

Dār-ul-Eḥsān

Epistles

Volume 2 Issue 4 *Rabī' al-Thani* 1430 AH - 27 March 09 CE

This month's focus on:

Hum kawn hain? (Who Are We?)

Muḥiyy-ud-Dīn Ibn Al-'Arabi Shaikh al-Akbar of Spain (d. 1240 CE) رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ

Rabī' al-Thani has many well-known Muslim saints and scholars including Ibn al-Arabi, the Shaikh al-Akbar of Spain, whose death anniversaries occur during the lunar month. The Shaikh al-Akbar is comparatively less known for lack of biographical accounts on him. His father 'Ali had been married long but childless, went to Muḥiyy-ud-Dīn Abdul Qadir al-Jilani (d. 1166 CE) رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ who prayed for the birth of a son to be named after him, forecasting: "The child would be the master of Divine secrets." So he was born on Monday, the 17th Ramaḍān al-Mubarak 560 AH (July 29, 1165 CE) at the garden city of Mursiya (Murcia), Spain.

From his very early childhood the boy showed the signs of intellect and understanding in heart and mind. At the age of eight (1173 CE) his father who practised the *Malakite* School of Islamic Jurisprudence took him to Seville where he studied the Holy Qur'ān, *Al-Kaḥf*, *Ḥadīth*, *Fīqh*, and philosophy with eminent tutors including his father. He was blessed by a body of scholars such as al-Hafiz al-Salafi, Ibn 'Asakar, Abu 'l-Faraj and Ibn Jawzi with the authority to narrate the *Ḥadīth*. As a student he was brisk and quick to grasp, given to hard penances, renunciation and indigence. His leaning to Sufism was reflected in his exemplary both prose and poetry. 'When he sang he fell into a sort of trance and it appeared as if he was drunk' writes Dhahbi.

Ibn Al-'Arabi moved to Ceuta in 597 AH (1201 CE) where he dreamt that he was wedded to all stars and the Moon that the learned interpreted as an immeasurable on-coming knowledge ('*Irfan*) for him. He claimed to have received initiation in spirituality by Hadrat Khidr رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ, known the *Ism-i-Azam* (The Great Name) and the science of Alchemy. For some time he took up discipleship of a ninety nine years old saintly lady Fatima bint Waliyyah. The following year he resigned his worldly life to take up poverty, travelled through North Africa, Egypt, Hijaz and visited Baghdad, Mosul, Aleppo and finally settled in Damascus. For his mystical utterances the orthodox Egyptian scholars opposed and finally forced him to leave the country.

During his travels he met his contemporaries, the luminaries of Islam, Shahab-ud-Din Suhrawardi, Najum-ud-Din Al-Razi, Musleh-ud-Din Sa'di Al-Shirazi, Abu'l-Hassan Al-Maghrabi Al-Shadhuli, Mawlana Jalāl-ud-Din Rumi, Shaikh Umar bin Al-Farid, and Ibn Al-Jawzi, may Allah the Almighty be pleased

with them all! 'Abdullah bin Sa'd al-Yafa'i writes in his *Irshadāt* that Suhrawardi met Ibn Al-'Arabi; they looked at each other briefly and parted without saying anything. The Shaikh Sa'd has reported Ibn al-'Arabi, saying: "Suhrawardi is from horn to heel saturated with the *Sunnah*, the Path of Muhammad رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ." And Suhrawardi said about Ibn al-'Arabi: "Muḥiyy-ud-Din is an ocean of *haqāiq* (realities)."

"The Shaikh al-Akbar stayed in Makkah for 7 years until 611 AH, where he wrote his celebrated *Futūḥāt al-Makiyyah*. By the time, he had endeared himself to the masses for his marvelous character, peaceful intentions, broad tolerance, Catholic look on life, immense piety, wonderful scholarship and deep insight into realities of existence" writes Maulvi Husaini.

Ibn al-'Arabi believed in dreams as a means of clairvoyance and prophetic knowledge. He claims to have had discussions with the Holy Prophet رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ and reported to have visions of him رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ. As to God, he writes in *Fusūs al-Hikam*, another of his philosophical treatises: "God is never seen immaterially, and vision of him in woman is the most perfect of all." (p245)

The Shaikh left Makkah at the end of the 611AH, reached Aleppo where the *Chief Qaḍi* appreciated his learning, offered him freedom of expression regarding his mystical pronouncements and married his daughter to him. A son was born to him in 618 AH.

continued overleaf ...

Translators Most Wanted

This is simply to bring in to the notice of our viewers/readers, brothers and sisters, that we have been for some time now and still are engaged in translation in to English of two of the major works of our Shaikh Ḥaḍrat Abū Anees Muḥammad Barkat Ali رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ, *Asmā' al-Nabī al-Karīm* and *Maqālāt-i-Hikmat*. It is hoped to publish the fourth of the five volumes of *Asmā'* before the end of the year, *in-shā* Allāh. Eleven of the thirty volumes of the *Maqālāt* have been published and the four rendered recently are currently in print. The translation work on the remaining volumes of the two books is in hand.

Also, a few magazines (chapters) of Ḥaḍrat Abū Anees's *Makshoofāt-i-Manāzal-e-Eḥsān Volumes 1-5*, picked randomly, have been translated and published, and uploaded on to the website. We are looking for translators, bilingual as well as well-versed in the juridical and mystical terminology, who would attempt one or two of the magazines, translate them in to current English and pass on to us electronically. Thus it will hasten the process and publication that will acknowledge and credit the translators in print, of course. Beware! Check it with us before starting with the translation, thus avoiding duplication of effort. This is all *Fī sabīl Allāh*, your contribution towards *Da'awah-o-Tablīgh al-Islam*. Incidentally, on several occasions the Sahikh addressed me during my visits to him, saying: "*You (i.e. Muslims) are there in the UK not by proxy, but subject to the Divine Will in order to promote Islam in the West.*"

Ḥaḍrat Abū Anees's corpus of writings is an invaluable legacy that once converted in to English will be our veritable tool for *Da'awah* activities, *mā shā Allāh!*

Forthcoming Events:

- 06 April 09 Death anniversary of *Piran-i-Pir* Sayyid Abdul Qadir al-Jilani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ
- 12 April 09 Annual *Ijtima'* of the Dār-ul-Eḥsān Jama'at (UK) at Manchester
- 22 April 09 Birthday of the Founder of Dār-ul-Eḥsān Ḥaḍrat Abū Anees Muḥammad Barkat Ali Ludhianvi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ

Dār-ul-Eḥsān Epistles ...

Focus on: *Hum kawn hain?* (Who Are We?)

Hum kawn hain? (Who Are We?) by Ḥaḍrat Abū Anees Muḥammad Barkat Ali رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْكَ Dār-ul-Eḥsān Publications, Serial No. 12, pp 17: 21 Ramaḍan al-Mubarak 1387 AH

The author Ḥaḍrat Abū Anees Muḥammad Barkat Ali قدس سره العزیز enumerates herein this magazine the different sects that have crept in to the Muslim ranks. He says: “We are Qadri, Chishti, Naqshbandi, Suhrwardi, Maliki, Hanifi and Shafi’i, Hanbali, *Ahl-e-Qur’ān*, *Ahl-e-Ḥadīth*, but above all *Ahl-e-Sunnat Wal’-Jama’at*, Deobandi or Brelvi from the East or the West, in all Muslims, the servants of Allāh the Almighty, believers of the one and only Holy Qur’ān, and members of the chosen *Ummah* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Without this membership we are nothing whatever.”

Ḥaḍrat Abū Anees supplicates for their sake to Allāh the Almighty to grant us love for one another, our lost heritage and life capital. The love for others enlivens the hearts and exalts the nations. This is demonstrated by honour of each and every Muslim, superiority of everyone else, befriending others with heart and soul, selflessness, supplication, well-wishing, unity and above all cultivating love amongst us for the sake of Holy Prophet ﷺ, the beloved of Allāh the Almighty, intercessor of and mercy to the humankind.

The author lists some Arabic compositions for supplication for love and unity to prevail amongst the *Ummah*. He addresses the readers: “O my Dear! Listen to me carefully! We are all servants of the One and Only Allāh the Almighty, members of the last *Ummah* of the last Prophet ﷺ, brothers unto one another. The sectarian differences have shattered the *Ummah* to pieces. Instead, spread love and faithfulness amongst yourselves, shake off the ego of superiority and seek lesson from the Christian missionaries. Engender these character-traits and assert unity amongst yourselves once more as the vicegerents of Allāh the Almighty on Earth to rule, not to be ruled by, the world.”

There are a number of *Ahādīth* reproduced in the magazine that insist on love, care, tolerance, helpfulness, unity, friendship and sharing of pain and grief and shun cruelty, hatred, back-biting, carping and jealousy. He quotes Ḥaḍrat Nu’mān bin Bashīr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ who has reported the Holy Prophet ﷺ, saying: “The Muslims all are as if one person (as his limbs). When his eye is painful, the whole body suffers, and the headache makes the whole body feel it.” – (*Muslim*)

Everyone is on the straight path, following one’s own school of thought. What is most important, yet lacking, is unity amongst them that, once acquired, abounds in comfort, honour, power, excellence, grandeur, highness, victory, triumph, in short everything. Unite and build bridges of unity.

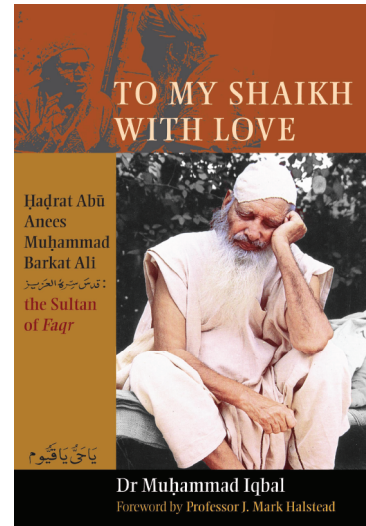
Shaikh Musleh-ud-Din Sa’di Al-Shirazi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْكَ (D. 1240 CE) has in his *Gulistan* (The Rose Garden) summed up the theme:

بنی آدم اعضاء یکدیگرند که در آفرینش نیک جوهرند
چو عضو بد درد آورده روزگار دگر عضوها را نماند قرار
تو کز محنت دیگران بی غمی نشاید که نامت نهند آدمی

Descendants of Adam bear among the limbs’ semblance;
For, in birth, they come from the same essence.
When to an organ circumstances usher in pain,
Peace to the others, do not remain.

As you are unaware of the others’ affliction,
It does not befit to name you the man (of benediction).

- (For the full English text of the magazine, see Dār-ul-Eḥsān Publications: ISBN 0 905773 42 X)



To My Shaikh with Love - Available now from Dār-ul-Eḥsān Publications or Amazon.co.uk

Muḥiy-ud-Dīn Ibn Al-‘Arabi Shaikh al-Akbar of Spain (d. 1240 CE) رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْكَ continued...

Throughout, the Shaikh lived a poor life. Once he gave away his bungalow to a beggar thus upholding the traditions of the ancestral generosity of Hatim Ta’i. He was teaching one of his pupils that he breathed his last on 28 *Rabī’ al-Thani* 638 AH (1240 CE) and was buried below the Mount Qasiyun, Damascus.

The Shaikh wrote some 286 books, *Futūḥat* ... being his masterpiece that explains in his peculiar style the doctrines of Islam especially the Almighty Allāh’s *Dhāt* in his well-known principle of *Wahdat al-Wujūd*. He has related in the book his journey to the Moon, where he said his prayers, described her surface texture as a grey powdery mass, geometry and geological make up much the same as has been by the first astronaut, Neil Armstrong, who as well as claims to have heard the *Ādhan* during his sojourn. Our Shaikh Ḥaḍrat Abū Anees Muḥammad Barkat Ali رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْكَ has endorsed the claim, saying: “The astronaut met with a befitting welcome by the Lord!” His next principal book is *Fusūs* ..., lit. The Bezels of Wisdom, and comprises 27 Chapters each devoted to a prophet, perfecting the composite whole in to the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

He has written in his *Al Fas al-‘Isawiyah* about the Jesus Christ’s Divinity in Christianity: “Verily those people became hiders of the truth who said God is Jesus, the son of Mary. It would not have been hiding the truth, if they had said Jesus is God or that Jesus is the son of Mary. They confined Divinity only to the form of Jesus. Some restricted his truth to Mary and referred him to the similitude of Gabriel when he breathed life into birds and called him the ‘Word of God’; and some others referring to his raising the dead, called him the ‘Spirit of God’. These differences have arisen only in the case of Jesus. All created objects are words of God which are never annihilated; for they all come under the command *Kun* (Be).”

(Source: *Ibn Al-Arabi, the Great Muslim Mystic and Thinker* by Moulvi S A Q Husaini, Ashraf Press, Lahore)

Dār-ul-Eḥsān UK



Dār-ul-Eḥsān Publications

Al-Barkat House

Almondbury

Huddersfield HD5 8LY

Tel (01484) 309852

e-mail drmuhammadiqbal@live.com

Web www.darulehsanpublications.com