

Pasi Anfas: Breath—Gatha with Commentary Series II

**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.**

Gatha with Commentary Series II: Number 10

Communication Through the Breath

GATHA: Breath is the medium between the outer life and the inner life. By the help of breath the elements necessary for the body can be attracted and by the help of breath thoughts and inspiration can be gained. By the help of breath all that is undesirable in the body and mind can be expelled.

TASAWWUF: In the establishment of the Gatha classes it was thought advisable to read and then reread the papers. It usually takes much more than that to impress upon the consciousness that breath IS the medium between the inner and outer. It is not enough to know the myth and then the symbology of such matters as Jacob's ladder. It takes a long time to impress people that when they have undesirable thoughts that these can often be expelled by powerful exhalations. One may ask then whether one should choose between Fikr and the powerful exhalations. Here one is taught to use the powerful exhalations. Everyone is not assigned Fikr practices, especially while they are yet disciples of the elementary study circle.

The world is always full of agitation. Many people become so used to them, that without excitement, they feel very uncomfortable. But they feel more uncomfortable with the excitement, because then there is no peace. Peace can be obtained through the refinement of breath coupled with devotional exercises and attitudes. We can also use the breath and especially the spoken word in repeating the sacred phrases. Such repetitions impress not only the mind but the very atoms of the body. Every cell benefits when one performs a Wazifa.

GATHA: The secret of telepathy, of reading the thought, has the science of breath as its mystery.

TASAWWUF: If two people wish to practice telepathy, to begin they should concentrate on each other at the same hour. This concentration is made easier when they breath in consonance. In fact sometimes even a few efforts may produce a result. This is especially true when they can begin with Fikr and concentrate on each other's minds. Or they can have a higher concentration, on the Teacher, or the Spirit of Guidance.

GATHA: When one wishes to draw from within inspiration, breath is the key.

TASAWWUF: This is told over and over again. The refinement of breath seems so simple. The audible or mental repetition of a sacred phrase seems so elementary. Yet these are the means adepts use. So if one is suffering from ennui or intellectual fatigue, attention should be paid to the breath. Sometimes this is done by diversions—walking, exercising, watching athletic contests, the cinema, reading of all kinds, etc. These diversions do remove uneasiness, but by themselves do not produce inspiration. Inspiration means contacting in some way God, or the universal mind, and for this, breath is not only all important, it is **the** means.

GATHA: Breath is a life-current; its value is known to so few! Breath in itself is a phenomenon, but the phenomenon becomes manifest when once the breath is fully mastered.

TASAWWUF: This subject has been presented in many places in the literature and in the lessons. Even when words are presented explicitly as in the last section of *The Soul, Whence and Whither*, there has been a whole culture whose teachings are otherwise. The effect of this culture has been so strong that even when the Bible expresses something in plain language, it has been disregarded. It cannot be repeated too many times, that among nearly all the people we choose to call primitive, the soul and breath have been identified. We must integrate this into our psychology, into our philosophy, into our daily life, and into our constant

practice, or else we have before us, merely empty words.

GATHA: The law of transmutation is also the secret of breath. What we give, or gain from another, without seeing or hearing, which we only realize as a result of the contact of someone, that is the effect of breath, for by the medium of breath there is always something given and taken; yet so few are aware of it!

TASAWWUF: This can easily be demonstrated. Hold hands as if one were shaking them, or for any other purpose. Breathe in and out and watch the changes in the magnetic currents. You will soon realize that breath is really the life; when we are talking of breath we are talking of life, and when we are talking of life we are talking of breath. No doubt Sri Aurobindo has carried this to an extreme when he refers to Prana as Life, and not just as breath. One should not say he is wrong, but he does not seem to have given a very complete picture. Besides, in his school, relatively little attention is given to the subject.

In the Dervish dances, we can easily experience the differences of proximity and actual contact. We can know it through experiences, not from any theory. Therefore, we can never exaggerate or over-exaggerate the importance of this subject. As other schools, Yogic, Vedantic, and Sufic, seem to have evaluated this subject, it is very important that we restore the proper emphasis. At the court of King Akbar, who was a Sufi, only disciples were employed as court attendants. They had to practice breathing and attunement and if they failed, they were dismissed. No doubt this is an extreme case, but it is true history.

GATHA: In the presence of one person one feels an inclination to laugh, in the presence of another one has a desire to cry; contact with one makes a person feel cheerful, with another sorrowful.

TASAWWUF: The negative or sensitive person often takes on the conditions of stronger persons around them. If one is weak, one should practice Fikr, or some other protective exercise. But generally, if one performs Fikr or repeats the Invocation, one is protected when protection is needed. Still there is a value if we can promote cheerfulness, either by our expressing it or responding to it.

This principle can be adopted. It can be used consciously. It is most important for those who must be positive in their attitudes to life, such as healers. The Wali may attune to an area, and through the breath send out protective blessings. The Teacher often does this in appearing before an audience whether they be disciples or non-disciples. Control of the breath produces control over the atmosphere. Control over the atmosphere makes communication much easier. In fact this is almost like a secret in the hands of Sufis.

GATHA: Sometimes without there being one word spoken between two people thoughts and feelings are transferred, without people knowing it, through the current of breath.

TASAWWUF: This has often been the experience of the commentator, especially when he was in the presence of the Community of the Spirit, that is to say fellow Sufis. In fact, it occurred so often, without effort, that it was no longer considered a phenomenon; what was difficult was not any experience in telepathy or spiritual attunement or thought transfer, or non-verbal communication; what has been difficult has been the unwillingness of western people to accept this as fact. Sometimes the phenomenal delights them, but the understanding or demonstration of the same phenomena does not always delight them. The result is that a great deal of what is explicable and demonstrable has become mysterious, and at the same time, a great deal of what is called "mysterious," rightly or wrongly, is being demonstrated now to the world.

There are many schools of esotericism which bring out this universal teaching. Unfortunately, or oddly, each particular religion prides itself that they contain schools which either teach such para-phenomena, or demonstrate them. But within their own ranks, each adheres at the same time to its particular orthodoxy. So while there are numerous incidences of thought-transfer and similar phenomena, it often happens that the religionists and pseudo-esotericists have kept such phenomena hidden. Sometimes only under the pressure of scientific investigations, but sometimes also through the awakening of souls, and the tremendous pressures on communications, these experiences are accepted. Obscurantists emphasize that it is pride that makes people talk. It is ignorance that objects to others talking. Wisdom can dictate, and if one has

developed Kashf one will also know when to speak and when to keep silent.

GATHA: Breath is a link through which one individual is connected with another individual, and space does not make a difference if once connection of breath is established. The communication will be sure and clear, if only the wire is tied to sympathetic hearts.

TASAWWUF: We can be sure that with the rise of advanced souls, and the re-birth of honesty in the world, there will be more and more instance of this. The time may also come when para-psychological phenomena is studied impersonally and objectively as all scientific and quasi-scientific phenomena should be studied, are studied.

In spiritual training of the day, sometimes hands are held in a circle, and the Invocation is repeated. This repetition helps to attune personalities one to the other; it also helps establish magnetic fields which can be used not only for healing, but for a multitude of beneficial purposes.

No doubt the Teacher can best help here. The teacher can attune to the student by breathing, or by the power of their own breath, they can raise the consciousness of the student. They can read the breath of the talib to much greater betterment than by asking questions, and also by this they do not cause any emotional disturbances to the student. In turn, the disciples in Sufism are raised step by step, grade by grade, to attune to the teacher, in the first steps toward attunement with God, i.e., spiritual realization.

While we may regard attunement as a separate process from love, it is surely that in love there is attunement. In the prayer we say we see God in a loving mother, a kind father, etc. Now we have to make this an actuality, and this is not too difficult.

This is also one of the reasons for introducing dancing into the Inner School. There, attunement is a vital necessity. You cannot have the dancing without the attunement. When there is the attunement, there is often much greater harmonization, and besides harmonization, exaltation, which is one of the grand purposes of spiritual training. In the Chistia School music has been used through the ages. Now we are using it in all its aspects, of singing, dancing, instrumentalization, etc. As it becomes effective more and more people will be drawn, for as it is said in *Gayani*, "Heart speaks to heart, and soul to soul."

GATHA: There is much that is common to the science of electricity and the science of breath. The day is not very far off when science and mysticism both will meet on the same ground in the realization of the electricity which is hidden in the breath.

TASAWWUF: There are two aspects to this at least. One comes in the study of static electricity, and also in dynamic electricity, so far as the propulsion is by battery. One can connect cells in series and parallel; at least that is what is taught. But one can connect cells in all kinds of ways, one can have complex connections and one can also measure the effects of these complex connections. One does this, then one will get some ideas which also can be used in psychology and in human behavior studies in general.

We do not always realize that in folk dances there are different effects accordingly as the straight line, the circle and the square and other formations are used; accordingly as the sexes are separated, joined or mixed. All these have definite effects, pleasant or unpleasant, but certainly definite. And it is not only formations, but the movements that follow that can throw considerable light on life and its phenomena.

Then there is another aspect which comes in power electricity, in the use of transformers, and in the phenomena of stepping up and stepping down, and in other complications. Often these are used in industry or in servicing homes without any psychological or philosophical conclusions being drawn therefrom. Then there is another aspect which has been studied a little bit by bio-physicists. The earlier tests show that a complete movement of breath has generated about 2.6 volts. No doubt there have been further studies here, and in these many parallels to mystical knowledge and unfoldment can be noted.

Then there is still another matter. Dr. Abrams of San Francisco, whom Hazrat Inayat Khan visited, had a

whole theory of bio-electrical phenomena, its use in measuring the health and dis-ease of the body. He was very much opposed by the medical profession. What really happened was he opened the door to the study of the subtle body, and its interaction with the annamyakosh, or body of flesh and food.

Again referring to *The Soul, Whence and Whither* where the existence of three vehicles is presented, and keeping in mind that the breath is the connecting nexus between all three, we can see infinite possibilities here if we wish to use measurements to ascertain the strength or weakness of personality. Indeed there are many schools which now do this, some regarding the subject as secret and esoteric, some regarding it as potential or actual science. And there are other views. Perhaps all of them are right. At the same time, according to Sufi psychology, the mind itself has a strength which can be asserted by suggestion or otherwise, so that every portion of the personality has the potency to influence the lesser portion of the personality more than it can be influenced. So when we pray, "Raise us from the denseness of the earth," it is indicated that spiritual unfoldment consists at least in part of greater influence of higher portions of personality over the lesser, and lesser influences of lower portions of personality over the greater.

All of this is the norm of the adept, who has mastery over breath.