



BAY'AH & TASAWWUF

QUESTION

I would like to know about Sufism. Is it a part of Islam or is it something which has just been made up by fraudulent people who are marketing it as religion? What I hear sometimes makes me think this is a "hoax" – a money-making racket. Many talk about shaykhs, peers, taking bay`ah with such people, Islaahun nafs, etc. I would appreciate a correct understanding of the ideology. What is the purpose?

REPLY

Bismih Ta'ala

Respected Sister in Islam,

Wa-alaykumus Salaam wa-Rahmatullahi wa-Barakaatuhu

1.) "Sufism", or Tasawwuf / Tariqat is very much a part of Islamic teachings. Shariah is knowledge and Tariqat is acting upon that knowledge. It covers all aspects of Deen, by following in the footsteps of Rasulullah (sallallahu alaihi wasallam), and revolves around the purification of heart and soul, the reformation of the nafs (self/ego), developing intense love for Allah Ta'ala and a connection with Him, such that we submit to Him, with heart, mind, soul and body. The Qur'aan Sharif alludes to Tazkiyya and Islaah a number of times.

2.) Unfortunately, many have spoilt the good name of "Sufism" or tasawwuf by introducing actions which are not in conformity with Islamic teachings. Some people have made Sufism appear like another religion, or they have brought into Sufism, the ideas and rites of mysticism from other religions. Moreover, there are many bogus 'peers' that are just in it for money. Therefore caution needs to be exercised in choosing a spiritual mentor.

3.) Bay`ah is a practice (Sunnah) of the Prophet (Sallallaahu 'alayhi wa-Sallam), which has been carried down, through the ages, by our Spiritual Guides.

It is through the barakah (blessings) of Bay`at that a person is able to easily and

steadily traverse and progress through the different stages in the spiritual world. The seeker is constantly drawing direction and guidance from the spiritual guide who has proficiency and expertise in the field.

Bay`ah is choosing a spiritual doctor (a Shaykh) for your spiritual ailments. The Shaykh must be one whom you are most compatible with, and whose teachings, you readily accept and follow. Of course, the Shaykh must be on Haq. There are many fraudulent people in the guise of the pious. The Shaykh must be learned, experienced, pious and wise – for such a person must have your best interests at heart.

The objective is Islaah (reformation), and complete Obedience to Allah Ta'ala and Rasulullah (Sallallahu 'alayhi wa-Sallam). The mureed (disciple) should therefore inform the Shaykh of his or her spiritual weaknesses – whether it be hasad (jealousy), kibr (pride), riyaa (ostentation), hirs (greed), Hubbud-Dunya (Obsessive love for the world) – or whatever it be, missing out his Salaah due to laziness, casting lustful gazes, listening to music, being involved in an illicit relationship, etc.

The Shaykh, if he is 'Kaamil', will not look down upon his mureed when informed of such sicknesses – just as a doctor will not look down upon his patient, because his patient has cancer, or a brain tumour, etc.

The right of the mureed over the Shaykh is that the Shaykh then makes Islaah of that spiritual malady – thus the Shaykh prescribes some remedy and also makes dua. For the mureed to experience the benefits and curative properties in the Shaykh's treatment and dua, it becomes absolutely necessary to now follow the Shaykh's advice. This is the mode and manner to restore spiritual health.

As an example : The mureed considers and thinks himself to be pious and great, and better than other people. He looks down upon those who do not do good deeds as he does, who do not dress in the Sunnah libaas like he does or who do not have a beard as he does... He considers himself better and superior, and considers others as sinful, immoral and condemned to hell-fire. This then is ujub (conceit) and takabbur (pride).

He should thus explain his condition by informing his Shaykh : I think of myself as great. I look down upon those who do not do what I do. I consider myself, an accepted servant. I consider my piety to be my achievement and effort. I think of others as evil and despicable. ...I don't keep their company because I consider them as evil, and think of myself as too pure and pious to be with them, that it is below my dignity and honour to sit amongst such people etc. etc.

So then the Shaykh will prescribe some suitable remedy – depending on various other aspects of the mureed.

If the mureed has a problem in controlling his anger, then he should inform the Shaykh: I am very temperamental – and I lose my anger when my wife does something wrong, even if it is something small. I sometimes slap or kick in that anger. I swear her and I threaten her with Talaq....

The mureed must spell out his weakness by giving an example of his behaviour.

Just saying that I have anger, pride, hasad is not very helpful to the Shaykh. ...What makes you feel that you have pride or hasad ?

The more specific you are in informing of your sickness, the more specific and exact will be the remedy.

4.) In this journey of love, the mureed will experience different spiritual states and conditions. However, this is, as I generally describe, the scenery enroute, as we travel to reach our destination. The scenery, no matter how beautiful, is not the destination. ...But this also requires much explanation. You could listen to the talk: **Feeling spiritually low?** – which you will find on the website www.yunuspatel.co.za

5.) You can also listen to the talks: "**Tasawwuf made Easy**", and can download the book '**Ikhlaas**' from this website. The book includes some discussion on Tasawwuf.

6.) May Allah Ta'ala fill our hearts with His Love and guide us all on the Path of Divine Love, and grant us the crowns of His Friendship. May Allah Ta'ala grant taufeeq of obedience and protect us from anything that is displeasing to Him.

Was-Salaamu alaykum wa-Rahmatullahi wa-Barakaatuhu

Yunus Patel (Maulana)