

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## A Glimpse at Our Beloved Mawlana Shaykh Nazim's Life and Teachings

**G**lory and thanks to You, our Lord, for guiding us to the mercy oceans of Your truth and Your light. *Allāhumma!* Send blessings and salutations of peace to our liege-lord Muhammad, the Seal of Your Prophets and Messengers who brought the Last Testament – the Qur'ān – and upon his Family and all his Companions, and his inheritors past and present, especially his chief successor and representative in our time.

The weak servant Gibril ibn Fouad was asked to “write a biography and article on our Beloved Mawlānā Shaykh Nāzim in your own few words about his life and teachings and your experience with him.” This month of Rabī<sup>c</sup> al-Awwal 1425 (May 2004) is most appropriate for this. May Allāh inspire both the writer and the reader about Mawlana Shaykh Nazim to render justice to this high subject. There is no power nor help except in Him. Just as He encompasses our ignorance with His knowledge, so may He encompass it with His mercy, *Āmīn!* (*Al-Ḥamdu lillāh*, permission was secured from Mawlānā to release this text today.)

Mawlānā's full name is **Muḥammad Nāzim 'Ādil ibn al-Sayyid Aḥmad ibn Ḥasan Yashīl Bāsh al-Ḥaqqānī al-Qubrusī al-Ṣāliḥī al-Ḥanafī**, may Allāh sanctify his soul and have mercy on his foreparents. His *kunya* is Abū Muḥammad – after his oldest son – and he is also the father of Bahā' al-Dīn, Nazīha, and Ruqayya.

He was born in 1341 (1922) in the city of Larnaca, Cyprus (Qubrus) to a family of Arab origin with Tatar roots. He told me that his father descended from Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Gilānī. I was also told that his mother descends from Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī. This makes him a

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*Damascus*

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son of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, upon him blessings and peace, on his father's side and a son of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, Allāh be well-pleased with him, on his mother's side.

After finishing school in Cyprus, Mawlānā went to college in Istanbul and graduated in chemical engineering. There, he studied Arabic and *fiqh* under Shaykh Jamāl al-Dīn al-Ālsūnī (d. 1375/1955) and received *ijāza* from him. He took *taṣawwuf* and the Naqshbandi *Ṭarīqa* from Shaykh Sulaymān Arḍarūmī (d. 1368/1948) who eventually sent him to Shām (Syria).

Mawlānā continued his Sharī'a studies in Ḥalab (Aleppo), Ḥamā, and especially Ḥimṣ. He studied at the shrine and mosque school of the great Companion Khālīd ibn al-Walīd رضي الله عنه in Ḥimṣ under its great Ulema and obtained *ijāza* in Ḥanafī *fiqh* from Shaykh Muḥammad 'Alī 'Uyūn al-Sūd and Shaykh 'Abd al-Jalīl Murād, and *ijāza* in ḥadīth from the *Muḥaddith* Shaykh 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn Muḥammad 'Alī 'Uyūn al-Sūd al-Ḥanafī.

Note that the latter is one of the ten great ḥadīth teachers of the late Rifā'ī *Ḥāfiẓ* of Aleppo, Shaykh al-Islām 'Abd Allāh Sirāj al-Dīn (1924–2002 CE) who sat on his knees for two hours at the feet of Mawlānā Shaykh 'Abd Allāh when the latter visited Aleppo in 1959 and who gave *bay'a* in the Naqshbandi *Ṭarīqa* to Mawlānā Shaykh Nāẓim during the latter's last visit to him in Aleppo in 2001 as narrated to me by Ustadh Muḥammad 'Alī ibn Mawlānā al-Shaykh Ḥusayn 'Alī from Shaykh Muḥammad Fārūq 'Itqī al-Ḥalabī who was present at the latter event.

Mawlānā also studied under Shaykh Sa'īd al-Sibā'ī who sent him to Damascus after receiving a sign related to the coming of Mawlānā Shaykh 'Abd Allāh al-Dāghistānī to Syria. After his initial arrival in Syria from Daghistan in the late thirties, Mawlānā Shaykh 'Abd Allāh lived mostly in Damascus but often visited Aleppo and Ḥimṣ. In the latter city he got

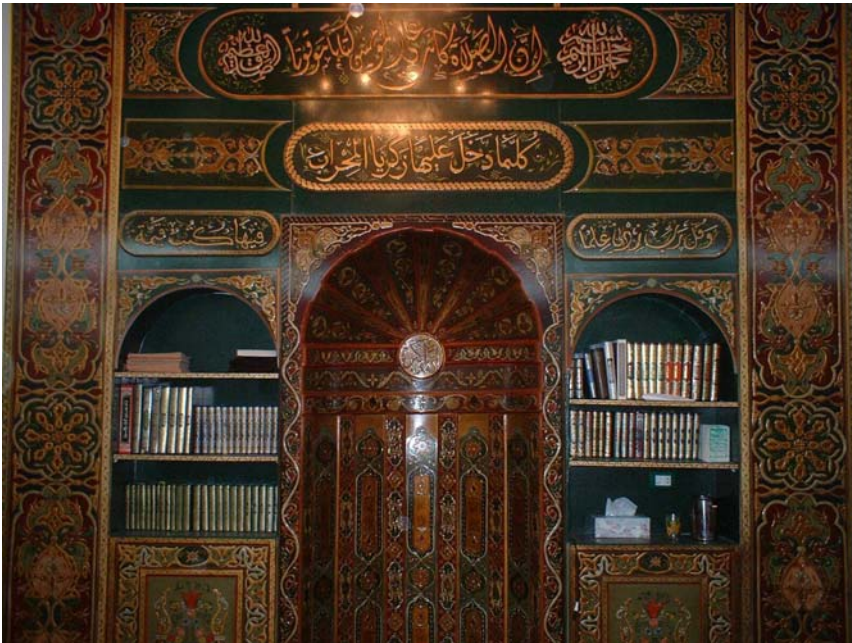
to know Shaykh Sa'īd al-Sibā'ī who was director of the Khālīd ibn Walīd School. Shaykh Sa'īd wrote him, “We have a remarkable student from Turkey studying with us.” Mawlānā Shaykh 'Abd Allāh replied to him, “That student belongs to us; send him over!” That student was our teacher Mawlānā Shaykh Nāẓim who came to Damascus and gave his *bay'a* to our Grandshaykh between 1941 and 1943.

The next year Mawlānā al-Shaykh 'Abd Allāh moved into the house bought for him by his first Syrian Murīd and presently-living caliph, Mawlānā al-Shaykh Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī ibn Muḥammad 'Ifrīnī al-Kūrkānī al-Rabbānī al-Kurdī al-Shaykhānī al-Ḥusaynī (b. 1336/1917) – Allāh sanctify his soul and have mercy on his foreparents – in Qasyoun, the mount overlooking Damascus to which Allāh Most High alluded:

﴿By the Fig and the Olive! By Mount Sīnā!﴾ (95:1-2)

Qatāda and al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said: “The Fig is the Mount on which Damascus sits [Jabal Qāsyūn] and the Olive is the Mount on which Jerusalem sits.” Narrated by 'Abd al-Razzāq, al-Ṭabarī, al-Wāḥidī, al-Bayḍāwī, Ibn al-Jawzī, al-Qurṭubī, Ibn Kathīr, al-Suyūṭī, al-Shawkānī, etc., all in their *Tafsīrs*.

Mawlānā Shaykh Nāẓim also bought a house near Grandshaykh's house and, together with Mawlānā Shaykh Ḥusayn, helped build Maṣjid al-Mahdī, Grandshaykh's Mosque, which was recently enlarged into a *Jāmi'* in the back of which is Grandshaykh's illumined grave and shrine



and where, to this day, delicious cereal and chicken soup is prepared in huge vats and continues to be distributed to the poor twice a week.



Thus, Mawlānā Shaykh Nāẓim lived in Damascus from the mid-forties to the early eighties, travelling at times to study or on behalf of Grandshaykh, until the latter left this life in 1973, after which Mawlānā remained in Damascus for several years then moved to Cyprus.

So Mawlānā, who is originally Cypriot, and Grandshaykh, who is originally Dāghistānī, both became Damascene “*Shāmiyyūn*” and lived in the district of the righteous (*al-ṣāliḥīn*) called Ṣāliḥiyya! No doubt, the reason for the importance of Damascus for Mawlānā and GrandShaykh is because Shām is blessed and protected through the Prophets and Saints. Imām Aḥmad and his student Abū Dawūd narrated with *ṣaḥīḥ* chains that our Holy Prophet said, upon him blessings and peace:

**“You must go to Shām. It is Divinely chosen by Allāh in all His earth. In it He protects His chosen servants; and Allāh Almighty has given me a Guarantee concerning Shām and its people!”**

Imām al-Nawawī said in his book *Irshād Ṭullāb al-Ḥaqā’iq ilā Ma’rifati Sunan Khayr al-Khalā’iq* ﷺ: “This ḥadīth is among the huge merits of Shām and is an observable fact!”

The director of Dār al-Ifṭā’ in Beirut, Lebanon, Shaykh Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Fakhri told me in his house in Beirut and wrote to me by hand:

On the morning of al-Aḥad 20 Rabī’ al-Ākhir 1386 corresponding to Sunday 7 August, 1966, we were granted the privilege of visiting Shaykh ‘Abd Allāh al-Dāghistānī – Allāh have mercy on him – in Mount Qāsyūn in Damascus on the initiative and in the company of Mawlānā al-Shaykh Mukhtār al-‘Alāyī – Allāh have mercy on him – the Muftī of the Republic of Lebanon at the time; Shaykh Ḥusayn Khālid the imām of Nawqara Mosque; Ḥājj Khālid Bashīr – may Allāh have mercy on both of them; Shaykh Ḥusayn Ṣa’biyya [the present director of Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya in Damascus]; Shaykh Maḥmūd Sa’d; Shaykh Zakariyyā Sha’r; and Ḥājj Maḥmūd Sha’r. The Shaykh received us most kindly, with a warm welcome full of happiness and mirth. This was in the presence of Shaykh Nāzim al-Qubruṣī – Allāh save and keep him!

We sat from nine o’clock in the morning until the *zuhr* call to prayer while the Shaykh – Allāh have mercy on him – explained and spoke about Shām, its excellence, its extraordinary merits, and the fact that it is the site of the Resurrection and that Allāh will gather all human beings in it for the final Reckoning. He mentioned things that moved our hearts and minds, imbued with the glorious spirit of the Ṣāliḥiyya district, and he spoke about the indissoluble

link – in practice as well as discourse – between *taṣawwuf* and the Sharī’a.... May Allāh lead and keep us upon guidance in the company of the righteous Saints. *Āmīn, yā Rabb al-‘ālamīn!*

There are many more prestigious names of the Ulema and *Awliyā’* of Shām that loved and associated with our Shuyukh during that golden period such as Shaykh Muḥammad Bahjat al-Bayṭār (1311-1396), Shaykh Sulaymān Ghāwji al-Albānī (d. 1378) the father of our teacher Shaykh Wahbī, Shaykh Tawfiq al-Hibrī, Shaykh Muḥammad al-‘Arabī al-‘Azzūzī (1308-1382) the Mufti of Lebanon and principal Shaykh of our teacher Shaykh Ḥusayn ‘Usayrān, al-‘Ārif Shaykh Shahīd al-Ḥalabī, al-‘Ārif Shaykh Rajab al-Ṭā’ī, Shaykh al-Qurrā’ Shaykh Najīb Khayyāṭa al-Faraḍī al-Ḥalabī, al-‘Ārif Shaykh Muḥammad al-Nabhān, Shaykh Aḥmad ‘Izz al-Dīn al-Bayānūnī, al-‘Ārif Shaykh Aḥmad al-Ḥārūn (1315-1382), Shaykh Muḥammad Zayn al-‘Ābidīn al-Jadhba, and others – Allāh have mercy on all of them!

From that blessed thirty-year *ṣuḥba* between Mawlānā and GrandShaykh came those unparalleled *Mercy Oceans* that are still lavishing on every seeker their *Endless Horizons*, their *Pink Pearls*, their *Rising Suns*. No doubt, those early transcriptions are milestones of the greatest single-handed call to Islām the US and Europe had seen in the twentieth century, by the grace of Allāh!

May Allāh bless Mawlānā Shaykh Nāzim ever more and grant him the highest stations He ever granted to His Friends, near our glorious liege-lord Muḥammad who said, upon him blessings and peace:

**If anyone travels on a road in search of knowledge, Allāh will cause him to travel on one of the roads of Paradise**, the angels will lower their wings from pleasure with one who seeks knowledge, and the dwellers of the heavens and the earth and the fish in the depth of the sea will ask forgiveness for the person of learning!

The superiority of the person of learning over the ordinary believer is like that of the moon on the night when it is full over the rest of the stars! **The Ulema are the inheritors of the Prophets**, and the Prophets have neither dinar nor dirham, they leave only knowledge; and he who takes it takes an abundant portion!

The first place I ever travelled in search of this Prophetic Knowledge was London in the month of Ramadan 1411 following my *shahādat an lā ilāha illā Allāh, Muḥammadun Rasūlullāh*. There, I took Mawlānā's noble hand for the first time and made *bay'ā* after having been introduced to *Tarīqa* by his son-in-law and American deputy, Shaykh Hisham Kabbani – may Allāh guide him and all Mawlānā's friends!

I visited Mawlānā several times in his home in Cyprus and saw him in Damascus as well. Among the **gifts of *suḥba*** Mawlānā gave were the last two weeks of Rajab in the year 1422 – October 2001 – in his house and *zāwiya* in the Turkish Cypriot town of Lefke. A memento of this experience was written in Arabic and English and published under the title *Qubrus al-Ṭarab fī Suḥbati Rajab* or *The Joy of Cyprus in the Association of Rajab*.

At that time and also later, during his last two trips to the US, in England, Cyprus, and Damascus, I took from Mawlānā the same great directive for every seeker of truth:

**OUR GOAL IS THE DEFENSE AND ILLUSTRATION OF THE  
PROPHET MUḤAMMAD AND HIS LOFTY ATTRIBUTES,**  
upon him and his House and Companions blessings and peace;  
to which Allāh support us!

I understood from this that **the true *Murīd* in the Naqshbandī-Ḥaqqānī *Tarīqa* is the friend and helper of every defender of Sayyidina Muḥammad ﷺ and it is his duty to associate with such defenders because they are on Mawlānā's path whether they are Naqshbandī or not.**

When the octogenarian Friend of Allāh in Johore, Malaysia, al-Ḥabīb ʿAlī ibn Jaʿfar ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-ʿAydārūs received us in his home in May 2003, wearing clothes that had not changed since the 1940s, he looked like Mawlānā in all respects and even seemed to mimic him when he said to pardon his broken Arabic. To our begging his *duʿā* for our injured lands and people he replied, **“The *Umma* is protected and in good hands and you have in Shaykh Nāzim Sufficiency!”**

Thus has it been for the humble murīd of Mawlāna in every encounter with the *Awliyāʾ* of this *Umma*. They invariably show the highest respect and most fearsome humbleness to Mawlāna and his *silsila* even when they are ostensibly on a different path such as al-Ḥabīb ʿAlī al-ʿAydārūs in Malaysia; Sayyid Muḥammad ibn ʿAlawī al-Mālikī in Makka; al-Ḥabīb ʿUmar ibn Ḥafīz of Tarīm; Sayyid Yūsuf al-Rifāʿī of Kuwait; Shaykh ʿIsā al-Ḥimyarī in Dubai; Sayyid ʿAfīf al-Dīn al-Jilānī and Shaykh Bakr al-Samarrāʾī of Baghdād; al-Sharīf Muṣṭafā ibn al-Sayyid Ibrāhīm al-Baṣīr in central Morocco; the Grandmufī of Syria Shaykh Aḥmad Kuftāro ibn Mawlānā al-Shaykh Amīn and his friends Shaykh Bashīr al-Bānī, Shaykh Rajab Dīb, and Shaykh Ramaḍān Dīb; the Kattānī Shuyūkh of Damascus; the late Shaykh ʿAbd Allāh Sirāj al-Dīn and his nephew Dr. Nūr al-Dīn ʿItr; Mawlānā al-Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Shāghūrī; Dr. Sāmer al-Naṣṣ; and the remainder of our teachers and brethren in Damascus – may Allāh always protect her and have mercy on them and us! I have met each of the above-named except for Shaykh Sirāj al-Dīn and they all invoked *tarāḍḍī* on Mawlānā al-Shaykh Nāzim, expressing belief in the loftiness of his *wilāya* and asking for his *duʿā* or that of his followers; **﴿And Allāh suffices as Witness that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh﴾ (48:28-29).**

It is an agreed-upon rule among the Men of Allāh that multiplicity of paths is the theme (*dandana*) of the unconnected while those that are *mawṣūl* are all on one path and in one circle and they know each other and love one another. They will be on pulpits of light on the Day of Resurrection. Therefore, we *Murīd*s of those respective paths must also know and love one another for the sake of Allāh and His Prophet and His friends so that we may enter that blessed light and belong in the highest circle of *suḥba* and *jamā'a* away from *furqa* and arrogance.

As Allāh Most High said: ﴿O Believers! Beware of Allāh and keep [company and loyalty] with the Truthful ones!﴾ and our Holy Prophet said ﷺ: “I charge you with following my Companions then those that follow them then those that follow; after that, lying will spread... But you must keep to the *Jamā'a* and beware of separation!”

This *Jamā'a* is described in the *mutawātir* ḥadīth: “He for whom Allāh desires great good, He grants him true understanding in the Religion. I only distribute and it is Allāh Who gives! That group shall remain in charge of the Order of Allāh, unharmed by those who oppose them, until the coming of the Order of Allāh.” O Allāh, make us thankful forever for what You gave and Your *Rasūl* and *Ḥabīb* distributed!

I heard Mawlānā Shaykh Nāzim say many times on behalf of his teacher, *Sultān al-Awliyā'* Mawlānā al-Shaykh 'Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad 'Alī ibn Ḥusayn al-Fā'iz al-Dāghistānī *thumma* al-Shāmī al-Ṣāliḥī (ca.1294-1393),<sup>1</sup>

- from Shaykh Sharaf al-Dīn Zayn al-'Ābidīn al-Dāghistānī al-Rashādī (d. 1354),
- from his maternal uncle Shaykh Abū Muḥammad al-Madanī al-Dāghistānī al-Rashādī,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>There is a variety of opinions over Mawlānā al-Shaykh 'Abd Allāh's date of birth ranging from 1284 (in Muḥammad Darnīqa's *al-Tarīqa al-Naqshbandiyya*) to 1294 according to Shaykh 'Abd Allāh's oldest student Mawlānā al-Shaykh Ḥusayn (in Muḥammad 'Alī ibn al-Shaykh Ḥusayn 'Alī, *al-Tarīqat al-Naqshbandiyya al-Khālidiyya al-Dāghistāniyya*) to 1303 in Shaykh 'Adnān Kabbānī's *al-Futūḥāt al-Ḥaqqāniyya* to 1309 in Shaykh Hishām Kabbānī's *The Naqshbandī Sufī Way*.

<sup>2</sup>He also received the Qādirī *Tarīqa* from Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Qādirī (as did Shaykh Jamāl al-Dīn) with whom he began his *sulūk* until Shaykh Ibrāhīm directed him

- from Shaykh Abū Muḥammad Abū Aḥmad Ḥājj 'Abd al-Raḥmān Effendī al-Dāghistānī al-Thughūrī (d. 1299),<sup>3</sup>
- from Shaykh Jamāl al-Dīn Effendī al-Ghāzī al-Ghumūqī al-Ḥusaynī (d.1292),<sup>4</sup>
- also (both al-Thughūrī and al-Ghumūqī) from Muḥammad Effendī ibn Ishāq al-Yarāghī al-Kawrālī (d. 1260),<sup>5</sup>
- from Khāṣṣ Muḥammad Effendī al-Shīrwānī al-Dāghistānī (d. 1254),<sup>6</sup>
- from Shaykh Dyā' al-Dīn Ismā'il Effendī Dhabīḥ Allāh al-Qafqāzī al-Shīrwānī al-Kurdāmīrī al-Dāghistānī (d. ?)
- from Shaykh Ismā'il al-Anārānī (d. 1242),
- from Mawlānā Dyā' al-Dīn Khālid *Dhūl-Janāḥayn* ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥusayn al-Shahrazūrī al-Sulaymānī al-Baghdādī al-Dimashqī al-Naqshbandī al-'Uthmānī ibn 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān *Dhūl-Nūrayn* (1190-1242) with his well-known chain up to Shāh Naqshband Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Uwaysī al-Bukhārī who said:

“Our *Tarīqa* is companionship and goodness is in the group!”

Allāh be well-pleased with them, have mercy on them, reward them, and benefit us with them through our ears, our hearts and our entire beings, *Āmīn!*

to Shaykh al-Thughūrī cf. 'Alī, *Tarīqa Naqshbandiyya* (p. 229).

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Shu'ayb ibn Idrīs al-Bākinī, *Hadāyā al-Zamān fī Tabaqāt al-Khwājagān al-Naqshbandiyya* (p. 375). He also took directly from al-Yarāghī cf. Ilyās al-Zadqārī, *Ṣullam al-Wuṣūl* as quoted in *Hadāyā* (p. 378 n.).

<sup>4</sup>Cf. al-Bākinī, *Hadāyā* (p. 396). He received the Qādirī *Tarīqa* from Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Qādirī and introduced the loud *dhīkr* into the Dāghistānī branch of the Naqshbandiyya through that authorization cf. al-Bākinī, *Hadāyā* (p. 396); 'Alī, *Tarīqa Naqshbandiyya* (p. 229).

<sup>5</sup>And not 1254 as erroneously mentioned in several sources. The correction is thanks to 'Alī, *Tarīqa Naqshbandiyya* (p. 214). Muḥammad al-Yarāghī also took directly from Shaykh Ismā'il al-Shīrwānī cf. al-Bākinī, *Hadāyā* (p. 350-351).

<sup>6</sup>From present-day Shirvān in Azerbaijan. He died in Damascus and is buried in Mount Qasyoun next to Mawlānā Khālid and Mawlānā Ismā'il al-Ānārānī who is Mawlānā Khālid's first successor who died seventeen days after the death of Mawlānā Khālid, both of them from the plague – may Allāh have mercy on them and all His *shuhadā'*.

Certain would-be Sufi critics of the Ḥaqqānī *Ṭarīqa* expressed criticism of our path for what they term “lack of knowledge.” A prudent Sufi would be the last person to utter such deluded criticism! They should be the first of people to know that knowledge by itself is not only useless but may be a mortal trap that leads to Satanic pride. Neither the proud nor the ignorant are excused; yet **the loving, sincere, and repentant Sufi who suffers even severe gaps in his knowledge and *adab* is closer to Allāh Most High and to knowledge of Allāh than the knowledgeable Sufi who harbors a speck of pride in his heart.** May Allāh protect you and us!

Ibrāhīm al-Khawwāṣṣ said knowledge is not to know much but to obey the Sunna and practice what one knows even if a little. Imām Mālik said knowledge is not to know many things but is a light Allāh casts in the heart. Imām al-Shāfi‘ī said knowledge is not to know proofs but to know what is beneficial. And when someone said of Ma‘rūf al-Karkhī, “He is not very knowledgeable,” Imām Aḥmad said: “*Mah!* Allāh forgive you! Is anything meant by Knowledge other than what Ma‘rūf attained?!”

Other critics object to *Rābiṭa* or “connection,” a particular characteristic of the Naqshbandī *Ṭarīqa*. More precisely, they object to the element of *taṣawwur* or “picturing” in *Rābiṭa* which requires of the Murīd to picture the image of the Shaykh in the heart at the beginning and during *dhikr*. But Allāh Most High said, **﴿Truly in the Messenger of Allāh you have a good example﴾** (33:21) and He said to **﴿enter the houses through their doors﴾** (2:189) and so we come to the Prophet ﷺ through the Siddiq ﷺ, and to the latter through Salmān ﷺ, and to the latter through Qāsim ﷺ, and to the latter through the Sayyid ﷺ, etc. Since “**the Ulema are the inheritors of the Prophets**” it follows that the *Murshid* is our example of that example. He must be one of those of whom the Prophet said ﷺ: “**When you see them, you remember Allāh!**” This is narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās, Asmā’ bint Zayd, and Anas ﷺ, and also from the Ṭābi‘īn Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Ghanam, and Muslim ibn Ṣubayḥ.

Some even object to the Murīd’s self-effacement in the Shaykh or *fanā’ fil-Shaykh*. They say, “Your Shaykh is just a man; let your *fanā’* be in Rasūlullāh!” But it is false that the guiding Shaykh is just like any other. Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī said – Allāh sanctify his soul:

Know that wayfaring (*sulūk*) in this Most Distinguished Path is by connection (*rābiṭa*) and love for the Shaykh we follow. Such a Shaykh trod this Path steadfastly and was dyed (*inṣabagha*) with all kinds of perfections through the strength of Divine attraction (*jadhba*). His gaze cures the diseases of the heart and his concentration (*tawajjuh*) lifts away spiritual defects. **The owner of these perfections is the Imām of the period and the Khalīfa of that time....** Thus our connection is love and our relationship (*nisba*) is mirroring and dyeing regardless of being near or far. Then the *murīd* gets dyed in this Path by the connection of love for the Shaykh, hour by hour, and gets enlightened through the reflection of his lights. In this pattern, knowledge of the process is not a precondition for the giving or receiving of benefit. The watermelon ripens through the heat of the sun hour by hour and warms with the passage of days. It matures, yet what knowledge does it have of this? Does the sun even know that it ripens and warms it?

As mentioned above, objecting to *fanā’ fil-Shaykh* is also like objecting to love of the Shaykh. We aim to love our Shaykh and know that he is the worthiest object of love and respect in this world. As the poet said:

وَأَمْحَضْتُكَ النَّصْحَ الصَّرِيحَ وَفِي الْحُشَا  
لِوُدِّكَ نَقْشٌ ظَاهِرٌ وَكِتَابٌ  
وَمَا لِي غَيْرُ الْوُدِّ مِنْكَ إِرَادَةٌ  
وَلَا فِي سِوَاهُ إِلَيْكَ حِطَابٌ

*Out of pure and sincere faithfulness to you I say:  
Love of you is written inside my heart of hearts,  
a patent engraving [NAQSH], an ancient writ.  
Nor do I have any will [IRĀDA] except your love,  
Nor can I say anything to you but that I love you.*

On this topic Mawlānā said recently:

“We have been ordered to love holy people. These are the Prophets and, after Prophets, their inheritors, the *Awliyā*’. We have been ordered to believe in Prophets and belief gives us Love. Love makes people to follow that beloved one. *ITTIBĀ*<sup>c</sup> means to love and follow while *ITĀĀT* means [only] to follow. An obedient person may be obedient by force or by love but not always by love.

“Now, Allāh Almighty is asking for His servants to love Him. And servants can’t reach directly to love of their Lord. Therefore, Allāh Almighty sends, on behalf of Himself, Prophets that represent Him among His servants. And everyone that loves *Awliyā* and *Anbiyā*, through *Awliyā* are reaching love of Prophets. And through love of Prophets you are reaching to love of Allāh Almighty.

“Therefore, **without love, a person can’t be a beloved one in the Divine presence. If you are not giving your love, how does Allāh Almighty love you?**

“But people that are like wood, dry, dry wood, are denying love. They are such dry ones – no life! A tree, with love, is opening through spring time. But dry ones, even if seventy springs came on them, never open. Love makes nature open and give its fruits, its beauty to people. Without love, it should never be opening, never flowering, never giving its fruits.

“**So love IS the most important pillar for faith. No love, no faith.** I may speak on it up to next year, but you must understand, from a drop, an ocean!” (This is the end of Mawlānā’s talk.)

**B**y Mawlānā, Allāh has made all difficult things easy. We are grateful to know him because he is our shortcut to the *nūr* in this Religion. This *nūr* is the goal of every sane person. It is described in the magnificent verse ﴿**He gives wisdom unto whom He will, and he unto whom wisdom is given, he truly has received abundant good! But none remember except people of understanding**﴾ (2:269). May Allāh grant us this wisdom and keep us on the path He commands and loves for us! May Allāh grant Mawlānā long life in health and grant us the rank of his true discipleship for the sake of the Most Honored Prophet Muḥammad!

Damascus, 12 Rabī<sup>c</sup> al-Awwal 1425.