

*Ladies' Dhikr in the Zawiyya of Shaykh Abdalqadir as-Sufi*

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Each day we are told that we are living in a time of uncertainty. There is great concern over inflation and rising prices, food shortages, natural disasters, war, despotism and large-scale crisis. This is not an abstract political analysis but something that is a feature of daily life which each one of us is experiencing.

As human beings, we are conditioned by modern society to believe in the inevitability of certain facts, now more so than in any other time. You work and get a guaranteed salary, you buy your food at the supermarket which has an endless supply of goods, all our communication is instantaneous and fixed - and any disruption to any of these things is a crisis.

Most people today operate within a paradigm of guarantees. But the reality is that nothing is guaranteed.

As a community we have experienced, in the last four months, three deaths which have shattered our sense of certainty. The deaths of Hajj Abd'al-Latif Wilson and Amir Abdalhakim Akanmu - two pillars of our community and men in the prime of their life - as well as the death of little Yaqub Marx just last week, has caused me to reflect on the fact that while our lives feel so fixed, death is inescapable and our Lord takes us back to Himself whenever He so chooses. Furthermore, I have been reflecting on how a matter of milliseconds can change everything, forever.

Shaykh Abdalqadir as-Sufi once said "**Certainty is an illusion**" meaning that nothing is guaranteed and much of his teaching focused on breaking us out of this illusion of certainty. His continuous critique of the debt-enslaved individual trapped in a nuclear family or the 'bourgeois family' was not an invitation to grasp an intellectual idea. Indeed it was an invitation to break out of the illusion, or perhaps one could say to break out of the delusion. Capitalistic comfort, consumerism and individualism affirm our delusions that *we* are in control of our lives, that *our* hard work determines our rizq and that whatever status we have in society *guarantees* that we will always come out on top. And it is these delusions that Shaykh Abdalqadir shattered through his instructions on family life, commands for people to move and travel *fi'sabillilah* and his implementation of living in community.

These delusions are the idols of our time and they are no less dangerous than the idols mentioned throughout the Book of Allah. Why? Because they are simply dressed up differently and because they too remove from us from knowing that Allah is Al-Wakil - He is the Best of Guardians and He the Best Disposer of Affairs.

All matters big and small are by Allah subhana hu wa t'ala. Allah says in Surah Al-An'am (6: 18):

**“He has power over all things.  
He is the Absolute Master over His Slaves.  
He is the All-Wise, the All-Aware.”**

It is this knowledge to which we must turn, particularly in times of loss, difficulty or when we simply cannot comprehend what is taking place around us, be that at the level of an outward political and economic situation or matters that are close and intimate to us.

Shaykh ad-Darqawi says in *The Darqawi Way*:

“Choose what your Lord choses for you, whether it is finding or loss, giving or withholding, might or abasement, health or sickness, wideness or narrowness, expansion or contraction, wealth or poverty, height or depth, life or death and so so on... As for the one who chooses above Allah and wants what he wants, he remains the prisoner of his passions.

Surrender to Salma, and go where she goes.  
Follow the winds of the Decree, and move where she moves.”

The Decree is the Decree - it is a matter about which, as human beings we have little knowledge of due to our limited capacity. Allah t'ala tells us in Surah Al-Anbiya (21:23):

**“He will not be questioned about what He does,  
but they will be questioned.”**

So while nothing is guaranteed or fixed or certain, this should not cause us fear or anxiety. While the events that will take place in our lives are not certain, the promise of Allah is.

Allah t'ala has guaranteed that He hears our worries and fears. He tells us in Surah Al-Mujadila (58:1):

**“Allah has heard the words of the woman  
who disputes with you about her husband  
and lays her complaint before Allah.  
Allah hears the two of you talking together.  
Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing”.**

In Surah Al-Imran, Allah t'ala tells us that He will never allow any of our efforts or striving to be wasted, He subhana hu wa t'ala says (3: 195):

**“Their Lord responds to them:  
'I will not let the deeds of any doer among you go to waste,  
male or female - you are both the same in that respect.'”**

Allah t'ala has also guaranteed a response to dua. He tells us in Surah Al-Baqara (2: 185):

**“If My slaves ask you about Me, I am near.  
I answer the call of the caller when he calls on Me.  
They should therefore respond to Me and believe in Me  
so that hopefully they will be rightly guided.”**

It is this knowledge that allows us to traverse through life's uncertainty - it is this knowledge that gives us real certainty - that gives us **Yaqin**. Shaykh Muhammad ibn al Habib says in his Diwan:

**“Take the staff of Yaqin and a store of Taqwa”**

In a commentary on this qasida, Hajja Rabea Redpath says, “Yaqin - which is certainty - the origin of every good action comes from certainty. Absolute certainty is what we want, to remove the confusion and foginess that covers the heart.”

But we must be absolutely clear, as Hajja Rabea says “the origin of every **good action** comes from certainty.”

This is reflected in the following words written by Shaykh Abdalqadir as-Sufi:

“We must forget future promises of happiness in this world’s Utopia, and declare that there is no power but from Allah the Mighty, the Great. **This is the certainty that empowers us to act.** We know this from the Messenger, who taught us by the gift of Revelation in Qur’an, and his Practice. Thus, we declare: There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. Submission is to this.

Secondly - We establish Salat and payment of Zakat. Jumuah and the two ‘Eids with Ramadan must be established by command. Zakat must be taken (not given) under authority. **For this the Amir is necessary...** Once the Salat and Zakat are established for the people, usury by legal implication is abolished.”

These are the matters which have been highlighted this weekend from the Jumu'a Khutba by Hajj Abdalhasib Castiñeira to the discourses given by Hajj Abdarazaq Redpath and Hajj Issa Bryce following the nights of dhikr. This action cannot be undertaken without Yaqin, and it cannot be undertaken without Taqwa, and it cannot be undertaken without **the support of the women who must encourage the men around them to act and to take the responsibility** which Allah has entrusted to us in establishing His Deen.

Ibn Ajiba defines Yaqin as **“The calmness of the heart with Allah due to a knowledge that is not given to change, modification, or disruption caused by the onslaught of turbulence”**.

This is what we desperately need. Many of us are feeling the onslaught of turbulence. Be that through the death of loved ones or the chaos of the age in which we are living, in which all of the systems and structures that we have grown accustomed to are crumbling. In the face of all of this turbulence and upheaval we want our hearts to remain firm, we want confusion to be removed and we want knowledge that will not change or waiver. We must repeat the great dua which was made often by the Rasul, sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, and say it with the firm expectation that Allah t’ala will answer it:

يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوبِ ثَبِّتْ قَلْبِي عَلَى دِينِكَ

**“O Turner of hearts, make my heart firm upon Your Way.”**

We ask Allah to bless the Prophet Muhammad *sallaallahu 'alayhi wa sallam* and to increase us in love for him and to make us people who follow the sunnah inwardly and outwardly.

We ask Allah to give a mighty reward to our teacher and guide, Shaykh Abdalqadir as-Sufi. We ask Allah to fill his resting place with light and expansion and to grant him the company of the Rasul - whose sunnah he strove to follow in every aspect.

We ask Allah to put light and expansion into the tombs of Shaykh Muhammad ibn al-Habib and Shaykh al-Fayturi. We ask Allah to make the states described in their diwans a reality for us. We ask Allah to bless all of the awliya, those known to us and those unknown to us, put us in their company and of their company.

We ask Allah to bless and protect and give increase to Amir Rhomeez. We ask Allah to give him authority and to surround him by men of good counsel and people who are reliable, upright and keep to their word.

We ask Allah to bless and protect and give increase to Sidi Muhammad Yves. We ask Allah to give him authority amongst his people and to aid him in his work as a d'ae.

We ask Allah to bless and protect and give increase to Hajj Abdarazaq and to aid him in his task of establishing and preserving the dhikr.

We ask Allah to bless all of the Muslims and increase us in number in strength, in unity and in love for each other.

We ask Allah to have mercy on all those who have gone ahead and we ask Him to reunite us with those we love.

We ask Allah for knowledge which is beneficial and lasting and we ask Him for guidance in all things.

Fatiha.

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