

ON THE THREE (3) “MEANS OF APPROACH” (WASA'IL) MENTIONED IN QUR'AN & ANNIHILATION (FANA'A) OF THE EGO

Khutbah of Shaykh Al-Islam Ibrahim Niasse (RA)



Source: 'Jawahir Ar-Rasa'il'

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ON THE THREE (3) “MEANS OF APPROACH” (WASA'IL) MENTIONED IN QUR'AN

Khutbah of Shaykh Al-Islam Ibrahim Niasse (RA)

Everything which we are seeking in this life and the Hereafter is to be found in Taqwa! Therefore I advise myself and all of you to have the conscious awareness of Allah—in public and private. Again Taqwa is to obey the commands and avoid the prohibitions of Allah—inwardly and outwardly. Allah Ta'ala says, “O you who believe! Have conscious awareness of Allah and keep your duty to Him, and seek the means of approach to Him.”(5:35). Therefore, if you are desiring to acquire Taqwa you must seek that which will connect you to its attainment, and there are three (3) Wasa'il mentioned in the Holy Qur'an:

1.) To follow the Messenger of Allah(SAWS) in all of his words and actions. Surely, this is a “means of approach” to Allah, Glorious and Exalted is He! “Say to mankind: ‘If you (really) love Allah then follow me, and Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.’”(3:31). The Messenger of Allah (SAW) is saying that if you love Allah, then follow him! Whosoever follows the Messenger in his words and actions will obtain the love of Allah! Allah says in a Hadith Qudsi, “When I love him, I become him.” If Allah loves someone He will become his hearing, his seeing, his speaking, his hands and his feet! This is the beginning of Sainthood (Bidayat al-Wilaya) and this is the best “means of approach” (Wasila al-Wasila).

2.) The Holy Qur'an itself is the second “means of approach”. The Remembrance of Allah, Glorious & Exalted is He, has no other aim and purpose besides the Countenance of Allah. “Keep yourself patiently with those who call on their Lord morning and evening, seeking His Face; and let not your eyes overlook them, desiring the pomp and glitter of the life of this world; and obey not him whose heart We have made heedless of Our Remembrance, and who follows his own lusts, and whose affair has been lost.” (18:28). In other words, imprison your egos (Ahbasa Nafsuka) along with those who remember Allah, morning and evening, and have

no other purpose (in this) but seeking His Face, Glorious & Exalted is He! Surely, this is a “means of approach” which will connect the servant to Allah, Glorious & Exalted is He!

3.) Companionship with a Gnostic Saint (‘Arif Billah). Allah says, “And follow the path of him who turns to Me in repentance and obedience.”(31:15). Whosoever turns to Allah in the totality of his spiritual states is to be considered an ‘Arif Billah, because there is nothing remaining of this person except Allah! So whosoever keeps the companionship of such a person will have found the “means of approach” which will connect you to Allah, Glorious & Exalted is He!

The reality of “Existence” (Haqiqat al-Kawn) is (to be considered) everything other-than Allah; Existence and Man him-“self”, but Man desires union with Allah (al-Insan yurid al-Wusul ila Allah) although between him-“self” and Allah are veils (Hijab). The “veil” which is blocking man is (only) “Existence” itself! If a person persists in the Dhikr of Allah, Glorious & Exalted is He!, along with presence of heart, he will find “existence” vanishing from before him and he will attain union with Allah! He will find “existence” “...like a mirage in a desert. The thirsty one thinks it to be water until he comes up to it, he finds it to be nothing; but he finds Allah with him!”(24:39). The “Greatest Shaykh” (Shaykh al-Akbar), Muhyideen ibn al’Arabi al-Hatimi(RA) has said:

“Whosoever has been enlightened to see ‘existence’ (al-Kawn) as a mirage, has surely been elevated (to see) beyond the veil!”

The Complete Shaykh (Shaykh al-Kamil) is the one who—when a disciple comes to him seeking union with Allah—the very first thing he orders is to engage in abundant Dhikr of Allah until he attains the Presence of Allah, according to the path of the annihilation of the ego (Tariqa al-Fana’). That is because unless the servant experiences the extinction of himself in the Essence of Allah, he will never obtain the perfection of faith! For as long as the “veil” remains, there also remains a type of punishment which will overtake the servant. “Nay! Surely, they will be veiled from seeing

their Lord that Day. Then verily, they will indeed enter the burning flame of the Hellfire.”(83:15-16). So wherever there is the “veil”, there also is the punishment! But if (the disciple) persists in the Dhikr of Allah, he will become annihilated (to existence)!

ON THE THREE (3) TYPES OF SPIRITUAL ANNIHILATION (FANA’):

- 1.) Annihilation in the Acts of Allah (Fana’ fi’l Af’al).
- 2.) Annihilation in the Attributes of Allah (Fana’ fi’s Sifat).
- 3.) Annihilation in the Essence of Allah (Fana’ fi’l Dhat).

Many of the Believers have attained the station of annihilation in the Acts of Allah. Whosoever knows that there is no “Doer” in existence except Allah, this is the one who is annihilated in the Acts of Allah. Indeed, many of the common believers have obtained this degree of annihilation.

I told my students, in one of the lessons on Arabic Grammar, that the grammarians say: “The Doer in reality is Allah, even if He engenders the action metaphorically by means of an agent, for the One Who engenders the action is inseparable from the action performed.” That is because it all is Allah! The “Doer” in reality is Allah (al-Fa’il Haqiqatun) and the metaphorical agent (al-Fa’il Majazan) who (appears) to “do” the action, is also Allah! Whosoever knows that there is no “Doer” in existence except Allah has attained the annihilation in the Acts of Allah—in the Presence of the Acts of Allah (Fi Hadrat al-Af’al)— and this person has found some of the true Faith (which is required).

If the person attains the station of annihilation in the Attributes (Fana’ fi’s Sifat), he has indeed ascended to a higher station. The Attributes of Allah are well-known to all of us, as we have studied the books of Tawhid which begin by enumerating His (Essential) Attributes:

- 1.) Power (Qudrat)
- 2.) Will (Irada)

- 3.) Knowledge ('Ilm)
- 4.) Life (Hayat)
- 5.) Hearing (Sami'a)
- 6.) Seeing (Basar)
- 7.) Speech (Kalam)

When we have assigned each of these (Essential) Attributes of Allah to Him Alone, we have attained to the station of annihilation in the Attributes of Allah. The 'Ulama have settled for us in our elementary teaching that there is no power, will, knowledge, life, hearing, seeing, or speech except that of Allah! Therefore, whosoever attains (the real knowledge of this) has arrived to the station of Fana' fi's Sifat! If someone persists onward in Tarqiyya and is elevated beyond this, he will attain to the station of annihilation in the Essence of Allah (Fana' fi'l Dhat).

[Interpreted from the Arabic by [Muhammad Abdullahi al-Tijani al-Ibrahimi](#) (USA)]



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