

36 Advices on Awakening the Inner Eye and Recognizing the Self

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Ya Ali Madad! Let us reflect on the following 36 advices on awakening the inner eye and recognizing of the self [Source: Coolness of the Eye, Pages 123-131):

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

1. The first and foremost requirement for spiritual progress is ethic, then belief, bandagi and the knowledge of certainty.
2. The virtue of taqwa (piety, righteousness) is the essence of the results and fruits of ethic, bandagi and the knowledge of certainty. Therefore, taqwa grants a sublime place to a mu'min.
3. A dominating element of taqwa is the fear of God. But it is important to know how one can fear God. For, without knowledge, the correct concept of the fear of God is inconceivable.
4. If someone in this world, has the companionship of the beloved servants of Mowla, it is a blessing, for it is practical guidance to goodness.
5. Whatever your level of knowledge, you should teach others. For, by this, knowledge increases naturally, in the sense that whatever amount of knowledge you give from your heart, it is replaced by Divine knowledge, provided it is done with taqwa.
6. Knowledge should be given in two ways: in a general assembly or gathering, or in a special circle of friends, so that you have an opportunity to teach everyone according to his or her understanding, and at the same time, your own general and special knowledge may increase.
7. The best place for ibadat is Jamat Khana, because as the Qur'an says it is the place of reward and peace ("Remember We made the House a place of assembly for men and a place of safety; and take ye the station of Abraham as a place of prayer; and We covenanted with Abraham and Isma'il, that they should sanctify My House for those who compass it round, or use it as a retreat, or bow, or prostrate themselves (therein in prayer)."
Holy Qur'an 2:125)
8. Jamati service helps in spiritual progress and the more far-reaching the service, the greater the reward. In this respect, the service of knowledge can be the most rewarding, for it can benefit the entire Ismaili world in the present as well as in the future.
9. There are three things: intention (niyyat), speech (qawl) and action (amal) through which a mu'min can make spiritual progress, therefore they should be kept pure to the utmost extent.
10. If the actions of a person are not pure, he should know that his tongue is not pure and if the tongue is not pure, his heart (intention) is not pure. As the Holy Prophet has said: "Indeed actions depend on intentions."

11. There can be revolutionary or gradual progress or a combination of both in dhikr-u ibadat.
12. Spiritual progress is not possible without humility, tolerance and modesty. Man falls by pride and arrogance.
13. Dhikr-i ilahi (remembrance of God) can be by a single ism (name), or by a tasbi (which may consist of more than one name) or through different names. If you feel pleasure in remembering one particular name, then continue to recite it. Or, if you feel happy reciting different names, then benefit from doing so. This concerns ibadat other than the special (luminous) dhikr.
14. There are various ways of doing dhikr-u ibadat: one is an expression of gratitude for the bounties of the Nourisher of the world, another is repentance for sins, another is to weep and shed tears for didar-i ilahi (Divine vision); still another is based on prayers, in which well-being and betterment of oneself and all other mu'mins is sought.
15. When someone prostrates in private and free ibadat, he should prostrate with utmost respect and humility and should not lift the forehead off the ground for some time. For has said: "Wa'sjud wa'qtarib (prostrate yourselves and draw near!) (96:19). And blessings should be invoked in this state.
16. A mu'min should cultivate the habit of raising hands in His presence and invoking blessings so that the state of his heart may always remain in need (of His mercy) in God's presence, and His mercy may embrace him.
17. Satan cannot come without the vehicle of the desires of the nafs-i amara (carnal soul). It is the nafs-i amara which is the donkey of Satan, which he rides to achieve his goal. If man opposes his nafs-i amara, Satan cannot approach him.
18. A true mu'min should know the wisdom that he must keep away from those who are far away from the Imam of the time and draw near those who are close to him.
19. There are two kinds of pleasures: spiritual and physical. Thus, as long as unlawful physical pleasures are not abandoned and lawful pleasures are not minimized, spiritual pleasures cannot be attained.
20. When spiritual progress stops, it is because of sins, whether they are mortal ones or the sum of many venial (forgivable) sins.
21. A mu'min once said that he did not progress spiritually, although he was regular in 'ibadat, he submitted dasond (tithe) properly and he thought that he did not commit any sins. He was told: "How is it possible not to progress spiritually in spite of not having committed a sin?"
22. A sin is committed in many ways: knowingly or unknowingly, or due to ignorance, externally or internally. In short, whatever may be the nature of the sin, it shows its effect and prevents spiritual progress. Nay, in most cases, it imprisons the sinner in eternal punishment.

23. In order to know whether there is taqwa (piety) or sin in his heart, a mu'min has to examine whether he is performing all kinds of religious duties or not, whether his dhikr-u ibadat progresses or he does not feel any happiness, whether his yearning for spiritual knowledge increases or he feels bored with it, and whether the love for Mawla has entered his heart or not. If such signs of goodness are not there, or are weak, he should know that there is sin in his heart.
24. Sin is the accursed tree. It continues to grow through its branches of evil. Its roots should be cut off, so it dries up and ceases to exist. Verbal repentance is of no avail, until it is done practically. Any practical repentance is difficult, unless its meaning is understood. Therefore, it is necessary to know the meaning of abandoning sin and of repentance.
25. Ibadat is the name of the slavery of God, the most High. And slavery demands all kind of services for the master. And the supreme service is that which is according to His will and required most by Him.
26. (True) knowledge is tahaarat (purity), (true) knowledge is salaah ('ibadat), (true) knowledge is zakat (tithe), (true) knowledge is sawm (fasting), (true) knowledge is hajj (pilgrimage), (true) knowledge is jihad (internal battle against the lower instinct) and (true) knowledge is wilayat (love for the Holy Imam), for (true) knowledge is everything.
27. If you give knowledge or help to give knowledge to someone, you are giving eyes to the blind, ears to the deaf, tongue to the dumb, hands to someone who has no hands, feet to the lame. You breathe soul into the dead, provide clothes for the naked and food for the hungry, give treasure to the poor and make a beggar a king and an ignorant person wise.
28. A true mu'min should have the intention that, by fighting in the path of Mawla, he will suppress his anger forty times; forty times he will spurn the desires of the nafs-i amara and pray for forty mu'mins who he thinks are not good, adopt forty good habits and remember God abundantly for forty days.
29. A true mu'min should struggle to do good every day, spend time in good deeds. Daily, he should acquire some knowledge; he should continue his study of religious books, he should meet good people and obtain happiness from ibadat.
30. These are signs of the beginning of spiritual progress: creation of ardent love for dhikr-u ibadat, to get up for bandagi on time, or in fact before time, softness of heart and readiness for giryah-u zari, continuation of dhikr and creation of seriousness and internal peace.
31. Some time after these signs, the inner light of heart is created. There is abundant happiness in this light. Although it is the initial kind of light and resembles material light, it is more colorful and pleasant and gradually increases in intensity.
32. At this stage, although this light is not spiritual and intellectual, but only natural, yet from this light, tremendous happiness is created in the heart of the mu'min. This is perhaps because of the fact that at this stage, his inner eye opens and he begins to recognize himself.

33. Just as there is material light in the external world, such as the light of the sun, the light of art, the light of science, similarly, in the inner world, there is light of nature, the light of spirit and the light of intellect. Nature should be called the subtle body.
34. We believe in subtle body, for it is a reality. It has many names, such as heavenly body, juththah-i ibdaaiyyah (ibdaai body) or the luminous body.
35. Subtle body is the body of ether and therefore, it can also be called the ethereal body.
36. Who can deny the inner world? It contains everything but in a subtle form. Every subtle thing is deposited in this compendium, i.e., the human body.

Global Prayer:

Ya Ali, Ya NOOR Mowlana Shah Karim Al-Hussaini Hazir Imam, make us **One global Jamat** with **One Sound Heart** (Qalb-i Salim), bless us with the **Golden Noorani** and the **Golden Jubilee Didars**, and empower us to present **Material, Spiritual** and **Luminous Nazranas**. Ameen.

Peace, light, barakat, taid and a 'golden noorani didar',
Noorallah Juma
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