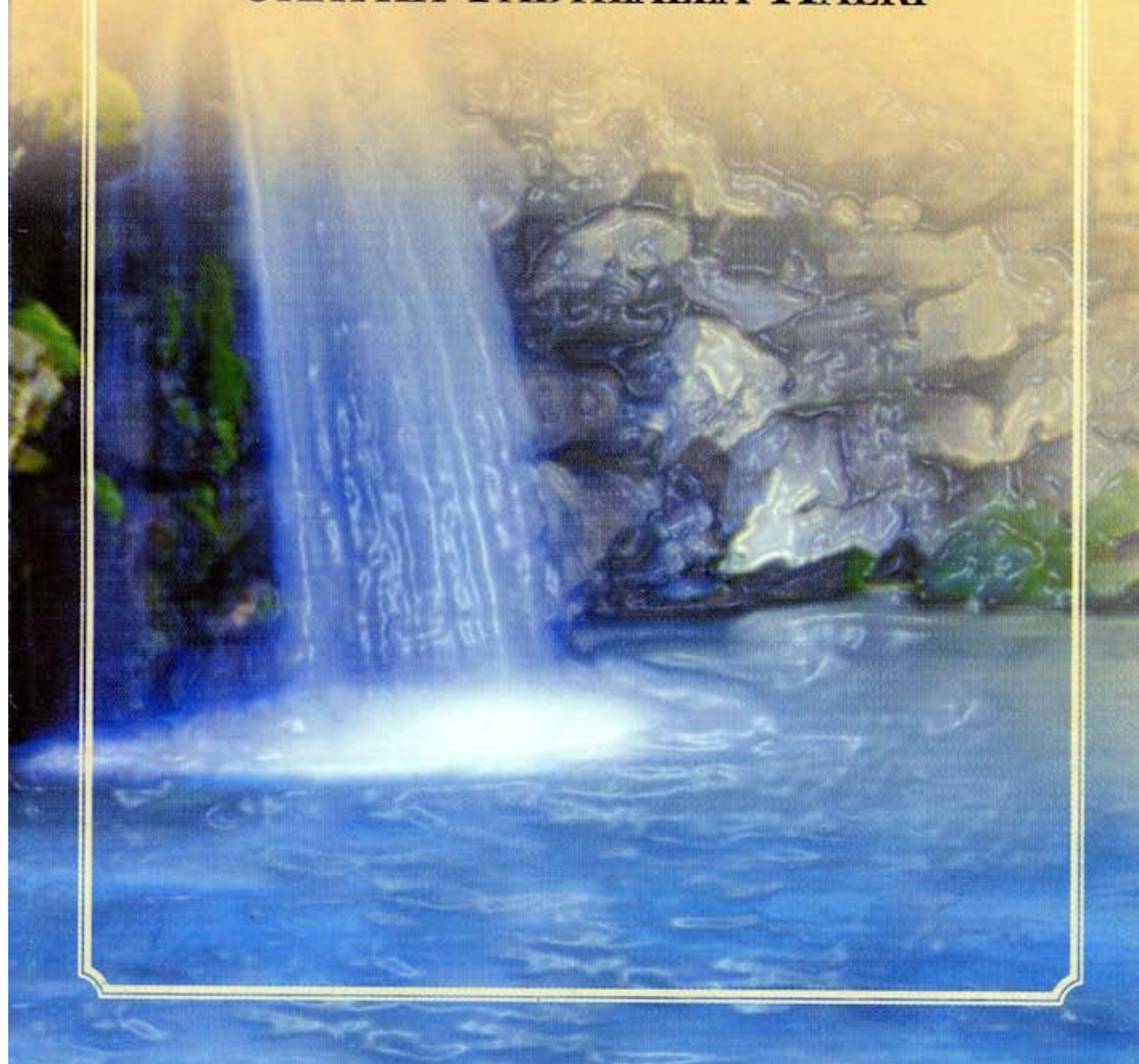


Ripples of Light

SHAYKH FADHLALLA HAERI





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Book Description

These inspired aphorisms are remedies for hearts that seek the truth. They provide keys to the doors of inner knowledge, as well as antidotes to distraction and confusion.

Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri is a Sufi Shaykh of the Shadhili, Chisti and Rifa`i Orders. He believes that unless individual human beings understand and awaken to inner knowledge and order, society-at-large will continue to live in chaos and confusion. When society finds the prophetic beings amongst them and follows them, confusion, wastage and destruction will no longer prevail. We pray that we will be led by the best amongst us.

About Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

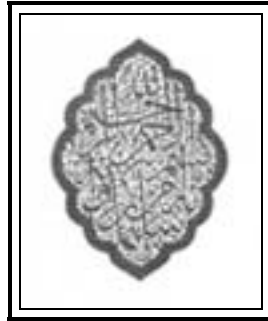
Acknowledged as a master of self-knowledge and a spiritual philosopher, Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri's role as a teacher grew naturally out of his own quest for self-fulfillment.

He travelled extensively on a spiritual quest which led to his eventual rediscovery of the pure and original Islamic heritage of his birth, and the discovery of the truth that reconciles the past with the present, the East with the West, the worldly with the spiritual – a link between the ancient wisdom teachings and our present time.

A descendant of five generations of well-known and revered spiritual leaders, Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri has taught students throughout the world for over 30 years. A prolific author of more than thirty books relating to the universal principles of Islam, the Qur'an, and its core purpose of enlightenment, he is a gifted exponent of how the self relates to the soul, humankind's link with the Divine, and how consciousness can be groomed to reflect our higher nature.

The unifying scope of his perspective emphasizes practical, actionable knowledge that leads to self-transformation, and provides a natural bridge between seemingly different Eastern and Western approaches to spirituality, as well as offering a common ground of higher knowledge for various religions, sects and secular outlooks.

Part One: Foundations



Introduction

The universe is composed of infinite varieties of diverse and heterogeneous components: solids, liquids, gases; living, inanimate, seen and unseen energies; colors; galaxies; relative time and apparent infinite space.

The one unique power, however, is the source of all powers which enables these existential realities to connect, relate and interact with each other.

That is the Divine essence, Allah, the Glorious, the ultimate unifier and source of all relative powers, the ONE unique, all-pervading Creator and Sustainer of time and space, the light behind all lights and shadows.

What we all seek is the knowledge of this absolute truth, whether consciously or otherwise. Allah's attributes – the Everlasting, the Merciful, the All-Knowing, the All-Powerful, the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing and so on – are the doors which lead to the Divine country. These attributes are what rule the universe. Knowledge of Allah is the key to all that is desirable in this life. It is the only-reliable source of happiness and contentment. Access to this knowledge comes only through self-knowledge, negating the *nafs* (self) whilst upholding the *ruh* (spirit), and reading the true meaning and message behind experiences and events.

You start by rational understanding and reasoning which emanate from the intellect. Later you see the hidden meaning and attributes behind the experience. When the *ruh* (spirit) illuminates the self you can then begin to see the Divine attribute and light behind all existential happenings. This state is the source of true contentment and security.

The following sections present key factors in progressing along the path. They are highly condensed and meant for the advanced seeker who has already read much and progressed in their journey.

The Primal Design of the Self

The human *nafs* (self) resembles a hologram which can reflect and reproduce ever-changing states and attributes. Its range covers the lowest qualities to the highest Divine attributes. The *nafs* can behave in the meanest and, by contrast, in the most generous of ways: fearful or courageous, impulsive or patient, stupid or wise, agitated or peaceful, ignorant or illuminated. The mind is the faculty of rationality and reasoning. It is the foundation for civilized and cultural reliability and tradition. The limitations of the mind and intellect are the source of its power, universal utility and human inter-relationships. Mind is vital to start with until the illuminated heart supersedes.

The spirit (*ruh*) is a Divine spark which energizes and gives life to the self and its physical body. It is the ultimate, constant reflection point for the *nafs*. The actions and experiences of the *nafs* are only possible because of the *ruh*. Whilst asleep dreaming occurs when the *nafs* wanders off and the *ruh* is present, whilst death comes when both the *nafs* and the *ruh* depart and the body is cast off back to its earthly origin.

The heart and its facets of monitoring, reflecting, witnessing and recording are the link between the *nafs* and the *ruh*. When the heart is clear of defects (hatred, suspicion, lust, and so on), then it will reflect to the *nafs* the source of higher guidance – the *ruh* and Divine light.

Good intentions and appropriate actions are needed to cleanse the heart, purify it and enable it to reflect the higher truth. It is said that they who know themselves will know their heart. They who know the lower tendencies of the self will understand the higher attributes of Allah. By being aware of one's meanness, one can visualize Allah's generosity.

Unreliability of the self can lead to recognition of the reliability of Allah. The self is a disappointment whereas Allah is the source of appointment. The self is impatient, Allah is patience. The self is insecure and dependent, Allah is totally secure and independent. The self can be weak and sick, Allah is the source of strength, all powers and healing. The self loves

power, reputation, majesty, freedom and so on. These are Divine attributes reflected upon the holographic *nafs* through the light of the *ruh*.

The *nafs* is a veil upon which the images of the above attributes pass like moving shadows, and if an attempt is made to bring any permanence to these attributes it fails abysmally. The *nafs* is such that its nature is one of change and contradictions.

Transcending the *nafs* before death brings about wisdom and illumination. Fear of death is a clear indication that transcendence has not yet been attained.

The Doctrine of the Roots of Opposite Dependencies

Each and every experience in life has its opposite. The opposite must be grasped if each experience is to be fully appreciated.

To appreciate sound, experience silence. To appreciate the thrill of speed, experience utter stillness. To appreciate flight, experience the firmness of earth. To appreciate total alertness, be dead still. To live with people, learn to be alone. To possess the world, be free of possessions. To live forever, die now. To control all, be controlled by the *One* controller.

To realize the highest within you, be conscious of the lowest. Go below the lowest within you. The root of structural, measurable reality lies in the unpredictable, unmeasurable, unseen. To be detached and free of creation and all insecurities, be totally attached and dependent on Allah, the source of all security and mercy.

All-Light Attributes

To be generous, see the overwhelming and unconditional generosity of the ONE. To give freely, recognize the ONE giver. To enjoy your struggle and sacrifice, realize the purpose and outcome of your efforts and dissolve in the source.

We seek power, for the light of the All-Powerful is within us. We seek wealth, whilst the light of the Ever-Wealthy lies within us. We seek longevity, whilst the Ever-Living is the cause of our spirit. We love possessions and collections, whereas the Possessor of all is within us. We seek knowledge, but the All-Knowing is within us.

We seek freedom, for the root of absolute freedom is in our hearts. We seek our roots, whilst the origin and the root of all creation is within us. We seek love, for the Ever-Loving is within us. We seek security, whereas the root of security is within us.

Primal Pattern

Human beings are conditioned to be healthy and well, seek and enjoy good food, seek comfort and ease, seek a clear and healthy mind and know what is needed and not be kept in ignorance. To have good relationships, give and receive love, be secure emotionally and materially, be content with the moment, and be balanced between the opposites of action and rest, challenge and idleness, giving and taking, and outer action and inner peace.

Once the mapping of the self, heart and *ruh* is read, then a self-imposed discipline will come about. The seeker wants the *ruh* to illuminate his actions. This desire is the ultimate root of moral and ethical character.

Truth, Realities and Perceptions

Every experience is real at the time of its occurrence. Experienced realities, however, are relative and change according to subjective perceptions. The same event may be interpreted differently by different people at different times. As our interpretations become subtler and more refined, our reading becomes more real and the truth behind each reality becomes evident. This is the difference between the human view and judgment from the underlying truth.

Human justice and laws can change whereas Divine natural laws are perpetual and constant. Good and bad are relative in human terms whereas what is always good is that which will lead to knowledge of Allah.

Physical realities are relative and conditional according to certain boundaries. Gravitational physics does not apply at a subatomic level.

ONE unique truth, however, encompasses all these dominions – the relative and absolute, seen and unseen – One truth from which many realities emanate. When perception is illuminated, it experiences relative reality but also reads the truth behind it.

The true purpose of life is to adore, glorify and worship Allah. Yet how can you be consistent in your commitment, love and submission to Allah unless you experience the Divine presence at all times? How can you be illuminated, awakened and enlightened if you are wrapped in the cocoon of the *nafs* and hardened by your mental perceptions and expectations?

The seeker must act upon what the heart transmits and is thereby transformed. Constant, faithful submission, inner humbleness and high expectations of Allah will open up channels of insight and spiritual drive leading to a reliable, steady inner awareness which becomes the source of true joy.

States and Conditions of the Seeker and of the Awakened

The seeker believes and hopes; the awakened knows and relies on the eternal truth. The seeker looks for the light of Allah to guide them; the awakened acts according to Allah's light. The seeker benefits and progresses according to the actions of submission, humbleness, patience, generosity, abandonment and so on; the awakened only sees the merits of these attributes as emanating from Allah and as decreed for the awakened to act accordingly.

The seeker longs for relief from constriction; the awakened experiences ease within constriction and caution within relief. The seeker enjoys ease in abundance; the awakened sees wealth within poverty and poverty within wealth. The seeker experiences strength in power; the awakened sees weakness within strength and might within weakness.

The seeker benefits in gathering and avoids separation; the awakened sees gathering in separation and separation in gathering. The seeker experiences states; the awakened experiences stations.

The seeker would like to know; the awakened ones know what they don't know and will know what they need to know.

Prescriptions and Remedies

To be healed from the ever-changing structure of the self, we need to understand the real nature of the *nafs* and then transcend it forever. The *nafs* is mean and limited in its nature. Allah is most generous and immeasurably great.

Look at the lower tendency of the self and then visualize Allah's high attribute so that it covers and overcomes the *nafs*. When the self is mean, selfish and greedy, remember and witness Allah's generosity. The self is bare and unconditional, yet exhibits false pride and arrogance. See Allah's immense sublime majesty.

The self is fearful and cowardly; Allah is the source of peace and courage. The self is full of hate and envy; Allah is the source of love, magnanimity and generosity. The self is impatient, Allah is ever-patient. The self is engulfed by passion and lust; Allah is the source of pure love and nurturing.

The remedy for meanness is to go to the lowest meanness in yourself. Then reflect on Allah's over-flowing generosity. Take all things to their absolute and The Absolute (Allah) will cover it.

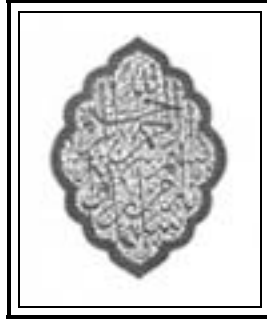
The *nafs* is given to rashness, unforgivingness and jealousy. Allah is clement, ever-forgiving and tolerant. The *nafs* tries to imitate the high attributes just as a commoner pretends to be a king. Through a pure heart, the *nafs* can allow the *ruh* to lead and shed the light of truth upon the realities experienced.

The *nafs* will experience death and therefore fears it, thus trying to prolong life. The *ruh* is forever and will continue after death, modified by the accumulated experiences and actions of the *nafs*. To remember death is a great remedy with which to deflate the *nafs* and antidote its lower tendencies.

In our present world all mention of death or painful experiences is considered undesirable. We choose the outwardly presentable and end up with much inner sickness. We forget that to achieve

outer ease we must awaken through inner difficulty. To know eternal life, we must be willing to die.

Part Two: Aphorisms



Knowledge and Wisdom

To be truly informed we must rise above the realm of form to that of non-form.

We always seek affirmation. Most of us look for it amongst creation and are often disappointed. The Creator however never lets down the sincere seeker.

Meditation which leads to higher consciousness is like a skylight in the human cave letting in the beam of hope and freedom from the illumination of the self.

Ugliness veils subtle beauty and beauty hides ugliness. It is all a matter of time or perspective.

The collector of beautiful objects is trapped by their collection. The lover of beauty itself has transcended form to meaning and attachment to freedom.

Art lovers and collectors have personal opinions whereas the lover of beauty is thrilled by higher knowledge.

Success is founded on acknowledgement of defeat. When the self is conquered, the spirit announces its triumph.

Chaos is order, the rationale and reason of which have not yet been discovered.

The truth is nearer to you than you think.

Outer security lies in familiarity, while the deeper the knowledge the stranger it seems.

When anger is directed at its real cause, there can be profound change. Often it is directed at the apparent cause. This is like blaming the mirror for reflecting one's own image. One must not blame the messenger, but look at the message or root cause.

There are two types of difficulties and problems: one type is a challenge to which to rise up and seek a solution – it is a healthy way of life. Another type does not relate to solutions, they are just blocks, obstacles or emotional grief. Leave them. Problems that cannot be tackled, practically or

rationally, or are beyond one's capacity often require time to resolve themselves. Our reactions to these situations are often emotional and counterproductive.

Grief and suffering are experiences for which the antidote is avoidance. The challenge is to reflect upon how that state came about in the first place. Attachments, expectations and perceptions are keys to this discovery. Success is merely a durable state of harmony as a result of expectations having been met.

Outer success implies a smooth connection between expectations and results.

Inner success implies a state of constant ease, peace and contentment irrespective of outer conditions and changes.

One's reading or understanding of any situation is much influenced by one's inner state and condition.

If you are curious as to how the subtle and unseen world works, then first study and understand how the visible world works.

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Professor Ali A. Allawi

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Collected Papers By: Sami K. Hamarneh

Edited By: Munawar A. Anees

Foreword By: Shaykh Fadhlalla Haeri

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