5.
Wandering (siyāḥa)

In the Arabic language:
The word siyāḥa means travelling the land, whether for worship, enjoyment, or observation.

In the Terminology of the Karkariya Order:
Siyāḥa is a non-spatial journey in space, and a timeless journey in time. It is done on the principle of disengagement from other-than-God (tajrīd) and ascension through the levels of divine self-sufficiency (ṣamadiyya), all the while contemplating the signs of divine power. Its purpose is to achieve the negation of other-than-God and everything that hinders the disciple from Him, and to break through the subtle veils and attain a taste of divine attraction (jadhba). This is based on the circular vibrations of passionate love, inside the realm of possibility, so that the idol of the ego may be broken.

294 Translator’s note: Literally, “to roam in space without a location, and to fare in time without a duration.”
In the Holy Qurʾān:

The word *siyāḥa* is mentioned three times in the Holy Qurʾān in different morphological forms, including God’s words:

God says: The penitent, and the worshippers, and the celebrants of praise, and the wanderers (sāʾīḥūn), and those who bow, and those who prostrate, and those who enjoin right, and those who forbid wrong, and those who maintain the limits set by God; and give glad tidings unto the believers. 295

God says: So wander freely (sīḥū) throughout the land for four months, and know that you cannot thwart God, and that God shall disgrace the disbelievers. 296

In the Noble Hadith:

Abū Umāma  narrated that a certain man said, “Messenger of God, permit me to go wandering.” He answered, “The wandering of my community is jihad in God’s cause.” 297

Ibn Masʿūd related that God’s Messenger  said, “God has angels who wander across the land conveying greetings of peace from my community.” 298

Abū Hurayra reported that God’s Messenger  said, “God has angels who wander about the earth in addition to the ones who record the deeds of mankind. When they find people invoking God, they call out to one another, ‘Hasten to what you

295 Q Tawba 9:112.
296 Q Tawba 9:2.
297 Ḥākim, Mustadrak #2333.
298 Ibn Ḥibbān, Ṣaḥīḥ #922.
seek!’ Then they come and spread their wings over them up to the first heaven. God Almighty says, ‘What were My servants doing when you left them?’ They reply, ‘When we left them they were praising You, exalting You, and glorifying You.’ He says, ‘And have they ever seen Me?’ They reply, ‘No.’ He says, ‘How would it be if they had seen Me?’ They reply, ‘Had they seen You, they would glorify You, exalt You, and praise You even more fervently.’ God then says, ‘For what do they ask?’ They reply, ‘Paradise.’ He says, ‘And have they ever seen it?’ They reply, ‘No.’ He says, ‘How would it be if they had seen it?’ They reply, ‘Had they seen it, they would desire it even more.’ He says to them, ‘From what do they seek refuge?’ They reply, ‘From Hell.’ He says, ‘And have they ever seen it?’ They reply, ‘No.’ He says, ‘How would it be if they had seen it?’ They reply, ‘Had they seen it, they would be even more eager to flee from it and avoid it.’ Then He says, ‘I call you to witness that I have forgiven them.’ They say, ‘There was a man among them who was not one of them, but had only come to them for some need of his.’ God says, ‘No one who keeps the company of such people will be disappointed.’”

299 Tirmidhî, Jâmi’ #3554.
Wandering with the Body and with the Spirit

Dear disciple, you should know that since all of existence is one within the circles of possibility, the locus of spatial confinement (\(\text{taḥayyuz}\)) is also one within the human world (‘\(\text{ālam al-nāsūt}\)), or what is called the world of corporeal bodies (al-\(\text{ashbāḥ al-jismāniyya}\)) or the physical world (al-\(\text{mulk}\)), which is the world of the six sensory directions.

He who is imprisoned by his sensory perceptions and limited to his own body, is part of the physical world. As for he whose heart is opened to the world of Lights, and whose eye (\(\text{ʿayn}\)) is not clouded by the obscuring dot of ghayn (\(\text{غ}\)), so that the moon of gnosis and the suns of subtleties are visible to him, and he sees the cosmos as pure Light—such a person is in the spiritual world.

Now all of these worlds share the same locus, and there is no sequential ordering or spatial elevation. On the contrary, their hierarchal degrees is suprasensory, because the locus is one, but it is seen from differing viewpoints. For example, consider three people trading in a market. The first one only sees people, fruits and vegetables; the second sees God’s Light wherever he turns; and the third is totally extinguished in the Lights. Anyone who looks at these men will see them in the same place at the same time, yet there is a world of difference between them.
The *siyāḥa* of the body is the journey around the circumference of the circle of all-possibility, accompanied by meditation upon the beauty of creation in order to touch the Qāf of the heart (*qalb*), so that the disciple can penetrate it and access its core.

The purpose of this physical *siyāḥa* is to behold the signs of God’s mighty power, as well as to prevent the heart from leaning on the pillars and pleasures of the lower self, as mentioned in the following verse: *Say, “If your fathers, your children, your brothers, your spouses, your tribe, the wealth you have acquired, commerce whose stagnation you fear, and dwellings you find pleasing are more beloved to you than God, and His Messenger, and striving in His way, then wait till God comes with His Command.” And God guides not iniquitous people.*  

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300 Q Tawba 9:24.
Let us focus on His words, and dwellings you find pleasing. The word masākin (dwellings) is from sukūn, “stillness.” Now for common people, stillness is poor conduct because they are bereft of the Light of witnessing, which is the celestial mount of spiritual wandering. This is why movement is obligatory for them in order to draw nearer to their Lord, in the spirit of the Holy Saying, “Whoever comes to Me walking, I will go to him running.” Therefore, they must walk and wander through the physical world in order to turn the wheel that will draw the water of passionate love into the innermost depths of their hearts.

Ibn ʿAjiba says in al-Bahr al-madīd:

Emigration (hijra) from the lands of heedlessness is obligatory, as is separating from those kinsfolk and friends who do not help the servant on his Path to God. The disciple must emigrate from the land where he does not find his heart, and where there is no one to help him with his relation with his Lord, no matter where it may be. I have never seen someone become a saint after remaining in his own homeland, with very few exceptions.

The Prophet ﷺ emigrated from his homeland to Medina, and it was then that the religion was granted success. This has remained the way of the saints ever since, and it is rare to find a saint who succeeds without leaving his home. The disciple must also avoid those who distract him, whether they be parents, children, spouses, or relatives. The same applies to all matters of property and business that distract the heart from God.
This applies, of course, only after he fulfills the rights of his children as mandated by the Sacred Law.

The intelligent disciple is the one who finds the middle way between the revealed Law (sharīʿa) and the esoteric Reality (ḥaqīqa), without neglecting those who depend on him, whether his spouse or otherwise. He should invoke God all the while, and remain with them in body but depart from them in heart. If he is unable to do so but still wishes to find the remedy for his heart, then he should leave the decision up to his wife, and appoint someone to take care of his family while he strengthens his heart and advances with his Lord. 301

As for he who has no part in the spiritual siyāḥa, he should redouble his efforts in the bodily siyāḥa until he masters the different degrees of wayfaring such as hunger, patience, asceticism, turning the other cheek, bearing abuse, and reliance on God. Without this, siyāḥa is nothing more than a movement from one created realm to another. It is written in the Ḥikam, “Travel not from creature to creature, for otherwise you will be like a donkey at the mill: roundabout he turns, always ending up back where he started. Rather, travel from creation to the Creator. The ultimate end is unto thy Lord. 302 Consider the Prophet’s words, ‘Whosoever emigrates for God and His Prophet, his emigration is indeed for God and His Prophet. And whosoever emigrates for worldly benefit, or for a woman he would marry, his emigration is for no more than that.’ Under-

302 Q Najm 53:42.
stand his words, and contemplate this, if you are a person of understanding."

Ibn ʿAjība says in his commentary on the Ḥikam: 303

He who travels from one created realm to another is the one who travels from other-than-God in search of other-than-God. He is like an ascetic who renounces world and devotes himself to God only for the sake of bodily repose, and in the hope that the world will come to him, because he knows that the Prophet said, “Whoever cuts himself from everything for God, God will provide for him from whence he does not expect.” And in another hadith, “Whoever directs all his intention towards the hereafter, God will ease his affair, put wealth in his heart, and make the herebelow grovel at his feet.”

Or he is like one who renounces the world because he wants other people’s esteem, honor, and recognition, or to be granted miracles, or to win the maidens and palaces of Paradise. In reality, such a person only travels from one creation to another, like a donkey at the mill, walking day and night but always ending up back where he started. The one whose aspiration is focused on selfish interests is like this donkey. He plods on, never leaving his location but imagining that he has traveled long distances in pursuit of his aims, getting nowhere despite all his toil.

Shaykh Abū al-Ḥasan said, “Stay by one door, without hoping that other doors may be opened for you, though they will be. Submit yourself to only one Master, without hoping that

303 See Ibn ʿAjība’s commentary on the 42nd aphorism of al-Iskandarī in Iqāz al-himam.
others may become subservient to you, though they will. God says: Naught is there, but that its treasuries lie with Us.”

Dear disciple, you must raise your aspiration to the supreme Sovereign. You must travel the vision of created things and seek to behold the Ruling King; you must travel from evidence and proof to firsthand eye-witnessing. This is the furthest goal and the ultimate end: The ultimate end is unto thy Lord.

Do not travel from one creature to another by sacrificing one self-interest for the sake of another, lest you be like the mill-donkey that always ends up back where it started. The comparison between this kind of person and the donkey is made in order to show his stupidity and small-mindedness. If he had God-given understanding, he would leave behind his self-interests and caprices and travel towards his Lord’s presence. Dear disciple, do not leave one created world for another, but leave this created world for the One who created it, because the ultimate end is to your Lord.

To travel to your Lord, you require three things. The first is to focus your aspiration upon Him and no other, so when He looks in your heart, he finds no other beloved there but Him. The second is to fulfill your duties and abandon self-interest. The third is always to seek refuge with Him, ask His help, rely on Him, and surrender to whatever fate He decrees for you.

Shaykh Abū al-Ḥasan  said, “When four things are found in someone, the creatures need him while he does not need

304 Q Hijr 15:21.
305 Q Najm 53:42.
them: Love for God, enrichment in God, sincerity, and certainty: sincerity in worship, and certainty in the laws of Lordship. And who is fairer in judgment than God, for a people who are certain?" 306

The Junction of the Two Seas

When God wanted to show His Confidant, Sayyidunā Mūsā ﷺ, the truths of His almighty power, He commanded him to travel (siyāha) in the direction of the junction of the two seas, which is the isthmus between the two opposites. This story of his wandering on the horizons is explained in the commentaries on the Qurʾān, at least from an exoteric point of view. What we are interested in here is the siyāha of the soul through the levels of the heart.

So the Mūsā-heart set out, accompanied by the servant-soul, carrying the fish of caprice, with the intention of meeting the Ḫiḍr-spirit. Thus, the heart’s accompaniment of the soul is purely for the sake of wayfaring, for the fields of the soul are where the heart’s journey takes place, and the heart cannot travel any road but the road of the soul, as the Ḥikam says: “If it were not for the fields of the soul, the journey of the wayfarers would not become realized; for there is no distance

306 Q Mā’īda 5:50.
between you and Him that your journey must traverse, and there is no gap between you and Him that would be bridged by your arrival.”  

So there is no distance between you and Him; **He is closer to you than your own jugular vein.** Your journey is from you to yourself; from your senses to what is beyond them; from your earth to your heaven; from the illusion of your existence to your Creator who formed you.

The journey then is a metaphor for surmounting the obstacles of the soul and traversing the levels of the heart to attain knowledge of its different states and self-disclosures. On this journey, the disciple draws strength from the power of caprice and imagination, even if he is not aware of it. This is why God commanded the Confidant to take the fish in the basket, and he made its loss, symbolizing the loss of caprice, the sign of his arrival at the junction of the two seas.

The fishes of Yūnus (Jonah, Dhū al-Nūn) and Sayyidunā Mūsā were of the same species. The fish symbolizes one of the pillars of the lower triangle by which God’s Prophet Yūnus b. Matā was tested. God tested him with the darkness of night, the ocean, and the belly of the fish.

So when the Mūsā-heart and the servant-soul reached the immolation stone, and the Confidant went to sleep there, the soul sprayed the fish with the water of life, and the station of life

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307 See the 244th aphorism of al-Iskandarî.
308 Q Qāf 50:16.
was instilled in it, so it dove into the ocean of realities, sketching out the talisman of the meeting with the spirit as it went.

Ibn ‘Ajiba says:

The fish became a guide and an indicator for Sayyidunā Mūsā ﷺ only after its death and after being separated from him. Then it was revived with a special form of life when the water of life was sprinkled upon it. The same applies for the gnostic: it is only after dying to his sensory perceptions, transcending the obstacles of his soul, annihilating his mortal human nature, and subsisting through his Lord, that he can become a guide to God and a leader who is emulated. Then his spirit is revived through witnessing his Lord’s magnificence, and he becomes a leader and a guide to Him. Extraordinary things appear at his hands, as happened with the fish when the flow of the water was held back from it so that it became like an arch, which was a divine miracle. The states of Khiḍr also alluded to this, and the fish was like a manifestation of his state in this story.\(^{309}\)

\(^{309}\) See Ibn ‘Ajiba’s commentary on Q Kahf 18:60-82 in *Al-Baḥr al-madīd*. 
So this is the way of the *siyāḥa* of the soul through the levels of heart to reach the spirit. This is why it has been said that he who knows himself, knows his Lord. The *siyāḥa* of the soul is a journey to God. He who travels towards God will reach God; as for the one who travels with God, his journey has no end.

This journey, however, is reserved for the one who has found the red sulfur, the Shaykh who has arrived and can lead others to their arrival. This Shaykh is the Blessed Olive Tree, *neither of the east nor of the west*. As for those who are not destined to find one, they must take up the *siyāḥa* of the physical world, which is to hold fast to the Sunna, fulfill one’s obligations, and avoid misdeeds and missteps, in the hope that they may be accepted in the register of the true wayfaring men and women.

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5. WANDERING (*siyāḥa*)

*Qāf* + *lubb* (core) = *qalb* (heart)

*Qāf* is the soul; *lubb* is the spirit

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310 Q Nūr 24:35.
The Foundations of the Karkariya Order

The meaning of, “The wandering of my community is jihad in God’s cause”

Abū Umāma  narrated that a certain man said, “Messenger of God, permit me to go wandering.” He answered, “The wandering of my community is jihad in God’s cause.”

The Prophet  was given the all-encompassing words (jawāmiʿ al-kalim), so that every word he spoke has seventy meanings, corresponding to the number of veils between God and creation. Every word he  utters contains the knowledge of the first and the last. How could it be otherwise, when as God tells us, Nor does he speak out of caprice; it is naught but a revelation revealed. 312

The word “jihad”, which is unfortunately too often limited to the meaning of “war,” has made many young people of the Muslim community to fall into the notion that hatred for God’s cause and disowning others is the pinnacle of the religion and the highest degree of faith. Yet God created this universe upon the foundation of love, and the principle of attraction is but one manifestation of this. A sublime understanding of the laws of the universe and the levels of the Name tells us that hate in reality is just one of the stations of love, and disowning is but one of the degrees of loyalty. Loyalty is the rule, and disowning is the exception; love is the rule, and hate is the exception. This is

311 Abū Dāwūd, Sunan #2130.
312 Q Najm 53:3-4.
why mercy precedes wrath in pre-eternity. Abū Hurayra narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, “When God completed his creation, He wrote and placed above His Throne, ‘My mercy prevails over My wrath.’”

In fact, there are several types of jihad. Some of them are obligatory only for part of the Muslim community (farḍ kifāya), while others are obligatory on every individual (farḍ al-ʿayn), such as jihad against the lower self, which is the highest level of jihad known as “the greater jihad.”

As for the quoted hadith, if we consider it at the station of spiritual excellence (iḥsān), it means that the real siyāḥa is the jihad of the disciple on God’s path, the path of realization of the levels of the Supreme Name. It is the journey from the levels of the Hāʾ of Identity, to the Lām of Constriction, to the Lām of Gnosis, to the Cloud of the Lord, to the Alif of tawḥīd.

This siyāḥa is at the same time esoteric and exoteric, physical and spiritual. Through it, the disciple wanders in the worlds of his self, swimming in the deep cosmic realities of his Shaykh. The disciple becomes as the earth, which rotates on its axis, and at the same time floats in orbit around the sun, which is its origin and the secret held within it. Indeed, the center of the earth is nothing more than a miniature sun.

313 Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ #7021.
Despite its state of stillness (sukūn), the sun sails to its own resting place. As for earth, its movement is the expression of its desire to reach that state of stillness. The sun establishes itself upon the throne of love by becoming completely incinerated in the pre-eternal Beloved, whereas the earth seeks to burn up in the love of the center of its orbit. The closer it gets to the sun, the closer it gets to its annihilation, and the closer its hour comes.

The state of stillness only pertains to the Shaykh, because his saintly aspiration is extinguished in the One he desires, for He is his identity. As has been said, “if not for the mediator, there would be nothing to be mediated.” As for the state of motion, it is on the part of the disciple seeking extinction in the mediator.

Stillness is thus the station of the Shaykh, while motion is the manifestation-site of the disciple. The one who becomes still through God knows Him, while the one who moves in Him limits and confines Him.

The Disciple’s Provision

The disciple must take provisions on his journey, in the form of some knowledge of the Sacred Law, for he must know the Sunna of the Beloved regarding travel, of which God says: But

314 Q Yāsīn 36:38.
it is not for the believers all to go forth. And why should not a party from each group go forth to acquire knowledge of religion, and to warn their people when they return to them, that haply they will beware? 315

Know that siyāḥa is founded on firm resolve, not religious dispensations. For the seeker must discipline his soul and cultivate firm resolve without showing enmity toward it or imposing excessive hardship upon it; for anyone who tries to make the religion harder upon himself will surely be defeated by it. He must therefore treat the soul like the sea: when it is stormy and the waves are fierce, he should cling to his obligations; when it is calm and tranquil, he should engage in supererogatory devotions without going so far as to become a monk.

One aspect of the Law of which the wanderer must not be ignorant are the rules of the dry ablution (tayammum), water, combining and shortening prayers, wiping over socks, and other aspects of travel which have a bearing on worship and alter its rules. He must endeavor to learn this according to the school of our Imam Mālik ﺔ.

He should also be aware that every branch of the Sacred Law has a root in spiritual realization, and that every word, deed, and tacit approval of the Chosen Prophet ﺔ—and what is more, every breath he took, every whispered remark he made, and everything he came into contact with—was a matter of spiritual realization.

315 Q Tawba 9:122.
Regarding the Dry Ablution (tayammum)

Tayammum is a dry ablution consisting of rubbing the face and hands with a proper intention. It is allowed in seven situations: (1) when not having enough water, (2) when unable to use water, (3) when fearing that water will cause or exacerbate illness or slow recovery, (4) when one’s animal will otherwise go thirsty, (5) when one fears that valuable property will be ruined if water is used, (6) when there is not enough time to use water before the prayer is missed, and (7) when there is water nearby but one does not have any way of getting it. Those in any of these situations may do tayammum whether they are traveling or at home, even if the journey involves something sinful. A single tayammum may be done for one obligatory prayer on its own, or for a voluntary prayer done immediately after it, but not for two obligatory prayers done back-to-back, or for a voluntary prayer done before an obligatory one.

Shaykh al-ʿAlawī said of this in al-Minaḥ al-quddūsiyya, his mystical commentary on the Sacred Law:

The one who purifies himself with a dry ablution should not seek the prayer of union, but only the prayer of separation, for he is separated by the impurity of temporality, which has not truly been lifted from his gaze. For he is constrained by its limits, unlike the one who purifies himself with nondelimited water (māʿ muṭlaq), whose purification is as nondelimited as the water itself, while the other’s purification is delimited by the
delimitations of earth. Water symbolizes the suprasensory realm, while earth symbolizes the sensory realm; and what a difference there is between one who purifies himself with the sensorial, and one who purifies himself with the suprasensorial! The sensorial cannot purify the physical. The one who uses water knows God through God, while the one who uses earth knows God through other-than-God. What a difference between the one who seeks proofs for Him, and the one for whom He is the Proof!\textsuperscript{316}

The example we have given of \textit{tayammum} may serve to stand in for all other matters of worship, social interaction, and rulings, so that the intention of the Law is recognized. There is a vast difference between applying the Law with understanding and applying it without understanding. Practice rooted in knowledge and understanding of the Lawgiver’s intent contains sweetness and bliss known only to those who experience it. The soul, moreover, finds it easy to adhere to this with consistency.

If you desire to know more, consult the books of the Sufis who examined the esoteric meaning of the Law such as \textit{al-Minaḥ al-quddūsiyya}, authored by our shaykh Sīdī Aḥmad b. ʿAlīwa al-Mustaghānamī (d. 1934), may God sanctify his spirit.

\textsuperscript{316} ʿAlawī, \textit{al-Minaḥ al-quddūsiyya} p. 127.
The Proper Courtesy of Siyāḥa

Siyāḥa is fundamentally a matter of beautiful character, which is the celestial mount that carries the wayfarer to the ultimate destination. Upon its back, he rapidly traverses stations that would take others years to get through. As for the one who displays ugly character toward his brethren or toward the public by repaying one ill turn with another, his siyāḥa will be fruitless, and such a person must renew his repentance. After all, the purpose of siyāḥa is to bear abuse and be patient with one’s brethren and with the public, and this can only be achieved by means of beautiful character. Here are some noble hadiths to illustrate the virtue and merit of this in the eyes of the Lord:

Jābir related that God’s Messenger ﷺ said, “The dearest of you to me, and the nearest on the Day of Resurrection, will be those with the most beautiful character. The most detestable of you to me, and the furthest on the Day of Resurrection, will be the chatterers, the braggarts, and the proud.”

Abū Hurayra related that God’s Messenger ﷺ said, “The dearest of you to me are those with the most beautiful character, those who are easygoing and get on well with others. The most detestable of you to me are those who spread gossip, sow discord among those who love one another, and seek out the faults of innocent people.”

317 Tirmidhī, Jāmiʿ 1937#.
318 Ṭabarānī, Awsaṭ #837.
Anas related that God’s Messenger ﷺ said, “The person with the most perfect faith is the one with the most beautiful character. Beautiful character is on the level of fasting and praying.” 319

Abū Hurayra related that God’s Messenger ﷺ said, “The believers with the most perfect faith are those with the most beautiful character. The best of you are those who are kindest to women.” 320

Abū Hurayra related that God’s Messenger ﷺ was asked what thing is most responsible for people entering Paradise, and replied, “Reverence of God and beauty of character.” Then he was asked what thing is most responsible for people entering Hell, and replied, “The mouth and the loins.” 321

Usāma b. Sharīk related that some Bedouins asked God’s Messenger ﷺ about a number of harmless things, until finally he said, “Servants of God! God has lifted all harm, except for the one who dares to impute the honor of his fellow Muslim unjustly. That is what harms and ruins.” They said, “May we use medicine, Messenger of God?” He replied, “Yes, do so, for God has made a cure for every ailment, except one: old age.” They said, “Messenger of God, what is the best gift a person has ever been given?” He replied, “Beautiful character.” 322

319 *Kashf al-āstār* #35.
320 *Tirmidhī, Jāmiʿ* #1078.
321 *Tirmidhī, Jāmiʿ* #2004.
322 *Ḥākim, Mustadrak.*
ʿAbd Allāh b. Masʿūd related that God’s Messenger ﷺ said, “Shall I not tell you of the one who is saved from Hell? It is the one who is easygoing and pleasant with his relatives.” 323

Proper etiquette, then, is one aspect of beautiful character, and courtesy is the spirit of Sufism, to the extent that it has been said that the one who is more courteous than you is a better Sufi than you. It has also been said that your worship should be like salt [which adds taste to the food], your courtesy like refined flour. The reason these proverbs exist is that the Sufis perceive the merit and blessing of proper etiquette. It has several facets: there is courtesy with God, courtesy with the mediator, courtesy with one’s brethren, and courtesy with the public.

Courtesy with God during siyāḥa is to rely on Him and throw oneself down before His mercy, like a feather floating in the breeze of His omnipotence. It is to be ascetic, and content oneself with the bare minimum of worldly comforts.

Courtesy with the mediator is to be constantly aware of its reality, so that it divests you of your own existence and you do not see yourself, but only your Shaykh in everything significant you do, as defined by the standards of the Sacred Law and esoteric Reality. For it is through him that you connect with the Light of God’s Messenger ﷺ. He is both the door and the doorkeeper, so throw yourself into the lap of his innermost secret.

Courtesy with one’s brethren is to be patient and overlook flaws, and indeed to revere the secrets and Lights hidden within

323 Tirmidhī, Jāmiʿ #2488.
them. They are but attributes of divine self-disclosure, so revere them. It is also to seek their counsel, for blessing lies in consulting them. The Lord encouraged His Messenger to consult his Companions, even though in reality he did not need to do so: Then [it was] by a mercy from God that thou wert gentle with them. Hadst thou been severe [and] hard-hearted they would have scattered from about thee. So pardon them, ask forgiveness for them, and consult them in affairs. And when thou art resolved, trust in God; truly God loves those who trust. 324

It is also to prefer others over oneself, as God says: They prefer others over themselves, even if they be impoverished. And whosoever is shielded from the avarice of his soul, it is they who shall prosper. 325

Finally, courtesy with the public means to pray that they be guided and given God’s grace, and to view them through the eye of realization. One of the gnostics said, “View yourself through the eye of the Law, and others through the eye of esoteric Reality.” The eye of Reality is the eye of Beauty, through which you see all things in the Light of God’s mercy. Treat them with mercy, compassion, and gentleness, as God’s Messenger said, “The prayer God loves the most is when His servant says, ‘Dear God, have mercy on the community of Muḥammad, all of them.’”

324 Q Āl ʿImrān 3:159.
325 Q Ḥashr 59:9.