



THE SHOPS OF MA'RIFAT

A person generally purchases material commodities from a shop. Groceries are purchased from a supermarket, clothing from a clothing store, jewellery from a jewellery shop and so forth.

To obtain these material commodities, the buyer will have to give a certain amount of money in return for his goods. This is a transaction which is most common in the business world.

There is also a transaction in the spiritual world where special commodities may be purchased: The commodities of the Ma'rifat (Recognition of Allah Ta'ala), 'Ishq (Love for Allah Ta'ala), Qurb (Nearness to Allah Ta'ala), Nisbat (Connection with Allah) and so forth are generously available, for all.

However, these special commodities of the 'Ma'rifat' (recognition) and Ishq of Allah Ta'ala are such that they cannot be purchased with the coins and notes or the gold and silver of this world.

They are to be purchased in this world and are found in what I term the 'shops' of Ma'rifat, which are found throughout the world.

These '**shops of 'Ma'rifat' are the Ahlullah (People of Allah)**. They stock the merchandise of Allah Ta'ala. However, these Ahlullah do not accept cash, cheques, cards, gold or silver in their transactions. They accept a different kind of currency, which is far more precious than money.

The payment for the merchandise of Allah Ta'ala is the Qurbani (sacrifice) of our evil desires. To become 'Aarif Billah', we have to pay for these spiritual treasures with the sacrifice of our base desires.

The 'asking price' is the sacrifice of our evil desires – whether it is the evil desire to cast lustful gazes, commit fornication/adultery, gamble, take drugs, backbite, listen to music or commit any action which is Haram.

Added to this, the more money a person possesses, the greater the commodity that

can be purchased. Five Rand cannot buy a person a 22ct gold bangle. **You require a lot of money for big commodities.**

Similarly, the more the Qurbani, the more the Ma'rifat of Allah Ta'ala; the greater the sacrifice, the greater the recognition of Allah Ta'ala.

Take the example of a person who goes to the Jeweller, and he has with him R100 000. On the one hand, he wants to purchase jewellery, and on the other hand, he does not want to part with his money. He is attached to one and drawn to the other. He wants both. But he will have to part with that money in exchange for the jewels that he desires.

Many of us want to please Allah Ta'ala, and we also want to keep our Nafs happy. This cannot be. No one can gain the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala and secure His love while pandering to the whims and fancies of the Nafs and Shaytan.

Just as the person will get gems, pearls, or gold and silver in return for his money, so too, if the Salik (Seeker of Allah Ta'ala) is prepared to sacrifice his evil desires and passions, then he will be given the pearls and jewels of Ma'rifat from the shops of Ma'rifat.

The Ahlullah have a priceless treasure within their hearts. They are very generous in sharing because sharing increases their Treasure. And if we are able to secure the same, then we will understand the insignificance of the Dunya (This material world).

**"O Allah, You have explained Your Value, being both worlds.
If by giving both worlds, You are attained,
Both worlds are nothing in exchange for Your Love and Friendship.
Even if a person should sacrifice his life for You,
Then too, the full price has not been paid.
To become martyred for the sake of Your Love,
Is better than a thousand lives,
And many are the Kingdoms to be sacrificed for Your servitude."**

Once Shah Waliyyullah (rahmatullah 'alayh) addressed the Moghul Emperors,

saying: Waliyyullah **has a heart that is beautified with the gems and pearls of the Love of Allah Ta'ala. If there is anyone wealthier, then come forward. When you die, you will be beneath the ground, wrapped in a few sheets, while your power and position, your wealth and Treasure will be left behind, above the ground.**

The gems and pearls of the 'Ishq and Ma'rifat of Allah Ta'ala are dependent on how much Qurbani is made.

"O, Friend! Treasures are generally buried in places of destruction. Hence destroy the evil desires and attain the Treasure."

Until we do not turn our hearts red with the blood of our evil desires, there is no way that we can secure the 'Ishq, Ma'rifat and Qurb of Allah Ta'ala. There is no Wali (Friend of Allah Ta'ala) who has become a Wali by fulfilling the evil desires of his heart.

The condition of the sincere ones is :

Say, "My prayer, my offering, my life and my death are for Allah, the Lord of all the worlds..."