

THE MEANING OF THE CONCEPT OF “NAFS” IN ISLAMIC SOURCES

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Annotation: One of the main topics of Sufism is the soul and its essence, and a number of studies are being carried out in world science. Psychological essence of Sufism as a religious phenomenon, stages of historical and gradual development, methodological problems of researching Sufism, issues of “spirit” (ruh), “soul” (nafs) and “psyche” related to the subject of Sufism psychology, problems of Sufism psychology as a science and solutions, self-awareness and improvement, spiritual education, cognitive psychological theory of Sufism, topical issues of Sufism in modern personality psychology, interpretation of Sufism’s concept of “I” in psychology, correlation between psychology and Sufism. This article analyzes the opinions of mystical scholars who expressed their views on the soul, its types and ways of educating it.

Key words: nafs, tasawwuf, nafs ammara, nafs lavvoma, nafs mutmainna

In Sufism, the concept of “nafs” is interpreted differently from theology and philosophy. Sufis generally focus on issues such as its weaknesses, tricks, evils, diseases, ways to cure them, protection from its evils, and self-discipline, rather than on topics such as its nature, unity, body, and essence, or whether it was created before or after.

In Sufism, the nafs is regarded as the root cause of sins and errors. One of the primary evidences for this view is the reference to the nafs al-ammārah (“the commanding soul”) mentioned in Surah Yusuf. Additionally, the Qur’anic verse stating, “What comes to you of good is from Allah, but what comes to you of evil, [O man], is from yourself.” (Surah al-Nisā’, 4:79), further emphasizes this concept. Moreover, in various hadiths—such as the supplication, “O Allah, we seek refuge in You from the evils of our own souls”—the nafs is explicitly described as a source of evil. These references collectively highlight the central role of the nafs in leading individuals toward moral shortcomings in the spiritual path.

Among the prominent figures of Sufism, Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī (786–857), in his work *al-Ri‘āyah li-ḥuqūq Allāh* (“Observing the Rights of God”), offers the following definition of the nafs:

“The nafs, which serves as Satan’s assistant in causing evil, is the greatest enemy within the human being. For this reason, it is common to supplicate: “O Allah, do not leave me to the control of my nafs even for a single moment [1:251].”

Although the early ascetics (zuhhād) and mystics (ṣūfīs) accepted asceticism (zuhd) as the foundation of their lives, they regarded the nafs (the lower self or ego) and its evils as their greatest enemy, referring to it as the “enemy within.” According to them, the nafs, being inclined toward sin and error, avoids worship and righteous deeds. For this reason, resisting the nafs was seen as a core principle of the ascetic way of life, and overcoming it was deemed essential for attaining virtue and salvation. Relying on the hadith, “Your greatest enemy is your own nafs” (narrated by al-Bayhaqī), ascetics and Sufi mystics labeled their struggle against this inner enemy as the “greater jihad” (al-jihād al-akbar). They considered the nafs even more dangerous than Satan, as Satan uses the nafs as a means to tempt humans into sin.

One of the earliest figures of Sufism, Ḥārith ibn Asad—who became known by the title “al-Muḥāsibī” due to his pioneering application of the principle of self-examination (muḥāsabah) in Sufi practice—discussed the tricks, deceptions, betrayals, and traps set by the nafs in his works



al-Ri'āyah, Ādāb al-Nufūs, Mu'ātabat al-Nafs, and al-Waṣāyā. In these texts, he provided analyses of the nature of the nafs, offered solutions for dealing with its harmful tendencies, and explored psychological methods for protecting oneself from it, disciplining it, and maintaining control over it.

The renowned scholar from Transoxiana, Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, also provided detailed explanations concerning the nafs in his works Kitāb al-Riyāḍa wa Ādāb al-Nafs, al-Masā'il al-Maknūna, and Manāzil al-'Ibād. Similarly, Sahl ibn 'Abdallāh al-Tustarī, in his exposition of Sufism, emphasized spiritual discipline (riyāḍa), struggle (mujāhada), and the methods of attaining mastery over the nafs. According to Tustarī, the primary method of subduing the nafs is to strike it with the "sword" of hunger, patience, and ascetic discipline [2:81].

According to Khawṭim al-'Āṣam, a person who embarks on the path of Sufism must subject their nafs to four types of "deaths": hunger (white), suffering (black), opposition (red), and wearing patched clothing (green) [3:93].

Zunnūn al-Miṣrī described the nafs as the thickest veil between a servant and Allah [3:93]. In his work al-Risāla, Abū al-Qāsim al-Qushayrī recounts that the Truth, addressing Bayāzīd al-Biṣṭāmī, said, "Abandon your nafs and come to Us." In response, Bayāzīd likened his renunciation of the nafs to the way a snake sheds its skin [4:719].

Sufi scholars have cited the verse from Surah Al-Jathiyah: "Have you seen he who has taken as his god his [own] desire, and Allah has sent him astray due to knowledge and has set a seal upon his hearing and his heart and put over his vision a veil? So who will guide him after Allah? Then will you not be reminded?" [45:23] as evidence, portraying the nafs as the human being's false deity.

Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī states in his work Qūt al-Qulūb: "The nafs is a person's idol. To attain the Truth, one must break this idol. As it is said: "But as for he who feared the position of his Lord and prevented the soul from [unlawful] inclination, Then indeed, Paradise will be [his] refuge." (Surah An-Nāzi'āt, 79:40-41).

The nafs is self-loving, self-centered, proud, and arrogant. Being created from clay, it is weak; being formed from mud, it is insatiable; being made from clay vessels, it is lustful; and due to its earthly origin, it is ignorant. Weakness, insatiability, lust, and ignorance are among its fundamental characteristics [5:10].

Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī explained the nature of the nafs as follows: "The nafs inherently contains savagery, animalism, devilishness, and a desire for domination. The source of enmity and aggression in the nafs is savagery; the origin of greed is animalism; the root of cunning and deceitfulness is devilishness; and the source of arrogance and the desire to rule over everything alone is domination. These four qualities correspond respectively to the dog, the pig, the devil, and the human. The nafs embodies all of these traits." [2:10]

According to Imam Qushayrī, the nafs is "the name given to a person's evil qualities, habits, and behaviors" [4:305]. In Sufism, the nafs is regarded as something that must be completely annihilated. It is viewed entirely negatively and must be "killed." Sufi teachings describe seven stages of the nafs, which are interpreted as a progression from being dead and temporary to becoming immortal.

In Sufism, the nafs is described through various metaphors. It is likened at times to an aggressive dog, a cunning fox, a rat, a terrifying serpent or dragon; at other times to Pharaoh and Nimrod, an idol, a prison, hellfire, or a thief ignorant of truth and law. It is also compared to a sorcerer or a woman who leads people astray. Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī metaphorically described the nafs as a figure who approaches a person holding a book in their right hand, yet kills them with a sword hidden in their left hand, promises water to lead one to a well, and then casts them into the well [6:27, 260].



One of the central concepts in Sufism, the *malāmātiyya* movement, is founded on the principle of blaming the *nafs* in every matter, speaking of its shortcomings, considering others as right or excusable, viewing the *nafs* as inherently flawed, and being hostile toward the *nafs* for the sake of Allah [7:151, 165].

On the other hand, no matter how flawed the *nafs* may be, it can be reformed, disciplined, and trained to benefit the deeds of the Hereafter. Indeed, just as the prey of a wild dog becomes pure and lawful when the dog is trained, so too a disciplined and nurtured *nafs* becomes pure. In Sufism, self-discipline is achieved through intense struggle and an ascetic, arduous life. For this reason, it is often emphasized that one must avoid following the *nafs* blindly and remain cautious and aware of the dangers it may pose. Al-Ghazālī stresses that it is neither possible nor correct to eliminate the negative impulses arising from the *nafs*'s nature of anger and lust; rather, it should be kept under the control of reason and divine revelation.

In Sufism, self-knowledge (*maʿrifat al-nafs*) is of paramount importance. Knowing oneself is considered the most sound path to knowing God. The phrase “He who knows himself knows his Lord” is often cited in this context and is sometimes even attributed as a hadith.

Scholars enumerate the stages of the *nafs* as follows:

1. Ammārah: the commanding self; the abode of darkness
2. Lāwwāmāh: the self-reproaching soul; the level of illumination
3. Mulhimāh: the inspired soul; the stage of entering into secrets
4. Mutmaʿinnāh: the peaceful soul; the level of perfection
5. Rāḍiyyāh: the contented soul; the stage of union and reaching the Divine
6. Mardhiyyāh: the pleased soul; the stage of manifesting the Lord's actions
7. Kāmilāh: the perfected soul; the stage of manifesting the Lord's ranks, names, and attributes

These stages are collectively known in Sufism as the “*Aṭwār al-Sabʿa*” (the seven states).

In some Sufi orders, the practice of self-discipline (*sayr wa sulūk*) involves the remembrance (*dhikr*) of one of the seven names of Allah—such as *Lā ilāha illallāh*, *Allāh*, *Hū*, *Al-Ḥaqq*, *Al-Ḥayy*, *Al-Qayyūm*, and *Al-Qahhār*—at each of the seven stages of the *nafs*. For example, a servant whose *nafs* is at the Ammārah stage recites the Kalima of monotheism a certain number of times as prescribed by their spiritual guide (*murshid*). Upon reaching the Lāwwāmāh stage, their practice shifts to the remembrance of the name *Allāh*, symbolizing greatness. At the Mulhimāh stage, the name *Hū* is recited; at Mutmaʿinnāh, the name *Al-Ḥaqq*; and when the seeker reaches the seventh name (*Al-Qahhār*), they attain the stage of the Kāmilāh or perfected *nafs*.

Similarly, within the framework of the sevenfold classification, each stage of the *nafs* corresponds to specific attributes: its **direction** (*yuʿnalish*)—*ilallāh*, *ʿalalallāh*, *billāh*, *ʿanillāh*, *fillāh*, *maʿallāh*, *lillāh*; its **world** (*dunyosi*)—witnessing (*shahādah*), lesson (*ibrat*), spirits (*arwāḥ*), forgetfulness (*unūt*), reality (*ḥaqīqah*); its **state** (*ḥāl*)—pleasure (*zawq*), desire (*ishtiyyāq*), love (*ʿishq*), means (*wasīlah*), wonder (*ḥayrat*), annihilation in annihilation (*fanāʿ fil-fanāʿ*), subsistence with subsistence (*baqāʿ bil-baqāʿ*); its **place** (*ʿarḍ*)—chest (*ṣadr*), heart (*qalb*), spirit (*rūḥ*), secret (*sirr*), secret of the secret (*sirr-us-sirr*), hidden (*khafī*), most hidden (*akhfā*); its **source** (*manbāʿ*)—*Sharia*, *Tariqa*, *Haqiqa*, *Maʿrifa*, *Wilaya*, *Siddiqiyya*, *Qurbat*; its **witness** (*shāhid*)—unity of actions (*tawḥīd al-afʿāl*), unity of attributes (*tawḥīd aṣ-ṣifāt*), unity of essence (*tawḥīd az-zāt*), unity (*jamʿ*), presence of the whole (*ḥaḍrat al-jamʿ*), the sum of sums (*jamʿ al-jamʿ*); and its **light** (*nūr*)—blue (*māwiyy*), yellow (*ṣafraʿ*), red (*aḥmar*), black (*aswad*), green (*akhḍar*), white (*abyaḍ*), and colorlessness (*lā lawn*).

For example, a seeker whose *nafs* is at the Ammārah stage reciting the Kalima al-Tawḥīd has the following correspondences: direction—*ilallāh*; world—*shahādah*; state—*zawq* (pleasure);



place—ṣadr (chest); source—sharī'ah; witness—tawhīd al-af'āl (unity of actions); and light—māwiyy (blue).

When the seeker, under the guidance of the murshid, advances from the Ammārah to the Lāwwāmah nafs and begins to recite the name of majesty (Ism al-Jalālah), their attributes correspond as follows: direction—'alalallāh; world—ibrat (lesson); state—ishtiyāq (desire); place—qalb (heart); source—ṭarīqah; witness—tawhīd aṣ-ṣifāt (unity of attributes); and light—ṣafra' (yellow).

By continuing their spiritual path (sulūk) in this manner, the seeker ultimately reaches the stage of the perfected nafs (Kāmilah), marking the completion of the spiritual journey's component related to the nafs.

The nafs possesses numerous qualities, characteristics, behaviors, states, manifestations, and relationships. It can assume many colors and present various forms. The differences in people's spirits surpass the differences in their bodies, and the capacities of the spirit greatly exceed those of the physical and intellectual faculties.

According to Muḥyiddīn Ibn 'Arabī, a human being consists of three elements: the physical body, the soul (jān), and the nafs. He defines the physical body as a material form that occupies its place in space, endures through time, and is subject to decay and change. Ibn 'Arabī discusses three qualities of the nafs: the nabaī (vegetative), the ḥayawānī (animal), and the 'aqli (intellectual) nafs. The intellectual nafs is not the intellect itself but rather a secondary attribute of it.

The primary function of the vegetative nafs is to seek nourishment and transform it into the body. The animal nafs is located in the heart; it is material and present in all humans and animals. The intellectual nafs, in its absolute essence, is the perceiving self, born purified, free from all sins; it is incorruptible and eternal. While it interacts with the body, it remains entirely independent of it. Upon death, the intellectual nafs becomes the universal nafs. The rūḥ (spirit) is the leader of these three nafs.

In his work "The Diseases of the Self and Their Treatment," Abu Abdurahman Sulami states the following regarding the training of the nafs:

"Know that the human nafs is divided into three: nafs mutma'innah (the peaceful soul), nafs lawwāmah (the self-reproaching soul), and nafs ammārah (the commanding soul).

The nafs mutma'innah is the heart that has found tranquility, firmly believes that Allah is its Lord, sincerely trusts in Allah's promises, affirms the truth of every word of His, and patiently endures every trial sent by its Lord.

This is the soul that has faith; in the Hereafter, Allah will not disgrace it, its book of deeds will be given into its right hand, and its face will be bright and among the radiant ones. Such a soul submits to the divine decree as the ultimate reality of all good and evil, benefit and harm."

Allah Almighty refers to the nafs that firmly believes in His promises and strives to attain His pleasure through good deeds as follows: "[To the righteous it will be said], "O reassured soul, Return to your Lord, well-pleased and pleasing [to Him]" (Al-Fajr, 27-28).

The nafs al-lawwāmah (the self-reproaching soul) is the sinful nafs that constantly admonishes itself for its good and bad deeds. It neither remains patient in joy nor in sorrow and is always dissatisfied with itself. It persistently reproaches itself, saying, "Why must I do this? I should have done it differently!" This nafs is neither inherently good nor bad; rather, it is never content with itself.

The self-reproaching (malāmati) nafs feels deep regret for lost opportunities and is never satisfied with its actions. When it does good, it says, "I should have done more!" and when it commits a sin, it laments, "Why did I do that?!"



Allah Almighty swears by this self-reproaching nafs: "And I swear by the reproaching soul [to the certainty of resurrection]" (Al-Qiyamah, 2).

The nafs al-ammārah is the soul that commands evil. Allah Almighty says concerning Prophet Yusuf (Joseph) in the Quran: "And I do not acquit myself. Indeed, the soul is a persistent enjoiner of evil, except those upon which my Lord has mercy. Indeed, my Lord is Forgiving and Merciful." (Yusuf, 53).

Moreover, Allah Almighty speaks of such a nafs in the following verse: "But as for he who feared the position of his Lord and prevented the soul from [unlawful] inclination, Then indeed, Paradise will be [his] refuge." (An-Nazi'at, 40-41).

"Have you seen he who has taken as his god his [own] desire, and Allah has sent him astray due to knowledge and has set a seal upon his hearing and his heart and put over his vision a veil?" (Al-Jathiyah, 23).

The desires of the nafs are an invisible deity that blinds the eyes and deafens the ears. The nafs that commands evil is more dangerous than Satan because Satan's cunning is weak. Allah Almighty says about Iblees: "And [mention] when We said to the angels, "Prostrate before Adam"; so they prostrated, except for Iblees. He refused and was arrogant and became of the disbelievers." (Al-Baqarah, 34). Arrogance originates from the nafs.

Allah Almighty has also mentioned the inclination of the nafs toward evil deeds and its distance from goodness in other verses.

In a hadith transmitted through Abu Hurayra from Abu Salama, Salama ibn Kuhayl, Sha'ba, Sufyan, Abu Usaym, Ahmad ibn Husayn ibn Abon, Abdujabbar ibn Sirin, and Ali ibn Amr (may Allah be pleased with them), the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Adam (peace be upon him) was created from clay mixed with calamity, air, and desire."

Allah Almighty commands: "And strive for Allah with the striving due to Him." (Al-Hajj, 78). That is, restrain your nafs and do not let it run after fleeting, empty desires and wishes!

Abu Abdurrahman Sulami states in another work: "People understand martyrdom only as dying on the battlefield. However, true martyrdom is to not submit to the nafs and to resist its desires."

Imam Rabbani emphasized the issue of nafs in his work Maktubat. The nafs, created to test a person, manifests as ammara (commanding evil) in non-Muslims; in Muslims, it progresses through the stages of lawwama (self-reproaching) and mulhima (inspired). When faith reaches perfection, it becomes mutmainna (tranquil); when content with Allah, it reaches the stage of radhiyyah; when Allah is pleased with the servant, it advances to mardhiyyah; and finally attains the rank of sofīya (the pure).

The nafs is a means given to humans for their spiritual perfection. Without the nafs, a human would remain in the same status as an angel, where there would be no possibility of elevation or decline. For this reason, Allah Almighty states in Surah Adh-Dhariyat, verse 56: "And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me." The absence of mention of angels and animals in this verse indicates that they are not subject to testing.

Here's a polished and poetic English translation of the couplets by Sofī Olohyor from Sabotul Ojizin on the explanation of the evil nafs:

"Come, O you, do not be a servant to the nafs anymore, At evening's breath, this neck is veiled in heedlessness. All your worship and devotion, however pure they seem, If you truly know, they are opposed by your nafs. Come, O human, no longer follow your nafs".

Evidence for the Seven Levels of the Nafs According to Sufi Scholars:

1. Nafs al-Ammara (The Commanding Self): A person at this stage of the nafs denies the Truth (Al-Haqq) and is constantly inclined to plan and commit evil deeds. Nafs al-Ammara is the nafs of disbelievers (kuffar) and hypocrites (munafiq). This stage represents the nafs's state of darkness and is the source of the lowest moral vices.



As stated in Surah Yusuf (12:53): “And I do not acquit myself. Indeed, the soul is a persistent enjoiner of evil, except those upon which my Lord has mercy. Indeed, my Lord is Forgiving and Merciful.”

At this stage, the person is not affected by whisperings (waswasa) and does not fear Hellfire. This group fears everything except Allah. Their greatest fear and hatred is death. Their affections and love are primarily for their nafs (self).

2. Nafs al-Lawwama (The Self-Reproaching Soul): This nafs is characterized by remorse and self-blame. It is the nafs where light and darkness meet face to face. The Qur’an refers to it by saying: “And I swear by the reproaching soul [to the certainty of resurrection]” (Surah Al-Qiyamah, 75:2).

A person at this stage feels some degree of fear regarding the accountability on the Day of Judgment. Such a person sometimes behaves like a believer and sometimes like a denier. This is the nafs of Muslims who have committed major sins. Although they often fear death, their fear of being held accountable is usually minimal.

3. Nafs al-Mulhima (The Inspired Soul): This is the stage of secrets, where the speaking nafs becomes inspired. The Qur’an states: “And inspired it [with discernment of] its wickedness and its righteousness.” (Surah Ash-Shams, 91:8)

Those at this stage are the righteous ones. They fear death and are even more deeply concerned about the severity of the Day of Judgment. They are vigilant about what is lawful (halal) and unlawful (haram).

4. Nafs al-Mutmainna (The Reassured soul Soul): This is the stage of maturity, where the speaking nafs attains tranquility. At this stage, the servant restrains the desires and passions of the nafs, calming and pacifying it.

Allah Almighty says in the Qur’an: “O reassured soul.” (Surah Al-Fajr, 89:27)

5. Nafs al-Radhiyyaa (The Contented Soul): This is the stage of union (attachment), and at this stage, the speaking nafs is called "raziya" (contented).

In the Qur’an, Allah commands: “Return to your Lord, well-pleased and pleasing [to Him]” (Surah Al-Fajr, 89:28)

At this stage, Allah has not yet become pleased with the nafs; rather, the nafs itself is content and pleased with Allah.

6. Nafs al-Mardhiyyah (The Pleasing Soul): This is the stage of the manifestation of actions, and at this stage, the speaking nafs is called "mardhiya" (pleasing).

In the Qur’an, Allah commands: “Return to your Lord, well-pleased and pleasing [to Him]” (Surah Al-Fajr, 89:27-28)

This station is the highest rank attainable by servants; those who reach this level cannot ascend beyond it except to the rank of prophethood.

At this stage, the divine names and attributes manifest intermittently like flashes of lightning. The nafs is content with Allah, and Allah is pleased with the nafs.

For those at this exalted level, death is not annihilation but union — a night of wedding (shab-i ‘aruz or shab-i ‘nikah).

7. Nafs al-Kāmila or Nafs as-Sufiyya (The Perfect or the Pure Soul): This nafs belongs to the prophets, great saints, and select individuals, and at this stage, the speaking nafs is called “sufiyya” (the pure).

At this rank, the hearts of these great individuals are continuously illuminated by the divine light of Allah’s Essence, flashing like lightning without ever fading. This divine manifestation is constant and perpetual.

In the Holy Qur’an, Allah the Almighty commands: “And no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another. And if a heavily laden soul calls [another] to [carry some of] its load, nothing



of it will be carried, even if he should be a close relative. You can only warn those who fear their Lord unseen and have established prayer. And whoever purifies himself only purifies himself for [the benefit of] his soul. And to Allah is the [final] destination.” (Surah Fatir, 35:18) [1:436]

This means that on the Day of Judgment, if a soul burdened with many sins calls upon its closest relatives for help to lighten its load, none of the sins will be transferred. This is because even the close relative cannot bear that burden and will themselves be overwhelmed. Both the disbeliever and the believer ultimately return only to Allah, and to no one else. Then Allah alone will perform the reckoning, rewarding the believers and punishing the disbelievers and sinners accordingly.

According to the great Sufi Imam Rabbani, the hunger mentioned here does not simply mean abstaining from food and drink, as some ignorant Sufis mistakenly interpret it. Indeed, Hindu and Buddhist monks can endure long periods of thirst and hunger. However, they only achieve a certain calmness of the nafs (ego/self), and nothing beyond that.

In his work *Maktubot*, Imam Rabbani explains what it means to keep the nafs hungry as follows: “Not fulfilling the desires of the nafs, doing what it dislikes, and the easiest way to subdue the nafs is to live in accordance with the Sunnah and to keep the heart pure from attachment to created beings.”

In Sufism, it is emphasized that to purify the nafs, one must adhere to the following:

1. Purify the nafs from evil traits such as hypocrisy, pride, greed, stinginess, craving, and being heedless of the reckoning of the Hereafter.
2. Beautify the nafs with noble qualities such as sincerity (ikhlas), mindfulness (returning to Allah), fear of Allah, gratitude, and humility.
3. Consistently perform the obligatory acts of worship (farz), for there is no deed more beloved to Allah than the obligatory.
4. Engage frequently in voluntary (nafl) acts of worship, as through these voluntary deeds a servant draws closer to Allah, until Allah loves His servant.
5. Recite the Qur’an thoughtfully and with contemplation, because the recitation of the Qur’an purifies the heart, and when the heart is purified, the nafs is purified as well. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “Hearts rust just like iron does when exposed to water.” They asked, “O Messenger of Allah, what polishes the heart and removes its rust?” He replied, “Frequently remembering death and frequently reciting the Qur’an.” (Reported by Bayhaqi)
6. Seek knowledge.
7. Constantly examine and discipline the nafs, and struggle against its desires that contradict the Shariah. Through this, a person overcomes the desires of the nafs, Satan, and worldly temptations. One of the righteous predecessors, Ibn Mehron (may Allah have mercy on him), said: “A person cannot be among the pious until he disciplines his nafs more strictly than he disciplines his friend, and knows whether what he eats, drinks, and wears is lawful or unlawful.” (Reported by Imam Tirmidhi) Hasan al-Basri (may Allah have mercy on him) said: “If a servant constantly advises himself and watches over his nafs, he will always remain in goodness.”
8. Associate with righteous people and avoid the company of those with corrupt manners.

The works of scholars that describe and analyze the nafs are very important from the perspectives of ethics, psychology, and especially religious psychology. Valuable insights on this topic can be found in the writings of Sufi scholars such as Harith Muhosibiy, Hakim Tirmidhi, Abu Talib Makki, and Hujwiri. Among the key texts in this field are Al-Ghazali’s *Ihya Ulum al-Din*, Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi’s *Al-Futuh al-Makkiyya*, and Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi’s *Masnawi*. Sufi poets like Fariduddin Attar and Yunus Emre have left beautiful verses depicting the nafs and its qualities.



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