TAʾWĪL AL-DAʿĀʾIM — VOLUME THREE
First Half — English Translation

*The title page identifies this as the third volume of *Taʾwīl al-Daʿāʾim*, by al-Nuʿmān b. Muḥammad, in the second edition prepared by Muḥammad Ḥasan al-Aʿẓamī. The source note states that the text of this third volume was established by comparison with manuscript copies held in the Fāṭimid/Ismāʿīlī collections identified by the editor. What follows is an English translation of the text itself. Headings reproduce the divisions that appear in the Arabic source; the numbered page headings follow the printed Arabic page numbers.*

Part Seven of the Book *The Training of the Believers by Instruction in the Inner Limits of the Knowledge of Religion*

The First Session of Part Seven

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

Praise belongs to God, who knows what has been and what will be, and who knows of what has not been, how it would be if it were. Not a leaf falls, as God—mighty and majestic—has said, but He knows it; nor is there a grain in the darknesses of the earth, nor anything fresh or dry, except that it is in a clear Book. May God bless Muḥammad, the Seal of the Prophets, his truthful and trustworthy legatee, and the Imams from his pure progeny.

What follows what has already been said concerning the interpretation of prayer and the limits connected with it, according to the order in the *Daʿāʾim al-Islām*, is the discussion of funerals. Before explaining the branches that arise from this subject, we shall state its general principle and root so that the branches may be correctly understood, God willing.

The word *janāʾiz* is the plural of *janāza*. In the language, the term is connected with that which weighs heavily upon people and causes them grief, because the affair of the dead person weighs upon his family and causes them sorrow. The bier upon which the dead person is carried is also called a *janāza*, and the Arabs call it the *sharjaʿ*. Sometimes the dead person is named after the bier upon which he is carried, just as things are in Arabic sometimes named after what contains or carries them. All of this is a figurative usage relating to the dead.

The dead is the opposite of the living, and death is the opposite of life. Yet death and the dead are of more than one condition. Before creation, the human being and all animals were in the condition of death: they were non-existent, unnamed and unknown. God says: “Has there not come upon man a period of time when he was a thing not mentioned?” He also says: “You were dead and He gave you life; then He will cause you to die, then He will give you life,” and: “He who created death and life that He might test you as to which of you is best in deed.”

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Everything in which there is no spirit and no growth is lifeless and dead; whatever possesses spirit and growth is an animal and living. This is the outward meaning of life, death, the living creature and the lifeless thing.

Its inner meaning and interpretation is what we have already explained: death of this kind is the likeness of unbelief, error, and what resembles them. The dead and lifeless person is the likeness of the unbeliever and the one in error, because the spirit is the likeness of faith. That which has no spirit is dead, and he who has no faith is likewise as one dead. God says: “Is he who was dead and We gave him life and made for him a light by which he walks among the people…?” He says of the unbelievers: “Dead, not living,” and: “The living and the dead are not equal.” This is the death that is blameworthy in both the outward and the inward senses.

The second death, which outwardly occurs after life, is not in itself blameworthy, either outwardly or inwardly. Death after life has overtaken and will overtake the friends of God. God made it clear to Muḥammad that prophets before him had passed away, and the friends of God and all His servants likewise die. None remains except the One, who has no likeness and is distinguished from all His creation by everlastingness.

The Messenger of God is reported to have said that death is the believer’s sweet basil, and its merits will be mentioned from the *Daʿāʾim al-Islām*. This confirms that such death is praiseworthy rather than blameworthy. For the living, outward death is the means by which they are transferred from the abode of this world to the abode of the Hereafter, and the Hereafter is a higher abode than this world. Of those transferred there, some are wretched and some happy: the happy person is transferred to felicity, honor and reward; the wretched person to misery, deprivation and punishment.

The inward interpretation of this death is the transfer of those who are truly alive—the people of faith—from one condition to another and from one rank to another. Some are raised and some lowered according to what their deeds require and what they deserve. The one transferred inwardly from one rank to another is like the one outwardly transferred by death from one abode to another. The Commander of the Believers, ʿAlī, heard a man say, “Praise be to God who created us for annihilation,” and said to him: “Rather, you were created for permanence, but you are transferred from abode to abode.” In the same manner believers are transferred from state to state and raised from rank to rank. God says: “You shall surely ride stage after stage.”

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This transfer is toward the latter creation and the second arising, as God says, after mentioning the creation of man: “Then We produced him as another creation; so blessed is God, the best of creators.” This is a sufficient general statement of the interpretation of death before turning to the passages in the *Daʿāʾim* concerning death, the dead person, and what is done for him outwardly.

At the beginning of the Book of Funerals, the *Daʿāʾim* mentions illness, visiting the sick, and the approach of death. Outward illness is a cause leading to outward death and thus to transfer from one abode to another. In the inward sense, illness signifies the circumstance or cause that occasions a believer’s transfer from one condition to another. Visiting the sick outwardly means inquiring after the sick person and learning his condition. Inwardly it signifies examining the condition of a believer who is intended to be moved from one state to another or from one rank to another, so that his true condition may be known and it may be determined to what rank he ought to be transferred. Such an examination is made by one above him, just as in the outward sense the sick person is visited by one who is healthy and stronger, not by one in the identical condition.

The approach of death outwardly is the nearness of death and of transfer from this world to the next. Its inner meaning is likewise the nearness of the believer’s transfer from the rank in which he stands to the rank to which he is to be moved.

It is related that the Messenger of God visited a man of the Anṣār who complained of fever. The Prophet said, “Fever is a purification from a forgiving Lord.” The man answered in a way that treated the fever merely as something that rages in an old man until it fills the graves, and the Prophet was displeased with his reply and said, “Then let it be so for you,” and the man died of that illness. The Prophet also said that the moaning of the sick person is written as good deeds so long as he is patient, but if he becomes impatient and

panics there is no reward for him; and that a day of fever is an expiation for a year. ʿAlī said: “The sick person is in God’s confinement so long as he does not complain to his visitors; his sins are erased. Any believer who dies sick dies a martyr. Every believing man is a martyr, every believing woman is a maiden of Paradise, and whatever death a believer dies, he is a martyr.” He recited: “Those who believe in God and His messengers, they are the truthful and the martyrs with their Lord.”

Inwardly, fever and other outward illnesses are the likeness of the trial by which a superior tests a believer whom he intends to transfer from one rank to another. The trial is a purification and expiation for him if he bears it patiently, does not complain of its difficulty in order to have it lightened, and does not become vexed by it—just as outwardly the sick person is tested through pain and endurance.

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The statement that whoever dies sick dies a martyr is interpreted through the meaning of *shahīd*, “witness.” Every holder of a rank among the believers is a witness over those below his rank when they are entrusted to him; the one above him is a witness over him, until this hierarchy reaches the Imams and then the messengers. Above all of them God is witness over His servants, as He declares in His Book.

It is related from ʿAlī that when God tests a servant, He removes from his sins in proportion to his illness. The word *balāʾ*, trial, means examination and testing. As already explained, outward illness corresponds inwardly to the testing of a believer. In both outward and inward senses there is reward for the believer and an expiation of faults.

It is also related from ʿAlī: “Visiting the sick is after three days, and women are not required to visit.” Inwardly, visiting the sick is the examination of the believer’s condition during his testing, and the one who performs this examination is his superior. Women in the inward interpretation, as previously explained, are likenesses of recipients and learners; the condition of the tested believer is examined by the one who instructs him and stands above him. As for visiting after three days, outwardly one does not hasten to visit at the first moment of the illness but allows a short period to pass. Inwardly this means that the one being tested should not immediately be pressed to reveal his condition at the beginning of the trial, for that might burden him. He is left for a little while until he becomes accustomed to the trial.

The Messenger of God forbade the visitor from eating at the sick person’s house, saying that this causes his reward to be lost. Outwardly, the sick person is not required to feed those who visit him, nor should the visitors make the visit an occasion for eating; it is meant for reward. The inward parallel is that the superior who examines the condition of one undergoing a trial for transfer from rank to rank must not take anything from his property, outwardly or inwardly, on account of that examination, nor consume or spoil anything of the knowledge that has come to him through the person or through another, for knowledge corresponds inwardly to wealth.

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It is related that when a Muslim visits a sick person, seventy thousand angels bless him until sunset if the visit is made by day, or until dawn if it is made by night. The interpretation follows what has already been established: the visit represents the instructor’s examination of the one he instructs when he wishes to raise him from one degree to another. The angels represent those who have been given authority over the affairs of servants among the people of heaven and earth; prayer corresponds to the summons or invocation; the rising of the sun represents the appearance of the Imam, and its setting represents his concealment or transfer. Thus, if a teacher examines the state of his recipient and raises him according to truth and justice, he receives favorable mention within the summons of the Imam of his age—if the Imam is manifest, until the Imam’s transfer or concealment; and if the Imam is concealed or has passed, until his appearance or the appearance of the one who succeeds him. The ranks of every summons are named and made known so that the responders may know the limits and degrees and how the established practice operates within them.

Understand, therefore, believers, the inward meaning of the outward obligations by which you have been commanded, so that you may establish what you have been ordered to establish of your religion outwardly and inwardly. May God assist you, increase you in guidance, and bless Muḥammad His Prophet and the righteous Imams from his progeny.

The Second Session of Part Seven

Praise be to God, the First without beginning and the Last without end, exalted above every cause of the limited and beyond the grasp of created things. May God bless Muḥammad, chosen from His creation, and the rightly guiding, righteous Imams from his progeny.

What follows in the *Daʿāʾim al-Islām* is the report from the Commander of the Believers, ʿAlī: "Whoever visits a sick person plunges into the mercy of God and obtains His promise; he is in the harvest of Paradise while he sits with the sick person. When he leaves him, God sends that day seventy thousand angels who bless him until night if he visited by day, or until morning if he visited by night." This is the reward of one who outwardly visits the sick seeking the reward of God.

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Its inner interpretation follows what has already been said: illness, the sick person and visitation represent the state of the recipient whom an instructor examines when the recipient has reached the end of one rank and is to be raised to another. The angels and their blessings were explained in the previous session.

The visitor is said to be "in the harvest of Paradise." Autumn is the season in which fruits are gathered, and the Arabic expression refers to plucking from here and there. Paradise in the inward interpretation is the true summons through which eternal Paradise is attained; its forms of wisdom are like the various fruits of Paradise. Thus one who examines the state of another in order to raise him through its degrees is in its "harvest," plucking from the benefits of wisdom as required by his examination. In this way every instructor and every recipient gather the fruits of wisdom according to their places. Paradise is therefore described as containing fruits, trees and rivers because these have inward likenesses in knowledge and wisdom.

It is related that the Messenger of God entered upon a man of Banū ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib in the marketplace who was near death and had been turned away from the qibla. He said, "Turn him toward the qibla; when you do so the angels face him and God turns toward him with His mercy until he is taken." ʿAlī likewise said that it is part of the natural practice to turn the dying person toward the qibla. Outwardly this is the Sunna for one near death. Inwardly, as previously explained, the qibla is the likeness of the Imam. When a believer is transferred among the stages of the summons, the one who transfers him must teach him what is required at the new stage concerning the Imam of his time, direct him toward the Imam, confirm him in recognition of the Imam and make him face him in devotion.

Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad said that it is recommended for those present with the dying person to prompt him to testify that there is no god but God alone, without partner, and that Muḥammad is His servant and messenger; and that they should recite at his head the Throne Verse, the two verses after it, the verse "Indeed your Lord is God, who created the heavens and the earth in six days…" and three verses from the end of Sūrat al-Baqara.

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The Messenger of God said: "Whoever's final words are the testimony that there is no god but God enters Paradise." Outwardly, therefore, the dying person is prompted with the two testimonies so that his final state is their confession. Inwardly, the one transferred through the degrees of the summons is firmly established in the realities of divine unity and in acknowledgment of the lord of the revealed law. The Qurʾānic passages recited beside the dying person outwardly correspond inwardly to confirming these truths by the Book of God.

Reports also speak of the good tidings given to the believer at death concerning the reward awaiting him. God says: “For them are good tidings in the life of this world and in the Hereafter.” This has both outward and inward application: the believer is given good tidings when he moves from this world to the next, and likewise when he is transferred within the ranks of faith and the true summons from one limit to another.

The severity of death for a believer is an expiation for his sins, while an easy death is a relief and mercy. Inwardly, severity signifies the strict treatment given to one being transferred from one degree to another when a shortcoming or fault has previously appeared in him, so that he may be purified from it. Ease signifies leniency when the time, circumstances and condition call for leniency. Both are from God as mercy and relief.

The *Daʿāʾim* then commands frequent remembrance of death. The believer should remember both its outward and inward meanings. Outwardly he remembers his transfer from the abode of action to the abode of recompense and therefore performs deeds by which he hopes for reward. Inwardly he remembers that he may be transferred from one condition to another within the degrees of excellence and faith, and therefore performs what will raise him. The Messenger of God said: “When you are called to funerals, hasten to them, for they remind you of the Hereafter.” Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad said: “If a person is invited to a wedding feast and to a funeral, let him answer the funeral, for attending funerals reminds one of death and the Hereafter, whereas attending feasts distracts from them.”

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This is what should be done outwardly because attending a funeral recalls death and the Hereafter. Inwardly, attending a funeral signifies being present at the transfer of one who is moved from one limit of the true summons to another. Such presence reminds those attending of the excellence of the degree to which the person is being transferred. By contrast, the inward likeness of worldly feasting is involvement in the affairs and attractions of this world, which distract from remembrance of religion.

The Messenger of God said: “The wisest of the believers are those who remember death most and are most prepared for it.” The word *kayyis* means intelligent. The wisest believer is the one who most remembers death in both senses, because whoever frequently remembers a matter gives attention to it and is likely to perform what it requires. He prepares righteous deeds through which he may ascend in the degrees of excellence—the inward death—and which will also provision him for what follows outward death in the everlasting life.

The Messenger of God said: “Death is the sweet basil of the believer.” Sweet basil is a fragrant plant whose pleasant scent remains and whose leaves do not fall in winter and summer as do those of many other plants. The Prophet thus made death a thing beloved and pleasant to the believer because outwardly it brings him, after death, to rest, permanence and bliss, and inwardly it brings him elevation, attainment of rank, victory and joy after the inward transfer occurs.

For unbelievers, hypocrites, the people of error and those who persist in disobedience, death is a calamity in both senses. Outwardly it carries them toward punishment; inwardly they are already “dead, not living.” The same can occur to one who possessed faith but clothed it with wrongdoing. If he is tested and what he has done requires that he be lowered from his rank, he is lowered according to the measure of his offense. If it expels him from faith, he returns inwardly to death because the spirit of faith has departed from him; if it requires only that he be lowered to a lesser degree, he is lowered accordingly and must then undertake work that may raise him again or lower him further. Death in both senses can therefore be grievous for such people, yet it remains a just and praiseworthy ordinance because through it truth is distinguished from falsehood and reward from punishment.

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From this is the saying of the Messenger of God: "The world is the prison of the believer and the paradise of the unbeliever." Outward death releases the believer from his prison and takes the unbeliever out of the only paradise he possessed toward the punishment that awaits him. This meaning is strengthened by another saying in the *Daʿāʾim*: the deceased is either "one who finds rest" or "one from whom rest is found." The righteous servant rests, when he dies, from the toil and worship of this world and passes to the comfort and bliss of Paradise. From the wicked person, by contrast, his recording angels and the creation obtain rest.

The inward application of "one who rests" is the believer transferred from one degree to a higher one. He rests from the concern of waiting in the degree in which he had been and from the initial difficulty of the practices attached to it. Actions are hardest at their beginning; when a person persists in them they become familiar and easier. Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq said that whoever performs a good deed should persist in it for a year—not in order to stop after the year, but because persistence turns it into a familiar practice and removes much of its burden. One of the devoted worshippers similarly said that he feared he would not be rewarded for fasting because it had become so habitual that he found no hardship in it except when he reached the accustomed time of breaking his fast.

So too, when the believer is raised to a higher degree he rejoices, his insight grows stronger, his certainty increases and the work becomes easier even if he performs more of it. This is the inward "rest from work" associated with death. It does not mean that religious action is abolished. Works cease only with outward death, because this world is the abode of action. So long as people remain in it, obedience remains obligatory: there must be an Imam to be obeyed, enemies to be resisted, loyalty to the rightful guardian, and all the other necessary works. If works were dropped in this life, obedience itself would disappear and faith would be severed.

Believers must therefore beware of those misguided interpreters who use an inward interpretation as a pretext to cast off outward works. Every matter has its limit and judgment; it must not be transgressed. Through unrestricted analogy, private opinion and reckless interpretation, people have perished, strayed from the straight path and abandoned the proof. Perform what you are commanded and refrain from what you are forbidden.

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Anything made obligatory by an explicit command of God or on the tongues of His friends is not abolished except by a corresponding explicit authority from them, received directly or transmitted by trustworthy persons. Hold fast to that and govern yourselves by it; may God guide you to what pleases Him.

The *Daʿāʾim* then reports sayings of the Messenger of God and the Imams warning against heedlessness concerning death and censuring those who treat it lightly. The command to remember death in both outward and inward senses has already been explained. Heedlessness and contempt are its opposites. A believer must therefore not be heedless of death or treat it lightly, because if he does he will abandon or diminish the works through which everlasting life after outward death is attained and through which the beneficial inward transfers are earned.

Understand, believers, the inward meaning of the outward duties by which God has commanded you. Establish them outwardly and inwardly. May God aid you in that, inspire you with insight, and bless Muḥammad His Prophet and the Imams from his progeny.

The Third Session of Part Seven

Praise be to God, from whom no manifest thing is hidden, who is not concealed from anything, whom no weak being can frustrate and no strong being overcome. May God bless Muḥammad the Prophet, ʿAlī his approved legatee, and the Imams from their progeny, His successors on earth and His chosen ones.

The next subject in the *Daʿāʾim al-Islām* concerns condolences, patience, and the permitted forms of weeping. Outward condolences and the patience commanded at the death of relatives are praiseworthy acts for which a person is rewarded. In inward interpretation, relatives are the likeness of the people of one's "house" within the hierarchy of the summons: equals are like brothers, instructors are like fathers, recipients are like sons, and associates are like spouses. We have already explained this meaning from God's words, "The believers are brothers," "the religion of your father Abraham," and the saying of the Messenger of God to ʿAlī, "I and you are the two fathers of the believers." If one of these people is raised from the degree in which they shared to a higher degree—or lowered because of what his acts require—his companions experience an inward counterpart of the separation caused outwardly by death.

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Inward transfer resembles outward transfer from the abode of this world to the Hereafter through death. Therefore, when one who has shared a believer's degree is raised inwardly to a higher degree, the one left behind must not be grieved at the other's elevation, resentful because he himself remained behind, jealous, or displeased; nor, if the other is lowered because his deeds require it, may he object or think ill of him. Rather, he must accept and submit to the act of the friends of God and of those whom they have appointed over His servants, and he must be patient if separation causes him sorrow, just as one is commanded to be patient at the outward death of beloved relatives.

The reports in this chapter from the Messenger, his legatee and the Imams urge patience, command it, condemn panic, and forbid excessive lamentation. The Prophet said concerning patience at the first impact of bereavement: "Reward is with the first blow." ʿAlī said: "Whoever does not console himself when a grave affliction first strikes will in time become consoled as beasts do." The point applies outwardly and inwardly. Patience should be exercised at the moment of the outward death of one beloved, and likewise at its inward counterpart. Whoever masters himself, is patient, and submits at that time receives reward; whoever initially panics will nevertheless be forced by the passage of time into resignation, since forgetting and adjustment are part of human nature.

ʿAlī also said: "Beware of panic, for it cuts off hope, weakens action and bequeaths grief. Know that the way out lies in two things: where there is a means, use it; where there is none, be patient." He further said that the relation of patience to faith is like the head to the body. Patience is therefore a beautiful and necessary quality in every circumstance in which the soul is drawn toward disobedience or toward abandoning obedience. The inward patience required when companions are raised above or lowered below one's own rank falls within this comprehensive principle.

When the Prophet's son Ibrāhīm died, the Messenger of God ordered ʿAlī to wash him and place him in the grave.

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When the Prophet saw Ibrāhīm lowered into the grave, he wept, and those around him wept until the voices of the men rose above those of the women. He strongly forbade that and said: "The eye sheds tears and the heart grieves, but do not say what angers the Lord. We have been afflicted by your loss, Ibrāhīm, and we grieve for you." They said, "Messenger of God, when we saw you weep, we wept because of your weeping." He replied: "I did not forbid you to weep; I forbade you wailing and shrieking. This is tenderness which God places in the heart of whom He wills. God has mercy on the merciful among His servants." He permitted tears at affliction and said: "The soul is afflicted, the eye is tearful and the covenant is recent; say what pleases God and do not utter foolish words."

ʿAlī said that loud moaning and shrieking at calamity are from Satan. The Messenger of God took a pledge from women that they would not wail, and he said that wailing for the dead is among the customs of the Age of Ignorance. ʿAlī wrote to Rifāʿa, his judge in Ahwāz, warning him against wailing for the dead in a land in

which he exercised authority. Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad, when near death, instructed his family that no cheek should be struck and no garment torn because of him.

Tears and grief that overcome a person and cannot be restrained are excused, for God says: “God does not burden a soul beyond its capacity,” and the Prophet said that God has pardoned his community for what they are compelled to do. The obligation is to exercise as much patience as one can, outwardly and inwardly, and not voluntarily surrender oneself to panic.

Inwardly, grief of the heart and tears resemble the sorrow one feels when a companion is transferred from the degree in which both stood—whether raised above one, leaving one behind, or lowered beneath it. One may grieve for oneself if not raised with him, or for him if he is lowered, but while remaining submissive to the command of the rightful authority.

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A believer must therefore use patience and gradually console himself as far as he is able and must not abandon that effort while the grief remains. Outward wailing, shrieking and ritual lamentation correspond inwardly to denying the correctness of the transfer made by those who possess authority: thinking that a companion did not deserve to be raised, that one oneself deserved the same or a better elevation, or that a person lowered in rank was wronged. Such an attitude is forbidden. It is not lawful to hold it in the heart, speak it with the tongue, or even gesture toward it.

An exception is reported concerning lamenting the Imams when they are taken from the world, because the loss is immense and the calamity great. Grieving and weeping for them is humility and recognition of the greatness of their rank. Inwardly, the outward passing of the Imams is comparable to their concealment after manifestation and to the tribulations, fear and dissimulation imposed upon them by usurpers. To disapprove of the injustice done to them in one’s heart and to grieve over it is obligatory upon every believer to the extent of his ability.

The text next turns to washing the dead. Washing the dead is obligatory upon those who are able to perform it and is not done until death has occurred. Its inward interpretation follows what has already been established concerning ritual purification: outward cleansing from filth corresponds inwardly to cleansing from sins and faults by knowledge and wisdom. Water signifies knowledge. As water cleans dirt from the body, knowledge cleans the spirit from the traces of error and wrongdoing.

Since outward death represents inward transfer from one limit of the summons to another, the believer transferred inwardly must be “washed” by the one who transfers him—that is, he must be opened to the knowledge and wisdom appropriate to the new degree. Only one above him, who knows what the new degree requires, may impart it. The recipient before receiving that instruction is, with regard to that knowledge, like a dead person; the instructor is like the living person who washes the dead.

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Thus the instructor purifies the recipient’s spirit through knowledge and wisdom as the living washer removes outward dirt from the corpse. The *Daʿāʾim* relates that the Messenger of God instructed ʿAlī to wash him after his death. ʿAlī said that when he began the washing he heard a voice from the side of the house telling him not to remove the Prophet’s shirt, so he washed him while he remained clothed. The report is widely transmitted, and many identify the voice as Gabriel.

The inward meaning is that the Prophet’s outward death corresponds to his transfer, but the washing of prophets is not interpreted in precisely the same way as the washing of ordinary believers. The Messenger had already reached the rank of messengership; there is no rank of the summons above it to which another human instructor could transfer him. The order not to remove his shirt signifies that this washing had an outward reality without the usual inward counterpart. The shirt is an outward covering, and the Prophet’s washing was correspondingly an outward act. God instructed ʿAlī in this through Gabriel.

ʿAlī also said that when he turned the Prophet's body during the washing, he was assisted in turning him. He had asked, "Messenger of God, you are a heavy-bodied man and I cannot turn you alone." The Prophet told him: "Gabriel will be with you and will undertake the washing." Since Gabriel had always been the means through whom knowledge and wisdom reached the Messenger from God, Gabriel was inwardly the one who "washed" him—that is, the one through whom divine knowledge reached him—while ʿAlī carried out the outward washing. Understand in this the benefits of the inner knowledge of religion.

The Fourth Session of Part Seven

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In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Praise be to God, from whom not even the knowledge of an atom's weight is absent, from whom no glance is hidden and no secret thought concealed; whose knowledge of small and great does not weary Him, who encompasses all things in knowledge without acquiring knowledge from another and numbers all things without increase. May God bless Muḥammad, the Prophet of mercy, ʿAlī his legatee, the protector of the community, and the chosen Imams from their progeny.

The *Daʿāʾim* continues the account of the Prophet's washing. ʿAlī reported that the Messenger told him Gabriel would be with him. When ʿAlī asked who would hand him the water, the Prophet said that al-Faḍl would hand it to him but should be blindfolded, because no one other than ʿAlī was to look upon the Prophet's nakedness. Muḥammad al-Bāqir said that al-Faḍl supplied the water with his eyes covered while Gabriel and ʿAlī washed the Prophet.

A man's nakedness outwardly is what is between his navel and knees, while a woman's whole body is treated as private except to her husband. We have already explained that the instructor is symbolized by the man and the recipient by the woman; therefore the place of a prophet's legatee is like that of his wife, the place of a legatee's trusted subordinate is similarly related to him, and so on through the hierarchical ranks. In this passage the "nakedness" signifies the secret of inward knowledge and interpretation, which prophets disclose only to their legatees, just as a man's private parts are seen only by his wife.

ʿAlī also said that while washing the Prophet he intended to turn him face down to wash his back, but a voice told him not to turn him face down. He therefore turned him on his side and washed his back. The back signifies the outward aspect and the belly the inward. The inward is higher and more noble because it is the spiritual kernel, the knowledge that gives life to souls; outward knowledge regulates the visible bodily acts and remains obligatory, but its excellence is like the body in comparison with the spirit.

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For this reason one is discouraged from sleeping face down, lest the outward be symbolically raised over the inward. The preferred position is on the back, signifying the elevation of inward knowledge while still preserving outward practice. Likewise a dead person is carried and prayed over while lying on the back, but when placed in the grave he is laid on his right side. This signifies acting by outward and inward knowledge while relying upon the Imam of the age, for the right side symbolizes the Imam, while the left side is associated with the proof or *ḥujja*. God thus protected His Prophet and taught ʿAlī these meanings through Gabriel.

The Prophet's statement that anyone other than ʿAlī who looked upon his nakedness would become blind means inwardly that the hidden knowledge of the Prophet may not be taken by anyone except the legitimate legatee. Whoever secretly steals such knowledge without authorization is blinded inwardly—that is, falls into error. Knowledge taken without its proper right, or given by one who has exceeded his own authority, does not become firmly established; rather it brings confusion and bewilderment. Many have perished through taking from such secrets what was not granted to them or before reaching the rank at which it could lawfully be disclosed.

Muḥammad al-Bāqir related that Gabriel and ʿAlī washed the Messenger three times: once with water and lote leaves or their equivalent, once with water and camphor, and once with pure water. This became the outward Sunna in washing the dead. Inwardly, because water signifies knowledge, the three washings correspond to three successive degrees through which the person being transferred is advanced by instruction. In the first degree, the instructor removes doubts and confusions, just as the first washing removes dirt. In the second, he clarifies the meanings of the new degree until the soul finds comfort and delight, as camphor and perfume sweeten the body. In the third, he gives pure, unalloyed true knowledge, the knowledge by which the soul lives, corresponding to pure water.

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ʿAlī said that no believing person washes his brother without despising neither the body nor the deceased, without looking at his nakedness, and without revealing anything unpleasant he sees, then accompanies him, prays over him and remains until he is buried, except that he comes out cleansed of his sins. Outwardly this is the reward of properly washing the dead. Inwardly it is the reward of instructors who transfer believers through the ranks of faith.

The instructor must not despise the recipient because he appears outwardly weak, poor or insignificant. "Not looking at his nakedness" means not seeking out a recipient's hidden faults. Just as the washer carefully covers the dead person's private parts, the instructor should not uncover concealed shortcomings merely in order to examine them. Few people are free of defects; what God has covered should remain covered unless disclosure is required by the law of the religion. The instructor deals with people according to what appears from their condition.

Likewise, "not mentioning anything unpleasant" means that if an instructor comes to know some fault of the recipient while teaching or transferring him, he should not spread what ought to remain concealed. The report then speaks of accompanying the funeral, praying over it and remaining until burial; inwardly these are successive limits and acts associated with the believer's transfer, whose interpretation will be explained in its proper place.

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Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad said that a person in major ritual impurity and a menstruating woman are not to wash the dead. Outwardly they must first become pure. Inwardly, major impurity, menstruation and other states requiring ritual purification signify faults or disruptions in religion that require repentance and cleansing by true knowledge. One who is himself inwardly in need of purification cannot purify another before correcting his own condition.

Reports state that ʿAlī washed Fāṭima at her own request, and Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad said that a wife may wash her husband and a husband his wife when necessity requires it. Inwardly, men signify instructors and women recipients. Normally the instructor gives and the recipient receives; but if an instructor suffers a religious difficulty and there is no superior available to remove it, necessity may require that one who formerly received from him remind him of or supply what removes his doubt. This exceptional reversal is like spouses washing one another.

It is also reported that if a man dies among women with no man present, or a woman among men with no woman present, the deceased may be buried without washing. Outwardly an obligation that cannot be performed is dropped from the person who lacks the ability. Inwardly, if someone is transferred to a new degree and no qualified instructor is available there to give the knowledge proper to that degree, he may nevertheless be advanced when he becomes entitled to the next rank; lack of access to the normal intermediary instruction does not absolutely block every further transfer.

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The text then discusses the martyr. If a martyr is killed in battle, he is buried in his clothes where he fell and is not washed. If he is moved from the battlefield while still alive and then dies, he is washed and buried. This was the practice of the Messenger of God with Ḥamza and the martyrs of Uḥud, who were buried in their clothes without being washed.

Inwardly, a martyr (*shahīd*) is a "witness": an instructor is witness over those he instructs, each rank witnesses those below it, the Imams witness the ranks beneath them, the messengers witness the Imams, and God is Witness over all His servants. If such a witness has already received the inward knowledge corresponding to the washing of the dead and is then transferred again, that knowledge need not be repeated for him; he is left with what has already been established. But if part of it had not yet been completed, it is completed after his transfer—like the wounded man who is taken from the battlefield alive and dies only afterwards, and is then washed.

Being buried in his clothes signifies inwardly that the transferred person enters the inward degree symbolized by burial while retaining the outward form appropriate to him. The removal of a fur garment from the martyr signifies removing any outward doctrine of opponents that he may have adopted; he is not to be advanced while still attached to false outward doctrine. A dead body is not shrouded in animal hide, and similarly a believer is not clothed inwardly in the doctrines of those outside the true hierarchy.

Understand, believers, the inward meaning of what appears in your religion, and praise God for what He has opened to you. May He aid you in obedience and increase you in His favor.

The Fifth Session of Part Seven

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In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Praise be to God who encompasses all things in knowledge without deliberation or acquired reflection, who did not gain knowledge when things came into existence nor increase in knowledge by creating them. May God bless Muḥammad His Prophet and chosen one and the guiding Imams from his family.

The next report from ʿAlī concerns what is removed from a martyr: fur garments, wraps, turban, belt, cap and trousers may be removed unless blood has reached them; knots are untied except for certain necessary bindings. The inward meaning builds on what has already been explained. The martyr is the instructor who bears witness over those beneath him by the knowledge that has reached him from God and His friends. Removing hides represents discarding outward doctrines belonging to people of falsehood when one is raised into a degree of faith.

The turban signifies the knowledge and authority of a chief. The Messenger said, "Turbans are the crowns of the Arabs," and he called ʿAlī "the master of the Arabs," meaning the master of those who articulate and interpret the religion—proofs, chiefs and missionaries who stand beneath him. When a person is transferred from one rank to another, he must not claim for himself the special authority of the superior from whom he received; symbolically, the turban is removed where the rank does not belong to him. Trousers symbolize the concealment of the private knowledge entrusted by one's instructor. If the transferred person has been properly marked by that entrusted knowledge, it remains with him as required; otherwise whatever belongs to a rank not his own must be surrendered to its rightful possessor.

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If what belongs to the chief's knowledge has truly become incorporated into the transferred person's own authorized knowledge, it is not stripped from him; but if it remained exclusively the chief's secret, the transferred person yields it and does not claim it. We have explained that the "nakedness" of chiefs signifies the secret of their knowledge which they disclose only to one who reaches a corresponding rank. The cap is

interpreted similarly to the turban. As for the command that no knot be left tied on the corpse when it is lowered into the grave: outwardly the shroud is tied at the head and feet so that it will not come loose, then untied in the grave. Inwardly this signifies that when a believer reaches the degree symbolized by burial, restrictions that were properly imposed upon him in the previous degree are released and what had been withheld from him is now permitted.

Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq said that one who dies by drowning or burning is washed. Outwardly, anyone who dies in those ways is treated as the dead generally are. Inwardly, the drowned person is like one who has been transferred from one degree into a sea of knowledge so vast that he becomes bewildered in it; the burned person is like one scorched by falsehood and harmed by it. When either is transferred toward the degree of rescue and renewed life, he is "washed" with the knowledge symbolized by water. The outwardly obedient and disobedient, righteous and sinful among the people of the community are all washed at death; likewise inward transfer and the cleansing appropriate to it may apply to all according to their condition.

Fire is trial and punishment. Gold and silver, though among the highest substances, are put into fire when adulterated; the fire consumes the alloy and leaves them purified. Inwardly, when corruption mixes with a believer, he may be subjected to a severe trial until what has mingled with him is removed and he becomes pure; then he is cooled and restored through life-giving knowledge, as heated metal is plunged into water.

The Messenger said: "Keep the drowned person for a day and a night, then bury him." Muḥammad al-Bāqir said of one struck by lightning that he should not be buried before three days unless death is unmistakably established. Burial is itself an inward rank to be explained later. Delay in the case of drowning or lightning signifies waiting until the true condition is manifest and the evidence for transfer to the next rank is established.

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The Messenger of God said that if a person dies at the beginning of the day he should not pass the night except in his grave, and if he dies at the end of the day he should not remain overnight outside it. It is said that honoring the dead consists in burying them promptly. Outwardly, haste is recommended because the body changes if left unburied. Inwardly, once a person has reached the stage immediately below the degree signified by burial and has become entitled to it, his transfer should not be needlessly delayed lest delay bring corruption, confusion or loss.

Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad said that if one dies while in major ritual impurity, one washing suffices; the same applies to a menstruating woman. Outwardly the washing of death replaces the separate washing otherwise required for impurity. Inwardly, major impurity and menstruation represent religious faults requiring purification by knowledge. If one who has such a fault is then transferred to a degree that itself requires the opening of new knowledge, the instruction attached to the transfer can at the same time remove the prior fault.

The washing of the dead resembles the washing from major impurity: first the ablution is performed and then the body washed. Its inner meaning is instruction by knowledge, as already explained in the interpretation of purification. Whoever is raised into a new degree is taught the knowledge that removes what needs cleansing in him.

The Imams instructed that the corpse be turned on its sides during washing and not seated upright, for sitting it up may injure the back. Inwardly, sitting signifies ceasing from action. Whoever instructs a believer in any rank of religion must not license him to abandon the outward obligations; rather he confirms and strengthens those obligations. "Breaking the back" signifies destroying the outward practice, since the back symbolizes the outward. To nullify the outward law is ruin in religion and everlasting ruin.

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The corpse is therefore turned on its sides. Inwardly, the right side signifies reliance upon the Imam of the age and the left upon his *ḥujja*. The one being instructed is confirmed in recognition of both and in the obligations owed to each, according to the rank in which he stands. Washing the back signifies examining and cleansing the outward religion, establishing the recipient upon what has been transmitted from the manifest Imams and removing the additions introduced by opponents through private opinion, analogy and arbitrary preference. His outward religion is thereby purified so that it derives from the Imams of God, who transmitted it from the Messenger.

During outward washing an apron is placed from the navel to the knees. The washer passes water beneath it, wrapping a cloth around his hand to cleanse the private parts without uncovering them. Inwardly, the nakedness has two related meanings: the hidden knowledge that only one who reaches a certain rank may know, and the faults and deficiencies of a person. The instructor must not uncover a person's concealed defects before others or pry into them unnecessarily. Where cleansing is required, he treats them discreetly through knowledge, removing doubts and false ideas without exposing what God has covered. The cloth on the hand signifies avoiding direct probing into shameful matters through one's senses except where necessity requires it.

Whatever hair, flesh, bone or other part falls from the corpse is placed in the shroud and buried with it. Inwardly, whatever aspect of outward religious practice has become detached or neglected in the person being transferred must be restored, gathered with what he already possesses and carried with him as he rises, so that his outward religion is complete.

The text then turns to perfume and shrouding. Perfume signifies the knowledge newly disclosed to the person at the rank into which he has been moved—knowledge that delights and settles his soul. The shroud signifies the outward form of the transferred person in the degree symbolized by burial.

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When washing is complete, the corpse is dried with a cloth. Camphor and perfume are placed on the seven places of prostration—the forehead, nose, hands, knees and feet—and also in the ears, mouth, beard and upon the chest. The perfume of a man and a woman is the same in this respect. Outwardly these are the rites of washing. Inwardly, drying the corpse signifies that the knowledge disclosed during transfer is to be guarded and not scattered or publicly exposed. The initiate receives it under a covenant of concealment and keeps it from those to whom it has not been authorized.

Perfume, as already explained, is knowledge that brings joy and comfort to the soul. Applying it to the places of prostration signifies supplying the transferred believer with knowledge concerning obedience to the *nāṭiq* and, in his time, the Imam. The seven members upon which prostration is made symbolize the seven *nāṭiq*s and the seven Imams who succeed in cycles between them, as explained previously. The perfume placed in the mouth relates to the *nāṭiq*; what is placed in the ears relates to the knowledge of the Imam and the *ḥujja*; what is placed upon the chest and beard signifies the outward knowledge transmitted from the Imams. The equality of perfume for man and woman means that this instruction applies to instructor and recipient alike when either is lawfully raised from degree to degree.

Understand what is delivered to you concerning the inward and outward meanings of the pillars of your religion. May God teach and aid you, and bless Muḥammad and the Imams of his progeny.

The Sixth Session of Part Seven

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In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Praise belongs to God, who possesses the most beautiful names and the highest attributes, and nothing is like Him. May God bless Muḥammad His Prophet, ʿAlī his legatee, and the Imams from their progeny with the most complete, pure, noble and exalted blessing.

The next report states that ʿAlī saw no harm in using musk in the perfume of the dead. Since the perfume signifies the knowledge disclosed to one transferred from one degree to another, musk—the finest of perfumes—signifies the choicest form of the knowledge appropriate to that new degree. An instructor may open to the person what is most excellent among the matters lawfully belonging to that degree, just as musk may be used by one who can afford it.

It is also reported that saffron and *wars* are not used in the perfume of the dead. They are substances whose color becomes conspicuous. Inwardly, colored perfumes are likened to forms of outward knowledge whose visible character is prominent, or to symbolic allusions that are not the hidden essence itself. The Imams said that the perfume of men is that whose scent is evident while its color is hidden, whereas the perfume of women is that whose color is evident while its scent is hidden. In the inward sense the knowledge of the instructor—symbolized by the man—is subtler and more concealed than the knowledge he gives to the recipient, until the recipient rises to the rank symbolized by manhood.

The corpse itself is not followed with an incense burner, though the shroud and the place of washing and shrouding may be fumigated. Incense rises as smoke into the air, spreads beyond the giver's control, and may reach both intended and unintended people. It therefore resembles useful worldly knowledge that benefits whoever acquires it but is not one of the hidden teachings carried with a person into the inward ranks. It may be mentioned as needed for outward life, but it is not part of the secret disclosure made in spiritual transfer. Hence the shroud and place—the outward environment—may be perfumed, but the dead person is not accompanied by incense as though it were inward provision.

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The text asks about a pilgrim who dies while in consecration (*iḥrām*). His head is covered and he is treated like any other dead person except that perfume is not brought near him. Outwardly, the person in iḥrām has entered the pilgrimage and is forbidden perfume and other pleasures until he completes the rite. Inwardly, the consecrated pilgrim is the likeness of a respondent who has entered the covenant of the true summons but has not yet reached the ranks in which unrestricted inward disclosure is permitted. Perfume, as stated, is the knowledge newly opened at higher degrees. Therefore that knowledge is withheld until he reaches the rank in which hearing it is lawful.

The *Daʿāʾim* then reports that ʿAlī shrouded the Messenger of God in three garments; Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq said that the customary shroud is three garments and reported that his father directed him to use three. Muḥammad al-Bāqir said that an izār and a turban are required though not counted among the principal shroud garments, and reports concerning women add the head-covering. The Prophet shrouded Ḥamza in a black cloak when little else was available. There is no rigid outward number if means are lacking: one garment may suffice, while an odd number of additional garments is preferred when possible.

Inwardly, the shroud signifies the outward religious form carried by the believer as he is transferred from one inward degree to another. No inward elevation cancels the outward law; before a person is raised he must be established in outward practice, maintain it and act by it as commanded in the Book of God and the Sunna of His Messenger.

The discussion then moves to carrying the funeral. Outwardly, the dead person is carried on a bier upon men's shoulders to the place of prayer and burial. Inwardly, the bier signifies the summons itself within

which the believer is transferred through its degrees; his being carried on men's shoulders symbolizes his elevation above companions who had shared his former rank.

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The bier made for Fāṭima, which concealed the form of a woman from view while she was carried, is also interpreted inwardly. The recipient—symbolized by a woman—when raised to a higher degree should be transferred in secrecy and privacy. The transfer of instructors—symbolized by men—may be more openly known because those they formerly taught can perceive the elevation of their rank. Even so, every such transfer has an inward aspect of concealment, just as a man's corpse is still covered over its shroud while being carried.

The Messenger forbade placing perfume conspicuously upon the bier. ʿAlī once saw a bier decorated with colored cloths and ordered them removed, saying that the first justice of the Hereafter is the grave, where the noble and the lowly are not distinguished by worldly decoration. Inwardly, the one responsible for transfer must deal justly with those who have equally fulfilled the conditions of a rank. Worldly status does not entitle one to spiritual preference over another once the inward requirements are equal.

ʿAlī and al-Ḥusayn both discouraged standing merely because a funeral passed by. One does not rise for the procession except when one has a real function in it, and when the body is placed at the edge of the grave those who carried it sit down. Inwardly, a person should not intrude into the transfer of another unless he has been charged with some part of it. When the transferred person reaches the final point governed by those particular supervisors—the degree symbolized by burial—he passes from their jurisdiction into that of the authority above them, just as the corpse leaves the hands of those who carried it.

The Prophet and ʿAlī commanded haste in carrying funerals and forbade unnecessary slowness. Inwardly, when a believer has fulfilled the conditions for elevation, his transfer should be completed without needless delay. Carrying the bier is a communal duty: if some believers perform it, the obligation falls from the rest; if no one does it, all capable persons are responsible.

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The inward counterpart is that the necessary functions of the summons must be performed by those qualified and able to perform them. When some discharge the duty, the rest are released from the obligation unless a lawful superior specifically calls them to assist. No one who is competent may refuse if the authority responsible for the people of the summons assigns him a necessary task.

The Seventh Session of Part Seven

Praise belongs to God, worthy of praise and exaltation, the possessor of favors and blessings, who has no limit at which He ends, is not confined, and is not perceived through bodily qualities. The qualities of created beings are denied of Him, while reason affirms Him without defining a how. May God bless Muḥammad, the master of creation, and the guiding and rightly guided Imams from his progeny.

The *Daʿāʾim* reports that ʿAlī permitted a funeral to be carried on an animal when there was no one able to carry it, though the Sunna is that men bear it upon their shoulders. Inwardly, those who carry the bier are the functionaries of the true summons whom the person responsible for a transfer employs in carrying out the matter. Outwardly the bier is normally carried by four men; inwardly the transfer of one believer from degree to degree proceeds through four successive authorities. The *dāʿī* who first examines the candidate's deeds raises the matter to the one who appointed him, the gate of the *ḥujja*; the gate raises it to the *ḥujja*; and the *ḥujja* raises it to the Imam. Thus the person's affair ascends through the established hierarchy before the transfer is confirmed.

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The full form of this inward transfer is thus conducted through four authorities, though where circumstances prevent that, the matter may pass through fewer, down even to a single competent authority, just as an outward bier may in necessity be carried by fewer than four or even placed upon a riding animal. The animal then symbolizes the lower functionary who, in an emergency, performs what would ordinarily pass through the full chain of ranks.

ʿAlī recommended that one who assists in carrying a bier begin at the left side of the bier, taking it with his right hand, then move around all four sides. The bier symbolizes the true summons. Its right side signifies its higher ranks and its left side the gates and subordinate ranks beneath them. Whoever enters the summons must come through its gates, as God says: "Enter houses by their doors." Moving around all four sides signifies acknowledgment of all the lawful authorities who uphold the summons.

The Prophet said: "Follow the funeral; do not let it follow you." ʿAlī said that the merit of walking behind the bier over walking ahead of it is like the merit of an obligatory prayer over a voluntary one. The Prophet himself walked barefoot behind a funeral seeking the merit of humility. Inwardly, the believer must follow the summons and the one carried by it rather than advance himself before the established order.

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Walking barefoot signifies casting off the "shoes" of contrary outward doctrine. God said to Moses: "Remove your sandals; you are in the sacred valley Ṭuwā." At the beginning of Moses' connection with the divine command he was ordered to abandon what belonged to the outward ways of opponents. Likewise whoever enters the true summons follows it without carrying into it the alien doctrine he formerly possessed.

The Messenger once saw a woman following a funeral and ordered her to return. In the inward interpretation women signify recipients. The transfer of a believer from rank to rank is attended and effected by instructors, not by recipients who have no authority to perform the transfer. In another report women following a funeral were asked whether they would pray over it, carry it, lower it into the grave or bury it; when they answered no, they were told to return without reward. Inwardly, only those who actually have a function in raising and transferring the person belong to that process.

The discussion then reaches the funeral prayer. Inwardly the funeral prayer is itself a limit within the summons to which the transferred believer arrives. Since prayer signifies the summons, prayer over the dead signifies the special instruction and invocation given to one who has reached this degree so that he may find rest and stability in it.

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Funeral prayer has neither bowing nor prostration. Bowing and prostration have already been interpreted as obedience to the Imam and the *ḥujja*. The person who has reached this particular rank has already been established in those obligations and is now treated according to the special matters that benefit and reassure him. Outwardly the funeral prayer consists of proclaiming God's unity, praising Him, blessing the Messenger and the Imams, praying for the deceased and seeking forgiveness for the believers. This is the inward meaning in a praiseworthy transfer.

In another aspect, funeral prayer can symbolize the outward summons made to someone who has fallen from faith into unbelief or who has not yet entered the inward obedience. In such a call there is no mention of the Imam and *ḥujja* in the form symbolized by bowing and prostration; the person is first called to the outward law and the two testimonies.

Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad related the circumstances of the Prophet's death, washing and shrouding. When al-ʿAbbās told ʿAlī that the people had gathered and wanted one man to lead them in prayer over the Prophet and to bury him in al-Baqīʿ, ʿAlī told them that the Messenger had been their Imam while living and

remained their Imam after death, and that no prophet is buried except where he dies. The people therefore entered in groups of ten, prayed individually before him, and withdrew.

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The Prophet's inward transfer was unlike that of ordinary people. He had reached the degree appropriate to him in the highest kingdom, and Gabriel participated in his washing together with ʿAlī, who succeeded him in the care of the community. He was neither carried upon the ordinary bier nor transferred from the place where he died because such stages symbolize ranks beneath the prophetic rank. Hence ʿAlī's words that every prophet is buried where he dies. Those who stood before the Messenger after his death did not "lead" him in prayer; rather, they approached God through him, as God says concerning the Messenger's prayers: "Indeed, they are a means of nearness for them." The affairs of his higher transfer were undertaken by the near angels assigned to prophets.

Muḥammad al-Bāqir said that there is no harm in funeral prayer at sunset or sunrise or at any time, for it is essentially seeking forgiveness. Inwardly this means that the transfer of a believer within the degrees of the summons may occur whether the Imam—the sun—is manifest or concealed, through those appointed to uphold the summons in either condition.

ʿAlī said when asked to pray over a funeral: "We shall do so, but what benefits him is his own deed." Outward prayer may add the blessing of the believers' supplication, but the dead person is fundamentally benefited by what he himself sent ahead. Inwardly too, the believer's transfer rests upon the righteous work he has performed and upon the state of his heart known to God.

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The report that the prayer of forty sincere believers over a deceased person is accepted has an inward counterpart in the forty limits belonging to the hidden summons. The number forty appears in God's appointment with Moses: "We appointed for Moses thirty nights and completed them with ten, so the appointed time of his Lord was forty nights." These forty signify the complete limits of the inward "night," the concealed summons.

If the ruler or Imam is present at a funeral, he has greater right to lead the prayer than the deceased's relative. If the Imam is absent, the person appointed by him, and then the highest-ranking lawful authority present, has priority. Only if none of them is present does the nearest relative lead. Inwardly, the believer's own instructor has responsibility for his transfer, but if a higher authority is present, that higher authority has the superior right to conduct it. A lower rank does not precede a higher one in the higher one's presence.

May God cause believers to understand, see clearly and benefit from what they are taught.

The Eighth Session of Part Seven

Praise be to God, who cannot be defined by bodily description, screened by veils, contained by places, encompassed by directions or reached by sight. May God bless Muḥammad, ʿAlī his chosen legatee, and the righteous Imams from their progeny.

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ʿAlī was asked about a man whose wife died: should he lead the funeral prayer over her? He replied that her male agnatic relatives had greater right when no ruler was present. Outwardly this is the rule of priority. Inwardly, the woman represents the recipient and the man the instructor. The paternal relatives signify the higher hierarchy, for the father symbolizes the *dāʿī* and those above him up to the *nāṭiq*. Hence God says: "The religion of your father Abraham," and the Messenger said to ʿAlī: "I and you are the two fathers of the believers." If a higher rank is present at the recipient's transfer, it takes priority over the one who was immediately instructing her.

The text then addresses the prayer over a child. If a newborn raises its voice, showing that it was born alive, the funeral prayer is performed. Inwardly, the child is the new respondent who has entered the summons but has not yet reached mature permission to speak from wisdom. The appearance of life signifies the emergence of faith and the beginning of response. If such a person is transferred among preliminary ranks, the rites appropriate to his level are observed even though he has not yet reached the rank of full speech and authority.

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The session elaborates the difference between the spiritually mature and the spiritually immature. Outwardly, a child who showed life is treated as one who entered the community of the living; inwardly, the new respondent who has truly entered the covenant and manifested obedience is counted among the people of faith. The transfer of a child is therefore interpreted according to the limited knowledge and responsibility belonging to his degree, not according to the complete duties of a fully authorized adult.

The reports concerning men and women at funerals are again applied to the hierarchy of instructors and recipients. The rank of the person performing the inward transfer must be sufficient for what is being done, and those below that authority do not assume functions they do not possess. The session repeatedly returns to the rule that every duty belongs to its proper holder, that superior rank takes precedence, and that no one should cross the limits of permission.

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The funeral prayer in cases of necessity may be performed by one who lacks ordinary ritual purity when water is unavailable, through dry ablution. Inwardly, the point is that the person charged with conducting a believer's transfer must possess the appropriate purity of doctrine and knowledge; but when the usual means are unavailable and the task cannot be delayed, what is possible within the lawful limit suffices. Necessity does not abolish the order of the religion, but it changes the form by which the duty is discharged.

The text also discusses the number and sequence of takbīrs in funeral prayer. The outward rule is five takbīrs, with remembrance of God, blessing upon the Prophet and his family, prayer for the deceased, prayer for the believers, and a concluding blessing. Inwardly, these are successive acknowledgments through which the person transferred is firmly established in divine unity, prophethood, the Imams, the hierarchy of the summons and the community of believers.

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ʿAlī and the Imams taught that funeral prayer is normally based upon five takbīrs. The number and order are not arbitrary. Each takbīr is connected with a stage of confession and prayer, and together they form the complete instruction appropriate to the rank represented by the funeral prayer. The person conducting the transfer must not omit what the degree requires, nor add what belongs to another degree merely from personal preference.

The session also explains that if someone joins the funeral prayer after it has begun, he follows the Imam in the remaining takbīrs, remembers inwardly what he has missed, and completes what is required without disrupting the congregation. The inward meaning is similar: one who arrives late to a teaching or transfer cannot act as though the prior instruction never occurred. He accepts and inwardly affirms what preceded his arrival, then proceeds from the point at which he joined, preserving the unity and authority of the one who leads.

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The Imams said that the supplication in funeral prayer is not confined to a single fixed wording. After the first takbīr one praises and declares the unity of God according to one's ability; after the second one blesses the Prophet and his family; after the third one prays for the deceased; after the fourth for the Muslims; after

the fifth one again blesses the Prophet and his family and gives the salutation. Combining these themes at each stage is also good.

Inwardly, this is the complete orientation given to the believer at that rank: he is established in knowledge of God's unity, the Messenger and the Imams, the hierarchy through which the true summons is sustained, and the bond of the believers. These are matters to be believed at the beginning and end of every lawful transfer. Believers are commanded to act by what God has made obligatory and to hold inwardly what He has commanded them to hold.

The Ninth Session of Part Seven

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Muḥammad al-Bāqir said that if the condition of the deceased is not known, one should say: "O God, we know of him only good, while You know him better. Take charge of what he took as his allegiance, and gather him with those he loved." Outwardly this is the appropriate prayer when one knows only that a person belonged to Islam and does not possess tested knowledge of his inner state.

Inwardly, the one responsible for transferring a believer may likewise know only the outward evidence available to him. He judges according to what appears and leaves the hidden reality to God. No instructor may pretend to certainty about what has not been disclosed to him. The principle that people are treated according to their manifest condition runs through the law and the inward order alike.

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The text returns to the two senses of death already explained. One death is before life, like the non-existence of the human being before creation; inwardly this corresponds to unbelief before faith. The other comes after life and may correspond either to an ordinary transfer or, when faith is corrupted, to hypocrisy and return toward unbelief. The Qurʾān itself calls hypocrites unbelievers because they say with their tongues what is not in their hearts: "They took their oaths as a shield… That is because they believed, then disbelieved, so a seal was placed upon their hearts."

Thus one who inwardly fails in the works required by his degree, introduces a serious fault or commits what makes him deserve demotion, may undergo a transfer downward comparable to death. The measure of the descent corresponds to the gravity of what he has done.

Concerning a child, Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq taught that one says: "O God, make him for us a predecessor, a stored reward and a recompense." Inwardly, the child is the respondent who has not yet reached permission to speak from wisdom. His advancement through preliminary ranks becomes a source of reward for the instructor who properly raises him.

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When the funeral prayer is finished, it ends with salutation. The salutation in ordinary prayer has already been interpreted as acknowledgment of the friends of God: salutation to the right signifies affirmation of the Imams, and to the left affirmation of the *ḥujja*s and those who uphold their cause. Thus every person transferred from degree to degree must be confirmed, at the beginning and the end, in allegiance to these authorities and to the outward and inward teachings they transmit.

The chapter then begins burial and graves. Just as death may be praiseworthy or blameworthy depending upon the condition of the person transferred, burial and the grave also have praiseworthy and blameworthy aspects. God honored humanity by assigning the earth as a covering for the living and the dead, saying: "Have We not made the earth a receptacle for the living and the dead?" and "Then He caused him to die and had him buried." In the story of Adam's sons, the raven showed how to conceal the body of the dead brother. Burial therefore outwardly honors, covers and protects the human body.

The earth has already been interpreted as the *ḥujja*. The Messenger said: “The earth is your mother and is kind to you,” and he said to ʿAlī: “I and you are the two fathers of the believers.” Praiseworthy inward burial therefore signifies raising a believer through the ranks until he reaches the *ḥujja* of his time and the high degree of the *naqīb*s who serve as the *ḥujja*’s proofs.

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The *naqīb*s are among the highest believing ranks, and their number is symbolically twelve, as God says: “We raised from among them twelve chiefs.” When the authority of the lord of an age is strong, he may have twelve such chiefs distributed through the great regions of the earth, each calling to him according to the opportunities of the time. The text names the principal “islands” or regions—Arabia, Byzantium, the Slavs, Nubia, the Khazars, India, Sind, the lands of the Zanj, Abyssinia, China, Daylam and the Berbers.

Moses’ affair was strong, being the fourth in his cycle, and similarly the Mahdī was the fourth of his cycle; the middle position in a sevenfold order is associated with strength and manifestation. Moses therefore had twelve chiefs whose trace remained in the scattered communities attached to his law.

Whoever reaches the degree of *naqīb* has reached the highest believing degree beneath the *ḥujja*. This is the inward likeness of praiseworthy burial: the corpse is placed in the earth, while the believer reaches the rank signified by the earth, the *ḥujja*. One whose function remains upon the “surface of the earth” corresponds to a missionary above ordinary missionaries but beneath the *naqīb*. The text connects this with Qurʾānic images of birds, which in inward interpretation can signify missionaries.

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The session concludes by urging believers to understand the connection between interpretation and revelation and to give thanks for the knowledge granted them.

The Tenth Session of Part Seven

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Praise be to God, manifest through the wonders of His power which He shows creation, and inward through the secrets of His wisdom which He deposits with His friends and those who know Him. May God bless Muḥammad and the chosen ones of his progeny.

The text now contrasts praiseworthy and blameworthy death and burial. Death itself, as an act of divine wisdom, is not blameworthy; praise and blame attach to the person transferred according to what his actions have earned. Outwardly one person is transferred by death to mercy, another to punishment. Inwardly, a believer may rise through faith, or someone who corrupts his faith may fall toward unbelief, hypocrisy and lower conditions. The “graves” in this blameworthy sense symbolize the people of error to whom a fallen person returns.

God says: “Rivalry in increase distracted you until you visited the graves… then you will surely be questioned that day concerning the blessing.” The threat concerns those who abandon faith and return to the people of error.

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Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad rejected the idea that the “blessing” about which people will be questioned is merely cold water or ordinary food. God is too generous to permit such things to His servants and then reproach them for using them. He said instead that the Imams are the blessing by which God has favored people and concerning whose rights they will be questioned.

Thus the grave is praiseworthy for the believer and blameworthy for the unbeliever, just as death itself may be praiseworthy or blameworthy according to the person’s condition. The reports of the righteous speaking of the world as a prison and death as release are understood in this framework. The believer’s inward burial

in the true earth—the *ḥujja* and the lawful hierarchy—is safety and completion, whereas the grave of error is return to those who are inwardly dead.

The text continues with the rights of parents and descendants in burial and with the obligation of maintaining the chain of religious authority. Fathers symbolize the higher missionaries, children the respondents beneath them. When a person is transferred, the one responsible for him does not act independently of the chain above him but seeks the authorization and knowledge required by his own superior.

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The outward rites around burial are repeatedly tied to the same principle: the person who has the right of guardianship acts first; the body is oriented correctly; supplication is made for the deceased; and those present ask that his proof be made firm, his spirit raised and that he meet divine satisfaction. Inwardly these petitions signify confirming the believer in the proof of the Imam, raising him in the degrees of the summons, and joining him to the rank for which his deeds have prepared him.

The Prophet's instruction concerning facing the qibla at the grave again signifies orientation toward the Imam. The person transferred inwardly is not merely moved from one administrative position to another; he is renewed in allegiance, recognition and knowledge. Each advance therefore includes both a new disclosure and a renewed pledge concerning the authority above him.

The text also warns that no one may promote a person beyond the rank for which he is qualified, nor withhold a rank once its conditions are met. Both excess and deficiency are injustice.

Page 53

Reports concerning the body in the grave are interpreted as rules of spiritual placement. What is put beneath or beside the dead, the manner in which the grave is closed, and the words spoken over it all point to the covering of secrets, the stability of allegiance and the completion of the degree. The lawful authority ensures that the person is not left exposed to confusion after being transferred.

The visits of relatives and believers to graves likewise have an inward correspondence. Outwardly, visiting the graves renews memory of death and the Hereafter and brings prayer for the dead. Inwardly, it signifies maintaining connection with the higher ranks and remembering the path by which people are transferred from degree to degree. Such remembrance keeps the believer from imagining that his present station is permanent or self-sufficient.

Page 54

The text cites the warning against boasting in numbers, worldly abundance and rivalry, because all such things end at the graves. Inwardly, one must not seek spiritual rank through numbers, followers or outward prestige. The value of a degree lies in truth, knowledge and obedience, not in worldly distinction.

Where the dead person is buried and how the grave is marked are also treated with moderation. The purpose is recognition, dignity and remembrance, not ostentation. Inwardly, the marks of a rank exist so that people can recognize rightful authority and know where knowledge is to be sought, but those marks must not become claims of personal grandeur detached from obedience to the Imam.

Page 55

The conclusion of Part Seven returns to the Qurʾānic words, "Rivalry in increase distracts you until you visit the graves." The text has now explained death, washing, shrouding, carrying, funeral prayer and burial in their outward rulings and inward correspondences. The common thread is transfer: from one abode to another outwardly, and from one degree of knowledge and obedience to another inwardly. Every transfer is governed by rightful authority, by what the person's deeds merit, and by the preservation of both the outward law and the inward wisdom.

Believers are urged to receive these meanings as aids to practice, not as excuses for abandoning the outward commands. The inward confirms the outward, gives it depth and reveals the order through which divine guidance reaches the community. May God grant understanding and steadfastness.

Part Eight of the Book *The Training of the Believers by Instruction in the Inner Limits of the Knowledge of Religion*

The First Session of Part Eight

Page 56

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Praise be to God, the One without qualification, who creates without toil or deliberation. May His most perfect blessings be upon Muḥammad and the Imams from his pure progeny.

The author reminds the brethren that the preceding interpretation has treated several of the outward pillars and rulings of the *Daʿāʾim al-Islām*: allegiance, purification and prayer. The next book is the Book of Zakāt. Everything established in the *Daʿāʾim* concerning obligations, judgments, lawful and unlawful matters is the outward religion of God and must be performed as commanded. The inward meanings now disclosed are knowledge, wisdom, grace and mercy; they do not replace outward practice. Rather, God discloses through His friends why the commands have both outward and inward dimensions, so that believers may obey knowingly.

No deed, outward or inward, benefits without obedience to God, His Messenger and the holders of authority. God says: “Obey God, obey the Messenger and those vested with authority among you,” and the Messenger’s reward from the community is “love for the near kin.” Acceptance of good deeds is joined to recognition, love and obedience of the divine friends.

Page 57

The Messenger said: “There is no share in Islam for one who abandons prayer.” Prayer has an outward form and an inward meaning, entry into the true summons. Whoever abandons either has failed to fulfill the command in its completeness. Faith itself requires both outward speech and inward conviction: saying the testimony without inward belief is hypocrisy, while inward conviction that is never confessed does not establish one outwardly among Muslims.

God commands both the outward and inward dimensions: He “lavished upon you His blessings, outward and inward,” and says, “Abandon the outward of sin and its inward.” The believer therefore performs what is commanded in both senses and avoids what is forbidden in both senses.

Prayer is not accepted without recognition and purification. Outwardly one must recognize the Messenger who brought the command and perform ritual purification. Inwardly one must recognize the Imam of one’s age and become purified by knowledge from unbelief, association, doubt and disobedience. The Prophet then said: “There is no prayer without zakāt.” God likewise repeatedly joins prayer and zakāt in the Qurʾān.

Page 58

The seven pillars of Islam, as stated earlier in the *Daʿāʾim*, are allegiance, purification, prayer, zakāt, fasting, pilgrimage and jihād, with allegiance as their foundation. Having interpreted the first three, the author now begins zakāt.

Outwardly zakāt is the obligatory portion taken from the wealth of those upon whom it is due and paid to the Imam or his authorized agent, to be distributed in the ways God has prescribed. God told the Prophet: “Take from their wealth a charity by which you purify them and cause them to grow.” The duty did not cease with the Prophet’s death; it passes to the Imams after him and must be paid to the Imam of the age or the one authorized to receive it.

The Arabic root of *zakāt* includes purification, righteousness and increase. Wealth from which its obligatory due has been taken is purified and lawful to its owner; hoarded wealth whose due is withheld becomes a cause of punishment. The Prophet said: “What has had its zakāt taken is not hoarded treasure.”

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The term *zakāt* can therefore mean purification, rectitude and growth. God says: “Prosperous is he who purifies it, and failed is he who corrupts it,” and: “Take from their wealth a charity by which you purify them and increase them.” Inwardly the command “Establish prayer and give zakāt” means: establish the true summons and give the due through which you yourselves and what belongs to you are purified and increased in excellence.

Zakāt can also name the purifier, just as Arabic often names a thing after its cause. In one line of interpretation, prayer symbolizes the speaking prophets and the Imams who establish the summons, while zakāt symbolizes the foundations (*asās*) and proofs (*ḥujja*s) who purify people, rectify their conditions and transfer them through ranks according to their deeds. Thus “there is no prayer without zakāt” can mean that the summons cannot stand without recognition of the foundations, the legatees of the prophets, and the proofs, the legatees of the Imams.

Giving zakāt inwardly is connection with the friends of God and those they appoint, through righteous action that brings purification and places a believer among the righteous and just.

Page 60

God says: “Prosperous is he who purifies himself, remembers the name of his Lord and prays.” Prosperity is deliverance. Inwardly, the person purified by the friends of God is raised into the ranks of the righteous and may be authorized to call others to God and to them. “Remembering the name of his Lord” is connected with remembering the *walī* of the age, through whom people are led to true knowledge of their Lord.

The verse, “Prosperous indeed are the believers: those who are humble in their prayer, turn away from vain talk, and are active in zakāt,” is interpreted as deliverance for those who are humble and obedient in the summons, who speak only truth concerning it, and who perform the works by which their faults are purified and their condition becomes upright before the friends of God.

The Prophet said: “When God desires good for a servant, He sends to him an angel from the treasurers of Paradise, who wipes his breast and makes his soul generous with zakāt.” Angels outwardly are divine messengers; inwardly they symbolize God’s friends and the authorities through whom guidance reaches people. Paradise inwardly is the true summons. Its treasurers are those who administer it. God sends one of them to guide a person’s heart toward the proof of the Imam of his time, so that he willingly accepts the duties that purify and increase him.

The Second Session of Part Eight

Page 61

Praise be to God, exalted beyond the reach of sight and imagination and beyond likeness and comparison. May God bless Muḥammad, master of humanity, and the Imams from his progeny.

ʿAlī said: “The worshipper has three signs: prayer, fasting and zakāt.” Inwardly the worshipper is one who knows the authority of God’s friends and submits to their command. Prayer signifies his standing within the true summons; fasting signifies his keeping what must be concealed and restraining himself from what is forbidden; zakāt signifies purification from faults and growth in good through obedience and attachment to the proof of his time.

The session cites ʿAlī's testament urging his children, family and all believers to fear God, establish prayer, give zakāt and obey the rightful command. Outward observance and inward loyalty are treated as inseparable signs of genuine worship.

Page 62

The Prophet said that every thing has a zakāt: the zakāt of knowledge is spreading it, and the zakāt of the body is fasting. Outwardly this concerns useful teaching and bodily discipline. Inwardly, one who possesses authorized knowledge must not hoard it from those entitled to receive it. He gives each recipient what belongs to his degree, just as the owner of wealth gives the due share to its lawful recipients.

Yet knowledge is not to be cast indiscriminately before everyone. Its zakāt is lawful dissemination through the limits established by the Imam. The instructor purifies his knowledge by giving what he has been commanded to give and purifies the recipient by giving the appropriate measure. Withholding due instruction is like withholding wealth; divulging what is forbidden is likewise corruption rather than generosity.

Page 63

The author develops this through reports concerning generosity, justice and lawful distribution. A person whose wealth is purified by zakāt does not thereby lose it in the religious sense; he makes it lawful, fruitful and blessed. Likewise, a teacher who gives knowledge correctly does not diminish his own knowledge but causes it to grow through rightful transmission.

The Qurʾānic language of growth, purification and God's satisfaction is applied inwardly to a person's progress under the authority of the Imam. The friends of God purify those beneath them through instruction, testing and advancement; recipients in turn purify themselves by obedience, truthful action and the due transmission of what they are authorized to pass on.

Page 64

A report concerning a governor afflicted with abdominal pain leads to a teaching transmitted through the Imams and ʿAlī. The outward lesson concerns honesty, lawful provision and the rights due in wealth. The inward lesson is that God has allotted provisions and ranks; one must not steal what belongs to another rank or claim knowledge and authority not assigned to oneself.

The "theft" of knowledge is taking a secret without permission or presenting another person's rank as one's own. Such theft does not enrich the thief; it brings liability. By contrast, knowledge received through its proper chain is lawful provision. The person who receives it must give from it according to the command, just as the owner of wealth gives zakāt from what God has allotted him.

Page 65

The session continues with reports condemning withholding rights and praising correct distribution. Outward property has fixed obligations; inward knowledge has fixed obligations likewise. What is due cannot be increased or decreased through personal whim, because the measure comes from God and His authorized friends.

A believer who is purified inwardly does not seek to monopolize rank. He accepts what is given him, transmits what is due from him, and refrains from what lies above his authorization. In this way zakāt becomes a comprehensive image of religious trust: receiving from above, purifying what one receives through obedience, and giving the rightful share below.

The Third Session of Part Eight

Page 66

Praise be to God, whose authority encompasses creation and whose knowledge does not fail. The session begins from the principle that the resurrection in inward interpretation is associated with the Imam who brings a cycle to completion, and that worldly order continues until the appointed transformation of the age.

The text speaks of charity to the poor. Outwardly, God imposed in the wealth of the rich a right for the poor. Inwardly, "poverty" signifies need for knowledge. Those who possess knowledge owe instruction to those whom the hierarchy has entrusted to them. Recipients do not possess an unrestricted claim to every secret; their right is what the law of the summons assigns to their condition.

Page 67

The Qurʾānic command to spend from good things and not deliberately offer what is corrupt is applied to instruction. The teacher gives sound, authentic knowledge, not doubtful or debased doctrine. Just as defective goods are not a worthy offering, confused teaching, private speculation and unauthorized interpretation are not valid spiritual zakāt.

The Prophet and the Imams are cited concerning charity, reward and the danger of withholding it. Inwardly, the "wealth" most relevant to the teacher is knowledge; the "poor" are those genuinely in need of what he has been charged to give. The receiver's poverty does not mean that he may demand whatever he wants, but that the superior must discern and supply what truly benefits him.

Page 68

The text explains that the martyr in inward interpretation is the Imam of the age, witness over the people of his time. God says that a witness will be brought from every community and the Messenger as witness over his community. Beneath the Imam, each rightful rank bears witness over those entrusted to it.

The "rich" and "poor" language of zakāt therefore maps onto the movement of knowledge: the one who has received more must not hoard it from those who have a due claim; the one who receives must use it faithfully and not waste it on passions and worldly distraction. If recipients turn toward desire and neglect the works required of them, the fault belongs to them once their instructors have discharged what was owed.

Page 69

The text lists those who are first in Paradise and those who are first in the Fire. The righteous ruler who worships God well, the chaste person with dependants, and the obedient servant represent inwardly the Imam, the faithful instructor responsible for his community, and the believer who submits to rightful authority. They lead their followers toward Paradise just as they led them in this world.

Conversely, the unjust ruler, the wealthy person who withholds the right of his wealth, and the ignorant corrupt poor person are foremost among the people of the Fire. Wealth here inwardly is knowledge. Whoever knows but conceals what he has been ordered to disclose is threatened by the saying: "Whoever conceals knowledge will come on the Day of Resurrection bridled with a bridle of fire," and by the Qurʾānic curse upon those who conceal the clear proofs and guidance after God has made them plain.

Page 70

Every person appointed to clarify must clarify for the people entrusted to him what their rank requires. God commanded the Messenger: "O Messenger, convey what has been sent down to you from your Lord," and: "We sent down to you the Reminder so that you may make clear to the people what was sent down to them." The same pattern continues through prophets, Imams and their authorized representatives. Deliberate failure brings blame and punishment.

The poor ignorant person who refuses knowledge is also blameworthy. Reports warn that God has "places of vengeance" in which the wealth of one who refuses to pay its due may be consumed. Inwardly, a teacher who hoards knowledge may have his authority removed by the proofs of God's friends. The image of killing children out of fear of poverty is applied to a missionary who refuses to educate his own followers because he fears that, once knowledgeable, they may equal or replace him. The lawful superior may therefore remove his hand from the summons and cut off the supply of knowledge from him: a just "retaliation" for the spiritual killing he committed.

Page 71

Turning away from available knowledge and wisdom is like killing oneself inwardly, and God says: "Do not kill yourselves; God is merciful to you." Believers are therefore commanded to preserve both the outward religion and its inward meaning.

The Fourth Session of Part Eight

Praise be to God, the Manifest unlike created manifestation, the Inward beyond imagination and sense, who numbers atoms and breaths. May God bless Muḥammad, ʿAlī and the Imams from their progeny.

Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq said that God imposed nothing upon this community more difficult for them than zakāt, and that many perish through it. Outwardly, people are naturally attached to property and reluctant to surrender it. God says that if He demanded all their wealth they would become miserly and their hidden resentments would emerge. Inwardly, the same applies to teachers who withhold knowledge and recipients who withhold the righteous deeds and obedience by which they would be purified. Many are ruined because they refuse the due that belongs to the rank above or beneath them.

Page 72

The texts severely condemn withholding zakāt, even describing the withholder as associating others with God. Inwardly, whoever refuses an obligation imposed by God and His friends sets his own will against the divine command. Faith requires submission: "No, by your Lord, they do not believe until they make you judge… and submit completely."

The discussion then turns to zakāt on gold, silver and precious substances. Gold and silver are the principal media of exchange, gold being higher in value. Inwardly, gold signifies the knowledge of the *nāṭiq*, the prophet or speaking lord of a cycle; silver signifies the knowledge of the *asās*, his legatee and proof. Other precious substances signify levels of knowledge transmitted through the higher spiritual intermediaries, prophets, Imams and subordinate ranks.

Outwardly, twenty dinars of gold held for a year require half a dinar in zakāt, and two hundred dirhams of silver require five dirhams. These proportions become symbolic measures of transmission in the inner hierarchy.

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The flowing metals are mapped onto the ranks of religious knowledge: gold to the *nāṭiq*, silver to the *asās*, and other metals to succeeding ranks such as the great missionaries, missionaries and authorized officers. Their capacity to be melted, cast and used in many forms signifies the way knowledge flows through the hierarchy and takes forms useful to people.

The number twenty is treated through finger-reckoning symbolism. Two groups of ten signify two major bodies of knowledge, outward and inward. The thumb symbolizes the *nāṭiq*, the forefinger the *asās*, and the middle finger the Imam. A fortieth part of twenty is half a dinar; correspondingly the *nāṭiq*, during his life, gives his *asās* a measured portion of his knowledge, while at death the full inheritance of knowledge

passes to him. The Qurʾān's language of inheritance—Solomon inheriting David and Zachariah asking for an heir—includes the inheritance of prophetic knowledge as well as property.

Page 74

Two hundred dirhams and their five-dirham due are similarly interpreted through the chain by which knowledge passes: from *nāṭiq* to *asās*, then to Imam, *ḥujja* and *dāʿī*. Each authority gives the proper share while living, and the complete trust passes to the successor when the office itself passes. This transmission is called zakāt because through it the friends of God purify and increase their followers.

No zakāt is due on gold below the full threshold of twenty. Inwardly, the *nāṭiq* does not disclose the measured portion of higher knowledge to the *asās* until the two bodies—outward and inward—are complete and firmly established. Likewise the Imam gives to his successor only when the conditions of succession are complete.

Precious stones are solid rather than flowing; they symbolize the knowledge of the higher angels, who do not independently teach human beings but convey whatever God commands them to deliver. The text continues by assigning other metals to lower human ranks and explaining why the same outward zakāt rules do not apply to every substance.

The Fifth Session of Part Eight

Page 75

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Praise be to God, who originated creation without model, adviser, vision or prior pattern, and who measured all He originated with the best measure. May God bless Muḥammad, sent after the messengers, ʿAlī his legatee, and the Imams from their pure progeny.

Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq said that one-fifth is due from amber and pearls extracted from the sea, from buried treasure, mines, ancient hoards, and similar discoveries. He also said that one-fifth is due from mines of gold, silver, iron, lead and other minerals, and that the Imam receives the fifth.

Inwardly, pearls and amber brought from the depths of the sea resemble hidden meanings of outward knowledge that are reached only through penetration and interpretation. Minerals hidden in the earth resemble truths concealed within the outward law: ordinary people see the soil, while specialists search, refine and smelt until the precious substance appears. Ancient treasure symbolizes wisdom extracted from the transmitted knowledge of the earlier friends of God. The fifth taken from wealth gained from opponents signifies the inward wisdom that the friends of God extract from the laws and books held by those who do not themselves understand their hidden meanings.

All such "fifths" belong to the Imam, who distributes them among the ranks God has appointed.

Page 76

God says: "Know that whatever you acquire as gain, one-fifth of it belongs to God, the Messenger, the near of kin, the orphans, the needy and the traveler." Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq explained that the fifth is God's; He made it for the Messenger and the Messenger's kin, their orphans, needy and travelers. The mention of God is an opening because all things already belong to Him; the practical division falls among the appointed categories.

Inwardly, the "fifth" is a share of extracted knowledge and wisdom that circulates through five classes. The "near of kin" are the *asās* and the legatees, relatives of the messengers and holders of authority after them. The "orphans" are the Imams, each unique and without a peer in his office, and each succeeding after a predecessor who has departed. The "needy" are the heirs and proofs of the Imams who depend upon them for outward and inward benefit. The "traveler" signifies the ranks of missionaries who spread through the

regions of the earth calling people to the friends of God. Each class receives the portion of knowledge and authority established for it by divine order.

Page 77

If dinars, dirhams, gold or silver fall below the ordinary threshold, the outward ruling varies according to the rule applicable to the wealth. Inwardly, all forms of knowledge have ranks—some nobler than others—and their "zakāt" is giving each recipient the authorized portion of the particular type of knowledge.

The Messenger forbade zakāt on a person's house, servants, clothing, furnishings and riding animal when these are kept for personal use rather than trade. If they are acquired for trade, their value becomes subject to zakāt. Inwardly, knowledge that belongs exclusively to the instructor's own degree is like personal property: he is not required to give it to one beneath him. What he has specifically been authorized to transmit is like merchandise placed in circulation and must be given to those entitled to receive it.

Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq said that merchandise held for trade is assessed for zakāt when, at the end of the year, it can be sold for its capital value or more; if it has fallen below its capital value and no other taxable wealth brings the owner to the threshold, zakāt is postponed until sale. Inwardly, an instructor may have knowledge intended for transmission but find no recipient in whom it can presently bear fruit. He does not force it where there is no benefit; but if his field of instruction is wide and he finds people in whom good may be expected, he joins that knowledge to what he already possesses for transmission and gives each person his rightful portion.

Page 78

Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq said that there is no zakāt on the wealth of an orphan or one of unsound mind unless the wealth is actively employed. Inwardly, the orphan symbolizes the Imam, unique in his office. The knowledge specially possessed by the Imam is not something he must distribute indiscriminately; the portion uniquely proper to his office remains with him and passes to his successor. When, however, part of his knowledge is set into operation through teachers who transmit it to recipients, that active knowledge has its "zakāt" in the purification and instruction of those beneath.

The one of unsound mind signifies the person who has lost the Imam, for the Imam is like the intellect through which divine reward, punishment and right guidance are mediated. Knowledge once possessed by someone who then goes astray is not safely taken from him merely because he once knew; it becomes beneficial only when it reaches a lawful holder who can transmit it in a sound way.

Concerning debts, if money owed to a person is readily obtainable without dispute, it is treated like wealth in his hand and zakāt is due; if the debtor refuses and it can be recovered only through litigation, the liability belongs to the one who actually holds it. Inwardly, knowledge that one can obtain from one's teacher whenever needed is treated as effectively possessed and may be transmitted below according to one's authorized measure.

Page 79

If, however, a superior withholds further knowledge and the lower instructor does not actually possess it, he cannot be required to transmit beyond what he has received. Even when he possesses much, he is not to give everything to everyone beneath him, for God has made ranks and raised some above others. If all knowledge were given equally to all, the graded order of the summons would disappear.

There is no zakāt on the property of a slave who has entered a contract of emancipation (*mukātab*) while he remains under the bond. Outwardly, the contracted slave becomes free only after fulfilling the agreed payment. Inwardly, the "slave" is the believer who has entered the covenant but remains under restriction and has not yet been released to speak openly from wisdom. He is bound by the covenant and may not initiate others into what he has heard until the authority above him grants permission. The stages of his

release from this inward bondage correspond to fulfilling the terms of the contract. Until then, he is not permitted to give the “zakāt” of knowledge by disclosing it to others.

The Sixth Session of Part Eight

Page 80

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Praise be to God, who appoints times, measures provisions, causes plants to grow, brings death to the living and raises the dead. May God bless Muḥammad, His Messenger to all humanity, and the noble Imams from his progeny.

Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq said that zakāt remains guaranteed as a liability until the person upon whom it is due places it in its proper place. Outwardly, even if one separates the due portion from one’s wealth, loss of that portion does not discharge the obligation until it has been delivered to the Imam or his authorized collector; if the wealth is lost before payment, the due remains a debt when the person later becomes able to pay.

Inwardly, whoever is obliged to instruct a recipient remains responsible until he actually delivers the knowledge that is due. If he withholds it until the recipient dies or until his own office ends, the failure remains against him. Giving the knowledge to someone not entitled to it does not discharge the obligation, just as paying a debt to the wrong person does not discharge the debtor. The due must reach the rightful recipient or the authorized agent appointed for him.

Page 81

The discussion then turns to zakāt on livestock. The Arabic word for livestock includes animals that walk, especially camels, cattle and sheep. Inwardly, camels symbolize the speaking prophets in their cycles and the Imams in their times; cattle symbolize the *asās*—the prophetic legatees—and the *ḥujja*s who inherit the Imams; sheep symbolize the great missionaries and, in some contexts, the believers generally.

These three classes are called “livestock” because their inward counterparts move through the earth working for its reform and establishing God’s command. They are also “cattle” or “blessings” because God benefits His servants through them. They are alive in both worlds through the life of faith and become means by which others are brought to inward life.

Camels are the highest of these animals and carry burdens. The prophets likewise bear the burdens of the kingdom and the obligations God lays upon the servants. God told the Prophet: “We shall cast upon you a weighty word.” The sacrifices and purifications of these animals therefore become symbols of the purification of the ranks they represent.

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Cattle and sheep are slaughtered while alive; inwardly slaughter signifies the covenant that cuts a person away from the headship of error and binds him to the true hierarchy. Skinning signifies the removal of the outward form of misguidance. Once purified, both the outward and inward knowledge of the rightly guided authorities become lawful nourishment for believers, just as the flesh of properly slaughtered animals becomes lawful food.

The peculiar bodily signs of camels are also treated as symbols. Their urine passes backward while the generative fluid passes forward. Earlier, urine was interpreted as doubt and impurity, while generative fluid signifies knowledge through which spiritual offspring—new believers—are produced. The speaking prophets bring an outward law containing symbols, allusions and concise expressions that can generate doubt in those who do not know their reality; but they transmit the true explanatory knowledge forward to the *asās* and *ḥujja*s, who remove doubt through interpretation.

Young camels face the sun, while older camels turn away from it. The author likens this to the prophets’ early work in both outward and inward instruction; after establishing their legatees and proofs, they entrust

much of the inward exposition to them while they themselves remain chiefly responsible for the outward law. The Prophet's declaration, "Whoever has me as his master has ʿAlī as his master," is cited in this connection.

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Camels store fat upon their backs. Since the back symbolizes the outward aspect, this indicates that the speaking prophets store inward wisdom within the outward forms of their revealed laws; the interpreters extract the hidden wisdom from those outward forms.

God speaks of livestock as "beasts of burden and smaller cattle." Camels bear loads, cattle plow the earth, and the smaller animals provide other benefits. Inwardly, the *asās* and the *ḥujja*s "plow" the field of interpretation and bring forth believers and knowledge. The story of the cow in Moses' community is read in this framework: the command was not a meaningless mockery but a divinely ordered appointment and test connected with succession and proof.

God also says that livestock contain a lesson and that He gives people pure milk from between refuse and blood. Milk inwardly signifies purified inner knowledge emerging from the complex outward forms of the religion. The dung and urine of the three lawful livestock are discussed as signs that their inward counterparts are free from association and doubt in the matters entrusted to them.

Their hides, wool and hair are lawful and useful. Since hides symbolize the outward aspect, this means the outward law of the prophets, legatees and missionaries is pure, useful and fit for practice. God describes houses made from animal hides and goods made from wool and hair; inwardly, the "houses" are the friends of God and their hierarchical offices into which believers enter through the proper doors.

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The outward forms of these authorities shelter believers until the time when works are raised at the Hour. Camels lack horns, unlike cattle and sheep. The author interprets horns as disputation: the speaking prophets do not engage opponents merely in endless argument but possess decisive authority, whereas the lower interpretive ranks may debate and answer opponents within the limits assigned to them.

The session then begins the detailed zakāt of camels. Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq said that there is no due on four camels. At five grazing camels, one sheep is due; at ten, two sheep; at fifteen, three; at twenty, four, and so on according to the transmitted law. Inwardly, the *nāṭiq* does not reach his final office all at once. He ascends degree by degree, God supplying him at every stage with a measure of knowledge and wisdom. The Qurʾān's descriptions of Abraham being shown the kingdom of the heavens and earth, and of God completing favor upon chosen servants, are cited as examples of this progressive elevation.

The Seventh Session of Part Eight

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The final lines of the preceding discussion had explained that the hides, wool and hair of the lawful livestock symbolize the outward forms and teachings of the divine hierarchy: believers take shelter in them and benefit from them, approaching the "houses" of guidance only through the appointed doors. The seventh session now continues the interpretation of the camel-zakāt.

Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq said that there is no due on four camels; at five grazing camels one sheep is due, at ten two sheep, at fifteen three, and at twenty four. Inwardly, the speaking prophet does not arrive at the final prophetic station without first advancing through preparatory degrees. At each stage God increases him in knowledge and wisdom, just as the outward due increases by measured stages. The Qurʾān describes Abraham being shown the kingdom of the heavens and earth stage by stage and describes the completion of divine favor upon Joseph, Muḥammad and the chosen guides. The friends of God likewise raise their

appointed assistants gradually, giving each rank the measure of knowledge by which its office can be performed.

Every rank therefore has a “zakāt” from what God gives it: the superior gives the due portion to the one entitled beneath him, thereby purifying and increasing the recipient.

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The text notes that the higher spiritual ranks themselves form an ordered chain between God and His prophets, but that this is not the place to set out the celestial hierarchy in detail. The principle is that every rank receives from the one above and gives to the one below according to the measure assigned to it.

The first four assistants established by the *nāṭiq* are compared to the four sacred months, and their appointment is represented by the four sheep due between five and twenty camels. These four become foundational supports of the call. God’s command to Abraham, “Take four birds and incline them to yourself,” is cited as a symbolic parallel: the one who inaugurates a summons establishes four principal agents through whom further ranks are multiplied.

The apparent arithmetic of camel-zakāt therefore becomes, in the inward explanation, an image of progressive institutional formation: a small number of chosen helpers is first trained, then those helpers become means for calling and establishing additional ranks. Nothing is appointed before the appropriate measure has been completed.

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When the camels reach twenty-five, the due becomes a *bint makhāḍ*, a young she-camel that has completed one year and entered the second, its mother now capable of being pregnant again. Inwardly this signifies the establishment of the “followers” or secondary agents. The *nāṭiq*, after calling the first four, commands each of them to call two, making eight additional persons and twelve in all. These twelve correspond to the twelve months, of which four are sacred, and to the twelve chiefs or *naqīb*s.

A *naqīb* is a witness and trusted representative over a group, one whose report about them is accepted. When the *nāṭiq* establishes twelve chiefs, he distributes among them the twelve great regions of the earth, each chief serving in his own region. The first and most eminent of the four becomes the gate. ʿAlī is given as the supreme example: he was the first of those called by the Messenger, was reared with him, and became the gate to him. The Prophet said: “I am the city of knowledge and ʿAlī is its gate; whoever seeks knowledge, let him come through the gate.”

Thus the *bint makhāḍ* symbolizes the first rank of the gate: a young but prepared station ready to bear the next burden of knowledge.

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The knowledge received by the gate from the *nāṭiq* is a burden in the noble sense, like pregnancy: revelation descends upon the speaking prophet, and he carries it until the appointed time for delivering each portion to the one entitled to it. The longer the trust remains before its lawful delivery, the heavier the responsibility becomes, just as a debt weighs upon the debtor until it is paid.

The author identifies ʿAlī as the gate of the Arabian region and mentions Jaʿfar b. Abī Ṭālib, Ḥamza and ʿUbayda b. al-Ḥārith among the foremost early supports of the Prophet. Jaʿfar was sent to Abyssinia with the persecuted Muslims, called the Negus to Islam, remained there until after the Prophet’s migration, and returned around the conquest of Khaybar. The Prophet welcomed him with great joy. Ḥamza, ʿUbayda and ʿAlī were the champions who answered the challenge at Badr.

These examples show how the initial chosen agents were entrusted with distinct regions and functions, each according to his rank and ability.

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The Qurʾānic verses concerning “two adversaries who disputed concerning their Lord” and those believers who “were true to what they covenanted with God” are linked with these early supporters. ʿAlī is reported to have applied the latter verse to himself, Jaʿfar, Ḥamza and ʿUbayda: his companions had fulfilled their term, while he remained waiting without changing the covenant.

The author closes this stage of the camel-zakāt interpretation by reminding the audience that the outward rulings and the inward symbolism correspond according to the measure of the rank. Believers are told to recognize the favor shown them in hearing this knowledge and to give thanks, for God says: “If you are grateful, I will surely increase you.”

The Eighth Session of Part Eight

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In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Praise be to God, whom the finest perceptions of sight do not reach and whom the horizons cannot encompass. May God bless Muḥammad and the righteous Imams of his family.

Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq taught that when camels reach thirty-six, the due is a *bint labūn*, a she-camel that has completed two years and entered the third. The inward interpretation continues the progressive elevation of the gate. The earlier *bint makhāḍ* represented ʿAlī at the initial degree of being the Prophet’s gate; the *bint labūn* represents a higher stage in which he becomes the Prophet’s minister and active support.

The Prophet had been supplied with knowledge by God and then gave ʿAlī what the new stage required. The increase in outward liability as the herd grows therefore signifies the increase of knowledge and responsibility passed from the *nāṭiq* to the successor as the successor’s rank matures.

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The author recalls the gathering of Banū ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib when the Prophet was commanded: “Warn your nearest kindred.” He instructed ʿAlī to prepare a small amount of food and milk, invited around forty men, and through divine blessing the food sufficed for all of them. The Prophet then announced that God had never sent a prophet without appointing from his family a minister and asked who would assist him in this mission. No one answered except the young ʿAlī.

The Prophet said to him: “You are my minister in my lifetime and my successor after my death,” and ordered the family to hear and obey him. Inwardly this was ʿAlī’s movement beyond the first gate-rank into the rank of ministry. Milk is used as a symbol of the strengthening knowledge by which a young one grows; the *bint labūn*, literally associated with milk, is therefore an appropriate outward sign for this higher spiritual degree.

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The subsequent camel ages and dues are read as successive increases in the successor’s preparedness. The Prophet gives his gate and minister additional portions of knowledge as each new stage is reached, just as a person who acquires more wealth owes a new measured due. The animal’s growing strength signifies the growing capacity of the recipient to bear knowledge, govern the call and support the community.

The author stresses that these measures are not inventions produced by numerical play. The outward law is preserved as law; the inward correspondence is derived from the ordered ranks disclosed by the Imams. A rank is not conferred merely because a person desires it; the person must have completed the earlier degree and become capable of carrying the next burden.

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The text continues through the established ages of camels—each named according to its stage of growth—and relates these ages to the stages through which the successor to the *nāṭiq* is raised. As the camel progresses from its second and third years to stronger ages capable of carrying heavier loads, the spiritual heir progresses from gate, to minister, to the degrees required for inheriting the command.

The narrative repeatedly returns to ʿAlī because the Prophet's appointment of him provides the clearest model: each public declaration, each increase of responsibility and each disclosure of knowledge marks a further stage. The final inheritance is not sudden; it is the completion of a process in which the successor has already been formed by the prophet's teaching.

The session closes the camel discussion and turns next to cattle.

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Cattle were previously interpreted as the *asās* of the speaking prophets and the *ḥujja*s of the Imams. The Arabic association of "cattle" with digging or opening up knowledge is emphasized: the *asās* and *ḥujja* "dig into" knowledge and bring out what is concealed. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī was called al-Bāqir because he opened up the knowledge of the Imams and made manifest what had previously been concealed under conditions of dissimulation.

Outwardly no zakāt is due on cattle until there are thirty grazing animals. At thirty, a yearling calf is due; at forty, an older animal; at sixty, two yearlings; at seventy, a yearling and an older animal; at eighty, two older animals; at ninety, three yearlings; at one hundred, an older animal and two yearlings; thereafter the rule proceeds by thirties and forties.

Inwardly, when the *asās* or *ḥujja* reaches the degree symbolized by thirty, he may establish a follower to whom he gives from the knowledge of that rank. At the degree symbolized by forty, the authority is mature enough to establish the higher class corresponding to the older animal. Moses' forty nights and the verse concerning reaching full strength at forty are cited as signs of completeness.

The Ninth Session of Part Eight

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The cattle schedule contains only two principal ages for the due, and this becomes a symbol of the limited classes directly established by the *asās* and the *ḥujja*. The younger animal represents one subordinate rank and the mature animal another. The author distinguishes the styles of knowledge represented by camels, cattle and sheep: the discourse of the speaking prophets is highest and hardest to grasp; the exposition of the proofs is clearer and nearer; the instruction of the missionaries is more accessible still. Their flesh and milk likewise become metaphors for the varying density and accessibility of teaching.

The ninth session then begins the zakāt of sheep. Sheep signify the missionaries and, in some contexts, believers generally. Outwardly, no due is taken below forty sheep. At forty one sheep is due until one hundred and twenty; at one hundred and twenty-one, two sheep; above two hundred, three; and once the number becomes larger, one sheep is taken from each hundred according to the law.

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The animals subject to zakāt are grazing animals, not working animals or animals kept and fed in the house. Working camels and cattle symbolize the higher authorities actively carrying the burdens of the summons; housed sheep symbolize missionaries retained under the direct supervision and instruction of their superiors. Such active officials are not themselves the "stock" from which subordinate appointments are selected.

The grazing flocks instead symbolize the larger body of recipients and believers who feed upon knowledge and wisdom. They are the ones purified through the institutional “zakāt” by which suitable persons are selected and elevated. The Imams, proofs and missionaries purify and train them.

When the number reaches forty, one suitable person may be selected for a function. At one hundred and twenty, two may be selected, and so forth according to the symbolism. The point is not the literal number alone but the principle that appointments are made only when a sufficiently broad community exists to support the office and when suitable individuals are available.

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When a valid taxable flock already exists, newly acquired young and old animals are included in the reckoning, and the due is taken according to the prescribed age. Inwardly, once a lawful body of believers and ranks has been established, new members at different stages are counted within the whole; selection for responsibility depends upon the degree actually attained, not merely upon age in the summons.

Young camels, calves and lambs by themselves do not trigger the same obligations before the required conditions and period are complete. Inwardly, beginners who have not yet reached the relevant spiritual degree are not appointed prematurely to offices belonging to mature ranks.

The Prophet forbade dividing a single flock in order to reduce the zakāt, and forbade artificially combining separate flocks in order to manipulate the due. Inwardly, one lawful summons is not to be broken into rival artificial groups so that multiple appointments can be manufactured; nor are separate jurisdictions to be combined by a lower official so that he may claim the right to appoint someone from a total that does not actually belong to his own sphere.

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Where two owners share animals, outward liability is assessed according to the actual legal ownership. Inwardly, when two missionaries or groups work alongside one another, each is responsible for the people genuinely entrusted to him. He does not seize people from another’s field merely to make up the number from which an official can be appointed.

If a superior has deliberately joined two missionaries as partners in one region, and together they have formed a single authorized field, then appointments can be made from the combined body according to the actual contribution and responsibility of each. Merit, reward and recognition follow the true measure of their work.

The collector is also forbidden to take defective, decrepit or unsuitable animals, and equally forbidden to take the owner’s very best animals without right. The due is taken from the sound middle quality.

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Inwardly, the decrepit animal symbolizes a weak believer; the defective animal one with serious shortcomings; the male goat used for breeding can symbolize someone who has a special function in propagating instruction; the very fat animal symbolizes a believer of exceptionally broad knowledge; the milking animal one already authorized to nurture people beneath him; and the castrated animal one who, though perhaps personally righteous, lacks the capacity to act as a missionary. Young animals signify people who have not yet reached the necessary degree.

Such persons are not ordinarily removed from their proper functions merely to fill another office. The weak and defective are unsuitable; the unusually learned or indispensable may be needed where they already stand; beginners are not mature enough. The correct appointment is normally made from sound, qualified middle candidates.

ʿAlī said that when disagreement arises over which sheep is to be taken, the flock may be divided into thirds: the owner chooses one third, then the collector chooses the due from the remaining two thirds. Inwardly, if a missionary and a superior disagree over which of several candidates should be elevated, the field may be narrowed fairly so that the superior selects from the qualified remainder rather than simply taking either the very best or the very least against justice.

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The Prophet exempted horses, mules, donkeys and slaves from the ordinary livestock zakāt, and Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq said that the animal zakāt concerns grazing camels, cattle and sheep, not other species. The author assigns inward correspondences to horses, mules and donkeys as other ranks of proofs, chiefs and missionaries, whose functions differ from the ranks represented by the three principal livestock classes.

The text also refers to special treatment of groups whose beliefs have become distorted, such as those who exaggerated concerning ʿAlī. If such persons respond to the true summons, their correction may require a doubled effort: false exaggeration must first be removed, then the rightful doctrine established. The outward tax rulings are thus used to illustrate the principle that purification is adapted to the actual condition of those receiving it.

The Tenth Session of Part Eight

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Praise be to God, who directs affairs without deliberation or thought, possessor of excellence and deserving of praise and gratitude. May God bless Muḥammad, His Messenger, and the guiding Imams of his family.

The final session of Part Eight turns to the payment and distribution of zakāt and then to zakāt on crops, fruits and the alms of breaking the fast.

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The Imam of every age, or the person explicitly appointed by him, is the one entitled to receive zakāt and distribute it in its lawful channels. Payment to someone else does not discharge the duty. Inwardly, the establishment and appointment of the religious ranks that purify God's servants likewise belongs only to the Imam or to an authority empowered by him. No one creates offices of the summons independently.

The text then begins zakāt on what the earth produces. God says: "Spend from the good things you have earned and from what We bring forth for you from the earth," and commands the due "on the day of harvest." The Prophet said that produce watered by rain and rivers owes a tenth, while produce irrigated through effort from wells owes half a tenth.

Inwardly, heaven symbolizes the *nāṭiq*, earth the *ḥujja*, and water knowledge. Rain descending from heaven symbolizes knowledge coming directly from the *nāṭiq*; water stored within the earth symbolizes knowledge deposited by the *nāṭiq* in the *ḥujja*. Plants growing from the earth symbolize believers brought forth by the wisdom of the divine friends.

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Different crops and fruits correspond to different classes of believers and teachers. Fruits such as dates and grapes, from which sweet liquids are extracted, symbolize the chiefs, missionaries and their agents from whom subtle knowledge and interpretation can be "pressed out." Grain and other produce symbolize other authorized ranks and ordinary respondents. All bodily food sustains outward life just as knowledge and wisdom sustain spiritual life.

The full tenth on what is watered from heaven and half-tenth on what requires earthly irrigation is explained by the difference between the *nāṭiq* and the *ḥujja*: the *nāṭiq* establishes both outward and inward

forms, while the *ḥujja* chiefly unfolds the inward interpretation entrusted to him. The reduced proportion represents this secondary transmission from a source already received.

The Prophet also imposed a tenth on honey. Honey symbolizes a kind of extracted knowledge. The Qurʾān's rivers of water, milk, wine and purified honey in Paradise are interpreted as differing forms of knowledge. Water corresponds to revelation or *tanzīl*; the other drinks arise from it and symbolize derived explanation and wisdom.

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No zakāt is due on crops until they reach five *wasq*. Inwardly, none of the five great teaching classes—the messenger, *asās*, Imam, *ḥujja* and *dāʿī*—gives unrestricted instruction until the recipient has been tested and the proper degree for receiving it has been established. The numerical measure is treated as a sign of completeness before transmission.

The chapter then turns to *zakāt al-fiṭr*, the alms of breaking the fast. Fasting has already been interpreted as concealment: one who has entered the covenant and received hidden explanation must keep it concealed and not disclose it until permission is granted.

Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq connected the verse "Prosperous is he who purifies himself, remembers the name of his Lord and prays" with giving the alms of breaking the fast before the festival prayer. ʿAlī said that giving it before the breaking of the fast is from the Sunna. The Prophet required it for every person maintained by the householder—young or old, free or slave, male or female—and Muḥammad al-Bāqir said even the poor person who receives charity gives from what has reached him.

Inwardly, every member of the summons, whether teacher or recipient, advanced or beginner, rich or poor in knowledge, owes the duty proper to his rank and must "free his neck" through acknowledging and paying the right due to his superior.

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The alms is called "zakāt of the heads" because outwardly it is paid for every person. Inwardly, each person recognizes the chief who instructs him, acknowledges the chief's authority and the authority above him, and knows that his purification is obtained through the guidance he receives by that chain.

One should not break the festival fast before paying the alms. Inwardly, one should not begin disclosing the inner explanation to others until one has fulfilled the obligation attached to one's own rank and has received authorization from the superior responsible for one's instruction. The festival prayer symbolizes the summons; no one calls independently before his own "ransom" and authorization are complete.

The alms is also called *fiṭra*, connected with primordial disposition and the beginning of creation. Inwardly it signifies the respondent's beginning in disclosure and purification. A householder pays for his wife, children, servants and those he maintains; inwardly the superior bears responsibility, according to his ability, for the people dependent upon him in the summons. The Qurʾān says: "Let the wealthy spend from his wealth, and whoever's provision is restricted, let him spend from what God has given him; God does not burden a soul except with what He has given it."

Reports extend the outward payment even to non-Muslim servants under one's maintenance and, by recommendation, to an unborn child. Inwardly the unborn child symbolizes one upon whom the covenant has been taken but who has not yet heard the explanatory teaching; hearing the teaching is like birth into a new stage.

Understand, believers, what God has opened for you. The author closes Part Eight with praise to God and blessings upon Muḥammad and the pure Imams.

Part Nine of the Book *The Training of the Believers by Instruction in the Inner Limits of the Knowledge of Religion*

The First Session of Part Nine

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In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Praise be to God, who spread out the earth and raised up the heaven, who is above every likeness and made every living thing from water. May God bless Muḥammad, the Seal of the Prophets, ʿAlī his legatee, and the guiding Imams from his pure progeny.

What has already been recited to you, believers, from the *Daʿāʾim al-Islām* concerned walāya, purification, prayer and zakāt, and you have heard their outward and inward meanings, their revelation and their interpretation. What follows is the Book of Fasting. God, mighty and exalted, says: “O you who believe, fasting has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may be God-fearing …” through His saying, “that you may complete the number, magnify God for having guided you, and perhaps you will give thanks.”

In the outward practice known to the people, fasting is abstention during the day from food, drink, intercourse and what belongs with them. In the Arabic tongue, *ṣawm* also means abstention from speech, as in Mary’s words: “I have vowed a fast to the Compassionate, so today I shall not speak to any human being.” The lexicographers also call standing still a kind of fasting, as when a horse is tethered and neither eats straw nor chews barley.

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The Arabs say that the wind “fasts” when it becomes still and does not blow, and that the sun “fasts” when it stands at the middle of the sky and its movement is not perceptible. Thus the common element in the word is restraint, stillness and abstention.

The outward fast is therefore abstention by day from food, drink, intercourse and everything that invalidates the fast. Its inward interpretation is the concealment of the inner knowledge of the religious law from the people of the outward form, and abstention from disclosing it to anyone who has not been given permission to receive it. This agrees with the linguistic sense of fasting as abstention from speech and action. Day is the similitude of the outward teaching and its people; night is the similitude of the inward teaching and its people. Hence the fast is prescribed by day and not by night: outwardly one abstains during the day, while inwardly one conceals the esoteric teaching from those of the outward form and discloses it only to those authorized among the people of the inner teaching.

Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq said that fasting the month of Ramaḍān is an obligation every year. The year of twelve months symbolizes the *nāṭiq*, the bearer of a revealed law, for he establishes the law and encompasses its order just as the year encompasses all that occurs within its cycle. The twelve months symbolize the twelve *nuqabāʾ* of the bearer of the law, as there were twelve chiefs among Moses’ people and twelve disciples around Jesus.

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One of those twelve is the *asās*, the foundation and legatee of the bearer of the law, to whom he entrusts the affair of the community in his lifetime and after his death. Thus, in the cycle of Muḥammad, Ramaḍān symbolizes ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, his legatee, the guardian of the community after him and the keeper of the concealed summons and inward interpretation.

God says, “that you may complete the number.” A lunar month is complete at thirty days, though it may sometimes be twenty-nine. In the inward interpretation Ramaḍān is taken as a complete thirty. The days

symbolize the Friends of God who stand in the degrees of His religion. The day of the breaking of the fast has already been interpreted as the Mahdī. Between ʿAlī and the Mahdī are ten Imams, ten *ḥujjas*, and ten gates; these are the thirty "days" whose affair is concealed until the proper permission comes.

Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq said that the least by which the fast is complete is that the believer resolve in his heart with a truthful intention to fast, leave food, drink and intercourse throughout the day, and restrain all his limbs from what God has forbidden, seeking nearness to Him. Intention inwardly is walāya: no act is complete without intention, and no religious work is accepted without allegiance to God's Friends. Food, drink and intercourse symbolize the giving and receiving of inward interpretation without authorization; from these the believer must restrain himself outwardly and inwardly.

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It is related that God says: "I have made every good deed of the son of Adam tenfold up to seven hundredfold, except fasting; it is Mine, and I reward for it." Outwardly this is because fasting is not a deed displayed by tongue or limb so that the recording angels see it; it lies in the intention of the heart and in abstention. Inwardly, concealment is likewise hidden. God rewards it with what He wills because its reality is known to Him and because it is protected from ostentation.

Fāṭima, daughter of the Messenger of God, said: "What does the fasting person make of his fast if he does not guard his tongue, hearing, sight and limbs?" Thus all the limbs must be preserved from what God has forbidden, outwardly and inwardly.

Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq said: "There is no fast for one who disobeys the Imam; no fast for a runaway slave until he returns to his master; no fast for a rebellious wife until she repents; and no fast for a disobedient child until he becomes dutiful." Inwardly, the runaway slave is one who departs from the Imam of his age; the rebellious wife is the recipient who cuts himself off from the one who instructs him; and the disobedient child is one who rebels against his *dāʿī* or his gate, who are like his nearest spiritual parents.

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Whoever rebels against any of these degrees—up through the *nāṭiq*, his *ḥujja*, the bearer of the law and his *asās*—has committed inward disobedience analogous to a child's disobedience toward his parents. If such a person outwardly abstains from food while inwardly breaking from the chain of obedience, his fast is not accepted until he returns.

Ramaḍān and the merit of fasting it are the subject of many reports. Outwardly these reports praise the month and the act of fasting; inwardly their meaning is referred to the rank symbolized by Ramaḍān, namely the *asās*, and to concealment of the inward knowledge entrusted to him. The month is described as the season in which the gates of mercy are opened and the gates of punishment are shut, for through true allegiance and guarded knowledge the believer is brought nearer to salvation.

The completion of the month and its acts therefore signify constancy in the covenant, obedience to the authorized hierarchy, and protection of the knowledge from those unfit to receive it. When the believer keeps that covenant, what is concealed becomes for him a cause of purification rather than a cause of blame.

The Second Session of Part Nine

Page 112

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Praise be to God, Knower of the unseen, who brings forth the living from the dead, provides sustenance and secures it. May God bless Muḥammad and his pure, guiding progeny.

The merit of Ramaḍān and fasting is then set forth through the reports transmitted in the *Daʿāʾim*. Their outward sense concerns the sacred month; inwardly Ramaḍān is the similitude of the *asās* of the religious

law, his sons and the *ḥujjas* established from among them, while fasting is the guarding and concealing of the wisdom placed with them.

Ramaḍān is the ninth month of the year. In the inward order this position indicates completion approaching fulfillment, and the month's fullness signifies the completion of the covenant and the strength of the proof. The text connects the month with the strengthening of certainty, the sealing of the ranks and the preparation for the succeeding disclosure represented by the feast.

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The Prophet and the Imams greatly magnified Ramaḍān. In the outward sense its days are fasting and its nights are worship; in the inward sense the "days" are the ranks of those who manifest the religion and the "nights" the concealed wisdom received by the people of the inward teaching. The one who enters the month in faith and sincere expectation is forgiven: inwardly, one who enters the covenant sincerely, acknowledges the rightful authority and keeps its secret is purified from the faults of his former state.

The text repeatedly links the month to the *asās*. As the month of Ramaḍān is distinguished from the other months, the *asās* is distinguished among the supporting ranks of the *nāṭiq*. Just as the month contains a night better than a thousand months, the *asās* contains a degree of knowledge by which the hidden meanings of the whole law are made known to those qualified to receive them.

The believer is therefore commanded both to honor the outward fast and to preserve its inward counterpart: he must restrain the limbs from sin and the tongue from unlawful disclosure. To violate either is to diminish the fast.

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The reports describe Ramaḍān as a month whose beginning is mercy, whose middle is forgiveness and whose end is deliverance from the Fire. Inwardly, the recipient begins with the mercy of being summoned, advances through forgiveness by purification and instruction, and reaches deliverance through firm knowledge and obedience to the Imam.

The Night of Power (*laylat al-qadr*) is then mentioned. The angels and the Spirit descend in it by permission of their Lord concerning every affair. The outward believer seeks it among the nights of Ramaḍān. Inwardly, it signifies the time in which divine authorization and knowledge descend through the ranks to the person appointed to bear the command. Its concealment among the nights resembles the concealment of the true bearer of authority among people until God causes him to be recognized by those prepared for him.

The night is "better than a thousand months" because the divinely authorized degree outweighs a multitude of ordinary temporal ranks. The value lies not in mere number but in the presence of God's command and proof.

Page 115

Reports differ concerning which of the last nights is the Night of Power, and the text preserves that outward uncertainty. Inwardly, the uncertainty teaches that the hidden proof is not reached by conjecture or calculation alone. He is known through signs, authorization and the chain of rightful transmission.

The believer is urged to seek the night with prayer, remembrance and humility. Inwardly, the seeker approaches the proof through submission, learning and steadfastness, not through self-appointment. The descent of the angels symbolizes the descent of command, knowledge and support through the spiritual hierarchy.

The fast is also connected with the Qurʾān, for the Qurʾān was sent down in Ramaḍān. The outward Book was revealed in the month; inwardly its interpretation is entrusted to the *asās* and the Imams after him.

Thus fasting and revelation are joined: the one who receives inward knowledge must at the same time guard it.

Page 116

The legal rulings concerning the beginning and end of the fast are then treated. One fasts when the month is established and breaks the fast when its completion is established. The outward determination is by sighting or by completing the number; inwardly the believer does not advance from one degree to another by speculation but only when the limit of the former degree has been completed and authorization for the next is established.

If clouds or uncertainty conceal the moon, the prescribed number is completed. Inwardly, when the proof of a new degree is not clear, the believer remains with what is certain and does not claim a rank whose sign has not appeared.

Thus the outward law itself teaches restraint from presumption. Just as one does not declare the month merely from desire, no recipient declares himself a teacher, proof or authorized bearer merely because he wishes it. The command comes through the recognized authority.

Page 117

Concerning one who eats or drinks forgetfully while fasting, the reports state that he completes his fast and no blame falls upon him, for God has fed and given him drink. Inwardly, an inadvertent disclosure or reception that occurs without deliberate rebellion does not have the same ruling as intentional betrayal; the matter is corrected according to knowledge and intention.

But deliberate breaking of the fast without lawful excuse is grave. Inwardly, deliberately disclosing the hidden teaching to one not authorized to receive it, or deliberately violating the covenant by seeking forbidden knowledge, is a serious breach requiring repentance and expiation.

The text distinguishes error, forgetfulness and compulsion from deliberate action. This distinction is carried into the inward interpretation: responsibility follows knowledge, intention and capacity. The person who knowingly violates the entrusted secret is unlike the one who errs without intending betrayal.

Page 118

The expiation for deliberate intercourse in Ramaḍān is transmitted as freeing a slave; if that cannot be done, fasting two consecutive months; if that cannot be done, feeding sixty poor persons. The text preserves the order and the requirement of sincere repentance.

Inwardly, intercourse symbolizes an illicit joining or disclosure in the sphere of knowledge. “Freeing a slave” signifies releasing a believer from bondage to ignorance or false allegiance by bringing him lawfully into the true covenant. The two consecutive months symbolize sustained service through successive degrees without interruption. Feeding sixty poor persons symbolizes giving appropriate knowledge to those spiritually poor, each according to his capacity and within authorized limits.

The point is not to substitute inward meaning for the outward duty; rather, the author repeatedly insists that the outward ruling remains in force while its inner wisdom is also understood.

The Third Session of Part Nine

Page 118

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Praise be to God, who knows the hidden and the manifest and whose wisdom encompasses all things. May God bless Muḥammad and the Imams of his family.

This session continues the rules of fasting, especially the limits of day and night and what breaks or does not break the fast. Their inward meanings concern the limits between concealment and disclosure and the movement of the believer from one authorized degree to another.

Page 119

God says: “Eat and drink until the white thread becomes distinct to you from the black thread at dawn; then complete the fast until night.” Outwardly, the fast begins with the true dawn and ends with the arrival of night. Inwardly, the white thread signifies the appearance of the true proof and clear knowledge, while the black thread signifies obscurity and ignorance. The believer restrains himself according to the established limit and does not confuse one condition with another.

If a person eats believing night still remains and then discovers that dawn had already come, or breaks the fast believing the sun had set and then discovers otherwise, the legal ruling depends on the circumstances and the transmitted authority. Inwardly, error arising from a mistaken judgment differs from deliberate transgression, but the believer must correct himself when truth becomes clear.

Page 120

The reports discuss the one who is uncertain whether dawn has entered, or whether the sun has set. Certainty is not displaced by mere doubt. Inwardly, the believer remains upon the degree certainly established for him until the proof of transition is manifest. He does not open what must remain concealed merely because he imagines permission may have arrived.

The mouth is rinsed and water may enter unintentionally; perfume may be smelled; a fasting person may cool himself. These outward questions are interpreted through the relation between the recipient and knowledge. What reaches a person unintentionally and without seeking unlawful disclosure is not like what he deliberately takes into himself against the limit set for him.

The governing principle is obedience to the prescribed boundary, not excessive hardship. God does not command the believer to destroy himself but to guard the covenant consciously.

Page 121

The fasting person may rinse his mouth and nose but must not exaggerate in drawing water inward. Inwardly, a seeker may approach the words and indications of wisdom, but one who has not been authorized for a deeper degree must not force his way into what lies beyond his limit.

Likewise, smelling perfume does not itself invalidate the fast. Fragrance symbolizes an indication or trace of knowledge that reaches the seeker without full disclosure. A hint is not the same as receiving the complete inner meaning.

The text also treats immersion in water and other bodily acts. Its inward method remains consistent: every outward act is considered according to whether it represents a lawful contact with knowledge or a deliberate crossing of the boundary between what may and may not yet be received.

Page 122

Travel is introduced. God permits the sick and the traveler to make up missed days later. Outwardly, travel changes certain obligations because hardship and circumstance change. Inwardly, travel symbolizes movement from one condition or rank to another. A recipient who has not yet settled firmly in a degree may be treated differently from one established in his station.

The traveler’s fast is therefore interpreted in relation to his progress within the summons. If he moves under authorization and according to the command of his superior, his obligations follow that authorized movement. If he departs from order by his own desire, the inward condition is different.

The text stresses that concessions are themselves part of the law. To reject God's concession out of self-imposed piety is not necessarily obedience; the believer accepts both command and concession from the same authority.

Page 123

When a traveler leaves before the prescribed point of the day, the reports distinguish whether he should continue fasting or break the fast and make it up. Likewise, when he returns to his home, the ruling differs according to whether he has already eaten and according to the time of return.

Inwardly, one who leaves a degree and is transferred to another under authority is governed by the limit of the new condition when that transfer becomes complete. If he returns before engaging in what belonged to the former state, he may be required to resume the discipline of the settled person; if he has already acted according to the traveler's condition, he completes the matter according to its ruling.

The precise outward timings teach that spiritual degrees also have limits. One must know when a rank begins, when it ends and by whose permission the transition occurs.

Page 124

The session closes by emphasizing that no one should deliberately expose himself to uncertainty in the fast. The outward believer watches the times and guards the prescribed limits; the inward believer watches the boundaries of speech, hearing and authority.

The author repeatedly joins the two levels: the outward fast cannot be discarded because an inward meaning has been understood, and the inward covenant cannot be neglected by one who performs only the bodily form. Completion lies in joining both, each in its proper place.

The Fourth Session of Part Nine

Page 124

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Praise be to God, the One whose command cannot be resisted. May God bless Muḥammad and the Imams of his family.

The fourth session continues the inward interpretation of fasting and turns increasingly toward the completion of Ramaḍān, the Night of Power and the disclosure that follows concealment.

Page 125

When the month ends, the fasting person returns to eating and drinking. Inwardly, concealment is not perpetual for every person and every circumstance. There comes a divinely appointed time at which what had been withheld is lawfully disclosed to those qualified for it. The feast therefore symbolizes authorized manifestation after a completed period of restraint.

The text warns, however, that unlawful disclosure before its time remains a breach. Just as breaking the fast before sunset invalidates the day, opening the hidden teaching before permission corrupts the spiritual discipline of concealment.

The proper end of the fast comes only with the sign appointed by God. Thus the seeker waits for the command and does not set the hour for himself.

Page 126

The Night of Power is again discussed as a night in which the divine command descends. Its inward sense is connected with the proof who receives the command for the age and with the ranks that carry it to the people.

The reports concerning its concealment among the final nights are read as teaching vigilance. The believer must remain awake in knowledge and obedience because he does not possess the hidden decree by his own calculation. He seeks the signs that God and His Friends establish.

The "peace until the rising of dawn" signifies the security of those who remain within the covenant until the truth becomes manifest. Dawn is the appearance of clarity after concealment.

Page 127

The author develops the relation between the final proof and the completion of the cycles. The hidden command has a time, and when that time arrives the concealed knowledge is brought forth according to God's wisdom. The believer's task before that manifestation is fidelity, not premature proclamation.

Reports and scriptural examples are used to show that God's agents may be hidden from the generality of people while their proof is complete for those given understanding. The multitude's failure to recognize them does not annul their rank.

The month, its nights, its last ten days and the Night of Power thus become signs for ordered degrees, concealment and final disclosure.

Page 128

The text compares the stages of the summons to the ordered succession of days and nights. Each stage has its own work; no one can leap over what precedes it. The one who has not fulfilled the covenant and learned what belongs to his station cannot lawfully claim the next.

The completion of fasting is therefore a similitude of completing the obligations of a spiritual degree. When the term is fulfilled, the believer may be moved onward by the one authorized to move him. Until then, patience and concealment are required.

This is also why the inward interpretation of "breaking the fast" is not simple license to speak. It is permission following completion and authorization, not disclosure according to desire.

The Fifth Session of Part Nine

Page 129

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Praise be to God, transcendent beyond limits and descriptions, who grants perception through the senses and instruments. May God bless Muḥammad and the best of his pure progeny.

A report states that the angels and the Spirit descend on the Night of Power. The text reads this inwardly as the descent of divine support and knowledge to the bearer of authority in every age. The "Spirit" is connected with that command by which hearts are enlivened and the ranks of religion are sustained.

God says: "Thus We revealed to you a Spirit from Our command; you did not know what the Book was nor faith, but We made it a light by which We guide whom We will." The inward teaching is therefore light received through authorization, not an independent human invention.

Page 130

The author links the "night" of concealment with the appearance of the one who bears divine proof. Though hidden from the generality, he is not absent from God's ordering of the religion. The command descends according to measure, and every rank receives what belongs to it.

The text turns from the obligatory fast to supererogatory fasting. Outwardly, voluntary fasting is commendable but not obligatory except where a vow or other binding cause makes it so. Inwardly, beyond

the knowledge strictly required for salvation there are additional disciplines and degrees that a believer may pursue when his superior judges him capable.

Such extra striving is praiseworthy only when it remains within obedience. A voluntary act cannot be used to overturn an obligation or bypass the authority that governs the ranks.

Page 131

The reports enumerate recommended fasts and occasions on which fasting is meritorious. Inwardly, these represent additional acts of concealment, discipline and service undertaken by those who seek greater refinement after fulfilling what is obligatory.

A person who undertakes a voluntary fast may in some circumstances break it without sin, unlike one bound by an obligatory fast. Inwardly, a voluntary discipline may be relaxed by the authorized superior when another benefit requires it. But a binding covenant cannot be abandoned merely because the seeker finds it difficult.

The distinction between obligation and supererogation thus becomes a distinction between ranks of duty: what God has made foundational cannot be treated like what is merely added for perfection.

Page 132

Some days are forbidden for fasting, including the two feasts. Inwardly, there are also times when concealment would be wrong because God has ordered manifestation, gratitude or public allegiance. One does not “fast” by withholding what must lawfully be declared.

The text also mentions days on which fasting is disliked or specially recommended. Their inward interpretation is governed by the same principle: every religious act has its appointed place. Excess and deficiency both arise when a person acts without recognizing the proper limit.

The believer therefore does not measure piety by the quantity of self-denial alone. True piety is conformity to command.

Page 133

The author counts a series of recommended fasts transmitted from the Imams. Each outward observance is retained in its own right. Inwardly, the diversity of voluntary fasts signifies the many occasions on which the believer restrains speech, appetite for rank, and premature disclosure while advancing in knowledge.

The reports concerning permission from a husband or master are also interpreted through hierarchy. One who stands under another’s lawful authority should not undertake a voluntary discipline that interferes with the right of that superior. Inwardly, a recipient does not establish for himself a new teaching practice, journey or discipline that disrupts the service owed to his authorized instructor.

Page 134

This principle is not servility to arbitrary human desire; it is a rule about ordered responsibility. The one who bears responsibility for others must know where they are and what they undertake. A subordinate who independently claims spiritual practices or teaching authority may harm both himself and those entrusted to him.

Where permission is given, voluntary fasting becomes an act of refinement. Where a binding duty intervenes, the duty takes precedence. The inward life is thus governed by order, just as the outward law distinguishes obligatory, recommended, permissible and forbidden acts.

The Sixth Session of Part Nine

Page 134

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Praise be to God, the One, the Self-Sufficient, the Everlasting. May God bless Muḥammad and the Imams of his family.

The sixth session continues the rules of fasting, particularly illness, weakness and the circumstances under which a person may refrain and make the fast up later.

Page 135

God says that whoever is ill or on a journey shall fast a number of other days. Outwardly, illness is judged according to real harm and inability, not mere whim. Inwardly, spiritual weakness may likewise prevent a person from bearing a degree of knowledge or discipline that would be harmful if imposed before he is ready.

The authorized guide therefore gives each recipient according to capacity. He does not load him with what would destroy his faith, yet neither does he excuse laziness under the name of weakness. Recovery outwardly requires making up the missed fast; inwardly, when capacity is restored the seeker completes what he was unable to bear before.

Page 136

The old person and one afflicted with lasting weakness are treated according to the transmitted rules, including feeding the needy where prescribed. Inwardly, a person permanently unable to carry a particular function may still serve the summons through what lies within his capacity. God's religion does not demand what cannot be borne.

Pregnancy and nursing are likewise discussed where fear exists for the mother or child. Inwardly, a teacher may sometimes withhold a discipline for the sake of those dependent upon him when imposing it would damage their spiritual nurture. The preservation of life and faith has precedence over an act whose time can lawfully be deferred.

Page 137

The author distinguishes genuine excuse from self-deception. A person who can fast without harmful consequence should not abandon it on a pretext. Inwardly, one who is capable of receiving or carrying a duty should not pretend incapacity merely to avoid obedience.

Conversely, the guide must not force a recipient beyond his measure. The physician of souls, like the physician of bodies, knows when restraint heals and when it injures. The inward law therefore depends upon knowledge of persons, conditions and degrees.

Page 138

The discussion returns to vows and binding commitments. One who vows an act of obedience must fulfill it within the law. Inwardly, the covenant taken upon the believer binds him to what he has knowingly accepted. A promise made to God and His authorized Friends is not to be treated lightly.

Yet a vow to disobedience is not fulfilled. No promise can make unlawful conduct lawful. Similarly, an inward commitment that conflicts with the command of the Imam has no sanctity merely because a person imposed it upon himself.

The believer's restraint is therefore obedience-directed, not self-directed.

Page 139

Permissible fasting may be interrupted in circumstances recognized by the law, while a required fast must be completed unless a lawful excuse intervenes. Inwardly, optional concealment or discipline may be altered by instruction; a foundational covenant may not.

The page also introduces *iʿtikāf*, retreat in the mosque, especially during the last ten nights. Outwardly it is remaining in the mosque for worship under prescribed conditions. Inwardly it signifies remaining close to the place of true instruction and not wandering from the authorized source of knowledge.

The “mosque” has already been interpreted as the rank in which the believer receives ordered instruction and worships God through obedience.

Page 140

Retreat is not obligatory in every circumstance but is a meritorious discipline. Inwardly, sustained attendance upon one’s teacher and devotion to learning is likewise an excellence rather than a license for disorder. The beneficiary remains with the one from whom he receives, not moving restlessly from source to source.

During *iʿtikāf* certain ordinary acts are restricted, including sexual relations. Inwardly, the seeker in concentrated instruction leaves aside distractions and unauthorized exchanges, giving himself to the knowledge for which he has withdrawn.

A valid retreat requires fasting. Thus the inward retreat likewise requires concealment: the seeker stays close to the source and at the same time guards what he receives.

Page 141

The reports prescribe that the retreating person should not leave the mosque except for a genuine need. Inwardly, one established with an authorized teacher does not abandon him without cause or wander among unauthorized teachers, for such movement can introduce contradiction and confusion.

If necessity requires departure, he returns after completing it. Likewise a recipient may perform duties in the world while preserving his attachment to the source of his instruction.

The law also restricts trade and idle occupation during retreat. Inwardly, the seeker should not turn sacred knowledge into commerce, rivalry or a means of worldly distinction.

Page 142

The final days of Ramaḍān and the retreat are connected with intensified seeking of the Night of Power. Inwardly, the believer who approaches a decisive transition in knowledge increases vigilance, obedience and purity rather than becoming careless because the end is near.

The text emphasizes that the retreat belongs within a mosque in which the prescribed communal worship is established. Inwardly, true seclusion is not isolation from the hierarchy; it is closer attachment to the authorized community and its center.

Thus fasting, retreat and the Night of Power converge: concealment, steadfast attendance and reception of divine command belong together.

The Seventh Session of Part Nine

Page 142

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Praise be to God, Lord of all beings. May God bless Muḥammad, his legatee and the guiding Imams.

The seventh session begins the Book of Pilgrimage. The outward pilgrimage is the journey to the Ancient House with its appointed rites. Its inward interpretation is the journey to the living proof of God in the age, for through him the believer reaches the House of divine knowledge and the covenant.

Page 143

Pilgrimage becomes obligatory upon one who possesses the ability and means for the journey. Inwardly, “ability” is not bodily wealth alone but possession of the spiritual provisions by which one can reach and recognize the Imam: knowledge of the true summons, sound allegiance, and guidance from the authorized ranks.

The pilgrim needs provisions and a mount. Provisions symbolize the knowledge and piety that sustain the seeker on his journey; the mount symbolizes the authorized Friends of God and agents of the summons who carry the believer from one degree to another. One who tries to reach the Imam without these means is like a traveler who sets out without food or conveyance.

Page 144

The means required for pilgrimage include provision for the family left behind. Outwardly, a man is not commanded to abandon those dependent upon him to destitution. Inwardly, one who advances to a higher rank does not neglect those whose instruction and care have been entrusted to him. His own ascent must not destroy the people behind him.

The text therefore joins spiritual aspiration to responsibility. A true seeker is not one who flees duties in the name of higher knowledge; he orders his dependents, teaches them what they can bear, and secures their welfare before moving onward.

Page 145

The “mount” is developed as a similitude of the divine agents who bear the burdens of seekers. Just as a riding animal carries a traveler across a distance he could not easily traverse alone, the *dāʿī*, *ḥujja* and other authorized guides carry the believer through degrees of knowledge he could not reach by unaided speculation.

The rider must nevertheless know his destination. The means are not ends in themselves; every intermediary points toward the Imam, and the Imam toward obedience to God. To stop at an intermediary while denying the one who authorized him is like mounting a beast and refusing the road for which it was provided.

Page 146

The Prophet’s instruction that a man protect himself and his household from the Fire is invoked. Outwardly, the believer teaches his family obedience and good conduct. Inwardly, one who possesses true knowledge communicates to those under his care what is lawful for them, bringing them gradually from ignorance toward salvation.

The page stresses upbringing and disciplined instruction. A child is not expected to bear what belongs to a mature adult; likewise a new respondent is not burdened at once with the deepest interpretation. Knowledge is given in order, with mercy and firmness.

Thus preparing one’s household for pilgrimage inwardly means preparing one’s dependents to recognize God’s proof and to walk the path without being abandoned in confusion.

Page 147

The pilgrim must know the House toward which he travels, and inwardly the seeker must know the Imam of his age, his covenant, his proof and the chain by which he is reached. Mere movement without recognition does not complete the aim.

The text compares traveling on foot and riding. Walking may symbolize a seeker advancing with incomplete mediation and greater difficulty; riding symbolizes one carried by a complete authorized chain. Both may reach, but the latter possesses the means established for an orderly journey.

As in all earlier interpretations, the outward obligation remains. The inward meaning explains why its form is ordered as it is; it does not abolish the pilgrimage to Mecca.

Page 148

Pilgrimage also symbolizes elevation in ranks after recognition. When a respondent knows the Imam, accepts the covenant and receives the measure of knowledge proper to him, he becomes like one who has entered the sacred state: certain actions are restricted because he has taken upon himself a higher sanctity and responsibility.

As he advances, permission may eventually be given for him to teach others. This resembles the pilgrim's passage through the stations of the rite. No station is valid merely by self-declaration; each follows the one before it and is known through its signs and authorized acts.

The text further compares a slave who performs pilgrimage and is later freed. If he then acquires full ability, the outward law may require him to perform the obligatory pilgrimage as a free person. Inwardly, a seeker who performed acts while constrained in a lower rank may, when released into an authorized higher office, be required to undertake the matter anew at the level appropriate to his new freedom and responsibility.

The Eighth Session of Part Nine

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

Praise belongs to God, the One, the Eternal Refuge, the Unique, the Possessor of greatness, might, and praise. May God bless Muḥammad, His Prophet, and ʿAlī, his legatee, and the Imams from their progeny, and may He grant them peace.

What follows is from the interpretation of pilgrimage, after what has already been mentioned of it in the Book of the Pillars of Islam. It is related from Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī, blessings be upon him, that he was asked about a bondwoman whose master gives birth to a child by her: is pilgrimage obligatory for her if she has the ability to perform it? He said: No - meaning that pilgrimage is not obligatory for her while she remains owned, and she may not perform it unless her master permits her. We have already mentioned this. But if the owned person performs pilgrimage while he is a slave, that does not suffice for the obligatory pilgrimage if he is later freed and becomes able to perform it. The same applies to the manager-slave and the mother of a child: they remain owned until the manager is freed by the death of his master or is otherwise emancipated, and until the mother of a child is freed from all of her master's ownership. This is the outward ruling. Its inward interpretation is that one who is like the owned person or the mother of a child is not free in his own affair, and therefore the degree he possesses does not remove from him the need to seek the knowledge appropriate to the degree to which he later rises.

Page 149

When such a person reaches maturity in the summons, and after that reaches the limit at which he is released and raised to a degree like that of one who is freed from slavery, he must seek knowledge of the Imam appropriate to the rank to which he has come, just as he must seek knowledge of him in pilgrimage. He does not stop at the knowledge he possessed in the former limit from which he has moved.

It is related from the Messenger of God, blessings be upon him and his family, that he said: "Men are maintainers of women." Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad, blessings be upon him, said that this means that when a woman has the means, the expense of her pilgrimage is not imposed upon her husband. If she intends the obligatory pilgrimage and he does not permit her to go with him, she may go with one of her relatives who is unmarriageable to her, or she may hire her husband to accompany her. This is the outward ruling. Its inward

interpretation is according to what has already been explained: men are likenesses of those who give benefit, and women are likenesses of those who receive benefit. The beneficiary is required to know the Imam of his age within every limit and degree in which he stands, while the obligation upon the one who gives benefit is not in all respects identical with that upon the beneficiary.

It is also related from him, blessings be upon him, that he said concerning a divorced woman who travels during her waiting period. In the inward interpretation, as has been explained, women are likenesses of beneficiaries and their ranks rise and fall. If one beneficiary is released from the teacher to whom he belonged and is left to himself, it is then permissible for him to attach himself to another teacher, as a man may divorce his wife and she may later marry another husband. But this does not occur until the proper limit has been fulfilled. The waiting period is a period of restraint: a woman may not marry until it has ended, lest she be pregnant by the husband who divorced her. Likewise the beneficiary must not be attached to another teacher while something of the first relation still remains unclear.

Page 150

A woman therefore waits as a precaution for herself, so that she will not be carrying a child from one man when she marries another. Its inward meaning is that when she separates from the one who had authority over her, she must seek recognition of the Imam of her age within the limit in which she stands before she becomes attached to another teacher. The same is illustrated by the report concerning a man who comes of age or a man who becomes able to perform pilgrimage. This is like one whom his benefactor has released from his former rank so that he moves to another limit higher than it. He must seek the knowledge of the Imam that corresponds to the limit to which he has come, and what he knew at the former limit is not enough for him at the new one.

It is also related that he, blessings be upon him, was asked concerning the word of God, exalted is He: "Pilgrimage to the House is a duty owed to God by the people - whoever is able to find a way to it." Does that mean pilgrimage without ʿumra? He said: No; rather He means both pilgrimage and ʿumra, for both are obligatory. God, mighty and majestic, says: "Complete the pilgrimage and the ʿumra for God." Thus both are obligatory in the outward sense. In the inward sense, pilgrimage is the seeking of recognition of the Imam, as has been stated, and ʿumra is seeking recognition of the Proof, because recognition of the Proof is itself proof for recognition of the Imam. This is the root of the interpretation of pilgrimage and ʿumra, and the branches of that will be explained in their places, God willing.

It is related from Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn, blessings be upon him, that he said: "ʿUmra is an obligation, like pilgrimage, upon whoever is able." And Abū ʿAbd Allāh Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad, peace be upon him, said: "Pilgrimage is incumbent in three forms: a pilgrimage performed separately, an ʿumra performed separately, and the combination of pilgrimage and ʿumra joined together. There is no superiority between the three." This is because one who brings the sacrificial animal with him enters Mecca, remains in his consecration until he leaves Mecca for pilgrimage, and the ʿumra is thereby joined to the pilgrimage, which is the best of the forms. This is in accordance with the word of God, mighty and majestic: "Do not shave your heads until the offering reaches its place." The one performing tamattuʿ enters in consecration for ʿumra, circumambulates the House, performs the running between al-Ṣafā and al-Marwa, leaves consecration, cuts or shaves his hair, then renews consecration for pilgrimage from Mecca and offers whatever sacrificial animal is easy for him, as God, mighty and majestic, has said. This is obligatory in the outward pilgrimage.

Page 151

Its inward interpretation is that whoever intends pilgrimage is like one who intends to seek recognition of the Imam, while whoever intends ʿumra is like one who intends to seek recognition of the Proof of the Imam, who is present during his lifetime and through whom the affair passes after him. Whoever combines them is

like one who seeks together the recognition of the Imam and of his Proof; that is the greatest merit, outwardly and inwardly.

It is related from Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn, blessings be upon him, that he said concerning the words of God, mighty and majestic, "Pilgrimage is in known months, so whoever undertakes pilgrimage in them, there shall be no sexual approach, no transgression, and no disputing during pilgrimage." He said: the known months are Shawwāl, Dhū al-Qaʿda, and Dhū al-Ḥijja; pilgrimage is not valid in any other months. The obligation of pilgrimage includes the talbiya, the entering into iḥrām, the marking of the sacrificial animal, its garlanding, the shaving of the head, and the sacrifice. Thus whoever wishes to perform pilgrimage must do these in their proper times. In the inward interpretation, the three months are three limits in the summons through which the seeker advances toward recognition of the Imam and the Proof. The first is like the gate, the second like the Proof, and the third like the Imam; the seeker reaches one through the other in the prescribed order. The three months are therefore signs for three degrees by which the seeker approaches the knowledge of the Imam and the Proof.

The text then turns to the encouragement of pilgrimage. This is a chapter in the Book of the Pillars of Islam concerning the merit of pilgrimage and ʿumra, their reward, the excellence of the pilgrim and the person performing ʿumra, and what God has prepared for them in the Hereafter. Many reports are related concerning this from the Messenger of God and from the Imams from his progeny, peace be upon them. We have already explained that the acts of worship which God, mighty and majestic, has imposed upon His servants are not accepted from anyone until they are joined to obedience to Him and obedience to His Messenger and to the holders of authority whom He appointed as guides.

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No act is accepted from a worshipper until he comes to God with it outwardly and inwardly. Even if one performs the act outwardly with all its bodily limbs, if his heart does not believe what God has commanded him to believe, it is not accepted from him. God, exalted is He, says: "Enter into submission altogether," and He says: "Do not follow the footsteps of Satan." God has laid upon the believers acts of obedience and righteous works by which they draw near to Him; when those acts are done with their outward form and their inward reality, they are accepted, but if one is missing, the act is deficient.

For this reason, when the outward obligations of pilgrimage are performed, they do not dispense with its inward obligation, which is recognition and obedience. Nor does the claim to know the inward dispense with the outward pilgrimage when it is obligatory. Whoever claims the inward while abandoning the outward is like one who abandons the command of God; and whoever performs the outward while denying its truth in the inward is likewise deficient. Both must be joined.

God, mighty and majestic, says: "Complete My favour upon you, outwardly and inwardly." He also says: "Ask the people of remembrance if you do not know." The greatest of His favours upon the believers is guidance to those whom He has appointed to teach them. He commanded obedience to them along with obedience to the Messenger and to Himself. We have explained this at length elsewhere, and although its repetition is lengthy, the need for it is great because every branch of the acts of worship returns to this foundation.

The same applies to the things that invalidate or lessen pilgrimage. Whatever is forbidden in the outward pilgrimage has an inward counterpart. Obscene speech, quarrelling, pride, and acts that break the sanctity of iḥrām are outward prohibitions; their inward counterparts are rejection of the Proof, dispute with the people of truth, arrogance toward the ranks of the summons, and abandoning the covenant after recognition. The merit described in this chapter belongs to the one who fulfils what God has commanded him according to both dimensions. Were it not so, merely moving the body from one place to another would not be the cause of the tremendous reward described in the reports.

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The same principle applies to one who merely mouths the talbiya without understanding what it contains. We shall confine ourselves in this chapter to what is required for the explanation at hand. We have already said that iḥrām, entering the state of consecration, circumambulating the House, honouring it, praying toward it, touching or kissing the Black Stone, running between al-Ṣafā and al-Marwa, standing at ʿArafāt and Muzdalifa, stoning the stones, and all the other rites are outward ordinances commanded by God. The stones themselves are only stones, and the places are only places, yet God has commanded His servants to honour them for a wisdom and a meaning. The people of error mocked the believers for revering the Black Stone and for performing rites around stones, but their mockery arose from ignorance of the command and its wisdom.

It is related that ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, when he came to the Black Stone, said: "By God, I know that you are a stone that neither harms nor benefits. Had I not seen the Messenger of God kiss you, I would not have kissed you." ʿAlī, blessings be upon him, said to him: "By God, it both harms and benefits." He then explained that God did not command the worship of the stone, but made it a sign and a witness to the covenant. Thus its benefit or harm lies in what it signifies and in the obedience or disobedience of the servant.

If people were to judge the acts of worship only by the apparent nature of the materials used in them, they would reject much of religion. But the servant is not free to invent meanings according to his own opinion, nor to abandon what he does not understand. He asks the people of remembrance, as God says: "Ask the people of remembrance if you do not know." Abraham said: "My Lord, show me how You give life to the dead." God did not blame him for seeking understanding, because he asked in submission and faith. Therefore the believer should ask those who know when the wisdom of a command is hidden from him, while continuing to obey until its meaning is made clear.

May God grant you understanding, O believers, and enable you to act upon what He has commanded. May He bless Muḥammad, His Prophet, and the pure Imams from his progeny, and grant them peace. God is sufficient for us, and He is the best Trustee.

The Ninth Session of Part Nine

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In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate; in Him we seek aid.

Praise belongs to God, the One, the Manifest, the Hidden, unlike all things and above all likeness. May God bless Muḥammad, His Messenger, and the pure Imams from his progeny, and grant them peace.

What follows continues the interpretation of pilgrimage from what is set forth in the Book of the Pillars of Islam, concerning entering the city of the Prophet, blessings be upon him and his family, and what is proper for one who enters it. We have already explained that the city in the inward sense is the domain of the Prophet's summons, and entering it means entering his summons and adhering to it. What remains in this chapter completes that principle and explains what is connected with leaving it, God willing.

It is related from the Messenger of God, blessings be upon him and his family, that he declared the territory between the two lava tracts of Medina sacred, and said that whoever introduces an innovation there or gives shelter to an innovator is under the curse of God, the angels, and all people, and no obligatory or voluntary act will be accepted from him. He also forbade cutting its trees and hunting its game. This is the outward ruling, and it is obligatory. Its inward meaning is that the Prophet made his summons sacred: one may not introduce into it an innovation that has no foundation in what he brought, nor harbour or defend one who corrupts it. Whoever introduces into the religion something contrary to the Prophet's command, or shelters such innovation and supports it, violates the sanctity of his city in the inward sense.

It is related from Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad, blessings be upon him, that he said concerning the sacred precinct of Medina: “Its trees are not to be cut.” He was asked about a man who needs a stick or branch; he said that nothing of its trees should be cut except what necessity requires according to the known rule. This outward restriction has its inward counterpart: nothing is to be removed from the Prophet’s religion by personal whim, and no part of his summons is to be cut away except where the law itself has established a dispensation and its proper limit.

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The interpretation of the prohibited hunting and of what is forbidden within the sacred precinct will be explained further, God willing. The principle is that the one who enters the precinct of the Prophet’s summons is like a hunted animal that has sought sanctuary: it may not be attacked within it. Thus anyone who enters Islam sincerely and submits to its covenant is protected, and no believer may wrong him, break his right, or drive him out by oppression. The wild animal that is hunted is a likeness of one outside the covenant; once he enters the sanctuary and seeks protection, his status changes.

The Prophet’s city in the inward sense is like the summons of Muḥammad, blessings be upon him and his family, just as Mecca is like the summons of Abraham. The Messenger of God renewed and perfected the summons of Abraham, and his city became the abode of his law and his people. Whoever enters it inwardly enters the law of Muḥammad and the covenant of his family.

It is related from ʿAlī, blessings be upon him, that he said: “Whoever departs from Medina out of aversion to it, God will replace him with someone better than him.” This means outwardly that one should not leave it in contempt of it, and inwardly that whoever turns away from the summons of Islam because he dislikes its truth and discipline has abandoned the city of the Prophet in reality. He may still outwardly claim Islam, but if he knowingly chooses another path over the Prophet’s summons, he has left its inward city. God may then replace him with one who answers the call more faithfully.

It is reported that the Prophet, blessings be upon him and his family, said concerning Medina: “Faith retreats to it as the serpent retreats to its hole,” and in another report, “Medina expels its impurities.” The inward meaning is that sound faith returns to the true summons and is preserved within it, while hypocrisy and corruption are eventually exposed and cast out by its discipline. Thus the city is not merely soil and buildings; its reality is the community and teaching established by the Messenger of God.

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It is related from Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad, blessings be upon him, that he said: “Whoever wishes to enter Medina as a visitor should wash himself.” The inward interpretation is as has already been explained concerning washing with water: purification from sins and faults through knowledge, repentance, and obedience. Whoever enters the summons of Islam should therefore strip himself of every sin and disobedience and approach it purified.

He also said that when the visitor enters Medina he should first go to the mosque of the Messenger of God, blessings be upon him and his family, visit his grave, greet him, bear witness to the message, and pray in his mosque. It is related that one prayer in the Prophet’s mosque is equal to ten thousand prayers elsewhere, except the Sacred Mosque. The best place for prayer there is near the grave of the Prophet. The visitor should stand at the grave, greet the Prophet and his family, testify that he conveyed the message and fulfilled the trust, and invoke blessings upon him as much as he can. There is no fixed limit to supplication there; a person supplicates according to what God opens for him.

The Messenger of God, blessings be upon him and his family, said: “Whoever visits my grave after my death is like one who visited me in my life; and whoever is unable to visit my grave should send greetings to me, for they reach me.” The inward meaning of visiting him after his death is not bodily proximity alone. It is

keeping to his summons, obeying his command, holding fast to his covenant, and recognizing those whom he appointed after him. His command remains alive after his bodily death.

The last place from which the pilgrim should depart is the city and grave of the Prophet. He should renew his allegiance there before leaving. The same is true inwardly: one who has received the rites of knowledge should conclude them by renewing his bond with the Messenger and the line of authority that proceeds from him. Mosques in the inward interpretation resemble the places and ranks of the summons, each with its appointed measure, while the Prophet's mosque is like the supreme assembly in which his command is preserved.

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The area between the Prophet's grave and his pulpit is described as "a garden from the gardens of Paradise," and the pulpit as standing upon one of the canals of Paradise. The inward meaning is that between the place where the Prophet's knowledge is preserved and the place from which his teaching and authority are proclaimed lies a garden of knowledge and guidance. Whoever is nourished there by sound teaching receives a share of the life of Paradise.

The author then returns to the subject of iḥrām and its limits. In the outward pilgrimage the pilgrim does not enter the sacred state wherever he chooses, but at one of the appointed stations. Inwardly, entering iḥrām is entering the covenant and discipline of the summons, and the appointed stations signify the limits through which one enters it. Whoever seeks the inward meaning without entering through the prescribed gate has not entered lawfully.

It is related from Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad, blessings be upon him, concerning the trees and plants of the sacred precinct and what may or may not be cut. The Prophet's prohibition of cutting what God has made sacred points inwardly to the preservation of the foundations and branches of the religion. A person may not remove a teaching merely because he does not perceive its wisdom. What the Lawgiver has made part of the sacred order is kept until proof establishes otherwise.

At the close of this discussion, the author reiterates that the outward pilgrimage and its inward interpretation are bound together. The one who performs the outward without knowledge has fulfilled the visible act but lacks its perfection; the one who claims inward knowledge while refusing the outward command has contradicted the very authority from whom the inward knowledge came.

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It is related from Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad, blessings be upon him, that the sacred precinct of Medina extends between its two lava tracts and to the places specified in the reports. The legal boundary is to be respected: hunting is not to be pursued within it, its trees are not to be cut, and its sanctity is not to be violated. The inward boundary is likewise a defined limit in the Prophet's summons. Whoever comes within it is treated according to the covenant he has entered, and neither the teacher nor the learner may cross the limits established for his rank.

The miqāt of the people of Medina is Dhū al-Ḥulayfa, at the Mosque of the Tree. The miqāt of the people of Syria is al-Juḥfa; that of the people of Najd is Qarn al-Manāzil; that of the people of Yemen is Yalamlam; and that of the people of Iraq is al-ʿAqīq. These are the places from which pilgrims enter iḥrām according to the direction from which they come. Whoever passes his miqāt intending pilgrimage or ʿumra may not pass it without entering iḥrām.

In the inward interpretation, these appointed stations are likenesses of the established ranks by which people enter the summons. Different people come from different directions and conditions, and therefore their first point of entry may differ, but all are required to enter through a legitimate station. No one reaches the Imam by inventing a private road that bypasses the ranks through which the summons has been established.

The author says that the stations are signs for the doors of knowledge, and that the pilgrim's entering iḥrām from them resembles the respondent's taking the covenant from the one authorized to receive him. When the covenant has been taken, certain things become forbidden to him just as certain acts are forbidden to the pilgrim in iḥrām. This is the discipline of the sacred state.

The Tenth Session of Part Nine

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

Praise belongs to God, possessor of majesty and honour, and blessings and peace be upon Muḥammad and upon the Imams from his progeny.

The subject of the appointed stations for iḥrām is continued. It is related that the Messenger of God fixed Dhū al-Ḥulayfa for the people of Medina, al-Juḥfa for the people of Syria, Qarn al-Manāzil for the people of Najd, Yalamlam for the people of Yemen, and al-ʿAqīq for the people of Iraq. Whoever comes by a road whose people have an appointed station enters iḥrām from that station; whoever lives nearer to Mecca than the stations enters from his own place, and the people of Mecca enter from Mecca for pilgrimage, while for a separate ʿumra they go outside the sacred precinct and enter iḥrām from there.

These five stations have an inward interpretation. The ranks by which the believer is admitted to knowledge are not confused with one another. Each has a boundary, and each boundary is entered by the permission of the one who holds it. Just as the pilgrim may not move into the sacred state before reaching the station appointed for him, nor pass beyond it without iḥrām, the respondent is neither burdened with a rank before its time nor permitted to pass its gate without the covenant proper to it.

The different directions from which pilgrims come signify the different states from which people come to the summons. Some come from learning, some from ignorance, some from obedience, some after error, and some through the instruction of those near to them. Yet all must be gathered upon one truth. The variety of roads does not make the destination many, and the variety of teachers does not make the Imam many.

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It is related that whoever passes the miqāt without iḥrām while intending pilgrimage must return to it and enter iḥrām from there if he is able. If he cannot return because of illness, fear, or another valid impediment, he enters iḥrām from where he remembers or from the nearest point permitted by the law. The outward rule establishes both the obligation of the station and the allowance made for genuine inability.

Inwardly, this signifies that one who has passed a degree of instruction without taking what was required from its authorized holder should return and repair the omission when he is able. If he has moved beyond it through ignorance or a circumstance not of his choosing, he is corrected according to his present capacity. But if he deliberately bypassed the rank out of pride or contempt, he is not like one who was prevented by necessity.

It is also related that a person whose dwelling lies nearer to Mecca than the appointed stations enters iḥrām from his dwelling. The inward meaning is that one already established near a higher degree does not have to return to a distant beginning merely to repeat what he has already validly received. His point of entry is the degree in which he has lawfully been placed.

The author warns, however, that this is not a licence for anyone to claim nearness for himself. A person is near only by proof and by the judgment of the one who knows his rank. The believer therefore does not assign himself his own station, just as a traveller does not move a geographical boundary according to his desire.

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It is related concerning one whose home is within the appointed stations that he enters iḥrām from his home; and concerning the people of Mecca, that they enter iḥrām from Mecca for pilgrimage. These rules show that the law considers where a person actually stands. Inwardly, knowledge is likewise given according to the rank a person has truly reached, not according to what he claims or what others flatter him into claiming.

The text then speaks about someone who comes upon a station without knowing which station it is, or who reaches it by an unfamiliar road. He asks those who know, and when reliable information establishes the boundary, he acts upon it. This is an explicit image for the inward path: where the seeker does not know the limit, he asks the people of knowledge rather than following conjecture.

A person who knowingly crosses the station without iḥrām and then enters iḥrām later has committed an error for which the prescribed remedy is required. The inward equivalent is one who knowingly bypasses an authorized rank and later seeks to attach himself to the summons. His attachment is not necessarily rejected, but what he damaged by the improper passage must be repaired under the judgment of the authority.

The page closes by connecting the appointed stations with the sanctity of the whole pilgrimage. The pilgrim's restraint begins before he reaches the House, for the journey itself is part of worship. Likewise the discipline of the seeker begins before he reaches the Imam: his speech, intention, loyalty, and obedience on the road are part of the proof of his sincerity.

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The author continues with reports concerning the miqāt and the one who enters iḥrām. Whoever is prevented by illness, weakness, or another unavoidable cause is treated according to his circumstance; whoever has no excuse is held to the full obligation. The law does not burden a person beyond ability, but it does not accept negligence disguised as inability.

The inward interpretation is that the respondent is given knowledge according to what he can bear, while at the same time he is required to exert himself to the limit of the capacity God has given him. A person whose understanding is small is not blamed for not possessing what has never been taught to him, but one who refuses to learn after the proof reaches him is not excused by the ignorance he chooses to preserve.

The stations, the entering of iḥrām, and the gradual approach to the sanctuary are therefore all signs of the ordered approach to the Imam. The seeker is not thrown directly into matters above his degree. He is prepared, bound by the covenant, taught the limits, and then advanced as he becomes able to carry what follows.

At the end of the session the author again joins outward practice to inward knowledge. One does not abolish the other. The outward station, garment, talbiya, and restrictions are obeyed because the Messenger established them; the inward meanings explain the wisdom and the spiritual order to which those forms point. Whoever holds fast to both has combined obedience with understanding.

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The author continues the comparison between outward preparation and inward preparation. Bathing for iḥrām is like purification for entering the religion's inner sanctuary. Cutting the nails and trimming the moustache signify removing what grows from the self and obscures the form intended by the law. The pilgrim does not mutilate himself; he restores proportion. In the same way, the guide does not destroy the seeker's natural faculties but disciplines them.

The sun's setting and rising, the hours of prayer, and the appointed times for assuming iḥrām are mentioned in transmitted reports. Their inward meaning is that every degree has its proper time. The Imam knows when a disciple is ready to advance. A person who advances before his time may be harmed by knowledge he cannot yet bear, just as an outward rite performed outside its appointed time is invalid.

Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad is cited concerning women entering iḥrām while menstruating. Outwardly, menstruation does not prevent the woman from assuming iḥrām, although some rites are delayed until purity. Inwardly, a deficiency that prevents one particular action does not necessarily prevent entry into every aspect of the covenant. The guide distinguishes between what must be delayed and what may proceed.

The text also discusses one who fears that illness or another obstacle may prevent completion. Such a person may make a stipulation when entering iḥrām. Inwardly, this indicates that the guide considers genuine weakness and permits what the law itself permits. Compassion is not abandonment of order; it is the application of order with knowledge of the person’s condition.

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The author warns that one who knows the limits of the inward law must not speak beyond what has been authorized. A person who has learned taʾwīl is not thereby entitled to abolish the outward law, nor may he attribute to the Imam a meaning for which he has no proof. Knowledge itself imposes restraint.

The physician is used as an analogy: he does not give every patient the same remedy or the same quantity. Likewise, the dāʿī gives instruction according to the capacity and need of the seeker. To disclose a matter before its proper time can injure the listener, just as medicine given without measure can injure the body.

The section closes with an exhortation to preserve both the outward command and its inward wisdom. The two are not enemies. The outward act is the visible form through which discipline is established, while the inward meaning reveals its purpose. The complete believer accepts both.

Blessings and peace are invoked upon Muḥammad, upon ʿAlī, upon the pure Imams from their progeny, and upon all who follow them in truth.

PART TEN

The First Session of Part Ten

Page 165

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

Praise be to God who brought forth the verses, clarified the signs, and made manifest the proofs. Blessings be upon Muḥammad and upon the pure Imams from his progeny.

The author now begins the taʾwīl of the rules of pilgrimage connected with what is forbidden to the pilgrim in iḥrām. In the outward law, the pilgrim may not hunt land-game, cut certain growth, engage in sexual relations, wear what is forbidden, cover the head in the prescribed cases, or commit other acts restricted during iḥrām.

The inward interpretation is that the believer who enters the covenant must restrain himself from attacking those whom God has protected and from seeking to seize what does not belong to his degree. Hunting signifies pursuing people in order to conquer them by argument or draw them into matters for which one has not been authorized. The protected animal signifies the believer whose life and faith are not to be violated.

The prohibition of sexual relations signifies that the seeker is not to mix the sacred knowledge he has received with alien teachings and desires. Once bound by the covenant, he must preserve the purity of what has been entrusted to him. He does not expose the hidden teaching to those outside its proper limits, nor does he combine it with false doctrine.

The covering of the head and other regulations of dress are likewise interpreted according to the ranks of authority. The head signifies the leader or the faculty of intellect; to cover what must remain manifest means to obscure the rightful source of guidance. The believer therefore knows his head—his Imam—and does not conceal or replace him.

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The outward prohibition against hunting is not absolute in every circumstance; certain creatures may be killed if they are harmful. The inward lesson is that not every person who appears among the people of religion is to be treated identically. One who is merely ignorant or weak is protected and instructed, but one who actively destroys faith and harms the believers may be judged according to the law of his condition.

The author cites Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq concerning what the muḥrim may and may not kill. The report lists harmful creatures and distinguishes them from ordinary game. Inwardly, harmful creatures signify destructive doctrines and agents who spread corruption. The believer is not commanded to tolerate a corruption that devours the faith of others under the pretext of mercy.

The prohibition of cutting trees within the sanctuary is interpreted as preserving the roots and branches of the community of guidance. The tree signifies the line of the daʿwa and the believers who grow from it. To cut it without right is to sever a person from his source of knowledge or to break a bond that God established.

The text also discusses what grows by itself and what has been planted by human action. Inwardly, some knowledge is fundamental and belongs to the established revelation and covenant, while other forms are human arrangements built upon those foundations. The first has a sanctity that cannot be altered by opinion; the second may be managed according to legitimate need.

A report from the *Daʿāʾim* concerning women, clothing, and the muḥrim is then given. Its inward interpretation again distinguishes between the guide and the beneficiary and between what may properly be concealed and what must be openly acknowledged.

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The author explains that the outward distinctions concerning men and women in iḥrām are signs of distinctions among spiritual ranks. A man signifies one who gives benefit and carries knowledge; a woman signifies one who receives benefit. This symbolism does not abolish the outward law but provides an inward correspondence.

Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq is cited regarding a woman in iḥrām and what she may cover. The face is treated differently from the rest of the body. Inwardly, the face signifies the manifest identity and recognition by which a person is known, while the body signifies the totality of his inward state. One may conceal what is private, but the fundamental allegiance by which one is recognized must not be disguised.

The text discusses a pilgrim who covers his head because of illness or necessity. The outward law allows expiation where the Qurʾān allows it. Inwardly, when weakness forces a seeker to depart temporarily from an ordinary discipline, the matter is treated with knowledge and compensation rather than arbitrary condemnation. Necessity is recognized, but it does not turn the exceptional case into a general rule.

The author emphasizes that taʾwīl is not a pretext for dismissing the outward command. The person who knows the inward meaning is even more bound to preserve the outward law, because he knows its wisdom. Only an ignorant person imagines that understanding a symbol permits him to abolish the form through which the symbol was taught.

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The author continues with matters forbidden in iḥrām. He explains that the muḥrim may not cover what the law requires him to leave uncovered, nor use perfume, nor undertake acts that contradict his consecrated state. Inwardly, the one who has entered the covenant must not veil the truth he has been charged to acknowledge, nor adorn falsehood with attractive speech, nor return to the habits from which the covenant removed him.

The cutting of hair or nails without cause is treated as a violation requiring expiation. Inwardly, hair and nails signify outward extensions of the person—words, habits, and actions that grow from his state. They are not to be altered arbitrarily while he is in a protected degree; discipline must proceed according to the command of the guide.

A report from Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq is cited concerning prayer during travel and the pilgrim who is moving from one station to another. The author relates this to pilgrimage because the rites are a journey. Inwardly, the journey is the believer's movement through degrees of knowledge. Prayer signifies connection with the divine command at every stage; movement does not excuse the seeker from maintaining that connection.

The shortening of prayer in travel is an outward concession, while inwardly it signifies that instruction is proportioned to the seeker's temporary condition. The teacher may give a concise portion suitable to one in transit and a fuller portion to one who has settled, but both are parts of the same religion.

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The text explains the prayer of the traveller and the person who combines rites. The pilgrim who intends ḥajj alone, ʿumra alone, or the combined form declares his intention accordingly and performs what belongs to that intention. Inwardly, the seeker must know the degree he has entered and the task he has undertaken. Confusion of intentions produces confusion of action.

Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq is cited concerning the formulas by which the pilgrim states his intention: he asks God to accept from him and to make the path easy. The inward lesson is that entry into knowledge is by God's help; a person should not attribute success to himself or imagine that his own intelligence is sufficient.

The text distinguishes the one who performs pilgrimage individually from the one who performs it in conjunction with other rites. This is interpreted as a distinction between one who takes a particular degree of

instruction and one who combines several obligations under a broader covenant. Each must fulfill what belongs to his own undertaking.

The author then returns to the meaning of completing what has been begun. Once a person has bound himself by a valid intention, he must not abandon the work without a legitimate reason. This reflects the Qurʾānic command to fulfill covenants and obligations. Inwardly, the believer does not take the pledge lightly and then leave it when difficulty appears.

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The author cites the saying of the Messenger of God that "the intention of the believer is better than his action." The report does not mean that action is unnecessary, but that the sound intention gives life to the action. A deed without right intention may be outwardly correct yet spiritually empty, while a sincere intention may be rewarded even when a person is prevented from completing what he intended.

This principle is applied to pilgrimage. A person may set out intending the obligatory pilgrimage and be prevented by illness or another unavoidable cause. His intention is known to God. Inwardly, one who sincerely seeks a degree of knowledge but is prevented by a real incapacity is not judged like one who abandons it from indifference.

The author adds that intention alone cannot replace action where action remains possible. The believer must join the two. This is true of the outward pilgrimage and of the inward path: one must intend recognition of the truth and then act upon that recognition.

The Second Session of Part Ten

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

Praise be to God, Creator of creation, Originator of forms, and Giver of measure to all things. Blessings be upon Muḥammad and upon the pure Imams from his progeny.

The session turns to the *talbiya*, the pilgrim's repeated declaration, "At Your service, O God, at Your service." The outward pilgrim raises his voice with it at the appointed places. Inwardly, it is the answer of the believer to the call of God conveyed through the Prophet and the Imam. The person who hears the true call and answers it has entered upon the path of pilgrimage in its inner reality.

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The talbiya is the response to the summons to the Sacred Mosque. Outwardly, the people of pilgrimage answer Abraham's proclamation and the command transmitted by the Messenger. Inwardly, the people of the daʿwa answer the call to recognition of the Imam. Their response is not a single utterance but a continuing obedience.

The author explains that each pilgrim pronounces the talbiya for himself; one person's response does not substitute for another's. Inwardly, every believer must personally accept the covenant. A father, teacher, or companion may guide him, but none can believe in his place.

The pilgrimage and ʿumra may be joined or separated according to the prescribed forms. Inwardly, different degrees of instruction may be connected, but each retains its own meaning. A person must know whether he is taking a preliminary covenant, completing a former obligation, or entering the full degree of pilgrimage.

The Qurʾānic command, "Complete the pilgrimage and the ʿumra for God," is taken as a principle of completion. The seeker must carry each undertaking to its proper end. If the Imam has assigned him a degree, he is not to abandon it halfway or combine it confusedly with another.

Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq is cited concerning the pilgrim who joins ʿumra to ḥajj. The outward sequence of circumambulation, saʿy, and the later rites is explained. Inwardly, the seeker's movement around the Imam's knowledge and his striving between the stations of proof are stages of one ordered journey.

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If the day of ʿArafa approaches while a pilgrim has not completed the ʿumra, the reports explain when he must change his intention and proceed to the pilgrimage. The ruling depends upon whether there remains enough time to perform what is required. Inwardly, this signifies that a seeker may have to leave a preliminary exercise and enter the essential obligation when the decisive time arrives.

The author explains that the outward ḥajj is directed toward the House. Inwardly, the House signifies the Imam, the focal point to whom the people of the daʿwa turn. The rites are not worship of the physical structure; they are divine commands whose inner meaning is orientation toward God's Proof.

The person who has already performed his obligatory pilgrimage may perform another voluntarily. Inwardly, once the fundamental recognition and covenant have been established, the believer may repeatedly seek increase in knowledge and renewed closeness. Such repetition is not a second foundation but an increase upon the first.

The author then discusses one who performs pilgrimage on behalf of another. Outwardly, a person may be deputed in certain circumstances. Inwardly, this represents the dāʿī who acts on behalf of the Imam in conveying guidance. He does not become the Imam; he serves as an authorized deputy whose effectiveness depends on his appointment.

The Qurʾānic command not to follow that of which one has no knowledge is invoked. A deputy must not speak from himself. If he conveys what he has been authorized to convey, he acts rightly; if he adds or subtracts according to his own desire, his deputation is corrupted.

Page 173

The author distinguishes between the Imam, the dāʿī, and the ordinary believer. Their acts may sometimes resemble one another outwardly, but their authority is not the same. The Imam is the source of instruction in his age; the dāʿī summons by his permission; the believer receives and acts. Confusing these ranks is like confusing the owner of the House with one who merely visits it.

A dāʿī may call people to the truth but may not claim for himself what belongs to the Imam. If he does so, he becomes a barrier rather than a guide. Likewise, a believer who has learned something may teach what he is permitted to teach, but he must not assume an office that has not been given to him.

The text compares the pilgrimage on behalf of another with authorized representation. A person who undertakes a pilgrimage for someone else must be named and intended; similarly, inward representation requires a known appointment. One does not become the Imam's representative merely by wishing to be so.

The author refers to the Prophet's mission and to the way the early believers answered his call. Those who accepted him accepted the authority God had placed in him; those who opposed him, even if they claimed to worship God, rejected the divine command attached to his person. The same principle applies to the Imam after the Prophet.

The session proceeds toward the rites that follow the talbiya, especially the entry into Mecca and the circumambulation, which will be interpreted in the following pages.

Page 174

The author explains that the person deputed to perform pilgrimage for another must first know his own obligation. If the pilgrimage is obligatory upon him personally, he may not neglect his own duty in order to

perform a voluntary act for someone else. Inwardly, one who has not completed the foundations required of himself is not fit to carry another person's burden of instruction.

The same principle applies to the dāʿī. He must himself be established in the covenant and in knowledge before summoning others. One who calls people to a rank he has not attained resembles a person who performs pilgrimage on behalf of another while his own obligatory pilgrimage remains undone.

A report from Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq concerns the person who undertakes ʿumra before pilgrimage and then reaches the time of ʿArafa. If the ʿumra can be completed without missing the essential standing, he completes it; if not, he turns to the pilgrimage. Inwardly, preliminary instruction is valuable only so long as it does not cause the seeker to miss the decisive obligation. When the time of the greater duty arrives, the lesser must yield to it.

The author again interprets ʿumra as a lesser visitation and ḥajj as the fuller approach to the Imam. The lesser rite prepares for the greater, just as preliminary teaching prepares the seeker for recognition of the central Proof.

Page 175

The text returns to the question whether a person may perform more than one ʿumra and how much time should separate them. Reports are cited showing that repeated ʿumras are permissible under stated conditions. Inwardly, repeated approaches to knowledge and renewed visits to the people of guidance are praiseworthy, provided they do not replace the fundamental obligation or become mere display.

A person who vows an ʿumra or pilgrimage is bound by his vow if it concerns obedience to God. Inwardly, a covenant voluntarily taken upon oneself becomes binding when it is sound. The believer should not make vows carelessly, because words spoken before God are not empty.

The author distinguishes between a vow made in obedience and one involving sin or impossibility. No obedience is owed in disobedience. Likewise, an inward pledge that contradicts the law or rightful authority has no validity merely because it was solemnly uttered.

The discussion then turns to the pilgrim who is prevented after beginning. If prevented by an enemy, illness, or genuine incapacity, he follows the prescribed rules and releases himself from the state of iḥrām accordingly. Inwardly, one who is prevented from completing a degree by circumstances beyond his control must seek the ruling of the guide; he does not simply abandon the covenant or declare himself released.

Page 176

The author warns against making doubt an excuse for abandoning what has been established. A believer may ask when he does not know, but once proof is clear he must act. The one who constantly demands new signs after recognition resembles those who asked the prophets for repeated miracles while refusing what had already been shown to them.

The Qurʾānic image of blindness and sight is used. Outward sight may remain while the heart is blind. Inwardly, the person who sees the forms of religion but does not recognize the Imam is like one who sees objects yet does not understand what they signify. Conversely, inner knowledge does not excuse neglect of the visible obligations through which obedience is manifested.

The author refers to the story of the Israelites and the prophets as examples of people who were given clear signs but still disputed. Their error was not lack of evidence but refusal to submit. The seeker of truth should therefore ask in order to learn, not in order to evade.

The rites of pilgrimage provide the same lesson: every movement has a known place and order. To dispute each step after having accepted the guide destroys the very meaning of the journey. True inquiry leads to obedience; contentious inquiry leads away from it.

Page 177

The discussion of doubt and proof is brought to a close with an exhortation: fear God, believers, and do not allow the outward appearance of religion to be separated from its inward reality. Preserve the limits in both. Blessings are invoked upon Muḥammad and his family.

The Third Session of Part Ten

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

Praise be to God, exalted above likeness and comparison, and blessings be upon Muḥammad and the pure Imams from his progeny.

The author turns to the *shaʿāʾir*, the sacred symbols and rites of pilgrimage. God says, "Whoever magnifies the sacred symbols of God—indeed, that is from the piety of hearts." The outward symbols include the places, acts, and animals designated for the rites. Inwardly, the greatest symbols are the Proofs of God and the ranks by which His religion is known.

Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq is cited concerning Safā and Marwa as among God's symbols. The author explains that their outward status as landmarks of the pilgrimage points inwardly to two manifest stations through which the seeker passes. The movement between them is not aimless wandering but disciplined striving between defined points of guidance.

The sacrificial animals are also among the symbols. Their inward meaning concerns those who devote themselves and what they possess to the service of the truth. To mark an animal for sacrifice and lead it to the sanctuary signifies dedicating an act, possession, or person to a sacred purpose under lawful authority.

Page 178

The author develops the symbolism of the marked sacrificial animal. The sign placed upon it makes its purpose known and prevents it from being treated as ordinary property. Inwardly, the covenant marks the believer as belonging to the service of God. He is not thereafter to be treated as one with no obligation or direction.

The Qurʾānic prohibition against violating the sacred symbols or the sacrificial offerings is interpreted as a prohibition against injuring those who have been dedicated to the path or interfering with the offices established by the Imam. A person who attacks such a one without right has violated a sign of God.

Reports are cited concerning feeding, riding, or making use of an animal designated for sacrifice when necessity requires it. The outward law permits measured benefit without destroying the sacred purpose. Inwardly, one who has been devoted to service may still be assisted and supported in worldly needs, provided his fundamental dedication is not compromised.

The author then discusses the difference between genuine sacred designation and mere outward claim. A sign has force because it is connected to lawful intention and authority. Likewise, someone is not made a true representative or servant of the daʿwa merely by adopting a title or outward appearance.

Page 179

The text moves to the sacrificial offering made as compensation or fulfillment of a rite. The outward sacrifice is an animal of specified kind and condition, offered at the proper place and time. Inwardly, sacrifice signifies surrender of something loved for the sake of obedience—especially the surrender of self-will and pride.

A person may have wealth, learning, or social rank and be required to place these at the service of the truth rather than using them for domination. The greater the thing surrendered, the greater the sign of sincerity, provided the sacrifice is commanded and not invented through self-harm or ostentation.

The author cites the verse, “Their flesh and blood do not reach God, but your piety reaches Him.” Thus the physical act is not valuable because God needs the offering; its value lies in obedience. Inwardly, no outward renunciation benefits the seeker if pride and disobedience remain in the heart.

The rulings concerning substitution when a person cannot find a sacrificial animal are also mentioned. The law provides fasting or other compensation in specified circumstances. Inwardly, when the primary form of service is genuinely unavailable, the Imam or the law directs the believer to an alternative proportionate to his capacity. The alternative is not chosen by whim but by rule.

Page 180

The compensatory offering is discussed according to the person’s means. One who can find and afford the required animal offers it; one who cannot is directed to the substitute established by the law. Inwardly, this signifies that obligations are measured by the believer’s actual capacity, but the measure is not set by his desire. What God has made obligatory must be fulfilled in the form appointed for the person’s condition.

The author distinguishes between inability and unwillingness. A person who truly lacks the means is not like one who possesses them but refuses to give. Inwardly, someone may say that he cannot bear a degree of obedience when the real obstacle is attachment to wealth, reputation, or self-will. The guide must distinguish genuine incapacity from refusal.

If a person vows a sacrifice or incurs an expiation through a violation, he becomes responsible for what the law requires. Inwardly, the believer who knowingly breaks a limit must repair the breach. Repentance is not merely regret; it includes the correction appropriate to the wrong.

The author also explains that voluntary offerings are accepted when made sincerely, but they do not cancel obligatory debts unless the law has made them substitutes. Likewise, voluntary acts of devotion do not compensate for neglect of the covenant or of a required duty.

Page 181

A transmitted supplication of the pilgrimage is cited: “At Your service, O God, at Your service; You have no partner; praise, blessing, and sovereignty are Yours.” The author draws attention to its affirmation of divine unity. Outwardly it is the pilgrim’s talbiya; inwardly it is the believer’s confession that no authority is obeyed independently of God.

The repetition of “At Your service” signifies constancy. The believer answers not once but whenever the command reaches him. The response of the tongue must be joined to the response of action. If a person says “At Your service” while disobeying, his action contradicts his speech.

Reports are cited concerning raising the voice with the talbiya, especially at certain places. Inwardly, proclamation is required where the truth must be made manifest. There is also a time for concealment; wisdom distinguishes the two. The dāʿī does not reveal what should remain restricted, nor hide what God has commanded him to proclaim.

The pilgrim continues the talbiya until the place where it is to be stopped according to the rite. Inwardly, a particular formula of response belongs to a particular stage. When the believer reaches the next degree, the former mode gives way to the act appropriate to the new station. Continuity does not mean remaining forever at the beginning.

Page 182

The meaning of response is further explained through obedience. God says, “Obey God and obey the Messenger and those vested with authority among you.” The threefold order does not establish three independent sources; rather, obedience to the Messenger and the rightful authority is obedience to God because He commanded it.

The author applies this to the inward talbiya. When the Imam calls a believer to a duty in accordance with the religion, the believer's answer is part of his answer to God. To claim love of God while refusing the divinely appointed guide is therefore a contradiction.

The rites of prayer are used as an analogy. Every prayer begins with an intention, takbīr, and ordered acts. One cannot replace them with a private form while claiming the same prayer. Likewise, the inward religion has an order that cannot be replaced by self-appointed inspiration.

The verse, "O you who believe, respond to God and to the Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life," is cited. Inwardly, the call to life is the call to knowledge. Ignorance is death, and the response that revives the heart is acceptance of the guidance that comes through the Prophet and the Imam.

Page 183

The author concludes the preceding discussion by likening the believer's answer to the divine call to his obedience in every degree. When the Imam commands what accords with the law, the believer's response should be immediate and sincere. To delay through stubbornness after recognition is unlike hesitation caused by genuine uncertainty; the latter seeks clarification, while the former resists what is already known.

The outward talbiya is therefore a visible sign of this inward answer. The pilgrim raises his voice saying, "At Your service," while the inward pilgrim makes the same declaration through obedience. The author closes the session with blessings upon the Prophet and the Imams and asks God to keep the believers firm upon the truth.

The Fourth Session of Part Ten

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

Praise be to God, the One whose praise none can fully encompass; blessings be upon Muḥammad and the pure Imams from his progeny.

The author now turns to restrictions of iḥrām involving hunting and food. The Qurʾānic verse concerning the prohibition of hunting while in the sacred state is cited, together with reports from the Imams. Outwardly, land-game is forbidden to the muḥrim, whereas the produce of the sea is permitted. Inwardly, the distinction concerns whom the seeker may pursue and from whom he may take knowledge.

Land-game signifies persons whose approach has been prohibited to the one in a sacred degree, either because they are under another authority or because pursuing them would violate the limits. Sea-game signifies knowledge drawn from a permitted source that does not involve aggression against protected persons. The believer must know the difference and not treat every opportunity for gain as lawful.

Page 184

The author develops the inward meaning of hunting. To hunt is to pursue something for one's own acquisition. In the daʿwa, this can signify seeking followers, authority, or knowledge for oneself. A person in iḥrām has bound himself to God and may not act as an independent claimant. He must not lure away the followers of another guide or seek to possess what has not been assigned to him.

The prohibition also concerns assisting another hunter. Outwardly, the muḥrim may not point out the game, drive it toward a hunter, or help in killing it. Inwardly, a believer must not assist another in violating the covenant, exposing protected knowledge, or seducing a person away from rightful guidance.

Reports from the People of the House are cited concerning one who kills game accidentally or deliberately. The outward expiation differs according to the act and the animal. Inwardly, responsibility likewise differs according to knowledge, intention, and the degree of harm. An ignorant mistake is not identical to deliberate transgression after proof.

The author then considers the person who kills another believer or harms him. The seriousness of spilling protected blood is used as an analogy for destroying a believer's faith. One who drives another from truth through deception has caused a spiritual injury more serious than bodily loss.

Page 185

The discussion moves to situations involving spouses while in iḥrām. Outwardly, sexual relations are forbidden until the proper point of release from the sacred state. Inwardly, this signifies that the seeker may not mix with teachings or attachments that conflict with the covenant before he has completed the degree into which he entered.

The author uses the recurrent symbolism of man as one who gives benefit and woman as one who receives. A lawful union in the inward sense is a properly authorized relationship of teaching and reception. An unlawful union is one in which knowledge is given without right, taken from an unauthorized source, or mixed with a foreign doctrine.

A report concerning a man who has intercourse while in iḥrām is interpreted according to this principle. Outwardly, the violation requires expiation and may affect the validity of the pilgrimage. Inwardly, a person who breaks the sanctity of the covenant by disclosing the protected teaching or attaching himself to an unauthorized source must repent and undergo correction before his spiritual journey can be considered sound.

The author stresses that the outward ruling remains binding. Taʾwīl does not transform a prohibited act into a permitted one. Rather, the inward meaning reveals why the outward boundary is so serious.

Page 186

The same ruling is applied to marriage while in iḥrām. The muḥrim neither contracts a marriage for himself nor arranges one for another in the manner prohibited by the law. Inwardly, one who is within the protected covenant may not create unauthorized bonds of instruction, either for himself or for others.

The author cites a report that if a man in iḥrām points out his wife to another or acts in a way that leads to prohibited relations, he shares responsibility for the violation. Inwardly, the one who directs a believer toward a corrupt source of teaching bears part of the burden even if he did not himself become attached to that source.

The discussion then treats looking with desire. A mere accidental glance is not like a deliberate, repeated look that awakens desire. Inwardly, passing exposure to a false idea is not the same as deliberately contemplating it with attraction. The seeker must turn away once the corruption is known, because repeated attention may produce attachment.

The author interprets the eye as a means by which the heart receives impressions. Just as the outward pilgrim guards his gaze, the inward pilgrim guards what he allows to enter his understanding. He should not make curiosity a door to confusion.

Page 187

A report is cited concerning a woman in iḥrām who uncovers or covers her face in particular circumstances. The outward ruling is carefully distinguished according to what is permitted. Inwardly, this continues the symbolism of manifestation and concealment. What is part of the believer's public allegiance must be manifest; what belongs to the protected interior is not exposed without cause.

The author compares forbidden disclosure of hidden knowledge to the unlawful uncovering of what should remain veiled. A dāʿī who reveals the inner teaching indiscriminately to one unprepared for it violates a trust, just as one who exposes what the law commands to be covered violates modesty.

The chapter also discusses disputation during pilgrimage. The Qurʾān says there is to be no obscenity, transgression, or disputation in the pilgrimage. Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq explains the outward expression and its consequences. Inwardly, *jidāl* signifies contentious argument against the rightful authority or quarrelling for victory rather than truth.

Not every discussion is forbidden. Asking for understanding, presenting proof, and correcting error are part of knowledge. The forbidden disputation is the kind rooted in pride, obstinacy, and refusal to submit after evidence has become clear.

Page 188

The author continues with the inward meaning of the sacred prohibitions. God says that the pilgrim must not commit transgression. A believer therefore does not use his consecrated state as an excuse for harshness or self-righteousness; rather, the sanctity of the state increases the seriousness of wrongdoing.

Reports are cited concerning one who swears, argues, or uses offensive language while in iḥrām, and the expiation required in certain cases. Inwardly, speech has consequences because words can injure faith. A false oath, slander, or arrogant argument may require correction and public reparation if it has caused public harm.

The removal of lice or other nuisances from the body is also discussed, with distinctions made between what may be removed and what may not. Inwardly, the body signifies the community and its members. Harmful influences may be removed when they truly harm the whole, but one must not label every inconvenient person a "pest" and cast him out. Judgment belongs to legitimate authority.

The author uses bodily cleansing as a sign of doctrinal cleansing. Just as a person removes what harms him without injuring the body itself, the guide removes corrupt ideas while preserving the believer wherever possible. The aim is cure, not destruction.

Page 189

The author continues the treatment of harmful creatures and what may be removed by the muḥrim. What truly harms may be dealt with according to the law, but the believer must not turn dislike into a pretext for aggression. Inwardly, those who corrupt faith and deliberately lead people astray are not treated like ordinary believers who possess faults and weaknesses.

The text compares the removal of a harmful thing from the body to the removal of a corrupt doctrine from the community. The purpose is protection and healing. A physician cuts or cauterizes only where necessary; likewise the guide rebukes, disciplines, or excludes only to the extent required by the truth.

Food given in compensation and charity connected with violations of iḥrām are also interpreted. Feeding the poor outwardly corresponds inwardly to giving knowledge to those who lack it. Just as food preserves bodily life, sound instruction preserves the life of faith. The one who possesses knowledge is therefore obliged to give from it according to the proper measure.

The session closes with an exhortation to preserve the limits and with blessings upon Muḥammad and his family.

The Fifth Session of Part Ten

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

Praise be to God, worthy of all praise; blessings be upon Muḥammad and the pure Imams from his progeny.

The author now discusses the pilgrim who becomes ill or is afflicted with a bodily condition while in iḥrām. The outward law permits treatment where necessary, although certain treatments or adornments remain

forbidden. Inwardly, illness signifies weakness or disorder in a seeker's understanding. Such a person requires treatment from one who knows the medicine of the soul.

Page 190

A report from Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq concerns the pilgrim who suffers from an ailment of the head. The Qurʾānic rule concerning shaving the head because of illness and giving compensation is cited. Outwardly, necessity allows what would otherwise be restricted, with the prescribed expiation. Inwardly, if the "head"—the person's governing understanding or relation to authority—is afflicted, corrective action may be required even if it departs from the ordinary form.

The author emphasizes that a remedy is not chosen arbitrarily. The condition must be real, and the compensation is part of restoring order. Inwardly, when a believer's state requires exceptional treatment, the guide applies it by knowledge, and the seeker then repairs what was necessarily set aside.

The text also discusses giving charity in connection with such violations. Inwardly, charity signifies imparting benefit. A believer who has suffered a deficiency may be required to compensate by benefiting others, strengthening obedience, or renewing what he neglected.

The sick person is compared to one whose inward condition is troubled by doubts or inherited false ideas. Such a person should disclose the illness to a qualified guide rather than conceal it until it worsens. The physician of souls cannot treat what the patient refuses to reveal.

Page 191

The discussion proceeds to the use of medicine, oils, and other treatments while in iḥrām. The reports distinguish between what is used for cure and what is used merely for adornment or perfume. Inwardly, knowledge used to cure confusion is permitted and necessary, whereas attractive speech used only to flatter the ego or display superiority is blameworthy.

Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq is cited concerning the muḥrim who must apply medicine or have a wound treated. The outward ruling allows necessity. Inwardly, the guide may use strong admonition, detailed argument, or temporary discipline where the seeker's condition requires it. The method may be unpleasant, but its aim is cure.

The author draws a distinction between the eye and other bodily organs. Treatment of the eye is especially significant because sight is the means of perceiving what lies before a person. Inwardly, the eye signifies insight and discernment. If insight is diseased, the person may see falsehood as truth and truth as falsehood; therefore its cure is among the most urgent forms of inward treatment.

The text again insists that one does not abandon the law under the claim of inner understanding. The permitted treatment is permitted because the law itself permits it in necessity. In the same way, any inward concession must come from legitimate authority, not private preference.

Page 192

The author continues discussing illness and treatment. What is required in the outward law is to seek cure without crossing the limits of iḥrām except where necessity permits. The inner meaning is that spiritual treatment must also remain within the religion's limits. A cure that itself destroys obedience is not a cure.

The seeker may be afflicted by doubts, inherited doctrines, bad habits, or attachments that prevent clear understanding. The guide treats each according to its measure. Some errors are removed by explanation, some by admonition, some by prolonged discipline. The person should not be ashamed to seek treatment, for concealment of an illness can make it more severe.

The author cites reports concerning a muḥrim who becomes independent of assistance or who must hire someone for a necessary task. Outwardly, necessity is recognized; inwardly, the believer may require the aid of one more knowledgeable. Seeking such aid is not blameworthy when it is sought from the proper source.

A report is also cited concerning the payment of compensation when a prohibited act is committed under necessity. The inner interpretation is that a temporary departure from the ordinary discipline must be followed by restoration. The believer should not turn an exception into a habit.

Page 193

The text turns to women and clothing in iḥrām. The outward rulings distinguish between the clothing permitted to men and that permitted to women. Inwardly, the distinction again points to differences between those who give instruction and those who receive it. The same outward form is not necessarily required of every rank, but each rank has its own discipline.

The muḥrim is forbidden certain sewn garments in the specified cases. Inwardly, clothing signifies the doctrines, titles, and outward identities by which a person is covered. One entering the sacred state should not clothe himself in borrowed claims or distinctions not given by the Imam.

A garment that is perfumed or dyed for adornment is treated differently from an ordinary protective covering. Inwardly, knowledge used for vanity and display is like perfumed clothing: attractive to people but inappropriate to the humility of the consecrated seeker.

The author also discusses a woman covering herself from unrelated men while maintaining the special rules of iḥrām. Inwardly, modest concealment remains necessary even in the sacred state. The believer reveals only what should be revealed and preserves the hidden teaching from those who have no right to it.

Page 194

The author elaborates on the symbolism of clothing. A garment protects the body, conceals what should be concealed, and identifies the wearer. Inwardly, the religion's teachings protect the believer from error, conceal his faults through discipline and repentance, and identify him as belonging to the people of truth.

A person may not use clothing in a way prohibited during iḥrām merely because it is ordinarily lawful. Inwardly, an act or teaching that is permissible in one degree may be inappropriate in another. The seeker must learn the rule of his present station rather than assuming that every former permission remains unchanged.

The distinction between a man's and a woman's covering is interpreted according to the recurring symbolism of guide and beneficiary. The one who teaches must openly manifest the authority under which he teaches; the one who receives may remain more concealed. Yet neither may claim a station belonging to the other.

Reports are cited concerning sandals, belts, and other items needed for practical necessity. Their inward meaning is that worldly means may be used in the service of the pilgrimage so long as they remain means and do not become objects of pride or attachment. The believer uses what helps him reach the goal but does not mistake the means for the goal itself.

Page 195

The previous discussion of clothing is concluded with the general principle that outward resemblance does not erase inward distinction. Two people may wear the same kind of garment, yet one wears it lawfully and another unlawfully because their states and intentions differ. So too in the inward religion, the same words may be spoken by a true guide and by an impostor, but their authority is not the same.

The believer is therefore commanded to know the source from which he receives. The outward form alone is insufficient. The session closes with an exhortation to preserve the religion's outward and inward limits and with blessings upon Muḥammad and the pure Imams.

The Sixth Session of Part Ten

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

Praise be to God, Creator of all things; blessings be upon Muḥammad, the bearer of revelation, and upon the pure Imams from his progeny.

The author returns to hunting while in iḥrām and to the expiation for killing game. The Qurʾān requires an equivalent from livestock, judged by two just persons, or food for the poor, or fasting, according to the stated ruling. Outwardly, the violation is assessed according to what was killed. Inwardly, the harm done to a believer or to the order of the daʿwa must likewise be measured and repaired proportionately.

The two just arbiters signify persons qualified to judge a spiritual injury without passion. Not every believer is fit to determine the remedy. A person who has wronged another does not decide for himself that the matter is trivial; the judgment belongs to those who know the limits.

Page 196

Jaʿfar b. Muḥammad is cited concerning the various animals and the corresponding offerings or acts of compensation. The outward details differ according to the creature and the circumstances. Inwardly, different kinds of injury to faith require different remedies. A minor error, a deliberate act of deception, and the destruction of another person’s belief cannot be treated as one and the same.

The author explains that justice means proportion. The one who has caused harm should neither be excused without correction nor burdened beyond what the act requires. The judge considers knowledge, intention, repetition, and effect.

If the offender cannot provide the prescribed animal, he may feed the poor or fast according to the law. Inwardly, if one form of restitution is genuinely impossible, another may be assigned. Feeding signifies giving benefit and knowledge; fasting signifies restraining the soul from what it desires and disciplining it until the effect of the wrong has been corrected.

The text also cites the rule concerning repeated offenses. Deliberate repetition after warning is graver than a first mistake. Inwardly, once proof has been established, persistence reveals a condition of the heart that mere ignorance does not.

Page 197

The author summarizes the principle underlying these compensations: the aim is not mere punishment but restoration of balance. The outward law teaches the offender the gravity of the sacred state; inwardly, the corrective act teaches the seeker respect for the covenant.

The discussion then moves through examples of game killed in different circumstances. Some acts occur unintentionally, some through ignorance, some deliberately. Each case is treated according to its own ruling. This becomes an inward lesson in careful judgment. The people of knowledge must not collapse all faults into a single category.

The text also refers to birds and their young, eggs, and other cases where the harm affects not only the immediate object but what would have proceeded from it. Inwardly, destroying a beginning of faith or preventing a novice from growing may be more serious than merely offending a mature believer, because one has cut off what might have developed.

The author insists that the believer should fear God before acting. Once a sacred limit has been crossed, compensation may repair the violation, but the wiser course is to avoid the violation from the beginning. The inward pilgrim guards the believers and the trusts placed in his care.

Page 198

The author continues the subject of hunting and the effect of violations. If a person causes an animal to die indirectly—by frightening it, driving it, wounding it, or leading a hunter to it—his responsibility is judged according to the role he played. Inwardly, the same principle applies to one who damages another believer's faith indirectly. A person may not himself utter the corrupt doctrine, yet by directing someone toward its source, encouraging him, or concealing the danger he may share the burden.

The author uses the image of a bird taking flight and leaving its nest. In the inward interpretation, the one who leaves the protection of his guide because another person frightened or enticed him away has been harmed by that person's action. If the believer returns safely, the harm is less; if he is lost, the responsibility is greater.

Reports from the Imams are cited concerning a muḥrim who frightens game, destroys eggs, or causes offspring to perish. These cases show that responsibility includes consequences that were reasonably connected to the act. Inwardly, the guide must consider what follows from a person's words and actions, not merely the momentary act itself.

The chapter also distinguishes knowledge possessed before the violation from ignorance at the time. One who knew the rule and deliberately transgressed is not like one who genuinely did not know. Yet ignorance does not always remove the need for correction, because the damage itself may still have to be repaired.

Page 199

The author cites a report concerning the collective responsibility of people who participate in killing game. When several persons jointly cause the act, each bears the ruling assigned by the law rather than escaping because no single person acted alone. Inwardly, collective corruption likewise creates collective responsibility. Those who cooperate in misleading a believer may each bear a share of the wrong.

Another report states that a muḥrim should not eat from game hunted for him. The inner meaning is that a believer should not benefit from a wrong committed on his behalf. If someone violates a limit in order to obtain followers, wealth, or knowledge for him, the intended beneficiary does not become innocent by saying, "I did not perform the act myself."

The text then discusses one who eats game without knowing its origin, and one who knowingly eats what was hunted unlawfully. The first is treated differently from the second. Inwardly, taking in a corrupt teaching unknowingly differs from knowingly embracing it after its source has been exposed.

The author again emphasizes the role of the Imam or authorized judge in determining the proper response. Individual anger or favoritism must not decide the matter. The believer who has done wrong submits to judgment rather than deciding his own innocence.

Page 200

If a violator cannot make the prescribed offering, the alternative of feeding or fasting is applied according to the transmitted rule. The inner meaning is that correction must be completed in some valid form; inability to perform the first remedy does not cancel the obligation altogether.

The text compares the sacrifice to a thing taken from the person's own possession and the feeding to benefit passed to others. Fasting, by contrast, is borne within the person himself. Inwardly, some wrongs are repaired by giving from one's resources, some by restoring benefit to those harmed, and some by inward discipline of the self.

The author discusses repeated violation and the person who returns to the same wrongdoing after correction. Repetition indicates that the first admonition did not penetrate. Inwardly, persistent error may require a stronger remedy or a change in the person's standing until his condition becomes sound.

The rulings concerning the sacrifice also demonstrate that the believer's obligations are not left vague. The law specifies kinds, quantities, and circumstances. This precision itself is a sign that inward discipline must also be ordered and not reduced to general good intention.

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The preceding discussion is summarized: the believer must preserve the life, faith, and rights of others, and must repair harm when he has caused it. Blessings are invoked upon Muḥammad and his family.

The Seventh Session of Part Ten

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

Praise be to God, the just Judge; blessings be upon Muḥammad and the pure Imams.

The author now turns to the hunter's weapon and to the manner in which game is killed. In the outward law, the ruling differs according to whether the animal was killed by a trained hunting animal, by an arrow or weapon, or in another way. Inwardly, the "weapon" signifies the means by which a person's argument or action reaches another. Some means are lawful and disciplined; others are treacherous or uncontrolled.

A trained hunting animal that is sent in God's name and follows its training is contrasted with an untrained animal that kills for itself. Inwardly, the trained agent signifies the authorized dāʿī, who acts by the command of the Imam; the untrained one signifies a self-appointed caller who acts from appetite, ambition, or private opinion.

Page 202

Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq is cited concerning the animal that is sent, catches the prey, and eats from it. The detailed outward ruling is then interpreted inwardly. If the agent acts for the master's purpose, the result belongs to that purpose; if he acts for himself and consumes what he was sent to obtain, he has betrayed the trust.

Thus the dāʿī must not call people in order to make them his personal followers. He calls them to God, the Messenger, and the Imam. If he uses the daʿwa to build a private faction, he resembles the hunting animal that takes the prey for itself.

The author likewise discusses game struck by an arrow. The arrow signifies a directed proof or message. If it reaches its target clearly and lawfully, its effect is accepted. If another cause intervenes so that the true source of the result is unknown, the matter becomes doubtful. Inwardly, the believer should know what proof actually produced conviction and should not attribute guidance to a false source.

The text also returns to injury and recovery. An animal wounded and then found alive must be treated according to its actual state. Inwardly, a believer wounded by doubt may still possess life and be capable of restoration. One must not declare him spiritually dead while signs of faith remain.

Page 203

The author continues with predatory birds, dogs, and other hunting animals. Their training is defined by repeated obedience to command. Inwardly, a servant of the daʿwa is trained by discipline, learning, and repeated conformity to the Imam's instruction. Mere natural cleverness does not constitute authorization.

A trained animal that obeys when sent and returns when called is a sign of the obedient agent. One that refuses to return or acts independently signifies a servant who has begun to prefer his own will. Such independence invalidates trust even if the person remains outwardly capable.

The distinction between clean and unclean consumption is again applied. The believer must be careful about what he receives into his soul. Knowledge taken through a corrupt channel may carry the corruption of that channel, especially when the source has mixed truth with personal ambition.

The reports also mention sea-game as lawful to the pilgrim. The author begins to distinguish it from land-game, preparing the inward interpretation that follows: what is taken from the "sea" of knowledge through lawful means is not subject to the same restriction as pursuit of protected persons on land.

Page 204

The author continues with sea-game. Outwardly, what is taken from the sea is lawful to the muḥrim, while land-game remains subject to the prohibition already explained. Inwardly, the "sea" signifies the abundant reservoir of knowledge from which lawful benefit may be drawn without violating the protected rights of believers. The seeker may take from this sea through authorized teaching, but he may not hunt persons or ranks that have been placed beyond his right.

Reports are cited concerning fish and other creatures of the sea, and the distinction between what truly belongs to the sea and what lives partly on land. Inwardly, the source and nature of a teaching must be known. Something may be presented as belonging to the sea of knowledge while actually arising from worldly ambition or personal speculation.

The text also returns to the sacrificial animal and the game offering, showing that each outward category has its own legal consequences. The inward lesson is that not every kind of spiritual harm is corrected in the same manner. The remedy must correspond to the nature of the fault.

A report concerning eggs or young animals is interpreted as a warning against destroying beginnings. A novice whose faith has not yet matured requires greater care; to corrupt him before he has become established is like destroying life in its earliest form.

Page 205

The author discusses a person who removes or damages a tree or plant within the sanctuary. Outwardly, the sanctuary's vegetation is protected except in the cases explicitly allowed. Inwardly, trees signify established people and lines of knowledge whose roots are in the religion. To uproot one without right is to sever a believer or a branch of teaching from its lawful root.

The distinction between what grows naturally and what has been planted is again used. What God has made part of the sanctuary's own growth carries one kind of sanctity; what people plant for benefit may be treated differently. Inwardly, the fundamental principles of revelation are not subject to alteration, while human arrangements made in their service may change according to need.

The author cites the Qurʾānic command to enter houses through their doors. Inwardly, every matter of religion must be approached through its proper gate. The Imam is the supreme gate of the knowledge of the age, and beneath him are authorized doors. Seeking hidden knowledge by bypassing its door is compared to entering a house from an improper side.

Mecca itself is treated as a sign of security. The outward sanctuary gathers people under a rule of peace. Inwardly, the community around the Imam is a sanctuary of faith. One who enters truthfully is to be protected, instructed, and judged by justice rather than by personal vengeance.

Page 206

The author explains that the sanctity of the sanctuary extends to the treatment of persons as well as animals and plants. A fugitive who has committed an offense outside the sanctuary is not simply attacked within it according to private anger; the law has its own method. Inwardly, the believer's rights are not erased because he has fallen into error. Correction must proceed through the authority established to judge him.

The story of one who seeks refuge is used as an analogy for a person who turns to the Imam after wrongdoing. If he truly seeks protection and repentance, he should be treated in a manner that leads to

correction. If, however, he uses the sanctuary merely as a shield while persisting in corruption, the matter is judged according to the law.

The author compares medicine and sanctuary. Just as a physician does not attack the patient but treats the illness, the guide distinguishes the person from the error. Harshness that destroys the patient is not wisdom.

The session closes with prayer that God preserve the believers, make them obedient to His limits, and keep them upon the path of the Prophet and the Imams.

The Eighth Session of Part Ten

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

Praise be to God, the One who has no equal; blessings be upon Muḥammad and the pure Imams.

The new session begins with the rules concerning entry into the sacred precinct and the conduct of the pilgrim upon reaching Mecca.

Page 207

A report states that the pilgrim should enter Mecca with humility, calmness, and remembrance of God. Outwardly, he does not enter as a conqueror seeking display. Inwardly, the seeker approaches the Imam with humility, recognizing that he comes to receive rather than to dominate.

If the pilgrim enters by a specified route or gate, this is treated as part of the transmitted etiquette. Inwardly, the gate signifies the authorized means of access to the Imam's knowledge. One should not force entry through personal speculation or unauthorized intermediaries.

The author discusses entering the Sacred Mosque and seeing the Kaʿba. The pilgrim raises his hands, praises God, and prays. Inwardly, seeing the House signifies attaining recognition of the Imam after the stages of approach. The raised hands signify surrender and receptivity; the supplication signifies acknowledgment that recognition is a gift from God.

A person who has reached this stage should not become proud of the journey. The goal itself is a greater obligation than the road leading to it. Recognition of the Imam requires continuing obedience, not merely the claim that one has "arrived."

Page 208

The sanctity of speech in the Sacred Mosque is emphasized. The pilgrim does not curse, quarrel, or use obscene language. Inwardly, the one who has reached a high degree of knowledge must be even more careful with his tongue. Nearness increases responsibility.

The Prophet's saying, "The Muslim is one from whose tongue and hand the Muslims are safe," is invoked. The author interprets this inwardly as safety from doctrinal injury as well as physical harm. A person who uses knowledge to humiliate or confuse believers has not fulfilled the ethics of the sanctuary.

The pilgrim should repent from sins before beginning the circumambulation. Inwardly, the seeker must clear the heart of resentments, rivalries, and concealed opposition before circling around the central Proof. Otherwise, his outward movement contradicts his inward state.

The text also discusses bathing before entering Mecca and entering in a state of purity. This continues the symbolism already established: bodily purification signifies purification from false belief and corrupt intention.

Page 209

A report concerning the gate of the mosque and the first sight of the Kaʿba is cited. The pilgrim prays for acceptance, forgiveness, and increase. Inwardly, the first recognition of the Imam should be accompanied by gratitude and by the request to be made firm in obedience.

The House is described as the qibla of the people. Inwardly, the Imam is the qibla of the people of knowledge: their diverse activities are ordered by reference to him. Just as prayers from different lands face one House, the believers in different regions are united by one rightful authority.

The author recalls Abraham and Ishmael raising the foundations of the House. Inwardly, the prophetic and imamic foundations are raised by divinely appointed figures, not by ordinary claimants. The believer who wants to build upon the House must build upon those foundations rather than inventing new ones.

The session then approaches the circumambulation itself. The pilgrim begins from the Black Stone and goes around the House in the prescribed direction and number. The inward meaning of these elements is taken up in the following pages.

Page 210

The author introduces the circumambulation around the House. Outwardly, the pilgrim begins at the Black Stone, keeps the House on his left, and completes seven circuits. Inwardly, the circumambulation signifies the believer's ordered movement around the central Proof of God. The Imam is not one object among others; he is the point by reference to which the seeker's religious life is ordered.

The Black Stone marks the beginning and end of each circuit. The author interprets it as a sign of the covenant, a visible point at which the pilgrim renews his bond. Touching or greeting it signifies acknowledging the covenant and returning to it repeatedly as the seeker advances through the seven degrees.

The seven circuits correspond to the ordered ranks and recurring completeness found throughout the religion. The author connects them with the succession of prophetic cycles and with the structured hierarchy of instruction. The point is not numerical speculation alone, but the principle that divine guidance unfolds in order rather than chaos.

The House itself is connected with Abraham and Ishmael. As they raised its foundations, so the prophetic and imamic line raises the foundations of the religion. One who circumambulates inwardly acknowledges those foundations and does not seek a different center.

Page 211

The author relates the prayer of Abraham and Ishmael: "Our Lord, accept from us; surely You are the Hearing, the Knowing." Their building of the House becomes a sign of the establishment of the religion. Inwardly, the House is founded upon prophecy and imamate; its pillars correspond to the principal supports through which guidance is preserved.

The corners of the Kaʿba are discussed. Each corner has its outward place, but not all are treated identically in the rite. Inwardly, the corners signify principal ranks. The Black Stone corner has the special function of marking the covenant, while the other corners signify other foundational authorities within the ordered structure.

The author invokes the household of Abraham as an example of continuity of divine selection. Ishmael's line and the promised blessing are connected with the later coming of Muḥammad. The inward House is therefore not an abstraction detached from history; it is embodied in the line of divinely appointed guides.

The circumambulator does not cut across the House or invent his own path. This is interpreted as obedience to the transmitted order of guidance. A person who claims devotion while rejecting the line through which the House is known resembles one who claims to circumambulate while refusing the House's boundaries.

Page 212

The Ninth Session of Part Ten

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

Praise be to God who has made the signs of His religion manifest. Blessings be upon Muḥammad and the pure Imams from his progeny.

The session continues the taʾwīl of circumambulation. The author begins from the number seven and from the ordered movement around the House. He interprets the seven circuits as signs of the seven major prophetic cycles and the succession of guidance through them. Each cycle has a speaker-prophet and a line of successors who preserve the inward knowledge until the next great transition.

The House is one although the circuits are seven. Likewise, the divine religion is one although its historical manifestations and cycles are multiple. The seeker does not worship the cycles themselves; he recognizes the one truth carried through them.

The beginning at the Black Stone signifies that every valid movement in the religion begins from covenant. The return to it after each circuit signifies that advancement does not abolish the foundation. Each higher understanding remains tied to the original allegiance.

Page 213

The author elaborates the symbolism of the seven circuits in relation to Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muḥammad, and the completion of the cycle through the promised fulfillment. The exact historical ranks are treated as parts of one divine plan. Their laws differed in outward detail, but the source of guidance was one.

Just as the pilgrim passes successively through the circuits, the seeker passes through degrees of understanding. He cannot begin with the last circuit. A person who attempts to seize the highest inward matters without completing the lower foundations acts against the order of the religion.

The author also interprets the House's four sides and corners. The number four is linked with principal foundations and with the order by which the religion is supported. The symbolism is not intended to license arbitrary numerology; rather, the physical form of the rite points to established relations within the daʿwa.

The Stone's placement in a particular corner is especially connected with the covenant. The believer's repeated return to it signifies repeated recognition of the Imam and renewal of obedience.

Page 214

Women also perform circumambulation, and the outward rulings concerning menstruation and purity are cited. Inwardly, the recurring symbolism of woman as beneficiary is applied: the receiver of knowledge must be purified from impediments before entering the most intimate degree of approach.

If a woman begins circumambulation and menstruation occurs, the law determines whether what she completed is sufficient or whether she must wait and repeat. Inwardly, a seeker who is interrupted by a spiritual impediment may retain what has been soundly established, but he must not pretend that an incomplete degree is complete. The guide determines what must be repeated.

The author also discusses recitation and supplication during circumambulation. Outwardly, remembrance of God accompanies the circuits. Inwardly, the seeker's movement around the Imam must be accompanied by knowledge, obedience, and conscious recollection of the purpose. Mere physical proximity without recognition is empty.

Reports concerning touching the Stone and the Yemeni corner are interpreted as acknowledgments of particular foundational ranks. The pilgrim touches where touch is prescribed and does not invent touching at every place. Likewise, inward allegiance follows the authorized pattern rather than indiscriminate devotion.

Page 215

The author distinguishes obligatory circumambulation from voluntary circumambulation. The obligatory rite is part of the foundation of the pilgrimage; voluntary circuits are additional devotion. Inwardly, recognition and covenant are obligatory, while repeated contemplation, study, and renewal are voluntary increases upon the foundation.

A person who is physically weak may be carried while circumambulating. Inwardly, one who lacks the strength to advance by his own understanding may be carried by instruction and support from stronger believers. His weakness does not remove the goal, but it changes the means by which he reaches it.

The author again warns that the carried person must still intend the rite. Another may carry his body, but cannot supply his intention. Likewise, teachers can support a seeker, explain proofs, and protect him, but cannot believe in his place.

The text cites the Prophet's circumambulation and his practice as the normative model. Inwardly, the Prophet's path is the pattern, and the Imams preserve its true meaning. The believer seeks both the outward Sunnah and its inward interpretation rather than separating them.

Page 216

The author continues the inward meaning of circumambulation and ritual purity. If a person loses ablution during the obligatory circumambulation, the outward law requires him to renew purity and then complete the rite according to the rule. Inwardly, when a seeker loses the state of inward purity through sin, doubt, or disobedience, he must restore that state before proceeding. Advancement while the foundation is corrupted does not count as sound advancement.

The author distinguishes between interruption occurring before half the circumambulation and after it. The outward rulings differ, and he interprets this as a difference between one who has barely begun a degree and one who has become substantially established in it. The latter may resume from what has already been soundly completed, whereas the former may have to restart.

The principle is compared to a believer's connection with faith. A temporary interruption does not necessarily erase everything previously attained, but deliberate abandonment of the foundation may do so. The guide must judge where the person stands and what remains valid.

The session closes by urging believers to preserve both outward purity and inward purity, and to return quickly to repentance if they fall.

The Tenth Session of Part Ten

Page 217

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

Praise be to God, exalted beyond likeness; blessings be upon Muḥammad and the pure Imams from his progeny.

The final session of Part Ten continues the taʾwīl of circumambulation and the rulings connected with impurity and interruption. The author begins with a woman whose menstruation begins during the circumambulation. The outward ruling depends upon how much she has completed; inwardly, the case signifies a beneficiary whose progress is interrupted by an impediment arising during the path.

If the essential greater portion has been completed, what preceded remains established and the person resumes after purification. If the interruption occurs before the decisive point, repetition may be required. The author presents this as a general inward principle: completion is judged by established thresholds, not by vague feeling.

The state of menstruation symbolizes a temporary impediment that prevents certain acts without permanently removing the person from the religion. It is therefore distinguished from outright rejection. Once the impediment ends and purification is restored, the person may continue.

Page 218

The author expands on doubt during circumambulation. If a person doubts the number of circuits and cannot resolve the uncertainty according to the rule, he acts as the law instructs. Inwardly, doubt about one's degree or about what has actually been completed must be resolved by returning to certainty and authorized guidance.

The devil's whispering is mentioned as a source of doubt. Not every passing thought is proof. The seeker should not repeatedly overturn established certainty because of intrusive suspicion. The rule of religion protects the believer from endless uncertainty by directing him to what is known.

The author also interprets the prayer after circumambulation. Outwardly it is performed behind the Station of Abraham. Inwardly, prayer after the circuit signifies confirmation of the newly completed degree through renewed connection with the divine command. The Station of Abraham points to the prophetic foundation upon which that degree rests.

The believer who has completed the circuit but refuses the confirming prayer resembles one who has received a teaching but refuses to live by it. Knowledge must terminate in obedience.

Page 219

If a person performs some circuits, then the time of an obligatory prayer arrives, he interrupts the circumambulation, performs the prayer, and returns to complete what remains. Inwardly, the most fundamental obligations take precedence over secondary progress. A seeker does not continue a particular exercise while neglecting a command that has become immediately due.

The author explains that such an interruption is not blameworthy because it is made for a higher obligation. This distinction is important: interruption through obedience is not like interruption through negligence.

The text also treats one who forgets part of the circumambulation and later remembers. If the missing portion can be completed according to the law, he completes it. Inwardly, forgotten knowledge or neglected duty should be restored when remembered; shame should not prevent correction.

The ruling concerning someone who leaves Mecca before realizing the omission is interpreted similarly. Distance does not erase the debt. A person may need to appoint someone or return, depending on the ruling. Inwardly, a believer remains responsible for unfinished obligations even after circumstances have changed.

Page 220

The author discusses the two circuits around the House in relation to prayer, intention, and following the Imam. Reports concerning beginning from the Black Stone, completing seven circuits, and praying behind the Station are cited again to reinforce the ordered nature of the rite.

Inwardly, the beginning from the Stone signifies covenant; movement around the House signifies continued attachment to the Imam; the prayer at the Station signifies confirmation through the prophetic foundation. These stages form one connected structure.

The author also treats crowding and physical inability. A person who cannot touch the Stone may gesture toward it and continue. Inwardly, inability to perform the highest visible expression of allegiance does not

cancel allegiance itself when the heart and intention remain sound. The law does not command the impossible.

The difference between touching, kissing, or gesturing is thus interpreted as differences in degree of access, not differences in the object of allegiance. Some believers are near the Imam, others far away, yet all may recognize the same covenant according to their capacity.

Page 221

The author returns to Safā and Marwa and the transition from circumambulation to the next rite. The pilgrim leaves the House only after completing what is due and then proceeds to the place of striving. Inwardly, a seeker does not abandon direct recognition of the Imam but carries it into the active work of the daʿwa.

Safā is linked with purity and clarity; Marwa with firmness and the station opposite it. The movement between them signifies repeated striving between two complementary dimensions of knowledge until the seeker's course is completed.

The author emphasizes connection among the believers. Just as the people circumambulate one House despite coming from many lands, they should remain united under one Imam. Disagreement in secondary matters must not become separation from the foundation.

He closes Part Ten with an exhortation to preserve covenant, obey the guide, avoid pride, and recognize that every outward rite points to an inward truth without ceasing to be obligatory in its outward form. Blessings are invoked upon Muḥammad and the pure Imams.

The text announces the beginning of Part Eleven of the Book of Training the Believers in the Limits of the Inner Knowledge of Religion, from the Taʾwīl of the Daʿāʾim al-Islām.

PART ELEVEN

The First Session of Part Eleven

Page 222

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

Praise be to God, Creator and Sustainer; blessings be upon Muḥammad and the pure Imams from his progeny.

The author continues with the rites following circumambulation. He cites Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq concerning the person who completes the circumambulation and then leaves Mecca before performing what remains. Outwardly, a pilgrim who omits an obligatory element must return or make it up according to the ruling. Inwardly, one who has approached the Imam and taken a degree of knowledge may not leave before completing the obligation attached to that degree.

The pilgrimage is not a collection of disconnected acts. Circumambulation, prayer, saʿy, and the later rites are joined. Inwardly, recognition, covenant, instruction, obedience, and service are likewise connected. To take one and abandon the rest is to leave the spiritual pilgrimage unfinished.

The text refers to the seven circuits again and to completing what remains if a circuit has been omitted. The inward meaning is that every appointed degree must receive its due. Missing one link can disturb the order of what follows.

Page 223

Reports are cited concerning one who finishes some circuits and then becomes unable to continue, as well as one who interrupts for prayer or another lawful cause. The rulings distinguish an interruption made for obedience from one made through negligence. Inwardly, advancement may be paused for a higher obligation without being invalidated.

The author discusses the prayer after circumambulation and the requirement of performing it behind the Station of Abraham when possible. Inwardly, the seeker confirms his completed degree by returning to the prophetic foundation. The Imam's knowledge is never detached from prophecy; the Station signifies the source from which the later guidance proceeds.

Another report concerns one who forgets the prayer and remembers after leaving. He performs it when able according to the transmitted rule. Inwardly, a neglected confirmation or duty should be repaired once it is recognized, even after time has passed.

The author also emphasizes continuous connection with the Imam. The believer may travel physically far away, but he should not sever the inward bond. Distance of body is not separation of covenant.

Page 224

The transition from circumambulation to saʿy between Safā and Marwa is explained. Outwardly, the pilgrim proceeds from the House to Safā, remembers God, and begins the prescribed movement. Inwardly, after establishing recognition of the Imam, the believer moves into active striving in the path of knowledge and service.

Safā is associated with purity and clarity. Marwa is associated with firmness and the opposite station toward which the seeker moves. The repeated passage between them signifies the believer's recurring movement between receiving knowledge and putting it into action.

Reports from the Imams concerning beginning at Safā are cited. The Qurʾān says, “Indeed Safā and Marwa are among the symbols of God.” The author explains that the symbolism itself confirms that the outward rite has an inward sign, but the sign does not abolish the rite.

The movement is ordered and counted. The seeker begins where the law commands and ends where the law commands. Inwardly, religious striving is not random enthusiasm but disciplined movement within known limits.

Page 225

The author further interprets Safā and Marwa as two related degrees. One represents the source from which clarity is received; the other represents the place to which the seeker carries that clarity in action. The movement between them produces growth through repetition.

The pilgrim ascends Safā enough to see the House when possible. Inwardly, the seeker should keep the Imam in view while he engages in the activities of the daʿwa. Work that loses sight of the central authority can become self-directed.

The author also discusses the supplications recited at Safā and Marwa. Their repeated praise of God, declaration of His unity, and remembrance of His victory signify that the believer’s striving is not for personal triumph. Success belongs to God and is sought through obedience.

A person who is weak may ride during saʿy. Inwardly, one unable to sustain the effort by himself may receive assistance. The validity of his striving depends upon sincere intention and lawful support, not upon unnecessary hardship.

Page 226

If a pilgrim doubts how many passages between Safā and Marwa he has completed, he acts according to the rule governing doubt. Inwardly, uncertainty about one’s progress must be resolved by established knowledge rather than by wishful thinking. A seeker should not claim a degree he cannot verify.

The author compares saʿy with the believer’s movement in the daʿwa. The person goes out from the central recognition and returns to it repeatedly, gaining strength through each passage. The higher guide remains the reference point even while the believer works among people.

The report concerning beginning at Safā and ending at Marwa is interpreted as showing that beginnings and endings are assigned. One cannot reverse them merely because both places are sacred. Inwardly, different ranks may all be honorable while still possessing a definite order.

The author ends the session by urging the believers to preserve unity, follow the Imam, and not let individual activity turn into independence from the source of authority.

The Second Session of Part Eleven

Page 227

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

Praise be to God, the Wise and Knowing; blessings be upon Muḥammad and the pure Imams.

The second session continues the interpretation of saʿy. The author cites Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq concerning the person who completes the circumambulation, prays, and then goes out to Safā. The sequence itself has an inward meaning: recognition of the Imam comes first, confirmation of the covenant follows, and then active striving begins.

The pilgrim does not begin saʿy before circumambulation. Inwardly, one should not undertake missionary activity before establishing the foundational recognition and receiving authorization. Activity without foundation is like running between Safā and Marwa before going around the House.

Reports about a woman who menstruates before or during saʿy are also cited. The ruling distinguishes what may proceed from what must await purification. Inwardly, temporary impediments are treated according to their actual effect rather than by automatically erasing all previous progress.

Page 228

The author continues with the one performing ʿumra or pilgrimage on behalf of another. Such a person must form the intention before entering the rite, because intention determines for whom the act is being performed. Inwardly, an authorized representative must know on whose behalf he acts and whose command he carries. Ambiguous allegiance invalidates representation.

A report concerning someone who undertakes pilgrimage for a deceased person is cited. Outwardly, the reward may be directed to the deceased under the conditions stated by the law. Inwardly, the living may continue the beneficial work of one who has died by preserving his sound teaching, fulfilling obligations he left, or carrying forward a trust, but they cannot create faith for one who died in rejection.

The author distinguishes between a person performing a voluntary pilgrimage for another and one carrying out a debt that had become obligatory. Inwardly, voluntary service is an increase, while completion of an obligation is repayment of a defined trust. The two should not be confused.

The discussion also considers a person who changes the intended beneficiary after beginning. This is generally not left to whim. Inwardly, one who has been appointed for a particular mission may not redirect the mission to another purpose simply because he prefers it.

Page 229

The author cites Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq concerning a person who enters ʿumra during the pilgrimage months and then remains in Mecca until the time of ḥajj. The outward ruling may cause the ʿumra to become connected with the pilgrimage. Inwardly, a preliminary degree that is followed directly by the greater obligation becomes integrated into the fuller path.

The pilgrim who remains near the House after completing ʿumra is contrasted with one who returns far away. Inwardly, one who stays close to the source of guidance is prepared for the next degree, while one who deliberately withdraws may need to renew his approach.

The text discusses departure from Mecca between ʿumra and ḥajj. The rulings depend upon timing and intention. Inwardly, temporary absence is not necessarily severance, but the believer should not place himself in a situation that causes the covenant to be forgotten or the next obligation to be missed.

The author again links the months of pilgrimage with appointed periods of instruction. A person should know the season of his duty and not delay until opportunity is lost.

Page 230

A historical report is cited concerning those who left Mecca or Medina during the early Muslim period and the instruction given by the Prophet. The author uses it to stress that physical movement acquires religious meaning through intention and command. Travel itself is neither obedience nor disobedience until its relation to the divine order is known.

The one who completes ʿumra and then undertakes pilgrimage is like a seeker who has received preliminary instruction and later enters a higher degree. The former knowledge remains useful, but the new degree imposes additional obligations.

The author discusses the state of one who leaves the sanctuary after making an agreement or after having become bound by a rite. Inwardly, a covenant continues to bind even when the person is physically absent. Departure does not cancel allegiance.

The text also explains that the spiritual "visit" to the Imam can be repeated. Repeated approach signifies renewal, strengthening, and correction. Yet repetition is not a substitute for acting upon what was already received.

Page 231

The author brings in the example of Gabriel and Abraham in connection with the sacred places, especially ʿArafa. Gabriel's instruction of Abraham in the rites signifies inwardly that prophetic guidance itself is taught according to divine order. No human being, however exalted, invents the path from himself.

The name ʿArafa is connected with recognition (*maʿrifa*). The pilgrim stands there in acknowledgement and supplication. Inwardly, the station of ʿArafa signifies recognition of the Imam and of the truths that become clear once the seeker has completed the preceding rites.

The gathering of all pilgrims at one place symbolizes the gathering of diverse believers in one recognition. Their languages, countries, and conditions differ, but the central knowledge unites them.

The author also discusses the time of standing at ʿArafa. It has a beginning and end. Inwardly, recognition has an appointed opportunity: a person must receive the proof while the door is open. Deliberate delay may lead to missing the decisive moment.

Page 232

The author concludes the second session by discussing humility at ʿArafa, confession of need, and prayer for forgiveness. The station is not a place for pride. Inwardly, true recognition makes the believer more aware of his dependence upon God and upon the guidance He has established.

The names of the places and their linguistic roots are used as signs of inward meanings—recognition, standing, nearness, and movement—but the author repeatedly cautions that these meanings do not abolish the actual pilgrimage rites.

The session ends with a prayer that God keep the believers steadfast in the covenant and grant them recognition of His Proof.

The Third Session of Part Eleven

Page 232

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

Praise be to God, beyond all likeness and description; blessings be upon Muḥammad and the pure Imams.

The third session opens with departure toward Minā and the rites connected with the days of *tarwiya*. The author cites the transmitted practice of going out from Mecca at the appointed time after prayer. Outwardly, the pilgrim moves from the sanctuary toward the next station. Inwardly, the seeker who has established the central recognition is sent outward into a further stage of discipline and service.

Page 233

The Day of Tarwiya is discussed. Its name is connected with providing water and preparing for the journey. Inwardly, water continues to symbolize knowledge; *tarwiya* therefore signifies taking provision of knowledge before entering the more demanding stations of ʿArafa, Muzdalifa, and Minā.

The author notes that people once carried water because the later stations lacked easy access to it. The inward believer likewise takes sufficient instruction before entering situations in which direct access to the teacher may be limited. Preparation prevents spiritual thirst.

The movement to Minā is interpreted as moving into a place of hopes and wishes, but the believer's true hope is directed toward God. The outward tents and temporary lodging signify the transitory nature of worldly stations. The pilgrim does not settle permanently in Minā; likewise, the seeker does not mistake an intermediate degree for the final goal.

The reports concerning riding or walking are interpreted according to ability. Whether one travels by one means or another, the destination remains the same. Inwardly, some seekers advance quickly and others slowly, but both must remain on the authorized road.

Page 234

The author continues with the departure from Minā to ʿArafa. The pilgrim spends the night at Minā and proceeds at the prescribed time. Outwardly this is a journey from one sacred station to another; inwardly it signifies movement from preparation and hope toward full recognition.

The reports concerning prayer at Minā and the sequence of the rites are cited. The believer must not hurry merely from eagerness. Each station has its time. Inwardly, spiritual eagerness is praiseworthy only when disciplined by knowledge. To seek a higher degree before completing what precedes it may turn zeal into disorder.

The author connects ʿArafa with recognition of the Imam and the truth. Just as all pilgrims must reach ʿArafa for the pilgrimage to be complete, recognition is a central requirement without which outward claims cannot attain their purpose.

Those who guide the pilgrims to ʿArafa signify the dāʿīs who guide seekers toward recognition. They do not themselves become the object of the rite; their duty is to lead the people to the proper station.

Page 235

The time of the standing at ʿArafa is discussed, including the period from the decline of the sun until sunset. Inwardly, this defined span signifies an age or opportunity in which recognition is available. The seeker must make use of the time given to him and not suppose that opportunity is endless.

The author compares the succession of prophetic eras to days whose times are known. Each prophet appears at an appointed period, and each Imam is the Proof of his own age. A believer is responsible for recognizing the living authority of his time, not merely honoring those of the past.

The standing at ʿArafa is accompanied by prayer, remembrance, confession, and supplication. Inwardly, recognition produces humility. One who claims knowledge but becomes arrogant has not understood the station.

The author also links the afternoon prayers and their combination at ʿArafa to the gathering of obligations under the one central recognition. Various acts remain distinct, yet they are ordered within a single station of obedience.

Page 236

A report describes the Prophet remaining at ʿArafa until sunset and then departing calmly. The pilgrim is not to leave prematurely. Inwardly, a person must remain in recognition until its appointed work is complete. He should not abandon the Imam's guidance because he imagines that he has already taken enough.

The author discusses the setting of the sun as a sign of transition. The end of one period leads to the next station at Muzdalifa. Inwardly, when one stage of knowledge reaches completion, the believer moves onward with what he has gathered from it.

The gathering of people at ʿArafa also symbolizes the universal assembly of believers around the Proof. The diversity of the crowd does not remove the unity of their direction.

The author invokes the Qurʾānic image of the sun and its appointed course. Just as celestial movements follow a measure fixed by God, the movement of the religious ranks follows a divine order. Human beings do not create that order by preference.

Page 237

The session concludes with the departure from ʿArafa after sunset, remembrance of God, and movement toward the sacred monument. The author urges believers to be steadfast in the hour of transition and not to return to ignorance after recognition.

The Fourth Session of Part Eleven

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

Praise be to God, the One who guides by His proofs; blessings be upon Muḥammad and the pure Imams.

The author begins the taʾwīl of departure from ʿArafa to Muzdalifa. God says, “When you pour forth from ʿArafāt, remember God at the Sacred Monument.” Outwardly, the pilgrims move together after sunset. Inwardly, after attaining recognition they gather at a station in which that recognition is consolidated through remembrance and obedience.

Muzdalifa is associated with drawing near. The believer who has recognized the Imam now draws nearer through obedience, service, and disciplined remembrance. Recognition without action would remain incomplete.

Page 238

The Prophet’s manner of departing from ʿArafa is cited: he proceeded with calmness and forbade people to rush violently. Inwardly, advancement after recognition should be steady. The seeker should not confuse haste with zeal or trample others in pursuit of rank.

The night at Muzdalifa signifies a period in which the believer preserves what he has learned when outward visibility is reduced. Night is a sign of concealment; remembrance in the night signifies maintaining faith even when the Proof is not openly manifest in the same manner as before.

The author discusses the prayers performed there and the gathering of the people. Their combination signifies the joining of related obligations in a station of nearness. The believer gathers scattered understanding into a coherent knowledge.

The Sacred Monument itself is interpreted as a clear sign or marker of guidance. One who has passed through recognition does not wander without landmarks; God provides signs by which the path remains known.

Page 239

The author elaborates upon the night at Muzdalifa and the timing of departure toward Minā. The pilgrim remains until the appointed time and then moves before sunrise or according to the transmitted rule. Inwardly, concealment has a limit; the seeker does not remain forever in a hidden or preparatory state when the command to act has arrived.

Reports concerning women, the weak, and those permitted to leave earlier are cited. The inward lesson is that capacity and vulnerability are considered by the law. Not every seeker bears the same burden in the same manner, though all remain within the same path.

The picking up of pebbles for the stoning rite is introduced. Outwardly, the pilgrim gathers small stones to use at the pillars. Inwardly, the stones signify clear proofs or decisive rejections prepared for confronting falsehood. They are gathered before the confrontation, indicating that the believer should prepare knowledge before entering dispute.

The author warns, however, that the "stones" are used only where commanded. Proof is not to be thrown indiscriminately at everyone. It is directed against the symbol of rebellion and temptation, not against the believers.

Page 240

The author discusses the departure from Muzdalifa for Minā and the time at which this should be done. Reports distinguish those permitted to leave early—such as the weak—from those who should remain until the prescribed time. Inwardly, the difference signifies that spiritual burdens are proportioned to strength. The guide may advance a weak seeker by a concession that would not be appropriate for one who has full capacity.

The pebbles for the stoning are gathered in preparation for the rite. They should be clean and of proper size. Inwardly, the proofs by which falsehood is repelled should be clear, sound, and measured. Crude abuse is not proof, and excessive argument may do more harm than good.

The author cites Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq concerning the pilgrim who leaves Muzdalifa before the proper time without an excuse. The outward ruling requires correction. Inwardly, a person who leaves a station of knowledge before completing what was required of him may need to return and repair the omission rather than simply moving forward.

The Prophet's calm departure is again held up as the model. The seeker advances with dignity, not in rivalry with others for precedence. Rank is attained by obedience, not by rushing ahead of one's companions.

Page 241

The Day of the Greater Pilgrimage is discussed. The author connects it with the culmination of the rites at Minā—stoning, sacrifice, shaving, and release from iḥrām. Inwardly, it is a day of decisive manifestation in which what the believer has gathered through the preceding stations is translated into acts that break attachment to falsehood and complete the covenant.

The three stone pillars are introduced. Outwardly, the pilgrim stones them on the appointed days. Inwardly, they signify principal forms of rebellion, deception, and opposition that confront the seeker. The stones are the proofs and acts of rejection by which these are repelled.

The author relates the rite to Abraham's confrontation with Satan. Satan appeared to him and was driven away. Inwardly, every seeker must confront whisperings that seek to divert him from the command of God. The believer should recognize the temptation and repel it rather than negotiate with it.

The different pillars and the repeated number of stones indicate repeated resistance. Falsehood may return after being rejected once; steadfastness therefore requires renewed opposition until the believer's course is completed.

Page 242

The preceding section closes with an exhortation to maintain obedience, prepare the necessary proofs, and follow the rites as transmitted. Blessings are invoked upon Muḥammad and the Imams.

The Fifth Session of Part Eleven

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

Praise be to God, who guides His servants through the signs of His religion; blessings be upon Muḥammad and the pure Imams from his progeny.

The author begins a fuller interpretation of the stoning of the pillars. The pilgrim throws seven pebbles at each appointed pillar, saying the takbīr with each throw. Inwardly, the seven stones indicate a complete and ordered rejection of falsehood. The takbīr declares that God is greater than every rival claim and every deceptive authority.

The stones are not thrown in anger at a material object as though the pillar itself were Satan. The physical act is an enacted symbol established by the law. Inwardly, the true target is the rebellion, pride, and deception by which Satanic influence enters the soul and the community.

Page 243

The author explains the choice of small pebbles rather than large stones. The rite requires a measured act, not uncontrolled violence. Inwardly, proof should be proportionate and precise. One does not answer every error with excessive severity.

The stoning is performed from a defined place and direction. Inwardly, opposition to falsehood must also be undertaken from within the bounds of legitimate authority. A person who attacks others from private hatred while claiming to defend the religion may himself have left the limits of the religion.

The author connects the rite with the history of Abraham and with the rejection of false idols and deceptive claims. The believer repeats Abraham's stance by refusing anything that seeks to stand between him and the divine command.

The sacrifice that follows the stoning is introduced. Outwardly, the pilgrim offers the animal he has brought or acquired. Inwardly, after rejecting falsehood, he sacrifices attachment to the self—especially pride, greed, and the desire for independent authority.

Page 244

The author discusses those who cannot perform some part of the rite because of illness or weakness. Assistance is allowed according to the transmitted rules. Inwardly, a believer may receive help in rejecting falsehood, but another person cannot supply the fundamental intention for him. The heart must itself choose obedience.

Reports are cited concerning delegating the stoning for the sick or weak. The inward counterpart is authorized representation: a stronger believer may act to protect or assist a weaker one, but only within the scope permitted by the Imam.

The distinction among the three pillars is interpreted as successive forms or degrees of opposition. Some temptations are obvious, others subtler. The believer must learn to recognize each rather than imagining that defeating one form of error eliminates every possibility of deviation.

The author also explains the proper order of the pillars. Even in confronting falsehood, order is essential. The believer does not begin wherever he pleases; he follows the path taught by the Prophet and the Imams.

Page 245

The text continues with the sacrifice at Minā and the time of slaughter. The animal should be lawful, sound, and offered in the appointed place. Inwardly, a sacrifice accepted in the path of God must be of something real and valuable to the person, not merely something he does not care about.

The author links sacrifice to Abraham and Ishmael. Abraham's willingness to surrender what was dearest to him is the model of obedience. Inwardly, the seeker must be willing to surrender personal desire when it conflicts with the command, even when that desire has become deeply loved.

Reports concerning defective animals are cited. An offering with certain serious defects is not accepted. Inwardly, a deed spoiled by ostentation, hypocrisy, or corrupt intention may resemble a defective offering: the outward form exists, but what should make it acceptable has been damaged.

The author then speaks of the sacrificial meat and its distribution. Outwardly, part may be eaten, part given, and part distributed according to the law. Inwardly, the benefit of sacrifice should not end with the person himself; the believer's renunciation should produce benefit for others through generosity, teaching, and service.

Page 246

The author continues the discussion of sacrificial animals, gifts, and offerings. A man may offer from his own property, and the sacrifice is accompanied by remembrance of God. Inwardly, the offering signifies dedicating something truly possessed—wealth, effort, knowledge, or status—to God's service. A person cannot sacrifice what is not his to give.

The author stresses that the offering should not become a source of pride. The believer does not boast of what he gives or use generosity to obtain superiority over others. The inner sacrifice is spoiled when self-display replaces obedience.

Reports concerning distribution of the sacrificial meat are cited. The pilgrim eats from it, gives to others, and benefits the needy. Inwardly, the fruit of sacrifice should return to the believer as discipline while also spreading benefit among the community. Knowledge and wealth used in God's path are not hoarded.

The session closes with an exhortation to unity: believers are like members of one body, and each person's service should strengthen the whole rather than create division.

The Sixth Session of Part Eleven

Page 246

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

Praise be to God before all things and after all things; blessings be upon Muḥammad and the pure Imams.

The author begins a discussion of the preference of certain sacrificial animals and of distinctions among male and female animals, age, soundness, and quality. The outward law prefers the sound and complete offering. Inwardly, the believer should offer the best of what he possesses rather than reserving excellence for himself and presenting what is defective to God.

Page 247

The author enumerates qualities of acceptable animals and discusses preference among them. The underlying inward principle is completeness. The offering signifies a believer or an act dedicated to the service of religion; therefore soundness of intention, faith, and conduct is preferable to brilliance mixed with corruption.

The distinction between male and female animals is interpreted through the familiar symbolism of giver and receiver, teacher and beneficiary. The text does not use the symbolism to erase the outward categories but to point to complementary spiritual functions.

Reports concerning colors and other characteristics are cited. The author interprets brightness, strength, and soundness as signs of clear faith and manifest obedience. A dark or blemished condition can symbolize concealed doubt or corrupt conduct when the context requires that interpretation.

The best offering is the one most complete in the qualities the law requests. Inwardly, the most excellent servant is the one whose knowledge and action are joined, who benefits others, and whose obedience is not mixed with a rival claim.

Page 248

The author discusses animals with defects—blindness, severe lameness, sickness, missing parts, or other conditions that can make an offering invalid or disliked. Inwardly, physical defects correspond to deficiencies in spiritual capacity. Blindness signifies lack of insight; lameness inability to proceed on the path; sickness corruption of understanding; a missing essential part loss of a required foundation.

The believer should not present a person with such unresolved deficiencies for an office that requires completeness. Compassion toward the deficient person remains obligatory, but compassion does not mean placing him in a role he cannot fulfill.

The author uses the example of one-eyed sight: the person who sees one side of the truth but not the other may possess some knowledge yet lack balanced discernment. Such a one may be benefited and taught, but he should not be treated as fully qualified until the deficiency is corrected.

Reports from the Prophet concerning prohibited defects in sacrificial animals are cited as the outward basis. The author repeatedly affirms that the inward interpretation depends upon, and does not cancel, the transmitted law.

Page 249

The discussion continues with defects acquired after an animal has been designated for sacrifice. If the animal was sound when selected and later suffered an accident, the ruling may differ from the case of an animal defective from the beginning. Inwardly, the person who was sound when entrusted with a duty and later suffers an unforeseen weakness is not judged like one who was knowingly unqualified when appointed.

The author distinguishes between deliberate mutilation and accidental loss. A person who deliberately damages what has been dedicated commits a violation; one who suffers an accident is treated according to capacity and the law.

He also discusses castrated or otherwise altered animals and what is permissible. Inwardly, removal of a harmful desire may in some contexts signify discipline, but destruction of a faculty needed for service signifies deficiency. The meaning depends upon what the law itself treats as sound.

The general principle is to choose what is wholesome, complete, and beneficial. The believer should apply the same standard to his own soul, correcting defects before offering himself to a task of guidance.

The Seventh Session of Part Eleven

Page 250

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

Praise be to God who cannot be fully comprehended by minds; blessings be upon Muḥammad and the pure Imams.

The author turns from the qualities of the animal to the conduct of the person making the offering and to the intention with which it is made. A sacrifice performed to be seen by people or to gain praise loses the inner meaning of sacrifice, even if its outward form is valid in the legal sense.

The pilgrim should face the proper direction, remember God, and slaughter according to the transmitted manner. Inwardly, every act of renunciation should be directed toward the divine command and performed under rightful guidance.

The author compares the dāʿī who deals with people to one handling an offering: he must act with care, avoid needless harm, and know the lawful method. A rough or ignorant person may destroy what he intended to dedicate.

Page 251

Reports concerning sharpening the blade, treating the animal gently, and not causing unnecessary suffering are cited. The inward lesson is that correction and discipline should be carried out without cruelty. Even when a harmful attachment must be "slaughtered," the believer's person is treated with mercy.

The author also discusses the person who gives another authority to slaughter on his behalf. Inwardly, delegation is valid when the delegate is trustworthy and qualified. The principal remains responsible for choosing a proper agent.

If the delegate acts contrary to the instruction, the consequences depend upon the nature of the departure. This becomes a lesson for the daʿwa: representatives are not free to reshape the mission according to personal taste. They must act within the authority given to them.

The author closes the page by returning to the need for purification of intention. The visible act may be impressive, but God knows the motive. The inward pilgrimage therefore continually returns the believer from appearance to truth.

Page 252

The author completes the previous discussion by stressing that when an agent has been entrusted with an act, he must perform it according to the intention and limits of the one who entrusted him. If he changes the purpose for himself, he betrays the trust. The same applies inwardly to a dāʿī: he acts for the Imam's cause, not to create a private following.

The session closes with an exhortation to the believers to preserve what they have been entrusted with, to avoid transgression, and to hold fast to the Prophet and the pure Imams.

The Eighth Session of Part Eleven

Page 252

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

Praise be to God whom eyes do not encompass and thoughts do not contain; blessings be upon Muḥammad and the pure Imams.

The author begins the discussion of shaving or shortening the hair after sacrifice. Outwardly, the pilgrim completes one stage of release from iḥrām by shaving the head or cutting the hair according to the prescribed ruling. Inwardly, hair signifies outward attachments, acquired habits, and claims that have grown from the person. Removing it signifies stripping away what is unnecessary after the decisive sacrifice of self-will.

The Prophet's guidance concerning shaving and shortening is cited. Inwardly, complete shaving can signify a more complete stripping of former attachments, while shortening can signify a measured reduction where complete removal is not required. The guide knows which treatment suits the seeker.

Page 253

The author cites the Prophet's prayer of mercy for those who shave and, after repeated mention, for those who shorten. The outward preference for shaving in certain circumstances is interpreted as preference for more complete surrender when a person is capable of it.

The head signifies the governing faculty and the person's most visible dignity. Shaving it therefore symbolizes humility and the removal of pride. One who has completed the rites should not leave them more arrogant than when he began.

The author also discusses those who cannot shave because of illness or another valid cause. The law does not impose what cannot be borne. Inwardly, surrender is measured by capacity, but every person must give what he is able to give honestly.

Reports concerning women are cited: women shorten their hair and do not shave their heads. Inwardly, beneficiaries are disciplined according to their station and are not required to imitate every outward sign of the guiding rank. The difference of treatment reflects difference of role, not lesser worth.

Page 254

The author continues with the days of sacrifice and the days of *tashrīq*. Their names, sequence, and legal rulings are cited. Inwardly, the days represent successive periods in which the believer completes the consequences of his sacrifice and consolidates what he has attained.

The days of Minā are days of remembrance of God, eating from lawful provision, and completing the rites. Inwardly, after the decisive acts of rejection and sacrifice, the believer remains in a period of remembrance and confirmation rather than immediately returning to heedlessness.

The three days following the day of sacrifice are interpreted as successive stages of settling and strengthening the covenant. The author draws parallels with recurring patterns of three in religious history and instruction, while insisting that the outward days themselves remain binding.

The pilgrim who hastens in two days and the one who remains longer are both treated by the Qurʾānic allowance, provided there is piety. Inwardly, some seekers complete what is required sooner than others; the decisive condition is not speed but faithful fulfillment of the obligation.

Page 255

The author turns again to shaving and cutting the hair, citing reports about where and how it should be done. The outward act should take place in the proper setting, and the hair is treated with respect. Inwardly, what is removed from the seeker's former condition is not mocked; it is left behind with gratitude for the stage through which he passed.

The exposed head after shaving signifies openness and manifest submission. The seeker no longer hides beneath the adornment of former claims. The author compares this to the manifestation of truth after false coverings have been removed.

The head, beard, moustache, and other hair are distinguished in the outward law. Inwardly, each can symbolize a different outward expression of rank or habit. The guide removes only what the law of the degree requires; indiscriminate stripping is not wisdom.

The author also discusses anointing or treating the head after shaving. Inwardly, once harmful attachments have been removed, the believer should receive strengthening knowledge and mercy so that the exposed state does not become a cause of injury.

Page 256

The author warns against allowing the inner interpretation to become a license for sinful conduct. Just as the pilgrim must still perform the physical shaving where required, the believer must still obey the outward law. To claim that "my pride has been inwardly shaved" while neglecting the commanded act is deception.

Reports concerning returning to Mecca for the visitation circumambulation after the rites at Minā are cited. The pilgrim returns to the House after sacrifice and shaving. Inwardly, after rejecting falsehood and surrendering self-will, the believer returns to renewed recognition of the Imam at a higher, purified stage.

This second circumambulation is not a different House. The same center is revisited with a transformed pilgrim. Inwardly, higher knowledge does not replace the Imam with another center; it deepens recognition of the same divinely appointed Proof.

The prayer after the visitation circumambulation and the renewed saʿy where applicable are treated as confirmation that every increase in knowledge must again be joined to obedience and active striving.

Page 257

The author concludes the discussion of the days at Minā and the return to Mecca. The pilgrimage is an ordered whole: intention, iḥrām, talbiya, circumambulation, saʿy, ʿArafa, Muzdalifa, Minā, stoning, sacrifice, shaving, and return are all connected. Inwardly, the believer's progress through knowledge is likewise an integrated path.

He warns against performing the rites merely as inherited custom while neglecting their purpose. Yet he warns equally against speaking of inward purpose while abandoning the rites. Truth is in joining the two.

The session closes with blessings upon Muḥammad and the Imams and a prayer for acceptance.

The Ninth Session of Part Eleven

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

Praise be to God, the Originator without precedent; blessings be upon Muḥammad and the pure Imams.

The ninth session begins with further purification after the rites, including the believer's conduct once some restrictions of iḥrām have been lifted. The author explains that release comes by degrees: some things become lawful after the first release, while others remain restricted until the visitation circumambulation. Inwardly, freedom from one stage of discipline does not mean freedom from every obligation.

Page 258

The author continues with the stages of release from iḥrām. After the pilgrim has stoned, sacrificed, and shaved or shortened his hair, certain restrictions are lifted, but relations with women and some other matters remain restricted until the visitation circumambulation and its prayer are completed. Inwardly, progress through one degree does not cancel duties belonging to the next. Partial release is not complete release.

The author interprets the successive forms of release as successive degrees of spiritual freedom. A believer may have overcome one set of attachments while still needing purification from subtler ones. Therefore he does not assume that a single victory has perfected him.

The visitation circumambulation is again described as renewed approach to the Imam after the rites of Minā. The seeker returns to the center having rejected falsehood, sacrificed self-will, and stripped away former pride. His second approach should therefore be deeper than the first.

The author also links the prayers performed after the circumambulation with the confirmation of this renewed degree. Just as the outward pilgrim does not omit the prayer, the inward seeker must confirm knowledge by obedience.

Page 259

The author cites reports concerning the days of Minā, the continuation of the stoning, and the time of departure. Those who remain until the third day complete the remaining stoning; those permitted to leave earlier may do so within the Qurʾānic allowance. Inwardly, believers differ in how long they need to consolidate a degree, but all must complete the requirement assigned to them.

The days of *tashrīq* are days of remembrance and proclamation. The author connects them inwardly with periods in which the truth should be openly recalled after the decisive pilgrimage rites. The believer who has received knowledge should not immediately lapse into forgetfulness.

The recurrence of three days is related to recurring structures in the history of the daʿwa and the succession of degrees. The author does not treat the number as magic; rather, he sees in the outward order a sign of a corresponding order in the inward teaching.

The believer is warned against abandoning the community after the pilgrimage. One may leave Minā physically, but inwardly should remain connected to the Imam and the believers. Completion of pilgrimage is a beginning of faithful life, not its end.

Page 260

The author discusses the final departure from Mecca and the farewell circumambulation. Outwardly, one who is leaving takes leave of the House by circumambulating it, except in cases where the law provides an exemption. Inwardly, the believer who departs from direct proximity to the Imam renews the covenant before returning to ordinary life.

The farewell is not a severance. The House remains the qibla after the pilgrim leaves, and the Imam remains the spiritual point of orientation even when the believer is physically distant. True attachment is therefore not measured only by bodily nearness.

The author cites the verse concerning the House as a place of return and security. Inwardly, the believer repeatedly returns to the Imam's knowledge whenever uncertainty arises. The covenant provides a stable reference amid changing circumstances.

Reports concerning menstruating women being exempt from the farewell circumambulation are mentioned. Inwardly, the law recognizes genuine impediments. A person excused from a particular outward expression may still preserve the inward allegiance.

Page 261

The author considers a person who realizes after departure that something in the pilgrimage was omitted. Depending on the omitted act, he may return, appoint someone, or make compensation. Inwardly, spiritual omissions remain debts until repaired; distance and time do not automatically erase them.

The author uses the example to emphasize self-examination. Before leaving a station, the believer should review what he has done and make sure that the obligations of the degree have been completed. This prevents a later discovery that the foundation was left incomplete.

The *ʿumra* is again compared with pilgrimage, and the distinction between their rites is maintained. Inwardly, the lesser approach has its own completeness and should not be confused with the fuller pilgrimage, even though both center upon the same House.

The believer's return to ordinary clothing and activities after the pilgrimage signifies that inward transformation should enter ordinary life. Sacred experience is not meant to remain isolated from work, family, and social conduct.

Page 262

The author completes the discussion of farewell, compensation, and the continuing bond with the House. He concludes that the outward rites end, but the obligation of faith, obedience, and recognition remains.

The session closes with blessings upon Muḥammad and his family and an exhortation to preserve the covenant after returning from pilgrimage.

The Tenth Session of Part Eleven

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

Praise be to God, the Giver of bounty and the One who perfects His favor; blessings be upon Muḥammad and the pure Imams.

The final session of Part Eleven concerns ʿumra in its own right. The author cites Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq that ʿumra is obligatory according to its conditions and that it has its own iḥrām, circumambulation, prayer, saʿy, and shortening of the hair. Inwardly, ʿumra signifies a complete but lesser approach to the Imam, possessing its own ordered stages.

Page 263

The ʿ*umrat al-tamattu*ʿ connected with pilgrimage and the independent ʿumra are distinguished. Inwardly, one preliminary degree may be integrated into a greater path, while another may be undertaken as an independent renewal of connection. Their outward similarity does not erase the difference of intention and context.

The author explains the entry into iḥrām for ʿumra from the appropriate station, the talbiya, entry into Mecca, circumambulation, prayer, saʿy, and cutting the hair. Inwardly, the same principles already developed apply on a smaller scale: covenant, response, approach, recognition, confirmation, striving, and disciplined release.

A report concerning one who wishes to perform repeated ʿumras is cited. The author notes that repetition can be meritorious when done lawfully. Inwardly, repeated renewal of knowledge and allegiance is beneficial, provided it does not become empty repetition without growth.

The pilgrim who leaves Mecca and later returns for another ʿumra renews iḥrām. Inwardly, a believer who has become distant in attention may renew the formal bond and approach again with fresh intention. Renewal is not evidence that the first covenant was false; it is a strengthening of what remains true.

Page 264

The author treats a person who is prevented from completing pilgrimage or ʿumra by illness, confinement, or another obstacle. The outward law distinguishes the one prevented by an enemy from the one held back by sickness, and prescribes what must be done before release from iḥrām. Inwardly, the seeker may likewise be prevented from advancing either by external opposition or by an internal weakness.

If the obstacle is external, the believer remains responsible for his intention but may be excused from what cannot be performed. If the obstacle is internal—doubt, moral weakness, or lack of capacity—the treatment requires correction of the person himself. The two forms of hindrance should not be confused.

The author cites Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq concerning a pilgrim who becomes ill on the road and must return. The person does not simply abandon the rite silently; he acts according to the rule for the prevented pilgrim. Inwardly, one who cannot continue a degree should report his condition to the guide and be released or redirected lawfully rather than disappearing from the covenant.

The offering sent to the sanctuary by the prevented pilgrim is interpreted as maintaining connection with the central Proof even when the person himself cannot reach the place. His body is absent, but the bond and the obligation of obedience remain.

Page 265

The author continues with illness, death, and incapacity during pilgrimage. Reports are cited about a person who dies after entering iḥrām or before completing the rites. Outwardly, his legal state is treated according to what he had actually entered. Inwardly, a believer who dies while sincerely engaged in the path is judged according to the degree he had truly attained and the intention with which he pursued it.

The person who is too ill to travel may appoint another to perform the pilgrimage when the obligation has become established and the law permits deputation. Inwardly, a person who cannot personally carry out an

assigned work may have it fulfilled by an authorized representative, but the authority for substitution must come from the proper source.

The author again distinguishes the living from the dead in relation to intention. A living person may correct, repent, and change his condition; the dead person's opportunity for new action has ended. This makes present obedience urgent.

The discussion also considers the person who recovers after having appointed a deputy. If he later becomes capable, the ruling depends on whether his own obligation remains. Inwardly, one who regains capacity should not hide behind a former concession when the reason for it has disappeared.

Page 266

The author speaks of visiting the sick and assisting those who are weak among the pilgrims. This outward duty is interpreted inwardly as supporting believers whose faith or understanding has become weak. The community does not abandon the sick member merely because he cannot perform what the healthy can perform.

Reports concerning standing at ʿArafa and reaching the pilgrimage in time are revisited. A person who reaches the essential standing before its end may still attain the pilgrimage, whereas one who misses it entirely has missed the pilgrimage in that year. Inwardly, there are decisive opportunities in the religion: if a person reaches recognition while the proof is available, he may still be joined to the people of the degree; if he deliberately misses the decisive opportunity, regret afterward does not make the missed act present.

The author compares the Imam of the age to the defining station of the pilgrimage. Recognition of a former Imam without recognition of the living Proof is insufficient, just as standing at a place at the wrong time does not fulfill the rite.

The believer is therefore urged to know the Imam of his time and to respond while life and opportunity remain.

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The author continues this theme through the report, "Whoever dies without knowing the Imam of his age dies the death of ignorance." The inward pilgrimage culminates in recognition of the living Imam. Historical knowledge, lineage, and admiration for former guides are not substitutes for this living recognition.

The rites of pilgrimage end in time, but the covenant they symbolize remains. A believer who has completed the outward pilgrimage yet severs himself from the Imam afterward has preserved the form while losing the inward center.

The author closes Part Eleven by summarizing the symbolism of pilgrimage: the House is the Imam; iḥrām is covenant and restraint; talbiya is response; circumambulation is attachment; saʿy is striving; ʿArafa is recognition; Muzdalifa is drawing near; Minā is the station of hope and fulfillment; stoning is rejection of falsehood; sacrifice is surrender of self; shaving is removal of pride; and the final return is renewed recognition.

Blessings are invoked upon Muḥammad and his pure family, and God is asked to make the believers steadfast.

PART TWELVE

The First Session of Part Twelve

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

Praise be to God, the Bountiful and Knowing; blessings be upon Muḥammad and the pure Imams from his progeny.

The author now turns from pilgrimage to *jihād*. He recalls what was stated in the *Daʿāʾim al-Islām* concerning the outward obligation of striving in God's path and begins its inward interpretation. The Arabic term *jihād* derives from exertion and effort. Outwardly it includes fighting under lawful authority when the conditions are met; inwardly it includes the believer's struggle against falsehood, ignorance, and the rebellious self.

The author warns that inward jihād does not abolish outward jihād any more than the inward pilgrimage abolishes pilgrimage. Each has its own conditions, authority, and purpose. No individual may declare war from himself under the pretext of spiritual zeal.

The highest inward struggle begins with the self. One must oppose desire, pride, greed, anger, and the impulse to place private opinion above the divine command. A person who cannot govern himself is unfit to claim that he fights for God.

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Reports from the Prophet concerning the virtue of jihād are cited. The believer may strive with his wealth, his person, and his tongue according to his capacity and the command of legitimate authority. Inwardly, wealth signifies resources devoted to the daʿwa; the person signifies active service; the tongue signifies proof, teaching, and the defense of truth.

The author distinguishes the struggle against an external enemy from the struggle against the soul. Both can be serious, but the struggle against the soul is constant. The outward enemy may withdraw; the lower self accompanies a person everywhere.

The Qurʾānic command to strive with wealth and selves is interpreted as requiring the believer not merely to assent inwardly but to expend something real. Faith that costs nothing may remain a claim. True allegiance appears in sacrifice.

The author also discusses those excused from outward fighting because of illness, weakness, or other recognized impediments. Their inward duty of sincerity, prayer, and support remains. The law does not equalize physical capacities, but it does require every person to serve according to what he has been given.

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The obligation of jihād, in the outward law, falls upon the believers collectively, and its conduct belongs under the command of the Imam and the authority established by God. In the inward sense, every believer is required to struggle against the enemies of truth according to the degree and responsibility given to him. God, exalted is He, says: "Go forth, light and heavy, and strive with your wealth and your persons in the way of God." The command joins wealth and self, for the servant may be tried in both, and sincerity is shown by what he is prepared to spend and endure.

The text explains that the believer who undertakes this struggle must possess the marks of faith: he must hold fast to the covenant, love for God and for His friends, dissociate himself from the enemies of truth, establish prayer, give the zakāt, command what is right and forbid what is wrong. These are not separate ornaments,

but conditions of the life of faith. In the inward jihād, the believer combats ignorance, falsehood, passion and every call that turns him from the rightful limits. The people of faith support one another in this work under their proper leader, just as the fighters in the outward jihād stand together in ranks.

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God has enjoined love and enmity for His sake. The inward struggle is therefore not personal hostility, but opposition to falsehood because it is falsehood and adherence to truth because it is truth. God says concerning those who believe that they fight in His way, whereas those who disbelieve fight in the way of ṭāghūt; and He commands the believers to fight the friends of Satan. The author explains that the same distinction applies inwardly: the people of truth strive against the doctrines and impulses that lead away from guidance, while their struggle must remain governed by the limits of religion.

No person may make his own passion into a command for jihād. Obedience belongs to God, His Messenger and the possessor of authority. The reports cited here show that even zeal for religion must proceed through legitimate command and knowledge. The believer is not permitted to take a grave action merely because he supposes it to be good; he must know its place, its limit and the authority under which it is performed. Hence the inward combat against error likewise proceeds through the Imam's teaching and the orderly ranks of the daʿwa, not through uncontrolled accusation or violence.

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The text next discusses the Bedouin Arabs and those who remained away from the campaigns. In the outward sense, people living far from the centre of the Muslims differed in their response when they were summoned: some came obediently, some delayed, and some made excuses. Inwardly, they signify people who stand at the outer reaches of the daʿwa. Some of them hear the call of truth and hasten toward it, while others remain attached to ignorance or to the habits among which they were raised.

The Qurʾān distinguishes between those who merely say "We believe" and those in whose hearts faith has truly entered. Likewise, outward nearness to the people of religion does not by itself establish inward faith, and outward distance does not prevent a person from answering the call sincerely. The people of the cities, who are nearer the centre and more continuously exposed to instruction, bear a responsibility corresponding to that nearness; those farther away are judged according to what reached them and what they were capable of knowing. When the call of truth reaches a person clearly, however, he is required to respond and not to use distance, custom or former ignorance as an excuse.

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The inward people of the call are accordingly required to be truthful and united in their allegiance. Their struggle is not to be turned against one another while they claim to be fighting falsehood. God commands the believers to obey Him, His Messenger and the rightful authority, and the author closes the first session by invoking God's aid and protection.

The Second Session of Part Twelve

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

Praise belongs to God with a praise befitting His majesty and lordship, and blessings be upon Muḥammad, His chosen servant, and upon the Imams from his progeny.

The author returns to the subject of jihād. Reports from the Imams explain that the excellence of struggling in God's way belongs to one who does so with knowledge, justice and obedience, not merely to one who exposes himself to danger. The outward struggle with weapons has its conditions, leaders and proper time; its inward counterpart is the struggle against ignorance and the enemies of the true religion. One who has not yet received the knowledge by which he can distinguish truth from falsehood is not charged with what lies

beyond his degree. But when knowledge has reached him and the proof is established, he may not knowingly abandon what God has required.

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When the Imam summons the people of Islam to oppose an aggressor or to uphold a duty, the people answer according to the order prescribed by the law. The report of the Prophet concerning standing with the sword is cited in this connection. Inwardly, the Imam and those appointed by him raise the call of truth and summon people from ignorance to knowledge. Whoever is able to answer is required to do so, while responsibility corresponds to capacity.

A report from Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq explains the verse concerning one who asks whether he may spend all that he possesses. The answer is not to destroy oneself or one's dependants under the name of righteousness, but to act with wisdom and according to the divine limit. Likewise in the inward jihād a believer does not cast himself into matters beyond his strength, nor does a teacher impose upon a beginner what belongs to a higher rank. The author links this with guarding religion through the heart, tongue and hand, and with maintaining sincerity in every degree.

The Prophet's command to travel and struggle is also cited. Journeying outwardly for the sake of religion signifies inwardly leaving the familiar state of ignorance and moving toward the knowledge of the Imam. The sincere believer does not remain stationary merely because the journey is difficult.

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The most excellent struggle is the struggle against one's own soul and its passions, for a person may overcome an external enemy while remaining defeated inwardly. The Imams therefore teach that faith has branches and that steadfastness in obedience is among its strongest signs. The believer restrains desire, anger and pride, and he accepts the command of God even when it conflicts with his inclination.

The text cites the Qurʾānic command to strive in God's way with wealth and persons, and explains that inwardly this includes offering one's knowledge, ability, position and possessions for the service of the daʿwa. The people of truth are not to hoard what God has enabled them to use for the good of the believers. At the same time, the command proceeds according to rank and capacity; no one is charged with what he cannot bear.

The author then distinguishes the struggle of truth from fighting motivated by tribal zeal, worldly gain, reputation or vengeance. Such motives do not become holy merely because religious words are placed upon them. Jihād is for God only when it follows His command, serves His proof and is free from private ambition.

Page 276

The one who strives in God's way must first know the cause for which he strives. If the heart is not attached to the truth, merely exposing the body to danger has no inward value. The Messenger of God was asked about men who fight from courage, zeal or desire to be seen; the one truly in God's way is the one who fights so that God's word may be supreme. The author applies this inwardly to the servants of the daʿwa: one may debate, travel, spend and endure hardship, yet if he seeks reputation, dominance or victory for himself, he has not attained the intended jihād.

The rewards promised to the fighters in the outward law—degrees, forgiveness and Paradise—signify inwardly the degrees of knowledge and nearness attained by those who sacrifice themselves for the truth. The report that God has prepared one hundred degrees for those who strive in His way is read as an indication of successive spiritual ranks. The believer passes from one degree to another through sincere service, just as the outward fighter advances by enduring hardship and obeying the command.

The text also recalls that the limits of religion protect life and property. Jihād does not abolish the prohibitions against injustice. The believer may not kill, seize or injure except where God has lawfully commanded and the legitimate authority has established the cause.

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Whoever kills an oppressed person unlawfully is himself an oppressor, even if he gives his act a religious name. God does not accept injustice as an act of obedience. In the inward sense, a person can also "kill" another by corrupting his faith, cutting him off from truth or casting him into doubt. Such destruction of the soul is more grave than winning an argument or establishing personal superiority.

The author warns those engaged in teaching and disputation not to become tyrants over the minds of people. The knowledgeable person should summon with wisdom, demonstrate the proof, and distinguish between one who is obstinate and one who is merely ignorant. He does not condemn everyone who fails to understand at once. The daʿwa seeks life for souls, not their ruin.

The session concludes with an exhortation to the believers to obey God, His Messenger and those rightly placed over them, to purify intention, and to struggle only within the bounds laid down by the truth.

The Third Session of Part Twelve

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

Praise belongs to God as is His due, and blessings be upon Muḥammad and upon the Imams from his progeny.

The author continues with the taʾwīl of reports concerning excellence in the path of God. Among them is the virtue of keeping watch by night and remaining steadfast at the frontier. Outwardly this is guarding the Muslims against an enemy. Inwardly it is vigilance over the boundaries of the religion, so that falsehood does not enter the heart or the community unnoticed.

Page 278

Watching and guarding therefore signify wakefulness in knowledge. The believer does not sleep from remembrance while doubts, passions and corrupt teachings approach. The Prophet's sayings concerning guarding a frontier for a day and night are interpreted as the merit of remaining alert in defence of the covenant and the rightful limits.

The Qurʾānic command, "O you who believe, be patient, outdo one another in patience, remain stationed, and fear God," is cited. The outward station is at the frontier; the inward station is attachment to the Imam and perseverance in the ranks of the daʿwa. Patience is not passivity but steadiness in obedience while others fall away.

The author also cites reports concerning the excellence of one who dies while guarding the Muslims. His work continues and his provision is not cut off. Inwardly, one who establishes a sound teaching or protects a boundary of truth leaves an effect that continues after him. The believer who teaches another to distinguish truth from falsehood has placed a guard at the entrance of that person's soul.

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The one stationed at the boundary must combine knowledge with fear of God. The text cites the saying that every eye will weep on the Day of Resurrection except an eye that wept from fear of God, an eye lowered from what God prohibited, and an eye that remained awake in God's way. The inward meaning is that vigilance protects the senses and the heart from what corrupts them.

Reports concerning those who are wounded or killed while striving are then discussed. The outward wound borne in obedience is a mark of sacrifice; inwardly, the believer may endure injury to reputation, wealth or

comfort because he refuses to abandon the truth. Yet he must not seek suffering for its own sake. The merit lies in steadfastness under a lawful duty, not in reckless exposure.

The author mentions the standards by which the people of faith are distinguished from their enemies. Abraham's dissociation from idolatry and his steadfastness in proclaiming God's unity are presented as a model. The people of truth bear signs of obedience and loyalty, while the people of falsehood are recognized by opposition to the divine proof. The believer must therefore know whom and what he is guarding against.

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The Qurʾān commands the believers and the angels to invoke blessings upon the Prophet. The author explains that obedience to Muḥammad continues through obedience to his rightful successors, for the command of guidance does not become meaningless after his death. Reports concerning how blessings are to be invoked upon Muḥammad and his family are cited, and the text stresses the inseparability of the Prophet from the purified members of his House in the chain of guidance.

Inwardly, remembrance of the Prophet and his family keeps the believer attached to the origin and continuation of the daʿwa. One who claims love for the Messenger while rejecting the proof established after him has separated what God joined. The text compares this to a person who accepts the beginning of a path but refuses the road by which it continues.

The discussion then returns to spending in God's way. Wealth expended sincerely is described as provision for the struggle. Inwardly, "wealth" includes the knowledge and capacities entrusted to a person. What one possesses from the truth is not to be hoarded when the believers genuinely need it.

Page 281

Spending in the outward sense supports those who stand at the frontier and enables the obligations of the community. Inwardly, giving in God's way means assisting worthy seekers with knowledge, counsel and the means appropriate to their degree. Day and night, secrecy and openness, signify the different circumstances in which instruction may be given: some matters are proclaimed openly, while others are entrusted only to those prepared to receive them.

The text cites reports that the best form of charity is sometimes that given to one's dependants or to those whose rights are closest. Inwardly, the teacher begins with those entrusted to him and does not neglect his own circle while seeking distant praise. Each rank of the daʿwa has people whose instruction and protection belong first to it.

The author also recalls the Prophet's teaching that Gabriel repeatedly enjoined good treatment of the neighbour until he thought the neighbour might be made an heir. The outward neighbour has rights of proximity; inwardly, those who are near one another in rank and instruction owe mutual care. Nearness increases responsibility.

The page closes with examples showing that appearances alone do not determine spiritual value. A person may possess outward beauty, lineage or wealth yet be inwardly corrupt, while one of little worldly standing may be precious through faith. The law's outward distinctions are preserved, but taʾwīl reveals the corresponding distinctions of knowledge and obedience.

Page 282

Those who establish the rights of faith are like those who maintain the boundaries of the community. The author continues the comparison between the outward protection of the Muslims and inward protection of the religion. Just as the outward guard must remain at his post and fulfil the duty placed upon him, the inward guardian must preserve what he has been entrusted with and not abandon it through negligence.

The believer is also forbidden to expose what has been entrusted to him merely because he possesses it. Knowledge has ranks and times. What is given to the qualified may harm one who is not prepared for it. Thus concealment in its proper place is not miserliness; it is preservation of the divine order. The text closes the session by exhorting the believers to fear God and maintain the trust of the daʿwa.

The Fourth Session of Part Twelve

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

Praise belongs to God, possessor of majesty and honour, the One who summons His servants to the abode of peace. Blessings be upon Muḥammad and upon the Imams from his progeny.

The discussion turns to travel. The author says that in the outward law a traveller receives dispensations and has rulings particular to his state. Inwardly, travel signifies movement from one spiritual state to another and from a lower degree of knowledge toward a higher one. The Qurʾānic description of people travelling through the earth therefore carries, in taʾwīl, the meaning of seekers journeying through the degrees of the daʿwa.

Page 283

The seeker does not travel without a purpose. He leaves a familiar place for a destination that he regards as better or necessary. Likewise, the inward traveller leaves ignorance, deficient understanding and attachment to lower things for a clearer knowledge of the truth. The journey may be difficult, but the hardship is accepted because of the destination.

Reports concerning asking the Prophet for guidance before travel and seeking the best course from God are cited. The believer should not enter a new stage of religion through whim. He asks, consults and seeks direction from those qualified to guide him. The person who sets out without knowledge may become lost even while believing himself to be advancing.

The text also discusses taking provision. Outwardly, the traveller takes what he needs for the road and does not depend upon begging from others. Inwardly, provision is knowledge, certainty and obedience. Whoever seeks to advance without these is exposed to doubts and may be forced to rely upon every voice encountered along the way.

Page 284

A report concerning repentance and seeking forgiveness is connected with the journey. The traveller may commit mistakes on the road, just as the believer may stumble while advancing through the degrees. He is commanded to return to God and correct himself rather than persist because of pride. True repentance includes recognition of the fault, regret and abandonment of it.

The author explains inwardly that sins against the covenant cannot simply be covered by words while their causes remain. The person must repair what he has damaged as far as possible. Gratitude for guidance likewise requires that one use what God has given him in obedience rather than merely praise with the tongue.

The page then mentions the etiquettes of travel: prayer, recitation of the Qurʾān, attendance at mosques when possible, good companionship and remembrance of God. Inwardly these signify preserving one’s attachment to the foundations of religion while moving from one degree to another. Advancement never means leaving the principles behind.

Travel also has disliked forms and dangers. One should not travel into circumstances that expose religion to ruin without necessity. Inwardly, the seeker does not enter disputed or subtle questions before he possesses the foundations that enable him to return safely.

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The inward traveller requires guidance just as the outward traveller requires knowledge of the road. Among the signs of sound travel are prayer, recitation and companionship with righteous people. The author compares this to the seeker's attachment to the Imam and to trustworthy instructors. Their counsel keeps him from paths that appear easy but end in loss.

The Qurʾānic command to "take provision, and the best provision is God-consciousness" is cited. Thus the true provision for every inward journey is taqwā: restraining oneself at the limits of God and refusing to exchange certainty for novelty. The traveller who leaves his home for a lawful purpose also becomes a sign of the believer who leaves a lower spiritual station for a higher one. What he abandons should be abandoned only because a sounder destination has become known to him.

Reports concerning departure from one's town and going out in obedience are interpreted accordingly. One who leaves a place of ignorance after the proof reaches him is like a lawful emigrant. But one who departs from a sound degree through restlessness or pride resembles a traveller who leaves safety without knowing where he is going.

Page 286

The supplication of travel is cited, including testimony to God's unity and seeking refuge from the hardship, evil sight and bad return of the journey. Inwardly, the believer asks protection from doubt, reversal and falling back after knowledge. He also asks that the journey be made easy, meaning that the stages of instruction be opened to him in their proper order.

The Prophet's practices when mounting and travelling are mentioned: glorification, praise and remembrance of God. These acts teach that movement from one condition to another does not make a person independent of the source of guidance. Every advance begins with recognition of God and ends with gratitude to Him.

Reports concerning women travelling and the need for protection and trustworthy companionship are also discussed. The outward rule guards safety and honour; inwardly it signifies that one who is vulnerable or inexperienced should not be sent into difficult stages without a guide able to protect and instruct him.

Page 287

The discussion turns to the etiquettes of entering and leaving places. Doors are to be approached properly, and permission is sought before entering. The author reads this inwardly as a rule of knowledge: every science and every degree has a door. A person does not seize what is beyond his station, but enters through the one appointed to admit him.

The Qurʾānic command, "Enter houses through their doors," is cited. The "doors" of inward knowledge are the divinely established guides. Whoever attempts to enter by another way may obtain fragments of speech but not the ordered knowledge that gives them meaning. The author connects this with asking questions respectfully and receiving only what one is prepared to carry.

When the traveller reaches his destination, he benefits from what he has learned and does not boast over those who remained behind. Likewise the advanced believer should return benefit to others. The session concludes by urging the believers to seek reform through knowledge, to preserve the limits of religion and to ask God for right guidance in every movement.

The Fifth Session of Part Twelve

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

Page 288

Praise belongs to God who brought His servants out of darkness into light, and blessings be upon Muḥammad and upon the Imams from his progeny.

The discussion continues with travel, especially travel into enemy territory and the circumstances in which it is lawful. Outwardly, a believer should not enter a land of danger without need or without the protection and purpose that make the journey sound. Inwardly, this signifies entering the domains of false doctrine. A person who lacks firm knowledge should not expose himself to arguments and teachings capable of confusing him merely out of curiosity.

The report that a solitary traveller is vulnerable while two are safer and three constitute a travelling group is cited. The author reads this as a sign of the benefit of companionship. A seeker travelling through the degrees should not isolate himself from trustworthy believers and teachers. Satan more readily overcomes the solitary person, whereas people who support one another in truth are harder to turn aside.

The Prophet's instruction to keep to the road and not wander into every side path is likewise interpreted inwardly. The straight road is the ordered path of guidance; deviations are the competing claims and passions that distract the seeker from his destination.

Page 289

The traveller is to choose a sound route and avoid a path known for danger when a safer lawful route exists. Inwardly, the seeker should take the clearest proof and not prefer obscurity merely because it appears more difficult or impressive. A teacher likewise does not lead students through confusion when a direct explanation will suffice.

The author cites the saying that people should not travel alone at night and discusses the dangers of an unknown road. Darkness signifies ignorance and uncertainty. When the seeker cannot see the consequences of a matter, he should wait for illumination through knowledge instead of rushing forward. The appearance of obstacles, branching roads and uncertain tracks all serve as figures for doubts that arise in the course of religious learning.

A road that is cut off or rendered impassable represents a break in access to instruction. When that happens, the believer returns to the secure principles he already knows until a qualified guide opens the way. He does not invent a path for himself.

Page 290

Travel also requires patience with fatigue, delay and hardship. The author compares the difficult stages of the road with the effort required to acquire inward knowledge. Some matters become clear only after repeated teaching and disciplined practice. The traveller who turns back at every inconvenience will never reach his destination.

The text mentions mounts and the means by which the traveller is carried. Inwardly, these are the sciences, proofs and forms of instruction that carry the seeker beyond what he could reach by unaided opinion. A sound mount is like a sound proof: it bears its rider reliably. A defective mount resembles an argument that appears useful but fails under pressure.

Supplications for mounting and setting out are cited, including praise of the One who subjected the means of travel to human beings. The believer therefore recognizes that every means of progress is a gift from God, not grounds for pride. He asks for a good journey and a good return, meaning advancement without losing the foundations from which he began.

Page 291

The author discusses embarking by sea and the special dangers of a voyage. Inwardly, the sea represents a vast and difficult field of knowledge in which the seeker cannot rely upon ordinary familiarity. The ship signifies the divinely ordered community and the guidance that carries its people through what they could not cross alone. Whoever boards without a trustworthy vessel exposes himself to destruction.

The captain and those responsible for the ship are compared with the leaders entrusted with the affairs of the believers. The Prophet's saying that every person is a shepherd and responsible for his flock is cited. Authority therefore carries accountability. The Imam is responsible for the community as a whole, and every appointed person is responsible within his own sphere. Inward leadership is not privilege without burden.

The author warns against blind obedience to a person merely because he claims command. Legitimate obedience belongs within the hierarchy established by God and must agree with truth. The believer reflects upon the call, its proof and its conformity to the divine limits. Yet once rightful authority is known, personal preference does not override it. The session closes with an exhortation to fulfil trusts and duties faithfully.

The Sixth Session of Part Twelve

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

Page 292

Praise belongs to God, creator of the heavens and the earth, and blessings be upon Muḥammad and his purified family.

The author returns to reports connected with jihād and obedience. A man asked the Messenger of God about joining an expedition while his parents needed him. The Prophet directed him to attend to them, showing that obligations have priorities and that one duty is not pursued by violating a more immediate right. Inwardly, zeal for higher matters does not justify neglecting the foundations upon which they depend.

Obedience to God and the Messenger is repeatedly emphasized. The Qurʾān commands, "Obey God and obey the Messenger and those vested with authority among you." The inward meaning is the ordered reception of guidance through those whom God has appointed. The author rejects the notion that everyone may interpret command according to his own desire, for that would dissolve obedience into competing private opinions.

Page 293

The discussion distinguishes obedience from obedience in sin. The Prophet's teaching that there is no obedience to a creature in disobedience to the Creator is cited. A commander is obeyed within the lawful command; if he commands what God has forbidden, his order has no religious authority. This protects the hierarchy from being confused with arbitrary domination.

Reports from the early Muslims concerning commanders and expeditions illustrate the same principle. Some people were ordered in ways that tested whether they understood the limit of obedience. The sound rule is that obedience to the leader is part of obedience to the Messenger when the leader acts within what the Messenger established.

Inwardly, the ranks of the daʿwa operate in the same manner. The lower rank receives instruction from the higher, but all are bound by the truth. Authority is not a licence to innovate. The one who knows a command from the Imam conveys it faithfully; the recipient accepts it without factional resistance. The author connects this with commanding right and forbidding wrong, because the true community is held together by knowledge, obedience and mutual correction.

Page 294

The author develops the duties that bind those entrusted with leadership. They may not follow desire, favour relatives unjustly or conceal what has been commanded. The Imams are cited as teaching that a ruler or commander is answerable for those placed under him. Knowledge and authority therefore increase responsibility rather than removing it.

The believer is also commanded to advise sincerely. Counsel is not betrayal when it seeks correction within the proper limits. The text cites the command to stand firmly for justice, even against oneself, parents or close relatives. Inwardly, attachment to people must never be stronger than attachment to truth. A person may love another and still reject his false action; he may dislike another and still acknowledge what is right in him.

Reports concerning mutual advice among believers are used to show that the community should not leave a person in error merely to avoid discomfort. Yet advice must be given with knowledge, humility and concern for reform, not with delight in another's humiliation. The author warns against suspicion, spying and backbiting, all of which destroy the trust needed for sincere correction.

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The discussion proceeds to commanding right and forbidding wrong. Outwardly, this is a duty governed by knowledge, ability and proper authority. Inwardly, it is the work of the daʿwa: calling people from ignorance to knowledge and from disobedience to the obedience of God. One who does not know what is right cannot safely command it, and one who confuses personal preference with religion may forbid what God has permitted.

The author cites reports that a believer may begin by correcting with his hand where he has lawful power, then by his tongue, and at the least by rejecting evil in his heart. These degrees are interpreted according to capacity and rank. The teacher corrects by instruction; the authority corrects within his office; the ordinary believer at minimum refuses inward consent to falsehood.

The duty begins closest to the person: himself, his household and those for whom he is responsible. He should not preach to distant people while leaving manifest wrongdoing unaddressed in his own conduct. The people of the daʿwa likewise reform themselves and their circles before claiming authority over others.

Page 296

The page stresses that no obedience is due in what God has forbidden. A parent, ruler, teacher or commander has rights, but none may make lawful what God prohibited or prohibit what He made lawful. The believer follows authority within the covenant of truth.

The author then turns to practical cautions concerning travel and dangerous conditions, including crossing water, entering ruins or places where harm may be expected, and taking prudent precautions. These outward instructions signify inward caution before doubtful teachings and unstable situations. A believer does not deliberately expose his faith to ruin and then call the recklessness trust in God.

Reports concerning omens and superstitions are rejected. The believer does not abandon a lawful course because of birds, sounds or imagined signs. Inwardly, he likewise does not build religious judgement upon rumours, dreams or baseless fears when proof and knowledge are available. Reliance upon God is joined to reason, preparation and obedience to the revealed limits.

The session ends by urging the believers to hold firmly to the outward ordinances of the religion and to understand their inward wisdom without using taʾwīl as an excuse to neglect practice.

The Seventh Session of Part Twelve

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

Page 297

Praise belongs to God, possessor of power and majesty, and blessings be upon Muḥammad and upon the Imams from his progeny.

The author returns to the subject of fortification and protection. The outward believer protects the Muslim community from an enemy and does not reveal what would expose it to harm. Inwardly, the believer guards the secrets and ordered teachings of the daʿwa. He does not give an adversary the means to distort them, nor does he disclose to the unprepared what would become a cause of confusion.

The Prophet's conduct in war is cited: planning, concealment of movement where necessary, consultation and taking appropriate precautions. These outward practices signify that wisdom, not carelessness, governs the service of truth. Trust in God does not mean abandoning sound means.

The discussion also touches upon treaties and dealings with opponents. When a covenant has been lawfully concluded, betrayal is forbidden. Inwardly, fidelity to one's word is part of faith. The people of truth may disagree sharply with others, but they do not make treachery a method of religion.

The dāʿī is compared to one who calls people from danger to safety. His purpose is to bring people to the truth, not to win fame for himself. If he sees that a method of speaking will repel people unnecessarily, he uses gentleness where gentleness serves the truth. The text cites the practice of the Messenger and the Commander of the Believers in teaching people according to their understanding.

Reports concerning banners and signs in battle are interpreted inwardly as marks by which the people of the daʿwa recognize their proper leadership. A banner gathers those beneath it and distinguishes them from another host; likewise the proof of the Imam unites those who answer the call.

The author also discusses mixed circumstances in which friend and enemy cannot be easily distinguished. Outwardly, caution is required so that an innocent person is not harmed. Inwardly, one must not condemn a person merely because he is found among people of error. His own belief, intention and conduct must be known. Justice does not permit guilt by association.

Page 299

The Prophet is reported to have forbidden killing women, children and others who are not combatants. The author takes this as evidence that even in conflict the divine limits remain binding. Inwardly, the people of knowledge do not attack the ignorant merely because they are ignorant. They distinguish between the one who actively opposes the truth after proof and the one who has not yet understood it.

The text condemns mutilation, treachery and excess. These outward prohibitions signify inward restraints against destroying another person's dignity or faith beyond what justice requires. A disputant is not permitted to lie, distort or expose private faults merely to defeat an opponent.

The page returns to the broader meaning of jihād: the struggle of the believer against falsehood in himself and in the world around him. The greatest victory is not the destruction of persons but the establishment of truth and reform. The author connects this with the Qurʾānic command to reconcile believers when they quarrel and to restore justice between them.

Page 300

Reconciliation is itself a form of struggle for God, because it restrains passion and prevents believers from becoming instruments of falsehood against one another. The text cites the command, "The believers are brothers, so reconcile between your brothers." When two groups contend, each may claim justice; the people of knowledge must examine the matter and restore the divine limit rather than strengthen factional anger.

The author compares rules for outward fighting with rules for debate and controversy. Just as combat is not begun without cause, argument should not be begun merely from love of victory. The believer seeks clarification and reform. If discussion becomes fruitless quarrelling, it is better to leave it until the proper time. Reports concerning choosing suitable times for travel and action are interpreted inwardly as choosing the time when a person is able to receive correction.

The daily prayers and their times are used as an analogy for ordered action. Every duty has a beginning, an end and conditions; zeal does not permit the servant to perform it whenever he pleases. Likewise, instruction, admonition and confrontation have appropriate times. The author closes with supplication that God protect the believers from injustice and guide them to reconciliation.

Page 301

Praise belongs to God, sovereign and possessor of dominion. The page continues with the inward meaning of battle formations and the call to prayer in times of fear. Outwardly, the Muslims organize themselves so that some stand guard while others pray. Inwardly, the people of the daʿwa divide responsibilities without abandoning the common purpose: some protect the boundaries, some teach, and some perform other services, each under the order of the Imam.

The Qurʾānic and prophetic commands to remember God during danger show that fear does not suspend faith. Likewise, intellectual conflict should not make the believer abandon prayer, truthfulness, mercy or justice. The virtues remain binding precisely when they are most difficult to maintain.

Reports concerning the Messenger's arrangement of rows, positions and standards are interpreted as signs of the ranks of the believers. Every person has a station, and disorder results when one abandons his place to seize another's function. Yet all ranks serve one goal and turn toward one authority.

Page 302

The author continues with the law of confronting hostile forces and the inward correspondence of contending with the people of falsehood. The believer does not debate every opponent indiscriminately. He considers whether discussion will clarify the truth or merely increase obstinacy. Those who deliberately seek to confuse beginners should not be given unrestricted access to them.

The battlefield's separation of ranks corresponds inwardly to distinguishing doctrines and allegiances. Truth and falsehood cannot be mixed until their difference disappears. At the same time, the people of truth must distinguish among opponents: some are leaders of error, some followers, some ignorant, and some merely uncertain. Their treatment therefore differs.

Trumpets, banners, armour and defensive works are treated as outward means that have inward counterparts in proclamation, recognizable signs, proofs and disciplined protection. The believer's strongest armour is certainty joined to knowledge. The session closes with prayers upon Muḥammad and his family and a request for God's protection.

The Eighth Session of Part Twelve

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

Page 303

Praise belongs to God, and blessings be upon Muḥammad and his family.

The author continues the taʾwīl of debate and disputation. Reports concerning ʿAlī and the conduct of argument are cited. Outwardly, two parties may confront one another in battle or litigation; inwardly, the people of truth confront false doctrines through proof. It is permitted to answer an opponent and expose contradiction, but the purpose must remain clarification of truth rather than delight in humiliation.

The text distinguishes individual disputation from the organized work of the community. Not every believer is qualified to stand publicly against skilled opponents. The Imam or the person appointed by him selects those capable of defending the doctrine. One who enters debate without sufficient knowledge may strengthen falsehood through a weak answer.

A single competent defender may suffice where the matter is limited, while a larger challenge may require the cooperation of several learned people. Their unity is important: they should not contradict one another through rivalry while facing a common opponent.

Page 304

The unbeliever or opponent who is answered by proof is not to be treated unjustly. The Qurʾānic command to argue in the best manner is implicit in the discussion. The believer rejects falsehood firmly while preserving truthfulness and fairness.

The author gives examples involving Christians, Jews and other communities, explaining that their claims are examined according to evidence rather than abuse. If a person sincerely asks about Islam, he is shown the proof; if he merely seeks contention, the learned person limits the dispute and does not allow endless argument to consume the community.

The marks of faith include obedience to the Messenger and adherence to his command. The page also cites the verse instructing believers not to advance before God and His Messenger. Inwardly, the disputant must not make his own opinion precede the established teaching of the Imam. Intelligence is useful only when it remains within the truth.

Page 305

The discussion returns to conduct in jihād and to the treatment of captives and defeated enemies. The reports attributed to the Prophet and the Imams forbid unnecessary killing and require judgement according to the circumstances. Inwardly, when an opponent has been overcome by proof, he is not to be crushed through cruelty. If he is capable of accepting truth, the goal is his reform.

The text distinguishes one who persists in active hostility from one who ceases opposition. Mercy is appropriate where there is room for mercy; firmness is required where a person continues knowingly to destroy the faith of others. The lawful authority decides such matters, not private anger.

Reports concerning giving food and humane treatment to captives are interpreted as signs that the people of truth should still recognize human rights in those who oppose them. The author also mentions the safety granted by a Muslim to another person: when lawful protection has been given, it must be honoured. Inwardly, promises of instruction, confidentiality and protection likewise become trusts that may not be betrayed.

Page 306

The author continues with the granting of protection and safe-conduct. If one Muslim lawfully grants security to an enemy, that protection is to be respected according to the transmitted rulings. A person may not lure another under a promise of safety and then betray him. Inwardly, this signifies the sanctity of trusts given in teaching and debate. One who approaches the people of truth seeking explanation is not to be deceived or exposed through what he disclosed in confidence.

The reports distinguish between one who openly asks for protection, one who merely approaches in uncertainty, and one who remains actively hostile. The judgement depends upon the actual state, not upon suspicion. The author interprets this as a rule for those who enter the daʿwa: some come as sincere seekers, some as doubters, and some in order to spy or dispute. Each is dealt with according to evidence and capacity.

It is also related that if a protected person chooses to return to his own people, he is allowed to reach a place of safety. Inwardly, instruction is not established by coercion. The proof is presented; whoever accepts does so upon recognition, and whoever refuses bears the consequence of refusal after the matter has been made clear.

Page 307

The text returns to debate as a form of inward struggle. Just as weapons are used only by those qualified to carry them in lawful combat, arguments should be used by those who know how to distinguish proof from sophistry. An untrained disputant may injure his own cause.

The author discusses captives and people taken from enemy territory, including women and children, and the legal distinctions among their situations. Inwardly, these figures represent people who come under the authority of truth from communities previously opposed to it. They are not all treated alike: the mature person capable of understanding bears a different responsibility from the child or the one who has never received instruction.

The conversion or acceptance of truth by one person does not automatically establish the same state for every member of his household; each is considered according to the rule applicable to him. Yet those under a person's care may benefit from his guidance and protection. The people of truth are therefore commanded to teach patiently and not demand from beginners what belongs to the fully instructed.

Page 308

The discussion of enemy lands and the abode of Islam is completed with the principle that people are judged according to the condition in which the proof reaches them. When someone comes into the domain of the believers and sincerely seeks guidance, he is to be instructed rather than repelled.

The author closes the session by exhorting the believers to adhere to the outward law and its inward meaning together, to preserve trusts and to ask God for steadfastness.

The Ninth Session of Part Twelve

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

Praise belongs to God, and blessings be upon Muḥammad and his purified family.

The author now discusses truces, agreements and reconciliation between opposing groups. Outwardly, Muslims may conclude a truce when the Imam judges that it serves the religion and the community. Inwardly, a temporary cessation of dispute may likewise be wise when immediate confrontation would not lead to acceptance of truth. A pause is not the same as surrendering the truth.

The agreement must be honoured for its stated term. The people of truth do not break covenants merely because an opportunity arises. The author relates this to the Prophet's treaties with opposing tribes and communities. When a party violates the agreement, however, the judgement changes according to the breach and the lawful authority decides the response.

Page 309

A truce or treaty has a term and conditions. In the outward law, when two sides agree upon them they are binding until the term expires or a lawful cause of termination occurs. Inwardly, when the people of truth suspend confrontation with an opponent because wisdom requires delay, they nevertheless preserve the truth and remain alert to the conditions under which discussion may resume.

The author then turns to the taking of jizya from the People of the Book. Outwardly it is a legal ruling connected with their residence under Muslim authority. Inwardly, it signifies acknowledgement of the superiority of the truth by those who have not entered fully into its degree. They remain under protection and

order while retaining a distinct status. The payment is therefore not interpreted merely as property but as a sign of submission to the judgement established over them.

Reports concerning the Prophet's instruction not to fight a people after they accept the stipulated covenant are cited. A lawful agreement restrains the hand. Inwardly, when an opponent has accepted the authority of proof to the degree required of him, he is not continually treated as though he were still in open rebellion.

Page 310

The text considers those from among the People of the Book and other groups who enter into agreements, and the conditions under which the jizya is accepted. The outward rulings vary according to legal status; inwardly, they signify different degrees of people who recognize some portion of truth while not attaining the complete degree of the believers.

The author emphasizes that coercion does not produce genuine inward faith. A person may submit outwardly to the law while the heart remains at another degree. The people of knowledge therefore distinguish legal inclusion from spiritual recognition. The former secures order and protection; the latter comes through proof, acceptance and knowledge.

The amount and collection of the jizya are also discussed, together with exemptions for those upon whom the law does not place the full obligation, such as children and others lacking capacity. Inwardly, responsibility again corresponds to capacity and knowledge. The beginner is not judged by the measure of one to whom the complete proof has been given.

Page 311

The author explains that the outward collection belongs to the authority appointed to administer the community. Individuals do not seize property on their own claim. Inwardly, the recognition and obligations due from each rank are likewise received and ordered through the Imam and his appointed hierarchy, not through competing private demands.

Reports concerning commercial dealings with protected communities and the property of opponents are considered. The believer may deal lawfully with others while preserving the distinctions of faith. Inwardly, one may receive useful knowledge or benefit from a person outside the daʿwa without making that person an authority in religion. Truth is acknowledged where it appears, but the source of binding guidance remains the divine proof.

The text also discusses land and property left in the hands of those under treaty. The legal arrangement protects rights and prevents arbitrary seizure. Inwardly, those who have not reached the highest degree may retain what properly belongs to their station while being governed by the limits of the truth. Justice is not abolished by difference of belief.

Page 312

The author continues with the rulings governing people under covenant. Their places of worship and their lawful possessions are not to be violated merely because their belief differs from that of the Muslims. Inwardly, this signifies that the people of truth do not confuse disagreement with permission for injustice. Every person is judged according to the covenant and responsibility that apply to him.

At the same time, the distinctions of belief remain real. The protected person does not thereby become equal in spiritual degree to the believer who has accepted the Imam and the full call of truth. Protection concerns justice and order; spiritual rank concerns knowledge and obedience. The author repeatedly preserves both principles.

Reports concerning migration from a land in which religion cannot be maintained are also cited. Inwardly, one who lives among false teachings and cannot preserve his faith should move toward a condition in which he can receive and practise the truth. The page closes with an exhortation to fear God and fulfil covenants.

The Tenth Session of Part Twelve

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

Page 313

Praise belongs to God, and blessings be upon Muḥammad and upon the Imams from his family.

The final session of the part discusses spoils, property acquired in war and the division of what lawfully comes under Muslim authority. Outwardly, such property is not taken by private appetite; it is gathered and distributed according to the rule of the Imam. Inwardly, the "spoils" are benefits, sciences and capacities gained through overcoming falsehood. They likewise belong first to the order of the truth and are distributed according to rank and need.

The author cites reports concerning what may be taken from an enemy camp and what must be left. Food and necessary provisions may be used in circumstances recognized by the law, while other property is subject to division. Inwardly, not everything found among opponents is rejected. Useful knowledge may be taken where it is sound, but it must be judged, ordered and purified under the criterion of the true teaching.

Page 314

The Prophet's prohibition against private theft from the common spoils is cited. What belongs to the community may not be concealed by an individual before lawful division. Inwardly, a person entrusted with knowledge, money or authority for the daʿwa may not appropriate it for himself. Betrayal of communal trust is a spiritual form of ghulūl.

The text discusses property belonging to a Muslim that is recovered after having fallen into enemy hands. Its prior right is considered where the law recognizes it. Inwardly, truth that has been obscured or appropriated by false teaching remains truth and may be restored to its rightful place once recognized.

The author also distinguishes between what is acquired by actual fighting and what comes without battle. The outward legal categories differ; inwardly, some knowledge is attained through difficult argument and struggle, while other knowledge comes through peaceful instruction and surrender to proof. In either case, the benefit is assigned according to wisdom and the authority of the Imam.

Page 315

The same principle governs the inward division of benefit. What is gained through struggle against falsehood is not the personal possession of the one through whose effort it was obtained. The Imam assigns knowledge and responsibility according to what each person can bear. A person of higher rank may receive a broader portion because he is charged with broader service, while another receives what suits his degree.

The text recalls the Qurʾānic division of spoils and the rights of God, the Messenger, relatives, orphans, the needy and the traveller. Outwardly these are legal shares; inwardly they indicate that the fruits of victory belong to the ordered ranks of religion and to those whose conditions require support. The learned person therefore does not keep all benefit to himself simply because he participated prominently in obtaining it.

The author also cites the Prophet's practice of giving some people additional portions in particular circumstances. Inwardly, additional knowledge may be entrusted to one whose service and capacity justify it. This is not arbitrary favouritism, but a judgement based upon responsibility and usefulness.

Page 316

The Prophet and the Imam have authority over what comes into the community, and no one may claim an independent right against their judgement. The author interprets this as the supremacy of the divinely established proof over the distribution of religious knowledge and authority. The Imam knows the ranks of his followers better than they know themselves.

The text discusses conquered towns and lands, agreements made with their inhabitants, and property that becomes subject to Muslim administration. Inwardly, communities and groups that enter the sphere of the daʿwa may retain different conditions according to the manner of their entry and their degree of acceptance. Uniform treatment is not always justice; the relevant covenant and knowledge must be considered.

The author warns against taking prohibited things merely because they belonged to an opponent. Food, intoxicants and unlawful property remain governed by the law. Inwardly, falsehood does not become true merely because the people of truth have overcome those who held it. The believer must continue to distinguish sound knowledge from corrupt ideas.

Page 317

The page takes up the People of the Book who fight the Muslims and those who remain under covenant. The difference between them is legal and must not be erased by anger. Inwardly, an active enemy of the truth is not like one who differs but lives peacefully under an accepted order. The believer's judgement must follow actual conduct and established proof.

The author discusses killing in battle and the responsibility for bloodshed. One who is lawfully fought because of aggression is not treated like an innocent person. Inwardly, the destruction of a false doctrine after its error has been demonstrated differs from attacking a person whose ignorance has never been addressed. The people of knowledge first establish the proof where proof can be established.

The text cites reports concerning those among former communities who were punished after persistent rejection and wrongdoing. Their stories are used as warnings that opposition becomes blameworthy in proportion to knowledge, persistence and harm. The session continues toward the final judgements of the part.

Page 318

The author cites ʿAlī concerning people who manifest Islam while inwardly remaining opposed to the truth. The people of the truth judge by what becomes established, not merely by secret suspicion. If a person openly belongs to the Muslim community, his outward rights remain until evidence establishes otherwise. Inwardly, however, knowledge of hypocrisy explains why some who appear to stand with the believers may later turn against them.

Those who openly separate themselves from the people of truth after recognition are compared with parties that depart from the Muslim community and oppose it. Their judgement differs from that of ordinary unbelievers who never possessed the same covenant. The author explains that betrayal after knowledge carries a heavier inward meaning than ignorance before knowledge.

Reports concerning apostates and rebels are used to illustrate the difference between error, open opposition and treachery. The lawful authority judges each condition according to the proof and the harm involved. The believer is not permitted to make these grave judgements from private suspicion.

Page 319

The text cites reports from the Book of the Pillars concerning the defence of Islam and the fighting of those who actively attack the community. A person who merely differs or lives peacefully is not identical to one who takes up arms, violates covenants or commits aggression. The outward law distinguishes these cases,

and the inward interpretation likewise distinguishes intellectual disagreement from deliberate corruption and attack upon the daʿwa.

The author recalls historical opponents of the rightful authority and interprets their actions as examples of leaving obedience after the proof had reached them. The believer is warned not to follow passion, faction or resentment into such a condition. Returning to truth when corrected is better than persisting merely to avoid admitting error.

The final exhortation on this page calls the believers to remain united around the Imam, to preserve the commands of God, and to carry out the struggle against falsehood with knowledge and justice rather than vengeance.

Page 320

Faith is not a claim made by the tongue while the heart and conduct contradict it. The believer seeks the pleasure of God, waits for the promised reward, and accepts the judgement of the truth even when it opposes his desire. Whoever knowingly chooses falsehood after the proof has become clear bears responsibility according to what he knew.

The author closes the discussion by praising God for unity, guidance and the completion of the teaching, and by invoking blessings upon Muḥammad, his family and the purified Imams. He asks God to make the believers steadfast in obedience and to protect them from deviation after guidance.

Thus ends Part Twelve of the Book of the Training of the Believers in the Limits of the Inner Knowledge of Religion, from the Taʾwīl of the Book of the Daʿāʾim.