Sufi Principles of Meditation

Lecture 1: Practical Foundations

"Remember, the entrance door to the sanctuary is inside you." —Rumi
All things, all circumstances that occur outside ourselves, on the stage of this world, are exclusively the reflection of what we carry within. With good reason then, we can solemnly declare that the “exterior is the reflection of the interior.” When someone changes internally and if that change is radical, then circumstances, life, and the external also change.

—Samael Aun Weor, *Treatise of Revolutionary Psychology*
Gnosis is lived upon facts, withers away in abstractions, and is difficult to find even in the noblest of thoughts.

—Samael Aun Weor, The Revolution of the Dialectic
Past Levels of Teaching / Practice

- Introductory: Shari’ah, Exoteric
- Intermediate: Tariqah, Mesoteric
- Advanced: Haqiqah / Marifah, Esoteric
The Divine Law and the Truth

The divine Law [Shari‘ah] commands one to the duty of servanthood. The Way [Tariqah], the inner reality [Haqiqah], is the contemplation of divine lordship. Outward religious practice not confirmed by inner reality is not acceptable. Inner reality not anchored by outward religious practice is not acceptable. Divine Law brings obligation upon the creation, while the Way is founded upon the free action [or experience] of the Real. The divine Law is that you serve Him. The Way is that you see Him.

The divine Law is doing what you have been ordered to do. Haqiqah is bearing witness to what He has determined and ordained, hidden and revealed. I heard Abu Ali al-Daqqaq say that God's saying [in the Opening Surah, Al-Fatihah of the Qur'an] iyyaka nabudu—"You we worship"—preserves the outward practice, the divine Law. Iyyaka nastain—"to You we turn for help"—establishes the inner reality, the Way.

Know that religious obligation is a spiritual reality in that it was made necessary by His command. And spiritual reality, as well, is a religious obligation, in that the realizations of Him were also made necessary by His command.

—Al-Qushayri, Al-Risalah: Principles of Sufism
The Divine Law and the Truth

Now, the divine law (sharia) is entirely the divine truth (haqiqat), and the divine truth is entirely expressed in the divine law, and the foundation of actual realization of the divine truth is the divine law and the claim to follow the law. The divine law and following that law without realizing the divine truth is useless, just as claiming to realize the divine truth without practicing and understanding the divine law is useless. So all those who act without integrating and realizing both of these together are acting in vain.

—Abdullah Ansari of Herat, Stations of the Sufi Path
The Three Blessings of the Sufis

Gabriel appeared to the Prophet in the form of a man, “O Muhammad,” he said. “What is faith (iman)?” The Prophet replied, “To believe in God, His angels, His books, His messengers, and destiny—it’s good and bad, its sweet and bitter, come from God.” “You have spoken the truth,” said the visitor. We were surprised that someone would corroborate the Prophet, both questioning him and confirming what he said.

“And inform me: What is Islam (submission to God’s will)?” he continued. “Islam is to establish prayer, give the poor their dues, fast during the month of Ramadan and make the pilgrimage to the House of God.” “You have spoken the truth,” he said again. “So tell me about doing what is beautiful (ihsan)?” “Doing what is beautiful is to worship God as if you see Him, and if you do not see Him, certainly He sees you.” “You have spoken the truth,” he said. [...]

...I heard Abu Hatim al-Sijistani say... that al-Jalajili al-Basri said, “For the testimony of unity (tawhid) to be in force, faith is prerequisite, for whoever has no faith cannot testify to the unity. For faith to be in force the divine law is prerequisite, for whoever does not hold to the divine law has no faith and cannot testify to the unity. For the divine law to be in force refined conduct is prerequisite, for whoever has not refined his conduct cannot hold to the divine law, has no faith, and cannot testify to the unity...”

—Al-Qushayri, Al-Risalah: Principles of Sufism