



**THE METHODS AND**  
**Manners**  
**WHILE VISITING A SHRINE**

Translated from the Hindi Book  
"Dargahon per Haziri ka Tareeka and Adab"

SARKAR SUFI GHYASSUDDIN

— MARKAZE TASAWWUF —

# THE METHODS AND MANNERS WHILE VISITING A SHRINE

*Translated from the Hindi book*  
**“Dargahon per Haziri ka  
Tareeka and Adaab”**

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The methods and manners while visiting a shrine  
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*Dedication*

IN THE FEET OF THE LIVING BUDDHA-  
SARKAR SUFI GHYASSUDDIN,  
MY MASTER, COMPANION, YES ALIVE,  
MY FOE AND INDEED MY BEST FRIEND.

## Foreword

This translated book, is humbly dedicated to my mentor, my guide, my living Buddha—Sarkar Sufi Ghyassudin Shah. His words have always carried deep meaning: "*Beta, ye Markaze Tasawwuf meine ek chatai se start kiya tha, isko khatam na hone dena.*" With these words, Sarkar entrusted us with the responsibility of continuing the legacy of Markaze Tasawwuf, a centre that transcends the physical and serves as a beacon for spiritual enlightenment. This book reflects that vision, offering guidance on the proper methods and manners for presenting oneself at dargahs—those sacred spaces where the divine is felt most strongly.

Dargahs are not merely places of worship; they are spaces infused with an aura where one can connect with higher consciousness. When you enter a dargah, it's an opportunity to attune yourself to this spiritual energy. It's a place where meditation reaches its peak, and spiritual experiences unfold naturally—only if you know how to tune in. This book is a guide to learning that art of tuning in, helping you establish that connection with the divine. Once you learn this, your experience at a dargah will transform into something profound, an experience beyond words.

What was once hidden will become visible, felt deeply within, and through the energy of that sacred space—both in the presence of the saint and even after their transformation—you will continue to gain spiritual insight. This is not just a theory; it is something you must experience yourself. Trust in the process, follow the guidance, and witness the truth for yourself.

The translation of this book was a task of immense responsibility. Every effort was made to retain the original essence without distorting Sarkar's message. If, in the course of translation, any errors have been made, I seek forgiveness and welcome your suggestions for correction. My deepest gratitude goes to all those who contributed in making this book a reality—your support has been invaluable, and your love has been felt. Sarkar knows all, and everything is clear to him.

I am certain this book will help you on your journey, and I offer it with love, trust, and sincere blessings to all those who use it as a tool for their spiritual growth.

*Thank you, with love and congratulations to those who step forward on this path.*

- SUFI SAIF ALI  
(ADVOCATE, DELHI HIGH COURT)

## From the Heart

Starting with the name of that Most Merciful, Compassionate, and Generous Being who is known by the name of Allah. Many people are only familiar with the name and continue to worship the name itself, unaware of the reality and essence of that name, which they should recognize and understand.

In every era, the Almighty sent down scriptures and prophets for our guidance and direction, yet we remained heedless. Spiritual leadership was established, and from the position of spiritual leadership, guidance for living an exemplary life is available, but we are still living in negligence. Shrines and sanctuaries were established to receive guidance and direction, but our negligence and greed have turned them into means for fulfilling our legitimate and illegitimate desires. In mines of diamonds, we are wandering around searching for coal!

We all visit the shrines and the resting places of Allah's saints for the sake of being in present moment, spiritual practices and to receive blessings. But what does it mean to be truly present, be accepted and be spiritually fruitful? We are often unaware of these aspects!

Indeed, when we visit a shrine or the resting place of any of Allah's saints or any sacred place associated with Allah, the manner in which we should be present there and the way to properly do so, we often neglect it. If we were truly aware of the spiritual significance and the correct practices

of Sufism and the path of Tariqat (methods), then we would undoubtedly gain much more from these visits.

However, because we do not know the proper manners and methods, we fail to achieve the blessings, progress, mercy, and spiritual benefits that we seek from these sacred places!

This Sufi who introduced this knowledge of Sufism, Tariqat, and spiritual practices, with God's grace, has presented before you some manners and methods of being present with proper etiquette and devotion. If you contemplate on this, act upon it with understanding and sincerity, then surely our presence will be fruitful—Aameen.

We are on the right path, the one that pleases Him, and we promise, intend, vow, and commit to following it!

The words, customs, and traditions presented ahead are not for the general public; they are for those who seek to understand the truth and for the wise. As for the rest, this is a request for forgiveness from the servant.

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*Beginning in the name of Allah,  
the Most Merciful and Compassionate!*

Allah the Exalted has said in His Book:

*"Say: I do not ask you for any reward for it except love for my close ones. And whoever does a good deed, we shall increase him in goodness. Surely, Allah is Forgiving and Appreciative." (Surah Ash-Shura 42: Ayah 23)*

### **Explanation:**

By the command of Allah -The Exalted, the Prophet has instructed his followers that he asks nothing from them in return for the message he has delivered, except for love for his family. Whoever loves them and after that does good deeds, Allah will increase the goodness for those who love them, granting them even more reward. This means that those who love Allah the Exalted and His Prophet's close ones, and who follow them, will receive greater goodness and rewards from Allah over others.

It is proven that to obtain greater goodness and rewards for good deeds and actions, it is essential to love those who are dear to Allah and His Prophet.

Now, the remaining part of the verse has even deeper meaning: *"Without a doubt, Allah is most forgiving and appreciative."* This means that those who have drawn closer to Allah and His Messenger, Allah will certainly forgive them and, in addition, will also express His gratitude to them!

This is an extraordinary concept: those who love the close ones of Allah and His Messenger will not only be forgiven but Allah will also value and appreciate them! For us, being forgiven is sufficient, and we should constantly be grateful to Allah. Here, Allah the Exalted is mentioning showing gratitude and appreciation!

Who are those then by loving whom, Allah will forgive appreciate and value us? And how great must be the ones whom Allah values and appreciates!

To understand whom Allah has commanded us to love, we need to seek the answer again from Allah's book. Let's seek it together and try to understand it!

Allah the Exalted has said in His book: *"Indeed, the 'WALI' of Allah will have no fear, nor will they grieve."* (The verse from the Book of Allah) The deep and subtle meanings of this verse hint at who is close to Allah the Exalted. For the wise, a hint is sufficient.

Another verse states:

*"Do not say of those who are killed in the way of Allah that they are dead; rather, they are alive, and We provide for them."*

(The verse from the Book of Allah)

There are two meanings of becoming a martyr. One is to be martyred while fighting for Allah, and the other is to live entirely according to the commands of Allah the Exalted, abandoning one's own will and desires, living solely for Him. Now, one's will or desires means nothing; only what Allah desires they live happily with that!

*"Do not say they are dead; they are alive."*

To say they are not dead means that one should not consider them dead from within either—they have reached the truth and attained the station of annihilation in Allah (Fana-fil-Allah). When Allah is alive and the Lord of the living, then how can someone who has reached Allah be dead? They are alive and have eternal life!

*"We provide for them."*

This means that just as the people of Prophet Musa (Moses) received manna and quails, in a similar way, those who are alive in the world, but not for the world, only for the hereafter they are alive.

This verse also refers to those people with whom we must maintain love, and the return of love is love itself.

Let us try to understand this from another perspective!

When Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) went to Mount Tur for thirty plus ten, forty nights, he left Prophet Aaron (peace be upon him) behind to lead and guide the community. So, when Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) did not leave his community without a guide and leader, how is it possible that the leader of both worlds (Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him) would leave his community without a guide and leader during his physical absence? It is impossible!

To understand the ongoing discussion more deeply, it is important to realize that Allah first sends the one who gives guidance, the guide and the one who shows the right path, and then those who receive the guidance. This is Allah's

wisdom so that people do not have the complaint that they had no one to receive guidance from, and so that those seeking guidance do not choose a guide from among themselves, similar to themselves! Selecting a Prophet as the guide and leader, or the process of choosing a guide and leader through a Prophet, is Allah's work and not an election or selection process!"

Verse:

*"Today, the disbelievers have lost hope in your religion, so do not fear them, but fear Me. Today, I have completed your religion for you, and I have fulfilled My blessing upon you, and I have chosen Islam (Peace) as your religion."*  
(Surah Al-Ma'idah 5:3)

The context, interpretation, and explanation of this verse: When the Prophet (peace be upon him) completed the final pilgrimage and was on his way back to Madinah, on the 18th of Dhul-Hijjah, 10 AH, this verse was revealed at the plain of Ghadir Khumm. At that time, the Prophet (peace be upon him) held the hand of Hazrat Ali and said, *"Whoever considers me their leader (Maula), Ali is also their leader."*

This servant has never understood why, after the public announcement of the inheritance of leadership (Wilayah), people disregarded the Prophet's (peace be upon him) declaration and chose someone else as Caliph through election. The process of choosing a Caliph, leader, or guide does not happen through elections!

Now, when the announcement of Hazrat Ali's apparent, spiritual, and scholarly inheritance was made at khumm

ghadeer only Muslims were present there. There were only Muslims present, including pilgrims and companions, so why did Allah reveal this revelation: "*Today, the disbelievers have lost hope in your religion*"? There were no disbelievers in that field, so who were referred to as disbelievers?

The truth is that among those companions, pilgrims, and groups of Muslims, there were some who were only Muslims merely by name, companions and pilgrims just by name. Their intention was to bury not only the Prophet (peace be upon him) but also the laws—meaning the Book of Allah—along with him, and to start the same shameless and immoral practices that Allah despises. Previous nations had done the same, but when the Prophet (peace be upon him) declared Hazrat Ali as his successor, it struck like lightning on the plans of those hidden disbelievers disguised as Muslims. Then this verse was revealed: "*Today, the disbelievers have lost hope in your religion.*"

Now, when the status of Prophethood and Messengership was subtly and secretly transformed into the status of Wilayah (spiritual authority), and Hazrat Ali was granted Wilayah and inheritance in every form and manner, Allah then revealed this verse through revelation: "Do not fear them, only fear Me. Today, the religion has been completed, and I have fulfilled My blessing upon you, and I have chosen Islam (Peace) as your religion.

Now, wise people will have understood who Allah has commanded us to love, who He has ordered us to have affection for, and who those pure people are. Those pure people are the family of the Prophet (Ahl-E-Bayt), some

special companions, the saints (Awliya) of Allah, and the perfect Sufis who are following in their footsteps, spreading the true message of Islam, and safeguarding the laws of Allah. They are working tirelessly to uphold the Sunnah of the leaders, and we must love and cherish them!

The point to understand is that there is no book greater than the Book of Allah. Once we have understood and grasped its commands, then no scholar, cleric, or sect—no matter how much they twist their words, write, or publish things in a roundabout way—should be able to mislead us. Many scholars, clerics, and sects often distort the meanings of the Quran and Hadith to mislead us. We must avoid them and adhere directly to the commands of the Book of Allah and show love and affection to those whom Allah has commanded us to love.

We have been commanded to love the family of the Prophet who have come close to Allah, beginning with the descendants of Hasan (Aal-E-Rasool Hasani), then the descendants of Hussain (Al-E-Rasool Hussaini), and then the descendants who are both Hasani and Hussaini. Additionally, we must honor the loyal and special companions, as well as the shrines and sanctuaries (Aastanas) of the saints of Allah.

Because the few words that are being presented to you are about the etiquette and methods of visiting the shrines and sanctuaries of these pure people, it is better to understand the meanings of a few key words.

**Dargah (Shrine):**

The literal meanings of the word Dargah are:

1. Court (Darbar)
2. Courtroom (Kacheri)
3. Judgement Hall (Adalat)

These three are the true meanings of the word Dargah. In all three places, justice is served. However, people who follow certain rituals have changed the meanings of the word Dargah and popularized various other interpretations, which uninformed people mistakenly believed as correct.

Now, when we go to any court in the world, we first approach a lawyer—a good lawyer—respectfully, so that they can present our case before the court. We also approach the court in the manner prescribed by the court's rules. The higher the court, the greater the level of respect and etiquette required. Each court has its own procedures: first this, then that, and after that something else. If we are right, the decision will be in our favour. When even the perishable and temporary things of this world require respect and proper methods, then wouldn't the spiritual court—Dargah, where decisions about both this world and the hereafter are made—also require respect and proper etiquette?

Absolutely, there will be a need for even more spiritual respect and proper conduct. If we go to a worldly court disrespectfully and without following the correct procedures, we may receive punishment from the court for disrespecting it before we even receive justice!

Now, if you understand the purpose of what this humble servant is trying to convey, you will also understand why our prayers are not accepted at the shrines of Allah's saints.

The truth is, before presenting ourselves at a shrine, we must learn the etiquette of how to present ourselves properly; otherwise, we will return empty-handed. It is even possible that, due to our lack of respect and proper conduct, we may return with the punishment for our disrespect.

**Aastana (Sanctuary):** The word Aastana means a place of learning. It is a place to learn true knowledge and the proper way of living—like a school, college, or university. The difference is that these places teach worldly knowledge, while Aastanas and Dargahs are places to learn spiritual knowledge, the proper way of living, respect, and awareness. It is unfortunate, however, that some people have come to see Aastanas and Dargahs merely as places to fulfil their lawful or unlawful desires, and some people, as well as government departments, have come to view Dargahs and Aastanas as sources of income. Others have started to see them as merely places to make wishes.

This servant of Tasawwuf is not saying that the wishes are not fulfilled in the Dargahs and Aastanas, this slave is only trying to say that the Dargahs and Aastanas are not only the place for the wishes and vows to be fulfilled but are much more precious places than this!

Dargahs and Aastanas are the signs of Allah Ta'ala, these places are the places to know, recognize and attain mercy from Bariye Ta'ala. A sign is that thing by which one can

identify whose sign it is & it is the will and power of Bariye Ta'ala that to whom he wishes to show his signs. Allah has declared the she-camel of Hazrat Saleh (A.S.), which used to perform even impurity, as his sign in his book, then the shrines & Aastanas of Allah's Auliya (plural of wali) will surely be the signs of Allah Ta'ala! If we do not respect and honor the shrines and sancturies of the Wali's of Allah Ta'ala in the rightful ways & manners, then our condition will also be the same as that of Hazrat Saleh's (A.S.) community and we shall be led astray too. It is even happening to us but in a different way yet we are so engrossed in rituals that we are not able to see our own destruction.

In His book, Allah Ta'ala has repeatedly ordered to love people close to him & his Auliyas. He has also mentioned about their honour with him, so we have to follow this order directly & completely with all our heart.

Some groups and sects changed the translations of Allah's book and Hadiths, no doubt that the Quran cannot be changed. Though in reality the Quran cannot be changed, yet the Quran was changed in terms of understanding, by excuses of using different Tafsir (Explanation) – Tarjuma (Translation) - Shan-E-Nuzul. This work was done by imposing one's own interpretation on the Book of Allah by the above said excuses. In Arabic the book of Allah is the same everywhere in this World, just the addition of Zer, Zabar and Pesh (grammar of Arabic/Urdu which was introduced much later) while re-writing in present times makes significant changes in the meanings of words thus the meaning of whole ayats changes. In our understanding, the true meaning of Allah's book is not even there, but those

are the meanings which have been explained to us by the Mullas & scholars of the sects and the people belonging to that sect. The biggest proof of it is that yet there is only one book of Allah, same Order for everyone in it to fulfil, still everyone is following their own wishes considering their understanding to be right misled by mullah & scholars!

Now because we have understood the direct instructions of Allah's book, no matter what any person from any group says, we have to love those who are Allah's Walis and are true guardians of his message.

One important thing one should understand is that Allah's book, the laws made by Allah Ta'ala for the betterment of human beings, were revealed so that humans should follow and practice them. The Book of Allah is for reflection, meditation, to be understood and practice. The real goodness of man lies in understanding and practicing the book of Allah. But the purpose for which Allah Ta'ala revealed His book has sadly ended, all that has remained is idle reading, memorizing & repetition. It is not wrong to do so, but the purpose of the revelation of Allah Almighty's book is not just to become a Hafiz by reading, memorizing and repeating it. Rather all that has been read should be put to an understanding and practising!

### **Hafiz (the one who memorises Quran by heart):**

Nowadays, as you also know that the trend is limited to reading, memorizing & repeating. Understanding and practising it has completely ended. Even those people who call themselves Hafiz, they also for once take the degree of being Hafiz & forget it. Only before Ramzan they repeat it throughout the day to earn money and recite it at night. A

Hafiz Sahib is a follower of this servant of Tasawwuf. He has recited twelve Mehrabs i.e., he has recited the book of Allah twelve times in Taraweeh. Through him this slave came to know that in the month of Ramzan, there are Hafiz who recite the Quran in Arabic language and those who give 'Lukma' both have a consent between them that whether the 'Lukma' is to be given or not and if it is to be given then where it is given, we understand a lot from it.

Reading should be done with the sole purpose to understand it. It is useless to read what is not understood. So, have you understood what you have read till now? Wait, and ask yourself this question If the answer comes as a yes from within, then read further, otherwise read again carefully.

We should remember that being a Hafiz of the Quran is a different thing and being a guardian of the Quran is another thing. A Hafiz in general parlance is one who memorizes, repeats and explains the meaning of the Quran to the community as per his own understanding. That is why Yazid bin Mawiyya first gave rewards to 50,000 hafizs & then took a Bayat (oath of allegiance) from them & later sitting on the member of the mosque, he justified his marriage with his father's sister (Phuppo), which was completely against the Quran. Yazid knew that the Hafiz were his slaves after all, now who will stop him from changing the law of Allah?

The guardian of the Quran is the one who, no matter how much oppression he may face, follows the laws of Allah Almighty and protects His laws. That is why Imam Aali Maqam Hazrat Hussain recited the Quran in front of us

with his head placed on a spearhead & set an example for us that the guardians of Quran are like this. Are you getting the difference now? Brother, being a Hafiz (one who has memorized the Quran) is an insignificant matter. Being a Muhafiz (protector/guardian) is a significant, valuable, and esteemed achievement.

My dear friend, now we have understood that Allah Ta'ala has given superiority to those who act upon the Quran. He has declared those who act upon it as His close and beloved ones (friends of Allah), has elevated the status of these beloved ones and ordered us to love them. Solely for love we should follow their footsteps, learn from them, adopt their ways, and improve both worldly and hereafter life.

In the book of Allah, it has also been clearly stated:

1. The close ones & Walis (friends of Allah) are alive.
2. They should neither be called nor considered dead.
3. There is no sorrow or grief upon the 'wali' (friends) of Allah.
4. We must love and maintain a connection with the close ones (friends of Allah).

Now, from the verses of the Quran, it has been proven clearly that the first and foremost manner and method while visiting shrines is that we must not consider them as dead, but rather, consider them alive and present. When we go to any government office, we are so mindful of our manners, ensuring that no mistake happens. But why do we remain disrespectful at the shrines of Allah's close friends (Wali)?

There are two reasons for this. The first reason is that our inner eye has not opened, which would allow us to see the

one in the shrine as alive. We say that the saints of Allah are alive, but our heart and outer eye only see the grave. We are false in our words and actions; we say one thing and think something else. The second reason is the people around the shrines and graves, those who call themselves the inheritors or caretakers of the holy shrines, or those who are part of some committee or government department, who live very close to the sacred graves. They themselves do not know the proper methods and manner; they are just concerned with money. If you ever visit a shrine, observe these people closely, and it will become clear that they are going completely against the Quran, treating the saint as merely dead and the shrine as just a grave."

Offering flowers on the shrine is one thing, and throwing flowers is another. First, observe carefully, and then respectfully present flowers, perfume, and a 'Chadar' at the sacred shrine; don't throw the flowers. Now, when those living near these shrines are themselves disrespectful and immersed in carelessness, the visitors imitate their behaviour. We must wake up and become aware.

Now, the point that this servant is about to present may seem like blasphemy (Kufr) to you! You may even get angry, but first, try to understand it with a calm mind. The Quran is bestowed (Baksh) for those who cannot read or listen themselves. According to the Quran, is it wise to bestow it to those who are alive? It is not sensible to bestow or read the Quran to the living inheritors of the Quran. This disciple is not opposing the reading of the Quran; he is opposing reciting/bestowing it for those, who don't understand it or don't act on it. And those who have understood it? They do not repeat the silent (Sakit) Quran

in front of the living Quran. They are merely seekers of a glance of grace!

The shrines of Allah's close friends are places where one receives something so great that once obtained, nothing else is needed, and it is something that even death cannot take away. What is left to seek after that?"

Further, Allah Almighty has said in His book that 'There is no fear or grief for the close friends of Allah.' Of course, those who have come near to Allah have no reason to feel fear or grief. They have become close to Allah, so it is proven that whoever comes close to Allah is freed from fear and grief. Therefore, the sole purpose of visiting shrines should be to come closer to Allah, and only someone who is already close to Allah can bring others closer to Him. It is up to that saint whether he intercedes on our behalf or not, based on how he observes our manners and etiquette during our visit.

Allah Almighty has already said in His book that He accepts only the intercession of certain special one! When we are going to those whose intercession Allah accepts, our manner and etiquette should be such that we only pray for spiritual progress, spiritual blessings, inner purity, and the ability to follow in their footsteps. They already know everything, so why ask for unnecessary things? They are aware of our inner and outer state, our conditions, our greed, and our desires. And the shrine is indeed a place of justice!

This disciple has spent 54 years of his life at the shrine of Khwaja Qutubuddin Ba-Ikhtiyar Kaki (Q.S.A.). Apart

from this, this servant has travelled to hundreds of shrines for ziyarat (visitation) and to have his presence accepted. But unfortunately, this servant has found nothing but carelessness, disrespect, negligence, ignorance, and just greed for money. No one thinks about how to spread the teachings of the saint whose shrine it is. Only a few shrines, only a few shrines are saved from this.

In the verse, we are commanded to love the close friends of Allah. The word love in this verse is the most important to reflect on and understand deeply. Let's try to understand what love truly means. For love to exist, it is essential that the one who loves does not expect anything in return. This servant is speaking of real, genuine love. Otherwise, in today's world, love is often claimed just to satisfy lust and desires.

The claim of love and these disobediences on it, Allah Allah, how surprising. The one who loves remains a slave forever, he always talks about slavery.

In true love, the one who loves always takes care of the preferences of the one they love and does not impose their own will. A wise person understands this with just a hint. So, when we visit the shrines, we must only be mindful of what pleases them. We are not there to consider the preferences of those living nearby; we must only care about what pleases the one whom Allah has commanded us to love!

How can we know what is liked by the saint at the shrine we are visiting? Let's reflect on this.

The elders we are visiting reached this elevated status by following and fully acting upon the commands of Allah, His Messenger, and the source of sainthood (Wilayat). The commands of the source of sainthood are not separate from the commands of the Prophet, and the Prophet's commands are not separate from the commands of Allah. So, by following and fulfilling Allah's commands, we can understand what pleases the saint. There are a few more points that are worth understanding, so please pay close attention to them.

1. Shrines are places of learning, so before learning, clear your mind of unnecessary thoughts.
2. Sit a little distance away from the sacred shrine, in a comfortable yet respectful manner. Those who are less wise and show off are the ones who try to get physically closer and closer to the sacred grave. They don't realize that at shrines, physical closeness is disrespectful and meaningless. What matters is spiritual closeness, even if the body remains distant.
3. Once you have cleared your mind of unnecessary thoughts and are sitting comfortably with respect, then try to connect with the saint of the shrine from your heart. Try to go within yourself, and refrain from talking about external matters. Even putting cotton in your ears can help with going inward and spiritually connecting with the saint of the shrine.
4. Once you are in this state, try to listen within. Someone else will speak inside you, and surely it will be the truth, guiding you towards what is right and preferred for you.

5. If your mind is not clearing of unnecessary thoughts, it is proof that you have filled it with worthless clutter, and you are false in your claim of love.

6. During your visit to the shrine, it is better to remain silent, both internally and externally. This helps in connecting with the saint of the shrine. Let others around you do whatever they wish out of ignorance, not knowing the right manner and etiquette, but do not pay attention to them." Try to listen to the silence.

7. Just as cotton or a sponge absorbs water, you should also try to absorb the spiritual and pure atmosphere of that place into your being!

*"The rituals remained unfinished, the spirit of Bilali did not remain, the philosophy remained, the teachings of Ghazali did not remain"*

Even Azan has become a mere ritual. There is no more longing and love like Hazrat Bilal's (RA). Only the outward appearance of presence has remained. Following the footsteps of Hazrat Imam Ghazali is over!

*"We are unconscious, we are negligent, we are blind and we are also sleeping"*

**Ziyarat:** The meaning of the word Ziyarat is meeting, interacting and learning something. Just roaming around and formally offering flowers and 'Chadar' at the holy shrine is not called Ziyarat.

It has been established from Allah's book that we must love the shrines and the friends of Allah, and we should seek to meet them. Now we should first ask ourselves whether our visit to the shrine or the abode truly resulted in a meeting with the friend of Allah. Because Allah Almighty has stated in His book that those who are close to Him should neither be called dead nor be considered dead, and they have no fear or grief. So, there must be a meeting and conversation. If our living presence cannot meet or converse, it means the ziyarat (visit) did not take place, and the unfortunate part is that we think we have made a visit.

Allah, who is alive, communicates through His friends. We are in a state of negligence, carelessness, and ignorance. We are only moving about in terms of worldly matters, but spiritually, we are dead. Because true living is what one experiences while being aware of Allah at every moment.

Understand that there are many distractions— the intoxication of worldly desires, the intoxication of wealth, the intoxication of fame and power, and many other things that have made us spiritually dead. If we are dead, and the friends of Allah are alive, then our spiritual connection and meetings cannot happen. Now we must awaken from this spiritual death, and believe me, it is not a very difficult task; it just requires intention, sincere effort and a spiritual Master (Kamil Murshid).

We must remain vigilant and not intoxicated by worldly matters. If we truly love the friends of Allah, we must prioritize their preferences over our own desires and wishes. We must abandon our own inclinations. Our true

well-being lies in what Allah desires, and He knows better than us. We are like people who are chasing after illusions.

Now, we should understand that to truly meet and visit the friends of Allah, we must remain aware and not fall into negligence. Only then can we receive spiritual blessings and progress.

Those people, committees, and departments that have turned the shrines into businesses for making money, thereby extinguishing the true purpose of the shrines, are ignorant, false, and filled with greed!

In reality, the shrines and abodes of the friends of Allah are places to learn how to live life. We need to learn there what awareness and manners to lead life are, how to purify ourselves both internally and externally, how to live the kind of life that Allah appreciates, and how to improve our hereafter and our worldly lives. There is so much more to learn. Learning never ends in life.

**Haazari:** The word Haazari is derived from Huzoori. Huzoor - Hazrat - Hazir are all words of the same group. The word Huzoor means one who is always present in the court of the Almighty, i.e. always remains in the remembrance of the Almighty. The purpose of Haazari is to get confirmation spiritually and internally that the visit or meeting has been accepted. Let us understand this later!

Every year lakhs of people go for Hajj. The meaning of the word Hajj is *"to visit the house of Allah in order to change oneself"*. Now, out of those lakhs of people, how many people's Hajj is accepted? How many people change

themselves by becoming Hajjis is a different matter but in reality, how many people's Hajj is accepted, only Allah knows. Though everyone claims to have pure intentions but in reality, only Allah knows whose intentions are pure and only his Hajj is accepted and he also gets a confirmation internally that the Hajj has been accepted—your ziyarat is completed!

When you visit any shrine and your presence is accepted, you may receive signs from the unseen. The intention behind the visit is what truly matters; it's not enough for you to simply believe that you've made a pilgrimage. The real purpose is to receive a sign indicating, 'Yes, your visit has been accepted!'

For example, one person may boast to another, 'Don't underestimate me; I know the Prime Minister.' The other person replies, 'What matters is not that you know the Prime Minister, but whether the Prime Minister acknowledges you.' This highlights the importance of mutual recognition.

True acceptance of your visit is when you receive divine signs that confirm your pilgrimage has been accepted. The joy and fulfilment of that realization are far greater than just the act of visiting itself.

The changing times and greedy individuals have altered the true purpose of the shrines of Allah's close friends. Now, the common practice at these shrines is to simply visit, offer flowers and incense, recite some memorized prayers, and leave with a sense of satisfaction, all while indulging in their own desires. Those present at the shrines are well

aware of your unjust cravings and wishes, which is why they often offer prayers that please you, knowing that you will respond with a gift. After all, offerings are made in response to what is perceived.

When we visit the shrines, whether we bring flowers, cloth, sweets, or any cash we give to agents or drop in donation boxes, we must ask ourselves: does this truly reach the intended recipients, or do those claiming to manage these offerings take a share for themselves? I have witnessed this first hand and know that much of that money ends up being spent on lavish meals, alcohol, or gambling on cricket matches. While not everyone behaves this way, how can we be sure that our contributions are being used for halal purposes and in service to Allah's cause rather than for haram activities?"

Those who forbid shirk (associating partners with Allah) and bid'ah (innovation in religion) are themselves involved in shirk and bid'ah, and they are even declaring prostration of respect as shirk. To them, the recommendation is given to read Surah Yusuf in Allah's book!

Nevertheless, the matter worth reflecting upon is: when we go to visit any dargah (shrine) or astana (saint's tomb), what can we take with us that will actually reach the saint? What is that thing?

The one thing we can present at the shrine of Allah's friend (wali) that will reach them, be accepted, and be honored is simply this: we purify ourselves inside and out, and with full respect, present our hearts, present ourselves at the shrine, saying, "This servant is now in your hands, please

accept me. I am like soft clay in your hands, shape me as you wish."

This is also how we should present ourselves in the service of our spiritual guide (Pir/Murshid). Allah's mercy and blessings rain down at the shrines of His friends and in the company of spiritual guides. But we must also know how to let ourselves be soaked in that rain.

We must move beyond ceremonial Islam and superficial Sufism to dive into the depths of true Islam and genuine Sufism. Only then can we make ourselves worthy of Allah's mercy and blessings.

That is why this servant of Sufism humbly requests that we avoid meaningless rituals and visit shrines with mindfulness, wisdom, and respect.

The true meaning of supplication (du'a) has already been explained to you by this servant through words. Now, I would like to present another aspect of supplication. You have the right to disagree with me, but in doing so, you will only prove that you do not wish to understand the truth. Instead, you see rituals and imitative actions as everything, which shows a lack of deeper understanding.

We need to realize that we are very attached to the world. We desire every luxury of life—wealth, gold, silver, cars, bungalows, and much more. At the same time, we want to live without any grief or difficulties, expecting nothing but comfort in every way and from every direction.

We have no concern for our life after death, absolutely none. Honestly, put your hand on your heart and think, do we even spend five minutes a day thinking about what will happen to us after we die? No, absolutely not. Yes, we do perform some rituals and deceive ourselves into thinking that's enough. Our guides have given us some false remedies, and by following them, we remain carefree, believing that we will enter paradise—not because of our deeds, but based on the intercession and forgiveness of our Prophet and Messenger. But we don't realize that even our Prophet and Messenger will only intercede for those who lived a righteous life, both inside and out.

The point is that we love this world and its comforts so much, and that's why we are so careless about what will happen after we die. All our prayers are focused on the comforts and desires of this world. Why? Why are our prayers not about our afterlife and improving our state after death?

This servant generally prefers to stay away from mullahs and those who behave like them, as they often parrot memorized phrases. They have a pre-prepared answer for every question, repeating the Quran without truly reflecting on or learning from it. You can get them to deliver big speeches and write books, but they don't think deeply.

Some time ago, a man came to the Markaz̤ Tasawwuf. He had been the imam of a mosque at a dargah (shrine) and used to lead prayers there regularly. He also used to offer supplications (du'as) at the shrine in the evening and after Friday prayers. Now, he has left for somewhere unknown.

I first offered him water and then prepared tea myself. This led to a conversation between us.

During our discussion, I asked him, "Why do you recite the title 'Shaykhul Islam' when reading the prayer of the Sufi lineage, even though the saint himself rejected the title or position of Shaykhul Islam, a governmental post? Isn't it an accusation against the saint?" The maulvi (religious scholar) replied, "Those who recited it before me also said this, so I follow them. Right or wrong, I won't stop reciting it." Even after it was proven wrong, the surprising thing was that when the truth was revealed to him, he later stopped using the term in his recitations. It became clear that whether it's true or false, whether a fact or mere tradition, the mullah says what the person paying him wants him to say. The community remains misguided, but who cares?

Do you know that even the imam leading prayers at the Kaaba is a servant of the Saudi government? He cannot say a single word against the Saudi monarchy, even if it means twisting or distorting the teachings of Islam.

My dear friend, think carefully about how the Saudi government appoints the person who leads prayers at the Kaaba and the millions of pilgrims during Hajj. Consider how they control the publication of the Quran and its commentaries. Learn to use wisdom.

Anyway, the maulvi continued talking about shallow aspects of Islam, many of which were baseless and lacked any evidence. In an attempt to silence him, I asked, "Why are the prayers you lead always about worldly success and

comfort? This way, the minds of those saying 'Ameen' will remain focused on worldly matters, and the Hereafter will never even cross their minds. You are offering prayers at the shrine of a saint who never sought worldly pleasures and was completely absorbed in the remembrance of Allah. Another thing, why do you pray for people's wishes to be fulfilled, saying, 'O Allah, grant our legitimate desires and wishes'? According to the Quran, desires and wishes are never legitimate; they are always illegitimate. What is legitimate is already present."

The maulvi became serious and said, "Oh Sufi Sahib, you understand everything, so why are you making me say this? You know that most people come to dargahs to fulfil their illegitimate desires—some want wealth, others want houses. Everyone wants something worldly. Who comes to the shrine or mosque seeking Allah, the saint, or the spiritual benefits of wilayah (sainthood)? If I don't soothe their egos, how will I receive offerings? And when I say, 'For those who have asked me to pray, accept their prayers,' it is to encourage others to ask me for prayers, so they too will give me offerings."

The servant asked, "And what about the afterlife? What will happen after death? What about the great sin of misleading the community?" The maulvi responded, "Oh my friend, who has seen the afterlife? Who has come back from there to tell us?" And with that, he left.

This servant spent several hours quietly reflecting on how different people's inner selves are from their outward appearances. From that day, I became convinced that those who have the least faith in Allah are often the mullahs

themselves, and others who have not truly known or recognized Allah, who have not seen even a glimpse of Him.

Read the previous pages repeatedly and try to understand what this servant of Sufism is trying to convey to you.

**One more request:** Try to understand what has not been said in this conversation. What is left unsaid is often far more valuable than what is spoken. Be aware, be alert!

Now that our conversation is about the etiquette and practices of visiting shrines, it would be beneficial to reflect on a few more points together

**Hamd:** The meanings of Hamd are about praise—praise that is solely for Allah, the Highest. The word "Tareef" is derived from the root word "Tarruf," which means "to introduce." It is similar to when we introduce two new people at a gathering by saying, "This is your introduction," or when we ask someone we just met about their introduction.

From this perspective, the meaning of Hamd encompasses those expressions that help us recognize Allah, whether sung, played with musical instruments like tabla or harmonium, or delivered in any other way. The words of Hamd convey to us the attributes of Allah, allowing us to know and recognize Him, touching our hearts.

It's important to understand that those who do not grasp the meanings of Hamd, Tareef, and Taarruf only understand Hamd as mere praise. They have misunderstood the words, creating expressions that lead listeners towards Allah's glorification and away from the reality of the introduction.

*"Indeed, all praise belongs to Allah"* is the first verse of the Quran, and it is the truth. However, the meaning of praise is not limited to admiration. Praise refers to anything that serves as a means of introduction. So, Hamd encompasses any form that serves as a means to introduce us to Allah, whether written or sung, those words are Hamd that establish our connection with Allah.

Nowadays, in the name of Hamd, only words filled with praise and flattery are written or sung. While it's good to praise, it often distances us from the truth and the purpose of Hamd. Praise creates distance, division, and duality, which can be harmful from the perspective of Sufism, as it leads us away from the reality of the essence of Allah.

If you don't understand the points mentioned above, I encourage you to read them three or four times for better comprehension.

The essence of Hamd is to explain the nature and attributes of Allah to us. Anything written or sung in the name of Hamd that does not truly establish our connection with Allah should be scrutinized to see if it leads us astray.

To express the status of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), whatever words are written or sung are referred to as Naat. Understanding Naat should be in the same way as previously explained regarding Hamd, Tareef, and Taarruf.

Now, I want to present another aspect about Hamd and Naat that is true but very dangerous—only for those with

deep understanding. This is not for the common people who might misinterpret this reality due to their ignorance.

When we listen to or recite Hamd or Naat, the words we hear inspire love for Allah and His Messenger in our hearts, bringing us joy and causing us to become ecstatic. However, the real question is, why do we return to being cunning, hypocritical, and merely formal Muslims after an hour? What is the reason? Let's understand that.

A prophet said, "*Thesaitan hides behind the saitan.*" Think about it. What happens is that the (Nafs-e-Ammarah) lower self-convinces us that we've listened to the Naat, praised it, and even donated money to the one reciting it, so what else is left? We've done a good deed, so what more should we do and that's enough.

This understanding pulls us away from the genuine understanding of Islam, making us forget the commandments of Allah's Book and the orders of the Prophet. Not only do we not know the reality of Islam, but even what little we know, we fail to practice it properly. Now, the Maulvi (scholar) earns money from reciting Naats, and he will definitely promote the tradition of reciting anything in the name of Naat. The time we spend listening to Naats—couldn't we instead spend that time listening to the translation of the Quran? But the Maulvi won't earn money from that. Therefore, reciting Naat has become a trend and a source of income. Has the Prophet ever ordered the recitation of Naat?

During the annual Urs (celebration) at the shrine, there is often a dispute over who will recite first because the one

who recites first gets more time and more money. If everyone is given time to recite based on their preference, the night will last forever, and it won't be finished. Who has stopped you from presenting your offering of love? Come and recite at any time, but what's the benefit of reciting alone? Where will the money come from? Now, the Khwaja sahab can't come from the shrine to give you money, as there is a great treasure of unity and sainthood there, but you want something else. You want money, so you will create an atmosphere and tradition in which you can earn it. What kind of love and devotion is that? The real love and devotion lead to action that purifies life from within.

The Quran states, *"Do not create excessiveness in your religion."* The term "Ghulu" means exaggeration. In today's times, those who write and recite Naats, some (educated ignorant) individuals go against the commands of the Quran by writing Naats and Manqabat (another form of poetry dedicated to the Prophet), leading us to commit excessiveness, which helps us stray from the commands of the Quran and distorts our understanding.

In conclusion, while listening to and reciting Naat and Manqabat is better, it should not include excessiveness. It should cultivate a genuine love that guides us toward better deeds and purifies our lives both inwardly and outwardly—Ameen.

**Manqabat:** Whatever words are written, read, or sung to describe the glory of all the saints who have passed away are referred to as Manqabat. Remember that a Wali (saint) is connected to Wilayat (sainthood) and should not be

understood as a friend or companion as common people think. According to the Quran, the term Wali has three meanings. Wherever the term Wali appears in Allah's Book, it refers to:

1. **Responsible:** Someone responsible for improving society, whom Allah has entrusted with the responsibility of bettering the community.
2. **Ba-Ikhtiyar:** Someone to whom Allah has granted spiritual powers and authority.
3. **Waris:** The one who takes care of the legacy of prophethood and Risalah and lives accordingly is called a Waris.

Some have wrongly popularized the meaning of Wali as a friend, which has no basis in the Quran. Through false and misleading speeches and writings, different sects fill the minds of the common people with misconceptions.

While writing, reciting, and listening to Manqabat, the same conditions apply as for Hamd and Naat. The purpose of Manqabat is to inspire good deeds and a state of purity, which should remain a priority.

**Mehfil-e-Samaan:** Whenever-whenever for some pure purpose. If some people gather to discuss useless and worldly matters, it cannot be called a gathering.

The meaning of Samaan is listening. The word Samaan is derived from Samin or Samiun. Listening is an art in

Tasawwuf and Tariqat. Listening in Tasawwuf does not mean only listening but also understanding after listening and keeping it in the heart. This is what changes the life. Hence the meaning of Mehfil-e-Samaan is *"gathering of some people for listening and understanding after listening, to achieve some special and pure purpose"*.

There are manners of listening which are according to the mehfil, first of all one has to understand the manners after listening or it can also be said that listening just for the sake of understanding can be called samaan, it will be easy to understand through a verse from the Book of Allah.

*"Some people say that they have listened it, but they do not hear or listen anything at all."* -(Ayat of the Book of Allah)

This verse proves that listening is for understanding, not just for the sake of hearing. The current situation is such that if a common man doesn't understand something, they assume that something grand and profound is being said. The Mulla take advantage of this ignorance, keeping people away from the truth.

**Qawwali :** The word "Qawwali" is made up of two words: "Qaul" and "Wali." "Qaul" means "said" or "pronounced," often by a saint of Allah. Therefore, Qawwali refers to the sayings, writings, or expressions of a saint, or words describing the grandeur of a saint, sung to musical accompaniment like harmonium, tabla, or other instruments. When good voice, rhythm, and words come together, they create an experience that pleases the listener. This natural inclination to enjoy Qawwali is something that God has placed in human nature, which is why everyone appreciates it.

Islam has divided into various sects, and every group, based on their own beliefs, gives their own opinions about Qawwali without much thought, sometimes even declaring it forbidden (haram). Some people declare it haram just to appear scholarly. These are the same people who claim that even looking at a Taziya breaks a marriage, spreading ignorance and causing conflict. Surely, many such marriages must have broken already, as people have seen Taziyas since childhood. Corrupt muftis and clerics have misled, discredited, and shamed the entire community with their arbitrary fatwas.

If you doubt this, ask a mufti from one sect for a fatwa on an issue, and then ask a mufti from another sect the same question. You will get different fatwas each time. This has made a joke of the serious matter of fatwas. However, not all muftis and clerics are alike; the truth will eventually come to light.

Those who declare Qawwali haram and unlawful should carefully study and understand Surah "Qaf" from the Quran. No man-made, diluted version of Shariah can ever be greater than the book of Allah.

Some people allow listening to a musical instrument in certain conditions while forbidding it in others, which makes no sense. A wise elder once remarked that it's strange how playing half an instrument is allowed, but playing both parts together is forbidden!

Shaykh Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi said, *"While angels hide their faces, the devil shows his work. It is bewildering to understand what's really going on."*

For those with a deep understanding of Sufism, there are hints and signs here.

Qawwal, with musical instruments, is used to sing praises, hymns, poems, and ghazals. There is also something called "Qaul," which refers to the declaration made by the Prophet at Ghadir Khumm, appointing Hazrat Ali as his successor, saying, "Whosoever I am the master of, Ali is his master."

The spiritual gatherings (Mahfil-e-Sama) in any Sufi shrine should always begin with "Qaul" as a recognition of the significance of spiritual leadership.

After reading and understanding the translation of Surah "Qaf," if any mufti still issues a fatwa against Qawwali or engages in unnecessary debates, they need to understand Imam Ghazali's teaching: "Qawwali that stirs lust is haram, but Qawwali that brings spiritual purity, creates ecstasy, and stirs divine love is permissible and even beneficial."

If Qawwali is merely heard for entertainment, it can confuse the mind. But for true Sufis, it is spiritual nourishment.

Today, some businessmen hire poets to write whatever they want, then have these words sung by Qawwals who are unfamiliar with Sufism. These recordings are sold at shrines, misleading the common people, filling their minds

with rubbish. Such behavior has given ignorant scholars a chance to criticize Sufism.

O my friends, I have shared what I have learned and experienced since childhood. It's possible that those unaware of the truth may not like this. If so, it can be assumed that these words weren't meant for them. Those who don't understand should reflect more deeply.

These words are spoken from the perspective of Sufism, with no concern for the external, ritualistic interpretations of Shariah. I have simply tried to awaken souls that have been asleep for thousands of years.

When you visit any shrine, maintain both inner and outer respect. Only then will your visit be accepted, and you will receive blessings. Awakening, awareness, and change are our own responsibilities.

When visiting shrines, follow the proper etiquette and avoid brokers, agents, and all kinds of beggars. Only then will your visit be worthwhile.

Some ignorant people may use these words as an excuse to issue fatwas or declare others disbelievers, but for that, this servant of Sufism seeks forgiveness without any conditions.

*Here's to the beginning of a new dawn.*

*Whoever want should get the light,  
we have lit our heart and kept it out in the open.*

***Khadim-e-Tasawwuf- Sufi Ghyassuddin Shah***

## Teachings

- Live a life where your expenses are less than what you earn.
- Compliment at least 3 people every day.
- Never feel ashamed to admit your mistakes.
- Never laugh at someone's dreams.
- Give the person standing behind you a chance to go ahead.
- Make sure to watch the sunrise every day.
- Only borrow something if absolutely necessary.
- If you need to ask someone something, ask politely twice.
- Never let debt or enmity grow too large.
- Have unwavering faith in Allah.
- Never forget to engage in worship; there is great power in it.
- Always focus on your own work.
- Time is the most valuable thing; do not waste it on trivial matters. Learn to be happy with what you have.
- Never speak ill of anyone, as negativity is like a hole in a boat— no matter how small or big, it will sink the boat.
- Always maintain a positive mindset.
- Every person is born with a talent. Bring that talent to the world.
- No work is small; every job is significant.
- Success comes only to those who make an effort.
- To achieve something, you don't need to lose anything, but you do need to put in hard work

*The show must go on...*



## **MARKAZE TASAWWUF**

Khanqah Sharif Qadriya, Shuttariya, Chishtiya

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