

The Book of Peace

by

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(Sufi Ahmed Murad Chisti)

*Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
the Only Being, United with All the Illuminated Souls
Who Form the Embodiment of the Master, the Spirit of Guidance.*

Series I: Lesson 1

As all wars are caused by activity of the nufs, so all forms of peace arise from control of nufs and this is true whether considered from the universal or particular standpoint. Now, it is not always so easy to distinguish the nufs; there was a time when men thought the way to fight evil was to attack the devil: they never considered that the way to stop evil was to cultivate goodness. Many can speak against the nuts, whereas unless inspired to speak, unless such speech arises from the heart, the tongue is controlled by nufs. It is always possible that the nufs may attack the nufs of another or attack nufs in an impersonal sense or attack itself and all the time it is strengthening itself, which is very deceiving. And this is true also both of the individual nufs and collective nufs, and never is nufs so deceitful as when attacking itself.

Now, the way of the Sufis is to lull the devil to sleep rather than rouse him to wakefulness because of opposition. So there are just two modes of action: either opposition to unrighteousness or cultivation of righteousness. Opposition to unrighteousness is like pulling weeds from a garden where one is not so sure they may not grow again. Cultivating righteousness is the implanting of flowers or trees which will choke out the weeds by themselves. As opposition to unrighteousness sometimes leads to self righteousness, the cultivating of the heart qualities is often the superior way, and the path of the saint is generally preferable to that of the prophet or master.

But it is wrong to consider different paths as different, for the difference may be psychological and should not be considered as moral. And here is the crux of the whole situation: man may go on a moral crusade or on a religious crusade and he may be fighting what seems to him to be evil but his very zealousness may strengthen his pride and agitate his nufs.

The question as to whether Sufis may favor such movements as the prohibition of liquor, dope and vice is very difficult to answer because what seems a simple question is a very complex mental question put into a few words. There may be several moral and spiritual issues at stake and before deciding it is proper to analyze all of them. This does not mean neutrality, although it does not exclude neutrality and is not opposed to neutrality. It means examine all principles first, see from all points of view, but do not hesitate to favor a cause you feel is morally or spiritually right.

Neutrality is not a principle. A neutral may see from neither point of view, a mystic sees from at least two points of view. Indecision is often moral or spiritual cowardice. There is a great difference between a true conscientious objector who holds that war is wrong and the coward who is afraid to fight. Yet the latter disguises his condition as the former. Pure neutrality may mean the end of activity, in other words, death.

The Bhagavad Gita teaches the Dharma of right actions and right action means peace, even on the battlefield. But all life is a battlefield and it is not only war when the nufs of one country fights the nufs of another country, it is war when the nufs of one race opposes the nufs of another race, when one religion opposes another, when political groups face each other, disagreement, debate, contest or vying, all is nufs.

No doubt some forms of emulation are needed in life. There is no harm in defeating a friend in a race, but when the personality as such is drawn into the contest it is war in heaven, Peace comes only through control of the nufs, nufs of a person, nufs of a country, nufs of an ideal, nufs of belief – all that is not commanded by God.

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Series I: Lesson 2

The question as to how peace can best be obtained may be answered directly and tersely: **“Man has no peace except with God.”** Except his peace with God there is no peace and if it be asked whether this does not mean peace with oneself, the answer is in the affirmative, that peace with oneself and peace with God are identical.

Now it may be challenged that man can be at peace with his neighbor and this must be answered from the metaphysical point of view that considering the neighbor as other than oneself is duality and there can be no war except through duality, as there can be no peace without unity. But it may be objected that one can live on most friendly terms with one's neighbor and never quarrel. The answer to this is the question, What is God? He is not man and He is not like unto man, but He is the love of the Mother, the kindness of the Father, the fidelity in a friend, the inspiring magnetism of a teacher. All these qualities are qualities of God and whenever any of these qualities is present, God is present. So when the statement is made that one is at peace with one's neighbor, there are two possibilities. The first of these is that the neighbor is a friend. But friendship shows the presence of Allah, so that peace which rises out of friendship is also peace in Allah and with Allah.

Now the other possibility is that you have had no relations with a neighbor and you say you are at peace. This is not peace. As war is living and dynamic, so is peace living and dynamic. Peace which is not the result of action but whose presence means the absence of action—that means the absence of life, and therefore death. One does not really live in peace and in harmony except with those who have entered into relations with one. Peace as well as war, is born of action.

There are two conditions of man, the condition of self-expression and the condition of self-surrender. These are all abiding conditions and from this contrast duality is born. There is a certain necessity in duality, but it can be a duality of cause and effect or it can be a duality of inner and outer or it can be a duality of separate entities. Dualities of cause and effect or inner and outer are really unities, only the mind views them as separate conditions even when parts of a unity. This is different from the duality of division or separateness.

These two conditions arise from the breath and are called Urouj and Nasoul. Urouj is all that one draws and attracts and is therefore the breath which maintains the nufs. Nasoul is the breath of self-surrender, in other words, of the Holy Spirit. The Bible teaches that someday the body will return to the dust of the earth, and the spirit to God who gave it. That day is now, in fact it is every breath: with every breath we draw from God and with every exhalation we give back to God.

The Urouj breath by drawing to a center amplifies the nufs. The mechanical action of it is something like a snake. So the snake has been regarded as a symbol of evil and of the nufs in all religions. It is only this way that life is maintained on the surface. If man did not continue to draw from without to himself, that spiritual energy which manifests in him would not come to the earth plane. Nufs serves to bring God to earth.

This is the mystery of Nahash who tempted Eve (that is, universal life) and so brought about the fall of Adam (that is, Universal Man), resulting in the expulsion from Eden. But this fall of man is not absolute evil. It was necessary so man could experience life on the outside, which in turn was necessary so God could maintain life on the outside. Each Nasoul breath of God gives birth to the Urouj breaths of his Creatures, and it is that Nasoul breath which is the Holy Spirit, the Mother of the World, the Mother of Christ.

Man indrawing to himself makes the mistake of claiming possession of things and qualities, forgetting that they are loaned by Allah for an accommodation. As soon as this occurs, there is duality, division. This appears on the mental plane in thinking differences and on the physical plane in speaking and acting differences.

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Series I: Lesson 3

The difference between the mystic's point of view and neutral point of view can be explained that the mystic sees from at least two points of view and the neutral often from neither. In other words, if we call one side of an argument right and another wrong, the neutral will even say the right party is wrong in some respects, while the mystic will begin agreeing with the one in the wrong, so far as he can.

Some people who pride themselves on fair mindedness often try to argue with others by defending those of an opposite view to make them see something of the opposite side. The mystic does not do that: he considers argumentation generally valueless so he begins by agreement and if he sees a way open to change a person's ideas a little and there is a value in it, he asks a question and by putting the other party on the defensive sometimes is able to change his opinions a little.

The idea of peace through neutrals is seen in the jury system. In order to get fair minded jurors one often has to select no-minded jurors, people who are often weak in the capacity of judgment and their apparent neutrality is a negative, not a positive frame of mind. Spiritual law does not call for a jury but for a judge or several judges who, without being biased, can see a person's point of view, sympathize with it and yet not necessarily fully accept it.

Unless the judge is stronger than the contenders he will have difficulty in reconciling them. A father is often able to keep his sons from fighting but sometimes it requires a policeman to prevent that man from quarreling with his neighbor. When two neighbors dispute and other neighbors who might appear neutral intervene, it often happens that if either or both of the contestants are stronger than the neighbors, it will end by their taking sides. By appeal to some older person or respected person or one in authority, the parties could be forced to arbitrate and accept the decision.

A tribunal is often required to establish peace, but no tribunal can hold authority over those equal or greater in strength. A policeman has no authority over a general and a provincial governor cannot issue commands to the ruler of a nation. The great mistake in International Courts as they have been constituted is that the judges are themselves responsible to the nations which elect them. So long as they remain responsible to a lower and not to a higher authority, they cannot properly enforce their jurisdiction except upon nations weaker than those they represent. Under such circumstances the great nations are responsible to no one-certainly not to the puppet courts which they uphold as against the weaker nations.

The question arises, where can one find a final tribunal of appeal? The answer is: in Allah alone. The policeman holds the jurisdiction over the citizen, the judge over the policeman, the governor over the judge, the king or prime minister or president over the governor. Up to this point each can control those below and maintain order, justice, and benevolence. But when the question arises: To whom is the king responsible? Who will see that great nations will deal with lesser nations as youths are required to do to small boys? It is certainly not best done by agents responsible to those larger nations.

No doubt there should be a super-government over the whole earth. If the executives of that supergovernment are kept responsible to particular nations, to lower authorities than the supergovernment, then there is no super- government. Therefore the only kind of super-government that has ever operated with success has been one responsible not to man, not to nations, not to the wealthy, the powerful or the majority, but responsible to the Will of Providence. Only in reliance on Allah can peace come to nations, to groups, and to individuals.

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Series I: Lesson 4

The first question is: How to attain peace with oneself. Person is five persons: body, emotions, mind, heart and soul. Man has therefore been pictured as a five pointed star; if the breath be added a six pointed star; although strictly as five-pointed and these appear as man with arms and legs outstretched.

In asana, posture, one sits upon one's legs and places the hands in the lap. Sitting upon the legs means that the lower forces—physical and psychic—are mastered by conquest; placing the hands in the lap teaches that heart and mind are mastered by voluntary surrender. So in the postured meditation there are not five forces, there is one force, and that is turned within.

Ordinary man depends upon his senses, impulses and part of his rational mind. He is seldom capable of conceiving his higher faculties and often unconsciously prevents them from operating. Senses reveal only a small portion of the physical world. There are nine predominating emotions and ascendancy of any one blinds a person to the other eight, so in any emotional state, even courage and mercy, man is in some way insulated, so to speak, as to the others. Therefore the most desirable for the mystic may be indifference. There are two forms of indifference, higher and lower. Lower indifference may be due to blindness, coldness, callousness, or carelessness. Higher indifference is due to the balancing and control of the emotions of the heart.

There are five senses but together they do not form a totality. At best they combine to build one section of the mind. The mind has five divisions, some of which are more or less independent of the senses, even for knowledge of the physical world. Emotions vary and both emotions and thoughts are affected by the breath. Therefore the mystic is trained to mastery of the breath. Through this he gains control of the psychic and physical worlds of experience.

The next step is mastery of mind. For this training in the breath also helps. As breath is greatly affected by the condition of mind, as well as mind by breath, control over both belongs to the Will. The proof that the mind can cause wars is that it changes. It is not even true to itself; how then can it be true to anything else? No doubt a changing or changeable mind is in some ways superior to a fixed mind, but peace of mind indicates mind at rest and changing mind indicates mind in motion or commotion.

To attain peace of mind it is necessary not only to remove it from dependence upon physical and psychic states but even from the influence of these conditions. If man permits food he eats to interfere with his duties in life, he is a slave to food. Likewise if mind permits sensual and psychic influences to interfere with its proper functions, it is a slave to those forces that should serve it.

Control of mind results through mastery of mind by Will. This is achieved through the action of the heart. In most people the psychological faculties of the heart are more or less dormant or suppressed. This interferes with self expression, prevents one from attaining one's purpose in life and leaves one in a state of greater or lesser bewilderment. Therefore man is at war with himself.

Man is at war with himself because he does not know himself. He does not know what vibrations come from without and what from within. He does not know his faculties nor the elements of his being and he is constantly buffeted from one state to another without control. So he is subject to pain, evil, disease and death.

When he seeks peace in his heart he is approaching unity. That is the first step. Until he takes this step all else is in vain. In the heart is the sanctuary of peace and the door to self-realization and self-mastery.

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Series I: Lesson 5

Life in the heart is not life in God, but life in the heart can become life in God. In the story in the Bible, Joshua commanded the sun and the moon to stand still. The mind is like the moon which shows various phases, the heart is like the sun which shows no phases but passes through the stages of rising, zenith and decline.

A person may love another, may love himself or may love God. Love for another does not bring peace because if another is not anchored, one would have to change his mood constantly to keep in harmony with the friend or beloved and this could not bring peace. Besides it would not center the consciousness in the heart for the Will would then respond to one's senses or passions rather than to the inner feelings. The question then rises, if love for oneself brings peace, is it the same as being at peace with oneself. The answer is that self has two aspects, Urouj and Nasoul, which are in conflict. Until one has reconciled these aspects, as well as controlled that condition called Zaval, one cannot attain absolute peace.

Now, Urouj outside the heart leads to desire, and desire leads to difficulty. In the heart Urouj tends toward intoxication. The perplexity which results from intoxication makes it difficult to understand the value of states (ahwal) and to distinguish the state of one's consciousness from one's self. At the same time Urouj gives strength, gives vitality, and if Urouj were entirely abandoned, it would mean death as God could not express through man.

Under the influence of Nasoul all returns to God, even the physical body. Breath sustains the body and although breath is the cause of nufs, it is not the existence of nufs which is evil but the identification of consciousness with nufs which is the cause of all difficulty and inharmony. No doubt Nasoul is needed most for spiritual evolution, for it is through Nasoul that transmigration is possible, that the life in the body is abandoned for the life in the mind, and the life in the mind is abandoned for the life in the heart.

Zaval, although another antithesis to Urouj, is not Nasoul. It is the waning of the effect of Urouj by itself. For instance, there is a hand pump and you raise and lower it; you have to use force to lower it. This corresponds to Urouj and Nasoul. But when using a bellows you have to employ force to fill it, but the air goes out gradually by itself. This resembles Zaval.

The Zaval condition of the heart is called KABZ, contraction, and the Urouj state, BAST, expansion. Expansion tends toward ecstasy, and contraction often tends to bring a feeling of absence, even the dark night of the soul, according to Christian mystics.

BAST often leads to realization of God, but if the state is sustained, there is no more Urouj, no more Zaval, no more Nasoul, but all is Kemal.

This is the peace with God, whether there is union in consciousness or not. Urouj tends towards union in consciousness, Zaval creates a longing for union in will, that is, love, but in Kemal all is sustained in equilibrium, where rise and fall, expansion and contraction, are absent or equal. Nasoul brings one from one state to another.

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Series I: Lesson 6

The Bible teaches that sometime there will be no more war. But where will there be war no more? In Mount Zion. And where is Mount Zion? Mount Zion is the abode of the Lord in the Promised Land. And where is the promised land? It can be found in the heart of man. Until man makes peace with God in his heart there can be no peace. Many have striven to bring about peace on earth. It is well that they do this for thinking peace is one of the means of achieving peace. But besides that one must know that peace is unity, and unity is to be found only in the heart.

Many suppose that the mind of man if cultivated, will secure peace. There is some truth in this: the question is, how should it be cultivated. If the mind continues to think differences it tends to create and preserve differences, just as if it continues to think peace it brings peace nearer to hand. As it is natural for the mind to analyze and divide, often quite unconsciously the mind makes distinctions and differences containing the seeds of war.

Intuition is thought force guided by Divine Will. This flows through the heart and then touches the mind. No intuition can contradict that of another person nor can one's intuition be opposed in meaning to that of another person. Therefore nothing so much as cultivation of intuition tends to produce unity and harmony.

It is not that God is cruel or despotic that peace may not come to earth. It is that the nature of peace is not generally understood. Nufs is to enable God to touch life on the outside, but nufs being the spirit of agitation causes disharmony and commotion. Peace on the earth is not impossible but peace on the earth plane is dependent upon peace of mind, just as war on the earth plane results from mind making differences.

The mind may be influenced by the heart from within and when it responds, it may be called the mind of Christ. This is the mind in harmony with the heart, in other words at peace with itself. One does not fully experience peace until one has touched the plane of Djabrut, realizing something of Divine Harmony. That is the purpose of Zikr and other similar spiritual practices.

Not only does peace with oneself come from peace with God, but peace with another arises from the same source. Therefore the adept cultivates love for God. As soon as there is love for other than God in the heart, there is division there; when there is division in the heart, there is unrest in the heart, and when there is unrest, there is both division and unrest in the mind.

The practice of spiritual concentration brings peace to the mind through control by the will. The great difference between heart at peace and mind at peace is that heart has but one love at a time while mind has many objects of attraction. In the spiritual condition one sees the Divine Forces and Divine Attributes in every thought or thing or circumstance. This is the ideal state of mind.

Thus peace in heart, unity in heart, becomes a contagious influence which broadens the horizon of the mind, including everything in a magnificent unity. Then there is music in thought and this makes possible peace on earth. It does not take very many people to bring peace to earth; even a few can help very much.

Nirvana is not escape from sorrow by escape from experience, but the meeting and experience without pain, sorrow or confusion. No doubt peace is first felt in the heart, but it is not enough for man to touch the threshold of Allah, man must also bring that peace of God here. Indifference, insight and a lofty spirit are of the greatest benefit in this accomplishment.

Peace upon earth is always possible, but the best way is to touch peace in its abode. There is no war, where every man has his vine and fig tree; that is, he enjoys the fruits of all his experiences without pain, and there the light of God shines day and night in one constant outpouring of the Divine Spirit.

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Series I: Lesson 7

The rule for bringing peace within a group is not different from that for an individual. In this connection it is well to consider first how to bring peace within a family and also how to preserve it within the Sufi Movement.

Peace can be preserved within the family in two ways: by bowing to the will of one member of the family, or by considering the family as a unit. Among the Teutons the wishes of the father were paramount, and among the Chinese a grandmother was most highly honored. No doubt there are many objections to such customs but the principles of Confucius have preserved the general peace and well-being of China for centuries. The corruption we now see can be charged to the heedlessness on the part of officials, lacking respect for custom and moral law.

Some peoples divide the jurisdiction of the parents so that the father's will is supreme in certain directions and the mother's wishes in other matters. Of course, the family institutions differ in various parts of the world. When the clan or tribe is a unit rather than the family, the question of peace and war has to be considered along other lines.

It is always possible to consider the family as a unit especially as children grow older and more discrete. A wise parent will always remember that his child is also the child of Allah and that in caring for his children he is paying his respects to Allah. Likewise a child is trained in India to consider the parent as a guru, a teacher, a representative of God. In this way there is spiritual respect shown which is sure to engender peace.

In the clan system it is generally the older, the wiser or the stronger who direct. As their wills are not always reflections of the Divine Will, whatever its social and economic value, the clan has not proven to be as useful for peace as for war. Only when there has been a strong religious movement as among the Druids or Vedic Aryans has the clan remained stable. Even though it served better as part of a warlike organization than in the development of peaceful arts.

The Sufi Movement is therefore not built upon the same principles as the clan and the tribe. The hierarchal basis of organization has certain advantages over the democratic or monarchical or oligarchic forms. Among these the will of the majority or of a single person or of some selected ones we come to consider how can peace be attained and sustained, none of them are entirely satisfactory.

Plato has described in his works what he thought an ideal social system would be. Many people have regarded it as a figment of his mind or his imagination. Even if it were so, it has many advantages over some of the social and economic systems now in existence or even in existence since the time of Plato. His state was actually patterned after a government on the plane of Malakut, which has served as an archetype for certain governments of earth.

The Sufi Order carries this idea further, being arranged not only on a pattern from one particular plane, but from all planes. While it may not differ radically from the schemes of Plato, it offers unlimited accommodations for all its members. The Sufi Order is the nucleus for the Sufi Movement; the general plan is to allow the light and genius and will of God to radiate through all conditions. By surrender to this Divine Will it is possible to preserve peace and harmony under all circumstances. It is well to consider and study its hierarchal organization as a model for all systems to preserve peace and general good-will in every direction.

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Series I: Lesson 8

The Sufi Movement exists as a model for other movements and organizations. Therefore it is important to keep the members in harmony one with another and to perfect all its departments. Actually a mureed's relationship with himself is much more complicated and harder to unravel than his relationship with another. The inner life being a larger and fuller life offers many more aspects to the personality than the ordinary life.

The Sheikh or Murshid forms a center of power and harmony around which all mureeds may gather, and through spiritual practices enter into a brotherhood. Two of the most important means used by Sufis are meditation and music. Meditation is peace through silence and music is peace through sound. Both lead towards unity, towards oneness.

The spiritual guide has many means at his disposal to harmonize mureeds and in their differences and disputes to point out and explain the point of view of another. Sometimes both mureeds may fail to respond to the note of the heart, sometimes only one fails. Darood, perhaps, helps more than anything else to bring persons together in daily life. It should be remembered that where intuitions are awakened, there are no differences, even though the point of view is not the same. For instance, two people may see an animal, one noticing grey fur and the other whiskers; the animal may be a cat. So there is a story of the blind men and the elephant. Differences of faculty and view should not cause mental or personal antagonisms.

The question whether one should obey the dictates of the heart or the spiritual guide is not always a good question. It supposes duality and it may be gravely questioned whether in those cases if what one calls the heart is the heart. It is so easy to confuse impulse with impression or to consider a partial impression as a full intuition. All this shows imperfection on the part of a mureed.

The Murshid with mureeds is like the sun with planets. The planets are in every way dependent upon the sun. While the sun as such may require its satellites, it may not require a particular set of planets. So the Murshid needs mureeds impersonally but does not need them personally. As the planets draw their strength from the sun, they move with it and are dependent upon it; in the same way lives the talib in fana-fi-Sheikh.

It is always possible for a guide to err mentally. This is like the sun going off its course and dragging the planets with it. Where mureeds have not physical knowledge, it can hardly be said

that the guide can err, for the relationship between mureed and Sheikh is not then changed nor is the knowledge, it is better for the teacher not to interfere or try to influence except in two instances: that the teacher is an accepted worldly authority or that the teacher has an inner direction. In neither of these cases has the mureed the right to question.

But when the teacher is not an authority on a subject, he is required to see from all points of view. Even though personally one view may be preferred, impersonally he must be as a judge, trying a case, presenting an unbiased attitude towards all. The teacher should not try to change mental opinions of mureeds, but may always endeavour to broaden their outlook and enlarge their horizons.

Mental differences between a Murshid and mureed is like a planet trying to detach itself from the sun and becomes a comet. This ends in a purposeless life, a wayfaring existence, a useless wandering. It is stupid for a teacher to try and impress something on a pupil that does not touch the pupil's heart and it is spiritual suicide for a mureed not to try and harmonize with the teacher, even on mental matters.

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Series I: Lesson 9

The second aspect of a situation arising from Sheikh and talib is the condition where the Sheikh speaks from the heart. Now the heart in man corresponds to the sun in heaven, and the harmony between the rest of man and heart, and between heart and heart, is necessary for the preservation of the universe.

There is a theory concerning sun-spots that they cause slight differences in atmospheric conditions, especially pressure, but that such changes, slight though they be, are sufficient to bring torrential storms and cyclones or even earthquakes. Just as the atmosphere of the earth is responsive to the sun, so the atmosphere of the mureed is responsive to the Sheikh.

Now the correction of a difficulty in this case is different from the case of a mental problem. Mureeds must keep in harmony so far as possible with the Sheikh or Murshid. There is just one cause for spots on the teacher's heart: love for other than Allah. No matter how justified personal love and affection are, the presence of one light in the field of another light causes a spot or shadow or interference, and these spots or shadows or interferences affect all objects or bodies dependent upon this source of illumination.

From this the Sufi can gain at least two lessons. One is that outer phenomena and its laws are the same as spiritual life and its laws. The other is that only by keeping one light in a sphere can there be complete harmony of illumination. Two lights always bring shadow, two loves always bring differences.

From the spiritual point of view this condition is prevented by giving the mureed the concentration of Tasawwuri Murshid when he is ready for it or requires it. The Murshid has the very sacred practices of Darood and Amal whereby the inner light of Allah finds accommodation in an earthly body. But as silence is the best way to bring peace, there are two other suggestions; one is to keep silent on all matters where difference of opinion or feeling may arise, except where the mureeds point of view is a shadow of nufs; the other is to keep silent where silence itself serves to bring harmony into any situation.

Besides the philosophic aspect of the heart, there is the moral aspect, and here the teacher is directly responsible to Allah as a personality. For moral shortcomings of a teacher, the mureeds are not harmed, just as planets would not be materially affected by eclipses or other shadowings of the sun.

Silence is best for mureeds in this connection for three reasons:

1. In most cases the mureed is unable to judge the Murshid from the moral point of view. While blind acceptance is not incumbent, faith and trust are most necessary.
2. Silence on the part of the mureed, coupled with prayer, will not only protect the Sufi Movement and even the whole earth, in case there is moral delinquency of a teacher, it will help the teacher more than anything else.
3. Silence on the part of the mureed will bring a lesson to the mureed, while speech will draw him into the undesirable psychic influence of that temporary condition and hold him there, long after the teacher has repented and been forgiven in Heaven.

Moral short-comings of a true teacher are exceedingly rare. What is presented is presented in principle. Intellectual short comings are not the presentation of a wrong idea, but the presentation of any idea, no matter how good, which does not bring one nearer to the Divine Ideal, or at least broaden the horizon. Affectional short-comings are more subtle, but can be overcome and understood by spiritual devotion.

Finally, all that has been said about the teacher and pupil here is a lesson showing how the pupil should act toward those of lesser evolution among the mureeds and to the many non-mureeds in the world. This lesson is mostly for him, to be as a Murshid to the generality.

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Series I: Lesson 10

The Sufi Order can be considered as a body of many persons and as one person, as having many minds and one will. The Hindu gods are pictured with many arms and one body. These arms represent both the attributes of Divine Being and the forms of energy at His disposal.

The Sufi Order as an organic whole endeavours to perfect each arm, each instrument. This is accomplished through the moral, mental, devotional, artistic and spiritual development of the mureeds even to the point of perfection. Harmony, the music of Unity, does not arise from all vibrating to the same chord and yet all should sympathize with the same chord. As an arm is controlled at the shoulder, leaving the hand apparently free, so the will of the mureed disappears and the Will of God expressed through the Sufi Order becomes the controlling power without limiting freedom of action.

In other words, hierarchal control is control at the source, leaving the paths unencumbered. There is some difference between spiritual freedom of action and what is commonly called “free will” by philosophers. This may better be called “human will.” It is by no means free, it is very much hampered in action, When one human will antagonizes another human will, there is either an impasse or a conflict.

As the spiritual life includes all points of view, the spiritual aspirant may thus contact others without antagonizing them. A diamond would stop any body thrown against it, yet light can pass through a diamond. This is even more true of heat; all other forces are more easily stopped than heat. Among human beings, love acts in much the same way; love can reach all according to their capacity for receiving it.

The love of the Sufi is impersonal and directed toward God. This makes it possible for the love of God to be reflected back to him and shine through him. Thuswise is Spiritual Will made manifest, and thus is it possible through Divine Love to radiate peace and good-will upon earth. It is only God who can give this peace.

Minds were not made to agree, but to express beauty and harmony, if possible. History, as well as a study of man, shows that minds change. If there were only one man and his thoughts took form and there was one thought for each seventy years of his life, these seventy thought beings would not agree in all matters and might even war among themselves.

Now suppose each day gave birth to a personified thought form. There might be 25,000 such thought-beings and there would be no absolute agreement among them except as to their source. Now suppose that every mental state and every psychic state gave rise to an elemental. There might be millions of such elementals; those arising from hope and fear, pride and greed, wantonness and sobriety, and there would be but one thing, their source, in which they agreed.

This is to some slight extent the picture of the creation of the human race from each attribute and aspect of Allah, that they agree in one thing, their Source, and only by concentration on the Source, and final realization of It, are they brought into the proper harmonious relations, one to another.

Spiritual practices enable man, who is a product of the thought-force of God, to harmonize both with his Source and with the other thought-emanations of Allah. As there is just one nexus for all that arises from man, his thoughts, emotions and feelings, that being himself, so there is just one nexus for the whole of humanity. Until man is resurrected as Adam, Cosmic Humanity, peace is not realized. Thus only is peace known, and then peace becomes a positive value.

*Toward the One, the Perfection of Love, Harmony, and Beauty,
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Series II: Lesson 1

The problem of a nation is not so different from the problem of the individual, only on a grand scale. There are two aspects to the personality: that soul which is an accommodation for Allah to touch the life on the surface and is really nothing but Allah—and that collection of thoughts, ideas, emotions and sensations attached to name. So Nationality has two aspects; that accommodation for a group of individuals over a larger or smaller area to act as a unit, and that series of acts, ideas and ideals attached to the government, laws and industry of the same area.

A closer appreciation will show that as man is soul and called by the name attached to his nufs, so the nation has a spiritual aspect and a material aspect. Some, seeing all the sins of a nation, particularly the wars caused by nations, believe only in internationalism. They believe that the brotherhood of man can come only when all belong to the same nation, the same government, and that such a move would automatically end all wars and other international troubles, making it possible to reduce armaments and remove taxes and other burdens.

No doubt there is much truth in it but there is another point of view. It has required ages to build the family and clan into the tribe and the tribe into the nation. This was not a rapid or an easy process. Man, forgetful of the past and troubled by the present, with an eye to the future, does not always take into account the many difficult stages passed through to build even the type of governments that exist today. With all their faults and shortcomings, when one looks upon the past, there seems to be so much improvement. One can see there something of the evolution of the whole human race, slow though that be.

When one observes the governments of the day and perceives their weaknesses, one wonders how a super-government can be built. For instance, there is moral corruption. This appears mostly in despotic governments and irresponsible governments. No doubt there are certain resemblances between these two forms; in each there is great temptation for personal aggrandizement and lack of the feeling of proper responsibility toward the governed. One sees more morality and honesty in the governments of small nations than in some of the larger nations because there can be a closer check on the activities of officials in such places, and a greater sense of responsibility.

Under the circumstances it can be questioned whether there can be found highly qualified persons for an international government with a full sense of responsibility. This raises the question as to what are the moral qualifications and how can they be secured. Certainly not while materialism is the ideal philosophy and wealth the goal of life. An international government so constituted might end wars between nations but could not bring peace between races, religions, and social and economic classes and political groups. Soon the whole world would be filled with war and chaos.

From the mental point of view man is not quite ready for the abolition of nationalism either. Outside the question of language and literature, which is very important, more important than some realize, it may be questioned whether there are yet enough people of high caliber to manage or direct the affairs of the world in any one department. When we look at the larger nations and see the difficulties they have in securing suitable executives and leaders and where few even of the best and most moral leaders, political, social and philosophical, are sufficiently developed to grasp the various aspects of the affairs of their country, it will be seen that much is yet needed in education, science, morals and philosophy, to rear men and women who will be able to handle such problems.

From the spiritual point of view, such training should include meditation, concentration, and the deepening and widening of the horizon far beyond that of many of the intellectual leaders of the day. By turning to God as a Universal Ideal, it is possible to rise above all distinctions and differences which divide men. Thus the Sufi Message prepares the way for a stable international government should that be necessary, and at the same time offers the solution for the larger problems of the day which will steadily grow as the activity of man increases.

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Series II: Lesson 2

Those who are anxious to see an international government established and the national government exist only as divisions of it, are not always aware of the contributions of race and nationality to civilizations and the functions they have served and will serve in organized society. This does not mean that the world super-government is not desirable. It is desirable and will come when it is possible to have it function properly. Large units of government have some advantages over small units; if they do nothing else, they broaden the horizon of the citizen.

Many desire an international language, but language of the heart is one and language of the head is another. The great contributions of poetry and literature stand as monuments for the whole of humanity even when they cannot be translated from one tongue to another. What remains is the spirit of genius which stands above all languages and yet must express itself in some particular dialect.

In the story of the tower of Babel it tells of the time when the entire human race spoke one language and how it arose that man began to speak differently. Now the word "Bab-el" means "gate of God." It is only at God's threshold that one language is spoken and this is the language of the heart. The true Babel or Threshold of God is not on the physical plane but on the heart plane. Its universal language is not speech but music.

Music is, has been and will be the only universal language. While many are trying to convert others to learn some artificial language, while some are educating scholars in various speeches, the whole world today is listening in some form to the music of other races, other peoples, other civilizations, and not only listening, but often appreciating it. Musical instruments, radio and phonograph will do more to unite nations than enforced training in the languages of each other, where words and thoughts are poured into the brain, but no feeling enters the heart.

Each nation has still to perfect its music. Those who have nothing to give, though they be masters of earth, will fall. Those who contribute to the art or advance the art, though they be the lowliest slaves, will rise from their estate. Until each nation responds to the music of other nations, what is there to unite them?

No doubt science plays its part in drawing nations together, but only up to a certain point. Science can be the hand-maiden of war as well as of peace. Science is rather the produce of genius than of nations. There is more of what may be called personal genius and less of what is called national genius in the scientist than in the musician. Of course, science has still a great part to play in the world's history. It serves to unite men regardless of race or nationality, without bringing them closer together in spirit.

In the past religion has done this, but religion has also divided men and led to war. Obviously the instruments of war cannot be the tools of peace. However there is an aspect of religion and also an aspect of psychology which will bring people together. This is devotion to a common ideal. Concentration and meditation as parts of education will also help, besides making people more reverential and devout unconsciously.

But for some time it will be music first, and then spiritual philosophy, which will unite peoples. So there is a great deal to be accomplished yet by the nations. A Sufi may watch it and encourage such developments without being intrigued by them, without considering them as the absolute of social life.

There may be no such goal, but as man broadens his horizon outwardly, he will also turn inward. Likewise nations themselves faced with the problem of continued existence, will search for ways and means of spiritual and mental protection, as well as intellectual and artistic development. In the end they will find these means of preservation far better and more useful than strong guns and heavy armaments.

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Series II: Lesson 3

National anthems have served to unite all the people of a country. This shows that music is a powerful instrument to weld persons together. A closer examination often shows that it is the music rather than the words which does this. The words are not always remembered, but something within responds to the vibrant strains of patriotic marches and airs. A further proof of this is the effect of certain marches which have no words. When played they also arouse the emotions and sentiments.

The best national music has words in which all can join in singing. Even there it is the spirit of song rather than the language of the words which produces the effect. This can further be seen by trying to memorize the words and reciting them. Often the poetry is not beautiful, the grammar is not representative of the language and the emotion is neither spiritual or true. At the same time when those words become song something is transformed, transmuted, and both head and heart will beat.

If music will serve to unite the people of an empire as nothing else can, then it may serve to unite all people. Within the British Empire many have responded to "God save the King," and not only Frenchmen join in "The Marseillaise." Only when it comes to international music there is another problem; the selection of an air in which all can join to mutual satisfaction. Some church music is international in this respect. The Christian "Adeste Fidelis," and Christmas carols, for instance, unite all of that belief without respect to race, sex, or particular creed. All Christians can join and find joy in such song. Likewise the Jewish people have preserved folk tunes in their religious services through the ages. With the people of Islam the movements in prayers serve this purpose, and among the Hindus all branches of music have been incorporated into the cult.

The difficulty with all these religious songs is that there is among them no fundamental unity. It is possible to find people of every faith singing some national anthem and it is possible to find people of every country chanting the same religious tunes, but there is as yet no music to which all respond.

The idea of a paradise was a garden or place where all could join in the same music. This is the actual condition in Djabrut. All religions picture angels as musical beings. If there is to be a Paradise on earth, therefore, one of the chief prerequisites will be music.

In the ancient Greek Olympic games which served as a means for drawing all the political units, the cities and states and kingdoms of Greece together, not only were there athletic games and contests, but also contests or pageants with music, poetry and dancing, each separate or combined in various fashions. The restoration of such institutions would go far to unite humanity. Only it must be remembered that in Greece these games were held with due respects to the gods and deities of Olympus and under the protection of Divine Providence. Man, although he is today called civilized, is far behind the Greeks in many respects and this is not the least of them. It is music and poetry and dancing before a Divine Ideal which will go far to unite all.

All arts, however, can help to draw people together. Besides music, poetry and dancing—painting, sculpture, architecture, all sorts of gardening and related arts, forest protection and similar movements can serve to unite people. Nations often cooperate to preserve whales, seals and other animals. This shows a growing tendency to work together. It is not so long since countries would not cooperate, even in the face of common dangers or common affliction.

Within man there is a strong will to peace, an echo or reflection of his true nature. Every once in a while it appears in some movement of cooperation with his fellowman. We can see these cooperative movements are increasing. This shows the growth of man's desire to attain to brotherhood, heralding the appearance upon earth of brotherhood in some form.

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Series II: Lesson 4

Present day education which includes the history of one's country from the patriotic standpoint does not always lead to a sympathetic feeling for humanity. There are some who are greatly opposed to it. They profess a greater love for humanity than for the people of any particular country, race or creed.

The difficulty with this point of view is that to a certain extent humanity becomes an idea and includes more than flesh and blood people. One who actually loves his neighbors with a heart felt sympathy is doing much toward securing world peace. But one who is in his goal for international brotherhood is intolerant toward those whose horizons are less wide, is actually dividing man into nationalists and internationalists, between whom, sooner or later, there would be conflicts, political and social, no doubt, but even actual outbreaks ending in the shedding of blood.

When we turn to particular countries and see on one hand the comparative unity of the people of the United States and the divisions in India and Germany, it appears that nationality has not fulfilled its destiny everywhere. At the same time nationalism tends to strengthen the nufs of nations and this brings wars. The question arises, how is it possible to preserve nationalism and prevent wars?

On the one hand there is the need of a higher moral ideal for the individual. While patriotism seems to bind man to man, it is not enough. It does not make man love man except in opposition to others. As long as selfishness is encouraged, so long as the ownership of wealth by individuals is made the life's ambition, it will be difficult to avert strife. Some have suggested the community of goods, but the question still remains: does this make man love man? Also it is one thing to prevent or change wrong forms of ambition, it is another matter to root out all ambition.

Beauty is an ideal which may be a common ideal. To teach children to avoid dirt and uncanny sites in themselves, their homes and surroundings, inculcates in their beings, hatred for dirt and love for beauty. Sooner or later that beauty will have a moral as well as an aesthetic value. This is the first step. When one finds that it is greed, selfishness and laziness that stand in the way, then love of beauty will include antagonism to greed, selfishness, laziness and other unworthy qualities.

In this way through education, that analytical faculty which now sees evils in persons will see persons in evil. Today they make the personality the background and fight the personality. Tomorrow they will fight the evil instead. The wicked will become untouchables and social ostracism will carry the greater stigma. Even the jail and asylum will become preferable, and this will build in man the sense of shame, a most necessary quality. As many people are still uneducated in many desirable directions, nations still have a duty. If an international government were now established, which in addition to preventing war undertook the education of the illiterate and the mutual exchange of culture, the task would be so great that the machinery might fail to operate. It takes a strong heart, a cultivated mind, a firm will and a fervid ambition to attain these ends.

The Sufi Message has therefore been delivered that education include meditation and concentration. Devotion will come later, but these processes added to music will benefit all without interfering with customs or beliefs or economic structure except to purify and perfect them.

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Series II: Lesson 5

The need of a universal ideal toward which all can draw and to which all can look for leadership and direction is accepted by most people who favor world peace or look upon it as a possibility. Some say this ideal is a religion or church, but what religion and what church? There never has been a time when all people believed alike and there probably never will be such a time. So long as any religion or church desires to make all believe alike, that will never be the universal religion.

The same objection may be made to any philosophical ideal, including those who regard democracy, monarchy, dictatorship or such institutions as ideals. People have been divided on these matters, will be divided upon them, and unless democracies, kingdoms and dictatorships agree to tolerate each other, we never can have world peace. For a long time the Grecian peoples lived in harmony regardless of the political institutions of each other. When the Spartans tried to make other states oligarchies after defeating the Athenians, then the Thebans favored democracies and there was no peace until there was more independent Greece.

Even scientists realize the defect of science as a universal ideal. In addition to it being the handmaiden of war, it requires considerable intelligence to understand its deeper principles, so it may take a long time to reach the hearts and minds of most people. Besides, science does not claim to be absolute truth and people do not die for probabilities. They will fight for a falsehood claiming to be truth a thousand times before defending a high probability.

It therefore becomes clear that one must look beyond religion, art, statesmanship and science for a common ideal. Those who seek it in atheism or agnosticism at least will have to face the fact that many people will fight and die for their religion who will not die for anything else. Besides that, although these people may dispute with religious institutions and point to the many evils in church history and dogmatic theology, it will not be easy to combat psychic and occult faculties which are the properties of men.

Sooner or later the scientists will begin to investigate consciousness, to study more deeply psychic and mental phenomena, and this will bring them to accept the existence of worlds beyond our senses. Nothing will be able to combat this teaching which will overthrow alike atheism, and one after another the traditional theologies, until only the skeletons founded upon truth will remain.

This means conflict, but this is necessary conflict, to rid the world of debris and to draw man closer to brotherhood. And this can be accomplished even in the midst of philosophic and scientific disputes, even in turmoil following the overthrow of dogmas and traditions, which have supplanted the pure teachings of the prophets and sages. These no science or worldly knowledge can ever destroy.

The first line of defense is the moral teaching of kindliness, tolerance and compassion. These belong to all religions and to atheism and to philosophy and to science. They can be advocated at all times and before all peoples. If they do not stand as ideals, conflict will necessarily follow. Christ came to teach no theology, but love. Mohammed came only with the Message of Unity, and Buddha taught that it was an attitude, not a form, which raised one into the peace of Nirvana.

Another way is to preach the ideals of love, harmony and beauty. Many who do not want religion will accept them. The religious will accept the ideas of love, harmony and beauty and the irreligious will accept the ideals of love, harmony and beauty. So you can find a common standard whereby all may join. In this way the Sufi Message in time will help greatly to spread the spirit of human brotherhood and so establish peace upon earth.

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Series II: Lesson 6

The problem of bringing all the world to the acceptance of a unique Being, Allah, who is the Soul and substance of existence, is one which need not be disturbing. It is one thing to praise Allah and another thing to preach Allah. Many have been preaching without realization. Now the world demands realization, demonstration, experience. Otherwise it will be difficult to combat agnosticism and skepticism.

It must not be forgotten that Allah is the Doer, that the Sufi Order is the agent of Allah: it is for the initiates to serve Him, not for him to serve them. There will be other roads by which He will become known to men. In science it will be the study of consciousness and vibrations which will destroy materialism, even as is being done already. Then not only will people become more interested in psychism and occultism, but the more reserved will understand the intuitive faculty. This is more important than psychic or occult faculties.

Another method of bringing people to Allah is through the philosophy of love, harmony and beauty, by constantly raising the ideal. Love which now unites individuals will draw in its train kindness and good-will until man is kind to man anywhere and everywhere. This is a large undertaking. Although some atheists and materialists also preach and believe in kindness, the fact that they are unaware of the nufs makes it difficult for them to maintain this state under all conditions. No doubt, willpower can control the emotions, but what strengthens will-power? It is here that meditation and concentration are necessary.

Through meditation the sympathetic chords of the heart will be aroused to respond to others. This will broaden one's vision and one's horizon. Then often unbeknown to himself, man's intuitive faculty will be operating, the rational faculty will be relied upon less and this will terminate many little differences and disagreements which play so large a part in life and are often, directly or indirectly, the cause of sorrow, pain, turmoil, and worldly conflict.

Likewise the growth of harmony will unite groups in the interest of music, art and culture. Every eclectic or international movement in these directions should be encouraged. All such groups will not be established by Sufis, may not even be founded upon outward spiritual bases, but it should never be thought that because one is not conscious of God, that person may not be the instrument of Providence. If this were not so, mankind would be in a pitiable state. Allah does not wait for our growth but may employ anyone at anytime for any purpose.

Especially studies in music should be encouraged that will awaken faculties. Studying various kinds of music, even in theory, due regard for the arts of other nations and a broader exchange between East and West and between both and the peoples of Africa and America, all will help. Until this is accomplished, the variety of temperaments and physis natures will make it difficult to secure and maintain harmony and equilibrium between man and man.

Although the average person does not perceive it, the Sufi recognizes God in all sorts of Love, in all forms of Harmony and in all aspects of Beauty. Therefore he can speak to all people in their language. It would be unwise to speak to a believer on love and harmony without ascribing them to God, and it would be just as unwise to refer to a deity in the presence of unbelievers. On the other hand, in their company one might speak of love, harmony, beauty, kindness or any ideal at great length and win their sympathy and admiration. All such attitudes and actions are needed in the Cause of God.

Remember it is Allah who is the Actor. This is the chief danger confronting those who are very eager and zealous to spread the Message. This work is not some propaganda for a particular idea, creed or way of life. The moment you have failed to harmonize with another, the moment you have antagonized another, you have sought to win, that instant you have failed in this service to God.

The only occasion in which a Sufi is permitted to don the cloak of hostility is in response to a Divine Call to combat evil in others or in the world. Otherwise action and attitude will always carry more weight with the public than speech or thought. It is by example most that one can bring others to an appreciation of the Divine Ideal.

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Series II: Lesson 7

Peace is the positive condition under which life can be experienced without discord. There are two aspects of it, the silent life and the life of activity. These conditions are not so opposite but are the reverse of each other like the inside and outside of a bag. One can look into the kaleidoscope and see forms and movements and activities and not be affected by them. So is the silent life, one in which one sees all the life within and yet is not affected by it.

Many people who deny the silent life do not know they are living it every moment. The body is filled with countless germs and organisms which carry on duties, work and rest, make war or live at peace, and yet one is hardly conscious of it. Only when there is sufficient sensation in the form of pain or inflammation does one pay attention. Until the doctors discovered germs and bacteria people did not know how much life there is in life. Yet when the body dies, many of these forms cease to exist.

Is this life part of ourselves or is it not a part? It is very hard to study it at all. If one were conscious of every psychic and mental state of all the living forms and cells within their physical body, the necessary attention would wear one out. This shows there must be a spirit of guidance in control.

Just as our bodies are the receptacles, the accommodations, for a host of living activities, so are our minds worlds in themselves. But if the body is the host for myriads of creatures, the mind harbors myriads of myriads of entities which have life of some kind. So long as we call and recall a thought, that thought has life. We can remember all our disagreeable experiences, but we do not keep them in the mind's eye always. If we did, insanity might result. This shows even now we live to a certain extent the silent life.

People who have little to do often complain of aches and pains. Their aches and pains may be no greater than those of everybody else, but their thoughts have no direction, no aim, and so are turned upon themselves. On the other hand, a very active person, one endeavoring to accomplish some great achievement, would not feel aches and pains, or at least would not respond to them. Sometimes such a one dies suddenly without any disease; it is called heart failure, but the cause is the separation of the life without from the life within.

At the same time this shows that silent life may be full of activity, with mastery and control of the many vibrations. The mystic is not only able to undergo physical sensations without apparent pain, he may live in the world of thought without suffering, and in the heart without grief. This is the silent life, the life of peace. in other words, one experiences life and action in the spheres of body, mind and heart without partaking of the fruits of these actions.

One thing which is not understood yet is that confinement in a cell, jail or asylum, whatever its beneficial effects, throws one back upon the self. One is not alone, one dwells with one's thoughts and feelings, which are very much alive. Then instead of mastering them, or controlling them, one becomes familiar with them until one is lost in a maze of thought. The result is that insanity is increased instead of benefitted and often made incurable by the means used to control and theoretically help it.

Peace is escape from the nufs. Nufs is not the source of activity or of life. One's thoughts are not only in conflict with the thoughts of another, they are at enmity with each other. Unless there is firm control over them, there is no solace. There is much difference between mastery of thought and abstinence from action. This last has never been prescribed. Action is necessary in and for every aspect of life.

Pure thought is divine thought and comes from the faculty of insight. This means feeling at one with the universe and perceiving from that point of view. As this includes all thoughts and ideas, there can be no conflict. Likewise intuitions cannot vary, so it is from the heart outwardly that peace will flow, and it is from activity inward that peace will live and benefit all.

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Series II: Lesson 8

The only special ceremony for peace in the Sufi Movement is found in the healing service where all concentrate on the phrase "In union with the will of God, we will to have peace." Actually much more is done than this, for every spiritual practice builds for each an atmosphere of peace. Then, by many consecrating a certain room, or a certain house, that place radiates an atmosphere of peace around that area. If many in a city join in spiritual worship or practices, or if even one person devotes his life to protecting a place, it radiates an atmosphere of peace over an area of greater or less extent.

If people within a nation would sing songs of peace or of praise to God, it would have the effect of making them more compassionate and less willing to go to war, even when great wrong seems to have been committed. Unfortunately, perhaps, much evil that has arisen out of man's selfishness has been blamed on to war, which also is the outcome of man's selfishness. At the same time it is well to consider the great harm of war. Man is apt to be selfish in some respects, it is his nature, but so long as he is not individually blamed, it is always possible to make him see something of the evils in the world. So in time he may eschew war even as he opposes vice and crime.

The question of blame is always a delicate one. Blame continues the war on the mental plane and brings its recurrence on the physical plane. This is the cause of vendettas, of long periods of strife and bloodshed between classes, races and nations. If only the victors would be satisfied with victory and not add blame! Blame often brings shame and shame grows into revenge so war springs out anew when the opportunity arises, even after centuries. So long as there is memory of blame and shame, there is possibility of wars.

Those who wage war in the name of God are not always inclined to follow the precepts of God's Messengers either in war or in the following peace. This has caused so much bloodshed in the world that neither have the religions been able to prevent war nor to convince many that there is any social satisfaction or peace in religion any more. This is a great pity. It has not only raised a barrier between God and man, it is making harmony more difficult in the world and exhaustion the only obstacle to renewed outbreaks.

All this shows that something vital is missing in life. It is the misplacing of value, of regarding the material life and material possessions and pleasures as all important. Even those who see a little into the causes of war and social evil do not escape this materialism, so at best they will not be able to lead mankind far on the road of better conditions.

Until new ideas are established, until other things than wealth are valued in life, it may be questioned whether any of the current problems can be solved. Those who present panaceas are seldom able to grasp the situation fully. On one hand those who are blind to evil are called optimists, and on the other hand those favoring a change seldom get to the root of the evil.

The true optimist is not one who refuses to recognize pain, turmoil and destruction, but who can rise above these things and visualize a better world thereafter. During a period of transition these are birth-pangs and death-throes. There are adjustments and rearrangements. There are unsettled conditions disturbing to mind and body. Consequently it is often hard to see ahead. Man moves in a mental fog, grasping at straws, and in his bewilderment he neither understands a situation nor can he detect the way out.

Really it is simple to combat the nufs. But that is just what most people will not do. So the situation will get more and more complex unless the forces serving Allah are able to take a hand. At first they will be open to opposition and ridicule, but that should not thwart them. Neither will it help the others, for it is today that the world's leaders are ridiculous in the eyes of Heaven, who are unable to solve the problems of the day, or suggest a way out; nor, even if believers, do not make God a reality in everyday life.

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Series II: Lesson 9

There are many who believe that there must be some radical changes in the social order to prevent war. While there is some truth in this, and while the property ideal in itself foments war, there is also the personal attitude. It is not ownership of property which is wrong, it is making ownership of property the be-all and the end-all of life. This is the evil. In that condition, instead of man owning the earth, the earth owns man.

Spiritually this can become a very serious matter. Man is higher than the mineral kingdom, higher than the vegetable kingdom, higher than the animal kingdom. Love of wealth, food, jewelry, perfumes and unguents, land, much property and such habits, make man subservient to the various kingdoms. When earth rules man, not only is man dispossessed, God is dispossessed also.

The abolition of private property no doubt removes certain abuses, but removal of temptation does not strengthen character. There is no particular honesty or merit in the man who does not steal because the thing in itself loses value. What is necessary is to cultivate beauty, to share in beauty, to make comfort for all, and yet not to be enslaved by beauty or comforts. This requires strengthening of will and character and these are best attained by spiritual education.

Spiritual education does not necessarily mean religious education. Training in music, concentration and meditation, develops the individual to an all-round point of view. When it is possible for man to see from his neighbor's standpoint, altruism becomes as common a characteristic as selfishness or individualism is today. All training and education in morals, science, art or philosophy which inculcates a universal point of view is beneficial and will promote peace and avert war. These combined with spiritual education will make religion a universal and common thing. This is what is known as Dharma.

Dharma or religious duty is to make each act a duty to Heaven and each habit a spiritual deed. It need not require any theology or prayer in the form of petition. It may even dispense with Scripture, yet it is not contrary to Scripture. In reality it objectifies Scripture and gives more life and strength to the words of the Holy Ones. There is no act so meritorious as when the word of the Beloved becomes the deed of the lover. In fact no other acts have ultimate virtues or merit.

The attitude of true fraternal feeling ordinarily arises only through joint sorrow or common joy. Both of these come from intoxication, when one is intoxicated with life. It is not wrong to suffer together or to be happy together; what is wrong is to be lacking in sympathy and consideration. The teaching of common duty or common ideal, once impressed on the heart and mind, will do more than anything else to restore and strengthen harmony in the world. Cooperative efforts in education, such as children studying together, helping and correcting each other, all benefit.

For instance, having a group of boys making a rowboat or radio or club-house together. Or a group of girls sewing costumes for parties or planning for some pleasure or need. Or both boys and girls combining when they have the same interests. These efforts will foster the proper spirit. Education should not consist so much of standing higher in lessons than one's companions; it should include more of those efforts which make for joy, beauty, harmony and usefulness in life.

When once this standard is attained or even approached, such folks will not only want to alter the social order to conform with the standard they have become accustomed to in the school, they will then be suitably equipped to make the necessary changes. It requires strength of mind and will to do it successfully. First, therefore, it is in order to build this strength and magnetism, and then adjust social and economic institutions. Nor is this power from the nufs, for all that unites in cooperative effort is nothing but Divine Spirit, the Spirit of Guidance becoming an outer reality.

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Series II: Lesson 10

In the Republic of Plato, in the Laws and other essays, exact details are given concerning an ideal social order. Many have regarded it as a fiction, many as a traditional record of a sunken empire, Atlantis, and many as a revelation of conditions on a higher plane.

There is some truth in all these statements. Often there have been governments established and social orders arranged upon some pattern derived from the higher worlds. Basically this arrangement is hierarchal, but a hierarchal government is not so fixed a form, being very pliable, subject to all sorts of arrangements and variations, and is more fixed in theory and in spirit than in operation.

Moses has given a fairly concrete description of another ideal social order. It was successful for some time, but after the erection of a material temple, people preferred to go to the temple to worship instead of performing practices and devotions in their homes and at work. In time the cupidity of the priests was aroused and they proclaimed it a particular merit to go to Jerusalem and worship at the temple there. Every means was used to induce people to come, some not so different from modern advertising.

The result was that instead of seeking salvation at work or at duty, salvation began to consist of special prayers, ceremonies and devotions. As soon as this is done, God is separated from God; there is dualism and duality, division and faction, and strife and contention. The prophets stood on one side and held to the laws of Moses: the priests on the other hand, suppressed the Torah, urged people to come to Jerusalem to pray and sacrifice. This resulted in many giving up their homes and property, often taking themselves to personal service for others, and bringing all their belongings to Jerusalem.

The priests became rich and the people became poor. Some at Jerusalem also became wealthy and constituted a nobility. No more was meditation practiced in the fields, nor the sacred words repeated silently or audibly during the day. Ceremony, priestcraft and ritual corrupted everything and everybody until the Kingdoms of Israel were destroyed and most of the people led away to captivity.

After this failure to live according to all the teachings of Moses, Jesus tried to make some changes in the laws. For that he was attacked. Neither would the people of Israel live according to sacred statutes when they interfered with their case or personal satisfaction, nor would they alter the law or study it much. They bickered over meaningless phrases and the spirit of Moses was gone. Jesus tried in vain to restore the spirit and ignore the form. He failed in this.

It may be questioned, can a prophet fail? Yes, no. It depends upon a point of view. No Hebrew from Moses on was able to make all of the people worship Jehovah in spirit and in truth. It was only after the second destruction of Jerusalem that the Jewish people began to realize the inner spirit of their traditions and the fruits of their efforts stand in the Talmud and Kabbalah. These correspond to the Shastras and Upanishads of the Hindus and should be regarded with equal sanctity and reverence.

Another result of the rejection of Jesus by his people was his acceptance by all other peoples in the Roman Empire. At first this helped very much by bringing comfort and solace to the slaves and the poor. But after a time greed and venery became more powerful and the churches corrupted the people. Just as in Israel, the priests sought to substitute church membership and ceremony and sacrifice for personal communion and meditation, so did the Christian Church repeat history.

Then the prophet Mohammed came and he saw the great difficulties under which Moses and Jesus labored. He saw it is practically impossible to succeed in three things at once: Social Message, Moral Message, Spiritual Message. So he worked for the last, hoping it would bring the others. Moses no doubt emphasized the Social Message, Jesus the Moral Message, and Mohammed the Message of Unity, but it is all one teaching. To understand it properly one should combine the efforts of these three Master-Prophets and Law givers. This will give some idea as to an ideal government, and ideal system of worship and an ideal attitude towards property and material things generally.

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Series III: Lesson 1

If you look around the world today, there does not appear to be much hope for peace and prosperity. If one were to walk through the streets of England and see all the poverty and unemployment, and heard one say: "Capitalism must go, we must build a new social order, communism is better," one might believe it. Then one might go to Russia and find so much poverty and ignorance that if heard there, "Communism does not benefit humanity, we want Socialism, not Communism or Capitalism," one might believe that.

Then one might go to Australia where they have Socialism, and still find poverty and unemployment. And the same would be true in India and China and South Africa and in the Americas.

All these countries are different in some respect, the social orders and governments differ widely, but today you find the same disastrous material conditions almost everywhere.

This shows that form cannot correct without spirit. There has been a great search for an ideal government and an ideal social order. The essential for government is strength. You cannot build a government without strength. It does not take much will power to control one's children, but to be a clan leader more power is necessary. At first physical power was sufficient, but physical power without sagacity will neither control nor preserve a community. This was one of the early lessons by which mankind learned that there was inner power as well as outer power. So as one studies the growth of states one finds the existence of codes claiming spiritual authority.

It was spiritual authority which gave rulers their strength and it was the recognition of some form of religion upon which they could rely which increased their authority and united their subjects. No doubt religion has often been abused and served as a means, foul or fair, by which potentates have held command over their subjects. At the same time it served as a unifying force and in that, did some good.

Today in the absence of spiritual codes and state religions, governments are founded upon human constitutions and traditional law codes which do not always have a spiritual basis. Especially is this so in some occidental countries. As a result, when there is any choice of action between the way of tradition and the way of spiritual principle, the former is often followed. Man does not always realize that laws may be made by a group of bandits seizing and dividing loot, and later become the rules for a great country. Their origin is lost from sight and they can play great havoc because of the departure from hierarchal principles.

It is not the province of the Sufi to set himself against the customs of his country. At the same time his respect for law should be based on the value of that law compared with the teachings of the Holy Ones as an eternal standard. If man's statutes are not contrary to spiritual teachings, even when not altogether in harmony with them, it is better to observe and obey the law, at least as a matter of custom, where it cannot be a matter of conscience. But when laws and activities of a country are definitely at variance with divine law or the teachings of the prophets, be sure disaster is at hand, even though it be delayed a little in fully coming to objective manifestation.

It is only a kindly Providence which has preserved nations which flagrantly disobey the Will of Heaven. As the Will of Heaven cannot always be known, it is enough to understand that nations, like individuals, will sow as they reap, and for every national act, good or ill, in time they will prosper or decay.

It is not generally in the sphere of the mystic to attack his native country. Neither is it his place to defend it without substantial knowledge. The best rule is: "Without insight, silence; with insight, sagacity." Government can be of God, man or the devil, and this lesson should first be learned.

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Series III: Lesson 2

Governments depend on strength and this may mean strength in point of time and strength in area. Strength in time is generally connected with some personality like Asoka or Charlemagne or Bonaparte, who because of ego or spiritual guidance established a powerful government for a limited period, causing it to bring brilliance to their nation. It is also seen in great dynasties like the early Caliphate of Islam and the Mogul Emperors of India. By strength of time is meant a period of virility due to the predominance of some powerful personality or strong individuals near the seat of government. When the personal power fails the whole empire may be destroyed, as in the case of Napoleon and the collapse of the Safavids in Persia.

Strength of area means control of vast territory. This depends either on a free or virile people or strong traditions, as in the case of Great Britain and China. Or the two may be combined as in certain periods in the history of the Roman Empire and of Persia. But total collapse may follow if the people become effete or luxurious or immoral.

Strength may apparently arise from self-reliance or reliance on others, yet neither of these shows the true source of it. It is difficult to determine whether Cromwell was personally a great man, or whether he was a product of a situation, or whether he derived his power from his trust in God, for at that time the whole nation was filled with religious zeal. Whatever be the case, the religious reverence and trust in God certainly strengthened both government and people: when the succeeding generations lost their fervor the nation received several setbacks at war and in enterprise.

Not only in the history of the ancient Hebrews, but also in modern Holland, can one witness a small but devout people defending their borders against overwhelming odds. But this can be best observed in the period of the Caliphs Al-Rashidin: Sidk, Omar, Othman and Ali, wherein a few poor but earnest and devout Arabs destroyed great kingdoms and empires.

This shows that the true source of strength is within man. It is part of the purpose of the Message to develop strength and magnetism in each and all. This comes through the subjection, not the destruction, of the nufs. By this means great leaders may arise in the future who will be competent to cope with larger problems. We see today that national leaders and national governments cannot handle their problems. This shows that something is missing which is still needed for man's further evolution. Not perceiving the source of strength within his being, man's magnetism becomes wasted and often people who have held high positions are forced to retire into private life, careworn and diseased.

No form of government is ideal, and every form of government can be ideal. Communism does not satisfy the heart and soul as it is practiced today, but communism of Plato and Pythagoras and Jesus would bring peace, happiness and prosperity. Socialism has not proven successful, but the socialism of Moses would make the world almost a Utopia or an Eden. Capitalism ignores all spiritual admonitions, but there is nothing to prevent a capitalistic state from accepting the teachings of Mohammed, thereby making it possible to remove many of the present day evils without a revolution.

Feudalism is looked upon with horror by many, but a state founded upon the principles expounded in the Dharma Shastras might preserve a civilized people in splendid conditions for a long time.

To say that Communism, Socialism, Capitalism, or Feudalism is most desirable is to say that thought power is dependent upon skin or outer covering, and happiness upon the shape of the skeleton or structure. Any form may be abused and they are generally abused, yet each one or combinations of them or even entirely different types of economic and social orders might prove successful.

It is easy to conceive a thinking animal without a skeleton—say a sort of glorified ant—but it is almost impossible to conceive one without nerves and blood. The life of a nation does not depend so much on the form of its government, but upon the spirit of the governed, and their contentment with respect to the governing. Weak, immoral, hypocritical, verbose and emotional leaders either demoralize people or cause disrespect for themselves. Strength and morality must be one in the hands of the monarch.

The greater the authority, the greater the responsibility, both to God and to man. Yet, what is earthly power? Without spiritual force all the authority in the world will not help a man to govern. The virtuous man, the vigorous man, the strong man will be one. It is through concentration and right living that power comes to an individual. This was the secret of many rulers of the past and it will become a necessary requisite for rulers in the future. In the hands of the mighty be all things, but only he shall be mighty who is without any help save the Will of Allah. Amen.

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Series III: Lesson 3

To build a strong government, respect for the rulers is necessary. People do not respect those who do not have some superior qualities. Most important among these qualities are known mental, moral and spiritual magnetism, besides what may be known as kingliness. Kingliness does not mean being an hereditary monarch; it means instinct or ability to synthesize situations and to lead therein. It is control of self, control of other persons, and leadership in situations.

All executives may not have all these qualifications, but if they have not some of them, failure may result. A mental leader may be one who can control in war or peace, who is not altogether lacking in understanding, who does not shirk responsibilities, is thoughtful and considerate with respect to state problems and generally acts from an intellectual point of view, his intellect controlling his will.

A moral leader is often an idealist. At times such a one is very religious and at other times quite tolerant. He is more apt to be devoted to peace than to war, but the crusader often belongs to this type who were eager for war albeit otherwise they may have been fine characters. This shows that mental or moral leaders may give strength to the government, but not necessarily bring peace. On the other hand, a weak ruler brings trouble both at home and abroad.

Spiritual magnetism cannot be developed along lines similar to mental and moral magnetism. In the first place, it springs from the heart and can only be sustained by a strong will. Many mystics have developed this quality, but that does not make them good rulers. There have, however, been many wise monarchs who have sought the advice of sages and holy men. When we study history we find that such kings were generally strong, victorious and successful monarchs.

An ideal government would have an executive possessing all three, mental, moral and spiritual magnetism. As these qualities are not always possessed by one person, it has often been advisable to establish aristocracies or democracies, where few or many reign instead of the power being centered in one person or in a small group. This shows that the government itself requires the qualities, that the state must be strong, and the question arises, from where does such strength come?

Mental and moral magnetism may be natural or to some extent may be the results of heredity, environment, education, experience or conditions. They become definitely connected with the personality. While they are not always dependent upon spiritual stability, a spiritual training will always increase them. On the other hand spiritual magnetism comes through the Grace of God and is generally bestowed upon those who have devoted their lives to the search for God.

To bring together these various attributes which did not always subsist in the same persons, it was the custom of many ancient nations, and some do it even to this day, to rely upon priests or ascetics or holy men for advice. This gave a strength to the state otherwise impossible. The awe with which people held religion or ceremony or divinities was an important force for unity, especially when what is commonly called patriotism was lacking. Then it also gave rule with justice, honor and sagacity.

Sometimes all these faculties were combined, as with Solomon, but be they in one man or several men or many men or men and women combined, that state will be strongest, that civilization will be most abiding when the leaders listen to the voice of God either as expressed within their own being or as they hear it from the lips of the holy ones.

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Series III: Lesson 4

The question, if governments were once dependent upon spiritual influences what caused their degeneration and fall, may be answered that there were three causes for this degeneration: Priestcraft, superstition and legalism.

Nearly all religions have been entangled in priestcraft at some time or other. The early priests were often leaders in the sacrifice. There was no particular virtue in this. It was the institution of sacrifice and the idea of sacrifice which was the virtue, which was the essential part of religion. It is always easy to arrogate virtue either to the ceremony or to the organization of which the sacrifice was a part and this is what happened in many instances.

Besides that, there were religions in which priests had charge over sacred instructions, as in Egypt. In Rome and elsewhere there were the two separate classes of priests, but they often became confused. With wealth and power as temptations it seems that priests have failed in their spiritual duties and devotions. Therefore in the Universal Worship great care has been taken not to establish a formal clergy which might in any way inherit the stigma of the priests of the past.

Then, sometimes because sages had prophetic power, interest in the future became so great that often soothsayers, astrologers and magicians ousted the mystics from high places. No doubt such people could often tell or guess correctly about the future. But there are great temptations in such divinations, and these include: forgetting God in the phenomena; being intoxicated by glamour so as to forget one's real purpose or aim in life; being tempted by wealth, power or other means so as to fix prognostications; putting more dependence upon answers from the lower nature than from the real man; changing reports so as to please hearers, thereby winning applause or popularity for oneself. These and many other evils arose, bringing in their wake even the downfall of empires.

Legalism is mostly restricted to Judaism and Hinduism, but has a greater or lesser influence in all faiths. It springs from tendencies to fix the spirit of Scriptures and sometimes the text has been tampered with. Legalism destroys the free spirit in man, fixes the cult and closes the door to God. The Talmud and Code of Manu have done great good in certain directions, but have often hampered the spiritual development of people, and their inhibitions against the study of the Bible and Vedas are not entirely defensible.

Looking toward the future, it is more important to avoid the mistakes of the past than to discuss them or give them overmuch attention. A superstate can only be successful with a universal religion, while a universal religion is possible without a universal empire. Thus the Pope and the Khalif have been recognized by many kings and princes as spiritual leaders, but such recognition did not unite the states of Christianity or Islam politically. So the adoption of the Universal Worship everywhere may not lead to a single government for the world, but no such government can exist without this or some other underlying cementing force.

What is this unifying force? First, it is the search for a common ideal, and the Sufi sees in love, harmony and beauty suitable ideals for all. But it is not sufficient to have an ideal, it is necessary to have that ideal high enough to inspire people and give them happiness. Therefore it is desirable to perfect the ideal so far as possible. Through concentration and meditation not only is the ideal perfected, but one comes to the inner realization of ideal and to the understanding of life.

Without spiritual education and development, strength of character and peace of mind are rare. Sooner or later rulers of the world will call into counsel such persons and this will be the beginning of the restoration of spiritual people in high places. When a leader listens to the voice of God from his heart or from another's lips, prestige, power and success, all are his, and the government will achieve a stability not known at the present time.

This will be the beginning, but if the spiritual influx grows, progress and prosperity will reach a higher plane than ever before, and not only reach it, but all will be able to share in the fruits of a noble civilization.

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Series III: Lesson 5

There are three means by which a government can be spiritualized, especially a government covering the whole world. No doubt, some countries may always be more advanced than other countries, but in the consideration of world peace it is necessary to have a world outlook, while in discussing the affairs of a nation, only a national survey is required.

So long as there is theological division, there is not complete unity. Every amalgamation of churches, regardless of loss of membership, is a movement toward peace. At last the time will come when devotees will be recognized beyond one's sect or creed, and this will be a great blessing.

The time will come when temples and houses of Universal Worship will be used by all devotees for all purposes – Christian and Hebrew, Mussalman and Hindu, will worship within the same walls and under the same roof – not that they need worship together, but once ground is hallowed, it will be considered sacred by all. When that time comes it may be just as well to permit the state to own church property. The Cherag is not a priest. He may be a working man or woman who gives his or her spare time to lead in prayers and devotions, so he need not be worried with the cares of the temple and its upkeep. No doubt building temples of Universal Worship will be the first step, but the time will come when Hebrew will pray there on Saturday, Christ on Sunday, Mussalman on Friday, and Buddhist, Hindu and Parsee on their respective holy days.

Curiosity and tolerance will cause them to mingle more and then all forms of worship from every religion will be regarded as forms of the Universal Religion. It will be one religion and all religions, one church and all churches, one service and all services. It will supersede much that is commonly held today and it will synthesize much also. But students must consider this mostly in spirit and the details of its manifestation are in Allah's hands.

Devotion is the spirit of the group, but besides the evolution of masses, the development of the individual is also important. No doubt much that is regarded as mystical or esoteric today will become a part of general training and education in the future. Exercises in concentration and silence will become more common. Some may be given in the regular schools; the present day instructions in psychology, hygiene and mental hygiene already include much that is spiritual.

Substituting the world point of view for more narrow outlooks will also become part of education. Then the limitations of knowledge caused by the ego, will be discovered. That will make it possible to establish world governments or confederacies. For with humanity becoming more spiritual, more control would be entrusted to the human race by heaven.

This does not mean that all would become Sufis. The teachings are that the Sufi Movement hopes to establish a nucleus around which a universal human brotherhood could be organized and erected. All people are not fit for a general training in the spiritual sciences. Especially knowledge of breath and higher esoteric sciences will have to be preserved under the veil of secrecy. But during the years the spirit of the Message will make itself felt more and more.

When the time comes to establish a general universal government, even though the leaders of men will be more advanced in outlook, the sagacious will not be satisfied with the Universal Worship or their own evolution, but as many of the wise rulers of the past did, they will consult spiritual teachers on important problems. They may even recognize such persons officially, and to that extent will the spiritual hierarchy which has always been preserved in heaven and upon earth, truly bring all humanity under the sceptre of God's most holy laws and beneficent traditions.

When that time comes it means the cessation of warfare and the disappearance of much of man's sorrow for a long, long time.

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Series III: Lesson 6

The restoration of spiritual institutions to a place in the State will not be effected easily. Without universal respect there can be no world empire, and so long as countries exist disunited there is always the possibility of war. On the other hand, the establishment of a recognized religion for everybody, if this were possible, might bring and maintain peace.

No one has ever commanded such universal respect as those prophets who stood for some great moral or spiritual purpose. While a prophet is often without honor among his own people, we already see a greater regard for scientists and intellectual leaders who have made important discoveries. Both science and the general evolution of the race will determine greater occult growth, and it is through the recognition of occultism that certain sacred institutions will be called into outer activity.

In ancient Greece there was the priest-king (archon) as a local authority, and the oracle as the highest councilor for the race. The priest-king was not always a king but reminded the people of the importance of sacredness in all acts. In the future there may be some persons recognized by the state who may be consulted in regard to moral and spiritual matters.

Soothsaying, foretelling through the stars, hands, cards, and in general all forms of magic or psychic conjuration will too easily degrade into superstition. On the other hand, if psychic powers are developed according to spiritual laws, there will again be oracles or sibyls who will not only be able to give advice to officials, but who will communicate to the world warnings, prognostications and messages of special kinds.

It will not be enough to stop there. Just as it is true that mental and moral magnetism must be perfected to enable genius to manifest in man, so psychics will require mystical training to enable them to preserve their power. From almost every point of view it will be seen that spiritual teachers will be called upon to administer to greater and greater numbers.

This will also arise from the Universal Worship. It will not be enough for the Cherag to expound Scriptures or deliver sermons or lead in prayers. If the Cherag is not more spiritually advanced than the generality, people will not behave toward him with due respect and reverence. The Cherag will require insight and intuition, and a greater degree of sympathy than is common today. These come from the cultivation of the heart.

The same result will also arise from the amalgamation of outer movements working toward universal brotherhood. The brotherhood of man without the Fatherhood of God is like body without blood. The form may be there, but there will be no life in it. All the precepts and commandments cannot unite people whose hearts are not melted to flow like rivers into each other and to empty into that all embracing sea of life which is God. Every science will lead sooner or later to this same conclusion and one after another the purposes of the Sufi Movement will become objectified realities.

Now the nexus for the psychics, Cherags and brotherhood workers will be found in the Sufi Order, the external body of the Celestial Hierarchy. This consists not only of Murshids and mureeds, but of souls especially chosen by God to render to humanity some particular duty. Many thus serve God in diverse fashions and all initiations are not the same.

The Kutb is the pole or axis for the world who unites in his personality the evolution of the human being and the expressed will of the manifested God. He or she is not always the leader in the Sufi Order or in one of the schools of Sufism. As the mystical schools disappear or reamalgamate, very often the Pir-O-Murshid or one of the Murshids or some representative of them may be selected to stand by the governing board of the world, to bring spiritual comfort and advice, to make suggestions in certain matters, and to bring and keep the whole of humanity close to the Divine Purpose for which it was created.

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Series III: Lesson 7

The part mystics may or should play in politics is not easy to define. Much of what is today included in that subject is self-seeking or emotionalism disguised as human welfare. There is no law against having any opinion on philosophical, economic, or social subjects, but it is another matter when called upon to take sides with this person or that one, for this emotional condition or that popular fancy. These matters belong to duality and it is not politics, economics and social studies the mystic should flee, but he must beware of duality and all that inhibits the expression of God's Will.

At the present time there are such stirring problems that the popular feeling will become more sober. Some may strive to escape their problems by indulgence in pleasure, alcohol, dope or vice. This is like saying the cure for poison is more poison. It is this attitude which has helped bring on the debacle and will make it worse. So long as man is intoxicated with the life on the surface and forgets his true nature, he summons evil after evil. It is just like the story of Pandora among the Greeks. When the gods wished to punish humanity they gave her a box containing all possessions and all pain and all pleasure. Seeking the possessions and the pleasure, they received the pain and their folly caused their affliction.

Sobriety is an attitude which is always necessary when a problem is at hand. Mystics are not always sober, for the practice of the presence of God is very stimulating to the heart and mind and leads to spiritual intoxication or ecstasy. But when a problem is at hand, man's duty is to serve God rather than to search for Him. In serving in humility and modesty one may be serving Allah without being aware of His Presence.

It would be wrong for a mystic to stand back when he holds the keys to a situation. Yet it would be awkward and even dangerous if he were too forward and presented ideas before the world was ready for them. This would not benefit the world and might cause unfavorable opinion about mystics. That shows how important it is to train and develop the intuitions. It always helps one to see how closely related are self-perfection and service to God and humanity. No matter how great the inner desire or the outer need, without the sufficient development of the personality, any forward effort for the world would be fruitless.

Therefore in the very first year of Sufi instruction the moral science is presented and explained for the control of the ego and the development of the true personality. This may seem to be an individual problem and in a certain sense it is so. But there is another point of view; until the intuitive faculty is restored to mankind and there is greater response to the heart, no efforts, even of geniuses in human flesh, will solve the greater problems of the day or herald the dawn of universal peace.

The unity that is to come must not only be an outer unity of governments, institutions, education and religion, it must not stop even with morals and a greater degree of mystical and occult knowledge. That science of attunement which in the physical world appears in the radio, and in general as the science of radiant energy, must further be developed on the mental plane between man and man, between thought and thought.

Nor can it stop there. To establish a harmony is one step: to maintain it is another. The mind is like an organ which can produce music, but whose pipes are wont to change in pitch. It is the heart, the will whose seat is in the heart, which can correct and control the mind. So until heart is joined to heart in sympathy many may cry, "Peace, peace" but there will be no peace.

Then there is the question: "What joins hearts?" Call it love, sympathy, admiration, attraction—anything. Behind it all is that Universal Chord which is the heart-heat of Allah, which brought out the world through love and which will perfect it through love. It is not an easy task to accomplish; it may seem almost impossible; but with Allah all things are possible and with His aid and in loving surrender and obedience to Him, even Paradise can be regained upon earth.

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Series III: Lesson 8

The establishment of an International Peace Day will help very much to bring concord between nations. This should be especially a day in which all can join without regard to prejudice. Such days as the first of January or a special day near the spring or fall Equinox might be chosen.

The first of May has been a day of Spring joy, but so long as it is International Labor Day, and by this token man is divided from man, it cannot be regarded as a day of peace whatever else its significance. Even as a brotherhood festival it is not satisfactory for until all human beings are included in that brotherhood it means something else than peace.

The religious holidays are not suitable because there is as yet too much prejudice to overcome as well as strong opposition to many of the religions of the past. Likewise Armistice Day is not satisfactory. The day should be a Universal Peace Day without regard to any particular war, and as free as possible from attachment to any other idea.

Of course, an international holiday is not enough, but it will help greatly. The performance of Olympic Games, including poetry and music, can be joined with it when possible. National holidays should be celebrated with the idea of peace and union within their borders. This will preserve popular traditions. In the movement for peace it is necessary for institutions to be outworn and voluntarily discarded. To attack patriotism, the flag, historical traditions, and the existence of standing armies and navies, even though justified, provokes opposition and so divides men.

No doubt disarmament will come someday, but it can never come while people hold thoughts of hatred. That is why Sufism is not passivism. We can destroy all armaments and if people continue to hate, do you think that would bring peace? On the thought plane undesirable ideas would produce poisons, and without guns or soldiers nations could harm each other. Through such poison in the mental atmosphere, there would be an increase of insanity, disease and other evils besides harm to crops and animals. So long as there is war in the mind, there is war in Heaven, and while there is war in Heaven, there cannot be peace on earth.

The restoration of the New Moon Holiday or some occasion for the celebration of picnics and festivals will also help. The religious holidays of the future should be occasions for joy, for communion with God, nature and one's fellow man. Instead of seeking pleasure and devoting some spare odd moments to God, it will be found comforting to spend some moments in meditation each day, to have periods of silence even while at work, to control speech and thought in oneself.

When Dharma is restored, every minute, even every breath will become sacred, and the religious spirit will be more like that of the Greeks who sow joy on all holy occasions. Of course there may be days or periods of seclusion, but this will be mostly for those who start on the path to God, or need it for some special reason. The idea of seclusion for all at certain periods has been practiced over and over. It is an institution which comes and goes and its rise and restoration will be of great benefit to humanity.

Local communities can also have their communion festivals and in all such movements towards cooperation in joy and worship, the Sufi Movement can take a leading part. It is not here a question of time, it is a question of direction. The spirit of cooperation between man and man, between household and household, of all the groups within a community, and between communities and states and nations, will help the spirit of good-will and mutual welfare.

It is a change of direction of ideal and many will understand this with knowledge of metaphysics or spiritual culture. The more effort that is put forward to pursue God's will in all affairs, the sooner the peace of God and man will manifest on earth.

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Series III: Lesson 9

The difference between man's view and absolute principle of Peace is due to the existence of man's mind. Just as a crystal will cause white light to appear as various colors and at the same time some of the light is not seen, so the mind of man divides Morality into those morals he can appreciate and those he cannot appreciate and those he often considers non-existent, although some morals may be as real in their own sphere as infra-red and ultra-violet light, which are now known to man but not perceived directly by the eye.

God's light is one light and His moral one moral. Therefore the Sufi recognizes "There is one moral, the love which springs forth from self-denial and blooms in deeds of beneficence." There are not several morals, although man speaks of justice, mercy, kindness, benevolence, love, sympathy, goodness, charity, as separate qualities. These are all rays from the one moral light. Therefore we read in The Way of illumination "There are many moral principals, as many drops fall from one fountain, but there is one stream that is the root of all, and endurance, forgiveness, tolerance, and to all moral principles. All deeds of kindness and benevolence take root in the soil of the loving heart."

From man's point of view, prosperity, ease, justice, charity, welfare, security and cooperation may be considered different from each other and different from peace. Peace may be made between nations without regard to these other principles. From God's point of view this is not so; there is light or no light or degrees of light, but you cannot divide light from light or split moral light as the physicist does the sun rays. You can seemingly partition the moral light, you can attempt to emphasize one moral, but it will have no security, it will bring no lasting good.

In the scientific world it has already been demonstrated that any color will cause a specific effect, it will turn in a certain direction, and too much of it or lack of it may cause harm. So it is with any particular moral. If one is all devotion and nothing but devotion, there may be no generosity. If there is all generosity, there may be instability in conscientiousness. Each moral by itself is not subsistent. No matter how man endeavours, he will never be able to establish any particular moral everywhere until he recognizes one moral as basic, and he will never be able to understand that moral until he comes to a comprehension of the fundamental Unity behind all things.

As we look back on the great war, we see that the peace has not only not brought peace, it has brought economic adversity, ill-will, suspicion and the spirit of revenge. In other words it has not brought peace. Today people want to blame everything on the war, the war has been made the scape-goat for crop failures and bank embezzlements, for crime and gross selfishness. It was not the war that caused these things, but that which is at the root of these evils itself caused the great war and all other wars—the spirit of aggression in man.

This spirit cannot be overcome by changing economic conditions or revolutionizing the social order. Stopped in one place, it will crop up elsewhere. It is one thing to preach unselfishness, it is another matter to become unspotted before the world. The Sufi need not oppose attempts to alter the political face of the world, but neither should he be misled by them. They will accomplish some things and the results may be called good or bad. It would be better to call them natural for every activity brings in its wake certain results, and those who seem to benefit thereby will call them good. But from a spiritual point of view they are a passing phenomena, not deserving of qualitatatives, good or unfavorable.

Until this one moral is seen, until the spirit of aggression is checked at its source, and until the heart of man begins to function actively, there can be no peace. From the standpoint of the cosmos, poverty is war, cruelty is war, insanity is war, and disease is war; hatred, revenge, spite, selfish aggrandizement, envy, jealousy—are all war. Until the nafs is crushed at its source and the heart of man purified, all one can do is to pray for peace, cooperate for peace, and repeat daily: “In unison with the Will of God, we will to have peace.” This is all one can do, but by doing it faithfully and thoroughly. thereby one can do all.

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Series III: Lesson 10

The ten Sufi thoughts contain the ideas and ideals which will become prevalent in future generations. All of these maxims may not be acceptable to all people, yet some will be acknowledged and if the whole world could unite on one point it would help greatly. Many people like to be analytical, like to be critical, and to make it their business to stand in opposition. When adverse view is founded on principle it may not be wrong to express it, but when even a few wish constantly to stand in opposition, this spirit is the draft which will sooner or later fan the flame which will bring about the conflagration.

To check this tendency to be in opposition, it is also necessary to check the tendency to favor, for there is no difference between opposition to a worthy idea and consent to an unworthy idea. Some people think it is right to speak when they hear a favorable suggestion and others think it their duty because it brings encouragement. The truth is that any idea, good or bad, suggests a change; each change is a shifting of equilibrium, each shifting of equilibrium a readjustment, and all such movements may be called war.

The way of the mystic, therefore, is to keep silent on all matters which do not pertain to God. Of course from a certain point of view all matters do pertain to God, because He is all in all. But man is not all in all and until his consciousness is immersed in God's consciousness, he cannot have true knowledge which is born of realization. Therefore the mystic strives mostly for realization, and although knowledge is not his supreme ideal he can be sure that his realization will include all the knowledge he needs in all affairs of life.

It is man through whom God speaks when He wishes to convey an idea. It will be mostly through those who have dedicated their lives to Him. Yet at a single instant with a single breath Allah may choose any personality upon earth through whom to express His wish. Therefore it is not man which is the music of God but that breath and that speech which flows from the heart, even for an instant. It will be the tone, the quality with which an idea is presented, which will indicate the presence or absence of the Divine Call. For that reason Jesus referred to the worldly-wise as having ears but hearing not. They might hear words, they sometimes would perceive ideas, but they would be blind to the feeling and attitude at the base of the spoken suggestion.

The more one studies problems the clearer it becomes that no solution can be found until man gets to the root of his being. When that is achieved, the problems may no longer exist to the person. His sight will be keen and his horizon broad. It is only when such persons exert wide influence that understanding can be maintained between group and group on a large scale.

Seen from this point of view, every prayer, every sacrifice, every devotion, every spiritual exercise, is a move towards peace, and every thought not arising from the heart, and all speech and action which do not arise from within are themselves war.

It may not seem a comforting idea that to bring world peace, speech, thought and action will have to be suppressed. It is true and it is not true. All movements not according to the laws of music, lacking in rhythm, harmony and melody, bring discord into the universe. Yet life, music and action may be one and God did not create man to do nothing, yet to be nothing is to do all.

Truth cannot be put into words. Its spirit must be felt. Its sound exists in all things. There is no right or wrong from the universal point of view. Whosoever tries to grasp truth through the mind, unless his mind be perfect, will divide light from light and moral from moral. The universe could not stand unless there were some central body about which to gravitate but to depend upon one's feeble judgment instead of hoping and trusting, is to stop the machinery and cause confusion.

Reason has never brought a successful peace. Reason must become the handmaiden of truth, not its guide. No person may understand all things, but with the proper spirit, the right feeling, the attitude, "In unison with the Will of God, we will to have peace," if nothing more is accomplished it will be to discover the peace and rest of Nirvana within one's own being, and more than that has never been asked of any man.