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THE MYSTICAL DOCTRINE OF ABŪ-ṬALIB AL-MAKKĪ

AS FOUND IN HIS BOOK QŪT AL-QULŪB

by

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

The purpose of this study is to examine the life and works of Abū-Ṭālib al-Makkī, one of the greatest ṣūfi writers of the fourth Islamic century, with special attention being paid to his mystical doctrine, as expounded in his chief work entitled "Qūt al-Qulūb fī mu'āmalat al-maḥbūb".

The thesis is divided into two parts. The first part, which constitutes the first chapter, deals with the biography of al-Makkī and examines the characteristic traits of his thoughts and personality.

In the second part, which constitutes four chapters, the mystical doctrine of al-Makkī is studied under the broad based divisions of: The religious life (ch. II), the mystical doctrine (ch. III), the mystical life (ch. IV), the mystic path (ch. V).

In analysing al-Makkī's mystical doctrine, detailed studies are made in relation to his concept of religious life as a preliminary basis for the higher mystical life, and his concept of mystical life with special reference to his concept of the heart, science of the heart, theory of knowledge, gnosis, and finally his concept of the mystical states and stations.

This thesis shows the contribution made by al-Makkī, to the formulation of ṣūfi theory and practice, during the most significant period of ṣūfism, namely the period of formulation, systematisation, and documentation.

ABBREVIATIONS

- Early Mystic = Margaret Smith, An Early Mystic of Baghdād.
- Essai = Massignon, L. Essai sur les origines du lexique technique de la mystique musulmane.
- E1¹ = Encyclopedia of Islam (Old Edition, 1913-36).
- E1² = Encyclopedia of Islam (New Edition, 1954-1960).
- E1(S) = Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam.
- ERE = Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics.
- Formative Period = Montgomery Watt, The Formative Period of Islamic Thought.
- Fihrist = Ibn an-Nadīm, Al-Fihrist.
- GAL = Brockelmann, Geschichte Der Arabischen Literatur.
- Ghunya = 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, Kitāb al-Ghunya li Ṭālibi Ṭarīq al-Ḥaqq.
- Ḥāji Khalīfa = Ḥāji Khalīfa, Kashf az-Zunūn.
- Ḥilya = Abū-Nu'aym al-Isfahānī, Ḥilyat al-Awliyā'.
- 'Ibar = Adh-Dhahabī, Kitāb al-'Ibar.
- Ibn-Khallikān = Ibn-Khallikān, Wafayāt al-A'yān.
- IC = Islamic Culture, Hyderabad.
- Ihyā' = Al-Ghazālī, Ihyā' 'Ulūm ad-Dīn.
- 'Ilm = Abū-Ṭālib al-Makkī, 'Ilm al-Qulūb.
- IQ = Islamic Quarterly, London.
- IS = Islamic Studies, Karachi.

- JRAS = Journal of Royal Asiatic Society.
- Kāmil = Ibn-al-Athīr, Al-Kāmil.
- Kashf = Al-Hujwīri, Kashf al-Maḥjūb.
- Khaṭīb = Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Ta'rīkh Baghdād.
- Khiṭaṭ = Al-Maqrīzī, Khiṭaṭ.
- Lisān = Ibn-Ḥajar al-Asqalānī, Lisān al-Mizān.
- Luma' = As-Sarrāj, Kitāb al-Luma'.
- Majmū'a = Ibn-Taymiya, Majmū'at ar-Rasā'il.
- Majesty = Montgomery Watt, The Majesty that was Islam.
- Muqaddasī = Al-Muqaddasi, Aḥsan at-Taqāsīm fī Ma'rifaṭ al-Aqālīm.
- Muslim Theology = Macdonald, Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory.
- MW = Muslim World, Hartford.
- Mystics = Nicholson, Mystics of Islam.
- Qushayrī = Al-Qushayrī, ar-Risāla.
- Rasā'il = Ibn-ar-Rundī, ar-Rasā'il-as-Sughra.
- Religious Attitude = Macdonald, The Religious Attitude and Life in Islam.
- Ṣafadī = As-Ṣafadī, Wāfi bi'il Wafayāt.
- Sam'ānī = As-Sam'ānī, Kitāb al-Ansāb.
- Sezgin = Sezgin, Geschichte Des Arabischen Schrifttums.
- Shadharāt = Imād ad-Dīn al-Ḥanbalī, Shadharāt adh-Dhahab.
- Subkī = As-Subkī, Ṭabaqāt ash-Shafi'iyya al-Kubra.

- Ṣūfism = Arberry, Ṣūfism.
- Sulamī = as-Sulamī, Ṭabaqāt as-Sūfiyya.
- Tadhkira = Adh-Dhahabī, Tadhkira al-Ḥuffāz.
- Talbīs = Ibn-al-Jawzī, Talbīs Iblīs.
- Yafi'ī = Yafi'ī, Mir'āt al-Janān.
- Yāqūt = Yāqūt, Mu'jam al-Buldān.

INTRODUCTION

The third and the fourth Islamic centuries marked an important epoch in the history of ṣūfism or what may be called Islamic mysticism. It was during this period it entered the phase of theorisation, systematisation and documentation. From the beginning of the third century itself attempts were made to formulate the theoretical and practical aspects of taṣawwuf by compiling treatises giving an exposition of ṣūfi theory and practice. Ḥarīth al-Muḥāsibī (d. 243/857) was the first ṣūfi writer of prominence and it is said that his original writings and commentaries reached a total of two hundred works. Thereafter, al-Kharrāz (d. 286/899) wrote his "Kitāb aṣ-ṣidq" and he was followed by the great formulator of orthodox ṣūfism, Junayd al-Baghdādī (d. 298/910) who has a number of mystical treatises to his credit.

From the fourth century onwards this movement for the formulation of the mystical doctrines grew stronger, due to various factors, which are studied in the first chapter of the thesis. The works of as-Sarrāj (d. 378/988), al-Kalābādhī (d. 385/995) and al-Makkī (d. 386/988) belonged to this period. As-Sarrāj wrote his "Kitāb al-Luma'" in which he gave an exposition of the ṣūfi theory and practice, and al-Kalābādhī expounded the doctrines of the ṣūfis in his "Kitāb at-ta'arruf li madhabi ahl at-taṣawwuf" and Abū-Ṭālib al-Makkī compiled his "Qūt al-qulūb fī mu'āmalat al-maḥbūb" with the same objective. The Luma' and the

Ta'arruf have been studied both by the Orientalists and the Muslim scholars. The late Professor R.A. Nicholson edited Kitāb al-Luma', with important notes and comments in English, and A.J. Arberry edited Kitāb at-Ta'arruf, and also translated it into English under the title "The Doctrine of the Ṣūfis". The present rector of al-Azhar University, ash-Shaykh 'Abd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd also has made a valuable contribution to the understanding of the above works, especially re-editing the al-Luma' of as-Sarrāj, by adding more new material to the already existing edition of Professor Nicholson. But although the Qūt al-Qulūb of al-Makkī was edited as late as 1931 A.D. no attempts have been made either for the translation or the systematic study of the work of al-Makkī, although it is very widely quoted by all the prominent scholars who write on ṣūfism.

Al-Makkī's contribution to taṣawwuf has in no way less significance than that of his contemporaries, and his influence on the development of later ṣūfi thought, especially that of al-Ghazālī, is very conspicuous. The aim of the present study is to fill this gap by making a systematic study of al-Makkī's mystical doctrine, as found in his main work "Qūt al-Qulūb."

The thesis is divided into two parts, the first part constitutes the first chapter in which an attempt is made to reconstruct the life of al-Makkī based on original sources, and also to analyse the characteristic features of his thought and personality. In the second part, the

mystical doctrine of al-Makkī is studied in four chapters. The chapter entitled "The Religious Life" (ch.II) deals with al-Makkī's concept of the religious life, which implies here, the fulfilment of the fundamental religious obligations and duties, as the initial preparatory ground for the higher spiritual life. The chapter entitled "The Mystical Doctrine" (ch. III) analyses the more theoretical aspects of al-Makkī's mystical doctrine, like his concept of the heart, theory of knowledge, and the philosophy of gnosis. The chapter entitled "The Mystical Life" (ch. IV) examines the more practical aspects of his mystical doctrine, namely about the mystical practices like self-examination, self-mortification, meditation and contemplation. The last chapter entitled "The Mystic Path" (ch. V) discusses his concept of the mystical states and stations, analysing the significance of each station and the place it occupies in the path towards the attainment of gnosis, and eternal bliss, which is the ultimate goal of every mystic who travels in the mystic path.

THE LIFE AND PERSONALITY OF AL-MAKKI

I. Historical Setting

The study of any personality or doctrine primarily involves an understanding of the historical situation in which it developed. The life and personality of al-Makki are inseparable from the historical circumstances in which he lived. The study of his life and personality is inseparable from the study of the history of the Islamic world in the period in which he lived. The study of his life and personality is inseparable from the study of the history of the Islamic world in the period in which he lived.

PART I

THE LIFE AND PERSONALITY OF AL-MAKKI

The Historical Background

For an understanding of al-Makki it will be sufficient to have a brief survey of the political and social conditions of the Islamic world between 900 and 1000 A.D., especially in relation to Bagdad and Baghdad, the city which formed the center of al-Makki's career.

This period witnessed the disintegration of the 'Abbasid Caliphate, in the sense that following the weakness of 'Abbasid caliphs and their lack of effective control over their domains, there came into being local dynasties which were fully autonomous for all practical purposes while owing nominal allegiance to the 'Abbasid caliph. In the wake of this disintegration of the central

CHAPTER I

THE LIFE AND PERSONALITY OF AL-MAKKĪ

I. Historical Setting

The study of any personality or doctrine primarily involves a deep understanding of the historical situation of the time in which the said personality lived or the historical circumstances in which the said doctrine or theory was formulated, because no personalities exist in the state of historical vacuum, and no intellectual movement could be divorced from the general trend of society. Hence a study of the mystical doctrine of Abū-Ṭālib al-Makkī has to be made against the historical situation in which he lived, preached, and formulated his doctrine.

The Political Background

For an understanding of al-Makkī it will be sufficient to have a brief survey of the political and intellectual condition of the Islamic world between 900 and 1000 A.D., especially in relation to Baṣra and Baghdād, the two cities that formed the centres of al-Makkī's career.

This period witnessed the disintegration of the 'Abbāsid Caliphate, in the sense that following the weakness of 'Abbāsid caliphs and their lack of effective control over their domains, there came into being local dynasties which were fully autonomous for all practical purposes while owing nominal allegiance to the 'Abbāsid caliph. In the wake of this disintegration of the central

caliphate, and the rise of minor states, the caliph lost most of his power, and remained as a figure-head while the real power passed into the hands of those who claimed the title sultan.

During the period between 945 and 1055 A.D. Baghdād came under the domination of one of those local dynasties, namely the Buwayhids, a war like tribe from Daylam at the south of the Caspian Sea. The Buwayhid rule extended mainly over Iraq, and Western Persia. Although there were dynasties like Sāmānids (874-999 A.D.) Ghaznavids (976-1186 A.D.) and Fāṭimids (909-1171 A.D.) in existence during this period, the Buwayhids were in control of the main centre of Islamic world, Baghdād.¹

Buwayhids are generally considered to be Imāmīte Shī'as, but really speaking, they were not sincere adherents to the Imāmīte creed. Though Buwayhid rulers like Mu'izz-ad-Dawla is stated to have encouraged the Imāmīte ceremonies like the mourning for al-Ḥusayn, these ceremonies were stated to be banned for a time by another Buwayhid ruler 'Aḍud-ad-Dawla, when it was said to have encouraged sectarian riots between the Shī'a and the Sunnites in Baghdād. Thus the pro-Shī'a acts of the Buwayhids appear to be of less significance.² On the whole, the Buwayhids appear to have never attempted to convert their Sunnite subjects to Imāmism, and Sunnism is said to have had a strong hold on the ordinary people.³

1. Cl. Cahen, Art. Buwayhids, E.I.² 1350 ff.

2. Watt, The Majesty, 193, 203.

3. Watt, Muslim Intellectual, 105.

The Religious and Intellectual Background.

The fourth century of Islam is a period of utmost significance both in the history of Islamic theology and Islamic mysticism. In the field of Islamic theology this period witnessed the consolidation of Sunnite creed, and the culmination of the formative period of Islamic thought. The stability of the Sunnite creed during this period is stated to have manifested in its ability to exist without any imbalance or disturbance during the period, when the supreme political authority was in the hands of Imāmite Buwayhids.¹ The movement of Islamic mysticism seems to have played an important role in the development of this theological dogma which attained its stability during the fourth century. Because the movement of Islamic mysticism is stated to have contributed to the theological thinking during the early period, since the personal experience of the Ṣūfis gave them greater confidence in approaching fresh theological problems. Thus al-Muḥāsibī (d. 857) is considered to be one of the first to make an attempt to refute the Mu'tazilites.² According to Louis Massignon, the experience of certain mystics had also contributed to the theological schools of Faḍliyya, Bakriyya, Karrāmiyya and Sālimiyya,³ and as we shall see

1. Formative Period, 317

2. The Majesty, 190

3. Formative Period, 263

later al-Makkī himself played an important role in the theological school of Sālimiyya, and also al-Makkī's Qūt which is essentially a work on Sūfism, abounds in the discussion of subjects of theological interest like the attributes of God, the Mu'tazilite standpoint in relation to Islamic theology, predestination, and the concept of Ahl as-Sunna wa-l-Jamā'a.¹ The interest shown by the sūfis in the matters of Islamic theology is also manifest in the theological activities of the famous mystic and a contemporary of al-Makkī, Ibn-al-Khafīf (371/981) who is said to have defended al-Ash'arī's theology.²

1. It is interesting to note that al-Makkī quotes the famous tradition about seventy-three sects, as has been done by al-Baghdādī, and ash-Shahrastānī. Al-Makkī too adopts a way of enumerating the sects to ensure that the number of heretical sects were exactly seventy-two. Al-Baghdādī, and ash-Shahrastānī treated the individual Mu'tazilites who differed in details in order to achieve this (vide Formative Period, 2, 3). But al-Makkī adopts a different method than that of al-Baghdādī or ash-Shahrastānī. According to al-Makkī the Khārijites, the Murji'a, the Rāfiḍa and Qadriyya, are the four heretical sects, and each sect was divided into eighteen groups, and thus seventy-two groups were completed. All these sects, says al-Makkī, originated in Iraq, because it is from there the fiṭna originated. QQ II, 259, 260. For al-Makkī's concept of Ahl as-sunna wa-l-Jamā'a, vide QQ II, 282-86 also 251-60.

2. Fazl-ar-Raḥmān, Islam, 139

Ṣūfism which remained as an individual phenomenon during the first two centuries developed into an institution with the development of Islamic law and theology, and also with the emergence of 'ulamā', during the third and fourth centuries.¹ The most characteristic feature of Islamic mysticism during the third and fourth centuries is the evolution of mystic terminologies, and the emergence of the concept of the ṣūfi way with its states and stations. Moreover, the ṣūfis during this period developed the doctrine of "gnosis" (ma'rifa) which came into conflict with the "knowledge" ('ilm) of the theology which developed during the same period. Unlike the early pietistic ṣūfism which laid emphasis on inner piety, the newly emerged gnostic ṣūfism, presented a challenge to the 'ulamā' because of the privileged type of knowledge which was considered to be the monopoly of the ṣūfis and not open to the learned.²

Being conscious of the impending rift between the formal theology, and mystic knowledge, from ^{the} third century itself there had been attempts to bridge the gulf between sharī'a, and what the ṣūfis called ḥaqīqa. Al-Muḥāsibī (d. 243/857) al-Kharrāz (d. 286/899) and al-Junayd (d. 298/911) struggled towards the attainment of reconciliation between the formal religion and ṣūfism.

These attempts of the ṣūfi writers of the period which were directed towards some form of reconciliation

1. Fazl-ar-Raḥmān, Islam, 141.

2. Ibid.

and unity led to some form of unity of thought, and what one may call a sense of growing together in the field of Islamic mysticism, an aspect which is not manifest in other fields of Islamic thought during this period.¹

Junayd is said to have laid the fundamental basis of mystic theory and practice upon which the later mystic writers have built up their superstructure of ṣūfi philosophy.²

The fourth century witnessed the rise of three main figures who undertook the task of systematising the ṣūfi way of life by producing treatises giving an exposition of mystical theory and practice. The three main figures are Abū-Naṣr as-Sarrāj (d. 377/987) the author of Kitāb al-Luma', Abū-Ṭālib al-Makkī, the author of Qūt al-Qulūb, Abū-Bakr al-Kalābādhī (d. 385/995) who wrote Kitāb at-ta'arruf li madhab ahl-at-taṣawwuf.

Apart from the desire for the integration of ṣūfi thought and formal theology, there appear to have been other factors that prompted these men to produce treatises giving an exposition of the ṣūfi creed.

As-Sarrāj, a contemporary of al-Makkī, refers to an important aspect which might have sounded the note of urgency to produce works of more elaborate nature on ṣūfi theory and practice.

As-Sarrāj says "Some knowledge of the principles, aims, and methods of genuine ṣūfis is necessary in this age in order that they may be distinguished from the

1. Formative Period. 263

2. Arberry, Ṣūfism, 57.

imposters who appropriate their name and dress." Moreover, he further states these pseudo ṣūfis themselves appear to have started to write books with "pure embellishments and ornamentation."¹ Moreover, the shallow utterances of these pseudo-ṣūfis seem to have created a confused state in which it became extremely difficult to identify the genuine mystic. As-Sarrāj refers to this confused state when he says that he was asked by some one to clarify about ṣūfism about which various opinions are being held; some raise them to a very high position glorifying their station, whereas some others held the view that it (taṣawwuf) is mere "vain sport and play" (lahw wa-l-la'b) and there were some, says as-Sarrāj, who criticised the ṣūfis as zindiqs, and as a group which is astray. After referring to this confused state of ṣūfism as-Sarrāj says that he was asked by a friend of his "to explain the principles of its doctrine and to show by argument how it is connected with the apostolic tradition."²

These observations of as-Sarrāj, a contemporary of al-Makkī, indicate the fact that there was an urgent need during this period, especially, when the ṣūfis were brought into disrepute by the utterances of the pseudo-ṣūfis, and were accused of zindiqism from other quarters, to systematise their doctrine, and give a correct exposition of it by compiling treatises which would justify their claims. Thus in the words of Arberry, "The

1. Luma', 2, 3.

2. Luma', 5.

need produced the men, and the men produced the books, eminently suitable for the purpose."¹

Muḥammad ibn-‘Aṭiyya al-Ḥārithī Abu-Ṭālib al-Makkī, who is the author of "Qūt al-Qulūb", was one of those mystical writers who fulfilled this need by producing a valuable treatise on ṣūfi doctrine and practice.

II. Al-Makkī's Early Life and Education

There is very little material available to reconstruct the life of al-Makkī. The biographical sources contain very little information concerning his early life, and no date is given in any of the sources for his birth, nor one find any reference to him in the contemporary writings of his period. Perhaps the explanation provided by al-Kalābādhī (d. 380/990), a contemporary of al-Makkī, for not mentioning any of his contemporaries in his work may be a sound reason for the silence of contemporary sources in relation to al-Makkī. Al-Kalābādhī says, "We have not mentioned the more recent writers, nor our contemporaries, although they in no way fall short of those whose names we have mentioned in respect of knowledge, for their presence among us renders it unnecessary for us to give any account of them."²

Perhaps, as al-Kalābādhī says, this awareness of the close proximity of al-Makkī might have led even his other contemporaries like as-Sarrāj not to mention him. But it sounds strange that he finds no place in the Risāla of

1. Ṣūfism, 66.

2. Ta'arruf, 14.

al-Qushayrī (d. 465/1073), Ṭabaqāt aṣ-Ṣūfiyya of as-Sulamī (d. 1021 A.D.) and Ḥilyat al-Awliyā' of Abū-Nu'aym al-Isfahānī (d. 1038 A.D.), even al-Hujwīrī (d. circa 465 A.H.) passes over him in silence in his Kashf al-Mahjūb.

The earliest biographical account of al-Makkī is found in the Kitāb al-Ansāb of Ṭāhir al-Muqaddasī¹ (d. 1058) and in the Tārīkh -Baghdād of Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 1071) and most of the subsequent writers seem to have derived their information about al-Makkī from these two sources. In fact, Ibn-Khallikān quotes from the Kitāb al-Ansāb of Ṭāhir al-Muqaddasī²

Muḥammad Ibn 'Alī Ibn-'Aṭīyya al-Ḥārithī al-'Ajamī al-Makkī was born in the Jabal area.³ The biographical sources are silent about his exact birth place. As the term was applied to a wide area, one finds it extremely difficult to locate his exact birth place. But generally speaking, the Jabal area seems to have played an important role in the field of Islamic mysticism.

As-Sulamī in his Ṭabaqāt aṣ-Ṣūfiyya mentions a number of mystics from Jabal. He refers to these mystics as

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1. His full name was abū Faḍl M.B. Ṭāhir al-Muqaddasī vide GAL, I, 436.
 2. Ibn Khallikān, III, 430.
 3. According to Yāqūt, the name Jabal was applied to a wide area, which included a number of provinces (a'māl). Generally this term was applied to the vast area between Isfahān, Zanjān, Qazwīn, Hamadhān, and Dīnawar, including Rayy. According to Yāqūt, this area is erroneously called by the non-Arabs ('Ajam) as Iraq, a name says Yāqūt which was unknown in the past. Yāqūt II, 22, 23.

mashā'ikh al-Jabal.¹ Thus it may be assumed that al-Makkī was born in an environment which was dominated by the spirit of mysticism.

Perhaps the nisba al-'ajamī which is appended to his name indicates his Persian origin. He was also called al-Hārithī. According to Ibn-Khallikān the nisba al-Hārithī refers to both al-Hārith and al-Hāritha, and he says due to this confusion he cannot precisely state to which of these tribes al-Makkī belonged.² He must have got his nisba al-Makkī due to his long stay in Mecca.³

A. Early Life in Mecca

According to the biographical sources al-Makkī, who was originally from Jabal area, came to Mecca and lived there for some time.⁴ It is not clear when he came to Mecca, but he must have come to Mecca when he was quite young, and he must have had the major part of his early education there. He mentions about Shaykh Fāḍil⁵ under whom he studied Qur'ān. He also speaks about Shaykh

1. Sulamī, 406, 411, 418.

2. Ibn-Khallikān, III, 430.

3. Perhaps he must have stayed for quite a long time in Mecca, than comparatively in Baṣra and Baghdād.

4. Ibn-Khallikān, III, 430.

5. QQ, I, 122. This Shaykh must have been a traditionist too, because al-Makkī reports a tradition from him.

Abū-alī Kirmāni, whom he met in the ḥaram.¹ It was during his stay in Mecca that he came under the influence of one of the greatest traditionists and mystics of the time, namely Abū-Sa'īd ibn-al-A'rābi. Of all the scholars al-Makkī had met in Mecca, Ibn al-A'rābi seems to have left his impressions on him most.²

Travelling was an integral part of the education in the medieval Islamic world. The aspirants of knowledge, and mystic path undertook long journeys, travelling from one place to another to drink from the fountain of knowledge and spiritual wisdom. Al-Makkī himself refers to this in his Qūt when he says, "The men of poverty (fuqarā') and the novices of the spiritual path (murīdīn) used to travel from one place to the other in order to meet the learned ('ulamā'), and the men of godliness (ṣālihūn), to have a glance at them, to seek their blessings, and to benefit from their training."³ Al-Makkī quotes at-Thawrī who says, "This is the age of travelling, in which one gets from one town to the other in order to escape from being known to the public. When one is known in one place, he shall go to another."⁴ As-Sarrāj, the contemporary of al-Makkī, too refers to the travelling of the aspirants of the mystic path. He says, their travels are not motivated by their desire of visiting places for

1. Ibid, II, 248.

2. This aspect will be studied in detail in the section dealing with the teachers of al-Makkī.

3. QQ, II, 250.

4. Ibid, 425.

the purpose of sight-seeing, or in search of food and provisions, but inspired by the noble feeling of ^{self-mortification} ~~holy war~~ (jihād) and to meet the spiritual masters (shuyūkh) to seek knowledge.¹

In the life of al-Makkī too travelling played an important role. He must have undertaken these journeys motivated by one or many of the above mentioned reasons. After staying in Mecca for some time, and enriching his knowledge from the meetings he had with a number of learned men and mystics he left for Baṣra. The reason for his leaving Mecca is not exactly known. But he himself had stated that Mecca is not a place for permanent settlement. He says that practice of the pious ancestors was to visit Mecca at intervals and not to reside there permanently, because, this increases in ones heart the love and longing for this sacred place.²

B. Life in Baṣra.

When al-Makkī wanted to leave Mecca his eyes were naturally set on Baṣra, which was at that time one of the greatest intellectual centres of the Islamic world, being a great commercial centre of cross-currents of ideas. In the words of Massignon, "Baṣra in fact is the veritable crucible in which Islamic culture assumed its form, crystallised in the classical mould between the first and fourth century of hijra."³

1. Luma', 190. Cf p. 216, below.

2. QQ, II, 247, 248.

3. Ch. Pellat, art. Baṣra, E.I.² I, 1086.

The sources indicate that al-Makkī entered Baṣra after the death of Abū-l-Ḥasan ibn-Sālim.¹ Ibn-Sālim died in the year 350/960.² Thus we may assume that al-Makkī must have entered Baṣra after 360 A.H., the year in which Ibn-Sālim died. Baṣra, as a great centre of intellectual activity, and cross-current of ideas offered a very wide scope for quenching the thirst of al-Makkī who had left Mecca presumably in search of better pastures, to widen the horizon of his mystical knowledge, and spiritual experience. It was in Baṣra that he was destined to play a significant role in the movement of Sālimiyya. It is stated that al-Makkī entered Baṣra after the death of Abū-l-Ḥasan ibn-Sālim, and claimed discipleship to his teachings.³ Thus al-Makkī was considered to be a follower of the religious sect of Sālimiyya.⁴

Al-Makkī and the School of Sālimiyya.

Sālimiyya was a school of dogmatic theologians, which was formed in Baṣra in the third and fourth centuries of hijra. The founder of this school of mystical theologians was Sahl ibn-'Abd-allah at-Tustarī (d. 283/896). But the school of Sālimiyya derives its name from his chief disciple Abu-'Abd-Allah Muḥammad ibn-Sālim (d. 297/909) and his son Abū-l-Ḥasan Aḥmad ibn-Sālim (d. 350/960) who

1. Khaṭīb, III, 89.

2. Yafi'ī, II, 373.

3. Ibn-Khallikān, III, 430.

4. Shadharāt, III, 120.

succeeded one after the other as its head.¹

On the whole, it is rather difficult to form a clear idea about the doctrine of Sālimiyya because what we know today about their doctrines is mainly derived from the writings of their adversaries like the Ḥanbalite Ibn-al-Farra (d.458/1066), and 'Abd-al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d.561/1166). Al-Jīlānī in his Ghunya deals with ten doctrines supposed to be held by Sālimiyya. According to al-Jīlānī, the Sālimis held the following doctrines:

1. God will appear in the day of judgement in human form visible to all the creations, including men, angels and animals.
2. God has secrets (sirr), if he reveals it the order of the things (tadbīr) will end in chaos; the prophets have secrets and if they reveal it the prophethood would cease, the men of learning ('ulamā') have their secrets, if they reveal it, the whole concept of knowledge would end in disorder.
3. The infidels will see God in the day of judgement, and even the infidels will be called to account for their deeds.
4. The devil (iblis) at the end performed prostration to God,² and the devil did not enter the heaven.
5. Jibrīl came to the prophet, without moving from his own place.

1. L. Massignon, art. Sālimiyya, E.I.¹ IV, 115.

2. According to Tritton this concept of Sālimiyya may be considered as an indication of the fact that the Sālimis did not believe in the eternity of evil and hell. Tritton, Muslim Theology, 136.

6. When God spoke to Moses, he was taken by pride, then God addressed him saying, O! Moses! You feel proud of yourself, but look up and see. Then Moses looked up; Lo! there formed hundreds of Moses, and hundreds of Tūr.
7. God deserves from his servants only obedience and he does not deserve disobedience.
8. The prophet used to memorise the Qur'ān before his prophethood and before angel Jibril brought the Qur'ān to him.
9. God recites the Qur'ān in the tongue of every reader of Qur'ān. Thus when one listens to Qur'ān being recited by a Qārī' he really listens to God.
10. God is in every place and there is no distinction between his throne and other places.¹

1. Ghunya, I, 106, 107. Al-Jīlānī also holds the opinion that some of the Sālīmī doctrines imply anthropomorphic ideas. Abu-Ḥulmān al-Fārisī, the founder of the sect of Ḥulmāniyya, which was a sub-sect of Ḥulūliyya, is stated to have been a disciple of Ibn-Sālim of Baṣra (d. 297/909). Moreover, Massignon feels that their doctrine that everything is allowed (ibāha) to him who knows to worship the presence of God in them is a corruption of the Sālīmī thesis on the divine tajallī. L. Massignon, art. Ḥulmaniyya, E.I.¹ II, 333.

But in a subsequent article on the same subject in the second edition of the E.I., J. Paderson expresses the opinion that it is rather difficult to harmonize the ibāha of Ḥulmāniyya with the earnest asceticism of Ibn-Sālim. Vide, J. Paderson, art. Ḥulmāniyya, E.I.² III, 570.

According to al-Jīlānī, all the above mentioned doctrines of Sālīmiyya amount to heresy and they are outside the pale of Ahl as-Sunna wa-l-Jamā'a. Hence he classes them with the heretical sects like Karrāmiyya, Jahmiyya, and Rāfiḍa.¹ The Ḥanbalites accuse them of anthropomorphism² and al-Hujwīrī also considered them to be ḥulūlīs, and classes them among the condemned sects of ṣūfis.³

In the third and fourth century of hijra, the school of Sālīmiyya appears to have held a very important position in Baṣra. Al-Muqaddasī (d. 946 A.D.) speaks of them as a group of mystical theologians who held a significant position in the intellectual circles of Baṣra.⁴ In the Ansāb of as-Sam'ānī the nisba Sālīmī is attributed to three persons each of whom had a following, and all of them claimed to follow the teachings of Abu-l Ḥasan ibn-Sālīm.⁵ Moreover it appears to ^{have} been the practice at that time to give the title Sālīmī to anyone who discussed the subject of vision of god (ru'ya) in the hereafter, because 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān ibn-Manda (d.470 A.H.) complains that whenever he quotes any traditions on the ru'ya, he was dubbed as a Sālīmī.⁶ According to Massignon the school of Sālīmiyya after two centuries of great theological and

1. Ghunya, I, 106, 107.

2. Louis Massignon, art. "Taṣawwuf" E.I., IV, 683.

3. Kashf, 131.

4. Muqaddasī, 126.

5. Amedroz, art. "Notes on some ṣūfi lives" JRAS, 1912, 573.

6. Ibid.

literary activity disappeared under continuous condemnation.¹

As it has been already mentioned, the school of Sālimiyya had^a large following in Baṣra including many fuqahā' and traditionists, during the third and fourth centuries. In Baṣra al-Makkī came under the influence of the teachings of Abū-l-Ḥasan ibn-Sālim, and through his teachings he became familiarised with the doctrines of Sahl ibn-'Abd-Allah at-Tustarī. Sahl was born at Tustar in the province of Ahwaz about 816 A.D., and died at Baṣra in 896 A.D.² Al-Makkī had assigned a prominent place to Sahl in his writings. His Qūt abounds in copious quotations from Sahl at-Tustarī.³ According to al-Hujwīrī, mujāhada or self-mortification was the main basis of the mystical doctrine of Sahl. While all the mystics stressed the need for mortification of the lower self, and considered it to be an indirect means (asbāb) of attaining contemplation (mushāhada) Sahl held that mortification is the direct cause of the latter. According to al-Hujwīrī, Sahl carried the concept of mujāhada to the extreme point. It is said he used to break his fast only once in fifteen days and he ate little food in the course of his long life.⁴ This spirit of mortification characterises the life of al-Makkī too, perhaps under the influence of the teachings of Sahl, with which he became

1. Essai, 297.

2. GAL, I, 204.

3. Watt, art. "Some mystics of the late 3rd/9th century", I.S. (7) 31.

4. Kashf, 201.

familiar in Baṣra through the teachings of Ibn-Sālim. It is said that al-Makkī was engaged in self-mortification (mujāhada) to such an extent that for a long time he kept himself aloof from partaking in any food, being content eating only permissible green herbs. He carried on this practice to its extreme position that it is said, his entire body became green due to much intake of green herbs.¹

Though it is clear that in Baṣra al-Makkī came under the influence of the school of Sālimiyya, it is not clear as to what definite role did he play, in relation to this school. He had a lot of admiration for both Sahl and Ibn-Sālim who were the founders of Sālimiyya. He quotes them with the honorific title of Shaykh.² But, on the whole, one finds none of the heretical views that are commonly attributed to the Sālimiyya in the writings of al-Makkī. He figures throughout, as an orthodox theologian and mystic, and as a great critic of all forms of innovation both in the matters of religious doctrine and practice. This accounts for the fact that al-Makkī is quoted by almost all the orthodox theologians and sūfis, including al-Ghazālī, with much respect and admiration. Therefore, though al-Makkī was a follower of Ibn-Sālim, it is possible he must have accepted sort of a puritanical form of their doctrine in line with the orthodox mystical theology, which is rid of all heresy. The best possible explanation is provided

1. Ibn-Khallikān, III, 430.

2. QQ, II, 354.

by Nicholson when he says, that it is not possible to assume that each individual Sālimī embraced all the heresies attributed to Sālimiyya.¹

On the whole, we are unable to form an exact picture of al-Makkī's career in Baṣra. The biographical sources only indicate that he came to Baṣra and claimed discipleship of Ibn-Sālim. We can assume that after claiming discipleship of Ibn-Sālim he must have succeeded Ibn-Sālim as the leader of Sālimiyya, and continued the assemblies which Ibn-Sālim used to hold in Baṣra.² Thus al-Makkī at this time was both an ascetic and a preacher (wā'iz)

C. Life in Baghdād

After an active career in Baṣra as a preacher of the doctrine of Ibn-Sālim, al-Makkī felt the urge to seek a more wider ground to quench the thirst for inner spiritual illumination. Perhaps, he also must have felt the need for a new climate to preach his ideas too, because by this time, one may assume, that he had already taken up the role of a preacher. Thus the natural choice for him at this time was Baghdād, which was the citadel of the Islamic culture and civilization during that period. But, in a way, it was really the period of decline of Baghdād as a centre of Islamic civilization. During this period Baghdād was under the domination of Buwayhids, who were

1. Nicholson, Introduction to Luma', XI

2. Sarrāj in his Luma' says that he was present in the assembly of Ibn-Sālim in which he used to address on theological matters. Luma', 390.

Imāmite Shi'ites. Though the Buwayhids did not appear to be sincere in their belief in the Imāmite creed they sought their support and offered them privileges. Thus in a way, the Buwayhids seem to have found the Imāmite intellectuals with their mass following a useful bulwark against the rigidity of the Sunnite 'ulamā'.¹ One of the chief characteristic features of this period was the increasing sectarian troubles which caused much loss to property and people, and this also appears to have caused confusion in thought. The conflicts between the Shī'as and the Sunnis became a common occurrence, and Buwayhids themselves appear to have encouraged these sectarian conflicts.² With the emergence of 'asharism as a powerful school, mu'tazilism appears to have been declining in its scope of influence, and the Ḥanbalites with their anti-rational theology seem to have had a very popular following in Baghdād. Ibn Baṭṭa (d. 997), a contemporary of al-Makkī, is considered to be the most powerful exponent of Ḥanbalism during this period.³ Thus in the midst of this confused state the ignorant masses were prepared to follow anybody due to their ignorance. Al-Mas'ūdī mentions several incidents which speak for the ignorance of the 'āmma of this period,⁴ and due to their ignorance the masses were prepared to follow any call.

1. The Majesty, 214.

2. A.A. Duri, art. "Baghdād" E.I.² I, 900.

3. The Majesty, 218.

4. A.A. Duri, art. "Baghdād" E.I.² 900.

It was in these circumstances of political instability and confusion in thought that al-Makkī entered Baghdād. It is said that he began to preach in the Jum'a mosque of Baghdād, and the people flocked to listen to him. But in the course of his discourse, it is stated, that he committed a mistake by uttering a statement which is heretical in nature. He is also reported to have stated that, "There is none who could do more harm to the creatures than the creator" (laysa 'ala-l makhluqīna aḍarrun min-al khāliq). It is said that when al-Makkī uttered this statement the people rose in anger, accused him of heresy and drove him away.¹ Both Imād ad-Dīn (d. 1201 A.D.)² and Ibn-Khallikān³ (d. 1256 A.D.) refer to this incident, and their source of information seems to have been the Kitāb al-Ansāb of Muḥammad ibn-Tāhir al-Muqaddasī⁴ (d. 1058 A.D.). As-Sam'ānī⁵ (d. 1167 A.D.), Ibn-al-Jawzī⁶ (d. 1200 A.D.) Adh-~~Shahabī~~⁷ (d. 1348 A.D.), Aṣ-Ṣafadī⁸ (d. 1363 A.D.) and Ibn-Hajar al-Asqalānī⁹ (d. 1449 A.D.) seem to have derived the information about this incident from Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdadī (d. 1071).

1. Khaṭīb, III, 89

2. Shadharāt, III, 120

3. Ibn-Khallikān, III, 430.

4. Brockelmann refers to him in GAL I, 436.

5. Sam'ānī, 541.

6. Talbīs, 164.

7. Mizān, III, 107.

8. Ṣafadī, VI, 116.

9. Lisān, V, 300.

We are unable to form a definite view about what al-Makkī had actually stated in his sermon, because both al-Muqaddasī and Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, had quoted the statement of al-Makkī without explaining the situation, or the context in which al-Makkī made the alleged statement. Thus one is unable to critically evaluate and assess the whole situation in an objective manner. The historical situation of the Buwayhid period too confuses the whole picture. But, as we shall see later al-Makkī too had his defenders who justified the above statement.

On the whole it is clear that al-Makkī has committed the mistake about which his contemporary al-Kalābādhī (d. circa 1000 A.D.) had warned and admonished. He says, "If a man discoursing does not take into account of the spiritual condition of the hearers, but expounding a certain station denies and affirms, it is possible that there may be in his audience, one who has never dwelt in that station. What he denies may be affirmed in the station of the hearer, so that he will imagine that the speaker had denied something which knowledge affirms and that he has either made a mistake or fallen into heresy, or even perhaps, relapsed into unbelief." And it will have two reactions, says Kalābādhī, either the audience will think good of the speaker, and accept him, convicting himself of lacking sufficient understanding to grasp the meaning, or else, he thought ill of the speaker, and accused him of madness, ascribing what he said to lunatic ravings.¹

1. Ta'arruf, 17.

This incident seems to have had a tremendous impact on the psychology of al-Makkī, because it is said that after this incident he had completely kept himself away from preaching, and seems to have had a very quiet life.¹ After this state of aloofness and solitude, during the last phase of his life, he died in the year 386 A.H. (996 A.D.) in Baghdād and was buried in the mālikīya graveyard.²

Ibn-al-Jawzī (d. 1200) in his Muntazam refers to an incident that took place at the time of al-Makkī's death. When al-Makkī was lying on his death-bed, he spoke to one of his disciples and said, "If you find out that I am saved strew almonds and sugar on my arms when borne to the grave, saying that this is for the wise." When the disciple asked him how to find out that he is saved, he said that he should give his hand to him when he is dying. If he clasps it, then he should know that he is saved; and if he let it go, then he should know that his end is not good. The disciple observed the signs of al-Makkī being saved, according to his indications, and acted accordingly.³

III. Teachers and Contemporaries of al-Makkī

One may safely assume that al-Makkī must have undergone the traditional type of education that was in vogue in the Islamic world during this period. Though private

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1. Khaṭīb, III, 89. Perhaps he must have written his 'Ilm-al-Qulūb during this period.
 2. Ibn-Khallikān, III, 430.
 3. Muntazam, VII, 189.

and public schools were founded by individual effort, mostly education was centred round the mosque, in the form of ḥalqas or circles of pupils gathered around a certain teacher. In his Qūt al-Makkī refers to the names of some of his teachers under whom he had his education. He mentions about Shaykh Fādīl¹ under whom he had studied Qur'ān, he also mentions another teacher of his 'Ābid ash-Shaṭṭ Muzaffar ibn-Sahl,² and he also speaks about Shaykh Abū-Alī Kirmānī,³ under whom he studied in Mecca.

Ibn al-A'rābī

Al-Makkī appears to have had a systematic study of Islamic sciences in Mecca, ^{in view of} notwithstanding the fact that most of the teachers he mentions were from Mecca; it was there that he attended the lectures of Abū-Sa'īd ibn-al-A'rābī, who was one of the great traditionists and a prominent mystic of the period. Among al-Makkī's teachers Ibn-al-A'rābī occupies a prominent place. Al-Makkī refers to the Ṭabaqāt An-Nussāk of Ibn al-A'rābī, and quotes his sayings with the honorific title of "Our Shaykh".⁴ Abū-Sa'īd Ahmad ibn-Muḥammad ibn-Ziyād, known as Ibn-al-A'rābī was originally from Baṣra. He was born in Baṣra in 246 A.H.⁵, but later he came and lived in Mecca and rose to the position of being the Shaykh of the sacred cities

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1. QQ, I, 122
 2. Ibid, II, 543.
 3. Ibid, II, 248.
 4. Ibid, I, 330.
 5. Ḥilya, 10, 375.

of Mecca and Madīna.¹ He was a great traditionist and mystic. It is said that before he settled down in Mecca, he lived in Baghdād, and was in the company of al-Junayd (298/910) Amr ibn-^Uthmān al-Makkī (297/909) Abu-l-Ḥasan Nūrī (295/907) who were the great mystics of the period.²

Ibn A'rābi compiled a number of books on mysticism, and his work entitled Ṭabaqāt an-Nussāk occupies a prominent place in the history of Islamic mysticism. He also has written a history of Baṣra.³ It is said that hundreds of people used to crowd into the assembly of Ibn al-A'rābī, and it is stated that he used to reply to the questions raised by the audience without having reference to any books.⁴ Ibn al-A'rābī is said to have continuously engaged in his teachings in Mecca for more than thirty years, and died in the year 341 A.H.⁵

Al-Makkī entered Baṣra after the death of Ibn-Sālim, which occurred in 350/960. This indicates that al-Makkī was in Mecca till 350 A.H., and thus there is every possibility that al-Makkī must have attended the lectures of Ibn al-A'rābī who died in 341 A.H. Al-Makkī refers to him as his shaykh and quotes him on many occasions especially in relation to asceticism (zuhd).⁶

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1. Ṭabaqāt, I, 93.
 2. Sulamī, 443
 3. Shadharāt, III, 354.
 4. al-Fihrist, 102
 5. Muntazam, IV, 381.
 6. QQ, I, 543.

Ibn-Sālim.

As it has been stated earlier, that although al-Makkī did not have the opportunity of meeting Ibn-Sālim, he had claimed discipleship of him, and considered him as one of his shayks.¹ Hence it is logical to include an account on Ibn-Sālim, when we discuss about the teachers of al-Makkī.

Abū-l-Ḥasan ibn-Sālim (d. 350/960) was a follower of his father abū-'Abd-Allah Muḥammad ibn-Sālim (d.297/909) Ibn-Sālim senior was a follower of the teachings of Sahl ibn-'Abd-Allah ibn-Yūnus at-Tustarī, and it was he who collected the thousand sayings of Sahl, which according to Massignon had "the intellectual potentiality and dogmatic coherence" to give rise to the school of Sālimiyya which derives its chief characteristics from the teachings of Sahl.² Abū-l-Ḥasan ibn-Sālim, who may be called Ibn-Sālim junior, became familiar with the teachings of Sahl through his father Ibn-Sālim the senior, and he succeeded his father as the leader of the school of Sālimiyya in Baṣra. It appears as if the father and son had a large following in Baṣra including many jurists and traditionists.³ Ibn-Sālim junior was a great ascetic who had experienced mystical states (ahwāl) and practised self-mortification (mujāhada).⁴

1. Ibid, I, 316.

2. L. Massignon, art. "Sahl-at-Tustarī" E.I.¹ IV, 63.

3. Amedroz, art. "Notes on some sūfi lives," JRAS, 1912, 573.

4. Shadharāt, III, 36.

It is said that Ibn-Sālim used to hold assemblies on theological and mystical subjects in Baṣra. As-Sarrāj (d. 378/988) the author of al-Luma' and the contemporary of al-Makkī was present in one of those assemblies and he reports a number of sayings of Ibn-Sālim in his Luma'.¹ As-Sarrāj appears to be a critic of Ibn-Sālim, because he criticises Ibn-Sālim for accusing Abū-Yazīd al-Biṣṭāmī (d. 261/875) of infidelity due to his declaration "Glory be to me".² As-Sarrāj says that Ibn-Sālim never acted in an objective and impartial manner in relation to this, because he quoted a statement of Sahl which carried the same meanings as that of al-Biṣṭāmī, but he never condemned it as he was well disposed towards Sahl.³ As-Sarrāj expresses his wonder as to how Ibn-Sālim justifies such a statement of Sahl, while condemning al-Biṣṭāmī.

Though al-Makkī was not fortunate enough to meet his, what one may call, spiritual mentor Ibn-Sālim, he must have become familiar with his teachings through the companions of Ibn-Sālim in Baṣra, who must have been in substantial number at the time of al-Makkī's arrival in Baṣra after the death of Ibn-Sālim. But soon al-Makkī was attracted by his teachings, and claimed discipleship of him, and rose to the position of being one of the chief spokesmen

1. Luma', 319, 326.

2. Luma', 319.

3. Ibid, 390-91. Sarrāj says that Ibn-Sālim said that once Sahl Ibn 'Abd Allah stated "My Lord never sleeps, and I also never sleep." This according to as-Sarraḡ carries the same meaning as that of al-Biṣṭāmī.

of the movement of Sālimiyya. Al-Makkī held Ibn-Sālim in very high respect. According to al-Makkī, Ibn-Sālim possessed a very deep knowledge in spiritual matters, and he had met a thousand pious servants of God and benefitted from the knowledge of everyone of them.¹ On one occasion al-Makkī laments, stating that after the death of Ibn-Sālim all the traces of his spiritual knowledge had vanished, its path being forgotten and he yearns stating "who shall revive it."²

Though al-Makkī had his fullest respect for Ibn-Sālim, yet he was not an uncritical admirer of him. Though he does not criticise the views of Ibn-Sālim as-Sarrāj, he takes the liberty to differ from him. For example, al-Makkī differs from Ibn-Sālim on the question of Abū-Yazīd al-Bisṭamī's declaration of "Glory be to me" (subhānī). According to Ibn-Sālim it was an utterance which was worse than that of Pharoah who declared, "I am your Lord."³ But al-Makkī justifies this statement of Abū-Yazīd by stating that Abū-Yazīd was a unitarian (muwaḥḥid) and he uttered this being conscious of the spiritual state of the time of pre-existence.⁴

But on the whole al-Makkī accepted him as his teacher, admired him, and quotes him frequently in his writings, follows his teachings to a great extent in the matters of mystical philosophy and dogmatic theology.

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1. QQ, II, 152.
 2. QQ, II, 152.
 3. Luma', 390-395.
 4. QQ, II, 148.

Al-Makkī's Teachers on Tradition (ḥadīth)

Al-Makkī narrated traditions on the authority of Abū-Bakr al-Mufīd al-Jarjarāyī.¹ He was born in Baghdād in 254 A.H. and lived in Jarjarāya,² hence his nisba, and he is stated to have been buried there. He was a ḥāfiẓ of Qur'ān, and was an eager student of ḥadīth undertaking long journeys in search of knowledge.³ He had narrated large numbers of traditions.⁴ He narrated traditions from Abū Ya'la^{al-}Mawṣilī, and many others, and it is said many of his authorities from whom he had narrated are not well known to the authorities on hadith criticism (majhūlūn). According to Ibn-al-Jawzī, Abū-Bakr al-Barqānī has cited in his musnad a tradition on the authority of Mufīd, and stated that this particular tradition had reached him only through Mufīd. Moreover, he had stated that he went to Mufīd, and wrote down the entire Muwaṭṭa' from him, and when he returned to Baghdād, Abū-Bakr ibn-'Alī Asad met him and said that the journey he had undertaken to Mufīd to write down Muwaṭṭa' was a futile one because he narrated Muwaṭṭa' on the authority of Ḥasan ibn-'Ubayd-allah al-'Abadī, who is considered to be a person not well known to the authorities on

1. Khaṭīb, III, 89.

2. Jarjarāya is said to be a city between Wāṣiṭ and Baghdād, and had been the birth place of several 'ulamā', vide, Ibn-al-Athīr, Lubāb, I, 220.

3. Muntaẓam, VII, 144.

4. Kāmil, IX, 46.

hadīth criticism (majhūl).¹ According to Adh-Dhahabī, Mufīd was a narrator of weak traditions.² He lived for forty-seven years and died in 375 A.H.³

It is not clear as to where al-Makkī met Mufīd. It is possible that he must have met him either during his stay in Baṣra or Baghdād because Mufīd himself had travelled widely. Apart from al-Mufīd, al-Makkī narrated traditions on the authority of Alī ibn-Aḥmad ibn-Ali-al Maṣīsī. He was originally from Maṣīsā, and came to Baghdād and narrated traditions on the authority of his father and many other traditionists including Aḥmad ibn-Khalīl al-Ḥalabī, Muḥammad ibn-Ma'ād, Alī-ibn-Aḥmad ar-Razzāz al-Barqanī and others. He died in the year 364.⁴ According to both Khaṭīb and Adh-Dhahabī, he was not a trustworthy narrator.⁵ It is possible that al-Makkī must have met him in Baghdād.

According to the biographical sources al-Makkī narrated traditions on the permission (ijāza) of Abū-'abd-Allāh ibn-Ja'far ibn-Fāris, and al-Makkī is stated to have studied Sahīh al-Bukhārī from Ibn-Zayd al-Marwazī.⁶

Thus the main two authorities from whom al-Makkī had derived his knowledge of traditions are generally held to be weak authorities. Perhaps this may be one of the reasons for some biographers to accuse him of also narrating weak traditions.

1. Muntaẓam, VII, 144.

2. 'Ibar, III, 8.

3. Shadharāt, III, 92. According to Adh-Dhahabī, Mufīd died in 378 A.H., vide, Tadhkira, III, 177.

4. Khaṭīb, III, 89.

5. Ibid, II, 324, Mizān, 3, 112.

6. Lisān, V, 300.

Contemporaries of al-Makkī

Abu Nasr as-Sarrāj (d. 378 A.H.)

As-Sarrāj, who was a contemporary of al-Makkī was a native of Ṭūs and hailed from an ascetic family, and he himself was a great ascetic and a ṣūfī.¹ Nicholson quotes Adh-Dhahabī who states in his Tārīkh al-Islām that as-Sarrāj had studied under the prominent ṣūfīs of the time like Ja'far Khuldī, Abū-Bakr Muḥammad ibn-Dāwūd al-Duqqī, and Aḥmad ibn-Muhammad ibn-Sā'ih.²

In his Luma' as-Sarrāj quotes Ibn-Sālim and on one occasion refers to a conversation he had with him. Thus it is clear as-Sarrāj was present in the circles of Ibn-Sālim in Baṣra,³ and it is after the death of Ibn-Sālim that al-Makkī entered Baṣra and claimed discipleship from him. But there is no indication either in Luma' or in the Qūt that as-Sarrāj had ever met al-Makkī. Though al Luma' was compiled with the same objective as Qūt, it differs from the latter in many respects. As-Sarrāj discusses the technical vocabulary of the ṣūfī movement in greater detail, an aspect one does not come across in Qūt and as Arberry has rightly pointed out Qūt has less curious quotations than Luma'.⁴

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1. Shadharāt, III, 91.
 2. Nicholson, Intro. to Luma' III. Nicholson feels as no person by the name Muḥammad ibn-Sa'ih is mentioned in the Luma' it may refer to Muḥammad ibn-Sālim, who is quoted many times in Luma'.
 3. Luma', 293 also 390.
 4. Ṣūfism, 67, 68.

But as-Sarrāj produced his work in the same intellectual climate in which al-Makkī lived and worked, and worked towards the same ideal of bridging the gulf between ṣūfism and the orthodox theology, as in the case of al-Makkī.

Al-Kalābādhī

Abū-Bakr Muḥammad ibn-Iṣḥāq al-Kalābādhī, who died in Bukhāra in 385/995 was another important contemporary of al-Makkī. His nisba refers to Kalābādh a quarter of Bukhāra. He shared the same objective of as-Sarrāj and al-Makkī and wrote a treatise entitled "Kitāb at-ta'arruf li-madhab ahl at-tasawwuf" with the avowed aim of bridging the gulf between orthodox and ṣūfism.¹

The work of al-Kalābādhī deals with the tenets of ṣūfism, and in order of chronology it appears to be the third important work that was written during this period; the first two being the works of as-Sarrāj and al-Makkī respectively.

According to Adh-Dhahabī, al-Kalābādhī was also a great traditionist, and one of the greatest scholars of Transoxiana. He is reported to have had a very deep knowledge of Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, and had been praised by Dār .-Quṭnī, one of the greatest traditionists of the period.² His writings, as that of as-Sarrāj and al-Makkī, played an important role in pleading the cause of a moderate ṣūfism with a structure of ideas consistent with

1. Art. "Kalābādhī" E.I. (5), 210.

2. Tadhkira, III, 216, 217.

orthodoxy.

Al-Huṣrī

Abū-l-Ḥasan Alī ibn-Ibrāhīm al-Huṣrī was also a contemporary of al-Makkī. He was originally from Baṣra and later lived in Baghdād where he died in 371 A.H.¹ According to as-Sulamī he was the Shaykh of Iraq, which implies that he was a prominent figure in the Baghdād school of ṣūfism.²

He was in the company of the great mystic Ash-Shiblī (334/946) and had a very deep knowledge of mysticism, and it is said that he was unique in giving an exposition of mystical concepts like Tawhīd, tafrīd and tajdīd.³

Dār -Quṭnī

The famous traditionist Alī ibn-'Umar ibn-Aḥmad ibn-Maḥdī known as Dār -Quṭnī (d. 385 A.H.) was also a contemporary of al-Makkī. He was a traditionist of great significance gifted with the remarkable gift of committing large numbers of traditions to memory, and he is also stated to have had a very deep knowledge in Asmā' ar-rijāl.⁴ Adh-Dhahabī quotes Qāḍī Abū-Ṭayyib aṭ-Ṭabarī who says that Dār -Quṭnī was the commander of faithful (Amīr al-mu'minīn) in the science of tradition.⁵

1. Sulamī, 516.

2. Sulamī, 516.

3. Ṭabaqāt, I, 98.

4. Muntaẓam, V, 183.

5. 'Ibar III, 28.

He travelled widely and studied traditions in the prominent intellectual centres of the period like Baghdād, Baṣra, Kūfa and Wāsiṭ, and in his old age he undertook long journeys to Egypt and Syria and compiled books on traditions.¹

Muḥammad ibn-Khafīf

Abū-abd-allāh Muḥammad ibn-Khafīf was also a contemporary of al-Makkī. He was a man of deep mystical knowledge and practice.² He was a Shāfi'ī jurist³ and a great ṣūfi Shaykh of his time. He died in 371 A.H., the same year in which al-Huṣrī died.⁴ Ibn-al-Jawzī feels that he belonged to the school of ibāha,⁵ but on the otherhand he is also stated to have been a notable defender of al-Ash'arī's theology.⁶ His mystical teachings seem to have had a profound influence, and given rise to a mystical group called Khafīfīs.⁷

Ibn-Sam'ūn

Ibn-Sam'ūn who was generally known as al-Wā'iz was another contemporary of al-Makkī. His name was Muḥammad ibn-Ismā'īl, but he was commonly known as

1. Tadhkira, III, 186, 190.
2. 'Ibar, II, 360.
3. Shadharāt, III, 76.
4. Kāmil, 9, 12.
5. Muntaẓam, V, 112.
6. Islam, 139.
7. Kashf, 247.

Ibn-Sam'ūn.¹ He seems to have got the nisba, al-Wā'iz, because of his frequent admonishing of the people. He is also stated to have had very deep knowledge in the science pertaining to the practical conduct (mu'āmalāt) in relation to religion. He died in 380 A.H., and it is said that his body was buried in his house, and removed to another graveyard after many years, and the body still was not putrefied.²

Ibn-Baṭṭa

He was born in 304 A.H. and died in 387 A.H., just one year after the death of al-Makkī. Al-Azjī who narrated traditions from Makkī, is stated to have heard traditions from him.³ It is said that he travelled widely in search of knowledge, and after his return from travels he was confined to his house for forty years. It is said that he engaged in fasting throughout the year except on the days of two festivals.⁴ He is considered to be the most influential exponent of Ḥanbalism during the Buwayhid period.⁵

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1. Kāmil, 9, 97.
 2. Muntaẓam, V, 193.
 3. Muntaẓam, V, 193.
 4. Ibid.
 5. Watt, Majesty, 218.

IV. The Works of al-Makkī

(A) Qūt al-Qulūb

It appears as if al-Makkī was not a prolific writer. He had written very few works and many of them seem to have been lost. But his magnum opus "Qūt al-qulūb fī mu'āmalat al-maḥbūb (The food of the hearts for fostering the love of God) had earned for him a unique place in the realm of Islamic mysticism. Before we proceed to discuss the other works of al-Makkī, apart from Qūt, it is proposed to discuss the structure and pattern of Qūt, which is the main subject of the present study.

The Structure and Pattern of Qūt al-Qulūb

An understanding of the structure and pattern of Qūt is essential for one to understand and appreciate the contents of it in a fitting manner. The Qūt lacks an introduction in which normally the author gives an exposition of the aim of the work, and an indication of the way of his treatment of the subject, and the circumstances which made him compile it. Hence one has to assume these aspects on the basis of the title the author had given to the work, or on the basis of the contents of the work. As far as Qūt is concerned, the title of the work itself is a clear, and sufficient, indication for an understanding of the purpose behind the compilation. It is entitled "Qūt al-Qulūb fī mu'āmalat al-maḥbub wa-waṣf ṭarīq al-murīd ilā-maqām at tawḥīd" (The food of the hearts in relation to one's dealing with the beloved (God) and a description of the path, the novice should tread to attain the station of divine unity).

Thus the work has a twofold aim:-

One is to give the guidelines as to the method of having relationship with God. This may cover the general principles of religious beliefs and duties which he deals in the Qūt. The other aim is to give an exposition of the path that the aspirant should follow to attain the station of unification (maqam at-tawḥīd).

This mystical doctrine of al-Makkī is explained in forty-eight chapters. The first twenty-two chapters deal with the recollection and prayer, orisons at set times (wird), the etiquette and methodology of the recitation of Qur'ān, the virtues of ^{Jum'ā} ~~jumma~~ prayer and its spiritual significance. There is also a section on fasting.

The chapters from twenty-three to thirty deal with deeper aspects than the previous chapters, and with the initial preparations a novice should make in order to tread on the mystic path. Hence they deal with self examination (muḥāsaba), exposition on the lower self (nafs), contemplation (mushāhada), meditation (murāqaba) and the basic fundamental principles that are to be observed by the novices (asās al-murīdīn) an exposition on the intuitions of the heart (khawāṭir al-qulūb).

Chapter thirty-one deals with al-Makkī's concept of knowledge ('ilm) and the superiority of gnosis (ma'rifa) over the formal knowledge.

Chapter thirty-two deals with certainty (yaqīn) and the stations of certainty. They deal with repentance (tawba), patience (ṣabr), gratitude (shukr), hope (rajā'), fear (khawf), asceticism (zuhd), trust in God (tawakkal)

satisfaction (riḍā') and love (maḥabba).

Chapter thirty-three deals with the principles of islām, namely belief in God and prophet, prayer, charity, fasting and ḥajj.

Chapter thirty-four deals with imām and islām and discusses the viewpoint of the early sects in Islām as to the relationship between the two.

Chapter thirty-five deals with the concept of ahl as-Sunna wa-l-Jamā'a, and also with the general principles of sharī'a.

Chapter thirty-six deals with the duty of a muslim towards another muslim.

Chapter thirty-seven gives an exposition of major sins (kabā'ir).

Chapter thirty-eight deals with sincerity (ikhlās) and pious intentions in ones actions (niyya).

Chapters thirty-nine to forty have an account on food and etiquette of eating.

Chapter forty-one deals with the virtues of poverty (faqr).

Chapter forty-two gives an exposition on travel.

Chapter forty-three deals with imāma.

Chapter forty-four is on companionship (ukhuwwa).

Chapter forty-five is on marriage.

Chapter forty-six is on the etiquette of entering public bath (ḥammām).

Chapter forty-seven deals with trade.

Chapter forty-eight gives an exposition on ḥalāl and ḥarām.

The Pattern of Qūt

Qūt is not a book of biography, nor does it contain scattered information or solitary anecdotes which have no relation to one another. It presents a complete picture of both the theoretical and practical aspects of Islamic mysticism clothed in beautiful charming style, drawing parallels from nature and life to bring home the mystical truths.

Qūt speaks eloquently for the analytical mind of al-Makkī. He presents his views in ^{the} logical manner which is ~~more~~ ^{also} conspicuous in al-Ghazālī (d. 1111 A.D.). Thus when al-Makkī wants to stress the fact that an action which is performed continuously in a steadfast manner, is praised by God, he bases his argument on the verse of Qur'ān in which God praises the fruit trees of paradise because they are always fruit yielding. Thus on this basis al-Makkī argues that God loves and praises an action too which is continuously performed.¹

Al-Makkī's approach to the subject is methodical; when he wanted to give an exposition of a particular subject, first he quotes the relevant verses of Qur'ān supported by the prophetic traditions. Then he presents the view of the pious ancestors (salaf), and the ṣūfis.

He never indulges in vain arguments, nor does he try to establish his views on the basis of logic, because he says his aim is not to argue on the basis of logic,²

1. Qur'ān, 56. 32. QQ, I, 90.

2. QQ, I, 209.

nor to deal at length about the virtues of the pious acts (faḍā'il al-a'māl) but to bring about the purification of the hearts of those who are engaged in pious acts (tahdhīb al-qūlūb). Because according to al-Makkī only by the purification of the heart, and by attaining the reality of faith (ḥaqīqa al-īmān) ones actions become purified, and those who are engaged in pious acts attain nearness to God.¹

By this time the ṣūfis have developed their own technical terms to give expression to their doctrines. Most of the ṣūfi writers of the period, including as-Sarrāj, the contemporary of al-Makkī, discusses the technical vocabulary of the movement. But this aspect is totally absent in Qūt.

Another characteristic feature of Qūt is brevity. Al-Makkī says that his aim is to deal with everything in a summarised manner.² But in spite of this claim of al-Makkī, at times one feels that he is indulging in trivial matters, and in details of things which may sound meaningless. But one must not lose sight of the fact that al-Makkī was writing a mystical treatise, and in the mystic path, what one may consider as most trivial may assume a much more significant position.³

Al-Makkī ^{is} was a very modest writer who ^{is} was very

1. Ibid, 154.
2. Ibid, II, 442.
3. Al-Makkī mentions about Kurz ibn-Walra who was weeping for a whole day, merely because he missed his recitation in the morning, QQ, I, 85.

conscious of his shortcomings and his limitations. He never claims perfection in his work. He says if there are any shortcomings in relation to the narration of traditions or any events, it is due to his being unmindful (sahw), heedlessness (ghafla) and forgetfulness (nisyān). If there is any correct exposition, and clear explanation in what he had stated then it is due purely to the grace and blessings of God, and due to his assistance.¹ Thus by no means an exaggeration when Margaret Smith says that "Abū-Ṭālib is a careful author of great authority and he is also a careful writer."²

Influence of Qūt

Al-Makkī's writings were received by later ṣūfis with much respect and admiration. Most of the later ṣūfis have quoted it as an authentic source to substantiate their views. Many had made extracts of it, and some had written commentaries, and marginal notes on it. Ḥusayn ibn-Ma'n had made an extract of Qūt al-Qulūb,³ and another notable scholar Muḥammad ibn-Khalaf al-Andalusī (485/1092) is stated to have summarised the Qūt al-Qulūb, entitled "Wuṣūl ila-'l gharḍ al-Maṭlūb min jawāhir Qūt al-Qulūb."⁴

Ibn-'Abbād ar-Rundī (d. 792/1390), the most important mystic writer of 8th/14th century, was a great admirer of

1. Ibid, I, 359.

2. Rābi'a the Mystic, 14.

3. GAL, I, 217.

4. Sezgin, I, 666.

al-Makkī, and compiled a work explaining the difficult parts of Qūt, and also of Bayān ash-Shāfi, another work by al-Makkī.¹ Muḥammad ibn-al-Asnāwī ash-Shāfi'ī (764/1363) who was a great scholar, and one time Qadi of Cairo, wrote a work called Ḥayāt al-Qulūb fī kayfiyya^a al-wuṣūl ila-l-maḥ^bṣūb, on the margin of Qūt al-Qulūb, and it was printed in Cairo in 1310 A.H.² Khwāja Sayyid Muḥammad Gesudra (the man with long curls) who was settled in Gulberga in India in 1398, and was a mystic of Chistī order, had written notes on Qūt al-Qulūb.³ Qūt al-Qulūb was very widely read in the ṣūfi circles, and occupied a prominent place in the libraries of ṣūfi monast^eries. Aṣ-Ṣafadī (d. 1363) says that he saw a copy of Qūt with Shaykh Muhyi ad-Dīn al Aqsarāī the Shaykh of Khānqa Saryāqūs,⁴ and states that he was longing to buy it even by paying three thousand dirhams, but he could not do so as it was a waqf property.⁵ This statement of as-Ṣafadī shows with how much respect and admiration the scholars held the writings of al-Makkī just three centuries after his death, and also the place Qūt had occupied in the ṣūfi circles.

1. GAL, I, 217.

2. Ibid.

3. Yūsuf Ḥasayn Khān, art. "Ṣūfism in India" I.C.(30) 248.

4. Al-Maqrīzī refers to this monastery in his Khiṭaṭ and also the Shaykh mentioned by aṣ-Ṣafadī. According to al-Maqrīzī, he was a leading Shaykh and head of the khānqa, Khiṭaṭ, II, 422.

5. Ṣafadī, VI, 116.

Ibn 'Abbād ar-Rundī, to whom reference has been already made, accords equal status to both Qūt and Iḥyā' of al-Ghazālī. According to him, both these works contain strange sciences (gharā'ib al-'ulūm) and marvellous truth of realizations, by which the hearts attain coolness, and the affairs of men are made easy.¹ Moreover, ar-Rundī states that every novice, or aspirant to the mystic path, must commence his studies, on the mystical theory and practice, by virtually reading the works of Shaykh Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī. He says "Let one passionately and zealously search and obtain this book, with the same effort with which one seeks to obtain the medicine that cures his illness."² It is said, that true to his word, Ibn ar-Rundī himself began his studies in Fez with the study of Qūt al-Qulūb.³

When al-Ghazālī began to study the mystical doctrines, he turned to Qūt, along with the writings of al-Muḥāsibī and others to gain an understanding of ṣūfi theory and practice.⁴ In a way it was Qūt more than any other work, which laid the foundation on which al-Ghazālī on the following century built his superstructure of the intellectual and spiritual justification of ṣūfism.

(B) 'Ilm al-Qulūb

Al-Makkī compiled another work entitled 'Ilm al-Qulūb on mysticism. This work of al-Makkī which is mentioned by

1. Rasā'il, 57.

2. Ibid, 21.

3. P. Nwyia, art. "Ibn-'Abbād" E.I.² III, 670.

4. Watt, Faith and Practice, 54.

Brockelmann¹ has now been edited by 'Abd-al-Qādir Aḥmad 'Aṭā, with an introduction and marginal notes. This edition is based on the manuscript in Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, and was printed in Cairo in 1964.²

The pattern of 'Ilm al-Qulūb, its treatment of the subject, and its style considerably differ from that of Qūt. Hence, this had led some to doubt the authenticity of the work, and its attribution to al-Makkī.³

But on the whole this is a baseless assumption, because one cannot entertain any doubt on a work, merely on the basis of style, because mysticism is an inner experience, and its form of expression varies according to the mystic consciousness or what the mystics call "inner light" one gains in the process of one's spiritual journey. Moreover, the style of a work depends on the subject with which one deals. In his 'Ilm al-Qulūb al-Makkī deals with the deeper aspects of mystical knowledge, like assertion of unity (tawhīd), gnosis (ma'rifa), wisdom (hikma) and other aspects which involve deeper metaphysical implications than those he deals with in Qūt. Hence it is written in a deeper mystical language than Qūt.

Moreover, the biographical sources indicate that

1. GAL, I, 360.
2. Brockelmann refers to another manuscript in Escorial, Ibid.
3. The editor refers to this aspect in his introduction to 'Ilm al-Qulūb, and also refutes this statement.

al-Makkī has several compilations on tawhīd,¹ and his 'Ilm al-Qulūb deals mainly with tawhīd. In fact 'Ilm al-Qulūb represents a spiritual stage in the life of al-Makkī. It was the stage in which the vigorous ascetic practices of al-Makkī bore its fruits in the form of inner illuminations and spiritual revelations. Al-Yafi'ī states that al-Makkī in the early phase of his life was a man of self mortification and self discipline (ṣāhib ar-riyāda wa-mujāhada), and in later phase of his life was a man of mystical secrets and spiritual contemplations (ṣāhib al-asrār wa-mushāhada).² Thus the compilation of his 'Ilm al-Qulūb appears to belong to the latter phase of his life, in which he rose to be a great mystic of inner spiritual illumination.

The 'Ilm al-Qulūb consists of fifteen sections, hence it is comparatively smaller than Qūt. The chapters deal with the following aspects:-

1. The concept of wisdom (ḥikma) and knowledge ('ilm) and the distinction between both.
2. Exposition of unity of God (tawhīd) and conception of separation or isolation (tafrīd)³
3. Gnosis (ma'rifa)
4. Sincerity (ikhlās)

1. Khaṭīb, III, 89.

2. Yafi'i, II, 430.

3. According to ṣūfi concept tafrīd implies isolation, or separation, as opposed to tawhīd, which implies unification. Thus the first step in unification, says Ḥallāj, is the annihilation of separation, Kaṣhf, 281.

5. Pious intention (niyya)
6. The signs of a believer.

The chapters on intention and sincerity cover almost half of the work.¹

C. Al-Bayān ash-Shāfī

Al-Makkī appears to have compiled a work entitled al-Bayān ash-Shāfī, but it seems to have been lost to us. Ibn 'Abbād ar-Rundī, the mystic writer of 8th/14th century, had written a work explaining the difficult parts of al-Bayān ash-Shāfī.² But apart from this work of ar-Rundī which covers some parts of the Bayān, the original compilation of al-Makkī seems to be lost.

D. Kitāb Manāsik Al-Hajj

Al-Makkī mentions in his Qūt that he had compiled a work giving a detailed exposition of the rituals of Hajj.³ This work also appears to be lost. Neither Hāji Khalīfa nor Brockelmann refers to this work by al-Makkī.

E. Tafsīr of Holy Qur'ān

In an edition of Qūt al-Qulūb printed in Cairo in 1351 A.H. (1932 A.D.), there is a marginal note to say that al-Khaffājī⁴ in his Sharḥ ash-Shifā' states that

1. 'Ilm al-Qulūb, Cairo, 1974.

2. Brockelmann refers to this manuscript in Escorial, GAL, I, 217.

3. QQ, II, 231

4. Shihāb ad-Dīn Khaffājī, the author of "Ḥusn ar-riyāḍ fī sharḥ kitāb ash-shifā'", died in 1059. Sharḥ ash-shifā' was a commentary on the Kitāb ash-shifā' of Qāḍi 'Iyāḍ, and it was printed in Constantinople in 1267 A.H. GALS, II, 396.

al-Makkī had a deep knowledge in tafsīr, and he compiled a voluminous tafsīr (tafsīr kabīr). Neither Hāji Khalīfa nor Brockelmann refer to this commentary of Qur'ān by al-Makkī, and al-Makkī himself makes no reference to this in his Qūt. The copious quotations from Qur'ān in Qūt with more emphasis on its mystical meaning, eloquently speak for al-Makkī's deep knowledge in Qur'ānic exegesis, and one cannot completely rule out the possibility of the compilation of a tafsīr that is attributed to al-Makkī. But if at all al-Makkī had compiled a tafsīr, then one has to assume that it is also lost to us.

F. Nuzūl al-Abrār.

This appears to be a work which is falsely attributed to al-Makkī, probably by some Shī'ite writer. It is said that Mīr 'Alī ibn-Ḥāfiz Muḥammad 'Alī Riḍawī Dihlawī, had made a Persian translation of this work, entitled "Māida-i-pur-thimar-i-nuzūl al Abrār." This work consists of the biographical notes concerning the Prophet and the Shī'ite Imams. It is said to be a translation made in 1251 A.H. (1836 A.D.) of Nuzūl al Abrār of Abū-Tālib al-Makkī.¹ This no doubt is a work which is falsely attributed to al-Makkī.

1. Storey, Persian Literature, I, 1258.

V. The Personality of al-Makkī

Al-Yāfi'ī says that al-Makkī at the initial phase of his life was a man who ceaselessly engaged in self-discipline (riyāḍa) and self-mortification (mujāhada) and during the later phase of his life he was a man of spiritual secrets (asrār).¹

On the basis of the above statement of al-Yāfi'ī, one could assume that al-Makkī had two phases of life. The early phase of his life was characterised by vigorous ascetic practices, with ardent devotion and worship. This is really the period of anxiety in the life of a mystic; the period in which he is fascinated by the life, probing into the mysteries of ultimate reality, and ceaselessly in search of it. This is the period of seeking the truth. The second phase was the period in which al-Makkī really saw the results of his vigorous ascetic practices bearing their fruits in the form of mystical revelations, and thus he became a possessor of spiritual secrets (sāhib al-asrār). The early phase was that of travelling in the path, and the latter was that of attaining the goal.

Though al-Makkī was a ṣūfi who had attained very high spiritual status, he always aligned himself with the orthodox sunnī faith, and practice, and he shows no aloofness to the requirements of religious law, that had characterised the lives of some ṣūfis of the later period.

1. Yāfi'ī, II, 430.



Though none of his biographers relate his school of thought in the matters of Islamic law, in his Qūt there are indications to the fact that he was a Shāfi'ite. The importance he attached to sunna, his strong criticism of independent reasoning,¹ his view that the marriage is not valid without a guardian, even though a woman is separated from her husband² indicates that in the matters of jurisprudence he was more inclined to Shāfi'ī school of thought.

Al-Makkī was completely opposed to scholasticism (kalām), and he was a critic of dialectics,³ and disapproved scholastic arguments. According to him, the knowledge must lead to action ('amal) and godliness (taqwa), and the aim of acquiring knowledge is to achieve godliness, and engage in pious actions, and not to indulge in vain arguments. He quotes Aḥmad ibn-Ḥanbal who declared that the learned men of scholasticism (ahl al-kalām) are zindiqs.⁴

Though al-Makkī was totally opposed to the methodology of logic and argumentative reasoning, he confesses that once upon a time, he himself was an admirer of scholastic reasoning. He says that once he argued about the relationship between man's actions and his ability to

1. Al-Makkī criticises those who uphold independent reasoning as extremists (ghālūn) QQ, II, 271.
2. The ruler or sultan is the guardian for those who have no guardian, QQ, II, 573.
3. Ibid, I, 322.
4. Ibid, 282.

perform the action. Al-Makkī says that he once argued on this subject on the basis of scholastic argument (ahl al-kalām), but never spoke about it after that because the solution to this problem was revealed to him through the knowledge of certainty (yaqīn).¹

Al-Makkī criticises all attempts to examine the names (asmā') and attributes of god through intellectual means, or try to interpret them according to one's own opinion. He says that this will lead one to draw parallels to God (tashbīh) and sometimes this may result in the complete denial and rejection of the attributes of God.² This viewpoint of al-Makkī reveals his anti-mu'tazilite tendencies. He is very critical of the mu'tazilites, and considers them as a group who are outside the pale of ahl as-sunna.³

Al-Makkī was against all forms of innovations (bid'ā') that had crept into Islam in the course of the centuries. According to him all these innovations were completely unknown to the salaf aṣ-ṣāliḥ and were introduced by the later generations.⁴

1. QQ, I, 211

2. Ibid, 302. It is interesting to observe that while the Ḥanbalites accusing Sālimiyya of anthropomorphism (vide, L. Massignon, art. "Tasawwuf" in E.I.¹ IV, 683), and al-Hujwīrī classes them among ḥulūlīs, (vide Kashf, 131) al-Makkī who is stated to have been a Sālīmī completely opposing any form of attempts that may lead one towards tashbīh, or drawing parallel to God.

3. QQ. I, 484.

4. Ibid, II, 331-39.

He was a great upholder of the prophetic sunna.

He says that one must not act according to his nature or customs ('adāt), but must act always on the basis of the sunna.¹ Thus he figures as a critic of bid'a and upholder of sunna.

He was not a ṣūfi who took religious laws lightly. He minutely observed the religious laws because he says that to whatever high mystical station a man may rise, the religious law or sharī'a is always binding upon him, and whatever high mystical revelations he may experience the following of the way of the prophet is always incumbent upon him. One who declares that religious law is not binding upon him, says al-Makkī, has forged a lie against God, his messenger, and against all the men of certainty (mūqinīn), and all lovers of God.²

Al-Makkī was a moderate thinker, who wanted to avoid all forms of extremism. He always wanted to reconcile the conflicts in religious thought and practice. This spirit of moderation and a via media policy figures very prominently in his writings. He quotes 'Alī who states that, "You must follow the middle course to which one who is an extremist may return and one who is far away from it, and had not attained it, may rise."³ Thus he attaches much significance to the way of the salaf; to him the ideal Islam is the Islam as presented by the salaf free from all heresies and innovations. Hence, according to al-Makkī, one of the conditions to be a muslim

1. QQ, II, 336.

2. Ibid, 90.

3. Ibid, 271.

is that he should not be a critic of salaf aṣ-Ṣālih.¹

VI. The Criticisms against al-Makkī

The most common criticism against al-Makkī was that in his Qūt he had narrated traditions which have no authenticity. Ibn al-Jawzī criticizes al-Makkī for narrating weak traditions.² The same criticism is levelled against al-Makkī by Ibn-Taymiyya³ (728/1328). In fact this appears to be a common criticism which is generally levelled against most of the ṣūfi writers. As-Sulamī (d. 1021 A.D.) also has been criticized for fabricating traditions.⁴ Even al-Ghazālī seems to have not escaped from this charge.⁵

A critical study of Qūt reveals that al-Makkī was not altogether free from this charge. But al-Makkī appears to have had his own method of narrating traditions. An understanding of these will enable one to have a fair assessment of al-Makkī in the light of above criticism.

Al-Makkī appears to have adopted the following method of narrating traditions.

1. He gave preference to traditions over analytical reasoning (qiyās).⁶
2. He was more concerned with conveying the meanings of the tradition than the exact words of tradition.

1. QQ, II, 286.

2. Talbīs, 164.

3. Majmū', 306.

4. Khaṭīb, II, 248.

5. Subkī, IV, 148-152.

6. QQ, I, 362.

Al-Makkī argues that many of the companions including Ibn-Abbās^{and} Anas ibn-Mālik had reported traditions in this manner. He quotes Ibn-Sīrīn, who says "I used to hear traditions from ten persons, they convey the same meaning, but the words differ."¹

3. If there is a tradition which was in circulation for more than two or three centuries or even for a century, and the Ulemā' had not rejected it, then it is accepted as a genuine tradition if it is not contrary to Qur'ān and accepted sunna.² He quotes Aḥmad ibn-Ḥanbal who says that if a tradition is not contrary to the Qur'ān and sunna, and if it does not go against the accepted unanimous opinion of the community, it is obligatory to accept it as genuine.³

4. Al-Makkī says that he is quoting the traditions having absolute faith in the pious ancestors, and being conscious of the fact that they were men of piety who would not dare to indulge in fabricating traditions.⁴

An examination of the method of al-Makkī's narration of traditions, reveals that he had not been so critical in accepting the traditions. Mostly he had narrated traditions having good faith in the pious ancestors.

1. Ibid, 359.

2. Ibid, 362.

3. Ibid, 361.

4. Ibid.

There are many traditions in Qūt which one would have to accept with some hesitation if it is subjected to scientific criticism. Hence, he is not altogether free from the charges of Ibn al-Jawzī and Ibn-Taymiyya.

Khaṭīb in his Tārīkh criticizes al-Makkī stating that al-Makkī in his Qūt had mentioned most hateful things about the attributes of God.¹ Ibn 'Abbād ar-Rundī (792/1390) in his Rasā'il as-Sughra defends al-Makkī against the allegations of Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī. Ibn ar-Rundī states that the experience of the mystics cannot be analysed and understood on the basis of pure intellectual reasoning. It is those who adopt this methodology that criticize al-Makkī in relation to his statements on the attributes of God, and accuse him of heresy. But men of spiritual insight know the truth of al-Makkī's statement in relation to God's attributes, as truly stated by him.²

1. Khaṭīb, III, 89
2. Rasā'il, 4.

CHAPTER II

THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

The religious life, which embraces both the dogma and the rituals of religion, is the initial phase of the life of any mystic. Hence, the study of mystical life of any personality primarily involves the study of his viewpoint and attitude to religious life. It has been already stated, that a mystic does not regard the religious laws lightly. He attaches much importance to the ritualistic aspects of religion and feels that the attainment of the highest state of consciousness is dependent upon the fulfillment of the religious laws.

PART II

THE MYSTICAL DOCTRINES OF AL-MAKKĪ

The mystical doctrines of al-Makkī are the subject-matter of this chapter. The history of the relationship between the mystic and the law is a subject which has attracted the attention of many scholars. The question of the relationship between the mystic and the law, was a subject which was discussed by the theologians and the mystics alike. The Murj'ites, and the other sects, were of the opinion that the mystic should not be allowed to neglect the religious laws. They were of the opinion that the mystic should be allowed to neglect the religious laws only if he is a true mystic. The Murj'ites, and the other sects, were of the opinion that the mystic should be allowed to neglect the religious laws only if he is a true mystic. The Murj'ites, and the other sects, were of the opinion that the mystic should be allowed to neglect the religious laws only if he is a true mystic.

1. *Al-Makkī*, *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd*, pp. 1170, 1171.

CHAPTER II

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Al-Makkī, as has been already stated, was not a mystic who took the religious laws lightly. He attaches much significance to ritualistic aspects of religion and feels no mystic will be rendered free from the fulfilment of these obligations even after the attainment of highest possible station in the mystic path.¹

I. A. Faith (īmān) The relationship between īmān and islām.

The question of the relationship between īmān and islām appears at a very early stage in the history of Islamic theology, since the question of the relationship between faith and action ('amal), and the question of increase or decrease of faith, were issues that were intimately connected with the theological speculations of the early Islamic sects like the Murji'ites, and the Khārijites. The main point of discussion revolved round the question whether faith implies internal conviction (i'tiqād or taṣdīq bi'l-qalb) and verbal expression (iqrār bi'l-lisān) or ~~that~~ it also includes the performance of prescribed pious acts of religion ('amal).²

1. QQ, II, 90

2. L. Gardet, art. 'īmān', EI², III, 1170, 1171.

Abū-Ḥanīfā and the Ḥanafites held that īmān was the knowledge of God (ma'rifa) combined with the acknowledgement of him, and the knowledge of the Prophet together with the acceptance of the revelation he brought. The Ḥanafīte documents like al-Fiqh al-Akbar contain statements which imply the Ḥanafīte view-point of īmān which implies that acts are not part of īmān.¹ In contrast to the Ḥanafites, the Mu'tazilites held that īmān consists not only of mere verbal pronouncements, but also of the performance of all religious duties, obligatory and supererogatory.² The Ḥanbalites^{or} also, stated to have held that īmān implies both verbal pronouncement, and action. Ibn-Ḥanbal is reported to have said that faith consists of words, works, and right intention (niyya). Ibn-Baṭṭa (d. 997 A.D.) a Ḥanbalite writer and a contemporary of al-Makkī gives expression to the Ḥanbalite view-point when he says that īmān implies speaking with the tongue (qawl bi-'l-lisān) ^{adhering} ~~to adhere to~~ ~~it~~ with the heart (taṣdīq bi-'l-jinān) ^{fulfilling} ~~to fulfill~~ the pillars of islam ('amal bi-l-arkān).³ Thus al-Ash'arī (d. 935 A.D.) a follower of Ibn-Ḥanbal, in agreement with him, held that īmān is speaking and acting.⁴

1. Formative Period, 131, 132.

2. Ibid, 134, 135.

3. Ibid, 135.

4. Formative Period, 135.

One may assume that these theological issues which agitated the minds of the theologians of almost every sect that appeared during the first three centuries of Islam to be sufficiently crystallised during the fourth century which witnessed the consolidation of the creed of Ahl as-Sunnā wa-l-jamā'at. The discussion of these theological issues appears to have assumed an important position even in the mystical circles, so much so, ^{that} no ṣūfi writers who wish to indicate their orthodox standpoint could afford to neglect it. Thus we find, two of the ṣūfi theorists of the fourth century, al-Kalābādhī and al-Makkī assigning an important place to the question of relationship between faith and action or rather, īmān and islām; and also to the question of increase and decrease of faith;¹ as we shall see, the viewpoints of al-Makkī too are closer to the Ḥanbalite and Ash'arite view.

1. Al-Kalābādhī expresses the general ṣūfi concept of faith by saying, "According to the majority of the ṣūfis, faith consists of speech, act, and intention, and they are also agreed that faith is necessary, as much as outwardly as inwardly, for since the inward portion of faith is the portion of the whole, so the outward portion of faith must be the portion of the whole, that is practising the divine commandments." Ta'arruf, 67, 71.

According to al-Makkī, īmān and islām are inter-related, and in a way inter-dependent, like the two parts of the basic Islamic creed (kalima), the belief in God and the belief in the Prophet, both these aspects are combined in the kalima in such a manner, that one cannot be separated from the other, so is the relationship between īmān and islām.¹ Thus to al-Makkī, one who has his external practices on the basis of Islam, but has no faith in the unseen is a hypocrite (munāfiq) and at the same time one who has faith in the unseen, but does not act on the basis of his belief according to the injunctions of Islam is an unbeliever (kāfir) in whom the belief in the assertion of unity (tawḥīd) has not gained a firm foothold. Hence, one who believes in the unseen, and then acts upon the commandments of God is both a believer (mu'min) and a muslim.² He compares the outward and inward aspects of faith to a seed which has its outer form (ẓāhir) and inner core (bāṭin); ^{in spite} because of the combination of these two different aspects in a seed, says al-Makkī, no one considers it as two seeds; such is the relationship between īmān and islām. Islām is the outward aspect of faith (ẓāhir al-īmān) which corresponds to the external actions or actions of the members of the body (a'māl al-jawāriḥ) and īmān is the inner aspect of Islam (bāṭin al-islām) which corresponds to the actions of the heart (a'māl al-qulūb).³

1. QQ, II, 262.

2. Ibid.

3. QQ, II, 263.

He also compares the relationship of īmān and islām with the relationship between external knowledge ('ilm az-ẓāhir) and inner knowledge ('ilm al-bāṭin). These are interdependent, and correspond to the actions of the body and actions of the heart respectively.¹ In order to elucidate this point further, al-Makkī draws the analogy of the relationship between the human speech (lisān) and the two lips. When the two lips are joined together, the letters are combined and thereby the tongue gives expression to the speech, and the speech attains perfection; if either of the lips do not cooperate then the speech will become imperfect. In the same manner when practice is absent the faith vanishes.²

Al-Makkī's analytical mind carries his arguments further by comparing the relationship between īmān and islām to that of a tent, which has a number of ropes outside it, and a pillar in the middle. Islām, says al-Makkī, could be compared to the tent, and the obligatory duties enjoined by islām with the ropes that hold the corners of the tent. The main pillar which is hidden inside the tent, and on which the entire tent rests, is like the faith, and no tent could stand without the support of this main axis. As the tent is in need of the ropes and the central pillar for its existence so does islām which cannot exist without faith, and the fulfilment of duties imposed by it.³ Moreover, almighty God

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

3. QQ, II, 264.

has stated that unbelief is an antithesis of both īmān and islām, implying thereby the identical nature of both. The faith will not attain its inner reality except by the manifestation of islām, and thus God has imposed the pious actions (a'māl aṣ-ṣāliḥa) as a condition or manifestation of faith, but at the same time, says al-Makkī, even if one engages in all the pious acts, it will not benefit him without faith.¹

Thus, according to al-Makkī neither ^{are} īmān ^{and} ~~nor~~ islām are identical, nor do they exist apart from each other, but both are interdependent and inter-related in such a manner that one cannot exist apart from the other. Thus, according to al-Makkī the view of those who held the opinion that īmān and islām are identical is closer to the viewpoint of the murji'a, and the view of those who state that islām is something which exists apart from īmān is very near to the doctrine of Ibādiyya.²

Al-Makkī discusses the statements of some tradition-ists, which outwardly ^yimplies that both faith and islām are two different entities. He quotes aḏ-Zuhrī who said, "Islām is speech and īmān is action", and he also quotes another statement by Hammād ibn-Ziyād who is reported to have said that islām is general ('āmm) and īmān is exclusive (khāṣṣ).³ But according to al-Makkī, these

1. Ibid, 265.

2. QQ, II, 262.

3. Ibid, cf. Ta'arruf, 70, 71.

statements do not indicate any sharp distinction between īmān and islām, as something which is mutually opposed to each other, because none of these traditionists had said that one is valid without the other, which is the viewpoint of the murji'a, but they only differentiated between them on the basis of exclusiveness (khāss), implying thereby that faith is more exclusive and is on a higher plane, because faith has its own proportions of increase and decrease and its virtues and stations.¹

1. QQ. II, 270. The question of increasing and decreasing of faith is also an aspect which had engaged the attention of almost all the theological sects in Islam. Abū-Ḥanīfa (d. 767 A.D.) is stated to have held that īmān does not increase or decrease, cf. Formative Period, 134, a standpoint which was contradicted by the Ḥanbalites who held that faith increases by good acts and decreases by sin. The Ḥanbalite writer Ibn-Baṭṭa (d. 997) a contemporary of al-Makkī is reported to have vindicated this Ḥanbalite viewpoint. In agreement with the Ḥanbalite, al-Ash'arī (d. 935 A.D.) and his followers who held that īmān implies both faith and action and also it increases and decreases, Ibid, 134 ff. Al-Makkī's viewpoint on this subject is closer to the viewpoint of the Ḥanbalites and Ash'arites. It is also in agreement with the general ṣūfi viewpoint as it appears that majority of the ṣūfis seem to have held the view that faith increases and decreases.
cf. Ta'arruf, 67. Iḥyā', I, 106, 107.

Hence, it has to be treated in an exclusive manner. This is clearly illustrated in a tradition which states that the Prophet was asked what is faith? He said islām, and when he was asked which islām is better, he said īmān. Thus in this tradition the Prophet spoke about faith in an exclusive manner without distinguishing it from islām.¹

According to al-Makkī the views of the salaf were completely in agreement with the above mentioned tradition, and with the viewpoint he had expounded, and are completely opposed to the views of the Murjīa, Karrāmiyya, and Ibādiyya, because the views of the salaf refute their claim that faith is merely pronouncement by the tongue (qawl), knowledge (ma'rifa),^{in al} belief ('uqd), without action ('amal). The concept of the salaf also contradicts the mu'tazilite standpoint of intermediary position (manzila bayn al-manzilatayn) and their claim that one who commits a major sin is a fāsiq. It also refutes the claim of Ḥarūriyya, and other sects of Khawārij, who hold that one who has committed a major sin has lost his faith and is a unbeliever, and it is lawful to kill him.²

1. QQ, II, 270.

2. QQ, II, 270

According to al-Makkī, one who commits a major sin is a believer, but he cannot be categorised under true and sincere believers who are called shuhadā', and siddīqīn. Those who commit the major sin says al-Makkī, deserve the punishment of God, but almighty God out of his mercy may forgive them. Ibid.

Al-Makkī claims that his view, that īmān and islām are interdependent, is the view of the leading figures among the pious ancestors (a'immaṭ as-salaf) and the jurists among the traditionists (fuqahā' aṣḥāb al-hadīth) except for the fact that he had stated it in a clearer and more systematic manner.¹

B. Faith and its stations

Faith or īmān has its own stations and the believers have their ranks and stations status (darajāt) in relation to their faith. When Qur'ān declares, "Those are they who are in truth believers" (mu'minūna ḥaqqan),² it implies that there are those among the believers some who believe but not on the basis of firm truth and conviction (ghyr al-ḥaqq). God describes in the Holy Qur'ān twenty-two different qualities, and characters of believers, and the term īmān embraces all these, except that according to the stations of faith, some are raised above the others. As God had declared, "Allah will exhalt those who believe among you, and those who have knowledge, to a high rank."³ Thus faith or īmān has a superior station over islām. Even though the believers are equal in relation to their physical performance of the obligatory duties of islām, some of them are above

1. QQ, II, 270.

2. Qur'ān, 8 : 4

3. Ibid, 58 : 11, cf. QQ, II, 274.

the others in relation to their faith, because faith has no limitations even though it attains its validity through islām.¹ Islām encompasses īmān, but īmān has different ranks and status, and hence the believers are the exclusive group of Muslims, and among them are men of different spiritual status such as muqarrabūn, siddīqūn, and shuhadā'. Islām is the general term by which the general body of the common believers are known, including those who commit the major sins²

Moreover, faith attains beauty and perfection due to the possession of certain qualities, and al-Makkī quotes the tradition which says, "The faith is naked, its clothing is piety (taqwa) its ornament is abstinence (wara') and its fruit is knowledge ('ilm)." According to al-Makkī, this indicates that one who has

1. QQ, II, 297.

2. Ibid. It looks as if al-Makkī is using the term knowledge in the sense of certainty. Al-Makkī in his 'Ilm al-Qulūb, elucidates this point further. He says, "The heart of a believer is better than the hearts of thousands of Muslims, and the heart of one who has attained certainty is better than the hearts of thousands of believers," 'Ilm, 34.

Al-Ghazali (d. 1111) too in agreement with al-Makkī, holds that īmān has several gradations. īmān based on certainty (yaqīn) which is attained through kashf, is superior to the īmān based on taqlid and īmān based on reason. cf. Iḥyā, I, 107, 108.

no piety has no clothing for his faith, one who has no abstinence is devoid of the ornaments of faith, and one who lacks knowledge is deprived of the fruits of faith. Thus piety covers the nakedness of faith, abstinence adds beauty, and knowledge helps to reap the fruit of it.¹

C. Aspects of faith (arkān)

According to al-Makkī, the aspects of faith (arkān al īmān) consist of the following:

1. Faith in the names of God (asmā' allāh) and his attributes (ṣifāt)
2. Belief in the revealed books (kutub allah) of God and the prophets.
3. Belief in the angels (malā'ika) and the devils (shayāṭīn)
4. Belief in heaven and hell, and also belief that they were created before the creation of Adam.
5. Belief in the resurrection after death.
6. Belief in the decrees of God (aqdār allāh), which implies that good (khayr) and evil (sharr) proceed from God, spring from his will and wisdom, and that it is based on divine justice.²

According to al-Makkī, īmān or faith implies the acceptance of all the above principles and then to obey the commandments of God and his prophet because God

1. QQ, II, 275.

2. QQ, II, 261.

had made obedience to the prophet a condition of faith, when he says in the Qur'ān, "Obey Allah and his messenger"¹ Thus if one is a true believer he should believe in the highest station of the Prophet and obey his commandments because obedience to the prophet, in fact, is obedience to God. As the Qur'ān stated, "Those who swear allegiance unto thee (Muhammad) swear allegiance unto Allah."²

D. Faith and intellect

Al-Makkī discusses the relationship between faith and intellect ('aql). According to him, the intellect is the mirror of the world, and what is in it is seen by the light of it, and faith is the mirror of the hereafter, and it is in the light of it, the hereafter and what is pertaining to the hereafter should be observed and seen.³ Faith is a blessing and grace from God which is conferred upon one due to his conviction (taṣdīq), certainty (yaqīn), and due to one's knowledge of transmitted things (naql). This blessing of God cannot be acquired through blind imitation (taqlīd), right thought (ḥusn az-ẓann) or intellect, it can only be acquired through certainty, because almighty God looks with the light of certainty (nūr al-yaqīn), and it is in this light,^{that} his attributes are observed, and observing his attributes in the light of certainty is the reality of faith.⁴

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1. Qur'ān, 4 : 58, QQ, II, 262.
 2. Qur'ān, 48 : 10, QQ, II, 262.
 3. QQ, II, 262.
 4. Ibid.

Al-Makkī discusses this problem of the relationship between faith and intellect in his 'Ilm al-Qulūb too. He quotes a saying of Dhūn-nūn in regard to it. Once Dhūn-nūn was questioned about the intellect, and he replied, "Intellect by its own nature is weak and it will indicate only that which is also weak because it is an instrument which has been given for the upholding of servanthip ('ubūdiyya) and not to indicate (rubūbiyya).¹ Al-Makkī also quotes a saying of Abū-Bakr who had said, "Praise be to God, who has not vouchsafed to his creatures any means of attaining unto knowledge of him except through impotence to attain unto knowledge of him."² Thus according to al-Makkī man's intellect will not enable him to attain the knowledge of God; God himself is the way to his knowledge.³

1. 'Ilm, 105.

2. Al-Hujwīrī also quotes the above saying of Abū-Bakr, and makes some interesting and important observations. According to al-Hujwīrī, many have mistaken the meaning of these words of Abū-Bakr and suppose that impotence to attain to gnosis is the same thing as agnosticism. This is absurd, says Hujwīrī, because impotence refers only to an existing state, not to a state that is non-existent. Therefore, a gnostic is not incapable of gnosis so long as gnosis is existent, for in that case his gnosis resembles intuition. Hence, according to Abū-Bakr, unification is the act of God in the heart of his creature. Kashf, 284.

3. QQ, II, 174. This aspect will be studied in detail in the following chapter in the section dealing with al-Makkī's theory of knowledge, and his concept of gnosis.

II Pillars of Islam (mabānī al-islām)

It is proposed to deal with al-Makkī's approach to the five pillars of Islam, with the emphasis he lay on the mystical aspects of each of these pillars, before we proceed to analyse his mystical doctrines properly, because to al-Makkī, the entire mystical experience of a ṣūfi branches out from the basis or the root of sharī'a or religious law.

Al-Makkī deals with the five pillars upon which the superstructure of Islam is raised, namely the kalima or the declaration that there is none worthy of worship except God, and Muhammad is his servant and messenger, the prayer, zakat, fasting and pilgrimage (ḥajj). While emphasising the importance of the performance of these acts imposed by the sharī'a, al-Makkī gives a mystical touch to each of these pillars of Islam by delving deeply into the spiritual philosophy that underlies in the performance of these acts.

A. Assertion of unity (tawhīd)

In analysing the pillars of Islam, al-Makkī deals at length with the concept of assertion of unity which is the cardinal doctrine of the creed of Islam.

Almighty God is one (wāḥid) he is the primary being (awwāl), and there is none who is second (thānī) to him. He is omnipresent, and he knows everything, never ignorant of anything. He lives eternally (ḥayyun) and death never overtakes him. He is self-existing (qayyūm), he hears (samī') and sees (baṣīr). He is forbearing (ḥalīm), and

he never forgets anything. He is a king whose kingdom never ceases. He is from eternity without any relation to time (ghayr al-waqt). He is the last without any limit to it. He exists from the very beginning without any interruption, and this quality of existence is an attribute that will never cease. He is eternal for ever and ever, and there is no end to his eternity. Eternity is an attribute which he did not create for himself, even in being eternal, there is no beginning to his existence nor ultimate goal for his eternity. He is the last in relation to his first, and he is the first in relation to his last. His names, attributes, and his lights (anwār) cannot be separated from him. ¹

He is in front of everything, behind everything, above everything, with everything. He is near to everything, yet he is not a component of anything, nor anything is a form that contains him. He is on his throne and he is, according to his own will, without any modality (takyīf) or likeness (tashbīh).²

1. QQ, II, 64.

2. Qūt, II, 164. In his 'Ilm -al-Qulūb, he quotes a saying of Dhun nūn to this effect. According to Dhun nūn, one who thinks of how God ascended the throne, and descended, will end up as a zindīq, and also he may be led to the denial of it, because nothing is like the likeness of him. 'Ilm, 79.

He is unique in relation to his essence (dhāt), and there is none except him in relation to his essence. He has names (asmā'), attributes (ṣifāt), power (qudra), grandeur (aẓma), speech (kalām) and will (māshia'). His divine lights are uncreated, and exist from eternity with all his names, and attributes, with his speech and will. He is a ruler with majesty and power, and with authority and his kingdom. The creations (khalq) and the power of commandments (amr), the authority (sulṭan) and power (qahr) belong only to him. He rules over his creatures by his own commandments, and according to his own will. His creatures have no will of their own, except the will of God. What he wills comes to be, and nothing happens without his will. The servants have no power to disobey him, nor power to obey him, except through his love and mercy.¹

He is not bounded by the laws to which human beings are subjected. He is wise (ḥakīm) and just ('ādil). But they cannot be compared to the wisdom and justice of his creatures. It is beyond any analogy.² He is above all intellectual reasoning and understanding. He is what he himself describes about him, and he is beyond the description of his creatures. Nothing is like the likeness of him. He exists unceasingly with all his attributes

1. Qūt, II, 165.

2. QQ, II, 165.

and will continue to exist in that manner, without any shape or form or without any similitude. He is unique in relation to it.¹

God had the knowledge of the being of things (kawn) before he brought forth them into existence. There is no veil between him and his knowledge. The knowledge, power, and will, had preceded the creation, and the past, present, and future are in his knowledge.²

God created the non-existence ('adam) as he had created the existence (wujūd). Hence non-existence had no eternity with his eternity, in a manner, it became a secondary being with him, nor the creation was in existence with his being, in a manner, that it also became the first with his anteriority (awwaliyya). God is the first and primary being without the limitation of time, or any goal. He exists in his attributes, and his attributes exist in him.³

B. Attributes of God and the Mu'tazilites

Al-Makkī criticizes the Mu'tazilites and the Jahmiyya in relation to their views on the attributes of God. Al-Makkī says that the Mu'tazilites held the view that God did not see anything till it was created, and Jahmiyya hold the view that God did not speak till he existed, and thereafter he created speech. This makes

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid, 175

3. Ibid, 175, 176.

the existence of God to precede the speech. According to al-Makkī, the Mu'tazilites and Jahmiyya are outside the pale of tawhīd due to their erroneous views on the attributes of God.¹ According to al-Makkī, God existed having his knowledge as an attribute, because it is not proper for him to create something which was not in his knowledge.²

Al-Makkī states that Mu'tazilites deny the attributes of knowledge, power and will to God. They also hold the view that God knows everything, but his knowledge of a thing will not compel him to perform an action. According to al-Makkī, by holding this view, the Mu'tazilites have equated the knowledge of God with the vain conjectures (ẓann) of the creatures. Thus the Mu'tazilites argue that God knows everything, but without knowledge; he is powerful, but without power; he wills, but without having any prior will. Al-Makkī says that according to Ahl-as-Sunna wa'l Jamā'a, this view of denying the pre-existence of the attributes of God, the speech of God and also the attempt to separate the qualities of God from his essence is considered to be heresy (ilhād).³

1. QQ, II, 176.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid, 176, 177. Al-Makkī explains this point more deeply in his 'Ilm al-Qulūb. He says, "The knowledge of the attributes of God is completely different from other types of knowledge, because difference of opinion in relation to formal knowledge ('ilm aẓ-ẓāhir) is a blessing, but in relation to ilm at-tawhīd it is misguidance (ẓalāl) and innovation (bid'a)."
'Ilm, 118.

While refuting the doctrines of Mu'tazilites and Jahmiyya, al-Makkī states that the exposition given by him about the attributes of God are completely in agreement with the views of the men of certainty (ahl-al-yaqīn). Al-Makkī says:-

"This is the contemplation of men of certainty, and the faith of those who had attained nearness to God."

He warns the reader not to make an attempt to understand his views on this subject, in the light of intellectual reasoning (nūr-al-'aql) because it could only be understood by the help of the light of certainty (nūr-al-yaqīn). Almighty God is the creator who has no similitude, and therefore he cannot be comprehended, except by a thing which is also beyond any comparison. The light of certainty is from the light of all powerful God, as he himself declares in the Holy Qur'ān "and for whom Allah hath not appointed a light, for him there is no light."¹

C. Tawḥīd of men of certainty

Junayd al-Baghdādī (d. 910 A.D.) says:-

"Tawḥīd is found in four stages of people. The first is the tawḥīd of ordinary men, next comes the tawḥīd of those who are well versed in formal knowledge. The other two stages are experienced by the elect who has esoteric knowledge."²

1. Qur'ān, 24 : 30. QQ, II, 177.

2. 'Abd al Qādir, art. "Rasā'il Junaid", IQ, vol. 4-5, 96.

Al-Makkī deals with both aspects of tawḥīd which has been mentioned by al-Junayd. But he is more concerned with the exposition of tawḥīd, which is aimed mainly at the elevation and illumination of the heart. He says that his exposition of tawḥīd is intended to increase ones faith, and also it is a food for the heart (qūt-al-qulūb).¹ Hence we find al-Makkī dealing at length about the tawḥīd of men of certainty, which according to al-Junayd, is the experience of the elect.

One who has certainty bears witness on the basis of his certainty, that almighty Allah is the primary being (awwal) in relation to everything, and he is near to every being. It is he who bestows and withholds things, who guides, and makes one go astray; none possess these qualities except him.²

One who has certainty remembers God in relation to everything, he empties his mind of everything, and returns to God almighty in relation to every matter. He adores him with the deep consciousness that almighty Allah is closer to him, and to his heart, than his jugular vein. He worships him with the deep realization that almighty Allah is closer to his sight (baṣar) than seeing (naẓr), more closer to his tongue than the saliva, and that he is near to him by virtue of his attribute of nearness, and not being brought forth near to him (by any other

1. QQ, II, 179

2. Ibid, 169

agency)¹.

He is on his throne by his will. The throne has a limit (hadd) but, he is not subject to any limitation by his throne. The throne is in need of a place, but God has no need for it, and the throne is his creation.

"He is the beneficent one who is established in his throne."² Thus beneficent (rahmān) is his name, establishment (istiwā') is his quality (na't) which is attached to his essence (dhāt). The throne ('arsh) is his creation, but separated from his attributes (ṣifāt).³

"Almighty God is the exalter of ranks, and the lord of the throne."⁴ His closeness to the earth is like his closeness to the throne. His throne is a place which cannot be felt or sensed. There is none who could glance upon it, nor any thinker could conceive any aspect of its nature, because almighty God by virtue of his power (qudra) is veiled from his creations. The throne of God exists in the state of being satisfied with him, and almighty God is surrounded by his throne. He encompasses the throne above everything, and above the underneath of everything (fawqa taḥta kulla shay'in). Thus he is above the above, and above the underneath. The discription that he is underneath (taḥta) does not imply in any way

1. Ibid.

2. Qur'ān, 40 : 15

3. QQ, II, 170.

4. Qur'ān, 40 : 15.

that there is something above him, because he is the highest of the highest ('aliyy al-a'la) wherever he is. He is not bounded by space (makān), and at the same time no space exists independent of his knowledge ('ilm) and power (qudra). His place (makān) is his will (māshi'a), and his existence (wujūd) is his power. The throne, the earth, and what is in between which belongs to the lower creations is like a mustard seed in his hand. He is higher than what encompasses all these beings. His greatness cannot be comprehended by means of the intellect and it is beyond all the presumptions and imaginations (wahm). There is no end to his greatness and there is nothing beyond his greatness.¹

Almighty God by virtue of his attributes of power and closeness is near to everything, and the things are far from him by their attributes of distance (bu'd) and veil (ḥujb). Distance and remoteness are the wisdom of his will, and the limitations (ḥudūd) are the veils of his creations. The distance, and opposite nature (tilqā') are places for beings other than him. The directions, and sides are also for created beings. The night and the days, the distance of space, and air (hawā) are for his creations. The laws (aḥkām) and decrees (aqdār) bind his creatures,² but he is the almighty beyond all decrees (miqdār) and laws, beyond

1. QQ, II, 169

2. Ibid.

the intellect and presumptions (awhām). He is veiled by his majesty from all thoughts (afkār). Hence, the thought and imagination (awhām) cannot conceive him. His essence is veiled from the intellect, nor can it grasp his attributes. Nothing is like the likeness of him. He is alone in relation to his attributes, and he is self-existing.¹

He is not bound by a place which contains him, nor by somethings which consist him, nor by any other creations which make his existence possible in it.² His attributes are beyond any limitation, and cannot be enumerated. He is neither limited by a form nor bound by an attribute (ṣifat). He never manifests himself with two attributes or qualities; every manifestation (tajallī) from him has its own form, since to every servant at one time of his manifestation, has an attribute, and in every glance of him there is speech (kalām) and in every speech there is understanding (fahm). There is no end to his manifestations (tajalliyāt), nor ultimate goal for his descriptions (awṣāf). There is no end to his speech and its understanding, and there is no shape or form for these qualities. The assertion of unity is beyond the scope of any formulation and description, and his power is beyond any explanation. The attributes of God cannot be applied to any of his creatures since he has no equals

1. Ibid, 170

2. QQ, II, 170

in relation to his essence.¹

When almighty God is veiled from the eyes and its sights ('iyān wa-'l abṣār) his essence is withheld from the hearts (qulūb) and thoughts (afkār). Thus neither the intellect, nor the thought comprehends him, in a manner, to be able to form a concept or form. Moreover, he cannot be comprehended by the intellect because he is the most intelligent being ('aqīl-al-'aql) nor could he be comprehended by encompassing him, because he encompasses everything, till he reveals his glory at the end, in the manner, he revealed his glory at the inception, out of desire and longing.²

The friends of God receive this revelation, in this world through the light of certainty (nūr al yaqīn) in their hearts. In the here-after, they shall see the revelation of his glory in the abode of the beloved itself, with their own eyes, when in the paradise he reveals his glory to them with the greatest longing and majesty, and speaks to them in such a sweet manner which is beyond every comparison. Thus in the here-after, he will reveal himself (tajallā) with his glorious attributes, manifesting the qualities of beauty (ḥuṣn) and grace (jamāl), appearing in the garment of grandeur (bahā') and perfection (kamāl).³

All that is existence and non-existence is within

1. Ibid II, 172.

2. Ibid 173.

3. Ibid, 171

his perception. He sees everything from the minute atom that encompasses the heavens and the earth. His strength (quwwa) is the entity of his power (qudra), and his power is the everlasting nature of his eternity. His vision is the vastness of his knowledge, and his knowledge is the extension of his perception. He knows with his vision, and he sees with his knowledge. His attributes are as ancient as he. They are perfect and complete and not subjected to any logical order or time. They exist with his existence.¹ His attributes are not limited by any directions, nor his essence is confined to one place. He never plans with any pre-thought, and faults or impediments never make him to alter the nature of things. He creates with his hand, or speech or will, as he desires. But the creation of a thing will not compel him to speak. He speaks when he wills. His treasures are in his speech, and his power is in his will. When he speaks, he manifests, if he wills he decrees, and when he loves it appears.²

He is powerful in relation to his nearness, he is near in relation to his greatness. His essence is veiled by his attributes, and his attributes are veiled by his actions. He unveils his knowledge by his will (irāda) and he causes his will to manifest by his movements or actions (harakāt). He causes his work to be

1. QQ, II, 172.

2. Ibid. 173.

hidden in his work and makes the work manifest in the instruments (adawāʾ) that are involved in its process. He is hidden in his nature of being unseen (ghayb) and he is manifest through his law (ḥukm) and power, and hidden in his wisdom. His work is a secret in his work, and it is also the manifestation of his will, nothing is like the likeness of him.¹

Though al-Makkī had made an attempt to convey the deep mystical truths of 'ilm-at-tawḥīd, he feels that this knowledge could only be gained with the help of gnosis (ma'rifa) because the reality of 'ilm at-tawḥīd (ḥaqīqa 'ilm-at-tawḥīd) is the inner aspect of gnosis (bātin al-ma'rifa).² He quotes an anonymous gnostic who had declared that, "If one has clear manifest knowledge of tawḥīd and reveals it, then to kill him is the most virtuous act."³ He quotes another anonymous statement which says, "The lordship (rubūbiyya) has its secrets, and if it is revealed the prophethood would be rendered worthless. The prophethood had its secrets and if it is revealed the knowledge would be rendered worthless. The men who have knowledge of God, and if it is revealed the wisdom would become invalid.

According to Sahl, "The learned have three types of

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid. 179

3. Ibid.

knowledge, the outer knowledge which he would transmit to men of formal knowledge (ahl az-zāhir), the hidden knowledge which cannot be revealed except to those who are capable of receiving it. There is another type of knowledge which is a secret between God and the one who possesses it, it is the reality of the faith, and he will not reveal it either to the men of formal knowledge or hidden knowledge."¹

After quoting the above sayings al-Makkī says the sustenance of the faith and the steadfastness of the religious law is attained only by concealing the secrets of lordship and on it is based the commandments and prohibitions.

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1. Al-Jīlānī, in his Ghunya quotes the above statement when he classifies the doctrines of Sālimiyya, and condemns it as heretical which falsifies the wisdom of God and hence as unbelief. Ghunya, I, 106. It is interesting to observe too, al-Ghazālī who really bridged the gulf between orthodox theology and ṣūfism, quoting the above statement in support of the fact that there are certain types of knowledge which are revealed to the elect through kashf, which they are not permitted to divulge. Thus it appears, that this statement, though it was condemned as heretical by al-Jīlānī, has been accommodated within the framework of orthodox mystical theology of al-Ghazālī, and thus gains the general approval of the 'ulamā', cf. Iḥyā', I, 88, 89.

Al-Makkī was very conscious of all these implications when he wrote about tawḥīd. He feared that by giving an exposition of some deeper aspects, some may go astray. Hence, he is satisfied only by giving an exposition of tawḥīd which would increase ones faith.¹

The exposition of al-Makkī on tawḥīd embraces all the aspects of tawḥīd which his contemporary al-Kalābādhī, had mentioned in his Kitāb at-ta'arruf. According to al-Kalābādhī assertion of unity has seven elements.

1. The isolation of the eternal from the temporal.
2. The exalting of the eternal above the perception of the created.
3. Giving up equating the attributes.
4. Abolishing the principle of causation from the attributes of lordship.
5. Raising God above the power of the temporal to affect or change him.
6. Exalting him above all mental discontinuation and consideration.
7. Declaring him to be free from the principle of analogy.²

Al-Makkī's exposition on tawḥīd, in a sense, is an elaboration of the following exposition of his spiritual

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1. QQ, II, 179. As-Sarrāj in his Luma' expresses the same view, cf. Luma', 31.
 2. Ta'arruf, 135.

master Sahl at-Tustarī. He says, "Unification is this, that you should recognize the essence of God is endowed with knowledge, that it is not comprehensible, nor visible to the eye in this world, but that it exists in the reality of faith, infinite, incomprehensible, non-incarnate, that he will be seen in the next world outwardly and inwardly in his kingdom and in his power; that mankind are veiled from the knowledge of the ultimate nature of his essence, that their hearts know him but their intellect cannot reach unto him, that believers will behold him with their (spiritual) eyes without comprehending his infinity."¹

D. Belief in Prophethood

After giving an exposition of the first aspect of Islamic creed, namely assertion of unity, al-Makkī deals with the second aspect, which is the belief in prophethood of Muhammad.

He was the last of all the prophets, as foretold by all the previous prophets, and he brought the last revelation which testified the previous revelations, while abrogating all the laws of the previous revelations.²

To obey him, and to love him is compulsory like the obedience to God and the following of his commandments. To keep away from all that he forbids is also compulsory duty imposed upon the community by God.³

1. Kashf, 283, 84. According to al-Hujwīrī the above saying of Sahl includes the principles of unification.

2. QQ, II, 166.

3. Ibid.

Al-Makkī says the love of the Prophet implies giving preference to his sunna, over one's personal opinion, and one's intellectual reasoning. It also implies the readiness to help the cause of the Prophet by the means of wealth, self and other means. It is obligatory to follow him outwardly and inwardly. To follow him outwardly is to fulfil all the obligatory duties and to keep away from the forbidden things, to cultivate in one's self his noble qualities, to follow his footsteps, to keep away from men of heedlessness, and from those who are the slaves of their sensual desires, to keep away from mutual rivalry in the multiplication of wealth, and from mutual pride.

Positively, the laws of the Prophet involve the performance of the pious duties, and to be closer to those who are engaged in it, to love the poor and give preference to them over the men of this world.

The following of the Prophet inwardly is the station of certainty and contemplation of the knowledge of the faith, like the fear, satisfaction, gratitude, modesty, submission, trust in God, yearning for God, and love. It also means to empty oneself from everything except God, and to find peace in the remembrance of God.¹

1. QQ, II, 166 - 168.

III Prayer

A. Its significance

As it has been already observed, al-Makkī was not a mystic who took religious laws in light vein. According to him, it is futile to engage in virtuous acts (faḍā'il) neglecting the compulsory duties (farā'id). The preparations for one's spiritual journey commences with the realization of one's state, and self, and in this initial phase he must begin with what is obligatory, after abstaining from what is forbidden.¹

Thus, in accordance with his concept of religious life, al-Makkī deals with all the fundamental religious duties, beginning with prayer. He quotes the Qur'anic verse in which God has praised those who perform their prayers with true fear of God, in a steadfast manner. "Successful indeed are the believers who are humble in their prayers."² According to al-Makkī 'humbleness' implies that one should feel at the time of prayer, a state of broken heartedness, be meek and submissive, must withhold the members of the body from sinful actions, must engage in prayer while both his body and heart experience quiescence (sukūn) in it. For those who perform their prayers in this spirit God rewards them with victory and paradise.³ Al-Makkī quotes

1. QQ, II, 237

2. Qur'ān, 23 : 19

3. QQ, II, 201

several traditions of the prophets and also the sayings of ṣūfis like Mālik ibn-Dīnar, and Ibrāhīm ibn-Adham on the virtues of prayer.¹

According to al-Makkī, prayer is named as ṣalāt, as it establishes a relationship and contact (ṣila) between God and his slave.² If there is anything more pleasing to God than prayer, the angels would have definitely engaged in it. But the angels are always engaged in different postures of prayer and glorify God. Some are engaged in the standing posture, while some are in the bending posture, and some others are in the state of prostration. Thus the pious acts of adoration of God which are combined in one rak'a of prayer, are being divided among thousands of angels. The angels are astonished that the postures that are being performed by them individually are combined in one single posture of the prayers of the human being. Thus it is through prayer, the believers achieve their superiority over the angels.³

Thus the companions of the Prophet were very much conscious about the virtues of prayer, and they were very eager to perform it at the prescribed time, without any delay. Sa'īd ibn-Musayb never missed the first rak'a of the congregational prayer for forty years, so much so, he was nicknamed as the pigeon of the mosque.⁴

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1. QQ, II, 202.
 2. Ibid, 204.
 3. Ibid, 200.
 4. Ibid, 203.

B. Prayer and the presence of the heart

Prayer must be performed in a state of the presence of the heart, with fullest concentration and attention. According to al-Makkī, it is not proper for any one to enter upon prayer, till he completely satisfied his needs, and desires, so that none of this may remain in his heart and be a hindrance to his concentration.¹ But the devil always causes sinful thoughts in the minds of those who are engaged in pious acts, and when one feels this danger he should struggle against it, and try his utmost, to maintain his concentration. If he does so, he will be rewarded double-fold, for his prayer, and for the struggle he waged against the devil.² The unmindfulness (sahw) is a great source of danger to concentration in prayer. If one prays behind an imam, and if he is not being conscious of what is being recited by the imām, then he has reached the extreme end of unmindfulness.³

It is said that the Prophet once looked at the new straps of his sandals, while at prayer, and he immediately ordered to remove them, and replace them with the old ones. This was the path that was followed by all men of godliness (tagwa), when the thought of any object disturbed their concentration in prayer they immediately severed their attachment with that object which had intervened between them and their lord.⁴

1. QQ, II, 212

2. Ibid, II, 209

3. Ibid, 206

4. Ibid, 210

Some of those pious men completely renounced the world and took up asceticism, so that their actions may be completely free from diabolic suggestions (waswās).¹ Some of them were so much engrossed in their prayers that they were completely blind to what was happening around them. It is said that Muslim ibn-Yasār, who was one of the pious ascetics, was praying in the mosque of Baṣra, when a big pillar on which the building rested collapsed. The entire crowd in the street gathered, while Muslim was completely dead to what was happening around him, being engrossed in his prayer.²

Sa'īd ibn-Jubayr states, "I have not known for forty years what is on my right, and what is on my left, while in the state of prayer."³

While stressing the importance of concentration, and presence of heart in prayer, al-Makkī explains the ways and means by which one could attain this state of mind in prayer. According to al-Makkī, one's heart must be completely engrossed in the various postures of the prayer (arkān) and his attention or concentration (himma) must completely encompass the meanings of every word he utters in his intimate converse (munājāt) with his lord; When he pronounces the takbīr and declares, "God is great", the majesty and grandeur of the divine being should fill his heart. His tongue which pronounces the takbīr, must act in agreement with his heart, in contemplating upon

1. QQ, II, 210.

2. Ibid, 205.

3. Ibid, 195.

the greatness of God. Thus he will be in a state of both reciting and seeing.¹

He must keep his heart free from the concerns of this world. If the impermanent minor kingdom of this world sounds bigger in ones heart, than the eternal supreme kingdom of the divine being, then he had not faithfully acted upon the pronouncement of takbīr.²

One must remember God in his prayers because what is intended by prayer is the remembrance of God. As it has been stated in the Holy Qur'ān, "Establish worship for my remembrance."³ Therefore, if the remembrance of the divine being is not present in ones heart, the prayer loses its significance.⁴ Ones heart must be completely submerged in his intention and concern, and his intention and concern must be only about God. He must remember the divine being in his heart, must glance at him through his speech, must converse with him through the medium of Gods speech, blandish him by his intimate converse (munājāt) and know him by his attributes.⁵

The ablution which is intended to be the preparation for the prayer helps to attain concentration in prayer if it is performed in the true spirit. The condition that one must purify himself before prayer, implies that his mind must not be pre-occupied with things other than

1. QQ, II, 196

2. Ibid

3. Qur'ān, 20 : 14

4. QQ, II, 196

5. Ibid, 197

God, at the time of the commencement of the prayer.¹

According to al-Makkī, the ideal prayer is that which is neither too short, nor too long, because he says that a prayer of longer duration causes heedlessness (ghafila) and shortening it results in unmindfulness (sahw), while a prayer of longer duration reduces its sweetness and becomes a burden on the members of the body and if it is shortened it lacks fulfilment. Thus, a moderate course is not to prolong it so that one may enjoy the taste and sweetness of prayer, and the pleasure of the communion with God by true concentration and attention. He must not shorten it so that he may be able to safeguard its limitations (ḥudūd) and he may fulfil the postures in it in a beautiful manner. This is the watchfulness (murāqaba) of those who pray, and the contemplation (mushāhada) of men of fear.²

The prayer, while one is in the state of anger, or while one is seriously involved in an important affair is a disapproved (makrūh) act. Therefore, he should make his heart completely free from these anxieties and then pray so that he may attain presence of heart in prayer.³

Al-Makkī quotes the Qur'ānic verse "O ye who believe! Draw not near to prayer when you are drunken,"⁴

1. QQ, II, 197

2. Ibid, 208

3. QQ, II, 194

4. Qur'ān, 4 : 43

in support of his contention. According to him, drunkenness or state of intoxication means the love of the world, and its concerns. He quotes Ḥasan al Baṣrī, who says, "Every prayer in which there is no presence of heart will hasten one towards punishments."¹

According to al-Makkī, one must find quiescence (sukūn) and peace (ṭam'aniyya) in prayer.² He quotes one of the gnostics who stated as follows:-

The prayer has four compulsory aspects.

I Honouring and glorifying the stations.

II Sincerity.

III Having certainty (yaqīn) as to what one pronounces.

IV Completely surrender oneself and affairs to God.³

Al-Makkī, apart from stressing the importance of compulsory prayers five times, and the laws, and regulations pertaining to it, lays much emphasis on voluntary prayers. He deals at length about the importance of keeping vigil at night, and spending it in prayers and meditation. He quotes Abū-Sulaymān Dārānī who says that, "The people who keep all night awake and engaged in prayer find more pleasure in their hearts than those pleasures in vain sports and play. If not for the night, I shall not will to remain

1. QQ, II, 194
2. Ibid, 195
3. Ibid, 203

in the world.¹

C. Virtues of Jum'a prayer.

Al-Makkī devotes a whole chapter to the virtues of Friday congregational prayer. He deals with the virtues of Jum'a at length, and also describes the praiseworthy acts in which the novices should engage themselves, on the day and night of the Jum'a.² It is a day with which God had beautified and honoured both the muslims and Islam.³ Almighty God gave the Jum'a prayer to the people of the book, but they differed in relation to it and turned away from it. Thereafter he stored it for this umma and made it a festival for them.⁴ Even the birds and the beasts greet each other on this day.⁵ Al-Makkī quotes Sahl who says, "The day of Jum'a is of the hereafter, and not of this world, it is a day of light and knowledge, a day of devotion and remembrance of God!"⁶

As this is a day of utmost significance one must make preparation to honour it from the dawn of the day itself. The pious ancestors used to spend the night of Jum'a in the mosque looking forward eagerly for the Jum'a prayer, and some of them used to go early in the morning too, and wait in the mosque to earn the reward

1. QQ, I, 78.

2. Ibid, 132

3. Ibid

4. Ibid

5. Ibid, 133

6. Ibid, 147

of presenting themselves early for the Jum'a prayer. It is said that the first innovation, that crept into Islam, was the abandoning of this noble practice of going early for Jum'a.¹ One's nearness to God in the hereafter, will depend on how early he had set out for the Jum'a prayer. He quotes the tradition of a prophet which states, "If only the men know what benefits are in store in three things they would hasten towards it, the call for prayer, the first row in prayer, setting out early for Jum'a."²

One must not sit idly listening to the story-tellers (quṣṣāṣ) on this day of great significance, nor should he sit on any other assembly or circle before the Jum'a prayer.³ According to some learned men, to engage in commercial transactions is forbidden after the call for prayer on the day of Jum'a.⁴ A bath is obligatory on this day, brushing the teeth, putting on good clean garments pairing the nails, trimming the beard and applying perfumes are meritorious acts.⁵

One must set out from home with all humility, with more supplication, and seeking pardon from God. He must cherish in his heart the intention of setting out from

1. QQ, I, 146.
2. Ibid, 134.
3. Ibid, 136.
4. Ibid, 132.
5. Ibid, 136.

his home to meet the lord in his house, and to attain nearness to him through worship and prayer. He must turn away all his attention from vain talk and playful deeds. He must recite the prescribed recitations.¹

There is an appointed time in the day of Jum'a in which the supplications of men are accepted, but the knowledge of this appointed time is only with God. But al-Makkī feels one must increasingly engage in prayers and supplications especially on two occasions, namely the interval between the imām ascending the pulpit and the prayer, and the last hours of the day of Jum'a when the sun is about to set. According to al-Makkī these are the most important times of the day of Jum'a.²

One must invoke the blessings of God on the prophet on this day, and he had prescribed the salawāt which could be recited on this day and night. It is meritorious to recite the complete Qur'ān on this day. It is also meritorious to pray (salāt at tasbīh) as the prophet had engaged in this prayer on the day of Jum'a.³

Al-Makkī feels that even after the prayer the honour of the day had to be maintained. When Qur'ān says after Jum'a prayers disperse in the land and seek the bounty of God,⁴ it does not refer to material pursuits,

1. Qūt, I, 137, 138.

2. Ibid, 138

3. Ibid, I, 140

4. Qur'ān, 62 : 10

but it implies the pious acts like visiting the sick, participating in the janāza, seeking knowledge, and visiting other brother muslims for the sake of God.¹

D. Prayers of men of certainty

Al-Makkī's aim and objectives was to treat every subject he deals with from a mystical angle, and hence we find him dealing with the prayers of those who had attained certainty or mystical consciousness. While dealing with one general aspect of prayer in his Qūt, he deals with the corresponding effect the prayer will have in the minds of those who had attained highest spiritual station. When one who had attained certainty prepares himself for ablution, he is really preparing himself to have communion with his lord. Hence, the devil runs away from him. When he pronounces takbīr, an angel glance looks at his heart, and finding that in his heart there is none greater than God, the angel quite happily proclaims as follows: "O you have acted in a true manner in regard to what you have stated." Then there issues forth a light from his heart and reaches the angelic world of the throne (malakūt al-'Arsh) the throne of God. The kingdom of heavens and earth are revealed to him in this light.

As for the heedless one (ghāfil), when he prepares him for ablution, the devil encompasses him like the flies

1. QQ, II, 198.

encompass the honey. When he pronounces the takbīr the angels look at his heart and find that he is not sincere in his statement of God is great. Then the angel says, "You have uttered a lie since Allah is not great in your heart as stated." Then a smoke appears in his heart, and rises to the sky and it becomes a veil for his heart, and it is said this veil acts as a source for the rejection of his prayer. Then the devil breathes into his heart creating doubt till he finishes his prayer in the most unmindful manner.¹

According to al-Makkī, the men of contemplation (ahl-al-mushāhada) has three different stations in the state of their prostration in prayer, corresponding to their spiritual state. There is a group among them, and when they prostrate the world of might and power (jabarūt) is revealed to them, and then he rises to a closer position to the divine being. This is the station of those lovers of God who had attained nearness to him.

The second group is those when they prostrate in prayer, the angelic world of glory (malakūt) is revealed unto them. Thus they prostrate before the lord with humbleness, and in a state of broken heartedness. This is the station of those men of devotion who have the fear of God in their heart.

Then there are those who when they prostrate, their hearts roam in the kingdom of heaven and the earth

1. QQ, II, 198

witnessing the most strange things. This is the station of those men of truth (sādiqīn) who are the seekers of truth.¹

IV Zakāt

A. Zakāt and Ṣadaqa

Al-Makkī gives an account of zakāt, the third pillar of Islam, in a summarised manner. To him ṣadaqa or voluntary charity is of equal importance as the compulsory charity. While quoting the prophetic tradition, "There is no right for any others over ones wealth except zakāt," al-Makkī states that among the followers (tābi'ūn), the authorities like Sha'bī, 'Aṭa and Mujāhid held a different opinion stating that there are right of others in ones wealth, apart from zakāt.² He says that according to some commentators the Qur'ānic verses like, "Oh ye who believes, spend of that where-with we have provided you,"³ and "Spend of that we have bestowed upon them,"⁴ are not abrogated by the verses which enjoins about zakāt, because it is the duty of every muslim to fulfil the needs of other brother muslims.⁵ Thus al-Makkī attaches equal importance to both zakāt and ṣadaqa.

1. QQ, II, 199

2. Ibid, II, 213

3. Qur'ān, 2 : 254

4. Ibid, 2 : 2.

5. QQ, II, 213, 214.

Al-Makkī discusses in detail the virtuous acts pertaining to zakāt. It is more virtuous to fulfil it, when one finds the opportunity to fulfil this obligation, even before it becomes obligatory upon him. Because, this act on his part would be considered as engaging in the pious act of "vieing with others in good works",¹ and in performing the act of "helping one another into righteousness and pious duty".

B. The ways to engage in it.

According to al-Makkī, when one feels the inclination towards the performance of this act, one must not delay it, because the world has its misfortunes and calamities, the self has its own whimsical fancies, and the heart has its changes.² Thus due to these factors involved in it, one must act immediately when he finds the psychological inclination towards it, and also the material prosperity. Because the life has its ups and downs, and one may become suddenly poor due to the vicissitudes of time, and lose the opportunity to engage in it, or his heart may be tempted by the wordly desires, and his pious intentions may change.³

1. QQ, II, 214. Al-Makkī is referring to the Qur'ānic exhortation which states, "Vie with one another in good works" (Qur'ān 3 : 114) and "help ye one another unto righteousness and pious duty" (Qur'ān, 5 : 2).

2. QQ, II, 214.

3. Ibid.

It is more virtuous to fulfil the obligation of zakāt in the month of fasting, or in the month of Dhul-ḥajj, because these months have the virtues which no other months possess. As for the month of Dhul-ḥajj it possesses five virtues which no other month has to its credit. It is one of the sacred months, it is the month of pilgrimage, it is also the month of great pilgrimage (ḥajj al-akbar). In it are "ten appointed days", known as ayyām al-ma'lūmāt and also the days of ayyām at-tashrīq, on which Allah had commanded mankind to engage in his remembrance. The most virtuous days of the month of fasting are the last ten days, and the month of Dhul-ḥajj are the first ten days. Therefore, it is most virtuous to give charity on these virtuous days.¹

Some of the pious men hold the view that it is praiseworthy to advance its payment every year by a month. If one pays it in the month of Ramḍān of a particular year, then he should advance it by a month, and pay it in the month of Sha'bān of the following year.²

One must discharge the obligation of charity with a happy heart, and without any hypocrisy or outward show (riyā'). Al-Makkī quotes the verses of Qur'ān which say, "Render not vain your almsgiving by reproach and injury."³

1. QQ, II, 214.

2. Ibid.

3. Qur'ān, 2 : 265.

According to al-Makkī, the word "reproach" (manḥa) in this verse implies the mentioning about ones alms in order to publicise it, and the word "injury" (adhā) means to make ones alms manifest, so that it may be seen by others.¹ He quotes a tradition which states that God will not accept the alms of those who act in this manner. According to al-Makkī, this hypocritic state of mind which seeks to publicise ones alms, is caused by the weakness of certainty (yaqīn). Even if one makes his charity apparent and known to others, with sincere intentions, he may stand to lose the reward for secret charity, because it is stated, that the superiority of secret charity over the charity made in public, is seventy fold. Moreover, according to a tradition of the prophet, seven persons will be shaded under the throne of Allah, on the day of judgement, on which there is no shade other than the shade of Allah, and one of them shall be the person who had engaged in secret charity in such a manner that his left hand is ignorant of what his right hand had given.²

Those who engage in secret charity have their corresponding spiritual states and stations in relation to their act. Thus one who gives charity in a manner that the receiver is ignorant of the source of it, is in the station of sincerity (maqām al-ikhḥās). If ones

1. QQ, II, 215.

2. QQ, II, 215, 216.

hand manifest at the time of giving charity, and yet if he had concealed it to keep it as a secret, then he is in the state of the men of sincerity (ḥāl aṣ-ṣādiq). Therefore, the men of piety, had always engaged in secret charity in order to earn the merit of it. It is said that some of the men of sincerity used to throw the dirhams on the path of the poor, so that he may pick it up, yet not knowing the source of it. Some of them used to tie the money in the garments of the poor, and he will not know who had kept it there. Al-Makkī states that he himself had seen men acting in this manner. Al-Makkī, stressing the importance of secret charity, quotes a verse of Qur'ān which states that the secret charity is an atonement for sin. "If you hide it, and give it to the poor it will be better for you and will atone for some of your ill deeds."¹ But according to al-Makkī, if one performs charity in public with the intention of being an example unto others, or being a source of inspiration to others so that others also may engage in such pious acts, then he will have his reward from God because God had enjoined such an act.²

Qur'ān says:

"Tell my bondsmen who believe to establish worship and spend of that which we have given them secretly and publicly."³

1. Qur'ān, 2 : 271.

2. QQ, II, 216, 217.

3. Qur'ān, 14, 31.

One should give in charity the best portion of his wealth, which he loves more, and would like to store and save because Almighty Allah had exhorted mankind to act in this manner in matters of charity when he says,

"O! ye who believe spend of good things which you have earned."¹

Thus by acting in this manner, one indicates his willingness to prefer Allah to his own self. It is also stated in Qur'ān that "seek not the bad (with intent) to spent charity."² This indicates that one should not dispose of in charity the unprofitable part of his wealth, which he would not like to possess. If he acts in this manner, then he is really placing his own self before God.³

One must give in charity the things which he had acquired through lawful means, with his own effort and perseverance, because God is pure (tayyib) and will accept only what is pure. Therefore, the purity of charity and its benefits are according to its lawfulness. One must always view the things he gives in charity as small, and must never over estimate it, because it is self-esteem ('ujb) to act in this manner, and it will ruin all his pious actions. When one looks at his deeds as small or

1. Ibid, 2 : 267.

2. Ibid

3. QQ, II, 217.

little, it increases with God, but when one over estimates it, it becomes smaller with God.¹

When one gives in charity he must ensure that there is a portion remains with him after giving in charity, because the prophet had stated that, "The best of charity is that which fulfils ones need, and yet some-things remain out of it after fulfilling it." Al-Makkī states that because what remains will be sufficient for him for the second occasion and also save him from begging, and it will also earn him the merit of charity for the second occasion without really engaging in it.²

In the act of charity, one must purely seek only the pleasure of God. Therefore, he must not ask from the poor to pray for him, nor should he expect their praise, because this would reduce the value of his charity.³ He should engage in the act of charity with kind words, gentle behaviour, and with an spirit of meekness and humbleness. It is said that some of the men of piety used to stretch their hands when they gave in charity, in such a manner so that the hands of the receiver may be above theirs, so that they may raise the status of the poor, and bring down their own position. Some of them used to place it on the ground, and request the poor to accept it, so that their hand may not get really involved in the process of

1. QQ, II, 222.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid, 218.

giving charity.¹

According to al-Makkī, the most virtuous thing pertaining to Zakāt or compulsory charity, is to give it to those to whom it is obligatory to receive it, and al-Makkī mentions those groups that are mentioned in the Qur'ān.²

It is a virtuous act to give ṣadaqa or voluntary charity, to the poor who are pious and sincere, the ṣūfis (ahl-at-taṣawwuf) and the men of religion (ahl-ad-dīn) who prefer to lead a life of silence and solitude, without complaining or grumbling. The Qur'ān mentions their quality as "Alms for the poor who are straitened for the cause of Allah,"³ which means, they are straitened in the path of the hereafter, due to lack of the provisions of life, or due to their physical disability, as the Qur'ān further illustrates "And who cannot travel on the land for trade."⁴ Al-Makkī says that these men are like the bird whose wings are broken because wealth to a rich man is like the wings to a bird, as the bird could fly anywhere it wants in search of its food, so is the wealthy, he could go anywhere he wants in search of his provisions. These poor men have no wealth which would facilitate their journeys for the

1. QQ, II, 218.

2. Ibid, 214. cf. Qur'ān 9 : 60

3. Qur'ān, 2 : 273

4. Qur'ān, 2 : 273

"Then eat thereof and feed them the poor
unfortunate."¹

"Eat thereof and feed the beggar and the
suppliant."²

After quoting these verses, al-Makkī defines the
terms that occur in the above verses as follows:

Sā'il One who begs with his hand, and requests with
his tongue.

Mahrūm One who is unlucky, and deprived of earning a
livelihood.

Qāni' One who sits at home being content with what
God gives him without his seeking.

Mutarr One who is compelled to beg, but will not make
that desire manifest. At times his needs
compel him to manifest his wants, but his sense
of modesty prevents him from doing so.

Yā'is One who is afflicted with any calamities like
sickness or disableness.³

Thus according to al-Makkī it is more virtuous to
give charity to those who are in the above category.

1. Qur'ān, 22 : 29

2. Ibid, 22 : 36

3. QQ, II, 222, 223

It is also more virtuous to give to those men who have a large family to support.¹

According to al-Makkī, the pious ancestors acted in this manner, in the matters of disposing of their charity.

Ibn-al-Mubārak used to give charity to those who were men of knowledge (ahl-al-‘ilm); when he was questioned as to the reason, he replied stating that "I do not know a higher station than the station of knowledge, after the station of prophethood."²

Al-Makkī says, that when a learned man preferred to distribute charity to the poor ṣūfis, he was asked why he did not distribute it generally to all the poor men. Thereupon he replied, "There are men whose only concern is almighty Allah. If the earning of a livelihood, occupied their attention, their concentration may get disturbed. Therefore, I prefer to give it to one whose only concern is God, than to thousands of those whose concern is this world." When this was narrated to al-Junayd, he appreciated it very much. Thus this was the way of the pious ancestors in matters of the distribution of charity.³

According to al-Makkī one must feel overjoyed, if his charity is accepted, by a gnostic (‘ārif) because it is really like the acceptance by God, due to his

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid, 227.
3. QQ, II, 226.

knowledge of God, since a gnostic spends his time in the actions that pleases God, his acceptance of it, is not like the acceptance of any others, and his rejection is not like the rejection of any others. It is said that the true believer looks through the eye of certainty ('ayn-al-yaqīn) and through the light of God. Therefore a gnostic accepts it through the inspiration from his lord, and he rejects it also on the same basis.¹ Hence, one must try his utmost to search for men of godliness and piety, to distribute charity, and he should try to attain the knowledge about them. If not, he must seek the assistance of those who know their signs. Because, the grace of God which helps one to place his charity in the most virtuous place, is like the grace of God which helps one to eat lawful food. It is a blessing which he gives only to his friends. (awliyā').²

V. Fast

A. Its significance

Fasting occupies a prominent place in ṣūfi thought, and way of life. According to al-Hujwīrī (d. 465 A.H.) an authority on ṣūfi theory, fasting includes the whole method of ṣūfism because according to him fasting involves abstinence, which in turn involves many obligations like keeping the belly without food and drink, guarding the

1. Ibid.

2. QQ, II, 226, 227.

eyes from the lustful looks, the ear from listening to evil speech, the tongue from vain and foul words, and the body from following after worldly things and disobedience to God.¹

Al-Makkī describes in detail the virtues of fasting and its mystical implications, stressing the importance it occupies in the mystic way of life. He quotes the Qur'ānic verse, "Seek help in patience and prayer,"² and states that according to the commentators "patience" (ṣabr) here implies "fasting". He also quotes the tradition of the Prophet in which he named the month of Ramḍān as the "month of patience". Al-Makkī says that this is because fasting keeps oneself away from passion (hawā). The Prophet also is reported to have said that patience is half the faith, and fasting is half the patience.³ According to him Qur'ān describes those who fast (ṣā'imūn) by referring to them as sā'iḥūn which means literally "Those who undertake journey". According to al-Makkī, those who are engaged in fasting are described in this manner because they undertake a journey towards their Lord through hunger and thirst.⁴

1. Kashf, 321, 322.

2. Qur'ān, 2:45.

3. QQ, I, 152.

4. QQ, I, 152. Al-Makkī here refers to the Qur'ānic verse which states "(Triumphant) are those who turn repentant (to Allah), those who serve (him), those who praise (him) and those who fast." Qur'ān, 9:112.

According to al-Makkī fasting is the key to asceticism, it is the door to the adoration and devotion, because it keeps oneself away from all sensual desires by mortifying the appetites for drinking and eating.¹ Fasting helps one to fight against the lower self (mujāhada) cutting asunder its carnal appetites and habits ('ādāt) and in it lies the weakening of the passions and sensual desires. As the mosque is the most pleasing of all the houses to God, and Makka is the most noblest of all the cities to God, so is fast, which is the most virtuous of all the pious acts with God. The act of fasting involves certain divine qualities (akhlāq aṣ-ṣamadīyya), because it is an act which cannot be seen by any others, and known only to the lord and the one who really engages in it. Hence the God almighty himself had taken upon the task of rewarding it. The reward for every act is known except fasting, because the reward for it is boundless, and none knows it except the almighty God.²

1. QQ, I, 151. Al-Makkī's comparison of fasting to asceticism is in agreement with the views expressed by al-Muḥāsibī in his 'ādāb an-nufūs - vide Early Mystic, 171.

2. QQ, I, 152.

B. Virtuous acts in relation to fasting

According to al-Makkī, the aim of fasting is not merely to abstain from food and drink, but it is to abstain from all the sins, in the same manner, as the aim of the prayer is to keep oneself away from lewdness and iniquity.¹ He quotes the tradition of the Prophet which states, "Many of those who engage in fasting, gain nothing out of it, except being in hunger and thirst." He also quotes another prophetic tradition which says that one who fasts must guard against four things; deceitful and lying speech, backbiting and slandering, false oath, and obscenity (from glancing with sensual desire).²

Al-Makkī enumerates the several virtuous acts pertaining to fasting. One who fasts must safeguard the six members of the body. He must safeguard his eyes from having recourse to unwanted glances, must safeguard his ears from listening to the forbidden things like sinful talks and from engaging in talks with the men of evil (ahl-al-bāṭil), must safeguard his tongue from indulging in unwanted talks, he must safeguard from its attachments to its anxieties (hamm), he should cut asunder the vain thoughts that occur in his mind (khawāṭir), he should safeguard his hand from getting hold of any unlawful earnings, and his legs from being employed

1. QQ, II, 230

2. QQ, II, 229

in the actions which are neither commanded by religion, nor praised as commendable actions.¹

Al-Makkī says that who fasts with due consideration, observing the above rules relating to the members of his body, and breaks his fast by performing the actions of eating and drinking, and sexual intercourse, which are actions pertaining to two members of his body, is the one who has fulfilled the fast with all its virtues, because he is classed among those men of certainty who had safeguarded the limitations of God. But one who had fasted in relation to his two members of the body, namely the stomach and the sexual organ, by abstaining from food, and sexual intercourse, but had violated the rules of fasting in relation to the six members of the body as explained above, has really acted in a manner which nullifies his fast, though he may have the mental illusion that he had observed the fast.²

Al-Makkī coineth a similitude for those who observe their fast, according to their different degree of abstinence in relation to their fast.

One who fasts abstaining from food, but violates the rules of fasting in relation to all other matters is like the one who has wiped off every member of the body in his ablution (mash), and consequently has his prayers rejected due to his ignorance. The example of

1. QQ, II, 227.

2. Ibid, 228.

those who observe the rules of fasting in relation to the members of the body by keeping away from all forbidden things and then breaks his fast by eating and sexual intercourse, is like the one who washes once his every member of the body in ablution, and then engages in prayer. Thus though he had failed to attain the merits for the performance of the virtuous act pertaining to ablution, he had earned the merit for the accomplishment of obligatory things in a beautiful manner, and his prayers are accepted. Thus he had attained the merits for the performance of the obligatory things of fasting, as his fast is accepted. The example of those who fast by abstaining from food and sexual intercourse, and also observe the laws of fasting by abstaining from the sins pertaining to the six members of the body, is like the one who had washed all his organs three times. Thus he had completed both the obligatory and virtuous acts, and perfected both the things that are commanded and recommended. He is classed among those who had performed the most beautiful actions (muḥsinūn). This is the fast which is praised in Qur'ān as the fast of those who have hearts which remember God.¹

One who fasts should increasingly employ his tongue in the praise of God, and less in speaking about the creatures of God. Let him not indulge in arguments or

1. QQ, II, 228.

quarrels, and if he is abused or beaten, let him not retort it, because this is the honour and regards he accords to his fast.¹ He must not be too anxious and concerned about his dinner before the actual time arrives, but it is virtuous to hasten to break his fast when the time comes, and let him be content with whatever little is available for breakfast, and increase his thanks to God.²

It is a praiseworthy act to breakfast with fresh ripe dates if one could find them, or with dry dates or with water. It is said that the Prophet used to breakfast by drinking a cup of water, or some milk, or some dates.³

Al-Makkī being conscious of writing a mystical treatise, explains how the novices or aspirants to the mystic path (murīd) should break their fast. According to al-Makkī, the novice should divide his breakfast into two parts. He should eat a bread at the time of breaking fast, which is really beginning of the night, and satisfy his hunger. At the time of sahr he should eat another bread for the purpose of fasting. According to al-Makkī, the novice derives the following benefits by arranging his meals in this manner.

1. QQ, II, 229

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

- A. He shall be able to keep his stomach empty during the day.
- B. He shall be able to keep his stomach empty for his night prayers.
- C. By keeping his stomach empty he will be able to keep his heart also free from all anxieties.
- D. It will help his contemplation.
- E. The peaceful state of the heart, free from all anxieties, would help his concentration of attention.¹

Perhaps the emphasis al-Makkī had laid on the need to keep the stomach empty even during the hours in which it is permitted to eat, may be due to the importance it occupies in the mystic way of life, and al-Makkī had stressed the importance of this for the aspirants to the mystic path. Having recourse to little food, and keeping the stomach empty, are the ascetic practices that illuminate the heart. Hence, all the mystics had emphasised the importance of being in hunger.

According to al-Hujwīrī, "When the food is withheld from the lower soul, it grows weak, and the reason gains strength, and the mysteries and evidence of God become more visible..... The fruit of hunger is contemplation of God (mushāhada) of which the forerunner is mortification (mujāhada)."²

According to al-Makkī it is disapproved to fast

- 1. QQ, II, 342.
- 2. Kashf, 324, 325.

throughout the year, but if one intends subjugating his lower desires, and improving his spiritual state, then he may engage in it. Because al-Makkī quotes another prophetic tradition which speaks of the virtues of engaging in fasting throughout the year and states that some of the followers and pious ancestors acted in this manner.¹

Apparently, it looks as if al-Makkī is contradicting his own statement by quoting mutually contradicting traditions, and stating contradictory views about fasting throughout the year. A closer examination of al-Makkī's statements reveal that fasting continuously throughout the year is generally forbidden but allowed in exceptional circumstances. This mystical approach to these two traditions becomes more clear in the light of the statement of al-Hujwīrī who says, "Continual fasting is forbidden by the apostle. To fast continuously without infringing the divine commandments is a miracle, and miracles have a special and not a general application."²

Al-Makkī quotes another tradition which praises the fasting for half of the year, and fasting each alternative day. According to al-Makkī, this would help one to be in between two states; the state of patience (ḥāl aṣ-ṣabr) and the state of gratitude (ḥāl ash-shukr).

Thus al-Makkī feels by engaging in fasting on

1. QQ, I, 153

2. Kashf, 323.

alternative days one undergoes the sufferings of hunger while fasting and thus exercises patience, and this helps him to be in the state of patience, and when he abstains from fasting on the following day, he enjoys the lawful things, and becomes conscious of the grace and blessings of God, comparing his state to the state he achieved while fasting, and this makes him enter into the state of gratitude.¹ Al-Makkī states that the Prophet himself had acted in this manner, and he had praised the fast of prophet Dāwūd, because he fasted every alternate day.²

Thus it appears, as if al-Makkī approves the middle course stated above, though he recommends, on the authority of a prophetic tradition, continuous fasting for the purpose of self-discipline. He quotes a prophetic tradition which states, "I was offered the keys of the treasures of this world, and the treasures of the earth, I rejected it saying I will be in hunger for one day, and I will be content on the next day. I will praise thee if I am satisfied, and I will beseech thee if I am in hunger."³

1. QQ, I, 153.

2. Ibid, 153, 154.

3. Ibid. Al-Ghazālī divided the fast into three categories. The fasting of ordinary men which implies the controlling of desires of the stomach and sexual organ; the fasting of the elect which implies controlling the desires of the eyes, ears, and other members of the body; then come the fasting of the Khusūs al Khusūs; the choicest lot among the elects whose fast implies abstinence from the concerns of the world which al-Ghazālī calls fasting of the heart.

cf. Iḥyā', I, 210, 211.

C. Fasting of the elect (khuṣūṣ)

According to al-Makkī, there are two kinds of fasts. The fasting of the ordinary men, and the fasting of the elect. He calls the former the fast of the body (ṣawm al-qālib) and the latter fasting of the heart (ṣawm al-qalb).

The fasting of the elect, which is the fasting of the heart, is to abstain from the desires of the world, and from about the thoughts and concerns of this world. Because every member of the body has its fast. The fasting of the ears, eyes, and tongues, is to safeguard the limits set by God in relation to their function. Fasting of the hand, and leg, is not to employ them in any matters that are contrary to the will of God. One who fasts in this manner has the remembrance of God in all walks of his life. It is to the fast of this nature the prophet had referred when he said, "The sleep of the one who fasts is worship, and his breath is glorification of God. (tasbīh).¹

The fasting according to the learned, says al-Makkī, is not to be in hunger, because then fasting becomes a habit or custom, and one who fasts would return to his previous spiritual state after the breaking of the fast.

One who fasts, and then breaks his fast by eating his belly full, and indulges in all the pleasures would

1. QQ, I, 154.

have his natural appetite, and yearning increased in this process. Consequently, his sensual desires would be let loose, and his sense of obedience would be weakened. Thus, his sensual desires would still dominate him in spite of his fast, except for the fact that would lie dormant during the time of fasting. This is the fast of those who love this world (abnā' ad-dunya) and not of the ascetics of the hereafter.¹

The fasting of the ascetics who are concerned with the hereafter is by taking little food, and by increasingly suffering from hunger, by abstaining from the sensual desires and by keeping away from the dubious things (shubhāt). Thus by this process the lower self would be subdued and its natural appetite would be controlled, the nature of the customary habits would be made invalid, the desire for the hereafter would be strengthened, and the love of the world would vanish from his heart. The true servant of God who acts by abstaining from food, controlling his appetite, and by refraining from all the pleasures is really acting like an ascetic.²

1. QQ, II, 340

2. QQ, II, 340

VI. Pilgrimage (Ḥajj)

A. Its significance

Al-Makkī states that his aim in giving an exposition of Ḥajj is to elucidate the spiritual aspect of Ḥajj, which he calls "food of all actions" (qūt al-a'māl).¹

Al-Makkī deals with the etymology of the term Ḥajj which according to him implies two meanings. Firstly, it means to aim at something higher and noble, therefore one who undertakes the pilgrimage must glorify and honour the main objective of his aim, so that he may attain the reality of its meaning. Secondly, the word Ḥajj is derived from the word maḥajja, and hence it also means to travel on a wide road which would lead him to a desired goal.²

Al-Makkī quotes the verse of Holy Qur'ān which states, "And pilgrimage to the house is a duty unto Allah for mankind, for him who can find a way thither."³ According to al-Makkī, the Prophet explained this verse by stating that it is incumbent for those who have material wealth and physical ability to undertake pilgrimage to Makka. Al-Makkī states that it is a disapproved (makrūh) act in religion to delay it while having all the above facilities, and if he dies without fulfilling this obligation in spite of all these facilities, then he has not perfected Islam because Almighty God had

1. QQ, II, 231.

2. QQ, II, 231.

3. Qur'ān, 3 : 97.

perfected Islam through this institution of Ḥajj when he revealed the following verse during the time of pilgrimage.¹ "This day I have perfected your religion for you and completed my favours unto you and have chosen for you as religion al-Islam."²

The Prophet had stated, "One who had not been prevented from the performance of Ḥajj either by serious disease or by an oppressive ruler and dies without performing it, let him die as a Jew or as a Christian." Hadrat 'Umar is reported to have once remarked that he has determined to impose pole tax on those who have not performed the pilgrimage, having all the facilities. And some pious ancestors have refused to conduct the funeral prayers of those who died without fulfilling the obligations of Ḥajj. Thus to al-Makkī, the non-fulfilment of this obligation in spite of the facilities available to one, may be considered as a warrant violation of one of the most fundamental obligations of Islam, and may take him out of the fold of Islam.³

B. Preparation for Ḥajj.

He deals with the preparation that one should make before he sets out for this noble purpose. The most

1. QQ, II, 230.

2. Qur'ān, 5 : 4.

3. QQ, II, 230.

important of all is that one must acquire the knowledge about the rules pertaining to the performance of Ḥajj, and he should give primary importance to this matter than any other matters.¹

One must have the purity of intention of performing the pilgrimage only for the sake of God. He must have lawful earnings, and his heart must be free from all wordly concerns and anxieties, which interfere with his singleness of purpose. His heart must be free from all passions and sensual desires, completely turning towards his lord. Al-Makkī quotes a saying of Ibn-'Umar to this effect. "The most virtuous of all the pilgrimage is that of those who perform it with purity of intention, lawful earnings, and with perfection of certainty (yaqīn).²

While stating the importance of this psychological and spiritual preparation, he also emphasises certain principles of material preparation. One who undertakes the journey for Ḥajj must shun the gorgeous clothes and utensils, and in regard to these matters, he must act in no way that would resemble the way of the men who love this world; and those who exceed the limitations, and indulge in mutual boasting, and mutual rivalry in the multiplication of wealth. Thus he must not seek comfort and luxury while in the path of God, but must be prepared to undergo hardship and suffering, so that he may earn the reward for it.³ According to al-Makkī

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid, 233.

3. Ibid, 234.

when the learned men, see those who had come for pilgrimage displaying all their pomp and glory, they used to say that these men had set out from home as travellers and not as pilgrims. Haḍrat 'Umar wrote to the commanders of the army to wear worn out coarse garments when they set out for pilgrimage. Al-Makkī states that it is better to follow the people of Yemen in this respect because the early pious ancestors followed them, in relation to this matter, as the people of Yemen very faithfully followed the companions in this respect.¹

Al-Makkī states that those who perform the pilgrimage on foot earn seven hundred reward, for every step, and one who undertakes the journey on a riding beast, has seventy reward.² He also states that according to some formal theologians ('ulamā'-aḡ-ḡāhir) to undertake pilgrimage on a riding beast is more virtuous because of the expenditure involved in it. Moreover, according to them, it is less burdensome to the body and would create more safer atmosphere for the perfection of pilgrimage.³ But according to al-Makkī to perform both 'Umra, and pilgrimage on foot is more virtuous, for those who have the physical ability.⁴

1. QQ, II, 234.

2. Ibid, 231.

3. Ibid, 235.

4. Ibid, 236.

One must not cause hardship to the riding beast by overloading it, or by sleeping on it, because the pious ancestors were so conscious of it, that Abū Darda said to his camel at the time of its death, "Oh! the camel! don't complain about me to your lord, because I have never loaded you beyond your capacity." According to al-Makkī it is preferable also the way of the pious ancestors to descend from the riding beast, morning and evening, so that it may relax in comfort.¹

According to al-Makkī, it is preferable to have the company of a learned pious companion on the journey, because this would help him a great deal in the proper performance of the obligations. If he forgets anything, his companion would remind him or help him; if he felt discouraged he would infuse in him courage and strength; if he felt weak, he would strengthen him; if he entertains any evil thought, he would substitute it with finer thoughts.²

Let him not act contrary to the wish of his companion and let him act in a kind and courteous manner with all the men extending his love to all, removing their hardships and sufferings, and in these aspects lies the virtues of Hajj.³

1. QQ, II, 235

2. Ibid, 233.

3. Ibid, 233.

One must ponder over and draw lessons from the signs of God that he sees during the course of his journey. He must witness the handiwork of God and his wisdom displayed in every object of his creation. He must draw lessons and admonitions from all these things because his journey is like the path to the hereafter. Thus let him see a reminder in everything, and an understanding and insight in every object.¹

C. Correct forms of Hajj.

Al-Makkī quotes the verse of Holy Qur'ān which speaks about the correct forms of the pilgrimage. "The pilgrimage is (in) the well known months, and whoever is minded to perform the pilgrimage therein (let him remember that) there is (to be) no lewdness, nor abuse nor angry conversation on the pilgrimage."²

Al-Makkī defines each of the terms that occur in this verse regarding the etiquette of the performance of the pilgrimage.

rafath or lewdness is the collective noun for all the vain speech (laghw) and obscene and dissolute speech. It also implies the coveting of women, and to speak about the affairs of sexual relationship.

1. QQ, II, 240.

2. Qur'ān, 2 : 197.

fusūq is the collective noun which embraces every disobedient act which violates the limits set by God.

jidāl means to engage in argument which causes malice which has no profit.

Thus, the above are sins from which God commands one to keep away during the pilgrimage, because they consist of the sins which are the basis of all the evils.¹

According to al-Makkī the obligatory principles are generally held to be six, but the scholars differ as to three of them, namely the rite of sa'y, the night stay in Muzdalifa, the casting of pebbles on the day of sacrifice, but according to al-Makkī, all the scholars generally agree on the obligatory nature of the three rituals pertaining to Ḥajj, namely, iḥrām, or donning of the pilgrims garb, staying in the valley of 'Arafāt, the ṭawāf az-ziyāra. After stating these different viewpoints as regards the obligatory aspects of Ḥajj al-Makkī says that he is in agreement with the majority of the learned in holding that there are four obligatory principles of Ḥajj. Namely, Iḥrām, staying in 'Arafat when the sun passes its meridian until the dawn of the day of sacrifice on the day of 'Arafat, ṭawāf az-ziyāra, and the rite of running between ṣafā and marwa. According to al-Makkī

1. QQ, II, 232.

2. Ibid, 231.

these^{are} four obligatory principles, the rest are supererogatory and praiseworthy acts.¹

It is praiseworthy to combine the Hajj and the 'Umra, as God had commanded the performance of 'Umra along with Hajj most of the learned hold that 'Umra is also as compulsory as Hajj.²

Al-Makkī also stresses the importance of the ceremonies that are connected with the pilgrimage. One must increasingly indulge in talbiya while in the state of ihrām because when the prophet was questioned about the Hajj which is accepted by God, he replied saying that it is the pilgrimage, in which the voices are raised, and the body is sacrificed. Thus the prophet had referred to the talbiya and the sacrificing of an animal, the two important ceremonies connected with Hajj. Therefore, it is also praiseworthy to sacrifice an animal even though it is not compulsory. He quotes a prophetic tradition which states that, "In every hair of the animal, and in every drop of blood that is shed there is reward."³

Al-Makkī also speaks about the merit of ṭawāf or the ritual of circling around the Ka'ba. One must increasingly engage in ṭawāf states al-Makkī, because, the ṭawāf of one week consists of a hundred and twenty

1. QQ, II, 231.
2. Ibid, 235.
3. Ibid.

blessings from God. Al-Makkī quotes a prophetic tradition which states that, "God sends down on this house one hundred and twenty blessings. Sixty for those who are engaged in tawāf, forty for those who are engaged in prayer, and twenty for those who glance at it." As one engages in tawāf, says al-Makkī, he must not engage in conversation with others, but must remember God, and increasingly engage in his glorification, and chant his unity. He should walk gently, with the spirit of fear and humbleness, and must not trample any one in the process of performing this pious duty. He should get near to the house of God, as far as he could, and kiss the blackstone if it is possible. He should guard against the baser thoughts, and sensual passions, because it is said that one is punished for entertaining evil thoughts in the sacred city. There is no other city, except Makka, in which one is punished merely for the thoughts he had entertained without really engaging in any evil actions. Therefore, one should guard himself against any sinful thoughts as the pious actions in Makka are rewarded doublefold, so the evil actions are punished doublefold.¹

It is necessary that in the performance of Hajj, one must undergo hardship, his body sprinkled with dust, and his hair dishevelled.² If one is afflicted with

1. QQ, II, 241.

2. Ibid, 237.

any calamity, which affects his self and wealth, in the process of the performance of Ḥajj, then it is a sign of accepted Ḥajj. The calamities one faces in the path of Ḥajj is equal to the spending in fighting for the cause of God.¹

The fulfilment of the obligation of Ḥajj must create in oneself, a great spiritual awareness, and transformation of his personality, because when Ḥasan al-Baṣrī was asked about the accepted Ḥajj he replied, "It is one's returning from the pilgrimage with a mind of the asceticism of this world, and love for the hereafter."²

According to al-Makkī, the signs of an accepted Ḥajj is that one abstains from all sins in which he was indulging, substitutes evil companions with pious friends, substitutes the assembly of the men of heedlessness with the assembly of the men of remembrance of God and awakefulness.³

Thus according to al-Makkī, the institution of the pilgrimage, has its deeper, spiritual aspect, which he calls qūt al-a'māl, the 'food of the actions'. The aim of the pilgrimage is the transformation of the human personality, and the substitution of higher noble values, in place of baser instincts. The true pilgrimage is

1. QQ, II, 241.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

that from which one returns as an ascetic of the world, full of love for the hereafter. Al-Makkī's concept of the pilgrimage is completely in agreement with al-Hujwīrī when he says, "Pilgrimage is an act of mortification (mujāhada) for the sake of obtaining contemplation (mushāhada) and the true object of the pilgrimage is not to visit Ka'ba, but to obtain contemplation of God.¹

VII The recitation of Qur'ān.

The exposition of al-Makkī's concept of religious life, which is really the initial phase of the purgative and the illuminative life, will be incomplete without dealing with his exposition of the recitation of the Qur'ān.

According to al-Makkī, the Holy Qur'ān is the greatest of all the signs of God that points to his existence, and its revelation is the greatest of all the blessings that almighty God had showered upon mankind.²

The Holy Qur'ān is the speech of God, it is the key to the treasure of the self, the door to the highest stations, the fountain of life, and the cure of all the diseases.³ Al-Makkī quotes Ja'far Ṣādiq who says, "Verily Allah manifests himself in all his glory to his creations in his speech, but they do not see it."⁴

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1. Kashf, 329
 2. QQ, I, 123
 3. Ibid, 101
 4. Ibid, 100

According to al-Makkī, no speech of any exposition of wisdom among God's creations could be compared with his speech,¹ because as the Qur'ān states, "Naught is as his likeness."² He quotes an anonymous saying which states "For every verse of Qur'ān, there are sixty thousand meanings, and what is beyond the understanding of mankind is much more than that." He also quotes a saying of Haḍrat 'Alī which states that had he desired he would have written commentaries on the opening chapter of Qur'ān (ṣūra' al-fātiḥa) itself amounting to a load of seventy camels.³

According to al-Makkī, a man's honour and respect for Qur'ān will be according to the degree of his piety, because one who possesses the true knowledge of the power and glory of the speaker would naturally honour his speech, hence his understanding of the speech also would be more perfect than others. As the speaker, had gained an honoured position in his heart, he would repeat the speech many times with love and admiration, and also reflect upon its meanings.⁴

The Qur'ān has its manifest (ẓāhir) and (bāṭin) hidden meanings, and its limited (ḥadd) and unlimited or revealed (maṭla') meanings. Its manifest meaning is for the

1. QQ, I, 123
2. Qur'ān, 42 : 11
3. QQ, I, 103
4. Ibid, 123

common Arabs, its hidden meaning is for the men of certainty (ahl-al-yaqīn) and its limited meaning is for the men of formal religion (ahl-aḏ-ḏāhir) and its revealed meaning is for the men of gnosis ('ārifūn).¹

A. Correct forms of the recitation of Qur'ān

Al-Makkī deals with the question of whether the Qur'ān should be recited in silence, or in loud tone. He quotes the prophetic tradition which supports the both ways of the recitation. He quotes the saying of the Prophet which states that the "virtue or the merit of the silent recitation of the Qur'ān is like the superiority of the secret charity over the charity made in public," and at the same time, according to al-Makkī, the Prophet had ordered the companions at times to recite the Qur'ān in loud tone, saying that the angels are listening to it.² Thus the prophet had permitted the Qur'ān to be recited in both ways.

Though both ways of reciting the Qur'ān are permitted, al-Makkī appears to have held that the louder recitation of Qur'ān has more benefits than the silent recitation. According to him the silent recitation benefits ones own self, whereas the recitation of Qur'ān in a louder tone benefits others too, and the best of men are those who are of benefit to others, and to benefit the people through the means of Qur'ān is a great meritorious act.³

1. QQ, I, 107

2. QQ, I, 124

3. Ibid.

The recitation of Qur'ān in loud tone may involve seven pious intentions (niyya).

1. The intention of reciting the Qur'ān in a leisured way and in an orderly manner (tartīl), because it is an act ordered by the Qur'ān.
2. The recitation of Qur'ān with a beautiful voice, since it is an act which is commended by the Prophet.
3. The understanding of its meaning, which cannot be comprehended unless it is recited in a loud tone.
4. The driving away of the devil and the sleep by raising the voice.
5. The intention of keeping those who sleep awake by his loud voice, so that they may remember God and thus the loud recitation becomes the cause of their wakefulness.
6. Intention of making the heedless indifferent persons to derive activeness to engage in worship.
7. Intention to engage increasingly in its recitation in order to continue keeping vigil at night and engage in prayer.¹

According to al-Makkī that if one recites in loud tone could have all these pious intentions combined in his act, then it becomes one of the meritorious acts. But at the same time al-Makkī warns that one who recites in loud tone must engage in it with all sincerity, because there is every possibility of the act of hypocrisy

1. QQ, I, 125.

becoming involved in it, if he has no pure intentions.¹

According to al-Makkī, to recite the Qur'ān by looking at the muṣḥaf is more meritorious than to recite it from memory, because seeing the muṣḥaf itself is a pious act, and most of the companions and followers used to recite from the muṣḥaf, so much so, that because of the constant recitation Ḥaḍrat Uthmān had two of his muṣḥaf completely torn.²

B. Concentration and reflection

According to al-Makkī, the Qur'ān should be recited with full concentration, and presence of heart, lest he may fall under the category of those about whom Qur'ān says "Among them are unlettered folk who know the scripture not except from hearsay. They but guess."³ Therefore Qur'ān should be recited with complete concentration and reflection.⁴

Al-Makkī quotes Abū Sulymān Dārānī, who says, "When I recite a verse of Holy Qur'ān, I will pause at it for four nights and then meditate and think upon it for five nights and still if I am unable to understand it, I will not proceed beyond it." Thus in the same manner, says al-Makkī, the people of inner illumination used to repeat the verses of Holy Qur'ān in their hearts till

1. QQ, I, 125.
2. Ibid, 128.
3. Qur'ān, 2 : 78.
4. QQ, II, 121.

they realise the reality of it by the help of God and consequently they become immersed in its true realization and understanding and they are lost in the ocean of its knowledge.¹

The Prophet used to recite the Qur'ān with presence of heart, with deep hearing, and insight observing the attributes of the speaker and the meaning of his speech. He used to recite the verses which warn the wrongdoers about the chastisement of God with full of grief and sadness, and the verses that promise reward for those who are engaged in pious actions with full of love and hope, and the verses of admonition with full of fear because the Prophet was aware of the attributes of the lord who revealed the Qur'ān.²

According to al-Makkī the verses of admonition and warning necessitates crying and if it does not create in one the sense of grief which makes him to cry in the true sense, then he should at least try and make an attempt to cry. He quotes Ibn-'Abbās who says, "If you recite a verse of prostration do not hasten to perform sujūd until you cry, and if your eyes are not shedding tears, let at least your heart feel the grief. According to al-Makkī, if one does feel the grief which makes him to cry in the manner of men of understanding, then he should feel sad being conscious of the fact that the

1. QQ, I, 105

2. Ibid, 99

attributes of men of understanding are not found in him.¹

The men of true piety and godliness used to recite the Qur'ān full of reflection and meditation. Thus when they come across a verse glorifying God, they glorify his praise. When they recite a verse which speaks about seeking forgiveness from God, they seek forgiveness from him. When they recite a verse which speaks about the warning or threat of punishment, they seek God's protection.²

Al-Makkī says that one who recites the Qur'ān should have the feeling that it is Almighty God who is really speaking to him through the medium of his speech because Almighty God, in his infinite wisdom has given the normal form of language to describe his form of speech in order to make it easier for men to remember him in their own tongue. As the symbol of the tree was the sign of God's speech to Moses, so is the Qur'ān a sign of God's speech to men.⁴ Thus says al-Makki, once Ja'far-^{as-}Ṣādiq fainted in prayer, and when he regained consciousness, he was told about it, and then he said, "I was constantly

1. QQ, I, 99.

2. Ibid.

3. QQ, I, 100.

repeating a particular verse of Holy Qur'ān in my heart, till I felt that I was listening to it from the speaker (God) itself, and thus I could not bear the witnessing of the power and the majesty of God!"¹ According to al-Makkī, one who is unable to reach the highest spiritual status attained by men of piety in relation to the recitation of Qur'ān, at least he should feel that he is engaging in secret conversation with his lord and it is almighty God who is really speaking to him by the medium of words, movements and sounds.²

Qur'ān should be recited with a mind full of remembrance of God, and if one pauses while reciting it, he should pause only to reflect upon God and must not let any thought, other than God, to enter into his mind, so that he may be saved from the committing the sin of hypocrisy because the prophet had stated "The majority of the hypocrites of my community are among the Qur'ān readers."³

Thus to al-Makkī, the recitation of Qur'ān is not a ritualistic performance, nor a pure intellectual experience. It is an immensely rewarding spiritual experience. While stressing the above spiritual and mystical aspects of the recitation of Qur'ān, he also describes in detail how it should be recited.

1. QQ, I, 101.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid, 97.

According to al-Makkī, the best way of recitation is to recite it in a leisurely manner (tartīl), uttering distinctly each word without exceeding the proper limits because this method of recitation helps one to understand its commandments, and affords him ample scope for reflection and contemplation. He quotes Ibn-‘Abbās who says, "The recitation of Sūrat al-Baqara and Sūrat al-Āla imrān in a leisurely manner, reflecting upon its meaning is more dear to me than the recitation of the whole Qur’ān in a quick manner."¹

To recite the Qur’ān in a leisurely manner, with reflection and contemplation is more meritorious while engaging in prayer, because the contemplation in the state of prayer is more meritorious than other times, and this provides an opportunity to contemplate upon the commandments of God, and his promise of reward, while being in the state of praising and glorifying the one who issues the command, and promises the reward.²

He also says how the psychological state of one should be at the time of recitation. Thus, when one recites the verses which promise reward, he should not mentally feel that he belongs to the category of those who will be rewarded but when he recites the verses which promise chastisement for those who are engaged in sinful actions, then he should feel that he falls under the

1. QQ, I, 97.

2. Ibid.

category mentioned in that verse and that particular verse is addressed to him. This type of psychological state of one while reciting the Qur'ān would make him more God-fearing and his mind would be inclined towards pious actions.¹

C. Grades of the reciters

Al-Makkī divides those who recite the Qur'ān into three grades who are in three different stations.

1. The highest are those who witness the attributes of the speaker in his speech, and thus knows his qualities by understanding the meaning of his speech. This is the station of gnostics.
2. The second grade are those who feel while reciting the Qur'ān that their lord is engaging in secret conversation with them, mentioning to them his bounties and favours. Their station is that of shyness (hayā') and praise and their state is listening and understanding. There are those who are engaged in pious actions (abrār).
3. The third grade are those who feel as if they are engaging in secret conversation with their lord. Their station is that of questioning and blandishment and their state is that of seeking and attachment. These are the novices (murīdīn) of the mystic path.

1. QQ, I, 105.

They are the exclusive men (khuṣūṣ) of the companions of the right hand (aṣḥāb al-yamīn).¹

According to al-Makkī one who has the following qualities will not gain understanding of the Qur'ān, with the manifestation of all its power, glory and majesty.

1. One who commits acts of innovation or one who is persistent in committing sin.
2. One who is having arrogance and pride in heart.
3. One in whose heart the passion (hawā) had gained a firm foothold.
4. One whose heart is full of love for this world.
5. One in whose heart the faith is not firmly rooted.
6. One who is weak in his certainty.
7. One who is more concerned with its letters, its selection and arrangement (ignoring the meaning).
8. One who follows the words of a commentator who is content with his formal knowledge ('ilm aẓ-ẓāhir).
9. One who is confined to his intellectual reasoning.

Those who belong to the above category are veiled by their intelligence, and intellectual reasoning and cannot penetrate beyond their veil of intellectualism.²

1. QQ, I, 100.

2. QQ, I, 96.

Thus al-Makkī condemns pure intellectual approach to the study of Qur'ān, even the formal theological knowledge will not help one to gain its true understanding. Thus he warns the danger of following the commentators who are confined to external knowledge. According to him, intellect is a veil to the true understanding of Qur'ān, and one who assigns primary position to intellect is really committing the sin of shirk, which he says is more hidden than the movement of an ant on the smooth ground on a dark night. Thus to al-Makkī, the true understanding of Qur'ān could be gained only through inner enlightenment.¹

According to him, one who recites the Qur'ān, with complete presence of heart, being conscious of the fact that he is listening to the secret speech of God, and with true realization of the meanings of the attributes of God, liberating himself from the binding chain of the intellect, glorifying the one who revealed it, standing humbly in his presence would gain true understanding of it and he will truly listen to the speech of almighty God.²

He quotes an anonymous saying, which states, "I never got the real pleasure of reciting the Qur'ān till I recite it as if I am listening to it from the Prophet when he recited to the companions. Then, I rose to a higher plane, until I recited it as if I am listening to the angel Jibrīl reciting it to the Prophet. Then came

1. QQ, I, 96

2. Ibid, I, 97.

the highest plane when I felt as if I was listening to Almighty God himself. It was at this point that I found complete pleasure which I could not control.¹

According to al-Makkī, the recitation of Qur'ān, and the contemplation upon its meanings, must lead one to pious actions, otherwise the recitation of Qur'ān would become an empty ritual devoid of any meaning. He quotes the Qur'ānic verse which condemns those who had forsaken the divine message.² "But, they flung it behind their backs and bought thereby a little gain. Verily evil is that which they have gained thereby."³ Among the companions of the Prophet there were very few who knew the Qur'ān by heart, but they were following its commandments, keeping away from its prohibitions.⁴

Al-Makkī quotes the verse of Qur'ān which says, "He hath written faith upon their hearts, and hath strengthened them with a spirit from him."⁵ According to al-Makkī this means that God had made their faith stronger by the knowledge of Qur'ān, because Qur'ān is the spirit of the faith (rūḥ al-īmān). Thus the strength of the faith lies in the right use of Qur'ān.⁶ Thus according to al-Makkī, the teachings of Qur'ān must find practical application

1. QQ, I, 105.
2. Ibid, I, 121.
3. Qur'ān, 3 : 187
4. QQ, I, 122
5. Qur'ān, 58 : 22
6. QQ, I, 98

in one's day to day life. He says, "Let Qur'ān be ones knowledge, his action, meditation, his prayer, his business, because, it is through the Qur'ān he could ask anything from God, and it is on the basis of Qur'ān, he shall be rewarded. His stations are from it, and his states are in it, thus everything he needs is in it."¹ Therefore, according to al-Makkī the recitation of Qur'ān, and the reflections and contemplation upon its meanings must lead him to pious actions because to hope for salvation purely on the basis of its recitation without practicing its commandments is against the wisdom and laws of God who says,² "Hath not the covenant of the scripture been taken on their behalf that they should speak aught concerning God save the truth and they have studied which is therein."³

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1. QQ, I, 106
 2. Ibid, 121
 3. Qur'ān, 7 : 169.

CHAPTER III

THE MYSTICAL CONCEPTS

I.

A. Al-Makkī's concept of the heart (qalb)

The concept of the heart forms the corner-stone of the mystical thought in Islam. According to al-Ghazālī it is the heart that distinguishes the man from the creatures and equips him for the knowledge of God, so the knowledge of the heart and its basic essential qualities is the root of religion, and the foundation of the travellers of the mystic path.¹

The ṣūfis distinguish three organs of spiritual communication; the heart (qalb) which knows God, the spirit (rūḥ) which loves him, and the inmost ground of the soul which contemplates him.² According to ṣūfi psychology the lower soul (nafs) represents the sensual nature of man, the intelligence ('aql) the intellectual nature of him, and the spirit (rūḥ) and the heart (qalb) represent the spiritual aspect of human personality. Thus, the qalb and the rūḥ are the proper organs of the mystical life and are generally not distinguished from one another.³ According to Macdonald, the word 'heart' does not adequately convey the meaning of Arabic qalb, because in English it is the seat of mind and related

1. Macdonald, Religious Attitude, 222, 223.

2. Mystics, 68.

3. Nicholson, art. Ṣūfis, in ERE (12) p. 13.

to the conception of emotions, affections, desires and sentiments, but according to ṣūfi concept the word 'heart' does not signify the heart of the flesh, but it is a transcendental subtilty (laṭīfa rabbāniyya), that is a non-material thing connected with the unseen world whereby the realities of all things are perceived like a mirror. Thus, the heart or qalb in the ṣūfi terminology represents the central organ of the soul corresponding to the vital centre of physical organ of the soul corresponding to the vital centre of physical organism. Thus the qalb according to ṣūfi concept represents the whole human personality.¹

Thus, all the mystics who attempted towards the theorisation of the ṣūfi doctrine and way of life, had accorded an important place to the concept of heart which in the words of al-Ghazālī, as referred to above, is the foundation of the mystic path. Ḥārith al-Muḥasibī (d. 861 A.D.) who is considered to be the first ṣūfi

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1. Macdonald, Religious Attitude, 221. Al-Ghazālī defines the heart as follows: By the heart, I do not mean the palpable matter of flesh, but one of the mysteries (sirr) of God which the physical senses (hass) fail to comprehend; a spiritual substance (laṭīfa) from God, sometimes indicated by the word (rūh) and at times by the term peaceful soul (an-nafs al-muṭma'inna). In religious law (shara') it is referred to as the heart because it is the primary vehicle (maṭīyya) and an instrument for that spiritual substance (laṭīfa). It is a precious jewel, and a pearl of immeasurable value. cf. Iḥyā', I, 48, 49.

author of foremost rank¹ bases his mystical teachings on the central theme of concept of heart, its qualities and mode of actions.² Ḥākīm at-Tirmidhī (fl. 280/893) who is called by Arberry the "psychologist of ṣūfism"³ has written an independent treatise on the description of the heart entitled "Bayān al-farq bayn aṣ-ṣadr wa-l-qalb wa-l-fu'ād wa-l-lubb."⁴

The study of al-Makkī's concept of qalb has to be made in the general background of the ṣūfi concept of heart, and an understanding of al-Makkī's concept of qalb is essential before one proceeds to analyse his mystical doctrine, because al-Makkī's theory of knowledge, concept of gnosis, the doctrine of the mystic path, its states (aḥwāl) and stations (maqāmāt) branches out from this central doctrine of the heart. The philosophy of the heart forms the central theme of his mystical doctrine, so much so, that he calls his work, the subject of present study as Qūt al-Qulūb, the food of the heart.

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1. Ṣūfism, 46.
 2. Early Mystic, 89.
 3. Ṣūfism, 61.
 4. For the translation of it vide, Nicholas Heer, art. "A ṣūfi psychological treatise" MW (51) 25, 83, 163, 244.

B. Al-Makkī's concept of science of the heart

('ilm al-gulūb)

It is generally held that Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728) was the one who laid the foundation of 'ilm al-gulūb which was later developed by the ṣūfis.¹ Al-Makkī too holds the same opinion, hailing Ḥasan al-Baṣrī as the founder of the science of the heart, and says that it is from Ḥasan that mystics like Mālik ibn-Dīnār, Farqad as-Sanjī and others derived this knowledge.²

According to al-Makkī, the tradition which states "Seeking knowledge is obligatory upon all the Muslims" is interpreted by some mystics like Mālik ibn-Dīnār to mean "Knowledge of the science of the heart", because it helps one to distinguish between the inspiration from the angel, and inspiration from the devil, between the suggestions of the soul (rūḥ) and the dubious suggestions of the lower soul (nafs).³

Al-Makkī quotes the Qur'ānic verse which states, "Of every troop of them, a party only should go forth that they (who are left behind) may gain sound knowledge in religion, and they may warn their folk when they return to them so that they may beware."⁴ According to al-Makkī

1. Margaret Smith, Readings from the Mystics of Islam, 8.

2. QQ, I, 262.

3. Ibid, 262-263. Al-Makkī's concept of this tradition will be discussed in the section dealing with his theory of knowledge.

4. Qur'ān 9:122

the term "knowledge" here implies the understanding of the actions of the heart, namely the science of the heart.¹ He also interprets a tradition in the same light, he cites a tradition which states, "May God have mercy upon one who listens to a saying from us and transmit it to others as he heard it, because one who hears from him may have a better understanding of it than one who transmits it." According to al-Makkī, the term "understanding" in this tradition implies understanding of the heart (faqīh al-qalb).² From al-Makkī's point of view, the knowledge of the heart is the reality of the religious law, and thus he calls the science of the heart as (ḥaqīqat al-fiqh), and also as science of the sciences ('ilm al-'ulūm) because according to him, the Prophet had made the heart a judge to issue verdicts on religious law.³ Thus al-Makkī who assigns such a unique place to the science of the heart has written an independent work on this subject entitled 'Ilm al-Qulūb,⁴ and had devoted a chapter in his Qūt to the exposition of the science of the heart, its nature and characteristics.

1. QQ, I, 298
2. Ibid, 296.
3. Ibid, 235.
4. This work of al-Makkī has already been discussed in chapter I.

C. Al-Makkī's description of the heart, its nature and characteristics.

According to al-Makkī, the qalb or heart represents the whole human personality. The qalb is one of the treasures of the spiritual world. The creator had invested it with desires (raghbūt) and fears (rahbūt) and illuminated it with the light of glory and power. The actions of the heart fall into the following groups.

1. Inspiration from the lower self (khāṭir an-nafs) and the inspiration from the devil (khāṭir al-'aduw): Generally all the believers possess these qualities, the passion and ignorance are motivating forces of this self.

2. Inspiration from the soul and the angel (khāṭir ar-rūḥ wa-l-malak): The exclusive group of the believers (khuṣūṣ al-mu'minīn) possess these praiseworthy inspirations.

3. Inspiration of the intellect (khāṭir al-'aql): It holds the central position among the above mentioned four types of inspirations, and it swings between the four, being at one time with the lower self and the devil and at other moments with the soul and the angel.

Thus Almighty God in his wisdom had created the heart in this manner, so that he may cause the creatures to do good, and bad through the use of the sense of discrimination.¹

1. QQ, I, 233, 234. By khāṭir the ṣūfis signify the occurrence in mind of something which is quickly removed by another thought, and which its owner is able to repel from his mind. See Kashf, 387 also cf. Qushyri, 51.

Thus according to al-Makkī God had made the human body as an abode to execute his laws and desires in the above manner and the philosophy of reward and punishment in his grand scheme revolves round the heart, having the intellect ('aql), sensual desires (shahwa) and intention (niyya) as accessories in this task.¹

Thus to al-Makkī, heart is the seat of all emotional, intellectual and spiritual activity. The lower self (nafs), the soul (rūḥ), the intelligence or the intellect ('aql) are the agencies that cause the heart to function in all matters of intellectual, emotional and spiritual life. He compares the heart to a lamp, the intellect to the candle that burns inside the lamp, and the knowledge to the oil which helps the lamp to burn. He calls the knowledge the soul of the lamp, because it is only through the oil called knowledge that the heart is kept alive, and the knowledge of certainty is attained. He compares the faith to the thread of the lamp, because as the power of the lamp depends on the degree of the strength and power of the wick so does certainty depend on the degree of faith. Thus the knowledge and faith helps the heart to attain its goal, the realization of the truth or the attainment of certainty.² The faith (īmān), knowledge ('ilm) and intellect ('aql) are combined in the heart

1. QQ, I, 234.

2. QQ, I, 236.

and help the attainment of certainty. The faith is like a fire stone (ḥajar an-nār) and the knowledge could be compared to the flint stone in which the fire stone (zinād) is to be struck to produce fire and the intellect could be compared to the place of burning (makān al-ḥaraq). Thus when the three are combined together the consciousness of certainty is lighted in the heart.¹

In every heart there are always three elements attached to the faculty of sensual desire (khawāṭir al-hawā), they are namely ignorance (jahl), avarice (ṭam'u) and love of the world (ḥubb ad-dunya), the strength or the weakness of the faculty of the sensual desire would depend upon the corresponding increase or decrease of these three aspects, and the faculty of the sensual desire could be weakened only by substituting the above qualities of ignorance, avarice, and the love of the world with knowledge, faith and intelligence.²

The heart has its senses like the body and al-Makkī calls it as "instruments and tools of the heart." The instruments of the body according to al-Makkī are its manifest attributes whereas the instruments of the heart are its hidden entities. The senses of the heart according to al-Makkī consists of the lower self (nafs), the soul (rūḥ), intellect ('aql), passion (hawā), knowledge ('ilm) and faith (īmān). The lower self and the

1. QQ, I, 236.

2. Ibid, 240.

soul are the abodes of the devil and angel respectively, the two entities that prompt men to do either good or evil, the intellect and passions perform their actions according to the will of the possessor, the knowledge and faith are two lights that issue from the heart through divine grace. Al-Makkī calls these six entities as the tools of the heart (adawāt al-qalb). The heart says al-Makkī is like a king, and its senses or instruments are like his army which obeys his command. The heart is also compared by al-Makkī to a mirror that reflects the objects around it. These six senses, according to al-Makkī, are the boundaries of the heart, and beyond these boundaries lie the treasures of the unseen, the celestial world of might and glory.¹

Al-Makkī quotes a saying of Sahl in which he states, "The heart has two aspects, one is the inner heart which possesses the ear and the eye and this is called the heart of the heart (qalb al-qalb). The other is the outer heart (ẓāhir al-qalb) and in it is the intellect. The example of the intellect in the heart is like the sight of the eye, it is a polishing for it is like the polishing in the blackness of the eye."² Al-Makkī quotes another anonymous mystic on the subject of inner and outer hearts. According to him, if ones faith is in the realm of the outer heart, he will love both this world and the here-

1. QQ, I, 232, 233.

2. QQ, I, 247.

after, and his heart will be in the state of swinging between God and the lower self, but if his faith enters the inner heart, he will hate this world and drive away all the sensual desires.¹ Al-Makkī too agrees with this concept of outer heart and inner heart. According to al-Makkī when ones faith is in the realm of outer heart (fu'ād)² the believer loves God in a moderate way, but when it enters the inner heart (bāṭin al-Qalb) then he loves God in a passionate manner. According to the learned says al-Makkī, the outer heart is the abode of islām and the inner heart is the abode of īmān.³

Al-Makkī too agrees with the above statement of Sahl in holding that the heart has its own eyes, ears. He says the heart has its own eyes, tongue and ears. Whatever falls within the ears of the heart is called understanding (fahm) and that which falls within the eyes of the heart is sight (nazr) which is contemplation (mushāhada). Whatever falls within the realm of the tongue of the heart becomes speech which amounts to tasting or relishing (dhawq). Whatever falls within the realm of its sense of smelling becomes knowledge which

1. Ibid.

2. It is interesting to note that al-Makkī uses the word fu'ād to denote the outer heart, whereas Ḥākim at-Tirmidhī has used it to denote the inner heart. See Ṣūfi Psychology, MW (51) 25.

3. QQ, II, 102. Al-Makkī's conception of the relationship between īmān and islām is discussed in chapter II.

amounts to reflection (fikr). Thus the senses of the heart are the agencies which enable contemplation and reflection, but if there occurs anything which could penetrate the thin veils of these senses of the heart, and find its way to the inner core of the heart (suwaydā'), it results in direct communion and then in ecstasy (wajd) which is a state in relation to contemplation.¹ According to al-Makkī, the eye of the face belongs to this world (mulk) but the eye of the heart is that of the other world (malakūt) and the same is true of all the senses.² Thus when one is a hypocrite his heart becomes hardened, but yet his eye will shed tears. This is the tears of the eyes of the body, and not of the heart.³

Thus the heart of each individual differs according to the degree of the realization of the truth. Al-Makkī quotes a tradition to elucidate this point. "The hearts are of four categories; the heart in which a lamp is shining is the heart of a believer; a heart which is dark and relapsed is the heart of an unbeliever; a heart which has a covering on it is the heart of a hypocrite; a heart which is plated (muṣaffa) in which there is both faith and hypocrisy."⁴ He also quotes the interpretation of Ubayy ibn-Ka'b, to the famous "light verse" (sūrat

1. QQ, I, 247.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid, 476.

4. Ibid, 233.

an-nūr) of Qur'ān where it is stated "God is the light of the heavens and the earth, the similitude of his light is a niche wherein is a lamp, the lamp is in a glass."¹

According to Ka'b, the phrase "his light" refers to the light of the believer. The heart of a believer is in a niche in which there is light. Thus, his speech is light, and his actions are light. In the same manner Ka'b is said to have interpreted the Qur'ānic verse, "Or as darkness in a vast abysmal sea,"² as referring to the heart of a hypocrite. Thus his speech is dark and his actions are dark.³ According to Zayd ibn-Aslam the term lawḥ al-maḥfūz in the Qur'ān refers to the heart of the believers. Al-Makkī also quotes the famous tradition, "Neither heavens and the earth but the heart of the believers contain me."⁴

D. Inspirations of the heart (khawāṭir)⁵

Al-Makkī quotes a tradition of Ibn-Masūd which states, "In the heart there are two types of inspirations, the inspiration of the angel (lummat al-malak) which prompts one towards good, and the inspirations of the devil,

1. Qur'ān, 24:35.

2. Ibid, 24:40.

3. QQ, I, 240.

4. Ibid.

5. The word khawāṭir, in ṣūfi terminology implies

suggestions or inspirations of the heart. The word inspiration is used here in this sense. cf. Kashf, 387.

which prompt one towards evil, falsifying the truth and preventing him from performing pious actions.¹ Al-Makkī categorises the suggestions and inspirations of the heart, assigning individual names to each of them as follows:

ilhām is the name for good thoughts that lead towards pious actions.

waswās is the dubious suggestions or evil thoughts that lead to sinful actions.

ḥasās is the name for the fearful thoughts which occur in the heart.

niyya is the good intention that occurs in one's heart.

amal or umniyya is the thought that occurs in one's heart and leads him towards the performance of permissible actions.

tadhakkur is the thought that occurs in one's heart reminding of the warning of the punishments and the promise of reward.

mushāhada is what the heart witnesses of the unseen with the eye of certainty ('ayn al-yaqīn).

hamn is the name which denotes the activities of the lower self.

lumam is what occurs in the heart due to the instigations of the sensual desire and habits ('adāt).²

1. QQ, I, 232.

2. QQ, I, 257, 258.

All the above aspects are generally called as khawāṭir which means suggestions or inspirations, because they all are either the aspirations of the lower self or the inspiration of the devil, through envy, or the suggestions of the angel through whispering.¹

There are some inspirations of the heart that are forgivable, and there are some for which one will be called to account for in the hereafter. The aspirations (himma) appear at times in the form of dubious suggestions of the lower self, and one will find the sudden appearance of it in the heart like the lightening, if one averts it by remembrance of God (dhikr) it will vanish, and if he leaves it due to his heedlessness then it will assume the form of a powerful suggestion. It is the suggestion of the devil with all the ornamentation and deception and if one rejects it, it will disappear, and if not it will gain a powerful influence over him and assume the form of a dubious suggestion. This is the state of obeying of the lower self to the devil, and if one averts it and guards himself against it through the remembrance of God, the hold of the devil would cease. These three aspects are forgivable due to the mercy of God and one will not be punished due to those evil inspirations and suggestions.²

1. Ibid

2. QQ, I, 258.

If one does not keep his lower self from obeying the suggestions of the devil, then the dubious suggestions would become stronger and assume the form of an intention (niyya) but if one does not substitute this evil intention with a pious intention, seek forgiveness from it and repent, it would gain more strength and become a powerful knot ('uqd), if he does not loosen this binding knot through the means of repentance (tawba) it would assume the form of determination ('azm) or a powerful aim (qaṣad).

These are three actions of the heart (a'māl al-qulūb) for which he will be called to account before God, and he will be punished.

If one is not saved through the mercy of God at this stage of firm determination ('azm) then his sense of resolution would assume the form of seeking an action (ṭalab) or an effort towards an action (sa'y). Thus, it would manifest in the members of the body in the form of actions, coming from the hidden source of the celestial world (malakūt), thus it would appear as actions of the body in this material world (mulk). These are the good and bad actions. The pious aspect of aspiration (himma), intention (niyya) and determination ('azm) which are confined to the state of pure thought or intention would be written in the scrolls as pure intentions and he will have the reward for it, in the same manner the evil aspect of the intention and determination will be considered as evil intentions, and he will be punished.¹

1. QQ, I, 258. cf. Ihyā', III, 36.

Thus al-Makkī categorises in a beautiful manner the various forms of suggestions and inspirations of the heart, assigning each its own name, and describing its characteristics, and he analyses in a beautiful manner how these intentions which are in the realm of the heart assume the form of actions manifesting in the members of the body. Thus, according to him, the actions of the heart (a'māl al-qulūb) have their corresponding effect on the actions of the body (a'māl al-jawāriḥ). The former belongs to the celestial world (malakūt) and the latter to the material world.¹

According to al-Makkī, the sinful thought that occurs in the heart, and then changes without gaining a firm hold in the heart, is an inspiration from the devil. The sensual desire that gains a firm foothold on the heart and creates a state of perplexity is from the lower soul which commands to do sin (an-nafs al-ammāra bi'ssū'i).² If one gets the aspiration in his heart to commit sin, and at the same time if he feels a sense of despise towards it, then the desire to commit sin is from the devil, and the hatred towards it is from the faith (īmān). If one has the aspiration to commit sin, or if one is inclined towards his sensual desires, and at the same time feels that he is being prevented from it,

1. QQ, I, 258.
2. cf. Qur'ān, 12:53.

the former is from the lower self (nafs) and the latter is from the angel. Whatever the thoughts that set in one's heart regarding the hereafter, or what is being promised in the hereafter is from the intellect ('aql). If he finds in his heart the feeling of fear (khawf), shame (ḥayā'), abstinence (wara') or asceticism (zuhd), then it is from his faith. Whatever the heart witnesses of the majesty, power, glory or of nearness (qurb) of God is from certainty (yaqīn).¹

After this categorisation and analysis of the inspirations and suggestions of one's heart, and their sources and manifestations in the form of the actions of the members of the body, al-Makkī feels that any exposition of the matters pertaining to the assertion of unity is beyond the ability of man, but every science says al-Makkī, needs some form of exposition. Thus, what is a unity and indivisible (jam') has been analysed in the language of religious law (lisān ash-shara') in order to give an exposition of the path as a guide line to the seekers of the mystic path.² "That he who perished might perish by a clear proof, and he who survived might survive by a clear proof."³

1. QQ, I, 259.

2. Ibid.

3. Qur'ān, 8:42.

E. Purification of the heart.

The mystical concept of the purification of the heart is beautifully illustrated by Nicholson in the following words, "Normally the heart is veiled by sin tarnished by sensual impressions pulled to and fro between reason and passion, so the inward spiritual eye which the ṣūfi called the eye of the heart is blind to the celestial glory until the dark obstruction of the phenomenal self with all its contamination has been wholly cleared away. The clearance away if it is to be done efficiently, must be the work of God though it demands a certain inward cooperation on the part of man."¹

Al-Makkī too agrees with the above concept in holding that the purification of the heart could only be accomplished through divine grace. He quotes a tradition which states, "The heart is like a sparrow which jumps from one place to the other every moment." The heart according to another tradition is between the fingers of almighty God, and he changes it as he wishes."² Thus it is almighty God who causes the heart to change and it is he who guides and makes one go astray.³

Thus according to al-Makkī, when God wishes the safety and success of one, he acts in such a manner that

1. Mystics, 69, 70.

2. QQ, I, 253.

3. Ibid, 255.

it would create a sense of piety in him which would cause him to subdue his lower desires and entrust his affairs to God, and God would glance at his heart in such a manner that would drive away the evil inspirations and open up for him the path of safety, thus his heart would become pure through the illumination of the divine light and he will turn away from his evil inspirations and seek pardon from God. In the same manner, if God wants to make one go astray, he would look at him in such a manner that intellect would be subordinated to his lower self, and his heart would be filled with sensual desire. Thus, due to the increasing control of the devil the light of certainty (nūr al-yaqīn) would lose its power, and his faith would be veiled, and this process would lead to the appearance of sinful actions.¹

The hearts of men of piety prompt them to do good due to divine grace. It is to this effect the Prophet has referred when he stated, "If God wants to do good to some one, he causes his own heart to warn and admonish him." Thus the men of heart (ahl-al-qulūb) receive the admonition from God, from the source of their hearts. Thus the Qur'ān refers to this spiritual state when it says, "Our Lord! lo, we have heard a crier calling unto faith."² The reference here says al-Makkī, is to the

1. QQ, I, 249.

2. Qur'ān, 3:193.

admonition of the heart.¹ Thus almighty God bestows to the men of certainty, the light to distinguish between the things that are dubious (shubhāt) and those which are of certainty (yaqīn). It is to this light of distinction that God refers when he says, "O! ye who believe! If you keep your duty to Allah, he will give you discrimination between right and wrong."²

Though the safety of the heart is purely in the hands of God, and it is one of the gifts that he bestows upon whom he wills, human effort also could play an important role in the task of purification of the heart. In the path of purification of the heart the greatest struggle one has to wage is against his lower self and the devil; man gets the instinct to commit sin either through ignorance (jahl), heedlessness (ghafla), or the love of worldly desires. It is these three aspects that create the dubious suggestions (waswās) in the heart, and the presence of the devil in the heart is caused by them. Therefore, one should struggle against his own lower self and the devil, and prevent the evil instincts that are created by these two forces, from transforming into manifest actions. He should also safeguard the members of the body from submitting to the inspirations of the lower self in the performance of sinful acts, because if he does not act in this manner it would act as a veil

1. QQ, I, 236.

2. Qur'ān, 8:29, QQ, I, 242.

between his heart and certainty.¹ The heart should also be cleansed of the rust of the desires of the lower self, by increasingly engaging in recollection (dhikr). It is from recollection or remembrance of God, that the heart is able to witness the reality of things. The remembrance of God could be attained only on the basis of piety and godliness (taqwa) and piety is the pathway to the hereafter, as much as passion (hawa) is the door to this world.² It is to this aspect God refers in the Qur'ān when he says, "Lo! those who ward off evil when a glamour from the devil troubleth them, they do but remember Allah's guidance and behold them seers."³

1. QQ, I, 248.

2. Ibid, 233.

3. Qur'ān, 7:201.

II. Al-Makkī's Theory of Knowledge.

A. Relationship between 'ilm and ḥikma, and 'ilm and
īmān.

Al-Makkī's theory of knowledge proceeds from his concept of the heart. According to him 'ilm or knowledge is the noblest of all the possessions, and Qur'ān refers to knowledge as a bounty or grace. When God says, "Allah revealeth unto thee scripture and wisdom and teacheth that which thou knowest not, the grace of Allah towards thee hath been infinite."¹

Knowledge is a gift from God to whom he wills; it is the light which God cast into the hearts of his friends, by it some of them are honoured over the others. When this light is cast into the heart, it expands with knowledge, and his sight (naẓr) expands with certainty, and his tongue would give expression to reality.²

Al-Makkī quotes a tradition in which the Prophet had made a reference to this type of knowledge which one receives through divine blessing, when he gave an exposition to the Qur'ānic verse which states, "And whomsoever it is

1. Qur'ān, 4:103, cf. QQ, I, 145.

2. QQ, I, 301. Al-Ghazālī too expresses the same concept, holding that knowledge is a light which God casts into the heart; Watt, The Faith and Practice of al-Ghazālī, 25, also cf. Ihyā', III, 16.

Allah's will to guide, he expands his bosom unto Islam."¹ When it was asked from him what is meant by the expansion of the bosom, he said, "When the light is thrown into the heart, his heart expands and becomes broader."²

Knowledge is also the wisdom (ḥikma) which God deposits in the hearts of his friend as Qur'ān says, "And gave him wisdom and decisive speech."³ Moreover God says, "He giveth wisdom unto whom he will, and he unto whom wisdom is given, he truly hath received abundance good."⁴ Al-Makkī interprets the term 'ḥikma' to mean 'understanding' (fahm). To him the knowledge of a thing, and gaining understanding in it are two different things. To illustrate this point, he states that there were companions of the Prophet who knew the ḥadīth, but later scholars gained better understanding of it than the companions who knew the traditions. Thus in the presence of Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, a companion of the Prophet narrated twenty-one traditions, but when Ḥasan requested him to interpret the meaning of them, he said, "I know nothing except what I heard from the Prophet." Thereafter Ḥasan explained and interpreted the tradition to the astonishment of that companion. Thus says al-Makkī, Ḥasan had better 'understanding' of the tradition than

1. Qur'ān, 6:126.
2. QQ, I, 301.
3. Qur'ān, 38:21.
4. Ibid, 2:269.

the companion who possessed the knowledge about the tradition.¹

Al-Makkī elaborates this concept of the difference between 'ilm and ḥikma in more detail in his 'Ilm al-Qulūb. He says, "One who is learned ('ālim) is in need of a man of understanding or wisdom (ḥakīm) to clarify the things, but the latter is in no need of the former, as Moses was in need of Khidr, but Khidr was not in need of Moses."² Thus, Aḥmad ibn-Ḥanbal used to seek the assistance of Ma'rūf al-Karkhī, and ash-Shāfi'ī used to go to ash-Shaybānī to clarify matters and to seek explanation and elucidation on some points.³

To al-Makki knowledge and faith are identical things because Qur'ān mentions faith along with knowledge when it says, "But those to whom knowledge and faith are given."⁴ On another occasion Qur'ān speaks of the believers on equal terms with the learned, "Allah will exalt those who believe among you and those who have knowledge to high ranks."⁵ Thus al-Makkī argues on the basis of the above

1. QQ, I, 300.

2. Apparently, the reference here is to the Qur'ānic story of Moses and Khidr as narrated in sūrat al-Kahf, also cf. art. al-Khāḍir (al-Khidr) in SE1, 232-235

3. 'Ilm, 51

4. Qur'ān, 30:56

5. Ibid, 58:11

verses of Qur'ān that knowledge and faith are identical.¹ Moreover, the way of the companions of the Prophet too support this contention. Thus 'Abd-Allah ibn-Rawāḥa used to say to his companions, "Let us sit and believe for a while," and after that they used to discuss the knowledge of faith ('ilm al-īmān).² Thus he named knowledge as faith. Moreover, God had made the ears, the eyes and the heart as the media through which the believers derive their knowledge. Hence, God says that those who have not benefitted from these organs are those who had rejected the signs of God. "And had assigned them ears, eyes and hearts, but their ears, eyes and hearts availed them naught since they denied the revelation of God."³ Thus says al-Makkī, it follows that those who believe in the revelation of God are those to whom their ears, eyes and the heart have benefitted, because they are the means by which one derives the knowledge of God.⁴

To al-Makkī, the knowledge about God and the knowledge about faith are inseparable; the former he calls 'ilm at-tawḥīd and the latter 'ilm al-īmān. The knowledge about God is the criterion by which one's faith is measured (mīzān al-īmān). It is in the light of the

1. QQ, I, 278
2. Ibid, 279
3. Qur'ān, 47:26
4. QQ, I, 279

knowledge about tawhīd that one's increase and decrease in faith could be assessed. Thus increase or decrease in one's faith is in proportion to one's increase or decrease of knowledge about the assertion of unity.¹ Only through 'ilm-at-tawhīd that one's vain conjectures and doubts (ẓann) and the diabolical suggestions that enter one's heart could be made to disappear.² Thus the Prophet has given preference to 'ilm at-tawhīd over all other sciences and knowledge. There are several traditions of the Prophet which speak about the virtues of the assembly of the remembrance of God (majālis adh-dhikr) and about the virtues of those who remember God. This only refers to the knowledge of faith and gnosis ('ilm al-īmān wa-l-ma'rifa).³ The companions of the Prophet used to give preference to 'ilm al-īmān. It is stated in a tradition that the Prophet taught the companions the faith before he taught them Qur'ān. The term īmān in this tradition indicates not the faith as such, but the knowledge of faith because it is really the

1. Ibid, 295. The question relating to the increase and decrease of faith has been already discussed in the section dealing with īmān. See above. 64.
2. Ibid, 301.
3. Ibid, 302.

description of faith.¹

Those who possess the true knowledge of God and faith would substitute intellectual reasoning with certainty, and the knowledge of personal opinion ('ilm ar-ra'y) with the science of tradition ('ilm as-sunna) and they would confirm what they learn from prophetic tradition through the light which is casted on their heart.²

Generally speaking it is very difficult to distinguish al-Makkī's concept of 'ilm al-īmān from his view on 'ilm at-tawhīd, because he uses both these terms in identical sense, to denote the knowledge about God, his names and attributes. According to al-Makkī, knowledge is of two kinds, one is the knowledge which is not proper to impart it until it is solicited for, and the other is the knowledge of the meaning of the attributes of God, the knowledge which Khidr commanded Moses not to ask for until it is given.³

1. QQ, I, 306

2. Ibid, 356.

3. Ibid, 113 cf. Qur'ān, 18:70.

B. The nature of obligatory knowledge.

('ilm al-farīda).

Before we proceed to analyse al-Makkī's concept of science of the heart and the distinction between the inward and outward knowledge, we must have a clear concept of al-Makkī's interpretation of the famous tradition of the Prophet on obligatory knowledge.

Al-Makkī quotes the tradition which states, "Seeking knowledge is an ordinance obligatory on every Muslim" and proceeds to give an exposition of the definitions of the obligatory knowledge, as given by both the theologians and the mystics, because, according to him, each of these groups differ in their interpretation of this famous tradition.¹

According to Sahl at-Tustarī whom al-Makkī hails as his spiritual master, the term obligatory knowledge implies the knowledge of mystical states ('ilm al-hāl). Some gnostics, says al-Makkī, interpret it to mean the knowledge of gnosis ('ilm al-ma'rifa), some scholars of Syria explain it to denote the knowledge of sincerity ('ilm al-ikhlas) and scholars of Baṣra assert that it refers to the science of the heart ('ilm al-qulūb) and the knowledge about the inspirations of the heart (khawāṭir), because they state that this knowledge is

1. QQ, I, 263. In his 'Ilm al-Qulūb too he analyses this tradition in the same manner as he has done in Qūt, cf. 'Ilm 80-86.

essential to distinguish between the inspiration of the devil, diabolical suggestions and the inspirations of the angel. Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, who is considered to be the founder of the science of the heart held this view, and most of the ṣūfis of Baghdād including Mālik ibn-Dīnār and Farqad as-Sanjī held this opinion. But some of the learned men of Syria interpreted the term 'obligatory knowledge' to mean the knowledge of permissible things (ḥalāl). They held this viewpoint in the light of another tradition which states, "Seeking the lawful things is obligatory after the fulfilment of all other obligations." Some of the jurists, including Abū-Ḥanīfa and his disciples, hold the opinion that it is the knowledge of the rules relating to buying and selling, and marriage and divorce.¹

Al-Makkī, after stating all these different interpretations as to the nature of obligatory knowledge, states that although all these different interpretations are clothed in different phraseology and appears to be mutually contradictory, are nevertheless convey the same meaning and concept. The differences, that are apparent and not real, are due to the fact that the men

1. QQ, I, 263-264. Al-Ghazālī too discusses this tradition in his Ihyā' and states that the people differed as to the obligatory knowledge referred in this tradition and split it up into twenty groups, each group insisting upon the necessity of acquiring the branch of knowledge which happened to be its speciality. Ihyā', I, 14.

of formal knowledge (ahl az-zāhr) interpret it in the light of their knowledge and men of inward knowledge ('ilm al-bāṭin) explain it in the light of their own knowledge, but both the inward knowledge and outward knowledge says al-Makkī are interdependent and hence, cannot be separated from each other like the relationship between īmān and islām, and body and heart.¹

Al-Makkī differs from all the above interpretations in his exposition of the concept of obligatory knowledge, his individualism manifests quite prominently when he chooses to differ from his spiritual mentor Sahl at-Tustarī in this matter. According to al-Makkī, obligatory knowledge as it occurs in the prophetic tradition implies the knowledge of the five pillars of Islam, because one cannot engage in these actions without acquiring the necessary knowledge about them.² Al-Makkī says that by the term 'knowledge' (al-'ilm) the Prophet did not mean the science of astronomy, medicine, grammar or poetry. According to him, the definite article 'al' which occurs as a prefix with ''ilm' implies a specific knowledge, which is the knowledge of the basic principles of Islam.³

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1. QQ, I, 264, for a detailed exposition of this concept of al-Makkī see his 'Ilm, 57.
 2. Ibid, al-Ghazālī appears to have based his concept of knowledge whose acquisition is farḍ 'ayn, on the interpretation al-Makkī has given to the tradition discussed above. cf. Ihyā', I, 13-15.
 3. QQ, I, 264. Al-Ghazālī too employs the same argument to indicate the fact that what is intended was specific knowledge. cf. Ihyā', I, 15.

He quotes another tradition of the Prophet in support of his view point, when a Bedouin questioned from the Prophet, "What God had made obligatory upon me?" The Prophet informed him about the shahāda or the basic creed of Islam, the prayer, charity, fasting and ḥajj. When the Bedouin repeated it, inquiring are there anything apart from these five which are obligatory he replied saying, "I shall not increase anything on it, nor decrease anything from it." Thus this illustrates very clearly that the Prophet meant by the term obligatory knowledge, the knowledge of the five principles of Islam, because without this knowledge one cannot perform these obligatory duties.¹

Moreover, the knowledge about a particular religious duty becomes obligatory when that particular duty becomes obligatory upon one. As for the general body of the Muslims there is nothing obligatory upon them except these five pillars of Islam.²

C. The ways of seeking knowledge.

According to al-Makkī, it is not permitted for a Muslim to remain in ignorance because the Qur'ān says, "Ask the followers of remembrance if ye know not."³ Thus if one is ignorant he should go in search of knowledge

1. QQ, I, 265.

2. Ibid.

3. Qur'ān, 16:43, Ibid.

because it is a great sinful act to remain in ignorance. Thus when Sahl was questioned what act of disobedience to God is greater than ignorance he said it is being ignorant of one's ignorance. According to al-Makkī, one who remains ignorant not only fails to fulfil one of the fundamental obligations of Islam, but he also, at times, may act in a manner which may create mischief in the society; he may issue religious verdicts or may speak about dubious things authoritatively, and misguide the people; hence it is the duty of everyone to seek knowledge not only for his well-being, but also for the well-being of the society.¹

Before one sets out in search of knowledge, he must have a clear idea as to the nature of the knowledge he is seeking, otherwise he may seek the wrong type of knowledge, and may be misled by the utterances of the pseudo-ṣūfis, story tellers and scholastic theologians. He is also in danger of falling a prey to mere ornamentation of speech which is devoid of true and beneficial knowledge, taking it for real knowledge.²

Al-Makkī states that this is important especially in the present age in which the state of learning, and the learned, has been degraded to a greater extent, and everyone who speaks in an eloquent manner with ornamentation and embellishment, but who is unable to

1. QQ, I, 314.

2. Ibid, 315.

distinguish between the truth and falsehood has been named as learned ('ālim) and any speech which is beautiful and attractive, but devoid of any truth is termed knowledge. This state of confusion is more aggravated by the ignorant masses who are unable to distinguish between 'ilm and kalām, between the 'ālim and mutakallim, because this is the age in which the mutakallimūn are named as 'ulamā', and the mere story tellers (quṣṣāṣ) who do not possess even the least knowledge of religion, and certainty, are hailed as gnostics ('ārifūn).¹

Al-Makkī quotes Ibn-Mas'ūd who says, "You shall be on the right path if there is somebody to inform you the correct knowledge when there arises confusion in your heart."² He proceeds to analyse the state of one who intends seeking knowledge in this age, in the manner of giving an exposition on the statement of Ibn-Mas'ūd. Al-Makkī says that in this age, if there arises in the mind of one an urge to inquire into the meaning of tawḥīd and the qualities of a muwaḥḥid, he may seek the assistance of five groups of men in order to seek the knowledge of it.

1. QQ, I, 327. See also, p. 325. According to al-Makkī, the pious ancestors used to distinguish between the assembly of the story tellers, and assemblies of the remembrance of God (majālis adh-dhikr) and also between 'ilm al-lisān and 'ilm al-fiqh, and 'ilm al-'aql and 'ilm al-yaqīn, QQ, I, 313.

2. Ibid, 297.

1. A misguided innovator (mubtadi') who will express his personal opinion, prompted by his sensual desire and increase the state of perplexity and confusion of the seeker.
2. A scholastic theologian (mutakallim) who would pass judgement on matters which are truly witnessed by men of certainty, on the basis of his limited knowledge, and on the matters of outward aspects of religion, on the basis of his intellectual reasoning. When this itself involves doubt and uncertainty and not based on truth and certainty, how could it dispel the doubts of others?
3. A shallow, perplexed, misguided ṣūfi who would bypass the Qur'ān and sunna, violate the view points of the truly learned, and give utterance to statements according to his whims and fancies, his imagination and conjecture.
4. One who issues religious verdicts (mufti) on the basis of his shallow knowledge, ignoring the inward knowledge, and who seeks the pleasure of men, having the object of this world in mind in preference to the hereafter.
5. One who narrates tradition without any proof or critical examination.¹

1. QQ, I, 297, 98.

Thus, in this age of ours, says al-Makkī, many false types of knowledge have made their appearance under the guise of true knowledge. These are the types of knowledge which deceive the seeker. As the Qur'ān states, "The thirsty one supposeth it to be water till he cometh unto it and findeth it naught."¹

Thus, due to the confusion that prevails in the society as to the nature of knowledge, one should have a clear idea about the type of knowledge he seeks, and he also must have an exact knowledge of the person from whom he seeks it.² Hence, al-Makkī defines the qualities of the truly learned.

The truly learned who are described as 'inheritors of the prophets' are those who are men of abstinence who had completely shunned the pleasures of this world. They are those who speak through the knowledge of certainty ('ilm al-yaqīn) and not on the basis of the knowledge of personal opinion ('ilm ar-ra'y) and their passion and sensual desire; they will observe silence in relation to dubious things (shubhāt).³ Silence, according to al-Makkī, is one of the noble qualities of men of true knowledge. He quotes Ibrāhīm ibn-Adham, "The silence of a learned man is very hard on the devil than his speech because he is silent through his quality of forbearance and he speaks on the basis of his knowledge."⁴

1. Qur'ān, 36:29.

2. QQ, I, 327.

3. Ibid, 358.

4. Ibid, 314.

According to al-Makkī, the learned men who possess the knowledge about God ('ālim bi'llah) must have five signs. They are, fear of God, humility, modesty, good disposition and asceticism.¹

Al-Makkī quotes Fudayl ibn-Iyad who says, "There are two types of learned men. The learned men of this world ('ālim dunya) and the learned of the hereafter ('ālim ākhira). The former belongs to this world and his knowledge is manifest and known. The latter belongs to the hereafter, his knowledge is veiled and concealed. Beware of the former, let him not turn you away from the right path by his charming words." And he recited the Quranic verse, "O! ye who believe! lo many of the rabbis and the monks devour the wealth of mankind and debar men from the way of Allah"² and Fudayl interpreted the term rabbis as learned men, and the monks as ascetics.

The truly learned according to al-Makkī would give preference to knowledge of certainty over intellectual reasoning, and to sunna over personal opinion; they would approach the narrations of men with a sense of critical examination with the help of the divine light which is shed on their heart through divine grace. It is to men of this nature God refers when he says, "We appointed from among them leaders who guided by our command.."

1. QQ, I, 297

2. Qur'ān, 9:34, also QQ, I, 287

'Alī ibn Abū-Ṭālib described the learned of the world as those who speak on the basis of personal opinion and sensual desires, and the learned of the hereafter as those who possess the knowledge of lordship, and (rubūbiyya) as those who act upon that knowledge and impart it to others.¹

Apart from this division of the learned men of the hereafter and the learned of the world, some others classify the possessors of knowledge on the basis of the learned who are commoners ('alim 'amma) and the learned who are elite ('alim khāṣṣa). The former is the one who passes judgement in relation to the lawful and unlawful things, the latter are men who possess the knowledge of tawḥid, and gnosis, they are the elite. He refers to the former as the companions of the pillars (aṣḥāb al-asāṭin) and the latter as the men of the corners (ahl az-zawāya).²

1. QQ, I, 290.

2. Ibid, 289. The term aṣḥāb al-asāṭin indicates that they were in the company of the men engaging in preaching and offering guidance. The term ahl az-zawāya denotes the fact that these group of men were generally kept away from the people, engaging in devotion and contemplation. Thus Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, who was the representative of the former category is compared by al-Makkī to the River Tigris which is well known to everybody, and Bishr al-Ḥārith, who belonged to the latter group is compared with a well which has extremely sweet water, but it is covered and hidden, and hence only a very few who have knowledge of it resort to it. QQ, I, 279.

D. The qualities of the seekers of knowledge.

While al-Makkī gives a detailed exposition on the qualities of the learned, he also gives a vivid description of the qualities the seekers of knowledge should cultivate in order to achieve the real benefit of what they seek. The primary factor, according to al-Makkī, is the cultivation of pure intentions. One should seek knowledge with the object of attaining piety (taqwa) and godliness, and engaging in those pious actions. He quotes several sayings which stress the importance of combining knowledge with action ('amal).¹ He quotes Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, who used to say "Seek knowledge with the desire to perform pious actions. Verily, God will not reward you for your knowledge until you engage in pious actions, because the object of the fools in acquiring knowledge is narration (riwāya) and the aim of the learned in regard to it is watchfulness (ri'āya).²

He quotes several statements of his spiritual master Sahl, about the qualities of the seekers of knowledge. The seekers of knowledge, according to Sahl, fall into three categories. There are those who seek it in order to act upon it. Then there are those who seek it in order to know different view points (ikhtilāf) so that they may practice abstinence and protect themselves. Then there

1. QQ, I, 280

2. Ibid, 270

are others who seek it to know the different interpretations (ta'wīl) and then get hold of the unlawful and make it lawful.¹ According to al-Makkī, ignorance is better than seeking the knowledge for the purpose of interpreting the facts to suit one's passion and sensual desire. This is the type of knowledge from which the Prophet sought refuge.²

Thus al-Makkī considers the action of seeking knowledge as a pious action, and one who seeks knowledge is really fulfilling a religious obligation; hence, he must engage in this act with the same care and devotion with which he engages in other religious duties.³

E. 'Ilm az-ẓāhir and 'Ilm al-bāṭin.

As-Sarrāj, the contemporary of al-Makkī states that 'ilm al-ḥaqā'iq or mysticism is the end of all types of knowledge and the ultimate goal of all sciences. It is really an ocean which has no end or boundaries. He also uses the word 'ilm al-qulūb to denote 'ilm al-ḥaqā'iq.⁴

Broadly speaking, in ṣūfi terminology, the phrases like 'ilm al-ma'rifa, or gnosis, 'ilm al-asrār or the science of divine mysteries, 'ilm al-bāṭin or inward knowledge, are generally used to denote the concept

1. Ibid, 276. Also see p. 277.

2. QQ, I, 276.

3. cf. the section on 'intention' in chapter IV

4. Luma', 379.

of the science of the heart which is generally held to be the esoteric knowledge one receives through divine grace in the form of a light casted into his heart.

Al-Makkī attaches so much importance to this concept of the science of the heart that he has written an independent treatise on it entitled 'Ilm al-Qulūb.¹ According to al-Makkī Ḥasan al-Baṣri (110/728) was the first person to formulate the basis of this knowledge and to have given expression to it. He says, "Ḥasan was the imām of us in this science. We who speak about it now, only follow his traces and the path he had trodden. We seek light from his lamp."² According to al-Makkī, Ḥasan derived this knowledge from Ḥudhayfa ibn al-Yamān, a companion of the Prophet, and it is said that the Prophet had transmitted this knowledge exclusively to him among his companions.³ In his 'Ilm al-Qulūb, al-Makkī develops this concept further by stating that the Prophet had derived it from Mika'īl who in turn had derived it from the divine pen, and it had derived it from the almighty God who said, "'Ilm al-bāṭin is of my mysteries, I have hidden it from my creatures and bestow it to my exclusive servants." Thus the science of the heart is

1. This work has been already discussed in the first chapter.

2. QQ, I, 304.

3. Ibid, 305.

of divine origin and belongs to the world of mysteries.¹

Al-Makkī uses the term "'ilm al-bāṭin" at times to denote 'ilm al-qulūb, and distinguish between 'ilm al-bāṭin which is the inward or esoteric knowledge and 'ilm az-ẓāhir, the outward or exoteric knowledge. The former is related to the hereafter (malakūt) and the latter to this world (mulk). The outward knowledge is pertaining to the tongue, a manifest organ of the human body and the inward knowledge is related to the heart which is a hidden treasure that belongs to the hereafter. Thus, the superiority of inward knowledge to the outward knowledge is like the superiority of the hereafter to this world; and the superiority of the heart, to the tongue.² The men of outward knowledge are the ornaments of the world and the earth, but the men of inward knowledge are ornaments of the hereafter. The former

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1. 'Ilm, 53. Ibn al-Jawzī quotes a tradition from 'Alī which states, "'ilm al-bāṭin is of the mysteries of God, and he cast into the hearts of those whom he wishes" and asserts that this is a weak tradition which has no basis, Talbīs, 321.
 2. Al-Ghazālī too makes this distinction between the outward and inward knowledge, cf. Iḥyā' I, 107, III, 311, IV, 216; and as-Suhrawardī refers to outward knowledge as the science of the tongue, and inward knowledge as science of the heart, Awārif al-Ma'ārif, 70.

are men of exposition and speech, (ahl al-khabar wa-l-lisān) and the latter are those who rule over their hearts and eyes (arbāb al-qulūb wa'l-'iyan). The outward knowledge is in need of the inward knowledge for its validity and confirmation as the law (ḥukm) attains its validity on the basis of the verdict issued by a judge (ḥākim).¹

Al-Makkī uses the term 'ilm al-yaqīn or knowledge of certainty synonymous with the inward knowledge. According to him, the knowledge of certainty is the reality of all the sciences, and the most purest and choicest part of them. As such, one who possesses it is independent of the need for the acquisition of all other sciences, whereas those who possess the knowledge of all other sciences are not free from the need for the acquisition of the knowledge of certainty because all the sciences stop at the point of God who is the source of all knowledge, and the knowledge of certainty springs from this divine source.² Thus in every way the inward knowledge is superior to the outward knowledge and it is due to this fact says al-Makkī that whenever the men of outward knowledge are confused and perplexed in relation to anything, they seek the assistance of those who are men of inward knowledge who possess the knowledge about God (ahl 'ilm bi'llāh) because they feel the latter are

1. QQ, I, 321.

2. Ibid, 320.

free from the passions, sensual desires and sinful acts, and more closer to divine grace. Thus it is said Imām ash-Shāfi'ī used to seek the assistance of Shaybān ar-Rā'iy, and Imām Aḥmad ibn-Ḥanbal and Yaḥyā-ibn-Ma'īn used to go to Ma'rūf al-Karkhī, to seek clarification in certain matters, even though they were more qualified in the knowledge of Qur'ān and sunna than those to whom they used to go to seek clarification.¹

The inward knowledge is suitable to be imparted to only a few exclusive souls who are capable of receiving it, and there are few of this group of men in existence at all times. Thus it is said, says al-Makkī, in Baṣra there were a hundred and twenty preachers who dealt with subjects of general admonition (wa'z) but there were only six who spoke on the science of gnosis (ma'rifa), certainty (yaqīn), mystical states (aḥwāl) and stations (maqāmāt).² Thus the assemblies of story-tellers and

1. QQ, I, 321, 322. According to al-Makkī, the men of inward knowledge may not follow (taqlīd) men of outward knowledge in matters of religion because the pious ancestors acted in this manner. Thus, when they attained higher spiritual stations, they differed from those from whom they received their knowledge, due to their increase in certainty and understanding. Thus Ibn 'Abbās studied fiqh under Zayd ibn-Thābit and Qur'ānic reading under 'Ubayy ibn-Ka'b, and then later differed from him in relation to fiqh, and from 'Ubayy in relation to Qur'ānic reading. QQ, I, 326.

2. QQ, I, 318.

preachers were crowded with large numbers of people, and the assembly of those who spoke about the inward knowledge had a very limited audience. This indicates that the inward knowledge is something which is the privilege of a choicest few.¹ Hence most of those learned scholars who spoke on inward knowledge addressed to a limited audience. Sufyān ath-Thawrī and Ibrāhīm ibn-Adham used to speak to only one, Sahl would not have more than five to ten men in his assembly, and it is said that Junayd spoke only to an assembly of ten men, the number of audience in his assembly is stated to have never exceeded twenty.²

Thus inward knowledge, which one acquires through divine grace, and which is the proudest privilege of the choicest few, is the life of the heart (ḥayāt al-qulūb), the light of the eye in darkness, the strength of the body in weakness and by it the servants of God reach the state of the righteous (abrār).³ To think about this knowledge amounts to fasting, and the acquisition of it

1. QQ, I, 318.

2. QQ, I, 316.

3. Though the term abrār is translated here as righteous, it really denotes a group of men who are in one of the highest grades of spiritual elevation. For the Qur'ānic usage of this term, vide, Qur'ān, 3: 193, 3:198, 82:13, 83:18, 83:22.

amounts to engage in worship keeping vigil at night, because it is through this knowledge one attains the spirit of obedience to God, and it is through this knowledge that the assertion of unity is proclaimed.¹

As it has already been stated, al-Makkī was a moderate thinker who was ever watchful in guarding himself against any form of extremist tendencies. This spirit of moderation is manifest in every aspect of his doctrine. Thus we see him, while stressing the superiority of inward knowledge over outward knowledge, stating that the Prophet had laid equal emphasis on outward knowledge too, which is the knowledge related to religious laws, and the decisions made on the basis of those laws, ('Ilm al-aḥkām wa'l-fatyā) is the knowledge which is bequeathed to one generation from the previous generation through hearsay. This knowledge will remain so long as Islam and the Muslims remain, because it is the proof of God (ḥujjat-allah) among his servants, and the ignorance of this knowledge would lead one to polytheism (shirk).²

Thus according to al-Makkī one must have a very good grounding on the outward knowledge, before he ventures into the field of inward knowledge or mysticism. He quotes the advice of Junayd al-Baghdadī to Sarī as-Saqāṭī, wherein al-Junayd advises him to gain the knowledge of ḥadīth, sunna and other fundamentals of religion (uṣūl) before

1. QQ, I, 274.

2. QQ, I, 296.

he seeks the knowledge of taṣawwuf, because these sciences of outward knowledge is the root, from which branches out all other types of knowledge and devotion, hence one must not concern himself with the subsidiary aspects of religion before he grasps the essentials and fundamentals of it.¹

F. 'Ilm and Ma'rifa.

Ma'rifa or gnosis according to the ṣūfi concept is the logical development of the inward knowledge. Ma'rifa is essentially different from 'ilm. "Even though the theologians, lawyers and other classes of men give the name ma'rifa to right cognition ('ilm) of God" says al-Hujwīrī, "the ṣūfi shayks call right feeling (ḥāl) towards God by that name." Right cognition, according to Hujwīrī, is not the same thing as right feeling, even though right feeling is the result of right cognition. The sole cause of gnosis is God's will and favour, for without his favour, reason is blind.²

It is generally held that it was Abū Sulaymān Dārānī (d. 830 A.D.) who developed the doctrine of gnosis, and the concept of gnosis is said to have formed the central point of the mystical thought of Dhūn-nūn al-Miṣrī (d. 860 A.D.) whom the ṣūfis consider as the primary author of their doctrine.³

1. QQ, I, 322.

2. Kashf, 267, 268 ff. cf. Mystics, 71.

3. Nicholson, The Literary History of the Arabs, 386, 387.

Thus from this time onward the doctrine of gnosis formed the superstructure on which the entire ṣūfi philosophy was raised, and constituted the main doctrine on the basis of which the ṣūfis distinguished themselves from the body of formal theologians. By the time of al-Makkī, the doctrine of gnosis had almost crossed its formative phase, and was sufficiently developed to give a theoretical content to its form and shape. Thus we find all the ṣūfi theorists who were contemporaries of al-Makkī dealing with this aspect with striking similarity.¹

According to al-Makkī gnosis is the fruit of guidance, and the result of one's increase in faith.² It is the basis and root of all knowledge, and knowledge without gnosis is like a body without a head, and a building without a foundation.³ According to al-Makkī, God's will and favour are the means to gnosis, and those who attain the state of peaceful soul (an-nafs al-muṭmai'nna) which

1. cf. Luma', 41, also Ta'arruf, 132-135.

2. QQ, I, 279.

3. 'Ilm, 41.

is being satisfied and pleased with God (marḍiyya)¹ are the men of knowledge and wisdom to whom God imparts the knowledge from his own source (min-ladunhu).²

Though gnosis is a divine gift, the human effort also has its role in relation to its acquisition, because one's gnosis will be according to one's love of God, and according to the degree of his knowledge and understanding of God. Gnosis according to al-Makkī has two stations (maqām). They are the gnosis of hearing (ma'rifa as-sam') and the gnosis of witnessing (ma'rifa al-'iyān). The

1. According to ṣūfi concept, an-nafs al-muṭmai'nna and marḍiyya^{ac} is the terms which denote the soul which has crossed the barriers of the nafs al-ammāra and attained the state of peace with God. The ṣūfi concept in relation to this is based on the Qur'ānic verse, "But, ah, thou soul at peace, returns unto thy Lord content in his good pleasure, enter thou among my bondsmen, enter though my garden." Qur'ān, 89: 27-30.

2. QQ, I, 177, and also 272, cf. Kashf 268-270. Also cf. Ihyā', III, 353. Also al-Ghazālī's Ar-Risāla al-Laduniyya, 45.

former is the gnosis which implies the knowledge that one attains through hearsay, the latter denotes a station which is far more superior to the former. In this station, one witnesses with his own eyes the reality, it is the eye of certainty ('ayn al-yaqīn).¹ This station of witnessing the reality has two stations. The first

1. According to al-Hujwīrī, by 'ilm al-yaqīn the ṣūfis mean the knowledge of (religious) practice in this world according to the divine commandments. By 'ayn al-yaqīn they mean the knowledge of dying and departure from this world. By ḥaqq al-yaqīn they mean the intuitive knowledge of the vision of God, Kashf, 382. But al-Qushyri defines it on a different basis. According to him, 'ilm al-yaqīn refers to that knowledge which is attained on the basis of certainty, which is beyond all doubts and uncertainties, and the 'ayn al-yaqīn and ḥaqq al-yaqīn, are the higher types of knowledge which branches out from 'ilm al-yaqīn. 'Ilm al-yaqīn is attained on the basis of proof (burhān) and 'ayn al-yaqīn on the basis of exposition (bayān) and ḥaqq al-yaqīn on the basis of vision ('iyān). It appears that al-Makkī's conception of this is more closer to the view point of al-Qushyri. Qushyri, 51.

station is the station of witnessing it, being in the state of seeking the proof (mushāhadat al-istidlāl) and the second is the station of witnessing the proof itself (mushāhadat al-dalīl anha). One reaches the former station before the attainment of gnosis, and this is the station which is related to hearsay and constitutes the knowledge one attains as a result of the seeking the knowledge of reality. The Prophet refers to this when he said "Seek the knowledge of certainty (yaqīn)" which means "Be in the company of men of certainty and seek from them the knowledge of certainty ('ilm al-yaqīn)."¹ As for the latter, which is the station of witnessing the proof itself, it is the station which one attains after his gnosis, it is not related to hearsay but involves the state of witnessing the reality with certainty with his own eyes, it is the knowledge which one derives through the eye of certainty.¹ Thus in this station, the gnostic witnesses the meaning of the essence of God and his attributes.²

1. QQ, I, 275. As-Sarrāj too speaks of the stations of gnosis on the same basis as al-Makkī, but clothing it in a different terminology. According to him, the gnosis has three stations:

- 1) Gnosis of acknowledgment (ma'rifat al-igrār).
- 2) Gnosis of reality (ma'rifat al-ḥaqīqa).
- 3) Gnosis of contemplation (ma'rifa mushāhada).

Luma', 41.

2. QQ, I, 185.

Thus the word 'ārif, which means gnostic, is the perfect name (ism at-tamām) which embraces all the spiritual stations, because the station of gnosis will not be valid until one attains the eye of certainty and witnesses the assertion of unity, and in this state he becomes completely a spiritual being (rūḥānī) after annihilating his self (fanā' an-nafs) through certainty, and he becomes immersed in the qualities of lordship (rabbānī) at the time of witnessing the creator. Thus a gnostic is the one who had crossed all the mystical states and stations and attained the status of being near to God (muqarrib) and a lover of God.¹

A gnostic derives his knowledge neither through senses nor through hearsay, but through the eye of certainty, witnessing the things in their true form and shape without any apprehensions and doubts. Thus he derives his knowledge through the primary source of all knowledge. Therefore, says al-Makkī, the word 'ārif denotes the one who possesses the knowledge of all good things with their perfections and virtues; he is the possessor of perfect intelligence ('aql al-kāmil), because the most perfect is that which is the knowledge about God, and all other types of knowledge are imperfect and incomplete.²

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1. QQ, I, 488. Al-Makkī's concept of mystical states and stations will be discussed in chapter V.
 2. Ibid, 97.

The gnostic is the one whose heart is empty of everything save God, every object he witnesses indicates to him the creator, every sight and movement for him are pathways to God. His assertion of unity is ever on the increase and his certainty extends to him unlimited scope for spiritual advancement. This is a station about which none is aware except them, and only they are suitable for this noble station of spiritual elevation and inner illumination.¹ The station, and contemplation of a gnostic in his state of nearness to God, is like that of a pious man who engages in devotion on the 'night of power' (lailat al-qadr) which is better than a thousand months.² Thus one of the learned had stated, "Every night for a gnostic is the night of power."³

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1. QQ, I, 169-170.
 2. cf. Qur'ān, sūra 97.
 3. QQ, I, 178.

CHAPTER IV

THE MYSTICAL LIFE

In the previous chapter a study of al-Makkī's concept of the heart, theory of knowledge and other matters related to more theoretical and speculative aspects of mysticism was made. Though it is extremely difficult to ~~make~~ distinguish between mystical theory and practice especially in the case of al-Makkī who does not wish to make any distinction of this nature, but this type of arbitrary, and in a way artificial division is necessary for the purpose of the study of his mystical doctrine from a theoretical view point. Hence, the previous chapter dealt with certain aspects of what may be termed as mystical theory, and it is proposed to deal with the practical aspects of the mystical doctrine such as the significance of intention, self-mortification (mujāhada), self-examination (muḥāsaba), meditation (murāqaba) and contemplation (mushāhada), which are considered to be the initial preparation for the journey towards the attainment of gnosis. Thus this chapter deals with the way one should prepare himself to procure the divine gift of gnosis and attain salvation, as conceived by al-Makkī.

A. The significance of intention (niyya) and its purification.

The initial preparation towards the attainment of gnosis, according to al-Makkī is intention. The early theorists of Islamic mysticism had laid much emphasis on the intention (niyya). Al-Muḥāsibī (d. 857 A.D.) says that, "One of the gates between God and man by which he is led into the knowledge of divine things is the gate of intention and its purification which leads to the will to do good in secret and openly, in things great and small."¹

Al-Makkī deals with this concept both in his Qūt and in his 'Ilm al-Qulūb.² Al-Makkī argues on the basis of the famous tradition "All actions are judged by their intentions," that intention is the root or the basis of religion. It is the most obligatory of all the obligatory acts, since no obligatory act would be perfect and valid without intention.³

1. Early Mystic, 105.

2. 'Ilm, 175. He deals in his 'Ilm more deeply with the actions of the heart ('a'māl al-qulūb) than in his Qūt. Hence the concept of niyya occupies a prominent place in his 'Ilm.

3. QQ, II, 331. Intention, says al-Makkī in his 'Ilm, in relation to action is like the purity in relation to prayer. As prayer without purification is not valid so is a pious act without intention. 'Ilm, 176.

Hence, according to al-Makkī, the intention occupies the most prominent place in relation to all the pious acts. Intention is a thing which pertains to the actions of the heart,¹ and it generally implies soundness of belief, and attainment of a beautiful aim in relation to one's pious actions.² He quotes the prophetic tradition which states that almighty God never looks at your body, nor your wealth, but he only looks at your heart and actions.³ Therefore, says al-Makkī, one must have intention in relation to every act, even in matters of eating, drinking, clothing, sleeping and marriage.⁴

Intention, according to al-Makkī, is an integral part of an action. Thus one who intends to perform a pious action is rewarded purely on the basis of that intention without having engaged in it. In the same manner, one who intends to perform an evil action would be punished for it purely on the basis of its intention, without being engaged in that sinful action.⁵ This is

1. The heart is the weakest of all things and its strength lies, says al-Makkī, in the power of intention. 'Ilm, 185.
2. QQ, II, 332.
3. Ibid, 330. Al-Makkī explains this tradition in his 'Ilm.
Almighty God looks at the heart because it is the seat of intention, and intention is the soul of action. As the body has no value without the soul, so is action, it has no value without intention. 'Ilm, 175.
4. QQ, II, 327.
5. Ibid, 329.

clear from the fact that when the Prophet set out from Medina for the battle of Tabūk he said, "Verily, there is a group of men in Medina, and we never cross a valley, nor attack our enemies, nor spend anything, nor are we afflicted with any wound except they also have a share in it, while they are being at Medina." When the Prophet was questioned by the companions as to why they are rewarded while being away at Medina, he said, "They are away due to genuine excuse, but they partake with us due to their purity of intention."¹ Al-Makkī quotes the tradition which states that, "The intention of a person is better than his action" and according to him the intention becomes superior to action on the basis of the following principles:

1. The intention is always secret, and the secret actions are rewarded two-fold.
2. It is a hidden action, and none will know it except God. Whereas the manifest actions are known to all.
3. God bestows it to one in its pure form without any other aspects mingled with it, no dangers would creep into it. This is a divine gift bestowed in the state of preparedness for the other actions to follow.
4. Intention is a condition for an action, and no action would be valid without it, whereas it is valid on its

1. QQ, II, 230.

own basis.

5. Some interpret the above tradition to mean that the sincerity in one's action is better than the action itself, because, according to them, intention is identical with sincerity. Thus the sincerity without action is better than the action without sincerity.
6. The intention of a person is permanent, continuous and uninterrupted whereas the actions are not continuous but of an interruptive nature.
7. On the basis of intention, the men of assertion of unity (ahl at-tawhīd) remain eternally in the heaven and men of polytheism (ahl ash-shirk) remain eternally in the hell.¹

According to al-Makkī, one would have the reward for his actions according to the degree of intentions God has bestowed upon him. Thus sometimes a man's single action

1. QQ, II, 329. Al-Makkī gives the same exposition of this tradition in his 'Ilm. cf. 'Ilm, 180-181; Al-Ghazālī too discusses this tradition in detail arguing on the above lines as al-Makkī, and also emphasising the fact that the actions of the heart are superior to the actions of the members of the body and on that basis intention is superior to actions. cf. 'Ihyā', IV, 313-315

may combine in itself a number of intentions according to his knowledge of the action and according to his understanding of the intention involved in the action. Thus he would have the reward for each good intention involved in the action; then each reward would be multiplied ten-fold, because they are really different actions combined in one action.¹

Thus, if one intends to perform an act, he must pause for a while and think about the various intentions involved in that particular act. By doing this, he may discover several intentions combined in one single pious act, and thus every intention involved in that pious act would be considered as an independent pious act, and each would have its reward. This is the way of the substitutes (abdāl)² and men of piety. By this means, one's actions become pure, his stations become higher, the rewards are multiplied. Thus they attain beautiful states, not due to engaging in the pious act in an

1. QQ, II, 327.

2. According to the ṣūfi doctrine, the cosmic order is preserved by a fixed number of saints, and when one of them dies, his place is filled by a substitute (abdāl). Al-Makkī refers to three hundred abdāl composing of siddīqin, shuhadā' and sālihīn.

See, QQ, II, 155, cf. Kashf, 214.

increasing manner, but due to the fulfilment of it in a beautiful manner with having different intentions involved in one single act.¹

One of the men of piety had stated, "I cherish an intention before I enter upon an act even in matters of eating, sleeping and entering the toilet." According to al-Makkī, the intentions that are involved in these acts are, to have the strength to obey God, to seek his help to engage in his service, to have the intention of purifying oneself from the impurities for the sake of religion.² Thus it is very important to cherish an intention in every act, and even in matters of applying perfume, which is not an act of fundamental religious importance, one must give ^{an} important place to intention, because if one has applied the perfumes with the intention of following the sunna of the Prophet, and manifesting the good things that God had bestowed, he would be engaging in an act of obedience, and would be rewarded for his pious intention. If he had done it with some objective other than God, then he had really acted according to his passion,³ because the most virtuous of all the acts is the one in which one enters upon it for the sake of God, and emerges out of it for the sake of

1. QQ, II, 336.

2. Ibid, 317.

3. Ibid, 335.

God.¹ Thus the men of piety, says al-Makkī, never engage in an act without intention.

When Ḥammād ibn-abū-Sulaymān, one of the scholars of Baghdād, died, at-Thawrī was asked whether he would participate in the funeral, he said, "If I have an intention I ^{will} ~~would~~ participate in it." In the same manner, when Ḥasan al-Baṣrī died, Ibn-Sīrīn did not participate in his funeral. When it was asked from him he said, "I had no intention." Thus the learned men, when they are asked about any action, they used to say, "If God gives us the intention we ^{will} ~~would~~ engage in it."²

B. Purity of intention.

According to Junayd al-Baghdādī, Ikhlās or the purity of intention is the ultimate goal of those who are engaged in devotion, and he refuses to categorise purity of intention on the basis of various gradations, because purity of intention itself is the ultimate goal.³ Al-Qushayrī says that purity of intention is a secret of God, and he invests it in the heart of those whom he loves.⁴

Thus purity of intention forms the corner-stone of the mystic way of life, and al-Makkī, while stressing the

1. QQ, II, 317.

2. Ibid, 312.

3. 'Abd-al-Qādir, art. Rasā'il Junayd, IQ, 14, 89-91

4. Qushyri, 113.

importance of cherishing an intention in relation to one's every action, stresses that the intention must be pure and sincere in the sense that the action must be performed only for the sake of God, honouring his lordship and being conscious of his majesty,¹ because almighty God accepts only those actions that are performed with sincerity of purpose.²

Therefore al-Makkī says that it is very essential for one who desires to engage in the act of devotion to be steadfast in it, and also to renew his intention at intervals. Thus he must pause a while, and do some heart searching in order to discover the dangers that might have crept into his heart, corrupting the purity of his intention, and he should drive away these dangers immediately. This is of utmost importance because the purity of intention implies two things, the soundness of intention or to engage in an act only for the sake of God, seeking his reward in the hereafter, and secondly to drive away the dangers of passion (hawā) and hypocrisy (riyā') that acts as a corrupting influence on his pious act.³

Al-Makkī quotes the tradition of the Prophet in which he had compared the heart to a king, and the members of the body to his army. As the army is under the command

1. QQ, II, 310. cf. 'Ilm, 188.

2. Ibid, I, 167.

3. QQ, II, 315.

of the king, so are the members of the body, which obey the inspiration of the heart. He also quotes another tradition which states, "If the heart is sound, the body also would be sound, and if the former is corrupted, the latter also would be the same." According to al-Makkī, these traditions of the Prophet, imply that if one's intention is sound, his state of steadfastness and firmness would continue unceasingly, if his intention is pure from the mixture of passion, his actions would be pure from hypocrisy and if his intention is corrupted by the love of this world, then the actions of the members of the body also would be corrupted by the love for praise and hypocrisy.¹

According to al-Makkī, the reality of sincerity (ḥaqīqat al ikhlās) or purity of intention is that it should be free from the two qualities; namely, hypocrisy and passion. It is by being free from these two qualities an action attains the state of pure and sincere action. Thus the pure action emerges in between hypocrisy and passion without being corrupted, as the pure milk comes out between the dung and the blood.² Al-Makkī elaborates this concept on the basis of the Qur'ānic verse which states, "We give you to drink of that which is in their

1. QQ, II, 333.

2. Ibid, 327.

bellies, from betwixt the refuse and the blood, pure milk palatable to the drinkers."¹ Thus God had bestowed upon mankind says al-Makkī, the bounties of pure food between the dung and the blood, and perfected his blessings. If any of these two things are mixed in it, his blessings would not be perfect. In the same manner, it is incumbent upon one to make his actions pure from passion and hypocrisy so that they may attain perfection and the state of acceptance by God.²

Al-Makkī argues that the purity of action is something which is related to the assertion of unity, hence, to perform an act for the sake of oneself or to seek the pleasure of others amounts to polytheism.³ This hypocrisy in relation to one's pious action, in a way, is worse than unbelief, because an unbeliever is sincere in his unbelief, and his manifest state and hidden state are the same, whereas the hypocrite has unbelief and polytheism in relation to his faith, and his outer state differs from the inner state and he has really given preference to the creatures over the creator.⁴

In fact, God speaks more about men of sincerity and speaks very little about the hypocrites, and he has named a sūra of Qur'ān as "sūra al-ikhlās," because of the fact

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1. Qur'ān, 16:66. Al-Ghazālī quotes the same Qur'ānic metaphor to explain the reality of ikhlās, cf. Ihyā', IV, 324.
 2. QQ, I, 167; also see QQ, II, 327.
 3. Ibid, cf. Ihyā', IV, 324.
 4. Ibid, II, 359.

that this ^{chapter} ~~verse~~ purely and solely speaks only about the attributes of God without any mention about ~~the~~ paradise and hell, promise of reward and warning of chastisement, or commandments and prohibitions. Hence it is ^{also} called "sūra^{at}-tawhīd". This explains, according to al-Makkī, that ikhhlās or purity of action is an integral part of tawhīd. Thus an action which does not involve purity of intention contains elements of polytheism.¹ Thus al-Makkī in his exposition on purity of intention equates nifāq or hypocrisy with kufr or unbelief. He also quotes a prophetic tradition which states, "The most fearful thing about which I am afraid for my community is hypocrisy and hidden sensual desire."²

Hypocrisy, according to al-Makkī, is not only to engage in an act seeking the pleasure of other than God, but it is also to abstain or keep away from an action due to shyness. According to men of understanding, to abstain from a pious act for the sake of men is also hypocrisy. On this basis al-Makkī argues that it is not proper to abstain from an action due to shyness, because shyness is also a part of polytheism (shirk) as it is also part of faith (īmān).³ In order to explain this deeper aspect of hypocrisy al-Makkī narrates an

1. QQ, II, 332.
2. Ibid, 316.
3. Al-Makkī apparently refers to the famous tradition, "The shyness is part of faith" cf. Bukhārī, īmān.

incident, according to which a pious man recited Qur'ān silently in order to conceal his act of piety from the eyes of men, but when he came to the verse of prostration he performed the act of prostration publicly, without abstaining from this act thinking that his action may be known to others, because it is an act that had to be performed in public. Thus it would not be considered as hypocrisy because he acted in that manner publicly, instead he would have two rewards, namely, one for the secret act of reciting Qur'ān, and the other for the act of performing prostration in public.¹

According to al-Makkī, it would not harm one's sincerity, if he disclosed his pious act, due to certain necessities. Thus there is a tradition of the Prophet which states, "If any one of you is invited for a meal, you must accept the invitation if you are not fasting, and if you are fasting you must say, "I am fasting." Thus, says al-Makkī, though it has been stated to keep one's fast as a secret act, here it has to be disclosed openly in order to prevent the heart of another brother Muslim being hurt for not accepting his invitation. In the same manner, one who normally engages in his prayers at home in order to conceal his pious act from the people, may have to go to the mosque for the purpose of i'tikāf.

1. QQ, I, 190.

Thus these acts would not affect one's purity of intention.¹

Thus the intentions differ according to the difference in aim and objections. What is far may become near due to the purity of intention, and what seems to be beautiful may turn to be evil due to evil intention.² In the same way, sometimes an act which is merely a permissible act (mubāḥ) gains for one the reward of a virtuous act due to his sincere intention, and at the same time, a virtuous act turns into a permissible act on the basis of weakness of intention. This aspect is known only to the truly learned on the basis of the hidden knowledge.

While al-Makkī stresses the importance of purity of intention, and the need to safeguard it from the dangers of hypocrisy, he also states that to keep one's intentions free from corruptions is by no means an easy task. It is a task which is far more difficult than engaging in long hours of self-discipline.³ He quotes Sufyān ath-Thawrī, who says, "I have never dealt with a more difficult task than dealing with my intention, because I had never seen it either deviating from me completely, or being weakened, or demanding treatment." According to Manṣūr, to be continuously and always engaged in an

1. QQ, I, 190.

2. Ibid, II, 313.

3. QQ, II, 313.

action till it becomes sincere and pure is more difficult than the performance of that action itself.¹ Thus one who has been bestowed by God the true understanding of purity of intention, and who had gained the true knowledge of sincerity, would run away from men to engage in his pious actions with the spirit of true sincerity because he witnesses things through the eyes of certainty.

C. The dangers of the lower self and the importance of self-mortification (mujāhada).

According to al-Makkī, the lower self by its very nature is not in a state of calm and quiescence, but is always prone to movement and action. Thus, if one witnesses increase in faith, then the lower self gets detached from passion and sensual desire due to divine grace, but if the heart is veiled by heedlessness, then the lower self will be set in motion. This state of the lower self losing its state of quiescence, and attaining the state of movement is due to the trial of God. The first trial to which it is subjected comes in the form of diversions which enter it through the door called ear (sam') which in turn leads to speech and sight, which again leads the way to the sensual desires

1. Ibid, 323.

which ultimately is the door to sin.¹

The two main characteristics of the lower self, says al-Makkī, are its nature of unsteadiness (taysh) due to ignorance, and its avarice due to its nature of greediness.² Al-Makkī compares the lower self in its state of unsteadiness to a ball on a smooth surface which always tends to move due to its lightness, round shape, and due to the nature of unsteadiness, even with a slight touch. He compares the lower self in its state of avarice to a moth which falls on the fire, being ignorant of the fact that its greediness of seeking more light would bring its ruination. If it was satisfied with a little light it would be safe, but without being content with a little, it seeks more of it and enters the very flame of the fire due to its greediness, and then dies. The nature of the self is also like that, in the state of its unsteadiness, which is the result of its hasty nature, and in its state of avarice which is the result of its nature of greediness.³

Moreover, the lower self, according to al-Makkī, is subjected to trial by four different attributes:

1. The attributes of lordship (sifāt ar-rubūbiyya) like pride (kibr) majesty (jabriyya) love of praise

1. QQ, I, 174.
2. Ibid, 175.
3. Ibid, 175.

and wealth.

2. Attributes of the devil like deception, scheming, jealousy and vain conjecture (ẓann).
3. Attributes of the animals, like love for food and love for sexual pleasure.¹
4. Attributes of servanthood (sifāt al-'ubūdiyya) like fear, meekness and humbleness.

Thus it is the duty of the one who aspires to the mystic path to substitute the qualities of the attributes of lordship with that of servanthood, the qualities of the devil with that of the believers, and the nature of the animals within him with the qualities of the men of spirituality (awṣāf ar-rūḥāniyyīn.)²

Thus after analysing the evil nature and sinful qualities of the lower self, al-Makkī states the ways and means by which the lower self could be subjugated. This, according to him, lies in self-mortification (mujāḥada), self-examination (muḥāsaba), meditation (murāqaba) and contemplation (mushāhada).

1. QQ, I, 177.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid, 176, ff.

D. Self-mortification (mujāhada).¹

Self-mortification is an integral part of the purgative life, and all the ṣūfis have affirmed the

1. The term mujāhada is derived from the root jahada which means to strive, to toil, or to exert. Thus mujāhada basically implies to combat the enemy imposing upon himself difficulty, distress or fatigue; cf. Lane, I, II, 564, 565. The Qur'ān uses the term in the sense of striving or exerting; cf. Qur'ān, 4:95; 9:20; 9:88; and 29:69. In tradition, it is used in the sense of fighting in the way of God, and also in the sense of struggling against oneself. Thus the Prophet is reported to have stated, "The mujāhid is he who struggles with all his might against himself (jāhada nafsahū) for God's sake," vide Tirmidhī fadā'il al-jihād. The ṣūfis appear to have developed their conception of mujahāda on the basis of the above sense, namely to denote the action of struggling against the lower self by mortifying it through fasting, silence and solitude to purge it of its evil attributes and to replace it by opposing qualities; cf. Kashf, 196, 200, 207, also Qushyrī, 59-61, The Mystics, 40-41.

need of self-mortification and declared it to be an indirect means of attaining contemplation.¹ According to Sahl, the Qur'ānic verse which states, "Those who strive to the utmost for our sake, we will guide them in to our ways"² implies that whoever mortifies himself will attain contemplation.³

According to al-Makkī, the controlling of the desire for food, and keeping the stomach in the state of hunger, and subjugating the desires of the lower self are the two important aspects of mortification.⁴ He gives an exposition of the ways of the pious ancestors in the matters of controlling one's desire for food. According to him, they followed two ways in controlling the desire for food. Either they used to decrease the intake of food till they gained mastery over their lower self, and brought it into a state of being satisfied with the least intake of food, or they increased the time in which the stomach would be kept empty, that is to say that they postponed the time of taking food by a certain time at each period, till their lower self gained the power to endure hunger.⁵

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1. Kashf, 201, cf. Mystics, 40.
 2. Qur'ān, 29:69.
 3. Kashf, 201.
 4. QQ, I, 194 ff.
 5. QQ, II, 339. Al-Makkī himself is stated to have been a man of vigorous self-discipline and self-mortification, during the early phase of his mystical life, vide Yāfi'ī, II, 430, cf. Ibn-Khallikān, III, 430.

According to al-Makkī, the aspirant to the mystic path may follow either of these two ways in regard to mortification of the self in the matters of food.¹

Al-Makkī quotes several traditions which speak of the virtues of keeping one's stomach empty. Once the Prophet said to the companions "Continue to knock the gate of paradise and it would be open to you." When the companions questioned him how, he said through hunger and thirst.² Thus the companions of the Prophet, and the pious ancestors mortified their self by undergoing the pangs of hunger, and al-Makkī describes the way in which the companions of the Prophet acted in matters of eating.³

One of the characteristics of the pious ancestors was to abstain from eating to the satisfaction. They used to force upon themselves the state of hunger willingly, and not compelled by circumstances.⁴ According to the learned, the most hateful thing to God is a stomach which is full, even though by the intake of lawful food; because this makes one's intellect inactive. He quotes Abū Sulaymān Dārānī, who says, "If you have any need of the hereafter to be fulfilled, then engage in it before

1. QQ, II, 339.
2. Ibid, 352.
3. Ibid, 344.
4. Ibid, 347.

you take your food, because when one eats to his satisfaction, then his intellect would become inactive and dull, or it would change from its original state.¹ The act of eating to the satisfaction not only makes ones intellect inactive, but also, it rouses ones lust, passion and sensual desire. He quotes Ibn-Sālim who states, "If you give your stomach its due portion of satisfaction, then every member of the body would demand its share of pleasure, and you would be dragged by your lower self towards ruination. If you deprive your stomach of its due share, all the rest of the members of the body would be deprived of their pleasure, and the heart would attain the state of steadfastness."² Thus keeping the stomach empty, and to cause it to suffer from hunger illuminates the inner heart. According to the learned, says al-Makkī, one who suffers from hunger for forty days would have the privilege of witnessing the power and majesty of the angelic world.³ Thus, Abū-Yazīd al-Bisṭāmī, who is considered by al-Makkī as one of the greatest exponents of the ṣūfi doctrine, was once asked how he attained gnosis, and he said, "With an empty stomach that suffers from hunger, and with a naked body."⁴

1. QQ, II, 347.

2. Ibid, 354.

3. Ibid, 344.

4. Ibid, 346.

Al-Makkī quotes a saying of Junayd, in which he had compared the stomach to the lute. "The lute consists of strings, and it is hollow, the sweetness of its music is due to its lightness and tenderness, because it is hollow and empty inside. If it is heavy and not hollow, it would not produce any sound of music. Likewise, is the stomach, if it is empty of food, then the heart would be tender, and the recitation of Qur'ān would be sweet, the sleep would be less and the body would attain the capability to keep vigil at night and engage in worship."¹

After giving an exposition of the dangers of the lower self, and stressing the importance of self-mortification, and explaining the ways of the Prophet and the pious ancestors in regard to the practice of it, al-Makkī gives an exposition of the way that should be followed by the novices. He quotes an statement of Abū Sa'īd al-Kharrāz on the different stations of those who experience hunger (maqāmāt ahl al-jūw').

- A. There are those who practice hunger out of abstinence (wara') if they cannot get anything lawful or pure to eat.
- B. There are those who possess something lawful, and yet abstain from it due to asceticism (zuhd) or fear of

1. QQ, II, 358.

accountability in the hereafter.

- C. There are those who find pleasure in devotion, and they see the work of eating and drinking distracting them from their devotion, hence they abstain from it.
- D. There are those who had attained nearness to God, and who possess the reality of modesty. Hence they feel shame to engage in eating in the presence of their Lord.¹

Thus, the stations of those who practice self-mortification by undergoing hunger, differ according to their aims, objectives and their states.

Al-Makkī generally provides a guide line for those who practice self-mortification in the matters of eating and drinking. According to him, one must avoid cold, moisten food, and hot dry food, because it rouses one's passion and strengthens the members of the body.² One who mortifies his self, must not eat meat and fat continuously. Al-Makkī recommends to eat it only twice in a month. He quotes a saying of 'Alī in which he had stated that, "One who continuously eats meat for forty days would be in a state of hardheartedness." Thus 'Alī had forbidden men to eat meat continuously, because, says al-Makkī, it has the quality of exciting desire like wine (khamr)³. If a novice desires to eat any good

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1. QQ, II, 353.
 2. Ibid, 351.
 3. Ibid, 355.

food (ṭayyibāt) or fruits, let him make it as a substitute for bread, so that he may ward off his hunger by it and it would act as a food at the time of hunger and not considered as a desert, or else the self may find combined pleasure both in custom (‘adāt) and sensual desire (shahwath) and because of the self finding satisfaction and contentment in other good sweet things (ṭayyibāt) other than bread, it would be more inclined towards sensual pleasure. But if the novice fears that eating of tasty foods would become a habit due to the scheming and cunning nature of the self, and if he feels that he may not be safe from falling into such a danger, then it is more virtuous to abstain from it.¹

If one is in the state of mortifying his self by hunger, and if his self desires sexual relationship, then it is praiseworthy for him not to eat so that he may not combine in his self two types of pleasures. In the same manner, it is also a praiseworthy act if he eats, then does not sleep after it so that he may not combine two acts of heedlessness (ghafila)² and become hardhearted, so he should either engage in prayer or remembrance of God after eating. The least is to pray four rak‘āt, to recite a hundred tasbīh and to recite one juz’ of Holy Qur‘ān after every meal. This was the way

1. QQ, II, 356.

2. Al-Makkī considers here, both eating and sleeping as actions of heedlessness (ghafila).

of the ṣūfis. It is said that if Sufyān ath-Thawrī had eaten to his satisfaction on a night, he used to keep vigil all night long. If he had acted in that manner at day time, then he used to make it follow by prayer and remembrance of God (dhikr).¹

Practice of mortifying the self in the matters of food is by no means an easy task. It is stated of a certain novice of Baṣra that he declared, "My lower self longed for the bread, rice and fish and I declined to obey its commandments. Then its desire grew stronger, and my struggle with the desire of the lower self lasted for twenty years."² Al-Makkī relates the experience of one of his shaykhs in regard to this matter. He says that he abstained from eating hot bread because he longed to eat it for many years, and he suffered due to it. He said, "Even if my self desires to eat it for twenty years, I would not eat it even for a moment." And sometimes he used to weep due to the strong desire of his self, and due to the strong determination of mortifying the self.³

According to al-Makkī, if one is subject to trial by eating what his heart had desired, he should not conceal it, but must make it manifest to others, because this is the way

1. QQ, II, 355.

2. Ibid, 357.

3. Ibid, 358.

of the pious ancestors, and this a sincere act. By acting in this manner, he does not lose the state of sincerity, even though he had sustained a loss in his mortification.¹

E. Mortification of the lower self.

Next to the mortification of oneself through hunger, mortification of the self in the matters of passion and sensual desire is the important aspect of self-discipline. According to Qushyrī "To fight against the baser qualities of the lower self and to purify it from its lust and passion is more difficult than the hardship of hunger and keeping vigil at night."²

"Nafs is the evil self, the seat of passion and lust, so the self with its allies, and the world with the desire is the greatest obstacle to the attainment of union with God. Therefore mortification of the self is the chief work of devotion which in turn leads to the contemplative life."³

According to al-Makkī, the dangers of the lower self⁴

1. QQ, II, 359.

2. Qushyrī, 58.

3. cf. Mystics, 39, 40.

4. By the term dangers of the lower self, al-Makkī means the evil aspects of the lower self such as lust, passion, avarice and sensual desire as explained above.

are its diseases, and the treatment for it is to purify it from its evil nature. As God has stated, "He is indeed successful who causeth it to grow."¹ Thus if it is purified from the dangers, it had attained a state of purity. According to al-Makkī every disease of the heart has its cure, according to its degree of big or small. Its treatment is either to place the treatment at the point of the disease, that is to say, from where the disease originates by substituting it with the opposing factor, or to cut asunder the root of the disease itself.² The most virtuous act in respect of this, says al-Makkī, is to wipe out the sensual desires of the lower self completely, because neither the origin nor the end of the sensual desires of the self could be traced. Thus if one does not cut it off at the beginning, it would tend to persist. Thus the way to attain this is to engage in mortification by substituting the baser qualities of the lower self with increased obedience to God, experiencing pleasure in devotion and exercising patience in regard to its mortification. It is to this aspect of obedience and patience in mortifying oneself that Qur'ān refers when it states, "Seek help from God in matters of obedience and exercise patience in regard to mortification."³ He also quotes a tradition of the Prophet which states, "The

1. Qur'ān, 91:9.
2. QQ, I, 111.
3. Qur'ān.

mortification of the self is the greatest jihad.¹

According to al-Makkī, the lower self is always prone to passion and the passion is the antithesis of truth and reality and God loves the truth whereas the lower soul loves passion. Therefore one should mortify the lower self by acting contrary to passion and in agreement with the truth because God loves the truth and hence to love the truth is the most virtuous act.²

One should also mortify his self in the matters of obeying to custom and habits ('ādāt) because the custom is the army of God which overwhelms one's intellect ('aql). It is really a trial from God, which makes one's knowledge obscure and pale into insignificance. It makes one to postpone the act of repentance, and it interferes with one's act of steadfastness, it is really a door of passion. Thus Abū-Sulaymān Dārānī stated, "To leave a morsel of night meal is more pleasing to me than to engage in worship standing all night long," because says al-Makkī, this would help him to break his custom which is more important for the mortification of the self.³

1. QQ, II, 381.

2. QQ, I, 382.

3. QQ, II, 284.

F. Self-Examination (muḥāsaba).¹

According to al-Makkī, one of the most important ways of mortifying the lower self is by self-examination. Every moment one must subject his lower self to self-examination, and at each moment he should keep a watch over his self-examination² because it is self-examination, and abstinence that protects one from falling a prey to the evils of the lower self.³

1. The term muḥāsaba is derived from the root ḥasaba, which means to number, to count, or to reckon. See Lane, I, II. But in ṣūfi terminology muḥāsaba implies the act of subjecting the self to questioning about one's actions, sins and spiritual state with a view to mortifying it, and to achieving inner purification and spiritual elevation, cf. Ihyā', IV, 336. The ṣūfis appear to have based their concept of muḥāsaba on the tradition which states, "Call your ownself to account for its action before it is called to account for its action in the hereafter, cf Tirmīdhī, Qiyāmā.

2. QQ, I, 178.

3. Ibid, 176.

The intelligent person must have four ways of spending his time. A moment in which he engages in secret converse with his Lord, a moment in which he ponders over the creations of God and a moment in which he indulges in eating and drinking.¹ He also quotes a saying of a pious ancestor in which he states, "I used to subject myself to self-examination, more severe than the partner of a business examines the other partner."²

He quotes a saying of 'Umar who states, "Account yourself before you are called to account for it, and weigh your sins before it is being weighed in the hereafter." Thus for those who subjected their self to accountability in this world itself, says al-Makkī, the accountability in the hereafter would be easier, and for those who had weighed their sins in this world itself, the weighing of it in the hereafter would be easier. According to al-Makkī, self-examination is possible only through abstinence (wara').³

While al-Makkī, stressing on the importance of self-examination, speaks about the dangers of forsaking it, according to him it is heedlessness that causes the forsaking of self-examination, and thus one who is not subjecting his self to self-examination, is in the state

1. QQ, I, 184, cf. Ihyā', IV, 345.

2. Ibid, 179.

3. QQ, I, 157.

of heedlessness, and it acts as a seal on one's heart, because heedlessness in its outward manifestation is a cover or a veil on the heart in its inward manifestation. This seal or cover on the heart is the result of continuous commitment of sins which makes one's heart rustified, and act as a cover as Qur'ān states, "Nay, but that which they have earned is rust upon their hearts."¹ According to al-Makkī, it is love of the world which causes heedlessness, which in turn causes one to neglect self-examination, and postpone repentance. As the Qur'ān states, "That is because they have chosen the life of the world rather than the hereafter, and because Allah guideth not the disbelieving folk, such are they whose hearts and ears and eyes Allah hath sealed and such are the heedless."²

While speaking about the importance of self-examination, and the factors that cause one to forsake self-examination and the dangers of forsaking it, al-Makkī gives an exposition of how one should engage in self-examination. He says that when one gets the intention and determination to engage in self-examination, he should pause for a moment and analyse his thoughts (khāṭir) and find out whether it is a sincere intention motivated by the desire to seek the pleasure of God, or whether it is an impulse of his lower self. If he finds that the intention is of

1. Qur'ān, 83:14.

2. Qur'ān, 16:107. QQ, I, 180.

sincere nature, then he must hasten towards acting upon it, if he discovers it as a mere impulse of sensual desire with worldly intention, he should discard it before it gains a firm foothold in his heart.¹

Al-Makkī prescribes two 'wirds', one at day, and one at night for the purpose of self-examination. One should engage in a wird after the forenoon prayer (ṣalāt ad-duḥā) in order to discover the heedlessness that had crept into his heart on the previous night. If in the process of this self-examination one discovers any blessings from God, he should thank him. If he has discovered any misfortune or trial from God, he should seek forgiveness from him. If he had seen in his state any qualities of the true believers whom God has praised, then he should rejoice and be hopeful. If he had found in his heart, or in his state, any of the signs of hypocrites, or qualities of ignorant folks whom Almighty God had condemned, then he should feel sad, and guard against it, should repent and seek forgiveness from God.²

For the second time, one should engage in self-examination, after witr prayer at night and before he sleeps so that he may ponder over the affairs in which he was engaging on that day. He must find out if there had been any heedlessness on his part. He must ponder over the manner in which he had engaged in the pious actions

1. QQ, I, 162, also 177, 178.

2. QQ, I, 179.

during the course of the day. He should find out for whose sake he had forsaken his state of silence if he had done so. He also must reflect upon his increase and decrease, and in the light of it he must try to find out about the sincerity in his state of movements and state of quietness. If he has discovered that his state of movements and quietness have been for the sake of God, then let him thank Almighty God for his blessings, and for guarding him against ruination. If he finds that his state of movement and quietness has been inspired by his sensual desire, let him seek forgiveness from God, because he is liable to be punished in the hereafter, unless he is forgiven due to divine mercy.¹

According to al-Makkī, the contemplation in this manner would cause in his heart a sense of fear as to what had happened, prevent his sleep, drive away his heedlessness, and make him to engage in devotion keeping vigil all night long, and thus he would attain the status of those about whom Almighty God says, "Who forsake their beds to cry unto their Lord in fear and hope."²

Thus, according to al-Makkī, the mortification of the lower self through hunger, and by acting contrary to its sensual desires and habits, subjecting it to self-examination, are the ways of the purgative life of the

1. QQ, I, 179.

2. Qur'ān, 32:16, QQ, 179.

mystic, which leads him to the contemplative life. The lower self, which is purified through the process of mortification, and self examination, now enters the phase of contemplative life, because according to al-Makkī, self examination is the proof of contemplation, and contemplation is the sign that indicates that one has presented himself in readiness to the service of his Lord.¹

G. Recollection (dhikr)

Self-discipline, according to al-Makkī, not only involves the actions of fighting against the inspirations of the lower self, but it also implies the positive actions of substituting for the sinful thoughts the remembrance of God, or what is known as recollection.

Dhikr is the collective name for all the actions of the heart that are related to stations of certainty, and it also denotes the contemplation in regard to the knowledge which is related to the unseen world. Thus al-Makkī uses the term dhikr in its widest sense. Thus it is not mere utterances of certain phrases but involved more intense psychological and spiritual activity.²

Recollection, according to al-Makkī, is intimately connected with contemplation and meditation. Thus recollection not only implies the glorification and praise of God, but also the act of reflecting upon the

1. QQ, I, 183.

2. QQ, I, 39.

bounties and favours conferred upon one by God with a strong consciousness of lack of gratitude on the part of the servant of God.¹ Recollection says al-Makkī, polishes the heart and illuminates it and it is this light that is cast upon the heart through recollection, which helps the heart to see, and it is piety (taqwa) that leads to recollection.²

By recollection one attains the state of reflection (tafakkur) and reflection in turn leads him towards fear and hope, and according to al-Makkī, the recollection when it is intensified becomes contemplation (mushāhada) so contemplation is really the logical development of intense recollection.³

1. Ibid, 30.
2. Ibid, 233.
3. Ibid, 30-31.

H. Meditation (murāqaba)¹ and contemplation (mushāhada).²

Self examination leads one to the strong consciousness of God's watchfulness over him, through constant self-

1. The term murāqaba primarily implies "looking" or "watching", and hence raqīb is the appellation applied to God meaning "watcher" or "observer" cf. Qur'ān 4:1 and 33:52, also cf. Lane I, III, 1132. But the term murāqaba in ṣūfi terminology assumes the meaning meditation or self-concentration, cf. Mystics, 48. Thus according to ṣūfis murāqaba denotes the realization with a strong consciousness that God is watching over him, and he is under the constant vigil of God and this leads him to devote himself to meditate on God, and thus no evil thoughts will find the way into his heart. cf. Qushyrī, 103-105, and Mystics 48 ff.

2. Mushāhada basically means witnessing, but in the ṣūfi terminology it denotes "contemplation". By contemplation ṣūfis mean spiritual vision of God. cf. Kashf 332, also cf. Qushyrī, 47, Luma' 429. Ṣūfis generally held self-mortification or mujāhada as one of the indirect means of attaining contemplation, Kashf, 201. Al-Ghazālī considers meditation and recollection as contributory factors which lead the soul towards contemplation, cf. Ihyā', IV, 340, 341.

examination one attains the state of consciousness that God is ever-watchful of him, that he is near to his heart, knows his states and hears his speech. This consciousness of God's watchfulness lead him to meditate on God.

According to al-Makkī faith is the source of contemplation, as the wheat is the source of flour. As the wheat contains all the elements of flour, the faith also contains all the elements of contemplation. Thus the faith is the root and contemplation its branch.¹

According to al-Makkī, self-examination, meditation and contemplation are inter-connected. He says, "The contemplation of those who are engaged in meditation is, initially, the meditation of those who are engaged in contemplation." That is to say, one who is in the station of meditation is in the state of self-examination, and one who is in the station of contemplation is also in the state of meditation. Thus according to al-Makkī, all these three aspects are interdependent and in a way, one overlaps the other.²

Al-Makkī states that the first state of meditation is to experience the state of worshiping God as if one is actually seeing him.³ He explains in detail the manner in

1. QQ, I, 275. As-Sarrāj too expresses the view point that the vision of a true mystic is contemplation which is the fruit of sincere faith, Luma', 429.
2. QQ, I, 182.
3. Ibid, 213, also cf. Qushyrī, 103. It refers to a tradition of the Prophet in which he defines "iḥāsān"³ to worship God as if one actually sees him, cf. Bukhārī, Īmān.

which one should engage in meditation and contemplation. He says, "One who meditates (murāqib) must contemplate and know with certainty that at no time should he be engaged in any matters except those that fall under the following three groups.

1. The obligatory duties that Almighty God has imposed upon him. These are the things either he had commanded to perform, or the things from which he had ordered one to keep away.
2. The praiseworthy affairs in which one is encouraged to engage himself. These are the pious deeds towards which one is requested to hasten without losing time, and those pious acts which brings one near to the divine being.
3. The permissible acts (mubāḥ) in which lies the soundness of one's body and heart.¹

There is nothing other than these three aspects in which one should engage by way of contemplation and action. If anyone has introduced a fourth thing other than these three, then he had violated the limits set by God.² "And whose transgresseth Allah's limits, he verily wrongeth his soul."³ Al-Makkī elaborates his concept of contemplation by quoting the Qur'ānic verse which states, "And he it is

1. QQ, I, 182.
2. Ibid.
3. Qur'ān, 65:1.

who hath appointed night and day in succession for him who desireth to remember, or desireth thankfulness."¹

As there is no time other than day and night, so is there no other action for one other than to remember God, and to thank him. The remembrance in this verse refers to faith (īmān) and knowledge ('ilm) which is pertaining to the actions of the heart, and thankfulness denotes the pious actions on the basis of virtuous qualities of the faith and the laws of religion which is pertaining to the actions of the body.²

He says, "Let one who meditates begin with the least time available at his disposal, and meditate upon the fact, whether he has to fulfil at that moment any obligatory duties pertaining to the commandments or prohibitions of God, and let him fulfil it. If he has not any of these obligatory duties, then let him engage in the supererogatory and virtuous actions (faḍā'il), and let him begin with the most virtuous, and if he has no actions of this nature to be performed let him take the most of what he has of his breath for the next breath, from his hour for the day, from his world to the hereafter. As the Qur'ān states, "Neglect not thy portions of the world"³ which means don't leave, but taking your share of the hereafter from

1. Qur'ān, 25:62.

2. QQ, I, 182.

3. Qur'ān, 28:77.

this world.¹

According to al-Makkī a servant of God is unceasingly in two stations, either in the station of blessing (maqām an-ni'ma) or in the station of trial (maqām al-baliyya) and his state in the former is gratitude (shukr) and in the latter is patience (ṣabr). Thus in accordance with this one must always engage in either of the two contemplations, namely the contemplations on the blessings of God and contemplation on the one who bestows blessings. He should perform this act in the manner of a servant who sits before his master and count his blessings.²

If he contemplates upon the one who had bestowed his blessings upon him, then he would feel shame (ḥayā') in his presence, and attain a state of repose and experience forbearance (wiqār) due to the majesty of his Lord. This is the exclusive privilege of the ṣūfis of the elite (khuṣūṣ) if he contemplated upon the blessings then he would be overwhelmed by gratitude and consideration (itibār) towards his Lord and this is the experience of the common ṣūfis ('umūm).³

1. QQ, I, 183.

2. Ibid.

3. Al-Makkī follows here the practice of grouping the mystics into 'umūm and khuṣūṣ. The former refer to the common ṣūfis or the ṣūfis of lower spiritual grade, and the latter to the elect or the elite. QQ, I, 183.

According to al-Makkī the contemplation and meditation have seven stations. Most of the factors explained above cover the first station of contemplation and as for the other stations he classifies them as follows:-

The second station of contemplation.

It is the contemplation upon the reward for the pious actions, and the punishment for the evil actions.

Third station of meditation.¹

It is the contemplation upon the fears that one encounters at the time of death and also in the hereafter, and also upon the beautiful end of the friends of God, and the saddest end of the enemies of God.²

Fourth station of meditation of men of certainty.

In this station one enters into a state of certainty as to the matters on which one contemplates. He would

1. Al-Makkī calls this station of contemplation as meditation, because as it has been already stated, he considers at times, contemplation to include the qualities of meditation, cf. QQ, I, 182.
2. QQ, 212-214.

1. Ibid., 215, 220.

2. Ibid., 220-222.

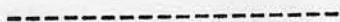
contemplate upon the accountability to God in the hereafter, and would meditate the time he passes, taking into account the years, months, and days, up to every breath he inhales, being conscious of the reward for the good acts, and punishment for the evil acts.¹

The fifth station of meditation of those men of certainty.

This is a station which is of higher than the former. Al-Makkī calls this station as the station of men of certainty who had attained nearness to God (muqarrabīn). Thus, these are men not only who had attained certainty, but on the basis of their certainty had attained nearness to God. This station includes the contemplation upon the hereafter on the basis of their certainty and nearness to the divine being.²

The sixth station of the contemplation.

This is the station of the contemplation of those who had attained nearness to God. Thus the fifth station of meditation leads to the sixth station of contemplation. The contemplation at this station revolves round things which one wishes to increase in relation to his pious deeds so that he may gain from the present and future, what he had lost in the past due to heedlessness.³



1. QQ, I, 214-218.
2. Ibid, 218, 220.
3. Ibid, 220-222.

The seventh station of the contemplation of men of certainty.

The contemplation of this station is also pertaining to the matters regarding the time lost by engaging in more pious deeds at the time available. This involves not only acts of obedience, but also the acts of refraining from disobedience, like safeguarding one's eyes, ears, hands and legs from sinful actions, and increasingly engaging hunger, enjoining good and forbidding evil, driving away one's evil thoughts and renewing one's repentance. He should engage in these acts without any postponement. In this station, one should know, on the basis of his certainty, that his entire life-time amounts to his day and his entire day is equal to the hour of the moment of time (waqt) and his time is his state (hāl), and his state is his heart. Thus he would seize from his state, for the sake of his heart, all that would bring him near to his Lord, by engaging in all the pious actions which are commended as virtuous by his knowledge, and which are recommended by his Lord, and which are obligatory upon him, so that the death may not overtake him by surprise. Thus he would accomplish all the pious actions with which he would meet his Lord. After completing this phase, he would seize from his time (waqt) for the sake of his state (hāl) all that would be sound to his heart, and by this his heart would get strengthened, and would enter a state of sincerity, in all the actions that are performed for the sake of his Lord. Thereafter, he would seize from his hour (sā'at) for the sake of his time, all that would make his state beautiful

with his Lord, and would seize from his day for the sake of his hour, all its needs and benefits. Then he would seize from his month for the sake of his day.¹

Thus, due to his contemplation of this nature, states al-Makkī, his month would become his day, his day would become his hour, and then his time (waqt) would keep him occupied from his hour, and his state would keep him occupied from his time, and in this state he would become one who keeps a watch over his time (waqt), who observes carefully his state (ḥāl), one who combines jointly all his spiritual aspirations (himma), one who counts his breath, one who is eternally in the state of watchfulness over his watcher (raqīb) and one who is in the state of companionship with his beloved. Thus no breath would emanate from him even for the slightest moment, except that he is in the state of remembrance of his Lord or in the state of patience for his love, or in the state of satisfaction at the time of hardship. Thus in all these matters he would be watching his Lord, inclining towards the one who is near to him, and hastening towards the beloved. He will not glance at anything except him. In this manner his entire life would become a day, a day an hour, and an hour a moment. The moment would be a state, the state would become a breath, a breath would become a meditation (murāqaba) and meditation would become a

1. QQ, I, 223.

personal encounter (muwājaha).¹ There would be increase in his faith, a renewal of his certainty, and the veil and the covering over his heart would be removed for him, and he would attain the station of gnosis.²

Thus al-Makkī analyses meditation and contemplation as one of the most important mystical exercises, which leads the novice through various stages of meditation and contemplation, to the ultimate goal of gnosis. The contemplation (mushāhada) becomes a personal encounter or actual vision in its ultimate end.³

1. It seems that al-Makkī is using the term muwājaha here in the sense of mukhāshafa which denotes the presence of the spirit in the domain of actual vision ('iyān). Mukhāshafa is stated to be the continual amazement at God's infinite grace, and it is in this sense the word muwājaha is used by al-Makkī above.
cf. Kashf, 373.

2. QQ, I, 223.

3. The term true vision here refers to the spiritual vision, as the vision of the divine being is possible only in the hereafter.

CHAPTER V

THE MYSTIC PATH

I. The states (ahwāl) and stations (maqāmāt)

The mystic path is generally described as a journey and the mystic is conceived to be a traveller journeying along a path which ultimately leads him to a higher plane of spiritual elevation in which the soul is completely liberated from the fetters of all material attachments and earthly cares and attains complete absorption in the reality of God. During the progress of the journey the soul passes through certain states (aḥwāl) and stations (maqām).¹ Dhūn-Nūn-al-Miṣrī (d. 245/859) is said to have been the first to formulate the doctrine of mystical states and stations.² Stations are generally defined to be the steps or stages on the ascetic and ethical discipline of the soul, which are attained by the traveller through his own efforts assisted by divine grace, whereas the states are considered to be divine gift, in the form of spiritual feelings over which man has no control. Stations are normally held to be permanent in nature, and

1. Mystics, 29.

2. Muslim Theology, 176.

the states are transient.¹

The doctrine of mystical states and stations, which were to form the main basis of later ṣūfistic thought, appears to have developed sufficiently during the time of al-Makkī, that both al-Makkī and his contemporary as-Sarrāj were able to give this concept more systematic formulation than any of their predecessors.² As-Sarrāj attaches so much importance to this concept, that he says that the knowledge of the states and stations is obligatory upon

1. Nicholson, art. "Ṣūfis" ERE 12, 13. Though this is the general conception of mystical states and stations, there had been considerable difference of opinion among the ṣūfis as to their nature. While al-Muḥasibī held that a state may be permanent, Junayd held it to be of temporary nature. According to Junayd their permanence is delusion suggested by the lower soul. cf. Kashf, 181, 182. Also cf. Qushyri, 37, 38. Al-Makkī holds the view-point that stations are permanent and firm and states are transient and subject to change, QQ, II, 163.

2. Al-Kalābādhī, another contemporary of al-Makkī, too deals with the subject of mystical states and stations, but in a less exhaustive manner. cf. Ta'arruf, 74-78

1. Locat, 16, 17.

2. Locat, 42.

all the believers at all times and the endeavour to understand the mystical states and stations is no less profitable than the endeavour to become an expert in legal knowledge.¹

Since the way of the mystic is personal and individual, no ṣūfis ever passes through identical states and stations. Thus various ṣūfis, in mentioning the states and the stations through which the soul passes in the course of its mystical journey, widely differ in detail. This aspect manifests more clearly in the writings of al-Makkī and as-Sarrāj. Both of these ṣūfi theorists, who were contemporaries, differ considerably in their analysis of the mystical states and stations. As-Sarrāj in his Luma' describes the seven stations of the mystic path in the following order.²

1. Repentance (tawba)
2. Abstinence (wara')
3. Asceticism (zuhd)
4. Poverty (faqr)
5. Patience (sabr)
6. Trust in God (tawakkul)
7. Satisfaction (riḍā)

Al-Makkī in his Qūt expounds at great length, and in a more exhaustive manner than as-Sarrāj, the path every ṣūfi must traverse, with different stations carefully mapped out, and doctrines pertaining to each explained,

1. Luma', 16, 17.

2. Luma', 42.

illustrating by means of Qur'ānic texts, traditions of the Prophet and the sayings of the prominent mystics. The path expounded by al-Makkī consists of nine stations.

1. Repentance
2. Asceticism
3. Patience
4. Gratitude
5. Hope (rajā')
6. Fear (khawf)
7. Trust in God
8. Satisfaction
9. Love (maḥabba)¹

Al-Makkī seeks the proof for his classification of mystical stations in Qur'ān. It is interesting to note how he built up his superstructure of the classification of mystical stations on the basis of Qur'ān. According to al-Makkī, all the above mentioned mystical stations branch out from the root called belief (īmān). Thus one who believes in God, and in his promise of reward and warning of chastisement, turns to God, so that his belief may

1. It is interesting to note that as-Sarrāj holds love, fear and hope to be states, whereas al-Makkī considered them to be stations. cf. Luma' 42 and QQ, II, 148, 149. Al-Muḥāsibī is stated to have held "satisfaction" to be a state, an attitude which differs both from al-Makkī, and as-Sarrāj. Kashf, 181.

attain its reality, his certainty may become sound, and his assertion of unity may become firm, this leads him to the station of repentance.¹ One who has turned towards God then proceeds to shun all sensual desires which prompted him towards sin, so that his repentance may become sincere, and his intention may become pure. Thus, this leads him towards the station of asceticism.² The practice of asceticism and the renunciation of all passions and desires of the lower self involves patience, because it is through patience that one's asceticism attains its reality, thus he enters the station of patience.³ One who practices patience, then proceeds to offer his thanks and gratitude to God, so that his patience and endurance may attain perfection, thus he enters the station of gratitude.⁴ One who has entered the station of gratitude then exercises hope in relation to his Lord, so that his Lord may increase his bounties and favours upon him due to his right thought (ḥusn-aẓ-ẓann) because having hope in the Lord naturally implies

1. QQ, II, 149, cf. Qur'ān, 41:30, 11:12, and 29:16.
2. QQ, II, 149. Al-Makkī bases his views in relation to this on the following Qur'ānic verses:-
Qur'ān, 16:96, 12:20.
3. QQ, II, 149, cf. Qur'ān, 74:10 and 90:17, the verses on which al-Makkī bases his arguments.
4. QQ, II, 150, cf. Qur'ān, 3:103.

cherishing good thoughts about him.¹ One who had attained the station of hope then fears the loss of what he has hoped for and also he entertains fear as to his lack of gratitude to his lord, and thus fears the loss of any further increase of God's grace, this is the station of fear.² Then he places his trust in his lord in relation to what he has feared, and then completely surrenders to him so that the lord may deal with him in whatever manner he wishes, this is the station of trust in God.³ One who trusts in God, then enters the state of being satisfied with the actions of his lord, and this leads him to the station of satisfaction.⁴ Then he begins to love the one in whom he had found satisfaction, and enters the station of love, and then he ascends in the station of love by grades, and finds in this station unlimited scope of spiritual elevation and inner illumination, because there is no end to the seeking of the lover, since love is something which is related to divine nearness (qurb) and there is not any ultimate end to what is termed as "divine nearness", and the ultimate end and the bliss of gnosis the seeker attains is beyond any description.⁵

1. QQ, II, 150. cf. Qur'ān, 39:9

2. QQ, II, 150, Qur'ān, 31:16.

3. QQ, II, 150. cf. Qur'ān, 5:23, and 25:59.

4. Ibid and cf. Ibid 5:119.

5. Ibid.

Thus, according to al-Makkī, all the stations of the mystic path are interdependent and one station is the logical outcome of the other as explained above. The five pillars of Islam in relation to the common folk are compared by al-Makkī to the mystical stations of the elect, in the sense that both have their nature of interdependence and the nature of interdependence in both these aspects branches out from the basis of belief, as explained above in the exposition of al-Makkī's concept of mystical stations.¹

II.

A. Repentance

As it has been stated above, repentance occupies the first place in the series of stations the seeker must traverse before reaching the final goal of gnosis. According to al-Hujwīrī repentance is the first station of pilgrims on the way to truth, just as purification (ṭahāra) is the first step of those who desire to serve God.²

In the ṣūfi terminology repentance implies turning away from sin towards righteousness and from blameworthy actions to praiseworthy actions. According to Sahl, the first thing a novice is being ordered is repentance

1. QQ, II, 150.

2. Kashf, 294.

because it changes one's blameworthy actions into praiseworthy actions.¹

Before one proceeds to analyse al-Makkī's concept of repentance, it is essential to have an idea about his concept of sin, its nature, and its effects upon the heart and the soul. He classifies the sins into seven categories, some he says are greater than the other, and each category has its ranks (marātib) and each rank of sinners fall into independent groups (ṭabaqa).

I. The sins pertaining to the acts of appropriating the attributes of God, his honour, pride, power and love for praise. These are sins that cause the ruination of the individual.

II. The sins relating to the qualities of the devil, like jealousy, injustice, treachery and deception. These are also sins which cause one to perish.

1. QQ, I, 369. There appears to have been two viewpoints among the ṣūfis as to the nature of repentance. While some ṣūfis, like Abū-Ḥafs Ḥaddad, and even al-Junayd held that man has no part in repentance because repentance is from God, vide Kashf, 299, there were others who held the opposite view. Thus Sahl at-Tustarī, is reported to have said that there is nothing more obligatory upon the creatures than repentance, and one who states that repentance is not obligatory is an infidel (kāfir). QQ, I, 365. Al-Makkī apparently supported the latter point of view.

III. The innovations which are against the accepted practice (sunna), these are considered to be major sins, and some of these sins causes decrease in one's faith and foster in him a sense of hypocrisy (nifāq).

IV. The injustices that are committed to the creatures in the matters of religion, that is to say, to cause mischief in religion, and turn the people away from the path of believers by distorting the scripture and misinterpreting the sunna.¹

V. The injustices that are committed to the servants of God in worldly matters, like beating an individual, abusing him or misappropriating one's wealth and to indulge in lying and deception.²

VI. The sins that are committed in matters which involve the relationship between man and God, these are sins pertaining to sensual desires and they fall into two broad-based categories of major sins (kabā'ir) and minor sins (saghā'ir). The former are those which involve the divine punishment in the hereafter and also necessitates

1. According to the learned, says al-Makkī, there is no repentance for those who are in the fourth category. QQ, I, 390.

2. According to al-Makkī, sins of this nature demand that it must be tried by a judge and punishments must be meted out for it unless the victim is magnanimous enough to forgive the wrongdoer. QQ, I, 390.

the punishment in this world (ḥadd). The minor sins are those which generally fall into the categories other than that of the major sin.¹ According to al-Makkī, the learned among the companions and followers differed as to the nature and number of major sins. According to Ibn-'Mas'ūd they are five in number and Ibn-'Umar held them to be four. Moreover, Ibn-'Abbās said all what God has forbidden falls under major sins, and according to others all the sins for which God had warned the chastisement in the hell belongs to the category of major sins.²

According to al-Makkī, they are seventeen in number and four of them are related to the actions of the heart such as ascribing partners to God, to be persistent in disobedience to God, to ^{be}despair of divine mercy etc. The other four are related to the tongue such as giving false evidence, unjust accusation of chaste women, indulging in charm (sihr), three of them are pertaining to the stomach like drinking intoxicating drinks, to unjustly procure the properties of the orphans, to unjustly consume the unlawful things one earned through usury, and there are two sins related to the sexual organs, namely, prostitution and homosexuality, two sins

1. These sins may be forgiven out of divine grace if one repents sincerely. Ibid, 391.

2. Ibid, 303.

relating to the hands, namely murder and theft, and there is a sin which is related to the leg, that is to retreat from the battlefield, and there is another sin which involves the whole physical body of the individual which is to disobey the parents. According to al-Makkī, this categorisation of major and minor sins, is a moderate and just exposition agreed upon by most of the traditions.¹

The sin, says al-Makkī, acts as a veil and a cover upon one's heart, and the heart becomes dark due to the veiling by sin as the sun is veiled by the dark cloud. Hence the heart becomes completely blind to true knowledge and exposition (bayān) without being able to distinguish between right and wrong.² The Qur'ān refers to this state when it says, "Nay, but that which they have earned is rust upon their hearts."³ When one repents for his sins

1. QQ, II, 304-305. Al-Ghazālī quotes al-Makkī's classification of major sins and states that although al-Makkī's classification is more accurate, yet some more could be added to his list of major sins and some could be removed from it. According to al-Ghazālī, al-Makkī includes only murder among the sins related to the body, but cutting one's hands, and subjecting men to other forms of physical tortures are also of major sins. cf. Ihyā', IV, 15 ff.
2. QQ, I, 378.
3. Qur'ān, 83:13. According to al-Ghazālī, the darkness caused in the heart by the act of sin (ẓulm as-sayyi'āt) could only be dispelled by the light of acts of righteousness (nūr al-ḥasanāt) cf. Ihyā', IV, 9 and 11.

and reforms himself, the veil is removed and the faith reappears again as the sun emerges through the veil of the cloud.¹

B. The ways to engage in repentance.

Thus, according to al-Makkī, sin acts as a great obstacle in the path of inner illumination and spiritual elevation. Hence, one who aspires to the mystic path must initially commence his journey by seeking repentance from his sins, and al-Makkī describes in detail the ways to engage in this pious act.

Initially, one who seeks repentance must confess his sins, despise his lower self which prompted him towards sin, and must repent for the past crimes. Thereafter, he must resolve to be steadfast in pious actions and to refrain from sin, and not to return towards sin again. Thus he should substitute his sinful acts with pious acts, must keep away from the company of evil folks and hasten towards pious acts.²

One must engage in the act of repentance with utmost sincerity as it is stated in the tradition "To seek forgiveness merely with the tongue without any sincere feeling in the heart is the repentance of the liars." Ḥasan al-Baṣrī defined the sincere repentance (tawbat an-naṣūḥ) as follows:

1. QQ, I, 378

2. Ibid, 365.

"It is the repentance (nadam) of the heart seeking forgiveness (istighfār) with the tongue, keeping the members of the body to refrain from sin, and to be conscious and determined not to return to it again."¹

Thus to be steadfast in one's state of repentance, one who engages in it must subject his lower self to self-examination every moment, and refrain from all sensual desires, and engaging in vain acts (fuḍūl) which constitute vain speech, vain looks, vain walks, and even vain clothings, foods and drinks.² Self-examination is utmost importance, because the most harmful thing for one who repents are the evil thoughts, that reminds one of sin and a thing that leads towards sin in itself is a sin and it is in this context that seeking repentance from heedlessness (ghafla) becomes important, because it is the first act of disobedience, and according to men of certainty it is the root of all major sins.³ One who seeks repentance must consider his minor sins as major and big in magnitude though they may be very minor, because it is stated that when one looks at his sins as major, they become minor with God. According to al-Makkī, this attitude leads one to attain the reality of repentance.⁴

1. QQ, I, 365.

2. Ibid, 370.

3. Ibid, 382 ff.

4. Ibid, 370.

Repentance, according to al-Makkī, implies not only the negative aspect of refraining from sin, but also the positive acts of substituting it with pious acts. Thus, every person who seeks repentance must be in the completely opposing state of sin at the time of seeking repentance. This state of righteousness could be achieved either little by little or by increasing proportions. In this manner, one may enter the state of those about whom God says, "Lo! We squander not the wages of reformers."¹ According to al-Makkī, one will not be a true repentor until he becomes a reformer (muṣliḥ) who reforms himself in the aforesaid manner, and he will not become a reformer until he engages in pious acts (ṣāliḥāt) and thereafter he enters the fold of the righteous (ṣāliḥūn) about whom God says, "He befriendeth the righteous."² Thereafter, he attains the reality of forgiveness and becomes the beloved of God due to his sincerity and reality in repentance, and it is about those who repent in this manner that God says, "God loveth those who turn unto him."³ This is also confirmed by the tradition which states, "One who repents is a beloved of God."

1. Qur'ān, 7:169.

2. Ibid, 7:196, also cf. Ihyā', IV, 9.

3. Ibid, 2:222. According to al-Makkī, this implies that God loves those who return to him refraining from sensual desires, purifying themselves from all hateful qualities. QQ, I, 374 ff.

According to al-Makkī, the men in relation to repentance fall into four categories and each category has its own station.

I. Those who repent and thereafter being upright and steadfast in it substituting all their evil actions with pious actions. This is the sincere repentance of those whose soul had attained peace (an-nafs al-muṭma'inna).

II. Those who repent and intend to be steadfast, but are subjected to trial by being caused to commit sin unknowingly. This is the nature of those about whom God says, "Those who avoid enormities of sin and abomination save the unwilling offences (for them) lo! thy lord is vast of mercy."¹ These are the men, says al-Makkī, of blameworthy self (an-nafs al-lawwāma).

III. Those who are near to the above mentioned second category of men are those who repent and then commit sin while in the state of feeling sad and shameful of it, and at the same time postponing the act of repentance, and consequently they never attain the state of complete repentance due to passion and heedlessness except their repentance at intervals.

IV. These are the most lowest grades of all. They commit sin and make it to follow by another similar nature of sin

1. Qur'ān, 53:52.

or of more graver magnitude, and thus continue to persist in sin without seeking repentance. Neither they hope for uprightness nor have the fear of chastisement. These are men who are the slaves of their commanding self (an-nafs al-ammāra bi'ssū'i). Most of the common folk, according to al-Makkī, belong to this category.¹

According to al-Makkī, there is no end for the act of repentance, it is an ever continuing process, with ever widening horizons according to one's ascending spiritual stations. Thus, it exists even after one's attainment of gnosis, which is the ultimate goal of the mystic. Thus a gnostic, after seeking repentance from all the sins, seeks repentance from attaining quiescence (sukūn) in relation to his repentance, thereafter he would contemplate upon his shortcomings in regard to the duties imposed upon him on the basis of lordship due to what he witnesses in regard to assertion of unity. Thus his repentance, in this highest spiritual state, would be relating to the shortcomings he witnesses in him in the light of the contemplation of his highest spiritual station. In this manner each mystical state and station has its own

1. QQ, I, 392 ff. Al-Ghazālī too categorises the repenters on the basis of the above four groups as described by al-Makkī. cf. Ihyā', IV, 38-41.

repentance, and each contemplation and revelation (mukāshafa)¹ has its repentance, because each contemplation has its sins, and each act of quiescence with things other than God has its sins and punishments, thus as sins are endless so is repentance.²

1. Mukāshafa, according to the ṣūfis denotes the presence of the spirit in the domain of actual vision. It also implies continual amazement at God's infinite greatness. cf. Kashf, 373-374.
2. QQ, I, 388.

III. Asceticism (Zuhd).

Al-Makkī holds asceticism to be the second station of the mystic path.¹ One who repents for his sins proceeds

1. Apparently, there appears to be some ambiguity, when one tries to analyse the various stations of the mystic path, as categorised by al-Makkī, because when he discusses the interdependent nature of various stations, as one is the development of the other, he places asceticism as the second station of certainty, see QQ, II, 149. But in the text it is placed as the sixth station, and described in that manner, QQ, II, 391. This may be due to the corruption of the text at a later period, or may be due to the arbitrary arrangement by some copyists. But for a critical student, it is clear that asceticism should occupy the position of being the second station of certainty, as al-Makkī himself had classified it in that manner as explained above. Moreover, as-Sarrāj, a contemporary of his, also holds asceticism to be the second station. Luma', 16, 17. Hence, it is proposed to discuss here asceticism as the second station of the mystic path.

to shun all the sensual desires from which he had repented, so that his repentance may attain the state of sincerity.

According to al-Makkī asceticism is the result of increase in one's faith, and it is on the basis of this increase in his faith that one repents, and thereafter enters the station of asceticism by shunning all the sensual desires.¹ According to gnostics, the faith in one's heart has two stations, and corresponding to these two stations there are two forms of asceticism, if the faith is in the outer heart, one would love both this world and the hereafter and work for the sake of both, if his faith enters the inner heart, then he would hate this world, would not glance at it, and would not work for its sake.²

The Prophet had described it as a reality of faith (ḥaqīqat al-īmān) and also as a sign of the expansion of the breast through the light of conviction (nūr at-taḥḍīq). He also had stated that it is one of the signs which indicate one's sincerity in his assertion of unity (ikhḷās at-tawhīd.) On the basis of this conception of asceticism, as expounded by the Prophet, al-Makkī holds it to be a mystical station which one attains on the basis of his strong faith, firm conviction, and sincerity in the

1. QQ, I, 512.

2. Ibid, 548.

assertion of unity,¹ and none of the pious acts combined within it all the aspects of obedience except asceticism and asceticism says al-Makkī, is the root and basis of all the pious acts, as the love of this world is the root of all the acts of disobedience and sin.²

A. The Ascetic way of life.

Al-Makkī gives an elaborate exposition of the nature of asceticism, and the ways to practice ascetic way of life. He quotes Ibrāhīm ibn-Adham³ who had classified asceticism according to the following categories:

I. Compulsory asceticism (zuhd al-fard) which is the practice of it in relation to forbidden things (ḥarām).

II Virtuous asceticism (zuhd al-faḍl), this is to practice asceticism in relation to lawful things (ḥalāl).

III. Asceticism of safety (zuhd as-salāma), this is the practice of asceticism in relation to dubious things (shubhāt).⁴

1. QQ, I, 508 ff.

2. Ibid, 175.

3. He considers Ibrāhīm ibn-Adham, as the first systematic exponent of zuhd, and calls him as the imām of this science, QQ, I, 544. For al-Makkī's quotations on the various definitions of zuhd and dunyā, vide QQ, I, 541 ff

4. QQ, I, 544.

Al-Makkī appears to have based his conception of asceticism on the above statement of Ibn-Adham, and his conception of zuhd may be called as a more elaborate exposition of what has been expressed in a concise manner by Ibrāhīm ibn Adham. According to al-Makkī, one who practises asceticism in relation to his sensual desires is practising the compulsory asceticism, one who practises asceticism in relation to lawful things is adhering to the virtuous asceticism. The asceticism of the former category which is the asceticism that is practised in relation to unlawful things is the asceticism of the Muslims by which their Islam attains beauty, the asceticism in the matters of dubious things is the asceticism of the men of abstinence by which their īmān attains perfection, the asceticism in relation to the permissible things is the asceticism of the ascetics by which their certainty attains its perfection.¹

According to al-Makkī an ascetic must have the following essential qualities, that is to say, neither he should feel happy about possessing a thing, nor he should feel sad over the loss of it, and he should seek from every thing, at the time of need, what he genuinely needs and not beyond it, nor should he seek a thing before the real need for it arises.²

According to al-Makkī, the initial phase of asceticism

1. Ibid, 537.

2. Ibid, 507.

is that one should cultivate in his heart the concern and anxiety about the hereafter, and must find pleasure in having discourse and communion with God. One will not achieve this state until he completely removes from his heart the anxieties about this world, and the pleasures of the sensual desire.¹

Abstinence (wara') and contentment are also part of asceticism, because to be satisfied with little, and enjoy little of everything is also considered as part of asceticism.² Contentment, and abstinence, cultivate in one's heart the quality of generosity which is also an aspect of asceticism, because asceticism creates in one's heart the desire and willingness to dispose of what one possesses, as the quality of avarice makes him to hold to it tenaciously, thus generosity is the quality of an ascetic whereas avarice is the character of those who love the world. Hence, the practice of asceticism demands an increasing struggle with one's lower self and sensual desires.³

According to al-Makkī, the practice of asceticism embraces all the aspects of this world including the basic essentials like food, clothing and shelter. He quotes Sahl who states, "One's asceticism will not be complete

1. QQ, I, 507.

2. Ibid, 508.

3. Ibid, 510 ff.

unless he practises it in relation to three things; in relation to wealth which he intends spending in pious ways in order to attain nearness to God, in relation to the dress with which he covers the body in the matters of devotion, in relation to his food with which he seeks the help to engage in worship.¹ Al-Makkī too agrees with Sahl, in holding that asceticism implies shunning comfortable, gorgeous clothing, delicious foods, shunning all types of ornamentation in one's utensils and taking pride in it. He quotes several traditions which state that the Prophet and the companions disapproved of delicious foods and gorgeous clothing.²

The main purpose in practising asceticism in relation to food is to increase one's patience, and to prolong one's state of hunger and state of poverty,³ because poverty, says al-Makkī, is an integral part of asceticism, and to love poverty and the poor, to sit in their company, and to show kindness to them is also part of asceticism.⁴

Asceticism, according to al-Makkī, also implies shunning fame and praise of men, and find pleasure and contentment in loneliness and obscurity. According to him, the most virtuous form of asceticism is to shun the

1. QQ, I, 538.

2. Ibid, 520 ff, also 525 ff.

3. Ibid, 529.

4. Ibid, 539, cf. Ihya', IV, 198-199.

leadership (riyāsa), and prominence, and to renounce all love for praise, because, according to the learned, says al-Makkī, it is one of the biggest gateways to the world, and to practise asceticism in relation to it is the asceticism of the learned (zuhd al-ulamā'). According to Sufyan ath-Thawrī, the practice of asceticism in relation to leadership and praise of men is more difficult than the practice of it in relation to one's wealth, because one has to spend his wealth in the path of seeking fame and leadership.¹

It is also an aspect of asceticism to shun all forms of superficial knowledge which would lead him towards the love of fame and praise, and in turn to the love of the world, because the type of knowledge which distracts one's attention from devotion and disturbs his singleness of purpose and concentration, causes hardheartedness and veils one's heart from reflecting upon the greatness of God.²

According to al-Makkī, though the practice of asceticism embraces all the aspects that constitute the world like wealth, house, garment, food, fame, leadership, and other material and non-material things, the reality of asceticism is the practice of it in relation to one's desires of the lower self, because one may shun the world

1. QQ, I, 541.

2. Ibid.

for the sake of his lower self intending to compensate it with some other thing, thus this too carries within it an element of desire (raghba), but if one practises it in relation to the lower self itself then it is the reality of asceticism.¹

Asceticism is a matter relating to faith, and as faith embodies both the pronouncement (qawl) and action ('amal), so is asceticism, it is both belief and action. The belief of asceticism implies the act of expelling the love of this world from one's heart, by substituting it with the love of the hereafter, and the actions of asceticism is to dispose of the things one loves from his material possession of them, compensating them with the reliance upon what is in the hand of God and in the hope of attaining nearness to God.²

The purest form of asceticism is to shun the desire for a thing from one's heart, and also dispose of materially what one had already discarded in his heart. By this means one's love for the world vanishes, his asceticism attains its reality, and he becomes an ascetic in relation to his asceticism itself. Thus this is not an asceticism for the sake of the self, but the practice of it in relation to the self itself, which is the asceticism of those who had attained nearness to God (muqarrabīn) on the basis of what they witness through

1. Ibid, 543, cf. Ihyā', IV, 207, 208.

2. QQ, I, 507.

the eye of certainty ('ayn al-yaqīn), and below this highest grade of asceticism of the men of certainty comes the asceticism of the common believers (zuhd al-mu'minīn) which implies discarding a thing which one possesses, while in the mental state in which his self is still attached to it and longs for it, a state which demands exercise of self-discipline in relation to it.¹

Al-Makkī categorises the ascetics into various grades on the basis of their degree of contemplation in relation to their object and purpose in practising asceticism. Thus there are those who renounce the world for the sake of honour and glory of God, then there are those who shun the world out of modesty (ḥayā') of God. Then there is another group which shuns the world out of fear of God, and there are still others who do so out of hope for the reward from God, then there are those who do so out of love of God. The last mentioned group who shun the world out of love of God is the highest grade of ascetics, and the lowest are those who renounce the world out of fear of accountability in the hereafter.²

IV. Patience.

The practice of asceticism basically involves patience, especially in relation to the shunning of

1. QQ, I, 507. cf. Ihyā', IV, 187, 188.

2. Ibid, 539.

sensual desires, thus it logically leads to the station of patience, and it is through patience that one's asceticism attains its reality.¹

God has imposed patience as a condition (shart) upon his sincere men of piety, and it is through patience their sincerity and piety is confirmed, and it is through it their qualities and pious acts attain their perfection. God refers to this when he says, "And the patient in tribulation and adversity, and time of stress, such are they who are sincere, such are God-fearing."²

According to al-Makkī, to exercise patience is the most difficult and detestful thing to the lower self, because the act of patience involves so many other matters like undergoing pain and suffering, suppressing anger, exercising clemency when one is subjected to disgrace, the cultivation of the qualities of meekness and humbleness. These are matters which demand steadiness and firmness in one's resolutions, the qualities which cause hardship and dissatisfaction to the lower self and are detested by it.³

1. QQ, II, 149.
2. Qur'ān, 2:177, also QQ, I, 398. According to al-Makkī, the fact that God had mentioned about patience in more than ninety places, also indicating that it would be rewarded double-fold (cf. Qur'ān, 38:54 also 39:10) suggests the superiority of its station, QQ, I, 395, cf. Ihyā', IV, 53.
3. QQ, I, 398. Al-Ghazālī classifies patience into two categories, namely patience in relation to the body (badan) and patience in relation to the lower self (as-ṣabr an-nafsī). According to him the latter is more praiseworthy than the former. cf. Ihyā', IV, 58.

Taqwa or piety, says al-Makkī, is the collective name for all the good deeds (khayr) and ṣabr or patience is the term that embraces all the pious deeds (birr). Thus when one combines them both, he attains the state of the righteous (muḥsinīn). Thus piety and patience are interdependent and one cannot be separated from the other.¹

According to al-Makkī, the actions which involve the exercise of patience, broadly speaking, fall into two major divisions, the actions in which lies the soundness of religion, and the action in which lies the corruption of the religion. One who exercises patience in relation to the former attains perfection in his faith, and one who practices it in relation to the latter attains beauty and soundness in relation to his certainty. Patience, says al-Makkī, could be further subdivided into many other divisions, on the basis of the above stated main divisions.² He also quotes a tradition of Ibn-'Abbās, in which he had categorised patience on the following basis:

1. The patience in the matters of fulfilling one's obligations to God.
2. Patience in the matters of keeping away from the matters which are prohibited by God.
3. Patience at the time of initial assault of misfortune (as-ṣabr fī as-sadamāt al-ūla).³

1. QQ, I, 400.

2. Ibid, 396.

3. Al-Makkī quotes a statement by Ḥasan-al-Baṣrī to the same effect, and states that all what he had described about patience falls under these three divisions. cf. Ibid, 405.

The exercise of patience in the matters of obedience or in the performance of various acts of piety is the controlling of the lower self from sensual desires in the performance of various acts of piety. One should assiduously apply oneself to the performance of these acts of obedience by subjugating the lower self by dealing with his tongue, heart and other members of the body in the proper manner in performing these pious acts. Patience in relation to devotional acts also assume the form of being satisfied with the treatment of God who is the provider of sustenance. One should exercise self-discipline and control his self from being a slave to its nature in order to seek the satisfaction of the lord.¹ Thus patience is needed before the commencement of a pious act, during the performance of it, and even after the accomplishment of it. It is needed at the commencement of an act to make one's intention sound and perfect, it is needed while the performance of the act to be steadfast in it, the patience after the performance of an act is needed to conceive it from the eyes of others, and also to safeguard oneself from looking at his pious acts with pride so that he may guard himself from hypocrisy.² Thus one should also exercise

1. QQ, I, 398. cf. Ihyā', IV, 60-61.

2. Ibid, 399. cf. Qur'an, 47:38 in which God says,
"O! Ye who believe, obey Allah and obey the messenger
and render not your actions in vain."

patience by concealing one's pious acts, including charity.¹ Moreover, one should exercise patience by controlling the lower self from the love for fame and praise, and from love for leadership (riyāsa). According to al-Makkī, one should not even outwardly manifest his miracles (karāmāt) and other aspects related to the revelation of mystical powers and signs (kashf al-qudra wa-l-āyāt), because exercise of patience in regard to this matter is considered to be the etiquette of one's beautiful dealings with the lord, due to modesty and shame before the lord. Thus it is also an aspect of patience to exercise it in attaining the qualities of meekness and submissiveness, in procuring the qualities of servanthood and abstaining from acquiring the qualities of lordship, because negligence of patience in this respect may lead him to procure some minute qualities of lordship, thus his foot may slip after attaining firmness.²

One should exercise patience not only in his relationship with the creator, but also with the creatures. He should abstain from causing any harm to the creatures and also must bear with patience the harm caused to him by the creatures. The former is the station of men of justice, and the latter is the station of men of righteousness. One should exercise patience in giving their due to those who deserve it (ahl al-ḥaqq) and spending one's wealth for their sake.³

1. cf. QQ, I, 403.

2. QQ, I, 404.

3. Ibid, 398 ff. cf. Ihyā', IV, 62.

One should also exercise patience in regard to the matters of dealing with the family. Thus one should exercise patience in the matters of earning the livelihood for the family, in spending for their sake, and bearing patiently the harm caused by them.¹

The practice of patience at the time of adversity and suffering implies not only bearing them patiently, but also of concealing one's sufferings and hardships from others, and not seeking satisfaction and comfort through complaining. Thus one must completely surrender to the will and pleasure of God out of modesty (ḥayā') being satisfied with the unfolding of the events on the basis of divine decree, as it is said one of the signs of patience is to submit to the divine decree with patience.²

One should exercise patience not only during adversity, but also at times of prosperity, when one is blessed with wealth, health and other material blessings. One should exercise patience in regard to his health by not frittering away his energy in the acts of disobedience, and transgression, he should exercise patience in relation to his wealth by not spending it in satisfying his sensual desires, and likewise he should exercise patience in relation to all other divine blessings by not utilising them in the acts of disobedience. The exercise of patience during prosperity is far more difficult, says

1. QQ, I, 404.

2. Ibid, 402-403. cf. Ihyā', IV, 62-63.

al-Makkī, than the practice of it during the time of adversity, and whereas a common believer may exercise patience in relation to poverty, none except men of sincerity (ṣiddiqīn) will be able to practise it at the time of prosperity.¹

According to the gnostics, says al-Makkī, patience assumes three forms, and each has its group of men on the basis of its station. The first is the refraining from complaining which is the rank of the repenters, the second is to be satisfied with what is decreed by God, this is the rank of the ascetics, and the third is to love the act of one's lord which is the station of men of sincerity.² In short, says al-Makkī, patience is either compulsory or commendable, depending on the nature of the matter. If there is an obligatory matter, then to exercise patience in relation to it is compulsory, and if there is a matter which is commended by religion, then to exercise patience in relation to it is a commendable act. This knowledge could be attained only on the basis of the knowledge of the religious laws (aḥkām).³

1. QQ, I, 401. Al-Ghazālī too expresses the opinion, in agreement with al-Makkī, stating that patience at times of prosperity is more difficult than the practice of it during adversity. cf. Ihyā', IV, 60.

2. QQ, I, 405.

3. Ibid.

According to al-Makkī, patience has its reality and non-reality. Thus to feign patience (taṣabbur) is not patience (ṣabr). The former implies striving towards patience through self-mortification and also inciting in the self the desire for patience. It could be compared to the feigning of asceticism which implies one's engaging in the actions that are considered only as means to asceticism in order to achieve the ultimate goal of asceticism. The true patience is the attainment of the reality of it. In other words, it signifies the end, and not the means, because it is a station.¹

V. Gratitude (shukr).

A. The significance of the station of shukr.

Gratitude is the station which one attains on the basis of his patience, and as patience is an aspect of faith, so is gratitude.²

According to al-Makkī, most of the retributions that befall on the creatures are due to the lack of gratitude for the blessings of God, which is caused by the factors like ignorance about the blessings of God, lack of knowledge about God, and prolonged heedlessness, which make one to refrain from reflecting upon the blessings of God and remembering him. Hence, says al-Makkī, the

1. QQ, I, 405.

2. Ibid, 413, cf. Qur'ān, 4:147.

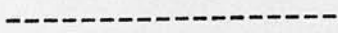
realization about the blessings of God, and a strong consciousness about it ~~it~~ is the pre-requisite for one to show gratitude¹ to God. Hence, al-Makkī analyses in detail the nature of the blessings of God, and their manifestations both in the material and spiritual forms in the creation of God. According to al-Makkī, the most primary blessing which a person is conscious of is the fact that God has brought forth him into existence out of nothing and caused him to be among the existing beings (mawjūdīn) as distinct from the non-existing beings (ma'dūmāt), then God has gifted him with life and made him as an animate being, as distinct from the inanimate beings which are lifeless, and then he has fashioned him as a human being as distinct from the animals, and endowed him with a beautiful form. Then God has gifted him with a healthy body and also with a sound heart to follow the right path without going astray. He also has protected his heart from falling as a prey to the commanding self (an-nafs al-ammāra). Moreover, God has provided him with varieties of food, and then subjugated him what is between the heavens and the earth. Al-Makkī calls all these blessings of God as "mothers of the blessings" (ummuhāt an-ni'am) implying thereby that all other material blessings are merely the by-products of these primary blessings.² Thus there are blessings

1. QQ, I, 423. Al-Ghazālī too considers the knowledge about the blessings of God as the initial phase of showing gratitude to God. cf. Iḥyā', IV, 81.

2. Ibid.

both inside and outside the body of man, so much so, that it is stated, says al-Makkī, that in every hair of his body there is a blessing, in every bone and vein, and in his every twinkling of the eye and in every breath there is a blessing. The blessings of God that are inside the body are seven-fold greater than what is outside the body, and blessings like faith, knowledge and certainty are double-fold greater than both the blessings of the body and the heart.¹

According to al-Makkī, the most superior and noblest of all the blessings of God, is the blessing of faith, the sending of the Prophet, the revelation of the Qur'ān, and the gods choice of the Muslim nation as the best nation ever raised by God.² According to the learned, says al-Makkī, the most superior blessings of all is the blessing of faith and unceasing continuity of it (dawām), because the continuity of anything without a break is a blessing within a blessing, and if the continuity of the faith and its firmness in the heart is withdrawn by God, then the heart would turn towards unbelief. Moreover, the blessing of the grace and help of God to perform pious actions and also his help in making one's affairs easy springs from the blessings of faith and its continuity.³



1. QQ, I, 424 ff.
2. Ibid. Apparently the reference is to the verse of Qur'ān which states, "Ye are the best community that hath been raised up for mankind." cf. Qur'ān, 3:110.
3. Ibid, 429 ff.

Thus, al-Makkī says, that God had showered both his manifest and hidden blessings upon man as he himself had stated "and hath loaded you with favours both without and within."¹ The former are the soundness of the body and the existence of sustenance and wealth in sufficient quantity. The latter are the soundness of the heart and the preservation and safety of one's beliefs.² There is also another blessing which is the manifestation of beauty and veiling of the ugly, and it is difficult to say which of these favour is greater because God has praised himself for the possession of both these qualities.³

According to al-Makkī, even trials and misfortunes are a source of blessings from God. If only one knows, says al-Makkī, that with every misfortune there are ten blessings then his complaining about his affliction would be less, and he would substitute it with gratitude. According to al-Makkī, every act of misfortune comprises of three aspects and all of them are blessings from God, either it would be a rank or status (daraja) for those who had attained nearness to God, or it may act as an atonement for sins (kaffāra) which is mainly for the companions of the right hand, who are the men of pious actions, or it may assume the form of a punishment for the common Muslims

1. Qur'ān, 31:20.

2. QQ, I, 418.

3. Ibid, 414.

and truly speaking the hastening of punishment in this world itself is a mercy and blessing from God and the attainment of the knowledge of these blessings is the path of men of gratitude.¹ Thus the blessings of God, both material and spiritual, what is related to the body and heart, the manifest and hidden are immeasurable as God himself had stated, "And if ye would count the bounty of Allah ye cannot reckon it."²

B. The ways of showing gratitude to God.

The act of gratitude implies three aspects, namely knowledge, feeling and action. Thus the initial phase of gratitude is to feel sincerely about the innumerable blessings of God, and to contemplate upon the bestower of the blessing, on the basis of the favours and bounties he had bestowed, this according to al-Makkī is the gratitude of the heart (shukr al-qalb) because gratitude implies sincere understanding and feeling of the heart, and not mere utterance of the tongue. When the verse of Qur'ān regarding the chastisement for those who store up wealth was revealed 'Umar asked the Prophet, "In that case what wealth shall we store?" and the Prophet replied "Let everyone of you store for yourself a tongue that remembers God and a heart that shows gratitude to him."³

1. QQ, I, 429.

2. Qur'ān, 14:34. cf. QQ, I, 424.

3. Al-Ghazālī too refers to this tradition. cf. Ihyā'
IV, 70.

Thus, according to al-Makkī, gratitude is primarily an action of the heart.¹

But the gratitude of the heart, says al-Makkī, must find an outward manifestation and expression in the form of making one's praise and glorification of God known to others. Thus the pious ancestors when they meet each other ask each other about their health so that they may give outward expression to their innermost thoughts of gratitude by praising God. Therefore, to engage in the glorification and praise of God, to count his favours, and to give expression to them outwardly is the gratitude of the tongue. (shukr al-lisān).

Then comes the gratitude of the members of the body (shukr al-jawāriḥ) and it implies not to employ them in the acts of disobedience, because this abuse of the blessings of God amount to unbelief as God has stated, "Hast thou not seen those who gave the grace of Allah in exchange of thanklessness."²

Gratitude also implies the act of engaging in pious acts because God invites mankind to engage in the acts of showing gratitude to him when he says, "Give thanks (i'malī) O! house of David."³ Moreover when the Prophet

1. QQ, I, 415.

2. Qur'ān, 14:28. QQ, I, 417. Al-Ghazālī too discusses the nature of the station of gratitude on the basis of these three broad-based divisions of gratitude of the heart, tongue and members of the body. cf. Ihyā', IV, 71-73.

3. Qur'ān, 34:13.

was questioned as to why he stands in devotion till his legs are swollen, he replied, "Shouldn't I be a grateful servant." Thus the Prophet had confirmed that to engage in self-mortification, and to engage in a beautiful relationship with God (ḥusn al-muʿāmalā) is also an aspect of gratitude.¹ Thus one should feel modest in the presence of God, acknowledge his unworthiness for the blessings of God, and should feel humble and meek in relation to both the blessings of God and his gratitude. One should accept the blessings of God in a pleasing manner, considering little of it as more, the smaller of it as large, because to ignore divine wisdom, and to look down upon the blessings of God amount to the rejection of his blessings.²

According to al-Makkī, one should consider even the trials of God as blessings and show gratitude, considering them as favours from God, because if one really knows the divine wisdom behind the deprivation of a thing he would certainly know that God had deprived him in order to give him more, in this manner the act of depriving of a thing would appear to him as bestowing of a thing, and thus he would show gratitude to him.³ According to al-Makkī, the highest station of gratitude is to thank God in adversity

1. QQ, I, 418.
2. Ibid, 430.
3. QQ, I, 416 ff.

and trials, and it will not be possible until one contemplates upon it as a blessing which necessitates him to be grateful to God on the basis of his certainty and the reality of his asceticism.¹

According to al-Makkī, the men of gratitude follow two paths, and one is above the other, namely the path of the gratitude of men of hope, and the path of the gratitude of men of fear. The former is to engage in beautiful transactions (ḥusn al-mu'āmalā) with God hoping for the outward blessings and seeking the perfection in relation to them. Thus they would hasten towards the performance of pious acts, showing gratitude for the blessings they had received. The second path, which is higher than the former, implies the fear about the evil end, and fear of falling into the lowest abyss of spiritual degradation, their fear is a proof and manifestation of the superseding gift of faith, and the place of honour the religion of Islam has acquired in their hearts. Thus they are being blessed with the greatest gift of God, and the knowledge and realisation of this fact is their gratitude, thus fear becomes their pathway to show gratitude to God.²

1. Ibid, 419.

2. QQ, I, 421.

VI. Hope

The station of gratitude leads to the station of hope and then to the station of fear, the twin stations which are stated to be interdependent. Before we proceed to analyse al-Makkī's analysis of the interdependent nature of these two stations, it is proposed to deal first with the station of hope.

According to al-Makkī, one who is in the station of hope, should engage in the following actions:

I. He should experience the inclination of the heart towards the performance of pious acts.

II. He must hasten towards the performance of the pious acts, fearing the loss of it, and hoping for the acceptance of it by God.

III. He must shun all sinful thoughts and actions and should engage in self-mortification, hoping for the fulfilment of the promises of God, and hoping for attaining nearness to him.¹

IV. He should establish worship and prayer, spend his wealth both secretly and publicly in the path of God, and the affairs of the world must not distract him from this

1. According to al-Makkī, the principles of hope are described in Qur'ān as follows: "Those who believe and those who emigrate and strive in the way of Allah, they have hope of Allah's mercy." Qur'ān, 2:218.

pious act.¹

V. One should engage in worship and invocation, keeping vigil at night due to the fear of God in his heart.²

On the basis of the above principles, al-Makkī holds that hope will not attain its perfection and reality in one's heart until all the following qualities are combined in his heart, namely, shunning everything and turning towards God, engaging in self-mortification in relation to it, recitation of Qur'ān, establishing worship, keeping vigil at night, spending one's wealth in the path of God and exercising caution in relation to all these things. According to al-Makkī, these are the basic qualities of men of hope and on the basis of these qualities the pious actions increases and multiplies, both in relation to his body and heart, on the basis of the light and knowledge and the unveiling of the unseen, that is to say, on the basis of the inner spiritual illumination which one receives due to spiritual elevation.³

1. According to al-Makkī, God describes the men of hope who had attained the reality of it when he says, "Lo! Those who read the scripture of Allah and establish worship and spend of that what we have bestowed on them secretly and openly, they hope for imperishable gain." Qur'ān, 35:29. QQ, I, 443.

2. Qur'ān describes them as follows: "Is he who prayeth adoration in the watches of the night prostrate and standing bawaring of the hereafter and hoping for the mercy of his Lord." Qur'ān, 39:9.

3. QQ, I, 444.

According to al-Makkī, right thought (ḥusn az-ẓann) is an integral part of hope and the men of piety attached so much importance to it that they were conscious about it even at the time of their death with the hope of meeting their Lord in a pleasing manner, thus it is narrated of Aḥmad ibn-Ḥanbal, that at the time of his death, he is stated to have said to his son, "Mention to me things in which there is hope and right thought." Thus if hope and right thought are not noble stations, the learned will not seek for it at the time of their death. Therefore, it is stated that fear is superior so long as one lives and when death comes hope is superior.¹

Al-Makkī quotes a number of traditions which speak about the mercy of God, his bounty and generosity which implies the importance of having hope in his mercy. Thus God admonishes mankind not to be despaired of his bounty when he states, "O! man what hath made thee careless concerning thy Lord, the bountiful."²

While stressing the importance of having hope in God's bounty, al-Makkī distinguishes between the true sincere hope of the pious, and the false unreal hope of the masses. He says, "As for the hope of the general consensus of men, which implies persisting in sin and disobedience while hoping for the grace and forgiveness of God, is not the real hope of the learned, because hope is

1. QQ, I, 445.

2. Qur'ān, 86:6, QQ, I, 453.

a station of certainty and what is described above is not the quality of the men of certainty, but the nature of those who are in the state of heedlessness, and ignorance of the laws of God." Thus God has condemned those who entertain hope of this nature, persisting in sin, being satisfied with it, but at the same time hoping for forgiveness. Thus he says, "And a generation hath succeeded them, who inherited the scriptures. They grasp the goods of this low life (as the price of evil doing) and say: it will be forgiven us."¹

The reality of hope is that it would increase in the men of deception the nature of deception, but it would be an increase in bounty for sincere repenters, a cooling of the eye, and a source of comfort to the sincere lovers, a source of pleasure and happiness to men of modesty and generosity.²

According to al-Makkī, the sign of soundness of one's hope is the existence of a hidden fear in his hope, because when one attains the true state of fear, he fears the loss of it, and thus he would increasingly engage in the acts that would increase his hope, fearing the loss of it. Hence, hope becomes the source of comfort for the men of fear. Moreover, hope according to the learned says al-Makkī is the first station of

1. Qur'ān, 7:169, QQ, I, 454.

2. QQ, I, 454.

love and one rises thereafter in his love according to the degree of increase and rise in his hope and right thought.¹

VII. Fear (khawf)

Fear, according to al-Makkī, is the name assigned to the reality of piety, and piety is the term which embraces all the devotional acts. "It is fear that burns one's sensual desires of the lower self and removes its dangerous tendencies, and it is fear that ultimately leads one towards love." He quotes Abū-Fayḍ al-Miṣrī who states, "One who loves will not drink from the cup of love except that his heart attains maturity in fear."²

A. Fear of the common believers and fear of the elect.

Though every believer cherishes in his heart the fear of God, each one has his fear according to the degree of his nearness to God. Thus al-Makkī classifies fear on the following basis:

I. Fear based on Islam: It is the fear based on the belief in the power and glory of God, believing sincerely about what God had stated about his punishments and threats.

1. QQ, I, 445 ff.

2. Ibid, 458.

2. QQ, I, 446 ff.

3. Ibid, 449.

II. Fear of the common believers: Their fear is in the outer heart,¹ and it is based on the inner knowledge (bāṭin al-‘ilm) on the basis of their faith.

III. Fear of the elect among the believers (khusūs): They are men of certainty whose fear is in their inner heart and it is based on their inner knowledge on the basis of ecstasy (wajd).

IV. Fear based on certainty: This is the fear of men of sincerity (ṣiddīqīn) among the gnostics. Their fear is based on what they truly witness of the things which the common believers believe as fearful attributes of God. Thus one who has fear based on certainty would subject his self to self-examination every moment and would meditate upon his Lord every moment and practice abstinence in regard to all dubious knowledge and things.²

Al-Makkī observes that the concept of fear among the learned is completely different from what is understood by the masses about fear. According to the common folk fear implies anxiety, grief, or disturbed state of the mind and heart, but in reality of knowledge, it has no meaning because according to the learned fear is the name for true and sound knowledge (ism ṣaḥīḥ al-‘ilm) and sincere contemplation.³

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1. For al-Makkī's concept of outer heart and inner heart, see above. 155
 2. QQ, I, 458 ff.
 3. Ibid, 449.

As the fear of the common believers and the elect are on two spiritual planes, it manifests in two different forms among both these groups. The fear of the common believers causes them to safeguard all the members of the body from sinful acts, as for the elects, it leads them to refrain from storing the food which they won't eat, from building a house in which they may not live, from seeking increase in things from which they would soon be separated. It also guards them from heedlessness and from being indifferent towards one to whom ultimately they would return.¹

Fear, says al-Makkī, is not caused by increase in sins. If it is so, the common masses would have more fear than the elect, but the fact is contrary to it. The pious and the elect have more fear in their hearts than the common folk. Thus fear is something which one attains due to the purity of heart, and consciousness of the greatness and majesty of God. The companions of the Prophet had the fear in their hearts even after attaining the highest status of receiving the glad tidings of entering heaven. More than anybody else, the Prophet himself is stated to have had the fear of most highest degree, so much so, that it is stated that he used to say, "Chapters of al-Hūd and al-Wāqi'a had caused my hair grey."²

1. QQ, I, 459.
2. Ibid. 463 ff.

Al-Makkī describes the qualities of fear dividing it into various gradations. The greatest of all the fears is the fear of one's evil end (su'āl-khātima). This has been the fear of the learned who are the inheritors of the Prophet.¹ Thus the fear of one's end was most important in the minds of the men of piety, because when one's ends comes all his pious acts comes to an end. It is said that the fear of Ḥasan al-Baṣrī was based upon the contemplation upon the evil end. It is said that Ḥasan never laughed for forty years and he used to speak as if he sees the events of the hereafter unfolding before his very eyes, and when he remains silent he appears as if the fire of hell is kindled in front of him.²

The fear of hypocrisy comes as the next major fear, and none would be free from the fears of hypocrisy, says al-Makkī, except three categories of believers, namely, the ṣiddīqīn, the shuhadā' and the ṣāliḥīn. According to al-Makkī, the signs of hypocrisy are beyond enumeration, and he mentions some of them in the light of the traditions of the Prophet, and the sayings of the pious ancestors. The other major fears are, the fear of one's faith being snatched away, and the fear of being severed from one's increase in the knowledge of faith while he retains an element of gnosis.³

1. QQ, I, 465.

2. Ibid, 460, cf. Ihyā', IV, 151 ff.

3. Ibid, 475 ff.

Apart from these major fears of evil end and hypocrisy, al-Makkī speaks of other types of fears which are encountered by the group of believers who are known as the companions of the right hand. They are as follows:

1. The fear of crimes and acquired sins (janāyāt wa'l-iktisābāt).
2. Fear of threat of punishments (wa'īd) and the mysteries of punishments (sirr-al-'iqāb).
3. The fear of falling short of fulfilling the commandments of God.
4. Fear of the transgression of the limits set by God.
5. Fear of withdrawal in divine blessings.
6. The fear of state of wakefulness (yaqẓa) being veiled by heedlessness.
7. Fear of experiencing faintness or dullness after exerting oneself in relation to pious acts (mu'āmalā).
8. Fear of one's determination being weakened after gaining strength.
9. Fear of breaking of promise on the basis of annulling of one's repentance.
10. Fear of being subjected to trial due to one not seeking repentance.

11. Fear of going astray after attaining true guidance in the right path.
12. Fear of getting accustomed to sensual pleasures.
13. Fear of perplexity after the state of calmness.
14. The fear of God looking into one's past sins and shameful acts, and thus he would turn away from him causing him to perish.

The fears, as classified above, says al-Makkī, are of different categories, and some are higher than the other.¹

Al-Makkī gives a vivid and interesting account of the way in which the consciousness of fear proceeds from the heart and enters into the bodily and spiritual organs producing different physical and spiritual reactions and manifestations.² According to al-Makkī, the fear proceeds from the heart and enters the physical and spiritual organs of the body, through seven different

1. QQ, I, 473. Al-Ghazālī too discusses on the same line about various categories of fears. Most of these fears which are considered by al-Makkī as the fears encountered by the companions of the right hand are considered by al-Ghazālī as the fears of the gnostics. cf. Ihyā', IV 137-139.
2. Al-Ghazālī also speaks of the reactions of fear when it proceeds from the heart and enters the body and overwhelms the members of the body. cf. Ihyā', IV, 135.

paths, and he discusses each of these seven paths in detail. For example, when the fear enters the intellect, it veils the intellect and shields its authority like the light of the moon eclipses the light of the sun, thus when the authority of the intellect is weakened by fear, it produces the physical reaction by causing one's body to tremble. The learned, and the men of the heart (ahl al-qulūb) experiences this state of fear.¹ When the fear enters the lower self, it burns the passions and sensual desires and subdues the nature of the lower self. According to the gnostics this is the highest type of fear. This is the fear of prophets and men of sincerity.²

Al-Makkī stresses the need for moderation in fear, because if it exceeds certain limits it would produce some reactions which are detrimental to spiritual progress. The worst of all these reactions is that when one's fear exceeds certain limits, he is liable to lose his hope, and this in turn would lead him to be despaired of the mercy of God. According to al-Makkī most of the heretical sects in Islam like the Khawārij, Mu'tazila, and Murji'a, went astray due to the act of exceeding the limits in the matter of fear, because it is really the act of transgressing the limit set by God who says, "Allah hath set a measure for all things."³

1. QQ, I, 481 ff.

2. Ibid, 483.

3. Qur'ān, 65:3. QQ, 484 ff.

According to al-Makkī the state of moderation in fear and sincerity in hope, could only be achieved on the basis of the true knowledge of God, and the true believer is the one who achieves a balanced state between fear and hope.

B. Interdependent nature of fear and hope.

According to al-Makkī the stations of hope and fear are interdependent. One who is ignorant of fear, says al-Makkī, is also ignorant of hope, and one who had not attained the station of fear would not attain the station of hope.¹

Al-Makkī compares the interaction of fear and hope with the interchange of day and night. When the day appears the night gradually recedes through the power of God, and when the night befalls, it covers the day according to divine wisdom. This is the reality of night entering upon the day and vice versa. What is true of the visible, material world is true of the world of the unseen. Thus when the quality of fear appears in a person, the laws relating to fear manifest in him, and thus he is named as the man of fear due to its dominating influence and due to the concealment of hope in his fear, and the same process takes place when hope makes its appearance. Fear and hope, says al-Makkī, are two aspects of the

1. QQ, I, 438.

faith like the two wings of the bird. The believer is in between fear and hope like the bird floats between its wings and like the tongue of the balance is between its two scales.¹

Al-Makkī quotes a saying of Luqmān to his son in which he states, "Fear Allah in such a way that you may not feel secure from his scheming (makr) and have hope in him in such a manner that your hope is stronger than fear."

When the son said, "How is it possible when I have only one heart?" Luqman replied, "Don't you know that a believer has two hearts, one to fear God, and the other to have hope in him."²

Thus, according to al-Makkī, a true believer will attain a balanced state in relation to both the station of fear and the station of hope.

1. QQ, I, 439. As-Sarrāj quotes in his Luma' an anonymous saying which states, "Fear and hope are two wings of the devotional acts without which it would not be able to fly." Luma', 62 ff.

2. QQ, I, 440. Al-Ghazālī too stresses the need to adopt a moderate attitude towards fear and attain a balanced state in relation to fear and hope.

cf. Iḥyā', IV, 127. Al-Hujwīri quotes a statement of Abū-Sulaymān Dārānī, which speaks of the importance of attaining equal status in relation to both.

Kashf, 112 ff.

VIII. Trust in God (tawakkul)

After the station of fear, one attains the station of trust in God, in which one surrenders his self to the Lord on the basis of his fear, so that his Lord may deal with him in whatever manner he wish.¹ The station of tawakkul, according to al-Makkī, is one of the highest stations of certainty, and also one of the noblest states of those who had attained nearness to God. Moreover, it is a station which embodies within it all the stations of certainty.²

Every believer in God, says al-Makkī, trusts in him, but the trust of each individual believer differs according to the degree of his certainty. Thus while the tawakkul of the elect (khuṣūṣ) is on the basis of their contemplation and satisfaction (riḍā) and the tawakkul of the common folk ('umūm) is on the basis of their faith in the decree of good and evil.³

Al-Makkī gives a detailed exposition of the qualities of the one who sincerely trusts in God. One who trusts in God must contemplate on his power (qudra) and wisdom (ḥikma) because God brings forth things on the basis of his power and makes it to exist and function through his wisdom. If one who trusts in God contemplates in this manner, he

1. QQ, II, 150.
2. Ibid, 62, also 4 ff.
3. Ibid, 19 ff.

would obey the laws of God recognising the power of God over all things.¹ Thus those who possess the true knowledge of God (al-ulamā' bi'illah) never trust in him in order to achieve any worldly ends, nor they seek from him to change the pattern of things, and the course of events, or to exempt them from his law (sunna), on the basis of which the former generations were subjected to trial, because in their hearts, the Lord occupies a nobler place than the mundane matters. Thus they would exercise patience in relation to the unfolding of events on the basis of divine decree, and accept them with complete satisfaction.² Because on the basis of his contemplation, one who trusts in God realises that power belongs only to God, and it is he who possesses the treasures of heaven and earth and reveals them according to certain measure.³

To have trust in God in relation to sustenance, says al-Makkī, is obligatory according to the gnostics and men of certainty. He quotes a tradition which states that if you trust in God in a true and perfect manner, he would provide you food as he is providing for the birds, they set out empty bellied from their nests at dawn, but they return at dusk fully content.⁴

1. QQ, II, 19.

2. Ibid, 71 ff.

3. Ibid, 5. Al-Ghazālī also speaks of the various grades of tawakkul and speaks of the highest grade, as expounded by al-Makkī, substantiating his views by quoting the traditions to which al-Makkī has referred. cf. Ihyā', IV, 230 ff.

4. QQ, II, 7.

Though to have tawakkul in relation to sustenance is the most noblest station, and becomes obligatory upon those who had attained very high spiritual station. Al-Makkī sees no harm in engaging in seeking livelihood, and states that it would not make one's tawakkul invalid.¹ Because though seeking livelihood is not obligatory it becomes obligatory on the basis of two things, either when there exists a family, and they lack the sufficient lawful means to feed themselves² or when there arises a situation in which lack of means causes weakness and physical disability and prevents one from fulfilling his obligatory duties to God. Thus Sufyān ath-Thawrī, is stated to have possessed fifty dinars, and engaged in trade with the help of that money, and when his family died, he is said to have given up his trade, and distributed that money among the poor. Thus earning of one's livelihood would not make

1. QQ, II, 57.
2. Though the ṣūfis like al-Khawwāṣ is reported to have stated, says al-Makkī, that a ṣūfi would not have employment (ḥarīf) this state suits the one who is single and lives alone. As for the one who has a family, earning his living is more suitable because his family is the family of God that is with him, and God has entrusted it to him and laid on him the task of feeding them, thus it would not reduce his spiritual state. QQ, II, 32.

one's tawakkul invalid, neither would it impair or weaken one's spiritual station, nor would it reduce his spiritual state.¹ Moreover, one's entering the market for the sake of earning the livelihood, would not minimise one's trust in God, because if it is so 'Abd-ar-Raḥmān ibn-'Awf would not have entered the market to seek his livelihood, and it never minimised his trust in God.² But one who had attained certainty, says al-Makkī, may abstain from earning his livelihood. He quotes a saying of an anonymous scholar who states, "If the existence of the means and the non-existence of it is equal in one's heart and if the heart finds peace and quiescence at the time of non-existence, and does not get diverted from the remembrance of God, then refraining from engaging in seeking his livelihood is better for him so that he may be occupied with his spiritual states and gather his provisions for the hereafter."³ Thus the question of earning one's livelihood, in relation to tawakkul, varies according to the degree of the spiritual state of each individual, and it is in reference to this one of the learned had stated, "One who refutes the earning of livelihood has criticised the sunna, and one

1. Al-Ghazālī discusses in detail the tawakkul of a man with a family (tawakkul al-mu'ayyal) as distinguished from the tawakkul of one who has no family (tawakkul al-munfarid). cf. Ihyā' IV, 234 ff.
2. QQ, II, 33.
3. Ibid, 31.

who falsifies about the concept of refraining from earning one's livelihood has criticised the assertion of unity."¹ Notwithstanding the permissibility of seeking one's livelihood, if one engages in it by acquiring his wealth through dubious means (shubhāt) and also with the intention of accumulating and amassing wealth for the sake of pride, then it would minimise his tawakkul, and remove him from its fold.²

In this connection al-Makkī also discusses the question whether storing or hoarding of material things or wealth (iddikhār) would make one's tawakkūl invalid. According to al-Makkī, it would not make it invalid if he stores it for the sake of God, and not to satisfy his sensual desires.³ In the same manner, if one stores things for the safety and protection of his heart, and to protect him from begging, or for the sake of his family in order to keep them engaged in pious actions, it would be considered as a virtuous act. Thus it is stated that the Prophet had stored up food sufficient for a year for the sake of his family so that it may form a sunna, and at the same time he had forbidden Ummu-Ayman,

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1. Ibid, 30. Al-Ghazālī attributes this statement to Sahl. cf. Ihyā', IV, 222, also cf. Qushyrī, 92.
 2. Ibid, 34. Al-Ghazālī too holds the opinion that one's engaging in trade will not make one's tawakkul invalid, though it is below the gradation of the tawakkul of the elect, cf. Ihyā', IV, 231 ff.
 3. QQ, II, 37.

Bilāl, and others from storing things for the next day so that men of mystical stations (ahl al-maqāmāt) may follow them. On the whole al-Makkī, being one of the men of mystical stations disapproves for one, who trusts in God, to store for more than forty days, and he quotes al-Khawwāṣ who has given a very minute exposition of tawakkul, "The entire station of tawakkul" says al-Khawwās "lies in the storing of four things that are pertaining to religion - a needle, a thread, a pair of scissors and a staff."¹

According to al-Makkī, trust in God also implies concealing one's sickness from others and refraining from complaining about it because this amounts to the denial of the blessings of God. But at the same time, says al-Makkī, if one informs others about his sickness without any of the dangers of the lower self involved in it, while in the state of his heart being thankful to God and satisfied with his decree, it would not nullify his tawakkul, because this would amount to the act of manifesting one's state of helplessness in the presence of Almighty God.² In the same manner, one's seeking treatment for his sickness would not minimise one's tawakkul, because God has not placed any hardship in the matters of religion, as he states in the Qur'ān, "And hath not laid upon you in religion any hardship."³

1. Ibid, 38.

2. QQ, II, 56, cf. Ihyā', IV, 251 ff.

3. Qur'ān, 22:78.

Moreover, the Prophet himself had prescribed various treatments for diseases. Thus seeking medical treatment is not incompatible with one's tawakkul, instead it becomes a virtuous act on the basis of two things, one is that it creates in one's mind the intention to follow the sunna and the other is that it enables him to benefit from what God had made easy in the matters of religion.¹ According to al-Makkī, if one resorts to seeking treatment, it would not make his tawakkul invalid provided he engages in it with pious intention. Thus if one cherishes the pious intention of engaging in pious actions by regaining his health, it would not affect his station of tawakkul, instead it would enhance its status, but if he intends by it only the health of the body or the comfort of recovery,

1. QQ, II, 40 ff. Al-Ghazālī discusses the reasons on the basis of which ones abstaining from seeking a cure attains its soundness. But at the same time he criticises those who hold the view that abstaining from seeking a cure is a superior state at all conditions, because abstaining from seeking a cure becomes superior at certain states, and the act of seeking a cure becomes superior at certain other states. Thus it differs according to the states and intentions of the different individuals, and if seeking treatment is not superior the Prophet would not have recommended and also acted upon it.

Ihyā', IV, 249-51.

then it assumes the form of a worldly desire, and thus he would lose the status of his tawakkul.¹

Al-Makkī also discusses the statement of Sahl which states, "Abstaining from seeking a cure for sickness, even though his sickness may prevent him from fulfilling the duty towards God, is better than seeking a cure for it with the intention of engaging in the pious actions."² While al-Makkī accepts the fact that abstaining from seeking a cure from one's sickness involves several pious acts like exercising patience at the time of trial, satisfaction with the degree of God etc., he generally supports the view-point that seeking a cure for one's sickness will not make one's tawakkul invalid, provided he engages in it with pious intention as stated above,

1. QQ, II, 49.

2. According to al-Makkī, this statement of Sahl is based on the Baṣrite school which stresses weakening the body in order to weaken the lower self, because they held the strength of the sensual desire is caused by the strength of the lower self, which in turn causes sin, rouses the passion, and love of the world, and prolongs one's hope to enjoy the life in this world (ṭūl al-amal) QQ, II, 45. The aspect of self-mortification occupied a prominent place in the mystical doctrine of Sahl. cf. Kashf, 195 ff.

because one who trusts in God knows that sickness has an appointed time and when that time comes he would be cured, and he is also convinced of the fact that it is not medicine, but God who cures it, because he is the primary agent of every action.¹

Al-Makkī also speaks about the relationship between one's hope for long life and tawakkul. One's hope to remain in the world will not cause his trust in God to be invalid, provided he cherishes his hope with the intention of obeying his Lord and to serve him, but if he entertains that hope with the intention of any worldly desires it would affect his asceticism, which in turn would cause him to lose his trust in God.² But at the same time, observes al-Makkī, the Prophet entertained very little hope to remain in the world, and this indicates that the emphasis upon things vary according to one's contemplation, on the basis that religious law has both characteristics, an aspect of easiness (rukhsa) and also an aspect of hardship ('azīma), the former is for those who are weak and the latter is for those who are strong. Thus on the basis of 'azīma and rukhsa of the religious law, al-Makkī propounds a moderate view-point of tawakkul avoiding the extremist tendencies.³

1. QQ, II, 48.
2. According to al-Ghazālī tawakkul will not attain its soundness except on the basis of asceticism. cf. Iḥyā', IV, 231.
3. QQ, II, 48.

IX. Satisfaction¹ (riḍa).

The station of satisfaction is the logical development of the station of trust in God, because one who trusts in God, as explained above, says al-Makkī, attains the state of being pleased and satisfied with the creator, thus al-Makkī speaks of satisfaction as the contemplation of those who trust in God,² and those who are in the station of satisfaction are superior to those who are engaged in self-mortification.³ It is a station which occupies a

1. There has been difference of opinion among the ṣūfis as to whether satisfaction is a state or a station. Al-Muḥāsibī is stated to have considered it as a state, and according to al-Hujwīrī, al-Muḥāsibī was the first to hold this view which was later adopted by the Khurāsāni school, but the people of Iraq, on the contrary, are stated to have asserted that satisfaction is one of the stations, and the extreme point of one's trust in God. Kashf, 176 ff. According to al-Qushayrī, the Khurasanian school and Iraqi school differ on the question whether it is a state or station. While the Khurasanians state it is a station, the latter hold it to be a state, and al-Qushayrī reconciles both viewpoints by saying that the initial phase of satisfaction is a station, and its end is a state, cf. Qushayrī, 105. It is interesting to note here what is attributed by al-Hujwīrī to Khurasanian school is attributed by al-Qushayrī to the Iraqi school. cf. Sūfism, 77.
2. QQ, II, 90.
3. Ibid, 83. According to the ṣūfi concept at the point of the station of satisfaction, all mortification ceases. cf. Kashf, 182.

higher plane than the divine vision itself because the continuity of the vision of God itself would depend upon the degree of satisfaction.¹ Thus according to al-Makkī, satisfaction is one of the highest spiritual stations the seeker attains, and it extends to him the scope of unlimited spiritual progress because it is a station which has no end.²

Satisfaction, primarily implies the state of being pleased and satisfied with the decree of God and finding quiescence in it, and being content with what is allotted to him on the basis of divine providence, submitting himself completely to the decree of God having absolute faith in the soundness and beauty of the divine scheme (tadbīr).³ According to the gnostics, the satisfaction assumes various forms according to the nature of things, if there is a matter which is commanded by God, then one should be satisfied with the commandments and offer his gratitude to God, but in relation to matters that are evil and sinful which are forbidden by God, one should be satisfied with it on the basis of divine decree and divine justice submitting to his Lord, exercising patience in relation to these matters, and he should confess his sins and be satisfied with the divine punishments meted out to him on the basis of divine laws, because he realises

1. QQ, II, 77. cf. Ihyā', IV, 294.
2. QQ, II, 86.
3. Ibid, 79.

that he had committed the sin by engaging the members of the body, but at the same time he is satisfied in holding that it proceeded from the will of God and he may forgive him out of his mercy or he may punish him on the basis of divine justice.¹ One should be satisfied with the sins, says al-Makkī, in the sense that they are of divine origin, but he must not be pleased with it when they proceed from the inspirations of the lower self and manifest in the form of evil actions, because the faith imposes the condition of disapproving sin, and the religious law proclaims its necessity, and God disapproves it. Hence, one who is in the station of satisfaction identifies himself with God in relation to what he hates and what he loves.²

According to al-Makkī, one's asking from God for the increase in the worldly blessings and the blessings of the hereafter with complete humiliation and with a feeling of dependency upon God, would not make his satisfaction invalid, but it would be more virtuous if he seeks from God his nearness (qurb) and his love in preference to all other things, because in doing so he would achieve the state of singlemindedness of purpose by turning his heart

1. QQ, II, 90.

2. Ibid.

3. According to al-Ghazālī supplication (du'ā) and seeking the blessings of God will not make one's satisfaction invalid. cf. Iḥyā', IV, 300.

only towards God.¹

Satisfaction implies the attainment of the state of mind which is pleased and satisfied with God both in regard to happiness and sadness, thus Fudayl had said, "When one treats the state of receiving from God and deprivation of something by God as equal, he is satisfied with God."² Satisfaction also implies that one should not find fault with anything, because every object and every act is the manifestation of the divine scheme, and has its source in the will and decree of God. Therefore, one who is satisfied with God sees the hand of God working in every object and in every act, and being conscious of his modesty and humbleness in the presence of God, he would not find fault with anything, as everything or act proceeds from God. Hence to find fault with anything amounts to finding fault with the creator himself, and thus this tends to manifest one's lack of modesty and shame which in turn amounts to the denial of the divine blessings. Thus, according to men of satisfaction, to blame anything or to find fault with it is like indulging in backbiting in relation to its creator. In the same manner, the men of abstinence never find fault with anything feeling shy of contesting the wisdom of God in his own abode, because the ruler executes his orders in any way he desires, and acts in any manner he wishes, and the duty of the servants

1. QQ, II, 87.

2. Ibid, 80.

is to be satisfied and be pleased with the acts of the Lord submitting to his law and wisdom.¹

The state of being satisfied with the divine decree does not mean, observes al-Makkī, that one should labour under the delusion that he should be satisfied even with his sinful acts on the basis that even they proceed from divine decrees, because satisfaction implies only those aspects which are harder upon the lower self and hence detested by it. It also embraces the matters that would bring benefit in the hereafter and that which would not bring any blame or punishment from God. Therefore one who is satisfied with his sinful acts and claims that it is of the station of satisfaction is among those who are condemned by God.² Therefore one's satisfaction will not be sound until one is protected by all the sensual desires and this protection ('isma) is the state that is conferred upon one by the blessings of God and it is the outward manifestation of divine mercy, because it is

1. QQ, II, 83 ff.

2. Ibid, 91. Al-Ghazālī also criticises those who commit the blunder of classing the acts of disobedience, sin, and unbelief under the decree of God stating that one must be satisfied with it. This, says al-Ghazālī, is due to one being ignorant and heedless about the mysteries of the religious law (asrār ash-shara'). cf. Ihyā', IV, 300, also cf. Qushyri, 105.

divine mercy that keeps one away from the sensual desires and it is the main aspect of satisfaction. It is the same divine mercy that leads one who had attained satisfaction towards love.¹

X. Love (maḥabba).

A. The qualities of the lovers of God.

Love, according to al-Makkī, is one of the inheritance of God to his sincere servants and it is also the culmination of divine blessings. Al-Makkī distinguishes between the love based on faith and love based on contemplation. Every believer in God, says al-Makkī, is a lover of God, but love of each individual is according to the degree of his faith, and according to the revelations of his contemplations. The love based on contemplation, says al-Makkī, is superior to the love based on faith, because the greatest blessing God had conferred upon the believers is gnosis.²

According to al-Makkī, the lovers of God fall into different gradations, and some are greater in their love than others. The most strong in their love for God are those who cultivate in themselves the divine attributes like knowledge, forbearance, forgiveness and other praiseworthy qualities (ḥusn al-khulq) and also the

1. QQ, II, 98.

2. Ibid, 99 ff.

divine attribute of veiling oneself from the creatures. Then comes the category of those who are more knowledgeable in the attributes of God, and thus they refrain from acquiring for themselves the divine attributes like pride, praise, love for fame, wealth and glory. Then comes the category of those who are strong in their love for the Prophet since he was the "beloved of the beloved" and thus they tread on his footsteps cultivating in themselves his qualities.¹

Al-Makkī mentions several signs which indicate one's love of God, the primary sign is the act of engaging in increased remembrance of God, as the Prophet had reported to have said, "Engage increasingly in the remembrance of God to such an extent that you are classed among the insane."² The love of meeting God face to face, the longing in one's heart to witness the unveiling of the divine essence in the abode of eternity, and the desire for the attainment of nearness to God are also signs of one's love of God. This is indicated by one's desire for death because it is the door that leads to the meeting of the beloved (liqā). Thus one's struggling and being killed in the path of God is also an indication of one's love of God. Thus a true lover will have an anxiety to see the unseen, and he would give preference to the

1. QQ, II, 100.

2. Ibid, 101, cf. Ihyā', IV, 286 ff.

affairs of the hereafter which would bring him near to his beloved over the affairs of this world which the lower self desires.¹ He would struggle in the path of the beloved with his wealth and self to attain nearness to him and to gain his satisfaction, and he would sever all his attachments to things that keep him away from the beloved.²

Thus, one who is a lover must not be afraid of journeying in the path to reach the beloved, undergoing suffering and hardship, forsaking his house and possessions, and courageously facing blame and reproach from others for the sake of his love. He should shun praise, must find companionship in his loneliness and seek his comfort in solitude. He should experience the gentleness of blandishment in the intimate converse (munājāt) with the beloved. He should find comfort in the speech of the beloved³ and in obeying his laws and

1. QQ, II, 101 ff also 106.

2. Ibid, 107.

3. The love for the speech implies the love of Qur'ān which is the speech of God, the lover would find comfort in listening to it and repeating it.

Al-Makkī quotes Ibn-Mas'ūd who says, "If one loves God he would love Qur'ān and if he does not love God he will not love it." Ibid, 105.

find pleasure in serving him because the sincere love is not to find comfort and quiescence in things other than the beloved, because to a true lover, the beloved is the source of comfort, solace and pleasure, and if the lover finds comfort in things other than God it would be classed as a sin which he has committed due to his heedlessness.¹

Thus a sincere lover who finds comfort in the company of his beloved (God) would engage in intimate converse with him forsaking all which is not agreeable to the beloved and concentrate his sole attention on the beloved with the singleminded purpose of attaining nearness to him, and he would find pleasure in unceasingly engaging in glancing at his presence, being pre-occupied with the thought of the beloved because one who knows him, loves him, and one who loves him glances at him and one who glances at him confines himself solely to him, as stated in the Qur'ān, "Now look upon thy God which thou hast remained a votary."²

The love, says al-Makkī, must be pure and unadulterated, and must not have the objectives either of material or spiritual benefits involved in it other than the pure, serene love of the beloved.³

1. QQ, II, 107.

2. Qur'ān, 20:97, QQ, II, 108.

3. QQ, II, 112.

According to al-Makkī, the station of love embodies within it an element of fear, which makes the lover eternally guarding himself in the path of the realisation of his ideal of achieving nearness to the beloved. He enumerates and describes in detail all the fears that are encountered by the lovers like the fear of being ignored or shunned by the beloved, the fear of being veiled from the beloved (khawf al-ḥijāb), fear of being driven away from his presence (khawf al-bu'd) and the fear of deprivation and loss (khawf as-salab wa khawf al-fawt). The worst of all the fears, ^{iwu}the fear of being diverted from the beloved (khawf as-sulūww) and the fear of change of state (khawf al-istibdāl). All these fears are related to the fear of spiritual degradation a lover encounters in this station due to what is known as the scheming or plotting by God (al-makr as-sarī) to which Qur'ān refers when it says, "Say Allah is more swift in plotting."¹ Thus, according to al-Makkī, the love of God must always carry within it an element of fear. He quotes an anonymous source according to which "One who knows God through the path of love without fear is perished due to his cheerfulness and blandishment, One who knows him through the path of fear without any involvement of love would get isolated from God by remoteness and loneliness, and the one who knows God through the path of both fear and love would become the

1. Qur'ān, 10:22. QQ, 115 ff.

beloved of God, and God would cause him to attain nearness to him and strengthen him."¹

B. Yearning for God (shawq) and fellowship with him (uns).

The station of love entails within it the prospects of unlimited spiritual progress, and the mysteries involved in it are so deep according to al-Makkī, neither can it be derived from books nor could it be described in them, and it is revealed to none except to those who had attained it.²

One of the highest stations is the station of yearning for God (shawq). According to Junayd, says al-Makkī, the yearning for God and fellowship with him (uns) are signs of one's perfect love (kamāl-al-ḥubb).³

Shawq and uns says al-Makkī, are two stations of certainty. Shawq is a state of anxiety and restlessness due to the witnessing of the glory and attributes of the beloved behind the veil of the unseen on the basis of the hidden minute aspects. In this station there is a sense of sadness (ḥuzn) and grief, a sense of broken heartedness (inkisār). Uns, according to him, is the state of nearness to the beloved due to the revelation of the presence of the beloved with all the minute qualities and in this state there is joy and happiness.⁴ Al-Makkī

1. Ibid, 117 ff.

2. Ibid, 119

3. QQ, II, 126.

4. Ibid.

gives a detailed exposition of shawq and the nature of those who experience this mystical state. In this state God veils him from his lovers being jealous of his honour, hence the lovers attain a state of broken heartedness over the loss of the blessing of witnessing the beauty of the beloved and yearn to regain what they have lost.¹ The uns or fellowship with God, is also one of the highest stations of love. Fellowship with God, according to al-Makkī, implies the attainment of the state of peace of mind (ṭam'aniyya) and quiescence in relation to God, and also to find sweetness and pleasure in one's relationship with God. The station of uns also comprises of the states of blandishment (tamalluq), intimate converse with God (munājāt) and companionship (mujālasa), and only those who had been blessed with the attainment of this station knows the mysteries of the states of ishq and uns.²

On the whole, love is a station, says al-Makkī, that cannot be explained, and he quotes Ma'rūf al-Karkhī, who says that "love is something which is taught by the beloved himself and not by any others." Thus the gnostics declared, says al-Makkī, that all the stations are from the lights (anwār) of the attributes of God, except love which is from the light of the reality of

1. Ibid. 124. cf. Ihyā', IV, 278, also 291.

2. Ibid. 127

the essence of God (ḥaqīqa adh-dhāt) and in it lies the greatness and the majesty of the station of love.¹

According to al-Makkī, when love reaches the inner heart it completely submerges one's heart, enslaves him, and completely overpowers him. Literally, he becomes the prisoner of love, thus in this state his heart becomes emptied of everything except the love of the beloved, and he becomes dominated by the qualities of the beloved, his veil is unveiled, and he describes his love on the basis of love itself.² But in this state, sometimes the desires of the soul act as a veil to the hearts of the elect, as the desires of the self act as the veil to the common folk, they will not be bestowed the highest spiritual blessings unless they overcome the desires of the soul too as they subjugated the desires of the self, and until the veils of light (ḥijāb al-anwār) and veils of intellect (ḥijāb al-'aql) are also removed.³ This state demands from the lovers extreme sincerity, even free from the desires of the soul, and one will not be able to achieve this sincerity until he attains gnosis and gnosis can be attained only on the basis of witnessing (mu'āyana) because what is known or heard is not like

1. Ibid, 135. According to al-Ghazālī, longing implies the state of seeking the object, and fellowship indicates the state of finding the object. cf. Ihyā' IV, 91.
2. QQ, II, 136.
3. Ibid, 143.

what is witnessed face to face and this witnessing cannot be achieved except on the basis of light of certainty (nūr al-yaqīn). When the veil of passion and desire¹ is removed, the eye of certainty ('ayn al-yaqīn) makes its appearance and then appears the lights of the attributes (anwār aṣ-ṣifāt) of the beloved with all their beauty, glory and perfection in the eye of certainty, then there appears one after the other all the attributes and manifestations of the beloved light above light adding light upon light. Thus when the stations are unveiled and the seeker has attained his reality, when degrees (darjāt) and stations cease, the seeker is submerged in what he sought, and the attributes of the object he sought dominates over him, and the seeker and his desires cease, and only the object that was sought remains, and it is to this highest station of the attainment of the spiritual reality Qur'ān refers when it says, "Everyone that is there on will pass away, there remaineth but the countenance of thy Lord of might and glory."² This is the state says al-Makkī in which one ceases to exist on the basis of his individual identity and subsists on the basis of the existence of the beloved.³

1. The allusion here is to the desire of the soul.
2. Qur'ān, 55:26.
3. QQ, II, 143.

Thus the seeker after his long and arduous journey, in his search for the ultimate reality, has achieved the ultimate object of his seeking, and thus entered the spiritual plane in which he witnesses ever widening horizon of spiritual landscape, because love, says al-Makkī, has no ultimate end, and it is beyond description, and the lover has no ultimate objective, because he yearns towards nearness (qurb) and nearness is beyond any definition and limitations (ḥadd), since nearness is the attribute of the most nearest one (qarīb).¹

Thus the lovers, observes al-Makkī, are raised in their stations, according to the manifestation (tajallī) of the beloved on the basis of the qualities of his attributes, and there is not any station above the station of love except the station of khulla, which is the station related to the gnosis of the exclusive nature (al-ma'rifaṭ al-khāṣṣa). In this station one has access to the hidden oceans of the spiritual mysteries, and the secrets of eternity (qadīm).² These spiritual mysteries

1. QQ, II, 150.

2. According to al-Makkī, Abū-Yazīd al-Bisṭāmī and Sahl at-Tustarī, were blessed with the attainment of this station, which is the privilege of the elect, and they have described their states in this station. Shaqīq al-Balkhī, and Ibrāhīm ibn-Adham also had access to this station. Ibid, 151.

are veiled by the vain fantasies of the heart (awhām al-qulūb), and are stored in the innermost recess of the heart with its spirits (arwāḥ). When the lower self (nafs) is separated from the soul (rūḥ), one attains the state of a pure spiritual being on whom the spirit of the soul dominates (rūḥānī), and when the intellect (‘aql) is separated from the heart (qalb) one becomes worthy of attaining divine nearness (rabbānī), and thus the grief and distress of separation vanishes in the cheerfulness of union with the beloved, it is to this state of cheerfulness one of the gnostics gave expression in the following lines:

"By my life, O! my life! Don't make me far
from my nearness.

Cause my self to be separated from my soul
and make my grief cheerful."¹

There is no station beyond the station of khulla, except the rank (daraja) of Prophethood. It is veiled from the hearts of men, like the station of khulla is veiled from the hearts of the common folk. The mysteries of the station of khulla is beyond discription, thus when Junayd al-Baghdādī was questioned about it he said, "It is the ultimate end of love, it is a glorious station in which the intellect is submerged, and the self is forgotten, and it is the most highest form of gnosis of

1. QQ, II, 151.

God."¹ According to al-Makkī, it belongs to the type of knowledge about which it is not proper to inquire until it is transmitted to one, and it will not be transmitted except to those who are capable of receiving it.²

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

CONCLUSION

In the preceding pages an effort is made to analyse the mystical doctrine of al-Makkī, as found in his work "Qūt al-Qulūb". This study may be brought to a close by arriving at the following conclusions based on the above study.

The study of the life and works of al-Makkī leads to the conclusion that al-Makkī was one of the leading ṣūfi theorists of the fourth century, who had made a successful attempt to give a systematic exposition of taṣawwuf, in agreement with the Qur'ān and sunna. Though al-Makkī's orthodoxy was questioned from certain quarters, and he was accused of heresy, in his Qūt he figures as a ṣūfi writer who wishes to uphold the sharī'a and follow it scrupulously. He was totally opposed to kalām, and was a vehement critic of the Mu'tazila and other heretical groups, including the shallow ṣūfis who give utterances to statements against Qur'ān and sunna. He always aligned himself with the Ahl as-Sunna wa-l Jamā'a, and insists that the following of the sharī'a is binding upon everyone, even after one's attainment of the highest mystical station. Though he was generally categorised under the Sālimis, the present study indicates that the heretical views that are normally attributed to the Sālimiyya are totally absent in his writings, and the role he himself had played in this movement remains obscure, except for the fact that he held in very high esteem Sahl at-Tustarī

and Ibn-Sālim, the chief figures of the movement of Sālimiyya. It appears as if he was not a prolific writer, he has very few works to his credit, and many of them seem to have been lost. Nevertheless, the Qūt al-Qulūb, his magnum opus had earned for him a unique place in the realm of Islamic mysticism. In this work he attempted to present a complete picture of both, the theoretical and practical aspects of ṣūfism in agreement with the sharī'a. Though similar attempts were made by his contemporaries like as-Sarrāj and al-Kalābādhī, with the same objective, the present study reveals that the works of al-Makkī differed in many respects from that of his contemporaries. The aim of as-Sarrāj appears to be to refute the criticisms of some of the theologians, and to establish the fact that taṣawwuf contains some things which are in agreement with Qur'ān and sunna. Hence, it is some what of ^{an} apologetic nature. The work of al-Makkī differs from that of al-Kalābādhī, in being a work of a more comprehensive treatment of the subject than that of al-Kalābādhī. Al-Makkī discusses all the significant aspects of taṣawwuf in a far more detailed manner than al-Kalābādhī.

The most salient feature of the work of al-Makkī is the absence of the apologetic tone which is rather conspicuous in the works of his contemporaries. Notwithstanding the fact that he himself was very much conscious about the challenge faced by the ṣūfis from the formal theologians, he is by no means content merely to answer

their criticisms, rather he establishes an independent doctrine of his own in his Qūt by claiming that the ṣūfi way of life and thought represented an authentic tradition of the Prophet's teachings, transmitted first by Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and maintained scrupulously intact by the succeeding generations of scholars and ṣūfis. Thus Qūt is a clearer and more complete statement of ṣūfi doctrine than that of his contemporaries.

Thus the mystical doctrine of al-Makkī is based on the Qur'ān and sunna, and the ways of the pious ancestors. He always substantiates his statements from Qur'ān and sunna, and from the sayings of the pious ancestors, and early ṣūfis. Though al-Makkī was criticised by some for quoting weak traditions, even in this respect, he seems to have exercised much care, although the present study indicates that this allegation against him is not altogether unjustifiable.

Al-Makkī's entire mystical doctrine revolves round the central doctrine of the science of the heart ('ilm al-qulūb), the founder of which he states to be Ḥasan al-Baṣrī. Heart is the central organ of human personality, the seat of all spiritual knowledge, experience, and reality, but the worldly desires, lust, passion and other sinful deeds act as a covering for the heart, and as a veil preventing the attainment of the reality. Hence, the path towards the attainment of the reality lies in polishing the mirror of the heart by means of self-mortification, self-examination,

meditation, contemplation and recollection. By these spiritual exercises the rust of the heart is removed, and it becomes clean and polished, capable of reflecting the divine reality.

Al-Makkī, as in the case of all the ṣūfis, conceives the path of a mystic as a journey which embodies within it several states and stations, which one who wishes to attain the reality must traverse, and after crossing all the mystical stations one attains the gnosis which is the ultimate objective of every aspirant of the mystic path.

The works of al-Makkī seem to have exercised a great influence upon the ṣūfi thought of succeeding periods. This is borne out by the various commentaries and extracts that were later compiled based on his Qūt. His teachings were received with admiration by the later ṣūfis like al-Ghazālī, Ibn-ar-Rundī, as-Suhrawardī and others. Above all, it was Qūt which appears to have laid the foundation on which al-Ghazālī, in the following century, built the superstructure of the intellectual and spiritual justification of taṣawwuf, an aspect which demands an independent study, which if undertaken would bring to light more interesting traits of al-Makkī's influence on later mystical thought in Islam.

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