

# Selections from al-Futuhāt al-Makkiyya

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## CHAPTER THREE

### **On Allah being disconnected from any connection (tashbih) or embodiment contained in the words which designate Him in His Books or on the tongue of His Messenger**

**"Allah is Greatly exalted over what the wrongdoers say." (17:43)**

In the slave's looking at his Lord  
in the purity and disconnection of strength,

And his height from the tools which you connect to "how" and likeness

Is an indication which gives an absolute judgement on the  
position of the slave and his praise.

The soundness of knowledge and its affirmation, and  
rejection of allegation and distortion.

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#### **(All known things were borne by the First Intellect)**

Know that the bearer of all known things, celestial and terrestrial, is the Intellect which takes from Allah without intermediary. None of the knowledge of higher and lower being is hidden from it. The self's gnosis of things comes from His giving and generosity, and from His manifestation to it, His light and His purest overflowing. The Intellect learns from Allah and teaches the self. The self learns from the Intellect and action comes from it. This applies to all that knowledge of the Intellect connects to things below it. We are limited by "what is below it" in respect of the learning we mentioned. Be careful when you ponder, remembering that Allah said, "*until We know*" (47:31). He is the All-Knower, so recognise the proper ascriptions!

#### **(..except the Bewildered World)**

Know that the Bewildered World does not learn anything from the First Intellect and the First Intellect has no power over those who are bewildered by love. They and it are on the same rank, like individuals among us who are outside of the jurisdiction of the Pole (*Qutb*), even though the Pole is one of the individuals. But the Intellect was selected to inform as the Pole is selected for appointment among the individuals.

### **(...and except the science of the isolation (*tajrid*) of *tawhid*)**

The principle of the Intellect teaching those below it is transpires in all that the knowledge of the Intellect is connected to - except for 'the isolation of *tawhid*'. The science of the isolation of *tawhid* is different from all known things in all aspects since there is no relationship at all between Allah and His creation, even if the 'relationship' is applied to it on a certain day as was done by Imam Abu Hamid al-Ghazzali in his books, and other people. That is a sort of mannerism and very far from the realities. What relationship is there between the in-time and the timeless? Or how can a likeness be made of the One Who does not accept a likeness with someone who does accept a likeness? This is impossible as Abu'l-'Abbas ibn al-'Arif as-Sanhaji said in *Mahasin al-Majalis*, "There is no relationship between Allah and the slaves except concern. There is no cause except judgement and no time except pre-Time. Whatever else is blindness and deceptive ambiguity." One variant has "knowledge" in place of "blindness". See how excellent these words are and how complete this gnosis of Allah is and how pure this contemplation (*mushahada*)! May Allah give us the benefit of what he said!

### **(The intellect's incapacity for gnosis of Allah)**

Knowledge of Allah is too difficult for the faculty of perception of the intellect and the self except for the fact that He exists and is holy! In its reflection and preservation, the sound intellect knows that Allah is different from what is said about Him in respect of creatures or imagined in compounds and other things. That illusion is not permissible in respect of Him nor can that verbal expression be logically applied to Him in the same manner as that which created things accept. If it is applied to Him, it is only used in a manner to facilitate the listener's understanding of the firmness of existence in a manner comprehensible to the listener, not to establish the the reality which the Real possesses. Allah says, "*There is nothing like Him.*" (47:19)

Knowledge of Allah, however, is obligatory for us in the *Shari'a* since Allah said to His Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, "*Know that there is no god but Allah.*" (47:19). So He is saying, "Know Me from My reports which are in harmony with your reflection so that your belief will give you sound knowledge as your knowledge without belief which comes from definition may be sound." So that matter is like that.

Because of this matter in the view and opinion of certain people, we looked to see how gnosis of Him can be attained. We investigated in a fair and balanced manner. The perfect intellect does not obtain it after effort and striving. We only attained to gnosis of Him by the incapacity to recognise Him because our quest to recognise Him is like our quest to recognise all things in respect of the reality which known things have. When we know that there is something in existence which has no likeness and which cannot be conceived in the mind nor perceived, how then can the intellect master this? This is not permissible even though knowledge of His existence is affirmed. We know that He exists and is One in His essence. This is the knowledge demanded of us, not that we know the reality of His essence which He knows that He has. This is knowledge of the lack of knowledge which is demanded of us. He does not resemble any creature in the view of the intellect nor is any of them like Him. It was obligatory for us, first of all,

when it was said to us, "Know that there is no god but Allah" to know what knowledge is. We have learned it and we have learned what it was first obligatory for us to know of what knowledge is.

### **(Matrices of the demands of knowledge)**

The matrices of the demands of are four: is?, what?, how? and why?. 'Is?' and 'why?' are single spiritual demands accompanied by what it is. 'Is?' and 'why?' are the two sound roots of simple elements because 'what is it?' is a sort of complex one. In these four demands there is no demand which should be asked of Allah in respect of what the reality accords since it is not correct that any of the science of tawhid be recognised except by the negation of what exists except for Him. Therefore He said, "*There is nothing like Him*" (42:11) and "*Glory be to your Lord, the Lord of Might, above what they describe.*" (37:180)

### **(Knowledge of negation is knowledge of Allah)**

Knowledge of negation is knowledge of Allah. Similarly we are not permitted to ask "How?" about spirits (*arwah*). They are too pure for that because their realities are different from this expression. The tools by which one questions are not applied to the spirits, nor is it permitted that they be applied to Allah. The realised unifier who is deprived of the presence of his Originator and Creator must not apply these expressions to Him. The Real is not ever known by these demands.

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## **Section**

### **(What is perceived by its essence, what is perceived by its action and what is not perceived at all)**

Then we also looked into all that is other than Allah and found it in two categories: one category is perceived by its essence - which is the dense, sensory category; and one category that it is perceived by its action, which is intelligible and subtle. The intelligible is higher than the sensory by this station: it is too pure to have its essence perceived, but its action is perceived. Since these are the qualities of creatures, Allah is too pure to be perceived by His essence like the sensory or by His action like the subtle because there is no relationship at all between Him and His creation. His Essence is not perceived by us so as to be like the sensory nor is His action so as to be like the subtle. The action of the Real is to originate the thing, but not from a thing. The spiritual subtle achieves a thing from other things. So what relationship is there between the two of them? When the relationship is impossible in the action, then it is more fitting that similarity in the essence be impossible.

If you wish to achieve realisation of some of this area, look at the effect (*maf'ul*) of this action according to the ranks of the effects, for instance the effect of handicraft like the shirt and chair. We find that the artisan is not recognised unless he himself has indicated the existence of its maker and his knowledge of his craft. It is the same with the effect of the formation of being - the sphere and stars - which do not

recognise their fashioner nor the one who compounded them. That was the Universal Self which encompasses them. It is also the same with the natural effect - like the products of minerals, plants and animals, who effect a nature which was one of the effects of formation into being. But they do not grasp who acts for them, namely the sphere and the stars.

So knowledge of the spheres is not what you see of their mass and what the senses perceive of them. Where is the mass of the sun in relation to itself in the eyes of one of us who sees it? Knowledge of the spheres comes from their spirit and meaning which Allah brought into existence for them from the encompassing Universal Self which is the cause of the spheres and what is in them.

It is the same with emanating effect which is the Universal Self, emanating from the Intellect as the Dihya [1] form came from the Jibrilian form. The Universal Self does not know what it emanated from at all because it is in its care and encompassed by it as it is one of its thoughts (*khawatir*). So how can the Universal Self know what is above it when what is in the Self from what is above it is only what is in it? It only knows what it has of it. So its knows its self, not its cause!

It is the same with the effect of origination which we call the Muhammadan Reality, and others call the First Intellect. It is the Highest Pen which Allah originated from nothing. It is even more incapable and prevented from perceiving its Doer than every effect already mentioned since between every effect and its doer which have been mentioned there is a sort of relationship and resemblance. So it must know of it according to the amount of relationship there is between them, either in respect of substantiality or otherwise. There is no relationship between the first thing originated and the Real - glory be to Him! It is the most incapable of the effects of causes of recognising its Doer from others. Then the incapacity of the effect, which resembles its active cause from some aspects, is incapable of perceiving it and knowing it. So understand this and realise it. It is very beneficial indeed in the area of *tawhid* and the inability to connect temporal knowledge to Allah the Great.

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## Section

### (The five faculties and their real perceptions)

What we mentioned confirms that man perceives all knowables by one of the five faculties: the senses which are five - smell, taste, touch, hearing and sight. Sight perceives colours, coloured things and individuals according to the known limit of proximity and distance. What he perceives a mile away is not what he perceives at two miles, and that what he perceived at 20 spans is not what he perceives a mile away. What he perceives close to him, like his hand is not what he perceives at 20 spans. At two miles, he perceives an individual shape and does not know whether it is a man or a tree. At one mile, he recognises that it is a man. At 20 spans he recognises that he is white or black. Face to face, he recognises whether it is blue or navy blue. It is like that with all the senses in their perception up close or from afar.

The Creator is not sensed, i.e. He is not perceived by the senses by us while we are seeking to recognise Him. We do not know Him by the means of the senses.

The imaginative (*khayaliyya*) faculty only takes what the senses give it, either in an image or a mental form, from what the senses give to each other. The path of the people of thought in gnosis of Allah ends here (by way of the imaginative faculty). It is their language, not our language. Even if their path is true, we ascribe it to them and it is quoted from them. This imaginative faculty continues as long as it has perception from the senses. We consider any connection of the senses to Allah to be invalid, so the connection of the imagination to Him is also invalid.

As for the meditative faculty, man only ever reflects on things that exist with him which he learns from the senses and the precepts of the intellect and from how thoughts work on them in the repository of the imagination which accords it another knowledge between it and these things in which he conceives of a relationship. There is no relationship between Allah and His creation. Thus knowledge of Him is not valid by way of reflection. Therefore scholars forbid thinking about the Essence of Allah.

As for the faculty of the intellect, it is not valid for the intellect to perceive Him. The intellect only accepts what it knows spontaneously or what reflection accords us. It is invalid for thought to perceive Him, so it is invalid for the intellect to perceive Him via reflection. But whatever the intellect is, its limit is to understand and grasp what it obtains. So it may be that the Real will give it gnosis of Him and it will understand it, but not by means of reflection. This is not impossible. Allah gives this gnosis to whomever He will of His slaves. The intellect does not have sole possession of perception of gnosis, but it accepts it. So neither proof nor demonstration is based on it because gnosis is beyond the scope of the perceptions of the intellect.

These essential attributes cannot be designated because they are beyond exemplification and analogy. "*There is nothing like Him.*" (42:11) Every intellect which does not have some of this gnosis unveiled to it questions another intellect which has had some of it unveiled to it. But it is not in the power of this questioned intellect to express it nor is it possible. That is why Abu Bakr as-Siddiq said, "The inability to perceive is perception." This statement has two ranks, so understand! Whoever seeks Allah through his intellect by means of his thought and investigation is astray. However, his preparation may be enough to receive what Allah gives him of that, so understand!

As for the faculty of memory, there is no way for it to perceive knowledge of Allah. It remembers what the intellect knew before and then was heedless of or forgot unwittingly. So the faculty of memory has no way to Him.

So man's perceptions are limited to what man is, what his essence gives him and he can acquire. All there remains is the preparation of the intellect to accept what Allah gave it of His gnosis. Man will never recognise the Real by deductive proof - except for recognition of existence and that He is the only One who is worshipped. So perceiving man is not capable of perceiving anything at all unless something

like the perceived thing already exists in him. If it had not been for that, he would not have perceived it at all nor recognised it. Since man does not recognise anything unless he has something like that recognised thing, in reality man only recognises what resembles him and is like him. There is nothing like the Creator and nothing has anything like Him, so He will never be recognised!

### **(Natural things only accept nourishment from their own sort)**

Part of what supports what we mentioned is that natural things only accept food from things of their own sort, and absolutely do not accept food from other than their sort. An example of that is that products of minerals, plants and animals are compounded of the four humours, and the products do not accept food from any other source. That is because a portion of them is from them. If a creature had wanted to make the food of his body, which is compounded of these elements, from other than these elements, or what is compounded of others, he would not have been able to do so.

As as it is only possible for natural bodies to accept food from something that is compounded of the same elements as they are, so it is not possible for anyone to know anything unless he has something like it. Don't you see that the self only accepts from the intellect what it shares with it and what resembles it? It does not know what it does not share with it at all. None of Allah is in anyone and it that is not permissible in any aspect, so no one recognises Him from his self and reflection. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Allah is veiled from the intellects as He is veiled from the eyes. The Highest Assembly seek Him as you seek Him." So the Prophet reported that the intellect does not perceive Him by its reflection nor by its inner eye nor does the eye perceive Him. This is what we indicated earlier in the chapter. Praise belongs to Allah for His inspiration and for teaching us what we did not know. The bounty of Allah is immense.

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### **(Disconnection (*tanzih*) and negation of exemplification and connection (*tasbih*))**

So there must be disconnection and negation of exemplification and connection. Whoever among those who use connection and go astray only go astray by allegorical interpretation and applying what the *ayats* and traditions bring us which we have not understood without looking into the disconnection which Allah made obligatory. That led them to pure ignorance and clear disbelief. If they had sought soundness and left the traditions and ayats as they had come without modifying anything in them to something else and entrusted the knowledge of that to Allah and His Messenger and said, "We do not know", that would have been better for them.

The words of Allah should be enough for them, "*There is nothing like Him.*" (42:11) When a *hadith* comes to them which contains connections so that Allah is made like something, He negated the likeness in respect of Himself. So all that remains is that that tradition has one of the aspects of disconnection which Allah recognises and it is brought to Arab understanding in whose tongue the Qur'an was revealed.



Actually there is not to be found a single phrase in a tradition or ayat at all which is a text for connection. What you find with the Arabs is that it supports many aspects, one of which leads to connection and one of which leads to disconnection. The allegorical interpreter applies that phrase to the aspect which leads to connection by wronging that phrase since he does not recognise its proper due given to it by what its place in the language demands. He infringes on Allah when He applies to Him what is not proper for Allah. Allah willing, we will present some of the *hadith* which have come with connection and which are not really a text for it. *"To Allah belongs the far-reaching proof. If He had willed, He would have guided you all."* (6:149)

### **(Connection (*tasbih*) and anthropomorphism in the expressions of the Sunna)**

An example of that is when the Prophet said, "The heart of the believer is between two of Allah's fingers." [at-Tirmidhi] The intellect looks at what the subject demands of reality and metaphor and that a 'limb' is impossible for Allah! 'Finger' is a shared expression which can be applied to the limb or applied to blessing. The shepherd said:

Weak of staff [\[2\]](#), of Bedouin origin, you see him over them when  
people have not had their blessing end in drought.

He said, "You see him over them" is a good indication of blessing by looking after them well. The Arabs say, "What an excellent finger so-and-so has over his property" meaning that his effect on it is to make his property grow because of his good management of it.

The swiftest turning over of things is what is turned over by the fingers because of their small size and perfect capacity for that. So their movement is swifter than the hand and other things. When Allah turns over the hearts of the slaves, it is the swiftest thing. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was most eloquent to the Arabs in his supplication. using what they understood. Because for us, things are only turned over by the hand, he used turning with 'the fingers' because the fingers are part of the hand and are quicker. Thus the Prophet said in his supplication, "O Overturner of hearts, make my heart firm in Your deen!" [Ibn Majah] Allah's overturning of the hearts is what He creates in them of concern for good and interest in evil. When man senses the succession of thoughts which come to him in his heart, this is referred to as 'Allah turning the heart'. Man's knowledge cannot turn this away from himself. That is why the Prophet said, "O Overturner of hearts, make my heart firm in Your *deen*!"

Regarding this *hadith*, one of his wives said to him, "Do you fear then, Messenger of Allah?" He, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, replied, "The heart of the believer is between the fingers of Allah," so the Prophet indicated the swiftness of the turning from belief to disbelief and what they both contain. Allah said, *"He inspired them with their depravity and godfearing."* (91:8) This inspiration is the turning and the fingers are for speed. The fact that they are two ('two fingers') is the thought of good and the thought of evil.

So 'fingers' should be understood as we have stated. 'Fingers' can mean the limb and it can mean the blessing and good effect. So which of the two aspects will you connect to the limb when these disconnected aspects demand it? Either we will be silent and entrust knowledge of that to Allah and to the one whom Allah has acquainted with it - a sent messenger or an inspired wali as long as the limb is negated, or we are overcome by inquisitiveness which takes control of us, although we ascribe that to an assimilating anthropomorphising innovator. It is not by inquisitiveness, but it is obligatory for the knower in that to clarify the aspects of disconnection in that expression so as to invalidate the argument of every disappointed anthropomorphist. May Allah turn to us and him and provide him with Islam! If we discuss that word which must give rise to tashbih, its explanation must be modified to an aspect which befits Allah - glory be to Him! This is the portion of the intellect in the linguistic convention of the phrase.

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### **The Blowing of a spirit (*ruh*) into a heart (*ru'*)**

#### **(The portion of the heart from the two fingers from an unseen aspect)**

'The two fingers' are the secret of essential perfection which is such that when it is unveiled to the eyes on the Day of Rising, a man will seize his father if he is an unbeliever and fling him into the Fire, and will not feel any pain in that nor any grief for him due to the secret of these two 'fingers' which has one meaning while the word is in the dual. The Garden and the Fire were created and the name illuminated and darkened, and Blesser and Avenger appeared. So do not imagine that these two fingers are two of ten fingers!

This secret must be pointed out in this chapter in the hadith, "Both of his Hands are right hands." This is gnosis of unveiling. The people of the Garden have two blessings: one is the blessing of the Garden and the other is the blessing of the punishment of the people of the Fire in the Fire. Similarly the people of the Fire have two punishments. Both groups see Allah by the Names just as they did in this world. In 'the two handfuls' which came from the Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, in respect of Allah is the secret of what we have said and pointed out. *"Allah speaks the truth and guides to the Path."* (33:4)

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**The handful and the right hand:** Allah said, *"The earth all together shall be His handful"* (39:68) and *"the heavens shall be rolled up in His right hand."* (39:68) The intellect should see what the situation requires. First of all, at the beginning of the *ayat*, Allah forbade that He be determined by connection and anthropomorphism which weak intellects already have in the ayats and traditions which give rise to that in any aspect. Then after this disconnection (transcendence) which only those with knowledge understand, Allah said, *"The earth all together shall be His handful."*

One of the conventions of the Arabic language we know that it is said, "So-and-so is in my hand (*qabda*)," meaning under my jurisdiction, even though I have nothing of him at all in my actual hand. But my command is enforced on him and my judgement of him is carried out, just like my judgement over what my hand physically possesses and grasps. I also say, "My property is in my hand", i.e. my ownership and I can dispose of it and there is nothing to prevent me from doing so. When I dispose of it, in the moment in which I dispose of it, I can say, "It is in my hand for me to dispose of," even if that is my slaves who dispose of it with my permission.

Since a limb is impossible for Allah, the intellect must modify the sense, meaning and benefit of the "handful". It is the possession of what it grasps in the moment, even if the grasper does not have anything to grasp with. It is absolutely in the possession of the handful. Thus the universe is in the grasp/handful of the Truly Real. The earth in the Next World is designated as one of the possessions as you say, "My servant is in my grasp", even though the servant is only part of what is in our grasp. I have mentioned him especially because something particular has occurred.

In our view, 'the right hand' is the place of absolute strong transaction. 'The left' does not have the power of the right. So in the Qur'anic *ayat*, the right hand alludes to full mastery. It indicates mastery of power in the action. So the Qur'anic meaning reached the understanding of the Arabs by phrases which they recognised and were quick to grasp. The poet said:

When a banner is raised for glory, 'Araba takes it with the right hand.

Glory does not have a tangible manner, so the "limb" of the right hand does not take it. It is as if he were saying: If glory were to show a tangible banner, its place or bearer would be the right hand of 'Araba al-Awsi [one of the Ansar], meaning that the attribute of glory is complete in him. The Arabs still applies the phrases used for the limbs to things which the actual limb cannot accept because they share in the meaning.

## **The blowing of a spirit into a heart**

**(The portion of the heart in the right and left hands: the right and left hands from an unseen aspect)**

When the Truly Real manifests Himself to the secret (*sirr*) of a slave who possesses all secrets and joins him to the free men and he has essential freedom of action in respect of the right hand, the honour of the left is by something else and the honour of the right is by its essence. To descend, the honour of the right hand is by the address (*khatab*) and the honour of the left is by presencing (*tajalli*). Man's honour is by recognising his reality and becoming acquainted with it, and it is the left = 'both hands' in respect of man are left just as both of Allah's hands are right!

Referring to the meaning of unification (*ittihad*), both of the hands of the slave are right. Referring to *tawhid*, one of the hands of Allah is right and the other left. Sometimes I am in 'gatheredness' and 'the

gatheredness of gatheredness' and sometimes I am in 'separation' and 'separation of separation' according to the manifestation and the gift (*warid*).

One day when I encountered someone with good fortune (*yaman*),  
he was Yemeni.

If I met one going beyond (*mu'addhi*), he was 'Adnani.

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Part of that is **wonder, laughter, joy and anger**. Wonder occurs from something existent who did not know that which makes him wonder and then he learns of it and it makes him wonder. So laughter is applied to him. This is impossible for Allah. There is nothing outside His knowledge, so when something occurs in existence which can make us wonder, that wonder and laughter is applied to the One who cannot have either wonder or laughter because the matter which occasions wonder among us, like the young man without youthful passion, is a wondrous matter. With Allah has the position of what would cause us wonder.

Laughter and joy emerge out of acceptance and pleasure. If you do an action for someone and because of it he shows you laughter and joy, he has accepted that action and is pleased with it. So His laughter and joy is His acceptance and pleasure with us. Similarly His anger is disconnected from the boiling of the blood of the heart seeking revenge because He is too pure for corporality and contingency. That refers doing the action of one who is angry who is permitted to be angry. It is His vengeance on the tyrants and those who oppose His command and overstep His bounds. Allah said, "*He is angry with him*" meaning that He repays him as is done with someone who is the object of wrath. So the Requitor is angry and the appearance of the action designates the name.

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Smiling is part of laughter. The *hadith* says, "Allah smiles on the man who walks to the mosque for the prayer and remembrance." Since the world is veiled by phenomenal beings and they are occupied with other than Allah, they perform this action in a state of absence from Allah. When they come to Him with one of the varieties of presence, Allah sends down on them in their hearts some of the pleasure of the bliss of being present (*muhadara*), intimate conversation (*munajat*) and contemplation (*mushahada*) which endears itself to their hearts. The Prophet said, "Love Allah for the nourishment He has given you of His blessings." Smiling alludes to this action of His because it is the manifestation of joy when you come to Him. When someone makes it easy for you to come, the sign of his happiness is to display kindness and love to you and to send some of the blessings he has to you. When these things appear from Allah to the slaves who come to him, that is called 'smiling'.

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**Forgetfulness.** Allah said, "*He has forgotten them.*" (9:67) It is not permissible for Him to forget, but when Allah punishes them with eternal punishment and does not give them mercy, they become as if they have been forgotten by Him and it is as if He has forgotten them. This is the action of one who forgets and one who does not remember the pain of the punishment they are in. That is because in their live in this world they forgot Allah, so He repaid them with their own action and their action comes back on them appropriately.

The meaning of "*Allah has forgotten them*" is He has deferred them and the meaning of "they forgot Allah" is they deferred the command of Allah and did not do it. So Allah deferred them in the Fire when He brought out of it the others which He had made enter the Fire. Near this area is describing the Real with devising, mockery and mockery. Allah said, "*Allah mocks them,*" (9:79) "*Allah devises,*" (3:54) and "*Allah will mock them.*" (2:15)

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**The breath (*nafas*):** The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Do not curse the wind. It is from the breath of the Merciful." He also said, "I feel the breath of the Merciful coming to me from the Yemen." All of this is from comforting (*tanfis*). It is as if he were saying, "Do not curse the wind. It is part of what the Merciful uses to comfort (*naffasa*) His slaves." The Prophet said, "You aided with the east wind" as he said. "I feel the breath," i.e. the All-Merciful relieves my grief for me. This was the grief the Prophet had when his people denied him and rejected the command of Allah. He said, "From the direction of the Yemen", so the Ansar were among those by whom Allah relieved His Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, from what grieved him from the deniers. Allah the Great is free of the breath which is the air expelled by the breather. "*Allah is greatly exalted above what the wrongdoers ascribe to Him!*" (See 17:43)

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**Form (*sura*).** Form is applied to a matter and to what is known with people and other things. The *hadith* attributes form to Allah in the *Sahih* and other books. For instance, there is the hadith of 'Ikrima, the Prophet said, "I saw my Lord in the form of a young man." This was a state of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and it is a well-known usage in Arabic. It is like when the Prophet said, "Allah created Adam on His form."

Know that the quality of "likeness" which comes in Qur'an is linguistic, not intelligible, because an intelligible likeness is impossible for Allah. Zayd is a lion in strength. Zayd is a Zuhayr in poetry. When you describe something existent with one or two attributes and then describe another with that attribute, even if there is clear disparity between them in respect of other realities, they share in the spirit of that attribute. It means that each of them has the form of the other in that attribute in particular. So understand and take note!

See that your being indicates Him - glory be to Him! Did you describe Him with an attribute of

perfection other than from you? Understand! When you enter the gate of stripping away equating, you negate imperfections which you are not allowed to do, even if you are not based on that at all. However when the anthropomorphist and assimilator ascribe that to him, you negate that attribution. If the anthropomorphist had not had the illusion, you would not have made any of this negation. Know that even if the form has many openings, but we have refrained from mentioning them since we wish to avoid making this book too long. *"Allah speaks the truth and guides to the Path."* (33:4)

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**The Arm.** It is related in a tradition from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, "the molar-tooth of the unbeliever in the Fire is like Uhud and his skin is as thick as forty arm-spans of the arm-span of the Almighty." This is an attribution of honouring by the amount which Allah made attributed to Him. It is like you saying, "This thing is so many arm-lengths of the King," meaning the greatest arm-length which the King makes, even though, for instance, the arm of the King is the limb, like people's limbs and the arm-span which he makes is greater than the King's limb by a half or its like. So in reality it is not his arm, but rather it is the estimate of his share and then it is ascribed to its maker, so know! In language, the "Almighty" is the Immense King.

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It is like that with the foot. "The Mighty places His foot (in the Fire)". The foot is the limb. It is said, "So-and-so has a good in the business," meaning he is firm. The foot is a collective noun in creation, so the food is an attribution. The Mighty is the angel and this foot belongs to the angel since the limb is impossible for Allah!

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**Settling** (*istawa'*) is also applied to steadiness, direction and overwhelming. Steadiness is one of the qualities of bodies and is not permitted in respect of Allah! except in the aspect of steadiness. Direction is direction is will and it is one of the attributes of perfection. Allah said, *"He lifted (istawa) Himself up to heaven,"* (3:29), i.e. intended. *"He settled on the throne"* (7:54) means occupied.

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There are many traditions and *ayats*, some sound, some weak. There is no tradition which does not have one of the aspects of disconnection. If you want to more easily understand that, then apply yourself to the phrase which gives rise to tashbih and take its benefit or its spirit or what comes from it. Put it in what is due to the Truly Real and you will win the degree of disconnection when other people obtain the rank of connection. So act thus and purify your garment! This is enough of these traditions for the topic is long.

The blowing of the Purest Ruh in the Inner Heart

## (The symbolic meaning of the phrases of *tashbih* in the Shari'a)

"The blowing of the purest spirit in the inner heart" is in the previous expressions: when the wonderer (the King) wonders at the one who has come out on His form (Adam), His Creator in his inner conscience, rejoicing in his existence, laughing in his witnessing and angry when he turns away, smiling when he comes near, forgetting his outward and breathing. So He let the ships take their course and is firm on His kingdom and rules over His kingdom by decree. What He wills is and the return is to Allah!

These are isolated spirits for which the supporting forms (*ashbah*) wait. When the time comes, moments come to an end, the heaven sways, the sun is rolled up, the earth is changed, the stars are thrown down, things are transformed, the Next World appears and man and others are gathered in the original state (See 19:10). Then the forms will give praise, the spirits will delight, the Opener will be manifested, the lamp will be kindled, the wine sparkle, pure love (*wudd*) appear, beseeching disappear, the wing spread, and the the Dome [3] established from the beginning of night to morning. How glorious a station! How delightful it is to selves in a perfect state. May Allah let us enjoy it!

1. Dihya al-Kalbi, in whose form Jibril appeared to the Prophet.
2. i.e. a good shepherd who tends his camels well.
3. The temple called *al-Bayt al-Ma'mur* corresponding to the Ka'ba in the Fourth Heaven.

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## CHAPTER FOUR

### The Cause of the Beginning of the World and the Ranks of the Most Beautiful Names in the entire universe

In the cause of the beginning and its rules, and the end of fabrication and its perception,

And the difference between the subjects of the high in its origin and its rulers,

The proofs indicate the Maker who has manifested all by His rules.

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#### (The elite of the place and the sensation of the Garden)

The pure *wali* grasped the cause of the beginning of the world in our book entitled, '*Anqa' Mughrib fi ma'rifa khatmi'l-awliya' wa shamsu'l-Maghrif*' and in our book entitled *Insha' ad-Dawa'ir* some of which we wrote in his noble house when we visited him in 598 on our way to *hajj*. His servant, 'Abdu'l-Jabbar (may Allah elevate his worth!) copied out for him what I had written of it. I travelled to Makka with him in this year to finish it there. This book (The *Futuh*) distracted us from it and anything else because of a divine command which came upon us to write it, as well as the desire of some of the brothers and *fuqara'* for me to do that since they desired to increase their knowledge and to receive the blessings of this Blessed Noble House, the place of blessings, guidance and clear signs. In this place we also desired to acquaint the noble pure one, Abu Muhammad 'Abdu'l-'Aziz (al-Mahdawi al-Qurashi), with the blessings Makka gives and that it is the best method of worship and the noblest earthly inanimate station. Perhaps the *himma* of yearning will rise to perform it and the desire for increase in it will descend. It was revealed to the one who "was given all the words" and had eye-witnessing of his Lord, closer than "two bows-lengths", in spite of this most perfect proximity and fullest portion, "Say, 'Lord increase me in knowledge.'" (20:114)

Part of the precondition of the witnessing knower, master of unseen and visible stations, is that he know that places have an effect in the subtle hearts. If the heart were to exist in any place in the most universal existence, its existence would be the most glorious and complete in Makka. As spiritual stages vary in excellence, so do physical stages. Is the pearl like the stone, unless it is with someone in a particular state? The perfected master of the station differentiates between them as the Truly Real differentiates between them. Does the Real equate a house built of bricks and straw with a house built of gold and silver? The sage who has arrived is the one who gives everything with a due its proper due. He is unique in his age and the master of his moment. So there is a great difference between a city most of whose



structures are appetites and a city most of whose structures are clear signs!

Did not my pure friend friend agree with me that the existence of our hearts in certain places is greater in some places than in others. May Allah be pleased with him! He abandoned retreat (*khilwa*) in the houses of the protected minaret in eastern Tunis along the coast and went down to ar-Rabita which is in the middle of the tombs, near the minaret on the side where its door is located. It is traced to al-Khidr. I asked him about that and he said, "I find my heart there more than in the minaret." I also experienced there what the Shaykh had said.

The *wali* knew that to due to whoever inhabits the place is either in the state of the noble angels or sincere jinn, or it is due the *himma* of the one who visits it when it is no longer there - like the house of Abu Yazid which was called "The House of the Pious", or the zawiyya of al-Junayd at Shuniziyya, or the cave of Ibn Adham at Yaqin and other places of the righteous who have departed from this world while their traces remain in their places affecting subtle hearts. This is the reason why mosques vary in excellence in the existence of the heart, but not in the doubling of the reward. You find your heart more in one mosque than another. That is not due to the earth, but to the assembly of comrades and their *himma*. The person who does not find a difference in the existence of his heart between the mosque and markets has a state, not a station.

I do not doubt by unveiling and knowledge that if the angels were to inhabit the entire earth with their rivalry in gnoses and ranks, the highest of them in rank and greatest in knowledge and gnosis would inhabit the Masjid al-Haram. Your existence is according to those whose company you keep. The *himma* of those who sit together has an effect on the one who sits with them and their *himma* is according to their ranks. If the rivalry is based on *himma*, then 124,000 Prophets, not counting the *awliya'*, did *tawaf* of this House. There is no Prophet or *wali* who does not have a *himma* connected to this House.

This city is the sacred city because it is the House which Allah chose over all other houses. It has the secret of firstness in places of worship as Allah said, "*The first house established for the people was that at Bakka, a blessed place, and a guidance to all the worlds. Therein are clear signs - the station of Ibrahim, and whoever enters it is secure*" (3:97) from every fear. There are other *ayats*. If the pure friend had travelled to this noble sacred city, he would have experienced gnoses and increase which he had not seen before that nor had occurred to his mind.

He knew that the self will be gathered on the form of its knowledge while the body will be gathered on the form of its action. The form of knowledge and action are more complete in Makka than elsewhere. If someone with a heart were to enter it for a single hour, it would have that. So how much would it have it if he were to be in its proximity and reside there and performed all the obligations and rules? There is no doubt that his witnessing there would be more complete and sublime, and its gift would be purer, sweeter and more delightful. Then my friend informed me that he felt increase and decrease according to places and natural dispositions, and he knew that that also derives from the reality of the one living there or his *himma* as we mentioned. We have no doubt that recognition of this science, i.e. recognition of

places and the sensation of increase and decrease comes from the completeness of the mastery of the gnostic's recognition and the height of his station and honour over things and the strength of his discrimination. May Allah write a good effect for the *wali* and give him a good report in it since he enjoyed that and was capable of it.

### **(The Divine Names and realities of existence)**

Know, may Allah give success to us, you and all the Muslims! that most of those who know by Allah among the people of unveiling and realities do not possess knowledge of the reason for the beginning of the universe other than the connection of the Timeless to its being brought into existence. Allah gave being to what He knew He would give being to. Here most people stop. We, and those who Allah has acquainted with what he has acquainted us with, have grasped other matters. This is that when you look at the universe in detail with its realities and ascriptions, you find it limited by realities and ascriptions, with known stages and ranks, and finite genera of similar and dissimilar things. If you understand this matter, you know that this has a subtle secret and wondrous matter whose reality is not perceived precisely by reflection or investigation. Rather, it is one of the knowledges given by unveiling and the results of striving which accompanies *himma*. Striving without *himma* does not produce anything nor have any effect in knowledge, but it has effect in the state by the fineness and purity the striver feels.

Know, may Allah teach you the secrets of judgements and give you all the words! that the Most Beautiful Names, which are above the names which can be counted and bring down happiness below the enumerated names, have an effect in this universe. They are the 'first keys' which only He knows. Every reality in existence has one of the names which is particular to it. By reality, I mean a reality which gathers together a genus of the realities. The Lord of that reality is that name and that reality is its slave and under its commission. It is only that.

If something combines several names for you, the matter is not as you imagine it to be. You look at that thing, you find that it has aspects compatible with those names it indicates, which are the realities which we mentioned. That is like what was confirmed for you in the knowledge which is in the outward intellect and under its jurisdiction in respect of a certain existent being singular and indivisible – like the single substance (*jawhar*) which is an indivisible part. In spite of that, this single substance contains numerous realities which demand an equal number of Divine Names. The reality of its being brought into existence demands the name the All-Powerful. From the aspect of its precision it demands the name of the Knowing. The aspect of its selection demands the name the Transformer. The aspect of its manifestation demands the name the Seer and Looker, etc. Even if this substance is but one, it has these and other aspects which we have not mentioned. And each aspect has many aspects which demand their commensurate names. Those aspects are the reality and they are secondary in our opinion and it is difficult to grasp them and even more difficult to obtain them by unveiling.

### **(The matrices of the Divine Names)**

Know that we may leave the Names with their multiplicity when we look at the aspects of those who

seek them in the world. When we do not look at that, we see the matrices of the demands of knowledge which they need and we recognise that the Names which are the matrices on which they stand are also the matrices of the Names. So it is easy to look, complete the goal and it is easy to go beyond these matrices to the offshoots, as it is easy to return the offshoots to the matrices. If you look at all the Names known in the celestial and terrestrial world, you will find seven names designated as the Attributes by those who know the science of *Kalam* which contains them. We have discussed this in our book called *Insha' ad-Dawa'ir*.

Our aim in this book is not in these seven matrices designated as the Attributes, but our aim is the matrices necessary for bringing the universe into existence. Similarly we do not need intellectual proofs of the recognition of the Real beyond the fact that He exists, is Knowing, Transforming, Powerful, Alive. No more is necessary. No more than this is required by responsibility. The Messenger, peace be upon him, made us recognise that He speaks. Responsibility made us recognise that He hears and sees, and so on with other Names. What we need here from recognition of the names is for the existence of the universe. These names are the Lords of the Names and all other names are in their custody as some of these lords have custody of others.

The matrices of the Divine Names are: the Living, the Knowing, the Transforming, the Speaker, the Generous, the Equitable. These are the offspring of two Divine Names: the Manager and the Divider. The Living confirms your understanding after and before your existence. The Knowing confirms your consolidation in your existence, and before your existence confirmed your determination. The Transformer confirms your selection. The Powerful confirms your non-existence. The Speaker confirms your timelessness. The Generous confirms your being brought into existence. The Equitable confirms your rank. The rank is the last of the stages of existence.

These realities must exist, and their names which are their Lords are also necessary. The Living is the Lord of the Lords and the subjects. It is the Imam. Next in rank is the Knower (*al-'Alim*), then the Transformer, then the Speaker, then the Powerful, then the Generous, and last of them, the Equitable. It is the Lord of ranks and it is the last of the stages of existence. The remaining names are under the authority of those Imam-Lords.

### **(The Imams of the Divine Names)**

That is was the reason that those Names turned the rest of the Names with their realities to the name Allah in bringing the universe into existence. In view of the fact that the Imams of the names, without considering the universe, are only these four - the Living, the Speaking, the Hearing and the Seeing - when Allah hears His words and sees His essence, His existence is perfect in His essence without regard for the universe. We only mean the names by which the existence of the universe was established. We have many names, so we turned to their lords and came to them in their presences and only found those which we mentioned. We presented them according to what we saw of them. So this was the reason that the lords of the names turned the rest of the names to the name Allah when our sources were brought into existence.

The first who undertook to demand this universe was the Divine Name, the Manager (*al-Mudabbir*) and the Divine Name, the Divider (*al-Mufassil*) at the request of the name, the King. Then these two names turned to the thing from which the example (*mithal*) exists in the universe itself without it being from prior non-existence, but rather a prior rank, not a prior existence - like the rising of the sun preceding the beginning of the day. Even if we connect the beginning of the day to the rising of the sun, it is still clear that the cause of the existence of the day is the rising of the sun which accompanies it in existence. This is how the matter is.

Then these two Divine Names managed the universe and divided it without previous ignorance of it or lack of knowledge. So the form of the model grew in the universe itself. Then His name, the Knowing, was connected to that model as it was connected to the form from which it was taken, even if it is not seen because it does not exist as will be mentioned in the chapter. "From what did the universe exist?"

### **(The first of the names of the universe)**

The first of the names of the universe are these two Divine Names: the Manager and the Divider. The name, the Manager, is what realised the determined moment of bringing into existence. The name, the Transformer, is connected to it according to the limit on which the Manager brought it forth and managed. These two names did not do anything of the formation of this model without the participation of the rest of the names, but from behind the veil of these two names. Therefore the Imamate is proper for them, while the others were not aware of that until the form of the model (*mithal*) emerged. Then they saw in it the realities appropriate to themselves which attracted them to affect passion for them. So every name became enamoured of its reality which exists in the Model, but it could not achieve any effect in it since that is not granted by the presence in which this model manifests itself. Thus that love and passion leads them to seeking, striving and the desire to bring the form of that model into existence so that their power might appear and their existence would be valid in reality. There is nothing with a greater *himma* than a mighty one who does not find someone mighty to dominate and abase under his force so that the authority of its might will be valid - or a rich one who does not find someone who needs his wealth! It is the same with all these names. So the rest of the names sought refuge in their Lords, the Seven Imams which we mentioned, asking them to bring the source of this model which they saw in the essence of the one who knew into existence. This is what is designated as the universe.

### **(The Divine Names are unified in respect of the Essence, separate in respect of connections)**

Somone might ask: "O realised one! How can the rest of the Divine Names see this model when the fact is that only the name, the Seeing, sees it and every Divine Name has a reality which another name does not have?" We would reply: May Allah give you success! You should know that every Divine Name contains all the Divine Names and every name is described by all the names on its horizon. Every Name is living, powerful, hearing, seeing, speaking in its horizon and in its knowledge. If not, how could every Divine Name be a lord to the one who serves it? How preposterous! How far from the mark!

However, there is a subtle indication which one is not aware of. That is that you know absolutely that

every grain of wheat or its like contains realities which its sister does not, just as you also know that this seed is not the same as that other seed, even though they both contain similar realities and so are alike. So seek this reality which makes you differentiate between these two seeds and say, "This is not the same as that." This holds true for all similar things in respect of what the resemblance is. It is the same with the Divine Names: every name contains the realities which the names contain. Then you know absolutely that this name is not that other name by that subtle quality (*latifa*) which you used to differentiate between the grains of wheat and everything which is similar. So seek this meaning until you recognise it by *dhikr*, not by reflection.

However, I want to acquaint you with a reality which no one before has mentioned. Perhaps it has not been disclosed or specified and I do not know whether it will be given to anyone after me or not from the presence which gave it to me. If it is read or understood in my book, I am the one who teaches it while the earlier ones did not discover it. That is that every Divine Name, as we stated, contains the realities of the the names while this *latifa* exists which gives you this distinction between two similar things. With the name the Blessor and the name the Punisher which are the Outward and the Inward, each of these names contains what its custodians contain, from their first to their last. However the Lords of the Names and other names have three ranks. Some are connected to the degrees of the Lords of the Names, and some of them have a degree on their own, and some of them are connected to the degree of the Blessor and some of them to the degree of the Punisher. These are the names of the universe which are enumerated, and Allah is the Helper!

### **(The Greatest Name of Allah)**

Then all the names referred back to those Imams and the Imams referred back to the name of Allah and the name of Allah referred back to the Essence since it is independent of the names, and asked for assistance in what the Names had asked it for. So "The Good, the Generous" granted that and said, "Speak to the Imams connected to bringing the universe forth according to what their realities." The name Allah went out to them and told them the news and they became happy, joyful and delighted and they are still like that. They looked at the presence which is mentioned in Chapter Six and brought the universe into existence as we will mention in the following chapters, Allah willing. "*Allah speaks the truth and guides to the path.*" (33:4)

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## CHAPTER SIX

**Concerning the beginning of the spiritual creation.**

**Who was the first to exist in it? From what did it exist? In what did it exist?**

**In what manner did it exist? What was its goal?**

**Concerning the spheres of the Macrocosm and the Microcosm**

Look at this well-planned existence.

Our existence is like the designated cloak.

Look at His khalifs in their kingdom,

those who have the clear eloquent tongue (Arabic) and non-Arab tongues.

None of them loves his God without mixing it with love of the dirham.

It is said: This is the slave of gnosis

and this is the slave of the gardens and those are the slaves of Jahannam

Except for a few among a few who are intoxicated with Him

without the sensation of illusion.

They are the slaves of Allah whom none know but Him,

not the slaves of bliss.

He lets them profit from every obscure knowledge

when He wants them to return to their castles.

The knowledge of the antecedant is in the elements alone,

and its basis from it is not decreased.

The reality of the adverb is that which veils it from its likes,

and this likeness is not concealed

And the knowledge of the cause by which the source of

the worlds exists in the oldest species

And the end of the matter which has no end perceived for it

in it is the Mightiest Mighty One.

The knowledges of the spheres of existence, large and small,

are only for the one who does not find fault.

These are the knowledges of the one who has realised their unveiling,  
and it guides the hearts to the straightest path.

Praise belongs to Allah who has all its knowledges  
and knows what is not known.

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### **Brief Elucidation**

The beginning of creation was fine dust, and the first existent in it is the Muhammadan reality of the *Rahman*. It is not contained in any place since it is not contained. From what did the world come into existence? It came into existence from the known reality which is described by neither existence nor non-existence. In what did it exist? It existed in fine dust. In what manner did it exist? It existed on the form known in the self of the Real. Why did it exist? It existed in order to manifest divine realities. What was its goal? Its goal was to be purified of mixture, so that every world would recognise its portion from its origin without mixture. So the goal of the world is to manifest its realities [i.e. the realities of the Real or the realities of creation], and recognition of the spheres of the Macrocosm from the world. In the usage of the [Sufi] community, it is whatever is other than man. The Microcosm, i.e. man, is the spirit, cause and reason for the world. The spheres of the world are its stations, movements and the separation of its classes. This is a summary of all that the chapter contains.

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### **(Man is the Microcosm)**

As man is the Microcosm by way of the body, so he is also inconsiderable due to his being in-time. Resembling the divine is valid for him since he is the khalif of Allah in the world and the world is subject to him, a vassal of the divine as man is a vassal of the divine.

Know that the most perfect formation of man is in this world. In the Next world, each man is in one of two parties based on equity in the state, not in knowledge. Each party knows its opposite state. So man is either believer or unbeliever. It is either happiness or misery, bliss or punishment, blessed or punished. Thus the recognition of this world is more complete although the manifestation (*tajalli*) of the Next world is more sublime. So understand! Open this lock! In this station, we have a symbol for whoever is clever and it is an ugly and disgusting expression whose meaning is beautiful and unprecedented:

### **The spirit of the Macrocosm is this Microcosm**

The spirit of the great existence is this small existence.

If it had not been for that, He would not have said,  
"I am the great, the powerful.

"My in-timeness should not veil you nor my annihilation nor rising.  
"If you reflect on Me, I am the Encompassing, the Great,

"My existence belongs to the ancient, and the new has manifestation."  
Allah is Unique, Out-of-time. Deficiency does not touch Him.

Phenomenal being is a new creation which is captive in His hands.

From this it came that I am inconsiderable existence,  
And every existence revolves around my existence.

There is no night like my night and no light like my light.  
So if someone speaks of me as a slave, I am the poor slave.

Or if he says that I am existence, then I am Aware Existence.

Proclaim a kingdom for me and you will find me or the rabble,  
as long as you do not encroach.

O you ignorant of My power! Are you knowing, seeing?

My existence reports about me, although speech can be both truth and lie.

Say to my your people: I am the Compassionate, the Forgiving.

Say: My punishment is the destroying punishment.

Say: I am weak, incapable, a captive.  
So how can a person be blessed or destroyed by my hand?

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**The expansion and explanation of the chapter.  
From Allah comes support and help.  
(Four known things of existence)**



Know that known things are four: The Real, who is described with absolute existence because He is neither caused by anything nor the cause of anything. He is the Creator of causes and exists by His Essence from own His Essence. Knowledge of Him refers to knowledge of His existence, and His existence is not other than His essence. However, His Essence is not known, but the attributes ascribed to Him are known. This means the attributes of meanings, which are the attributes of perfection. Knowledge of the reality of the Essence is impossible since it is not known by either proof or logical demonstration and is untouched by definition. Allah is not like anything and nothing is like Him. So how can the one who is like things be like the One who resembles nothing and nothing resembles Him? Gnosis of Him is that "*there is nothing like Him*" (42:10) and "*Allah cautions you about Himself*".(3:27) The *Shari'a* includes the prohibition against reflection about the Essence of Allah.

### **(The reality of realities)**

The second known is the universal reality which belongs to the Real and to the universe, which is not described as existent or non-existent, in-time or out-of-time. It is out-of-time when the out-of-time is described by it, and in-time when the in-time is described by it. In-time and out-of-time known things are not known until this reality is known, but this reality does not exist until the things described by it exist. If something exists without prior non-existence, like the existence of the Real and His attributes, it is said that it is an out-of-time existent since Allah is described by it. If something exists from non-existence like the existence of what is other than Allah, which is in-time and exists by other than itself, it is said that it is in-time. It is in every existent according to its universal reality. It does not accept division, so "each" and "some" do not apply to it. One does not attain to its gnosis free of form by either proof or demonstration. The world exists from this reality by means of the Real. This reality does not exist in its essence, so Allah brings us into existence from an out-of-time existent. Thus out-of-timeness is established for us.

Similarly you should know that this universal reality is not described as being before the world nor is the world described as being after it. Rather, it is the root of existent things in general. It is the source of the substance (*jawhar*), the sphere of life, the truth by which creation takes places [See Qur'an 15:85] and other things. It is the intelligible Encompassing Sphere. If you said that it is the world, you would be speaking the truth. If you said that it is not the world, you would be speaking the truth. If you said that it is the Truth or not the Truth, you would be speaking the truth. It accepts all of this. It multiplies with the multiplicity of persons of the world and is disconnected with the disconnection of the Real.

If you want an example to make it easy for you to understand, look at the woodness in a piece of wood, the chair, the inkwell, the minbar and the box. Look as well at squareness and similar things in forms in every sort of square like the room, box, and piece of paper. Squareness and woodness are by their reality in each of these individual items [without multiplicity or being in part]. Look also at the colours: the whiteness of the garment, jewel, paper, flour, ointment, etc, without the intelligible whiteness in the garment being described as being part of the garment in itself. Rather it is the reality of whiteness which appeared in the garment as it appeared in the paper. It is like that with knowledge, power, will, hearing, sight and all things. This will make this universal known clear to you. We spoke at length on it in our book entitled, *Insha' al-Jadawil w ad-Dawa'ir*.

There is a third known, which is the entire world: angels and spheres and the worlds that they contain, the air and the earth and the world that is between them. It is the Greater Kingdom. Finally there is the fourth known which is man, the Khalif appointed by Allah in this world which is subject to him. Allah said, "*He has subjected to you whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, all together, from Him.*" (45:12)

Whoever knows these known things, has no other known which he seeks. Among these four knowns is that whose existence is only known - the Real, may He be exalted! His actions and attributes are known by making examples. Some of them are only known by the model (*mithal*) - like knowledge of the Universal Reality. Some of them are known by both aspects, and by whatness (*mahiyya*) and how-ness: the world and man.

## Section

### (The beginning of the world and its model: dust and the Muhammadan reality)

"Allah was and nothing was with Him." (al-Bukhari) Then he added to this *hadith*, "He is now as He was." No quality which He did not already have refers to Him from the fact that He brought the world into existence. He described Himself before His creation and was named with the Names by which His creation calls upon Him. When He wanted the world to exist and began it according to the limit He knew by His knowledge of Himself, it was effected from that pure will by a sort of prescencing (*tajalli*) from the manifestations of disconnection (*tanzih*) to the Universal Reality. A reality was effected from it called dust or nebula (*haba'*) which like the gypsum the builder casts down in which he can open whatever shapes and forms he wishes. This was the first existent in the universe which was mentioned by 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, Sahl ibn ÔAbdullah at-Tustari and others among the people of realization, the people of unveiling and existence.

Then Allah manifested Himself by His light to that dust. The philosophers call it the primal whole (*al-Hayula al-Kull*). It contains the entire universe by potentiality and by competence. So every thing accepted from Him in that dust according to its potential and predisposition, as the corners of the room accept the light of the lamp, and the intensity of its illumination and acceptance is according to its nearness to that light. Allah said, "*The likeness of His light is as a niche wherein is a lamp.*" (24:35) He makes His light like a lamp. So there was nothing nearer to accepting it in that dust except the reality of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, which is called the Intellect. So it was the master of the entire universe and the first thing to appear in existence. Its existence came from that Divine Light and from the dust and from the Universal Reality. His source existed in the dust. The source of the universe came from his prescencing (*tajalli*). The closest of people to him was ÔAli ibn Abi Talib, and the secrets of the Prophets.

As for the model (*mithal*) on which the entire universe existed without separation, it is the knowledge dependent on the Real. Allah knows us by His knowledge of Himself and brought us into existence according to what He taught us. We have this specific form in His knowledge. If the matter had not been

like that, this form would have come to us by accident, not intention, because He would not have known it. It is not possible that a form issue into existence by accident. If it had not been that this specific form is known by Allah and willed by Him, He would not have brought us into existence on it, and this form could not have been taken from any other since it is confirmed that Allah "was and nothing was with Him". So there only remain the forms He brings out in Himself. He knows it Himself. He knew us before time, not after non-existence. That is how His knowledge of us is. Our model, which is the same as His knowledge of us, is out-of-time with the out-of-timeness of Allah because it is an attribute of His, and in-timeness does not concern Him. He is too majestic for that!

### **(The goal of the universe)**

As for our statement, "Why was the universe brought into existence? What is its goal?" the answer is that Allah says, "*I only created men and jinn to worship Me.*" (51:56) He made a clear statement about the reason for which He brought us into existence. It is the same with the entire universe while Allah mentioned us and the jinn in particular. Here the jinn is every hidden thing, be it angel or something else. Allah said about the heavens and the earth, "*Come willingly or unwillingly! They said, 'We come willingly.'*" (41:11) He also said, "*But they refused to carry it.*" (33:72). That is because it was a offer. If it had been a command, they would have obeyed and carried it since it is inconceivable that they rebel. They were created for that [obedience], but the fiery jinn and men were not so endowed.

### **(All the universe is alive and articulate)**

Similarly there are philosophers among the people of investigation and proofs who are confined to the senses, necessities and proofs, who say that the obligated person must have intellect in respect of understanding what is said to him. They spoke the truth. The matter is like that with us since the entire universe is intelligent, living, and articulate. This is confirmed in respect of unveiling by the breaking of norms (miracles) which people have, i.e. our obtaining knowledge of this. However they say, "This is an unintelligible inanimate object." They stopped at what their eyes told them. According to us, the matter is different from that.

When it is reported from a Prophet that a stone spoke, or a sheep-shoulder or the trunk of a tree or a beast, they say that Allah created life and knowledge in it at that moment. [\[1\]](#) That is not what we consider the matter to be. It is the secret of life which flows through the entire universe and all "who hear the *mu'adhdhan*, moist or dry, will testify for him" [Ibn Majah, Nasa'i, Abu Dawud] and it only testifies from knowledge. This is confirmed by unveiling with us, not by the deduction of whoever looks into what the apparent information indicates and no more. Whoever wants to grasp it should travel the path of the Men and cling to retreat and *dhikr*. Then Allah will acquaint him with all of this directly. So he will know that people are blind to the perception of these realites.

### **(The existence of the universe is the manifestation of the Power of the Names)**

Allah brought the universe into existence in order to manifest the power of the Names. Power without

the object of power, generosity without gift, provider without provided for, helper without helped, merciful without object of mercy are realities devoid of effect. Allah made the universe in this world a mixture as He mixed the two handfuls in the clay. Then He separated individuals from it and made one handful enter into the other handful. Each handful is mixed with its brother, but the states are unknown. Scholars vary in excellence in extracting the foul from the good and the good from the foul. The goal is purification from this mixture and the distinguishing the two handfuls until this one is alone with its world and that one is alone with its world. It is as Allah said, "*until He shall distinguish the corrupt from the good. He will put some of the corrupt on others, and so He will pile it up altogether and put it in Jahannam.*" (8:37)

Whoever has some of that mixture remaining in him when he dies is not gathered on the Day of Rising among the trusty. [See Qur'an 15:46; 34:37; 41:40; 44:55, but esp. 27:89.] However, some people are freed of this mixture in the Reckoning, and some are only freed in *Jahannam*. When he is purified, he comes out. They are the people of intercession. As for the one who is distinguished into one of the two handfuls here, he moves by a reality to the Next World from his grave to bliss, or to punishment and *Jahim*. He is already purified.

This is the clarification of the goal of the world. These two handfuls are two realities which refer back to an attribute which the Real has in His Essence (like the two feet). From here we say that the people of the Fire see Him as Punishing and the people of the Garden see Him as Blessing. This is a noble secret. Perhaps you will grasp it in the Next Abode by witnessing, Allah willing. Those of realisation obtain it in this world.

### **(The celestial and terrestrial knowledges and their likes in man)**

As for what we said in this chapter concerning the spheres of the Macrocosm and the Microcosm which is man, by it I mean the worlds of its totalities and genera. Its amirs are those who have effect on others. I have made the spheres of the Macrocosm and the Microcosm reciprocal. This one is a copy of that one. We gave them orbits in the forms of the spheres and their order in the book, *Insha' ad-Dawa'ir wa'l-Jawadil* which we began to write in Tunis in the house of Imam Abu Muhammad ÔAbdu'l-'Aziz (al-Mahdawi al-Qurashi) [2], our friend and guardian, may Allah have mercy on him! In this chapter we have put a summary of what is connected to it.

We say that the worlds are four: the celestial world, which is the world of going-on; then the world of change, which is the world of annihilation; then the world of habitation which is the world of going-on and annihilation; and then there is the world of ascriptions. These worlds are in two places: in the Macrocosm, which is what is outside of man, and in the Microcosm, which is man.

The highest world is the Muhammadan Reality. Its sphere is life. It has an equivalent in man in the *latifa* and the Pure *Ruh*. It includes the Encompassing Throne whose equivalent in man is the body. There is also the Footstool, whose equivalent in man is the self. There is also the Inhabited House whose equivalent in man is the heart. There are also the angels whose equivalent in man are the spirits and

capacities in him. There is also Saturn and its sphere, whose equivalent in man is the faculty of knowledge and the breath. There is Jupiter and its sphere whose equivalent in man is the faculty of memory and rear part of the brain. There is also Mars and its sphere whose equivalent in man is the faculty of intellect and the crown of the head. There is the Sun and its sphere whose equivalent is the faculty of reflection and the middle of the brain. There is Venus and its sphere whose equivalent in man is the faculty of illusory imagination (imagination) and the animal spirit. There is Mercury and its sphere and its equivalent in man is the faculty of the imagination (*khayal*) and the front of the brain. Then there is the moon and its sphere whose equivalent is the sensory faculty and the limbs which have sensation. These are the classes of the upper world and their equivalents in man.

The world of change includes the orb of the ether whose spirit is hot and dry. It is the orb of fire and its equivalent in man is yellow bile whose spirit is the power of digestion. It includes the air whose spirit is hot and wet and is equivalent to the blood. Its spirit is the faculty of attraction. It includes water whose spirit is cold and wet and whose equivalent is phlegm. Its spirit is the faculty of expulsion. It includes earth whose spirit is cold and dry and whose equivalent is black bile. Its spirit is the faculty of retention.

There are seven classes of the earth: black earth, dusty earth, red earth, yellow earth, white earth, blue earth and green earth. The equivalents of these seven in man's body are: skin, fat, flesh, veins, nerves, muscles and bones.

The world of inhabitation includes the *Ruhaniyyun* whose equivalents are the faculties in man. It includes the world of animal whose equivalent is what is sensed in man. It includes the world of plants whose equivalent is whatever grows in man. It also includes the world of inanimates whose equivalent is what is not sensed in man.

The world of ascriptions includes the non-essential (*aÔrad*) whose equivalent is black and white, colours and beings (*akwan*). Then there is "how" whose equivalent is states like healthy and ill. Then there is "How many" whose equivalent is "the thigh is longer than the forearm". Then there is "where" whose equivalent is the neck as a place for the head and the lerg as a place for the thigh. Then there is "time" whose equivalent is "I move my head at the moment when my hand moves." Then there is the relative (*idafa*) whose equivalent is, "This is my father, so I am his son." There is place whose equivalent is "my language and my dialect." There is the active verb whose equivalent is "I ate". There is the passive verb whose equivalent is "I became full." Some of them have different forms in the matrices [the other three] like elephants, donkeys, lions and cockroaches. The equivalent of this is the human capacity which accepts forms of meanings which are both blameworthy and praiseworthy. "This one is clever so he is an elephant. That one is stupid so he is a donkey. This one is brave so he is a lion. This one is a coward so he is cockroach."

*"Allah speaks the truth and guides to the path." (33:4)*

1. Referring to specific *hadiths* from the Prophet.

2. A disciple of Abu Madyan who died in 621 AH.

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

### **The Beginning of Human Bodies (The last thing to come into existence in the Macrocosm and the last class of products)**

The reality of the inward of man grew  
into a strong kingdom with manifest power.

Then his essence sat on the throne of Adam  
as the Throne was sat on by the Merciful.

The reality of his body appeared in its source-form,  
and the kingdom of the second existence is completed by it.

The gnoses of his knowledge appeared in his articulation  
among the noble and the hateful.

So their dreams became paltry because of his knowledges,  
and the accursed shaytan became proud.

They sought nearness to Allah in His *Malakut*,  
but a little shaytan brought loss to them.

#### **(Making the natural world inhabited)**

Know –may Allah support you! – that the time of the habitation of the natural world which is limited by time and contained in place is 71,000 of the years known in this world. This length of time is 11 days of days of other names, and one and two-fifths days of the days of the Possessor of Ascents. There are different sorts of days. Allah says, "*In a day whose measure was 50,000 years*" (4:70) and "*a day with your Lord is like 1000 years of your counting.*" (22:47) The smallest of the days is that which is measured by the movement of the encompassing sphere which appears in our day of 24 hours. The smallest of the days with the Arabs, which is this, belongs to the largest sphere. That is due to its influence on the spheres inside of it since the movement of what is below it in night and day its surface movement which forces the rest of the spheres which it encompasses.

#### **(The natural and surface movement of the spheres)**

Every sphere has a natural movement which it has along with the surface movement. Every sphere below it has two movements in the same movement: a natural movement and a surface movement.

Every natural movement in every sphere has a particular day whose measure is counted by the days occurring from the Encompassing Sphere which is designated in His words, "*of your counting*". All of them intersect the Encompassing Sphere. Whenever it intersects it completely, its day belongs to it and the orbit revolves. So the smallest of its days is 28 days "of your counting". It is the measure of the intersection of the moon's movement in the Encompassing Sphere.

Allah set up these seven planets in the heavens so that human sight might perceive the intersection of their spheres in the Encompassing Sphere "*in order to know the number of years and the reckoning.*" (10:5) "*He determined it by stations so that you might know the number of years and the reckoning.*" "We shall distinguish everything." (17:11) "*That is the determination of the Mighty, the Knowing.*" (6:96) Every planet has a determined day by which they are distinguished from each other according to the speed of their natural movements or the smallness or largeness of their spheres.

### **(The Creation of the Pen and the Tablet)**

Know that Allah then created the Pen and the Tablet and called them the Intellect and the Spirit (*Ruh*). He gave the *Ruh* two attributes: an attribute of knowledge and an attribute of action. He made the Intellect teach it and inform it with use of immediate witnessing, as it derives cutting from the form of the knife without it saying anything about that. Allah created a substance (*jawhar*) without a self which is the aforementioned Spirit which He called dust. This is the naming which has come down to us from 'Ali ibn Abi Talib.

### **(Creation of dust (*haba'*))**

Dust is mentioned in the Arabic language. Allah said, "*it was scattered dust*". (56:6) It was like that when 'Ali ibn Abi Talib saw it, meaning that this substance is scattered in all natural forms, and there is no form free of it since the form only exists in this substance called dust. It is with every form by its reality. It is not divisible nor separated nor described with decrease. It is like the whiteness existing in every white thing by its essence and reality. It is not said that there is a decrease of whiteness according to what this white thing receives of whiteness. This resembles the state of this substance.

### **(The Four ranks between the Spirit and Dust)**

Allah apportioned four ranks between this Spirit described with the two attributes and the dust. He made each rank a stage for four angels. He appointed these angels as guardians over what He originated of the world below them, from the '*Illiyun*' to the "*lowest of the low*". He gave each of those angels a knowledge which he wants to carry out in the world.

The first thing that Allah brought into existence in source-forms which is connected to the knowledge and management of these angels is the Universal Body. The first shape which Allah opened in this body is the global spherical form since it is the best of forms. Then Allah descended by bringing-into-existence and creation to the completion of the manufacture, and made all that He created the domain of



these angels. He entrusted them with its affairs in this world and the Next World and safeguarded them from opposing what He commanded them to do. He told us that they *"do not disobey Allah in what He commands them and they do what they are commanded."* (66:6)

### **(The creation of products (*muwalladat*))**

Then He finished the creation of the products of inanimates, plants and animals at the end of 71,000 years of the years of this world which you count and ordered the world in a wise ordering. From the very first existent to the last product, which is animal, He did not use both His hands in the creation of anything except man. Man is this bodily organism of dust. Everything except for that He created from a Divine command or by one hand. Allah said, *"Our word to a thing when We will it is that We say to it, 'Be!' and it is."* (16:40) This is from a Divine command. It is reported in tradition that Allah created the Garden of Eden with His hand, wrote the Torah with His hand, planted the tree of *Tuba* [in Paradise] with His hand and created Adam, who is man, with both His hands. In order to show honour to Adam, Allah said to Iblis, *"What prevented you from prostrating to what I created with My hands?"* (38:75)

### **(The Lowest Sphere and the Twelve Constellations (*al-Buruj*: the Zodiac))**

When Allah created the lowest sphere, which is the first one mentioned above, He divided it into twelve parts called "mansions (constellations)". Allah said, *"and the heaven with constellations"*. (85:1) Each division has a constellation and those divisions have four natures. He repeated each of the four natures in three places. He made these divisions like the stages and watering-spots where the travellers alight and in which the voyagers travel while they are travelling and journeying so these stages are arrived at in the journey of the planets through them. What Allah originated in this sphere of the planets whose course passes through these constellations was in order that Allah, through their intersection and journey, Allah might originate what He wishes of the natural and elemental world. He made them waymarks of the effect of the movement of the sphere of constellations, so know that!

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### **(Natures and the four elements)**

The nature of one division of these four is hot and dry; the second is cold and dry; the third is hot and wet; and the fourth is cold and wet. He made the fifth and ninth divisions like the first, the sixth and tenth like the second, the seventh and eleventh like the third, and the eighth and twelfth like the fourth in nature. So Allah contained natural bodies by difference, and elemental bodies without difference, in these four which are: hot, cold, dry and wet. Even though they are four matrices, Allah made two of them the basis for the existence of the other two. Heat produces dryness and cold produces wetness. So wetness and dryness exist from the two causes of heat and cold. This was mentioned by Allah when He said, *"There is no fresh (wet) or withered (dry), but it is in a Clear Book"* (6:59) because the caused, inasmuch as it is caused, must have the existence of a cause, or if it is an effect, then it must have a cause, however you want to put it. The existence of a cause does not necessitate the existence of

something caused.

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### **(The Starless Heaven (*al-Falak al-Atlas*))**

When Allah created this first sphere, it revolved with an orbit whose end is only known by Allah because there were no limited bodies above it to intersect it. It was the first of diaphanous bodies. Movements were numbered and made distinct. Allah did not create anything inside of it. Then movements became distinct and ended at the one who is inside of it. If it has not been so, the movements in it would not have been distinct at all because there is no planet in the Starless Sphere, and it resembles itself. So the measure of one movement in it is neither known nor determined. If there had been part of it in it different from the rest of the parts, then without a doubt its movements would have been numbered by it. But Allah knew its measure and its end and its repetition. The day occurred from that movement. There was neither night nor day in that 'day'.

Then the motions of this sphere continued and Allah created 35 angels in addition to the 16 angels we mentioned. So the sum was 411 angels. These angels included Jibril, Mikajil, Israfil and 'Azra'il. Then He created 974 angels and added them to the angels already mentioned. He revealed to them and commanded them regarding that they had in His creation. They said, "*We do not come down, save at the command of your Lord. To Him belongs all that is before us and all that is behind us, and all between that. And your Lord is never forgetful.*" (19:64) Allah said of them, "*They do not disobey Allah in what He commands them.*" (66:6) These are among the angels who are the guardians in particular. Allah created the angels who are the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth to worship Him. There is no place in the heaven or the earth that does not have an angel in it. Allah continues to create angels from the breaths of the world as long as they continue to breathe.

### **(Creation of the Nearest Abode)**

When the movements of this sphere, whose duration is 54,000 years of your counting, was complete, Allah created this world and appointed for it a known term at which it will end and its form will come to an end. It will be changed from being an abode for us and accepting a particular form, which is what we see today, to "the earth changing to other than the earth, and the heavens as well." When 63,000 years of your counting were complete of the movements of this sphere, Allah created the Next World: the Garden and the Fire which Allah has prepared for His slaves, both the happy and the wretched. There were 9000 years of your counting between the creation of this world and the creation of the Next World. That is why it is called the "*the Next*", since its creation was delayed until after the creation of this world which is called the first" because it was created before it. Allah said, "*The Next will be better for you than the first.*" (97:4) He addressed His Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and did not give the Next World a term at which it will cease to be. It has constant going-on.

### **(The ceiling of the Garden is the Starless Heaven)**

Allah made this sphere the ceiling of the Garden. We call it the Throne whose movement is not specific nor distinct. It has a continuous, unending movement. None of creation which we mentioned was created without the second goal of it attaching itself to the existence of man who is the Viceregent in the world. I said "the second goal" since the first goal of creation is to recognise Allah and worship Him since it was this for which the entire universe was created. There is nothing but that it glorifies His praise. The meaning of the second goal and the first is the connection of the will, not the in-timeness of the will, because the will of Allah is an out-of-time pre-temporal attribute by which His essence is described as is the case with all of His attributes.

### **(The movement of the heavens and the movement of the earth)**

Then Allah created these spheres and heavens, and inspired every heaven with its command and ordered their lights and lamps in them and filled them with angels and caused them to move. So they moved out of obedience to Allah, coming to Him, seeking perfection in the slaveness proper to them, because Allah summoned the heaven and the earth and said to them, "*Come willingly or unwillingly*" by a command defined for them. They said, "*We come willingly.*" So they are constantly coming and continue to move, even though the movement of the earth is hidden from us. It moves around the centre because it turns. As for the heaven, it came willingly when Allah commanded it to come. The earth came willingly when it knew itself to be compelled and that Allah must bring it when He said "or unwillingly". That is what was meant when He said "or unwillingly". It came willingly unwillingly! "*He established them as seven heavens in two days, and He inspired each heaven with its command.*" (41:12)

### **(The creation of the earth and the determination of its foods)**

Allah created the earth and determined its foods in it in respect of its products. He meant it a treasury for their foods. We already mentioned the organisation of the formation of the world in the book, *al-'Aql al-Mustawfir*. Part of the determination of its foods is the existence of water, air and fire, as well as what it contains of vapours, clouds, lightning, thunder, and celestial effects. "*That is the determination of the Mighty, the Knowing.*" (6:96) He created the jinn from fire and the birds, reptiles of land and sea, and insects from the decay of the earth so that the air would be pure for us, free of the vapours of decay which, if mixed with the air in which Allah entrusted life and well-being for man and animals, would have made him sick, weak and ailing. So Allah purified the atmosphere for him as a kindness on His part when He formed these creatures from decayed things. So there were few illnesses and diseases.

### **(The creation of man)**

And then the Kingdom was settled and prepared and none of these creatures knew from what sort this Viceregent would be for whose existence Allah had prepared this kingdom. When the specified time in His knowledge came to bring this Viceregent into existence 17,000 years after this world had been populated and 8000 years after the Next world, which has no end, was populated, Allah commanded some of the angels to bring Him a handful of every kind of dust of the earth. There is a long tradition

about the angels bringing this to him which is well-known among people. Allah took it and kneaded it with His hands. This is His words, *"what I created with My hands."* (38:75)

Allah entrusted each of the angels which we have mentioned with a trust for Adam. He said, *"I am creating a man from clay"*.(38:71). These trusts which you have belong to him. When I have created him, each of you give him what you have which I have entrusted you with for him. *'When I have fashioned him and breathed My spirit into him, then prostrate yourselves to him.'* (15:29)" Then Allah kneaded the clay of Adam with His hands until he altered its smell which had been fetid mud. That is the part which is air in the structure. He made its outward part the place for the wretched and the happy of his progeny. He entrusted in in what was in His hands. Allah tells us that the happy are in His right hand and the wretched are in His left hand. "Both hands of My Lord are blessed right hands." He said, "Those are for the Garden and do the deeds of the people of the Garden. Those are for the Fire and do the deeds of the people of the Fire."

He entrusted the whole in the clay of Adam and joined the opposites in him by the principle of proximity. He formed him on the straight movement, and that is in the domain of Virgo. He made the six directions for him: above, which is beyond his head, below opposite it, which is below his feet, right, which follows his strong side, and left opposite it, which follows his weak side, in front, which is before his face, and behind opposite it, which is behind his neck. He formed, balanced and shaped him. Then He breathed into Him of His spirit which is related to Him. When He breathed into it, the four humours were originated as it spread into all his parts. They are: yellow bile, black bile, blood and phlegm.

Yellow bile is from the element of fire from which Allah formed him when He said, *"from a clay like the potters."* (55:14) Black bile is from earth which is His words, *"He created him from earth."* (15:26). Blood is from air, and it is His word, *"fetid mud"*. Phlegm is from water with which earth is kneaded and becomes mud. Then Allah originated in the power of attraction by which the animal attracts food, then the power of grasping by which the animal holds what will nourish it, then the power of digestion by which food is digested, and then the expelling power by which he expels excretions from himself - sweat, vapour, wind, excrement, etc.

As for the spread of the vapours and the division of the blood in the veins from the liver and every part of the animal, that is by the power of attraction, not by the power of expelling. The portion of the power of expelling is only what it expels, as we said, of excreta. Then Allah originated in it the powers of feeding, growing, senses, imagination, illusion, retention and memory. All this is in man inasmuch as he is an animal, not inasmuch as he is man except for these four powers: the powers of imagination, illusion, retention and memory. They are stronger in man than animal.

Then He bestowed on man the faculty of conception, thought and intellect, and so he is distinct from the animal. He put all these powers in the body as tools for the Articulate Self to reach all the benefits of the senses and meanings. *"Then He formed it with another creation"* (23:14) which is humanity. He made him perceptive by these powers, and he is living, knowing, capable, willing, speaking, hearing, and seeing according to a known limit in his acquisition. *"Blessed is Allah, the Best of Creators."* (23:14)

Then Allah did not name Himself with any of the names without putting some of the character of that name into man as a portion from Him which is manifest in the world according to what is proper to him. For that reason, some people interpret the words of the Prophet, "Allah created man in His form" to have this meaning. He sent him down as a Viceregent for Him in His earth since the earth is part of the world of change and alteration, as opposed to the Higher World. Judgements occurred among the inhabitants of the earthly world according to the change which occurs in the celestial world. Thus the principle of all the divine names appeared. Thus Adam is the Viceregent in the earth rather than heaven and the Garden. There whatever He commanded was: the knowledge of the Names, the prostration of the angels, and the refusal of Iblis as will be all mentioned in its proper place, Allah willing.

### **(Human bodies and types)**

This chapter is devoted to the beginning of human bodies. They are of four types: the body of Adam, the body of Eve, the body of Jesus and the bodies of the children of Adam. Each of these bodies has a formation different from the formation of the other bodies in causality, in spite of the common physical and spiritual form. We said this, and spoke on it in order that the weak intellect might not imagine that divine power or realities do not great that this human organism be from only one cause whose essence grants this formation. Allah refutes this doubt as this human formation appeared in Adam in a way in which it did not appear in the body of Eve; the body of Eve appeared by a means by which the body of Adam did not appear; and the body of the children of Adam appeared by a means by which the body of Jesus did not appear. Each of these are called men by definition and reality. That is so that it be known that Allah has knowledge of everything and that He has the power to do anything.

Then Allah joined together these four types of creation in an *ayat* of the Qur'an in the *Surat al-Hujurat*. (49:13) He said, "*O People, We have created you*" meaning Adam "*from male*" meaning Hawwa' "*and from female*" meaning Jesus, and joined "*from male and female*" meaning by means of marriage and birth. This *ayat* is part of "all the words" and "distinction of speech" which was given to Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.

### **(The body of Adam and the body of Eve (Hawwa'))**

Then the body of Adam appeared as we mentioned, and he had no appetite for marriage. Allah already knew to bring birth, procreation and marriage into existence in this abode. Marriage in this abode is for the continuation of the species. Then He brought out Eve from the smallest rib of Adam. For that reason, woman has a lesser degree than man as Allah said, "*men have a degree over them*". (2:228) So women never overtake them. Eve had the bentness which is in the ribs so that by that she might incline to her child and husband. The man's inclination (=tenderness) for the woman is his inclination for himself since she is a part of him. The woman inclines to the man since she was created from the rib, and the rib has curvature and inclination.

### **(...the love of Adam and the love of Eve)**

Allah filled the place in Adam from which Eve emerged with appetite for her since there was not be a void in existence. When He filled him with passion, Adam yearned for her as he yearns for himself because she is a part of him. She yearned for him because he is her home in which she was formed. Eve's love is love of the homeland, and Adam's love is love of himself. For that reason, man's love for woman appeared since she is the same as him, and woman was given the faculty designated as modesty in love for men. She is capable of secrecy because the homeland is not joined to her as Adam is joined to her.

Allah fashioned in that rib all that He fashioned and created in the body of Adam. The formation of Adam's body in his form was like what the potter fashions from clay and baking. The formation of the body of Eve was like what the carpenter carves of forms in wood. When he carved her in the rib and set up her form, shaped and balanced it, he breathed into her of His spirit. She stood up as a living, speaking female in order to make her a place for procreation. He feels at home with her and she feels at home with him. She is a "garment for him and he is a garment for her." Allah says, *"They are a garment for you and you are a garment for them."* (2:187) Appetite diffused through all his parts and he sought her.

### **(The formation of the third type of body)**

Then Adam covered her and cast water into her womb and by that drop of water, the blood of menstruation flowed which Allah had written for women, and in that body was formed a third body different than how the body of Adam and body of Eve had been formed. This is the third body. Allah took charge of the formation in the womb state by state by the change from water to sperm to a bloodclot to a lump of flesh to bone. Then Allah clothed the bones in flesh. When the animal growth was complete, He formed another creature and so breathed the human spirit into it. *"Blessed is Allah, the best of creators."* (23:14)

Were it not that it would take too long, we would have explained man's formation in the womb state by state, and the guardian angels who are in charge of forming the embryo in the womb until it emerges. But we want to talk about human bodies. Although they are same in definition, reality, sensory and significative form, the reasons for their composition are different lest one imagine that that belongs to the essence of the cause. Exalted is Allah! That refers to the chosen Actor who does what He wishes when He wishes without interdiction or inability in one matter rather than another. *"There is no Allah except Him, the Mighty, the Wise."* (3:18)

### **(The formation of the body of Jesus)**

Then the naturalists say that the water of woman does not have anything formed from it - even the embryo which is in the womb is from the man's water. Therefore we made the formation of the body of Jesus another formation, even though its regulation in the womb was the same as the regulation of the bodies of sons. The formation of the body of Jesus was from the water of the woman since the Spirit appeared to her as a man without fault, or it was from the breath without water. In any case, the body of Jesus is a fourth body with a different type of formation than the other bodies. Therefore Allah said,

"Truly, the likeness of Jesus" (2:56) i.e. the formation of Jesus, "*with Allah is as Adam's likeness. He created him from dust.*" The pronoun refers to Adam. The likeness refers to his creation without a father, i.e. the quality of his formation is like that of Adam, even though He created Adam from dust. Then Allah said to him, "Be!"

Then Jesus, as was said, did not remain in Mary's womb the length of time that children customarily remain because he formed quicker because Allah wanted to make him a sign for people and use him to refute the naturalists when they judge nature according to what custom accord, not by the secrets and wondrous formations which Allah entrusted in it. Some of the intelligent people establish this matter as nature and said, "We only know of it what You have given us, and it contains things which we do not know."

### **(Man on the earth is like the intellect in the heaven)**

This is why we mentioned the beginning of human bodies and the fact that there are four bodies formed differently as we confirmed and that man is the last of the products. Thus he is like the intellect and is connected to it because existence is a circle. The beginning of the circle is the existence of the First Intellect which has been reported in tradition: "The first thing that Allah created was the Intellect." It is the first of the genera. Creation ends in the human species and so the circle is complete and man is joined to the intellect, as the end of the circle is joined to its beginning. So it is a circle. Between the two ends of the circle is all the genera which Allah created in the world, between the First Intellect, which is the Pen, and man, who is the last existent.

Then lines emerge from the dot which is in the centre of the circle to the circumference which exists from it, and come out equally to each part of the circumference. It is the same with Allah's relationship to all existent things. It is the same relationship. Change does not occur at all. All things look at Him and receive from Him what He gives them as the parts of the circumference look at the dot.

Allah set up this human form by the straight movement as the form of the stick is to the tent. He made him the support of the dome of these heavens. Allah keeps them from descending because of him. So we consider man to be the tent-stick/support. When this human form is annihilated, and none of them remains breathing on the face of the earth, and the heaven is split, on that day it will fall because the support which is man has vanished.

Then habitation will move to the Next Abode since man has moved there. This world will become a ruin because he has left it. So we know absolutely that man is the source meant by Allah for the world and he is truly the Viceregent and he is the site of the manifestation of the Divine names. He brings together all the realities of the world - angel, sphere, spirit, body, nature, inanimate, and animal. This is in respect of what he alone is given of the knowledge of the Divine Names, in spite of the smallness of his size and mass. Allah said of him, "*Certainly the creation of the heavens and the earth is greater than the creation of men*" [40:57] because man was produced from the heaven and the earth, so they are like his parents. Allah elevated their value because of him, "*but most men know it not*". (7:187) He did not mean

greatness in size, for that is known by the senses.

### **(The Testing of the the Greatest Man (*al-Insan al-Akbar*))**

However, Allah tested man with a test which He did not use on any of His creation, either because He will make him happy or because He will make him wretched according to what He lets him use. The trial by which He tested him is that He created in him a capacity called thought (*fikr*) and made this capacity serve another faculty called intellect. He made the intellect, even though it is the master of thought, take what thought gives it. He did not give thought any scope except in the faculty of imagination. He made the faculty of imagination a place for gathering what the sensory faculties give it. He also gave it a faculty called conceptualization. So in the faculty of imagination, nothing is acquired except what the senses give it or what the conceptual faculty gives it. The substance of conceptualization comes from sensory things. It puts together forms which did not have a source, even though all its parts existed in the senses.

That is because the intellect was created guileless without any of speculative knowledges. Thought was told, "Distinguish between the true and the false which is in this imaginative faculty. Thought investigates according to what it has. He may obtain doubt and it may obtain proof without it knowing that even though it claims that it knows the forms of doubts from the proofs. It obtains knowledge while it has not regarded the shortcoming of the substance on which it relies in the acquisition of knowledges. The intellect accepts from it and judges by it. So its ignorance can be much greater than its knowledge!

Then Allah commanded this intellect to recognise Him so that it might refer to Him in it, not to something else. The intellect understood the opposite of what the Truly Real wanted from it when He said, "*Have they not considered?*" (7:184, etc.) "*To a people who reflect.*" (10:24 etc.) It relied on thought and made it an Imam to be followed and neglected what Allah had meant when He mentioned reflection. He told it to reflect so that it would see that there is no way to know Allah except by being given gnosis of Allah. Therefore the matter would be unveiled to it for what it really is. Not every intellect has this understanding - it is only the intellects selected by Allah from His Prophets and saints.

Would that I knew if they had said, "*Yes indeed*" with their thoughts when Allah made them testify against themselves [to the lordship of Allah before their creation] in the handful of the progeny of the descendants of Adam! His making them testify to that when He took them from their loins is from solicitude. However, when they reverted to taking from their reflective capacities in gnosis of Allah, they did not agree at all on even a single judgement in gnosis of Allah. Each group formed a school, and the statements about the protected divine presence multiplied. These thinkers were as bold as possible towards Allah. All of this is part of the test which we mentioned when Allah created thought in man.

The people of Allah are in need of Him in the belief in Him which He was obliged of them in His gnosis. They know that what is desired of them is that they refer to Him in that, and in every state. Some of them said, "Glory be to One who made no way to recognise Him except the inability to recognise Him!" Some said, "The inability to reach perception is perception." The Prophet, may Allah bless him



and grant him peace, said, "I cannot enumerate Your praise!" Allah said, "*They do not encompass Him in knowledge.*" (20:110) They refer to Allah in recognition of Him and abandon thought about His rank and fulfil His due. They do not put Him in what should not be thought of Him. It has been reported that it is forbidden to reflect on the Essence of Allah. Allah says, "*Allah warns you that you should beware of Him.*" (3:28,30) Allah gave them the gnosis of Himself that He gave them and made them witness of His creatures and manifestations what He made them witness. So they knew that what is logically impossible by means of thought, is not impossible by divine relation. Some of that will be found in the next chapter on "The Earth created from what was left of the clay of Adam" and elsewhere.

That which the man of intellect is that he is indebted to Allah in himself got knowing that Allah has the power to do anything, possible or impossible - and not everything is impossible. He has effective power and vast of gifts. There is no repetition of His bringing into existence - rather similar things occur in a substance which He brought into existence and wishes to continue. If he had so willed, it would have been annihilated with the breaths. "*There is no Allah but Him, the Mighty, the Wise.*" (3:18)

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## CHAPTER NINE

### The Existence of Spirits Created from Smokeless Fire (jinn)

He mixed fire and plants, so the form of the jinn was set up  
as an interspace between two things

It is between a bodily spirit with a place in depth  
and a spirit without "where".

That which accepts embodiment seeks for food for  
nourishment without falsehood,

And that which accepts the angels, accepts the heart in  
taking shape in the source.

For this reason, it obeys one moment and rebels the next.  
He will repay those of them who disobey with two fires.

### (Creation of the Jinn, angels and man)

Allah says, "*He created jinn from a fusion of smokeless fire.*" (55:14) It is reported in sound *hadith* [saying of the Prophet], "Allah created the angels from light and Allah created the jinn from fire and He created man from what you were told." As for what the Prophet said about the creation of man "from what you were told", he was concise and did not specify it as he did in the case of the creation of the angels and the jinn. The Prophet "was given all the words". This is part of them. The basic creation of angels and jinn did not vary. The creation of man is varied as there are four categories of man's creation. The creation of Adam does not resemble the creation of Eve. The creation of Eve does not resemble the creation of the rest of the children of Adam. The creation of Jesus does not resemble the creation of the others. Here the Messenger of Allah was concise. He has transmitted to us the details of the creation of man. Adam was created from clay, Eve from a rib, 'Isa is from the blowing of a spirit, and the children of Adam from "a contemptible water". (77:20)

### (The conceptual cohesion of heaven and earth)

When Allah set up the four basic elements and smoke rose to the bottom of the Sphere of Fixed Stars, the seven heavens unwound themselves in that smoke, each separate from each other. He "*revealed, in every heaven, its ordinance*" after "*He established in it its nourishment*" and all that was "in four days". Then he said "*to the heavens and the earth: Come willingly or unwillingly.*" (41:9-11) i.e. they answer when they are called to produce what He wants them to produce. They said, "we come willingly."

Then Allah established a conceptual cohesion between heaven and earth and a direction by which He desires to bring into existence products in this earth in the form of minerals, plants and animals. He made the earth like the wife and the heaven like the husband. The heaven casts to earth the command of Allah in it as a man casts water into a woman in intercourse. In that casting, the earth brings forth the types of formations which Allah has hidden in its.

### **(The four elements and the formation of man and jinn)**

When air is ignited and heated, it burns like the lamp. The burning of that fire is the flame which is the burning of the air and this is smokeless (*marj*, jumbled) because it is mixed with the air and is the burning air. *Marj* is mixture and from this the smokeless is *marj* since the plants are mixed in it.

The jinn are composed of the two elements of fire and air, as man is composed of the two elements of water and earth kneaded together which produced the name mud. Similarly the mixture of air and fire has the name 'smokeless fire'. Allah created the form of jinn in that smokeless fire. Because of the air which is in the jinn, they can assume whatever form they wish. Because of the fire which is in them, they are insubstantial and very subtle, and they seek dominance, pride and might since fire has the highest position of the elements and it has great power to change things as nature demands. That is reason why he [the jinn Iblis] was too proud to prostrate to Adam when Allah commanded him to do so, because of his own estimation of himself. He said, "*I am better than Him*" (7:12), i.e. meaning according to the basis by which Allah preferred fire among the four elements.

The jinn did not know that the power of water from which Adam was created was stronger than fire for it extinguishes it and earth is firmer than fire by cold and dryness. Adam has strength and constancy by the dominance of the two elements from which Allah derived him. Even though he also possesses the rest of the elements - air and fire, they do not have the authority in him. The jinn also have the rest of the elements...

Adam was given humility on account of the clayness of his nature. When he is proud, that is incidental (and not intrinsic to his nature). He accepts that because of the element of fire in him as his imagination and states accept different forms because of the element of air in him. The jinn are given pride by the nature of fire in them. If they are humble, that is something incidental which they accept because of the element of earth in them. They also accept fixation in enticement if they are devils and fixation in acts of obedience if they are not devils.

### **(The jinn when *Surat ar-Rahman* (Chapter 55 of the Qur'an) was recited**

When the Prophet recited *Surat ar-Rahman* to his Companions, he said, "I was reciting it for the jinn. They listened to it better than you. When I said, '*So which of your Lord's blessings will you deny?*' they stated, 'We do not deny any of the blessings of our Lord'. They affirmed them and did not quake when they were told, "*So which of your Lord's blessings will you deny?*" in his recitation. That is by is in the nature of the jinn of earth and of water which remove the fieriness of fire. Some of them are obedient to

Allah and some are rebellious, like us; but they can take on forms as can the angels.

### **(Their basic form is spiritual)**

Allah has made them invisible to us so we do not see them except when Allah wishes to lift the veil for certain individuals who then see them. Since the jinn are insubstantial and subtle, they can take form in whatever sensory form they wish. Their basic form is the spiritual one which was the first form the first jinn accepted when Allah brought him into existence. Then he took on various forms according to what Allah willed. If Allah had opened our eyes so that we could see what the forms conceived by the conceptual faculty through the imagination (*khayal*), then at different times you would have seen man in various forms which are unlike one another.

### **(Procreation in jinn and men)**

Then Allah breathed the spirit into the flame which was full of turbulence because of its insubstantiality. The blowing increased the turbulence and air dominated it and it did not remain in the same condition. The world of the jinn appeared in that form. As intercourse occurred in mankind by the casting of water in the womb and progeny and birth occurs in this mortal Adamic species, so procreation occurs in the jinn by casting air into the womb of their female, and progeny and birth occurs in the jinn. They exist by Sagittarius and it is fiery. That was mentioned by the one who arrived - may Allah preserve him!

### **(The years between the creation of jinn and men)**

There were 60,000 years between the creation of Jann (the first jinn) and the creation of Adam. This is necessary according to the claim of some people that birth will cease among the jinn after 4000 years and that birth will end with man after 7000 years. However, things do not occur on that basis. Things will occur according to what Allah wills. The jinn still procreate and we still procreate. So when did man begin, how many years of progeny does he have left and how much time remains until the end of this world and the annihilation of mankind on the face of the earth and their transfer to the Next World? This is not the stance taken by those who are firmly rooted in knowledge. It is stated by a small group of people and will not be repeated.

### **(The Jinn are an interspace between angels and men)**

The angels are spirits breathed into lights. The jinn are spirits breathed into winds. Men are spirits breathed into shapes. It is said that a female was not separated from the first existing jinn as Eve was separated from Adam. One of them said Allah created a vulva in the first existent jinn, so part of him mated with the other part and offspring like those of Adam were born to him: a male and female who married each other. So the jinn's nature was hermaphrodite. For that reason the jinn are part of the world of the interspace: they resemble men and resemble angels as the hermaphrodite resembles both the male and female.

## **(The food and marriage of the jinn)**

The elements of air and fire dominate the jinn. For that reason, their food is what the air carried by of fat in bones. Allah made their provision in them. So we see that the bone and its flesh is not decreased at all and we know that Allah gave them their sustenance in the bones. This is why the Prophet said about bones, "They are sustenance for your brothers among the jinn." In a *hadith*, "Allah appoints their sustenance in them." Someone to whom this was unveiled reported to us that he saw the jinn come to some bones and sniff them like beasts of prey sniff. Then they went back having taken their sustenance. Their food was taken in that sniffing. Glory be to the Subtle, the All-Aware!

As their union with each other in marriage, it is in the form of twisting - like what you see of smoke issuing from a kiln or a pottery oven. The smoke intermingles and each of the two individuals enjoys that mutual entry. Their ejaculation resembles like the seed of the palm and is in the form of pure scent, just as is the case with their food.

## **(The tribes and clans of the jinn)**

They have tribes and clans. It is said that they are contained in twelve tribes and then they branch into subtribes. There are great wars between them, and some whirlwinds are, in fact, the centre of their battles. The whirlwind is the mutual opposition of two opposing winds, each preventing its companion from passing through. So that barrier leads to the circle witnessed visually in the physical dust which is the effect of the mutual opposition of the two winds. Their battles are like that, but not every whirlwind is on of their battles. The story of 'Amr the jinn is famous. He was killed in a whirlwind which was seen. It dispersed from him while he was dying. It did not take long for him to die. He was a pious jinn. If the basis of this book had been to present traditions and tales, we would have mentioned some of them, but this is a book about the science of meanings. You can look for their stories elsewhere in book of history and poems.

## **(The manner in which the spiritual world appears in forms)**

When this spiritual world takes on shape and appears in a sensory form, the eyes confine it since it cannot abandon that form as long as the eye continues to look at it although that it is the human being which is looking. When human eye defines it and continues to look at it, the spiritual (*ruhani*) being does not have a place into which it can disappear, so this spiritual being manifests a form which it puts on itself like a veil. Then the spiritual being makes the person imagine that that form has left him in a particular direction, so his eye follows it. When his eye follows it, the spiritual being leaves its confinement and vanishes. When it disappears, that form vanishes from the sight of the one who is looking at it and following it with his eye. In relation to the spiritual being, that form is like light is in the case of a lamp whose light is diffused in the corners. When the body of the lamp is absent, the light is lost. It is thus with this form. If someone knows this and wants to confine that spiritual being, he should not follow the form with his eye. This is one of the divine secrets which are only known by the instruction of Allah. The form is not other than spiritual being. Indeed it is the same, even if it is in a

thousand places, or in every place, with different shapes.

If it happens that one of those forms is slain and apparently dies, that spiritual being moves from the life of this world to the interspace just as we move when we die. No information about it remains in this world, just as is the case with us. Those sensory forms in which the spiritual beings appear are called 'bodies'. It is the words of Allah, "*We cast a mere body on his throne*" (38:34) and "*We did not give them bodies which did not eat food.*" (21:8) The difference between jinn and angels, even though they share in spirituality, is that the food of the jinn consists of foods found in natural bodies. The angels are not like that. That is why Allah mentioned in the story of the guests of Abraham, "*When he saw that their hands were not reaching for it, he was suspicious of them*" (11:70) i.e. the angels did not reach for the roasted calf and they did not eat it which made him afraid.

### **(The formation of the world of the jinn)**

When the time for the formation of the world of the jinn came, He directed three of the trusty angels in the first sphere who took their deputies which they needed for this formation from the second heaven. Then they descended to the heavens and took two deputies from the second and the sixth there. They descended to the elements and prepared the place. Three other guardians followed them, and they took whatever deputies they needed from the second heaven, and then descended to the third heaven, and to the fifth from there. They took two angels. They passed by the sixth heaven and took another deputy from the angels. Then they descended to the elements in order to complete the formation. The remaining six descended and took the remaining deputies in the second heaven and the heavens. All were gathered for the ordering of this formation by the permission of the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

When the formation of the world of the jinn was complete, Allah directed the spirit from the World of Command and breathed a spirit into that form by which life flowed into it. It stood uttering the praise and glorification of the One Who brought it into existence: this is the natural disposition on which He fashioned it. Within it there was might and immensity whose cause is not recognised nor discovered since at that time there was no another creature in existence in the world of nature other than it. It remained worshipping its Lord, proclaiming His power, humble to the lordship of the One who brought it into existence by what was in its being until Adam was created. When the jinn saw his form, one of them, whose name was Harith, was overcome with hatred for that organism and he glowered at the sight of the form of Adam. The rest of his species saw that and they censured him for that since they saw that he had grief and sorrow because of it. When Adam's business was complete, al-Harith displayed what he felt in himself and refused to obey the command of his Creator to prostrate to Adam and became arrogant towards Adam because of his own constitution and he boasted of his origin [from fire which he said was better than earth]. He failed to see the secret of the power of that water from which Allah created every living thing, and from which comes the life of the jinn although they are not aware of it.

### **( The creation of Adam and the formation of man)**

If you are among the people of unveiling, reflect on the words of Allah, "*and His throne was upon the*

waters." (11:7) So the throne and the creatures around it were brought to life by water. *"There is nothing which does not glorify His praise."* (17:44) He used the negative. Only the living glorifies. In an excellent hadith from the Messenger of Allah said, "The angels said, 'O Lord (in a long *hadith*)! have You created anything stronger than fire?' He replied, 'Yes, water.'" So He made water stronger than fire. If the element of air in the structure of the jinn had not been ignited by fire, the jinn would have been stronger than the children of Adam, for air is stronger than water. In this *hadith*, the angels asked, "O Lord, have You created anything stronger than air?" He replied, "Yes, the children of Adam." Allah made the human organism stronger than air. Water is stronger than fire, and it is the main element in man as fire is the main element in the jinn. This why Allah said about Shaytan (Satan), *"Surely the guile of Shaytan is ever feeble."* (4:76) He did not ascribe any strength to him at all. He did not deny it to the Governor (of Egypt) when he said, *"surely your guile is great"* (12:27) ...

The reason for that is that the human organism accords deliberateness in matters, perseverance, meditation and reflection due to the predominance of the elements of earth and water in the human temperament. Thus the human being has ample intellect because earth holds him back and restrains him while water makes him supple and easy. The jinn are not like that. The jinn's intellect does not possess that which will enable him to hold to something as the human being does. This is why we say, "So-and-so is 'light' of intellect and dim-witted" when he is frivolous and foolish! This is the attribute of the jinn, and by it the jinn strays from the path of guidance due to the frivolous nature of his intellect and his lack of firmness in his thought. So he said, *"I am better than him,"* (7:12) and combined ignorance and bad manners because of his frivolous nature.

### **(The first shaytan of the jinn)**

So any jinn who rebels is shaytan, i.e. one who is far from the mercy of Allah. Al-Harith was the first jinn to be called shaytan. Allah drove him to despair, i.e. drove him out of His mercy and repelled mercy from him. From him all the shaytans branch out. Any jinn who believe, like Hama ibn Alham ibn Laqis ibn Iblis, join the believing jinn. Any who remains an unbeliever is a shaytan. It is a matter of some dispute among the scholars of the Shari'a). Some of them say that the shaytan never submits, deriving this from what the Prophet said about his shaytan who was the companion entrusted to him, "Allah gave me power over him and he submitted (*aslama*)." The one who interprets what he said as "aslamu" takes it to mean: "I am safe from him" and he has no way against me. Thus the interpretation varies. If it is interpreted as "*aslama*" is it submission. It means that he submitted although he was an enemy and so he only commands me to good, compelled to do so by Allah and as a protection for the Messenger of Allah. The opponent says that "*aslama*" means that he believed in Allah as the unbeliever becomes Muslim and thus becomes a believer. This is more appropriate and acceptable.

### **(Iblis was the first of the wretched jinn)**

Most people claim that al-Harith was the first of the jinn, and that he was in the same position to the rest of the jinn as Adam is to mankind. We do not think that that is the case. Al-Harith was one of the jinn, but the first among them who is in the same position as Adam is to mankind was someone else. That is

why Allah says, "*Iblis was one of the jinn*" (18:50) i.e. he was from this category of creation. Similarly Qabil (Cain) was one of mankind, but Allah wrote him down among the wretched. He was the first of the wretched among mankind, and Iblis was the first of the wretched among the jinn. The majority of the punishment of the shaytans of the jinn in Hellfire is by severe cold, not by heat, although they may be punished with fire. Most of the punishment of the descendants of Adam is through fire.

One day I came upon one of the saints whose intellect was deranged. He was weeping and saying to the people, "Do not stop with His words, '*I shall assuredly fill Hellfire with you*' (38:85) and apply them to Iblis alone. Look how He alluded to you when He said, '*...Hellfire **with you***'. Iblis was created from fire, so he returns to his source - may Allah curse him! If Iblis is punished with it, the punishment of pottery by fire is greater, so take heed!"

When Hellfire (*Jahannam*) was mentioned, this saint only thought of fire in particular, and was heedless of the fact that Jahannam is a name for both its intense heat and its intense cold. It is called Jahannam by its frowning (*jahama*. *Jahuma* means "to have an ugly face") because its appearance is hateful. Jaham is the word for clouds which have already poured out their water. Abundant rain is the mercy of Allah. When Allah has removed the rain from the clouds, then the name *jaham* is applied to them. since the mercy, which was abundant rain, has vanished. Similarly, Allah has removed mercy from Jahannam which is hateful in appearance and report. It is also called Jahannam because of its great depth. One says, "the depths of Jahannam" when something is very deep. We ask Allah Almighty, to give us and the believers security from it!

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## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### Concerning the Bearers of the Throne

By Allah, the Throne bears the Merciful, and they bear it -  
this statement is intelligible.

What power is there for a creature and what strength,  
if it had not been for that which the intellect and Revelation brought?

Body and spirit and nutrients and rank.  
There is nothing else which division arranges.

That is the Throne, if you but realise its eminence!  
The One who settles on it in the name of the Merciful is hoped-for.

They are eight, and Allah knows them. Today there are four,  
and there is no fault in them:

Muhammad, then Ridwan and Malik, Adam  
and the Friend (Ibrahim) and then Jibril,

Joined by Mika'il and Israfil. There are only eight here -  
nourished by "there is no god but Allah".

#### **(The Throne ('*Arsh*) in Arabic)**

May Allah support the *wali*! Know that in Arabic 'the Throne' is a designation by which the kingdom is meant. It is said, "The king's throne is toppled," when there is a disturbance in his kingdom. Throne also designates and means the seat. When the Throne designates the kingdom, its bearers are its supporters. When the Throne is the seat, its bearers are the legs which support it, or whoever carries it on their sacks. Number enters into the bearers of the Throne. The Messenger said that they are four in this world, and eight on the Day of Rising. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, recited, "*Upon that day eight shall carry above them the Throne of your Lord,*" (69:17) and then he said, "Today they are four," meaning in this world. Allah said, "Upon that day they shall be eight," meaning in the Next World.

#### **(The Throne is contained in body, spirit, nourishment and rank)**

We related from Ibn Masarra al-Jabali, one of the greatest of the People of the Path in knowledge, state,

and unveiling, "The carried Throne is the kingdom. It is contained in body, spirit, nourishment and rank." Adam and Israfil belong to forms; Jibril and Muhammad to spirits; Mika'il and Ibrahim to provisions; and Malik and Ridwan to the Promise and the Threat. There is only in the kingdom what was mentioned. Nourishment, which is provision, is both sensory and spiritual. That which we will mention in this chapter is the one method, which has the meaning of kingdom, through which benefit is connected. "Its bearers" designates those who undertake its management. One manager is an elemental form or a luminous form; one manager is a spirit; one manager belongs to an elemental form; one manager is a spirit and one managed and compelled by a luminous form. Nourishment belongs to an elemental form and the nourishment of knowledges and gnoses of spirits. There is a sensory rank of happiness achieved by entering the Garden and a sensory rank of wretchedness achieved by entering Hellfire (*Jahannam*) and a spiritual rank of knowledge.

This chapter is based on four issues. The first question is form; the second is the spirit; the third is nourishment; and the fourth is the rank, which is the end. Each of these questions has two divisions, so there are eight. They are the bearers of the Throne, i.e. when the eight appeared, the kingdom was established and appeared, and its King sat on it.

### **(Luminous bodies and Archangels)**

The first question concerns form and it has two divisions: an elemental bodily form which contains the imaginative bodily form, and the other division which is a luminous physical body. We will begin with the luminous body. The first bodies which Allah created were the bodies of the angelic spirits wandering with love in the majesty of Allah. They include the First Intellect and the Universal Self, and the luminous bodies created from the light of majesty end there. None of these angels exist by any other means than the Self which is below the Intellect. Every angel created after these angels is subject to the jurisdiction of nature. They are from the genus of the spheres from which they were created and which they inhabit. It is the same with the angels of the elements. The last rank of angels are the angels created from the deeds and breaths of the worshippers. We will mention them class by class in this chapter, Allah willing.

Know that Allah was before He created creation when there was no beforeness in time. That is an expression of connection which indicates a relationship by which the goal is obtained in the listener. Allah was in the Mist ('*ama*') below and above which there is no air. It was the first Divine manifestation to appear in which the light of the Essence flowed, as is clear in His words, "*Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth.*" (24:35) When that Mist was coloured by light, He opened in it the forms of the angels bewildered with love who are above the world of natural bodies. No throne or creature preceded them. When He brought them into existence, He gave them a manifestation. That manifestation became unseen for them, and that unseen was a spirit for them, i.e. for those forms. He gave them a manifestation in His name, the Beautiful, so they wandered distraught with love in the majesty of His beauty, and they do not recover from it.

### **(The First Intellect is the Axis of the World of Registration and Recording)**

When Allah wanted to create the world of recording and writing, He specified one of those *Karubiyin* angels. He was the first angel of that light called the Intellect and the Pen. He was given a presencing (*tajalli*) in the place where given (*wahabi*) knowledge is manifested according to the bringing-into-existence He desired for His creation, not for an end and a limit. By its essence, the Intellect accepted what will be and the Divine Names which desire the issuance of this created world. From this Intellect was derived another existent thing called the Tablet. He commanded the Pen to descend to it and entrust in it only all that will be until the Day of Rising. He gave this Pen 360 years of penness, i.e. being a Pen. From its being Intellect, Allah gave this Pen 360 presencings (*tajalliyat*) or *raqa'iq* (filaments). Every year or filament extracts 360 varieties of comprehensive knowledges, and the Pen details them in the Tablet. This encompasses the knowledges in the universe until the Day of Rising. The Tablet knows them when the Pen entrusts them to it. That is part of the knowledge of nature, and it is the first knowledge which this Tablet acquires of the knowledges of what Allah has willed for His creation. That is nature rather than the self. All of that is in the world of pure light.

### **(The Throne and its angelic inhabitants)**

Then Allah brought into existence the pure darkness which is opposite this light, which is in the position of absolute non-existence opposite absolute existence. When He brought it into existence, that light flowed onto it with an essential outflowing with the help of nature. So that light repaired its disarray and the body appeared which is designated as the Throne. Then the name the Rahman settled on it by the name, the Outwardly Manifest. That was the first of the world of creation to appear. From that mixed light, which is like the light of dawn, He created the angels which encircle the Seat. That is His words, "*You will see the angels encircling the Throne proclaiming the praise of their Lord.*" (39:75) They have no other occupation than to encircle the Throne, proclaiming His praise. We explained the creation of the universe in our book, '*Uqla al-Mustawfiz*. We have used the principles for this chapter.

### **(The Footstool (*Kursi*) and the angels who inhabit it)**

Then He brought the Footstool into existence inside this Throne and put angels of its own nature in it. Each sphere was the basis for its inhabitants which were created in it just like the elements from which its inhabitants were created. So Adam was created from earth and he and his sons filled the earth. In this noble Footstool the Word was divided into report and judgement: these are the two feet which descend from the Throne as reported in the report of the Prophet. Then inside the Footstool Allah created spheres, one inside the other. In each sphere He created a world from it which they inhabit which He named angels, i.e. messengers. He adorned the spheres with stars, and inspired every heaven with its command until He created the forms of products (*muwalladat*).

### **(The spirits and luminous forms, imaginative forms and elemental forms)**

When Allah completed these luminous and elemental forms which were without spirits which were unseen by these forms, He gave a manifestation to every class of these forms according to what they are based in. The spirits of forms took on being from the forms and from the presencing (*tajalli*). This is the

second question. Allah created the spirits and commanded them to manage the forms and He made them indivisible, a single essence but made them distinct from one another. They are distinct according to the forms they accept from that presencing. The forms do not belong to these spirits in reality according to "wherenesses". These forms belong to the spirits as the kingdom in respect of the elemental forms, and like places of manifestation in respect of all forms.

Then Allah originated the imaginative physical forms by another presencing between the *lata'if* (subtleties) and forms, and luminous and fiery forms appeared to the eye in those physical bodies. The sensory forms manifested carry forms of meaning in these physical forms in sleep, after death and before the resurrection - it is the interspace of form. It is a horn of light whose top is wide and bottom is narrow. Its highest part is the Mist and the lowest is the earth. These bodies of form in which the jinn and angels and inward part of man appear are outward in sleep and the forms of the Market of the Garden. It is this form which populates the earth of the imagination which we already spoke about in this proper chapter.

### **(The nourishment of the spirits and the nourishment of forms)**

Then Allah appointed nourishment for these forms and these spirits. They are the subject of the third question. They subsist by that nourishment. It consists of sensory nourishment and nourishment of meaning. The nourishment of meaning is the nourishment of knowledges, presencings (*tajalliyat*) and states (*ahwal*). Sensory nourishment is well known. It is what the forms of food and drink bear of spiritual meanings, i.e. faculties. Each form, be it luminous, animal or physical, is nourished by what is suitable for it. It would take too long to give the details of that.

### **(Ranks of the world in happiness and wretchedness)**

Then Allah gave every world a rank in happiness and wretchedness and a station; and the details are innumerable. Its happiness is according to it: some of it is happiness of desire, happiness of perfection, happiness of being filled, and happiness of place, i.e. the Shari'a. Wretchedness is like that in division in what is not in accordance with desire, perfection, temperament (which is not being filled), and is not the Shari'a. All of that is sensory and intelligible. The sensory part of it is what is connected to the Abode of wretchedness, of pains in this world and the Next, and connected to the Abode of happiness of pleasures in this world and the Next. Some is pure and some mixed. The pure is connected to the Next Abode. The mixed is connected to this Abode. So the happy might appear in the form of the wretched and the wretched in the form of the happy while they will be distinct in the Next Abode. It may be that the wretched manifests his wretchedness in this world and it is connected to the wretchedness of the Next world. This is also the case with the happy. However, they are not known in this world, but they are distinct in the Next World: "*Now keep yourselves apart, you wrongdoers, on this day!*" (39:59) So there the ranks are connected to their people with a connection which is not broken nor changed.

### **(The bearers of the Throne is in this world and the Next)**

So the meaning of the eight, which is the sum of the Kingdom designated by the Throne, has been made clear to you. This is the fourth question. The meaning of the eight is clear to you. These eight belong to the eight Divine ascriptions by which Allah is described. They are: life, knowledge, power, will, speech, hearing, sight, and the perfection of the tasted, smelt and felt with the attribute connected to him. This perception of them has a connection, like hearing perceiving heard things and sight perceiving seen things. Thus the Kingdom is contained in eight. Four of them are manifest in this world: form, food, and the two ranks. On the Day of Rising, all of the eight will be visible to the eyes. It is what Allah said, *"Upon that day eight shall carry above them the Throne of Your Lord."* (69:17) The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Today they are four." This is in the explanation of the Throne as the Kingdom.

As for the Throne, which is the seat, it belongs to Allah and the angels bear it on their backs. Today they are four, and tomorrow they will be eight in respect to bearing in the land of gathering. It is related of the forms of those four bearers what approximates what Ibn Masarra said. It is said that one has the form of man, one of a lion, one of an eagle and the fourth of a bull. It was what the Samiri saw and imagined that it was the god of Musa. So he built the calf for his people and said, *"This is your god and the god of Musa"* (20:88) in the tale. Allah speaks the truth and guides to the Path.

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## CHAPTER NINETEEN

**On the reason for the increase and decrease of knowledges and the words of Allah, "Say: 'Lord, increase me in knowledge!' and the words of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, "Allah does not restrict knowledge, plucking from the breasts of the scholars, but He removes it by removing the scholars."**

The *tajalli* of the existence of the Truly Real in the sphere of the self is evidence of decrease in knowledges.

If one is unconscious of that *tajalli* by his self, can he then perceive Him through investigation and inquiry?

If multiplicity of knowledge appears in the self, realised veiling is confirmed by the text.

Nothing except the disk of the sun of existence appeared and its light fell on the world of spirits.

The Source is only perceived when there is manifestation, even if man is destroyed by the intensity of greed.

There is no doubt in the statement which I unfolded; and it is not misrepresenting lie or conjecture.

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### **(Knowledges: its ranks and stages)**

Know that every living thing and everyone described by perception, is in a new knowledge in every breath in respect to that perception. However, it may be that the perceiving individual is not one of those who is mindful of that knowledge. In fact, it is knowledge, so knowledges can be described as being in decrease in respect of the one with knowledge. It results from the fact that there would be perception had not a barrier intervened between him and many things which he perceives, as is the case with someone who happens to be blind or deaf or the like.

Therefore knowledges rise and descend according to what is known. That is why when aspirations (*himma*) are connected to sublime noble knowledges by which man is described, his *nafs* (self) is purified and his rank exalted. The highest rank in knowledge is knowledge of Allah. The highest of the

paths to the knowledge of Allah is the knowledge of *tajalliyat*. Below it is the knowledge of intellectual examination (*nadhhar*). There is no divine knowledge below examination. There are creeds for the general people, not knowledges.

These knowledges are those in which Allah commanded His Prophet to seek increase. Allah said, "*and do not rush ahead with the Qur'an before its revelation to you is complete and say, 'O Lord, increase me in knowledge!'*" (20:114) i.e. increase me with Your words that You want me to know. Here increase in knowledge is knowledge of the nobility of slowness in the revelation, out of adab with the teacher who brings it to him from his Lord. For this reason, He put this verse after His word, "*and faces will be humbled unto the Living, the All-Sustaining,*" (20:111) i.e. humbled. He meant the knowledges of *tajalli*. *Tajalli* is the noblest path for obtaining knowledges - they are the knowledges of immediate tasting.

### **(Knowledge: its increase and decrease)**

We will mention increase and increase of knowledge in another chapter, Allah willing. That is that Allah gave everything - and the self (*nafs*) of man is one of these things - an outward and inward. The self of man outwardly perceives matters by the eye, and inwardly perceives matters by knowledge. Allah is the Outward, the Inward. It is by Him that perception occurs. It is not in the power of whatever is other than Allah to perceive anything by itself. He perceives by what Allah puts in him and the *tajalli* of Allah. Whoever has a *tajalli* from any world, be it the Visible or Unseen world, is from the Name, the Outward. As for the name, the Inward, part of the reality of this relationship is that there is no *tajalli* ever in it, not in this world or the Next since *tajalli* designates Allah's manifestation to the one who receives that manifestation. That belongs to the name, the Outward. The intelligibility of relationships does not change, even if they do not have any source by which they exist. However, they do have logical existence, so they are intelligible.

When Allah grants a *tajalli*, either as a free gift or as answer to a request, he gives the *tajalli* to the outward of the self, and perception by the senses occurs in the form and that takes place the interspace of making likenesses. So the one who receives the manifestation has an increased knowledge of judgements if he is one of the scholars of the Shari'a, increased knowledge of the criteria of meanings if he is a dialectician, and increased knowledge of the measure of speech if he is a grammarian. It is the for with the master of each of the knowledges of beings and non-beings. He has increase in himself in the knowledge with which he is occupied.

The people of this path know that this increase is comes from the Divine *tajalli* to those classes, so they cannot deny what has been unveiled to them. Non-agnostics sense increase and ascribe that to their thoughts. Others than these two experience increase but do not know that they are being increased in anything. In likeness "*their likeness is that of a donkey loaded with weighty tomes. How evil is the likeness of those who deny Allah's Signs!*" (62:5). The signs are this increase and the source of the increase. Astonishment is expressed about those who ascribe that to their own thoughts! They do not know that their thought, reflection and investigation in any question is part of the increase of knowledges in themselves which comes from that *tajalli* which we mentioned. The thinker is

preoccupied with the connection of his thought and the end of his quest. He is veiled to knowledge of the true state. His knowledge is increasing, but he is not aware of it.

When *tajalli* occurs, it is by the name the Outward to the inward part of the self. Perception occurs the insight into the world of realities and meanings divested of physical matter. These are designated as "texts" since Divine texts do not have any ambiguity or probability by a certain aspect. That only takes place in the meanings. So the one with meanings has rest from the labour of thought, and in the *tajalli* he is increased in divine knowledges, the knowledges of the secrets and knowledges of the inward, and what is connected to the Next World. This is particular to the people of our Path - it is the path of our knowledge.

### **(Knowledge: its decrease)**

Knowledge decreases for two reasons, either by evil nature in the basis of the organism or an incidental imperfection in the faculty connected to that. This evil nature in the basis of the organism cannot be mended, as al-Khidr said about the boy, "*his nature was an unbeliever.*" (18:80) This is in the basis of the organism. As for the incidental imperfection, it can vanish - if it is in the faculty - by medicine. If it is in the self, as when love of leadership and following appetites distract him from acquiring knowledges which contain his honour and happiness, this can also be removed when the Truth calls from his heart and he returns to sound reflection, and he knows that this world is one of the stages of the traveller and a bridge to be crossed, and that if man does not furnish himself with knowledges, noble character and the attributes of the Higher Assembly here in the form of purification and freedom from natural appetites which distract him from sound reflection, he will have no way to achieve eternal happiness. Therefore he sets out on that. This imperfection is also a reason for the decrease of knowledges.

I do not mean that when s decrease it is a fault in man - except in the case of Divine knowledges. The reality accords that there is no decrease at all and that man is always and constantly in increase of knowledge and in respect to what his senses give him, the fluctuations of states and passing thoughts in himself. He his knowledge is increasing, but there is no benefit in it. Opinion, doubt, speculation, ignorance, heedlessness and forgetfulness: all of this and things like them are not accompanied by knowledge of what you are in in respect of opinion, doubt, speculation, ignorance, heedlessness or forgetfulness.

### **(The knowledges of *tajalli*: their increase and decrease)**

As for decrease and increase in the knowledges of *tajalli*, man is in either one of two states: how the Prophets bring them forth by transmission, or the *awliya'* by the principle of being the heirs of the Prophets. This is like what was said to Abu Yazid al-Bistami when the robe of of delegation was placed on him, "Go out to My creation by My attribute. Whoever sees you has seen Me!" He could do nothing but obey his Lord's command. He took a step towards himself from his Lord and swooned. There was a cry, "Return My lover to Me! He cannot endure being apart form Me!" He was absorbed in the Real, like Abu 'Iqal al-Maghribi, so the spirits entrusted with him and who supported him when he was



commanded to go out returned him to the station of absorption (*istihlak*) in Him. He was returned to Allah and the robes of humility, poverty, and abasement were placed on him. Life was pleasing and he saw his Lord and was increased in intimacy and had rest from the "lent trust (*amana*)" (33:72) which had to be taken from him.

### **(The Ascent of Man on the Ladder of Gnosis)**

From the moment man starts up the ladder of ascent, he has a divine *tajalli* according to the ladder of his ascent. Each person among the people of Allah has a ladder particular to him by which no one else ascends. If someone could ascend by the ladder of someone else, then prophethood would be acquirable. By its essence, every ladder gives a rank particular to the one who ascends in it. If it would otherwise, the scholars would climb the ladder of the Prophets and obtain prophethood by doing so. The business is not like that. 'Divine capacity' would vanish if the matter would be repeated. In our view, it is confirmed that there is no repetition in that presence.

However, all the steps of the meanings - for Prophets, *awliya'*, believers, and messengers - are the same. One ladder does not have more steps than another ladder. The first step is Islam. It is submission. The last step is in annihilation in the ascent and going-on in the going-out. What remains is between the two of them. It is belief (*iman*), *ihsan* (excellence), knowledge, pure oneness (*taqdis*), disconnection (*tanzih*), wealth, poverty, abasement, might, change (*talwin*), establishment in change, annihilation if you go out and going-on if you enter. Every step in which you leave it decreases the knowledges of *tajalli* in your inward commensurate with what is increased in your outward until you reach the last step.

If you go out and reach the last step, then He is manifested by His essence in your outward in accordance with your worth and you manifest Him in His creation. In your inward there is nothing left at all and the *tajalliyat* of the inward leave you totally. When you are called to enter, this call is the first step to be manifested to you by *tajalli* in your inward according to what is decreased of that *tajalli* in your outward, until you reach the last step. Then He is manifested to your inward by His essence and no *tajalli* at all remains in your outward. The reason for that is that the slave and the Lord continue to be together, each one with perfect existence for himself: the slave is still the slave and the Lord is still the Lord, in spite of this increase and decrease.

This is the reason for the increase and decrease of the knowledges of *tajalliyat* in the outward and the inward. The reason for that is constitution. This is why all that Allah created and brought into existence in its source is composite - it has an outward and an inward. That which we refer to as the simple elements (*basa'it*) are intelligible matters which have no existence in their sources. Every existent thing, other than Allah, is composite. We learned this by sound unveiling with no doubt in it. It obliges a corresponding need of Him, since it is an essential description of Him.

If you understand, we have clarified the way for you and set up the ascent for you. So travel! And rise! You will see and witness what we have made clear to you. We have specified the steps of the ascent for you which we retained for you in the good advice when the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him

and grant him peace commanded us to give [in sound *hadith*]. If we had described the fruits and results to you without specifying the path to it for you, we would have made you yearn for an immense business which you would not know how to reach. By the One who has my self in His hand, it is the Ascent (*Mi'raj*). *"Allah speaks the truth and guides to the Path."*

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## CHAPTER FIFTY-NINE

### Concerning existent time and determined time

When you ascertain that the substance of time  
is determined and known by illusions,

Like nature in effecting its power.

The source in nature and time is are non-existent.

Things are specified by it, but it does not  
have a source by which it is judged.

The intellect cannot perceive its form.

For that reason, we say that time is illusory.

If it had not been for disconnection, the existence of Allah would not be  
designated by it. So He has exaltation in the heart.

When you are fair about the root of time from before-time  
its judgement is of pre-time, and it is governed

Like emptiness whose extension does not have an end in  
other than body by the illusion of embodiment in it.

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### **(The firstness of the Real and His existence and the firstness of the universe and its existence)**

Know, first of all, that Allah is the First and there is nothing else has firstness before Him, and nothing which depends on Him has firstness nor is there anything which was coterminous with Him. He is the One - glory be to Him! in His firstness. There is nothing whose existence is necessary by itself except Him. He is Rich by His essence absolutely above need of any being. Allah says, "*Allah is Rich beyond need of any being.*" (3:97) by the proof of logic and the Shari'a.

So the existence of the universe is must of either have its existence be from Allah to Himself, or an extra matter which is not Him since, if it had been Him, it would not be extra. If it had also been Him, it would have been a complex matter in itself and firstness would have belonged to that extra matter. We have stipulated that there is no firstness to anything with Him nor before Him.

Since that extra matter is not Himself, it must be existence or not existence. It is impossible that it be not existence. Not existence cannot have the effect of bringing into existence in what is described by not-existence, which is the universe. So neither of the two is more likely to have the effect of bringing-into-existence than the other since both of them are not existence. Not-existence has no effect because it is non-existence.

It is impossible that it be existence. So in that it must either be existence by itself or not. It is impossible that its existence be by itself, for the proof has been established of the impossibility of there being in existence two whose existence is necessary by themselves. So there only remains its existence by other than itself, and there is no meaning for the possibility of the universe unless its existence is by other than it. So then it is the universe or from the universe.

If the existence of the universe had been from Allah by a certain relationship, if it had not been for that relationship, the universe would not have existence. That relationship is called will or volition or knowledge or whatever you like of what the existence of the possible demands. So the Real without a doubt would only do something by that relationship. Need has no meaning except this, and it is impossible for Allah. Allah has absolute wealth and he is, as He said, "*Allah is Rich beyond need of any being.*" (3:97)

If it is said that what is meant by this relationship is the same as His Essence, we said that the thing is not in need of itself. He is Rich in himself. So the one thing is in need inasmuch as it is not rich. All of that in respect of Himself is impossible. We negated the extra matter. That obliges therefore that the existence of the universe be, inasmuch as it exists from other than it, tied to the Necessary of existence by Himself. It is impossible that the source of the possible effect the Necessary of existence by Himself with bringing-into-existence. The matter is only intelligible like that.

His will, volition, knowledge and power are His essence. Allah is be exalted very greatly in His essence. Indeed, He has absolute oneness, and He is the One, the Unique, Allah, the *Samad* "*who did not beget*" which would be a precedent "*nor was He begotten*" which would be a result, "*and there is nothing equal to Him,*" (112:3-4) so the existence of the world by Him would be from two premises - from the Real and the equal. Exalted is Allah!

He described Himself like this in His Book when the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was asked about the attribute of his Lord. Then the *Surat al-Ikhlās* was sent down and freed him of being associated with other. Allah is exalted in that pure attributes and descriptions. There is nothing which He negates or affirms in this *sura* but that that affirmer or negator is what some people say about Allah.

**(The relationship of Pre-time (*Azal*) to Allah is like the relationship of time to mortals)**

We have explained to you how we must be in need of Him - and He is Allah, glory be to Him! We will

further clarify it . Know that the relation of pre-time to Allah is like the relationship of time to us. The relationship of pre-time is a negative attribute without source. Existence is not from this reality. So time belongs to the possible with a relationship whose existence is illusory, not existent, because in the case of anything you can apportion, you can ask "when" about it. When is a question is about time, time must be an illusory matter, not existence. For this reason, Allah applied it to Himself when He said, "*and Allah has knowledge of everything*" (33:40) "*and to Allah belongs the command before and after.*" (30:4) In the *Sunna* the words of the asker are confirmed when he asked, "Where was our Lord before He created His creation?" If time had been a matter of existence in itself, Allah's being pure above limitation would not be valid since the principle of time would limit Him. So we recognise that these shapes do not have a matter of existence under them.

### **(Time: intelligible and proven)**

Then we say that people differ about the expression "time" and what is understood by it and proven by it. The sages apply it to different matters. Most of them say that it is an illusory period which is intersected by the movement of the spheres. The *mutakallimun* apply it to something else: the comparison of an in-time to an in-time about which it is asked, "When?" The Arabs use it to mean night and day. It is our aim in this chapter. Night and day divide the day. From the rising of the sun to its setting is called "daytime", and from the setting of the sun to its rising is called "night". This divided source is called the day. This day manifests the existence of the greater movement. There is only in specific existence the existence of the Mover. It is not the source of time. The outcome of that referring to time is an illusory matter with no reality.

Since this is confirmed, the intelligible which is determined is designated by existent time. By it weeks, months, years and eons are manifested. They are called days and are determined by the small ordinary day which is divided into night and day. "Determined time" is what is extra to this small day by which all the great days are determined. It is said, "*on a day whose measure is a thousand years of your reckoning,*" (32:5) and "*on a day whose measure is fifty thousand years.*" (70:4)

### **(How days are reckoned in the time the Dajjal)**

The Prophet said, "In the days of the Dajjal, a day will be like a year, a day will be like a month, and a day will be like a week, and all his days are like your days." This may be due to intense terror. He removed ambiguity outwardly at the end of the hadith when 'A'isha said, "How will one do the prayer on that day?" He said, "One will determine." If it had not been that the matter in the movements of the spheres remained what it was without being upset, it would not be valid that it be determined by the hours by whose form the people of this knowledge act and by which they know the times in cloudy days when the sun does not appear.

At the beginning of the emergence of the Dajjal, there will be many clouds and they will follow one another to such an extent that the existence of the day and night will appear the same to the naked eye. That is one of the rare forms which will occur at the end of time. Those piled-up clouds will come

between us and the sky, but the celestial movements will be as they are. So the movements will appear in the actual occupations which are known by the people of occupation with knowledge of the appearance and course of the stars. By them they determine the night and days and the hours of the prayer without doubt.

If that day which is like a year been a single day, it would not be obliged for us to determine the prayers. We would wait for noon of the sun. If it did not descend, we would not pray the prescribed *Dhuhr*. If the sun stopped and did not descend for twenty thousand years, Allah would not oblige us anything else. When the Lawgiver commanded us to worship by determination, we knew that the movement of the spheres is in the area and their structure is not broken.

### **(Single time and the single jawhar)**

We have informed you about what time is and what is the meaning of the relationship of existence of it and the relationship of determination. There are many days, both small and great. The smallest of them is single time on whose basis emerges *"every day He is in one affair."* (55:29) Single time (*zaman fard*) is called a day because the "affair" spoken about is the smallest and finest of times. There is no limit to the greatest of days at which it stops. Between them are the middle days, the first of which is the ordinary well-known day divided into hours. The hours are divided into degrees and the degrees divided into minutes and the minutes divided into seconds, and so on *ad infinitum* according to some people. They divide the minutes into seconds. When the judgement of number enters them, its judgement is that of number, and number does not end and hence the division does not end.

Some people speak of an ending in that and look at it in respect of the numbered. They are the ones who state that time has an existent source. All that enters into existence comes to an end without a doubt. Their opponent says that the "numbered" inasmuch as it is numbered, does not enter into existence and so it is not described as coming to an end for number is not described as coming to an end. The one who denies the "single essence (*jawhar*)" is advances this as an argument. The body is divided *ad infinitum* in the intellect. It is a matter of dispute among the people of speculation which occurs from a lack of just treatment and investigation into what is proven by expressions. It is related in sound tradition that time (*dahr*) is one of the names of Allah. The intelligibility of time is well-known and we will mention that, Allah willing, in this book. *"Allah speaks the truth and guides to the path."*

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## CHAPTER SIXTY-SIX

### Concerning the secret of the Shari'a, outward and inward, and which Divine Name brought it into existence

The Majestic demands majesty from the Majestic.  
So the Majestic refused to witness other than majesty.

When he saw the existence of the might of Allah,  
the slave of Allah became coquettish.

He was secure with himself,  
proud, haughty, self-exalted, arrogant.

He informed him of a protected Shari'a  
so its power greatly abased him.

The slave calls out by loss and abasement,  
"O You whose dignity is blessed and exalted!"

### The Divine Names are the language of the state accorded by the realities

Allah says, *"Say: Had there been in the earth angels walking at peace, We would have sent down upon them out of heaven an angel as a Messenger."* (17:95) and He says, *"We do not punish until We send a Messenger."* (17:15)

Know that the Divine Names have a tongue of state which is accorded them by their realities. Occupy yourself with what you hear and do not imagine multiplicity or existential gathering. In this chapter many intelligible realities will be arranged in respect to relationship, not in respect to existential source. The essence of Allah is One inasmuch as it is essence. From the point of view of our existence, need and possibility, we know that we must have something probable on which to rely. That basis from which our existence is demanded must have various ascriptions. The Lawgiver [Prophet] has called them the *ÒMost Beautiful NamesÓ*. He called Himself "Speaking" by them inasmuch as He speaks in an existential rank of His Divine existence which cannot be shared in. *ÒHe is one god. There is no god but Him.Ó*

### The confluence of the Names in the presence of the Named and the manifestation of their judgements

After this confirmation in the beginning of this matter and preference and dominance in the possible

world, I say that the names gathered together in the presence of the Named. They looked at their realities and meanings and asked for the manifestation of their judgements so that their sources would be set apart by their effects. The Creator is He who is the Determiner, the Knower, the Manager, the Distinguisher, the Originator, the Fashioner, the Provider, the Reviver, the One who makes dies, the Inheritor, the Thankful. All the Divine Names looked at their essences, but did not see the created, managed, distinguished or provided for. They said, "How can there be action unless these sources are manifest in which our judgements appear so our authority is manifest?"

So after the manifestation of the source of the world, the Divine Names which some of the realities of the world demanded sought the protection of the Name, the Originator. (*al-Bari*). They said to Him, "Would You will bring into existence these sources to manifest our judgements and establish our authority since the presence we are in does not accept our effect?" The Originator said, "That must be referred to the Name, the Powerful. I am under His control."

### **The possibles in the state of their non-existence and how their sources appeared**

The basis of this is that in the state of their non-existence, the possibles made a request to the Divine Names from a state of abasement and need. They said to them, "Non-existence has blinded us to the perception of one another and to recognition of what we owe you. If you were to manifest our sources and clothe us in the robe of existence, you would have blessed us with that and we would have undertaken the glorification and exaltation is obliged in respect of you. Authority is valid for you in our actual manifestation. Today you are masters over us by power and competence. This which we seek of you. is more abundant than it is in respect of us." The Names said, "This which the possibles mentioned is valid." They moved to seek that.

Then they resorted the name, the Powerful (*al-Qadir*). He said, "I am under the control of the Transformer. I cannot bring any source among you into existence except by His direction. Nothing is possible for me in itself except that a command from the Commander comes to it from its Lord. When He commands it to take form and says to it, 'Be!' then I can do it and connect it to bringing into existence, so I give it form from that moment. Go to the name, the Transformer. Perhaps He will prefer and make dominant the aspect of existence over the aspect of non-existence. The Commander, the Speaker and Myself will be joined together and bring you into existence."

They came to the name, the Transformer, and said to Him, "We asked the name, the Powerful, to bring our sources into existence. He referred the matter to You. What do you say?" The Transformer said, "The Powerful spoke the truth, but I have no news about what the name, the Knowing, has judged regarding you and whether His knowledge of bringing you into existence has preceded in particular or not. I am under the control of the name, the Knowing. Go to Him and tell Him your business."

They then went to the name, the Knowing, and told Him what the name, the Transformer, had told them. The Knowing said, "The Transformer spoke the truth. My knowledge of your coming into existence has already preceded, but *adab* is more fitting. There is a presence which controls us, and it is the name



Allah. We must appear before Him, for it is the presence of gatheredness."

All the names gathered in the presence of Allah. He said, "What is your concern?" They told him. He said, "I am the Name which gathers together your realities. I am the proof of the Named, and it is the pure Essence which has the attributes of perfection and disconnection. Stay until I go in to My proven." He went in to His proven and told Him what the possibles had told Him and what the names conferred about. He said, "Go out and tell each of the Names to attach itself to what its reality demands in the possibles. I am the One by Myself in respect to Myself. The possibles demand My rank, and My rank demands them. All the Divine Names belong to the rank, not to Me, except for the One. It is a name particular to Me, and none shares with Me in its reality in any aspect, either among the names, the ranks, or the possibles.

### **The known balance, prescribed limit and protected Imam**

The name Allah came out, and with Him came the name, the Speaker, to interpret for Him to the possibles and the Names. He mentioned to them what the Named had mentioned. So the Knower, the Transformer, the Speaker and the Powerful were connected, and the first possible appeared by the selection of the Transformer and the judgement of the Knowing.

When the sources and effects appeared in beings, some began to subdue others and prevail over them according to what they are based on among the names and this led to dissension and strife. They said, "We fear that our order will be corrupted and we will be joined to the non-existence which we were in it." The possibles warned the Names about what they were informed of by the Names, the Knowing and the Manager. They said, "O Names! If your judgement is on a known balance, and prescribed limit by an Imam to which you refer, our existence will be preserved for us and we will preserve your effects on us for you. That would be better for us and you. Go to Allah. Perhaps He will advance someone who will prescribe limits for you to stop at. If not, we will be destroyed and become void." They said, "This is useful and a proper opinion." So they did that. They said, "The Name, the Manager, is the One who decides your affair." They went to the Manager with the matter. He said, "I will do it."

He entered and emerged by the command of the Real to the Name, the Lord. He said to Him, "Do what benefit demands to make the sources of these possibles go on." He appointed two ministers to help Him, as He was commanded. One was the name the Manager and the other was the name the Distinguisher. Allah says, "*He manages the affair and distinguishes the signs. Perhaps you will be certain in the encounter with your Lord.*" (13:2) who is the Imam. So look at how wise are the words of Allah when He brought a phrase in accordance with the state which obliges that the business be based on it!

### **Wise policy and conventional laws**

The name, the Lord, prescribed limits for them and placed rules for them for the best interests of the kingdom and to test which of them is the best in actions. Allah put that into two categories. One category is called wise policy which He put in the nature of the selves of the great people. They prescribed limits

and set down laws by a power which they find in themselves in each city, direction and climate, according to what the disposition of that area and their tempers demand by their knowledge of what wisdom accords. By that means the property of people and their blood, family, kin and relations is preserved. They call them laws (*nawamis*) which means "causes of good" since in technical usage, the *Namus* is that which brings good. The spy (*jasus*) is the one who deals with evil.

The *nawamis* are laws of wisdom which men of intellect set down which originate from Allah's inspiration while they are not aware of that. They are meant for the benefit of the world, its order and connection in places which do not have a Divine Shari'a sent down nor knowledge of the One setting down these laws and that these matters draw near to Allah, inherit the Garden or the Fire nor anything of the causes of the Next World. They do not know that there is a Next World and a physical resurrection after death in natural bodies and that in it will be food, drink, clothes, intercourse and joy, and that in it will be punishment and pains. The existence of that is possible, and its non-existence is also possible. They have no proof that one of the two possibles will outweigh the other. "*They originated monkhood.*" (57:27) Therefore the basis of their laws and benefits is to make benefit endure in this abode.

Within themselves, they possess Divine knowledges: the *tawhid* of Allah and the exaltation and glorification which He must have, the attributes of disconnection (*tanzih*) and non-existence of any peer or like. The one who perceived that and the one who knew that notified those who did not perceive it. They encouraged people to sound investigation and taught them that the intellects, in respect to their thoughts, have a limit at they stop and cannot exceed, and that Allah grants divine overflowing to the hearts of some of His slaves by which He teaches them knowledges directly from Him so that that is not impossible for them. Allah has entrusted in the celestial world matters which they infer by the existence of their effects on the elemental world. It is His word, "*He revealed in every heaven its command.*" (41:12)

They seek the realities of themselves by what they see - when the bodily form dies, none of the limbs is lacking. Thus they know that the perceiver and the mover of this physical body is another matter additional to it. They seek that extra matter, so they recognise themselves. Then they see what it knows after it was ignorant. They know that even if it is the most noble of bodies, it is accompanied by poverty and loss. They seek the cause by investigation, moving from one thing to another. Whenever they reach something, they see that it is in need of something else until examination leads them to something not in need of anything nor like anything more resembling anything nor having anything resemble it. They stop at it and say, "This is the First." It must be One by its essence in respect to its essence, and its firstness does not accept a second, nor does His oneness because He has no like nor commensurate. They unify Him with the *tawhid* of existence. When they see that, by themselves, possibles have no dominance by their essence, they know that this One gives them existence. They are in need of Him and His might to negate from them all that their essences are described by. This is the limit of the intellect [in its thought]

## **The policy of the Shari'a and Divine rules**

We have clarified them like that. When a person of their sort arises whom they do not consider to have any rank in knowledge so as they believe that he has sound thought and appropriate investigation and then tells them, "I am the Messenger of Allah to you," they say, "Justice is more fitting. Look at the heart of the claim. Does he claim what is possible or what is impossible?" They said, "It is established with us that Allah has Divine overflowing which He can bestow on whomever He will as He made that overflow onto the spirits of these spheres and these intellects. All share in the possibility. Not one of the possibles is more entitled than others in what is possible. It only remains for us to look into the truthfulness of the person making a claim or see whether he lies or not. We do not advance either of these two judgements without proof. It is bad *adab* with our knowledge."

They say, "Do you have a proof of the truthfulness of what you claim?" He brings them proofs, and they look at his exposition and his proofs. They look to see what this person has of information about the results of thoughts and what he does not recognise of that. They know that part of what was revealed in every heaven by the One who revealed in every heaven its command is the existence of this person and what he brings. They hasten to him with belief and affirm him. They know that Allah has acquainted him with what He entrusted in the celestial world of gnoses which their thoughts do not reach. Then He gave him some of the gnosis of Allah which they do not possess.

They see that His sending-down knowledge of Allah to the common person, weak of opinion, is with that which is suitable for his intellect in that, and to the person with great intellect and sound examination it is also with that which is propitious for his intellect in that. They know that the man has received Divine overflowing which is beyond the level of the intellect, and that Allah has given him some knowledge of Him and power over it which he did not give them. They speak of His bounty and His advancing him above them. They believe in him and affirm and follow him. He appoints for them acts which bring a person near to Allah and he teaches them what Allah creates of possibles which are unseen for them, and what He will form in them in the future. He tells them about the Resurrection, the Rising, the Gathering, the Garden and the Fire.

### **The basis of the establishment of the Divine Shari'a in the world**

Then Messengers followed one another in different times and different situations. Each of them affirmed his companion. They do not differ at all in the basic principles on which they rely and which they designate, even if judgements differ. Divine laws were sent down and judgements were sent down. Judgement is according to the time and the state as He said, "*We have appointed a law (Shari'a) and a practice for every one of you.*" (5:48) Their basic principles agree without there being any difference in any of it.

They differentiate between these prescribed prophetic procedures from Allah and what the metaphysicians stipulate of aphoristic procedures which their thought process demands. They know that this matter is more complete and that it is from Allah without a doubt. Therefore they accept what he teaches them from the unseen worlds and they believe in the Messengers. None of them resists but that he has not given faithful to himself in his knowledge and he has "*followed his passion*" (7:176) and

sought leadership over his fellow species. He is ignorant of his true self and its value, and he is ignorant of his Lord.

The root and cause of setting down the Shari'a in the world is to put the world in order and recognition of what was unknown from Allah which the intellect does not accept, i.e. what the intellect does not possess alone in respect of its examination. So Books were sent down containing this knowledge, and the tongues of the Prophets and Messengers articulated it. Thus the men of intellect knew that they are lacking in matters in knowledge of Allah which the Messengers complete.

### **The real men of intellect and those who only possess anxiety, disputation and words**

By men of intellect, I do not mean the *mutakallimun* of today in wisdom. By men of intellect, I mean whoever follows the path of the Prophets by being occupied with his self, forms of self-discipline, striving, retreat and preparation for the *wâridât* which will come to them in their hearts when their attributes are part of the higher world in which revelation is given in the high heavens. These, i.e. the men of intellect, have chatter, speech and argument with those who use their thoughts in the matters of articulation which issued from earlier ones. They do not see the matter from which those men derived it. As those like this with us today, they have no value with any man of intellect. They mock the *deen* and belittle the slaves of Allah, and they only respect the one who is with them on their level. Love of this world has settled in their hearts as well as ambition for rank and leadership. Allah abases them as they abase knowledge and He degrades them and humiliates them. He makes them have recourse to the doors of ignorant kings and governors. The kings and governors abase them.

The words of men like this are of no importance. Allah has sealed their hearts (7:2), "*made them deaf and blinded their eyes*" (47:23) in spite of their vast claim that they are the best of the world. The *faqih* and *mufti* in the *deen* of Alla has a better state than these people in spite of his lack of scrupulousness in every aspect. The one with belief, in spite of the fact that he takes it through imitation, has a better state than these men of intellect in their claim. Far be it from the man of intellect that he be the like this!

We have perceived a few who had their state. They were the most knowledgeable of people about the scope of the Messengers and who was the greatest of them in following the *Sunna* of the Messenger, and the strongest of them in preserving his Sunna, gnostic of what is necessary for the majesty of the Real in exaltation, knowing what Allah has given His slaves among the Prophets and their followers among the *awliya'* in the way of knowledge of Allah from the direction of divine overflowing of election outside of ordinary teaching in the way of lessons and striving which the intellect cannot reach in respect of its thought.

I heard one of their great men, who had seen part of what Allah had opened upon me of knowledge of Him without reflection or reading. It was from a certain retreat which I did with Allah while I was not among the people of the quest. He said, "Praise be to Allah who has let me be in a time in which I saw one to whom Allah has brought mercy from Him and knowledge from His presence!" Allah bestows His mercy on whomever He will, and Allah has great bounty.

*"Allah speaks the truth and guides to the Path." (33:4)*

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## CHAPTER 71

### On the Secrets of Fasting

---

O you who laugh in the form of the weeper!  
By us you are the complaint and the complainer.

Is the fast abstention without elevation  
or elevation without restraint?

They are both together  
for the one who affirms *tawhid* by association.

Intellects are trapped and prevented  
from their freedom of action without nets or snares.

Intellects are impaired from their freedom of action,  
severely cut off by the Shari'a.

They surrender to what their proof refutes  
and they believe without perception.

The star of guidance carries them along,  
swimming between the angels of the spheres.

My self, had it not been for you, I would not have been  
as if I were Him, were it not for you! Were it not for you!

Fast from phenomenal being and do not break your fast!  
The God of creation will bring you close, taking charge of you by that.

Inasmuch as it is a fast, intend that. By nature it is your nourishment.

If you reflect on it, there is a meaning in the fast  
whenever a creature alights at your abode.

"There is nothing like the fast."  
The Lawgiver said that to me, so reflect on that!

This is because it is non-action. Where is that  
which you have done and where is your claim?

The matter has returned to its root.  
My Lord has seized control of you by that.

If you reflect on the principle of the fast  
and the basis of its meaning by your meaning,

Someone with news came from Him  
about your prescribed fast which will divest you.

The fast belongs to Allah, so do not be ignorant.  
You are merely the place of its manifestation.

The fast belongs to Allah,  
and yet you are the one dying of hunger, so know that!

The Merciful made you feminine because of what appears  
from you when He fashioned you (the self).

Glory be to the One who fashioned you! Welcome to Him!  
He only gave that to you!

You, like the earth, are a bed for it  
and your source-spring (eye) is described as weeping.

You see the source of the handiwork of Allah  
between the two of you, so where is your manifestation?

When you called on Allah out of abasement to Him, the Great,  
He said, "At your service" to you.

The highest pen in His Tablet  
wrote your pure description from Him.

You are the source of all, not His source.  
He brought you near from one aspect and put you far from another.

Beware of being content with what pleases you

for the sake of what He makes pleasing to you.

Remain with your root in all He desires.

Do not forget so as to be forgotten.

This is the knowledge

which came to me from one who does not lie.

He brought it down at the command of the One who has the most knowledge of what is between the ascetics and devout.

Praise be to Allah who bestowed on me knowledge of lights and darkness.  
He gave me a form whose perfection is only by your shelter.

### **Fasting is abstention and elevation**

May Allah support you! Know that fasting (*sawm*) is both abstention and elevation. One says "the day has reached its full height (*sama*)" when it has reached its highest point. (The poet) Imru'l-Qays said:

When the day reached its height (*sama*) and its heat was intense,

i.e. the day reached its fullest extent. It is because the fast has a higher degree than all other acts of worship that it is called "fast" (*sawm*). Allah elevated it by denying that it is like any other act of worship as we will discuss. He denied its ownership to His servants although they worship Him by it and ascribed the fast to Himself. Part of its affirmation is that He rewards the one who is described by it by His hand even though He connected it to Himself when He stated that it is not like anything else.

### **Fasting in reality is non-action, not action**

(In reality, fasting is non-action, not action. The negation of likeness is a negative attribute. Therefore the relationship between it and Allah is strengthened. Allah Almighty says about Himself, "*There is nothing like Him.*" (42:11) He denied that there is anything like Him and so there is nothing like Him by logical proofs and by the Shari'a. An-Nasa'i related that Abu Umama said, "I came to the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and said, 'Give me something that I can take from you.' He said, 'You must fast. There is nothing like it.'" He denied that it was like any of the acts of worship which are prescribed for the servants of Allah.

Anyone who recognises that it is a negative attribute – since it consists of abandoning things which break it – knows absolutely that there is nothing like it since it has no source which is described by understood existence. This is why Allah said, "The fast is Mine." In reality, it is neither worship or action. It is permissible to apply the name 'action' to it, as the application of the expression 'existent' can be applied to Allah. We understand that it is allowed although the ascription of existence to He whose



existence is the same as His Essence is not like the ascription of existence to us. "*There is nothing like Him.*" (42:11)

Every action of the son of Adam is His except fasting. It belongs to Allah.

### **Quotation of a Divine Prophetic *hadith*:**

Muslim transmitted in the *Sahih* that Abu Hurayra reported from the Messenger of Allah that Allah said, "Every action of the son of Adam belongs to him except the fast. It is Mine, and I repay him for it. Fasting is a protection. When one of you has a day of fasting, he should then speak neither obscenely nor too loudly; and if someone seeks to curse him or fight with him, let him say, 'I am fasting.' By Him in whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, the smell of the mouth of the one who fasts is more delectable to Allah than the scent of musk. The one who fasts has two joys in which to delight: when he breaks his fast, he rejoices; and when he meets his Lord, he rejoices in his fast." (Muslim: 13:163)

### **The delight of the faster lies in his attachment to the degree of the negation of likeness**

Know that since the Prophet denied that there is anything like the fast, as is established in the *hadith* of an-Nasa'i, and "Allah has nothing like Him," the faster meets his Lord described as "having nothing like him". He sees Him by it, and He is the Seer-Seen. This is why the Prophet said, "he rejoices in his fast" and not "He rejoices in meeting his Lord." Joy does not rejoice in itself; he is made to rejoice by it. Whoever has Allah as his sight when he sees and contemplates Him, only sees himself by seeing Him.

The faster rejoices at having the rank of negation of likeness. He rejoices in breaking the fast in this world since that gives the animal self its due since intrinsically seeks food. When the gnostic sees that his animal self needs food and sees that it exists by the nourishment which he gives it, then he fulfils its due which Allah has made obligatory for him and put in the position of being described as a right. He gives by the hand of Allah as He sees Allah in the encounter by the eye of Allah. This is why he rejoices at breaking the fast as he rejoices in his fast when he meets his Lord.

### **Fasting is a *samadiyya* attribute and the Real repays it**

Clarification of what this tradition contains:

The slave is described as having a fast and being entitled to the name 'faster' by this attribute. After affirming his fast, then Allah strips it from him and ascribes it to Himself. He said, "Fasting is Mine," meaning the attribute of timeless self-reliance (*samadiyya*). It is disconnection from food. "It is only Mine, even if I have described you with it. I described you with a certain limited qualification of disconnection, not by the disconnection (*tanzih*) which My majesty deserves. I said, 'I repay him for it.'" Allah repays the fast of the faster when it is transferred to his Lord and he meets Him with an attribute unlike any other: which is the fast, since "the One who has nothing like Him" is only seen by the one who has nothing like him. This is like the text from Abu Talib al-Makki, one of the masters of the

people of tasting. "Its reparation shall be him in the saddlebags of whom it is discovered" (12:75) It is what is obliged by this ayat in this state.

### **The difference between negation of likeness from Allah and from fasting**

Then He said, "Fasting is a protection," and it is a safeguard as He said, "*Fear Allah*," (2:194) i.e. take Him as a safeguard and also be a safeguard for Him. He put the fast in His position in acting as a safeguard. "There is nothing like Him," and fasting has no like among the acts of worship. One does not say that there is nothing like the fast. The thing is a matter of permanence or existence. Fasting is non-action. It is a non-existent intelligible and negative attribute. It has no like. It is not that there is nothing like it. This is the difference between the attribute of Allah in the negation of likeness and the way that the fast is described by it.

### **The faster being forbidden obscenity, shouting and strife**

Then the Lawgiver placed prohibitions on the faster. The prohibition is non-action and a negative attribute. He said, "he should then speak neither obscenely nor shout." He did not command him to an action, but forbade that he be described by certain actions. Fasting is non-action, so the relationship between fasting and what he forbade the faster is valid. Then he commanded that he say to the one who curses him or fights with him, "I am fasting," i.e. I am leaving this action which you are doing, fighter or curser, to me. By the command of his Lord, he disconnects himself from this action. He reports that he is not acting, i.e. he does not have the attribute of cursing or fighting for the one who curses and fights him.

### **The smell of the mouth of the faster with Allah**

Then he swore, "By the One who holds the soul of MUhammad in His hand, the changed breath of the faster..." This is the changed smell of the mouth of the faster which only exists by respiration. He respire these good words by which he is commanded. These words are: "I am fasting." These words and every breath of the faster is "more delectable on the Day of Rising," the day when people are resurrected for the Lord of the worlds, "with Allah." He used the name which joins all of their names and he used the name which has no like since only Allah is named by this name. It is in harmony with fasting which has no like.

He said, "more delectable than the scent of musk." The scent of musk is an existential matter which is perceived by smell. The person who has a balanced constitution enjoys it. The scent of changed breath is considered more fragrant with Allah than that, because the ascription of the perception of scents to Allah does not resemble the perception of scents to the smeller. We find it unpleasant, while with Him this breath is more sublime than the scent of musk. It is a described *ruh* which has no like as He described it. This scent is not like that scent. The scent of the faster comes from respiration. The scent of musk does not come from the respiration of musk.

## **Ibn 'Arabi with Musa ibn Muhammad al-Qabbab at the minaret in the Haram of Makka**

Something like of this happened to me. I was with Musa ibn Muhammad al-Qabbab at the minaret in the Haram of Makka at the Hazawwara door. The *adhan* was being given. He had some food which had a very offensive smell to everyone who smelled it. I had heard in Prophetic tradition that the angels take offence at that to which the children of Adam take offence and that it is forbidden to go near the mosques with the smell of garlic, onions and leeks. I spent the night resolved to tell that man to remove that food from the mosque for the sake of the angels. Then I saw Allah Almighty in a dream in which He told me, "Do not tell him about that food. Its smell with Me is not like its smell with you." In the morning, he came to us as he usually did and I told him what had transpired. He wept and prostrated to Allah out of thankfulness. Then he told me, "My master, in spite of this, *adab* with the Shari'a is better," and he removed it from the mosque, may Allah have mercy on him.

### **Celestial natures are averse to foul odours**

Sound natural constitutions in man and angel flee from foul unpleasant odours due to the offensiveness which they sense arising out of lack of harmony. The aspect of the Truth in foul odours is only perceived by Allah and whoever has the disposition to accept it among animals and men who have the nature of that animal. This is not the case with the angel. This is why he said, "with Allah". Inasmuch as the faster is a human being with sound constitution, he dislikes the bad breath of fasting in himself and others.

Do any creatures with sound constitution realise by their Lord a moment or in witnessing so that they absolutely perceive foul odours as pleasant? We have not heard of this. We said "absolutely" because some constitutions dislike the smell of musk and the rose, especially the hot constitution. That which is found to be offensive is not pleasant for the one with this constitution. This is why we said "absolutely" since most constitutions find musk, rose and the like fragrant. It is a rare constitution, i.e. unusual, which finds these pleasant smells offensive.

I do not know whether Allah has granted anyone the perception of the equality of scents since nothing has a foul smell with Him. We have not tasted this ourselves and it has not been transmitted to us that anyone else perceived that. Moreover, it is related that perfect men and the angels find these foul smells offensive. Only Allah perceives that as pleasant. This is transmitted. I also do not know what the case is with animals outside of man regarding that because Allah has not established me in the form of an animal other than man as He established me in the forms of His angels at times. Allah knows best.

### **The Gate of Quenching by which fasters enter the Garden**

By way of the meaning, the Shari'a has described fasting with the perfection above which there is no perfection. This is because Allah gave it a special door with a special name which demands perfection. It is called the Door of the Quenched. The fasters enter it. Quenching is a degree of perfection in drinking. After being quenched, the drinker does not accept any more to drink to all. Whenever he accepts, then he was not quenched, whether it is a land or not a land among the lands of the animals.

Muslim related from the *hadith* of Sahl ibn Sa'd that the Messenger of Allah said, "There is a door in the Garden called the Quenching. The fasters will enter it on the Day of Rising. None except them will enter it. It will be said, 'Where are the fasters?' and they will enter it. When the last of them has gone in it, it will be locked and no one else will enter it." That is not said about any of the commanded or forbidden acts of worship except for the fast. By "the Quenching," He made it clear that they obtain the attribute of perfection in action since they are described by that which has no like as we already said. In reality, the one who has no like is the perfect. The fasters among the gnostics enter it here, and there they will enter it with the knowledge of all creatures.

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