

Ilm (knowledge)

ilm is a light from the candle of prophecy in the heart of the faithful slave whereby he gained the path.(a) to Allah Almighty.(b) to the work of Allah Almighty.(c) to the order of Allah Almighty.ilm is the special description of man: from it, is excluded the understanding of his sense, and 'Akl (reason).\

'Akl is a natural light, whereby becometh distinguishes good from evil.

The 'akl that distinguishes between the good and evil.(a) of this world is an 'akl that belongeth to the kafir as well as to the faithful.(b) of the next world is an 'akl that belongs only to the faithful.'ilm is special to the faithful; 'ilm and 'akl are necessary for each other.

The eye of 'akl (of the next world) is luminous with the light of guidance; and anointed with the kuhl of the shari'at. In its essence, it is one; but it has two forms.(a) One in respect of the Creator. Its meaning is the 'akl of guidance, special to the faithful.(b) One in respect of the created. Its meaning is the 'akl of livelihood.For people of faith and for seekers of Allah Almighty and of the next world, " the 'akl of livelihood" is obedient to "the 'akl of guidance."Whenever these two 'akls agree, they credit the 'akl of livelihood;" and according to act: whenever they disagree, they discredit it, and pay no attention to it.Thus, to the seekers of Allah Almighty, the man of this world ascribes weak 'akl. He know not that outside their 'akl is another 'akl.

'ilm of three kinds:

1

'ilm-i-tauhid, knowledge of the unity of Allah Almighty.

2

'ilm-i-ma'rifat, Knowledge of the work of Allah Almighty.

In respect of annihilation In respect of dispersing

In the respect of creation In respect of assembling In the respect of propinquity to Allah Almighty In respect of reward In the respect of distance from Allah Almighty In respect of punishment In the respect of making a living. In respect of other things In the respect of putting to death

3

'ilm o

f the shari'at orders and prohibitions.Each one of these three paths has a separate traveler. The traveler of:

(a) The first path is the " sage of Allah Almighty" In his 'ilm, are, without opposition, included the other two 'ilms.(b) The second path is the "sage of the next world." In his 'ilm, is, without opposition,

included the 'ilm of the shari'at. (c) The third path is the "sage of this world." Of the other two 'ilms, no knowledge is his. If he had possessed it, he would have brought it into use. For the decline of good deeds is the result of a defect of faith. If he had had his heart with Allah Almighty; and belief in the next world, he would not have passed below the doing of good deeds. The sages of Allah Almighty have, with reason and conviction, faith in the unity of Allah Almighty: in the next world; and in the work of Allah Almighty. Obedient to the orders of Islam, are: the first ones (near to Allah Almighty

) "sufis"

.The sages of the next world, despite their belief in the next world, have a share (as much as is needed) of the knowledge of Islam and employ it. They are: (a) The abrar (the pious). (b) The companions of the right hand. The sages of this world have no share at all except the outward knowledge of Islam, which they have gained by being taught. What they have learned, they use not. Through defects of faith, they are not secure from passing into deeds, prohibited and detested. They are: (a) The companions of the left hand. (b) The wicked ones of men. (c) The sages of sin, upon whom have descended threat upon threat of Allah's wrath.

In the account of Miraj (the night-ascent to the highest heaven), it is said of Muhammad: I passed by a crowd, whose lips they had cut with fiery scissors. I asked saying: Who are ye? They cried: We are those who ordered for goodness, and prohibited from badness and yet to badness we ourselves proceeded. (Hadith.) Better than the sage of Allah Almighty and of the next world, is none; worse than the sage

of this world, none. (Hadith) Then 'ilm, when the

ye seek it for Allah's sake,

naught is more profitable, when for the world's sake, naught greater loss. 'ilm is like to victuals that essentially have, as regards the healthy, whose temperament is firm and quarters of the body free from humors, the power of nutrition: and that are, as regards the sick, whose temperament is declining and quarters of the body is filled with humors, the source of disease. In its own nafs, 'ilm is a useful food, the cause of the expanding of nafs and of the heart, on the condition, that the follower is not infirm of desire, and of temperament; nor in love for the world, nor a turner from Allah Almighty. When the temperament of the heart turned in love to the world; and the parts of existence become filled with low humors, 'ilm becometh the cause of increase of desire, of pride, of haughtiness, of hate, and of the rest. For the destruction of this great deceit, there is naught (a) save when that 'ilm, which is the guide of salvation, becometh the cause of destruction. (b) save when that sage by whom the captives of the leader of desire gain freedom, becometh foot-bound in the snare of desire.

In nafs profitable 'ilm

Increase piety. Inflamed the fire of love and desire. Increase humility. | Increases non-existence.

It is the aid of life; its severance from the heart is put to death. Amiru-l-Murraqin, Ali bin Abi Talib said:

In nafs, noxious 'ilm increase

Pride Presumption Haughtiness Desire for the world.

Profit from 'ilm appear to that one, who display the service of resolution, not the following of license as AbuYazid-i-Bistami hath said. In the midst of men, the existence of the sage of Allah is Allah's best favors; his being hidden, the absence of Allah's favors, and the source of the darkness of kufr and of error