



THE BEZELS OF WISDOM

١٢١ هو Fusus al-Hikam

By Muhi-e-Din Ibn Arabi
Translated to English by Aisha Bewley
Note: last edited on 11 March 2022



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The Divine Wisdom in the Word of Adam

When God — glory be to Him! — willed that the source of His most Beautiful Names — which are beyond enumeration — be seen (or you can equally say that He willed His source to be seen), He willed that they be seen in a microcosmic being which contained the entire matter¹, endowed with existence, and through which His secret was manifested to Him. For how a thing sees itself through itself is not the same as how it sees itself in something else which acts as a mirror for it. So He manifests Himself to Himself in a form which is provided by the place in which He is seen. He would not appear thus without the existence of this place and His manifestation (tajalli) to Himself in it.

God brought the entire universe into existence through the existence of a form fashioned without a spirit (ruh), like an unpolished mirror. Part of the divine decree is that He does not fashion a locus without it receiving a divine spirit, which is described as being "blown"² into it. This is nothing other than the result of the predisposition of that fashioned form to receive the overflowing perpetual tajalli which has never ceased and which will never cease. Then we must speak of the container (qâbil). The container comes from nothing other than His most sacredly pure Overflowing. So the whole affair has its beginning from Him, and its end is to Him, and "the whole affair will be returned to Him" (11:123) as it began from Him. Thus the command decreed the polishing of the mirror of the universe. Adam was the very polishing of that mirror and the spirit of that form.

The angels are some of the faculties of that form which is the form of the universe, which the Sufis designate in their technical vocabulary as the Great Man (al-Insân al-Kabîr), for the angels are to it as the spiritual (ruhani) and sensory faculties are to the human organism. Each of these faculties is veiled by itself, and it sees nothing which is superior to its own essence, for there is something in it which considers itself to be worthy of high rank and an elevated degree with God. It is like this because it has an aspect of the divine synthesis (jam'îya). In it is something which derives from the divine side and something which derives from the side of the reality of the realities. This organism carries these attributes as determined by the universal nature which encompasses the containers of the universe from the most exalted to the basest. However, the intellect cannot perceive this fact by means of logical investigation for this sort of perception only exists through divine unveiling by which one recognises the basis of the forms of the universe which receive the spirits.

This being was called both a human being and khalîf³. As for his humanness, it comes from the universality of his organism and his ability to embrace all of the realities. He is in relation to God as the pupil⁴, being the instrument of vision, is to the eye. This is why he is called "human". It is by him that God beholds His creatures and has mercy on them. So he is a human being, both in-time [in his body] and before-time [in his spirit], an eternal and after-time organism. He is the word which distinguishes and unifies. The universe was completed by his existence. He is to the universe what the face of the seal is to the seal — for that is the locus of the seal and thus the token with which the King places the seal on his treasures.

¹ al-Insân al-Kâmil, The Perfect Man

² Nafkh, Quran 32:9, etc,

³ Representative

⁴ Insan, as well as meaning human being, also means the pupil of the eye.

God named him khalif for this reason, since man guards His creation as treasure is guarded with the seal. As long as the seal of the King is on the treasure, no one dares to open it without his permission. He made him a khalif in respect to safeguarding the universe, and it continues to be guarded as long as this Perfect Man is in it. Do you not see then, that when he disappears and is removed from the treasury of this world, nothing that God stored in it will remain? Everything that was in it will leave it, and all the parts will become confused, and everything will be transferred to the Next World. Then Man will be the seal on the treasury of the Next World for endless time and after-time. All the Divine Names contained in the divine form⁵ appear in this human organism. Thus it possesses the rank of containing and integrating this existence. It was by this that God set up the proof against the angels⁶, so remember that! God admonishes you through others. Look at where that originates and where it ends up. The angels did not realise what was implied by the organism of the khalif, nor did they realise what the presence of the Truth demanded as ibada⁷. Each one only knows from God what his essence accords him. The angels do not possess the universality of Adam, and they did not understand the Divine Names with which he has been favoured, and by which he praises God and proclaims His purity. They only knew that God had names whose knowledge had not reached them, so they could not praise Him nor proclaim His purity through them. What we mentioned overcame them and this state overpowered them. They said about this organism, "Why put on it one who will cause corruption on it?" (2:30) This is only the argument which they were voicing.

What they said regarding Adam is exactly the state they were with regard to God. Had it not been that their nature was in accord with it, they would not have said what they said in respect of Adam, "and yet they were not aware." If they had had true recognition of themselves, they would have had knowledge, and had they been in possession of knowledge, they would have been protected and would not have resisted by belittling Adam and thus exceeding their claim of what they possessed of His praise and glorification. Adam was in possession of Divine Names which the angels did not have, so that their praise and glorification of Him was not the same as Adam's praise and glorification of Him. God describes this to us so that we may ponder it and learn adab⁸ with God, and so that we will not lay claim to what we have not realised or possessed by pinning down. How can we allege something which is beyond us and of which we have no knowledge? We will only be exposed. This divine instruction is part of God's discipline of those of His slaves who are well-mannered, trusting and khalifs.

Let us return to the wisdom under discussion. Know that universal matters which have no existence in themselves are without a doubt intelligible and known in the mind. They are hidden and continue in their invisible existence. These universal matters have jurisdiction and effect on everything which has an individual existence. Indeed, they are the same thing and nothing else, i.e., the sources of existent individual things, and they continue to be intelligible in themselves. They are manifest in respect of the sources of existent things just as they are hidden in respect of their intelligibility. Each individual existent thing depends on these universal matters which cannot be dislodged from the intellect, nor would their existence be possible in the source once they ceased to be intelligible, whether that individual existent is

⁵ The form chosen by God for the human being.

⁶ Quran 2:30-33.

⁷ 'Ibada: All the acts of worship: giving, praying, fasting, etc.

⁸ Adab: Manners. Here meaning the much deeper quality of spiritual manners, that is a courtesy engendered in the ritual acts of worship, the prostrations of the prayer, the fast, and giving gifts to the needy. Such a quality is imbued with awareness that you are the dependent, and the Real is the independent. You are poor, He is rich.

in-time or out-of-time. The relationship of that which is in-time or out-of-time to this universal intelligible matter is the same. This universal matter only has jurisdiction in individual existent things according to what the realities of these individual existent things demand of it. It is like the relationship of knowledge to the knower, and life to the living. Life is an intelligible reality; knowledge is an intelligible reality. Knowledge is as distinct from life as life is distinct from knowledge. So we say that God has knowledge and life, and that He is the Living, the Knowing. We also say that the angel has life and knowledge, and is living and knowing. We say that man has life and knowledge, and is living and knowing. The reality of knowledge is one thing and the reality of life is another, and their relationship to the knowing and the living is the same relationship. We say that the knowledge of God is in non-time and the knowledge of man is in-time. So look at the evaluation that this relationship has brought about in this intelligible reality!

Examine this relationship between individual and ideal realities, it is necessary from another, not from itself. As knowledge determines the one who participates in it as he is called knowing so the one who is described by it can determine the knowledge. It is in-time in relation to the one in-time and non-time in relation to the one in non-time. Each of the two is determining and determined. It is known that these universal matters, even if they are intelligible, lack a source although they still have an authority. When they are determined, since they are ascribed to an individual existent thing, they accept the principle in the existent sources and do not accept distinction or fragmenting, for that is impossible for them. They themselves are in everything described by them, as humanity is in every person of this particular species, without distinction or the numbering which affects individuals; and it continues to be intelligible.

Now, as there is a connection between that which has an individual existence and that which does not have one and it is a non-existent relationship so the connection of existents to each other is easier to conceive because, in any case, there is a common factor between them which is individual existence. In the other, there is no common factor, yet there is a connection despite the lack of a common factor. So it is stronger and more real when there is a common factor. Without a doubt, the in-time establishes itself as being put into time and it needs something in time to put it into time. It has no place in itself so it exists from something other-than-it, and it is linked to That by the dependence of need. This dependence must be on That whose existence is necessary, which is independent in Its existence by Itself without need. It is That which, by Its own essence, gives existence to the in-time which depends on It. Since the existence of Its essence is necessary and what appears from It depends on It for its essence, it nevertheless depends on its form for everything which is from a name or attribute, except for the essential necessity. That is not the property of it in-time, even if its existence is necessary, rather, it is necessary by another, not by itself.

Since the matter is based on what we said about its manifestation in its form, God communicates to us knowledge of Himself through contemplation of the in-time. He tells us that He shows us His signs in the in-time⁹, so we draw conclusions about Him through ourselves. We do not describe Him with any quality without also possessing that quality, with the exception of that essential autonomy. Since we know Him by ourselves and from ourselves, we attribute to Him all that we attribute to ourselves. For that reason, divine communications came down on the tongues of our interpreters¹⁰, and so He described Himself to

⁹ Quran 41:53, "We will show them Our signs on the horizons and in themselves..."

¹⁰ i.e., the Prophets.

us through ourselves. When we witness, He witnesses Himself. We are certainly numerous as individuals and species, yet we are based on a single reality which unites us. So we certainly know that there are distinctions between individuals. If there were not, there would be no multiplicity in the One.

Similarly, we are described in all aspects by that by which He describes Himself, but there must be a distinction and it is none other than our need of Him in our existence. Our existence depends on Him by virtue of our possibility and He is independent of that which makes us dependent on Him. Because of this, one can apply before-timeness and timelessness to Him which negates that firstness which is the opening to existence from non-existence. Although He is the First, firstness is not ascribed to Him, and for this reason, He is called the Last. Had His firstness been the firstness of the existence of determination, it would not have been valid for Him to be the Last of the determined because the possible has no last — for possibilities are endless. So they have no last. Rather, He is the Last because "the whole affair will be returned to Him" (11:123) after its attribution to us. He is the Last in the source of His firstness and the First in the source of His lastness.

Then know that God has described Himself as the Outwardly Manifest and the Inwardly Hidden¹¹; He brought the universe into existence as a Visible world and an Unseen world so that we might know the Hidden by the Unseen and the Manifest by the Visible. He described Himself with pleasure and wrath, and so He brought the world into existence as a place of fear and hope so we fear His wrath and hope for His pleasure. He described Himself with majesty and beauty, so He brought the universe into existence with awe and intimacy. It is the same for all that is connected with Him, may He be exalted, and by which He calls Himself. He designates these pairs of attributes by the two hands¹² which He held out in the creation of the Perfect Man. Man sums up all the realities of the universe and its individuals. So the universe is seen and the Khalif is unseen. It is with this meaning that the Sultan veils himself, even as God is mentioned and described as having veils¹³ of darkness, which are natural bodies, and luminous veils which are subtle spirits (arwah). The universe is composed of both the gross and the subtle.

The universe is its own veil on itself and cannot perceive the Truth since it perceives itself. It is continuously in a veil which is not removed, since it knows that it is distinct from its Creator by its need of Him. It has no portion of that essential necessity which belongs to the existence of God, so it can never perceive Him. In this respect, God is never fully known by the knowledge of tasting and witnessing because the in-time has no hold on that.

God only applied "between His two hands" to Adam as a mark of honour, and so He said to Iblis, "What prevented you prostrating to what I created with My two Hands?" (38:76) That is none other than the union in Adam of the two forms — the form of the universe and the form of the Real¹⁴ — and they are the two hands of God. Iblis is only a fragment of the universe and does not possess this comprehensive quality. It is because of this quality that Adam was a khalif. Had he not had the form of the One who appointed him khalif, he would not have been khalif. If there were not in him all that is in the world, and

¹¹ Quran: 57:3

¹² Quran 38:75, "What I created with My two hands."

¹³ Hadith: "God has 70,000 veils of light and darkness. If they were to be removed, the splendour of His face would consume."

¹⁴ Hadith: "God created Adam on His form."

what his flocks, over whom he is khalif, demand of him because of their dependence on him (and he must undertake all they need from him) he would not have been khalif over them.

The khalifate is only valid for the Perfect Man, whose exterior form comes from the realities of the universe and its forms, and whose inner form is based on His form, may He be exalted! For that reason, God has said of him, "I am his hearing and his sight."¹⁵ He did not say, "his eye and his ear." So He differentiated between the two forms. It is the same for every existent in the universe which appears according to what the reality of that existent demands of it. Nonetheless no one totally comprehends what the khalif has. One only surpasses others by this comprehensiveness. If it were not for the diffusion of God into the existents by the form, the universe would not have any existence. Similarly, were it not for these universal intelligible realities, no principle would have appeared in individual existent things. From this reality the universe depends on God for its existence. So all is in need, and nothing is independent.

This is the truth and we have not spoken metaphorically. If I speak of a something independent without any need, you will know Who I mean by it. The whole is tied to the whole and cannot be separated from it, so understand what I have said! Now, you have learnt of the formation of the body of Adam his outer form and the formation of his spirit, his inner form, so he is the Real and a created being. Now you have learnt of the formation of his rank which is the comprehensiveness by virtue of which he is worthy of the khalifate. Adam is the unique self from which the perfect human species was created according to His words, "O mankind, be fearful of your Lord who created you from a single self, and created its mate from it, and disseminated many men and women from the two of them." (4:1)

His words, "Be fearful of your Lord," mean to make of what has appeared from you a safeguard for your Lord and make what is concealed of you, which is your Lord, a safeguard for yourselves. The matter consists of blame and praise, so be His safeguard in the blame and your safeguard in the praise, so that you will be among those of knowledge and adab. Then He showed him what He had placed in him, and He put that in His two hands — one handful contained the universe and the other handful contained Adam and his descendants — and He showed them their ranks in Adam.

Then God informed me in my inner heart (sirr) of what He placed in this Imam, the great progenitor. I have put in this book some of what was allotted to me but not all of what I realised. A book could not contain that and not even the present existent universe could contain it. I have put some of what I have witnessed in this book, as the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, defined it. It was the divine wisdom in the word of Adam, that is, this chapter.

Then there is the wisdom of angelic inspiration in the word of Seth, the wisdom of divine inspiration in the word of Noah, the wisdom of purity in the word of Enoch, the wisdom of being lost in love in the word of Abraham, the wisdom of truth in the word of Isaac, the wisdom of the elevation of the word in the name of Ishmael, the wisdom of the spirit in the word of Joseph, the wisdom of unity in the word of Eber, the wisdom of revelation in the word of Salih, the wisdom of the heart in the word of Jethro, the wisdom of the power of the word of Lot, the wisdom of the decree in the word of Ezra, the wisdom of

¹⁵ ref. to hadith qudsî via Abu Hurayra, "My slave does not draw near Me with anything I love more than what I have made obligatory for him. My slave continues to draw near me with superogatory actions until I love him. When I love him, I am his hearing with he hears, his sight by which he sees, his hand with which he strikes, and his foot with which he walks." (Sahih al-Bukhari, 81:38:2)

prophethood in the word of Jesus, the wisdom of mercy in the word of Solomon, the wisdom of existence in the word of David, the wisdom of the soul in the word of Jonah, the wisdom of the unseen in the word of Job, the wisdom of majesty in the word of John the Baptist, the wisdom of possession in the word of Zachariah, the wisdom of intimacy in the word of Elijah, the wisdom of benevolence in the word of Luqman, the wisdom of the Imam in the word of Aaron, the wisdom of sublimity in the word of Moses, the wisdom of what one turns to in the word of Khalid, and the wisdom of uniqueness in the seal of Muhammad.

There is a seal for each wisdom. So I have condensed these wisdoms according to what is established in the Mother of the Book, and I complied with what was written out for me, and stopped at what was set as a limit for me. Even if I had desired to do more than that, I would not have been able to do so. Indeed, the Presence forbids that, and God is the One who grants success. There is no Lord but Him.

The Wisdom of Angelic Inspiration¹ in the Word of Seth

Know that the gifts and favours which are lavished in this world, whether through the mediation of human beings or without it, fall into two categories: the gifts of the Essence and the gifts of the Divine Names. These two categories are distinct among the people of spiritual taste according to whether they come from a specific request for a specific thing, from a general request, or without any request. This applies whether they are gifts of the Essence or gifts of the Divine Names. They are specific when someone says, "O Lord, give me such-and-such a thing," and specifies something which occurs to him. They are general when someone says, "Give me what You know is good for all my parts, subtle and gross," without specifying it.

The askers fall into two groups — one group makes the request from a natural impulse to hasten its attainment, "for man is impetuous;" (17:11) and the other group asks because they know that there are matters with God which, in the foreknowledge of God, are only obtained after a request. They say, "Perhaps what I ask of Him is something of that sort." Their request takes into consideration this possibility. They do not know what is in the knowledge of God, nor what their capacity to receive will grant them. This is because it is one of the most difficult things to know capacity at any moment, for it refers to the capacity of the individual at that time. Furthermore, had he not been disposed by his capacity to make the request, he would not have made that particular request.

The goal of the people of presence², who do not possess such a knowledge, is to know it in the moment in which they find themselves. They know by their state of presence what God has given them in that moment. and they only receive it by their predisposition for it. They are of two sorts: one group knows their predisposition from what they have already received, and the other group knows what they are going to receive based on their predisposition. This latter group has the most perfect recognition of predisposition.

Among this group are those who make a request, neither to hasten it nor for the possibilities of favour, but rather to comply with the command of God when He says, "Call on Me and I will answer you." (40:60) This sort of person is the pure slave and when he asks, his aspiration (himma) is not attached to what he asks for, be it specific or not, rather his aspiration is merely in obedience to his Lord's command or not. When his state requires, he asks for slavehood, and when it requires entrustment [to God] and silence, he is silent. So Job and others were tried, and they did not ask God to remove their affliction from them. Then at another moment, their state required that they ask that it be removed, and God removed it from them.

The immediate granting of a request, or its deferment, depends on the decree which has been determined for it by God. If the request coincides with the moment, the answer comes quickly, and if the moment is deferred — either in this world or the next, the answer is also deferred except for the answer from God which is, "At your service"³ — so understand this well!

¹ Nafth, to puff, blow or spit, hence inspiration. Hadith, "He (Gabriel) inspired or put (nafatha) into my heart..." Hence poetry is called the nafth of Satan.

² The people of the presence are those who see everything as coming to them from God and everything as effected by God.

³ Labbayk.

As for the second category, it is received without making a request, and by "without request" we mean verbal expression of it. In actuality, there must always be a request — be it articulated, or by a state, or from a predisposition. Similarly, unrestricted praise only takes place through verbal expression. The state determines the meaning, for that which induces you to praise God is determined for you by a Name of Action⁴ or a Name of Disconnection⁵. In the case of the predisposition of the slave, its possessor is not conscious of it, but he is aware of his state because he knows both what his motive is and the state itself. Predisposition is the most hidden form of making requests.

That which prevents some people from asking is their knowledge that God has predetermined their destiny, so they have prepared themselves to receive whatever comes from Him, and they have withdrawn from their selves and their desires. Among these people are those who know that the knowledge which God has of them in all their states is their basic constitution in the state of their permanent source-form from before existence. They know that God will only give them what their source allows them according to God's knowledge of it when they were in their permanent source-forms. Thus these people know that God knows the way they will obtain anything.

There is no higher, nor more unveiled group among the People of God than this group, who understand the secret of the Decree. They, in turn, fall into two sorts: those who know it in general and those who know it in particular. Those who know it in particular are higher and nearer perfection than those who know it in general. Such a person knows what is in the knowledge of God for him — be it by God informing him of the knowledge his own source has accorded to Him, or be it by direct unveiling to him from his permanent source-form whose unfolding states are endless. So he, in his knowledge of himself, is in the position of having God's knowledge of him, because it is derived from the same source. In respect of the slave, concern from God is predestined for him, and it is constituted by the sum of the states of his source which the possessor of this unveiling perceives when God allows him to perceive it, i.e., the states of his source. When God informs him of the states of his permanent source-form upon which the form of his existence depends, it is not in the capacity of the creature in this state to perceive what God perceives of his permanent source-form upon which the form of his existence depends, it is not in the capacity of the creature in this state to perceive what God perceives of these permanent sources in the state of their non-existence, since they are but essential relations without any form. In this respect, we say that divine concern precedes the slave's need because of this equivalence in the communication of knowledge.

In this way God speaks so that we will know, and it is an expression which is completely specific — not as is imagined by those who do not drink from this source. The goal of disconnection is to make that intimentness in knowledge belong to Knowledge. It is the highest aspect of this question which the *mutakallim*⁶ can comprehend with his intellect — unless he considers knowledge to be distinct from the Essence. If he does this, he ascribes relativity to knowledge, and not to the Essence, and because of this,

⁴ Like the Giving, the Provider.

⁵ Tanzih, making God free of any connection to His creation. Names like the Absolutely Pure (al-Quddûs).

⁶ The people of words — theologians and philosophers. They are unable to enter the realm of reflection and meditation that is the Sufic domain, and thus some of them oppose the Sufic teaching — mistaking the doctrine's meanings since they cannot intellectually identify them with a specific set of physical practices and direct inner experience

he sets himself apart from the realised ones among the People of God, who are endowed with unveiling and real existence.

Let us return to those gifts which are either the gifts proceeding from the Essence or the Names. As for the favours, gifts and graces of the Essence, they only come by means of divine tajalli⁷. Tajalli only comes from the Essence by means of the form of the predisposition of the one to whom the tajalli is made. It never occurs otherwise. The one who receives the tajalli will only see his own form in the mirror of the Real. He will not see the Real, for it is not possible to see Him. At the same time, he knows that he sees only his own form. It is the same as a mirror in the Visible world inasmuch as you see forms in it or your own form but do not see the mirror. At the same time, however, you know that you see the forms, or your own form, only by virtue of the mirror. God manifests that as a model⁸ appropriate to the tajalli of His Essence, so that the one receiving the tajalli knows that he does not see Him. There is no model nearer or more appropriate to vision and tajalli than this. When you see a form in a mirror, try to see the body of the mirror as well — you will never see it. It is true that some people who perceive this say that the reflected form is imposed between the vision of the seer and the mirror. This is the most that it is possible to say, and the matter is as we have mentioned. We clarified this in the *The Meccan Revelations*.

If you wish to taste this, then experience the limit beyond which there is no higher limit possible in respect of the creature. Neither aspire to, nor tire yourself out in trying to go beyond this degree, for in principle, there is only pure non-existence after it.

Thus God is your mirror in which you see yourself, and you are His mirror in which He sees His Names. His Names are not other than Himself, as you know. The matter is confusing. One of us implied ignorance of the matter as part of knowledge and said, "The incapacity to achieve perception is perception."⁹ Some of us know but do not express it in this way, even though it is the highest of words. Knowledge does not give incapacity to know as the first one said, but rather knowledge gives him the same silence which incapacity gives. This is the highest level of those who have knowledge of God.

This knowledge only belongs to the Seal of the Messengers and the Seal of the Awliya. The Messengers and Prophets only see it from the niche of the Messenger who is the Seal. The Awliya only see it from the niche of the wali who is the Seal. Even the Messengers only see it to the extent that they see it from the niche of the Seal of the Awliya, for Message and Prophethood — by which I mean the Prophethood of bringing the Sharia and its message — ceases, but wilaya never ceases. Thus the Messengers, as much as they are, see what we have mentioned only from the niche of the Seal of the Awliya. How could it be different for other awliya? Although the Seal of the Awliya is subject to the judgement which the Seal of the Messengers brought through the Sharia, that does not diminish his station nor does it detract from what we have said, for something which is lower from one point of view can be higher from another.

⁷ A manifestation by which something is made clear and unobscured, as the bride is displayed to the husband or the rust removed from a sword or mirror so that it shines. The tajalli is the unveiling of a spiritual reality in the realm of vision. It is a direct-seeing into the nature of existence, a showing forth of the secrets of the One in the celestial and terrestrial realms

⁸ Mithal, a Quranic term which indicates learning not by logical but by analogical method. It is simply the ACCESS to the parable and not the parable or any idea that the "metaphor" equals its interpretation. It has no specificity. Mithal is grasped "on the wing" so to speak. It cannot be explored or analysed or extended. That is to say it must not be approached rationally but empathetically with direct and clear seeing-into.

⁹ Abu Bakr as-Siddiq.

Confirmation of this occurred in the history of our Sharia in the excellence of the judgement of 'Umar regarding the prisoners of Badr¹⁰ and their treatment, and in the story of fertilization of the date-palms.¹¹ It is not necessary that the perfect have precedence in everything and in every rank. The Rijâl¹² regard precedence as being in the degrees of knowledge of God. Here is their goal. As for the things which are in-time, they do not attach their thoughts to them, so realise what we have mentioned!

Khidr said to Moses, "I have knowledge which God has taught me, and which you do not know, and you have knowledge which God has taught you and which I do not know."¹³ It is like the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, in relation to a brick wall which was complete except for one brick¹⁴, and the Prophet was that one brick although he himself only saw the place for the single brick. The Seal of the Awliya must also have this sort of vision. He sees the same as the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, saw, but he sees a place for two bricks in the wall, and that the bricks are made of gold and silver. He sees that there are two bricks missing in the wall, and he sees that they are a silver brick and a gold brick. He must see himself as being disposed by nature to fill the place of these two bricks. The Seal of the Awliya is these two bricks by which the wall is completed. The necessary reason for which he sees himself as two bricks is that he follows the Sharia of the Seal of the Messengers outwardly — which is the place of the silver brick. This means the outward Sharia with all that pertains to it of ordinances which are taken from God by the secret, according to the outward form which conforms to the secret because he sees the matter for what it really is. He must see the matter in this manner, for it is the place of the golden brick in the inwardly hidden. It is taken from the source from which the angel brought it, the same angel who brought the revelation to the Messengers. If you have understood what I have alluded to, then you have indeed acquired useful knowledge!

All the Prophets, from Adam to the last of the Prophets, take their light from the niche of the Seal of the Prophets, may God bless him and grant him peace. Even though the existence of his clay was deferred, the last Prophet was nevertheless present in his reality, according to his statement, "I was a Prophet when Adam was between water and clay."¹⁵ Every other Prophet only became a Prophet by being described by divine qualities inasmuch as God is described as the Praiseworthy Wali¹⁶.

The Seal of the Messengers, in respect to his wilaya, is connected to the Seal of the Awliya in the same way in which Prophets and Messengers are connected to it. He is a wali, Messenger, and Prophet. The Seal of the Awliya is a wali and the heir who takes directly from the source, contemplating the ranks. He is the most beautiful of the beauties of the Seal of the Messengers, Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace, the overseer of the community, and the master of the sons of Adam by reason of

¹⁰ After Badr, Abu Bakr asked the Prophet to either forgive or allow the prisoners to be ransomed. 'Umar said that they should be killed. Eventually, the Muslims reached a consensus that the captives should be ransomed and they were. Later the verse was revealed, "It is not for a Prophet to take captives..." (8:67)

¹¹ When the Prophet had been asked about whether palm-trees should be pollinated and then later said, "You have the best knowledge of these things of your world".

¹² Rijal (sing. rajul): The men. Meaning the men of gnosis and illumination. Those who know — that is — who know how-it-is, and not the veiled fantasy experience of so-called ordinary sensory perception which is, as we now know, in direct contradiction to the physical reality of matter according to high-energy physics.

¹³ cf. Quran 18:65.

¹⁴ Hadith in al-Bukhari (2815) and Muslim.

¹⁵ Hadith in at-Tirmidhi and Musnad Ibn Hanbal.

¹⁶ Quran 42:28, "It is He who sends down abundant rain after they have lost all hope, and He unfolds His mercy; He is the Praiseworthy, the Wali".

opening the door of intercession. He specified a particular state which is not universal.¹⁷ In this special state, he has precedence over the Divine Names. So the All-Merciful only mediates with the Avenger for the people of affliction through the intercession of the mediators. Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace, obtained mastery in this special station. Whoever understands the ranks and the stations does not find this discourse difficult.

As for the gifts of the Names, know that God bestows mercy on His creation which is wholly from the names. Either it is a pure mercy, like the excellence of the provision which they have in this world or on the Day of Rising which is bestowed by that name, the Merciful, and so is a gift of mercy, or it is a mixed mercy like the taking of a disagreeable remedy which is followed by relief — it is still a divine gift. Divine gifts can only possibly be given through the intermediary of the guardians of the Names. Sometimes God gives it to the slave by means of the All-Merciful, and so the gift is pure from any adulteration which would be contrary to the nature of the moment, otherwise he would not receive the object and what would resemble it. Sometimes He gives by means of the Boundless, so it is general — or by the Wise, so He looks at what is fitter at the moment, or by the Giving, who gives what is good without those who receive it having to compensate for it by gratitude or deed. He gives by the Compeller, and so He looks at the environment and what is necessary to it. He gives by the Forgiving and so He looks to the environment and what is happening to the individual. If he is in a state which merits punishment, He veils him from it, and if he is in a state which does not merit punishment, He protects him from a state which would merit it. He is "protected from wrong action", "safeguarded", and other descriptions of that sort. The Giver is God in the sense that He is the Treasurer of all that is in His treasury, and God only brings forth from it according to a predestined decree through the intermediary of a name particular to that matter. So He gives everything its created form¹⁸ according to the name, the Just, and its brothers.

The Names of God are endless because they are known by what comes from them, and what comes from them is endless, even though they can be traced back to the limited roots which are the matrices of the Names or the presences of the Names. In reality, there is but one of the Names or the presences of the Names. In reality, there is but One Reality which assumes all these relations and aspects which are designated by the Divine Names. The Reality grants that each of the Names, which manifest themselves without end, has a reality by which it is distinguished from another Name. It is that reality by which it is distinguished which is the Name itself — not that which it shares.

It is the same with the gifts — every gift is distinct from another by personal nature, although they come from a single source. It is evident that this one is not that one. That is because the Names are distinct. Because of its boundlessness, in the Divine Presence there is nothing at all which repeats itself. This is the truth which is determined.

This was the knowledge of Seth, peace be upon him, and its spirit aids every spirit which discusses the like of this, except for the spirit of the Seal who receives replenishing knowledge directly from God, not from any spirit. No, rather it is from his spirit that his substance flows to all spirits, although he may not perceive that of himself at the time when his elemental body existed. However, in respect to his reality and his rank, he knows all of that essentially, just as he is ignorant of the composition of the elements (of his body). So he has knowledge and is ignorant, and he is capable of being described by contrary

¹⁷ He only can open the door of intercession because it is a special gift to him alone.

¹⁸ Quran 20:50: "Our Lord is He who gives each thing its created form and then guides it".

attributes even as the Origin admits of description with opposites such as the Majestic and the Beautiful, the Outward and the Inward, the Last and the First — and they are the same, and not other than He. Therefore, he knows and does not know, and he perceives and does not perceive, and he sees and does not see. It is by this knowledge that Seth received his name because it means "the gift". In His hand is the key to the gifts in their various types and relationships. So God gave him to Adam, and he was the first gift, and He only gave it from Himself.

All gifts in phenomenal being are manifested in this fashion — so no one receives anything from God and no one receives anything which does not come from himself. Not everyone recognises this. Only a few of the people of God know it. When you see one who recognises that, rely on him, for that one is the source of the purest purity and the elite of the elite of the Men of God. Whenever a person of unveiling sees a form which communicates to him gnosis which he did not have and which he had not been able to grasp before, that form is from his own source, no other. From the tree of himself he gathers the fruits of his cultivation, as his outer form opposite the reflected body is nothing other than himself, even though the place of the presence in which he sees the form of himself presents him with an aspect of the reality of that presence through transformation. The large appears small in the small mirror and tall in the tall, and the moving as movement. It can reverse its form from a special presence, and it can reflect things exactly as they appear, so the right side of the viewer is his right side, while the right side can be on the left. This is generally the normal state in mirrors, and it is a break in the norm when the right side is seen as the right and inversion occurs. All this is from the gifts of the reality of the Presence in which it is manifested and which we have compared to the mirror.

Whoever recognises his predisposition, recognises what he will receive. Not everyone who knows what he will receive, knows his predisposition, unless he knows it after receiving it, and this one knows it in a general way. Some people who are weak of intellect think that since it confirmed with them that God does what He wills, they deem it admissible that He could contradict wisdom and what the matter is in itself.¹⁹ Because of this, some of them go so far as to deny the possibility and affirm that which is necessary by essence and by other. The man who has achieved realisation, however, admits the possibility and knows its presence and knows what is possible and how it is possible, since in its source it is necessarily existent because of something other-than-it. From where is the name of other, which determines its necessity, valid for it? No one knows this distinction except those with particular knowledge of God.

It is in the footsteps of Seth that the last of this human species will be born, and he will carry his secrets. There will none of this species born after him, so he will be the Seal of the Begotten. A sister will be born with him, and she will emerge before him, and he will follow her with his head at her feet. He will be born in China, and he will speak the language of his country. Sterility will spread in men and women, so there will be much cohabitation without conception. He will call people to God, but will not be answered. When God takes him and the believers of his time, those who remain will be like beasts, not knowing what is lawful (halal) from what is unlawful (haram). They will act according to their natural instincts with lust, devoid of reason and law. Upon them the Last Hour will occur.

¹⁹ i.e., they permit that He do the impossible, like making existence, non-existence or non-existence, existence.

The Wisdom of Divine Inspiration¹ in the Word of Noah

Know that disconnection (tanzîh) among the people of realities in respect to God is the same as limitation and qualification, so the one who disconnects is either ignorant or ill-mannered if he only applies disconnection to Him and believes that about Him². When the believer who follows the Sharia disconnects and stops at that, and does not see anything else, he displays ill manners and slanders God and the Messengers — may the blessings of God be upon them! — although he is not aware of it. He imagines that he has reached the target and yet he has missed it, so he is like the one who believes in part and rejects part³. One especially knows that when the language of the various Sharias speaks about God as they do, they speak to the common people in the first sense, and to the elite in every sense which can be understood from the various aspects of that expression in any language in the usage of that language.

God manifests Himself in a special way in every creature. He is the Outwardly Manifest in every graspable sense, and He is the Inwardly Hidden from every understanding except the understanding of the one who says that the universe is His form⁴ and His He-ness (huwiyya), and it is the name, the Outwardly Manifest. Since He is, by meaning, the spirit of whatever is outwardly manifest, He is also the Inwardly Hidden. His relation to whatever is manifested of the forms of the world is the relation of the governing spirit to the form. The definition of man, for example, includes both his inward and outward; and it is the same with every definable thing. God is defined in every definition, yet the forms of the universe are not held back and He is not contained by them. One only knows the limits of each of their forms according to what is attained by each knower of his form. For that reason, one cannot know the definition of God, for one would only know His definition by knowing the definition of every form. This is impossible to attain, so the definition of God is impossible. Similarly, whoever connects without disconnection has given limits to God and does not know Him. Whoever combines connection and disconnection in his gnosis, and describes God with both aspects in general - because it is impossible to conceive in detail because we lack the ability to encompass all the forms which the universe contains - has known Him in general and not in particular, as he knows himself generally and not in particular. For that reason, the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, linked knowledge (ma'rifa) of God to knowledge of oneself and said, "Whoever knows himself knows his Lord." God says, "We will show them Our signs on the horizons (what is outside of you) and in themselves (what is your source) until it is clear to them (the contemplators) that it is the Truth," (41:53) inasmuch as you are His form and He is your spirit. You are to Him as your body-form is to you, and He is to you as the spirit which governs the body.

The definition contains your inwardness and outwardness, for the form remains when the spirit which governs it departs, and it is no longer man, but one can speak of it as resembling the form of man. There is no difference between it and the form made of wood or stone, upon which the name of man is only applied by metaphor and not by reality. God cannot vanish from the forms of the universe, as His definition of His divinity is by reality, not metaphor, as the definition of man applies only so long as he is alive. As the exterior of the form of man praises both his spirit, and the self-governed by it, with his

¹ Subbûh, name applied to God, the All-Perfect, disconnected from imperfections.

² If he does not go on to include tashbih, connection.

³ cf. Quran 4:149: "Those who reject God and His Messengers and desire to make division between God and His Messengers, saying, 'We believe in some and reject some.'"

⁴ By manifesting His attributes and Essence since everything is a proof and indication of Him.

tongue, similarly God made the forms of the universe which glorify His praise, but we do not understand their glorifying⁵. We do not embrace all forms in the universe. All are tongues of God uttering the praise of God and for that reason He said, "Praise be to God, the Lord of all the worlds," (1:1) i.e., all types of praise refer to Him. He is the Praiser and the One praised.

If you speak of disconnection, you limit Him,
and if you speak of connection, you define Him.
If you speak of the two together, then you are free of error
and you are an Imam and a master in knowledges of gnosis.

He who affirms duality, falls into shirk, and whoever speaks of uniqueness is a unifier⁶. Take care lest you be a dualist by connection, and take care lest you be a isolator by disconnection.

You are not Him, rather you are Him
and you see Him in the source of thing,
absolute and limited at the same time.

God says, "There is nothing like Him," and so He disconnects, "and He is the Hearing, the Seeing," (42:11) so He connects. God says, "There is nothing like Him," so He connects and doubles it⁷, and "He is the Hearing, the Seeing." Then He uses disconnection and makes Himself Unique.

If Noah had combined these two calls for his people, they would have answered him. He called them openly (71:8), and he called them secretly (71:9). Then he said to them, "Ask forgiveness of your Lord. Truly He is Endlessly Forgiving." (71:10) He said, "I have called my people night and day, but my calling has only made them more evasive" (71:5-6) because they knew what they had to do in answering his call.

So the knowledge of those who know God is what Noah indicated in respect to his people by praising them through blame. He knew that they would not answer his call because of the furqân⁸ it contained. The command is the Quran, not the Furqân. Whoever is established in the Quran does not incline to the Furqân. Even if the Furqân is in the Quran, the Quran contains the Furqân but the Furqân does not contain the Quran. For this reason, no one was favoured by the Quran except Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace, and this community which is the "best community ever to be produced before mankind." (3:110)

So "there is nothing like Him" unified several matters in one single matter. If Noah had articulated something like of this ayat, his people would have responded to him, because it contains connection and disconnection in a single ayat, rather in half an ayat.

⁵ Ref. to Quran 17:44, "There is nothing which does not glorify Him with praise, but you do not understand their glorification."

⁶ In this case, ignorant of the multiplicity of His Names and Attributes.

⁷ "Like Him" = "ka-mithlihi", the word "like" occurs twice: "ka" and "mithl", so like negates like, like a double negative.

⁸ Furqan: One of the names of the Quran, meaning a "discrimination" that which separates or distinguishes. Here presented as an opposite in a dyad: Quran/furqan, that is, discrimination/gathering.

Noah, peace be upon him, peace be upon him, called on his people at night in respect to their intellects and spirituality (ruhaniyya), which are unseen; and by day he called on them in respect to their outer forms and arrival. In his call, he did not unify with anything, like "there is nothing like Him." So their inward had a distaste for this separation, and it increased them in evasion. Then he said of himself that he called upon them that He might forgive them, not that He be unveiled to them. They understood that from him. That is why "they put their fingers in their ears and wrapped themselves in their clothes," (71:7) and this is the form of veiling to which he called them. So they answered his call by action, not by saying, "At your service."

There is both the confirmation of likeness and its negation in "There is nothing like Him." For this reason, the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, said of himself, "I have been given all the words."⁹ Muhammad, peace be upon him, did not call on his people by night and day, but rather he called upon them by night in the day and by day in the night. Noah said in his wisdom to his people, "He will send heaven down on you in abundant rain," (71:11) which is intellectual gnosis in meanings and metaphorical speculation, and "He will reinforce you with wealth," i.e., by what comes to you from Him.

Thus it is your wealth in which you have seen your form. So whoever among you imagines that he has seen Him, does not have gnosis, and whoever of you knows that he has seen himself, he is the gnostic. For this reason, people are divided into those who know God and those who do not know. "And sons" is what results from their logical speculation while the knowledge of the business (to which Noah called them) is based upon contemplation which is far from the results of thought. Their trade did not profit them¹⁰, so what they had in their hands, which they only imagined they possessed, vanished from them.

The kingdom belongs to the people of Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace, for God says "Give of that to which He has made you successors."¹¹ (57:7) For the people of Noah it is, "Do not take anyone besides Me as a guardian." (17:2) The kingdom was confirmed for the people of Muhammad, and the guardianship in it belongs to God. The people of Muhammad are the khalifs in it. The kingdom belongs to God and He is their guardian, and that is the kingdom of being appointed khalif. For this reason, God is the "King of the kingdom"¹² as a-Tirmidhi says. "They have hatched a mighty plotting," (71:22) because calling to God is the plotting of the One called; since He does not lack the beginning, He is called to the end, so they call to God. This is the source of devising according to inner sight. Noah said, "The affair belongs entirely to Him," so they answered Him with plotting as He called them.

The people of Muhammad came and knew what the call to God was in respect of its He-ness, rather what it is in respect to His Names. God says, "The day those who are godfearing are gathered to the All-Merciful."¹³ So He used the "particle of the end" (ilâ - to) and joined it to that Name, and we recognise that the universe is under the care of a Divine Name which requires them to be among the "godfearing".

⁹ Hadith in al-Bukhari and Muslim.

¹⁰ Reference to Quran, 2:16, "Those are the people who have sold guidance for misguidance. Their trade has brought no profit. They are not guided."

¹¹ Khalifs.

¹² Since He answers His slave who is the "kingdom". Technical term used by al-Hakim at-Tirmidhi and Abu Madyan, discussed by Ibn Arabi in *The Meccan Revelations*, Chapter 24, vol. I, p. 182.

¹³ ref. Quran 19:85.

The reality of taqwa¹⁴ is that man avoids ascribing blessings, perfections and praiseworthy attributes to himself or to others, except for God. He fears God through His acts and attributes. These things are evils from the spring of possibilities. They said in their plotting, "Do not abandon your gods. Do not abandon Wadd or Suwa' or Yaghuth or Ya'uq or Nasr." (71:22) Then they abandoned them ignorant of the Truth according to what they left of the idols. God has an aspect in every worshipped thing. Whoever recognises it, recognises, and whoever is ignorant of it is ignorant among the people of Muhammad. Your Lord decreed that you should worship only Him that is the judgement of your Lord.

The one who possesses knowledge knows who the slave is and in what form he is manifested as far as he is a slave. Separation and multiplicity are like the limbs of the sensory form and like faculties of meaning¹⁵ of the spiritual form. He only worships God in every worshipped object. The lowest one is the one who imagines that godness is contained in it. Were it not for this illusion, stones and other things would not have been worshipped. This is why He said, "Say: Name them!" (13:33) If they had named them, they would have named stone, tree, or star. If they had been asked, "Whom do you worship?" they would have replied, "God". They would not say "God" or "the god".

The highest knower does not use this imagination,¹⁶ but rather he says that this is a divine tajalli which one must exalt, and he does not restrict himself. The lowest one is the one possessed of fantasy: "We only worship them so that they bring us neared to God." (39:3) The highest knower says, "Your god is One God, so submit to Him," (22:34) wherever He is manifest, "and give good news to the humble-hearted" who humble the fire of their nature. They spoke to it (the fire), and did not say "nature". "They have misguided many people," (71:24) i.e., they perplexed many in the multiplicity of the One by aspects and relations. "Do not increase not the wrongdoers" because their selves are from the totality of the chosen ones who inherited the Book and they are the first of the three,¹⁷ which precedes the ambivalent and the outdoer, "in anything but misguidance", except in the perplexity of the man of Muhammad who says, "Increase me in perplexity."¹⁸ "Every time it shines on them, they walk in it.

¹⁴ Fearfulness of God which is reflected in one's behaviour.

¹⁵ Meaning. Meaning does not carry the ordinary connotative significance that it has in the science of semantics. In the Sufic science meaning is not allied, but inseparable from the experience of the recognition of meaning. In other words, it is not a "thing" which can be apprehended with the qualities of thingness. It is a mode of experiencing which takes places in a zone of awareness that is in itself a realm of the inward reality cognised in the waking state. Meaning/sensory, ma'na/hiss.

¹⁶ Khayal: An important term. Khayal means imagination, but in the special technical language of Ibn Arabi the khayal contains an outer and inner meaning. Its outer (not inner) meaning is imagining in the ordinary sense of a "tangible reality" which is experienced mentally yet remains unreal, that is, untouchable and non-physical. Its inner meaning, however, is that faculty by which we solidify the objects — which are according to unveiling basically "not-there" - spatiality itself. There is much resistance to this in "rational" and programmed intellects as there is of the hand to the rock in "common sense" experience. The rock is there, it does not budge. There is, it must not be forgotten, a threshold situation where this is not so, for if the subject were brain-damaged, subjected to a hallucinogen, or hypnotic trance, then the object would experientially melt away. That is still not the same as seeing in which things are seen as-they-as in one unified field without differentiation, while alert within that condition of experiencing. And this state brings with it wisdom beyond the recognition of how-it-is at that moment — in other words a new understanding is established by the experience.

¹⁷ Ref to Quran 35:32, "...but some of them wrong themselves, some are ambivalent, and some outdo each other in good.

¹⁸ Hayra: Bewilderment. A Key term, Hayra is not a negative situation — it is the condition in which the seeker finds every intellectual channel blocked, every pathway of reason clashing against the other in contradiction so that it induces in the seeker a state of intensity. This intensity by virtue of its inner tension creates a condition we call

When the darkness comes over them, they stop." (2:20) So the perplexed one turns about, and the circular movement is about the axis which he does not leave.

The one who has a stretched-out path is inclined to leave the goal, seeking what the possessor of imagination has in it, and his end is that imagination. He has "from" and "to" and what is between them. The one who has a circular movement has no beginning, "from", which clings to him, and no end, "to", is judged of him. Thus he has the most perfect existence. He "is given all the words"¹⁹ and wisdoms. "And because of their errors" which is that which is recorded for them, "they were drowned" in the seas of the knowledge of God which is perplexity among the men of Muhammad. When the seas were heated up²⁰, "they were put into a fire" in the source of water, "and they found no one to help them besides God." (71:25) God is the source of their helpers, and so they were destroyed in it for time without end. If He had brought them out to the shore, the shore of nature, He would have brought them down from this high degree. All belongs to God and is by God, rather it is God.

Noah said, "My Lord!" and he did not say, "My God," for the Lord has immutability, and "God" differs according to the Names. So "every day He is engaged in some affair." (55:29) By Lord, he meant something with an immutable quality. "Do not leave upon the earth" and he called on them to go into its Muhammadan interior. "If you let down a rope, it would fall on God,"²¹ "to Him belongs what is in the heavens and what is in the earth." When you are buried in it, you are in it and it is your container, and "We will return you into it and We will bring you forth from it again," (20:55) by the difference of existence. "...of the unbelievers" who wrap themselves in their garments and put their fingers in their ears, seeking veiling because he called on them that He might forgive them. Forgiveness is the veiling of wrong actions, "not even one" so that the benefit will become universal like the call. "If You leave any," i.e. if You call them and then leave them, "they will misguide Your slaves," i.e. confuse them and so bring them out of their service to what they have of the secrets of lordship. They will think themselves lords after they were slaves in themselves. Thus they are slaves and lords. "They will spawn nothing" i.e. they will not have any result or manifest anything except their being shameless that is, the manifestation of what veils the unbelievers is that they were veiled from what appeared after their manifestation. They manifested that which veils, so they were veiled after their appearance.

The thinker is confused and does not recognise the goal of the shameless in shamelessness²², or the unbeliever in his disbelief, yet the person is but one. "My Lord, forgive me," i.e. veil me and that which concerns me so that my rank and station are unknown, as the rank of God are unknown in His statement, "They do measure God with His true measure"²³; "and my parents" of whom I am a result, and they are the intellect and nature; "and all who enter my house," i.e. my heart, "as believers" believing in what it contains of divine reports, and it is what their selves occasioned, "And all the believers, men (the intellects) and women (the selves)."

hayra. It is a collapse of separation - a kind of "white hole" — which results in gatheredness. That is, the hayra creates a new condition which is its result and that result is a breakthrough into an illumination of the Real.

¹⁹ Meaning the Prophet Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace, who was given all the words.

²⁰ By the oven (from which the water gushed out of the earth in the Flood.)

²¹ Hadith.

²² The manifestation of lordship.

²³ 6:91, 22:84, 39:67.

"Do not increase the wrongdoers (dhâlimîn)" who are from the darkness (dhulumât), the people of the unseen, hiding behind the veils of darkness, "except in ruin" i.e., in destruction. Thus, they do not recognise themselves because they see the Face of God outside of them. Among the men of Muhammad, "All things are passing except His Face." (28:88) Ruin is destruction. Whoever wishes to understand the secrets of Noah must rise into the sphere of Noah²⁴. It is in our book, at-Tanazzulat al-Mawsuliyya.

²⁴ The Sphere of the Sun.

The Wisdom of Sanctification¹ in the Word of Enoch

Elevation has two references — one of place and one of rank. Elevation of place is "We raised him up to a high place," (19:57) and the highest of places is that upon which the mill of the world of the spheres revolves. It is the sphere of the sun and in it is the station of the spirituality of Enoch, peace be upon him! There are seven heavens under it and seven heavens above it, and it is the fifteenth. That which is above it is the red heaven, i.e., Mars, the heaven of Jupiter, Saturn, the heaven of fixed stars, the Starless Heaven and the heaven of the constellations, the heaven of the Kursi and the heaven of the Arsh. That which is below it is the heaven of Venus, Mercury, the Moon, the circle of ether, the circle of air, the circle of water, and the circle of earth. It is the axis of the heavens, and it is a "high place".

As for the elevation of rank, it is for us, the people of Muhammad. God said, "When you are uppermost and God is with you" (47:35) in this height. He exalts Himself above place, not above rank. When the selves of those among us who do deeds are afraid, He follows the mention of "being with" with His words, "He would not cheat you of your deeds." The deed demands place and knowledge demands rank. So He joined the two heights for us — elevation of place by deed and elevation of rank by knowledge. Then to disconnect the association of being with, He said, "Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High," (87:1) above this association in meaning.

It is one of the most wondrous of matters that man is the highest of existent things — I mean the Perfect Man, and elevation is only attributed to him by subordination either to place or rank which is a degree. So he is not high by his essence, he is high by the height of place and the height of rank, for these possess height. Height of place is like the All-Merciful settling on the throne², and it is the highest of places. Height of rank is "All things are passing except His Face," (28:88) and "the whole affair will be returned to Him," (11:123) and nothing has existence along with God.

When God said, "We raised him up to a high place," He made high an adjective for place. Since your Lord said to the angels, "I am putting a khalif in the earth," (2:30) this is height of rank. He said about the angels, "Were you overcome by arrogance, or are you one of the exalted?" (38:75) so He gave elevation to the angels. If the angels had possessed that elevation by simple virtue of the fact that they are angels, then all the angels would have been included in this elevation. It was not common to them in the definition of angel. We recognise that this is elevation of rank with God. It is the same for the khalifs of the people. If their elevation with the khalifate had been an elevation by essence, every man would have it. It is not general and so we know that that elevation is by rank.

One of His names is the High. Over whom, when there is nothing except Him? So He is the High by His Essence. Is He High over that which is particular, when there is no He except Him? His elevation is by virtue of Himself, and He, in respect to existence, is the source of existents. Those in-time things which He calls high in themselves are not other than Him. He was the High when there was no height of relativity because the source-forms in non-existence had not smelt the scent of existence. They remain in their state in spite of the multiplicity of forms in existents, but the source is the same from the whole in the whole. The existence of multiplicity lies in the names which are the relationships, and they are non-existent matters. There is only the source which is the Essence. He is High through Himself, not by

¹ Quddus

² Quran 7:54, "...then He settled Himself firmly on the Throne."

any ascription to another. From this standpoint, there is no height of relative relation in the universe, but the aspects of existence which are distinct. The height of relativity exists in the one Source in respect of the many aspects. For that reason, you say of Him, Him and not Him, and you and not you.

Al-Kharraz³, may God have mercy on him, who is one of the aspects of God and one of His tongues with which He speaks of Himself, said that one only has gnosis by joining opposites together in respect of Him. "He is the First and the Last, the Outwardly Manifest and the Inwardly Hidden." (57:3) He is the source of what appears and the source of what is hidden in the state of its manifestation. There is none who sees Him other than Him and there is none who is hidden from Him. So He is manifest to Himself and hidden from Himself. He is called Abu Sa'id al-Kharraz and other than that from the names of things in-time.

The Hidden says "No" while the Manifest says, "Me," and the Manifest says, "No" while the Hidden says, "Me". This is found in every opposite, yet the speaker is one, and he is the same as the hearer in the statement of the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, about what their selves say⁴, for they speak and hear what they say, and know what their selves say. The source is but one, even if the judgements are different. There is no way that anyone can be ignorant of this sort of thing. Every man knows from himself, and it is the form of the Real.

So things are mixed and numbers appear by the one in the known ranks. Thus "one" brought number into existence, and number divides the One. The principle of number only appeared through the numbered. Part of the numbered is non-existent, and part is existent. The thing is non-existent in relation to the senses while it is existent in relation to the intellect. There must be number and numbered. That must grow from one and it grows because of it. Every rank of the numbers has one reality like 9, for example, and 10 and down to 2, and upwards without end, and its reality is not a sum.

A name is not perceived by the addition of ones. 2 is one reality, and 3 is one reality, and so on until the end of these ranks. Even though the source [of numbers] is one, the source of one of them is not the source of the others. Addition encompasses them all, and it speaks of them from them and judges them by them. Twenty ranks⁵ appeared in this statement, so composition entered into them. You will continue to affirm the source of what you deny in itself. Whoever recognises what we have related of the numbers, and that negation is the same as their affirmation, knows that the Real, who is disconnected by disconnection, is creature by connection, even though the creature is distinct from the Creator. The matter is the creature/Creator and it is the Creator/creature. That is from one source, rather it is the One source and it is many sources. Look at what you see!

Abraham's son told him, "My father, do what you are ordered." (37:102) The child is the same as his father, so he only saw himself sacrificing himself, "and He ransomed him with an immense sacrifice."⁶ That which was manifested as a ram was manifested in the form of a human, and manifested in the form of a son. Rather, it is by the principle of the son being the same as the father. "He created from

³ Abu Sa'id Ahmad ibn 'Isa al-Kharraz, died in Cairo 286/899. He said, "I only knew God by joining the opposites," and then recited, "He is the First and the Last, the Outward and the Inward."

⁴ Hadith, "God forgives my people what their selves say to them as long as they do not act upon that."

⁵ 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100, 1000.

⁶ "And We ransomed him with an immense sacrifice." Quran: 37:107.

(one self) his mate." (4:1) He⁷ married his own self, and from him are both his companion and his child. The matter is one in number. It is the same for nature and what is manifested from it. We do not see it diminishing by what appears from it nor increasing by the lack of what other than it manifests. That which is manifested is not other than it, nor is it the same as what is manifested according to the variety of forms in principle. This one is cold and dry, and that one is hot and dry. They are joined by dryness, and distinct by another quality. The common source is nature, and the world of nature is composed of forms in one mirror. Rather, it is one form in different mirrors.

There is only bewilderment (hayra) by the dispersal of perspectives. Whoever knows what we have said is not bewildered. If he increases in knowledge, it is only from the principle of place, and place is the same as the source-form in which the Real varies in the locus of His tajalli. Conditions vary, so He assumes every condition. There is no condition except for the source in which He makes tajalli of Himself, and there is nothing except this.

By this aspect, God is creature, so interpret!
 And by this aspect, He is not creature, so remember!
 The inner sight of whoever understands
 what I have said is not confused, and only
 the one who perceives it possesses sight.
 The source of joining and separating is the same,
 and it is multiplicity which never remains or departs.

The One who is High in Himself is the One who possesses the perfection in which all matters of existence are absorbed, as are all non-existent relations, inasmuch as it is not possible that any of these attributes be lacking from Him, be they praiseworthy by custom, logic, or law, or blameworthy by custom, logic or law. That belongs only to the One named God. As for what is named other-than-God, it is either a locus of His tajalli or a form which is in it. If it is the locus of His tajalli, it contains distinction. Because of that, there must be distinction between the One who makes tajalli and the place of tajalli; if it is a form in it, that form is the source of the essential perfection because it is the same as what is manifested in it. That which belongs to God belongs to that form. However, it is not said that it is Him nor that it is other-than-Him.

Abu-l-Qasim ibn Qasi⁸ indicated this in his book, *The Removal of the Sandals*, and he said, "Each Divine Name is qualified by all the Divine Names, and described by their description." It is so. Each Name indicates the Essence and the meaning which is set out for it and which demonstrates it. In respect to its indication of the Essence, it possesses all the names, and in respect to its indication of the meaning which is singular to it, it is distinct from others, such as the Lord, the Creator, the Fashioner, etc. The Name is the same as the Named in respect to the Essence, and the Name is other than the Named in respect to the meaning which is particular to it.

If you have understood that the "high" is as we have mentioned, you know that it is neither place nor height of rank, for height of rank is particular to the administration of authority, like the Sultan and the judge, wazirs and qadis, and all who have rank, be they worthy of that rank or not. Height is by

⁷ Adam.

⁸ Sufi leader of rebellion against the Murabitun in the Algarve

attributes which are not like that. The most knowledgeable of people can be ruled by the person with the position of power, even if that person is the most ignorant of people. This is the height of rank according to the principle of what he has over me in himself. When he retires, his high rank vanishes. The one with knowledge is not like that.

The Wisdom of Being Lost in Love¹ in the Wisdom of Abraham

Abraham is called the intimate friend, and he was an intimate friend (khalîl), because he was penetrated (takhallal) and gathered all the qualities of the Divine Essence. The poet says:

You pervaded the course of my spirit,
and that is why the intimate friend is called the intimate friend.

It is like the colour which permeates the coloured, so it is a non-essential matter ('arad) in respect to its essential substance (jawhar), and it is not like the place and that which it occupies. Or it means the penetration of the Real into the existence of the form of Abraham. Each of these two principles is true as was mentioned, for each points to an aspect which appears without overstepping it.

Do you not see that the Real is manifest in the qualities of beings in-time and He gives news of that from Himself, and He is even manifest in the attributes of imperfection and the attributes of blame? Do you not see that the creature is manifest with the qualities of the Real from first to last, and all of them belong to him as the attributes of in-time things belong to the Real? "Praise belongs to God," so the results of praise from every praiser and one praised go back to Him, and "the whole affair will be returned to Him," (11:132) It includes what is blameworthy and praiseworthy, and there is only one or the other.

Know that when something is penetrated by something the first is contained by the second, so the penetrating is the name of the actor veiled by the penetrated, which is the name of the one acted upon, and it is the Outwardly Manifest. The name of the actor is the Veiled, the Inwardly Hidden. It is its food, as water permeates wool and so makes it expand. If the Real is the Outwardly Manifest, then the creature is veiled within Him, and creation is all the Names of the Real, His hearing and seeing, and all His ascriptions and discernments. If the creature is outwardly manifest, then the Real is veiled and hidden in him, and so the Real is the hearing of the creature, and his seeing, hand and foot, and all his faculties as it related in sound hadith.²

If the Essence were exempt from these relations, it would not be divinity. These relations are made by our sources, so we make Him god by our dependence on His godness. He is not recognised until we are recognised. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Whoever knows himself knows his Lord." Such a person is the creature with the most knowledge of God. Some sages, especially Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, claim that one can have gnosis of God through disregarding the world. This is false. Indeed, the non-time pre-time is not recognised as god until that which depends on its being God is known. Thus it is a proof of Him. Then after this, in the second state³, unveiling accords you that the Real Himself is the source of the proof of Himself and His godness. The universe is but His tajalli in the forms of their source-forms

¹ Huyûm is the intense love and passion which causes bewilderment and distraction.

² ref. to hadith qudsî via Abu Hurayra, "My slave does not draw near Me with anything I love more than what I have made obligatory for him. My slave continues to draw near me with superogatory actions until I love him. When I love him, I am his hearing with he hears, his sight by which he sees, his hand with which he strikes, and his foot with which he walks." (Sahih al-Bukhari, 81:38:2)

³ The first unveiling was annihilation (fanâ') and the second is going-on (baqâ').

whose existence is impossible without Him. He assumes various forms and modes according to the realities of these sources and their states, and this is after our knowledge of Him that He is our God.

Then the last unveiling comes, so our forms appear to you in Him, and some of us appear to others in the Real, and then some of us recognise each other and some of us are distinct from one another. Among us are those who recognise that our recognition of ourselves occurs in the Real, and some of us are unaware of the presence in which this recognition of ourselves takes place. "I seek refuge with God from being one of the ignorant." (2:67)

By the two unveilings together, He only judges us by ourselves, rather we judge ourselves by ourselves, but through Him. That is why He says, "God's is the conclusive argument," (6:149) meaning against those who are veiled when they say to the Real, in conformity with their desires, "Why did you do this or that to us?", thinking that it was not in conformity with their desires. "On the Day when the legs are bared," (68:42) means the matter which the gnostics unveil here. They see that the Real did not do to them what they allege that He did, but that it was from themselves. For He only lets them know what they are in themselves. From this their argument will dissolve, and the decisive proof of God will remain.

If you say, what is the benefit of His words, "If He had willed, He could have guided every one of you," (6:149; 16:9) we say in If He willed "if (law)" is a particle of impossibility showing impossibility. He only willed the matter as it is. But the source of possibility accepts the thing and its opposite in the principle of logical proof, and it is the same with any two logical principles. That which occurs is that which the possibility implies in the state of its immutability. The meaning of "If We had guided you" is, had He shown you the Truth. God does not open the inner eye of every possibility in the universe to the perception of the matter as it is. There are those who know and those who are ignorant. God did not so will, so He did not guide all of them, and He will not will it, and it is the same as if He had willed it. How would He will this which is not? His volition is unified in its connections. It is a relationship dependent on the known, and the known is you and your states. Knowledge does not have an effect on the known, rather the known has an effect on knowledge, and so it accords from itself what it is in its source.

Divine discourse relates according to what agrees with the ones addressed and what logical reflection accords it. It does not come according to what unveiling gives. For that reason, there are many believers, but the gnostics who possess unveiling are few. "There is not one of us who does not have a known station," (37:164) and it is what you are in your state of immutability which you manifest in your existence. This is if it is confirmed that you have existence. If existence is confirmed to the Real and not to you, the judgement is yours without a doubt in the existence of the Real. If it is confirmed that you are existent, then the judgement is yours without a doubt, even if the judge is the Real. It is only the overflowing of existence on you.

You only praise yourself and you only blame yourself, and praise is only due to God for the overflowing of existence, for that is His, not yours. You are His nourishment by conditions, and He is your nourishment by existence. He is specified by what specifies you. The command comes from Him to you, and from you to Him, even though you are called obligated, a passive name (mukallaf), and He is not called obligated since there is no imposition upon Him.

He praises me, and I praise Him.
He serves me and I serve Him.
In one state I draw near to Him,

and in sources I deny Him.
 So He knows me and I do not know Him,
 and I know Him and I witness Him.
 Where is independence
 when I help Him and assist Him?
 That is why the Real brought me into existence.
 Then I knew Him and manifested His existence.
 Hadith⁴ brought us that,
 and in me He achieved His goal.

Then the intimate friend, Abraham, peace be upon him!, possessed this rank by virtue of which he was called the intimate friend. For that reason, he made hospitality to guests a sunna. Ibn Masarra⁵ associates him with the angel Michael in respect to provisions. Provision is that which nourishes those provided for: when provision permeates the essence of the one provided for until nothing remains in it except permeation and nourishment flows in all the parts of the one nourished. There are no parts in divinity, so all the divine stations are penetrated which are designated by the Names, and by which His Essence is manifested.

We are His as our proofs confirm,
 and we are ours.
 Only my being belongs to Him,
 and we are His as we are ours.
 I have two aspects: Him and me,
 but He does not have "me" through me.
 However, His place of manifestation is in me,
 so we are His — like me.
 "God speaks the truth, and He guides to the Way." (33:4)

⁴ "I created existence so that I might be known."

⁵ Muhammad ibn Masarra al-Jabali, Andalusian Sufi and thinker, born in Granada 269 /883 and died near there in 319/931.

The Wisdom of the Real in the Word of Isaac

The ransom of a Prophet by an animal's sacrifice
 as an offering!
 How can the bleating of a ram be equal to the voice of a man?
 God Almighty magnified the ram out of concern for us or for it,
 but I do not see by what measure.
 There is no doubt that the bodies
 of cows and camels are larger,
 but they relinquished the rank of sacrifice
 to the offering of the ram.
 Would that I knew how a ram
 replaced the khalif of the All-Merciful with its small body!
 Do you not see that the command to sacrifice
 implies correspondence and promises gain and diminishes loss?
 There is no creature higher than the mineral,
 and after it comes the plant according to its ranks and measures.
 The animal comes after the plant,
 and each one had gnosis of its Creator by unveiling and evident proof.
 As for the one named Adam, he is limited
 by intellect, thinking, and the conventions of belief.
 It is that which Sahl (al-Tustari)¹ and the realizer
 said as we do² — because we and they are in the degree of Ihsan.
 Whoever witnesses the matter I have witnessed
 will say what I have said, both secretly and openly.
 Do not pay any attention to words
 which contradict our words and do not sow grain in the land of the blind!
 They are the "deaf and dumb" in the text of the Quran
 which the one protected from wrong action brought for our ears.

Know, may God support us and you! that Abraham, the intimate friend, peace be upon him, told his son, "I saw in a dream that I must sacrifice you." (37:102) He did not interpret it although the dream is the presence of the imagination (khayâl). It was a ram which appeared in the form of Abraham's son, and Abraham confirmed the vision. So his Lord ransomed his son from Abraham's illusion with the "mighty sacrifice", which was the interpretation of the vision with God, but Abraham was not aware of it.

The tajalli of form in the presence of the imagination requires another knowledge by which one can perceive what God means by that form. The Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, said to Abu Bakr when he interpreted a dream, "You have guessed part of it rightly, and you have missed part of it it." Abu Bakr asked him to inform him of what was right in it and what was wrong, but the Prophet did not do so.

God said to Abraham when He called him, "Abraham, you have discharged your vision." (37:105) He did not say to him, "You have confirmed the vision that it is your son" because he did not interpret it. He

¹ Famous Sufi who studied under Sufyan ath-Thawri. d. 282/896. Wrote a short commentary on the Quran.

² That the inanimate has more greater gnosis of God and obeys Him more than other creatures.

took what he dreamt literally, whereas dreams require interpretation. That is why the 'Aziz, the ruler of Egypt, said, "...if you can interpret dreams." (12:43) The meaning of interpretation is the transposition from the form of what one dreamt to another form. The cattle represented the hard years and the fertile years. If Abraham had been faithful to the dream, he would have sacrificed his son, since he believed in the dream that it really was his son, whereas with God it meant the "mighty sacrifice" in the form of his son. He ransomed him by what occurred in Abraham's mind, but it was not ransomed in actuality with God.

There is a common form to the sensory form of the sacrifice and the imaginary form of Abraham's son. If he had seen a ram in his imagination, he would have interpreted it as his son or something else. Then God said, "This was a most manifest trial," (37:106) i.e., his clear test, meaning his experience in knowledge — whether or not he knew what the perspective of the dream required in the way of interpretation. He knew that the place of the imagination required interpretation, but he neglected it and the condition inherent in it, and for this reason he believed in the vision.

Taqi ibn Mukhallad, the transmitter of traditions, did so too, having heard in a tradition he was sure of, that the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, said, "Whoever sees me in a dream, sees me when awake, for Satan cannot assume my form."³ So Taqi ibn Mukhallad saw the Prophet in a dream in which the Prophet gave him milk to drink. Taqi ibn Mukhallad believed his dream, but he made himself vomit and threw up the milk. If he had interpreted the dream, he would have known that milk means knowledge, equal to the quantity that he drank. Do you not see that the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, received a goblet of milk in a dream and he said, "I drank it until satiety came out of my nails, and then I gave the surplus to 'Umar." It was said, "Messenger of God, what do you interpret it as?" He replied, "Knowledge."⁴ He did not leave it as milk in its dream form since he had knowledge of the state of dreams and how they must be interpreted. It is known that the form of the Prophet, peace be upon him, which the senses see, is buried in Medina, and that the form of his spirit and his subtle form have never been seen by anyone nor by himself. For this reason, the spirit of the Prophet takes on material existence in the form of his body as he died, and nothing is missing from it. So it is Muhammad, peace be upon him, who appears in dreams through his spirit in a bodily form which resembles his buried body, for Satan cannot assume the form of his body⁵, may God bless him and grant him peace, and God protects the one who sees him. For this reason, whoever sees this form takes from it all that it orders or prohibits or gives good news of, even as he takes judgements from him in the life of this world — according to what they indicate from text, immediate or implicit. If he gives him something, that thing is subject to interpretation, unless it is manifest in the senses as it is in the imagination, and so does not require interpretation. It is based on this aspect that Abraham, the intimate friend, relied, even as Taqi ibn Mukhallad did. The vision has these two aspects⁶.

God taught us adab in what He did with Abraham and what He said to him when He gave him the station of prophethood. We know that when we see God in a form which logical reason rejects, we must interpret that form according to the Sharia, whether it is in the state of the one who sees Him, or in the

³ Al-Bukhari (6592); Muslim 42:10.

⁴ In Abu Dawud and Ibn Hanbal.

⁵ As in the hadith of al-Bukhari and Muslim.

⁶ Either it remains on its dream form or it is subject to interpretation.

place in which He is seen, or the two together. If logical reason does not refute it, then we take it as we saw it, just as when we see God in the Next World.

So the One, the All-Merciful,
has forms in every place from what is hidden and what is manifest.
If you said, "This is the Real!" you spoke truly;
and if you said, "It is something else," you interpreted.
His principle is not in one place rather than another,
but it brings the Real to the creatures.
When He manifests Himself to the eyes,
the intellects deny him by insistent proofs.
He is accepted in the tajalli to the intellects,
and in that which is called the imagination (khayâl).
That which is sound is the seeing.

Abu Yazid⁷, may God be pleased with him, says of this station⁸, "Had the Throne, and all it contains a hundred million times over, been in one of the corners of the heart of the gnostic, he would not have felt it." This is the magnitude of Abu Yazid in the world of bodies, but I say, "If the limitlessness of that which exists could be conceived of as being limited, and had it been contained as an existent source in one of the corners of the heart of the gnostic, he would not have been aware of it in his knowledge." For it is confirmed that the heart contains God, although it is not described by satiety. Had it been filled, it would have saturated.

Abu Yazid also said, "We have pointed to this station, saying:
O Creator of things in Yourself,
You encompass all You have created!
You create that whose being has no end in You,
for You are narrow and vast!
Had that which God created shone in my heart,
this shining dawn would not have shone.
But that which contains God
does not exclude creation.
How is that, O Hearing?

Anyone can create by illusion in his imagination that which has no existence save in the imagination. This is a common matter. By aspiration (himma), the gnostic creates that which has an outside existence in his aspiration. However, it continues only as long as the aspiration continues to preserve it without being tired by preserving what it created⁹.

When it happens that the gnostic neglects to preserve what he created by concentration, that creature ceases to exist, unless the gnostic has mastered all the presences and does not neglect anything. Rather, he must witness at least one of these presences. If the gnostic creates something by his aspiration and possesses this encompassment, that creature's form will appear in every presence, and the form will

⁷ Al-Bistami, d. 261/874. Famous Sufi known for his ecstatic expressions.

⁸ The station of the vastness of the heart.

⁹ Language derived from Quran 2:255, "...their preservation does not tire him.".

preserve itself. If the gnostic neglects a presence or many presences while seeing one of the presences, and while preserving the form of what he created in the presence he is in, all the forms will be preserved by the preservation of that form in the presence which he does not neglect. For neglect is never universal, either among the common or the elite. I have exposed a secret here which the People of God have guarded jealously, for it contains a refutation of their allegation of being the Real. For the Real is never unconscious of anything, and the slave must be unconscious of something in favour of something else. Inasmuch as he preserves that which he has created, he says, "I am the Real,"¹⁰ but he does not maintain it the way the Real maintains it that is the difference. Inasmuch as he is unconscious of any form and its presence, the slave is distinguished from the Real. He must be distinct, although all the forms are maintained by his preservation of a single one of these in the presence of which he is conscious. This is preservation by inclusion, and the preservation of the Real of what He created is not like that. Rather, His preservation is of each form in particular. This matter which I have just communicated has never been written about by anyone — neither by me nor by any others — except in this book. It is unique in time. Take care lest you forget it!

The presence which you remain conscious of, with the form which resembles it, is like the Book about which God said, "We have not omitted anything from the Book." (6:38) It therefore integrates the tangible and the intangible. None will recognise what we have said except the one who is himself a Quran¹¹. The one who fears God will have a furqân¹², which is, as we mentioned, this matter in which the slave is distinct from the Lord. This furqân is the highest furqân.

At one moment, the slave is the Lord without a doubt,
and at another the slave is most certainly the slave.
If he is the slave, he is vast by God,
and if he is the Lord, he is in a restricted life.
Insofar as he is the slave,
he sees the source of himself,
and without a doubt his hopes expand from him.
Inasmuch as he is a lord, he sees all of creation,
from the presence of angels and the kingdom, demanding from him,
And he is unable to answer their demands by his essence.
For this reason, some of the gnostics weep.
Be the slave of a Lord, and do not be the lord of His slave,
so you will not be suspended and tested in the fire.

¹⁰ Al-Hallaj.

¹¹ i.e., The Perfect Man.

¹² Quran 8:29, "O you who believe! If you have fear of God, He will give you a furqan..."

The Wisdom of Elevation in the Word of Ishmael

Know that the one called God is Unique (Ahad) by Essence and by all His names, and every existent thing is only attached to God by its own lord exclusively, for it is impossible for an existent to possess the whole. As for Divine Unity (ahadiyya), no existent possesses any of it because one cannot have one part of it while another has another part. Unity does not admit of divisibility. His Unity integrates all of Him by potentiality.

The happy one is the one is the one "who was pleasing to his Lord." (19:55) There is no one who is not pleasing to his Lord because it is by him that lordship (rububiyyah)¹ is sustained. He is pleasing to Him, and so he is happy. This is why Sahl at-Tustari said, "Lordship has a secret, and this secret is you." He was addressing every source. "Had the secret been disclosed, lordship would have been invalidated." He used the word "law"² which is the particle of impossibility — so it is never manifested, and lordship is never invalidated - for the source has no existence except by its Lord. The source is always existent, therefore lordship is never invalidated.

He who is pleasing is beloved, and all that the beloved does is beloved, so everything is pleasing, because the source could not act unless the act belonged to its Lord. The source is made tranquil by having an act attributed to it, but it is content with what appears in it and from it of the acts of its Lord, and is pleased with these acts, because every doer and producer is pleased with his act and product. He completes his act and product according to its basis. "He gives each thing its created form and then guides it," (20:50) that is, He revealed to it that He gave everything its creation, so it does not admit of decrease.

Ishmael, peace be upon him, by his discovery of what we mentioned "was pleasing to his Lord." In the same way, every existent thing who is pleasing to its Lord is also pleasing to the Lord of another, because lordship is only obtained from each of the names, not from the One of Unity. What is specific to it from the whole is only what is attributed to it. So He is its Lord. None is attached to Him in respect of His Unity. For this reason, the people of God are forbidden tajalli in the Unity. If you look at Him by Him, He is the One who is looking at Himself, and He continues to be Himself looking at Himself by Himself. If you look at Him by yourself, unity vanishes because of you. If you look at Him both through Him and through you, Unity also vanishes because the pronoun of the second person implies that there is something else besides that which is regarded. There must be some relationship which necessitates the

¹ Rububiyyah: Lordship, the quality of being a lord. A term derived from the Quranic descriptions of God's lordship over creation. One might say the ecology of natural existence. It is an essential element in Sufic cosmology and is a most sophisticated concept which surpasses the crude specificity and mechanistic views of evolutionist biology. It is an energy system of relationships in constant change and altering dynamics. It functions through the different realms, the atomic, the mineral, the plant, and so on. It relates the levels of living organisms from the unicellular up to man, and the interpenetrations of organism and environment. It re-defines "event" from crude historicity to a picture of organism/event in a unified field. It is the underlying concept which allows us to abandon the dead mind/body split of the dying culture. It permits us to utilise and develop the energy concepts of Islamic/Chinese medicine - which hold a common energy concept at base. Rububiyya permits us to observe ONE PROCESS at work throughout every level of the creational realities

² "Law" (if, but probably not) expresses an unlikely condition, while "in" (if, but probably yes) expresses a probable condition.

duality of the regarnder and regarded, and so Unity vanishes, even though there only exists the One who sees Himself by Himself. It is known that in this description, He is the Regarder and the Regarded.

It is not possible that the one who is pleasing be totally pleasing, unless all that he manifests comes from the act of the One who is pleased with him. Ishmael was distinguished from other individuals by how God described him, namely, that "he was pleasing to his Lord."

It is the same for every "self at peace" to which it is said, "Return to your Lord." He only commanded it to return to its Lord who called it, and so it recognised Him among the totality, "well-pleasing and well-pleased. Enter among My slaves!" (89:28) to the degree that they have this station. The slaves mentioned here refer to every slave who has gnosis of his Lord, who is content with Him, and does not turn to the Lord of another while preserving the unity of the source which is necessary. "Enter My Garden," which is My veil³, and My Garden is none other than you, so you veil Me by your essence. There is only gnosis of Me by you and you only exist by Me, so whoever has gnosis of you has gnosis of Me, and there is no gnosis of Me, for there is no gnosis of you. If you enter into the Garden, you enter into yourself, so you will know yourself by a gnosis other than the gnosis by which you had knowledge when you knew your Lord. You will have two sorts of gnosis: gnosis of Him in respect of yourself, and gnosis of yourself and Him in respect of Him, not in respect of you.

You are a slave and you are a lord
to whomever you are a slave in respect of.
And you are a lord and you are a slave
to whoever possesses the covenant in speech.
Every knot has a person over it who unravels it
by one who has another knot.

God is pleased with His slaves, and "they are well-pleasing and well-pleased with Him." He is pleasing, so the two presences confront each other and accept likes, and the likes are opposites because the two likes are a single reality which does not unify them since they would not then be distinct. There is only the distinct, so there is no like. There is no like in existence, and so there is no opposite in existence. Existence is one reality, and the thing is not opposite to itself.

Only the Real remains,
no phenomenal being remains.
There is nothing connected, nothing distinct.
For that reason, the proof of the eye-witness came,
so I only see His source with my eye when I see!

That is for "the one who fears his Lord" lest He makes distinction by his knowledge. By that distinction, we indicated the ignorance of sources in existence according to what the knower brought, so distinction occurs among the slaves, and distinction occurs among the lords. If distinction had not occurred, one divine name would have been interpreted in all its aspects by that by which another name is interpreted. The explanation of the Exalter is not that of the Abaser, and so on, but from the aspect of unity, as we said, every name indicates the Essence and its reality in respect to what it is. The One

³ Garden, Janna, also carries the connotation of veiling, concealing.

Named is but One. The Exalter is the Abaser in respect to the Named. It is not the Abaser in respect to itself and its reality. That which is understood differs in the understanding in respect to each of them.

Do not look at the Real.
 Free Him from creation.
 Do not look at creation,
 and garb it in other than the Real.
 Disconnect Him and connect Him,
 and stand in a seat of honour⁴.
 Stay in the state of gatheredness (jam') if you wish,
 and, if you wish, in the forms in separateness (farq).
 You will win all,
 even if all set out to carry the day.
 You will not be annihilated and you will not have going-on
 and the forms will not be annihilated
 and will not have going-on.
 Revelation will not be given to you in respect to another,
 and you will not receive it.

Praise is by the truth of the promise, not the truth of the threat. The Divine Presence demands praise which is praiseworthy in itself. So one extols the Divine Presence by the truth of the promise, not the truth of the threat, for one goes beyond it, "and do not imagine that God break His promise to His Messengers." (14:47) He did not say, "and his threat", rather He said that He will pass over their wrong actions even though he threatens not to. He praised Ishmael because "he was true to his promise." (19:54) Possibility vanishes in respect to the Real, since in it is that which demands the probable.

Nothing remains except the One
 who is true to His promise alone,
 and an eye does not remain
 seeing the threat of the Real.
 If they enter the abode of misery,
 in it they are in possession of delight, and a different bliss.
 Than the bliss of the gardens of endless-time, but the matter is the same.
 The difference between them occurs in the tajalli.
 It is called punishment ('adhab) from the sweetness ('udhuba) of its food,
 that is like the husk of it, and the husk protects it.

⁴ Quran 54:53-55, "The fearfully aware will be amid Gardens and Rivers on seats of honour in the presence of an All-Powerful King."

The Wisdom of the Spirit in the Word of Jacob

The Din¹ is two Dins: the Din with God and with the one whom the Real knows, and who has recognition of the fact that the Real knows him; and the Din with creation; and God takes account of it since its goal is conformity with what God has willed of the Sharia set down with Him. God said, "Abraham directed his sons to this, as did also Jacob, 'My sons! God has chosen this Din for you, so do not die except as Muslims'" (2:132) that is obeying Him. The Din brought the alif and the lam² of definition and acquaintance. It is the recognised Din. It is His words, "The Din with God is Islam," (3:19) and it is submission. So the Din is an expression of your obedience. That which is from God is the road which leads you to Him. Din is submission and the law (namus) is the road which God has set down.

Anyone who is described by submission to what God has prescribed for him is the one who has based himself on the Din, and it raises him up and establishes him as does the prayer. The slave is the product of the Din. God sets down judgements, and thus submission is the source of your action, and so Din is from your action. You will only achieve happiness by what comes from you. As happiness is established for you by your actions, so the Divine Names are only established by His actions, which are you and which are in-time. As He is called god by His effects, so you are called happy by your effects.

God bestowed His rank upon you since you established the Din and obeyed what He prescribed for you. I will enlarge on that, if God wills, in a useful manner, after we have clarified the Din which creation has which God takes account of when He says, "The Din is God's alone," (8:39) and all of it is from you, and not from Him except in respect to origin. God says, "They invented monasticism," (57:27) and monasticism consists of arbitrary esoteric rules (an-nawâmis al-hikmiya) which the known Messenger did not bring to the people from God by the traditional Prophetic method. When wisdom and clear benefit corresponded to these rules regarding the divine decision about the goal of the Sharia of God³, God took it into account according to what He Himself prescribed. God did not prescribe it for them. Then God opened between Himself and their hearts the door of divine concern and mercy while they were not aware of it, and in their hearts He made them esteem their rules by which they seek "the pleasure of God" beyond the Prophetic method known by Divine definition. God says, "They did not observe it" those people who devised these rules and what was prescribed for them "as it should have been observed" — "unless it was purely out of the desire to gain the good pleasure of God." That was what they believed about it.⁴

"To those of them who believed We gave their reward, but many of them are deviators." (57:27) "Many of them," i.e., those who have this worship prescribed for them, "are deviators," that is, do not submit to it and observe it properly. God does not accord to the one who does not obey it, a law which pleases Him, but the command requires submission. Its proof is that the one who is obligated either obeys with agreement or opposes it. The one who agrees and is obedient has no need of any discourse on it to prove it. The one who opposes it is seeking one of two matters from God to be judged regarding him:

¹ Din: The life transaction, literally the debt or exchange situation between two parties, in this usage the Creator and the created, or as some say between the conditioned and the unconditioned, the limited and the limitless, or the many and the One

² The definite article.

³ Which is the achievement of human perfection through knowledge and actions.

⁴ Hadith, "The people of knowledge are the heirs of the Prophets."

either overlooking of wrong actions and forgiveness, or being taken to task for that. One of the two is necessary because the command is true in itself. In any state, it is true that God guides His slave by his actions whatever state he is in, and so the state is the influencing factor.

Thus the Din is a reward, that is, the exchange for what is easy and for what for is not easy. "God is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him" (97:8, 58:22) is the easy reward, and "As for any one of you who has done wrong, We will make him suffer great punishment" (25:19) is the reward of what is not easy. He passes over their wrong actions and this is their reward. It is proven that the Din is the reward. As the Din is Islam, and Islam is the same as being led, it leads to what is easy (the reward) and what is not easy (the punishment), and so it is the repayment. This is the language of the people of outwardness.

As for its secret and inwardness, it manifests itself in the mirror of the existence of God, so it does not refer to possibilities from God other than what their essences in their states accord. They have a form in every state, and their forms differ according to the difference of their states. The tajalli differs according to the difference of the state. The effect occurs in the slave according to what he is. None gives him good except himself, and none gives him the opposite of good except himself. Thus he gives bliss to his essence, and he also punishes it. He only blames himself and only praises himself. "God's is the conclusive argument" (6:149) in His knowledge of them since knowledge depends on the known.

The secret which is above this in this sort of question is that possibilities are based on their origin from non-existence. The existence of the created reality is only by the forms of the states on which the possibilities are based in themselves and their sources. Thus you know who has pleasure and who has pain, and from each of these states you know what follows ('aqaba); and since it follows, you derive punishment ('uquba) and penalty ('iqab) from it. It permits good and evil as two opposites which custom calls the good reward, and the evil punishment.

For this reason, He designates and elucidates the Din by custom because He relates to it what is necessary and what his state demands. Din is custom or habit, and the poet said, "Like your habit (Din) with the mother of little Harith...", that is, like your custom. What is understood by custom or habit is that the matter itself recurs. This is not the case in Din. Custom is repetition, but custom is only one intelligible thing while resemblance in forms exists. We know that Zayd is the same as 'Amr in respect to humanness, but humanness does not recur since, had it done so, it would have multiplied. It is but one reality, and the one does not multiply itself. We know that Zayd is not the same as 'Amr in respect to personality. The person of Zayd is not the person of 'Amr in spite of the realisation that personality is common to both. In the sensory, we say that humanness recurs because of this resemblance, and we say in sound judgement that it does not. From one aspect, there is no habit in reward, and from another aspect, there is habit even as there is reward by one aspect and no reward by another aspect. Thus reward is also a state in the possible. This is a question about which those who know this matter are unaware, and it is part of the secret of the Decree which governs creatures. Know that it is as if it were said of the doctor that he is the servant of nature — in the same way, it is said of the Messengers and heirs 4 that they are the servants of the Divine Command among people. In the heart of the matter, they serve the states of possible things, and their service derives from the sum of their own states on which they are based in the state of the immutability of their sources. See how wondrous this is!

Is not the desired servant here the one who performs what is commanded by the one who is served, either by state or by word? So it is valid that the doctor be called the servant of nature if he acts

according to the principle of assisting it. Nature produces in the body of the one who is ill a special state of being by which he is called "ill". If the doctor were to assist nature by service, he would also increase the magnitude of the illness by it when he wants to repel the illness, seeking health. Health is also a part of nature by the growth of another state of being which differs from this state of being. Then the doctor is not the servant of nature, and yet he serves it inasmuch as he only heals the body of the one who is ill and changes that aspect, not the general one, for generalities are not valid in this sort of question. Thus the doctor is both a servant and is not a servant of nature.

In the same way, the Messengers and their heirs are in the service of the Real, and the Real has two aspects of judgement in respect to the states of the obligated. The matter proceeds from the slave according to what the will of God demands of it, and the will of God is attached to it according to what the knowledge of God demands of it. The knowledge of God is attached to it according to what the known accords it of its essence. The known only appears in its form. The Messenger and the heir serve the divine command by will, and yet they do not serve the will. The Messenger answered it seeking the happiness of the one who is under obligation. Had he served the Divine Will, he would not have given counsel, and yet he only gave counsel by it, i.e., the will. The Messenger and the heir are the doctors of the selves for Next life, obedient to the command of God when He commands them. So he looks at God's command, and sees that He has commanded him to do that which opposes His will. The command is only what He wills, and for this reason, it is the command.

He wills the command and it occurs, and He did not will the occurrence of what He commanded the commanded one to do, and so it did not occur from the commanded one therefore it is called opposition and rebellion. The Messenger conveys the news, and this is why he said, "The Sura of Hud (and its like) made me white-haired," when they came to him from His words, "Go straight as you have been commanded." (11:112) He did not know whether he was commanded to what complies with the will, so that it occurs, or to what does not comply with the will, so that it does not occur.

No one recognises the judgement of the will except after what is willed takes place, unless he is one whose inner eye has been unveiled by God. If he is, he will perceive the source-forms of the possibilities in their fixed state for what they really are. Then he judges according to what he sees. This belongs to certain people at certain moments, but they do not have it all the time. The Messenger said, "I do not know what He will do with me or with you."⁵ (5) So he made the veil clear, and he only meant that it emerges in a particular command, and no more.

⁵ Hadith in al-Bukhari.

The Wisdom of Light in the Word of Joseph

This luminous wisdom spreads its light on the presence of the imagination (khayal), and it is the first of the beginnings of divine revelation in the people of divine concern. Aisha, may God be pleased with her, said, "The first of what the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, had of revelation was the true dream. Then he only saw dreams which came like the breaking of dawn, and there was nothing hidden in it,"¹ and her knowledge only extended to this. This lasted for six months, and then the angel came to him. She did not know that the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, had said, "People are asleep, and when they die, they wake up." Everything seen in the state of wakefulness is of that sort, although states differ. She spoke of six months, but all his life in this world was like that, like a dream in a dream.

Everything reported of this nature is called the world of the imagination (khayal), and for this reason, there must be interpretation: the matter which has a form in itself appears in a form other than it. The interpreter passes from these forms which the sleeper sees to the form upon which the matter is based. If he is correct, as in knowledge appearing in the form of milk, then he interprets the source of the form of knowledge from the form of milk. He discovers the source and says, "This form of milk refers to the form of knowledge."

When the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, received revelation, he was taken from the ordinary sensory world. He was covered and withdrew from those who were present with him. When that left him, he returned, and he only received revelation in the "presence of the imagination", although it could not be said of him that he had been asleep.

It was the same when the angel appeared to him as a man. That was also from the presence of the imagination, for it was not a man, but rather an angel who had entered into the form of a man. The gnostic onlooker interpreted it until he reached its form in reality. Then he said, "This is Gabriel who came to teach you your Deen."² He told them, "Answer the greeting of the man," so he called him a man in respect to the form in which he appeared to them. Then he said, "This is Gabriel," and he looked at the form to which this imaginary man would return. He spoke the truth both times, with the truth of the vision of the physical eye, and the truth in that this was Gabriel without a doubt.

Joseph, peace be upon him, said, "I saw eleven stars and the sun and the moon prostrate themselves in front of me." (12:4) He saw his brothers in the form of the stars and his father and mother in the form of the sun and moon. This is from the point of view of Joseph. Had it been from the point of view of what was seen, the appearance of his brothers in the form of stars and the appearance of his father and mother in the form of the sun and moon would have been from their volition. Since they had no knowledge of what he saw, that which Joseph perceived was in the repository of his imagination.

Jacob knew that when he related it to him, so he said, "O my son, do not tell your vision to your brothers in case they should devise some scheme to injure you." (12:5) Then he absolved his sons of deceit and ascribed it to Satan, who is the source of deceit. He said, "In truth, Satan is a clear-cut enemy to man," i.e., he manifests enmity. Then Joseph said at the end of the affair, "This is now the interpretation of the

¹ In al-Bukhari and elsewhere.

² In Muslim, also an-Nawawi's Forty Hadith.

dream that I had. My Lord has made it all come true," (12:100) that is, that He manifested it in the world of senses after it was in the form of the imagination.

The Prophet Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace, said about it, "People are asleep". Joseph spoke of what his Lord had rendered true in the status of one who dreams that he has awakened from his dream and interprets it, and does not know that he is still asleep. Then later when he wakes up, he says, "I dreamt such-and-such a thing, and then I dreamt that I woke up and interpreted in such-and-such a way." This is similar to that. Look at how great the difference of perception is between Muhammad, peace be upon him, and Joseph, peace be upon him, at the end of the affair when Joseph said, "This is the interpretation of my dream of long ago which my Lord has rendered true," that is, made sensory or sensed. It was always sensed, since the imagination only gives out sensed things, and it has nothing other than that. See how noble is the knowledge of the heirs of Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace!

I would say more on this presence on the Muhammadan tongue of Joseph, as you will soon understand, if God wills. Know that that which is referred to as other-than-God, or the universe, is related to God as the shadow is related to the person. The universe is the shadow of God. It is the same as the relation of existence to the universe, since the shadow exists in the senses without a doubt. But there must be something by which that shadow appears. If one were to remove that by which the shadow appears, the shadow would be intelligible but would not exist in the senses. Rather, it would be a potential in the essence of the person on whom it depends. The locus of the manifestation of this divine shadow called the "universe" is the sources of the possibilities by which this shadow extends itself. This shadow is perceived according to what it projects itself on from the existence of this essence, but perception occurs through His name, the Light. This shadow is projected on the sources of possibilities in the form of the unknown unseen.

Do you not see that shadows incline to the darkness, indicating the hiddenness they contain because of the distance of the relationship between them and the persons who project them? Even if the person is white, his shadow is like this. Do you not see that when mountains are distant from the eye of the onlooker, they appear black? In their actual sources they are other than the colour the senses perceive. This is only due to the effect of distance. It is like the blue of the sky. This is the effect distance has on the senses with non-luminous bodies. It is the same for the sources of possibilities which are non-luminous because they are non-existent. Even if they are described as unchanging, they are not described by existence since existence is light. Distance makes luminous bodies appear small in the senses, so this is another effect of distance. The senses perceive them as small in size, whereas in their sources they are large according to that degree and greater in magnitude. One knows by proof that the sun is larger than the earth, but it appears to be the size of a shield. That is also an effect of distance.

You only know the universe according to the amount you know the shadows, and you are ignorant of the Real according to what you do not know of the person on which that shadow depends. Inasmuch as He has a shadow, He is known, and inasmuch as one is ignorant of what is in the essence of the shadow of the form which projects the shadow, he is ignorant of God. For that reason, we say that God is known to us from one aspect and not known to us from another aspect. "Do you not see how your Lord stretches out shadows? If He had wished, He could have made them stationary," (25:45) i.e., it still would be a potential in Himself. It is as He said, that God would not give a tajalli of Himself to

possibilities until He manifests the shadow. The shadow is as if it remains outside of the possibilities which do not have a source manifested for them in existence.

"Then We appoint the sun to be a pointer to them," that is to His name, the Light of which we spoke, and the senses witness it, for shadows have no source in the absence of light. "Then We draw them back to Ourselves, in gradual steps," so God draws it back to Himself because it is His shadow which appeared from Him, and it is not other than Him. All that you perceive is the existence of God in the sources of possibilities. Inasmuch as the He-ness of God is He, it is His existence. Inasmuch as forms differ in it, it is the sources of possibilities. As the name of the shadow does not leave it by the difference of forms, in the same way the name of the universe or the name other-than-God does not leave it by the difference of forms. In regard to the Divine Unity of His being, the shadow is God, because He is the One, the Unique; and in respect to the multiplicity of forms, it is the world, so understand and realise what I have explained to you! Since the matter is as I mentioned, the universe is illusory, and it does not have a real existence. This is the meaning of the imagination, that is, you imagine that the universe is an autonomous extra thing outside of God. It is not like that in itself. Do you not see that in the senses, the shadow is connected to the person who projects it, and it is impossible that it be detached from that connection since it is impossible for something to be detached from its own essence? Recognise your source ('ayn), and who you are, what is your he-ness and what your relation to God is, and by what You are the Truth and by what you are the universe, "other", and whatever resembles these expressions. In this, those that know vie in excellence, so there is the one who knows and the one who is more knowing.

The Real is, in relation to a particular shadow, small or large, pure or purer, as light is in relation to what veils it from the onlooker through coloured glass which tints it. At the same time, it has no colour, and so you see it as making a mirror-image of your reality to your Lord. If you say that the light is green by the greenness of the glass, you will have spoken the truth as your sensory vision testifies. If you say that it is not green and has no colour as evidence accords you, you will have spoken the truth as sound logical consideration testifies. This is light projected across the shadow, and it is the same as the glass which is a luminous shadow because of its purity. It is the same for one of us who has realised the Real. His form manifests itself in him more than it manifests itself in another. Among us there is the one for whom God is his hearing, seeing, and all his faculties and limbs³, according to the signs which the Sharia gives in a transmission from God. In spite of this, the source of the shadow exists, so the pronoun of "his hearing" refers to him. Other slaves are not like this. The relation of this slave is nearer to the existence of God than the relation of other slaves.

Then the matter is as we have confirmed. So know that you are imagination and that which you perceive and of which you say, "It is not me" is also imagination. All of existence is imagination within imagination. True existence is God, the Real, in particular in respect to essence and source, not in respect to His Names, because the Names have two meanings. One meaning is His source which is the same as the "Named", and the other meaning is what it indicates and that by which the Name is separate from this other Name, and so distinct. The Ever-Forgiving is separate from the Manifest and the Hidden, and the First is distinct from the Last. Thus it is clear to you that each Name is the same as

³ Hadith, see. p.11.

the other Name, and yet it is not the other Name. Inasmuch as the Name is the same, it is the Real, and inasmuch as it is not it, it is the imaginary Real which we discussed.

Glory be to the One who is only proven by Himself and Whose being is only confirmed by His source! The Hidden is pure non-existence, so whoever holds to multiplicity, holds to the universe and the Divine Names and the names of the world. Whoever holds to Divine Unity holds to God in respect to His Essence which is independent of the universe, not in respect to its divinity and form. If the Essence is independent of the universe, then He is the source of its independence from the ascriptions of the Names, because it has the Names, and they indicated it as they indicate other named things in which their effect is realised. "Say: He is God, Absolute Oneness" (112:1) in respect of his source, "God, the Everlasting Sustainer of all" in respect to our dependence on Him. "He has not given birth" in respect to His He-ness and us, "and was born" the same way, "and no one is comparable to Him" in the same way.

This is His description so He singled out His Essence in His statement, "God is Unique (Ahad)". Multiplicity appears by His attributes which are known with us. We beget and are begotten, we depend on Him, and we are equals to one another. This is the One who is pure above these attributes. He is independent of them as He is independent of us. There is no description of God except for this sura, the Sura al-Ikhlās (112), and it was revealed in that. The Divine Unity (ahadiyya) of God is in respect to the Divine Names which demand the unity of multiplicity on our part, and the Divine Unity of God, in respect to His independence from us and from the names, is the Divine Unity of the source. Both of them are included in the name, the Unique One (al-Ahad).

Know that God has not manifested the shadows and made them prostrate themselves, casting themselves to the left and the right⁴, except as indications for you of yourself and Him. In this way you are able to recognise who you are and what your relationship to Him is, and what His relationship to you is, until you know from where and by which divine reality that which is other-than-God is described, through its complete poverty to Him as well as the relative poverty of some to others. In this way also, you are able to know from where and by what reality it is that God is described by independence from people and the universe, and the universe is described by independence, i.e., the independence of some from others in an aspect which is the source of its need of some. For the universe is in need of causes without a doubt by essential need. The greatest of its causes is the causality of God, and there is no causality of God by which the universe is in need except for the Divine Names. The universe is in need of each of the Divine Names, whether from the universe like it or, from God Himself. Thus it is God, and not other-than-Him.

This is why God said, "Mankind! you are the poor in need of God whereas God is the Rich Beyond Need, the Praiseworthy." (35:15) It is known that we depend on each other. Our names are the Names of God since everything is, without a doubt, in need of Him. At the same time, our sources are His shadow, and not other-than-Him. So He is our he-ness, and He is not our he-ness. We have prepared the way for you, so look!

⁴ Ref. Quran 16:48, "Do they not see the things that God has created, casting their shadows to the right and to the left, prostrating themselves before God in complete humility."

The Wisdom of Divine Unity¹ in the Word of Eber

God has the straight path which is manifest
and unhidden among the common people.
Its source exists in great and small,
in those who are ignorant of matters
and in those who know.

For this reason, "His mercy encompasses everything,"² great and small. "There is no creature He does not hold by the forelock. My Lord is on a Straight Path." (11:56) So all that walks on the Straight Path of the Lord, and is not of those "against whom God is wrathful" from this aspect, nor is he "astray"³. As being astray is a non-essential quality, so divine wrath is also a non-essential quality. The source to which they return is the "mercy which extends to all things", and which preceded wrath. Everything which is other-than-God is a creature which crawls and which has a spirit. There is nothing which crawls by itself, rather it crawls by other than it. It crawls by the principle of following the One who is on a Straight Path. It is only a path by virtue of the fact that it is walked on.

If creation draws near you, God draws near you.
If God draws near you, creation does not follow.
So realise what we say on it,
and everything I have said to you is true.
There is no existent thing in phenomenal being
that you see which does not have articulation.
The eye only sees of creation
that its source is God.
But He is stored in it, and for this reason,
its forms are true.

Know that divine knowledges of taste (dhawq) which are acquired by the people of God differ according to the different faculties acquired from them, even though they derive from a single source. God said, "I am his hearing by which he hears and his sight by which he sees and his hand by which he strikes and his foot by which he walks."⁴ So He mentioned that His He-ness is the source of the limbs which are the same as the slave. Thus He-ness is one, but the limbs are different, and every limb has one of the knowledges of taste which are specified from a single source, and differ according to the different limbs. It is like water which is but a single reality, yet differs in taste according to the different locations. The water of the Euphrates is sweet, and brackish water is salty, yet it is water in all its states and its reality does not change, even though the taste differs.

This wisdom is from the wisdom of the feet. It is the words of God, that whoever establishes His Books will eat "from beneath their feet" (5:66). The path which is the Straight Path is travelling on it, and walking and running on it. It is only by the feet. So this witnessing of the taking by the forelock by the

¹ Ahadiyya

² ref. Quran 7:156, "My mercy extends to all things."

³ ref. Quran 1:7.

⁴ Hadith qudsi.

hand of the One who is one the Straight Path only results in this special art from the knowledges of taste. "We will drive the evildoers" (19:86)⁵, who are those who deserve the station to which they are sent, and destroy them by the west wind⁶. The wind takes them by the forelocks and carries them on, and it is the source of the passions which take them to Jahannam. It is the distance⁷ which they imagined. When it carried them to that abode, they reached the source of nearness, and so distance vanished. What is called Jahannam vanished in respect to them. They win the bliss of nearness in respect to merit since they were wrong-doers.

This pleasurable station of taste was not given to them as a favour. They received it by what they realities merited from the acts which they were doing. They were running with their actions on the Straight Path of the Lord because their forelocks were in the hand of the One who has this attribute. They did not walk by themselves, but by the principle of compulsion to reach the source of nearness. "We are nearer to him than you, but you cannot see." (56:85) Rather it is seen, and so the covering is stripped away, and "his sight is sharp."⁸ What is specified as dead is from the dead, i.e., what distinguishes the happy from the wretched in usage. "We are nearer to him than his jugular vein." (50:16) What is specified as man is from man, so divine nearness is from distance as is not hidden in divine transmissions. There is no nearness nearer than that His He-ness be the source of the limbs of the slave and his faculties. The slave is not other than these limbs and faculties, so he is God witnessed in illusory creation. Creation is intelligible and God is felt and witnessed with the believers and the people of unveiling. God is intelligible with other classes, and creation is witnessed. So they are in the station of the salty, brackish water. The first group is the station of the sweet water which is pleasant to drink.

People are of two classes those who walk on the path recognising it and its end, for it is a straight path in respect to him; and those who walk on the path being ignorant of it and not knowing its end. It is the same path which the other class knows. The gnostic calls to God by inner sight, and the non-gnostic calls to God by limitation and ignorance. This is a special knowledge which comes from the lowest of the low⁹ because the feet are the lower part of the person, and what is lower than them is none other than the path. Whoever recognises that God is the same as the Path, recognises the matter for what it is. Then God is travelling on it since there is no known except Him, and He is the source of the wayfarer and the traveller. There is no knower except Him. He is you, so know your reality and your Path (tariqa). The matter has been made clear to you on the tongue of the interpreter¹⁰, if you but understand. It is the true tongue, so the only one who will understand is the one whose understanding is Real.

God has many ascriptions and their existence varies. See how 'Ad, the people of Eber, said, "This is a storm cloud which will give us rain." (46:24) They thought good of God, and He is with the opinion of His slave¹¹. God turned this word away from them. He informed them of what was more perfect and higher in nearness. When it rained upon them, that was the earth's portion and the seed was watered. He told them, "No, rather it is what you desired to hasten a wind containing painful punishment." He made the

⁵ "We will drive the evildoers to Jahannam."

⁶ The worst of winds which does not fertilise trees or raise clouds. It is said that it was a west wind which destroyed 'Ad. It blows in the hot season and is very thirsty.

⁷ Jahannam comes from a root which means "deep", as in a deep well.

⁸ See Quran 50:22.

⁹ Ref. Quran 95:5, "We reduced him to the lowest of the low."

¹⁰ The Messenger of God in the hadith, "I am his hearing, his sight, etc."

¹¹ Hadith qudsi, "I am according to My slave's opinion of Me..."

wind (rîh) an indication of what rest (râha) it contained for them. By this wind, He gladdens their spirits (arwah), delivering them from dark forms, difficult paths and black veils. There is punishment ('adhab) in this wind, i.e. a matter which they find sweet (ista'dhaba) when they taste it. It only pains them by the separation from familiar things. Thus punishment gives them good news. And the command is nearer to them than they imagine.

"Destroying everything at its Lord's command! When morning came you could see nothing but their dwellings." (46:25) That is, their corpses, in which their true spirits lived, so the trueness of this special relation vanished from them; and a special life in their forms remains to them from God of which their skins, hands, and feet speak¹², so does the punishment of the blows and thighs¹³. All that is related in a divine text.

God described himself by jealousy (ghayra). Out of jealousy He forbade actions unrestrained by limits (fawahish). The unrestrained act is only what is evident. As for the unrestrained which is hidden, it belongs to the one who manifests it. When He made the unrestrained haram, that it, forbade that the reality of what we mentioned be known, and that is the source of things, He hid it by other (ghayr). So other says: hearing is Zayd's hearing. The gnostic says that hearing is God. Thus nothing remains of the faculties and limbs. Therefore not everyone recognises God. People vie in excellence and ranks are differentiated, and the exceeding and exceeded are clear.

Know that God revealed to me and caused me to witness in a vision, which I received in Cordoba in 586, the sources of His Messengers and all His Prophets, from Adam to Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace. None of this group spoke to me except for Eber, peace be upon him. He told me why they were gathered together. I saw that he was a very large man of good appearance, subtle in reply, gnostic in matters of unveiling. My proof of his unveiling is His words, "There is no creature He does not hold by the forelock. My Lord is on a Straight Path." (11:56) What gift to creatures is greater than this? Then it is from the bestowal of favours on us by God that this speech reached us from Him in the Quran.

Then Muhammad, may God bless him and grant us peace, completed its gathering for everyone by what he was told by God, for He is the source of "hearing, sight, the hand, the foot and tongue the source of the senses. The spiritual faculties are nearer than the senses. He is content with the defined and distant more than with the defined unknown which is nearer. God translated the speech of Eber to his people to inform us, and the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, translated the speech of God in turn to give us good news. Knowledge is perfected in the breasts of those who are given knowledge, "and none denies Our signs but the unbelievers," (29:47) for they cover up the signs when they recognise them through envy, meanness and injustice. We only see from God in respect of Himself disconnection (tanzih) or non-disconnection by definition in any ayat which He has sent down or in transmissions which have reached us from Him. Otherwise He has the Great Mist (al-'Ama')¹⁴ which has no air above it and no air beneath it. God was in it before He created creation. Then He mentioned that He "established Himself firmly on the Throne." (57:4) This is also definition. Then He mentioned that "He

¹² Ref. Quran 41:21, "...that your hearing, eyes, and skin should not testify against you."

¹³ In the grave according to hadith.

¹⁴ "He was in the Great Mist with air neither above nor below it." Hadith in Ibn Majah, Ibn Hanbal and at-Tirmidhi.

descends to the nearest heaven.¹⁵ This is also definition. Then He said that "He is in the heaven and in the earth¹⁶," and "He is with us wherever we are¹⁷." and He tells us that He is our source. We are limited, so He only describes Himself by limitation.

His statement, "There is nothing like Him," (42:11) is also limitation if we take the kaf ("like") as an appendage to other than the attribute. Whoever is distinct from the defined is defined by his phenomenal being which is not the source of what is defined. Freedom from limitation is limitation, and the absolute is limited by absoluteness for whoever has understanding. If we attach the kaf of ka-mithli (like) to the attribute, we define it. If we take "There is nothing like Him" as the negation of "like (mithli)", we realise the given and the sound transmissions that He is the source of things, and that things are defined. If their definitions differ, He is defined by the definition of everything with a definition. Nothing is defined unless it is a definition of God's. He moves in the designation of creatures and creation. Had the matter not been like that, existence would not have been valid, for He is the source of existence. He preserves everything by His Essence, and the preserving of something does not oppress Him¹⁸. His preserving of all things is His preserving of His form in that the thing is other than His form. Only this is valid. He is the witness in the witness and the witnessed in the witnessed¹⁹. He is the spirit of the universe which is managed by Him, and it is the Macrocosmic or Great man (al-insan al-kabir).

He is all phenomenal being
and He is the One (al-Wahid)
who establishes my phenomenal being by His being,
For that reason, I said that He is nourished.
So my existence is His food, and we imitate Him in Him from Him,
if you look by the aspect of my taking refuge.

For his sorrow breathed, so the breath is related to the All-Merciful because He is Merciful by it. Divine ascriptions demand it from the bringing into existence of the form of the universe which we have said is what is manifest by God since He is the Manifest. It is His inward since He is the Hidden; and He is the First since He was when they were not. He is the Last since their source is in their manifestation. The Last is the source of the Manifest, and the Hidden is the source of the First. He has knowledge of all things since he knows Himself. When He brought forms into existence in the Breath, and the power of the ascriptions designated by the names appeared, the divine ascriptions then became valid for the universe. They depend on God. He said, "Today, I set down your ascriptions and raise up My ascriptions," i.e. I take from you your dependence on yourselves and return to you your dependence on Me. Where are those who are fearful of God?²⁰ they those who take God as a safeguard. God is their manifest part, i.e., the source of their manifest forms. They are the greatest of people, the purest and the strongest among all. The one who has taqwa is the one who makes himself a safeguard for God by

¹⁵ Hadith qudsi from Abu Hurayra in al-Bukhari and Muslim: "Our Lord who is blessed and exalted descends every night to the lowest heavens when two-thirds of the night has passed and says, 'Who supplicates to me so that I may answer him?'"

¹⁶ Quran 6:3, "He is God in the heavens and the earth."

¹⁷ cf. Quran 57:4.

¹⁸ Quran: 2:255.

¹⁹ cf. Quran 85:3.

²⁰ i.e., have taqwa.

His form since the He-ness of God is the faculties of the slave. The one called the slave makes a safeguard for the One called God based on witnessing, so that the knower is distinct from the one who does not know. "Say: 'Are they the same those who know and those who do not know?' It is only people of intelligence who pay heed," (39:9) and they see into the core of the thing²¹ which is sought from that thing. The negligent one does not precede the diligent, and similarly the hireling does not resemble the slave, Since God is a safeguard for the slave by one aspect, the slave is a safeguard for God by another aspect. Say what you like about phenomenal being. If you like, say that it is creation. If you like, say that is the Real. If you like, say that it is both the Real and creation. If you like, say that it is not Real from every point of view and not creation from every point of view. If you wish, say it is bewilderment in that. The goals are made clear by your specification of ranks. If it had not been for definition, the Messengers would not have reported the changing of the Real in forms, nor would they have described Him by the dropping of forms from Himself.

The eye only looks to Him,
and authority only rests with Him.

We are His, and by Him, in His hand, in every state, so we are with Him. For that reason, He is denied and recognised, disconnected and described. The one who sees God from Him in Him by His eye is a gnostic. The one who sees God from Him in Him by his own eye is not a gnostic. The one who does not see God from Him nor in Him, and waits to see Him by his own eye is veiled and ignorant.

On the whole, each person must have some doctrine of his Lord by which he refers to Him and in which he seeks Him. So when God manifests Himself to him in it, he knows Him and goes near Him. If He manifests Himself to him in other than it, he denies Him and takes refuge from Him and has bad adab in that matter while claiming he shows adab with Him²². He only believes in a divinity according to the [subjective] form he gives that in himself. The divinity of creeds is based on subjective positing. People only see themselves and what they formulate in themselves.

Look at the ranks of people in knowledge of God. That is the source of their ranks in vision on the Day of Rising; and I have taught you the necessary cause of it. Take care lest you be limited by a particular creed and deny what is other than it, so that a great blessing may pass you by. Indeed, knowledge of what the matter is based on may pass you by.

Make yourself a vessel for all the forms of belief. Surely God is vaster and greater than being contained by one creed rather than another. So God says, "Wherever you turn, the face of God is there." (2:115) He did not mention one "where" less than another. He said there is the face of God. The face of the thing is its reality. By this He spoke to the hearts of the gnostics, that they might not occupy themselves with non-essentials in this life through seeking the like of this. The slave does not know in which breath he will be taken. He may be taken at the time of his negligence, and then he will not be equal to the one taken in a state of presence.

Then the slave who is perfect knows that this is linked to exterior form and to the state limited by turning the prayer toward the Masjid al-Haram. He believes that God is in his qibla when he prays. Those

²¹ Lubb means both the core of a thing and or understanding.

²² Hadith in Muslim (Belief, 302) about the Day of Rising.

are some of the ranks of God from "Wherever you turn, the face of God is there." The direction of the Masjid al-Haram is one of them. In it is the face of God, but do not say "He is here", rather stop with what you perceive and cling to adab in turning towards the Masjid al-Haram, and cling to adab in the non-encompassment of the face in this particular whereness. Rather whereness is part of the sum of directions to which one turns. So God makes it clear to you that He is in the "where-ness" of every direction.

There are only creeds, so all directions are correct. Every correct thing has a reward. Every rewarded thing is happy. Every happy one is approved. If he is wretched at one time in the Next Abode, the people of preservation experience illness and pain in this life in spite of our knowledge that they are happy and the people of God. Among the slaves of God are those who are overtaken by these pains in the other life in an abode called Jahannam. Even so, none of the people of knowledge to whom the matter is unveiled for what it is declares that they do not possess a bliss particular to them in this abode. As for the loss of pain, they denied it, and so it was lifted from them. Their bliss is their rest from feeling that pain, or else bliss is particular and extra as is the bliss of the people of the Garden in the Garden. God knows best.

The Wisdom of Revelation in the Word of Salih

Among the signs¹ are the signs of the mounts.²
 That is due to the difference in destinations.
 Among those with mounts are those
 who make their mounts stand by the command of God,
 and among them are those who cross
 the deserts with their mounts.
 As for those who stand,
 they are the people of the source,³
 and those who cross the deserts are the aliens.
 Each of these has the revelation (futih) of the Unseen worlds
 brought to him from God on every side.

Know, may God grant you success, that the business (of bringing into existence) is based on uniqueness (fardiyya), and uniqueness has triplicity which is from three and upwards. Three is the first singular. The universe exists from this Divine Presence. God, may He be exalted! says, "Our Word to a thing when We desire it is just to say to it, 'Be' and it is." (16:40) This is an essence which has volition and speech.⁴ Had it not been for this essence and its volition, which is connecting attention to something particular in order to bring anything into being (and when He turns to that thing, He says, "Be"), that thing would not have been. Then tripartite uniqueness also appeared in that thing, and it is by this uniqueness in respect to the thing that it is valid that it take and that it be described by existence. Its triplicity is its thingness, its hearing, and obeying the command of the One who gives it form by bringing it into existence. It accepted three by the threeness of its fixed essence when it was in the state of its non-existence in counterbalance to the essence of the One who brought it into existence. Its hearing is in counterbalance to the volition of the One who brought it into existence. Its agreeing to comply with the command to take form is in counterbalance to His word "'Be!' and it is." Taking form is thus related to the thing. If it not had the capacity to take form from within itself when this is said, it would not have been. God only brought the thing into existence after it was not in the command of taking form, by the thing itself.

God confirmed that taking-form (takwin) belongs to the thing itself, not to God; and that that which belongs to God is His command. Similarly, He told us about Himself when He said, "Our Word to a thing when We desire it is just to say to it, "Be!" and it is." He ascribed taking-form to the thing itself from the command of God. God speaks the truth, so this is understood in the command itself. Someone who is feared and not disobeyed commands His slave: "Stand!" and the slave stands in obedience to his master's command. When this slave stands, the master only has the command to the slave to stand. Standing is the slave's action, not the master's action.

¹ Salih has this in view of the fact that the mountain split open to reveal the she- camel, he opened belief to those who believed in him. The camel is a mount.

² Mounts which are miracles proving the truthfulness of the Prophets — like the Buraq of Muhammad and the she-camel of Salih.

³ Eyewitnessing.

⁴ i.e., a triplicity: Essence, volition, and speech (qawl).

Thus taking-form is based on triplicity, i.e., from three, on both sides the side of God and the side of creation. That applies to bringing meanings into existence by proofs. The proof must be compounded of three in a special structure and special condition. There must be a result from it. The result is that the thinker constructs his proof from two propositions. Each one proposition contains two singulars, and so it four. One of the four is repeated in the two propositions in order to link one to the other as is marriage. It is three and no more because of one is repeated in both of them. That is how it is the goal exists. Then this compound occurs in a special aspect which is that the two propositions are connected to each other by the repetition of that one singular, by which triplicity, and the special condition that the principle be more general by cause or equal to it, is valid. Then the principle is true. If it is not like that, then it will give a result which is not true. This existent thing in the universe is like the ascription of actions to the slave, removed from their ascription to God, or the ascribing of taking form, the object of our discussion, to God absolutely. But God only ascribed it to the thing which was told, "Be!" A representation of that is if we wish to prove that the universe exists from a cause,⁵ we say that everything which is in-time has a cause.⁶ Thus we have the in-time and the cause. Then in the other proposition we say that the universe is in time. The "in-time" is repeated in the two propositions. The third singular is "the universe". From this it follows that the universe has a cause and the conclusion appears in what was mentioned in the first proposition — that is the cause.

The special aspect is the repetition of the "in-time", and the special condition is the generality of the cause ('illa) because the cause is what effects the existence of the in-time. The principle is general in the in-timeness of the universe in relation to God. We therefore make the judgement that every being which is "in-time" has a cause, i.e., in the greater proposition, unless that cause is equal to the principle or the principle is more general than the cause. So the universe would thus fall under the principle of the cause [in both cases]. The result is true.

The principle of triplicity also appears in bringing meanings into existence, which makes use of proofs. The root of phenomenal being is triplicity. For this reason, the wisdom of Salih, peace be upon him, is what God manifested in the delay of three days when He promised to punish the people of Salih, and the promise was kept. The truth was the result, and it was the Cry by which God destroyed them, and "morning found them lying flattemed in their homes." (11:67) On the first of the three days, the faces of the people became yellow, and on the second day red, and on the third day black. When the three days had passed, their predisposition was proved and corruption appeared in them. That manifestation was called "destruction".

The yellowing of the faces of the wretched is in counterbalance to the shining of the faces of the happy in the words of God, "Some faces on that day will be radiant (musfira)" (80:38) which comes from sufur, when the dawn becomes white. This is a manifestation as the yellowing of the faces on the first day was the manifestation of the sign of the wretchedness of Salih's people. Then came the counterbalance offered to His word about the happy, "laughing". (80:39) Laughter is one of the causes which produces redness in the face. Among the happy, it is the cheeks which are red.

⁵ Here he uses sabab, something by which something is brought about, rather than 'illa, which is something which alters or effects something, as in cause and effect. 'Illa is the reason behind judicial reasoning.

⁶ First proposition.

Then He made the complexion of the wretched turn black as a counterbalance to His word, "joyous (mustabshira)".⁷ That is the effect that joy has on their skins as black effected the skins of the wretched. For this reason, He spoke of the two groups with good news (bushra). He spoke a word to them which affected their skin (bashara) which turned a colour by which skin had not been described before this event. God said in regarding the happy, "Their Lord gives them the good news of His mercy and good pleasure," (9:21) and He said about the wretched, "Give them the news of a painful punishment." (9:34) There was an effect on the skin of each group because of the effect of the discourse on them. It only appeared in them outwardly by virtue of the understanding which was fixed inside them. So it is them who have that effect on themselves just as taking form only comes from them. "God's is the conclusive argument." (6:149) Whoever understands this wisdom and confirms it in himself and witnesses it, gives his self rest from connection to other. He knows that good and evil only come from him. By good, I mean what agrees with his goal and suits his nature and temperament. By evil, I mean what does not agree with his goal or suit his nature and temperament. The one who possesses this witnessing makes out excuses for all existent beings, even if they do not make excuses. He knows that all he has for himself is from himself, as we mentioned at the beginning, since knowledge follows the known. When something which does not agree with his goal comes to him, he tells himself, "Clench your fists and puff out your cheeks!" "God speaks the truth and He guides to the Way." (33:4)

⁷ Comes from a root meaning skin (bashara), the root of bashshara, to give good news, is to announce something which produces a change in the complexion.

The Wisdom of the Heart in the Word of Jethro

Know that the heart of the gnostic of God is from the mercy of God, and it is vaster than mercy. The heart encompasses God, but His Mercy does not encompass Him.¹ This is the language of the general public from the door of indication (ishara). God is merciful (rahim) and is not the one to whom mercy is shown (marhum). Mercy has no power over Him. As for the indication from the tongue of the elite, God describes Himself by the breath which is from breathing. The Divine Names are the same as the Named, and the breath is none other than Him. They require what they give the breath of realities, so the realities which the Names demand are not other than the universe. Thus divinity (ulûhîya) demands the object of worship (ma'luh) and sovereignty (rubûbiya) demands the object of lordship (marbub).² They have no source except by the universe in existence and determination (taqdir). God, in respect to His essence, is independent of the universe, but sovereignty does not possess this principle. The matter remains between what the sovereignty demands and what the essence deserves of independence from the universe. Sovereignty is based on reality and the description is only the same as this essence.

Then the matter changes according to the relationships. It is reported that God only describes Himself with compassion for His slaves. The first of what was breathed from sovereignty by Himself is related to the Merciful by His bringing into being the universe, which sovereignty demands by its reality and all the Divine Names. By this aspect it is confirmed that "His mercy encompasses everything"³. It encompasses God. It is wider than the heart or equal to it in capacity.

Know that God, as it is confirmed in sound tradition, changes in the forms of the tajalli. When the heart contains God, it does not contain other-than-Him of creatures along with Him. It is as if He filled it, and the meaning of this is, that when it looks to God in His tajalli to it, it is not possible to look at another with Him.

The heart of the gnostic in respect to vastness is as Abu Yazid al-Bistami said, "If the Throne and what surrounds it a million times over were in one of the corners of the heart of the gnostic, he still would not feel it." Al-Junayd said about this meaning, "If the in-time were compared to the out-of-time, not a trace of it would remain." The heart encompasses the out- of-time, so how can it sense the in-time as existent? If God varies His tajalli in forms, then by necessity, the heart is expanded and contracted according to the form in which the divine tajalli occurs. There is nothing left in the heart apart from the form in which the tajalli occurs. So in relation to the seal, the heart of the gnostic or the Perfect Man, is at the stage of the place that is the face of the seal. It does not exceed it, rather it is its size and shape in respect to roundness. The face is round, square, hexagonal, octagonal, etc. in form. If the face is square, hexagonal, octagonal or whatever form, its place in relation to the seal is like it and it is not like other than it.

This is the opposite of what one group alluded to, saying that God gives a tajalli according to the predisposition of the slave. This is not how it is. The slave is manifest to God according to the form in which God gives him a tajalli of Himself.

¹ Hadith qudsi, "Neither My earth nor My heaven contain Me, but the heart of My believing slave contains Me."

² lit. "god-ed" and "Lord-ed".

³ cf. Quran 7:156.

The exact clarification of this question is that God has two tajalli: an unseen tajalli and a visible tajalli. From the unseen tajalli He accords the predisposition on which the heart is based, and it is the tajalli of the Essence of which the Unseen is the reality. It is the He-ness which merits it by His word from Himself: "He". His He-ness is always He. If this predisposition comes to the heart, then the visible tajalli is manifested to it in the Visible world, so the heart sees it. He is manifest by the form of whatever tajalli he has, as we mentioned. God gives it the predisposition by His word, "He gave everything its creation, then guided it." (20:50) Then He lifted the veil between Him and His slave, so He sees Him in the form of his belief in God. God, who is in the belief, is He whose form the heart contains. He is the One who gives it a tajalli, and so it knows Him. The eye only sees by belief, not hidden in the varieties of belief.

Whoever limits God, denies God in other than what he limits God to, and confirms God in what he limits Him by, when God gives him a tajalli. Whoever frees God from limitation does not deny God, and so confirms God in every form in which Him changes. He is given from himself according to the form in which the tajalli infinitely occurs. The forms of the tajalli are without end. Similarly knowledge of God has no limit in the gnostic who understands the forms. Rather, he is a gnostic at every moment, seeking increase of knowledge by "Lord, increase me in knowledge! Lord, increase me in knowledge! Lord, increase me in knowledge!"⁴

The business is endless from both sides. This is as if you said: God and creation. If you looked at His words, "I am his foot by which he runs, and his hand with which he strikes and his tongue by which he speaks," and so on of the faculties whose location are the limbs which are not separate, then you said that the matter is all God or the matter is all creation. It is creation by one ascription and it is God by another ascription, yet the source is one. The source of the form is what gives the tajalli of the source of the form which did not exist before the tajalli. It is the one giving the tajalli and the one receiving it. See how wondrous is the command of God in respect to His He-ness and in respect to His relationship to the universe in the realities of His most Beautiful Names!

Who is He and what is He and what is His source?

He is He!

Whoever is of His commonality is of His elite,
and whoever is of His elite is of His commonality.

There is no source except source,
so the light of His source is His darkness.

Whoever is ignorant of this
experiences grief in himself

And none recognises what we have said
except for the slave who has aspiration (himma).

He said, "There is a reminder in that for anyone who has a heart," (50:37) because the heart (qalb) is transformed (taqallaba) in the various forms and attributes. He did not say, "to him who has an intellect" because the intellect limits⁵. It confines the matter to a single description, but reality refuses to be contained. It is also a reminder for those who have intellect, and they are those who have creeds by

⁴ Ref Quran 20:114: "Say, 'My Lord, increase me in knowledge!'"

⁵ The root meaning from which intellect ('aql) comes means to hobble a camel.

which some deny others, and some curse others, and they do not have helpers⁶. The god of the one with a creed does not have jurisdiction over the god of someone with another creed. The one who has a creed defends it; he defends the matter which he believes of his god, and supports it. He does not support that which is not in his creed. For this reason, he has no effect on the creeds of his dissenters, and similarly his dissenters have no help from the god who is in his creed; so they have no helpers. God excluded help from the divinity of creed based on the isolation of one creed to the exclusion of others. The helped is gathered and the helper is gathered.

For the gnostic, God is the Recognised Who is not denied. The people of recognition in this world are the people of recognition in the Next World. This is why God said, "anyone who has a heart (qalb)" (50:37) since he knows the transformation (taqlib) of God in forms by the transformation in shape. He recognises himself from himself. His self is not other than the He-ness of God. There is nothing in phenomenal being from what is, or what will be, which is other than the He-ness of God. Rather, He is the source of He-ness. So He is the gnostic and the knower and the acknowledger in this form. He is the one who is neither gnostic nor knower. He is also the one who denies Him in the other form. This is the portion of the one who knows God from the tajalli and the witnessing in the source of gatheredness (jam'). It is His word, "anyone who has a heart" which transforms the shapes by His transforming.

As for the people of belief (iman), they are the ones who imitate those who imitated the Prophets and Messengers in what they transmitted from God. They are not those who imitate the people of concepts and those who interpret the transmissions received by basing them on their logical proofs. These are the ones who imitate the Messengers, may God bless them and grant them peace. They are the ones who are meant by His words, "or listens well" (50:37) to what divine transmissions relate of the sunna of the Prophets. He means this is the one who "will listen well, having seen the evidence" (50:37) with awareness of the presence of the imagination and its use.

That is what the Prophet said about ihsan, "Worship God as if you saw Him,"⁷ ("God is in the qibla of the one who prays."⁸ For that reason, he is a witness. Anyone who imitates the people of logical speculation and is limited by them is not the one who will listen well. The one who will listen well must witness what we have mentioned. When he does not witness what we have mentioned, he is not the one meant by this ayat. These are those of whom God has said, "When those who were followed disown those who followed them." (2:166) The Messengers do not disown their followers who follow them.

Realise, my friend, what I have mentioned to you in this wisdom of the heart. As for its specification with Jethro, there is some branching off (tash'ib). Its branches are not numbered because every creed has a branch, and so they are all branches or creeds. If the covering is removed, it is removed for everyone in accordance with his creed. The covering might be removed in a manner contrary to his creed in principle. It is His words, "What confronts them from God will be something they did not reckon with." (39:47) Most of them in principle are like the Mu'tazilites, believing that God will execute the threat on the rebel should he die without repentance. If he dies and is given mercy from God, then concern

⁶ ref to Quran 29:25, "You have adopted idols apart from God as tokens of mutual affection in this world. But then on the Day of Rising you will reject one other and curse one another. The Fire will be your shelter. You will have no helpers."

⁷ Hadith in Muslim and al-Bukhari.

⁸ Hadith in al-Bukhari.

preceded it, for He did not punish him. Thus he found God Ever-Forgiving, All-Merciful, and there appeared to him from God something he did not reckon with.

As for He-ness (*huwiya*), some people are firm in their belief that God is such-and-such. When the covering is removed, they see the form of their belief, and it is true. They believe in it. Then the knot is unravelled and the creed vanishes and becomes knowledge through contemplation (*mushahada*). After vision is sharpened, weak vision does not return. It appeared to some people by the variety of the *tajalli* in forms through vision, since the *tajalli* is not repeated. He verifies it in he-ness; and there appeared to them from God in God's He-ness what they never reckoned with before the covering was removed.⁹

We mentioned the form of the ascent in divine recognitions after death in our Book of the *Tajalliyat*, in which we mentioned what we gathered from the group regarding unveiling, and the benefits we derived from them in the question that they did not know about. One of the most wondrous of matters is that man is always in ascent, but is not aware of that due to the fineness of the veil and its delicateness. It is like His words, "They were only given a simulation of it." (2:25)

He, the One, is not the same as the Last. Therefore the two semblances with the gnostic are similar dissimilars. The one possessed of realisation sees multiplicity in One, as he knows what the Divine Names indicate. Although their realities differ and are numerous, it is yet One Source. It is an intelligible multiplicity in the source of One. In the *tajalli*, it is multiplicity witnessed in the one source even as it matter which you obtain in the definition of each form. It and the multiplicity of forms and their variety derive, in fact, from one substance (*jawhar*). It is its own matter (*hayula*). Whoever recognises himself with this recognition recognises his Lord. God is in His creation due to His form, rather He is the source of its he-ness and its reality.

For this reason, the only ones among the 'ulama' who tumble on the recognition of the self (*nafs*) and its reality are the divinely inspired messengers and the great among the Sufis. As for the philosophers and masters of thought among the ancients and the *mutakallimun* in their discourse on the self and its whatness, none of them stumbled onto its reality, and logical speculation can never provide it.¹⁰ He who seeks knowledge of it by means of logical speculation, swells himself up and boasts without vigour or substance. "They are those whose efforts in the life of this world are misguided while they suppose that they are doing good." (18:104) He who seeks the matter by other than its path will not achieve its realization.

How excellent is what God said about the universe — He changes it with the breaths into a new creation in one source. He said in respect to some, rather to most of the world, "Yet they are dubious about the new creation." (50:15) This means that they do not know the renewal of the command in breaths. However, the Ash'arites stumbled on it in some existent things, and these are non-essentials (*a'râd*). The Hisbaniya¹¹ stumbled on it regarding the entire universe. The logical philosophers consider them

⁹ Ref. Quran 39:47, "If those who did wrong were to possess all that If those who did wrong owned everything on earth, and the same again with it, they would offer it as a ransom to save themselves from the evil of the punishment on the Day of Rising. What confronts them from God will be something they did not reckon with them from God that they never reckoned with."

¹⁰ Being veiled by limitation.

¹¹ The Hisbaniya were sophists, a group known in the history of philosophy for doubts, scepticism and sophism who held that the universe changes at every moment since there is no objective Reality. All is subjective.

ignorant of it. However, the two groups erred. As for the error of the Hisbaniya, in spite of what they said regarding change in the entire universe, they did not stumble on the oneness of the source of the intelligible substance (jawhar) which underlies the form. The universe only exists by the oneness, as the oneness is only intelligible by the universe. If they had said that, they would have obtained the degree of realisation in the matter.

As for the Ash'arites, they do not know that the entire universe consists of a collection of non-essentials (a'râd). It changes in every moment since accidents do not last for two moments. That appears in their definition of things. So when they defined the thing, its phenomenal being is clear in the definition of non-essential matters. These non-essentials mentioned in its definition are actually the source of this independent substance and its reality. Inasmuch as it is a non-essential, it is not independent, but by the sum of what is not independent, comes what is independent. It is like occupation of space in the definition of the independent essential substance, and its acceptance is non-essential in its essential definition. There is no doubt that that the containing-of-form is an accident since it is only in the container, and that is not independent it is in the essential nature of the substance. Occupation of space is a non-essential, and it only occurs in the thing occupying space, and so it is not independent. Occupation of space and containing-of-form are not based on the source of the defined substance by an extra matter, since essential definitions are the source of the defined and its he-ness.

That which does not last two moments becomes that which lasted two moments or indeed several moments! What was not independent became independent in their view! They do not understand the basis of this, and these people "are dubious about the new creation."

As for the people of unveiling, they see God in a tajalli of Himself in every breath, and there is no repetition of the tajalli. They also see by witnessing that every tajalli grants a new creation and takes away a creation. Thus its departure is annihilation in the presence of the tajalli, and it is going-on by what the other tajalli grants. So understand!

The Wisdom of Power¹ in the Word of Lot

Malk is power and force, and the strong man with power says, "I have power over the kneading, since I am forceful in kneading it." When the poet, Qays ibn al-Hatim, described his attack with a spear in verse, he said:

I have power over it
and so I made its rupture wide,
and you see standing under it what was behind it.

That is to say that he used enough force in the thrust. It was what God said regarding Lot, peace be upon him, "If only I had the power to combat you, or could take refuge in some powerful support!" (11:80) The Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, said, "God showed mercy to my brother Lot, and he took refuge in a powerful support." So the Prophet said that Lot was with God who is strong. It was God whom Lot, peace be upon him, meant by the strong pillar, and resistance when he said, "If only I had the power." Here it is aspiration (himma) in relation to man in particular.

The Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, said, "From that time, the time in which Lot, peace be upon him, said, 'or could take refuge in some powerful support,' after that, Prophets have only been sent with some power from their people." His tribe protected him as Abu Talib protected the Messenger of God. His words, "If only I had the power to combat you" is because he heard God say, "It is God who created you from a weak beginning," (30:54) by origin, "and then after weakness, gave you strength." Strength is by appointing, and it is non-essential strength. "Then after strength ordained weakness and grey hair." Appointing is connected to grey hair. As for weakness, it returns to the basis of its creation as He said, "He created you from a weak beginning." God returns him to that from which He created him, as He says, "then some of you revert to the lowest form of life that, so after having knowledge, they may know nothing at all." (16:70) God mentions that he returns to the first weakness. The old man is judged to be as weak as the child is. A Prophet is only sent after he has reached the age of forty. It is the time which is the beginning of decrease and weakness. For this reason, Lot said, "If only I had the power to combat you," although that demands effective aspiration (himma). If you were to ask: "What prevents him from using effective aspiration while it is present in the wayfarers (sâlikûn) among the followers when the Messengers are more entitled to that?" you spoke the truth. However, you lack another knowledge, which is that gnosis does not leave the aspiration freedom of action. Whenever gnosis is great, then its freedom of action with the aspiration is weak. That has two reasons one is his realisation of the station of slavery and his regarding the root of his natural creation;² and the other reason is the oneness of the actor and the acted upon. The aspiration of a Messenger does not appear, since the latter aspect prevents it.

In this witnessing, he sees that his opponent does not turn from the reality on which he is based in the state of his source-form and the state of his non-existence. He only appears in existence through what he had in the state of non-existence by his source-form. He does not overstep his reality nor does he

¹ Malk

² Which is weakness, and the slave obeying the command of the Master, as in Quran 30:54, "It is God who created you from a weak beginning."

abandon his path. That is called dissent; yet it is a non-essential matter manifested by the veil which is over the eyes of the people, as God says, "but most people do not know." They know what is manifest and outward of the life of this world, but they are ignorant of the Next life. It is the other way round, so it is from their words, "our hearts are veiled³," that is, in coverings. It is a covering which veils them from perceiving the matter for what it is. This and its like prevent the gnostic from acting freely in the world.

Shaykh Abu 'Abdullah ibn al-Qa'id said to Shaykh Abu's-Su'ud ibn ash-Shibli, "Why do you not act freely?" Abu's-Su'ud replied, "I have left God to act for me as He wishes." He meant the command of God, "so take Him as your Guardian." (73:9) The Guardian is the one with freedom of action, especially as He heard God saying, "Give of that to which He has made you successors (khalifs)." (57:7) Abu's-Su'ud knew, and the gnostics know that the command which he has is not his, and he is only a successor to it. God told him, "this command is the Deen to which I have you successors and over which I have given you power, so take Me for a guardian in it," Abu's-Su'ud obeyed the command of God and took Him for a Guardian.

How can there remain any aspiration for the one who witnesses the like of this command? Aspiration (himma) only acts by the property of concentration that which its possessor does not have, and acts on other than his concentration. This gnosis separates him from that property of concentration. The complete gnosis manifests gnosis at the end of incapacity and weakness. One of the Abdal⁴ said to Shaykh 'Abdu'r-Razzaq⁵, "After you greet Shaykh Abu Madyan⁶, tell him, 'O Abu Madyan! Why is nothing difficult for us, yet things are difficult for you, and we long for your station and you do not long for ours?'" Similarly, although Abu Madyan had that station as well as the other, we are more complete than him in the station of weakness and incapacity. His badl said this to him; he did not say it.

The Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, said that this station is from the command of God to him: "I do not know what He will do to me or you. I only follow what is revealed to me." The Messenger acts according to what is revealed to him. He does not have anything else. If He reveals to him that he should act by ordinance, he acts. If he is prevented from acting, he does not act. The best part of choice is to abandon freedom of action unless the person is deficient in gnosis.

Abu's-Su'ud ash-Shibli said to his believing companions, "God gave us freedom of action fifteen years ago, and we abandoned it through politeness." This is the language of conceit. As for us, we did not abandon it through politeness, for abandoning would imply preference. Rather, we abandoned it by the perfection of gnosis. Gnosis does not oblige it on the strength of choice. When the gnostic acts by aspiration in the world, it is from divine command and compulsion, not by choice.

There is no doubt that the station of the Messenger demands freedom of action for the acceptance of the Message which he brings. God informs him of what will be accepted in his community and among his people in order to manifest the Deen of God. The wali is not like that. Nevertheless, the Messenger does not seek Him in the manifest, because the Messenger has compassion for his people. He does not

³ Two places: 2:88; 4:155.

⁴ Abdal, plural of badl, a substitute. Shaykh al-Akbar says, "They are seven. Whoever travels from one place and leaves his body in its form so that no one recognises that he has gone, that one is only a badl. He is modelled on the heart of Abraham, peace be upon him."

⁵ A jurist and one of Abu Madyan's disciples.

⁶ Abu Madyan: Shu'ayb ibn al-Husayn al-Andalusi, great Maghribi Sufi, born ca. 520/1126 near Seville and died near Tlemcen in 594/1197.

want them to exceed by having the proof appear against them because that would entail their destruction. He spares them.

The Messenger also knew that when something inimitable⁷ is manifested to the community, some of them believe in it, and some recognise it but deny it out of injustice, arrogance or envy. Some of them attribute it to magic and deception. The Messenger sees that, and he also sees that no one will believe unless God illuminates his heart by the light of belief. When the person does not look by that light called belief, the inimitable miracle has no benefit for him. Their aspiration does not seek inimitable matters, since the effect is not uniform among those who see it, nor is it in their hearts as He said in respect to the most perfect of Messengers and the most knowing of creation and the most truthful in state, "You cannot guide those you would like to but God guides those He wills." (28:56)

If aspiration did have an effect, no one would be more perfect than the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, nor have a higher nor stronger aspiration than him, yet even so his aspiration did not bring about Abu Talib, his uncle, becoming Muslim, and it was to the Prophet that the ayat which we mentioned was revealed. Similarly, God said of the Messenger, "It is only his to deliver the message⁸." And He said, "You are not responsible for their guidance, but God guides whoever He wills," (2:272) and He added in Surat al-Qasas, "He has best knowledge of the guided," (28:56) those to whom knowledge of their guidance was given in the state of their non-existence in their source-forms. It is established that knowledge follows the known. Whoever is a believer in his source-form and in the state of his non-existence, appears in that form in the state of his existence. God knew that of him, so that is what he is like. For that reason, God said, "He has best knowledge of the guided."

When God said the like of that, He also said, "My Word, once given, is not subject to change," (50:29) because My Word is based on My knowledge of My creation. "and I do not wrong My slaves," that is, I do not decree that disbelief (kufr) on them which makes them wretched and then I demand of them what is not in their capacity to do. Rather, We only deal with them according to what We gave them knowledge of, and We only gave them knowledge of what they gave Us from themselves by that on which they are based. So if they do wrong, they are the ones who are unjust. For this reason, He said, "but they wronged themselves. God did not wrong them⁹." Finally, We only said to them what Our essence accorded that We say to them. Our Essence is known to Us by what it is based on; so, if We say this, and do not say that, then We only spoke by what We knew to say. We spoke the word from Us, and obedience or lack of obedience is up to those who hear.

So all is from Us and from them,¹⁰
and acceptance is from Us and from them.
If they are not from Us,
We, without a doubt, are from them.

⁷ Mu'jiza, a miracle performed by a Prophet to prove his truthfulness and which others are unable to do.

⁸ Ref. Quran 5:99 and several other places.

⁹ 2:57, 9:70, etc. in many places in the Quran.

¹⁰ The apparent sources. The Word is from him and obedience from them.

So my friend, realise this wisdom of power in the word of Lot. It is a gate which belongs to gnosis. The secret¹¹ has been made clear for you, and the command is clear. It is included in the even which is called the odd.

¹¹ The secret of the Decree.

The Wisdom of the Decree in the Word of Ezra

Know that fate (qada') is the judgement of God on things, and God's judgement on things is according to His knowledge in them and of them. The knowledge of God in things is based on that which known things accord Him of what they are in themselves. The decree (qadar) is the timing of how things are in their source without increase¹. Fate is only decreed for things by themselves. This is the source of the secret of the Decree for the one who has a heart or gives ear. He is a witness "God's is the conclusive argument." (6:149)

Properly speaking, the judge (hakim) studies the source of the question which he judges according to what its essence demands. The one sentenced to what is due him is, in fact, a judge over the judge when he sentences him to that. Every "judge" is sentenced to what he sentences, and in it he is the judge, whoever he is. Grasp this question! The decree is only unknown by the force of its appearance. It is not recognised, so there is much seeking and earnest request in it.

Know that the Messengers, may God bless them and grant them peace, inasmuch as they are Messengers not inasmuch as they are awliya and gnostics are in ranks according to that on which their communities are based. They only have the knowledge with which they were sent, according to what the community of that Messenger needs, no more and no less. Communities differ, some have more need than others, so Messengers differ in the knowledge of the message just as their communities differ. It is what God said: "Those Messengers: We favoured some of them over others." (2:253)

In the same way, they also differ in what springs from their essences, peace be upon them, in the varieties of knowledges and judgements they have according to their predispositions. This is what God said: "We have preferred some of the Prophets over others." (17:55) And God said in respect of creation, "God has favoured some of you over others in provision." (16:71) Provision from God can be spiritual like knowledges and sensory like food. God "only sent it down in a known measure." (15:21) It is the due which creation seeks. God "gives everything its created form." (20:50) He sends down according to what He wills². He only wills what He knows, and so He commands it. What He knows is as we have stated. It is only by what the known accords.

Timing basically belongs to the known. Fate, knowledge, will and volition follow the Decree. So God only gives the understanding of the secret of the decree in respect to knowledges to the one who has been given complete gnosis. Knowledge gives complete rest to the knower, and it gives painful punishment to the knower as well. It gives two opposites. By knowledge, God describes Himself with both wrath and pleasure, and by knowledge the Divine Names are opposite one another. A reality³ governs the absolute existent and the limited existent. It is not possible that there be something more complete than it or stronger or greater than it, because of the universality of its jurisdiction, both limited and unlimited.

The Prophets, may God bless them and grant them peace, only take their own knowledges from a particular divine revelation. Their hearts are free of logical speculation because they know the limitations of the intellect in respect to its cognitive perception. The intellect is unable to perceive

¹ Qadar has a specific time and qada' does not. So qadar refers to the particular instances of qada'.

² Ref. Quran, "Were God to expand the provision of His slaves, they would act as tyrants on the earth. But He sends down whatever He wills in a measured way." (42:27)

³ The secret of the decree.

matters for what they really are. Simple communication is also unable to perceive that which is only accorded by taste (dhawq). Perfect knowledge remains only in the divine tajalli and in what God removes of veils from the springs of the inner sight and the eyes. They perceive matters — their non-time and in-time, their non-existence and existence, their impossibility, necessity and possibility — for what they truly are in their realities and sources.

Since the request of Ezra, peace be upon him, occurred on the elite path, censure fell on him as is related in tradition⁴. Had he sought the unveiling which we mentioned, perhaps censure in that would not have fallen on him. The proof of the simplicity of his heart is in his statement, "How can God restore this to life when it has died?" (2:259) His form, peace be upon him, is in this statement of his, as the form of Abraham is in His words, "Show me how You bring the dead to life." (2:260) That necessitates the response by the action which God manifested when He said, "God caused him to die a hundred years, then He brought him back to life," and He said, "Look at the bones how We raise them up and clothe them in flesh." So he saw how bodies grow with the witnessing of realisation. He showed him how it was. He asked about the decree which is only perceived by unveiling to things in the state of their permanence in their non-existence. That was not granted. That is one of the properties of divine cognisance, so it is impossible that any except God know it. They are the keys of the First,⁵ the keys of the unseen which only He knows. God informs only those slaves whom He wills on such matters.

Know that they are only called keys in the state of opening⁶. The state of opening is the state of connecting taking-form to things, or rather the state of connecting the decree to the decreed. None has any taste in that except God. Neither tajalli nor unveiling occur in it since only God has power and action in view of the fact that He has absolute existence which is unlimited.

When we saw that God censured Ezra, peace be upon him, when he asked about the Decree, we knew that Ezra was seeking this cognisance. Thus he was seeking to possess the power (qudra) which is connected to the decreed (maqdur). That is only claimed by the One Who has absolute existence. Thus he sought the impossible. How-things-are is only perceived by taste.

As for what we relate of what God revealed to him, "If you do not desist, I will efface your name from the register of prophethood," it means I will remove the path of transmission from you and give you matters based on tajalli. Tajalli only occurs according to what you have of the predisposition by which the perception of taste occurs. You know that you only perceive according to your predisposition. You look at this matter which you are seeking. If you do not see it, you know that you do not have the predisposition which it requires. That is one of the properties of the Divine Essence. You have learned that God "gives everything its created form." (20:50) So if He did not give you this particular predisposition, then it is not your creation. If it had been your creation, then God, who informed you that "He gives everything its created form," would have given it to you. It is you who desist from this sort

⁴ Quran 2:259 "Or the one who passed by a town which had fallen into ruin. He asked, 'How can God restore this to life when it has died?' God caused him to die a hundred years then brought him back to life. Then He asked, 'How long have you been here?' He replied, 'I have been here a day or part of a day.' He said, 'Not so! You have been here a hundred years. Look at your food and drink it has not gone bad and look at your donkey so We can make you a Sign for all mankind. Look at the bones how We raise them up and clothe them in flesh.'" According to 'Ali, Ibn Jarir, Ibn 'Abbas, al-Hasan and Qatada, that is Ezra.

⁵ The realities of sources.

⁶ Miftah, key, comes from the root, fath, opening.

of question in yourself. There is no need for any other prohibition. This is a mark of concern God showed to Ezra, peace be upon him. He knew that from his own knowledge and was ignorant of that from his own ignorance.

Know that wilaya⁷ is the universal encompassing sphere. This why it is not intersected, and so it is informed about things. As for the prophethood of law-giving and the Message, it is intersected, and it was cut off in Muhammad, peace be upon him. There will be no Prophet after him, either giving law or bound by law. There is no Messenger after him, and he is the lawgiver. This hadith⁸ is a fragment of the manifestation of the awliya of God, because it contains the cutting off of the taste of complete perfect slavedom, so the name of slavedom, which is particular to it, was not used. The slave does not want to share with his Lord, who is God, in the same name. God is not called "prophet" or "messenger." However, He is called Wali and is described by that name⁹. God says, "God is the Wali of those who believe," (2:257) and He says, "He is the Wali, the Praiseworthy." (42:28) This name, "wali", continues to be applied to the slaves of God both in this world and the Next. A name which is particular to the slave and not to God no longer remains since prophethood and the message have been cut off.

"God is gentle to His slaves," (42:19) so they still have the general prophethood in which there is no law (shari'a), and they still have the law in striving in the confirmed ordinances. They still have heirs in the laws. The Prophet said, "The 'ulama' (men of knowledge) are the heirs of the Prophets¹⁰." The only inheritance here is that they strive with the ordinances, and so they legislate them.

If you see a Prophet speaking a language outside the simple ordinances of the Sharia, that is due to the fact that he is a wali and a gnostic. For this reason, his station in respect to his being a man of knowledge and a wali is more perfect and complete than it is due to the fact that he is a Messenger or someone who legislates and has a Sharia. If you hear one of the People of God speaking, or it is related to you that he said, "Wilaya is higher than prophethood," that speaker only means what we mentioned. Or if he says that the wali is above the Prophet or the Messenger, he means in the same person. He is the Messenger, and inasmuch as he is a wali, he is more complete than he is by simply being a Prophet. It does not mean that the wali who follows him is higher than him. The follower never overtakes the followed in that in which he follows him. If he had overtaken him, then he would not be his follower. So understand that!

The starting point of the Messenger or Prophet who brings a Sharia is wilaya and knowledge. Do you not see that God commanded him to seek increase of knowledge, not increase of anything other than it? God commanded him, "Say: 'Lord, increase me in knowledge!'" (20:114) This means: you know that the Sharia consists of making certain deeds obligatory and prohibiting certain actions. These actions take place in this world, so they come to an end. Wilaya is not like that. If it had been cut off, it would have been cut off in respect to itself just as the message is cut off in respect to itself. If it had been cut off, it

⁷ According to the commentator, wilaya is annihilation in God, and God encompassed all, and "All things are passing except His face." (28:88)

⁸ "I am the Seal of the Messengers."

⁹ Wali means the friend of God, and refers to the gnostic. It is also one of the Divine Names which means the Guardian or the One who manages people's affairs.

¹⁰ Al-Bukhari.

would not still have a name. Wali is a name which God will continue to have¹¹. This belongs to the slaves by following a model, realisation and attachment¹².

He told Ezra, "If you do not desist from asking about how the decree is, I will efface your name from the register of prophethood. The business will come to through unveiling by tajalli and the name "prophet" and "messenger" will vanish from you." God will still have his wilaya. The context of the state indicated that this speech came as a threat. Whoever has this state when he is addressed in this fashion, knows that he is threatened with the cutting off of some of the special ranks of wilaya in this abode, since prophethood and the message are a special rank in wilaya based on some of the ranks which wilaya contains. He knows that he is higher than the wali who has neither law-giving prophethood nor the message.

If someone has another state which necessitates that the rank of prophethood be confirmed for him, that then is the promise and not the threat. Ezra's question was accepted because the Prophet is the elite wali. Because of the context, he knows that since the prophet has this prerogative in wilaya, he cannot engage in what he knows that God will dislike him doing. He cannot engage in what he knows it is impossible for him to attain. When these circumstances exist for the one who has them and they are affirmed, then this divine statement, "I will efface your name for the register of prophethood" becomes a promise. Thus it becomes a transmission indicating a lasting rank. It is a lasting rank for the Prophets and Messengers in the Next Abode, which is not a place where a Sharia is prescribed for any of God's creatures after they have entered the Garden or the Fire.

We define that as an entry into the two abodes of the Garden and the Fire. When the Day of Rising begins for the people who lived in the times of the gaps between the Prophets¹³, young children, and madmen, all of them will be gathered on one plain for the establishment of justice, recompense for wrong actions and the rewards for works which are due to the people of the Garden. Then they will be gathered separate from other people on one plain¹⁴, and a Prophet from the best of them will be sent among them. The Fire will be shown to them. This Messenger sent to these people will bring it, and he will say to them, "I am the Messenger of God to you." Some will affirm him and others will deny him. Then he will say to them, "Plunge into this fire. Whoever obeys me will be saved and will enter the Garden. Whoever disobeys me and opposes my command will be destroyed and he will be one of the people of the Fire." Whoever obeys his command and casts himself into this fire will be happy and receive his reward. He will find this fire to be "coolness and peace"¹⁵. Whoever disobeys him deserves the punishment and will enter the Fire and descend into it because of his deed of opposition so that that justice from God might be set up among His slaves.

That is like the words of God, "Upon the day when legs are bared"¹⁶, (68:42) i.e., for one of the immense matters of the Next World, "and they are called on to prostrate." This is obligation and Sharia. Some will

¹¹ As Joseph said about God, "...You are my Wali in this world and the Next." (12:101).

¹² According to al-Qashani, it is acquired and realised through annihilation in the Divine Attributes and Essence and attached by the going-on (baqa') after annihilation in the station of drawing near.

¹³ i.e., those who did not have a Prophet to follow.

¹⁴ According to the commentator, al-Qashani, the plain on which they are gathered may be as-Sahira, as in the Quran (79:14), "But it shall be but a single scare, and behold they are at as-Sahira!" As-Sahira which, according to some, is the earth God will create anew on the Day of Rising.

¹⁵ As was the case with Abraham, Quran 21:69.

¹⁶ The expression means to get ready for something difficult.

be able to prostrate and some will not be able to do so¹⁷. These are the one about whom God says, "They are called on to prostrate, but they will not be able to do so," just as some of the slaves cannot obey the command of God in this world like Abu Jahl¹⁸ (18) and others. This is according to what remains of the Sharia in the Next Abode on the Day of Rising before people enter the Garden and the Fire. This is why we have written it down, and praise belongs to God, the Wali.

¹⁷ This is also reflected in a hadith in al-Bukhari in which the Prophet said, "Our Lord will unveil what is hidden, and every believer, man and woman, will prostrate to Him. Those who prostrated out of eyeservice and reputation in this world will go to prostrate and find their backs rigid."

¹⁸ The Prophet's uncle who was a violent opponent of Islam.

The Wisdom of Prophethood in the Word of Jesus

He was manifested from the water of Mary
 and the breath of Gabriel in the form of man existing from clay.
 The spirit was in an essence purified of nature
 which it called prison.
 For that reason, the spirit stayed in it
 for more a thousand years in the designation of time.¹
 A spirit from God, no other.
 For that reason, he revived the dead and formed the bird from clay.
 Since his relation with his Lord is proven,
 by it he has effective action in both the higher and lower worlds.
 God purified his body, and made his spirit pure,
 and He made him a model of taking-form.

Know that among the special qualities of the spirits (arwah) is whenever they touch anything life flows into it. This is why the Samiri² seized a handful of dust from the track of the messenger, who was Gabriel, and he is the Spirit. The Samiri had knowledge of this matter. When he recognised that it was Gabriel, he knew that life would flow into whatever he had walked on, so he took a handful of dust³ from the track of the messenger or he filled his hand or the ends of his fingers⁴, and threw it into the Calf. The Calf made a noise like the sound of a cow mooing. If it had been in another form, the name of that form's sound would have been ascribed to it — as grumbling to the camel, baa-ing to rams, bleating to sheep, and voice or articulation and speech to man. That power from the life which flows in things is called lâhût. The nâsût is the locus on which the spirit is based. The nâsût may be called a spirit by what is based on it.

When the Trusty Ruh, who is Gabriel, presented himself to Mary, peace be upon her, in the form of a "handsome, well-built man"⁵, she imagined that he was a man wishing to have intercourse with her. She took refuge with God from him with all her being, with the whole of her existence, that God might save her from him since she knew that that was among the things which are not permitted. She was given a complete presence with God, and it is the meaning-without-form spirit. If Gabriel had breathed into her at that moment in this state, Jesus would have been born in such a manner that no one could tolerate him due to the harshness of his nature which was the state of his mother.

When he said to her, "I am only your Lord's messenger of your Lord so that He can give you a pure boy," she relaxed from that contraction (qabd) and her breast expanded. It was at that time that Gabriel breathed Jesus into her. Gabriel conveyed the word of God to Mary as the Messenger conveyed the

¹ As he was born more than five centuries before the Prophet Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace, and is still alive, waiting to descend.

² The story is found in the Quran 20:75-95, where as-Samiri convinces the tribe of Israel to cast their ornaments into the fire out of which he brought the figure of a Calf which lowed, and which they worshipped. He told Moses, "I beheld what they did not behold, and I seized a handful of dust from the messenger's track and cast it into the thing."

³ With dad, qabda.

⁴ With sad, qabsa.

⁵ 5. Quran 19:17.

word of God to his community. Jesus was "His word that He cast into Mary, and a Spirit from Him⁶." Then appetite filled Mary. The body of Jesus was created from the actual water of Mary and from the imaginary water of Gabriel which was infused in the moisture of that breath, since the breath of the living is moist because of the water content in it. So the body of Jesus is from imaginary water and real water. He emerged in the form of a man in respect to his mother and inasmuch as Gabriel had appeared in the form of a man, since taking-form only occurs in the human species according to the normal principle.

Jesus brought the dead to life because he is the Divine Spirit, and bringing to life belongs to God. The breath which Jesus has is like the breath which Gabriel has. The word belongs to God. The bringing the dead to life by Jesus is an actual revival inasmuch as it was manifested from his breath as he was manifested from the form of his mother. His bringing to life is also imagined to be from him, but it actually belongs to God. He joined the two by the reality on which he is based even as we said that he is created from imaginary water and actual water. Bringing-to-life is ascribed to him by means of actualisation in one aspect, and by imagination in another aspect. In respect to actualisation, it is said of him that he brings the dead to life. In respect to imagination (tawahhum), it is said that he breathes into it and it becomes a bird by the leave of God⁷. The agent is in the prepositional phrase "by God's permission", even though He did not breathe into it. It is also possible that the agent is the one who breathes into it. It became a bird as regards physical form. In the same way, Jesus healed the blind and the lepers.

All was ascribed to Jesus as being "by God's permission⁸". "Permission" (idhn) is an indirect expression, as in His words, "By My permission⁹" and "by the permission of God". If the prepositional phrase is connected to breathing, the breather has leave in the breathing, and so it is a bird by the leave of God. If the breather breathed not by leave, then the taking form of the bird as a bird is not by the leave of God. The agent in that is then the verb "it becomes (yakûn)." If there had not been something real and something imaginary in the matter, then these forms would not have accepted these two aspects. Rather, it has these two aspects because the constitution of Jesus accords that. Jesus showed humility to the extent that he prescribed that his community "pay the jizya¹⁰ tax with their hands in a state of willing submission¹¹," and that if one of them were slapped on the cheek, he should offer the other cheek to the one who slapped him, and not rise up against him nor seek revenge. This came from his mother's side. Since the woman is lower, she has humility because she is subject to the man legally and physically. The power to bring to life and heal that he had come to him the side of the breath of Gabriel in the form of a man. Jesus brought the dead to life by the form of man. If Gabriel had not come in the form of man, but in another of the elemental forms of phenomenal beings from the animals, plants or minerals, Jesus would not have been able to bring the dead to life without taking on that form for that moment and appearing in it. If Gabriel had come in a luminous form beyond the elements and natural humours, since luminosity is part of his nature, Jesus would not have been able to bring the dead to life

⁶ Quran 4:171, "The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was only the Messenger of God and His Word, which He cast into Mary, and a Spirit from Him."

⁷ Quran 3:49; 5:110.

⁸ Quran 3:49.

⁹ Quran 5:110.

¹⁰ The tax paid by the People of the Book to the Muslim State.

¹¹ Quran 9:29.

unless he appeared in that form of non-elemental light, while still maintaining the human form in respect of his mother.

When he brought the dead to life, it was said that it was him and not him. The onlookers fell into bewilderment (hayra) just as the man of intellect becomes bewildered in his logical reflection when he sees an individual human being bringing the dead to life, as that is one of the divine qualities - bringing to life with speech, not mere bringing with animation¹². The beholder is bewildered because he sees the form of a man who possesses a divine effect. That led some of them to speak of that as "incarnation" and say that Jesus was God since it was by Him that Jesus brought the dead to life. Thus they are charged with disbelief (kufr) which is the veil because they veil God, who brings the dead to life, by the human form of Jesus. God said, "They are unbelievers who say, 'God is the Messiah, the son of Mary'¹³." They fell into both error and disbelief at the end of all they said, not because they say that he is God nor by calling him the son of Mary. But they made the attribution that God, insofar as He brought the dead to life, was contained in the human form of the human nature which is called the son of Mary. There is no doubt that Jesus was the son of Mary. The hearer imagines that they have attributed divinity to the form, and so they make divinity the same as the form. That is not what they do. Rather, they make divine He-ness the subject in the human form which is the son of Mary. They should differentiate between the form of Jesus and the divine principle because they have made the form the same as the principle. Gabriel was in the form of man who did not breathe and then he breathed. One differentiates between the form and the breath, and the breath from the form. The form existed without the breath - thus the breath is not part of its essential definition. For that reason, differences occurred among the people of different [Christian] parties regarding Jesus and what he was. Whoever looks at him in respect to his mortal human form, says that he is the son of Mary. Whoever looks at him in respect to his mortal representational form relates him to Gabriel. Whoever looks at him in respect to what was manifested from him of bringing the dead to life, relates him to God by the quality of the spirit, and says that he is the Spirit of God¹⁴, that is, by Him life was manifested in whomever received his breath. Sometimes God is imagined to be the passive principle in Jesus, and sometimes the angel is imagined in him, and sometimes mortal humanity is imagined in him. So the conception of everyone is based on what predominates that person. Jesus is the Word of God¹⁵, the Spirit of God¹⁶, and the slave of God¹⁷. That is something which no one else has in the sensory form. Indeed, each person is attached to his father of form, not to the One who breathed his spirit into the human form. When God fashioned the human body as He said, "When I have shaped him," (15:29;38:72) then He breathed into Him, that was from His spirit. Thus in its being and source, the spirit is ascribed to God. That is not the case with Jesus. The shaping of his body and mortal form is implied in the breath of the spirit. Others, as we mentioned, are not like that.

¹² . i.e., the dead person can speak and answer him. This not simply causing the dead limbs to move of their own accord.

¹³ Quran 5:17, 5:72.

¹⁴ Ruh God.

¹⁵ See Quran 3:45, 4:171.

¹⁶ Quran 14:171.

¹⁷ Quran 19:30.

All existent things are the words of God which are inexhaustible¹⁸ because they are from "kun" and "kun" is the word of God. Is the word ascribed to Him according to what He really is? His what-ness is not known. Or is it that God descends to the form of the one who says, "kun", and so the word "kun" is the reality of that form to which he descended or in which He is manifest? Some of the gnostics take one side and some take the other side, and some of them are bewildered in the business and do not know. This is a question which can only be recognised by taste (dhawq), as was the case with Abu Yazid al-Bistami when he breathed into the ant which he had killed and it returned to life. He knew in that action by Whom he had breathed, and that was an Jesusian witnessing. As for the revival of meaning by knowledge, that is the divine life, essential, eternal, sublime, and luminous, about which God said, "Is someone who was dead and whom We brought to life, supplying him with a light by which to walk among the people..." (6:123) Whoever gives life to a dead soul by the life of knowledge in a particular problem connected to knowledge of God, has brought him to life by it, and it is "a light for him by which he walks among the people, i.e., among his likes in form.

Were it not for Him and not for us,
that which is would not have been.
I worship Him in truth,
and God is our Master.
I am his source so know!
If you said, "man,"
Then do not be veiled by "man".
He has given you a proof.
So be God and be creation,
and you will be merciful by God.
Feed His creation through Him,
and you will be spirit and sweet scent.
We give Him what appeared by Him in us,
and He gave to us.
The command is apportioned between Him and us.
My heart was given life by the One who knew it
when He gave us sensory life.
At that time (before time),
we were beings, sources and times in Him.
That did not endure in us, but that gave us life.

Part of what proves what we mentioned concerning the breath (nafkh) of the spirit with the elemental form is that God has described Himself by the "breath of the All-Merciful". Everyone described by an attribute must follow the attribute and all that attribute demands of him. You realise that breath is necessary for the one who breathes. For that reason, the divine breath accepts the forms of the universe. It is like the primordial substance¹⁹, which is not other than the source of nature.

The elements are one of the forms of nature, and what is above the elements and what issues from them are also part of the forms of nature. They are sublime spirits going right up to the seven heavens.

¹⁸ See Quran 18:109, "Say: 'If all the sea was ink to write down the Words of my Lord, it would run out long before the Words of my Lord ran out,' even if We were to bring the same amount of ink again."

¹⁹ Al-jawhar al-hayulani.

As for the spirits of the seven heavens and their sources, they are elemental, so they issue from the vapour of the elements. The angels from every heaven are from the elements, so they are made from the elements, and there are no beings of nature above them. For this reason, God described them with dispute²⁰, i.e., the Highest Assembly, because nature has polarisation. Polarisation is that which is in the Divine Names, and they are ascriptions given by the "breath of the All-Merciful." Do you not see how the Essence is not subject to this principle, and that it is independent of the worlds? This is why the world appeared in the form of the One who brought it into being, and it is not other than the divine breath.

The divine breath ascends by what it has of heat, and descends by what it has of humidity and cold, and fixes itself and solidifies by what it has of dryness. Thus precipitation comes from cold and humidity. Do you not see that when the doctor wants to give someone a remedy, he looks at his water (urine) in a long-necked bottle? If he sees precipitation, he knows that the digestion is complete. He gives the remedy to speed progress. The precipitation is produced by his natural coldness and humidity.

Then God kneaded the clay of this human person with "His two hands." These are opposite to each other. Even though each of these two hands may be a right hand, the distinction between them is not hidden. They are only two in themselves - two hands because He only causes effects in nature according to what is in conformity with it. Nature consists of opposites, so He said "two hands". Then He brought man into existence with two hands, and called him man (bashar)²¹. This refers to the direct contact (mubashara) of the two hands as befits the Divine Presence. That arises from His concern for this human species. Then God said to the one who refused to prostrate himself before Adam, "What prevented you prostrating to what I created with My Own Hands? Were you overcome with arrogance (towards the one who is your like, made of the elements) or are you one of the exalted?" (38:75) meaning those who are above the elements. "You are not like that."

By the exalted²², He means those who, by their essence, are above being elemental by their luminous constitution, even though they are part of nature. Man is only better than the other species by virtue of his being made of clay (bashar). He is the best species of all that was created from the elements by direct contact with the two hands. So in rank, man is above the terrestrial and celestial angels, although the lofty angels are better than the human species according to a divine text²³.

If anyone wishes to recognise the divine breath (nafas), let him recognise the universe, because "whoever knows himself knows his Lord"²⁴ who is manifest in him. The universe was manifested in the breath of the Merciful which God breathed from the Divine Names. They brought the manifestation of their effects into existence from the non-manifestation of their effects. He was generous to Himself by what He brought into existence in Himself. The first effect of the breath took place in that Presence. Then the command continued to descend²⁵ by breathing out from the universal to the last of what God brought into existence.

²⁰ Quran 38:69, "I had no knowledge of the Highest Assembly when they disputed." It can also mean mutual rivalry.

²¹ Quran 15:28, "I am creating a mortal (bashar)."

²² "The exalted" are the angels who wander in love and those who are near, like Gabriel and the angels of the Throne.

²³ "Or are you one of the exalted?" 38:75.

²⁴ As the Prophet said.

²⁵ See Quran 65:12, "It is God who created the seven heavens and of earth their like, the Command descending down through all of them."

All is contained in the source of the breath,
 like light is contained in the essence of darkness
 at the end of the night before daylight.
 Knowledge comes by proof at the end of the day
 for the one who is sleepy.
 He sees what I have said as a dream which indicates the breath,
 And it gives him relief from every grief.
 In the recitation of the Quran, it is, "He frowned²⁶."
 He has given a tajalli of Himself
 to the one who came to fetch a firebrand²⁷.
 So Moses saw Him as a fire,
 while He is a light for kings and seekers.
 If you have recognised what I said,
 then know that you are in a state of grief²⁸.
 If Moses had sought something else
 (other than the brand),
 he still would have seen Him in that,
 and not the opposite.

When God establishes this Jesusian word in the Station²⁹ so that we would know and he would be known, Jesus will be asked about what was ascribed to him and whether or not it was true, even though God already knew whether or not that matter had taken place. God will say to him, "Did you say to people: 'Take me and my mother as gods, besides God'?"³⁰

Adab demands a response to the one asking the question because when He gave him a tajalli in this station and form, wisdom necessitated the response in separation by the source of gatheredness. So he put disconnection first and said, "Glory be to You!" using the kaf (pronoun of the second person singular) which defines who is indicated by encounter and speech. "It is not mine," inasmuch as I belong to myself rather than You³¹, "to say what I have no right to," that is, what my he-ness rather than my essence necessitates. "If indeed I said it, You know it," because You are the Speaker, and whoever says something knows what he has said. You are the tongue by which I speak, as the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, reported to us in a divine transmission in which God said, "I am his tongue by which he speaks." He made His He-ness the same as the tongue of the speaker, but ascribed the speech to His slave.

Then the man of right action completed his response by saying, "You know what is in my self," and the speaker is God, "and I do not know what is in it," so this is in knowledge of the he-ness of Jesus in respect of His He-ness, not in respect of the fact that Jesus speaks and has an effect. "It is You", so He

²⁶ Sura 80.

²⁷ Moses in Quran 20:10; 27:7. Refers to empirical knowledge, but he found unveiling in the form of the Burning Bush.

²⁸ By standing behind the veil or seeking other-than-Him.

²⁹ On the Last Day.

³⁰ Quran 5:116.

³¹ To slaveness rather than lordship.

brought distinction and support to confirm the proof and dependence on Him, since God only knows the Unseen. So He separated and gathered, unified and made many, made wide and narrow.

To end his reply, Jesus said, "I said to them nothing but what You ordered me to say." He negated to begin with³², alluding to the fact that he has no existence. The statement required adab with the questioner. If he had not acted thus, he would have been described as lacking knowledge of the realities, but he certainly was not like that! Thus he said, "only what You ordered me," and it is You are the One who speaks on my tongue, and You are my tongue. Observe this divine polarity of the spirit! What is finer and more subtle than this!

Jesus said that he said, "Worship God." So he used the name of God because slaves differ in forms of worship and Sharia. So he did not specify one name rather than another name. Instead he used the name which joins all of them. Then he went on, "my Lord and your Lord." It is known that His relationship to one existent being by lordship (rubûbiya) is not the same as His relationship with another existent being. That is why he made a distinction when he said, "my Lord and your Lord," by two references one to the speaker and one to the one addressed. He said, "nothing but what You ordered me," and thus he affirmed that he is one who is commanded. The quality of being commanded is not other than slavery, since one is only commanded when obedience is expected of one, even if one does not comply.

Since the command descends according to ranks, all that appears in a certain rank is coloured with what the reality of that rank gives it. The rank of the one commanded has a principle which appears in everyone who is commanded. The rank of the commander has a principle which appears in every command. God said, "Establish the prayer." He is the commander and the one who is subject to the obligation is the commanded. The slave says, "Forgive me!" so he commands and God is the commanded. What God demands of His slave by His command is the same as what the slave demands of God by his command. This is why every supplication is answered, and it must be answered, even if the answer is delayed, just as some who are under obligation delay the prayer. Whoever who is obligated to perform the prayer and does not pray it at its proper time, delays obedience and prays it at another time when he is able to perform it. There must be an answer, if only by intention.

Then he said, "I was a witness against them (and he did not say over himself with them as when he said, 'my Lord and your Lord') as long as I remained among them" because the Prophets are witnesses over their communities as long as they are in them. "But when You took me (i.e. raised me) back to You," and You veiled them from me and me from them, "You were the One Watching over them," no longer in my substance, but in their substance, since You are their eye which necessitates observation.

He wanted to make a distinction between him and his Lord so that it would be known that he was a slave and that God is God and He is his Lord. He referred to himself as a witness (shahid) and he referred to God as the Watcher (raqib). He mentioned "them" before himself when he said, "I was a witness against them as long as I remained among them³³," preferring them in priority and with adab. He put "them" after God in relationship to Him when he said, "You were the One Watching over them" because of what the Lord merits in priority of rank.

³² (ma qulta = I did not say).

³³ Literally in the Arabic, "I was against them a witness."

Then know that God has the name the Watcher (Raqib) which Jesus applied to Him, and He is the Witness in His words, "a witness against them," and "You are Witness of all things." (5:117) He referred to all things and "thing" is the most indefinite of things. He used the name, "The Witness," and God is the Witness over every witnessed thing according to what the reality of that witnessed things demands. He indicated that God was the Witness over the people of Jesus when he said, "I was a witness against them as long as I remained among them." This is the witnessing of God in the substance of Jesus, as it is confirmed that God is his tongue, hearing and sight.

Then he said something which is both Jesusian and Muhammadan. As for its being Jesusian, that is the speech of Jesus by the transmission of God from him in His Book. As for its being Muhammadan, it happened that Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace, stood in one place for an entire night reciting it without turning to anything else until dawn broke. It is, "If You punish them, they are Your slaves. If You forgive them, You are the Almighty, the All-Wise³⁴." "They" is the pronoun of those who are absent as "he" is the pronoun of someone who is absent. as He said, "they are those who disbelieve," with the pronoun of those who are not present. Absence is their veil to what is meant by the witnessed one who is present. He said, "If you punish them," with the pronoun of the absent, and that absence is the source of the veil which hides them from the Real.

The Prophet mentioned them to God before the time when they are present³⁵ so that when the actual time came when they were present, the leaven would already have acted on the dough, and the dough might have had time to become equal to the leaven³⁶.

Then by "they are Your slaves," he singled out the unity (tawhid) on which they are based. There is no submissiveness greater than the submissiveness of slaves because they have no freedom of action with themselves. They act according to what their master wishes of them when he has no partner in them. He said, "Your slaves," and singled out what was meant of the punishment which is their humiliation. There are none more lowly than they, since they are slaves. Thus their essence necessitates that they be lowly, so You do not degrade them, for You do not degrade them with anything more lowly than the fact that they are slaves.

"If You forgive them," if You veil them from the punishment which they deserve because of their opposition if You put forgiveness on them, You veil them from the punishment and protect them from it, "You are the Almighty," the Protector, the Guardian. When God gives this name ('aziz) to one of His slaves, then God is called the Exalter (Mu'izz). This name is given to him by the 'Aziz, so he has strong protection from the revenge and punishment which the Avenger and Punisher desire for him. He also used distinction and dependence to confirm the proof, and so the ayat is the same sort of His words, "You are the Knower of the Unseen Worlds," and "You are the Watcher over them," and "You are the Almighty, the All-Wise³⁷."

The question from the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, and his supplication to his Lord in which he repeated the phrase for the entire night until dawn was a request for the answer. If he had

³⁴ This is the end of what Jesus said in this verse.

³⁵ On the Day of Gathering.

³⁶ According to the commentator, the leaven is the predisposition for the arrival in the presence of God. The dough is the clay of his substance.

³⁷ All used in this verse.

heard the answer in the first questioning, he would not have repeated it. God showed him the judgements in detail by which they deserved punishment. As each instance was presented to him and specified, the Prophet said to Him, "If You punish them, they are Your slaves, and if You forgive them, You are the Almighty, the All-Wise." If he had seen in what was presented to him anything which would make it necessary that God had already decided and that His presence must be preferred, he would have invoked God against them rather than for them. So what they deserved is changed by what this ayat accords of submission to God and exposing themselves to His pardon.

The Prophet related that when God loves the voice of His slave when he makes supplication to Him, He delays the answer to his supplication so that the slave will repeat the supplication. This comes from His love for the slave, not because He has turned away from him. For that reason, the Prophet mentioned the name of the Wise, and the Wise is the one who puts everything in its proper place, and who does not turn away from the qualities which their realities necessitate and demand; so the Wise is the One who knows the order of things. When the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, kept repeating this ayat, he was in possession of a great knowledge from God. If anyone recites it, let him recite it in that manner³⁸. (38) Otherwise, it is better that he remain silent. When God lets the slave articulate any request, He does so when He wants to answer it and grant his need. Let no one be slow in whatever has been guaranteed to him, but let him persevere as the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, perserved with this ayat in all his states, so that he either hears with His ear, or with hearing, whichever you like. How else will God make you hear the answer? If He permits the question on your tongue, He will let you hear the answer with your ear. If He permits the meaning to you, He will let you hear the answer by your hearing.

³⁸ i.e., with knowledge, weeping, and maintaining adab.

The Wisdom of Mercy in the Word of Solomon

Bilqis said¹, "It (the letter) is from Solomon and it says 'In the Name of God, the All-Merciful, Most Merciful.'" Some people criticise the fact that the name of Solomon comes before the name of God. That is not the case, and in saying this they say something that does not befit the gnosis which Solomon, peace be upon him, had of his Lord. How could what they say be connected to him when Bilqis said of it, "a noble letter had been delivered to me," that is, a letter which honoured her. In this they were influenced by the story of how Chosroes tore up the letter of the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace². He did not tear it up until he had read all of it and knew what it contained. It was the same with Bilqis. Had she not accepted what was established, respect for its author would not have prevented her from tearing up the letter, whether his name, peace be upon him, had been mentioned before or after the name of God.

Solomon mentioned the two mercies: the mercy of graciousness and the mercy of obligation, and they are ar-Rahman ar-Rahim. So God freely dispenses His bounty by the Rahman, and it is incumbent on Him by the Rahim. This obligation comes from graciousness, so Rahim is contained in Rahman. God "has prescribed mercy for Himself," glory be to Him! in order that the slave might have what God spoke about of the deeds which this slave brings, expecting his due from God who has required Himself to have this mercy for them, the mercy of obligation. When one of the slaves is like this, he knows that He is the author of the deed.

The deed is divided according to the eight organs of man. God informed us that He is the He-ness of each organ. So the author of the action is none other than God while the form is that of the slave. He-ness is embodied in him, i.e., only in his name because God is the source of what is manifested and which is called "creation". Because of this, the names of the Manifest and the Last belong to the slave since he was not and then was. By the fact that his manifestation depends on Him and action issues from Him, there is the name the Hidden and the First. Thus, when you see creation, you see the First and the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden.

This recognition was not hidden from Solomon, peace be upon him. Indeed, it is a part of a kingdom which "belonged to no one after him³," in terms of its manifestation in the visible world. Muhammad, peace be upon him, was given what Solomon was given, but he did not manifest it. God gave him the power to vanquish the 'ifrit⁴ who came in the night to attack him⁵. When the Prophet wanted to take the 'ifrit and tie him to the one of the columns of the mosque until morning so that the children of Madina could play with him, he remembered the prayer of Solomon, and so God made him drive the

¹ In Quran 27:30. The story is found in Sura 27. When Solomon hears of the kingdom of Queen Bilqis in Sheba, he sends the hoopoe to take a letter to her.

² When the Prophet sent Chosroes or Khosrau a letter inviting him to Islam, he tore it up after it was read to him.

³ Ref. Quran 38:35, where Solomon says, "My Lord, forgive me, and give me a kingdom the like of which will never be granted to anyone after me."

⁴ Type of malicious jinn.

⁵ Hadith. "Yesterday Satan rushed up suddenly to stop my prayer. God gave me power over him and I seized him. I wanted to tie him to one of the pillars of the mosque so that all of you could look at him, but then I remembered the supplication of my brother Solomon, 'O Lord, forgive me and give me a kingdom the like of which will never be granted to anyone after me.' (38:35) God turned him away in humiliation." via Abu Hurayra in al-Bukhari and Muslim.

'ifrit off in disgrace. The Prophet did not manifest his power as Solomon had done. He spoke of "a kingdom" which is not universal, and we know that he meant a particular kingdom. We see that the Prophet shared in every part of the Kingdom which God had given him and so we know by this that he is privileged with the whole kingdom. In the story of the 'ifrit, he was only given the manifestation while Solomon might have been given the whole and the manifestation. If the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, had not said in the story of the 'ifrit, "and God gave me power over him," we would have said that when he wanted to seize the 'ifrit, God reminded him of Solomon's prayer so that the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, would know that God had not given him power to seize him. He then made him send off the 'ifrit off in disgrace.

When he said, "God gave me power over him," we knew that God had given him freedom of action in that. Then God reminded him and he remembered Solomon's prayer and showed adab towards him. We know from this that that no creature after Solomon had the general manifestation of that kingdom.

Our goal in this question is only discussion and instruction about the two mercies which Solomon mentioned in the two names which are expressed in Arabic as al-Rahman al-Rahim⁶. God stipulated the mercy of obligation⁷ and made the application of the mercy of graciousness universal when He said, "My mercy extends to all things," (7:156) even the Divine Names, which are the realities of ascriptions. He was gracious to us in them. We are the result of the mercy of graciousness by the Divine Names and divine ascriptions of lordship. Then He prescribed mercy for Himself by our own manifestation. He informed us that He is our He-ness, that we might know that He obliged mercy on Himself only for Himself. Mercy never departs from Him. Who could be gracious to you when there is only Him?

There must be a principle for clarifying differences in merit this is in relation to what is manifested of the differences in merit that creatures have in knowledge, so that it might be said that this person knows more than that person, even though the source is but one. This means the shortcoming connected to the will (irada), apart from the connection of knowledge. This difference in merit exists in the divine attributes⁸. The connection and merit of will and its increase is connected to power. In the same way, hearing, sight and all the divine names are arranged in ranks, some having more merit than others. Similarly what is manifested in creation differs in ranks of merit, so that it can be said that this person knows more than that person even though the source is the same.

As each Divine Name which I have set forth is implied by all the Names and described by them, similarly that which creation manifests accepts all of that which is subject to differences of merit. Each part of the universe is from all the universe, i.e., it is a vessel for all the separate realities of the universe. Our statement that Zayd is inferior to 'Amr in knowledge does not contradict the fact that the He-ness of God is the source of both Zayd and 'Amr, but it is more perfect and knowing in 'Amr than in Zayd, even as the Names differ in merit. They are not other-than-God. God, inasmuch as He is Knowing, has a more encompassing connection than God as the Transformer, the All-Powerful. But He is still He and not other-than-Him.

O my friend! do not then know Him in one aspect and be ignorant of Him in another! Do not negate Him here and affirm Him there, unless You affirm Him by an aspect through which He affirms Himself and

⁶ The All-Merciful, the Most Merciful.

⁷ When He said, "I will write (mercy) for those who are god fearing" (Quran 7:156)

⁸ i.e., Knowledge is more perfect than will.

negate Him by an aspect through which He negates Himself, as in the ayat which combines affirmation and negation in respect to Him when He said, "Nothing is like Him," negating, "and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing," (42:11) and so He affirmed an attribute which is general to every hearing and seeing living being. Nothing exists but that it is alive, although this is hidden in the world from the perception of some people. It will appear to all people in the Next World, for it is the Abode of the Living (ad-Dar al-Hayawan). Similarly, the life of this world is only veiled from some of the slaves so that election and difference of merit might be manifested among the slaves of God according to what they perceive of Him from the realities of the universe.

In one whose attainment is more comprehensive, God is in principle more manifest in him than in someone who does not have this comprehensiveness. So do not be veiled by the difference in merit and say that it is not correct to say that creation is the He-ness of God after we have shown you the different in merit in the Divine Names. You have no doubt about them being God, and what is designated by them is not other than God.

How then could Solomon place his name before the name of God as they allege? He is part of the whole which the mercy of graciousness brought into existence. The name, ar-Rahman ar-Rahim, must come first for the dependence of the one receiving this mercy to be valid. Advancing the one who should come afterwards and delaying the one who should come before in the place he merits is contrary to the realities.

Part of the wisdom of Bilqis and the sublimity of her knowledge lies in the fact that she did not mention who cast the letter to her. She only did that so that her companions would know that she had communications on matters whose means they did not know. This is part of divine management in ruling because when the means of communication reaching the ruler are unknown, the people of the government fear for themselves in their actions. Therefore, they only act with prudence in a matter because that will reach their ruler, and they are guarding themselves from the potential danger of that action. If they knew precisely by whom information reached their ruler, they would have tried to flatter him and bribe him so that they could do whatever they wanted without their ruler hearing about it. Therefore the Queen said, "a noble letter has been delivered to me," without naming the one who cast it. That was an act of policy on her part that would insure respect for her among the people of her kingdom and the nobles under her rule. By this, she merited her superiority over them.

As regards the superiority of the human man of knowledge over the man of knowledge of the jinn in the secrets of the disposal of things and the special properties of thing, that is known by the amount of time, for the movement of the eye in perceiving what it perceives is quicker than the movement of the body when it moves⁹. The moment in which the eye moves is the same moment which it connects to the object, in spite of the distance between the viewer and the object. The moment that the eyes open is the moment in which they are connected to the heaven of the fixed stars. The moment when its glance returns is the same moment that its perception is absent.

⁹ Solomon asked his council, "'O Council, who among you will bring me her throne before they come to me in submission?' An 'ifrit of the jinn said, 'I will bring it to you before you get up from your seat...' He who possessed knowledge of the Book said, 'I will bring it to you before your glance returns to you.'" (27:38-40)

Rising from one's place is not like that. It does not possess this speed. Asaf ibn Barkhiya¹⁰ was more perfect in the deed than the jinn was. What Asaf ibn Barkhiya said is the same as the action in the same moment. Solomon, peace be upon him, at the same moment saw Bilqis' throne "settled before him" so one must not imagine that he perceived it while it was in its original place without being moved. We do not think that the displacement takes place in one and the same moment, but that it involves going into non-existence and returning to existence inasmuch as the only one who is aware of that is the one who has recognition of it. This is what God said, "Yet they are dubious about the new creation." (50:15) Not a moment passes them but that they see what they saw. Since it is like this, the time of its non-existence (the absence of the throne from its place) is the same as the time of its existence with Solomon because of the renewal of creation with the "breaths". No one knows this power, or rather, man is not aware with regard to himself that he ceases to exist in each breath and then is again.

Do not think that "this" (thumma) implies a delay. That is not true. However, it demands a high rank of knowledge in Arabic, as when the poet says:

As he brandished the straight Rudayni¹¹, it quivered.

There is no doubt that the moment of brandishing the spear is without a doubt the same as the moment of quivering of the thing which is brandished. It happened without delay. It is the same with the renewal of creation with breaths. The time of non-existence coincides with the time of the existence of its like. It is similar to the renewal of accidents in the theory of the Ash'arites [tajrîd al-a'râd].

The question involving the moving of Bilqis' throne is one of the most difficult problems, except for someone who has recognition of what we have mentioned in its story. Asaf did not have any merit except for acquiring renewal in the assembly of Solomon, peace be upon him. The throne was not moved across place nor did it rise above the earth nor break the laws of space for the one who understands what we mentioned. That was done by one of the companions of Solomon in order to elevate Solomon's honour in the selves of those who were present with Bilqis and her suite. The reason for that was that Solomon was God's gift to David as He said, "We gave Solomon to David," (38:30) so the gift is the giving of the donor by providing a blessing, not by means of fitting recompense or merit. So he is the abundant blessing, the decisive word and the cutting sword.

As for the knowledge of Solomon, God said of him, "We gave Solomon understanding of it (in spite of his opposite judgement to that of David), and God "gave each of them judgement and knowledge." (21:79) David's knowledge was knowledge given by God, and Solomon's knowledge was the knowledge of God in the matter inasmuch as He is the Judge without intermediary. So Solomon is the interpreter of God in the seat of sincerity¹². It is like the man who is striving to hit on the judgement of God by which God would judge the question. If he were to find it by himself or by what was revealed to His Messenger, then he would have two rewards. The one who errs in this particular judgement has one reward as well as its being knowledge and judgement. The community of Muhammad was given the rank of Solomon in judgement¹³ and the rank of David in wisdom¹⁴, so there is no better community than it.

¹⁰ The name of the man of knowledge in Solomon's council.

¹¹ Rudayna was a woman who was famous for straightening spear shafts which were tested by shaking.

¹² See Quran 54:55.

¹³ i.e., by the Quran and hadith.

¹⁴ By ijtihad.

When Bilqis saw her throne, and she knew how great the distance was and the impossibility of moving it in that space of time, she said, "It seems the same." (28:42, lit. "it is as if it were.") She spoke the truth according to what we mentioned regarding the renewal of creation by similarity. It was it. The matter is true, as you are the same at the time of renewal as you were in past time. Part of the perfection of Solomon's knowledge was in the instruction he gave regarding the pavilion when he told Bilqis, "Enter the courtyard¹⁵." The courtyard was very smooth without any curvature in its glass. When Bilqis saw it, she thought that it was water and had depth, so she bared her legs so as not to let the water dampen her clothes. By that, Solomon informed her that the throne which she saw was of this sort. This is the utmost fairness. He informed her that she had hit the mark when she said, "It seems the same." At that point, she said, "My Lord, I have wronged myself but I have submitted with Solomon to the Lord of all the worlds."

So she did not submit to Solomon, but to the Lord of the worlds, and Solomon was part of the worlds. She did not restrict her submission as the Messengers do not restrict their belief in God, contrary to Pharaoh who said, "to the Lord of Moses and Aaron." (26:48) Although this submission is related to Bilqis' submission in a certain respect, it does not have the same force. She had more discernment than Pharaoh in submission to God. Furthermore, Pharaoh was governed by the principle of the moment when he said, "I believe in the One in whom the Children of Israel believe." (10:90) He specified, but he also specified when he saw the sorcerers articulate their belief in the "Lord of Moses and Aaron." The Islam of Bilqis was the Islam of Solomon since she said, "with Solomon." She followed him in all that he adhered to in the way of beliefs.

This is how we are on the straight path which the Lord is on, for our forelocks are in His hand¹⁶, and it is impossible for us to separate from Him. We are with Him implicitly, and He is with us by open declaration. God said, "He is with you wherever you are," (57:4) and we are with Him as He takes us by our forelocks. He. may He be exalted! is with Himself wherever He goes with us on His path. So everyone in the world is on a straight path, and it is the path of the Lord. It is this that Bilqis learned from Solomon, so she said, "To God, the Lord of all the worlds," without referring to a particular world.

As for the subjection which was the privilege of Solomon, peace be upon him, and by which he was distinguished from others, and the kingdom which God gave him which none after him would have, it is from his command when He said, "We gave him the fiercely blowing wind, speeding at his command." (21:81) It was not subjection in itself, for God said in respect of each of us without exception, "He has made everything in the heavens and everything on the earth subservient to you." (45:13) He also mentioned the subjection of the winds, stars and other things¹⁷, but that is not by our command. It is from the command of God. If you reflect with your intellect, Solomon was privileged by this command neither by mental concentration nor by aspiration (himma) rather, it was by nothing more than the command itself. We said that because we recognise that the physical bodies of the world can be affected by the himma of the self when someone is in the station of concentration. We have seen such things happen in this Path. Solomon only had to articulate the command in whatever he wished to subject without either concentration or himma.

¹⁵ This is in the same sura (27), ayat 44.

¹⁶ Quran Ref. 11:56, "I have believed in God, my Lord and your Lord. There is no creature He does not hold by the forelock. My Lord is on a straight path."

¹⁷ Various places in the Quran: 14:32, 16:12, 22:65, 31:20.

Know, may God support us and you by a spirit from Him, that when any slave receives a gift like this, that does not detract from his portion of the kingdom of the Next World, nor is he called to account for it. That was true of Solomon. Although he sought it from his Lord, the tasting (dhawq) of the Path¹⁸ demands that it was advanced to him from what was stored up for others, and He will call him to account for it when he wants it in the Next World. God told him. "This is Our gift (and He did not say "to you: or to anyone else); bestow or withhold without reckoning." (38:39) We knew by the tasting of the Path that his request was from the command of his Lord. Thus the request was from the divine command, and the one who requested it received full recompense for his request.

If the Creator wishes, He grants his need in what he seeks from Him, and if He wishes, He withholds it. The slave has fulfilled what God demanded of him to obey His command in what he asked of his Lord. If he had asked that from himself without his Lord commanding him to do that, then he would be held to account for it.

That is true in all that God is asked for, as He said to His Prophet Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace, "Say: 'O Lord, increase me in knowledge!'" He obeyed his Lord's command and sought increase in knowledge to such an extent that each time he was given milk, he interpreted it to be knowledge even as he interpreted it as knowledge in a dream in which he received a glass of milk. In the dream, he drank the milk, and gave the rest of it to 'Umar ibn al-Khattab. The people asked, "What is its interpretation?" He replied, "Knowledge." Similarly, when God took him on his Night Journey, the angel gave him a vessel which contained milk and a vessel which contained wine. The Prophet drank the milk, and the angel said, "You have chosen the true nature (fitra). God has bestowed you on your community!" When milk appeared, it was the form of knowledge. Therefore it is knowledge taking on the form as milk, just as Gabriel came to Mary in the form of "a handsome, well- built man." (19:16)

When the Prophet said, "People are asleep and when they die, they wake up," he meant that everything that man sees in the life of this world is in the rank of the dreams of someone who is asleep, so it must be interpreted. Phenomenal being is imagination (khayal), but it is God in reality¹⁹. Whoever understands this has received the secrets of the Path. When the Prophet was offered milk, he would say, "O God, bless us in it and increase us in it" because he saw it as the form of knowledge, and he had been commanded to seek increase in knowledge. When he was offered something other than milk, he would say, "O God, bless us in it and give us better than it."

When God gives something to someone, and He gives it to him by a request which arises from a divine command, He does not take him to account for it in the Next Abode. When God gives something to someone, and He gives it by a request which is not by a divine command, the business in it is up to God. If He wishes, He will take him to account for it, and if He wishes, He will not take him to account for it. I hope for knowledge from God in particular for which He will not call one to account, for He commanded the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, to seek increase of knowledge, and it is the same command which is addressed to the Prophet's community. God said, "You have an excellent model in

¹⁸ One variant has "reality" instead of Path (Tariq).

¹⁹ Inasmuch as phenomenal being is a divine shadow.

the Messenger of God," (33:21) and what greater model is there than this model who is a source of solace²⁰ to the one who possesses understanding from God?

Had we discussed the station of Solomon in its entirety, you would have seen a matter whose revelation would have struck you with terror. Most of the men of knowledge of this Path have no knowledge of the state and rank of Solomon. The business is not as they claim²¹.

²⁰ Uswa is model, or a person to be imitated and through whose emulation one gains consolation. The source of solace is the verbal noun from Form V of this verb, ta'assa, which means to become consoled by the example of another who had suffered in a similar fashion and been patient in it.

²¹ His kingdom does not decrease what he has in the Next world.

The Wisdom of Existence¹ in the Word of David

"We subjected the mountains to glorify with him in the evening and sunrise, and also the birds, flocking together, all of them turned to him." Then God combined the kingdom and speech and prophethood in David when He says, "We made his kingdom strong, and gave him wisdom and decisive speech²." God clearly and openly appointed David Khalif. This was David, peace be upon him. His freedom of action in the kingdom with this subjection was by a mighty command which was not completed in him alone. God also gave it to Solomon who shared in it as He says, "And We gave knowledge to David and Solomon who said, 'Praise be to God who has favoured us.'" (27:15) He says, "We gave Solomon understanding of it. We gave each of them judgement and knowledge." (21:79)

Know that since prophethood and the message are a divine privilege, and cannot be acquired. This is the prophethood which lays down a Sharia. It is God's gift to them. Gifts of this sort are not recompense, nor is recompense demanded from them for these gifts. God bestows it on them as pure blessing and favour. So He says, "We gave him (i.e. Abraham) Isaac, and Jacob³." He says of Job, "We gave him his family, and the same again with them." (38:43) He says of Moses, "We endowed him with Our mercy, making his brother Aaron a Prophet," (19:53). There are more instances like that. What they received first of all is what they will receive at the last in the totality of their states, or most of them. It is only His name, the Giver.

God says in respect of David, "We gave David great favour from Us." (34:10) He did not accompany that with a demand for recompense from David, nor did He say that He gave him what He mentioned as a reward. When He demanded gratitude for that by action, He demanded it of the people of David, and did not mention David himself, asking David 's people to thank Him for the blessing which He gave to David. For David himself, it is a gift of pure blessing and favour. It is not like that for his people, but rather like the demands of barter. So God said, "Work, family of David, in thankfulness! But very few of My slaves are thankful⁴."

If the Prophets, peace be upon him, thanked God for what He had bestowed on them and given to them, that was not from the command of God. They undertook that freely from themselves, as the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, stood thanking God until his feet were swollen, when God had forgiven Him his wrong actions, past and present. When people commented what he did, he said, "Am I not a thankful slave?" God said that Noah was a thankful slave⁵. So the thankful among the slaves are few.

The first blessing which God bestowed on David was that He gave him a name which does not have any connected letters in it:

D W D

¹ Wujud

² Quran 38:18-20.

³ 6:84;19:49; 21:72; 29:29.

⁴ Quran 34:13.

⁵ Quran 17:3.

By this, He cut him off from the world and He told us this by the name itself which is dâl, alif, and wâw. God named Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace, with both connected and separated letters:

So in this God both joined him and separated him from the world. He combined the two states for him in his name as He combined the two states for David through meaning (ma'na)⁶ although He did not put that in his name. That was a privilege which Muhammad had above David, i.e., calling him by this name. The matter was thus completed for Muhammad in all its aspects. It is the same in his name Ahmad.

AHMAD

That is from the wisdom of God.

Then He spoke about the blessing He gave David in the mountains' echoing of glorification with him⁷. So they glorified with his glorification that the deed might be his. It was the same with the birds. He gave him power and described him by it⁸, and He gave him wisdom and decisive speech⁹.

Then the greatest blessing and nearest rank which God appointed for him was that his khalifate was mentioned in the divine text. He did not do that with any of his kind, and there were khalifs among them. God said, "David, We have made you a khalif on the earth, so judge between people with truth and do follow your own desires," i.e., whatever comes to your mind in judgement without revelation from Me, "letting them misguide you from the Way of God," (38:26) "from the path which I revealed to My Messengers." Then God showed adab with him and said, "Those who are misguided from the Way of God will receive a harsh punishment since they forgot the Day of Reckoning." He did not say to him, "If you go astray from My Path, there is a terrible punishment for you." If you said that Adam is mentioned as the Khalif in divine text, we will say that it is not the same as in the text regarding David, for God said to the angels, "I am putting a khalif on the earth." (2:30) He did not say, "I am making Adam a khalif." Even if He had said that, it still would not be the same as His words, "We have made you a khalif," in respect of David. One is implied and the other is explicit. Mentioning Adam in the story after that did not indicate that he is the same as the khalif of whom God spoke. Occupy your mind with the transmissions of God on His slaves when He transmits them. It is the same in respect to Abraham the friend, "I will make you an Imam for the people." (2:124) He did not say "a khalif". We know that the imamate here means the khalifate, but it is not the same because He did not mention it by the most specific of its names which is the khalifate.

Then part of bestowing the khalifate on David is that He made him a khalif of judgement. That is only from God. He told him, "Judge between people with the truth." (5:42) The khalifate of Adam was not of this rank. David's khalifate was that he follow what was in it previously, not that he delegated with the divine judgement of God in His creation. If that had been the case, it would have occurred. However, our discourse is only regarding the khalifs on the earth from God, and they are Messengers. As for the khalifate today, it is from the Messengers, not from God, so they only judge by what the Messengers prescribed for them. They do not go beyond that except when there is a small point which is only known

⁶ As he had prophethood, the message, the khalifate, the kingdom, knowledge, wisdom, and discrimination.

⁷ Quran 34:10, "O mountains and births! echo with him in his praise!"

⁸ Quran 38:17, "Remember Our slave David, who possessed true strength."

⁹ Quran 38:20, "We made his kingdom strong, and gave him wisdom and decisive speech."

by those like us. That is in taking what they judge by, from what is in the Sharia of the Messenger, peace be upon him.

The khalifate is from the Messenger. He takes the judgement from him, may God bless him and grant him peace, by transmission or by ijtiḥad, whose basis is also transmitted from him. Some of us think that the one who takes the judgement takes it from God, for he is a khalif from God by the source of that judgement. The substance is his inasmuch as it was the Messenger's — the source of his judgement is that of the Messenger's. Outwardly he follows, not disputing his judgement, as will be the case with Jesus when he descends and judges. It is the same when the Prophet Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace, said, "Those are the ones whom God has guided, so be guided by their guidance¹⁰." This relates to what he recognises as one who is singled out and one who conforms. It is in him by the degree of what the Prophet established of the Sharia which from the previous Messengers since he confirmed it. We follow him in relation to its confirmation, not because it is a Sharia of someone else before him. In the same way, the Khalif takes from God the same thing that he takes from the Messenger.

In the language of unveiling, we call him "the khalif of God", and with outward knowledge, we say "the khalif of the Messenger of God". For this reason, the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, died and did not transmit the khalifate from himself to anyone else for he knew that among the slaves of God are those who will take the khalifate from their Lord. Thus the khalif from God is in conformity with the judgements of the Sharia. Since the Prophet knew that, he did not hinder the matter. God has khalifs in His creation who take from the mine of the Messenger and the Messengers that which the Messengers took. They recognise the virtue of their predecessor there because the Messenger is a vessel for increase. The khalif is not a container for the increase which, had he been the Messenger, he would have received. He only gives knowledge and judgement in what he legislates through the specific legislation of the Messenger. Outwardly he follows the Messenger without opposition.

Do you not see that in the case of Jesus, peace be upon him, when the Jews imagined that he did not add to Moses, as is the case with what we said about the Khalifate today with the Messenger, they accepted him and confirmed him? When he added judgement and abrogated judgement, Moses confirmed it, for Jesus was a Messenger. They did not accept that because he differed from their creed, and the Jews did not know the matter for what it was — this is why they sought to kill him. His story is what God relates to us about them and him in His Mighty Book. He was a Messenger before increase. As for decrease of the judgement or its increase, it is confirmed since decrease is increase of judgement without a doubt.

The khalifate today does not have this rank, but it decreases or increases based on the Sharia which is confirmed by itjiḥad, not on the Sharia which Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace, articulated. The khalif might do something which is counter to a ḥadith in a certain judgement, and so he imagines that that comes from ijtiḥad. That is not the case, but rather this Imam has not confirmed that the transmission with respect to unveiling is from the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace. If it had been confirmed, he would have judged by it. If the path in it is fairness in justice, he is not protected from illusion. It is not by transmission in meaning.

¹⁰ Quran 6:90.

Something like this occurs in the khalif today. Similarly, it also applies to Jesus for, when he descends, he will remove much of the Sharia established by jihad. By removing that, he will clarify the form of the legislated truth which he had, especially when the judgements of the Imams differ in the same event. We know absolutely that when revelation descended, it descended in a certain way. That is the divine judgement and none other! God confirmed it and it is the Sharia of confirmation by the removal of interdiction from this community and the vastness of its judgements in it.

As for the statement of the Prophet, "If there are two khalifs, then slay one of them," this is the outward khalifate which has the sword. If they are in agreement, then one of them must be killed by the conflict of the khalifate of meaning. There is no actual killing in it, but killing comes with the outward khalifate. If the khalif does not possess this station, being the khalif of the Messenger of God — it is just being from the principle of the basis by which the existence of two gods could be imagined: "If there had been any gods besides God in heaven or earth, they would both be ruined," (21:22) even if they are in agreement. We know that if they differ implicitly, the judgement of one of the two will be valid. The one with the operative judgement is the god properly speaking. The one whose judgement is not operative is not god.

From this, we know that every valid judgement in the world today is the judgement of God even if it differs from the established judgement in its outward manifestation called the Sharia. The only judgement which is valid belongs to God in the heart of the matter, because the matter which occurs in the world is based on the judgement of the Divine Will, not on the judgement of the established Sharia¹¹, whose establishment itself comes from the Will. For that reason, He put His determination into effect. Therefore, Will only has determination in the matter, not in the act which it brings.

The power of the Will (mashi'a) is immense¹². This is why Abu Talib¹³ considered it to be the Throne of the Essence, since the Will itself necessitates judgement. Nothing occurs in existence nor disappears from it without the Will. When there is opposition to the divine command here, it is called "rebellion". It is only commanding the means, not the command, which brings things into being. None opposes God at all in what He does in respect to the command of the Will. Opposition only occurs in respect of the command of means. So understand that!

Properly speaking, the command of the Will is directed to bringing the action itself into existence, not to the one at whose hands the action manifests itself. It is impossible that the action should not be. However, it takes place in a particular locus, and so, at one moment, it is called opposition to the command of God, and at another moment it is called agreement and obedience to the command of God. The language of praise and blame follow the action accordingly.

Since the matter itself is based on what we have stated about it, creation of all sorts therefore hopes for happiness. He designated this station as "mercy which encompasses everything"¹⁴. It preceded divine wrath, and the predecessor comes before as is its right. That which the latter judges is what the former judged. Mercy obtained it since nothing preceded it, so this is one meaning of "His mercy preceded His wrath" that mercy judges the one who reaches it. It stands at the end. Therefore, the end must be

¹¹ See the Quran 74:54-56, "It is truly a reminder to which anyone who wills may pay heed. But they will only pay heed if God wills."

¹² The reality of the will necessitates judgement because it is the same as making a demand.

¹³ Al-Makki.

¹⁴ Quran 7:156, also 40:7.

reached, and thus mercy and parting from wrath must be reached. It has jurisdiction over everything which reaches it according to what is given to it by the state of the one who arrives.

Whoever possesses understanding
witnesses what we have said.
If they do not understand,
they should take it from us.
There is only what we mentioned in this matter,
so rely on it and be in it now as we were.
What we recited to you came from it to us,
and from us to you is what we gave you from us.

As for the softening of iron¹⁵, hard hearts are softened by reprimand and threat as fire softens iron. The hardness of hearts is a stronger hardness than that of stone. Fire breaks stone, calcifies it and does not soften it. Iron was only softened for him so that protective coats of mail could be fashioned. This is an instruction from God that the thing is only protected by itself. Mail protects against the spearhead, the sword, the knife and the arrowhead — protection against iron is by iron. The Muhammadan Sharia brings, "I take refuge with You from You." Understand this! This is the spirit of the softening of iron. He is the Avenger, the Merciful, and God grants success.

¹⁵ Quran 34:10, "We softened iron for him: 'Fashion wide coats of mail and measure well the links.'"

The Wisdom of the Breath¹ in the Word of Jonah

Know that this human organism in its perfection consists of spirit (ruh), body, and self (nafs). God created it in His form. The disintegration of its structure is only undertaken by the One who created it either by His hand — and it is only that — or by His command. Whoever undertakes to do that without the command of God has wronged himself and exceeded the limits of God in it and rushed to the ruin of the one whom God has commanded to thrive. Know that compassion to the slaves of God is more proper through preservation than jealousy in God.

David, peace be upon him, wanted to build the Bayt al-Muqaddas², and built it many times. Whenever he finished it, it was destroyed. He complained about that to God. God revealed to him, "This House of Mine will not be built by the hands of one who has shed blood." David said, "O Lord, was that not for Your sake?" God said, "Yes, but are they not My slaves?" David said, "O Lord, let it be built at the hands of someone who is from me!" God revealed to him, "Your son Solomon will build it."

What is meant in this story is that the preservation and maintenance of this human organism is better than its destruction. Do you not see that God has prescribed jizya³ and research of peace with those who had opposed the Din in order to spare them? He said, "If they incline to peace, you too incline to it, and put your trust in God." (8:61)

Do you not see that for the one who has responsibility for retaliation, accepting blood-money or pardoning is prescribed for the next-of-kin who is the responsible guardian? If he refuses to accept either, then the killer can be slain in retaliation. Do you not see how when the next-of-kin consists of a group of people, and one of them accepts the blood-money or pardons the person while the rest of the group want him killed, God observes the one who pardoned and prefers him to the one who did not pardon? Do you not see that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Whoever is in a position to retaliate and slays the person is like him"? God says, "The repayment of a bad action is one equivalent to it," (42:40) so He made retaliation an evil deed, i.e., that deed is evil even though it is part of the Sharia. Whoever pardons and makes amends has a reward due from God because he is based on His form. Whoever pardons and does not slay, his reward is due to the One on whose form he is based, because the One who fashioned is more entitled to it, and his existence only appeared by the name the Manifest.

Whoever preserves the person, preserves God. Man is not blameable by his source, but by his action, and his action is not the same as him. We are discussing his action, and action belongs only to God, even though some actions are blamed and some are praised. The language of blame in respect to purpose which is reprehensible with God, and the only thing reprehensible is what is made to be so by the Sharia. The Sharia makes something reprehensible because of what God made known or which He made known through someone He has instructed. So God prescribed retaliation by necessity for the preservation of the human race and to prevent people exceeding the limits of God. God says, "There is

¹ Nafas

² The Temple (Beth ha-Mikdash) in Jerusalem. The chapter is an evident proof against the lies circulated by the occupier of al-Aqsa, Mr. 'Ikrimah Sabri, after the Ahlu-s-Sunnah were expelled from it.

³ Poll tax paid by non-Muslims.

life for you in retaliation, O you who possess intelligence (lit. cores)⁴!" (2:179) They are the people of the core who stumble onto the secret of divine laws and wisdoms.

Since you know that God preserves this organism and preserves its continuance, you should also preserve it since you have that happiness. While man is still alive, he hopes that he will obtain the attribute of perfection for which he was created. Whoever strives to destroy it, strives to prevent the acquisition of that for which he was created. How excellent is what the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, said, "Shall I tell you what is better and more excellent for you when you meet your enemies, smite their necks and they smite yours? Remembering God."

That is because the only one who knows the value of this human organism is the one who remembers God with the invocation (dhikr) demanded of him⁵. God sits with the one who remembers Him⁶, and the sitter is witnessed by the one doing the invocation. When the one doing the invocation does not witness God who sits with him, then he is not doing invocation. When God is mentioned, He flows in all parts of the slave, not just in his invocation with the tongue. God, at that moment, is only the Companion of the tongue in particular. The tongue sees Him, inasmuch as the man⁷, in respect of his sight does not see Him⁸.

Understand this secret in the invocation of those who are heedless! The heedless person who does invocation is present without a doubt, and the One mentioned sits with him and so he witnesses Him. In respect of his heedlessness, this person does not do invocation and God does not sit with the heedless. Man is many but with a single source. God is one source but has many Divine Names, just as man has many parts. What is required of the invocation of one part is not the invocation of another part. God sits with the part which is invoking Him, and the other part is described as heedless. There must be some part of man doing invocation, so God sits with that part, and He preserves the rest of the parts by His concern.

When God undertakes the destruction of this organism by what is called "death", that is not negation (i'dam), but rather separation. He takes man to Him, and what is meant is only God's taking man to Him, "and to Him the whole affair will be returned." (11:123) When He takes him to Him, He fashions him a different composition than this composition. The new composition is from the genus of the abode to which he has moved, that is, the Abode of Going-on, because equilibrium exists. The creature thus will never die, i.e., his parts will never be separated.

As for the people of the Fire, they will return to bliss, but it will be in the Fire since after the end of the duration of punishment, it must become cold and peace according to the mercy which preceded it. This is their bliss. The bliss of the people of the Fire, after claims are settled, is the bliss of the friend of God,

⁴ Lubb: In Arabic there is no word for mind. However, in the Quran the word that designates a central locus of awareness in the human being is lubb, which means core. It is the heart viewed as an organ of gnosis and not merely as a valve which pumps blood to the head. Ibn Arabi says that it is that part of knowledge which is protected from the hearts which are attached to phenomenal being.

⁵ Which is to remember God on the tongues while banishing passing thoughts and the chatter of the nafs while you watch God with the heart.

⁶ Hadith qudsi, "The people of My dhikr are the people I sit with..." in Ibn Hanbal, Ibn Majah, etc.

⁷ Insan - also the pupil of the eye.

⁸ "Eyesight cannot perceive Him but He perceives eyesight. He is the All-Penetrating, the All-Aware." (Quran 6:103)

Abraham, when he was thrown into the Fire⁹. He was punished by the sight of it since his knowledge told him that it is a form which causes pain to any living being which is near it. He did not know what God intended by it and from it in respect to him.

So after the existence of these pains, he will find cold and peace in spite of the fact that he still witnesses the phenomenal form which is fire in the eyes of the people. The single thing has various modes in the eyes of the onlookers. The divine tajalli is also like that. If you wish, you could say that the tajalli of God resembles this, and if you wish, you could say that the world is in the eye of the beholder which contains the parable of God in the tajalli, and so it takes on various modes in the eye of the onlooker according to the onlooker's disposition. The onlooker's disposition varies with the modalities of the tajalli. All of this is permissible in the realities.

Had a slain person or one who had died not returned to God when he died or was slain, God would not have decreed their deaths nor prescribed their slaying. All is in His hand, and there is no loss in respect to Him. He prescribes slaying and decrees death by His knowledge that His slave will not pass from Him, for he returns to Him as God says, "and to Him the whole affair will be returned." So freedom of action occurs in it, and He is the One with freedom of action. Nothing is outside of Him of which He is not the source. Rather, His He-ness is the source of that thing, and He is the One who gives it its unveiling when He says, "and to Him the whole affair will be returned."

⁹ See Quran 21:69.

The Wisdom of the Unseen in the Word of Job

Know that the secret of life flows in water, for it is the basis of the components and the basic elements. For this reason, God made every living thing of water¹. There is nothing which is not alive, so there is nothing which does not proclaim His praise, but their extolling is only understood by divine unveiling². Nothing extols unless it is alive. So the basis of everything is water. Do you not see how the Throne is on the water because it was formed from it?³ It oppresses the water while the water underneath it maintains it. In the same way, God created man a slave. Then he was haughty towards his Lord and put himself above Him. In spite of this, God preserves him from underneath in respect of the height of this slave who is ignorant of himself. This is what the Prophet said, "If you let a rope fall, it would fall on God." So he indicated that "below" is related to Him as "above" is related to Him when He said, "They fear their Lord above them," (16:50) and "He is the Absolute Master over His slaves." (6:18; 6:61) So He has "above" and "below" For this reason, the six directions only appeared in respect of man, who is on the form of the All-Merciful.

There is no nourisher except God. He said of one group, "If they had implemented the Torah and the Gospel," using the indefinite and being general, "and what was sent down to them from their Lord," and this includes every judgement sent down on the tongue of a Messenger or someone inspired, "they would have been fed from above their heads," and He is the Nourisher in respect of the aboveness which is ascribed to Him, "and beneath their feet," (5:66) as He is the Nourisher in respect of the belowness which He ascribes to Himself on the tongue of His Messenger, who translates from Him. If the Throne had not been on the water, its existence would not have been maintained. The existence of the living sustains life. Do you not see that when the living dies the customary death, the parts of his structure disintegrate and his faculties are eliminated from that particular structure? God said to Job, "Stamp your foot! Here is a cool bath," (38:42) meaning that since he had an excess of the heat of pain, He would alleviate it by the coolness of the water. For this reason, the medicine was decrease from excess and excess in decreasing. What is meant is the demand of balance, and the only way to it is by approaching it.

However, we said that there is no way achieve equilibrium because realities and witnessing constantly accord taking-form with every single breath⁴. Taking-form (takwin) only comes from an inclination which is called deviation or decomposition in nature. In God it is the will, and it is inclination to one particular goal rather than another. Equilibrium denotes sameness in all, but this does not occur. For this reason, we are deprived of the principle of equilibrium. God's description with pleasure and anger and the attributes is related in prophetic divine knowledge. Pleasure obliterates anger, and anger obliterates pleasure from the pleasing. Perfect equilibrium would mean that anger and pleasure are the same. The Wrathful would not be wrathful towards the one he is angry with, but would be pleased with him. He is described by one of the two principles in respect to him that is, inclination. And God would not be

¹ See Quran 21:30.

² See Quran 17:44.

³ See 11:7. As for the connection between Water (al-ma') and the Throne (al-'arsh), see the hadith narrated by Imam al-Bukhari, "God existed and there was nothing with Him, then His Throne was on the water, and then He created the heavens and the earth."

⁴ Tajdid al-khalq, instantaneous renewal of creation.

pleased with the one He is pleased with and would be angry with him, and so He is described by one of the two principles in respect to him — that is, inclination.

We said this, however, in respect of the one who thinks that God's wrath will continue against the people of the Fire forever, as he claims. So they do not have the principle of pleasure from God. What is meant is true. It is as we have said, so the hopes of the people of the Fire lies in the removal of pains. Even if they still dwell in the Fire, that is pleasure, so wrath is removed when the pains are removed since the source of pain is the source of wrath if you understand! Whoever is wrathful has suffered hurt. He only strives to avenge the object of his wrath by causing him suffering so that the wrathful might find relief by that. He transfers the pain which he has to the object of his wrath. If you separate God from the universe, then High indeed is He exalted above this attribute! If God is the He-ness of the universe, then all principles appear only in Him and from Him. It is His word, "to Him the entire affair will be returned" in reality and unveiling, "so worship Him and put your trust in Him" (11:123) in veil and covering. There is nothing in the realm of possibility more original than this universe because it is based on the form of the Merciful which God brought into existence — He manifested His existence by the existence of the universe as man manifests the existence of the natural form. We are His manifest form, and His He-ness is the spirit of this form which governs it. There is no management except in Him as it is only from Him. He is the First by meaning and the Last by form, and the Manifest by the changing of judgements and states, and the Inner by management. "He has knowledge of all things." "He witnesses everything"⁵ so He knows by direct witnessing, not by thought. It is the same with the knowledge of tasting (dhawq) which does not derive from thought. Tasting is sound knowledge. Other things are only conjecture and surmise, and that is not knowledge at all.

Then Job had that water to drink to remove the pain of thirst which was from the weariness and punishment with which Satan⁶ had touched him⁷, that is, distance from the realities which he perceived for what they were. Job perceived them for what they were, and by his perception, he was in the place of nearness. Every witnessed one is close to the eye ('ayn=source), even if it is far away by the interval of distance. Vision reaches it, since it is witnessing. If it had not been for that, he would not witness it, nor would what is witnessed be reached by vision, however you want to put it. The witnessed is near between the sight and the seer. This is why Job alluded to touch and ascribed it to Satan in spite of the nearness of touch. He said, "The one distant from me is near because of his power over me."

You know that distance and nearness are two relative matters, for they are two ascriptions. They have no existence in the source in spite of the fact that there judgements are established in the far and near. Know that the secret of God in Job (whom He made an example for us in a written existing book which this Muhammadan community reads in order to learn what is in it, and they attach honour to the one who possesses it), is that God praised him for his patience in his supplication to remove affliction from him. We know that when the slave calls on God to remove affliction from him without that lessening his patience, then he is patient and the best of the slaves, as God said, "What an excellent slave! He truly turned to his Lord."⁸ (38:44) This means he goes back to God, not back to the cause.

⁵ See Quran 5:117; 22:17, etc.

⁶ The root of the name Shaytan is shaytana, meaning "to be remote from".

⁷ Quran 38:41.

⁸ Awwab, which means one who frequently turns to God.

God affects by the cause because the slave depends on it since the causes which will remove any one matter are many, but the Causer is but one. It is more fitting that the slave return to the One Source in order to remove that pain by the cause of that than to the particular cause. It may be that it will not conform to God's knowledge in it, and then some will say, "God did not answer me." Yet he did not call on him, but he inclined to a particular cause which neither the time nor the moment requires. Job acted by the wisdom of God since he was a Prophet. He knew that with one group, patience is what holds the self back from complaint. That is not our definition of patience (sabr). Its definition is to hold the self back from complaint to other-than-God, not to God. The first group is veiled in their view that the complainer is lessened in contentment (rida) with the decree by complaint. That is not the case.

Contentment with the decree is not lessened by complaint to God or to others, but contentment with the decreed is lessened. We are not speaking about contentment with the decreed. Affliction is what is decreed and not the same as the Decree. Job knew that holding the self back from complaint to God for the removal of affliction is to oppose divine force. It is ignorance if, when God afflicts someone by what gives him pain, he does not call on God to remove that painful matter from him. The one who has realization must supplicate and ask God to remove that from him. For that gnostic who possesses unveiling, that removal comes from the presence of God. God describes Himself as "hurt", so He said, "those who hurt God and His Messenger." (33:57) What hurt is greater than that God test you with affliction in your heedlessness of Him or a divine station which you do not know so that you return to Him with your complaint so that He can remove it from you? Thus the need which is your reality will be proven. The hurt is removed from God by your asking Him to repel it from you, since you are His manifest form.

One of the gnostics was hungry and wept. Someone who had no tasting (dhawq) in that area censured him for that. The gnostic said, "But God makes me hungry so that I might weep. He tests me by affliction so that I might ask Him to remove it from me. This does not lessen my being patient." We know that patience is holding the self back from complaint to other- than-God.

By "other" I mean a particular aspect of God. God specified a particular one of God's aspects, and it is called the aspect of He-ness, so he calls on Him from that aspect to remove affliction from him, not from the other aspects called causes. They are only Him in respect to elaboration of the matter in itself. The gnostic's request does not veil him from the He-ness of God in removing affliction from him and the fact that all the causes are Him from a particular point of view. This path is only obliged on the people of adab among the slaves of God who are entrusted with the secrets of God. God has guardians whom only God recognizes, and some of them recognize each other. We have counselled you, so strive, and ask of God!

The Wisdom of Majesty in the Word of John the Baptist

This is the wisdom of firstness in the names. God called him John, i.e., the dhikr of Zachariah was John brought to life by him, and "a name We have given to no one else before." (19:7) He joined the attainment of the attribute, which is in the one who has passed on but left a son to revive his memory and his name through him. He called him "John". His name John is like knowledge by tasting. The memory of Adam, peace be upon him, was revived by Seth and that of Noah by Sam. It is the same with the Prophets, peace be upon them; but God did not combine the name of knowledge from Him and the attribute for anyone before John. It was an act of concern for Zachariah from God, since Zachariah said, "Give me an heir from You." (19:5) He mentioned God before the mention he mentioned his son, as Asiya¹ mentioned the neighbour before the abode when she said, "Build a house in the Garden for me in Your presence." (66:11) God was generous to Zachariah, for He granted his need and named him by His attribute. John's name was a remembrance for what His Prophet Zachariah asked of Him; because he preferred the going-on of dhikr-Ullah after his death, since the son is the secret of his father.

He said, "to be my inheritor and the inheritor of the family of Jacob." (19:6) Nothing is inherited in respect of these except for the station of dhikr-Ullah and calling to Him. Then God gave him the good news of what He appointed for him from His words, "Peace be upon him the day he was born, and the day he dies, and the day he is raised up again alive." (19:15) He brought the attribute of life, which is his name, and He informed him of His peace upon him. His words are true. He completed it, even if it is the word of the spirit, "Peace be upon me the day I was born, the day I die, and the day I am raised up again alive," (19:33) and this is more sublime and more perfect in oneness and belief in the interpretation. That in which the order of nature² was broken in respect to Jesus was articulation. His intellect was given mastery and perfected at that time when God made him speak. In any case, mastery of articulation is not necessary.

Jesus spoke the truth in what he articulated but this is different than the one who was testified to, as in the case of John³. God's greeting on John was higher than the greeting of Jesus on himself in this way since the ambiguity occurring in divine concern was removed. The immediate circumstances indicate his proximity to God in that and his sincerity, since he spoke in the cradle the form which indicated the innocence of his mother. He was one of the two witnesses. The other witness was the shaking of the dried trunk of the palm tree⁴. Fresh, ripe dates came tumbling down without the male palm tree or pollination. In the same way, Mary bore Jesus without a man, that is, without normal and customary intercourse. If a Prophet had said, "My sign and my miracle is that this wall will speak," and then the wall speaks and says, "You have lied, you are not the Messenger of God," then the sign is proven and it is confirmed by it that he is the Messenger of God. One does not pay any attention to what the wall said.

He introduces this probability into the words of Jesus when his mother pointed to him while he was in the cradle. God's greeting on John is higher than this element. The passage which indicates that he is the slave of God is in respect of the claim made about him that he was the son of God. The indication is completed by sheer articulation. He is the slave of God according to another group who speak of

¹ The wife of Pharaoh who was one of the perfect women.

² Kharq al-'adat, miracle, literally, the breaking of the normal pattern of things.

³ Jesus was a witness, not one who is the object of witness, since he testified on behalf of his mother.

⁴ See Quran 19:29.

Prophethood. It increases the principle of probability in logical thought until his truthfulness appeared in the future regarding all that he spoke about when he was in the cradle. So understand our allusion!

The Wisdom of Sovereignty¹ in the Word of Zachariah

Know that the mercy of God encompasses everything in existence and judgement, and the existence of wrath comes from the mercy of God by wrath. His mercy preceded His wrath, that is, the ascription of mercy to Him preceded the ascription of wrath. Then every source has an existence which demands that God's mercy encompass every source. For that reason, we say that the mercy of God encompasses all things in existence and principle.

The Divine Names are "things", but they derive from a single Source. The first thing that His mercy encompassed before time was its thingness, that source which gives existence to mercy by mercy. Thus the first thing that His mercy encompassed was itself, then the thingness indicated, then the thingness of every existent existing without end in this world and the Next, non-essential ('arad) and substance (jawhar), composite and simple. Neither the acquisition of a goal nor harmony of nature is taken into account rather, harmonious and inharmonious things are all encompassed by divine mercy in existence. We mentioned in *The Meccan Revelations* that effect only belongs to the non-existent, not the existent. If the existent had it, it is by the principle of the non-existent. It is a strange knowledge and a rare question. Only those who possess illusions (awhâm) know its realisation, and that is by their tasting (dhawq)².

The mercy of God pervades phenomenal beings, and circulates in essences and sources. The most ideal position of mercy is when it is known from witnessing with sublime thoughts. Everyone mercy designates is happy. There is only what mercy designates, and the mention of the mercy of things is the source of its bringing them into existence. Every existent thing has been shown mercy. O friend! Do not be veiled from the perception of what we have said by what you see of the troubles people experience and what you believe about the pains of the Next Abode which will not depart from the one whom they afflict.

First of all, know that mercy is in bringing-into-existence in general. In mercy by pains, only pains come into existence. So mercy has an effect in two ways — the first effect is by the essence, which is its bringing every existent source into existence. It does not regard desire or lack of it, suitability or lack of suitability. It looks at the source of every existent before its existence, or rather, it looks at its source-form. For this reason, it saw God-as-creature in creeds as a single source-form among the source-forms. Its mercy to itself is by bringing- into-existence. This is why we said that God-as-creature in creeds is the first thing shown mercy after its mercy to itself in its connection of bringing those shown mercy into existence.

It has another effect by request. Those who are veiled ask God to have mercy on them in their beliefs, and the people of unveiling ask for the mercy of God to settle on them. They ask for it by the name of God, and so they say, "O God! Have mercy on us!" and He only has mercy on them by carrying out mercy through them. It has authority because authority in reality belongs to the meaning based on place.

¹ Al-Mâlikiyya. His state was dominated by the name al-Mâlik, the Sovereign, who prevails in His orders. This strength was shown in his himma whose fruit was John.

² Because they connect the imagination (wahm) to things and bring them into existence and thus have experiential knowledge of this. As for the one on whom illusion has no effect, he is far from this question.

He is the Merciful in reality, so God is only merciful to His slaves, attentive to them by mercy. When mercy settles on them, they experience its authority through taste (dhawq). The one designated by mercy has had mercy known to him. The active participle is the Merciful (Rahîm) and the Mercy-Giver (Râhim), and this principle does not describe creatures because it is a matter of directing meanings to their essences.

States are neither existent nor non-existent they have no source in existence because they are relationships. They are not non-existent in principle because what knowledge establishes is called the "knower", and it is a state. The knower is an essence described by knowledge, but it is not the same as the essence nor is it the same as knowledge. There is only knowledge and the essence on which this knowledge is established. The being of the knower is a state of this essence when it is described by this meaning. The relationship of knowledge occurred to him, so he is called knowing. Mercy, properly speaking, is a relationship from the Mercy-giver, and it is necessarily part of the principle, so it is merciful. The One who brought it into existence in the one shown mercy did not bring it into existence in order to be shown mercy by it; He brought it into existence to show mercy to the one on whom it settled.

God is not in a place by events, so He is not in a place by bringing mercy into existence. He is the Mercy-Giver, and the Mercy-Giver is only Mercy-Giver by the establishment of mercy. He confirmed that He is the source of mercy. Whoever has not tasted this matter and has no part in it, does not dare to say that He is the source of mercy or the source of the attribute. Such a person says, "He is not the same as the attribute nor other than it." In his view, the attributes of God with Him are not Him, nor are they other-than-Him because he cannot deny them nor can he make them the same as Him. Thus he³ moves to this interpretation, and it is a good interpretation. Yet there is another interpretation more appropriate to the matter than this one, and more likely to remove ambiguity. It is to deny the sources of the attributes any existence based on the essence of the one described. Rather, they are relationships and relative ascriptions between the one described by them and their intelligible sources. Although mercy is common to all of them, it is different in relationship to each Divine Name⁴.

For this reason, God is asked to show mercy by each Divine Name, so the mercy of God and its indirect reference, which is that which encompasses everything, has many branches according to the number of the Divine Names. It is not general in relation to that particular divine name in the statement of the one who asks, "O Lord, have mercy!" and other Divine Names, even the Avenger. So he says, "O Avenger, have mercy on me!" That is because these Names indicate the designated Essence and, by their realities, indicate different meanings. They call on Him by these Names in mercy with respect to their indication of the Essence called by that Name and no other not by what is indicated by that Name, separating it from another and distinguishing it. The Name is not distinguished from another, and with him it is the indication of the Essence. It is distinguished in itself from other-than-it by its essence, as it is generally agreed that, by any expression, this Name is a reality distinct in its essence from other-than-it.

The whole is set forth to indicate one designated source. There is no disagreement that each name has an authority which another does not have. That also must be taken into account, as one takes into account their indications of the named essence.

³ The Imam of Ahlu-s-Sunnah wa-l-Jama'ah, Shaykh Abu-l-Hasan al-Ash'ari.

⁴ There is a specific mercy of God, of al-Rahman, of al-Rahim, of al-Malik, etc.

For this reason, Abu'l-Qasim ibn Qasi said regarding the Divine Names that each Name is, in its isolation, designated by all of the Divine Names since they preceded in mentioning its description by all the Names, that is, by their indication of one source. Although the Names based on it are many and their realities differ, i.e., the realities of these Names, the mercy is obtained by two means. The first is the path of obligation, and it is His word, "I shall prescribe it for those who are godfearing and pay zakat," (7:156) and He binds them by it through the attributes of knowledge and action. The other path by which mercy is obtained is the path of divine graciousness which is not connected to action. It is His words, "My mercy embraces all things." Of this, it is said, "So that God may forgive you your earlier errors and any later ones." (48:2) And of this, there are His words, "Do what you want, I have already forgiven you⁵." So know that!

⁵ This refers to an incident involving Hatib ibn Abi Balta'a. When the Muslim army prepared to set out to conquer Makka, Hatib sent a letter to warn the Quraysh which was intercepted. 'Umar wanted kill him for intelligence with the enemy in war, but the Prophet said, "O 'Umar, perhaps God has looked with favour on those who already fought at Badr and said, 'Do whatever you want. I have already forgiven you.'"

The Wisdom of Intimacy in the Word of Elijah

Elijah is none but Enoch, peace be upon him. He was a Prophet before Noah, and God raised him to a high place¹. He dwells in the heart of the spheres, the sphere of the sun. Then he was sent to the town of Baalbek. Baal is the name of an idol and "bakk" is the power of the village. The idol was called Baal and was singled out with domination. It was Elijah who was Enoch, who was given the example of the splitting of the mountain called "Lubnan (Lebanon)" which comes from lubana (desire, goal). What he needed was a horse of fire with all its trappings of fire. When he saw it, he rode it and appetite fell from him, and so there was intellect without appetite. There remained for him no connection with that which is connected to the desire of the self. For him, God was pure without connection. He had only half of gnosis of God. When the intellect is free of the self in respect to gathering knowledges by its discernment, its gnosis of God is based on disconnection (tanzih) not connection (tashbih).

When God gives gnosis by tajalli, then gnosis of God is perfected. Disconnection is used in one place and connection in another place.

The gnostic sees the diffusion of God by existence in natural and elemental forms. There is no form but that he sees the source of God in its source. This is the complete perfect gnosis which is brought the roads (shara'i) revealed from God. By this recognition, all illusions (awham) have authority. For this reason, illusion has a stronger power in this human organism than the intellect, because the man of intellect even if his intellect reaches maturity is not free of the power which illusion has over him and over the formation of what he reasons. Illusion is the greatest power in this perfect human organism. The revealed roads brought it, and so you use both connection and disconnection. You use connection in disconnection by illusion, and disconnection in connection by the intellect. So the whole is connected to the whole. It is not possible that disconnection be free of connection nor connection from disconnection. God said, "Nothing is like Him," so He used connection and disconnection. "He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing²," and He used connection, and yet it is the greatest of ayat revealed on disconnection. Even so, it is not free of connection because of the Kayf (like).

So He has the most knowledge of Himself of those who know. He only designated Himself by what we mentioned. Then He said, "Glory be to your Lord, the Lord of Might, beyond anything they describe," (37:180) and they only describe according to what these realities accord them. He exalted Himself above their disconnection since they limit Him by that disconnection. That is due to the inability of the intellect to perceive the like of this.

Then all the roads (Shara'i) brought what the illusions dominate. They do not free God of an attribute in which He is manifest as they said. They brought that, and so communities acted on it. God granted them the tajalli. The heirs followed the Messengers closely, and said what the Messengers of God said. God knows best where He puts His message, and so God knows best who turns his face to Him in a particular aspect by transmission to the Messenger of God. One aspect of His begins with "He knows best where to place His message." (6:124) There is a reality in each of the two aspects for that reason, we speak of connection and disconnection, and disconnection and connection. After this³ is established, we will

¹ A place from which, according to Sidi Muhiddin, Enoch descended in order to become Elijah. See Quran 19:57, "Mention Enoch in the Book. He was a true man and a Prophet. We raised him up to a high place."

² Quran 42:11.

³ The rule of joining tanzih and tashbih.

lower the screens and drop the veils on the eye of the critic⁴ and the one who simply follows a creed. Both of them are among the forms in which God gives tajalli, but He has commanded the veil for us in order that different levels of excellence of the predisposition of forms might appear. One is given a tajalli in a form according to the predisposition of that form. What its reality and exigencies accord him is ascribed to him. That must be. The example of the one who sees God when he is asleep and does not deny it is this. Without a doubt, it is God Himself. He attaches to it the exigencies of that form and its realities in which He gives the tajalli in sleep. Then after that, he interprets, i.e., he transfers it to another matter which disconnection logically demands. If the one who interprets it has unveiling and belief (iman), then he does not transfer it to disconnection at all. Rather, he gives it the disconnection that is due it and what is due to that which is manifest in it, i.e., its connection/resemblance. Properly speaking, "God" is an expression for the one who understands the indication (ishara)⁵.

The spirit of this wisdom and its seal is that the command is divided into the effector and the one effected. These are two expressions. The effector in every aspect and in every state and in every presence is God. The effected by every aspect and in every state and in every presence is the universe, even if it is God who comes⁶. God is everything at its foundation which corresponds. That which appears is forever and ever a branch from the root; divine love is a branch from the supererogatory acts of the slave. So this is an effect between the effector and the effected. God is the hearing of the slave and his sight and faculties from this love⁷. This is an established effect which, if you believe, you cannot deny because it is confirmed by the Sharia.

As for the person of sound intellect, he is either in possession of a divine tajalli in a natural locus of tajalli⁸, so he recognizes what we have said, or else he is a believing Muslim who believes in what was reported in sound tradition. The power of illusion must govern the man of intellect investigating what has been brought to him in this form because he believes in that form. As for the one who is not a believer, he judges illusion by illusion; and so he imagines by his logical discernment that he assigns to God what the tajalli gives him in dream. Illusion in that does not depart from him inasmuch as he is not aware because of his disregard for himself. From that is what God says, "Call on Me and I will answer You." (40:60) God also says, "If My slaves ask you concerning Me, I am near. I answer the call of the caller when he calls on Me," (2:186) since He only answers when there is someone who calls to Him. The source of the caller is the source of the answerer, but there is no disagreement about the difference of forms. They are two forms without a doubt.

All these forms are like Zayd's limbs. It is known that Zayd is one reality in personality, yet his hand is not the form of his foot nor his head nor his eye nor his eyebrow. He is one multiple — multiple by forms, one by source. That is like man who is one by source without a doubt. There is no doubt that 'Umar is not Zayd nor Khalid nor Ja'far, and that the individual persons of this one source are endless in existence. Even if man is one by source, he is many by forms and persons. If you are a believer, you know absolutely that God Himself will appear in a tajalli in a form on the Day of Rising. He will be

⁴ The one who uses logical proof.

⁵ i.e., what he recognises from the word "God" extends only so far as his predisposition and understanding.

⁶ In the wârid.

⁷ "When I love him, I am his hearing with he hears, his sight by which he sees, his hand with which he strikes, and his foot with which he walks".

⁸ i.e., the human form.

recognized and then He will change form and be denied⁹. Then He will change from it again into another form and will not be recognized. He is the One giving tajalli and it is not other than Him in each form, even though it is known that this form is not that other form.

It is one source which has the same function as the mirror. When the viewer looks in it at the form of his belief in God, he recognizes Him, and so draws near Him. When it happens that he sees in it the belief of someone else, he denies Him since he sees his form and the form of someone else in the mirror. The mirror is but a single source while the forms are many in the eye of the viewer. There is no form in the mirror which comprises them all at once. Although the phenomenal being of the mirror has an effect on the forms from one aspect, it does not have an effect on the forms from another aspect. The effect which it has makes the form change shape in smallness, largeness, length, and width, so it has an effect in quantities. This is attributable to it, but this changing of it is by the difference of the size of the mirrors. In the example, look at one of these mirrors, and do not look at all of them. It is your perception in respect to His being essence, and so He is independent of the universe, and in respect to the divine names. In that moment He is like the mirrors. Whatever Divine Name in which you look at yourself or simply look at. He manifests the reality of that Name in whoever looks. The matter is thus. If you understand, do not be anxious, and do not fear. God loves bravery, even to the extent of killing a snake. The snake is not other than yourself, and the snake is alive through its self in form and reality. The thing is not killed by itself, even if the form is destroyed in the senses, The definition determines it, and imagination does not make it depart.

Since the matter is based on this, this is the safeguard of the essences and might and invincibility. You cannot destroy the definition. What might is greater than this might? You imagine by illusion that you have killed. By intellect and illusion, the form does not vanish from existence in the definition. The proof of that is, "You did not throw when you threw, but God threw." (8:17) The eye only perceived the form of Muhammad which had the throwing confirmed to it in the senses. It is what God denied the throwing to at first, and then confirmed in the middle, only to return to the perception that God was the One who threw in the form of Muhammad. One must believe this. So look at this effector when God descended into a Muhammadan form. God Himself informs His slaves of that, and none of us said that of Him, rather He said it of Himself. His report is true, and it is obligatory to believe it whether or not you perceive the knowledge of what He said, being a knower or believing Muslim.

Part of what shows you the weakness of the intellect's discernment in respect to its thought, since the intellect passes judgement on cause ('illa), is that cause is not an effect of the one who is the cause. This is the judgement of the intellect which is evident. There is only this in the knowledge of tajalli, and it is that the cause is an effect to whoever is the cause. That which the intellect governs is sound when discernment is clarified. Its goal in that is that, when it sees the matter differently than what logical proof would accord it, it says that the source after it is confirmed that it is one in this multiple, and inasmuch as it is cause in one of these forms belonging to any effect is not an effect of its effect, so that its effect would become a cause to it. This is his goal when he sees the matter for what it was, although he does not continue in his logical discernment.

Since the command in causality is of this sort, your opinion by the scope of logical discernment is not in other than this narrow limit. None are more reasonable than the Messengers, may the blessings of God

⁹ Hadith in Muslim: 1: 299, 302.

be upon them, and they brought what they brought in transmission from the Divine Presence. They confirmed what the intellect confirmed. Then they gave more in what the intellect alone does not possess by its perception and what the intellect does not imagine directly, but one draws near to it in the divine tajalli. When he is alone with himself after the tajalli, he is confused about what he saw. If he is the slave of a Lord, his intellect returns to him, and if he is the slave of reasoning, God gives him back judgement. This is only as long as he is veiled in the dimension of this world from his dimension in the Next World.

The gnostics appear here as if they possessed the form of this world by virtue of the fact that its principles operate on them. However, God has transformed them inwardly to the dimension of the Next World. That must be the case. They are unknown by form except to whoever has had his inner eye unveiled by God so that he perceives¹⁰. There is no gnostic of God in respect of divine tajalli who is not based on the dimension of the Next World. He has been gathered in this lower world of his and has been called from his grave. He sees what they do not see, and he witnesses what they do not witness - as a mark of concern from God to some of His slaves in that respect.

Whoever wishes to find this wisdom of Ilyas-Enoch to whom God gave two formations, so that he was a Prophet before Noah, and then he raised him up and brought him down after that as a Messenger and so God joined for him the two degrees, let him descend from the authority of his intellect to his appetite and be an absolute animal so that he will be shown what every creature that crawls is shown except for the jinn and men. Then he will know that he has realized his animality, and it has two tokens. One is this unveiling so he sees who is punished in his grave and who has bliss. He sees the dead alive and the silent speaking and the sitting walking. The second token is muteness since, had he wanted to utter what he had seen, he would be unable to do so. Thus he has realized his animality. We had a pupil who acquired this unveiling although dumbness did not take hold of him, and so he did not fully realize his animality. When God established me in this station, I realized my animality with a complete realization. So I was seeing and wishing to utter what I was witnessing but I could not. So there was no difference between me and the mute who cannot speak.

When he realizes what we have mentioned, he will move to being pure intellect in natural matter. He will witness matters which are the roots of what is manifested in natural forms. He will know from where this principle is manifest in the natural form with the knowledge of tasting. Had it been unveiled that nature is the source of the breath of the All-Merciful, he would have been given much good. If he is restricted in what we have mentioned, this power from the gnosis which governs his intellect will be enough for him. He keeps company with gnostics, and by that he knows tasting. "You did not kill them, it was God who killed them," (8:17) yet only iron, the blow and that which is behind this form killed them. In the whole, killing and throwing took place. So he witnesses matters by their roots and by their forms, and he is complete. When he witnesses the breath, he is completely perfect. The breath of the All-Merciful is the source of the overflowing of existence and life on all, rather the source of God's descent to all forms.

¹⁰ See Quran 50:22, "We have stripped you of your covering and today your sight is sharp."

The Wisdom of Virtue in the Word of Luqman

If God wishes, He wills provision for Him,
 so all of phenomenal being is His food.
 If God wishes, He wills provision for us,
 so He is our food as He wishes.
 His volition is His will, so say that He wished it.
 So it is wished.
 He wills increase and decrease.
 So what He wishes is wished.
 This is the distinction between them¹,
 so understand! From a certain point of view,
 their source is the same.

God says, "We gave Luqman wisdom," (31:12) and He says, "Whoever has been given wisdom has been given much good." (2:269) By the divine text, Luqman had much good as God has testified. The example of what Luqman said to his son is, "My son, even if something weighs as little as a mustard-seed, and it is inside a rock or anywhere else in the heavens or earth, God will bring it out." (31:16) This is a wisdom which is articulated, and that wisdom is his setting out that God is the One who brings forth. God confirmed that in His Book and did not refute what the speaker said.

As for the silent wisdom in it, and you know it by the circumstances, he is silent about the one to whom that grain is given. He did not mention him nor did he say to his son, "God will bring it to you or to other than you." He used bringing in general terms and denoted the thing brought in the heavens or in the earth as an instruction that the looker might regard His words, "He is God in the heavens and in the earth." (6:3) Luqman gave instruction by what he said and by what he remained silent on, so God is the source of every knowing thing because the known is more universal than the thing, so it denies unknown things.

Then he completed the wisdom and brought it to its full value in order that the structure might be complete in it. He said, "God is Latif (Subtle, Kind)." (31:16) Part of His subtleness (latâfa) and His kindness (lutf) is that He is in the thing named by such-and-such a definition in such-and-such a source of that thing, so it is only what its name indicates by convention and usage. It is said that these are names: heaven, earth, rock, tree, animal, angel, provision and food, and yet the source of everything is One. Thus the Ash'arites say about this that the entire universe is homogeneous in substance (jawhar), so it is one single substance.

It is the same as our statement that the source is One. They said that it varies by non-essentials. Thus our statement that it varies and becomes many through forms and relationships so as to provide distinction. It is said, "This is not that in respect to its form or its non-essential or natural disposition (mizâj)." Say whatever you like, but this is the same as that in respect to its substance. For this reason, the source of the substance is put in the definition of every form and disposition. However, we say that

¹ The difference between volition (mashi'a) and will (irada).

it is not other-than-God. The mutakallim thinks that it is called substance. Even though it is true, it is not the source of God of which the people of unveiling and tajalli speak. This is the wisdom of the "Latîf".

Then He is described when He says "the All-Aware (Khabir)," the One who knows by experience. It is His words, "We will test you until We know." (47:31) This is the knowledge of tastes. God put Himself with His knowledge of what the matter is in (our) profitable knowledge. No one can deny what God has written about Himself. God differentiated the knowledge of tasting and absolute knowledge. The knowledge of tasting is limited by the faculties. He said of Himself that He is the source of the faculties of His slave when He said, "I am his hearing," which is one of the faculties of the slave, "and his sight," which is one of the faculties of the slave, "and his tongue," which is one of the faculties of the slave, "and his foot and his hand." He did not restrict Himself to specifying the faculties, but He mentioned the members. The slave is not other than his members and faculties. The source called the slave is the Real, but the source of the slave is not the Compassionate Master.

Relationships are distinct by their essence. The one brought into relationship is not distinct². Then He equalized His source in all relationships, for it is but one source with various ascriptions, relationships and attributes. Part of the completeness of Luqman's wisdom in instructing his son is what has come in the ayat of these two Divine Names, Latif and Khabir — God is called by them. If He had put that in phenomenal being (kawn) which is existence, and said, "He was (kana)," it would have been more complete in wisdom and more eloquent in admonition. God related the words of Luqman in meaning as he said it and did not add anything to it. His statement that God is the Latif, the Aware, is from the statement of God. Then God knew of Luqman that, had he said it (kana), it would have been utterly perfected by this.

As for his words, "If it should be but the weight of one grain of mustard-seed," it is for the one who has it as food. It is only the atom mentioned in His words, "Whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it, and whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it." (99:7-8) A mustard-seed is the smallest thing consumed. If there had been anything smaller, God would have used it as He said, "He is not ashamed to make an example of a gnat." (2:26) Then since He knew that there is anything smaller than the gnat, He said "or of an even smaller thing," i.e., in smallness. This is the word of God, and that which is in the Sura of the Earthquake (az-Zalzal, 99) is also the word of God. So know that! That which is smaller than the gnat is the atom, and then there is another subtlety (latîfa). That is that the atom, in spite of its smallness, is also lighter in weight because it is alive, since the living is lighter than the dead. So the meaning is that when the deed is the weight of an atom in smallness and lightness, the recompense must be seen. We know that God did not restrict Himself to the weight of the atom, and there is nothing smaller than it. He used it by way of intensification, and God knows best.

When Luqman used the diminutive for his son³, it was the diminutive of mercy and thereby he gave him a legacy which contains his happiness if he acts according to it. The wisdom of Luqman's legacy lies in his prohibition to his son, "Do not associate anything with God. Associating others with Him is a terrible wrong." (31:13) The one wronged establishes apportioning in respect to His description even though it is the same source. So he is only associating His source with Him, and this is the very greatest ignorance.

² In respect of its reality, the Essence is not distinguishable.

³ Bunayya, "little son".

The reason for this is that the person who has no recognition of the matter nor of the reality of the thing, does not know that diversity is actually contained in a single source although forms vary in that single source. So such a person puts the form shared by another in that station, and so he makes every form a part of that station. It is known of the associate that the matter which indicates him through what occurs in him of partnership is not the source of the other with whom he is associated, since it is the other. In reality, there is no associate. Everyone is based on his portion whenever it is said about him that there is a partnership between the two in it. The reason for that joint association, if it is joint, is that the action of one of them eliminates the collective aspect. "Say: Call on God or call on the All-Merciful." (17:110) This is the very heart of the question.

The Wisdom of the Imam in the Word of Aaron

Know that the existence of Aaron, peace be upon him, was from the presence of mercy (rahamut) by His words, "We endowed him with Our mercy, making his brother Aaron a Prophet." (19:53) So his Prophethood was from the presence of the Rahamut. He was older than Moses, and Moses was greater than him in Prophethood. The Prophethood of Aaron is from the presence of mercy (rahma) and, for that reason, he said to his brother Moses, peace be upon him, "O son of my mother!" (7:150) So he called to him by his mother, not by his father, since, in principle, mercy belongs in greater abundance to the mother than the father. Were it not for that mercy, the mother would not have the patience necessary for upbringing. Then he said, "do not seize me by the beard or by the hair," (20:94) and do not let my enemies gloat over me. All this is one of the breaths of mercy. The reason for that is the lack of ascertainment in looking at the tablets which had been given into his hands. If he had looked at them with ascertainment, he would have found guidance and mercy in them.

Moses would have found guidance, which is an elucidation of what happened in the matter which made him angry and of which Aaron was innocent, and mercy towards his brother. He did not take him by the beard because of that state in which he saw his people because of his age, for Aaron was older than him. That was compassion for Moses from Aaron because the Prophethood of Aaron is from the mercy of God. Only the like of that issued from him.

Then Aaron said to Moses, "I was afraid that you would say: 'You have caused division in the Tribe of Israel'," (20:94) and you would make me the cause of their division since the worship of the Calf divided them. There were some of them who worshipped it following and imitating the Samiri, and there were some of them who refused to worship it until Moses returned to them so that they might question him regarding it. Aaron was afraid that he would have that division between them attributed to him.

Moses knew the matter better than Aaron because by his knowledge he knew the One the people of the Calf worshipped since God decreed that only He would be worshipped. When God decrees something, it must occur. Moses chided his brother Aaron since the business consisted of disavowal and inadequacy. The gnostic is the one who sees God in everything, rather he sees Him as the source of everything. Moses was teaching Aaron with the instruction of knowledge even though Moses was younger than him in age.

For that reason, when Aaron said what he said, he turned to the Samiri and said to him, "What did you think you were doing, O Samiri," i.e., what were you doing in turning aside to the form of the Calf, and in your making this shape from the jewellery of the people so that you captured their hearts for the sake of their wealth? Jesus used to say to the Tribe of Israel, "O Tribe of Israel! Every man turns to where his wealth is, so put your wealth in heaven, and then your hearts will be in heaven." Wealth is only called that (mâl) because by essence it inclines (yumîl) the hearts to worship. It is the greatest and most exalted goal in the hearts since they need it. Forms have no going-on, so the form of the Calf must vanish. If Moses had not hastened to burn it, jealousy would have overcome him. So he burned it and then scattered the ashes of that form in the sea. He told the Samiri, "Behold your god." He called it a god to alert him in order to teach him that he did know some of the places of divine tajalli, "I will surely burn it!"

The animality (hawayâniyya) of man has freedom of action over the animality of animals since God has subjected animals to man, especially in view of the fact that man's origin is not animal. Man has greater subjugation because that which is not-animal does not possess will. In fact, the non-animal is under the jurisdiction of whoever administers it without any recalcitrance whatsoever. The animal, on the other hand, has both will and instinct. Recalcitrance appears in some of its actions. If it has the power to manifest that, reluctance and resistance to what man wants appears from it. If it does not have that power or if what the man wants agrees with what the animal itself wants, then the animal obediently follows what is wanted of it.

Even so, man's "like" follows a command in whatever God has called him to in respect of the wealth which he hopes for from Him, which is designated in some states by "the other World" as when God says, "We have raised some of them above others in rank so that some of them are subservient to others." (43:32) His like is only subjugated to him by his animality, not by his humanness. The two likes are two opposites. The higher in degree subjugates the lower in degree by wealth or by rank with his humanness, and that other was subjected to him either by fear or greed from his animality, not from his humanness, so his like is not subjected to him.

Do you not see that what is among the beasts in the way of jostling against one another is because they are likes? Two likes are two opposites. That is why He said, "and He raised some of them above others in rank," so he is not with him in rank, and so subjugation occurs in respect of rank. Subjection is of two kinds. First, there is subjection intended by the subjector like the active conqueror when he subjects this subjected person — like the subjugation by the master of his slave although he is his like in humanness, and like the subjugation of the Sultan of his subjects who are his like in humanness, He subjugated them by rank.

The second sort is subjugation by the subjects of the king establishing their command that he drive harm away from them, protect them, do battle against those who attack them, and preserve their property and lives. All this is subjection through state by the subjects who subjugate their king in this act. In reality, it is called the subjection of rank. Rank has jurisdiction over him by this act. There are kings who work just for themselves, and there are those who recognize the matter and know that their subjects' subjugation of them is by rank. He knows their power and rights. God rewards him for that with the reward of those who know. The reward of the like of this is up to God, in God's being involved in the affairs of His slaves, for all the universe is subjected by state. Who is there who cannot be referred to as being "subjected"? God said, "Every day He is engaged in some affair." (55:29)

Lack of power was in fact the armour of Aaron which saved him from the people of the Calf by mastery over the Calf as Moses had mastery over it. This is a wisdom from God which is manifest in existence that He should be worshipped in every form. When the form departed after that, it only departed after it had been clad with divinity by its worshipper. For this reason, there is no species but that it is worshipped, either by the worship of making divine or by the worship of subjugation. That must be so for the one who has intellect.

Nothing is worshipped in the universe except after it is clad in elevation for the worshipper and its rank is manifest in his heart. For that reason, God called Himself for us, "the Exalter of ranks," and He did not say the "Exalter of rank," for ranks are many in the same source. He decreed that we worship only Him in many ranks. Each rank accords a divine locus of tajalli which is worshipped in it, and the greatest locus of tajalli in which He is worshipped and the highest, is passion (hawa). As He said, "Have you seen him

who takes his passion to be his god?" (45:23) It is the greatest idol. Nothing is worshipped except by it, and it is only worshipped by itself. Of it I say:

The truth of passion is
that passion is the cause of passion.
If there had not been passion in the heart,
passion would not have been worshipped.

Do you not see how perfect God's knowledge of things is? How it is completed in respect of the one who worships his passion and takes it as a god? He said, "he who God has misguided knowingly." (45:23) Being astray is bewilderment (hayra). That is when this worshipper sees that what he worships is only his passion, by following it in obedience to Him in what He commanded him of worship of whichever person worships Him, until his worship is for God the Great. That too is from passion because if passion had not occurred in him in that pure presence and it is the will to love he would neither have worshipped God nor preferred Him to others. In the same way, everyone worships a certain form among the forms of the universe, and takes it as a god, and he only takes it by passion. The worshipper is under the power of his passion. Then he sees that idols take on various forms among the worshippers. Each worshipper, for some reason, denies the one who worships another. What he has is a nearer perception which is confused by the unity (ittihâd) of passion, rather by the oneness (ahadiyya) of passion as He mentioned. It is the same source in every worshipper. God led him astray, i.e. confused him in respect to a knowledge that every worshipper only worships his own passion, and only seeks to worship his passion whether or not it agrees with the command of the Sharia.

The complete gnostic is the one who sees that every idol is a locus of God's tajalli in which He is worshipped. For that reason, they are all called "god" in spite of having a particular name of a stone, tree, animal, man, star, or angel. This is the nature of the personality in it. Divinity is a rank which the worshipper imagines it to have, and it is the rank of his idol. In reality, it is a locus for the tajalli of God belonging to the sight of this particular worshipper devoted to this idol in this particular locus of tajalli.

This is why some of those who did not recognize an ignorant statement said, "We only worship them so that they may bring us nearer to God" (39:3) although they called them "god", as they said, "Has he turned all the gods into One God? That is truly astonishing." (38:5) They do not deny Him, rather they are amazed. They stop at the multiplicity of possible forms and the ascription of divinity to them. That is why the Messenger came and called them to one God who is recognized and not witnessed by their witnessing. They confuse Him with them and believe in Him when they say, "We only worship them so that they may bring us nearer to God" by their knowledge of those forms in stones. This is why the proof went against them when He said, "Say: Name them!" and they only named them by what they know those names to have in reality.

As for those who recognize the matter for what it is, they manifest the form of denying what is worshipped in the way of forms because their rank is in knowledge, and their rank is in accord with their being based on the principle of the moment, since they know that the moment is one of the mighty places of the tajalli of God in which He gives tajalli at each moment by some of His attributes. This is why time (ad-Dahr) is one of God's Names. The

Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Do not curse time, for time is God!" At every moment, people are overcome by the principle of the quality in which He gives tajalli at that particular moment. The Messenger who is sent in that moment is the greatest manifestation of the perfection of that quality. He calls creation to God, manifested by tajalli in him, by obedience to him, which is obedience to God, as God says, "Whoever obeys the Messenger has obeyed God." (4:80) This is why is obligatory to trust in him and obey him.

However, the gnostics know that they do not worship the forms themselves. Rather, they worship God in them according to the power of the tajalli which they know of these forms. The one who denies and has no knowledge of what God has manifested in tajalli is ignorant of this. The complete gnostic veils himself from the Prophet and Messenger and their heirs. He commands himself to leave that form which the Messenger of the moment left in order to follow the Messenger desiring God's love for them by His words, "Say: if you love God, then follow me and God will love you." (3:31) He called on a God to whom one has recourse and Who is known in respect to the whole and is not witnessed, "nor do the eyes perceive Him, but He perceives the eyes" (6:103) by His lutf and His diffusion in the source of things. The eyes do not perceive Him as they do not perceive their spirits which govern their shapes and outward forms. "...He is the Latif, the All-Aware."

Experience is tasting, and tasting is tajalli. Tajalli occurs in forms. They must be and it must be, and the one who sees Him by his passion must worship Him, if you only knew! God possesses the goal of the path.

The Wisdom of Sublimity in the Word of Moses

The wisdom of the killing of the male children in respect to Moses was in order to give him the support of the life of each of those killed for his sake because each of them was killed for being Moses. There is no ignorance, so the life of the one killed for his sake had to return to Moses. It is pure life in the natural state (fitra). The desires of the self have not soiled it; rather, it is in its natural state of "Yes (bala)"¹. Moses was the sum of the lives of those killed for being him. All that was prepared for the murdered ones in the way of the predisposition of their spirits was in Moses, peace be upon him. This is a divine favour to Moses which no one before him had.

The wisdoms of Moses are numerous. If God wills, I will enumerate them in this chapter according to what the divine command puts into my mind. This is the first about which I shall speak in this chapter.

Moses was only born being a synthesis of many spirits. He was a concentration of effective forces since the young have an effect on the old. Do you not see how the child has an effect on the older person by the special quality the child has? The older person descends from his leading position to play with the child and rock him in his arms and to show himself at the child's level of intellect he descends to the level of the child's intellect. He is under subjugation even though he is not aware of it. He occupies himself with instructing and protecting the child, seeing to his needs and consoling him so that the child is not distressed.

All this is part of the effect of the young on the old. That is due to the strength of his station. The young has a new covenant with his Lord because he has newly come into being. The old person is further from Him. Whoever is nearer to God subjects whoever is further away from Him, just as the elite of the near angels subject the further ones. The Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, used to expose himself to the rain when it came down and to uncover his head so that it would fall on him. He said that it has a new covenant with God. Look at this recognition of God on the part of this Prophet! What is more glorious, more sublime and clearer than this? The rain subjected the best of men due to its proximity to its Lord. That is a likeness of the Messenger on whom the revelation descends. The rain called him by its own state², and so he exposed himself to the rain in order to receive from it what it brought from his Lord. If he had not received this divine benefit from it by the rain, he would not have exposed himself to it. This is the message of water from which God has fashioned every living thing³ — so understand! As for the wisdom of Moses being put into the ark and then cast into the river, the ark (tabut) is his human nature (nasut). The river is what he received of knowledge through his body by what the power of discernment and the sensory imaginative faculties accorded him. Only by the existence of this elemental body does the human self have these faculties or their like. When the self comes to this body and is commanded to freely dispose of it and manage it, God gives it these faculties as instruments by which it obtains what God wills that it obtain in the management of this ark which contains the sakina⁴ of the Lord. Moses was cast into the river in order to receive various knowledges by

¹ "Yes, we testify." Quran 7:172. Before the selves were created, God asked them, "Am I not your Lord?" They replied. "Yes, we testify."

² In the form of knowledge and life descending from God.

³ See Quran 21:30.

⁴ Divine Presence which causes calmness and tranquillity in the hearts of the Believers. It is also related to the Ark of the Covenant and to Bayt al-Maqdis, when the invisible Sakina/Shechina descends from above. See 2:249: "The

these faculties. Thus God taught him that the spirit which manages him is the ruler. He is only managed by it. It gives him the command of these faculties of phenomenal being which are in this nasut that is designated by the ark in the field of indications and wisdoms.

God manages the universe in the same way, and it is only managed by it or by its form. It is only managed by Him inasmuch as the arrival of the one begotten depends upon its being brought into existence by the begetter. Caused things depend on their causes, proven things depend on their proofs, and true things depend on their realities. All of this is part of the universe, and it is God's management of it, and he only manages by it.

As for our statement, "or by its form," I mean the form of the universe, and by it I mean the Most Beautiful Names and sublime attributes by which God is named and described. Nothing of a name by which He is called has reached us but that we found the meaning and spirit of that name in the universe. The universe is also only managed by the form of the universe.

For that reason, the Prophet said in respect of the creation of Adam who is the blueprint which gathers all the attributes of the Divine Presence which is the essence, the attributes and the actions: "God created Adam in His form." His form is only the Divine Presence. In this noble epitome, which is the Perfect Man, He brought into existence all the Divine Names and the realities of that which is outside of him in the Macrocosm separate from him. He made Adam a spirit (ruh) for the universe, and so He subjected to him the high and the low through the perfection of his form. As there is nothing in the universe that "does not glorify God's praise⁵," in the same way, there is nothing in the world which is not subject to this man according to what the reality of his form accords him. God says, "He has made everything that is in the heavens and the earth subservient to you. It is all from Him." (22:65) All that is in the universe is subject to man. He who knows that from his knowledge is the Perfect Man. He who is ignorant of that is the Animal Man.

The form of casting Moses into the ark and then casting the ark into the river is outwardly a form of destruction. Inwardly, it was his rescue from being killed. He was brought to life as the self is brought to life by knowledge from the death of ignorance as God says, "Is someone who was dead (i.e., by ignorance) and whom We brought to life (with knowledge) and supplied with a light by which to walk among the people (which is guidance) the same as someone who is in utter darkness (in being astray) unable to emerge from it (i.e., will never be guided)?⁶" In itself the matter has no end at which it stops.

Divine guidance consists in what man is guided to bewilderment (hayra). He knows that the existence is entirely bewilderment. Bewilderment is instability and movement. Movement is life. There is neither inertia nor death, but pure existence without absence. It is the same with the water which gives life to the earth. Its movement is His word, "so it quivers" and conceives, "and swells" with pregnancy, "and sprouts plants in beautiful pairs⁷." It only gives birth to what resembles it, i.e., has a nature like it. It has being linked in pairs (zawjiya) which is the state of being doubled by what is born from it and what appears from it.

sign of his kinship is that the Ark will come to you, containing a Sakina from your Lord, and certain relics left by the families of Moses and Aaron left. It will be borne by angels."

⁵ Quran 17:44.

⁶ Quran 6:122.

⁷ Quran 22:5.

Similarly, the existence of God has multiplicity and the many Names. It is this or that according to what appears from it of the universe which demands the realities of the Divine Names by its development. They are doubled by it and stand in opposition to the unity of multiplicity. It is one by source in respect to its essence, as the primal substance (hayula) is a single source in respect to its essence, while it has many forms which it supports by its essence. It is the same with God through the forms of tajalli which are manifested from Him. So the locii of the tajalli are the forms of the universe, in spite of the intelligible unity (ahadiyya). Look at the excellence of this divine instruction which God gives by granting its recognition to whoever He wishes among His slaves.

When the family of Pharaoh found him in the river by the tree, Pharaoh called him Moses (Musa). Mu is water in Coptic and sha is tree. He named him by where he found him, for the ark stopped by the tree in the river. Pharaoh wanted to kill him. His wife, speaking by divine articulation in what she said to Pharaoh about Moses since God had created her for perfection as God said about her when He testified that she and Mary, daughter of 'Imran, have the perfection which men have⁸ said, "he may be a source of delight for me and for you." (28:9) She would be consoled by him with the perfection which she received as we have said.

The consolation of Pharaoh was with the belief God gave him when he was drowning. So God took him pure and purified. There was no impurity in him since He took him in his belief before he had acquired any wrong actions. Islam effaces what was before it. He made him a sign of His concern so that none might despair of the mercy of God, for "no one despairs of solace from God except for the unbelievers." (12:87) If Pharaoh had been of those who despair, he would not have embarked on belief. Moses, peace be upon him, was, as the wife of Pharaoh said, "a source of delight for me and for you. Do not kill him. It may well be that he will be of use to us." That is what happened. God gave them use of Moses, although they were not aware that he was a prophet who would destroy the kingdom of Pharaoh and his family.

When God protected him from Pharaoh, his mother's heart was freed of the anxiety which had befallen her. Then God forbade him to be suckled until he had received his mother's breast, so she suckled him that God might complete her joy. The knowledge of the roads (shara'i) is like that. It is as God said, "to each We have made a road," (5:48) i.e., a path (tariq), "and a direction (minhaj)" from that path. This statement is an indication of the root from which he came (minhuja). It is his food as the tree has branches and yet is only nourished by its root. What is haram in one Sharia can be halal in another Sharia — I mean in a certain form it can be halal, while in the heart of the matter it is not really the same as what passed because the matter is new creation, not repetition. This is what we instruct you! It is referred to in connection with Moses when the wet-nurses were made haram.

In reality, the one who suckled him, not the one who bore him, is his mother. The mother of birth carried him in regard to the trust. He is formed within her and fed by her menstrual blood without any volition on her part in that, so that does not come from her benevolence towards him. He is only fed by what would destroy her or make her ill had he not been nourished on it, or had that blood not gone out

⁸ Quran 66:11: "God has made an example for the believers — the wife of Pharaoh when she said, 'My Lord, build a house in the Garden for me in Your Presence, and rescue me from Pharaoh and his deeds.'" Also the hadith in al-Bukhari and Muslim from Abu Musa, "Many men have been perfect, but among women only Mary, daughter of 'Imran, and Asiya, wife of Pharaoh, were perfect."

of her. The embryo is a gift to its mother since it feeds on what would cause her harm had that blood remained with her and not gone out of her, or had not the embryo been nourished on it.

Suckling is not the same. By her suckling, she intends to give him life and to sustain him. God gave that to Moses in the mother who bore him. No woman outside of his mother by birth had any right over him that she also might find consolation in bringing him up and watching him grow in her room, and so she was not sad. God saved him from the grief of the ark, so he pierced natural darkness by what God gave him of divine knowledge, while he did not depart from nature. He tested him with many trials⁹ and gave him experience in many places so that he might realize patience in himself in the trials God gave him.

The first of God's trials was the killing of the Copt which God inspired him to do and gave him success in his secret yet he did not know this. However, Moses did not feel any anxiety over killing him, although he was unsure until the command of his Lord told him, since the Prophet is inwardly protected without being aware of it until he is informed, until transmission comes to him. For this reason, Khidr showed him the killing of the boy¹⁰, so Moses criticized the killing but did not remember how he had killed the Copt. Khidr told him, "I did not do it of my own volition," (18:82) and he informed him of his rank before he told him that his movement was protected in reality, but he was not aware of it.

Khidr also showed him the piercing of the ship. Outwardly it was destruction, but inwardly it was rescue from the hand of the tyrant. He made that an analogy of the ark which was in the river its outward aspect was destruction, while inwardly it was rescue, for his mother did it fearing the hand of the tyrant, who was Pharaoh, that he might not kill Moses in captivity. She looked at him with the revelation God had inspired in her while she was not aware of it. She felt in herself that she would suckle him. When she feared for him, she cast him into the river because, as the proverb says, "What the eye does not see does not afflict the heart." She did not fear for him with the fear of the witnessing of the eye, and she was not sad with the sorrow of seeing him. It came over her thoughts that perhaps God would return him to her, for she had a good opinion of Him. She lived by this thought in herself and by the hope which was opposite fear and despair. When she was inspired to do this, she said, "Perhaps he is the Messenger who will destroy Pharaoh and the Copts." She lived and took joy in this, which was illusion and thought in respect of herself, but, in the heart of the matter, it is knowledge.

When they searched for Moses (after he had killed the Copt), he left in flight, fearful outwardly and in the meaning, it was love of deliverance for movement is always by love, but the onlooker is veiled from it by other causes, which are not the movement. This is because the root is the movement of the universe from non-existence which was immobile in existence. That is why it is said that the matter is movement from immobility. The movement which is the existence of the universe is the movement of love. The Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, said, quoting God, "I was a hidden treasure, therefore I wanted (lit. loved) to be known¹¹."

If it had not been for this love, the universe would not have appeared in its source. Its movement from non-existence to existence is the movement of the love of the One who brings into existence for this purpose. The universe also loves to witness itself in existence as it was witnessed in immutability. Thus

⁹ See Quran 20:40, "We rescued you from trouble and tested you with many trials."

¹⁰ See the story in the Quran 18:65-82.

¹¹ Hadith qudsi.

by every aspect, the movement from immutable non-existence to the existence of the sources is a movement of love, both in respect of God and in respect to itself.

Perfection is loved for itself. God's knowledge of Himself is His, since He is independent of the worlds. It belongs only to Him. The perfection of the rank of knowledge only remains by the in-time knowledge which comes from these sources. When the sources of the universe exist, then the forms of perfection appear with timeless and in-time knowledge. Thus the rank of knowledge is perfected by two aspects.

In the same way, the ranks of existence are perfected. Existence from it is before-time and not before-time, which is in-time. Pre-temporal (azali) time is the existence of God by Himself, and non-pre-temporal-time is the existence of God by the forms of the immutable universe. It is called in-time because it manifests some parts to others. He is manifest to Himself by the forms of the universe, and so existence is perfected.

The movement of the universe is by love of perfection, so understand! Do you not see how what the Divine Names bring into existence is breathed from the absence of the manifestation of their effects in an entity called the universe? It loves rest¹² which is only reached by the existence of form, high and low. Thus it is confirmed that movement occurs by love. The only movement in the entire cosmos is by love.

Among the 'ulama' are those who know that and those who are veiled by the nearer cause because it rules their state (hal) and overpowers them. Moses was aware of his fear by what occurred through his killing the Copt. That fear implied love of deliverance from killing. So he fled by fear. In the meaning, he fled when he loved deliverance from Pharaoh and his deeds. He mentioned the nearest cause which he was aware of at that moment, which is like the form of the body of man, and love of deliverance is contained in it as the body contains the spirit which manages it.

The Prophets had the language of the outward with which they addressed people in general and on which they relied to make the one who listened understand what was said. The Messengers make allowances for people in general by their knowledge of the rank of the people of understanding. It is as the Prophet, peace be upon him, said about gifts, "I give to this man, while another man is more beloved to me than him for I fear that God might throw him down into the Fire." He made allowances for those whose intellect and discernment are weak and who are overcome by greed and nature.

Similarly, what they brought of knowledges, they brought wearing a robe¹³ which nearer to the understanding, so that the one who has no "diving" might stop at the robe and say, "How excellent this robe is!" and he will see it as the limit of rank. Because of what this robe from the king demands, the one with subtle understanding, the one who dives for the pearls of wisdom, looks at the quality of the robe and its type of material. By it, he knows the degree of the one it covers, and so he stumbles onto a knowledge which no one else has obtained from those without knowledge of such matters.

Then the Prophets and Messengers and heirs knew that in this world and in their communities, there are those who, in this manner, express themselves in the outward language which the elite and common share. The one who is elite understands of it what the common understand, and more, inasmuch as it is valid that he be called elite. He is distinguished from the blind. Those who have obtained knowledges

¹² i.e, reaching the perfection of love. This is called love or yearning after the parting.

¹³ khil'a, a robe of honour.

are content with this. This is the wisdom of his words, "I fled from you when I was in fear of you"¹⁴, but he did not say, "I fled from you by love of safety and well-being."

Moses came to Madyan and found two women and got water for them without being paid for it. Then he turned away to the divine shade and said, "O my Lord, I am truly in need of any good You have in store for me." (28:24) He made the source of his getting water the same as the good which God sent down to him, and he described himself as being in need of God in the good which he had. Khidr showed him the setting-up of the wall without wage, but Moses chided him for it. So Khidr reminded him of his drawing water without wage, and other things which were not mentioned. The Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, wished that Moses had remained silent and had not left him so that God would have related more about them.

Khidr alerted Moses to the fact that what had come to him and would come to him was by the command of God and His will which it is impossible to contradict. Knowledge of that is one of the prerogatives of wilaya. As for the Messenger, He might not acquaint him with it, for it is the secret of the decree¹⁵. If He had acquainted him with that, it might have been a reason for his lassitude in conveying what he was commanded to convey. God withholds the knowledge of this from some of the Messengers as a mercy to them from Him. He did not withhold it from our Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, because of the strength of his state. This is why our Prophet said, "I call on God by inner sight." (75:14)

By this he knew what Moses had succeeded in had been without knowledge on his part. If it had been from knowledge, Moses would not have criticized what Khidr did, since God had testified before Moses as to Khidr's purity and justice. In spite of this, Moses was heedless of the fact that God had made him pure, and of the conditions set down for following him. This was a mercy for us if we forget the command of God. If Moses had known that, Khidr would not have said to him, "What you have never encompassed in your knowledge," meaning I have a knowledge which you have not received by tasting as you have a knowledge which I do not know. He was just.

As for the wisdom of his parting from him, it is because God said of the Messenger, "Take what the Messenger brings you, and avoid what he prohibits you." (59:7) The 'ulama' of God who recognize this quality of the Message and the Messenger stop at this statement. Khidr knew that Moses was the Messenger of God. He regarded what came from him to preserve the adab which is due to the Messengers. Moses said to him, "If I ask you about anything after this, then you should no longer keep me company." So he forbade Khidr to keep his company. When that occurred for the third time, Khidr therefore said, "This is where you and I part company," Moses did not tell him, "Do not do it," nor did he seek to keep him company for he knew the level of the rank he was in when he spoke of the prohibition against keeping him company. Moses was silent, and the parting took place.

Look at the perfection of these two men in knowledge and the completion of divine adab as right, and the justice of Khidr, peace be upon him, in what he acknowledged to Moses when he said, "I have a knowledge which God has taught me which you do not know, and you have a knowledge which God has taught me which you do not know." This information which Khidr imparted to Moses was a remedy for the wound inflicted on him in his words, "How indeed could you bear with patience something you have

¹⁴ Quran 26:21.

¹⁵ Sirr al-Qadar.

not encompassed in your knowledge?" (18:68) although he knew the sublimity of his rank with the message, and Khidr did not have this rank.

This appeared in the community of Muhammad in the hadith regarding the fertilization of the date tree. The Prophet, peace be upon him, told his Companions, "You know more about the matters of your daily life¹⁶." There is no doubt that the knowledge of the thing is better than ignorance of it. God praises Himself, saying, "He has knowledge of all things." The Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, acknowledged to his Companions that they knew more about the exigencies of this world than he because he had no experience of them. It is knowledge of tasting (dhawq) and experience, and the Prophet, peace be upon him, had not occupied himself with this sort of knowledge. Rather, he was occupied with what was more important. I have informed you about a great adab which will benefit you if you occupy yourself with it.

Moses's statement, "My Lord gave me right judgement," (26:21) means the khilafah," and made me one of the Messengers," means the message. Not every Messenger is a Khalif. The Khalif has a sword, duties and governance. The Messenger is not the same rather, he transmits what he has been sent to transmit. If he does battle and defends with the sword, then he is both Khalif and Messenger.

As for the wisdom of Pharaoh's question regarding divine whatness (mahiya) when he asked, "What is the Lord of the worlds?" (26:23) that question did not arise from ignorance, but it was posed in order to test Moses and to see what answer he would give when he claimed that he had a message from his Lord. Pharaoh knew the rank of the Messengers in knowledge of God and he wanted to test Moses's answer to ascertain the validity of his claim. In order to inform those present, he invited an answer which would have been misleading as far as they were concerned since they did not know what Pharaoh himself knew about the question. Moses answered him with the answer of those who have knowledge of the matter. Then Pharaoh, in order to preserve his position, asserted that Moses had not answered his question. So because of the inadequacy of their understanding, it seemed clear to those who were present that Pharaoh knew more than Moses. For this reason, when Moses answered him with what was not appropriate and outwardly it is not an answer to what he was asked about and Pharaoh knew that he would only give that answer, Pharaoh then said to his companions, "Your Messenger" who was sent to you "is mad" since the knowledge of what I question him about is veiled from him¹⁷ since it is inconceivable that it be known at all.

The question is valid. The question of the whatness is a question about the reality of what is asked about — it must be real in itself. As for those who make definitions which consist of category and genus, these are matters shared by various things. Whoever has no category must have a reality in Himself which belongs to no other. The question is invalid in the school of the People of God, sound knowledge and sound intellect. The only answer to it is the answer Moses gave.

Here is a great secret! He mentioned the "act" in giving the answer to the one who asked for a definition of essence. He made the essential definition the source of the attribution to what appeared of Him in the forms of the universe, or what appeared in Him of the forms of the universe. In answer to, "What is the Lord of the worlds?" he said that He is the One in whom the forms of the universe are manifest on

¹⁶ Hadith narrated by Imam Muslim.

¹⁷ Madness "junun" is related to veils.

high which is the heaven — and below — which is the earth, "if you but have certainty¹⁸," or He who is manifest by them.

When Pharaoh told his companions that Moses was mad (majnun), in the sense that he was possessed, Moses added to the elucidation in order to inform Pharaoh of his rank in divine knowledge because he knew that Pharaoh already knew that. Moses said, "The Lord of the East and the West," bringing what was manifest and what was hidden, in the outward and the inward, "and what between them is" which is God's words, "He has knowledge of everything," "if you have intellect¹⁹," i.e., if you possess qualification since this comes from intellect.

The first answer is for those who are certain, and they are the people of unveiling and existence. Moses said, "If you have certainty," i.e., if you are the people of unveiling and existence. I have given you knowledge of what you are already certain about in your witnessing and existence. If you are not of this category, I have answered you in the second answer: if you are among the people of intellect and qualification, and you limit God according to what the proofs of your intellects accord.

Thus Moses manifested both aspects in order to inform Pharaoh about his question and his veracity. Moses knew that Pharaoh knew that because he asked about the whatness of God. He knew that his question was not couched in the language the ancients used in their questioning by means of what. That is why he answered him. If he had known anything else from him, he would have been mistaken in the question. Moses treated that about which he was asked as the source of the universe, and Pharaoh addressed him by this language²⁰ although the people present were not aware of that.

Pharaoh said to him, "If you take any god other than me, I will certainly make you one of the imprisoned." (26:29) The letter sin in prison (sijn) is one of the letters of increase²¹, meaning I will veil you, for you answered by what supported me so that I might say the same to you. If you say to me, "O Pharaoh! I do not recognize your threat to me while the source is but one, so how can you separate?" Then Pharaoh replied, "The ranks are separate, but the source is not separate and it is not divided in its existence. My rank right now is power over you by actual fact, O Moses! I am you by the source and other than you by rank!"

When Moses understood that from him, he gave him his due in respect to himself and told him, "You will not be able to do that." Pharaoh's rank gave him power and influence over Moses because God is in the rank of Pharaoh in respect of the outward form which has authority over the rank in which Moses appeared in that assembly.

Therefore Moses told him that God had manifested a barrier to his hostility against Moses. He said, "Even if I were to bring you something undeniable?" Pharaoh could only reply, "Produce it then, if you are someone telling the truth", so that Pharaoh would not appear to be unjust among those of his nation who were weak-minded. They had doubts about him, and they were the group Pharaoh made

¹⁸ "The Lord of the heavens and the earth and what is between them is you have certainty." Quran 26:24.

¹⁹ Quran 26:28.

²⁰ of unveiling.

²¹ Zawa'id, the augmentative letters, i.e., the ten letters which are added to the radical letters in Arabic words sin, hamza, alif, lam, ta', mim, waw, nun, ya' and ha'. If you take away the sin from sijm (prison), you get "jinn" meaning veil.

unsteady. However, they obeyed Pharaoh because they were a corrupt people²²; that is, lacking sound intellects' rejection of taking Pharaoh's claims literally. The intellect stops at a certain limit, and only those of unveiling and certainty can cross that limit. This is why in his answer, Moses first addressed those of certainty and then address those of the intellect.

"So he drew down his staff (asa)" (26:32) which is the form with which Pharaoh defied²³ (asa) Moses when he refused to answer his call. "And there it was, unmistakably a snake," i.e., an evident snake. Thus rebellion, which is evil, changed into obedience, which is good, as God says, "God will transform their evil deeds into good deeds," (25:70) meaning in judgement. Here the judgement manifested a differentiated source in a single substance (jawhar) so it is a staff, a snake, and a manifest serpent. It devoured its likes among the snakes in the form of a snake, and the staffs in the form of a staff. The proof of Moses overcame the proofs of Pharaoh in the form of staffs, snakes and ropes. The sorcerers had ropes, but Moses did not have a rope. The "rope" is the small hill²⁴; that is, their powers in relation to the power of Moses is as the hills are to the lofty mountains.

When the sorcerers saw that, they recognized Moses's rank in knowledge and they saw that he possessed a power which was not mortal. If it had been within the power of a mortal, it would only belong to someone who could distinguish sure knowledge from imagination and illusion. So they believed in "the Lord of the Worlds, the Lord of Moses and Aaron" — that is, the Lord to whom Moses and Aaron summoned them because they knew that the people understood that they were not being called to Pharaoh. Pharaoh was in the position of authority, and he was the master of the moment since he was the Khalif with the sword, even though he broke the customary divine laws when he said, "I am your Lord most high" — i.e., since all are lords²⁵, I am the highest of them through the power which you have outwardly given me over you. The sorcerers knew that he spoke the truth in what he said, and they did not deny it. They affirmed that to Pharaoh, and said, "You only judge in this passing life, so judge as you like, for the kingdom is yours." So the statement of Pharaoh, "I am your Lord most high," was valid. Although the source is from God, the form is Pharaoh's. He cut off the hands and feet, and crucified through a real source in false form in order to attain the ranks which are only attained by that act.

There is no way to neutralize causes because the source-forms necessitate them. They only appear in existence by the form on which they are based at the source since "there is no changing the words of God." (10:64) The words of God are not other than the sources of existent things. Timelessness is ascribed to Him in respect to their permanence, and in-time-ness is ascribed to them in respect of their existence and appearance. Thus we say, a certain man or guest happened²⁶ to be with us today." That does not mean that he did not have any existence before this event. For that reason, God says about His Mighty Word which is timeless, "No reminder (dhikr) from their Lord comes to them lately renewed²⁷ without their listening to it as if it were a game," (21:2) and "but no fresh²⁸ reminder reaches them from

²² See Quran 43:54, "In that way he swayed his people and they succumbed to him. They were a people of deviators."

²³ 'Asâ as a noun means "staff", and 'Asâ as a verb means "to rebel against, oppose."

²⁴ Habl meaning "rope" also means mound or small hill.

²⁵ Lord being a relative name, demanding a subject, also because it means owner, so one says the lord of the house, the "lord" of a herd, etc. Also, one who looks after, the "lord" of a child.

²⁶ Huduth means coming into existence for the first time. It also means an event or occurrence.

²⁷ Muhdath.

²⁸ Muhdath.

the All-Merciful, without their turning away from it." (26:5) The Merciful only brings mercy, and whoever turns away from mercy advances the punishment which is the absence of mercy.

As for the words of God, "but their belief when they saw Our violent force was of no use to them. That is the pattern God has always followed with His slaves²⁹," (40:85) that did not mean that it did not profit them in the Next World through His exception, "except for the people of Jonah." He meant that that did not prevent them being punished in this world. For that reason, Pharaoh was seized in spite of the existence of his belief even though his affair was that of someone who is certain that his death is approaching. The circumstances accord that he was not certain that he was going to die because he saw the believers walking on the dry path which had appeared when Moses struck the sea with his staff. Pharaoh was not certain that he would perish since he believed that he would not die until the moment actually reached him. He believed in the One in whom the Tribe of Israel believed, in certainty of his deliverance.

It was indeed certain, but it was in a form other than the one he wanted. He was saved from the punishment of the Next World in himself and his body was saved as God says, "Today We will save your body that you might be a sign for those after you," (10:92) because, if his form had vanished, his people might have said that he had gone into occultation. His known form appeared as a corpse that it might be known that it was really him. Deliverance was encompassed both in the senses and in the meaning.

The one who has the word of the punishment in the Other World realized for him³⁰ will not believe, even if every ayat had been brought to him, "so that they might see the painful punishment," that is, taste the punishment of the Next World. Pharaoh left this class of people. This is the literal meaning of what the text of the Quran brought us. We say, and the matter belongs to God, that the fixed idea which the common people have regarding the wretchedness of Pharaoh is not based on anything in the divine text. As for his family, that is another judgement. This is not the place to mention it.

Know that God only takes someone while he believes, that is, affirms what divine transmissions bring, and I mean those who are consciousness at death. This is why sudden death and being killed while unaware is disliked. The definition of sudden death is that the incoming breath goes out and the outgoing breath does not come in. This is sudden death and when that happens, one is not conscious of death.

It is the same if a man is killed unawares by a blow from behind on the back of the neck. He is then taken with whatever belief or disbelief he possesses at that moment. For that reason, the Prophet said, "One will be gathered in the state in which one dies," as one is taken in whatever one is doing at the time. The one who is conscious of death is only the one who sees it coming. He believes what he sees. He is only taken in what he is doing because that is an existent expression connected to time by the circumstances. We distinguish between the unbeliever who is conscious at death and the unbeliever either killed while unaware or who dies suddenly as we have said in the definition of sudden death.

As for the wisdom of tajalli and the discourse on the form of the fire, this was because it was the object of Moses's desire. God gave him a tajalli in what he was searching for so that Moses would turn to Him and not turn away. If God had given the tajalli in other than the form which he was seeking, Moses

²⁹ It like is in Quran 10:98, where the punishment is removed from the people of Jonah after they believed.

³⁰ See Quran 39:71.

would have turned away because his interest was concentrated on a particular goal. If he had turned away, his action would have rebounded on him, and God would have turned away from him. Moses was the chosen one and the one brought near. When God brings someone near to Him, He gives him a tajalli in the object he desires, without him knowing it.

Like the Fire of Moses
which he saw as what he needed.
It was God,
but he did not perceive it.

The Wisdom of What One Turns to¹ in the Word of Khalid

As for the wisdom of Khalid ibn Sinan², by his call he manifested the Prophethood of the interspace. He claimed that he would tell them about what happens after death. He commanded that he should be disinterred and questioned in order that he might report that the judgement in the Interspace occurs in the form of the life of this world. Thus it would be known that all the Messengers spoke the truth in what they related in this life regarding what happens after death. Khalid's goal was that all the world would believe in what the Messengers brought so that there would be mercy for all. He was honoured by his Prophethood being near the time of the Prophet Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace. He knew that God had sent Muhammad as a mercy to the worlds, but Khalid was not a Messenger. He wanted to receive a generous share of this mercy contained in the message of Muhammad. He was not commanded to convey the message, but he wanted to have that share in the Interspace so that there would be stronger knowledge about the creation, and for this reason his people squandered him.

The Messenger of God described them as having squandered their Prophet because they did not do what he wanted them to do. Did God give him the reward for what he wanted? There is no doubt and no disagreement that he had the reward of what he wished, but there is doubt and disagreement about the reward of the goal. Is wishing for it the same in the Next World as its occurrence even though it did not occur or not? In the Sharia, equality is not supported in many places such as in the case of the one who performs the prayer in the group³. The one who prays it in the group has a reward from the presence of the group. He is like the person who, in spite of poverty, desires to be able to give charity as the people of wealth and property do. He has the like of their rewards, but the like of their rewards can be in their intentions or their deeds. The people had both the intention and the action. The Prophet, peace be upon him, did not prescribe both of them, nor one of them, and outwardly they are not the

¹ as-Samad

² Al-Qashani, the commentator, says that Khalid lived in Aden, and was a man of great himma who was overcome in the contemplation of divine unity. One day a great fire appeared from a cave among his people. It destroyed the crops and the livestock, and the people called on him to protect them from it. He struck the fire with his staff, saying, "Away! Away!" until it became cold and retreated to the cave. Then he told his people that he would enter the cave in order to extinguish the fire, and he told them to call him after three full days had passed. Should he call him before that, he would come out and die. If they were patient, he would emerge in good health. They waited two days, and then Satan made them restless, and doubts came to them and they were afraid that he might have been destroyed. They shouted to him. He emerged from the cave with his hand on his head from the pain their shouting had caused him. He told them, "You have killed me and squandered my word and my covenant." He then told them of his death and commanded them to bury him and then watch for forty days. Then, he said, a flock of sheep led by a donkey with slit ears and its tail cut off would come to them. When it stood opposite his grave, they were to disinter him and he would rise and tell them of the true state of things after death from witnessing and vision so that all creation would receive certainty as to what the Messenger related. Then he died and they buried him. They waited until the forty days had passed. The flock of sheep came led by a donkey with slit ears. It stopped opposite his grave, so they understood that they should disinter Khalid as he had commanded them so that he might inform them as to the truth of the Prophets. Some of his older sons were averse to that and said that it would shame them among the Arabs and that they would be called, "the sons of the disinterred one." There was the vehemence of the Jahiliya in that. They squandered their legacy and destroyed him. After the Prophet Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace, was sent, a daughter of Khalid came to him, and he said to her, "Greetings to you, O daughter of a Prophet whose people squandered him!"

³ His Prophethood did not appear in this world.

same. For that reason, Khalid ibn Sinan sought the proclamation to confirm for him the station of joining both matters so that he would receive two rewards. God knows best.

The Unique Wisdom in the Word of Muhammad

Muhammad's wisdom is uniqueness (*fardiya*) because he is the most perfect existent creature of this human species. For this reason, the command began with him and was sealed with him. He was a Prophet while Adam was between water and clay¹, and his elemental structure is the Seal of the Prophets. The first singular is three, and what is more than this firstness of individuals comes from three. The Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, is the surest proof of his Lord, so he was given all the words², which are everything that is named by the names of Adam³. He resembles the proof in its threefoldness, and the proof is a proof of itself. Then his reality grants the first uniqueness which is threefold in structure. For that reason, speaking about the domain of love which is the root of existence, he said, "I was made to love three things in your world⁴," because of what this world has of threefoldness. Then he mentioned women, and perfume, and that the coolness of his eye was in the prayer.

The Prophet began by mentioning women and ended with the prayer. That is because woman is part of man in the root of the manifestation of her source, and because man's recognition of himself preceded his recognition of his Lord. That is why the Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Whoever knows himself knows his Lord." If you wish, you can say that this tradition is the forbidding of gnosis and stating the inability to attain to Him — and that is a permissible statement; and, if you wish, you can say that it is the affirmation of gnosis. The first is that if you do not know yourself, so you will not know your Lord. The second is that you recognize yourself, so you do recognize your Lord. Muhammad was the clearest proof of his Lord. Every part of the world indicates its root which is its Lord, so understand!

The Prophet was made to love women, so he yearned for them because as the whole yearns for what is part of it. The matter is self-evident through what God says regarding this elemental human constitution, "and I breathed My Ruh into him." (15:29; 38:72) Then He described Himself with intensity of yearning to meet those who yearn for Him. He said, "O Dawud! I have intense yearning for them," i.e., those who yearn for Him, and it is a particular encounter. The Prophet said in a hadith about the Dajjal, "None of you will see his Lord until after he dies⁵." God must yearn for those near ones — because even though He sees them and wants them to see Him, that encounter is still prevented by man's station. That is like His words "until We know" although He is Knowing. He yearns for this particular attribute which only is achieved existence through death.

By this, He tests their yearning for Him as He said in the hadith of hesitation which concerns this matter, "I do not hesitate in anything I do, but I hesitate to take the breath of My believing slave because he hates death, and I hate to make him die. But He must meet Me." He gave him good news and did not say to him, "he must die" because He did not want to distress him by mentioning death. Man only meets God after death as the Prophet says, "None of you will see his Lord until he dies." That is why God says, "He must meet Me", for God desires the existence of this relationship. He made it clear that He

¹ Hadith, "I was a Prophet when Adam was still between water and clay."

² Hadith, "I was given all the words."

³ Quran 2:31, "And He taught Adam the names of all things..."

⁴ Hadith in an-Nasa'i and Ibn Hanbal: "I was made to love three things in your world: women, perfume, and the coolness of my eye in the prayer."

⁵ Hadith in Muslim (fitan:95) and at-Tirmidhi.

breathed into him some of His spirit (ruh) so He only yearns for him. Do you not see that He created him on His form because he is from His Spirit?

Man's constitution is based on these four elements which are called the "humours" in his body. The combustion of the moisture found in the body occurs from his breath. The spirit of man is fire as regards his constitution. For this reason, God only spoke to Moses in the form of fire⁶, and put his need in it. If his constitution had been from nature⁷, then his spirit would have been light. God alluded to it with the blowing (nafkh) which indicates that it is from the breath (nafas) of the All-Merciful. It is by this breath, which is the blowing-out that he manifested from Him, and by the predisposition of the one blown into, that combustion is fire and not light. The breath of God is hidden in that by which man is man.

From man, He derived a person in his form called "woman". She appeared in his form, and he yearned for her with the longing of that thing has for itself, and she yearned for him with the longing of that thing has for its home. God made him love women. God loves the one whom He created in His form, and He made the luminous angels, in spite of the power of their might and their station and the sublimity of their natural constitution, prostrate to him⁸. From this comes the affinity which occurs in the form which man and woman share, which is like that between God and man. The form has the greatest affinity, as well as the most glorious and perfect. It makes a pair that is, doubles the existent belonging to God, as the woman, by her existence, doubles man, and makes him one of a pair. So three appeared: God, man and woman. Man yearns for his Lord who is the origin as woman yearns for man.

His Lord made him love women as God loves the one who is in His form. Love only occurred by the One by whom he is formed. His love was for the One he was formed by, and He is God. This is why the Prophet said, "He made me love...", and he did not say, "I loved" as coming from himself because his love is connected to his Lord in Whose form he is. In his love for his wife, he loves her by God's love for him as a divine nature⁹.

When a man loves a woman, he desires union, that is, the goal of union which exists in love. In the elemental form, there is no greater union than marriage¹⁰. By this appetite encompasses all parts. For that reason, complete ritual washing is prescribed after intercourse. Purification envelops him as annihilation in the woman was complete in the obtainment of appetite. God is very jealous of His slave if He believes that he finds pleasure in other than Him. So man purifies himself by ritual washing in order to return to Him in whom he was annihilated, since that is all there is.

When man witnesses God in women, his witnessing is in the passive; when he witnesses Him in himself, regarding the appearance of woman from Him, he witnesses Him in the active. When he witnesses Him from himself without the presence of any form from him, his witnessing is in the passive directly from God without any intermediary. So his witnessing of God in the woman is the most complete and perfect because he witnesses God inasmuch as He is both active and passive. Regarding himself, He is passive in particular. For this reason, the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, loved women because

⁶ The Burning Bush.

⁷ i.e., from the nature of the world of Purity.

⁸ Quran 2:34.

⁹ Since his nature (khuluq) was immense or mighty ('adhim) as God said, "You are truly immense in character," (68:4) and as Aisha said of the Prophet, "His nature was the Quran."

¹⁰ Nikah, or marriage, actually means lawful intercourse.

of the perfection of the witnessing of God in them since one does not ever witness God free of matter. God by His essence is independent of the worlds. So from this aspect, the business is impossible, yet witnessing only occurs in matter. The witnessing of God in women is the greatest and most perfect witnessing. The greatest union is marriage.

It is like the projection of His will on the one He created in His form in order to create him. He sees His form in him, rather, He sees Himself. He fashioned him and balanced him and breathed into him of His spirit (ruh) which is His breath. Outwardly he is creation, and inwardly he is God. For this reason, God describes Himself with having management of this frame. He "directs the whole affair from the heaven," which is the height of the earth, "to earth," (32:5) which is the lowest of the low, because it is the lowest of all the elements.

He called them women (an-nisa') which is a plural which does not have a singular form. For that reason, he said, "He made me love three things in your world: women..." and he did not say, "woman". He took note of the fact that they came after him in existence. The word an-nisa' also means postponement. God says, "The month postponed is an increase in disbelief," (9:37) and the sale of "nasi'a" is said to be by postponement, that is, by credit. That is why he said an-nisa'. He loved them only by rank, and they are the place of the passive. They are to him as nature is to God in which God opened the forms of the world by the projection of the will and the divine command which is marriage in the world of elemental forms, and aspiration (himma) in the world of luminous spirits, as in the order of premises and their meanings through deduction. All of that is the marriage of the first uniqueness in each of these aspects. Whoever loves women in this measure, loves with a divine love. Whoever loves them in respect to natural appetite in particular, deprives himself of the knowledge of this appetite. For him it is a form without a spirit (ruh). That form in the heart of the matter is the essence of a spirit, but it is not witnessed by the one who comes to his wife or any woman by pure gratification, and he does not perceive the one it is for even so, he has no knowledge of himself, as others have no knowledge of him, since he has not been verbally named so that he could be known.

One of them said:
It is confirmed with people
that I am a passionate lover,
although they do not know
the object of my passion.

It is the same with the one who loves gratification — he loves the place in which it occurs, being the woman, but the spirit of the question is obscure to him. If he had known it, he would have known by whom he has pleasure and who it is that has pleasure. He would have been perfect.

Similarly, the woman has a lower degree than the man by the words of God, "As for men, they have a degree over them." (2:228) The one created on the form is lower in degree than the one who is fashioned in His form¹¹, even though he is in His form. This is the degree by which He is distinguished from the form. So God is independent of the universe, and He is the first Doer. The form is the second

¹¹ See Quran 6:98.

doer, and does not have the firstness which God has. Sources are distinguished by ranks. "He gives each thing its creation¹²," as every gnostic gives each thing with a right its due.

That love that Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace, had for women came from divine love. "God gives everything its creation," and that is the source of its truth. He only gave creation to it by merit, so it merits what He called it that is, by the essence of the created thing.

He put women first because they are the place of the passive as nature precedes that which exists from it by means of form. Nature in reality is only the breath of the Merciful. The forms of the universe, high and low, are introduced into it by the diffusion of the breath (nafkha) in the primal substance (jawhar hayulânî), particularly in the world of bodies. As for its diffusion by the existence of the luminous spirits and non-essentials (a'râd), that is another kind of diffusion.

In this tradition, the Prophet put the feminine before the masculine because he meant to attach importance to women. He said, "Three (thalath, the feminine form of the number) and he did not say thalatha (the masculine) with the ha' which is by the number of the masculine since scent (tîb) is one of the three, and it is masculine. The custom among the Arabs is that the masculine takes precedence over the feminine. When they say, "The Fatimas and Zayd went out," they saw kharajû (mas. pl) and do not say kharajna (fem. pl). The masculine, even if it is only one, take precedence over the feminine, even if they are a group. The Prophet was Arab, so he respected the meaning which was intended by showing love for what did not happen through his own love. Then God informed him of what he did not know, and God's bounty to him was great¹³. The feminine took precedence over the masculine by his word, thalath without ha'. Who knew the realities better than him, may God bless him and grant him peace? Who had greater care to observe rights and dues?

Then he placed the seal with what was like the first since it is also feminine (salat, prayer, is feminine), and he placed the masculine between them, as in existence. He began with "women" and ended with "prayer", both of which are feminine while perfume is masculine. The man is between the essence from which he appeared and then the woman appeared from him. So man is between two feminines, the form of the Essence¹⁴ from which he appeared, and a real feminine, woman, who appeared from him. Similarly, woman is a real feminine, and the prayer is not a real feminine. Scent is the masculine between the two, as Adam is between the essence from which he has existence and Eve, who existed from him. If you wish, you can say "attribute (sifa)" which is also feminine. If you wish, you can say, "power (qudra)" and it is feminine. Be of whatever school you wish. You will always find that the feminine takes precedence, even among the people of cause ('illa) who make God a cause in the existence of the form, and cause is also feminine.

As for the wisdom of the perfume which he mentioned after women, because women have fragrance in their form, the most fragrant of perfumes is the embrace of the lover as they say in the common example. When the Prophet was created a slave, by the nobility of his origin, he did not lift his head at all to mastery rather, he continued to prostrate himself in humility and to remain passive in spite of who he was until God formed from Him what He had intended. He gave him the rank of action in the world of

¹² See Quran 20:50.

¹³ Quran 4:113, "God's favour to you is indeed immense."

¹⁴ Dhat, essence, is feminine.

breaths, and the breaths are fragrant scents. So God made him love perfume. For that reason, he put perfume after women.

He observed the ranks which belong to God in His words, "Raiser of ranks is He, Possessor of the throne" (40:15) by His sitting on it by the name of the All-Merciful. There is none among those that the Throne encompasses but that divine mercy touches him. That is the words of God, "My mercy embraces all things," (7:156) and the Throne encompasses everything, and the One who sits on it is the Merciful. By its reality, mercy is diffused through the universe as we explained in another part in this book and in *The Meccan Revelations*.

God put perfume in this marital connection in the innocence of Aisha¹⁵, may God be pleased with her! He said, "Corrupt¹⁶ men are for corrupt men, and corrupt men are for corrupt women; and good¹⁷ women are for good men, and good men are for good women. The latter are innocent of what they say." (24:26) He made their scent fragrant because the word is breath, and it is the source of the scent. It goes out with fragrance and putrefaction according to what appears in the form of speech. As it is divine by the nobility of its origin, it is all good, and so it is good. As for what is not praised and is censured, it is good and bad. The Prophet said in respect to the badness of garlic, "It is a plant whose scent I dislike." He did not say, "I dislike it." The source is not disliked, but he disliked what appeared from it.

Dislike for that is either by custom or unsuitability of nature, by something in the Sharia, or a lack of perfection or something other than what we have mentioned. Since the command is divided into corrupt and good as we confirmed, he was made to love perfume rather than repulsive odours. He described the angels as being offended by unpleasant odours. He described the angels as being offended by unpleasant odours. Since there is putrefaction in this elemental structure as it is created of "dry clay from mud moulded (or fetid)"¹⁸, so the angels dislike it by essence. The nature of the dung-beetle is offended by the scent of the rose which is one of the pleasant scents. For the dung-beetle, the scent of the rose is not a pleasant scent. If someone has the same sort of nature (as the dung beetle) in meaning and form, the truth offends him when he hears it, and he is gladdened by the false. It is what God said, "those who believe in falsehood and reject God." (29:52) He described them with loss, and said, "those, they are the losers" who have lost themselves. Whoever does not distinguish goodness from corruption, has no perception.

God made the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, love only the good (the perfume) of everything, and there is only that. Can it be conceived that there is a disposition in the universe which only finds good in everything but does not recognize the bad? We say that there is not. We find it in the very root from which the universe appeared which is God; we find that He hates and loves. The corrupt is only that which He hates, and the good is only that which He loves. The universe is the form of God, and man is in both forms. There is no nature which only perceives one matter in everything — rather, the nature distinguishes the good from the corrupt in spite of the fact that it knows that it is corrupt by tasting and good without tasting. The perception of the good in it diverts him from the sensation of its corruptness. This can happen. As for the removal of the corrupt from the universe

¹⁵ The following verse was revealed about Aisha in the affair of the Lie and declared her innocence in the affair.

¹⁶ Khabith, also meaning with a repulsive odour.

¹⁷ Tayyib, means good, wholesome, fragrant, from the same root as perfume, tîb.

¹⁸ See Quran 15:26.

that is, from phenomenal being it is not admissible. The mercy of God extends to both the corrupt and the good. The corrupt considers itself good, but the good in itself is corrupt. There is nothing but good but that an aspect of its disposition is bad, and vice versa.

As for the third by which uniqueness (fardiyya) is completed, it is the prayer. The Prophet said, "and the coolness of the eye¹⁹ is in the prayer" because it is contemplation. That is because it is intimate discourse between God and His slave as God says, "Remember Me, and I will remember you." (2:152) It is worship ('ibâda) which is divided in two parts between God and His slave one part belongs to God and one part to His slave, as has come in sound transmission from God in which He says, "I divided the prayer into two parts between Me and My slave. One part is Mine and one part is My slave's, and My slave will receive what he asks for. The slave says, 'In the name of God, the All-Merciful, the Most Merciful,' and God says, 'My slave has mentioned Me.' Then the slave says, 'Praise belongs to God, the Lord of the Worlds,' and God says, 'My slave has praised Me.' The slave says, 'The All-Merciful, the Most Merciful,' and God says, 'My slave has glorified Me. My slave has given Me authorisation²⁰.'" All this part belongs purely to God.

"Then the slave says, 'You alone we worship. You alone we ask for help,' and God says, 'This is between Me and My slave, and My slave has what he asks for.'" Sharing occurs in this ayat. "The slave then says, 'Guide us in the straight path, the path of those You have blessed, not of those with anger on them nor of the misguided,' and God says, 'This is for My slave, and My slave has what he asks for.'" This is purely for His slave as the first part is purely for God. The knowledge of this makes the recitation of the Fatiha obligatory. Whoever does not recite it has not prayed the prayer establish between God and His slave.

The prayer is then a secret conversation (munajat). It is remembrance/invocation (dhikr). When someone mentions God, he sits with God and God sits with him. It is a sound divine transmission that God said, "I sit with the one who mentions Me²¹." Whoever sits with the One he mentions and has sight, sees the One with whom he sits. This is contemplation (mushahada) and vision. If he does not have sight, he does not see Him. Thus the one who prays knows his rank, and whether or not he sees God with this vision in the prayer. If he does not see Him, then let him worship Him by belief (iman) as if he saw Him, imagining Him to be in the qibla of his conversation, and let him listen for God's reply.

Without a doubt, everyone who prays is an Imam, so the angels pray behind the slave when he prays alone, as is related in tradition. If he is the Imam for his particular world and the angels pray with him, then he has attained the rank of the Messenger in his prayer which is deputyship from God. When he says, "God hears whoever praises Him²²," he informs himself and whoever is behind him that God has heard him. The angels and those present say, "Our Lord, praise belongs to You."

God says on the tongue of the slave, "God hears whoever praises Him." Look at the sublimity of the rank of the prayer and where it takes the one who has it! Whoever does not achieve the rank of vision in the prayer has not reached the goal nor does he have the coolness of the eye in it because he does not see the One he addresses. If he does not hear the answer of God, he is not one of those who listen.

¹⁹ i.e., that which delights me.

²⁰ Muslim 4:38, 41, etc.

²¹ Hadith qudsi in Ibn Majah and Ibn Hibban.

²² When he comes up from ruku in the prayer.

Whoever is not present in the prayer with his Lord, and does not hear nor see Him, is not one who prays at all, and he is not along those "who listen well, having seen the evidence." (30:37)

The prayer is the only form of 'ibada during which one is forbidden to perform any other action. The mention of God in it is greater than the words and actions it contains. We mentioned the attribute of the perfect man in the prayer in *The Meccan Revelations* and his nature, because God says that "the prayer precludes indecency and wrongdoing" (29:45) since it is set down in the Sharia that the one performing the prayer cannot act in anything except this 'ibâda as long as he is in it, and he is called the one the prays (musalli). "The remembrance of God is greater still" (29:45) in it that is, the mention which is from God to His slave when He answers him in his request, and his praise of Him is greater than the mention of the slave of his Lord in it, because greatness belongs to God²³. This is why He says, "God knows what you do," and He says, "He who listen well, having seen the evidence" he gives ear to what God mentions in the prayer.

Therefore, since existence is from an intelligible movement which transported the universe from non-existence to existence, the prayer encompasses all movements. There are three movements: vertical, which is the state of standing in the prayer, the horizontal, which is the state of bowing, and the downward movement, which is the state of prostration. The movement of man is vertical, the movement of the animal is horizontal, and the movement of plants is downward. The inanimate does not have a movement from its essence. If a rock moves, it moves by other means than itself.

As for the words of the Prophet, "The coolness of my eye is in the prayer," he did not ascribe the action of putting it there to himself, so God gives the one who prays a tajalli which stems from Him, not from the one who prays. If he had not mentioned this attribute from himself, he would have commanded the prayer without tajalli from Him to him. Since that is from Him by means of graciousness, the contemplation is also through graciousness. He said, "the coolness of my eye is in the prayer," and it is only contemplation of the Beloved by which the eye of the lover is delighted by continuance. The eye remains seeing God. It does not look with Him to other than Him in anything, and for that reason, it is forbidden to turn away in the prayer. The glance is something which Satan steals from the prayer of the slave in order to forbid him the contemplation of the Beloved²⁴. If God had truly been the Beloved of the one who turns aside, he would not have turned aside in his prayer to another qibla. Man knows his state in himself, whether he is like that in this particular act of worship or not. "Man will be clear proof against himself in spite of any excuses he might offer." (75:14) He recognizes his lie apart from his truth in himself, because man is not ignorant of his state, his state has tasting (dhawq) for him.

The prayer has another portion. God commanded us to pray to Him, and He told us that He prays for us. The prayer is from us and from Him. When He prays, He prays by His name, the Last, for it comes after the existence of the slave, and it is the source of God which the slave created in his qibla by logical discernment or by imitation. He is the God of the one who has a creed. It varies according to what the place of the tajalli has and according to the established predisposition as al-Junayd said when he was asked about recognition of God and the gnostic. He said, "The colour of water is the colour of its vessel." It is a masterly answer giving information about the matter for what it is. This is God who prays for us. If

²³ See Quran: 45:37.

²⁴ Hadith in al-Bukhari and Muslim. "(Looking aside in the prayer) is something which Satan snatches from a slave's prayer." Also the hadith in Ibn Hanbal and elsewhere: "God continues to turn favourably towards a slave while he is engaged in the prayer as long as he does not look to the side. But if he does so He departs from him."

we pray, we have the name, the Last, so we are in it, as we mentioned, in the state of the One who has this name we are with Him according to our state. He only regards us by the form which we bring to Him.

The one who prays is behind the one who precedes him in the place. It is His words, "Each one knows its prayer and its glorification " (24:41) that is, its rank in being behind the worship of its Lord and the extolling which his predisposition accords him of disconnection (tanzih). "There is nothing which does not glorify Him with praise" of its Lord, the Forbearing, the Forgiving. For that, we do not understand the extolling of the universe distinctly²⁵, creature by creature.

Then a rank refers the pronoun to the extolling slave in His words, "There is nothing which does not glorify Him with praise," that is, the praise of that thing. The pronoun which is in His word, "His praise (bi-hamdihi)" refers to the thing — that is, with the praise that is from it.

As we said of the one who has a creed other than Islam, he praises the God who is in his creed and attaches himself to Him. What is from his work returns to him, so he only praises himself. It is from the praise of fabrication the artisan is praised without a doubt, and so the excellence of what he creates or its lack of excellence returns to the artisan. The god of a creed is the product of the one who looks at it, and it is his fabrication; his praise for what he believes is his praise for himself. For this reason, he condemns the creed of another if he had been fair, he would not have done that. Indeed, the possessor of this particular object of worship is certainly ignorant in his rejection of other than what he believes about God, since had he recognized what al-Junayd said, "The colour of water is the colour of its vessel," he would have conceded to everyone who has a creed what he believed in, and he would have recognized God in every form of worship of every person with a creed, He has opinion but does not know it. For that reason, God says, "I am in My slave's opinion of Me²⁶," that is, I only appear to him in the form of his creed. If he wishes, he generalizes, and if he wishes, he limits. The god of creeds is taken from definition, so He is the God which the heart of His slave encompasses²⁷.

The Absolute Divinity is not encompassed by anything because He is the source of things and the source of Himself. It is not said of the thing that it encompasses itself, not that it does not encompass itself, so understand! "God speaks the truth and He guides to the Way." (33:4)

²⁵ See Quran 17:44, "The seven heavens and the earth and everyone in them glorify Him. There is nothing which does not glorify Him with praise; but you do not understand their glorification. He is the All-Forbearing, Ever-Forgiving."

²⁶ Hadith in Muslim and al-Bukhari, "I am in My slave's opinion and I am with him when he remembers Me..."

²⁷ Hadith qudsi, "Neither My heaven nor My earth contains Me, but the heart of My believing slave contains Me."

Appendix

This version of *Fusus al-Hikam* by **Muhi-e-Din Ibn Arabi** was translated into English by Aisha Bewley. Besides Titus Burckhardt's French translation and commentary — which unfortunately includes fewer than half the chapters — this is the version I use for personal reflection. Since I have enhanced it, I've decided to share it privately. These are the changes I have made to Mrs. Bewley's translation:

- I corrected typographical, orthographic, and grammatical errors.
- I beautified the layout for easier reading.
- I translated the names of the Prophets into the corresponding English language names where appropriate, and the same for other figures (e.g., Mary, Eve, and Satan).
- Following Burckhardt's example, I translated "Allah" to "God" to make it more accessible to Western readers.
- I replaced the endnotes with footnotes for easier access
- When some parts were unclear, I consulted and compared to Burckhardt's translation

Burckhardt's translation is more sophisticated and metaphysical, as perhaps should be expected, and Mrs. Bewley's translation has a more "homey" feel. For example, where Burckhardt uses "ethereal" and "eternal", Bewley uses "in-time" and "out-of-time". There are many examples of that type.

Names of the Prophets

This table lists the Islamic names of the prophets with their Biblical equivalents:

Islamic Name	Biblical Name	Comment
Adam	Adam	
Shith	Seth	
Nuh	Noah	
Idris	Enoch	
Ibrahim	Abraham	
Ishaq	Isaac	
Isma'il	Ishmael	
Ya'qub	Jacob	
Yusuf	Joseph	
Hud	Eber	
Salih		
Shu'ayb	Jethro	
Lut	Lot	
Uzayr	Ezra	
Isa	Jesus	
Sulayman	Solomon	
Da'ud	David	
Yunus	Jonah	
Ayyub	Job	
Yahya	John the Baptist	
Zakariyya	Zachariah	
Ilyas	Elijah	
Luqman	Luqman	

Harun	Aaron	
Musa	Moses	
Khalid	Khalid	Khalid bin Sinan was a judge and follower of Abraham in pre-Islamic Arabia.
Muhammad	Muhammad	

Guenon on Ibn Arabi

Reading the Quran can certainly "open" many things, but, of course, on condition that it is done in the Arabic text and not in translations. For this reading and also for some esoteric writings, this is something that has no relation to the external and grammatical knowledge of the language. I was also told the other day of the case of a Turk who admirably understood Mohyid-din Ibn 'Arabi, while in his life he had never been able to learn Arabic fluently; on the other hand, I know teachers from El Azhar (Cairo) who cannot understand a single sentence. ~ Letter to L. C. 26 June 1937

The 15 Spheres

In the Meditation on Enoch, Ibn Arabi identifies 15 spheres or "heavens". The Sun is Enoch's station of spirituality, with seven above it and seven below. The vision is heliocentric, since all the spheres revolve around the Sun. He then discusses whether these spheres refer to "place" or to degrees of existence. For those rewarded by deeds, they seem to be places. For the gnostic—the man of knowledge—they are degrees of existence.

1. The Throne (Kursi, 'Arsh) (Empyrean)
2. Zodiac (Primum Mobile)
3. Starless Heaven (crystalline sphere)
4. Fixed stars (firmament)
5. Saturn
6. Jupiter
7. Mars
8. Sun (around which the others revolve)
9. Venus
10. Mercury
11. Moon
12. Ether
13. Air
14. Water
15. Earth