

would. I gave him a piece of dry bread that we happened to have. He ate it and said: 'If you want to give something to the poor one,⁸³ it should be something like this [piece of bread].'"

Abu Sulayman Dawud b. Nusayr al-Ta'i

He was a person of great importance. Shaykh Abu 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sulami – may God have mercy on him – told me: Abu 'Amr [b.] Matar told me: Muhammad b. Musayyib told me: Ibn Khubayq told me: Yusuf b. Sibab told me: "Dawud al-Ta'i inherited twenty *dinars* and he ate from them for twenty years." I heard our master Abu 'Ali al-Daqqaq – may God have mercy on him – say: "The cause of Dawud's conversion to asceticism was as follows. He used to wander the streets of Baghdad. Once he was passing through a street, when a group of the bodyguards [of Humayd al-Tusi] pushed him away from Humayd al-Tusi. When Dawud noticed Humayd, he said: 'Fie to the world in which Humayd takes precedence over you!'/47 So, he secluded himself in his house and began to practice ascetic austerities and perform acts of devotion."

Once I heard one of the poor⁸⁴ say in Baghdad that the cause of his conversion to asceticism was that he heard a bereft woman whining: "On which of your two cheeks have appeared the traces of decay? And which of your eyes has flowed out?"

It is also said that the reason for his conversion to asceticism was that he attended the circle of Abu Hanifa,⁸⁵ who told him once: "Abu Sulayman, we have already prepared the [required] equipment."⁸⁶ To which Dawud replied: "So what else is left?" Abu Hanifa answered: "[Only] works in accordance with it." So Dawud said: "My soul prompted me toward seclusion. I told her: 'As long as you sit with them,⁸⁷ you should not speak about any issue at all!' So for a whole year I was sitting with them, but I never spoke about any issue." Sometimes issues would dawn upon me and I would be as eager to discuss them as the thirsty man is eager to drink cold water, yet I would not talk." Thus he achieved what he achieved.

[Once] Junayd al-Hajjam (the Cupper) cupped Dawud al-Ta'i. The latter gave him a *dinar*. Someone told him that this was too much. He answered: "He who has no manliness⁸⁸ has no devotion [to God]." Also he used to say during his night [vigils]: "O my God, my concern for You has annihilated all other mundane concerns and now stands between me and [my] sleep."

83 That is, a Sufi.

84 That is, a Sufi.

85 Abu Hanifa al-Nu'man (d. 150/767), a renowned scholar of Iraq who founded the Hanafi school of law.

86 That is, theoretical knowledge.

87 That is, Abu Hanifa and his followers.

88 *Muru'a*; on this rather vague moral virtue see *EI* under "Muru'a". One of its most important aspects is generosity.

I heard Muhammad b. 'Abdallah al-Sufi say: Muhammad b. Yusuf told me: Sa'īd b. 'Amr told: 'Alī b. Harb al-Mawsili told me: Isma'īl b. Ziyad al-Ta'ī told me: "Dawud al-Ta'ī's wetnurse told him: 'Don't you want to eat some bread?' He answered: 'Between the chewing of bread and eating a mess of crumbled bread lies the reading of fifty verses [from the Qur'an].'"

On the day Dawud died, one of the righteous⁸⁹ saw him in a dream as he was running by. He asked him what happened to him. He answered: "I was just released from prison." When the man woke up from his dream, he heard people crying [in the street]: "Dawud al-Ta'ī has died!"

Someone asked him for an admonition. He answered: "A soldier of death⁹⁰ awaits you!"//48.

Someone came to visit him in his house and saw a jug of water standing right under the sun. He asked him why he did not want to put it in the shade. He answered: "When I put it there, there was no sun, and [later] I was ashamed to show God that I want to walk for the sake of my soul's satisfaction."

Someone came to visit him in his house and started to stare at him. Dawud told him: "Don't you know that they⁹¹ used to refrain from staring [at one another] as much as they refrained from excessive talk?"

'Abdallah b. Yusuf al-Isbahani told me: Abu Ishaq Ibrahim b. Muhammad b. Yahya al-Mazakki told me: Qasim b. Ahmad told me: I heard Maymun al-Ghazzal⁹² say: I heard Abu 'Al-Rabi' al-Wasiti say: I asked Dawud al-Ta'ī to admonish me. He said: "Fast in this world, break your fast on death and flee from people as if you are fleeing from wild beasts!"

Abu 'Alī Shāqīq b. Ibrahim al-Balkhī⁹³

He was a Sufi master of Khurasan. He spoke a lot about trust in God (*tamakkul*) and was a teacher of Hatim al-Asamm.⁹⁴ It is said that the cause of his repentance was as follows. He was an offspring of a wealthy family. As a young man he set out on a journey to the land of Turks.⁹⁵ Once he entered a sanctuary of idols, where he saw a custodian of the idols. His head and beard were shaved and he was dressed in a purple robe. Shāqīq al-Balkhī told him: "You have the Creator who is living, All-Knowing and All-Powerful. Worship Him and not those idols who neither help nor harm you!" The custodian answered: "If this were so, then [the Creator] would be able to provide you with sustenance in your own country. Why then did you take pains to come here for trade?"//49 Shāqīq took heed and embarked on the path of world-renunciation.

89 That is, a Sufi.

90 In another reading, "the army of the dead".

91 Meaning the first Muslims.

92 In another reading, al-Ghazzali.

93 On him see *IM*, pp. 32–33.

94 See *IM*, pp. 33–34 and pages 36–37 in this book.

95 Probably Central Asia.