

Translation:

Kitāb Majmū‘ al-Tarbiyah

(The Book of the Compendium of Spiritual Cultivation / التّربية)

by the most eminent master, our leader Sayyidnā Muḥammad ibn Ṭāhir — may God exalt his sanctity.

In the name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.

All praise belongs to God, the Possessor of manifest signs, the Creator of the lofty heavens, who created all things in pairs and established, through them, a path to His Oneness (tawḥīd).

Thus, none of the attributes perceived by the senses can be ascribed to Him, nor can any of the characteristics apprehended by the intellect be attributed to Him. Minds have grown weary in attempting to grasp what might be made a description of Him, and so they have come to certainty in their own limitation. Intellects have failed to delimit Him, and thus have declared Him transcendent beyond all that they encompass of created matters.

Glory be to a God about whom the fires of inquiry have been extinguished in reports, concerning what tongues and lips might utter. Before the nobility of His Countenance, all faces and foreheads fall in prostration. Exalted and transcendent is He above what the الظالمون (wrongdoers) say—an exaltation most great.

I praise Him with all His praises, and glorify Him with the most beautiful of glorifications.

And I bear witness that there is no deity except God alone, without partner. And I bear witness that the master of the prophets and their crown, the pride of the righteous Imams and their lamp, Muḥammad, is His servant and His messenger—whom He singled out for His رسالة (mission) as a grace and favor, and in whose progeny He placed the Imamate until the Day of Resurrection as an honor and enduring distinction.

May blessings be upon him and upon his successor after him in his الأمة—the pillar of religion and its foundation, the friend (walī) of God upon His earth and among His servants:

Ali ibn Abi Talib—peace be upon them both—

and upon their progeny, the stars of truth and its banners, the lamps of tawḥīd and its order;

and upon the inheritor of their exalted مقام (rank), before whom the one who denies his true merit falls into نقصان—whether through deficiency or excess:

the servant of God, Abū al-Qāsim, His walī, our master, the مالک of our الرقاب (allegiance), the sun of our day and the Imam of our age:

Al-Tayyib Abu al-Qasim, Commander of the Faithful, the proof (ḥujjah) of God over all creation, and His clear and manifest path.

May God's blessings be upon them all.

أما بعد (To proceed):

I have compiled in this book such sciences as assist its reader in attaining knowledge of the matters of the rightly guiding da'wah and of worship, and in acquiring nearness (zulfa) and felicity (sa'adah). I have arranged it in both concise and detailed forms, and made it an introduction to what is intended to be read from the books of the rightly guiding da'wah.

I have named it *Kitāb al-Jawāhir* ("The Book of Jewels"), on account of its containing a selection of rare expressions and wondrous meanings.

And in God—Exalted is He—and in His awliyā' (chosen representatives) do we seek aid in guarding against error, though we are not free from it. There is no power and no strength except through God, the Most High, the Magnificent.

God is sufficient for us, and sufficient is He as a guardian.

Chapter (faṣl) on the knowledge of wuḍū' (ritual ablution) and ṣalāh (ritual prayer), and their ta'wīl (esoteric interpretation)

And God is the granter of success toward what is correct.

Section (bāb) on the ta'wīl of ṣalāh outwardly (ẓāhiran) and inwardly (bāṭinan), in summary

All praise belongs to God, the One worthy of praise. Blessings be upon His Messenger, our master Muḥammad and his pure progeny (āl), and He is sufficient for me and the best of guardians (wakīl).

In the name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful—and in Him we seek aid:

Place the vessel to your left, then pour water from it over your hands and wash them up to the wrists. When they are cleansed, move the vessel so that it is on your right. Then place your right hand into the water, taking from it, and say when washing the hands:

"In the name of God (bismillāh), by God (billāh), praise be to God (al-ḥamdu li-llāh); all the most beautiful names (al-asmā' al-ḥusnā) belong to God. [I act] in obedience to God and upon the creed (millah) of the Messenger of God—may blessings be upon him and his progeny."

Then wash the upper private part, saying:

"O God, fortify my chastity (farjī) against disobedience to You so that I may not disobey You."

Then wash the lower private part, saying:

“O God, conceal my nakedness (‘awrah) and forgive my lapse (zallah).”

Then rinse your mouth three times (maḍmaḍah), saying:

“O God, give me to drink a draught from the basin (ḥawḍ) of Your Prophet, by the hand of the Imām ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib—peace be upon him—after which I shall never thirst.”

Then inhale water into the nose (istinshāq), saying:

“O God, let me smell the fragrance of Your Garden (jannah) within Your Garden.”

Then wash your face up to the hairline, and run water through the beard, saying:

“O God, whiten my face by Your light on the Day when the faces of the believers are whitened and the faces of the disbelievers darkened; and illumine it with the light of īmān (faith).”

Then wash your right hand up to the elbows, saying:

“O God, give me my book (kitāb) in my right hand and take from me an easy reckoning (ḥisāb yasīr); do not give it to me in my left, nor from behind my back.”

Then wash your left hand, saying:

“O God, forgive me and my parents as they nurtured me when I was small.”

Then wipe your head (mash)—its front toward the front and its back toward the back—saying:

“O God, envelop me in Your mercy (raḥmah).”

Then wipe the ears and the neck, saying:

“O God, let me hear the caller of Your Garden within Your Garden; free my neck (raqabah) from the Fire, and protect me from chains (salāsil) and shackles (aghlāl), O Mighty (‘Azīz), O Compeller (Jabbār).”

Then wipe your feet, saying:

“O God, make my feet firm upon Your straight path (ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm) on the Day when the feet of the believers are made firm and the feet of Your criminal enemies slip.”

It is recommended (mustaḥabb) to perform a full washing (ghusl) after that.

ذكر ركعتي تحية المسجد (Description of the two rak'ahs of greeting the mosque)

When you enter the mosque (masjid), it is its due right that you perform two rak'ahs as a greeting.

You begin with the opening التكبير (takbīrat al-iḥrām), raising your hands to your ears. Then recite al-ḥamd (Sūrat al-Fātiḥah) and “Qul a‘ūdhu bi-rabb al-falaq.” Then say takbīr again, raising your hands to your ears, then bow (rukū‘) and say:

“Subḥāna rabbī al-‘aẓīm wa-bi-ḥamdih” three times.

Then raise your head, saying:

“Sami‘a Allāhu li-man ḥamidah,” raising your hands, and say quietly:

“Rabbanā laka al-ḥamd.”

Then prostrate (sujūd) and say in your سجود (sujūd):

“Subḥāna rabbī al-a‘lā wa-ta‘ālā” three times.

Then raise your head, say takbīr, and while sitting say:

“O God, to You belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth.”

Then prostrate again, saying the same as in the first.

Then stand and recite al-ḥamd and “Qul a‘ūdhu bi-rabb al-nās,” and perform rukū‘ and sujūd as before.

When you complete the second prostration, sit in the posture of tawarruk and perform the tashahhud, which is to say:

“In the name of God and by God: all greetings (taḥiyyāt), pure offerings (ṭayyibāt), prayers (ṣalawāt), purified (zākiyāt), sanctified (ṭāhirāt), abundant (sābighāt), pleasant (nā‘imāt), and fragrant, morning and evening, belong to God. Whatever is good, sincere, pure, growing, refined, and purified belongs to God; whatever is impure belongs to other than God.

I bear witness (ashhadu) that there is no deity but God alone, without partner; and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His servant and messenger, whom He sent with guidance and the religion of truth as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner before the Hour.

I bear witness that God is the best Lord, that Muḥammad is the best messenger, and that ‘Alī is the best walī. That Paradise (jannah) is true, that the Fire (nār) is true, that resurrection (ba‘th) is true, that the Hour (sā‘ah) is coming without doubt, and that God will raise those in the graves.

Upon this I live, upon this I die, and upon this I shall be raised alive, if God wills.

O God, bless (ṣalli) Muḥammad and the ﷺ Muḥammad, have mercy (irḥam) upon Muḥammad and the ﷺ Muḥammad, and bless (bārik) Muḥammad and the ﷺ Muḥammad as You blessed, greeted, and had mercy upon Ibrāhīm and the ﷺ Ibrāhīm among the worlds —our Lord, indeed You are Praiseworthy (Ḥamīd), Glorious (Majīd).”

Then give salām to your right and your left, saying:

“Al-salāmu ‘alaykum wa-raḥmatullāh wa-barakātuh, al-salāmu ‘alaykum wa-raḥmatullāh wa-barakātuh.”

These are the two rak‘ahs of greeting the mosque.

ذكر صلاة الظهر (Description of Ṣalāt al-Zuhr)

You perform the adhān (call to prayer) as follows:

“Allāhu akbar” four times,
“Ashhadu an lā ilāha illā Allāh” twice,
“Ashhadu anna Muḥammadan rasūl Allāh” twice,
“Ashhadu anna mawlānā ‘Aliyyan walī Allāh” twice,
“Ḥayya ‘alā al-ṣalāh” twice,
“Ḥayya ‘alā al-falāḥ” twice,
“Ḥayya ‘alā khayr al-‘amal” twice,
“Muḥammad wa-‘Alī khayr al-bashar wa-‘itratuhumā khayr al-‘itr” twice,
“Allāhu akbar” twice,
“Lā ilāha illā Allāh” twice.

Then begin with takbīrat al-iḥrām, raising your hands to your ears, and perform six rak‘ahs, giving tashahhud and taslīm after every two rak‘ahs. Each pair begins with takbīrat al-iḥrām, and you perform rukū‘, sujūd, tashahhud, and taslīm as described in the two rak‘ahs of taḥiyyat al-masjid.

This is the sunnah of zuhr, and it is called **ṣalāt al-awwābīn** (the prayer of the oft-returning). Know this—may you be granted success, God willing.

ذكر فريضة الظهر (Description of the Farīḍah of Ṣalāt al-Zuhr)

You perform the iqāmah as follows:

“Allāhu akbar” four times,
“Ashhadu an lā ilāha illā Allāh” twice,
“Ashhadu anna Muḥammadan rasūl Allāh” twice,
“Ḥayya ‘alā al-ṣalāh” twice,
“Ḥayya ‘alā al-falāḥ” twice,
“Ḥayya ‘alā khayr al-‘amal” twice,
“Qad qāmat al-ṣalāh” twice,
“Allāhu akbar” twice,
“Lā ilāha illā Allāh” once.

Then say takbīrat al-iḥrām, raising your hands, and recite the tawajjuh:

“I have turned my face toward the One who originated the heavens and the earth, as a ḥanīf and a muslim, and I am not among the mushrikūn. Indeed, my ṣalāh, my sacrifice (nusuk), my life (maḥyā), and my death (mamāt) belong to God, Lord of the worlds. He has no partner; with this I have been commanded, and I am among the muslimūn—upon the millah of Ibrāhīm, the dīn of Muḥammad, and the walāyah of ‘Alī, and I disassociate (barā’ah) from his ظلم (oppressive) enemies.”

Then recite:

“A‘ūdhu bi-llāh min al-shayṭān al-rajīm, bismillāh al-raḥmān al-raḥīm,” followed by al-ḥamd (Sūrat al-Fātiḥah) and another sūrah.

Then perform rukū‘ and sujūd. After completing the second sujūd, sit in tawarruk and perform tashahhud:

“Bismillāh wa-billāh, al-ḥamdu li-llāh, wa-al-asmā’ al-ḥusnā kulluhā li-llāh. Ashhadu an lā ilāha illā Allāh waḥdahu lā sharīk lah, wa ashhadu anna Muḥammadan ‘abduhu wa-rasūluh. Allāhumma ṣalli ‘alā Muḥammad nabiyyik wa-taqabbal shafā’atahu fī ummatih wa-ṣalli ‘alā ahl baytih.”

Then stand and recite al-ḥamd only, then perform rukū‘ and sujūd, and recite the tashahhud as described in the prayer of taḥiyyat al-masjid. Then conclude with taslīm.

Then extend your hands, placing the inner palms upon your knees facing your face, and perform **taqarrub (seeking nearness)**, saying:

“O God, I draw near (ataqarrab) to You through You, through Muḥammad Your Prophet, through ‘Alī the waṣī of Your Prophet and Your walī, through Fāṭimah al-Zahrā’, daughter of Your Prophet, through al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, two Imāms, grandsons (sibṭay) of Your Prophet, through ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn, Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī, Ja‘far ibn Muḥammad, Ismā‘īl ibn Ja‘far, Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl, and through the three concealed Imāms (al-a‘immah al-mastūrīn) out of fear of Your oppressive enemies: ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad, Aḥmad ibn ‘Abd Allāh, and al-Ḥusayn ibn Aḥmad; and through those قائمین (upholders) from their progeny and descendants; and through the possessors of resolve (ulū al-‘azm) among them: ‘Abd Allāh al-Imām al-Mahdī bi-llāh, al-Qā‘im bi-amr Allāh, al-Manṣūr bi-naṣr Allāh, al-Mu‘izz li-dīn Allāh, al-‘Azīz bi-llāh, al-Ḥākīm bi-amr Allāh, al-Zāhir li-i‘zāz dīn Allāh, al-Mustanṣir bi-llāh, al-Musta‘lī bi-sultān kalimāt Allāh, and al-Manṣūr Abū ‘Alī al-Āmir bi-aḥkām Allāh—those transferred to the abode of Your generosity and dwelling in the station of Your mercy—the pure Imāms (al-a‘immah al-ṭāhirīn) and rightly guided guides (al-hudāt al-rāshidīn).

And I draw near to You through our master, our lord, the Imām of our age (imām al-zamān) and the possessor of our command (walī amrinā):

al-Imām al-Ṭayyib Abī al-Qāsim, Amīr al-Mu‘minīn—may God’s blessings be upon him, his pure forefathers, and his noble awaited descendants until the Day of Judgment.

O God, I draw near to You through them, I show loyalty (tawallā) to them, and I disassociate (barā’ah) from their enemies. O God, gather me with them, make me firm upon their obedience, and make me, through them, honored in Your sight and among the felicitous in this world and the Hereafter, and among the near ones (al-muqarrabīn).

I call You to witness, O God, with the realities of sincerity (ikhhlāṣ) and the truthfulness of certainty (yaqīn), that they are Your deputies (khulafā') on Your earth, Your proofs (ḥujaj) over Your creation, the means (wasā'il) to You, and the gates of Your mercy (abwāb raḥmatik). May God's blessings be upon them all."

Then prostrate and place your cheeks upon the ground, saying:

"My face has fallen in سجود (prostration) before the One who created it and split open its hearing and sight. O God, hasten the relief (faraj) of the believers in the شرق (east) and غرب (west) of the earth through the Imām al-Ṭayyib Abī al-Qāsim, Amīr al-Mu'minīn—may God's blessings be upon him, his pure forefathers, and his noble awaited descendants until the Day of Judgment."

This is the farīdah of ṣalāt al-ẓuhr.

Then you stand and perform four rak'ahs of the nāfilah of ẓuhr, beginning each two rak'ahs with takbīrat al-iḥrām and ending with tashahhud and taslīm as done in the earlier sunnah prayer.

*Thus, the total is **fourteen rak'ahs** for ṣalāt al-ẓuhr—so know this.*

العصر (Ṣalāt al-'Aṣr)

Ṣalāt al-'aṣr consists of eight rak'ahs: four sunnah and four farīdah.

You perform the adhān as previously described, then pray four rak'ahs of the sunnah of 'aṣr, giving tashahhud and taslīm after every two rak'ahs, as done before.

ذكر فريضة العصر (Description of the Farīdah of Ṣalāt al-'Aṣr)

You perform the iqāmah as mentioned and recite the tawajjuh as described earlier.

*Then you pray two rak'ahs reciting al-ḥamd and a sūrah, and perform tashahhud with the first tashahhud mentioned in ṣalāt al-ẓuhr, **without taslīm**.*

Then you pray two more rak'ahs reciting al-ḥamd only, and perform the second tashahhud mentioned in ṣalāt al-ẓuhr, then give taslīm.

*You do **not** perform taqarrub (supplication of nearness) after ṣalāt al-'aṣr, nor do you make du'ā' afterward.*

This is ṣalāt al-'aṣr.

ذكر صلاة المغرب (Ṣalāt al-Maghrib)

You perform the adhān as described, then sit briefly to distinguish between the adhān and iqāmah.

Then perform the iqāmah and recite the tawajjuh.

You pray two rak'ahs, reciting al-ḥamd and a sūrah in each. Then perform the first tashahhud **without taslīm**.

Then stand and pray one rak'ah, reciting al-ḥamd only. Then perform the second tashahhud and give taslīm.

After that, perform taqarrub similar to the du'ā' of taqarrub in ṣalāt al-ẓuhr.

Then pray the sunnah of maghrib: six rak'ahs, performing each two rak'ahs with takbīrat al-iḥrām and ending with the second tashahhud and taslīm, as described previously.

Thus, ṣalāt al-maghrib totals **nine rak'ahs**.

ذكر صلاة العشاء الآخرة (Ṣalāt al-'Ishā' al-Ākhirah)

You perform the adhān as described and pray four rak'ahs of sunnah as before.

Then perform the iqāmah and recite the tawajjuh.

You then pray four rak'ahs:

- In the first two: recite al-ḥamd and a sūrah, and perform the first tashahhud without taslīm.
- In the last two: recite al-ḥamd only, then perform the second tashahhud and give taslīm.

Then you conclude (tataṣarraf).

After that, stand and pray four rak'ahs of nāfilah, performed as described earlier for the sunnah prayers.

This is ṣalāt al-'ishā' al-ākhirah.

ذكر صلاة الشفع والوتر (Ṣalāt al-Shaf' wa al-Witr)

Begin with takbīrat al-iḥrām and pray two rak'ahs:

- In the first: recite al-ḥamd and "Subḥ ism rabbika al-a'lā"

- In the second: recite al-ḥamd and “Qul yā ayyuhā al-kāfirūn”

Then perform tashahhud and taslīm.

Then stand, say takbīrat al-iḥrām, and pray one rak‘ah:

- Recite al-ḥamd and “Qul huwa Allāhu aḥad”

Then perform rukū‘. When you rise from rukū‘, extend your palms facing your face and say:

“O God, You see and are not seen; You are in the highest station. To You is the *النهاية* (end), to You is the return (ruj‘ā), to You are sights raised, steps directed, necks extended, and hands stretched.

O One to whom hands are extended, to whom hearts are directed, to whom eyes humble themselves, to whom necks submit—we complain to You of the loss of our Prophet, the smallness of our number, and the *كثرة* (abundance) of our enemies.

And we thank You for the blessing of our Imām, the son of our Prophet, the guide to You and the *دليل* (proof) for us toward You:

al-Imām al-Ṭayyib Abī al-Qāsim, Amīr al-Mu‘minīn.

We ask You to send blessings upon him, his pure forefathers, and his noble descendants awaited until the Day of Judgment; and that You support him with a victory by which You honor Your dīn and aid Your awliyā’.

O God, unite hearts upon Your obedience and upon belief in his imāmah. Grant him victory over his rebellious enemies.

O Lord of creation, Lord of the worlds—make certainty (yaqīn) firm in my heart, increase me in guidance (hudā), mercy (raḥmah), light (nūr), and forgiveness (maghfirah), and guide me to Your straight path (ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm).

O my Lord, grant me good (ḥasanah) in this world and good in the Hereafter, and protect me from the punishment of the Fire, by Your mercy, O Most Merciful of the merciful.”

Then prostrate, perform tashahhud and taslīm.

Then sit cross-legged (mutarabbī’), say takbīrat al-iḥrām, and pray two rak‘ahs while seated:

- In the first: al-ḥamd and “Qul a‘ūdhu bi-rabb al-falaq”
- In the second: al-ḥamd and “Qul a‘ūdhu bi-rabb al-nās”

Then perform tashahhud and taslīm.

Thus, ṣalāt al-shaf‘ wa al-witr totals **four rak‘ahs**, since two rak‘ahs performed sitting are equivalent to one rak‘ah standing.

Know this—may you be granted success, God willing.

ذكر صلاة الفجر (Ṣalāt al-Fajr)

Perform the adhān as described. Then pray **two rak'ahs of sunnah**, perform tashahhud and taslīm.

Then stand, perform the iqāmah as described, recite the tawajjuh, and pray **two rak'ahs of farīdah**, reciting al-ḥamd and a sūrah in each.

After completing the recitation in the second rak'ah, before performing rukū', extend your palms facing your face and perform **qunūt**, saying:

"O Allah, we praise You, seek Your help, and ask Your forgiveness. We believe in You and trust in You. We commend Your goodness, thank You, and submit before You. We fear Your punishment, for Your punishment reaches the disbelievers. O Allah, punish the disbelievers, hypocrites, and deniers, and support Your awliyā' from the Imāms among the purified Ahl al-Bayt. O Allah, forgive me, the believing men and women, reconcile them among themselves, place faith and wisdom in their hearts, unify their word, fix them upon Your obedience, and grant them victory over Your enemies. O Allah, guide me among those You have guided, protect me among those You have protected, take me as Your ward among those You have taken, bless me in what You have given, and protect me from what You have decreed, for You decree and none can decree over You. He whom You support is not humbled, and he whom You oppose is not honored. Blessed and exalted are You. There is no deity except You. I seek Your forgiveness and turn to You in repentance. I ask You for good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and protect me from the punishment of the Fire."

Then perform rukū' and sujūd, recite tashahhud, give taslīm, and perform **taqarrub** as in the first taqarrub.

Notes on Recitation in Ṣalāh:

- In **ṣuḥr** and **ʿaṣr**, recitation is done quietly (mukhāfah).
- In **maghrib**, **ʿishā** **al-ākhirah**, and **fajr**, recitation is aloud (jahr), except for rak'ahs in which only al-ḥamd is recited—they are quiet.
- **Sunnah** rak'ahs are also recited quietly, except for shaf' and witr, which are recited aloud.
- It is recommended to **lengthen recitation** in **ʿishā** **al-ākhirah** and **fajr**, **shorten** in **ʿaṣr** and **maghrib**, and **moderate** in **ṣuḥr**.

- In *farā'id*, recitation follows the order of the *Qur'ān* from top to bottom (longer surahs first). In *sunnah* prayers, it is from bottom to top.
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Times of Ṣalāh:

- The beginning of **ṣuḥr**: when the sun passes its zenith.
- The end of **ṣuḥr**: beginning of **‘aṣr** (shadow of any object equals its length).
- End of **‘aṣr**: yellowing of the sun.
- **Maghrib**: sunset (one precise time).
- **‘ishā’ al-ākhirah**: starts at the disappearance of twilight, ends at midnight. *Witr* after this is recommended at the last part of night.
- **Fajr**: begins at dawn, ends before sunrise.

*Imām Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq (‘a) said: each ṣalāh has **two times**, the beginning (first) and the end (last). The first time is more meritorious, except for ‘ishā’ al-ākhirah, whose last time is preferable. Maghrib has only one time.*

On the Inner Meaning of Purification and Ṣalāh:

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate. Praise belongs to Allah, outwardly and inwardly. Blessings upon Muhammad, the “Mountain of Light,” the “Spring of Illumination,” and his successor who fulfilled his right, Ali ibn Abi Talib (‘a), and the Imāms from their progeny—chosen of Allah.

O happy brother, may Allah grant you His pleasure and make you dwell in the gardens of Paradise.

*Since **ṣalāh** is the pillar of religion and the sign of the monotheists, and no ṣalāh is valid without **ṭahārah** (purification), which requires **water** or **ṭurb** (dust) if water is unavailable, and **niyyah** (intention) is required, we first explain the inner meaning of **niyyah** and purification before the inner meaning of ṣalāh.*

- *Niyyah represents obedience/walayat to the Imām of the Time (wali al-zamān).*
- *Purification with water symbolizes the purification of the soul; water from rivers or wells represents knowledge transmitted from the Prophet (ṣ) to his successor (‘a) and the Imāms.*

- *Water is needed to survive. Similarly, your soul needs knowledge to survive.*
- *Contaminated water (Lake) symbolizes the influence of corrupt leaders or enemies of truth.*

Metaphorical Correspondences:

- **Water:** *Ilm (knowledge)*
- **Body:** *Soul*
- **Sky:** *the Nāṭiq (speaking Imām).*
- **Pure land:** *the legitimate successor (the Wasi).*
- **Impure land:** *corrupt leaders of the community (Dushman).*
- **River and Well:** *Imam and Zahir, Hujjah/Mansoos and Tawil*
- **Bucket:** *Dai al Balagh (rank lower than imam)*
- **Sink:** *Dai al Mutlaq*
- **Hands:** *the authorized deputies (mādhūn and makāsir), whose washing signifies obedience.*
- **Five Fingers:** *5 zakat and Namaaz*
- **Istingha:** *Removing impurities from mind (false conceptions)*
- **Mouth and teeth:** *the hujjah (proof) and its Hudood.*
- **Kuli:** *Maarefat*
- **Teeth Brush:** *Dai*
- **Nose:** *the Imām of the Time and his predecessor.*
 - *The Nose (Imam) cant do the work of the mouth (Hujjah), but the mouth can do the work of the Nose.*
- **Face:** *the Nāṭiq, whose washing signifies adherence to his guidance.*
- **Head:** *the Aql e Awwal, the “head of the spiritual and corporeal world.”*

- **Feet:** the foundations of religion.

Thus, **ṭahārah** (ablution) represents seven boundaries corresponding to the seven speaking Imāms, seven foundations, and the seven Imāms as guides to the truth of God.

Tayammum (dry ablution) with dust represents taking knowledge from a pious believer when water is unavailable, until one can reach the true boundaries (Imāms).

- Wiping the face and hands with dust gives the believer two levels of faith:

1. Liberation from ignorance
2. Attachment to the covenant of the Imām

These steps correspond to recognition of the Nāṭiq of the Time.

Chapter on the Interpretation of Prayer

Likewise, the congregational mosque (al-masjid al-jami') in some aspects of interpretation symbolizes the call to truth, while in another aspect it symbolizes the caller of the community. Prayer performed therein symbolizes the visitation of that caller and recognition of his right, as God Almighty said: "The mosques of God shall be maintained by those who believe in God and the Last Day" — and the other mosques symbolize all the other boundaries below that caller. The minaret symbolizes the station of the speaker of the era, and its being higher than other buildings symbolizes its superiority over the physical boundaries. The muezzin symbolizes the caller, and his standing at the minaret symbolizes the caller inviting people to recognize the station of the speaker and to understand the interpretation of his law and its elucidation. His proclamation through the call to prayer symbolizes the outward manifestation of his call and its dissemination to both the public and the select, urging them to act upon it. The muezzin's effort in raising his voice symbolizes the caller's dissemination of the hidden interpretation and what benefits his followers, convincing them with clarity.

Chapter

The fourfold takbīr at the beginning of the call to prayer symbolizes God's four boundaries: intellect, soul, speaker, and foundation, indicating the exalted status of these stations. The phrase "I testify that there is no god but God", repeated twice, symbolizes the singularity of the primary intellect, acknowledging divinity in both spiritual and physical domains, with all boundaries contained within it, uniting divinity with it. The phrase "I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of God", repeated twice, symbolizes the elevated station of the Prophet,

connected to the primary intellect beyond the connection of other speakers before him, leaving no intermediary between him and it.

The phrase “Come to prayer” with a glance to the right side is a greeting and good news to the fully realized believers, committed to the upright boundaries, seeking the truths of the religious meanings explained to them — they are the people of the right. The phrase “Come to success”, with a glance to the left, is a greeting to the covenant-bound, forbidden ones, alerting them to follow and join the people of the right. The phrase “Come to the best of deeds” points to serving the callers in their mission and extracting souls absorbed in the sea of materiality and the secrets of nature, as this is the highest deed. The phrase “Muhammad and Ali are the best of humanity, and their progeny the best of lineages” signals the refutation of exaggerators and those negligent in what they claim, accusing them wrongly. The phrase “God is greatest” indicates that the primary intellect is the greatest of spiritual and physical boundaries. The repeated “There is no god but God” signifies the singularity of the primary intellect in the rank of unity, above all other intellects, the speaker in his time, and the Imam in his era, in the rank of unity above all physical boundaries. In one interpretation, there is no Imam except the Imam of the time.

The ten words of the call to prayer symbolize the ten boundaries of religion, and their doubling signifies the union of spiritual and physical boundaries, their convergence, and succession one upon another.

Chapter

The call of iqāmah symbolizes the call of the inner guardian (al-wasī al-bāṭin). Its timing in the life of the speaker is proportional and performing it is a command. The lowering of the voice by the one reciting it symbolizes the concealment of the hidden knowledge by the caller from those not fit to receive it. The phrase “The prayer has been established” symbolizes the caller establishing both the outward and inward call, as he is commanded to uphold both together. The single repetition of “There is no god but God” at the end symbolizes the singularity of the ultimate boundary, which remains standing in remembrance with the rank of unity, beyond all previous physical boundaries, indicated by its uniqueness.

Chapter

Prayer is performed five times at five specific times. The five times symbolize the five spiritual boundaries, and the five prayers symbolize the five physical boundaries. The first prayer, the Dhuhr prayer, is called the first because it was the first prayer observed and manifested in Islam. It symbolizes the speaker of the era (peace be upon him). Its fourteen

rak'ahs — six called the salat al-zuhr, four obligatory, and four voluntary — have specific symbolic meanings:

- *The six rak'ahs symbolize the six perfected Imams of the era of Christ, who guide toward the appearance of Muhammad to manifest sanctity and glorification: Abd Shams Bashashi, Dhu al-Nun (Yunus ibn Matta), Habib al-Najjar, Marwah al-Rahib, 'Amir, and Sergis.*
 - *The four obligatory rak'ahs symbolize the station of Muhammad (peace be upon him), corresponding to the letters of his name. When separated, the first rak'ah symbolizes the speaker, the first boundary and its head, recited with Al-Fatiha and a surah, representing both the outward and inward aspects. The second rak'ah symbolizes the inheritor of his station, his successor, holding the rank of both outward and inward, reciting Al-Fatiha and a surah, showing he carries on the speaker's role. The remaining two rak'ahs symbolize their respective gates, reciting only Al-Fatiha, symbolizing each gate's operation in its time with inward rank alone.*
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Chapter

When the worshipper stands for prayer and pronounces the opening takbīr, it symbolizes the taking of an oath by the one responding, entering into the sanctuary of the Imam. Facing the qiblah symbolizes obedience to the Imam, the qiblah of qiblahs. The worshipper faces the dense with his body and the subtle with his spirit. Raising the hands to the ears during the opening takbīr and other takbīrs symbolizes the connection of lower boundaries to higher ones, the elevation of actions to the realm of words, and their return, as they are elevated back to the divine. It also symbolizes the worshipper's approach from lower boundaries to higher ones, and through them to God Almighty, asserting divinity and His greatness.

Similarly, raising the hands to the ears during prostration symbolizes this connection. Recitation in prayer symbolizes knowledge and exposition, as all knowledge without exposition is flawed. Bowing during Dhuhr prayer symbolizes the foundation, the gate of the speaker (peace be upon him). Prostration symbolizes the speaker, and performing two prostrations indicates the speaker's operation in both outward and inward rank, while a single bow indicates the foundation's operation in inward rank alone. This applies during the speaker's life as he is its gate and proof. Once the matter was entrusted and confirmed, and he moved to the abode of divine honor, he stood in his station with both outward and inward rank, while his gate stood with inward rank alone. Bowing can also symbolize the gate of the Imam, and prostration the Imam, because the Imam, when the mission of the call is imparted to him, operates in both outward and inward, as he is in the station of the speaker. The gate represents the foundation first, as its share in remembrance is that of both.

Chapter

When the worshipper stands for prayer, he is standing before God Almighty, humbling himself as a plant does, which possesses no power to harm or benefit itself. He is submissive to God and obedient to the caller of his community. In this, he embodies the act of standing, as he stands by the command of the call, both outwardly and inwardly, acknowledging the right of the caller and seeking through him those boundaries above him, and through them all, reaching God Almighty.

When he bows, he humbles himself before God, like the mute, lowly animal standing before Him, submitting to the authority of the Imam of the time, who is the gate. He embodies the act of bowing, having no access to the Imam except through him, seeking through him and through them all to God Almighty.

When he prostrates, he humbles himself before God and His saints, like the metal beneath the feet, submissive and acknowledging the right of the Imam of the time, who is symbolized in the act of prostration. He obeys and seeks through him God's forgiveness.

When he sits for the testimony (tashahhud), he symbolizes acknowledgment of all boundaries. When he concludes the prayer with salutation to the right and left, he is surrendering to the authority of the speaker and the foundation, to the Imam of the time, and to the proof, who is the gate of the Imam (peace be upon him).

Bowing the head in prayer symbolizes obedience to what benefits him and humbleness toward it. Continuously looking at the place of prostration symbolizes adherence to the law established by the speaker, who is represented in prostration, without turning to the right or left — that is, without listening to divergent opinions of exaggerators or those negligent in the truth. He does not play with pebbles or stones during prayer, symbolizing that he does not share the teachings of the outward with those unready to receive them, nor does he play with his beard, meaning the initiate should not seek the higher boundaries until fully nourished and understanding the law and its inner and outer meanings. Once this is understood, he must pursue knowledge of the higher boundaries, for the beard symbolizes the seven upper boundaries, divided into seven parts: the sides, mustache, cheeks, throat, and chin. Bringing the feet together symbolizes adherence to both outward and inward dimensions.

Chapter

The congregation should draw close together during prayer so that Satan does not intervene, symbolizing the joining of boundaries, adding each to the other, placing each in its proper position. Know that the respondent is within the fully realized believer, the believer within the assistants, the assistants within the authorized ones, the authorized within the caller, the caller within the proof, the proof within the gate, the gate within the

Imam, the Imam within the guardian, the guardian within the speaking Prophet (peace be upon him).

Separating the fingers on the knee during bowing symbolizes the separation of the foundation's proofs after the command was given to him. Bringing them together in prostration symbolizes that the speaker (peace be upon him) did not separate his proofs in his region; they were called in his presence without separation. Similarly, extending the hands while standing symbolizes the extension of the foundation's proofs, for the speaker used to hold his hands to his chest while standing, symbolizing the gathering of boundaries and their unification under his guardian, represented by the chest. Once the command was passed, he extended his hands, symbolizing the distribution of boundaries. This is why the practice of some differs, placing hands on the chest contrary to the example of the Commander of the Faithful and his followers, who extended their hands.

Sitting on the left leg and placing the right on the ground symbolizes reliance in God's religion on the proof of the Imam, who is the gate, and on the foundation of the speaker, as both symbolize the earth. The four rak'ahs of Dhuhr's voluntary prayer symbolize the four proofs of the speaker (peace be upon him and them).

Chapter

The Asr prayer consists of eight rak'ahs: four voluntary, four obligatory. They symbolize the one standing in remembrance (peace be upon him), with the era of the speaker connected to his era, and his call connected to his call. Hence, the end of Dhuhr prayer coincides with the beginning of Asr. The four voluntary rak'ahs symbolize the four sanctified proofs standing before him (peace be upon him), while the four obligatory rak'ahs symbolize his standing, corresponding to the letters of his name. He reconciles all differences and returns them to his view; this is why it is called the Asr prayer.

Chapter

Maghrib prayer consists of nine rak'ahs: three obligatory and six voluntary. These symbolize the guardian, performed after sunset, reflecting the continuation after the transfer of the speaker, symbolized by the sun, with concealment prevailing after him to protect the right of the Commander of the Faithful. The three obligatory rak'ahs correspond to the letters of his name. The first two are recited with Al-Fatiha and a surah, like in Dhuhr, the third with Al-Fatiha only, symbolizing his gate. The six voluntary rak'ahs symbolize the six spiritual rulers of the religion: the proof, the universal caller, the absolute caller, the limited caller, the authorized one, and the assistant. In interpretation, they also correspond to the six perfected Imams: al-Hasan, al-Husayn, Zayn al-Abidin, Muhammad al-Baqir, Ja'far al-Sadiq, and Isma'il.

Chapter

'Isha prayer symbolizes the Imam of the time, standing in every moment. It has twelve rak'ahs: four voluntary, four obligatory, four supererogatory. The four voluntary rak'ahs symbolize his four sanctified proofs, the four obligatory his station, the first two separate rak'ahs symbolize him and his successor, the third and fourth rak'ahs symbolize their respective gates. The four supererogatory rak'ahs symbolize the four sanctified proofs for the Imam inheriting the station of the master of the era. The arrangement of voluntary rak'ahs before and supererogatory after symbolizes that the call continues before and after him, connected to those who preceded and succeeded.

Chapter

Shaf' and Witr prayers consist of three rak'ahs, with two of sitting. The three rak'ahs symbolize the gates of the three concealed Imams, and also their three callers during concealment. The two sitting rak'ahs symbolize the authorized one and the assistant standing before them.

Chapter

Fajr prayer consists of four rak'ahs: two voluntary, two obligatory, symbolizing the call of our master, al-Mahdi (peace be upon him). The first two voluntary rak'ahs symbolize the standing of his proof before him calling toward him, and the two obligatory rak'ahs symbolize him; if separated, the first rak'ah symbolizes him, the second his successor inheriting his station (peace be upon them).

Chapter

Know that daytime symbolizes the speaker (peace be upon him) and his outward call to both the select and the public; nighttime symbolizes his hidden call and the gate standing therein. During daytime prayer, the worshipper recites quietly; during nighttime prayer, aloud — symbolizing the dissemination of esoteric wisdom to the inward and its secrets to the outward.

The worshipper's recitation in bowing, "Glory be to my Lord, the Most Great, and praise be to Him", acknowledges the virtue of the speaker's proof, exalting his station, as well as that of the gate of the Imam in his era. The recitation in prostration, "Glory be to my Lord, the Most High, and Exalted", acknowledges the exalted station of the speaker in his era, the

guardian in his era, and the Imam inheriting their station, as he occupies the highest and noblest ranks of physical boundaries.

Completion of Prayer

The completeness of prayer consists of fourteen components: ablution (*wuḍūʿ*), opening (*istiftāḥ*), the call to prayer (*adhān*), the *iqāmah*, orientation (toward the *qiblah*), recitation, bowing, prostration, glorification (*tasbīḥ*), praise (*taḥmīd*), testimony (*tashahhud*), salutation (*taslīm*), the supplication of *qunūt*, and the supplication of nearness.

Know that the worshipper's raising of his hands during *qunūt* symbolizes seeking mediation through the spiritual boundaries—represented by the hands—toward those higher than them, and through them all to God Almighty. The worshipper must gather all these fourteen components, for through them his prayer is perfected. Likewise, the believer must know the seven speakers (*nuṭāqāʿ*), the seven trustees (*awṣiyāʿ*), and the seven completing Imams, for they are the pillars of the true call. Whoever does not know them or fulfill their rights, his knowledge and faith are incomplete.

Chapter

Know that the two *rakʿahs* prayed by one entering the mosque symbolize the authorized one (*al-maʿdhūn*) and the assistant (*al-mukāsir*), through whom the initiate first connects. Performing these two *rakʿahs* symbolizes obedience to them and acknowledgment of their right, for through them is his life, and through sincere loyalty to them is his salvation. For this reason, the recitation in them is from the beginning of the *Qurʿan* to its end, and they are given a rank similar to obligatory acts. Likewise, the recitation in the two *rakʿahs* of the *sunnah* of *Fajr*—from the beginning of the *Qurʿan* to its end—indicates the *فضل* (excellence) of the two proofs of the Mahdi and the *عظم* (greatness) of their striving above other *sunnah* prayers.

Chapter

Know that the mosque has twelve etiquettes:

- 1. Entering with the right foot first and delaying the left**

This symbolizes that one entering the call of truth must prioritize belief in the *فضل* (virtue) of his Imam and disassociate from his opponent and false claimant.

- 2. Mentioning God upon entering**

This symbolizes taking the covenant and connecting with one's guide in both the branches and roots of truth. It reflects the meaning of the verse: "Do not eat of that over which God's name has not been mentioned"—that is, do not disclose truths to those who have not taken the covenant of the Imam of the time.

3. **Greeting the mosque with two rak'ahs**

This symbolizes acknowledgment of obedience to one's guide and the authorized intermediary.

4. **Sitting facing the qiblah while waiting for prayer**

Its inner meaning is sincere orientation toward the Imam of the time with loyalty and devotion.

5. **Not announcing lost items in the mosque**

This symbolizes that the initiate should not reveal wisdom to those who do not follow the Imam of the time.

6. **Avoiding spitting in the mosque except when necessary**

This symbolizes refraining from improper speech before one's داعي (caller/guide). The Prophet said that the mosque recoils from such acts just as a person recoils from ضرب (striking).

7. **Not engaging in buying and selling in the mosque**

Its inner meaning is that the initiate must focus fully on the teachings of his guide and not distract himself with worldly matters. God تعالى says: "Woe to those who pray, yet are heedless of their prayer..."—the heedless are those who turn away from the Imam, and the ostentatious are those who outwardly display obedience while inwardly opposing it.

As said by Imam 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (peace be upon him):

"Two men have broken my back: a sinful believer and a devout disbeliever..."

8. **Not directing weapons toward the qiblah**

This symbolizes that one must not oppose or rebel against the Imam. Just as a follower does not oppose the Imam in prayer, he must not oppose him in doctrine.

9. **Not turning right or left during prayer**

Meaning one should not incline toward divergent doctrines.

10. **Keeping the gaze fixed on the place of prostration**

This symbolizes adherence to one's guide and intermediary.

11. **Remaining silent when the Imam recites**

This symbolizes attentive listening to one's teacher without اعتراض (objection).

12. **Exiting with the left foot first**

This symbolizes concealing one's beliefs and teachings upon leaving the presence of the داعي.

Know that prayer performed in different mosques carries different درجات (degrees of merit):

- Prayer in a neighborhood mosque equals **12 prayers**
- Prayer in a market mosque equals **25 prayers**
- Prayer in a congregational mosque equals **50 prayers**
- Prayer in the mosque of the Prophet equals **100 prayers**
- Prayer in Bayt al-Maqdis equals **500 prayers**
- Prayer in the Sacred House (Ka'bah) equals **1000 prayers**

Know this, and may you be granted success, if God wills.

Chapter

Know that the Sacred House (Bayt Allāh al-Ḥarām) symbolizes the Imam (peace be upon him). Whoever enters into his الدعوة (call) is safe, provided he avoids major sins and grave transgressions. Connection to him is connection to God تعالى, and obedience to him is the perfection of religion.

Just as the number one thousand (al-alf) represents the fourth rank in the ترتيب (ordering) of numbers—units, tens, hundreds, and thousands—so too does it signify completion. Thus, prayer in the Sacred House is equivalent to one thousand prayers, because its beneficial symbolic correspondences are complete.

Prayer in Bayt al-Maqdis is half of that (five hundred), symbolizing the ḥujjah (proof) who follows the Imam and is connected to him in rank, linked to him with gentleness and subtlety. Connection to the ḥujjah is connection to the Imam, and his rank follows the Imam's in perfection.

The Mosque of the Messenger (peace be upon him) symbolizes the داعي (caller) who follows the path of the ḥujjah. Prayer therein equals one hundred prayers, which is one-fifth of Bayt al-Maqdis and one-tenth of the Sacred House. This reflects the proportional relationship between the rank of the داعي and that of the ḥujjah and the Imam.

Know that the congregational mosque symbolizes the داعي المطلق (absolute caller), who stands as a veil and gate for the داعي البلاغ (caller of proclamation), assisting the مأذون (authorized) and his companions. He is also called داعي الإحلال, distinguished by dignity and majesty, sharing equally with the داعي البلاغ in explaining doctrine through both wealth and self. Thus, prayer therein equals fifty prayers.

The market mosque symbolizes the مأذون غير المحدود (unrestricted authorized one), while the neighborhood mosque symbolizes the مأذون المحدود (restricted authorized one). The unrestricted مأذون corresponds to the داعي الإحلال, and the restricted مأذون corresponds to the unrestricted one in degrees of completeness and correctness.

Whoever connects with these ranks through sound worship, and performs prayer in these stations while knowing their symbolic meanings, attains the مقام (rank) of precedence in felicity. He fulfills prayer outwardly and completes its conditions inwardly through knowledge of the حدود (spiritual hierarchies), which guide to the reality of the One worshipped.

Thus, it is obligatory upon every true believer to establish prayer both outwardly and inwardly, and to hold this belief inwardly and outwardly, openly and secretly—so that his body fulfills its obligations outwardly, and his soul realizes the truths inwardly. In this way, his existence is rectified and his worship becomes true.

Chapter

Know, O brother—may God grant you happiness and success—that God تعالى did not prescribe prayer upon His servants as a burden or hardship. Rather, out of His عظيم فضل (great فضل) and mercy, He made prayer a symbol pointing to a deeper reality, and a sensory act indicating an intellectual truth.

It guides toward His noble spiritual boundaries, whose obedience purifies bodies, whose loyalty ensures salvation in the hereafter, and whose knowledge protects from anthropomorphism and disbelief. Through them one attains true tawhīd, transcendence, and spiritual abstraction.

As **al-Mu'ayyad fi'l-Dīn** (may God sanctify his soul) said:

“I bear witness that there is no god but God, to whom none reaches except through His boundaries—only His unity is reached thereby. The أهل الزيغ (people of deviation) fall into likening and limiting Him.”

Thus, God obligated prayer five times daily and commanded persistence in it, so that it becomes a habit and a deeply rooted disposition. Through it, thoughts remain attached and souls long for it. This leads believers to reflect on its causes, the number of its units, and the meanings of bowing, prostration, standing, and sitting—until they arrive at the علم التأويل (science of interpretation), through which the حدود are known, guiding to the true worship of God and knowledge of existence.

At that point, they fulfill the عبادات (acts of worship) required of both body and soul, leading to the abode of happiness. Their souls become refined, their forms perfected, and their

connection to the spiritual hierarchy firmly established. Through this connection, no separation occurs thereafter.

The same applies to all pillars of Islam. Know this with certainty, so that it may guide you to *الخير* (goodness) and serve as your path. Hold firmly to it, so that you may ascend to the *عالم الملكوت* (spiritual realm) and dwell near the Lord of might and majesty.

Conclusion

One of the spiritual authorities said:

“And you will dwell near the Mighty Lord, sanctified are His Names,
rejoicing and delighting.

Forms of light in the radiance of His kingdom,
in sanctity—without flesh or blood.”

The book is completed by the help of God, the Sovereign, the Bestower. Praise be to God alone. May blessings be upon His Messenger, our master Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets; upon his *وصي* (trustee) ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, master of the trustees; upon the Imams from their pure progeny; and upon the successor after them, the living Imam of our time, our master al-Ṭayyib Abī al-Qāsim, Commander of the Faithful—may God’s prayers be upon them all.

And what follows will follow, if God wills.

Chapter on the Interpretation of Prayer (General Summary from the Second Compilation)

In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate. In Him we seek help, and upon Him we rely.

Know—may God grant you success—that prayer has three aspects:

- **Obligatory (farīdah)** — corresponding to the **nāṭiq (speaker/prophet)**
- **Sunnah** — corresponding to the **asās (foundation)**
- **Supererogatory (nāfilah)** — corresponding to the **Imam**

Whoever counts a fourth intends **voluntary devotion (taṭawwu’)**, which corresponds to the **ḥujjah (proof)**.

The **nāṭiq** is obligatory because God appointed him;
the **asās** is sunnah because the Messenger appointed him by God’s command;
the **Imam** is **nāfilah** because the **asās** appointed him by God’s command;

and the ḥujjah is voluntary because the Imam appointed him by God's command to establish obedience to him.

The proof of this is the قول (saying) of God:

“And during the night, pray with it as an إضافي (supererogatory act) for you...”

Here, the night symbolizes the rank of the asās.

Knowledge of the Five Daily Prayers

The day symbolizes the nāṭiq, and the night symbolizes the asās.

The total number of rak'ahs is **51**:

- **17 obligatory (farḍ)**
- **17 sunnah**
- **17 supererogatory (nāfilah)**

The **17 obligatory** correspond to obedience to the foundational حدود (spiritual ranks):

- the two principles: **al-qalam (the Pen)** and **al-lawḥ (the Tablet)**
- the four supports: nāṭiq, asās, Imam, and the twelve ḥujjahs

Together they make seventeen. Whoever abandons obedience to these is likened to one who abandons obligatory prayer, as the Prophet said:

“Whoever abandons the obligatory prayer is a disbeliever, and whoever abandons my sunnah is accursed.”

Structure of the Sunnah and Supererogatory Prayers

- Six rak'ahs before Ṣuḥr → obedience to the nāṭiq, asās, Imam, ḥujjah, dā'ī, and ma'dhūn
- Four after Ṣuḥr → return to the Imam of the time, his ḥujjah, dā'ī, and ma'dhūn
- Four before 'Aṣr → correspond to the four sacred ones
- Obligatory 'Aṣr → obedience to the asās
- Six after Maghrib → same symbolism as the six before Ṣuḥr

- Four before 'Ishā' and four after → correspond to the previously mentioned four
-

Shaf' and Witr

The three rak'ahs of **witr** symbolize obedience to the **Qā'im** (the one who rises, peace be upon him).

He has three حدود (aspects):

1. His manifestation in bodily form as proof among the physical
2. His concealment among the spiritual after his انتقال (passing), witnessing souls in the barzakh
3. His قيام (final rising) on the Day of Judgment, rewarding and punishing souls

The audible recitation in witr signifies that the بيان (truth/clarification) becomes manifest in his era.

- Those who say qunūt is before bowing → mean the الدعوة (call) is established before his ظهور (appearance)
- Those who say after bowing → mean it is established after his appearance

Thus:

- Qunūt = the الدعوة (call)
 - The worshipper = the dā'ī (caller)
 - Prayer itself = the الدعوة
 - Time = the Imam
 - Shaf' = obedience to the dā'ī and the ma'dhūn
-

Chapter

Īd al-Fiṭr symbolizes the **asās**, because he "breaks the fast" through proclamation after silence during the nāṭiq's lifetime.

Ramaḍān also symbolizes the **asās**:

- It is one of twelve months → like the **asās** being one among twelve ḥujjahs

- It is called Ramaḍān because it “burns” (armaḍa) the hearts of hypocrites through the establishment of the asās

Another interpretation:

- Ramaḍān = (رمز) رمز for the asās
 - al-ḍān = believers who concealed the الدعوة from opponents
-

Chapter

ʿĪd al-Aḍḥā symbolizes the Qā'im (peace be upon him)

- ʿĪd al-Fiṭr → one day
- ʿĪd al-Aḍḥā → three days → corresponding to his three حدود

The shedding of blood symbolizes the manifestation of truth in his era, and also doubt (shakk).

Thus, the prohibition of approaching women during menstruation symbolizes that the dā'ī must not address one in doubt until he is purified of it.

Chapter

The sermon (khuṭbah) symbolizes the revealing of what was hidden:

- Friday sermon → exhortation
- ʿĪd sermons → rebuke

Similarly:

- The Imam دعوت (calls) with wisdom and gentle exhortation
- The Qā'im rebukes for doubt and rejection

Friday prayer in the mosque and ʿĪd prayer in the open → symbolize:

- Imam → outward call
- Qā'im → inner unveiling

The sermon of الجمعة precedes prayer, while that of ʿĪd follows it:

- Because the call to the Qā'im precedes his appearance
- Once he appears, he calls directly

The congregation faces the qiblah → symbolizing orientation toward the Qā'im, who is the qiblah of the Imam, and the Imam is the qiblah of his people

Night prayer of twelve rak'ahs symbolizes the twelve ḥujjahs

Etiquettes of Prayer (Ādāb)

There are twelve:

1. Lowering the head → humility before one's dā'ī
 2. Looking at the place of prostration → adherence to the law of the nāṭiq
 3. Not turning right or left → not following divergent doctrines
 4. Not playing with stones → not engaging with أهل الظاهر (people of outwardness)
 5. Not playing with the beard → not seeking higher knowledge prematurely
 6. Bringing feet together → combining outward and inward
 7. Spreading fingers on knees in bowing → the asās distributing his ḥujjahs
 8. Bringing fingers together in prostration → the nāṭiq uniting them
 9. Sitting on left foot, right upright → reliance on the ḥujjah and the Imam
 10. Pressing oneself to the ground → adherence to the inner call
 11. Not raising gaze upward → not تجاوز (exceeding) one's rank
 12. Not cracking fingers → not revealing hidden knowledge
-

This section further reinforces the central framework of the text:

- **Prayer = symbolic enactment of the Ismaili cosmological hierarchy (ḥudūd)**
- **Ritual actions = encoded metaphysics**
- **Numbers (3, 5, 12, 17, 51) = structured representations of authority and transmission**

On the Interpretation of Faith and Its Pillars

In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, and in Him we seek help.

Praise be to God, Lord of all. May blessings be upon Muḥammad, His Messenger, the Seal of the Prophets; upon his وصي (trustee), ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, the master of the trustees; upon the Imams from his pure progeny; and upon our master, our lord, the صاحب العصر (Imam of the age), the guardian of our affairs, al-Imām al-Ṭayyib Abī al-Qāsim, Commander of the Faithful—upon whom be salutations, blessings, and peace.

Chapter

Know that the radiant Sharī‘ah is the foundation of the world of prophetic proclamation (‘ālam al-nuṭq), and its structure is built upon faith (īmān).

Faith consists of:

- **Speech of the tongue**
- **Action of the limbs**
- **Belief and intention within the heart**

Thus, the spiritual (speech) and the physical (action) are united through intention (niyyah). For this reason, the Prophet said:

“The intention of the believer is more far-reaching than his action.”

This is because Islam and faith are fundamentally tied to belief, and their existence is not valid without it. A small amount of action performed with sincere intention is better than a large amount performed without intention.

Evidence of this is that God—blessed and exalted—praised **‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (peace be upon him)** in thirty verses of His Book for feeding the poor, the orphan, and the captive with a small amount of food, due to the عظمة (great) and sincere intention known and accepted by God. Thus, he is praised in the oft-repeated verses and the Mighty Qur’an, in every sanctuary and by every tongue, until the end of time.

By contrast, God did not mention in His Book the abundant charity of others who spent eighty thousand dinars, whether secretly or openly. That act did not attain the same مقام (standing), nor was it widely known—people assumed it was merely wealth being spent. They did not perceive the inner secret or the meaning intended by God, nor did it leave an enduring remembrance.

From this, we know that:

the intention of the believer is better than his action.

Interpretation of the Seven Pillars of Faith

Chapter

Know that the outward (ẓāhir) and inward (bāṭin) aspects of the Shari‘ah consist of **seven pillars**:

1. Purification (ṭahārah)
2. Prayer (ṣalāh)
3. Almsgiving (zakāh)
4. Fasting (ṣawm)
5. Pilgrimage (ḥajj)
6. Striving (jihād)
7. Belief in allegiance (wilāyah)

Whoever does not refer all obligations and practices—both outward and inward—back to these seven has no standing. There is no place for analogical reasoning (qiyās) in them. Whoever employs analogy in any of these matters is an innovator, and innovation leads to the Fire.

Chapter

Know that these seven pillars—and their explanation in both outward and inward aspects—are the aim of this book, though presented briefly.

Purification (ṭahārah):

- In the outward sense: cleansing physical impurities from the body with pure water.
- In the inward sense: disassociation from the enemies of the friends of God, whoever they may be.

As God تعالیٰ says:

“You will not find a people who believe in God and the Last Day loving those who oppose God and His Messenger, even if they were their fathers, sons, brothers, or kin...”

True disassociation is achieved by acquiring sacred knowledge without reliance on analogy. Just as purification cannot be performed with impure water, so too knowledge derived from speculative analogy is impure—likened to the teachings of devils and their followers.

Prayer (Ṣalāh)

The beginning of prayer is the takbīr and facing the qiblah.

- Outwardly: ritual commencement and orientation.
- Inwardly: directing one's belief after taking the covenant (symbolized by the opening *takbīr*), and maintaining sincere allegiance to the *صاحب الدولة الكلية* (the universal sovereign), the Imam of the time.

This connection must be renewed **five times daily**, just as prayer is performed at five times. Additional supererogatory acts bring great merit, for through them the believer remains constantly mindful of the *صاحب الشريعة* (bearer of the law).

(The detailed explanation of prayer is considered sufficiently covered in earlier works of the *da'wah*.)

Almsgiving (Zakāh)

- Outwardly: what is due from wealth once it reaches the prescribed amount (*niṣāb*).
- Inwardly: **wealth is knowledge**.

Thus, any believer who acquires knowledge of truth must present it to his spiritual guide (one of the *حدود*). If the time is appropriate for disclosure, he reveals it; if not, he conceals it and safeguards it.

Fasting (Ṣawm)

- Outwardly: abstaining from food, drink, and relations.
 - Inwardly: preserving knowledge and protecting its *أهل* (people), concealing it from those who rely on analogy, striving for the well-being of the faithful, and shielding them from harm through concealment until the appointed time.
-

Pilgrimage (Ḥajj)

- Outwardly: journeying to the Sacred House for pilgrimage once in a lifetime if able.
- Inwardly: visiting the *صاحب الدولة الكلية*—the Imam of the time, who is the means to God.

This visit is undertaken once in a lifetime when one possesses the necessary knowledge and resources, so that one's *أثر* (trace), remembrance, and recognition remain with the Imam until the Day of Resurrection. No reward is greater than this.

Striving (Jihād)

- Outwardly: mobilizing against polytheists and striving with wealth and life.
 - Inwardly: establishing decisive proofs and radiant arguments against the greatest enemy—**Iblīs**, the adversary of the divine order—and his followers.
-

Conclusion of the Six Pillars

These six pillars combine both spiritual and physical dimensions, all tied to belief, intention, and discernment between truth and falsehood.

They ultimately lead to knowledge of the One (*al-Wāḥid*), the origin of all things, from whom everything begins and to whom everything returns.

Whoever affirms divine unity sincerely—through knowledge of the **حدود** and fulfillment of their rights—enters Paradise.

This is the extent of what has been conveyed according to our capacity, through the support of the Imam of the time and the blessings of our **داعي** (caller)—upon him be the best of peace.

This section is especially important because it **systematizes the entire religious structure**:

- Each pillar has a **dual ontology** (*ẓāhir / bāṭin*)
- Knowledge (*‘ilm*) replaces material categories in the inner layer
- Authority flows through the hierarchy of **ḥudūd (spiritual ranks)**
- Salvation is tied to **recognition + obedience**, not ritual alone

Another Aspect of the Interpretation

In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate.

Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds, and blessings be upon Muḥammad and his family.

Amīr al-Mu’minīn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (peace be upon him) said:

“Perfecting ablution (*wuḍū’*) is to pass water over the limbs of ablution.”

Its inner meaning is the clarification of the **درجات** (ranks) of the spiritual boundaries (*ḥudūd*) to the initiates through knowledge.

It is reported that the Prophet forbade urinating in burrows, saying they are dwellings of serpents. The Commander of the Faithful explained that these “burrows” symbolize the dā’īs (missionaries), because they are the refuge of one who becomes alive through wisdom after having been spiritually dead. Thus, the Prophet forbade casting filth upon them—meaning slander, abuse, or false accusations—for they are innocent of such things and free from them.

Urine and excrement symbolize the false beliefs held by opponents of the truth, and the fabrications attributed falsely to the truthful Imams—beliefs adopted by the ignorant and the people of innovation and misguidance. These include their الروايات (reports) from false authorities and their fabricated doctrines, their restriction to the outward (ẓāhir) while neglecting the inward (bāṭin), and their reliance on the absent instead of the present—falsehoods against God. They have gone astray and are not guided.

When the time of prayer arrives, the sleeper is awakened so that he may prepare through purification and ablution.

- **Prayer** symbolizes the call to truth (da’wah)
 - **The sleeper** symbolizes the heedless one
 - *Just as the sleeper is unaware, the heedless person does not understand the affairs of his religion*
 - **The one who awakens him** symbolizes the mukāsir (assistant), who guides him toward knowledge, removes doubt, and leads him to certainty
-

Symbolism of Night and Day

- **Night** symbolizes concealment, as it covers all things → it represents the station of the ḥujjah and the inner dimension
- **Day** symbolizes the manifest Imam (nāṭiq), possessing outward knowledge, as it reveals all things

As God تعالى says:

“Indeed, the rising of the night is more effective and more suitable for speech, while during the day you have prolonged activity.”

Etiquettes of the Lavatory (Ādāb al-Khalā’)

There are **twelve etiquettes**, which collectively symbolize the **twelve ḥujjahs**. Each carries a deeper wisdom:

1. Entering with sandals, covering the head, and stepping with the left foot first

- The two sandals symbolize the outward and inward → one must uphold both knowledge and action
- Covering the head symbolizes concealing the spiritual authority (the “head”) from أهل الظاهر
- Stepping with the left foot symbolizes practicing precaution (taqiyyah) among أهل الظاهر

2. Not facing the qiblah nor turning one’s back to it

- Not openly declaring allegiance before those unworthy
- Nor disavowing it entirely

3. Leaning on the left leg while seated

- Outwardly conforming to others (taqiyyah) while maintaining inner truth

4. Not speaking while inside

- Not revealing wisdom in the presence of those unfit

5. Not remaining longer than necessary

- Not becoming attached to أهل الظاهر

6. Not cleansing with impure substances (dung, bones, etc.)

- Spiritual purification cannot occur through false doctrines or disbelief

7. Using three stones when water is unavailable

- Purification through the knowledge of the Imam, his ḥujjah, and his dā’ī

8. Not pouring water directly on filth, but removing it first

- One should not apply interpretation (ta’wīl) to corrupted outward teachings; rather, restore the الصحيح (correct) foundation first

9. Exiting with the right foot first

- Returning to allegiance to the Imam after leaving أهل الشك والكفر

Additional Symbolism

- The Prophet said: “Do not walk with one sandal” → do not follow only the outward or only the inward
 - “If the sandals become wet, then pray in your dwellings” →
 - Water symbolizes knowledge
 - Wet sandals symbolize the arrival of true inner knowledge after فساد (corruption) of outward understanding
 - “Dwellings” symbolize the dā’īs, who nurture initiates step by step
-

Symbolism of Ḥajj

The Prophet said:

“Ḥajj is obligatory upon one who possesses provision and a mount.”

- **Provision (zād)** → knowledge
- **Mount (rāḥilah)** → the dā’ī

Just as physical provision sustains the pilgrim’s body, knowledge sustains the soul.

Just as the mount carries the pilgrim from station to station, the dā’ī elevates the believer through درجات (levels) until he reaches the Imam.

Further Inner Meanings

- Covering the head → concealing spiritual authority
 - Not facing the qiblah → not revealing allegiance publicly
 - Not turning away → not abandoning it inwardly
 - Silence → withholding wisdom
 - Limited stay → avoiding attachment to أهل الظاهر
 - True purification → only through the awliyā’ (friends of God)
 - Returning with the right foot → reaffirming allegiance to the Imam
-

Conclusion

Praise be to God. Blessings be upon Muḥammad and his family.
God is sufficient for us, and He is the best disposer of affairs.

Concise Interpretation of Prayer

Ẓuhr (midday prayer) consists of fourteen rak'ahs:

- The **six sunnah rak'ahs** (ṣalāt al-zawāl) symbolize the six Imams completing the cycle of Christ
 - The **four obligatory rak'ahs** symbolize Muḥammad, his قائم مقام (successor), and their gate
 - The **four supererogatory rak'ahs** symbolize the four sacred ones
-

‘Aṣr (afternoon prayer) consists of eight rak'ahs:

- The **four sunnah rak'ahs** symbolize the four sacred ones who precede the rise of the Qā'im, standing before the Imam who calls prior to his ظهور
 - The **four obligatory rak'ahs** symbolize the Qā'im (peace be upon him)
-

Maghrib (sunset prayer) consists of nine rak'ahs:

- The **three obligatory rak'ahs** symbolize ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, his successor, and his gate
 - The **six sunnah rak'ahs** symbolize: the ḥujjah, the داعي البلاغ, the داعي المطلق, the restricted داعي, the ma'dhūn, and the mukāsīr
-

‘Ishā' (night prayer) consists of twelve rak'ahs:

- The **four sunnah rak'ahs** symbolize the four sacred ḥujjahs of the Imam of the time
 - The **four obligatory rak'ahs** symbolize the Imam of the time, his inheritor, and their two gates
 - The **four supererogatory rak'ahs** symbolize the four sacred ones serving the inheriting Imam
-

Shaf' and Witr:

- The **three rak'ahs** symbolize the gates of the three concealed Imams
 - The **two sitting rak'ahs** symbolize the *ma'dhūn* and the *mukāsir*
-

Fajr (dawn prayer) consists of four rak'ahs:

- In one interpretation:
 - The **two sunnah rak'ahs** symbolize the *nāṭiq* and the *asās*
 - The **two obligatory rak'ahs** symbolize the intellect and the soul
 - In another interpretation:
 - The **two sunnah rak'ahs** symbolize the two ḥujjahs of the Mahdī before him
 - The **two obligatory rak'ahs** symbolize the Mahdī and his inheriting son
-

Conclusion:

Completed—praise be to God alone, and blessings upon Muḥammad and his family. God is sufficient for us, and He is the best disposer of affairs.

General Interpretation of Prayer (from Kitāb al-Mas'alah wa al-Jawāb)

Prayer symbolizes the **honored da'wah (divine call)**.

- **Zawāl (decline of the sun)** symbolizes the *nāṭiq* removing previous laws
 - The **worshipper** symbolizes one entering the call of truth
 - Entry requires **taking the covenant**, symbolized by purification (*ṭahārah*)
-

Elements of Prayer

- **Adhān** → call of the *nāṭiq*
- **Iqāmah** → call of the *asās* to inner truths
 - Adhān precedes iqāmah → outward precedes inward

- **Takbīrat al-iḥrām** → entry into the sacred domain
 - Symbolizes the dā'ī introducing the initiate into the Imam's sanctuary
 - **Taslim (ending salutation)** → recognition of all principles and the Imams
 - Whoever truly knows them has “surrendered himself” and attained salvation
-

Symbolism of Specific Prayers

- **'Aṣr** → symbolizes the asās, the knower of truth
- **Fajr** → symbolizes the highest primordial principle

Both indicate a finality:

- No prayer follows them → no higher rank beyond these realities
 - One who reaches these levels has attained ultimate knowledge
-

Interpretation from Kitāb al-Shawāhid wa al-Bayān

The five obligatory prayers contain **17 rak'ahs**:

- **10 from God** → represent two higher principles and seven upper ranks (soul, witness, agent, guardian, firm one, obeyed one, trustworthy one, and the داعي calling to them)
- **7 added by the Prophet** → represent the seven lower Imams

Thus:

- Lower ranks mirror higher ranks
-

Sunnah Rak'ahs

The **12 sunnah rak'ahs** correspond to the **twelve ḥujjahs**, paired with the obligatory structure.

Letters and Numbers

The **19 letters** of the Arabic alphabet symbolize:

- 12 ḥujjahs
 - 7 Imams
-

Five Prayers as Five Prophets

The five prayers symbolize the five great messengers (Ulū al-‘Azm):

- Noah
- Abraham
- Moses
- Jesus
- Muḥammad

Each represents a صاحب شريعة (bearer of a law).

Loud and Silent Recitation

- **Ẓuhr & ‘Aṣr (silent)** → outward law without full exposition
- **Maghrib, ‘Ishā’, Fajr (loud)** → the asās explaining inner meanings

Another interpretation:

- **Ẓuhr** → Muḥammad (new law replacing previous ones)
 - **‘Aṣr** → ‘Alī (derived from him, explaining and extending his knowledge)
-

Witr and the Qā’im

- **Witr** symbolizes the Qā’im:
 - Unique and singular
 - Distinct from all previous ranks
 - Reveals hidden truths and abolishes outward forms

He is likened to the **soul in the body**:

- The six directions = structure
 - The seventh = the روح (spirit) → the Qā'im
-

Ablution (Wuḍū')

- Washing the limbs (seven parts) → symbolizes the seven Imams
 - Sensory organs of the head → symbolize seven higher ranks
 - Wiping the head → represents the لطيف (subtle) world
-

Eid Prayer

- Contains **12 takbīrs** → symbolize the twelve ḥujjahs renewing allegiance
-

Symbolism of Prohibited Killings in Iḥrām

The five permitted creatures represent types of فساد (corruption):

- **Rabid dog** → one who harms believers and داعيين
- **Snake** → one who deceives secretly
- **Scorpion** → one who betrays his teacher
- **Kite (bird)** → one who steals knowledge and gives it to opponents
- **Crow** → one who reveals truths prematurely

“Killing” them means **refuting and restraining their فساد**.

Final Symbol

- **Dīnār (gold coin)** → symbolizes the nāṭiq
- **Dirhams (silver coins)** → symbolize the flowing emanation of knowledge from him to the asās

Statement Attributed to Sayyidunā Muḥammad ibn Ṭāhir (may God sanctify his soul)

In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate. In Him I seek help.

If it is said to you: “Are you a believer (mu’min) or a Muslim?”

then say: “Rather, I am a believer.”

If it is said: “Did you attain faith after being a Muslim, or without Islam?”

then say: “I attained faith after being a Muslim.”

If it is said: “When did you attain Islam?”

then say: “At my physical, natural birth.”

If it is said: “What is your proof?”

then say: the saying of the Messenger of God:

“Every newborn is born upon the fitrah (natural disposition of Islam), until his parents make him a Jew, Christian, or Magian.”

If it is said: “What is Islam?”

then say: “Testifying that there is no god but God and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of God.”

If it is said: “When did you attain faith (īmān)?”

then say:

“At the spiritual birth—when the noble covenant was taken for our master, the Imam al-Ṭayyib Abī al-Qāsim, Commander of the Faithful (peace be upon him).”

If it is said: “What is the proof that al-Ṭayyib is the Imam?”

then say: the statement of our master al-Āmir (peace be upon him) in his decree announcing his birth:

After praising God and mentioning His blessings, he said (summary translation):

Among the greatest of blessings is that God has granted him a pure, righteous son, born on the morning of Sunday, the 4th of Rabīʿ al-Ākhir, 524 AH.

His birth brought joy to the pulpits, and hope to all people.

His نور (light) illuminated darkness, and through him the Fatimid state was adorned with virtues.

He was drawn from the lineage of prophethood, like light drawn from light.

He was named al-Ṭayyib for his purity, and given the kunya Abū al-Qāsim, after his grandfather, the Prophet.

The Commander of the Faithful thanked God for granting him a shining star in the sky of his rule.

He prayed that the chain of Imamate would continue through him, that he be a guide for seekers, a proof against deniers, a refuge for the distressed, and a source of felicity for the knowing.

He commanded that this glad tidings be spread among the *المؤمنين* so that joy may be shared by all.

Interpretation of “Bismillāh al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm”

Know, O brother—may God grant you success—that **“Bismillāh al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm”** has **three interpretive dimensions (abwāb)**:

First Aspect: The Four Words

The phrase consists of four words. Each word represents a joining of letters, and these four words symbolize divine names and realities:

- **“Bism Allāh”** → the **Intellect (‘aql)** and **Soul (nafs)** in the spiritual world
- **“al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm”** → the **Prophet (nāṭiq)** and the **Waṣī (asās)** in the religious world

Thus:

- First two → spiritual realm
 - Second two → religious-hierarchical realm
-

Second Aspect: The Nineteen Letters

- **“Bism Allāh” (7 letters)** → symbolize the **seven higher حدود (spiritual ranks)** and the **seven nāṭiqs**
- **“al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm” (12 letters)** → symbolize the **twelve داعيين (missionaries)** of the regions

Total: **19 letters** → **structured hierarchy of authority**

Third Aspect: The Ten “Essences” (Jawāhir)

The phrase yields **ten elements**:

- **Five repeated letters**
- **Five non-repeated letters**

The Five Repeated Letters

(mīm, alif, lām, rā', ḥā')

These correspond to:

- The **five fingers** (which repeat in the human body)
- The **five daily prayers**
- The **five recurring hierarchical ranks** in every age:
 - Imam
 - Bāb
 - Ḥujjah
 - Dā'ī
 - Ma'dhūn

These are **cyclical roles**, continuously renewed in every era.

The Five Non-Repeated Letters

(bā', sīn, hā', nūn, yā')

These correspond to:

- The **five senses of the face** (non-repeating organs)
- The **fixed higher realities**, which do not change over time

These are:

- In the language of da'wah:
 - Intellect ('aql)
 - Soul (nafs)
 - Jadd
 - Faṭḥ

- *Khayāl*
- *In the language of revelation:*
 - *Pen (qalam)*
 - *Tablet (lawḥ)*
 - *Jibrīl*
 - *Mīkā'il*
 - *Isrāfīl*

These are **unchanging, eternal ranks**.

Ritual Gesture and Its Meaning

When one recites “**Bismillāh al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm**” and wipes the face:

- This symbolizes **seeking mediation through the lower (repeating) ranks**
 - Toward the **higher (non-repeating) spiritual ranks**
 - And ultimately toward **God**, who transcends all
-

The Imam's Role

The Imam:

- **Combines both realms** (higher and lower)
- His name consists of **five letters**, reflecting the structure

When he is mentioned and one wipes the face:

- It signifies mediation through all ranks
 - The Imam is the **واسطة (means)** to God
-

Conclusion

Understand this with certainty—may God grant you success.

*Praise be to God alone, Lord of the worlds.
Blessings be upon our master Muḥammad and his family.*

This treatise is complete by the help and success of God.

Book of the Interpretation of the Testimony (Shahāda) and Its Correspondences to the World

On the Meaning of the Testimony

In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate.

You asked, O brother—may God grant you success and guide you rightly—about the statement of the Messenger of God and what he conveyed from God regarding the testimony:

“There is no god but God (lā ilāha illā Allāh).”

He said:

“I have been commanded to fight the people until they say ‘lā ilāha illā Allāh’. If they say it, their blood and property are protected except by its right, and their reckoning is with God.”

Thus, he fought them, shed their blood, took their wealth, and enslaved their offspring until they uttered it—even under compulsion. Then he refrained from them due to the عَظَمَة (greatness) and lofty rank of this statement—whose reality he knew, while they were ignorant of it.

*By uttering it, they entered **Islam** and were protected from punishment.*

God تعالى said:

“The Bedouins say: ‘We believe.’ Say: ‘You have not believed; rather say: We have submitted (aslamnā), for faith has not yet entered your hearts.’”

For every believer is a Muslim, but not every Muslim is a believer.

And He said:

“They consider it a favor to you that they have submitted. Say: Do not count your submission as a favor to me; rather God has favored you by guiding you to faith, if you are truthful.”

Then the Prophet said again:

“If ‘lā ilāha illā Allāh’ were placed on one side of a scale, and the heavens and the earth and all within them on the other, it would outweigh them.”

Yet, if taken merely at its outward wording, it would have no weight. The Messenger speaks only truth, as God said:

“He does not speak from desire; it is only revelation revealed.”

He also said:

“Whoever says ‘lā ilāha illā Allāh’ sincerely will enter Paradise.”

It was asked: “What is its sincerity?”

He replied:

“Knowing its حدود (boundaries) and fulfilling its حقوق (rights).”

Thus, we return in its interpretation to the heirs of the Book, about whom God said:

“Ask the أهل الذكر if you do not know.”

Saying of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (peace be upon him)

He said:

“The Messenger of God taught me a thousand doors of hidden knowledge; from each door opened a thousand more. If you were to know it, you would be shaken in your religion like ropes in a deep well.”

And he said:

“Whoever knows it has truly spoken it; whoever does not know it has not spoken it.”

Thus:

- *One who understands its meanings has given a **pure, sincere testimony***
 - *One who does not has given a **false testimony, rejected***
-

Structural Interpretation of the Shahāda

‘Alī (peace be upon him) said:

*The testimony “lā ilāha illā Allāh” unfolds through **five aspects (abwāb)**:*

1. Division into Negation and Affirmation

- **Negation** → “lā ilāha”
- **Affirmation** → “illā Allāh”

2. Division into Three Letters (Essences)

- *Alif (ا)*
 - *Lām (ل)*
 - *Hā' (ه)*
-

3. Division into Four Words

- *“lā”*
 - *“ilāh”*
 - *“illā”*
 - *“Allāh”*
-

4. Division into Seven Sections

- *“lā” → one section*
 - *“ilāh” → two sections*
 - *“illā” → two sections*
 - *“Allāh” → two sections*
-

5. Division into Twelve Letters

Total: 28 Boundaries (Ḥudūd)

Universal Correspondence

*Everything in existence corresponds to these **28 boundaries**:*

- *Spiritual beings in the heavens*

- *Physical bodies on earth*
 - *Intermediate realms*
 - *Natural elements and their products*
 - *Celestial spheres and their motions*
 - *Stars and their effects*
 - *Souls and their compositions*
 - *Languages and structures*
 - *Revelation and its rulings*
 - *Prayer and its obligations, sunnahs, and supererogatory acts*
-

Correspondence in the Cosmos (Āfāq)

God said:

"We will show them Our signs in the horizons..."

In the heavens:

- ***Two spheres (outer & inner) → negation and affirmation***
- ***Three motions → the three letters***
 - *From the center*
 - *Toward the center*
 - *Around the center*
- ***Four pillars (ascendant, descendant, midheaven, nadir) → four words***
- ***Seven governing planets:***
 - *Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon*
→ *correspond to the seven divisions*
- ***Twelve zodiac signs:***

- *Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius, Pisces*
→ correspond to the twelve letters

Total: 28 correspondences

Correspondence in the Earth

God said:

“And in the earth are signs for those of certainty.”

- ***Earth: inhabited & barren*** → negation and affirmation
- ***Three kingdoms: mineral, plant, animal*** → three letters
- ***Four qualities: heat, moisture, dryness, cold*** → four words
- ***Seven regions*** → seven divisions
- ***Twelve lands/islands*** → twelve letters

Total: 28

Correspondence in Time

God said:

“And the alternation of night and day...”

- ***Night & day*** → negation and affirmation
- ***Three times: past, present, future*** → three letters
- ***Four seasons*** → four words
- ***Seven days of the week*** → seven divisions
- ***Twelve months*** → twelve letters

Total: 28

Correspondence in the Human Being

God said:

“And within yourselves—do you not see?”

- **Body & soul** → *negation and affirmation*

- **Three levels of soul:**

- *Vegetative*
- *Animal (sensory)*
- *Rational*
→ *three letters*

- **Four humors:**

- *Yellow bile*
- *Black bile*
- *Phlegm*
- *Blood*
→ *four words*

- **Seven bodily substances:**

- *Brain, bone, nerve, vein, flesh, blood, skin*
→ *seven divisions*

- **Twelve organs:**

- *Two eyes*
- *Two ears*
- *Two nostrils*
- *Mouth*
- *Two breasts*
- *Navel*
- *Two passages*
→ *twelve letters*

Total: 28

On the Interpretation of the Testimony (Shahāda) and Its Correspondences

God تعالى says: "O you who believe, when you rise for prayer, wash your faces and your hands up to the elbows, wipe your heads, and your feet up to the ankles."

This refers to **ablution (wuḍū')**—and within it is a correspondence to the structure of the testimony:

- Ablution has **two forms**: with water and dry ablution (tayammum) → like **negation and affirmation** in the testimony.
- Purification has **three aspects**: for prayer, for contact, and from major impurity → like the **three letters** of the testimony.
- Ablution consists of **four acts**: two washings and two wipings → like the **four words** of the testimony.
- It includes **seven actions**: cleansing, rinsing the mouth, rinsing the nose, washing the face and hands, wiping the head and feet → like the **seven divisions**.
- It applies to **twelve bodily parts** → like the **twelve divisions** of the testimony.

All of this forms **twenty-eight principles**.

Prayer (Ṣalāh)

God says: "Indeed, prayer is prescribed upon the المؤمنين at fixed times."

Prayer corresponds to the testimony as follows:

- It has **two modes**: movement and stillness → like negation and affirmation.
- It has **three types**: obligatory, sunnah, and voluntary → like the three letters.
- It has **four شروط**: time, intention, purification, and direction → like the four words.
- Its **seven pillars**: التكبير، التوجه، القراءة، الركوع، السجود، التشهد، التسليم → like the seven divisions.
- It manifests in **twelve forms**: the five daily prayers plus funerary prayer, the two 'Id prayers, eclipse prayer, rain prayer, fear prayer, and prayers of illness and travel → like the twelve divisions.

Again, the total is **twenty-eight principles**.

Almsgiving (Zakāh)

God says: "And give zakāh."

- It originates from **two substances**: gold and silver → like negation and affirmation.
- From animals, it concerns **three types**: camels, cattle, sheep → like the three letters.
- It has **four names**: tithe, charity, fay', and khums → like the four words.
- It applies to **seven domains**: knowledge, status, trade, المعادن, crops, livestock, and actions → like the seven divisions.
- In crops, it applies to **twelve categories** → like the twelve divisions.
 - Wheat
 - Barley
 - Rice
 - Millet
 - Lentils
 - Chickpeas
 - Dates
 - Grapes
 - Figs
 - Olives
 - Pomegranates
 - Vegetables / miscellaneous

Total: **twenty-eight principles**.

Fasting (Şawm)

God says: "Fasting has been prescribed for you..."

- It has **two states**: fasting by day and الإفطار by night → like negation and affirmation.
- It is restricted in **three cases** (without permission): guest, servant, and woman → like the three letters.

- It abstains from **four things**: food, drink, intimacy, and major sins → like the four words.
- Obligatory fasting has **seven forms** (Ramadan and various expiations) → like the seven divisions.
 - Ramadan – the month of obligatory fasting for all adults.
 - Expiation for breaking an oath – fast required to atone for violating a vow.
 - Expiation for intentional homicide – fasting as part of atonement.
 - Expiation for unintentional killing – if applicable under classical jurisprudence.
 - Expiation for missed Ramadan days due to illness or travel – making up missed days.
 - Fasting during Hajj rituals – e.g., specific days for atonement or rituals.
 - Other expiatory fasts commanded by law or custom – e.g., compensations for specific sins.
- Forbidden fasting includes **twelve types** → like the twelve divisions.
 - Fasting on Eid al-Fitr
 - Fasting on Eid al-Adha
 - Fasting on the Day of Doubt (Shakk) – day before Ramadan starts incorrectly
 - Fasting on Fridays alone
 - Fasting on Saturdays alone
 - Fasting on two consecutive days without reason
 - Fasting without intention (niyyah)
 - Fasting during menstruation
 - Fasting during postpartum bleeding
 - Fasting while ill if it harms the body
 - Fasting in travel that is forbidden
 - Any voluntary fast explicitly forbidden by law or Prophet's teaching

Total: **twenty-eight principles**.

Pilgrimage (Ḥajj)

God says: "Pilgrimage to the House is a duty upon people..."

- It has **two states**: consecration (iḥrām) and release (iḥlāl) → like negation and affirmation.
- It has **three forms**: ifrād, qirān, tamattu' → like the three letters.
- The House has **four pillars** → like the four words.
- Circumambulation consists of **seven circuits** → like the seven divisions.
- It includes **twelve stations** → like the twelve divisions.
 - iḥrām – state of consecration
 - Makkah – arrival at the city
 - al-Masjid (the Sacred Mosque) – starting point of Tawaf
 - al-Maqām (Station of Abraham)
 - al-Kaaba – central sanctuary
 - al-Rukn (Corner of the Kaaba)
 - al-Safā – first hill in Sa'i ritual
 - al-Marwah – second hill in Sa'i ritual
 - Minā – site of stoning the pillars
 - Arafat – standing in prayer
 - Muzdalifah – night stay and collection of pebbles
 - al-Jimār (Ramy) – stoning ritual

Total: **twenty-eight principles**.

Jihād

God says: "God has preferred the strivers over those who sit..."

- It has **two forms**: by wealth and by self → like negation and affirmation.
- It has **three modes**: by hand, tongue, and heart → like the three letters.

- It has **four aspects**: restrain desires, avoid prohibitions, compel obedience, maintain spiritual integrity→ like the four words.
- It has **seven functions**: establishing truth, breaking falsehood, refutation, argumentation, symbolism, indication, worship→ like the seven divisions.
- It is directed against **twelve groups** (various categories of opposition and deviation) → like the twelve divisions.
 - Al-Nākihīn (الناكثين) – Those who break oaths or covenants
 - Al-Māriqīn (المارقين) – Those who revolt against authority or the Imam
 - Al-Mulḥidīn (الملحدين) – Those who deny divine truth or reject faith
 - Al-Qāsiṭīn (القاسطين) – Those who commit injustice or oppression
 - Al-Jāhidīn (الجاحدين) – Those who reject or deny God or the truth
 - Al-Kāfirīn (الكافرين) – The disbelievers
 - Al-Zālimīn (الظالمين) – The tyrants
 - Al-Mujrimīn (المجرمين) – The criminals or lawbreakers
 - Al-Kāḍibīn (الكاذبين) – The liars, hypocrites, or false claimants
 - Al-Mushrikīn (المشركين) – The polytheists or idolaters
 - Al-Fāsiqīn (الفاسقين) – The immoral or rebellious against divine law
 - Al-Ghālin (الغالين) – Those who exaggerate or distort belief, often in sectarian deviation

Total: **twenty-eight principles**.

Section Translation: On the Names of God and the Boundaries of the Testimony

1. God's names and limits:

- Allah says: "To Him belong the Most Beautiful Names; call upon Him by them" and "These are the limits of Allah, and whoever transgresses His limits has wronged himself."
- Every believer must understand the **meanings of the testimony** "*lā ilāha illā Allāh*". The Prophet ﷺ said: "Whoever says it sincerely enters Paradise." Sincerity means knowing its **boundaries** and fulfilling its **rights**.

2. Boundaries and correspondences:

- The boundaries are **living, speaking jewels**: the spiritual (upper) and the soul-psychic (lower) aspects.
- They correspond to the testimony through the **same balance pattern** used throughout the text.

3. **Spiritual world (al-‘ālam al-rūḥānī):**

- **Prior and subsequent** → correspond to **negation and affirmation** (lā ilāha / illā Allāh)
- **Lineage, origin, potentiality** → correspond to **three letters** (L-A-H)
- **Four aspects of spirituality**: creation, emanation, matter, form → correspond to **four words**
- **Seven angelic rulers**: nafs, shahīd, wakīl, ḥafīz, makīn, muṭā‘, amīn → correspond to **seven segments**
- **Twelve divine names**: al-amr, al-kalimah, al-‘illah, al-ḥarakah, al-quwwah, al-qudrah, al-mashīyah, al-irādah, al-nihāyah, al-ghāyah, al-nūr, al-‘āzamah → correspond to **twelve divisions**

● **Total**: 28 symbolic points.

4–7–12 Pattern in the Qur’an and Prophetic Tradition

● **Book of God (Qur’an):**

- Revelation and interpretation → **negation/affirmation**
- Core of religion (tawḥīd) → **three: Prophet, successor, Imam**
- Each speaker (nāṭiq), successor, or Imam → **four boundaries: gate, proof, caller, assistant**
- In each era → **seven completions or segments**
- Across twelve lands (islands) → **twelve dispersed proofs**, matching the twelve divisions of the testimony

● **Imam in each era:**

- Must manifest **negation and affirmation**
- **Three signs of Imamate**: noble lineage, spiritual cause, divine appointment
- **Four sacred boundaries**

- **Seven ranks after the gate** (proofs, callers, messengers, rulers, assistants, enforcers, believers)
 - **Twelve appointed guides** across the islands
-

Five roots of letters (ḥurūf) symbolic structure

1. **Five upper (spiritual) boundaries:** *al-Qalam, al-Lawḥ, Isrāfīl, Mīkā'il, Jibrīl* → 28 letters
 2. **Seven speakers (prophets):** *Ādam, Nūḥ, Ibrāhīm, Mūsā, 'Isā, Muḥammad, al-Qā'im* → 28 letters
 3. **Seven successors (awṣiyā')**: *Shīth, Sām, Ismā'il, Hārūn, Sham'un, 'Alī, Ḥujjah* → 28 letters
 4. **Seven completions (atamā')**: *Hasan, Ḥusayn, 'Alī, Muḥammad, Ja'far, Ismā'il, Muḥammad* → 28 letters
 5. **Five repeated boundaries** in every era: *Imam, Gate, Proof, Caller, Assistant* → 28 letters
- These roots **witness to all spiritual and physical creations**, repeating across time to establish divine proof and guidance.
-

The Five Divisions of the Testimony – First Three Divisions

First Division – Two Faces: Negation and Affirmation

The testimony has **two aspects**: *lā* (negation) and *illā* (affirmation). These represent the two great boundaries of God: the **Prophet** and the **Successor (al-Wasī)**. Without them, there would be no religion or wisdom.

This duality of negation and affirmation is mirrored in creation, human life, and worship: the celestial orbits and zodiac spheres reflect this duality; the earth's states of desolation and cultivation; the human composition of body and soul; time divided into night and day; ritual purity achieved through water ablution or dry ablution; prayer expressed in movement and stillness; zakah divided between gold and silver; fasting during the day and breaking it at night; pilgrimage involving the states of *iḥrām* and *iḥlāl*; and jihad by wealth and by self.

To properly understand the testimony, one must recognize these two boundaries with certainty, guided by clear reasoning and radiant knowledge, and fulfill their rights.

Second Division – Three Letters

The testimony consists of **three letters**, which have no dots and no fixed form, symbolizing hidden knowledge. These correspond to three divine boundaries: the **Imam**, the **Proof (al-Ḥujjah)**, and the **Caller (al-Dāʿī)**. From them comes knowledge, wisdom, and certainty. Without these three, religion, wisdom, and certainty could not exist.

This triplicity is mirrored in various realms. In creation, there are the three natural movements of the heavens; on earth, the three types of beings born; in humans, the three types of souls; in time, past, present, and future; in ablution, three stages of washing and wiping; in prayer, the three categories of obligation, recommendation, and supererogation; in zakah, three types of animals; in fasting, three voluntary prohibitions; in pilgrimage, the three types (mufrad, qārin, muta'); and in jihad, the three forms of effort—by hand, tongue, and heart.

One must know these three boundaries with certainty and fully perform their rights.

Third Division – Four Words

The testimony consists of **four words: lā ilāha illā Allāh**, representing four divine boundaries. The upper boundaries are **reason** and **soul**, expressed in the pen and tablet (sharia). The lower boundaries are **the speaker** and **the basis of the call**, expressed in the Prophet and the Successor.

These four boundaries form the origin of all creation, both spiritual and physical, and the foundation of religion and wisdom. If they did not exist, there would be no spiritual creation, no celestial orbits, no physical bodies, and no law or guidance.

In the worlds of humans, time, and ritual, these four are mirrored as the four humors, the four seasons, the four washings of ablution, the four pillars of prayer, the four categories of zakah, the four pillars of the Ka'bah, and the four aspects of jihad.

One must know these four boundaries thoroughly and fulfill their rights completely.

Fourth Division – Seven Divisions (Seven Chapters)

The testimony unfolds into seven chapters, symbolizing seven divine boundaries. These are the seven speakers: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, and the Qa'im (peace be upon them all). They form the foundation of religion and wisdom. Without them, religion and wisdom would not exist.

This sevenfold structure reflects creation, time, and ritual:

The seven chapters mirror the seven divisions of the testimony.

The seven celestial spheres represent creation.

The seven regions of the earth correspond to physical space.

Humans are composed of seven essential components.

Time is organized into seven days of the week.

Ablution involves seven stages.

Prayer encompasses seven elements.

Zakah has seven aspects.

Obligatory fasting includes seven forms.

Circumambulation around the Ka'bah consists of seven circuits.

Jihad occurs in seven forms.

One must fully understand these seven boundaries and fulfill their rights to secure salvation and spiritual guidance.

Fifth Division – Twelve Letters

The testimony also unfolds into twelve letters, representing twelve boundaries in each prophetic era. Each prophet, foundational figure, and imam has twelve appointed leaders in twelve regions, calling humanity to one religion and one imam, though with diverse times and contexts, so that people have no excuse before God.

This twelvefold system mirrors the world:

Twelve letters correspond to the testimony itself.

Twelve zodiac signs reflect creation.

Twelve regions represent the earth.

Humans have twelve essential components.

Twelve months structure time.

Ablution involves twelve body parts.

Prayer has twelve components.

Zakah includes twelve categories of wealth or property.

Fasting prohibits twelve actions or circumstances.

Pilgrimage has twelve stations.

Jihad occurs in twelve forms.

Knowing these twelve boundaries, especially the appointed caller in one's own region, ensures one is spiritually connected. As the Prophet ﷺ said: "Know yourselves through Him; know Him through yourselves." The soul is linked inseparably to God, and knowing it reveals the full network of spiritual and material boundaries. Proper knowledge ensures a truthful and accepted testimony.

Human Body and Natural Correspondences

The text then explains creation, using the human body as a metaphorical and symbolic reflection of divine order:

Humans are made of four humors: black bile (cold/dry), yellow bile (hot/dry), phlegm (cold/wet), and blood (hot/wet).

These humors correspond to elements: earth (black), water (phlegm), air (blood), fire (yellow).

The body consists of nine essential substances: flesh, blood, veins, skin, nerves, bones, brain, hair, and nails.

The body is structured like a city with ten layers: feet, legs, knees, thighs, hips, shoulders, back, abdomen, neck, and head.

The human body contains 248 bones and 720 nerves connecting the brain to all limbs.

There are 365 stationary veins (from the liver) and 365 active arteries (from the heart).

Eleven reservoirs hold essential substances: brain, spinal cord, heart, lungs, liver, gallbladder, spleen, stomach, intestines, kidneys, bladder.

The body is protected by skin with twelve openings: two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, mouth, two breasts, navel, two excretory passages.

Humans have seven internal powers, each with a unique function: attracting, holding, digesting, propelling, nourishing, shaping, and growing.

Five senses: sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch.

Humans are supported by two legs and operate with two arms.

Spiritually, three “tribes” inhabit the body:

Jinn – the growing soul, circulating from liver through stationary veins.

Humans – the sensory soul, circulating from the heart through active arteries.

Angels – the rational soul, residing in the brain, circulating through nerves.

The Prophet ﷺ explained: God created angels with intellect and no desire, beasts with desire and no intellect, and humans with both. Those dominated by desire are worse than beasts; those dominated by intellect are better than angels.

Introduction and Purpose

*In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful. Praise be to Allah, Lord of all worlds, and blessings upon the best of His creation, **Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets**, upon his guardian **‘Ali ibn Abi Talib, Commander of the Faithful**, upon the pure Imams from their progeny, and upon our present Master, **the Imam al-Ṭayyib Abu al-Qasim, Commander of the Faithful**, the proof of God upon all creation.*

*The author addresses a fellow seeker of truth, recognizing his clarity of insight and refined perception, and presents this treatise as a doorway to **true, precise, and salvific knowledge**, drawn from the blessings of the pure Fatimid Imams. This treatise is called **“The Treatise of the Two Substances”** because it revolves around the knowledge of two essential forms of being: the dense (material) and the subtle (spiritual).*

*The treatise is structured into **eight chapters**, addressing the nature of substances and their properties.*

Chapter One – Substances and Accidents

- All things fall into **two categories: substance (jawhar) and accident ('ard)**.
- Substances themselves are divided into **dense (kathīf) and subtle (latīf)**.
- Accidents are also divided into two types.

The author begins with **substance**, as it is the carrier of accidents, and starts with the **dense substance**, which serves as the gateway to understanding the subtle.

Chapter Two – Dense Substance (Jawhar Kathīf)

- Dense substance is perceivable in **length, width, and depth**.
 - It is grasped through the **five senses**: hearing, sight, smell, taste, and touch.
 - It occupies the **six directions**: front, back, right, left, above, and below.
 - This makes it a **finite body** with defined dimensions.
 - Dense substance accepts **opposites** (hot/cold, dry/wet) without losing its identity as a body.
 - Dense substance is divided into **impossible** (mustaḥīl) and **possible** (ghayr mustaḥīl) forms.
-

Chapter Three – Impossible Substances

- These are further divided into **elements (arkān) and creatures (mawālīd)**.
 - The **four elements**: fire, air, water, earth (the classical “primary elements”).
 - The **three creatures**: minerals, plants, animals.
 - Each element and creature can be subdivided further, which will be discussed in study and memorization.
-

Chapter Four – Possible Substances

- Possible substances are divided into **planets (kawākib) and celestial spheres (aflāk)**.

Planets:

- Divided into **moving** and **fixed**.

Celestial spheres:

- There are **nine main spheres**:
 1. Moon
 2. Mercury
 3. Venus
 4. Sun
 5. Mars
 6. Jupiter
 7. Saturn
 8. Fixed stars (Zodiac)
 9. The Primum Mobile (or the “Sphere of the Heavens”), also called the Throne (al-‘Arsh) or the Straight Sphere.
 - Within the larger spheres exist the **four elemental spheres**: fire, air, water, earth, which are **suspended without supports or pillars**, reflecting the divine precision of creation.
-

Philosophical Explanation

- These nine celestial spheres correspond to the **physical universe** from the outermost to the center of the earth.
- In philosophical terms (ḥayūlī), they are the **absolute material body**.
- They are **activated by the subtle substance** (al-jawhar al-latīf), which gives them life in potency.
- The “dead” material (al-mawt) is considered **absence or non-existence**, corresponding to the **Divine Tablet (al-Lawḥ)** in Shariah terminology.

Movements of dense substance:

1. **Towards the center** – water and earth.

2. **Away from the center** – fire and air.
3. **Around the center** – planets and spheres.

This shows a **harmonized cosmic order**, where the dense substance forms the foundation of the visible, material universe, yet is animated and directed by subtle, spiritual forces.

Second Part: The Accidents (Al-'Arḍ) – Dense and Subtle

Chapter Five – Dense Accidents

- Dense accidents are divided into two types:

1. **Natural (Compulsory)**

- Further subdivided into **necessary** and **unnecessary**:
 - **Necessary**: inherent properties, e.g., colors of objects, constant movements, fixed directions, limits.
 - **Unnecessary**: changes that are contingent or situational, e.g., blushes of shame, paleness of fear, color changes in plants, shapes like round, triangular, flat, etc.

2. **Artificial (Optional)**

- Further subdivided into **lasting** and **non-lasting**:
 - **Lasting**: pigments, engravings, wood or stone inlays – things chosen by human will and remain over time.
 - **Non-lasting**: sounds, speech, incidental motions, and temporary actions – impermanent and variable.

- The dense accident is the **physical manifestation of wisdom**, perceived by the senses, called a “partial body” in philosophical terms, or “artificial form” (ṣūrah ṣinā'īyah).
-

Second Part of the Treatise: Subtle Substance (Al-Jawhar al-Latīf)

The subtle substance is **non-material, spiritual, and essential**. It is explored in eight chapters.

Chapter One – Complete and Incomplete Subtle Substances

- **Complete (Kāmil):** subdivided into **Creatio (Ibda')** and **Emission (Inbi'āth):**
 - **Ibda':** the First Creator, the first existent, eternal, ultimate intellect, the Divine Pen, the Absolute.
 - **Inbi'āth:** the second existent, the second intellect, the Universal Soul, or Tablet (al-Lawḥ).
 - **Incomplete (Nāqis):** subdivided into:
 - **Active for others**
 - **Passive for others**
 - They are incomplete because they require something beyond themselves to attain perfection.
 - Both complete and incomplete subtle substances are **life itself**.
-

Chapter Two – Difference Between Dense and Subtle Substances

- Dense substance is **perceptible by senses**, bounded, limited.
 - Subtle substance is **imperceptible by senses**, unlimited, without edges or finite dimensions.
 - Dense substance can hold opposites like hot/cold or soft/hard; subtle substance can hold opposites like knowledge/ignorance, courage/cowardice, generosity/miserliness.
-

Chapter Three – Subtle Substance and Life

- Subtle substance is **the carrier of life**, which hosts all spiritual and intellectual qualities.
 - Life is inherent to subtle substance; even if qualities are imagined removed, life persists.
-

Chapter Four – Material Union with Subtle Substance

- Subtle substance manifests in two ways:

1. **Detached (*mutajarrid*)**: complete and self-sufficient, requiring nothing else (e.g., the First Creator).
 2. **United with body (*muttahid*)**: incomplete, needing the body to express itself.
- **Example**: the human soul requires the body to act in the physical world but is not bounded by it, like sunlight passing through a glass sphere – inside the sphere, the light seems constrained, outside it remains unlimited.
-

Chapter Five – Evidence of Complete and Incomplete Substances

- Evidence of complete: acts by itself, requires nothing else.
 - Evidence of incomplete: union with body is observable via movement, perception, and actions.
 - Human existence is proof: body (dense) + soul (subtle) together.
-

Chapter Six – Union of Subtle Substance and Body

- The subtle substance is **non-limited**, while the body is limited.
 - The union is like **light and glass**: the light permeates and transcends the glass but appears within it.
 - The soul's capacity is unlimited: it can grasp all sciences, arts, and knowledge without being overwhelmed.
-

Chapter Seven – On the Perfect Subtle Substance

- The perfect subtle substance is **divine**, infinite, not bounded by matter or time.
 - Its existence proves the **duality**: an active, complete principle (God) and a passive, dependent principle (creation).
 - This duality requires recognizing both absolute perfection and contingent existence.
-

Chapter Eight – Subtle Accidents

- *Subtle accidents are divided into:*
 1. **Innate (Mawhūb):** natural intelligence, guiding all physical beings, maintaining their order, and directing them toward good.
 - *Examples: a plant's roots seeking moisture, an animal avoiding harm.*
 2. **Acquired (Maksūb):** human learning, skills, sciences, arts – temporary, may be forgotten, but enables achievement.
 - *Divided further into:*
 - **Foundational/Mathematical & Legal Knowledge (Muqawwim)**
 - **Comprehensive/True Knowledge (Mutammim)**
 - *Proper understanding and use of these subtle accidents lead to success; misuse or neglect leads to error and destruction.*
-

From the Fourth Epistle of the Brethren of Purity

Know, my righteous and merciful brother—may God support you and us with His Spirit—that the seven regions of the earth are not natural divisions, but imaginary lines drawn by early kings who explored the inhabited world, such as Afridun the Nabatean, the Himyarite rulers, Solomon son of David, Alexander the Greek, and Yazdegerd son of Babakan the Persian. They established these lines to map the boundaries of lands, trade routes, and dangerous areas.

The remaining three-quarters of the earth were largely inaccessible, blocked by towering mountains, treacherous paths, vast oceans, and extreme natural conditions of heat, cold, and darkness. For example, in the far north under the Tropic of Capricorn, winter lasts six months, the air is intensely dark, and water freezes. Conversely, in the southern tropics under Canopus, the sun never sets, the air becomes blistering hot, scorching plants and animals, making habitation impossible.

Similarly, the western oceans with their violent waves prevent travel, while the high mountains in the east make movement difficult. Observing this, one sees that humanity is effectively confined to the inhabited quarter of the earth, with little knowledge of the remaining regions.

Moreover, the earth, with all its mountains and seas, is but a point compared to the vast heavens. In the celestial spheres, there are 1,029 planets; the smallest is eighteen times the

size of the earth, and the largest is 107 times bigger. The vast distances make them appear like scattered pearls on a green carpet. Contemplating this grandeur reveals the wisdom and majesty of the Creator, awakening one from heedlessness and ignorance. It becomes clear that God created all things for a meaningful purpose, not in vain.

Praise be to God. Peace and blessings be upon Muhammad and his pure family.

On Education, by Muhammad bin Tahir, Servant of the House of Muhammad

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. We seek His help.

Praise be to God, who established His religion as a model for creation and guides knowledge toward His unity. Blessings be upon His trustworthy messenger, Muhammad, whose station with God is secure, and upon his guardian, Ali ibn Abi Talib, the Imam of the God-conscious. Blessings also upon the Imams from his lineage, the bearers of truth and guidance, masters of religion, and rulers appointed by God, down to our current Imam, Abu al-Qasim, proof of God over all creation.

To proceed:

May God grant you joy through allegiance to your Imam and surround you with blessings. You asked about pure and sound education, free from doubt and flaw, to guide those under your care along the straight path. I offer this concise guidance, divided into twelve chapters corresponding to the twelve ranks of religion, to clarify the principles for readers.

Chapter One:

Briefly, the Shi'a are divided into three groups: the People of Truth, the Extremists, and the Negligent. I will summarize their beliefs to distinguish the correct from the incorrect, God willing.

Chapter Two:

The People of Truth occupy the middle path between the Extremists and the Negligent. The latter two are doomed, destined for divine punishment, because they fail to nurture true understanding or insight. The Prophet (peace be upon him) illustrated this metaphorically: the right and left paths are misleading, while the middle path leads to salvation. The Extremists are on the right, the Negligent on the left, and the People of Truth in the center, following God's correct religion and straight path. They unite revelation and interpretation, observe obligatory acts and lawful norms, maintain the five daily prayers, and are mindful of God in both public and private life.

Chapter Three:

They understand hidden meanings, preserve sacred symbols, and grasp deep truths. They recognize the honor of each era's divinely appointed leader and the Imams of his lineage, whose authority is explicitly confirmed. Knowledge and leadership pass from one to the next,

down to our present Imam, Abu al-Qasim. These people understand the essence of God's unity and transcendence, follow the appointed boundaries, avoid sin, and safeguard themselves from forbidden acts. In sum, they uphold the pillars of Islam, both outwardly and inwardly, comprehend the secrets of creation, and understand the archetype and its manifestations. They rely on the tangible to understand the unseen and follow God's words: "We shall show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth" (Quran 41:53). The Qur'an praises them: "Successful indeed are the believers: who are humble in their prayers, avoid vain talk, pay the zakat, and guard their chastity except with their spouses or those their right hands possess" (Quran 23:1-6).

Chapter Four:

Through such acts and knowledge, human insight is enlightened and religious understanding develops. The Shariah is the seed of eternal life, and observing its boundaries ensures everlasting salvation. By following it, one attains the kingdom of heaven, rises to glory, and encounters people of virtue. The region of moderation on earth reflects this group: it is neither excessively hot nor cold, which preserves crops and life, ensuring balance in day and night, rainfall, and the growth of plants, animals, and humans.

Chapter Five:

The Extremists, in contrast, claim divinity for humans, believing that Imam Ali (peace be upon him) is the all-encompassing whole and appears in every era. They reject religious obligations and laws, asserting that knowledge alone suffices, which in their case leads only to disbelief and moral corruption. May God protect us from such beliefs and guide us away from them.

Chapter Six

They are concerned with God's words: "Among the people are some who worship God superficially" and the warning given to the believers: "Say, O People of the Book, do not exceed the limits in your religion, and speak only the truth about God."

Curses and warnings have been directed at such people in all times and places. Among them are those warned by the call to righteousness, recorded in their own actions. For example, as narrated by our master Ja'far ibn Mansur al-Yaman, God sanctify his secret, regarding the misguided Shi'a who exaggerated in devotion to Ali, claiming he neither begot nor was begotten, and asserting that Hasan and Husayn were sons of Azur ibn al-Qays. Some clung to Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyya, and their misguidance is described by our master Hamid al-Din, God sanctify him, in *Tanbih al-Hadi wa al-Mustahdi*: the gravest misguidance is that of the extremists, who mislead themselves and others like a flame set by Satan. They abandon true worship of God, separate from the community of faith, and stray from justice and honesty. Beware of aligning with them, lest your heart hardens. God's mercy is near to the righteous.

Chapter Seven

Our master al-Mu'ayyad, God sanctify him, stated in a gathering: "O believers, cleanse yourselves from filth and remove the veil of ignorance from your hearts. Seek refuge in God from those who claim, with their mouths, to be Shi'a but are the forefront of disbelief and deviation. They pursue ease, distort the meaning of prayer, zakat, and fasting, claiming that understanding them nullifies their obligation, and they twist prohibitions to suit their desires. They are more harmful to religion and the faithful than the sword, opposing the Imams openly and defiantly. From the time of Amir al-Mu'minin Ali ibn Abi Talib and the Imams of his lineage down to the present Imam, God has declared them disassociated from this path. They spread shameful texts against all who follow the true religion."

He also said: "Ignorantly, the extremist believes he is exalted, while in reality he is lowly."

And in Bab al-Abwab, God sanctify him: "Avoid both the extremist and those who flatter him, as well as the negligent and those who mislead him. The truth lies in the middle. This group is reflected in the northern regions of the earth, dominated by Saturn with extreme cold and dryness, where neither plant, animal, nor human life can grow, because it is outside the bounds of moderation."

Chapter Eight

The negligent group adheres to ritual acts but rejects interpretive reasoning, denies the stations of the special people, follows the misguided Imams, and imitates the ignorant. God refers to them in the Qur'an: "Faces on that day will be humbled, laboring in toil, enduring a scorching fire" (Quran 3:106). Their deeds are lost despite thinking they perform well; their labor in the worldly life is wasted. They act contrary to the Prophet's guidance, opposing the divinely appointed Imams.

The northern and southern extremes of the earth illustrate this: the northern zone suffers extreme cold and dryness; the southern zone suffers extreme heat and aridity, so neither vegetation, animals, nor humans can thrive in these regions outside the balance God intended.

Chapter Nine

Those entering the sacred path of the call to truth must first purify themselves and begin by learning proper prayer. They should perform it on time, understand its meaning, and recognize its role as the foundation of religion. The Prophet said: "The first thing God looks at from a servant's deeds is his prayer. If it is correct, He observes the rest; if not, the rest is disregarded."

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq, peace be upon him, stated: prayer is the most beloved act to God, the final advice of the prophets. Proper ablution, privacy in worship, and devotion during prostration bring one closest to God.

Regarding intoxicants, Imam al-Mu'izz li-Din Allah, peace be upon him, prohibited shell-less fish, analogous to those whose faith is hollow and exposed. Likewise, alcohol is condemned as it corrupts reason, destroys the soul, and enables sin. God says: "O you who believe! Intoxicants, gambling, idols, and divination are abominations of Satan's work. Avoid them so you may prosper" (Quran 5:90). The Prophet cursed all involved with it, including producers, sellers, and users.

The human form is the pinnacle of creation; reason is the pinnacle of the human form. Intoxicants oppose reason, extinguishing its light and undermining wisdom, contrary to God's order in creation. Hence, prohibiting intoxicants is central to God's law and the Prophet's teaching.

Chapter Ten

One must observe divine boundaries and maintain loyalty to those who exemplify religious duties. This ensures one is knowledgeable and active, not ignorant. One pays obligatory charity (zakat) through the Imam or guardian, supports the needy, and cultivates virtue. One shows mercy to others, recognizing that without God's favor, one could have been astray.

Other obligations include fasting Ramadan, performing pilgrimage if possible, and striving in God's path, whether by hand, tongue, or heart. The Prophet said that in paradise there will be a tree under which noble steeds will stand, accessible only to the righteous, demonstrating the reward of night prayer, fasting, charity, and striving while others neglect these duties.

Chapter Eleven

One maintains allegiance to the divinely appointed spokespersons, Imams, and the current Imam, obeying their guidance and those aligned with them, and opposing those who oppose them, in accordance with God's covenant.

One studies the outward pillars of Islam in detail, as well as the works of the Muhammadiyya call, striving to seek God through righteous deeds. This internalizes virtue, purifies the self, and distances it from corrupt actions. One avoids the company of the morally suspect and associates with the righteous. Understanding moral discipline precedes religious practice.

The Prophet said, when asked about the believer: "Where is the believer? The believer is like a red ruby—found only in the treasuries of kings." May God guide us and all believers to what pleases Him, by the merit of Muhammad and the pure Imams, peace be upon them.

Chapter Twelve

Our master al-Baqir, peace be upon him, said to some of his followers: "Convey our greetings to our Shi'a, and enjoin them to fear God. Let the wealthy support the poor, the healthy attend to the sick, and all be present at the funerals of the deceased among them. Let them visit each other's homes, for such meetings bring life to our cause. May God have mercy on those who revive our mission and act in its best manner. Tell them that nothing from God benefits them except through righteous deeds, and they cannot attain our guardianship except through piety and diligence. The most regretful on the Day of Judgment will be those who claim a deed and deviate to something else. Peace be upon you. This is my statement, my faith, and my belief. I disassociate myself from any religion contrary to it. Praise be to God for His apparent and hidden blessings. Blessings be upon our master Muhammad, the Prophet, and upon his pure Imams. God is sufficient for us and the best disposer of affairs."

Following this, the letter of Shahriyar ibn al-Husayn, God sanctify him, is recited:

In the Name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

A question was posed to the Da'i: A questioner asked, "You claim that there exist two worlds: a corporeal world and a spiritual world. We acknowledge and understand the corporeal world, the entirety of this great physical structure, including the raised heavens, luminous stars, the four elements, and successive generations of living beings. But beyond that, we have not perceived nor comprehended anything. Clarify for us what you claim, and establish proof that we cannot refute, which the hearts acknowledge as true."

We said, by God's assistance, that for those who deny the spiritual world, once the corporeal world is fully known, bounded, and classified, we can then approach the spiritual world without difficulty or rugged paths, because the unseen is inferred from what is seen. Without this, no knowledge beyond observation would be possible.

We explain that the corporeal world divides into three categories:

- 1. The World of Celestial Spheres and Planets*** – Neither its whole nor its parts admit increase or decrease. Even the smallest addition would demand space for it, which is impossible. No emptiness exists therein by consensus of the scholars. Observation over ages confirms no expansion or contraction. The sages agree that the celestial spheres are immutable, perfectly constructed, and free from corruption, both in part and whole.
- 2. The Four Elements*** – These admit partial change but not total change, through interaction and blending. Change in one part of an element occurs due to mixture with another element. Total change would prevent the persistence of generations and stability.

3. ***The Three Generations of Creatures*** – Mineral, plant, and animal kingdoms admit change in their entirety, involving three components: a productive element (kawn), a decaying element (fasad), and a transitional element between them. Creation begins with kawn and ends in fasad. Change is inherent and inseparable.

Humans, being the culmination of thought and action, contain a portion of every lower-world species and a share of every higher-world essence. The multiplicity of their faculties requires access to all forces. Opposing forces interact, necessitating a noble power to actualize their potential, enabling the acquisition of knowledge and guidance for salvation in the hereafter. The human composition unites these portions, governing creation and assigning to each its proper place, securing permanence and transition from the transient world to the eternal, the Garden of Abode and the Abode of Simplicity.

In contrast, a mere physical body, constrained in essence and capacity, draws only from its immediate surroundings. It cannot ascend to the sphere of spiritual purity, nor achieve permanence or uniqueness. Comparison between such a body and a human soul is flawed; their nature, abilities, and potential are utterly different.

Bodies also exhibit another kind of movement, not inherent to their matter: choice and will. Matter alone cannot move or act autonomously; it only receives effects. The actor's influence elevates or corrupts it, assembles it, or disperses it, always returning it to its original nature. This indicates the existence of a non-corporeal essence, capable of bringing benefits and averting harm, and through which humans acquire knowledge of hidden and distant matters.

This noble essence possesses countless virtues. Among them: perceiving things hidden in time and space, integrating past and future knowledge, and organizing actions accordingly. Its operations explain foresight in worldly matters, strategic planning, and protection of possessions and descendants. Bodies alone cannot accomplish this; such abilities belong to the spiritual essence.

Furthermore, distinctions among species, forms, and individuals demonstrate that observable actions depend on underlying noble essences. Human longing for eternal life, obstructed by corporeal limitations, indicates derivation from another world. Seed propagation also exemplifies this: a single seed draws elements from its environment, reproducing its qualities and powers—a process impossible without an active, noble essence.

The spiritual world is not hidden, but the human inability to perceive it directly creates apparent absence. Just as children or those of limited intellect cannot comprehend composed speech with profound meanings, so too the spiritual cannot be grasped without developed faculties.

Bodies maintain cohesion for a time, but eventually disassemble; they cannot preserve themselves without an external binding force. God has appointed this spiritual essence to maintain unity and order, preventing dissolution.

Reflect, then, O denier of the spiritual world, on God's design in creation—the subtle and the manifest, the apparent and the hidden—and thereby recognize His unity. The Prophet said: "I know you by Myself; I know you by your Lord." May God grant us, and all who seek knowledge, guidance for the salvation of the soul.

Praise be to God alone, blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad and the pure Imams, and God is sufficient for us and the best disposer of affairs. There is no power or strength except in God, the Most High, and I entrust my affairs to Him, for He sees His servants.

A Treatise Containing the Decree Announcing Glad Tidings for Our Master, from the Words of Sayyidunā Muḥammad ibn Ṭāhir, may God sanctify his soul

In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, and in Him we seek help.

If it is said to you, "Are you a believer or a Muslim?" then say: "Rather, I am a believer."

And if it is said, "Did you attain faith after having been a Muslim, or did you attain it apart from Islam?" then say: "Rather, I attained faith after having been a Muslim."

If it is said, "When did you attain Islam?" then say: "At natural birth."

If it is said, "What is the proof of that?" then say: the saying of the Messenger of God: "Every child is born upon the natural disposition of Islam, until his parents make him a Jew, a Christian, or a Magian."

If it is said to you, "What is Islam?" then say: "Uttering the two testimonies," as the Messenger of God said: "I have been commanded to fight the people until they say: There is no god but God, Muhammad is the Messenger of God. If they say it, they protect by it their blood and wealth, except by its due right, and by uttering it they enter Islam and safety from retribution."

If it is said to you, "What is the perfection of Islam?" then say: "Performing the prescribed ritual obligations and entering into the commands of the sacred law."

Section

If it is said, "What is the obligation, what is the obligation of the obligation, what is the obligation that leads to an obligation, and what is the sunnah by which the obligation is completed?" then say:

The obligation is prayer.

The obligation of the obligation is ablution.

The obligation that leads to an obligation is taking water with the right hand and passing it to the left in order to remove impurities.

The sunnah by which the obligation is completed is circumcision.

Section

If it is said to you, "The Messenger of God said: Actions are by intentions. With what intention do you leave your house for the mosque?" then say: "With the intention of visitation."

If it is said to you, "With what intention do you enter the mosque?" then say: "With the intention of worship."

If it is said to you, "With what intention do you stand for prayer?" then say: "With the intention of service."

If it is said to you, "With what intention do you rise for service?" then say: "With the intention of servitude and acknowledgment of God's divinity."

If it is said to you, "How many obligations are upon you before entering prayer?" then say: "Six obligations."

If it is said to you, "What are they?" then say: intention, purification, covering oneself during purification, choosing the place of prostration, standing for prayer, and facing the qiblah.

If it is said to you, "What is the consecration of prayer?" then say: "The opening takbīr."

If it is said to you, "What is its form?" then say: "Its recitation."

If it is said to you, "What is its essence?" then say: "Its glorification."

If it is said to you, "What is its dignity?" then say: "Humility."

If it is said to you, "What is the perfection of humility?" then say: "Looking at the place of prostration."

If it is said to you, "What is its farewell?" then say: "Its tashahhud."

If it is said to you, "What is its release?" then say: "Its salām."

If it is said to you, "What is its emblem?" then say: "Supplication."

If it is said to you, "How many takbīrs are required of you in the five obligatory prayers every day and night?" then say: "Ninety-four takbīrs."

If it is said to you, "Why is the required number in these prayers ninety-four takbīrs, neither more nor less?" then say: "The discussion concerning the quantity of these takbīrs and their rationale, and likewise the numbers of the other kinds of prayer, is necessary and binding, but in its proper place."

On Faith

Section

If it is said to you, "At what time did you attain faith?" then say: "At the taking of the noble covenant for the Imam of the age, peace be upon him. That is the religious birth."

If it is said to you, “Who is the Imam of the age?” then say: “The lord of the present time and age, Imam al-Ṭayyib Abū al-Qāsim, Commander of the Faithful, son of Imam al-Āmir bi-Aḥkām Allāh, peace be upon them both, and upon their pure forefathers and noble awaited descendants.”

If it is said to you, “By what was it established and confirmed for you that he is the Imam of the age?” then say: “By that through which the prophethood of the Prophet, the trusteeship of the Trustee, and the imamate of the Imams from their progeny, peace be upon them all, were established and confirmed.”

If it is said to you, “And by what was that established for you?” then say: “By clear proofs and manifest prophetic evidences established by the boundaries of religion appointed by the pure Household of Prophethood. Once their truthfulness, purity, rectitude, and justice were established for us, then through them there was established for us the falsity of the beliefs of the Musāwiyya, the Zaydiyya, those who hold the imamate of Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyya, the Twelvers, the Rajīmiyya, the Nizāriyya, and the Majīdiyya. For if the imamate of our master al-Ṭayyib ibn al-Āmir, peace be upon him, were lacking, then all of that would collapse, the order would be severed, and doctrines and rulings would be nullified. But by the establishment of his imamate, peace be upon him, all of that is established.”

Section

What increased us further in certainty is the arrival of the decree of our master al-Āmir bi-Aḥkām Allāh containing the glad tidings of his birth and the explicit designation of him to the imamate without interruption, and that it remains in his progeny so long as days and nights endure. This is its wording. He, peace be upon him, said:

In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, and in Him we seek help. From the servant of God and His friend, al-Manṣūr Abī ‘Alī al-Āmir bi-Aḥkām Allāh, Commander of the Faithful, to the noble free queen, the contented lady, the pure and virtuous one, unique of the age, lady of the kings of Yemen, pillar of Islam, sincere devotee of the Imam, treasure of religion, support of the believers, refuge of the respondents, protection of those who seek right guidance, companion of the Commander of the Faithful, and guardian of his blessed followers—may God perpetuate her authority and blessings, and perfect for her His aid and assistance—peace be upon you.

The Commander of the Faithful praises to you God, besides whom there is no deity, and asks Him to bless his grandfather Muḥammad, the Seal of the Prophets and master of the Messengers, and upon his pure and rightly guided family, with complete peace and blessing.

To proceed:

The blessings of God upon the Commander of the Faithful cannot be counted, nor can they be limited by measure, nor can thought encompass them, for they are like clouds: whenever one cloud passes, abundant showers follow it. They are like the radiant sun in its shining, constant in order and harmony; like rains continuously descending morning and evening.

Among the noblest of these blessings in worth, greatest in fame and remembrance, most exalted in majesty and glory, is the gift newly granted to him now: that he has been provided with a son, pure, pleasing and well-pleasing, righteous and God-fearing. This occurred on the night preceding Sunday, the fourth of Rabīʿ al-Ākhir in the year 524. The pulpits rejoiced in the sweetness of his remembrance, and the hopes of all present and absent turned toward his gifts. The darkness of the black nights was illuminated by the lights of his glory and the beauty of his appearance, and through him the Fatimid state was adorned with strings of virtues and glories. God brought him forth from the line of prophethood, as light is brought forth from light, and granted thereby to the Commander of the Faithful that by which the spark of joy was kindled.

He named him al-Ṭayyib for the goodness of his essence, and gave him the kunyah Abū al-Qāsim, the kunyah of his grandfather, the Prophet of guidance, whose substance was brought forth from his own substance.

The Commander of the Faithful thanks God for what He has bestowed upon him in allowing him to behold a shining star in the heaven of his state, and a blazing meteor in the orbit of his glory and exaltation, with a gratitude that ensures the continuation of His blessing and the pouring forth of the clouds of His favor and mercy.

He asks Him to allow him to attain through him the fulfillment of his highest hopes, and to continue through him the chain of the imamate for as long as days and nights continue, and to make him a protection for those who seek guidance, a proof against the deniers, a relief for those who cry for help, a rain-cloud for those who seek bounty, a support for the fearful, and felicity for the gnostics, so that the world may receive through his blessedness its fullest share and portion, and the imamate may smile broadly with delight.

Because of your lofty station with the Commander of the Faithful, and your rank which rises above all equal and peer, he informs you of this glad tiding—great in worth, immense in glory, widespread in fame and remembrance—so that you may take from the joy of it the fullest share, and spread it among those in your care from his loyal followers and respondents, in such a way that all, near and far alike, are equal in knowledge of it, so that the necklace of joy may be strung by it, and its fragrance may spread like moist sandalwood among those present and absent. So know this and act upon it, God willing.

Section

If it is said to you, “This decree contains nothing but the glad tidings of his birth,” then it is said to him: “From this conception of yours, and that of your companions, and from your self-sufficiency in your own opinions, you have fallen into destruction and taken the path of blindness, for you did not distinguish between designation, glad tidings, and other things. Whoever has no light from God has no light.”

The decree contains glad tidings of him, explicit designation of him, information about what will come from him, and the command to call people to him.

Its glad tidings of his birth are his saying, peace be upon him:

“Among the noblest of these blessings in worth, greatest in fame and remembrance, most exalted in majesty and glory, is the gift newly granted to him now: that he has been provided with a son, pure, pleasing and well-pleasing, righteous and God-fearing. This occurred on the night preceding Sunday, the fourth of Rabīʿ al-Ākhir in the year 524.”

And the explicit designation (naṣṣ) is in his statement:

“The pulpits rejoiced in the sweetness of his remembrance, and the hopes of every present and absent person turned toward his gifts; and the darkness of the nights was illuminated by the lights of his radiance and the beauty of his appearance.”

His saying, “the pulpits rejoiced in the sweetness of his remembrance”, is an indication of both the outward pulpits upon which sermons are delivered in his name, and the inner “pulpits,” which are the six Imams in each cycle, with the pulpit being the seventh among them.

The joy of the six Imams in their seventh is their delight in the seventh Imam, by whom their completion and perfection are realized—he who stands among them as the soul stands in the body.

For this reason, the Messenger of God said: “Between my grave and my pulpit is a garden from the gardens of Paradise.”

His “grave” refers to his successor in whom his wisdom is buried, and his “pulpit” refers to the قائم (the one قائم on his remembrance), who is the seventh speaker (nāṭiq), standing among the speakers as the soul stands in the body.

This is a sufficient and complete designation for the one who has been granted success.

His saying, “the hopes of every present and absent turned toward his gifts”, is an indication of his spiritual provisions connected to those who benefit from his hierarchical ranks (ḥudūd), and to those who receive benefit from following them among his responding adherents.

His saying, “through him the necklaces of virtues and glories of the radiant Fatimid state were strung together”, refers to the continuation of the Imamate to him, and from him to the rest of the Fatimid Imams.

For the “necklaces” are their cycles (adwār), each cycle being a well-ordered chain. If he (peace be upon him) were absent, their order would be severed and their wisdom lost.

This is a second designation confirming the first.

Section

His saying, “He brought him forth from the lineage of prophethood just as light is brought forth from light”, is a third designation confirming the first two.

For no missing or non-existent person can be brought forth from the lineage of prophethood, nor can the spark of joy be kindled by a child who is not an Imam.

Beneath these designations lies a subtle secret and a vast ocean of knowledge, grasped only by the true friends of God.

If someone were to say that scribes add or omit words according to their eloquence, embellishing speech with their rhetoric, it would be said to him:

That may apply to literary expressions and worldly discourse, but as for prophetic meanings and divine mysteries—far from it! These are expressed only through divine ranks and luminous structures.

Their speech (peace be upon them) is concise yet miraculous—below the speech of God, yet above the speech of human beings.

If all the leaders of misguidance and their followers were asked about even a portion of what has been presented here, they would turn back humiliated and defeated. So bring forth your knowledge if you are truthful.

Section

His saying, “and he named him al-Ṭayyib for the purity of his essence, and gave him the kunyah Abū al-Qāsim, the kunyah of his grandfather, the Prophet of guidance”, is a fourth designation confirming the previous ones.

For sharing the kunyah of the Prophet is a true and definitive designation, leaving no room for doubt among those who possess knowledge.

As one of our teachers said: this designation through the kunyah of the Prophet suffices for those who understand. As for one who lacks knowledge, he must follow—if he succeeds, he is saved; otherwise, he perishes.

This is confirmed by the statement of our master al-Āmir in his well-known epistle of guidance, which he made a preface to this designation. He did not conceal the precedence of al-Mustanṣir, nor did he hide the designation of al-Musta’lī, but rather made it explicit.

Knowing that disagreement and trial would arise, he named him with the name and kunyah of the Prophet as a subtle رمز (symbol), understood only by the knowledgeable and perceptive—not by the masses.

Likewise, knowing that the trial concerning his son al-Ṭayyib would be even greater, he named him al-Ṭayyib, gave him the kunyah of the Prophet, and concealed his title until the time of his manifestation.

Section

As for the “informing” (ikhbār), it is his statement:

“The Commander of the Faithful thanks God...” up to “its fame and mention spreading.”

As for the “command,” it is his statement:

“So that you may take from the joy of it your full share...” up to “So know this and act upon it.”

Section

If it is said: “Why is your Imam not manifest to you or others?”

It is said: because his time is a time of concealment (satr).

If it is said: “Why is this particular to him and not to other Imams?”

It is said: concealment is not exclusive to him; rather, it occurred with three of his forefathers, in accordance with divine wisdom and the condition of the community.

As stated by Amir al-Mu’minin: the Imamate never ceases from the world even for a moment, for it is the proof over creation—but it may be hidden due to فساد intentions and widespread doubt.

Thus his withdrawal serves as an apparent interruption, while in reality the Imamate continues through his representatives (ḥudūd), who convey his knowledge and establish the proof.

If it is said: “Why do you call to a concealed Imam without direct command from him?”

It is said: the call is not initiated independently, but by the command of the one who designated him.

As Ja’far ibn Manṣūr al-Yaman stated: even in concealment, the Imam’s call continues—at least in one region—through his appointed ranks.

The Imam exists through the existence of his ḥudūd, who guide toward him, just as God—though unseen—is known through His messengers and representatives.

If it is said: “What proof is there that this applies specifically to your Imam?”

It is said: no Imam after this noble statement entered concealment except al-Ṭayyib.

If it is said: “What if your Imam has died without your knowledge?”

It is said: the infallible Imam cannot depart without appointing a successor like himself.

Otherwise, his Imamate would be invalid, and the entire chain—back to the Prophet—would collapse.

Thus, this is impossible.

If it is said: “What if he appointed a successor but you have not received knowledge of it?”

It is said: if the knowledge of designation does not reach us, then no proof is established upon us—just as divine proof requires the sending of messengers.

If it is said: “Do you remain in this trial without an Imam?”

It is said: God forbid that the world remain even for a moment without an Imam.

Rather, one remains bound to the previous Imam until the next is confirmed—just as Imam Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq said:

“In the end of times, an Imam will go into concealment... the believer will hold fast to the first until the second is established.”

Thus we remain certain in our matter, firm in our belief, clear in our understanding. No doubt enters us through deception, nor confusion through falsehood.

“Whom God guides, he is the rightly guided; and whom He leads astray, you will find no protector to guide him.”

Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds. Blessings upon our master Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets; upon his successor Ali, the most noble of successors; upon the Imams from their pure progeny; and upon our master, the Imam of our time, al-Ṭayyib Abū al-Qāsim, Commander of the Faithful.

God is sufficient for us, and He is the best disposer of affairs.

The Epistle of Investigations (al-Mabāḥith) by Mawlānā Muḥammad ibn Ṭāhir

May God sanctify his soul and grant us his intercession and companionship

In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, and in Him we seek help.

Praise be to God as is due to Him, and blessings upon Muḥammad, His servant and Messenger, and upon his successor and vicegerent after him, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, the most noble of those in depth and elevation; and upon the Imams from their progeny, the safeguard of those who bear God’s covenant and uphold His mighty trust; and upon our master, the Imam al-Ṭayyib Abū al-Qāsim, Commander of the Faithful, who attained the honor of the Imamate in his cradle. Peace, mercy, and honor be upon them.

Chapter One

Know, O fortunate and rightly guided brother—may God raise your rank and illuminate your insight—that all existence is divided into two categories:

*One is the **World of Command (‘Ālam al-Amr)**, and the other is the **World of Creation (‘Ālam al-Khalq)**.*

If it is said: “What is the World of Command?”

Say: it is the subtle, spiritual world.

If it is said: “What is the spiritual world?”

Say: it is the world of purity and the abode of permanence, known as the realm of the noble angels.

If it is said: “What are the angels?”

Say: they are luminous forms and sacred realities, free from physical bodies and material substance. From them is the beginning, and to them is the return.

Chapter Two

If it is said: “What is the World of Creation?”

Say: it is composed of natural bodies and material life.

It is divided into two parts:

*One is the **World of Celestial Bodies**, and the other is the **World of Generation and Corruption**.*

If it is said: “What is the World of Celestial Bodies?”

Say: the nine spheres, the seven planets, and the twelve zodiacal signs.

If it is said: “What are the nine spheres?”

Say: they are subtle, transparent bodies:

1. *The outermost sphere (al-falak al-muḥīt)*
2. *The sphere of the constellations (al-burūj)*
3. *The sphere of Saturn*
4. *The sphere of Jupiter*
5. *The sphere of Mars*
6. *The sphere of the Sun*
7. *The sphere of Venus*
8. *The sphere of Mercury*
9. *The sphere of the Moon*

If it is said: "Are they moving or still?"

Say: they are in circular motion.

If it is said: "Is their motion from themselves or from a mover?"

Say: from a mover.

If it is said: "Who is their mover?"

Say: the one who governs the order of the world by the command of God.

Chapter Three

If it is said: "What are the seven planets?"

Say: they are solid luminous bodies:

Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, the Sun, Venus, Mercury, and the Moon.

They are called the seven wanderers (planets), while the Sun and Moon are called the two luminaries, and the remaining five are called the hidden ones.

If it is said: "Why are these planets placed in the spheres, and are they identical to them?"

Say: the planets are distinct from the spheres, and the spheres are distinct from the planets.

Each planet resides in a sphere, and the sphere is named after it, just as one says "the house of so-and-so." The house is not the person, nor the person the house, but it is attributed to him.

These planets relate to the spheres as souls relate to bodies.

If it is said: "Are they moving or still?"

Say: they move by the motion of their spheres.

Chapter Four

If it is said: "What are the twelve zodiacal signs?"

Say: they are divided constellations, each part being a sign:

Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius, and Pisces.

If it is said: "What are these?"

Say: luminous bodies like the previously mentioned planets.

If it is said: "Are they moving or still?"

Say: they move with the motion of their sphere.

Chapter Five

If it is said: "Is this entire world active (agent) or passive?"

Say: it is active after having first been passive.

If it is said: "What is its passivity?"

Say: that each thing exists in the state proper to it, and occupies its appropriate place.

If it is said: "What is the purpose of that?"

Say: that it becomes a perfectly ordered instrument, without corruption or deviation from its condition.

If it is said: "Why is that?"

Say: to bring forth what is hidden within the corporeal world and elevate it step by step until it reaches its human perfection.

If it is said: "What is its action?"

Say: its influence upon what is beneath it in the world of bodies.

Chapter Six

If it is said: "What is the World of Bodies?"

Say: it consists of the four elements (the 'mothers') and the three generated kingdoms.

If it is said: "What are the four elements?"

Say: fire, air, water, and earth.

If it is said: "What is fire?"

Say: heat and dryness.

If it is said: "What is air?"

Say: heat and softness.

If it is said: "What is water?"

Say: coldness and moisture.

If it is said: "What is earth?"

Say: coldness and dryness.

Chapter Seven

If it is said: "Why is fire hot and dry?"

Say: because of its proximity to the celestial sphere, and because it lies in the first degree within the horizon of the first sphere, under the primary motion—which is the most intense of motions. Circular motion, when considered at its beginning, produces nothing but heat and dryness due to its intensity.

If it is said: "Why is air hot and moist (soft)?"

Say: because it lies in the second degree within the sphere's horizon under the primary motion, and because from intense heat and dryness there arises only moderated heat and softness.

If it is said: "Why is water cold and moist?"

Say: because it lies in the third degree within that same order, and because from heat and softness there arises coldness and moisture.

Chapter Eight

If it is said: "Why is earth cold and dry?"

Say: because it lies in the fourth degree within the sphere's horizon under the primary motion, and because from coldness and moisture there results intense coldness and dryness.

The sensory proof of this is what we observe in bathhouses:

- *the first chamber is hot and dry,*
- *the second hot and moist,*
- *the third cold and moist,*
- *the fourth cold and dry.*

If it is said: "Are these elements moving or still?"

Say: they are moving in their extremities, but stable in their totality.

If it is said: "Are they active or passive?"

Say: they are passive.

If it is said: "What is their passivity?"

Say: the transformation of their parts—which is also their motion.

If it is said: "What acts upon them?"

Say: the celestial world (the spheres).

Chapter Nine

If it is said: "What are the three generated kingdoms?"

Say: mineral, plant, and animal.

If it is said: "What is the mineral?"

Say: bodies embedded in the earth with latent forces within them.

They are divided into two types:

- *malleable (like gold, silver, copper, lead, iron)*
- *non-malleable (like ruby, emerald, pearl, diamond, crystal, agate, salt, lime, gypsum, etc.)*

Both categories divide further into praiseworthy and blameworthy.

The praiseworthy include ruby, emerald, pearls, gold, and silver; the rest are blameworthy.

If it is said: "Is it moving or still?"

Say: it is moving.

If it is said: "Is it active or passive?"

Say: it is passive.

If it is said: "What is its passivity?"

Say: its total transformation—which is also its motion.

Chapter Ten

If it is said: "What is the plant?"

Say: plant bodies with growing souls, moving in all directions.

They are divided into three types:

- *sown (like wheat, barley, grains, some aromatic plants)*
- *planted (like date palms, grapes, figs, pomegranates, fruits)*
- *neither sown nor planted (wild growths)*

All of them divide into praiseworthy and blameworthy:

- *praiseworthy: what nourishes humans and has a pleasant scent*
- *blameworthy: the rest*

If it is said: "Is it active or passive?"

Say: it is passive.

If it is said: "What is its passivity?"

Say: its total transformation.

Chapter Eleven

If it is said: "What is the animal?"

Say: fleshy, blood-filled bodies with growing and perceptive souls, capable of locomotion.

They are divided into praiseworthy and blameworthy:

- *praiseworthy: what the sacred law permits*
- *blameworthy: what it forbids*

If it is said: "Is it active or passive?"

Say: it is passive.

If it is said: "What is its passivity?"

Say: its total transformation.

If it is said: "Why do the generated beings transform in their entirety, while the four elements transform only in their parts?"

Say: because the three kingdoms derive from the four elements, while the elements are their centers.

A center does not leave its place. If the elements were to transform entirely, they would cease to be centers, and the entire order of creation would collapse.

Thus, the elements transform only partially, while generated beings transform completely.

Chapter Twelve

Know, O brother—may God increase you in insight—that the entire corporeal world ascends from state to state, rising from degree to degree, moving toward its first perfection.

If it is said: “What is this first perfection?”

Say: human forms—bodily human existence—which is the straight path stretched between Paradise and Hell.

If it is said: “What are these human forms?”

Say: bodily beings with growing, perceptive souls, progressing toward the first degree of rationality.

If they encounter a true and rightful teacher, accept from him, and follow him with gratitude,

he becomes their best guide and leads them to the straightest path.

*Then the influences of the **spiritual heavens**—their luminous stars and radiant constellations—connect to them, granting them a luminous, angelic form.*

*They then reach the **second perfection**, leave the perishing world, ascend to the highest ranks, and join the company of the purified and glorifying beings.*

But if they encounter a false teacher, he diverts them from that knowledge, leads them to destruction, and gives them a dark, satanic form.

This bars them from Paradise and consigns them to humiliation and torment, turning them backward and casting them into Hell from every gate.

Know also that without the corporeal beings receiving the influence of the physical heavens, they would never reach the first perfection—they would remain like inert stones.

*Likewise, unless human beings receive the influence of the **spiritual heavens** (which correspond to the physical ones), they will not attain the second perfection, nor rise to the abode of permanence.*

Instead, they will regress, cut off from the means of the friends of God.

May God protect us from such severance and regression, by the right of Muḥammad and his family.

End of the text.

Praise be to God as is due to Him. Blessings upon Muḥammad and his family, upon the Imams from his progeny, and upon our master, the Imam al-Ṭayyib Abū al-Qāsim, Commander of the Faithful, God’s proof over all creation.

God is sufficient for us, and He is the best disposer of affairs.

Knowledge of the Body and the Soul and the Difference Between Them

In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, and in Him we seek help.

If someone asks: "Tell me about the body—is it a substance (jawhar) or an accident ('araḍ)?"

Say: it is a substance.

If it is said: "What is the proof?"

Say: because it accepts opposite qualities—such as yellow bile, black bile, phlegm, and blood.

If it is said: "Are these opposites substances or accidents?"

Say: they are accidents.

If it is said: "What is the proof?"

Say: because they are carried in the substance, while it carries them and receives them.

The nature of an accident is to be carried and received, while the nature of a substance is to carry and receive.

If it is said: "Is the body dense or subtle?"

Say: it is dense.

If it is said: "What is the proof?"

Say: because it accepts the three dimensions—length, width, and depth—which make it dense; these are inseparable accidents.

If it is said: "Is the body simple or composite?"

Say: composite.

If it is said: "What is the proof?"

Say: because it is perceived by the five senses—hearing, sight, smell, taste, and touch—and is contained within the six directions—above, below, right, left, behind, and in front.

Thus, the body is dense, visible, perceptible, and observable.

Section

If it is said: "Tell me about the soul—is it a substance or an accident?"

Say: it is a substance.

If it is said: "What is the proof?"

Say: because it accepts opposites such as knowledge and ignorance, generosity and miserliness, courage and cowardice.

If it is said: "Are these opposites substances or accidents?"

Say: they are accidents, because they are carried by the substance.

If it is said: "Is the soul subtle or dense?"

Say: subtle.

If it is said: “What is the proof?”

Say: because it is living, knowing, and capable, yet not perceived by the senses nor contained within spatial directions.

If it is said: “Is it simple or composite?”

Say: simple.

If it is said: “What is the proof?”

Say: because it is not bounded by direction, sense, or dimension, and is not directly perceived—only known through its actions and attributes.

If it is said: “Is the soul inside the body or outside it?”

Say: it is both inside and outside.

Because if it were only inside, it would be confined; and if only outside, the body would be lifeless.

Thus it is connected to the lower aspect (growth).

If it is said: “What is the essence of the soul?”

Say: its essence is life itself.

If it is said: “Which precedes—the soul or the body?”

Say: their existence is simultaneous.

If it is said: “What is their origin?”

Say: the drop (nutfa), derived from nourishment through the three kingdoms (mineral, plant, animal), originating from the four elements (fire, air, water, earth), through celestial motions producing heat, cold, moisture, and dryness.

The ultimate origin is matter (hayūlā) and form, proceeding from the potential intellect, from the actual intellect—the First Origin—brought forth by the One beyond all comparison.

*Know that when the soul is in the womb, it is called **growth (namā’)**.*

Its powers are seven:

- nutritive
- attractive
- retentive
- digestive
- expulsive

- *growing*
- *formative*

After birth, when exposed to air, it acquires sensory power and develops gradually.

The sensory faculties are five: hearing, sight, smell, taste, touch.

*When perfected, and upon encountering true guidance, it becomes **rational (nāṭiqā)**.*

It then possesses five higher faculties:

- *desire*
- *imagination*
- *thought*
- *memory*
- *recollection*

Understand this.

Knowledge of the Four Souls

*It is reported that someone asked ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib about the saying:
“He who knows himself best knows his Lord best.”*

He said: “Which soul do you ask about?”

The man said: “Are there many?”

He replied: “Yes.”

They are:

1. ***The vegetative soul (natural)***
 2. ***The animal soul (sensory)***
 3. ***The rational soul (sacred)***
 4. ***The universal soul (divine)***
-

The Vegetative Soul

*A natural force from the four elements.
Located in the liver.
Its function: growth and nourishment.
It returns to its origin upon separation.*

The Animal Soul

*A celestial force from the spheres.
Located in the heart.
Its function: sensation, movement, dominance.
It returns to its origin upon separation.*

The Rational Soul

*A luminous, simple, knowing essence.
Origin: the Universal Soul.
Begins at spiritual birth.
Its domain: knowledge and truth.
It returns to its source upon separation.*

The Universal Soul

*A divine, simple substance.
Origin: the Intellect.
It is the highest Word of God, the Tree of Paradise.

Who knows it is saved.
Who is ignorant of it is lost.*

*If it is said: "What is the intellect?"
Say: a simple substance that comprehends all things, knowing them before they exist.

Blessed is the one who understands these symbolic truths and attains eternal human perfection.*

The Treatise of "The Kitchen" (al-Maṭḥakh)

Know—may God grant you goodness—that every believer must understand the origin of his existence, his coming into the world, and his return.

On the Origin of Human Body and Soul

Human existence arises from the four humors (yellow bile, black bile, phlegm, blood), which originate from the four elements, through the three kingdoms, through celestial influences, ultimately from matter and form, and finally from the First Intellect.

Explanation

When a man and woman unite, their substances mix like milk being churned.

A refined essence forms (the sperm), which is placed in the womb.

The two fluids combine, coagulate, and develop:

- *The navel forms*
- *Menstrual blood surrounds and nourishes it*
- *The placenta forms*
- *A cord connects it to nourishment*

Growth continues through a latent power (the growing faculty).

Each planet governs development for one month:

Saturn → Jupiter → Mars → Sun → Venus → Mercury → Moon

- *If born in the 7th month: it may live*
- *8th month: often non-viable (due to Saturn's influence)*
- *9th month: viable (under Jupiter's influence)*

After birth, nourishment is milk derived from transformed menstrual blood.

*The child grows until maturity, at which point the body is complete and becomes like a **"kitchen" (maṭbakh)**—a term understood by scholars.*

Section

If someone says: "How do the humors (ṭabā'i) from which the human is formed come into being?"

The answer: they arise from the finest part of nourishment.

A human being feeds on animals and plants. When this food enters the stomach, it is digested, then divided into two parts:

- *One part is waste, expelled from the body.*
- *The other is its extract (chyme), which is sent to the liver, where it is cooked a second time.*

There it divides into five parts:

1. *A watery portion, like the wash of meat, which goes to the kidneys and bladder; whatever nourishment remains in it is absorbed, and the rest is excreted.*
2. *A frothy portion that goes to the gallbladder—this is yellow bile.*
3. *A subtle, refined blood that goes to the heart; the heart further refines it and sends it through the arteries, while vapors rise to the brain, producing the faculties of the five senses.*
4. *A thicker blood remains in the liver and is distributed through the veins.*
5. *The densest residue is sent to the spleen—this is black bile.*

As for phlegm, it is an incompletely cooked blood distributed by nature throughout the body and lungs.

Section

If it is said: “How do these foods arise from the elements and become these humors?”

The answer: portions from each of the four elements transform and become vapor. This vapor forms clouds composed of all the elements.

By God’s power, this becomes rain, from which plants and animals arise.

Thus comes the origin of the elements, the humors, and the human body.

Section

*As for the coming of the human **by his soul**:*

*When the sperm enters the womb—being the refined essence of the humors—it contains within it the subtle power previously mentioned: the **growing power**, which is the basis of the soul.*

The soul does not precede the body, nor the body the soul—they come into existence together.

This rejects the doctrine of transmigration and exaggeration, which claims the soul pre-exists the body.

*After birth, the soul rises in degree, and a new power appears: the **sensory faculty**, granted through the influence of the celestial spheres.*

Thus the human now possesses two powers:

- growth
- sensation

Then he learns speech.

If he learns through the sacred law, he distinguishes himself from animals.

*If he responds to true guidance, his soul rises further and gains the **rational faculty (nāṭiqā)**.*

*If he then receives knowledge (described as “spirit”) from the religious hierarchy, his soul rises again and gains the **intellectual faculty (‘āqila)**.*

*If he reaches the level of divine support (ta’yīd), he acquires the **holy faculty (qudsiyya)**.*

This highest level is attained only by those who combine knowledge and action with perseverance.

Section

As for the unbeliever:

His bodily origin is identical to that of the believer.

But his soul differs.

After reaching maturity, instead of following true guidance, he follows a corrupted outward law, altered by innovation and error, dominated by falsehood and satanic influences.

Thus he becomes distant from truth, as God says:

“They are called from a distant place.”

He denies the friends of God and rejects the Imam of the age.

The Prophet said:

“Whoever dies without knowing the Imam of his time dies a death of ignorance.”

*At this point, his soul darkens and becomes **satanic (shayṭānī)**.*

“Shayṭān” derives from distance—one far from truth.

*If he persists, he becomes like **iblis**: misguided and misleading.*

Section

As for the believer's destiny:

*When death approaches, his soul joins his **spiritual father**, not with the body but with the soul.*

He enters Paradise, which has eight gates.

If he surpasses these levels, he joins the nearest angels in the highest paradise.

If not, he remains according to his rank.

His state is described as:

- *honored, never humiliated*
- *rich, never poor*
- *living, never dying*
- *joyful without end*

The Prophet said:

"Between one of you and Paradise or Hell is only death."

Section

As for the body:

It is buried, decomposes, turns into vapor, and returns to its elemental origins until resurrection.

Section

As for the unbeliever:

Both soul and body lead to Hell, which has seven gates.

According to his degree of disbelief, he suffers punishment, sinking into darkness—the material abyss and the turmoil of the physical world.

Final Reflection

This is the knowledge of human origin and destiny—where he comes from and where he returns.

It is a concise summary.

May God protect us from drowning in the material world and gather us among the righteous.

God grants knowledge to those who seek it and success to those who act upon it.

The Narrative of ‘Imlāq the Greek

In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, and in Him we seek help.

Know that ‘Imlāq the Greek said to his teacher Qusṭā ibn Lūqā:

“Will you not make my object of worship clear to me, so that I draw near to none but Him, and seek refuge in none but Him?”

He replied:

“O king, do you know the one who made you know yourself when you had been ignorant of it, who guided you to the benefits of your life and its harms when you had been heedless of them, and who taught you that, if you follow it, it will make you forget the fearful thing with which you were threatened, rescue you from anxiety, produce in you a sweetness whose taste you experience, a strength whose force you feel, and through which you become independent of what is not from it?”

‘Imlāq said:

“I have known that only through you.”

He replied:

“Then you have found your lord, and you are among the successful believers.”

‘Imlāq said:

“O معدن نور الغيب, what lies beyond my lord, that I may be among the victorious?”

He said:

“Beyond him is one who is to him as he is to you, and so on, one after another, up to the gate of the one in whom all those beneath him are gathered; the scholars of his age are incapable of reaching him, the people of his time fall short of him, and all the people of his era are in need of him. That one is the lord of the lords of that age and the master among creation for him. He draws from his exalted lord above him, and receives from his hidden support. And so, by the hidden one above him, he is hidden from those beneath him; and by the exalted one above him, he is exalted over those below him—up to the furthest One, the Lord of the world of origination, the all-perfect Holy Spirit, the place of the first heat. He is the First Intellect, the First Existent. From him is the beginning, and to him is the end. As for what lies beyond that, it is an unseen that is not named, and a blessing beyond reckoning.”

A Statement on the Proof, from One of the People of Truth, on the Explicit Designation

In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, and in Him we seek help.

He said:

It is established that we say to our opponents regarding the explicit designation:

“Did God choose the Messenger, or did the people choose him?”

They say:

“God chose him.”

We say:

“Why?”

They say:

“For the guidance of creation.”

We say:

“Then the Messenger’s guiding of creation has become a trust placed upon him.”

They say:

“Yes.”

We say:

“How can he discharge this trust, when he was sent to all creation?”

For God said: “We have not sent you except to all mankind.”

And the Prophet said: “I was sent to the white and the red.”

How, then, can he free himself from this trust, when it is impossible for him to live until he reaches everyone to whom he was sent? God said to him: “Indeed, you will die, and indeed they will die.”

So he has no answer except either to say:

“He designated Amir al-Mu’minin ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib,”

*or to say what the adversaries say: “He did not designate,” and thus accuse him of ظلم—
and God forbid that the Prophet should be unjust.*

So we say to the one who says he designated Amir al-Mu’minin ‘Ali, peace be upon him:

“Did Amir al-Mu’minin act regarding this trust as the Messenger did, or not?”

He says:

“Yes, he did.”

We say:

“To whom?”

He says:

"To his son al-Hasan."

We say:

"Did al-Hasan act regarding this trust as his father and grandfather did, or not?"

If he says:

"Yes,"

We say:

"To whom?"

He says:

"To his brother al-Husayn."

We say:

"Then this trust came to al-Husayn. Did he act in it as his brother, his father, and his grandfather did, or not?"

If he says:

"Yes,"

We say:

"To whom?"

He says:

"To his son 'Ali ibn al-Husayn."

Thus he finds no escape from the continuity of designation from one to another. Whoever this trust stops with and who does not discharge it is unjust, and upon him falls what God has said regarding the unjust.

This is a matter specific to the people of the pure and noble doctrine—I mean the doctrine of explicit designation. It is the root from which they reap its fruits at every time and season. Whoever departs from it has departed from the truth and fallen into the abyss. We seek refuge in God and in His friends from that.

Peace.

And blessings be upon Muhammad and his family, abundantly.

And I entrust my affair to God; indeed, God sees His servants.

The Epistle of the Degrees

*By Sayyidunā al-Dhu'ayb ibn Mūsā, may God sanctify his soul and grant us his intercession
It consists of seven degrees*

In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, and in Him we seek help.

Sayyidunā Ḥātim Ḥamīd al-Dīn, may God sanctify him, said at the beginning of the third section of the first discourse of Rāḥat al-‘Aql:

Every thing among existents that fall under origination has an order and arrangement. The arrangement of worship that leads to the abode of felicity—which is the da‘wah of the pure Imams—is the reverse of the natural order. Thus, what is first in the natural order is last in the order of worship, and what is last there is first here.

For example, the creative and emanative intellects, which are first in the natural order, are last in the order of worship. Since the existence of souls is a later existence, their ascent to the knowledge of the first existents proceeds from the last things to the first.

Thus, the beginning of knowledge is first with what is nearest and closest to the soul—such as a person’s garment and body. From there one ascends until finally one reaches knowledge of the creative and emanative intellects, moving from what is near to what is farther, until one encompasses all existents in knowledge.

So we judged, O brother, that we should begin for the learner with the last thing and the thing nearest to him.

*Thus, a human says: “**my garment.**” In this expression there are eight matters: name, named thing, naming, attribute, attributed thing, attributer, and meaning. The meaning is the yā’ to which the garment is annexed; it is not itself annexed to the garment.*

Know that all existents, spiritual and bodily, are of two kinds: substance and accident. Substance is of two kinds: bodily, which is seen; and spiritual, which is not seen. Accident is of two kinds: transient and abiding.

The “name” in your saying “my garment,” as well as the naming and attribute, are transient accidents. The proof of this is that they do not remain for two moments.

The named thing and the attributed thing are bodily substances. The proof that the naming subject and attributing subject are substances will come in the fourth degree.

The proof that the named thing and the attributed thing are two substances is that they have length, width, and depth, are perceived by the five senses—hearing, sight, smell, taste, and touch—and are contained within the six directions: above, below, behind, in front, right, and left.

The yā’ in “my garment,” to which the garment is annexed and which is its meaning, points to your body. Its proof is the same as that of the named thing and the attributed thing.

When you fully understand this degree, you will have encompassed all that humans possess.

The Second Degree

Your saying: **“my body.”**

In it is all that was in “my garment,” and its proof is as before, except for the yā’ that is its meaning. It is that to which the body is annexed, but it is not annexed to the body. It is other than it.

This points to the vegetative soul. It is a natural, material life, the first of the spiritual realities and their support. Its boundary is the sphere of the moon. It is diffused through all the elements. Its point of union with the animal is at the places where the sperm-drop settles; in the plant, at the fall of the seed into the soil. Its center is the liver.

It is inside the body and outside the body, one in number, and receptive of opposites: heat, cold, moisture, and dryness.

Its likeness is like the light from a lamp in relation to the lamp: the lamp does not contain the light, nor is the light separate from it.

It is not nullified in the human body; rather, it is a foundation for the spiritual realities. Its likeness is like foul water in a basin.

The Third Degree

This is your saying: **“my soul.”**

It has a name, a named thing, naming, a namer, and a meaning. The meaning is the yā’. The name and naming are two transient accidents. The named thing is the vegetative soul, whose proof has already been given. The proof of the naming subject and the attributing subject is in the fourth degree.

The yā’ in “my soul,” to which the soul is annexed, is your sensory soul. Its boundary is the encompassing sphere, as Sayyidunā Ḥamīd al-Dīn mentioned in the first section of the fifth discourse of Rāḥat al-‘Aql, because it is diffused through the world; the heavens and the earth are filled with it. Nothing is empty of it, and nothing escapes it.

It is connected to the animal at its emergence from the womb. It is a substance in the human species.

If it is said: “What is the proof of it?”

Say: because it accepts opposite things while remaining one in number. Its essence is life, and its substance is the substance of life.

It accepts knowledge and ignorance, courage and cowardice, generosity and miserliness, and the like. It is inside the body and outside the body, like the light of the sun in relation to the sun: the sun does not contain the light, nor is it separate from it.

It has mingled with the vegetative soul so that the two have become one thing.

Know that when a human soul learns knowledge and wisdom apart from the friends of God and apart from the Household of Revelation, despite the diversity of its opinions and beliefs, it is not called “rational-speaking” (nāṭiqā). The term nāṭiq applies only to one connected to the Imams of the House of Muhammad who were explicitly designated.

As for the speech of the adversaries, it is said to be an Iblisi, dark utterance with no light in it, and their souls are like the souls of animals, with no return for them.

The Fourth Degree

*Your saying: “**my spirit.**”*

In it there is a name, named thing, naming, namer, and meaning—the yā’ in your saying “my spirit.” The name and the naming are two transient accidents. The named thing in your saying “my spirit” is what we have already established by proof: the soul of growth and sensation.

But the yā’ to which the spirit is annexed, while it is not annexed to it, is the true rational soul: the one that has become connected to knowledge and wisdom and has drawn from the blessings of the friends of God.

It is a luminous spiritual substance that has accepted wisdom, knowledge, scrupulousness, purity, and chastity.

Its likeness is like pure water poured upon that foul water—which is the soul of sensation and the soul of growth—washing away their filth and removing their impurities, which are anger, envy, pride, and all vices, on this condition, and transforming them into its own essence.

Thus this yā’ becomes truly a spirit, inside the world and outside the world, as Sayyidunā al-Mu’ayyad fī’l-Dīn, may God sanctify him, said:

“He deposited within you the inward meaning of the Essence, manifest in the signs, encompassing the earth and the heavens.”

This is from a longer passage which we have abbreviated here.

The Fifth Degree

*Your saying: “**my intellect.**”*

It is none other than the rational soul once it has understood its own essence, encompassed it, known it, encompassed the souls of human beings—their learned and ignorant alike—encompassed the souls of animals, and encompassed all bodies, understanding them.

It then becomes, as Sayyidunā Ḥamīd al-Dīn, may God sanctify him, said in one of the names of the Imam—

The Sixth Degree

*The yā' in your saying: “**my intellect**,” to which your intellect is annexed, is your teacher, your guide, and your leader to good, appointed by the friends of God.*

Know that your connection to him is the true reality of the prayers, because his substance is like your substance, though in his substance there is what is not in yours.

If you fully comprehend his substance—which corresponds to your substance—and connect to him in complete connection, that is the reality of the prayers. This is because he is connected to the one above him, just as you are connected to him.

The proof of this is the saying of the sage of the community in his discussion of the testimony, where he said that it is negation and affirmation, then applied that to prayer, saying that it is motion and rest. Motion and rest can only come from a mover and one who causes rest, and the mover and causer of rest is the soul.

Its yearning movement toward its teacher, who moves it, is the true reality of the prayers.

*Sayyidunā Ḥamīd al-Dīn, may God sanctify him, also mentioned in the Risālah al-Ḥāwiyah, when discussing the categories of prayer, that it is **the spiritual form**.*

Section: The Seventh Degree

*Know that the station in this degree is distinct from the six degrees previously mentioned. We have already said, concerning your expression “**my intellect**,” that it is one of the names of the Imam, and we previously established by proof that it is a substance.*

*The one who occupies this degree and station is the **mukāsir**. The **ma'dhūn** is what it names, and the **dā'ī** is the meaning and the naming source for both of them. It is a chain that never breaks, and a bond that cannot be severed.*

*Then the mukāsir is joined to the ma'dhūn, and together they become a “name,” while the dā'ī becomes their naming source, and the ḥujjah becomes the meaning and also the naming source for those below him. Then the ma'dhūn and his respondent are joined to the dā'ī, and they become a “name,” while the ḥujjah is the meaning, and the bāb is the meaning beyond that. Then all are joined to the bāb, and they become a “name.” This is the **second emanation**, as Maṣṣūr al-Yaman, may God sanctify him, said:*

“They are beyond the changing of attributes, divine beings upon whom languages do not become confused, differing in the ranks of degrees. They neither begot and so reproduced, nor were begotten and so related by descent, nor were they equals. Rather, each one has above him one whom he serves. All of them are veiled from the unseen knowledge of the

Possessor of might. They are near veils, honored servants: they knew and so they taught, they were given dominion and so they gave thanks, they were made servants despite their greatness and so they did not wax proud. They suffice for what they were charged with, are capable through what they were given, and convey what they were made to bear. Places do not encompass their vastness, nor do locations contain their greatness. If the highest heavens, the lowest earths, what lies between them, and what lies beneath the soil were weighed against the greatness of one of them, they would be like the wing of a gnat. So where can piercing intellects boast? And how can a questioner aspire to the one asked about? ‘What God opens to people of mercy, none can withhold.’ And ‘He taught Adam all the names.’”

Praise be to God alone, and blessings upon His Messenger and servant Muḥammad, the best of His creation, and upon the Imams from their pure offspring. Peace, and God is sufficient for us.

The Epistle of the Nine Investigations

My success is only through God

In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, and in Him we seek help.

Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds, and blessings upon our master Muḥammad, Seal of the Prophets; upon our master ‘Alī, his trustee, the most excellent of trustees; upon the pure and noble Imams from their offspring; and upon our master, our Imam, and the possessor of our allegiance, Imam al-Ṭayyib Abī al-Qāsim, Commander of the Faithful—may God’s prayers be upon him and upon them all.

*Know—may God teach you good and make you one of its people—that the first sages and ancient philosophers began teaching their students wisdom with the **nine investigations**, which are:*

- *whether it is*
- *how much it is*
- *how it is*
- *what it is*
- *which thing it is*
- *when it is*

- *where it is*
- *who it is*
- *why it is*

By these investigations one asks about all things that exist, whether perceptible or intelligible. The skillful learner is the one who asks well through these investigations, and the wise philosopher is the one who answers them and demonstrates their answers.

Investigation of the Sphere of the Spheres

If one asks about the outermost sphere, the encompassing sphere:

Whether it exists: it is said, it exists in thought.

How much it is: one single kind.

How it is: a transparent, spherical body.

What it is: one nature.

Which thing it is: a governing, moving sphere in motion.

When it is: time is in it.

Where it is: not in a place.

Who it is: the encompassing sphere, the sphere of spheres.

Why it is: for the order of the universe.

Investigation of the World as a Whole

Whether it exists: it exists in thought and through the senses.

How much it is: spheres, stars, elemental qualities, and generated beings.

How it is: luminous, transparent, and dark bodies.

What it is: essences of differing natures.

Which thing it is: moving circles.

When it is: time is in it.

Where it is: not in a place.

Who it is: the encompassing sphere contains it.

Why it is: for the bringing forth of humankind.

Investigation of the Stars

Whether they exist: they exist by way of sight.

How much they are: two classes, fixed and wandering.

How they are: luminous and non-luminous bodies.

What they are: essences with differing natures.

Which thing they are: embodied, solid lights.

When they are: time is the measure of their motions.

Where they are: in place.

Who they are: the stars and planets.

Why they are: to exert influence by their motions upon generated beings.

Investigation of the First Element: Fire

Whether it exists: it exists in conceptual understanding.

How much it is: one kind.

How it is: a transparent, spherical body.

What it is: hot and dry.

Which thing it is: ether.

When it is: after time.

Where it is: within the celestial sphere.

Who it is: the sphere of fire.

Why it is: to move the air and what it contains, so that generated beings may appear according to divine will.

Investigation of the Beginning of the Human Species

Concerning what it was in, whether it was borne or bearing, and what of it was bearer and what was borne:

Whether it exists: it exists in thought, potentially, in prime matter.

How much it is: one kind.

How it is: latent in that matter.

What it is: an accident among accidents.

Which thing it is: an effect from the Universal Soul in first matter.

When it is: with the emanation of matter all at once.

Where it is: in the totality of matter, as a borne form, while matter bears it.

Who it is: the hylic potentiality and contingent conjunctions.

Why it is: so that, through the mingling of natures, humankind may come forth.

Investigation of the Final Stage of Human Becoming

Whether it exists: it exists in the zone of equilibrium.

How much it is: two kinds, dense and subtle, each with its own quality.

How it is: the body's matter and the soul emerged together, mingled; the body is matter that bears, and the soul is form borne within it, while also giving it life by its proximity.

What it is: two mingled substances from the mixtures of the spheres of the universe.

Which thing it is: the purest result of the mingling of the spheres of the world.

When it is: when the motions reach their utmost limits and ends in their nobility, in the place of equilibrium.

Where it is: in visible existence after coming-to-be.

Who it is: the human species, appearing from dispersion into union, which is the first perfection.

Why it is: so that its subtle aspect, corresponding to the psychic power, may be perfected and become the purest of purities.

Investigation of Human Becoming While Its Matter Moves from Potentiality to Actuality

Whether it exists: it exists in thought, within the course of the world's form, potentially.

How much it is: one kind.

How it is: between dispersion and union.

What it is: an accident among accidents.

Which thing it is: an effect from the Universal Soul.

When it is: with the emanation of matter.

Where it is: in the final form of the world, and the world's form bears it.

Who it is: the corporeal potentiality.

Why it is: so that, when the natures mix, humankind may arise.

Investigation of the Human Individual's Reception of Growth

Whether it exists: it exists in thought—that is, the power of growth—and in some sensory respect, namely the body.

How much it is: three kinds, namely the dimensions.

How it is: length, width, and depth.

What it is: density with subtlety for the sake of increase; this act is an accident among accidents.

Which thing it is: an act performed by the subtle in the dense, in cooperation with the natural powers and nutritive materials.

When it is: when first matter, which is life in potency, settles in its place in the zone of equilibrium.

Where it is: in every body capable of growth.

Who it is: the growing power, which is matter bearing the body, while the sensory power is a form borne within it and its completion, and nobler than it.

Why it is: so that it may reach its utmost end and goal, whose purpose is purity.

Investigation of the Human Individual's Reception of the Sensory Power

And whether it is the growing power itself or other than it:

Whether it exists: it exists in its action through some of the senses.

How much it is: one kind.

How it is: perceptive of all sensibles.

What it is: a substance receptive of what comes upon it, while the act itself is an accident among accidents.

Which thing it is: the growing power has become complete and perfect, and so becomes sensory and growing.

When it is: when the growing power is perfected and purified, it becomes sensory.

Where it is: in every sound and complete body.

Who it is: the sensory power, bearing the body's substance and what comes upon it, for the body is dead when deprived of it. Thus the sensory power is matter bearing the rational power, while the rational power is a form borne within it and its perfection, and nobler than it.

Why it is: so that sense may reach its utmost limits and goals, whose purpose is purity.

Investigation of the Human Individual's Reception of the Rational Power

And whether it is sensory by itself or other than it:

Whether it exists: it exists in its act from itself and in itself, not through another instrument.

How much it is: one kind, though with degrees.

How it is: perceptive of all intelligibles and discriminating among states.

What it is: a substance receptive of what comes to it, broad and receptive without end.

Which thing it is: the sensory power has become complete and perfect, and so becomes rational and intellectual.

When it is: when the sensory power is perfected and purified and receives the accidents that constitute its essence.

Where it is: in every sound, speaking, living, capable, and knowing body.

Who it is: the rational power, which bears the body's substance and what comes upon it.

Why it is: so that it may reach its utmost ends and goals, to the abode of permanence.

Investigation of the Partial Intellect's Reaching Its First Ends and Goals

Whether it exists: it is possible for it, within its scope, to reach its utmost ends and goals according to its receptivity and strength.

How much it is: one kind, though with degrees.

How it is: life existing in actuality.

What it is: a living, knowing, capable, perfect, and complete substance.

Which thing it is: a radiant light, drawn out of the material world and returning to its first source and most excellent abode.

When it is: when the rational power is perfected and passes from potency into actuality.

Where it is: in the abode of existence among the spheres of felicity.

Who it is: a purity refined and an essence extracted.

Why it is: so that it may attain everlasting bliss and eternal reward.

Investigation of the Causes that Bring the Partial Intellect to Its Ultimate Ends

And what they convey to it so that it reaches the second perfection:

Whether they exist: they are known through the senses, while their rank is known by thought, and what they convey is known through some of the senses.

How much they are: one kind as regards essence, many as regards order.

How they are: possessors of upright human forms, whose bodies and souls are connected to the highest assembly.

What they are: living, speaking substances, stripped of materiality, while what they convey is an accident among accidents, which they bear.

Which thing they are: the purest of purities, and what they bear is an accident constituting the souls and completing them so that they may join the world of purity.

When they are: in every age there is one among them who conveys what has been drawn from above to sound intellects, giving them all the forms of knowledge, so that those who join them may be delivered from the world of matter and rise to their rank.

Where they are: on earth, while their knowledge is from those who preceded them in existence.

Who they are: the prophets, the legates, and the Imams of guidance—peace be upon them, and God's mercy and blessings.

Why they are: so that through them and their knowledge, humankind may reach the abode of honor and the place of security and peace.

The investigations are completed.

And blessings be upon Muhammad, the Prophet, the unlettered one, and upon his trustee and family.

Section

Know that questioning by means of these investigations requires intelligence, sharpness, and thought, while answering them requires precision and concision.

Know that “transparent” bodies are those that have no natural color, such as the color of salt or the blackness of pitch, and are those which accept light at one time and darkness at another, like air and water; and among mineral bodies, crystal and glass.

Luminous bodies are those that have no shadow, like the stars and the fire we have here. As for that fire called ether, it is not luminous, for if it were luminous it would obstruct us from the light of the stars.

Dark bodies are those that possess shadow, like the moon and the earth—except that the moon has a polished surface which reflects light, while the earth does not. The human body is dark by reason of its shadow, which belongs to it.

These are the qualities of bodies, along with their other qualities.

The investigations are completed, by the praise and help of God. Blessings upon His Messenger, our master Muhammad, Seal of the Prophets; upon his trustee ‘Ali, most noble of trustees; upon the Imams from their pure and holy progeny; and upon our master, our lord, the Imam of our time, Imam al-Ṭayyib Abi al-Qasim, Commander of the Faithful. God is sufficient for us.

The Treatise Entitled The Fertilizer of Minds and Awakener of the Drowsy

By Sayyidunā ‘Ali ibn Muhammad ibn al-Walid, may God sanctify him and grant us his intercession and companionship and raise his rank

In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, and in Him we seek help.

Praise be to God, who raises the ranks of scholars according to the height of their ascent in the degrees of knowledge, exalts the stations of the wise according to what they have acquired of understanding and comprehension, and makes them exemplars for those who follow them on the path of salvation, and leaders who, by receiving from them, guide others to the spring of the water of life.

I praise Him for His abundant and manifest blessings, and thank Him for His great and successive favors, with a praise that brings ascent through the درجات of His honor, and a gratitude that necessitates increase from the overflow of His bounty and grace.

I bear witness that there is no god but the One before whose greatness and majesty intellects are bewildered, before whose vast power minds are lost, and whose description and quality tongues are unable to encompass. And I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger, chosen for the conveying of His message, His chosen one and trusted one for the delivery of His revelation and trust, the sun of guidance by whose shining light the darkness of error is dispelled, and the mercy of God by whose clear proof the death of ignorance is revived.

Blessings be upon him, a Prophet whom God made the qiblah of souls and intellects, and whom He supported in what he legislated by joining the sensible and the intelligible; and upon his trustee, the one who kindled the spark of realities from the green tree of his law, and extracted the pith of meanings from the outward wording of his wisdom—‘Ali ibn Abi Talib, sprung from the noble root of his tree, singled out for his succession in his community; and upon the Imams from their progeny, the lamps of the Imamate that tear through the darkneses of error, and the standards of guidance whose path is made clear by manifest indications; and upon the inheritor of their supreme station, the companion of the revealed Book, the one from whom is sought the clarification of its difficulties and the exposition of its summaries—Imam al-Ṭayyib Abi al-Qasim, Commander of the Faithful, a loser indeed is he who denies and nullifies his station. And peace be upon them.

To proceed:

O blessed son, rightly guided and successful one: your letter reached me, and the means of goodness became connected to you. You asked me to compose a treatise that you might add to your memorized knowledge and increase thereby the number of your reviews. I found it to be the request of one who truly desires, and in whose brightness I perceived the flash of aptitude. So I answered your request in hope of the good I expected in you.

Although I speak, I am only expressing the favor of your father upon me, and from the abundance of his kindness that has reached me I write what I write.

In what I have explained for you, I have followed the path of brevity and concision, and I have hinted through allusion at flashes of lofty truths and hidden mysteries, so that brevity may help you in recollection and memorization, and so that the allusions may kindle the fire of your intelligence to search for hidden treasures and thereby gain the fullest share of benefit.

*I have entitled what I have written for you **The Fertilizer of Minds and Awakener of the Drowsy**, so that what is in it may fertilize the minds of those who hear it, and awaken from the sleep of heedlessness the souls of those who reflect upon it.*

By God and by His friend I seek help in completing what I intend, and from both of them I seek the success in what I explain and set down.

I have made it into twelve chapters, corresponding to the totality of the ranks of the numbers and circles, and witnessing the excellence of the stations of the people of the islands.

Chapter One

My son, the first thing you should know is that you were brought into being from an extract of base water, when you had not been anything worth mentioning. You were nurtured in three darkneses, compelled beneath the supports of the subtle operations of your governing Lord. When your body was completed in its creation, it was like a dark house, and

its Creator kindled within it, by the spirit—referred to as the “other creation”—a light, when you emerged, subdued, into the expanse of this bodily world. Hearts then inclined toward you with tenderness and compassion, to set your condition aright and manage your affairs, gradually raising you through the stages of nourishment and proper measure, and drawing out the speech latent within you through repeated instruction and constant teaching, until the language of your parents became firmly established in you. Along with this, you were exercised in the fields of discipline, so that your character might be refined and liberated; you were warned against your innate habits, purified of animal impurities, restrained from beastly qualities, and guided along the human paths, until the star of your first worldly perfection shone forth. Through your good receptivity to the various forms of discipline, you became the equal of the children of your kind and their peer. By what appeared in you of the beauty of this educational discipline, you became their leader, while one deprived of it became abject and regretful. Blessed is the One who, if you obey Him, will give you better than that: gardens beneath which rivers flow, and palaces.

Chapter Two

My son, cast your gaze with the eye of insight, and employ reflection and deep thought regarding your weighty and subtle conditions. You know only a little, and that only in summary. You fall short in knowing what preceded your beginning and what follows your end; you wander perplexed, unable to reach their true reality. Yet among the children of your kind you are considered important because of what you have gathered of cultivated accomplishments, and you rise above them by adorning yourself with the ornaments of eloquence, rank, and distinction. You become one who commands and forbids, who exercises control over them, and who acts with authority in matters they cannot attain. So what would your state be if the veil were lifted from you, if your certainty increased and your insight deepened, if you witnessed as present realities what before had only been reports, if you glimpsed a radiant light from the kingdom above, if its brilliance flashed in the preparedness of your essence and you became inwardly seeing through it, and if the secret of your origin and return, which had been hidden from you, were disclosed? If your soul were inscribed with true forms of knowledge so that you became fashioned by them, then anyone who saw the brilliance of your expression would say: “Glory be to God! This is no mere human being.”

Chapter Three

My son, therefore, strip yourself with the aspiration of the earnest seeker, mount the resolve of the one who seeks glory, and employ the keen thought with which you have been gifted. Then the wonders hidden from you behind the veil of heedlessness will be uncovered, you will gain the best of goods and desires, and you will attain the beloved object of hopes and

aims. What you seek through striving and effort is not beyond your reach, nor is your hope in what we hope for in vain. Since the difficult mounts have already been made humble for you in your ascent to the first perfection, and the roughness of the roads and paths toward it has been eased, and the obstacles and impurities that prevent its attainment have been warded off, and the well-ordered stars have revolved for the attainment of its goal, and the influences of the spheres and stars have operated in it by the command of its Governor—while it is, compared to the two perfections, like the merely possible and contingent in relation to the truly necessary—then the second perfection is within it like a hidden meaning enclosed within a veiling expression. And in this first perfection you are compelled to cross those deserts and attain those stations, while death scatters the order of its natural composition like a dispersing plunderer, and the hands of events stretch forth to it like a dominating thief, and the arrows of calamities shoot its assembled parts with separation from the bows of afflictions. Therefore, of necessity, the paths leading to the second perfection are open and accessible, and the traveler upon them is protected from destructive dangers and ruinous perils—if he seeks refuge with the guides appointed to traverse their distances, the noble and pure ones, who give their followers the sweetest springs of wisdom and the clearest draughts, and who remove from them, by the light of divine support, the accumulated darknesses of doubts and obscurities. These are the ones referred to in His saying: “Indeed We have adorned the heaven with the adornment of the stars.”

Chapter Four

My son, keep company with your body and its bodily world only as one keeps passing association, but place your soul and its psychic world before you as your intended aim. Your body is like a ship in the flood of the world of generation and corruption, built from the waves of its parts. Your wise Governor fashioned it for you by divine wisdom so that you might cross upon it the surging sea of prime matter and ascend to the spiritual city, and, if divine success accompanies you, become one of the inhabitants of the royal sanctuary of holiness. This will be so if you cleanse yourself from the filth of your sins through the commands of the law, wash your soul with the water of repentance from the stain of slips and errors, polish the rust from the mirror of your intellect by the remedies of revealed prophetic sciences, elevate the rank of your spirit by contemplating the choicest products of higher esoteric interpretations, preserve your essence from dissolution through true loyalty to the pure Fatimid family, revive your soul from the death of ignorance by holding fast to the rope of the Ṭayyibī Imamate, and quench your psychic thirst by drinking deeply from the flowing stream of knowledge of the داعي of the Yemeni isle. Then glad tidings to you of a pleasing life in the lofty eternal Garden, and the right to hear the call: “O tranquil soul, return to your Lord, pleased and pleasing.” But if—God forbid—you make your aim to submit to appetitive forces, to follow the commands of the soul that incites to evil and wrath, and to turn away from acquiring true knowledge, then you will be cast back in

deficiency to the low, base stations, descending backward and in reverse toward the downward ranks, joined to the Taymī and ‘Adawī factions, and attached to the losing Umayyad party. We seek refuge in God and His friends from the great terror of this calamity, and ask Him for protection from falling into those destructive pits, lest you become one of those of whom God said: “Indeed, those who disbelieved among the People of the Book and the polytheists will be in the fire of Hell, abiding therein; those are the worst of creatures,” and be stripped away from those meant by His words: “Indeed, those who believe and do righteous deeds—those are the best of creatures.”

Chapter Five

My son, hold fast to the rope of God, cling to the bond of salvation, hasten to the corner of the Ancient House, and enter the Gate of Repentance, content with the humility that exalts you. Join yourself to the party of truth and be counted among them. Humble yourself before them in obedience and compliance, and you will become mighty and honored. Take their sciences as ladders to the kingdom of the heavens, and ask them to disclose to you the inner secret that is kept hidden from the enemies of the Imams. Through it, and through knowledge of them, they made the summits of the spheres a footstool for their feet. They came to possess the keys of the treasures of wisdom and were thereby marked as true sages. Each one of them became, for the people of his region, a sign of guidance. Take up residence in their sanctuary, which God made “a place of return for mankind and a sanctuary,” and embark upon their saving ship so that you may be delivered from the flood of innovations. Then you will gain heavenly and divine benefits that profit you in the hereafter and constitute true gain, and abundant showers of support will descend upon you from the clouds of divine aid, and the continuous rains of mercy will pour upon you from the heaven of holiness. Then you will say: “Indeed, my Lord has guided me to a straight path, an upright religion.”

Chapter Six

My son, this world is near to vanishing, swift in changing its states and passing on. Wretchedness lies in relying upon its glitter, which contracts like a shadow, and loss lies in clinging to its deceptions, which are themselves pure impossibility. True felicity lies in acquiring from it piety as provision for the journey’s end, and in taking it as a passageway to the world of unity and the neighborhood of the Lord of might and majesty. One is brought to that only by taking the loyalty of the Imamate as the means of ascent and connection, and the divine sciences as a lamp by which to cross the darkneses of the world of nature and be delivered from its terrors, while mounting for that purpose the steeds of piety fashioned from righteous deeds. You will not attain that unless you look upon the world with contempt and abasement, and nothing will help you turn away from it except your certainty of the

nearness of parting from it and departure, your cutting off of hopes by the knife of certainty in the nearness of appointed times, and your realization that God is aware of everything outward and inward in your intentions and acts, as He said: "God knows what every female bears, what the wombs diminish and what they increase, and everything with Him is by measure—Knower of the unseen and the visible, the Great, the Most High."

Chapter Seven

My son, since your body is a composite drawn together from the parts of the bodily world, and your soul by its essence belongs to a noble, holy world, and since their union is from the Governor, through the influence of a moving corporeal world, then it is most fitting for you to investigate the connection and nearness between this world and that, and the distinction between their states in wording and meaning. Since the One who brought them into being is just and wise, what is the cause that requires the noble and exalted among them to be high, while the dense and base are low? And by what has the human species been made superior, such that it has become ruler over the species of the animal kind? Perhaps by knowing the secrets contained in this you will attain the excellence of the true human person, rise in the ranks of the ordered knowledges in the religious psychic world, and receive your portion of the mercy flowing from the world of origination, thereby attaining your second perfection. Then you will obtain, in the Garden of Refuge and the Sanctuary of Holiness, while freed of the accidental density that attached to you beforehand in your luminous subtle world, steadfastly held by divine protections when dark imaginings assail you or satanic whisperings reach you. So seek help, through the authority of earnest striving, against the devil of heedlessness and laziness. Turn to your Lord in supplication, seeking nearness through the noble friends of God, for attaining your highest hopes. For God said: "And when My servants ask you about Me, indeed I am near; I answer the call of the supplicant when he calls upon Me."

Chapter Eight

My son, by knowledge the degrees are exalted, and the superiority of the learned over the ignorant is like the superiority of the living, speaking being over dead matter. By knowledge the earth was spread out and the revolving spheres were set in motion. By knowledge all buried things and hidden treasures were brought forth from the earth. By knowledge and action upon it one ascends to the kingdom of the heavens. By knowledge and action upon it one merits abiding forever in the gardens. By knowledge and action upon it good deeds are acquired. By knowledge and action upon it the paths of destruction are avoided. By knowledge and action upon it one wins the way of salvation and success. By knowledge and action upon it the beginnings and ends are known. By knowledge and action upon it the hidden unseen matters are disclosed, and what has passed and what is to come are made

certain. Make it your provision and your treasure, for what an excellent provision and treasure it is for the day of appointed meeting. What a delightful companion it is in solitude, a faithful friend in times of terror, and an intercessor whose intercession is accepted when intercession is needed. By knowledge and action upon it, the ordered ranks of the world of origination are arranged; by it, the intellects of the world of holiness understood themselves and what preceded them among prior beings; by it, the spheres and stars moved in their differing motions; by it, the circles of the elements were organized and their differing, discordant natures harmonized; by it, their choicest parts were extracted and blended to bring about the existence of beings; and from those mixtures all generated things arose—minerals, plants, and all types of animals—progressing toward the human individual, who is the end of ends. From this species were extracted all rational souls, raised through the ranks of causes until they joined the ranks of the emanated beings. Yet they cannot rise to those lofty ranks except by obeying the commands of the guiding proofs, whom God chose and to whom He bequeathed His Book, so they differed in stations and degrees, as God said: “Then We caused those of Our servants whom We chose to inherit the Book; among them is one who wrongs himself, among them is one moderate, and among them is one foremost in good deeds.”

Chapter Nine

My son, make knowledge and action your ultimate aim and the end of your striving. Thus you will attain in this world the ranks of the noble and excellent, and in your return you will win salvation and success. Do not tire of studying the sciences and revisiting the learned, but make your continual return to them. Through them and from them—if you are fortunate—you will acquire your steed of lightning and your provision. Among them is the guiding proof and the rightly-directing counselor, so place your trust wholly in them. They are the authority by which you may pass through the regions of the heavens and the earth and attain your farthest desire. Through what they pour upon you of heavenly benefits, your error is unveiled and the light of your right guidance shines forth. By holding fast to their strong rope, you are delivered from the world of your becoming and corruption. By casting their rays into the preparedness of your essence, the star of your ill fortune sets and the dawn of your felicity rises. They are God’s proofs over His creation and His witnesses against them, so seek, by fine obedience, the pleasure of your proofs over you and their testimony in your favor. They are physicians of souls, so seek your healing from them, for they will guide you to your well-being in intellect and soul and away from your corruption. They are the guides to the abode of bliss, so seize success by your attraction to them and your submission. Through sincere love for them your works are accepted and purified, so give them the purest of your affection. They are the mines of divine wisdom, so hasten to gain it from them by right seeking and proper searching. Disobey the devil of passion, who enslaves the soul that commands evil, for he is your greatest enemy. Put on armor against him in the form of the

commands of the sacred law, and make them your rulers in all your coming and going. Illuminate the darkness of your sensory essence with the support of your luminous rational teacher, for that is your finest equipment and provision. Know that the knowledge of divine unity, transcendence, and abstraction is the marrow of all sciences, so strengthen the knot of your belief in that. Do not let your heart become attached to the disputes of the sects; rather, return their affair to God, as He commanded His Prophet, saying: "Say: O God, Originator of the heavens and the earth, Knower of the unseen and the seen, You judge between Your servants concerning that wherein they differed."

Chapter Ten

My son, since the world of nature, between its coming-to-be and its corruption, is ever in transition, always being taken in hand by alteration and annihilation, changing in all its states by ascent and descent, and since every human contained in it is unwillingly departing from it, then of necessity there must be a place to which he goes and a dwelling that shelters him, wherein he will find what he has earned as reward or punishment. Thus he will either be among those upon whom God bestowed favor, concerning whom He said: "Indeed, those who believe and do righteous deeds—for them are the Gardens of Paradise as a lodging," or among those who followed Iblīs, about whom He said: "Will you then take him and his progeny as allies instead of Me, while they are enemies to you? Evil is the exchange for the wrongdoers." Why, then, have you not tightened your resolve and prepared for yourself a place of return and refuge, and caused your spirit to ascend, so that every pure word you have raised to your Lord—dyed with the dye of God in knowledge and action—may be accepted? Then you would become sheltered under the good pleasure of God and received by the greetings of the angels, dwelling near the eternal inhabitants of the abode of the stations, "abiding therein and not desiring any change from it." So beware, beware lest laziness overcome you and idleness become sweet to you, and the armies of regret encircle you while you are unable to turn them away. Then your worldly effort will sink low in the abode of your hereafter, your evil deeds will become a hindrance to escape from painful punishment, and your unresolved doubts—because you did not seek clarification from the godly ones—will themselves become a form of torment for you. The great terror you behold on the Day of the Greatest Dread will occupy you from your family and wealth. The capital of your natural life, upon which you had hoped to make gains, will have been lost. The decree of your Lord will be fulfilled, and there will be no excuse for one facing it, for the paths of return and reconsideration will have been blocked by the arrival of the Approaching Hour. It will be said to the regretful on that day: Did you not find, in the long lifespan granted you, enough time? Did you not take from piety the docile mounts for your salvation? So beware, beware that you become preoccupied with what distracts you from preparing for your return, or that you spend the garment of your life on something unfit for your hereafter, lest

you regret it when it is said to you: “Did you disbelieve in the One who created you from dust, then from a sperm-drop, then fashioned you into a man?”

Chapter Eleven

My son, the creative intellects are bewildered in the greatness of their Creator, and the originated forms are incapable of grasping the One who originated and fashioned them. The circle of the world of intellect is the meeting place of the first and second emanated lights and the station of their union. Through the gazes of those angelic beings upon the encompassing spheres, their courses in setting and rising occur, and according to what flows through them, their influence upon what is beneath them comes to be—in their direct motion, retrogression, and return. By means of those motions and their influence upon the elements beneath them, the hidden things stored within were brought forth. Through that divine solicitude the generated beings appeared in succession and continual flow, all of them ending in the human individual, who is the final abode and gathering place of virtues, the choicest of all genera and species—a profound wisdom from the One who gives genera and diversifies species. Thus he came forth, possessing the first perfection and prepared to receive the lights of the religious stars, their influences, and the place of their descent. These are among the prophetic lights intended by the Lawgiver through the institutions He laid down, and the human being who walks by their noble laws—worthy are the paths of their guidance and the source from which they were legislated. For the souls of this human species there are, through the influences of the lords of divine support, subtle graces of compassion that secure the rectification of their return and ultimate destination. In the ladders of their religious ranks there is ascent, according to their bearing of the fatigue of legal obligations and their armoring themselves with them. By the sincerity of their loyalty to the Imams of their religion, their seeking of deliverance and their taking refuge are accepted. Through the compassion of the higher toward the lower, by bestowing from the effusion of the world of holiness, those souls are illumined and made radiant. By their holding fast to the rope of God, ascent to the abode of permanence becomes possible—the very abode from which their creation first began and from which their spring flowed—purified from the stain of sin by their remorse and grief, safe from the slips of falling and the descents of degradation because they hastened to enter the gate of salvation. Thus they attain the Garden of Refuge and the Sanctuary of Holiness, dwelling near their giver of permanence and benefactor, among those of whom God said: “Those are the ones who hasten to good works, and they are foremost therein. And God does not burden any soul beyond its capacity.”

Chapter Twelve

My son, this is the matter of the beginning, to which I have alluded by hinting. And the reality of the end I have shown you through a flash of its lightning, visible to the insight of the keen and purified. As for the condition between the two ends, I have explained it to you in a clear and elaborated chapter. Let the flint of your thought be struck, by continual reflection upon it, so that you may awaken and receive your portion of support from the Imam of your age. God has appointed me to you as a sincere and affectionate brother. I hope—and may God make that hope true in you—that He will fertilize your prepared soul through the guidance I have directed to it. So meet his advice with acceptance, and your trade will become profitable. Through good obedience you will inhale a spiritual breeze, be delivered from the depths of the fire into which the one who abandons obedience has been cast, sprawling, and find that what his hands sent forth of evil deeds has become for him a disgraceful and shameful acquisition. So follow the road of safety, for I have laid out for you a broad and upright path. Leave off turning to the deceits of this world, and you will find rest thereby. Set death before your eyes, for its remembrance is enough to cut off hopes that stretch longingly toward the world. Swallow the bitterness of patience in fulfilling the two عبادات so that your intellect may be healed from religious illnesses, sound and healthy. Just as you would seek from Galen or the Messiah a remedy for your bodily sickness, so seek from the owner of the house of prophetic wisdom a Messiah for the sickness of your soul. Seek from the descendants of ‘Alī a baptizer who will, by the Holy Spirit flowing to him, anoint you, and say to you upon your being chosen and selected: “And I have chosen you, so listen to what is revealed.”

Praise be to God for His all-encompassing blessings, His abundant favors, and His overflowing grace and generosity. Blessings be upon the best of His Prophets, the noblest of His Messengers and friends—Muḥammad, the best over whom the sun has risen, whom support and holiness aided; and upon his trustee, the best of trustees and father of the noble Imams; and upon the Imams from their progeny, the intercessors for the servants and the guides to salvation and right guidance; and upon our master and lord, the possessor of our age and the Imam of our time, Imam al-Ṭayyib Abī al-Qāsim, Commander of the Faithful, the proof of God over all creation. Peace be upon them. God is sufficient for us, and He is the best disposer of affairs, the best protector and the best helper. There is no power and no strength except through God, the Most High, the Most Great.

The Virtues of the Sage of the Community and His Miracles

In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, and in Him we seek help.

Among them: The Story of the She-Camels

Al-Faḍl ibn Kathīr narrated to us; he said: Sharīk narrated to us, from al-A‘mash, from ‘Aṭīyyah, from Jābir ibn ‘Abd Allāh, who said that al-Miqdād ibn al-Aswad said:

A man came to the Messenger of God and said:

“O Messenger of God, I am a man from the Arabs, and my home is far away in the furthest

part of Yemen. I am poor, and I have many dependents. Yet despite this, I am the chief of my people: my command is obeyed, and my word is accepted. If I bring my kinsmen to you so that they submit and affirm your message, then I am to have one hundred red she-camels, with their halters, saddlecloths, little and great."

The Prophet said: "Good."

The Messenger of God then passed away, and Abū Bakr assumed authority. The Bedouin later arrived with his kinsmen and asked for the Prophet. He was told, "He has passed away."

He asked, "Who is after him?"

He was told, "Abū Bakr."

So he said to Abū Bakr: "Are you the legatee of the Messenger of God?"

Abū Bakr replied: "Yes, I am the successor of the Messenger of God after him."

The Bedouin said: "The Messenger of God promised me one hundred red she-camels of such-and-such description."

Abū Bakr replied: "By God, the Messenger of God left neither dinar nor dirham nor anything else. From where can I give you what you ask, O Bedouin?"

So the man left him in despair. Then al-Faḍl ibn al-ʿAbbās met him and said:

"Whom are you seeking, O Bedouin?"

He replied: "I came seeking the Messenger of God, but I was told he had passed away. I am seeking his legatee, and I was directed to a man who said that the Messenger of God left neither dinar nor dirham."

Al-Faḍl ibn al-ʿAbbās said to him: "Come."

He guided him to the house of ʿAlī, peace be upon him, and said:

"Knock on the door and call out for al-Ḥasan. When he comes out to you, tell him your story, for his father is the legatee of the Messenger of God."

So he knocked, and al-Ḥasan said: "Who is this?"

The Bedouin said: "The one who came to your grandfather."

Al-Ḥasan came out to him and said: "What do you want?"

He replied: "I seek the legatee of the Messenger of God."

Then the Commander of the Faithful came out to him and said:

"You are the Bedouin to whom the Messenger of God promised the camels?"

He said: "Yes."

ʿAlī said:

"Go, O Ḥasan, with the Bedouin to al-Baqī, to such-and-such a place near the white rock.

Pray four rak'ahs, and supplicate with these invocations. A head with a halter in it will appear. Take the halter and give him one hundred camels as he requested."

So al-Ḥasan and the Bedouin went and did as his father had ordered. Then suddenly a head appeared with a halter in it.

Al-Ḥasan said: "O Bedouin, take the halter."

The Bedouin said: "You take it until you fulfill the number for me."

So al-Ḥasan took it and came leading them until he stopped before Abū Bakr and said: "This is the legatee of the Messenger of God."

The people remained astonished and blamed those who had put others over themselves. Then the Bedouin and all his kinsmen believed at the hand of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, peace be upon him.

Among them: The Story of the Carpet

The qāḍī Abū 'Abd Allāh narrated to us, through his shaykhs back to Anas ibn Mālik:

I was with the Messenger of God, and Abū Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthmān were with him in the mosque, when a Kurdish man entered with a carpet on his shoulder. He gave salām and placed it before the Messenger of God, saying:

"This carpet is a gift from me to you, O Messenger of God."

He spread it out so that he could look at it. It was the time of the Maghrib prayer. When he had prayed, he turned to me and said:

"O Anas, call for my cousin 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib."

I went out of the mosque and came to him and said: "Answer the Messenger of God." So he came out quickly. When he entered the mosque, the Prophet said to him:

"O 'Alī, shall I not give you glad tidings that will delight your heart?"

He said: "Yes, O Messenger of God. What are those glad tidings?"

He said: "This carpet lying before me—God has commanded it to obey you just as He commanded the wind to obey Sulaymān ibn Dāwūd. So command it as you wish."

Then the Commander of the Faithful said to Abū Bakr:

"Rise and sit upon one corner of the carpet."

He did so. Then he said to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb:

"Rise and sit upon the other corner facing Abū Bakr."

He did so. Then he said the same to 'Uthmān, and he did so. Then he said to me:

"O Anas, rise."

So I rose and sat upon the fourth corner. Then the Commander of the Faithful sat in the middle of the carpet, spoke some words, struck the carpet with his right foot, and said: "O carpet, rise! O wind, carry the carpet!"

So the carpet rose with us until it brushed the sky, and we heard the glorification of the angels. The companions fainted, and none among them remained conscious except me.

Then it descended and came to a barren rock in a desolate place without a path. The Commander of the Faithful awakened them and said:

"O companions, do you know where you are?"

They said: "No, by the life of the Messenger of God, we do not know where we are."

The Commander of the Faithful said:

"You are at the Cave and al-Raqīm. Rise, O Abū Bakr, and greet them," meaning the people of the cave.

Abū Bakr rose, went to the cave entrance, returned, and said:

"O Commander of the Faithful, I greeted them, but they did not return my salām."

Then he said to 'Umar:

"O Abū Ḥafṣ, rise and greet the people."

He did so and returned saying:

"O Commander of the Faithful, I greeted them, but they did not return my salām."

Then he said to 'Uthmān:

"Rise and greet the people."

He did so and returned saying the same thing.

Then he said to me:

"O Anas, rise and greet the young men."

I rose and greeted them, but they did not return my salām. So I returned and said:

"O Commander of the Faithful, you brought us to a rock and tell us to greet them—is this mockery?"

He said:

"No, by the life of the Messenger of God. Rise, all of us together."

So Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, I, and the Commander of the Faithful all rose and came to the cave entrance. Then the Commander of the Faithful hastened forward and said:

"Peace be upon you, and the mercy of God and His blessings."

They replied:

"And upon you be peace, O Commander of the Faithful and legatee of the Messenger of the Lord of the worlds."

He said to them:

“Why did you not return the salām of the companions of the Messenger of God, when they were standing here?”

They said:

“We are bound by a covenant and pledge not to greet anyone except a Prophet or the legatee of a Prophet—and you are the legatee.”

Then he began speaking with them, and they with him. At hearing their speech and witnessing them, the companions fainted again.

When the Commander of the Faithful finished his conversation with the young men, he awakened us from our swoon and ordered each of us to return to his place on the carpet. Then he sat again in the middle of it, spoke, struck it with his right foot, and said: “O carpet, rise! O wind, carry the carpet!”

So it rose again as before.

Then it descended, and suddenly we found ourselves at the gate of the mosque of the Messenger of God, while he had just come out from the dawn prayer. Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān were still unconscious.

The Messenger of God began awakening them one by one and asking each what he had seen during the night.

Abū Bakr said:

“O Messenger of God, I saw three, the fourth of them being their dog.”

‘Umar said:

“I saw five, the sixth of them being their dog.”

‘Uthmān said:

“I saw, O Messenger of God, seven, the eighth of them being their dog.”

Then he asked me, and I informed him. Before he had completed his question to me, Jibrīl descended with revelation. The Prophet said:

“My Lord has revealed to me: They will say: three, the fourth of them their dog; and they will say: five, the sixth of them their dog, guessing at the unseen; and they will say: seven, and the eighth of them their dog. Say: My Lord knows best their number.”

Anas said:

Then the Prophet turned to me and said:

“O Anas, this report will remain as a burden upon your neck until the Day of Resurrection: whenever they call upon you to testify, if you do not testify for him...”

Then when ‘Ā’ishah went out to fight ‘Alī, the Prophet’s earlier warning came to pass. ‘Alī said to Anas:

“O Anas, tell what you saw on the Night of the Carpet.”

But he replied:

“I know nothing of it,” and concealed his testimony.

So ‘Alī, peace be upon him, supplicated against him with blindness, and he became blind and leprous until he died.

Among them: The Story of the Sun Being Returned for ‘Alī

Abū Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Mūsā al-Hāshimī narrated to us. Abū ‘Īsā ibn Mihrwān said: Maḥmūl ibn Ibrāhīm informed us. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Aswad al-Shukrī narrated to us from Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Abī Rāfi’, from his father, from his grandfather, from Abī Rāfi’, who said:

The Prophet lay with his head upon the thigh of ‘Alī, peace be upon him, and the time of the ‘Aṣr prayer came, while ‘Alī had not prayed it. He thought the Prophet might be receiving revelation, so he disliked waking him until the sun had set.

When the Prophet awoke, he said to ‘Alī:

“Did you pray ‘Aṣr?”

He said:

“No, O Messenger of God.”

So the Prophet supplicated, and the sun was returned until it came back to where it had been at the proper time. Then ‘Alī rose and prayed ‘Aṣr, and when he had completed his prayer, it set again, and the stars were intermingled.

Among them: The Report of Abū al-Ṭufayl

Abū Bakr al-Anbārī informed us. Yaḥyā ibn Muḥammad al-Ḥaybī narrated to us. Muḥammad ibn ‘Ubayd narrated to us. Muḥammad ibn Nūr narrated to us from Ma‘mar, from Wahb ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Abī al-Ṭufayl, from ‘Āmir ibn Wā’ilah, who said:

I was present while the Commander of the Faithful ‘Alī, peace be upon him, was preaching, and I heard him say:

“Ask me, for by God, you will not ask me about anything that shall happen until the Day of Resurrection except that I will tell you of it. Ask me about the Book of God, for by God, there is not a verse except that I know whether it was revealed by night or by day, on plain ground or on a mountain.”

Then he said:

*“O Kumayl, these hearts are vessels, and the best of them are those most capacious.
Preserve from me what I say:*

People are three:

*a sage formed by the Lord,
a learner upon the path of salvation,
and the rest are the rabble—followers of every crier, swaying with every wind. They have
not sought illumination from the light of knowledge, nor have they taken refuge in a firm
support.*

*O Kumayl, knowledge is better than wealth. Knowledge guards you, whereas you guard
wealth. Knowledge increases through giving, while wealth decreases through spending.*

*O Kumayl, companionship with the scholar is obedience during his life and beautiful
remembrance after his death.*

*The benefit of wealth ceases with its disappearance, but knowledge rules, while wealth is
ruled over.*

*O Kumayl, the treasurers of knowledge die, yet they remain so long as time endures; while
the treasurers of wealth die even though they are still living.*

*O Kumayl, after the death of the treasurers of knowledge, their persons are absent, but their
likenesses remain in hearts.*

*Indeed, here—” and he pointed to his chest— “is abundant knowledge, but I have found no
bearers for it.”*

Among them: The Story of the Two Doves

On the authority of ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir, may God be pleased with him, who said:

*I was with the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, in the congregational mosque of
Kūfa, and there was no one else there besides us, when suddenly he said: “صدقیه” —
“Believe him.”*

So I turned right and left, but saw no one. I remained astonished.

He said:

“O ‘Ammār, it is as though I see you saying: ‘To whom is ‘Alī speaking?’”

I said:

“That is indeed so.”

He said:

“Raise your head and see what you behold.”

So I raised my head, and there were two doves answering one another.

He said:

“O ‘Ammār, do you know what one of them is saying to the other?”

I said:

“No, by your life, O Commander of the Faithful.”

He said:

“The female bird says: ‘You have taken another in my place, abandoned me, and chosen someone else besides me.’ He swears to her and says: ‘I have not done so,’ while she says: ‘I do not believe you.’

Then he says to her: ‘By the One before whom the one seated facing this qiblah sits, I have not taken another besides you, nor chosen anyone else.’”

He said:

“I understood that she was rejecting him, so I said to her: ‘Believe him.’”

‘Ammār said:

So I said, “O Commander of the Faithful, I did not know that anyone knew the speech of birds except Sulaymān.”

He replied:

“O ‘Ammār, by God, Sulaymān asked God by means of us—the People of the House—until he was taught the speech of birds.”

Among them: The Story of the Serpent

It is narrated that the Commander of the Faithful, peace be upon him, was upon the pulpit of Kūfa addressing the people, when a serpent approached from the Elephant Gate, huge like a Bactrian camel.

The people were terrified of it, but the Commander of the Faithful called to them:

“Make way for it, for it is the messenger of a people from among the jinn called Banū ‘Āmir.”

So they made way for it, and the serpent came until it climbed the pulpit to the Commander of the Faithful. It placed its mouth at his ear and hissed, and the Commander of the Faithful spoke to it in a hiss like its own. Then it turned and departed the way it had entered.

The Commander of the Faithful then descended and said:

“A dispute had occurred among a people of the jinn. This serpent came asking me what would reconcile them, so I instructed it.”

And it is also narrated that this serpent was the representative of the Commander of the Faithful over the jinn. Peace be upon him.

The Second Epistle of the Third Division on the Intellectual Principles

From the Epistles of the Brethren of Purity, according to the view of the Brethren of Purity and the Loyal Friends

In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, and in Him we seek help.

*Know, O pious and compassionate brother—may God support you and us with a spirit from Him—that the first thing the Creator, exalted be His praise, originated and brought into existence was a simple, spiritual substance, in the utmost perfection, completeness, and excellence, containing within it the forms of all things. It is called the **Active Intellect**.*

*From that substance there overflowed another substance beneath it in rank, called the **Universal Soul**.*

*From the soul there gushed forth another substance called **First Matter**.*

*And First Matter received quantity—namely length, breadth, and depth—and thereby became an **absolute body**, which is the **Second Matter**.*

Then the body received the spherical shape, which is the most excellent of shapes. From that there arose the world of the spheres and the stars, insofar as it became purified and subtilized, one after another, from the outermost sphere down to the sphere of the moon.

These are nine spheres, one inside another:

- *the nearest to the center is the sphere of the moon,*
- *the farthest and highest is the encompassing sphere,*

which is also called the sphere bearing the whole, being the subtlest in substance and the simplest in body.

*Then beneath it is the sphere of the zodiac,
then the sphere of Saturn,
then Jupiter,
then Mars,
then the Sun,
then Venus,
then Mercury,
then the Moon.*

And beneath the sphere of the moon are the four elements: fire, air, water, and earth.

The earth is the center, and it is the densest of bodies in substance and the thickest in mass.

When these spheres were arranged, one within another, as their Creator—glorious is He—willed, and as His wisdom required in their subtle order and beautiful arrangement, layer upon layer, He made their system orderly and their governance excellent. The spheres, with their constellations and stars, revolved over the four elements, and night and day, winter and summer, heat and cold alternated over them.

Thus some mixed with others: the subtle with the dense, the heavy with the light, the hot with the cold, the moist with the dry. From this, over long stretches of time, arose the various compounds that are minerals, plants, and animals.

- **Mineral** is everything that solidifies in the depths of the earth, the bottom of the seas, and the insides of mountains, from vapors, exhalations, rising fumes, and trapped moistures in caves and hollows, in which the earthy principle predominates.
- **Plant** is everything that sprouts upon the face of the earth—grass, pasture, herbs, vegetables, crops, and trees—in which the watery principle predominates.
- **Animal** is every body that moves, senses, and passes from one place to another with its bulk, in which the airy principle predominates.

Minerals are nobler in composition than the elements.

Plants are nobler in composition than minerals.

Animals are nobler in composition than plants.

And man is nobler in composition than all animals, in whom the fiery principle predominates.

In the composition of man are gathered all the meanings of the existents, both simple and composite, previously mentioned. For man is composed of a dense bodily body and a simple spiritual soul.

*For this reason, the sages called man a **small world**, and the world a **great man**.*

If man truly knows himself—through the wondrous composition of his body, the subtle structure of his frame, the various operations of the soul's powers within him, and the manifestation of its acts through him and from him, in the form of ordered crafts and perfected skills—then he becomes able to measure by that all the meanings of sensible things, and to infer from them all the meanings of intelligible things in both worlds.

Therefore, O brother—may God support you and us with a spirit from Him—if we are resolved to know the realities of existing things, we should first begin by knowing ourselves, since we are the nearest of things to ourselves. Then after that we may know the rest of things. For it would be most shameful for us to claim knowledge of the realities of things while not knowing ourselves.

Know, O brother, that the **Universal Soul** is a spiritual power that overflowed from the Intellect, by the permission of the Creator, exalted be He, as we said before.

It has **two powers** flowing throughout all bodies, from the encompassing sphere down to the center of the earth, like the diffusion of the sun's light through all parts of the air.

One of its two powers is **knowing**, and the other is **acting**.

By its acting power, it perfects bodies and completes them by impressing into them forms, shapes, states, adornments, beauty, and colors.

By its knowing power, it perfects its own essence by bringing forth its virtues from potentiality into actuality: true sciences, beautiful ethics, sound judgments, righteous actions, perfected crafts, and refined skills—according to how much each person receives its influence by the purity of his substance and the subtlety of his constitution.

Know also, O brother, that the soul is a substance that does not perish, a power that does not vanish, and its acts do not cease, because its matter comes from the Intellect, which continually supports it, and its reception of the outpouring from it is uninterrupted.

Likewise, God's support for the Intellect is continual, and His outpouring is unceasing, and the Intellect's reception of that is likewise uninterrupted. For the outpouring of God—glorious is He—is the spring of goods, the source of blessings, the **معدن** of generosity. It does not perish, its gifts do not cease, and its virtues do not end. Therefore all praise, thanksgiving, and glorification belong to Him.

Know, O my brother, that the **Universal Soul** has its rank above the outermost sphere, and that its powers flow through all the parts and individual bodies of the celestial sphere, governing them through administration, craftsmanship, and wisdom, and likewise through all that the sphere sets in motion among the rest of the bodies. It has in each individual heavenly body a particular power proper to it, governing it and manifesting through it its acts. That power is called the **particular soul** of that individual. For example, the power proper to the body of Saturn, governing it and manifesting through it and from it its acts, is called the **soul of Saturn**. Likewise, the power proper to the body of Jupiter, governing it and manifesting through it and from it its acts, is called the **soul of Jupiter**. By this same analogy, all the powers proper to each star and each celestial body, governing them and manifesting through them and from them their acts, are called their souls.

This is the true meaning of what is symbolized in the divine books when they speak of the **angels**, the **highest assembly**, and the **hosts of God who do not disobey God in what He commands them, but do what they are commanded**. It is also the true meaning of what the sages and philosophers have said in explaining the particular souls in the world of the spheres and the elements, whom they call the spiritual beings entrusted with preserving the world and governing creation: by turning the heavens, setting the stars in motion, ordering

the ages, varying the times, supervising the elements, nurturing plants and animals, and preserving them.

Know also, O my brother, that the Universal Soul, which is above the outermost sphere, has a particular power flowing through all bodies beneath the sphere of the moon. This power governs them, acts in them, and manifests through them and from them its works.

*Philosophers and physicians call it the **nature of generation and corruption**, while revealed law calls it **an angel among the angels**. It is one soul, yet it has many powers spread throughout all the classes of animals, plants, minerals, and the four elements from the sphere of the moon down to the center of the earth. There is no genus, species, or individual among these existing things except that this soul has a specific power proper to it, governing it and manifesting through it and from it its acts. That power is called the particular soul of that individual.*

*Know, O my brother, that the first powers of this soul in the four elements—fire, air, water, and earth—are **heat, cold, moisture, and dryness**. The first acts of these powers in these elemental qualities are motion, rest, regulation, heating, dissolving, congealing, raising upward, distilling, mixing, blending, composing, structuring, shaping, carving, coloring, and the like. All of this occurs through the action of these powers in these elemental qualities, with the assistance of the powers of the celestial bodies, by God's permission. For example, it moves the element of fire so as to heat the world, with the constant assistance of the power of the Sun; it stabilizes the element of earth with the constant assistance of the power of Saturn; it liquefies the element of water with the constant assistance of the power of Jupiter; it makes the element of air subtle with the constant assistance of the power of Mars; it distills the element of moist vapor with the constant assistance of the power of Venus; it blends the element of dry vapor with moist vapor with the constant assistance of the power of Mercury; and it supplies generated things with the element of juices, with the constant assistance of the power of the Moon.*

*Know, O my brother, that the first effect of these powers—namely heat, cold, moisture, and dryness—in the formation of minerals is the production of **mercury and sulfur**. This happens because the moistures trapped in the interior of earthy bodies, and the vapors confined within them, are acted upon in succession by the heat of summer and the internal heat of the mine. They become subtle and light, and rise upward to the roofs of those cavities and caves, where they remain suspended for some time. Then, when the cold of winter comes upon them, they become thick, congeal, and drip back down into the lower parts of those spaces and caverns, mixing with the soil of those places and remaining there a long time, while the heat of the mines continuously works to ripen, cook, and refine them. Thus that watery moisture, together with the earthy particles mixed into it, and the heaviness and density it takes on through time and the ripening heat, becomes **mercury**, moist and heavy. And the earthy particles in the lower part of the mines, mingled with oily moisture and ripened by heat, become **combustible sulfur**.*

*When mercury and sulfur mix a second time and are blended together, while the same process of regulation continues, the various kinds and species of mineral substances are formed from their combination. Thus, in the formation of fusible minerals, if the mercury is pure and the sulfur clean, and they are mixed evenly, and the sulfur absorbs the moisture of the mercury as earth absorbs the dampness of water, and their parts unite in moderation, with their proportions balanced, and the heat of the mine ripens them moderately without any accident of cold or dryness reaching them before their ripening, then over a long time **pure gold** is formed. If cold reaches them before they ripen, they solidify and become **white silver**. If dryness, due to excessive heat, reaches them, they become **dry copper**. If cold reaches them before the parts of sulfur unite with the parts of mercury, then **tin-lead** results. If cold reaches them before full ripening and the sulfur is more abundant, then **iron** results. If the mercury is more abundant, the sulfur less, and the heat weak, then **lead** is formed. By the same reasoning, the rest of the mineral species differ because of the various conditions that affect them: excess or deficiency of mercury and sulfur, excessive heat or cold before ripening, deviation from balance, and similar factors.*

*Know, O my brother, that God—exalted is He—has supported the **vegetative soul** with seven active powers: the **attractive, retentive, digestive, expulsive, nutritive, formative, and growing** powers. Each of these performs an act different from that of the others. Their first action in the formation of plants is the attraction of the juices of the four elements—earth, water, air, and fire—and the drawing in of their subtle parts and the elements suited to each species of plant. Then it holds them by the retentive power, ripens them by the digestive power, expels them by the expulsive power, nourishes them by the nutritive power, causes increase and growth by the growing power, and shapes them into various forms and colors by the formative power.*

For example, when the attractive power sucks up the moisture of the soil through the roots of the plant, just as the cupper sucks blood with the cupping glass, or as fire draws oil through the wick, earthy particles are drawn along with it because of their strong union with that moisture. When that material arrives in the veins of the plant, the digestive power ripens it and makes it akin to the substance of the veins. Then the nutritive power distributes it and attaches each portion to what suits it, while the growing power increases its dimensions in length, breadth, and depth. What remains of that material, once it has become subtler and finer, is driven upward by the expulsive power into the roots, stalks, branches, and twigs of the plant; the attractive power draws it upward there, and the retentive power holds it so that it does not flow back downward.

Then the digestive power cooks it a second time, making it akin to the substance of the roots, branches, and twigs, and material for them, thus increasing their dimensions in length, breadth, and depth. What is still subtler and finer is driven upward again into the upper branches and twigs, where the attractive power draws it and the retentive power holds it.

Then the digestive power cooks it a third time, making it akin to the substance of leaves, blossoms, flowers, husks of grain, fruit, and the like, and material for them, increasing their dimensions in length, breadth, and depth. What becomes still subtler and finer is made into material for the grain and fruit, and the retentive power holds it there.

Then the digestive power cooks it a fourth time, ripens it, and refines it, separating the subtle from the dense and the thick from the thin. The dense and thick become material for the peel and the pit, whose dimensions are increased in length, breadth, and depth. The fine and subtle become material for the kernel and the edible fruit: flour, oil, sweetness, syrup, taste, color, and fragrance.

When an animal takes in the inner part of the plant as food and that material reaches the stomach, the first act of these powers upon it is the act of the digestive power by innate heat. Then it is refined in the intestines, the chyme is drawn to the liver, it is ripened again, and the humors are separated from one another—namely blood, phlegm, and the two biles. Then they are sent to the organs and vessels prepared to receive them. Blood is apportioned to the organs and joints through the veins, and each organ is nourished by what corresponds to it from that material. Then comes increase in their dimensions in length, breadth, and depth. Then sperm is extracted from all parts of the body of the male at the time of intercourse; it is the foam of the blood. It is then conveyed to the womb of the female through the organs prepared for that.

As for the action of these powers in composing the human body when the sperm settles in the womb, and their management of it over the course of nine months, stage after stage, until the body is completed and its form perfected, we have explained that in another treatise besides this one.

*When the appointed term decreed by God—exalted is He—is completed, and the power of the sensitive animal soul transfers the child, by God's permission, from that place to the spaciousness of this world, another kind of management begins, until the age of four years. Then comes the **rationally expressive power**, which gives expression to the names of sensible things, and another stage of management begins until the age of fifteen years. Then comes the **intellective power**, which distinguishes the meanings of sensible things, and another management begins until the age of thirty years. Then comes the **sapiential power**, discerning the meanings of intelligibles, and another management begins until the age of forty years. Then comes the **angelic, supported power**, and another management begins until the age of fifty years. Then comes the **nomic power**, preparing for the return and separating from matter, and another management continues until the end of life.*

If the soul has become complete and perfected before leaving the body, then the power of ascension descends upon it and raises it to the highest assembly, where another management begins. But if the soul has not become complete and perfected before leaving the body, it is returned to the lowest of the low, and management begins again from the

beginning, as God said: "Indeed We created man in the best form, then We reduced him to the lowest of the low, except those who believe and do righteous deeds..." And He said: "As We began the first creation, so shall We repeat it—a promise binding upon Us; indeed We shall do it." And He said: "Then that you may become old men; and among you is he who is taken in death, and among you is he who is returned to the most decrepit age, so that after knowledge he knows nothing."

Question

What do you think is said and believed by one who reflects upon the principles of things and speaks of them? Were all things originated in the utmost perfection, completeness, and excellence, and then some declined and were debased? Or were they all originated in the utmost deficiency, and then increased, became complete, and reached perfection, some surpassing others? Or were some of them like this and some like that?

Section

*Know, O my brother, that since God—exalted is He—is perfect in existence, complete in virtues, knowing things before they come to be, and able to bring them into existence whenever He wills, it would not accord with wisdom for Him to withhold those virtues within Himself and not bestow them or pour them forth. Therefore, by the necessity of wisdom, bounty and virtues flowed from Him, just as light and radiance flow from the disc of the sun. That outpouring from Him remains continuous, successive, and unbroken. The first of that outpouring is called the **Active Intellect**, a simple spiritual substance, pure light, in the utmost perfection, completeness, and virtue, and within it are the forms of all things, just as the forms of known things are in the thought of the knower.*

*From the Active Intellect there flowed another outpouring beneath it in rank, called the **Passive Intellect**, namely the **Universal Soul**. It is a simple spiritual substance receptive of forms and virtues from the Active Intellect, in order and due proportion, just as the pupil receives instruction from the teacher.*

*From the Soul there flowed another outpouring beneath it in rank, called **First Matter**, a simple spiritual substance receptive from the Soul of forms and shapes over time, little by little. The first form that matter received was length, breadth, and depth, and thereby it became an **absolute body**, which is the **Second Matter**. The outpouring stopped at the level of body; another substance did not flow forth from it because its rank falls short of the spiritual substances, its substance is thick, and it is remote from the First Cause.*

*Since the outpouring from God to the Intellect and from the Intellect to the Soul remained continuous, the Soul turned toward body and fashioned in it forms, shapes, colors, and patterns, so as to perfect it with virtues and beauties according to what body can receive, depending on the purity of its substance. The first form the Soul impressed into body was the **spherical shape**, the most excellent of all shapes, and it moved it with **circular motion**, the most excellent of all motions. It ordered the bodies one inside another from the*

*encompassing sphere down to the center of the earth, making them **eleven spheres**. The whole then became one single world, in one ordered universal system.*

The earth became the densest and darkest of bodies because of its remoteness from the outermost sphere. The outermost sphere became the subtlest, most spiritual, and most luminous of bodies because of its nearness to First Matter, which is a simple, intelligible substance. Matter is lower in rank than the Intellect and the Soul because of its remoteness from God, mighty and exalted. Matter is a simple, spiritual, intelligible substance, neither knowing nor acting, but receptive of the effects of the Soul over time and passively affected by it. The Soul, by contrast, is a simple spiritual substance, potentially knowing and naturally acting, receiving the virtues of the Intellect without time, and acting upon matter through motion over time. As for the Intellect, it is a simple spiritual substance, simpler and nobler than the Soul, receptive of God's support, actually knowing, and supporting the Soul without time.

May God grant you success, O pious and merciful brother, and all our brethren, in soundness and right guidance, and support us and them with a spirit from Him wherever they may be in the lands. He is noble, generous, compassionate, and merciful toward His servants.

Praise be to God as is due to His praise, and blessings, peace, greetings, and benedictions upon Muḥammad and his family.

The Epistle on Definitions and Descriptions

from among the fifty-one Epistles of the Brethren of Purity and the Loyal Friends

In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, and in Him we seek help in all matters.

Know, O pious and merciful brother, that the prophets, peace be upon them, are the envoys of God between Him and His creation; the scholars are the heirs of the prophets; and the sages are the most excellent of the scholars.

*It has been said that the sage is one in whom seven praiseworthy qualities are found:
that his acts be well-ordered,
his crafts perfected,
his speech truthful,
his character beautiful,
his judgments sound,
his deeds pure,
and his knowledge true.*

We have already explained in one of our epistles the categories of the sciences and the quantity of their kinds, and in another the manner of perfecting the crafts and making them exact.

Know that the knowledge of the reality of things is the knowledge of their **definitions** and **descriptions**. All things are of two kinds: composites and simples.

As for composite things, their realities are known when the things of which they are composed are known.

As for simple things, their realities are known when the qualities specific to them are known.

For example, if it is said to you: "What is the reality of clay?" it is said: water and earth mixed together.

If it is said: "What is oxymel?" it is said: vinegar and honey blended together.

If it is said: "What is a bed?" it is said: wood and form combined.

If it is said: "What is speech?" it is said: words and meanings joined together.

If it is said: "What is melody?" it is said: sharp and deep tones united.

If it is said: "What is the animal?" it is said: soul and body conjoined.

On this pattern one replies when asked about composite things: one must mention the things of which they are composed and from which they are constituted.

As for simple things, their realities are known by the qualities proper to them.

For example:

If it is said: "What is matter (*hayūlā*)?"

It is said: a simple substance receptive of form.

If it is said: "What is form?"

It is said: the whatness of a thing, through which it has a name, an act, and a subsistence.

If it is said: "What is substance?"

It is said: that which subsists by itself and receives qualities.

If it is said: "What is quality?"

It is said: an accident inhering in substance, though not like a part of it.

If it is said: "What is a thing?"

It is said: the meaning that is known and reported about.

If it is said: "What is the existent?"

It is said: that which one of the senses has found, or the intellect has conceived, or proof has indicated.

If it is said: "What is the non-existent?"

It is said: that which is opposed to the things mentioned under existence.

If it is said: "What is existence?"

It is said: "is."

If it is said: "What is non-being?"

It is said: "is not."

If it is said: "What is the eternal?"

It is said: that which was never "not."

If it is said: "What is the originated?"

It is said: that whose coming-to-be is through another.

If it is said: "What is origination?"

It is said: the bringing into being of what is brought into being.

If it is said: "What is a cause?"

It is said: that which is the reason for the existence of another thing.

If it is said: "What is the caused?"

It is said: that whose existence has a cause among causes.

If it is said: "What is the knower?"

It is said: one who conceives a thing according to its true reality.

If it is said: "What is knowledge?"

It is said: the form of the known in the soul of the knower.

If it is said: "What is the living?"

It is said: that which moves by its own essence.

If it is said: "What is the capable?"

It is said: that for which action is not impossible whenever it wills.

If it is said: "What is action?"

It is said: an effect from an effector.

If it is said: "What is meant by the Creator (al-Bārī)?"

It is said: the cause of every thing, the reason for every existent, the originator of originated things, the inventor of beings, the one who perfects them, completes them, and brings each of them to the utmost extent of its ends and final limits according to what is possible for it.

If it is said: "What is power?"

It is said: the possibility of bringing an act into existence.

If it is said: "What is craft?"

It is said: the bringing forth by the craftsman of what is in his thought and placing it in matter.

If it is said: "What is the crafted thing?"

It is said: that which is composed of matter and form.

If it is said: "What is the Active Intellect?"

It is said: the first originated thing that God brought forth, a simple luminous substance in which is the form of every thing.

If it is said: "What is the soul?"

It is said: a simple spiritual substance, living, knowing, active, and one of the forms of the Active Intellect.

If it is said: "What is will?"

It is said: an indication by imagination toward bringing into being something whose existence and contrary existence are both possible.

If it is said: "What is human intellect?"

It is said: the discrimination that is specific to each human individual, as distinct from the rest of animals.

If it is said: "What is genus?"

It is said: a description common to a group sharing one form and one universal meaning.

If it is said: "What is the individual?"

It is said: every whole pointed to as distinct from others by acts and forms.

If it is said: "What is a property?"

It is said: a quality specific to one thing and not another, slow to disappear.

If it is said: "What is light?"

It is said: a visible substance that shines by itself and by which other things are seen.

If it is said: "What is darkness?"

It is said: the absence of light from a thing capable of receiving light.

If it is said: "What is day?"

It is said: the light of the sun.

If it is said: "What is night?"

It is said: the shadow of the earth.

If it is said: "What is heat?"

It is said: the boiling of the parts of matter.

If it is said: "What is cold?"

It is said: the freezing of the parts of matter.

If it is said: "What is moisture?"

It is said: the flowing of the parts of matter.

If it is said: "What is dryness?"

It is said: their cohesion.

If it is said: "What is color?"

It is said: the flashing forth of the rays of bodies.

If it is said: "What is smell?"

It is said: vapors of certain qualities that dissolve from composite bodies.

If it is said: "What is sound?"

It is said: a striking in the air produced by the collision of bodies.

If it is said: "How many motions are there?"

It is said: six kinds—generation, corruption, increase, decrease, alteration, and locomotion.

If it is said: "What is their condition in action?"

It is said: generation is the acceptance by matter of form and emergence from the state of non-being; corruption is the stripping away of the form from matter; increase is the distancing of the limits of a thing; decrease is their contraction; alteration is the changing of qualities in that which is qualified; locomotion is movement from one place to another.

If it is said: "What is place?"

It is said: every location in which something located may be established; it is the boundaries of a body.

If it is said: "What is time?"

It is said: the number of the motions of the sphere and the recurrence of night and day.

If it is said: "What is the sphere?"

It is said: a transparent, spherical body encompassing the world.

If it is said: "What is the world?"

It is said: all the generated existents contained by the sphere.

If it is said: "What are the stars?"

It is said: luminous, rounded bodies, like solid things, because of their enduring stability in known positions.

If it is said: "What is body?"

It is said: that which has length, breadth, and depth.

If it is said: "What is a transparent body?"

It is said: every body through which what lies beyond can be seen.

If it is said: "What is fire?"

It is said: a luminous, hot thing that scatters things, separates their parts, and returns them to their simple essence.

If it is said: "What is air?"

It is said: a subtle, light, flowing, transparent body, swift in movement toward the six directions: above, below, west, east, south, and north.

If it is said: "What is water?"

It is said: a flowing body that surrounds the earth.

If it is said: "What is earth?"

It is said: a dense body, the densest of bodies, standing at the center of the world.

If it is said: "What are the directions?"

It is said: six kinds—east, west, south, north, above, and below. East is where the sun rises; west is where it sets; north is where the orbit of Capricorn lies; south is where the orbit of Canopus lies; above is what faces the encompassing sphere; below is what faces the earth.

If it is said: "What is clay?"

It is said: water and earth.

If it is said: "What is foam?"

It is said: water and air.

If it is said: "What is vapor?"

It is said: water and fire.

If it is said: "What is smoke?"

It is said: fire and earth.

If it is said: "What is lightning?"

It is said: fire and air.

If it is said: "What are minerals?"

It is said: that in which the earthy principle predominates.

If it is said: "What is plant?"

It is said: that in which the watery principle predominates.

If it is said: "What is animal?"

It is said: that in which the airy principle predominates.

If it is said: "What is man?"

It is said: that in which the fiery principle predominates.

If it is said: "What are the angels?"

It is said: that in which the nature of the sphere predominates.

If it is said: "What are the jinn?"

It is said: that in which the fiery and airy principles predominate.

If it is said: "What are the devils?"

It is said: that in which the earthy and fiery principles predominate.

If it is said: "What are winds?"

It is said: the undulation and flow of air toward one of the directions.

If it is said: "What is active nature?"

It is said: a power among the powers of the universal celestial soul flowing through the elements.

If it is said: "What is ether?"

It is said: the hot air adjoining the sphere of the moon.

If it is said: "What is the breeze?"

It is said: the temperate air adjoining the face of the earth.

If it is said: "What is zamharīr?"

It is said: the air above the sphere of the breeze and below the ether, exceedingly cold.

If it is said: "What is a ray?"

It is said: the light of the sun, moon, and wandering stars in the air toward the center of the earth.

If it is said: "What is the reflection of rays?"

It is said: the return of those lights from the surfaces of the earth, seas, rivers, and mountains into the air.

If it is said: "What is vapor?"

It is said: moist watery parts rising into the air along with those reflected rays from the surfaces of waters.

If it is said: "What is smoke?"

It is said: subtle earthy parts rising into the air with heat.

If it is said: "What are cloud and cloud-mass?"

It is said: watery and earthy parts when they become numerous and accumulate in the air; the thin of them is called cloud, and the dense accumulation is called cloud-mass.

If it is said: "What is rain?"

It is said: those watery parts when they join together, become dense and heavy, and return toward the earth.

If it is said: "What are winds?"

It is said: those earthy parts when they cool and return toward their center.

If it is said: "What is lightning?"

It is said: fire kindled by the friction of those smoky parts within the cloud.

If it is said: "What is thunder?"

It is said: the sound that moves within the cloud seeking an outlet.

If it is said: "What is the thunderbolt?"

It is said: a sound produced by the sudden escape of those winds together with those flashes of lightning.

If it is said: "What is sound?"

It is said: a striking occurring in the air from the collision of bodies with one another.

If it is said: "What is mist?"

It is said: moist vapor rising from the face of the earth after rainfall.

If it is said: "What is the halo?"

It is said: a circle that appears above the surface of the cloud from the reflection of the light of the sun, moon, or stars.

If it is said: "What is the rainbow?"

It is said: half of that circle when it appears in the sphere of the breeze in a slanting position.

If it is said: "How many finite colors are there in it, with their pigments?"

It is said: four—red at the top, yellow beneath it, green beneath the yellow, and blue beneath the green. We have already mentioned something of the manner of the arising of these things in our epistle on the upper phenomena.

If it is said: "What is snow?"

It is said: small drops frozen within the cloud, descending gently.

If it is said: "What is hail?"

It is said: drops frozen in the air after emerging from the cloud.

If it is said: "What is cloud?"

It is said: what is simple and thin is called cloud, and what is piled one above another like mountains of cotton is called cloud-mass.

If it is said: "What are torrents?"

It is said: the waters of valleys flowing from abundant rains.

If it is said: "What are the increases of rivers?"

It is said: from the waters of springs descending from mountain roots, pouring and flowing through the valleys, their increase coming from the abundance of torrents.

If it is said: "From what place do all rivers flow?"

It is said: they begin from springs at the tops of mountains or their lower parts, and from hills in the wilderness, and continue flowing toward thickets, pools, and marshes.

If it is said: "What are earthquakes?"

It is said: the movement of some regions of the earth caused by winds trapped in the interior of the earth.

If it is said: "What is sinking of the earth?"

It is said: the collapse of the surface of regions of the earth over cavities beneath them when those cavities split open and the trapped winds escape.

If it is said: "What are mountains?"

It is said: the pegs of the earth and the places where winds and seas are checked.

If it is said: "What are islands?"

It is said: regions of land in the midst of seas.

If it is said: "What are wildernesses?"

It is said: tracts of land with neither vegetation nor buildings.

If it is said: "What are thickets and marshes?"

It is said: places in which there are waters and vegetation.

If it is said: "What are pools?"

It is said: places where rainwater gathers.

If it is said: "What is the earth?"

It is said: a spherical body standing in the air by God's permission, together with all that is upon it of mountains and seas.

If it is said: "What is the air?"

It is said: that which surrounds the earth from all directions.

If it is said: "What is the sphere?"

It is said: that which surrounds the air in the same way.

If it is said: "What is the center of the earth?"

It is said: a point in the middle of its depth; and from that point to the outer surface is three and a half of twenty-two of the circumference.

If it is said: "What are seas?"

It is said: basins upon the face of the earth containing the gathered waters in them.

If it is said: "What is the increase of the sea?"

It is said: the pouring of rivers and valleys into it.

If it is said: "What is the cause of the tide and ebb of the Persian Sea in the day and night?"

It is said: the cause of the tide at the rising of the moon is that it affects the boiling of the parts of the waters in its depths and their swelling and upheaval, and the rivers pouring into it are forced backward, so the tide appears. The cause of the ebb is at the setting of the moon and the return of those parts to their settled state; the cessation of boiling, agitation, and swelling produces calm, and the ebb appears.

If it is said: "What is the reason that all sea water is salty, bitter, and thick, while rainwater, river water, and most well water are sweet and subtle?"

It is said: we have already mentioned something of their causes and reasons in an epistle we referred to before.

If it is said: "What are the four natures?"

It is said: coldness, heat, moisture, and dryness.

If it is said: "What are the four elements?"

It is said: fire, air, water, and earth.

If it is said: "What are the four humors?"

It is said: yellow bile, black bile, blood, and phlegm.

If it is said: "What are the generated beings?"

It is said: minerals, plants, and animals.

If it is said: "What are minerals?"

It is said: what exists in the depth of the earth of gems and other things that are in the condition of lifelessness.

If it is said: "What is plant?"

It is said: what appears and comes forth upon the face of the earth from trees and all that sprouts.

If it is said: "What is animal?"

It is said: every moving, sensing body composed of an animal soul and a lifeless body; and its formation is of two kinds: some are formed and generated in the womb, some are brought forth from eggs, some arise from things, and some gather both ways, reproducing and being generated.

If it is said: "What is will?"

It is said: an indication by imagination toward the coming-to-be of something whose coming-to-be is possible, and whose opposite is also possible.

If it is said: "What is power?"

It is said: the possibility of some acts by choice.

If it is said: "What is choice?"

It is said: the acceptance of one of two alternatives, by imagination in inward things and by sense in outward things.

If it is said: "What is ignorance?"

It is said: conceiving a thing otherwise than it is.

If it is said: "What is belief?"

It is said: fastening probability to the verification of a thing.

If it is said: "What is imagination?"

It is said: a power among the powers of the animal soul by which things are imagined.

If it is said: "What is faith?"

It is said: affirming as true what the informer reports.

If it is said: "What is Islam?"

It is said: submission without objection.

If it is said: "What is religion?"

It is said: obedience by a group to a leader from whom reward is expected.

If it is said: "What is unbelief?"

It is said: covering over.

If it is said: "What is associationism?"

It is said: affirming lordship for two.

If it is said: "What is denial?"

It is said: rejecting the truth.

If it is said: "What is disobedience?"

It is said: departing from obedience.

If it is said: "What is obedience?"

It is said: compliance with the command of the commander and the prohibition of the prohibiter.

If it is said: "What is the return (ma'ād)?"

It is said: the return of the particular soul to the Universal Soul.

If it is said: "What is reward?"

It is said: what every soul finds of rest, delight, joy, and happiness after its separation from the body.

If it is said: "What is punishment?"

It is said: what it suffers of fear, sorrow, and pains after separation from bodies. Every soul receives, according to what it has earned, either good if it was good, or evil if it was evil.

If it is said: "What is the recognized good (ma'rūf)?"

It is said: doing what custom has established and what the law and prophetic way have not forbidden.

If it is said: "What is the rejected evil (munkar)?"

It is said: doing what custom has not established, neither in the prophetic way nor in the law.

If it is said: "What is the wage of the worker?"

It is said: the recompense that each laborer deserves for what he does.

Section

Shape is a bodily form, while **color** is a spiritual form. Both are found in all things, if one reflects carefully. They are present, for example, in the class of fruits: in the form of the fruit

itself, which appears through its ripening and through the transformation of the subtle, fine moisture into what becomes manifest in it.

As for things possessing flowing moisture and abundant moisture, the flowing moisture comes first, because its preservation is like an instrument that takes the place of the bark of a tree: it preserves the moisture and prevents corruption from reaching it. This is by the determination of the Mighty, the Knowing, so that the innate heat present in all fruits may cook and mature them, changing them from a useless state into a useful one. For the aim of nature is to ripen everything, cooking by innate heat the moistures of matter according to the ordered arrangement of the instrument for the benefits for which it came to be thus.

If it is unable to do so because of some interfering cause, then either the moistures dominate the thing, and putrefaction arises in it, which becomes a sign of corruption; or the moistures in the thing are deficient, and dryness and roughness arise in it, and that too is a kind of corruption.

The seeds of plants, when they first appear, and the seeds of crops and trees, are all hot and moist, because the heat in them is greater than the moisture, while the moisture within them restrains the heat. Therefore tenderness arises at their beginning.

Do you not see the action of the ferment that curdles soft milk through the strength of its heat, and how the milk follows it by accepting its effect? For in heat there is an attractive power that draws moistures so as to be nourished by them and to live as long as the material remains. But if coldness and moisture increase over it, the heat becomes hidden in the interior of bodies and burns them inwardly. For heat is the active principle, while moisture is the material receptive of form.

Heat also has a tendency of motion upward. Its outlet tends toward the right, the front, and upward from the direction of the heart, because the heart is the noblest of the parts of the body—though not nobler than the whole body—just as the veins of a tree are its noblest parts, though not nobler than the tree itself. Small things, by their multitude, can withstand great things, by reason of their fewness. And because the first mover is one, every generated thing has in its like an action corresponding to that first One.

Every single origin, in the body of an animal, first sends forth from the heart two vessels: one toward the upper part of the body and the other toward its lower part. Likewise, in the body of a plant two vessels appear: one goes downward and takes in material from earth and water according to what is needed for its life; the other raises it upward so that it may be nourished by it, and from that come the nurture of the trunk, the leaves, and the fruit.

Section

*Then know that **number** is one of the mathematical sciences of wisdom.*

The **unity** found in the imagined “one” is the principle and origin of number, and it has no part.

Number is the multiplicity of ones gathered together.

It is a form impressed in the soul of the counter through repetition of unity.

Counted things are the things that are counted.

Calculation is the combining and separating of number.

Calculated things are the things whose quantities have been known.

Numbers include **even** and **odd**.

An **even number** is every number that has an integral half.

An **odd number** is every number that exceeds an even number by one.

Numbers also include **whole numbers** and **fractions**.

A **whole number** is everything indicated by one of the eleven basic terms: one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, hundred, thousand, and what is composed from them, such as twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty, ninety, one hundred, two hundred, three hundred, four hundred, five hundred, six hundred, seven hundred, eight hundred, nine hundred, one thousand, two thousand, three thousand, four thousand, five thousand, six thousand, seven thousand, eight thousand, nine thousand, and so on by repeated formation.

Fractional numbers are everything indicated by nine terms derived from division: half, third, quarter, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth, or compounds formed from them such as half of a half, a third of a third, a quarter of a quarter, a fifth of a fifth, a seventh of a seventh, and the like.

The number whose beginning is from one in all its matters and whose end is to four is represented thus: **1 2 3 4**. These four are the stability of its root, and from them comes the branching of what is derived. The rest is compounded from them, as we explained in the Epistle on Arithmetic.

Number has four ranks:

the rank of units,

the rank of tens,

the rank of hundreds,

and the rank of thousands.

It also has an order and arrangement of many kinds, which become apparent when one works with it.

Among these are:

Natural order, such as:

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

The order of consecutive even numbers, such as:

2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20

The order of consecutive odd numbers, such as:

1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11

The order of “even-odd” numbers, such as:

6, 10, 14, 18

The order of “even-even-odd,” such as:

12, 20, 28

The order of doubled evens, such as:

2, 4, 8, 16, 32

The order of primary odd numbers, such as:

3, 5, 7, 9

The order of squares, such as:

4, 9, 16, 25

The order of cubes, such as:

8, 27, 64, 125

The order of fourth powers that are not squares, such as:

6, 10, 14, 18, 22, 26

Each of these kinds has its own origin, quantity, species, and properties. We have already mentioned some of them in the Epistle on Number.

*A **ratio** is the measure of one number relative to another.*

*A **continuous ratio** is when the proportion of the first to the second is like that of the second to the third.*

*A **discrete ratio** is when the proportion of the first to the second corresponds to the proportion of the third to the fourth.*

***Multiplication** is the repeating of one number according to the number of units in the other.*

***Division** is the reverse of multiplication.*

*A **root** is a number multiplied by itself.*

*A **square** is the product resulting from that.*

*A **cube** is the product resulting from multiplying the square by the root.*

*Then know that **geometry** is the foundation of the mathematical sciences of wisdom.*

The science of geometry is the knowledge of dimensions and magnitudes.

*The **dimensions** are three:*

length, breadth, and depth.

The **magnitudes** are three:
lines, surfaces, and bodies.

A **line** is a magnitude with one dimension.

A **surface** is a magnitude with two dimensions.

A **body** is a magnitude with three dimensions.

Lines are of three kinds:
straight, curved, and bent, which is composed of both.

Surfaces are of three kinds:
flat, concave, and convex.

Bodies are of many kinds:
some differ by the number of surfaces,
some by the number of shapes,
and some by both together.

Among those that differ by the number of surfaces are eight kinds:

The first is the **sphere**, enclosed by one surface.

The **hemisphere** is enclosed by two surfaces.

The **quarter-sphere** is enclosed by three surfaces.

The **fiery shape** is enclosed by four surfaces.

The **earthly shape**, which is the cube, is enclosed by six surfaces.

The **airy shape** is enclosed by eight surfaces.

The **watery shape** is enclosed by twenty surfaces.

The **celestial shape** is enclosed by twelve surfaces.

Surfaces are many in kind, differing sometimes by their sides, sometimes by their angles, and sometimes by both, yet all of them are gathered under four kinds:

The **triangle**,
the **square**,
the **circle**,
and the **many-angled figure**.

The triangular surface is that enclosed by three lines and having three angles.

The square surface is that enclosed by four lines and having four angles.

The circle is a surface enclosed by one line, and within it is a point from which all straight lines drawn to the circumference are equal to one another from the center to the circumference.

The many-angled shape is such as the pentagon, hexagon, heptagon, and whatever increases beyond that.

Angles are three kinds:

right, acute, and obtuse.

*The **right angle** is that beside which is another like it.*

*The **acute angle** is smaller than a right angle.*

*The **obtuse angle** is greater than a right angle.*

Section

***Plant** is every body that nourishes itself and grows.*

***Animal** is every body that moves and senses.*

***Man** is a living, speaking mortal; he is a composite whole made up of a rational soul and a mortal body.*

***Body** is a subtle substance possessing length, breadth, and depth.*

***Sound** is a striking that occurs in the air from the collision of bodies.*

***Utterance** is every sound that has articulated letters.*

***Speech** is every utterance that indicates a meaning.*

If it is said: "What is truthfulness?"

It is said: affirming of a subject a quality that truly belongs to it, or denying of a subject a quality that does not belong to it.

***Falsehood** is the opposite of that.*

It is also said that:

- *truth and falsehood apply to statements,*
- *correctness and error apply to thoughts,*
- *good and evil apply to actions,*
- *right and wrong apply to judgments,*
- *harm and benefit apply to sensible things.*

*The **worldly life** is the duration of the soul's remaining with the body until the time of their separation, which is called death.*

***Death** is the soul's ceasing to use the body.*

*The **afterlife** is a second arising after death.*

It is also said that death is the soul's continuing after separation from the body and its being alone in its own world.

***Paradise** is the world of spirits, and **Hell** is the world of bodies.*

Paradise is also the higher rank, and Hell is also the lower rank.

The paradise of the vegetative soul is the form of the animal soul.

The paradise of the animal soul is the form of the human soul.

The paradise of the human soul is the form of the angels.

And the angelic forms have stations and degrees before God, so that some are nobler than others, like the near ones among them and those who are not near.

Resurrection (ba'th) *is the awakening of souls from the sleep of heedlessness and the slumber of ignorance.*

Sleep *is the soul's being occupied from the body with something else while its care for the body still encompasses it.*

Resurrection (qiyāmah) *is the soul's rising from its grave, namely the bodily form in which it had been, and from which it then turned away and became distant.*

Gathering (hashr) *is the collecting of the partial souls toward the Universal Soul and their union with one another, since the part is one of the parts of the whole, and the whole is the gathering of the parts separated from it.*

By "union" we mean the mingling of spiritual substances, like the mingling of the sounds of the high string and the low string.

Reckoning (ḥisāb) *is the agreement of the Universal Soul with the partial souls concerning what they did while they were with bodies.*

*The **Ṣirāṭ** is the straight path directed toward God Almighty.*

Section

*The **simple colors** are:*

white, black, red, yellow, green, blue, and murky.

White things are seen as white for three reasons:

One is that light is held within them because of the dominance of moisture, and moisture has a color like milk.

The second is that light enters into them because of their porousness, like salt.

The third is that light is held within them because of the solidity of their moisture, like silver.

In general, light seen through transparent bodies appears white; if some condition affects it, it appears yellow.

Yellow things are seen as yellow for reasons that prevent the light from appearing pure. Fire, for instance, appears yellow because its heat closes the channels of sight, so the visual faculty cannot perceive it fully. Some things are seen as yellow because heat closes their pores, just as white things, when cooked, become yellow.

The reason things appear red is due to two causes: putrefactive causes and dissolving causes.

Putrefactive causes are due to an abundance of moisture; dissolving causes are due to an abundance of heat. The sun appears red when there is an abundance of vapors rising toward it from waters and moist substances, and likewise at ripening and in blossoms and fruits because of the intensity of dissolving heat.

Thus it becomes clear that when sight sees light through transparent bodies, and one of these three causes predominates, it sees them as red.

Green comes about because earthy moisture predominates over light, preventing sight from receiving it purely, or preventing the light from reaching sight in a pure form.

Black occurs when earthy moisture prevents light from reaching sight, or prevents sight from reaching light. Black gathers the sight together, while white disperses it.

All the remaining colors lie between these two extremes, and their effect upon sight depends on which of these two predominates in them.

*The **tastes** are nine kinds:*

astringency, puckering, sourness, sweetness, saltiness, bitterness, pungency, freshness, and fattiness.

Sweetness makes the tongue smooth.

Bitterness makes its parts rough and scattered.

Pungency increases that effect.

Saltiness disperses and dries.

Astringency gathers and contracts.

Sourness disperses and contracts.

Then know, O brother, that you have been journeying toward your Lord ever since you were created as a drop in the womb and your soul was attached to it. Each day you are transferred from a lower state to one more complete, perfect, and noble; from a deficient rank to another higher and more honorable; and to a station loftier still—until you meet your Lord and behold Him, and He settles your account, and your soul remains with Him in delight, joy, happiness, and everlasting abiding through endless ages and unending time, together with the prophets, the truthful, the martyrs, and the righteous—and excellent are those as companions.

May God grant success to us, to you, and to all our brethren in rightness; may He guide us, you, and all our brethren to the path of sound guidance. He is compassionate toward His servants.

And praise belongs to God alone, and blessings and peace be upon His Messenger Muhammad and his family, the pure Imams. God is sufficient for us, and He is the best disposer of affairs.

As an example: a city built from different elements

*The **four simples** are:*

heat, cold, moisture, and dryness.

*The **four elements**, paired in nature and balanced in powers, are:*

fire, air, water, and earth.

*The **four humors**, opposed in temperament, are:*

yellow bile, black bile, phlegm, and blood.

*The **nine substances** are:*

bones, marrow, nerves, vessels, blood, flesh, skin, nails, and hair.

*The **ten regions** are:*

the head, the neck, the chest, the abdomen, the interior cavity, the loins, the hips, the thighs, the legs, and the feet.

*The **pillars** are the bones,*

*and the **bindings** are the nerves.*

*The **eleven خزائن (storehouses/organs)** are:*

the brain, spinal cord, lungs, heart, liver, spleen, gallbladder, stomach, intestines, kidneys, and testes.

*The **roads and streets** are the arteries,*

*and the **rivers** are the veins.*

*The **twelve gates** are:*

the two eyes, the two ears, the two nostrils, the two passages (excretory organs), the two breasts, the mouth, and the navel.

*The **seven craftsmen** are:*

the attractive faculty, the retentive faculty, the digestive faculty, the expulsive faculty, the growing faculty, the nutritive faculty, and the formative faculty.

*The **five senses** are:*

hearing, sight, taste, and touch.

*The **two pillars** are the legs,*

*and the **two wings** are the hands.*

*The **six directions** are:*

front, back, right, left, above, and below.

*The **three tribes** are the three souls, their powers, and their actions:*

- *The **appetitive soul**, with its traits and actions, is like the jinn.*

- The **animal soul**, with its faculties and senses, is like humankind.
- The **rational soul**, with its discernment and knowledge, is like the angels.

The **single ruler** is the intellect.

The **body** is like a house,
and the **soul** is like the inhabitant of that house.

Completed by the praise of God and His success.

Epistle

In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate, and in Him we seek assistance.

We say, with God's help and power, that people are of four kinds:

1. **Slaves by ownership ('abīd riqq):**
those possessed under the law.
2. **Slaves of nature:**
those employed in natural processes—agriculture and similar occupations.
About them, the Qur'an says:
"We have apportioned among them their livelihood in the worldly life and raised some of them above others in ranks so that some may take others in service..."
and:
"God has favored some of you over others in provision..."
3. **Slaves of desire:**
those devoid of knowledge and wisdom, and of allegiance to the righteous and obedience to them.
About them, the Qur'an says:
"Have you seen the one who takes his desire as his god?"
4. **Slaves of obedience:**
those steadfast in wisdom, devoted through knowledge and action.
About them, the Qur'an says:
"Indeed, My servants—you have no authority over them,"
and:
"God raises those who believe among you and those given knowledge in درجات (ranks)."

We conclude this epistle with something of **tawhīd (divine unity)**, that it may serve as guidance toward salvation. We ask God for success, guidance, and rectitude.

Section on Divine Unity (Tawḥīd)

Know—may God strengthen us and you—that it is not appropriate to describe the Creator, exalted be He, as a **“substance” (dhāt)**, because every substance carries attributes, like a body and its nine accidents (quantity, quality, relation, place, time, possession, position, action, and passion).

Nor should He be called a **“substance” (jawhar)**, because substance divides into spirit and body.

Nor should He be called a **“cause”**, because the effect is one of the consequences of a cause.

Nor should it be said that He is **“knowing by His essence”**, because such attributes would either be eternal alongside Him or originated—both of which are problematic:

- If eternal, they become independent co-eternals.
- If originated, they would imply that the Creator is a locus for created things.

Whoever says, “He is a thing unlike other things,” still invokes the category of “thing,” which leads to endless conceptual difficulty.

Whoever says, “I know Him as a reference to the known,” has imposed limitation upon Him.

Whoever says, “The Creator is existent,” implies an external cause for His existence.

Whoever says that human actions please or anger Him attributes change and transformation to Him—moving from anger to satisfaction or vice versa—while God is exalted above such change.

Rather, human actions return upon themselves, and God is not described by their qualities. The True Originator is exalted beyond all this.

As He says:

“Whoever does good—it is for himself; and whoever does evil—it is against himself. And your Lord is not unjust to His servants.”

These are characteristics of created things; the Creator is exalted beyond them, for the Creator does not resemble anything He has created. If He resembled anything, He would be created, not Creator.

Thus, when we observe creation and its coming into being after not existing, we know that it has a Creator—yet our intellects are incapable of fully comprehending Him.

Exalted is He above what the wrongdoers say.

Statement (قال عليه السلام)

*"Perception is of three kinds:
intellect, imagination, and sense.*

- *The intellect seeks its objects through causation.*
- *Imagination seeks them through form and shape.*
- *Sense seeks them through place.*

*God is not subject to causation for the intellect to grasp Him,
nor does He possess form or shape for imagination to know Him,
nor is He contained in place for the senses to perceive Him.*

Rather, He is only described through reasoning in terms of His actions.

These faculties may operate separately or together:

- *If intellect is abandoned → it becomes imagination.*
- *If imagination is abandoned → it becomes mere sensation.*
- *If sensation is abandoned → it becomes sleep.*
- *If all are abandoned → it is death.*

So understand this."

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate

A questioner asked our master, the Commander of the Faithful (peace be upon him):

*"O my master, inform me about God—
is He in the house, or is the house in Him?"*

He replied:

*"He is not in the house such that He would be contained,
nor is the house in Him such that it would have a place within Him.
Nor is He absent from it such that He would be missing,
nor is it outside His encompassing, for He encompasses every existent."*

The questioner said: "Then benefit me, O Commander of the Faithful."

He said:

*"He is existent, not absent;
transcendent, not limited."*

The questioner asked:

“Did God create creation out of need or without need?”

He replied:

“He did not create them out of need, for then He would be needy; nor did He create them without purpose, for then it would be in vain. Rather, He created them out of generosity, grace, and bounty.”

The questioner said:

“By what did He show generosity to them?”

He replied:

“By bringing them out of non-existence into existence.”

He said:

“In what did He bestow favor upon them?”

He replied:

“By making present for them everything they need.”

He said:

“In what did He show excellence toward them?”

He replied:

“By appointing their guide among them—present, not absent.”

He said:

“O my master, did God create them to complete a will of His, or to manifest His power?”

He replied:

“He did not create them to complete a will—otherwise His will would be deficient. Nor did He create them to manifest power—otherwise His power would be inadequate.”

The questioner said:

“Then benefit me, O my master.”

He replied:

“God did not benefit from their creation, nor was He harmed by their non-existence. Like a lamp: it is not increased in light by the many who benefit from it, nor diminished by the few. Rather, the benefit returns to those who take light from it.”

*Likewise, God is not benefited by their existence nor harmed by their absence.
The benefit returns to creation.*

*Exalted is He who bestowed generously upon His creation,
honored them with the Imams and the divine حدود (limits/laws),
obligated upon them knowledge of the One worshipped,
ennobled them with knowledge of divine unity,
and purified them through covenants and pledges.”*

*And blessings be upon Muhammad and his family.
God is sufficient for us, and He is the best disposer of affairs.*

Epistle (Risālah)

In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate.

*Praise be to God—
when the intellect seeks to describe Him, it falls back confused and exhausted;
its strength turns into weakness,
and armies of incapacity advance upon it.*

Bewilderment becomes the only veil indicating Him.

Far exalted is He above being described by the attributes of created things.

*I bear witness that there is no god but God—
the One who seizes the intellect when it attempts to grasp His true reality.*

*And I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger,
who effaced the traces of polytheism.*

And blessings be upon his وصي (successor),

*‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib—
the destroyer of misguidance,
the foremost in faith,
the bravest of men,
a sea of sanctity from whom the knowers draw.*

*And upon al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn,
whose remembrance pours mercy upon the believers,
and whose guidance extinguishes the fire of misguidance.*

*And upon the Imams from the progeny of al-Ḥusayn,
who are mercy for the الأمة (community),
guides who rescue from destruction.*

O brethren

*The souls that are drowned in the ocean of matter,
entangled in the prison of nature,
and overcome by the darkness of narrow dimensions—*

*are gradually drawn out over time,
and freed through wisdom, step by step.*

*They are brought into the human realm
and composed in the best form,
so that they may return to their original state of subtlety
and be stripped of the كثافة (density) and impurity that befell them.*

*When they enter this stage,
they are tested through argument and struggle,
and confronted by proofs and reasoning.*

*If they are purified from ignorance
and enter the circle of guidance,
and extend the hand of repentance—*

they are entrusted to the guide of the age.

*Then the discipline of the sacred law is imposed upon them
to cleanse them and refine them,
so they may attain purification, connection, and beauty.*

*If sincerity appears in them,
and eagerness for truth is seen—*

*then subtle interpretation (ta'wīl) is opened for them,
drawing them nearer with gentleness.*

*Examples are given,
meanings clarified,
until intelligible realities become as if perceptible.*

*Thus confusion is removed,
and truth becomes firmly established within them.*

*If they persist in seeking,
they are granted expansion after constriction,
light after darkness,
because of obedience and receptivity.*

*Then they become recipients of divine grace,
and receive their share of generosity
from the **Walī of the Time**.*

*If they remain upright,
they ascend after death through the heavens
and attain ranks among the angels.*

*But if they turn away—
preferring the lower to the higher—
they fall into suffering after ease,
and regret when regret is of no benefit.*

The states of the soul

There are three states of the soul within the circle of response:

- *steadfastness and ascent*
- *hesitation and stagnation*
- *deviation and سقوط (fall)*

*And in every age there must be one to whom seekers turn—
a حاضر (present), witnessing guide—
and that is the **one Imam of the time**.*

Without him, order collapses and perfection is lost.

Yesterday's devotion does not suffice for today.

So awaken from heedlessness.

Truth stands opposite falsehood—do not exchange them.

Numerical symbolism (closing passage)

*We are in the time of the **seal of the third cycle**,
associated with the triangular form.*

*The word “**dīl**” (**side/edge**) consists of three letters,
whose numerical values (in abjad) total **900**:*

- *ḍād = 800*

- *lām* = 30
- *‘ayn* = 70

Each Imam corresponds to 100,
so the total becomes 900 in symbolic correspondence
between prophets, *وصياء* (successors), and Imams.

Section

One of your brethren desired to **depict this figure** and to clarify what it contains of wonders,
and what it includes of remarkable indications—concerning the **Imam of the Time**, and the
meanings and clear proofs contained within it.

So he undertook this with the help of the One who bestows favor upon him, to whom his
affair is directed, from whom his movement proceeds, and by whom he is sustained.

If he brings guidance and felicity, then it is by His will.

If he is granted success in saving a soul or guiding it, then it is by His bestowal—
not by any power of his own, nor by any strength except through Him.

Thus he stands between His command and His restraint,
clothed in the garments of His grace and beneficence.

He hopes to be near Him,
acknowledging His prior favor and established right,
drawing from His generosity,
seeking an increase from His bounty.

And if he errs or slips,
it is due to his delay, deficiency, and heaviness.

So he says:

“My Lord, I seek refuge in You from **self-admiration** (*‘ujb*)—
for it is among the greatest veils from Your blessings.
I seek refuge in You from **envy** (*ḥasad*)—
for it is the cause of ancient *فساد* (corruption).
I seek refuge in You from **desire** (*hawā*)—
for it casts its possessor into the lowest *سقوط* (fall).
I seek refuge in You from **arrogance** (*takabbur*)—
for it is the cause of doubt and confusion.
I seek refuge in You from **bad character**—
for it is the mark of ignorance and disgrace.”

*He made this work a gift for his brethren,
seeking thereby the pleasure and forgiveness of his Lord.*

The symbolic triangle

*Since this figure has **three sides**,
they correspond to the **three speaking prophets (al-nuṭaqā')**:*

- *Adam*
- *Noah*
- *Abraham*

*And its **three angles** correspond to the **three sons**:*

- *Moses*
- *Jesus*
- *Muhammad (peace be upon him), who is their seal.*

Proof (symbolic linguistic):

If we take:

- *the last letter of Ādam*
- *the last letter of Nūḥ*
- *the last letter of Ibrāhīm*
- *and the letter dāl of Ādam*

*→ they form the name **Muḥammad**.*

And if we take:

- *the ḥā' of Nūḥ*
- *the yā' of 'Īsā*
- *the dāl of Muḥammad*
- *the rā' and hā' of Ibrāhīm*

→ they form **Ḥaydar (حيدر)** (a name of ‘Alī).

Expansion of the letters (ضلع → six letters)

From the word **ḍil’ (ضلع)** arise six letters:

- From **ḍād (ض)** → alif + dāl
- From **lām (ل)** → alif + mīm
- From **‘ayn (ع)** → yā’ + nūn

→ total = **6 letters**

Thus, they correspond to the **six foundations (al-usus)**.

Correspondence system

Each Imam in every cycle corresponds to one of the six speaking prophets:

- 1st Imam → Adam
- 2nd → Noah
- ...
- 6th → Muhammad

And each Imam must correspond to that prophet in **letters**—either in name, title, or kunyah.

Thus, the figure is constructed with:

- names of the prophets (*nuṭaqā’*),
 - their foundations (*usus*),
 - and the six Imams of the cycles.
-

The central point

The **Imam of the Time** is placed **at the center**, on a straight line.

This corresponds to:

- the **seven verses of Sūrat al-Fātiḥah**,
 - and the **straight path (ṣirāṭ)** for which guidance is sought.
-

Numerical symbolism of 6

The number **six** is a **perfect number**,
because its parts neither exceed nor fall short:

- $1/6$
- $1/3$
- $1/2$

These correspond symbolically to the **three letters of the Imam's name**.

From 6 → 21

The number six points to **21**, because:

$$1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 = 21$$

This corresponds to:

- the **21st Imam** (from al-Ḥasan, peace be upon them),
 - and the number of letters in the name "**Ṭayyib**" (symbolically counted).
-

Structure of the triangle

The triangle is composed of **three elements**:

- a **point**
- a **side**
- an **angle**

These correspond symbolically to the structure of the sacred name:

- The **side** → corresponds to 3 letters
 - The **point** → corresponds to 4 letters (counting doubled letters)
 - The **angle** → corresponds to 5 letters (with definite article added)
-

Six motions

The number six also corresponds to the **six types of motion**:

1. Generation and corruption (in substance)
2. Increase and decrease (in quantity)
3. Growth and decay (in quality)

And within these six is a **hidden seventh motion**, as stated by the author of the *جامع الرسالة*.

Cosmic structure within the triangle

All existence—beginning and return—is arranged within this figure.

There are:

- **15 circles** from origination (*ibdāʿ*) to the responsive soul
(from 5 letters × 3 prophets)
- **18 circles total**, consisting of:
 - 14 from prime matter to earth
 - 4 for the generated beings (minerals, plants, animals, humans)

This comes from:

- the six motions × the three sides of the triangle
-

Conclusion

Thus, this **triangular form** represents the entire order of existence—its beginning and its return.

It serves as:

- *guidance for the one who understands it,*
- *and a proof for the one who is granted success.*

*And its full diagram is to be drawn on the following page
for direct observation—
and success is by God alone.*

Section

*Thus, the **earth** is positioned at the bottom of the **left side**, descending—
just as the **responsive soul (al-mustajīb)** is at the bottom of the **right side**, ascending.*

*Although in reality the **celestial spheres (aflāk)** are not arranged in this linear stacked form
along the side, but rather form a **surrounding sphere** encompassing the “mothers”
(elements) and “generated beings,” wrapped around them—*

- *the earth lies at the center like the yolk of an egg,*
- *and the encompassing sphere surrounds everything,*
- *turning the whole with a divine rotation from east to west every day and night.*

*Its motion is a **motion of longing (shawq)**,
while the motion of what is within it (the inner spheres) is a **motion of propulsion (sawq)**.*

Know this.

*However, we have depicted it according to the **religious-symbolic form** we are working
within,
so that one may perceive how the world is interconnected and interwoven as a whole.*

The 33 circles

*The circles in this figure are **33 in number**, corresponding to:*

- *the days of the fasting month plus the three festivals,*
- *the number of words in “Indeed We sent it down in the Night of Power”,*
- *the three obediences:*
 - *obedience to God,*
 - *obedience to the Messenger,*

- obedience to the authority after him,
- the number of letters in:
“There is no power nor strength except through God, the Most High, the Great”,
- and the number of letters in:
“Do not think God unaware of what the الظالمون (wrongdoers) do”
(counting the doubled letter as one).

It is also the number of **letters upon which all language is built**, as reported from Ja'far al-Şādiq:

- 28 letters for Arabic,
- 22 for Syriac and Hebrew,
- plus 5 additional “deviated” letters shared across languages → total **33 letters**.

These five are known only to scholars.

This report is transmitted by Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī in *Kitāb al-Zīna*,
and also by Maṣṣūr al-Yaman in his writings.

Additional symbolic correspondences

The **15 circles** on the right side and upper angle correspond to:

- the number of words in *Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ* (*Qul huwa Allāhu aḥad*).

Its verses are 4 → combined gives **19**,
which equals the number of letters in *Bismillāh al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm*.

With opening and closing formulas, this becomes **21** → note this.

The 28 circles

The circles on the two sides together are **28**,
equal to the letters of the Arabic alphabet.

These are divided into:

- **spiritual letters** (those appearing at the beginnings of Qur'anic chapters),
- **corporeal letters** (those that do not).

The **14 on the right side** correspond to the completion of the lunar cycle.

Relation to tawhīd (*لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ*)

This figure corresponds to the phrase:

“There is no god but God”

because it consists of:

- negation and affirmation
 - structure and unity
-

Structural correspondences

- The figure is a **triangle** → 3 sides
- The shahāda contains **3 essential realities**
- The triangle relates to **4 letters**
- The shahāda has **7 divisions**, corresponding to the Imams in:
 - the sides
 - the angles
 - and the center (the Imam of the Time)

The shahāda has **12 letters**,
and when multiplied symbolically → produces **28**,
matching the number of circles.

This also corresponds to the verse:
“God will suffice you against them...”

Numerical totality

The triangle gathers all number:

- its **3 points**
- its **3 sides**

- its **3 angles**
- its **3-letter name**

Together they reflect the structure of number:

- units
- tens
- hundreds
- thousands

Nine completes the units,
and the remaining ranks complete twelve—
beyond which numbers repeat.

Section

Just as the **third side** unites the other two,
so too the **third speaking prophet (Ibrāhīm)** unites what came before him.

As God says:

“And Abraham fulfilled.”

Proof:

- the letters of the previous two prophets = 6
 - the letters of Ibrāhīm = 6
 - and within them is a hidden **seventh (alif)**,
just as there is a hidden seventh motion among the six.
-

Section: On the structure of existence

According to Ḥamīd al-Dīn (may God sanctify him):

Origination (ibdāʿ) proceeds from One who is not described as an “agent.”

From this arise two relations:

1. Relation to its source → **intellect (ʿaql)** (higher)

2. Relation to itself → **intelligible (ma'qūl)** (lower)

From these come:

- a fully actual intellect
- and a potential intellect (matter + form)

These form the basis of the **corporeal world**.

From them proceed **seven additional intellects**, mirrored in the religious hierarchy:

- the **nāṭiq (prophet)** ↔ first intellect
- the **waṣī (successor)** ↔ first emanation
- the **seven Imams** ↔ seven intellects

The tenth becomes the governor of the physical world.

Cosmological structure

- The spheres = active (fathers)
- The elements = passive (mothers)
- Their result = generated beings

Divine care establishes spiritual hierarchies to raise the soul back to the level of intellect.

Section (Imam al-Ḥusayn b. Aḥmad)

- Plants draw from earth → gain growth
- Animals consume plants → gain sensation
- Humans consume all → gain intellect

Just as fire turns wood into fire, so higher beings transform lower ones.

Thus, all existence is **interconnected (ishtibāk)**.

Without this interconnection, everything would collapse.

*The plant is rooted in earth,
yet connected upward to animals—
and ultimately becomes human.*

Moral and spiritual motion

There are **six motions**:

Praiseworthy:

- *forward*
- *right*
- *upward*

Blameworthy:

- *backward*
 - *left*
 - *downward*
-

Section: Hierarchy (ḥudūd)

Each rank is:

- *heaven to what is below*
- *earth to what is above*
- *name to what follows*
- *meaning to what precedes*

Example:

- *ḥujja → bāb → dā'ir → ma'dhūn → mustajīb*

Each level defines and elevates the one below it.

Final metaphysical principle

Each level is incapable of fully describing what is above it.

All deny divinity for themselves

and affirm it only for God:

“Whoever claims divinity besides Him—his recompense is Hell.”

Symbolic correspondences (52)

The number 52 appears across:

- *letters of sacred names*
- *cosmic structures*
- *time (days, weeks, lunar cycles)*
- *earth divisions*
- *human anatomy*

→ showing universal harmony.

Final conclusion

This figure and epistle together encompass:

- *the beginning (origination)*
- *the end (return)*
- *divine unity*
- *knowledge of the soul*
- *and the مقام (rank) of the Imam of the Time*

They are meant to:

- *refine the intellect*
- *bring clarity to the seeker*

- and produce certainty in the one who reflects
-

*The closing poem then praises the **Imam of the Time**,
affirming his central role in guidance, salvation, and cosmic order.*

*How long has dispute endured concerning your exalted rank,
O Imam of the Time, O guide of the ten!*

*They have gone astray and returned burdened with sins—
those who did not adhere to the path of the revealed text.*

*Clawed by harmful doubts,
and polytheism spread among them and scattered them.*

*What prevented them from your obligatory loyalty—
had they understood it, their affliction would have vanished.*

*Instead, they grasped only the outward wording,
and thus their foundations collapsed.*

*Even if what they claim were true,
in it would be insight and healing—*

*and the words of al-Mu‘izz concerning al-Āmir al-Manṣūr
were transmitted by al-Nu‘mān—so why did they not investigate?*

*He said of him: “You are the Imam from me,
the seventh to whom the pure ones turn.”*

*So why do the pure not reflect,
when what they narrate from al-Āmir contradicts this?*

*The intelligent one is he who understands the meaning—
for in it are symbols and faith.*

*He meant: “Send blessings upon him”—
and his “death” signifies concealment.*

*It is a trial for the believers,
to distinguish the pure from the impure.*

*His concealment is majesty, awe, and elevation,
for he preserves the religion through his hiddenness.*

*Though outwardly unseen,
his spirit is active, and through it things move.*

*Through this understanding we are saved from doubt,
and clothed in certainty.*

*The striving of the ignorant regarding the pure Ṭayyib is in vain,
even if prolonged in prostration.*

*The lineage of the Imam endures like the sun—
its influence penetrates even dense forms.*

*He has creative power in subtle realities,
for all things belong to Him who owns them.*

*Is it possible that the earth be left without one?
No—light dispels darkness through him.*

*These are the ravings of a misguided ignorant one,
led astray by desires.*

*Wandering in heedlessness like a beast—
if there were no Imam, where would salvation and ascent be?*

*O Imam of the Time—grant kindness and forgiveness
to those who erred in ignorance.*

*They received texts about you but did not comprehend them,
and thus came to confusion and complaint.*

*It was said: “You are the pure light drawn forth,
whose foundation is the successors.”*

*The speaking prophets pointed toward you—
so why do they hesitate regarding you?*

*The perfect ones are seven, and the foundations two—
that makes twenty-one—let the rational observer see.*

*Yet the ignorant turned away from your glory,
though you were indicated in every age.*

*Do they not reflect on the number of the name?
In it is proof and illumination.*

*The ṭā’ is nine, the bā’ is two, and the yā’ completes it—
from ‘Alī and from your Prophet is the bā’.*

*In you is ṭā' from Fāṭimah, in you is yā'—
thus it becomes twenty-one without doubt.*

*Then comes the shīn from Shabr and Shabīr—
thus the heights of your glory are completed.*

*The son of 'Abd Allāh calls to the heights,
and the wise point toward you.*

*Like the son of Mūsā after 'Abdān—
you are the reviver of religion and life.*

*On the Day of al-Baḥrayn they dispute concerning you—
yet the faithful should rejoice.*

*You are the house of hope in the time of al-Mahdī,
and the enemies shall perish.*

*When your name is pronounced with the single alif,
its letters form five.*

*Like the Prophet, his brother, and his two grandsons—
its system is completed by al-Zahrā'.*

*Its total is fifty-two—
a number clear and without obscurity.*

*Like the worshipper and the prayer together,
it contains insight and purification.*

*It appears as "Ana" (I am) to one who understands deeply—
and the Brethren of Purity intended this in their رسائل (epistles).*

*When the steeds carry lions into battle,
their advance becomes healing.*

*When you strike the enemies openly,
it becomes a devastating حملة (assault).*

*When the lands tremble,
and rivers seem to flow with blood—*

*When treasures emerge from Byzantium,
and Baghdad is filled with the blood of opponents—*

*When Iraq is purified from defilement,
and enemies perish by your sword—*

*Then I see near relief approaching,
and clarity shining by your glance.*

*Soon the Imam will appear among
the chosen pure ones of the lands.*

*With hearts firm enough to split stone,
men faithful to their covenant without hypocrisy—*

*Armies will gather so vast
that the horizon narrows from their كثرة (multitude).*

*Dust will darken the light,
and battle will pour forth blood.*

*Standards will fill the sky,
and spears will drink until satisfied.*

*Prepare, O brethren, and be ready
for a radiant day of encounter.*

*People will forget their children,
and maidens will abandon their adornments.*

*The noble Fāṭimid Imam has come—
the chosen one to whom the elite submit.*

*Blessings be upon him endlessly,
as long as doves sing upon branches.*

*He has long called you, yet you delayed—
these discourses are presented for reflection.*

*They heal the loyal with clear proofs,
though they distress those filled with hatred.*

“The poem is completed, and with its completion the treatise is completed.

*Praise be to God with a praise equal to His blessings and bounties.
May blessings be upon His Messenger, whose mission was عظيمة (great and exalted),
Muḥammad—possessor of honor and majesty—*

*and upon his وصي (successor), entrusted with the completion and perfection of his mission,
and upon the Imams from their progeny, elevated in knowledge and nobility,*

*and upon our master, our lord, and the صاحب العصر (Imam of the Age),
whom whoever follows attains prosperity and a praiseworthy end,
and whoever turns away from his ولاية (authority) deserves punishment and disgrace.*

*Peace be upon him and upon them all,
as fleeting as a mirage appears to its observer.*

*God is sufficient for us, and He is the best disposer of affairs.
We hold fast to God—and whoever holds fast to God is guided to a straight path.*

*O Lord, forgive and have mercy,
overlook what You know,
and grant a good ending, O Lord.*

The treatise is complete—praise be to God, Lord of the worlds.

Sayings and Wisdoms

The Messenger of God (ﷺ) said:

- *Whoever seeks honor without right will inherit humiliation with justice.*
 - *Whoever withholds God's due will spend double in falsehood.*
 - *Whoever does not walk willingly in God's obedience will walk unwillingly in obedience to His enemy.*
 - *Whoever exalts himself before God through knowledge, God will abase him through that same knowledge.*
-

Imam Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (peace be upon him) said:

- *When people are busy with the quantity of obligations, focus on sincerity.*
- *When they seek the pleasure of creation, seek the pleasure of the Creator.*
- *When they beautify the outward, purify the inward.*
- *When they build the world, build the hereafter.*
- *When they look at others' faults, look at your own.*

And he advised:

- *Conceal poverty as if you are wealthy.*
- *Conceal pain as if you are well.*

- *Conceal anger as if you are content.*
 - *Conceal voluntary deeds as if you are deficient.*
 - *Conceal charity as if you are miserly.*
-

From Imam 'Alī (peace be upon him):

- *The most insightful is the one aware of his sins and faults.*
 - *A long tongue destroys a person.*
 - *Endure bitterness from your enemy until opportunity arises.*
 - *The fruit of intellect is good companionship; its فساد is bad company.*
 - *The wound of words is worse than the wound of swords.*
 - *Good manners conceal poor lineage.*
 - *The best gift is intellect; the worst trait is ignorance.*
 - *A useful small coin is better than a destructive large weight.*
 - *One word may destroy a blessing.*
-

From the Prophet (ﷺ):

- *سوء التدبير (bad planning) leads to destruction.*
 - *The worst speech brings regret; the best brings safety.*
 - *Keeping company with the ignorant leads to estrangement.*
 - *Long silence brings safety; excessive speech brings regret.*
-

Philosophical Saying (Attributed to Aristotle)

- *When the body is balanced, the soul's influence strengthens.*

- *When the soul strengthens, aspiration rises.*
 - *When aspiration rises, virtues appear.*
 - *When virtues appear, divine knowledge is attained.*
 - *When divine knowledge is attained, one exists truly as a human—not merely as an animal.*
 - *When freed from material constraints, one reaches a higher, post-mortem existence.*
-

Qur'anic Reflection (Described)

- *Its outward is beautiful, its inward is deep.*
 - *Its wonders never end.*
 - *Those who reflect outwardly see marvels,*
 - *those who reflect inwardly see hidden wisdom.*
-

Additional Narrations & Sayings

- *Humanity is like a hundred camels—hardly one is suitable for riding (true excellence is rare).*
 - *“O captives of death, free yourselves through divine wisdom.” (Socratic theme)*
 - *Blessings remain with those who give; if withheld, they are taken away.*
-

Cosmological Lists

Eight Gardens (Paradise levels):

- *Firdaws, Naʿīm, Khuld, Maʿwā, Dār al-Salām, ʿAdn, Dār al-Yaqīn, Dār al-Maqāmah (with the Throne beyond them)*

Seven Fires (Hell levels):

- *Jahannam, Saqar, Laḡā, Huṭamah, Saʿīr, Hāwiyah, Jaḥīm*

Ethical System (From Imam 'Alī)

God ordained:

- *Faith → purification from شرك*
- *Prayer → removal of arrogance*
- *Charity → increase in provision*
- *Fasting → purification of the soul*
- *Hajj → strengthening religion*
- *Jihad → honor of Islam*
- *Enjoining good → social reform*
- *Forbidding evil → restraint of ignorance*
- *Kinship → increase in lifespan*
- *Justice → preservation of life*
- *Truthfulness → dignity*
- *Imamate → order of the الأمة*
- *Obedience → respect for authority*

Political Philosophy (Aristotle-style chain)

- *The world is a garden → sustained by the state*
- *The state → upheld by law*
- *Law → administered by the ruler*
- *The ruler → supported by the army*
- *The army → funded by wealth*

- *Wealth → produced by the people*
 - *The people → governed by justice*
 - *Justice → sustains the world*
-

Closing Statement

*The author explains that this work was written as a **concise guide** for:*

- *Obligations (فرائض)*
- *Practices (سنن)*
- *Good character (اخلاق محمودة)*
- *Avoidance of bad character*

So that:

- *Worship is based on knowledge, not ignorance*
- *Actions become accepted*
- *The seeker progresses spiritually step by step*

And concludes:

“God grants success and guidance through His mercy.”

Chapter One – On the Obligations

Among the obligations that are required of the human being, the first and most noble of them is the acknowledgment of the two testimonies:

“There is no god but God, and Muḥammad is the Messenger of God.”

And to affirm the unity of God, declaring Him transcendent above the attributes of His creation; and to believe in the Messenger who brought revelation from Him; and in his successor, and the Imams from his progeny; and to acknowledge their authority, honor them, and give them precedence over all creation.

And to know that obedience to them is obligatory, and love for them is required, as He, exalted, says:

- ***“Obey God, and obey the Messenger, and those in authority among you.”***

- *“Say: I ask of you no reward except love for the near kindred.”*

And to follow them in every age, and to know that they are the proofs of God over His creation and His deputies in His lands, and that the earth is never devoid of one قائم (established) for God with a proof from among them, even for the blink of an eye.

Chapter Two – On Purification

God has mentioned purification in many places in His Book, such as His saying:

- *“A mosque founded upon piety from the first day is more worthy that you stand in it; in it are men who love to purify themselves, and God loves those who purify themselves.”*
- *And His saying condemning the people of Lot: “Expel the family of Lot from your town; indeed they are people who keep themselves pure.”*
- *And His saying: “If you are in a state of impurity, then purify yourselves...”*

And many other verses concerning purification.

And it is reported that the Prophet said:

“Wash your eyes with water in ablution, so that they may not see a blazing Fire.”

Chapter Three – On Prayer

God says:

- *“Establish prayer and give zakāt.”*
- *“Indeed prayer restrains from indecency and wrongdoing.”*
- *“Guard strictly the prayers, and the middle prayer, and stand before God devoutly.”*
- *“Those who preserve their prayers.”*

And the Messenger of God said:

“Everything has a face, and the face of your religion is prayer.”

Chapter Four – On Zakāt

God says:

- *“Establish prayer and give zakāt.”*
- *“Successful indeed is the one who purifies himself.”*
- *“Woe to the polytheists who do not give zakāt.”*

And the Prophet said:

“Fortify your wealth with zakāt.”

And it is reported from the Imams:

“No wealth perishes on land or sea except due to withholding zakāt.”

Chapter Five – On the Month of Ramadan

God says:

- *“O you who believe, fasting has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become mindful.”*
- *“Fasting is better for you, if you only knew.”*
- *“The month of Ramadan in which the Qur’an was revealed...”*

And Amir al-Mu’minin ‘Alī said:

“Fasting is a shield from the Fire.”

Chapter Six – On the Pilgrimage

God says:

- *“Pilgrimage to the House is a duty owed to God by people who are able to find a way to it.”*

And there are many verses concerning its rites and obligations, well known.

Chapter Seven – On Jihād

Jihād is in the path of God under the Imam of guidance, or one appointed by him.

God says:

- *“Strive in the way of God with the striving due to Him.”*

- *“God has purchased from the believers their lives and their wealth in exchange for Paradise...”*
-

These are the seven pillars of Islam which must be upheld and maintained.

The Associated Sunnah Practices

From Wilāya:

- *The love of believers for one another*
 - *Brotherhood for the sake of God*
-

From Purification:

- *غسل الجمعة (Friday غسل)*
 - *غسل of the two Eids*
 - *Remaining constantly in a state of purity*
-

From Prayer:

- *Two units before Fajr*
 - *Six before Ṣuḥr and four after*
 - *Four before ‘Aṣr*
 - *Six after Maghrib*
 - *Four before and after ‘Ishā’*
 - *Two for Shaf’ and one for Witr*
-

From Zakāt:

- *Voluntary charity*

- *Supporting the poor and believers*

Obligatory zakāt:

- *Must be given to the Imam in every time and age*
 - *It is not permitted to distribute it independently*
-

From Fasting:

- *Fasting in Sha‘bān*
 - *Fasting three days each month*
-

From Hajj:

- *Additional حج or عمرة beyond the obligation*
-

From Jihād:

- *Supporting the fighters*
 - *Voluntary participation where permitted*
-

On Praiseworthy Character

Among them:

- *Sincerity to God, His representatives, and the believers*
- *Seeking and learning true knowledge*
- *Humility*
- *Truthfulness*
- *Contentment*
- *Detachment from worldly greed*

- *Justice in testimony*
- *Fulfilling trusts*
- *Good character*
- *Modesty and restraint*
- *Calmness and dignity*
- *Avoiding doubtful matters*
- *Kindness to parents*
- *Gratitude*
- *Patience*
- *Generosity*
- *Courage*
- *Compassion*
- *Fairness in both pleasure and anger*

These must be cultivated until they become natural qualities.

On Blameworthy Character

The roots of sins are three:

1. Arrogance

From it arise:

- *ignorance*
- *injustice*
- *harshness*
- *oppression*

- *contempt for others*
-

2. Envy

From it arise:

- *hatred*
 - *deception*
 - *betrayal*
 - *backbiting*
 - *hypocrisy*
-

3. Greed

From it arise:

- *miserliness*
- *unlawful earning*
- *deceit*
- *anxiety and dissatisfaction*

These traits must be removed and resisted.

On the World of Creation

The heavens are not flat layers, but spherical bodies, each within another:

- *The outermost sphere surrounds all*
- *Then the sphere of the zodiac*
- *Then Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, the Sun, Venus, Mercury, and the Moon*

They rotate continuously.

The Four Elements

- *Fire*
- *Air*
- *Water*
- *Earth*

They are arranged concentrically, with Earth at the center.

The Generated Beings

1. Minerals

Formed in the earth over time:

- *gold, silver, gemstones, etc.*
-

2. Plants

Various species beyond counting.

3. Animals

Land, air, and sea creatures, created for human benefit.

4. Human Beings

Nations of different:

- *languages*
 - *beliefs*
 - *appearances*
-

Continuity Between Levels

- *Highest mineral connects to lowest plant*
 - *Highest plant connects to lowest animal*
 - *Highest animal connects to lowest human*
 - *Highest human connects to lowest angel*
-

Examples:

- *Coral and gold resemble plant-like growth*
 - *The palm tree resembles animals (requires pollination)*
 - *Some animals approach human understanding and speech*
-

Thus, all existence is interconnected in درجات (levels), each linked to the next.

Section: On the Human Being

*Know that the individual human being is a **small world (microcosm)** containing within himself all that exists in the great world (macrocosm), despite its vastness and magnitude. There is nothing in the great world, in all its breadth, except that there is in the human being something corresponding to it, resembling it, and matching it.*

For example:

- *The celestial spheres, as previously mentioned, are nine; likewise, the human body consists of nine substances:*
 - *flesh, blood, bone, marrow, nerves, veins, skin, hair, and nails*
→ *these nine correspond to the nine spheres*
- *The seven planets correspond in the human being to seven principal organs:*
 - *the heart, brain, liver, stomach, lungs, spleen, and gallbladder*
- *The twelve zodiacal signs correspond to twelve openings in the human body:*
 - *the two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, the mouth, the two breasts, the navel, and the two passages*

- *Among the planets are two principal luminous bodies: the sun and the moon; and in the human being there are two principal organs:*
 - *the heart and the brain*
→ *through them life and discernment are sustained*
- *In the world there are four elemental mothers: fire, air, water, and earth; and in the human body there are four humors:*
 - *bile (yellow), black bile, phlegm, and blood*
- *In the earth there are minerals, plants, and animals on land and sea; and in the human being:*
 - *teeth and nails resemble minerals*
 - *hair resembles plants*
 - *lice and small creatures resemble land animals*
 - *worms within resemble sea creatures*
- *His bones resemble mountains*
- *His veins resemble rivers*
- *His abdomen resembles the sea*
- *His back resembles the land*

Thus, the human being is a small world containing all that exists in the great world.

Section: Correspondence of the Religious World with the Macrocosm and the Human Being

In confirmation of the saying of the Messenger:

“God established His religion according to the pattern of His creation, so that creation indicates His religion, and His religion indicates His unity.”

Thus:

- *The nine spheres correspond to:*
 - *the two spiritual principles*
 - *and the seven speaking prophets (نطقاء):*

- Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, and the Qā'im

- In the present cycle:
 - the Prophet, the successor, and seven Imams after seven
- The seven planets correspond to the seven Imams
- The seven hierarchical ranks (حدود) are:
 - Prophethood
 - Succession (Waṣāya)
 - Imamate
 - Ḥujja
 - Dā'ī
 - Ma'dhūn
 - Mustajīb
- The twelve zodiac signs correspond to:
 - twelve داعي (missionaries), one in each region of the earth
- The four elements correspond to four principles of religion:
 - revelation (تنزيل)
 - interpretation (تأويل)
 - sensory (محسوس)
 - intellectual (معقول)
- The four generations correspond to four religious dispensations:
 - the religion of Adam
 - the religion of Noah
 - the religion of Abraham
 - the final unveiling

And:

- The religion of Adam corresponds to Moses

- *The religion of Noah corresponds to Jesus*
 - *The religion of Abraham corresponds to Muhammad*
-

Section: Correspondence with the Qur'an

- *The nine (spheres) correspond to the nine signs given to Moses*
 - *The seven planets correspond to the **seven oft-repeated verses (السبع المثاني)***
 - *The twelve signs correspond to:*
 - *"We appointed twelve leaders among them"*
 - *"Twelve springs gushed forth from it"*
 - *The four elements correspond to the four rivers of Paradise:*
 - *water, milk, wine, and purified honey*
-

Section: Correspondence with Time

- *The nine spheres correspond to the great conjunction cycle (900 years)*
 - *The seven planets correspond to the seven days*
 - *The twelve signs correspond to the twelve months*
 - *The four elements correspond to the four seasons:*
 - *spring, summer, autumn, winter*
-

Section: On the Esoteric Interpretation of the Seven Pillars

Wilāya

Corresponds to Adam:

- *the first commanded to be obeyed*
 - *the one to whom the angels prostrated*
-

Purification

Corresponds to Noah:

- *whose sign was the flood (water)*
 - *purification from impurity*
-

Prayer

Corresponds to Abraham:

- *who said: "I have turned my face toward the Creator of the heavens and the earth"*
 - *and established the Ka'ba*
-

Zakāt

Corresponds to Moses:

- *"Will you purify yourself?"*
-

Fasting

Corresponds to Jesus:

- *who vowed silence:*
 - *"I have vowed a fast to the Most Merciful, so I will not speak today"*
-

Hajj

Corresponds to Muhammad:

- *who established its rites*
 - *purified it from corrupt practices*
-

Jihād

Corresponds to the Qā'im:

- *who establishes truth by the sword*
-

Another Level of Interpretation

Purification

→ *cleansing the self from:*

- *ignorance, blindness, arrogance, envy*
-

Prayer

Derived from “connection” and “following”:

- *outwardly: ritual prayer*
 - *inwardly: following the divine hierarchy*
-

Deeper Interpretation of Prayer

Prayer corresponds to the structure of the da'wa:

- ***Adhān*** → *call to the outward law*
- ***Iqāma*** → *call to the inner meaning*
- ***Takbīr*** → *entering the inner path*
- ***Facing the qibla*** → *turning to the Imam*
- ***Recitation*** → *seeking knowledge*
- ***Bowing (rukū')*** → *obedience to the حجة*
- ***Prostration (sujūd)*** → *obedience to the Imam*
- ***Tashahhud*** → *affirmation of divine sovereignty*
- ***Salām*** → *submission to the Imam*

Thus:

- *outward prayer = ritual*
 - *inward prayer = knowledge of hierarchy and unity*
-

Fasting (Inner Meaning)

- *outward: abstaining from food*
 - *inward: withholding knowledge from the unworthy*
 - *day = disclosure*
 - *night = concealment*
-

Zakāt (Inner Meaning)

- *outward: giving wealth*
 - *inward: giving knowledge*
 - *the learned give to the ignorant*
 - *the ignorant receive*
-

Hajj (Inner Meaning)

- *outward: journey to the Ka'ba*
- *inward: journey to the Imam*
- *'Umra = connection to the حجة*
- *Ihrām = entering the inner path*
- *White garments = outward and inward purity*
- *Ṭawāf = recognition of the seven prophets and Imams*
- *Kissing the stone = recognition of the حجة*

- *Stoning = refutation of falsehood*
 - *Sacrifice = taking the covenant*
-

Jihād (Inner Meaning)

- *outward: physical struggle*
 - *inward: intellectual struggle*
 - *defeating opponents through proof*
 - *establishing truth through argument*
-

Final Statement

All outward practices are built upon inward meanings.

When the inner meanings are concealed, the outward forms remain as symbols and examples, containing hidden wisdom for those who reflect.

This is a summary of the esoteric interpretation of the obligations, and a step toward higher understanding.

God grants success and guides through His chosen ones.

Section: On the Five Senses and Their Objects

*The **sensible (perceptible)** is that which is perceived through the five senses:*

- *sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch.*

Objects of Sight (10 types):

- *light*
- *darkness*
- *bodies and their surfaces*
- *colors*
- *shapes*

- *positions*
- *dimensions*
- *motion*
- *rest*

Objects of Hearing (4 types):

- **articulate (logical):** human speech
- **animal:** sounds of beasts
- **natural:** thunder, echoes, wind
- **instrumental:** drums, horns, mills, and all man-made instruments

Objects of Smell (2 types):

- *pleasant*
- *foul*

Objects of Taste (10 types):

- *sweetness*
- *sourness*
- *bitterness*
- *saltiness*
- *astringency*
- *fattiness*
- *pungency*
- *insipidity*
- *harshness*

- *mild sweetness*

Objects of Touch (10 types):

- *heat*
- *cold*
- *moisture*
- *dryness*
- *softness*
- *roughness*
- *hardness*
- *looseness*
- *heaviness*
- *lightness*

These together constitute all sensibles.

On Intelligibles and Internal Faculties

*The **intelligible** is that which is perceived through:*

- *estimation (wahm)*
- *imagination (takhayyul)*
- *thought (fikr)*

All of these are faculties located in the brain:

- ***Front of the brain*** → *imagination*
- ***Middle of the brain*** → *thinking faculty*
- ***Back of the brain*** → *memory*

Process:

1. *Imagination forms images*
2. *These are passed to the thinking faculty*
3. *If validated, they are stored in memory*
4. *Retrieval occurs from the posterior brain*

Any نقصان (deficiency) or defect in these organs diminishes the function proportionally.

On the Heart and Digestion

- *The **heart** is the seat of innate heat*
- *From it, heat spreads through the body*
- *If it is corrupted → the whole body perishes*
- *The arteries originate from the heart*

Digestion Process:

1. *Food enters the stomach*
2. *It is digested by heat*
3. *The lower stomach opens (through two “gate” nerves)*
4. *Food passes into the intestine (الصائم)*
5. *The liver extracts the pure essence via veins*
6. *It transforms it into blood*
7. *Blood is distributed to all organs*

Each organ:

- *takes what suits it*
- *converts it into its own substance*

Excess:

- *expelled toward weaker organs*
- *causes disease depending on its nature*

Remaining waste:

- *liquid → goes to bladder → urine*
 - *solid → expelled as excrement*
-

Section: On the Body and the Soul

The body, despite its perfect structure, is:

- *the most impure of created things*
- *a container of filth*

It produces:

- *blood, bile, phlegm, black bile*
- *mucus, saliva, discharge*
- *urine, feces*
- *and countless diseases*

Thus:

- *the body is not the ultimate purpose*
- *it is merely an instrument*

The true subject is:

→ ***the soul***

Just as:

- *a writer uses pen and paper*
- *a craftsman uses tools*

The soul uses the body to attain perfection.

Two Outcomes for the Soul

If the soul perfects itself:

- *acquires true knowledge*
- *performs righteous actions*
- *attains noble character*
- *understands divine hierarchy*
- *transcends bodily limitations*

Then:

- *it departs joyful*
- *freed from impurity*
- *moving:*
 - *from كثافة → لطافة*
 - *from fear → security*
 - *from فساد → purity*
 - *from earth → higher realm*

→ *This is the **great success***

If the soul remains ignorant:

- *attached to desires:*
 - *greed, envy, deception, lust, ظلم*
- *neglects knowledge and virtue*

Then after death:

- *it still desires sensory pleasures*
- *but cannot attain them*

Result:

- *perpetual frustration*

- sorrow, regret, isolation
- endless suffering

→ This is the **manifest loss**

Section: On Divine Unity (Transcendence Beyond Attributes)

- Attributes apply only to created things
- The Creator cannot be described by created attributes

If you say:

- powerful, wise, merciful

→ these exist also in creation

→ thus implying similarity (شرك)

Therefore:

- God is beyond attributes
- beyond intellect and imagination
- beyond sensory perception

Names of God:

- also not literal attributes
 - rather:
 - His “names” are His manifestations:
 - spiritual and physical hierarchies
 - which point to His unity
-

Section: The First Created Being — The Universal Intellect

The **Universal Intellect** (العقل الكلي) is:

- a subtle, living, knowing, powerful substance

- *self-sufficient*
- *perfect and complete*
- *aware of itself by itself*

It is:

- *the **Pen (القلم)** mentioned in scripture*
- *the **cause of all causes***
- *the origin of creation*

We can describe it because:

- *a relation exists between it and our partial intellects*

Animals cannot comprehend it:

- *because they lack this relation*
-

Section: The Second Being — The Universal Soul

*The **Universal Soul (النفيس الكلية)**:*

- *emanates from the intellect*
- *like a child from a parent*

It:

- *shares its nature*
- *but is lower in rank and perfection*

It is:

- *the **Preserved Tablet (اللوح المحفوظ)***

The “writing” of the Pen:

- *symbolizes the unfolding of creation*
- *not literal writing*

Section: The Third Being — Prime Matter (الهيولى)

Prime Matter:

- *emanates from the soul*
- *is:*
 - *inert*
 - *non-living*
 - *without knowledge*

Reason:

- *it is further removed from the First Principle*

Hierarchy:

- *Intellect → complete*
 - *Soul → less complete*
 - *Matter → lowest*
-

Formation of the World

From matter arise forms:

- *subtle, moving → celestial spheres*
- *luminous → sun, moon, stars*
- *hot/dry → fire*
- *light → air*
- *fluid → water*
- *dense/dark → earth*

All originate from:

→ one underlying substance

Analogy: Human Creation

Just as:

- *the human body originates from a single drop (نطفة)*

Yet produces:

- *heart → like the sun*
- *brain → like the moon*
- *head → like the sphere*
- *12 organs → like zodiac*
- *bones → mountains*
- *veins → rivers*
- *hair → plants*
- *organisms → animals*

Thus:

- *multiplicity arises from unity*

Likewise:

- *the universe arises from one primordial matter*

Section: On Form (Şūrah)

This refers to the celestial spheres, the stars, the zodiacal constellations, and the four elements (the “mothers”). Discussion of them has already preceded in relation to the worlds, but one point remains:

The spheres, stars, and zodiac signs:

- *undergo **no change**, no transformation, no increase, and no decrease*
- *except for **constant motion***
- *and the movement of the planets through the northern and southern zodiac*

They remain:

- ***eternal***, enduring for all time
- because they are the ***most refined products of prime matter***
- and are not composed of parts or mixtures

Therefore:

- they are incorruptible
 - unchanging
 - not subject to dissolution or transformation
 - but remain in a constant state forever
-

On the Four Elements (The “Mothers”)

Unlike the heavens:

The four elements:

- ***do transform into one another***

Transformations:

- Earth → becomes water
- Water → becomes air
- Air → becomes fire

This occurs:

- in ***parts***, not in totality

Examples:

- Earth produces vapor under the sun
→ rises into air
→ condenses into water

- *Water evaporates:*
→ *dense parts* → *rain*
→ *subtle parts* → *air*
- *Air refines:*
→ *becomes fiery substance (meteors / shooting stars)*
- *Fire* → *transforms into air*
(*not directly observable, but established by intellect*)

Observed examples:

- *Smoke rises and mixes with air* → *becomes air*
- *Air cools* → *becomes dew, frost, moisture*
- *Water freezes* → *becomes solid like earth*
- *Sediments in seas form:*
→ *mountains and rocks*

Thus:

- *elements transform **mutually in their parts***
- *but their **totality remains constant***

And:

- *fire does not become something higher than itself*
- *but transforms downward*

Section: On the Elements in Their Proper Places

Each element:

- *is **light in its natural place***
- *and not heavy*

Examples:

- *Air:*

- *if forced into water → resists and rises*
- **Water:**
 - *easy to move within water*
 - *but extremely heavy when lifted into air*
- **Earth:**
 - *weightless in its own domain*
 - *but heavy when lifted out*

Thus:

- *each element belongs to its natural realm*
-

On the Earth and Cosmic Structure

- **Earth is:**
 - *the **center of the world***
 - *its deepest point is its center*
- *All directions from the surface are “above” relative to that center*
- *The celestial sphere surrounds it*

Day and Night:

- *When the sun shines on one half → day*
- *The opposite half → night*

Thus:

- *half the earth is always illuminated*
 - *half is always dark*
-

On Life on Earth

- *Different peoples inhabit different regions*

- *Each extracts benefits:*
 - *minerals*
 - *plants*
 - *animals*
- *They live and die there*
- *Nations remain unaware of one another*

Earth:

- *contains them in life and death*

All of this:

- *is not direct divine handling*
 - *but through mediation:*
 - *via the chain of existence*
-

Section: On the Angels

The term “angel” (malak) applies to:

- *one who possesses authority over **religious affairs***

Just as:

- *kings govern worldly affairs*

Distinction:

- ***Malak (فتح) → spiritual authority***
 - ***Malik (كسر) → worldly authority***
-

Nature of Angels:

Angels in potential:

- *are:*

- *prophets*
- *successors*
- *Imams*
- *and their followers*

While in bodies:

- *they are angels **in potential***

After death:

- *they become angels **in actuality:***
 - *self-subsisting*
 - *free of bodily need*
-

Their State:

- *eternal life*
 - *no death or illness*
 - *no fear*
 - *complete independence*
 - *lasting joy*
-

Origin of Angels:

- *All angels (except two) originate:*
 - *from earth*
 - *from embodied existence*
- *The exceptions:*
 - *the **Universal Intellect***
 - *the **Universal Soul***

These:

- are directly emanated
 - not born through bodies
-

Section: On Iblīs and the Devils

Iblīs:

- derived from **despair** (إِيبْلَاس)
- meaning:
 - one who loses hope in divine mercy

He is:

- any being who:
 - rejects the truth
 - opposes the rightful authority
 - despairs of divine guidance
-

Shayṭān:

- derived from **distance** (شَاطِن)

Meaning:

- anyone who:
 - is distant from truth
 - and from its people
-

Conclusion:

- Devils and satans:
 - are from **human beings**

Just as:

- *angels are also from human beings*

Section: On the Jinn

*Know that the word **jinn** is derived from concealment (istitar).*

- *The fetus is called **janīn** because it is hidden in the womb.*
- *Gardens are called **jannāt** because they conceal what is within them.*
- *Armor is called **junnah** because it conceals and protects a person.*
- *A shield is called **mijann** for the same reason.*
- *Paradise is called **jannah** because it is hidden from sight.*

Praiseworthy Jinn:

Those mentioned in the Qur'an:

"A group of jinn listened to the Qur'an..."

These are:

- *the **people of the inner** دعوت (da'wa)*
- *hidden from the **أهل الظاهر** (people of the outward law)*
- *concealing knowledge from those unworthy of it*

They are called jinn:

→ because they conceal knowledge

Blameworthy Jinn:

Those mentioned as:

- *chained*
- *destined for Hell*

These are:

- *the **hypocrites***
- *who outwardly display Islam*

- *while concealing disbelief*

They are called jinn:

→ because they conceal hypocrisy

Section: On Rain, Snow, Thunder, Lightning, and Earthquakes

Rain:

- *originates from **earthly vapor***
- *rising upward*
- *condensing into water*

Like steam in a bath:

- *rises → condenses → drips*
 - *In cold regions → becomes **snow***
 - *In moderate air → becomes **rain***
 - *In certain conditions → becomes **hail***
-

Thunder and Lightning:

Two types of vapor:

- ***dry hot vapor** → from deserts*
- ***cold moist vapor** → from seas and rivers*

When mixed:

- *the cold vapor dominates*
- *the hot vapor seeks to rise*

→ This produces:

- ***thunder** = sound of its attempt to escape*

If trapped:

- *it ignites → **lightning***
- *tearing through clouds*

Thunderclap (ṣā'iqā):

- *sound of bursting moisture in clouds*
-

Earthquakes:

- *The earth contains:*
 - *cavities*
 - *tunnels*
- *Air enters and becomes trapped*
- *It attempts to escape naturally*

→ *This causes:*

- *shaking of the earth above*
-

Section: On Solar and Lunar Eclipses

Solar Eclipse:

- *occurs when the **moon blocks the sun***
- *The moon:*
 - *has no light of its own*
 - *reflects sunlight*

When aligned:

- *it obscures sunlight from our view*

→ *The sun itself remains unchanged*

Lunar Eclipse:

- occurs when the **earth blocks sunlight from the moon**
- The earth casts a shadow (night)
- When the moon enters this shadow:
 - it darkens

Outside the shadow:

- it remains illuminated
-

Conclusion of Praise

Praise belongs to God alone,
and blessings upon:

- Muhammad
 - 'Alī
 - the Imams
 - and the pure lineage
-

Section: On the Cycles of the Prophets (الأدوار)

Cycle of Adam:

- first speaking prophet (nāṭiq)
- first manifestation of divine light
- duration:
 - 2080 years, 4 months, 15 days
- his opponent:
 - Iblīs
- he appointed:
 - Hābīl (Abel)

→ *Imamate continued through his descendants*

Cycle of Noah:

- *name: 'Abd al-Ghaffār*
 - *called "Noah" for his weeping*
 - *duration:*
 - *942 years*
 - *lifespan:*
 - *120 years*
 - *buried at Mount al-Jūdī*
-

Cycle of Abraham:

- *duration:*
 - *1150 years*
 - *lifespan:*
 - *113 years*
 - *buried in Jerusalem*
-

Cycle of Moses:

- *lifespan:*
 - *107 years*
 - *duration:*
 - *1130 years*
-

Cycle of Jesus:

- *lifespan:*
 - 32 years
 - *duration:*
 - 670 years
-

Cycle of Muhammad (6th Nāṭiq):

- *final law-bearing prophet*
- *abrogated previous laws*
- *revealed the Qur'an*
- *established Islam*

He appointed:

→ ***ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib*** as successor

On the Twelve Ḥujjas of the Prophet

They are listed as:

- *Abū Bakr*
- *ʿUmar*
- *ʿUthmān*
- *Salmān*
- *Miqdād*
- *Abū Dharr*
- *ʿAmmār*
- *Ibn Masʿūd*
- *Zayd ibn Thābit*

- Ubayy ibn Ka'b
- Zayd ibn Ḥāritha
- Ḥudhayfa

Among them:

- three deviated
 - nine remained steadfast
-

On 'Alī and His Ḥujjas

'Alī:

- was:
 - the باب (gate) of the Prophet
 - his وصي (successor)
- master of:
 - interpretation (ta'wīl)
 - law and meaning

He appointed **twelve ḥujjas**, They are:

- 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Abbās
- Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr
- Ḥujr ibn 'Adī
- Abū al-Ṭufayl 'Āmir ibn Wā'il
- Mālīk ibn al-Ḥārith al-Ashtar
- 'Umar ibn al-Ḥumq al-Khuzā'i
- 'Adī ibn Ḥātim al-Ṭā'i
- al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays

- *Ḥāritha ibn Qudāma al-Sa'dī*
 - *Muslim ibn 'Awsaja*
 - *Ṣa'sa'a ibn Ṣūḥān*
 - *Sharīk ibn A'war*
-

Ḥujjas of al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī

They are:

- *Aṣbagh ibn Nubāta*
 - *Jābir ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Anṣārī*
 - *Sa'īd ibn al-Musayyib*
 - *al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr*
 - *Ḥabīb ibn Muḥammad*
 - *Yaḥyā ibn Umm al-Ṭawīl*
 - *Yaḥyā ibn 'Uqba*
 - *Kumayl ibn Ziyād*
 - *'Abd Allāh ibn Sinān*
 - *Muḥammad ibn Ḥudhayfa al-Yamānī*
 - *'Utba ibn Rabī'a*
 - *Yūnān al-Aslamī*
-

Ḥujjas of al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī

They are:

- *Ṣudayr ibn Ṣayrafī*

- *Muḥammad ibn Abī Zaynab*
- *Jābir al-Kindī*
- *Rasīl al-Fakhrī*
- *Khālīd ibn Muṭ‘im*
- *‘Aṭiyya ibn Bishr*
- *‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Uqba*
- *Hānī ibn ‘Urwa*
- *Ibrāhīm ibn al-‘Alā’*
- *Abū Ibrāhīm al-Hamdānī*

Statement

This text is written in the register of our Master himself — may God sanctify his soul.

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Compassionate

*Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds,
and blessings upon His Messenger, our Master **Muḥammad** and all his family.*

First Question

It was written in the exemplar that:

- **pronouncing the name of God (tasmiyah)** is obligatory when taking locusts and fish alive.

*O our Master — may I be your ransom — in the response of **al-Qāḍī al-Nu‘mān ibn Muḥammad** (may God sanctify his soul) regarding the food of the People of the Book, and His saying:*

“The food of those who were given the Book is lawful for you, and your food is lawful for them”

He said:

- *this applies to **condiments and grains**,*

- *but **not to slaughtered animals.***

So, O our Master:

- *do the Jews pronounce the name of God or not?*

Answer

- *Taking locusts and fish **alive** constitutes their proper slaughter.*
- *If taken **dead**, they are not lawful.*
- *As for the slaughtered animals of the People of the Book:*
 - *if a Muslim knows that:*
 - *they faced the qibla*
 - *and pronounced the name of God*
→ *then they may be eaten*
- *As for the rest of their food:*
 - *it is lawful by explicit Qur'anic text*
 - *however, if they touch moist food, it becomes impure*

And God knows best.

Second Question

It is stated in the law:

- *food may not be sold **before possession (qabd).***

What is meant by "food"?

*Does **sesame (simsim)** fall under food?*

Answer

- *Sesame is among the grains*
- *Its benefit is not realized except after possession*
- *Its possession consists in:*

- *measuring*
- *and weighing*

And God knows best.

Third Question

It is stated:

- *one hundred and nineteen dirhams*
- *and for the wealthy, one dinar*

What defines wealth (yasar)?

What is the weight of:

- *the dinar?*
- *the dirham?*

Answer

- *Wealth = 200 dirhams or more*
- *Dinar = 24 qirāṭs*
- *Islamic dirham = 14 qirāṭs*

And God knows best.

Fourth Question

A man neglected obligatory prayer in his youth and later repented.

What should he do?

- *Should he perform:*
 - *supererogatory prayers*
 - *voluntary prayers*

Answer

- *He performs:*

- the obligatory prayers on time
- along with their sunnah and voluntary prayers
- Whatever past obligations he makes up:
→ he is rewarded for them

As God says:

“O you who believe, repent to God with sincere repentance...”

And God knows best.

Fifth Question

In the Prayer of Tasbīḥ:

- in the second rak‘a one says tasbīḥ ten times

How should this be done?

- sitting or standing?

Answer

- When intending to rise for the second rak‘a:
 - he sits briefly in a poised manner
 - recites the tasbīḥ ten times
 - then stands

And God knows best.

Sixth Question

In the Prayer of Sufficiency (Ṣalāt al-Kifāya):

- First rak‘a:
 - al-Fātiḥa
 - al-Ikhlāṣ
 - al-Kāfirūn
 - Āyat al-Kursī (once each)

- *Second: twice*
- *Third: three times*
- *Fourth: four times*

Is al-Fātiḥa repeated multiple times?

Answer

- *Al-Fātiḥa is recited:*
 - ***once in each rak'a***

And God knows best.

Seventh Question

If a traveler returns and enters the outskirts of his town:

- *does he pray full prayer or shortened?*

Answer

- *He does **not pray full** until:*
 - *he enters his home*
 - *or meets a relative within the town boundary*

And God knows best.

Eighth Question

Postnatal bleeding (nifās):

- *some say **40 days***
- *some say **60 days***

Which is correct?

Answer

- *It depends on:*

- the woman's habitual pattern
- Except in cases of irregular bleeding (*istiḥāḍa*), which is distinct

And God knows best.

Ninth Question

The sacrificial animal (*'aqīqa*):

- should its bones be broken or not?

Answer

- It is mentioned that:
 - it should be **jointed (not broken arbitrarily)**
 - following the established practice

And God knows best.

Tenth Question

A pregnant woman dies while carrying a living, fully formed fetus.
Should it be left or removed?

Answer

- If a skilled woman is present:
 - extraction is **obligatory**
- Provided:
 - the fetus is **6 months or more**
 - and life is expected
- If not:
 - burial is delayed until its death is confirmed

And God knows best.

Eleventh Question

Can a man:

- *travel with:*
 - *his son's wife*
 - *his wife's mother*

without strict covering?

And what about foster relations?

Answer

- *It is permitted **only in necessity***
- *if no close relatives are present*

And God knows best.

Clarification of the Tenth Question

It is stated:

- *If a pregnant woman dies and the fetus is alive:*
 - *the midwife may:*
 - *insert her hand*
 - *dismember the fetus*
 - *and extract it*
- *If not possible:*
 - *the abdomen is opened*
- *If neither is possible:*
 - *the nearest male relative performs it*
- *This is only done if:*
 - *life is certain*
 - *and gestation $\geq$ six months*

- *Otherwise:*
 - *it is left until it dies*
 - *If the fetus dies inside:*
 - *it is removed to protect the mother*
 - *Opening the body of the dead:*
 - *is preferable to letting the living child die*
-

Clarification of the Eleventh Question

- *The preferred course:*
 - *is caution*

Based on the saying of the Prophet:

- *“The cautious one avoids even what is permissible, fearing what is not.”*
 - *If relatives are present:*
 - *avoidance is required*
 - *If none:*
 - *it is permitted*
-

Closing Note

*This is what was written in the inner register,
answered in the noble handwriting of our Master,
in response to the questions of **Sayyid Ḥasan ibn Nūḥ** —
may his life be prolonged.*

*And what follows in the next page
is the outward version of that same register,
which has been copied here for preservation.*

This is from the outward part of that register, in the handwriting of Sayyid Ḥasan ibn Nūḥ

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Compassionate

*Praise be to God who has made me among those who,
amid the blazing heat of doubt and bewilderment,
found shelter beneath the shade of the tree of the Sharī'a and Revelation —
whose root is:*

- *submission to the commands of God*
- *avoidance of all prohibitions*

and whose fruit is:

- *the pure essence of truths*

and whose branches are:

- *esoteric interpretation (ta'wīl)*
- *knowledge of the spiritual hierarchy (ḥudūd)*
- *and the affirmation of Divine Unity*

— which are the ultimate aim and purpose of God.

*Blessings be upon His Messenger Muḥammad,
who brought comprehensive speech and guidance,
calling to worship and righteous action;*

*and upon his successor,
who brought clarification and interpretation,
and resolved what the Prophet established in the laws of religion;*

*and upon the Imams from their pure lineage,
the noble ancestors of our Master, the Commander of the Faithful.*

After this

*The questions came from one whose place in the heart
is like the eye to the human being,
and the human being to the eye —*

may God protect him from the people of falsehood and deceit.

I presented them to:

- *our Master*

- *our Lord*
- *the possessor of our affair*
- *the sword of religion and the world*

He answered them:

- *with sufficient clarity*
- *removing doubt*
- *and providing complete healing*

His answers were written:

- *in his noble handwriting*

But his words:

- *were too elevated for one like me to fully grasp*

So I returned to him and requested:

- *explanation and clarification*

He then bestowed upon me:

- *abundant generosity and insight*

I have written this:

- *for the benefit of the brethren*

seeking aid from God.

Explanation of the First Answer

Our Master said:

- *If a Muslim captures locusts or fish alive and pronounces God's name:*
→ *they are lawful*
- *If captured alive by:*
 - *a Jew*

- *Christian*
- *Magian*
- *or polytheist*

and then:

- *taken alive by a Muslim*
- *who pronounces God's name*

→ and it dies afterward

→ it is lawful

- *But if it dies in their hands:*
→ it is unlawful

This follows the ruling in Da‘ā’im al-Islām.

Also:

- *the ruling for Jews, Christians, Magians, and polytheists is the same*

As for the earlier confusion:

- *it likely arose from a scribal error:*
 - *“grains” (ḥubūb) mistaken for “fish” (ḥūt)*

Explanation of the Second Answer

- *Sesame is among items:*
 - *measured or weighed*
- *It cannot be sold before possession*
- *“Transfer (tawliyah)” means:*
 - *assigning ownership at cost price before weighing*
- *But selling for profit before possession:*
→ invalid
- *Ownership is only established:*
→ after measurement or weighing

Explanation of the Third Answer

Wealth (yasar):

- *possession of zakāt-labile wealth after one year*

Minimum:

- *200 silver dirhams*
- *or 20 gold dinars*

Weights:

- *Dirham = 14 qirāṭs + fraction*
- *Dinar = 24 qirāṭs*

Because gold and silver values fluctuate:

- *the lower value standard should be used*
-

Explanation of the Fourth Answer

One who abandons prayer:

- *is not considered Muslim **during that period** (in terms of action)*

Based on:

“Between a servant and disbelief is abandoning prayer”

- *No acts are accepted without prayer*

However:

- *he is still legally Muslim (due to shahāda)*

If he repents sincerely:

- *his repentance is accepted*
- *he becomes fully Muslim again*

- *Past prayers:*
→ *not obligatory to repeat*
 - *Future prayers:*
→ *must be performed with sunnah and nawāfil*
 - *If he makes up past prayers:*
→ *rewarded*
 - *If he broke fast intentionally:*
→ *must make up and expiate*
-

Explanation of the Fifth Answer

In the Prayer of Tasbīḥ:

- *One sits briefly after the second سجدة*
- *Recites tasbīḥ ten times*
- *Then stands*

However:

- *the more common practice:*
 - *sit fully*
 - *recite tasbīḥ*
 - *then continue*
-

Explanation of the Sixth Answer

- *Al-Fātiḥa:*
→ *once per rak'a*
- *Other sūrahs:*
 - *2nd rak'a → twice*
 - *3rd → three times*
 - *4th → four times*

Explanation of the Seventh Answer

A returning traveler:

- *does not pray full prayer until:*
 - *entering his home*
 - *If still outside:*
 - *prays shortened*
 - *Even inside city limits:*
 - *still shortened unless at home*
 - *Exception:*
 - *meeting a relative residing there*
-

Explanation of the Eighth Answer (Postnatal Bleeding)

- *Determined by habit*
- *Minimum: **20 days***
- *Average: **40 days***
- *Maximum: **60 days***

If it continues beyond:

→ *becomes istiḥāḍa*

If blood continues:

- *up to 2 months precaution is taken*

After that:

- *treated as abnormal bleeding*
-

Explanation of the Ninth Answer ('Aqīqa)

- *Sacrifice is a confirmed sunnah*

- *The animal:*
 - *is divided into parts*
 - ***bones are not broken***
 - *Distribution:*
 - *given*
 - *eaten*
 - *charity*
 - *Hair of newborn:*
 - *shaved*
 - *equivalent weight in gold/silver given*
-

Closing Supplication

*Praise be to God alone,
and blessings upon:*

- *Muḥammad*
 - *‘Alī*
 - *Fāṭima*
 - *al-Ḥasan*
 - *al-Ḥusayn*
 - *the Imams*
 - *and the Imam al-Ṭayyib Abū al-Qāsim*
-

Colophon

This manuscript was completed:

- *on Monday*

- *9th of Sha‘bān*

- *1421 AH*

During the era of:

- *the 52nd Dā‘ī*
- *Sayyidnā Abī al-Qā‘id Jawhar Muḥammad Burhān al-Dīn*

Written by:

- *Muḥammad ibn al-Shaykh Ṭayyib ‘Alī*

At:

- *al-Jāmi‘a al-Sayfiyya*
- *Surat*