

# Al-'Iqdu Ath-Thamîn Fi Ma'rifat Rabbil-'Âlamîn

The Precious Necklace Regarding Gnosis of the  
Lord of the Worlds



Amir al-Hussein bin Badruddin (as)

# **The Precious Necklace**

## **Regarding Gnosis of the Lord of the Worlds**

By

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### Translator's Introduction

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful...

All praise is due to Allah, the Exalted and Majestic; the One who has no partners or associates; the One who provides the light of guidance to His slaves so that they may attain spiritual perfection and illumination by means of it. May Allah send His choicest blessings upon His slave and seal of the Messengers, Muhammad bin Abdullah. May Allah bless his pure Progeny, righteous Companions, and those that follow them in excellence until the Day of Judgment. As to what follows...

According to Islamic cosmology, the role of prophets was multifold. They served as living, breathing visual representations of the Creator's attempt to reach out to His creation.

One of the prophetic functions was to perfect and correct concepts of the Deity that were subsequently coloured by human frailties and weaknesses. Either human beings brought the Divine to their level by ascribing lowly attributes that robbed Allah of His Transcendence, or they brought themselves to the level of the Divine by promoting themselves as Sovereign entities that subjugated the masses by "Divine Right". The prophets came as heralds to free the minds of the masses from these gross travesties of imperfect, human creation. They utilized many creative means to instruct the masses in these Divine realities by affirming the Divine attributes which were more comfortable to the human intellect. They also "spoke truth to power" in order to remind despotic potentates that their earthly power and authority does not denote an ounce of Divine power because even a bothersome fly could unseat a king.

One of the other functions of the prophets was to establish justice. It is not enough to exercise the individual human soul with sublime concepts but leave him to fend for himself in a chaotic society. It is rather the role of a teacher to make sure that the learning environment is suitable for the mental and spiritual development of the student. Likewise, prophets fought to establish just societies in their immediate locales. The establishment of justice also served as a material paradigm of Divine Justice; meaning that if a human despot would be improper, then a Divine despot would be even more improper.

Another function of the prophets was to remind human beings of their impending end. Humans who engage in material pursuits, tend to typically forget the most obvious truth of all; death. The realization of the finality of human life serves as an effective means to rectify one's affairs. One can simply observe the lives of those terminal patients who are given a limited time to live. They spend their remaining days, hours, and minutes taking into account their lives, families, and the like. That withstanding, prophets served as constant reminders of the common destination of all.

With such important functions, it is incumbent that the prophet be flawless and infallible; otherwise, his message can be belied and denied by fear of corruption. The prophets have to be truthful and trustworthy in all states for the same reason.

Likewise, as human beings, the prophets are bound by the finality of death. This means that the prophet must be succeeded by either another prophet, or a leader who subsequently protects and carries out the dictates of Divine Justice. Otherwise, the prophetic mission will be null and void with the death of the prophet.

All of the above serve as the basic format of the Fundamentals of the Islamic religion according to one of the earliest theological schools: *At-Tawhīd* (Divine Oneness), *al-Adl* (Divine Justice), *al-Mi'ād* (Hereafter), *an-Nubūwa* (Prophethood), and *al-Imāma* (Imamate). The Divine must be freed from attributes of imperfection; *at-Tawhīd*. The Divine must be freed from attributes of injustice; *al-Adl*. The reality of Divine Judgment must be propagated; *al-Mi'ād*. All of this must be accomplished by means of a deputy charged with the message; *an-Nubūwa*. Divine justice must be carried out after the demise of the deputy; *al-Imāma*.

Consequently, these fundamentals form the basis of this book, *Al-'Iqdu Ath-Thamīn fī Ma'rifat Rabbil-'Alamīn* (Tr. "The Precious Necklace Concerning Gnosis of the Lord of the Worlds").

### Author's Biography

The author is Sayyid Amir Al-Hussein bin Muhammad (Badruddīn) bin Ahmed bin Yahya bin Yahya al-Yahyawi al-Hādawi al-Hasani al-Yemeni. He was born on 582 AH and died on 662 AH. He was a well-known memorizer of the Qur'ān, a scholar of independent judgment (*mujtahid*), an astute and upright politician known for his sagacity, a genius in the various disciplines of sciences, a compiler of various texts, and a prolific author. He also served as a reference for the scholars and imams of his time. He answered many religious inquiries as well.

Judging from the subjects and contents of the various books he authored, one could see that he mastered many of the religious sciences. He authored texts on *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *hadīth*, *ilm al-kalām* (sciences of speculative theology), and biography, just to name a few. Although his magnum opus was the book: *Shafā' al-Awām fī Ahādīth al-Ahkām* (Tr. "The Cure for the Commoners Concerning the *Hadīths* of Laws"), the other text that he is famous for was a book on the sciences of *ilm al-kalām: Yanābī' an-Nasīha fī al-Aqīdat as-Sahīha* (Tr. "The Fountain Spring of Advice Concerning the Correct Creed"). *Yanābī'* is a more extensive work on theology than *Al-'Iqdu*. He went into a lot more detail in explaining the various issues of theology.

The majority of the texts he authored were on the subject of *ilm al-kalām* and *usūl ad-dīn* (Fundamentals of the Religion); however, his vast knowledge of the sciences of Qur'ān and *hadīth* enabled him to provide textual proofs in addition to intellectual proofs. This brings us to the content of *Al-'Iqdu* itself.

### The Content of the Book

The text is a condensed work consisting of five chapters. The size of the text and the fact that it is arranged in a question-answer format implies that it is meant to be memorized and studied by beginning-level students. The relatively concise answers provided by the author emphasizes that the text itself serve as a basic introduction to *usūl ad-dīn*. The text does not present in-depth refutations to the answers of its opponents or an abundance of textual proofs to support its claims. Rather, it provides a basic level understanding to those issues that it is obligatory for every Muslim to know and believe.

It begins with the subject of Divine Oneness (*at-Tawhīd*). Even though the title of the chapter literally implies that it will specifically deal with the subject of Allah's Oneness, it rather deals with the concept of the Divine Attributes. It begins by introducing the reader to his Creator by proving Allah's existence and subsequently emphasizes Allah's Transcendence and Attributes.

In this, the author mimics most other texts on the same subject. However, unlike the other texts, he dedicates a sub-section to disproving the doctrine of the Sublime Vision (*ar-Ru'ya*). This doctrine, which is espoused by the Generality of the Muslims, holds that Allah will be seen by the eyes of the believers on the Day of Judgment. They rely upon an interpretation of the verses of the Qur'ān and *hadīth* to support their view. Although the orthodox creed of the Muslims holds that Allah exists outside of the confines of time and space and would, therefore, make seeing Him impossible, the Generality reconciles this seemingly contradictory view by adopting the *bi-la kayf* doctrine. This view maintains that the Sublime Vision will take place in a manner unbeknownst to the believers; however, it is incumbent that they believe in it.

The second chapter deals with the concept of Divine Justice (*al-Adl*). This concept is absent in the *usūl ad-dīn* texts of the Generality. They hold that Justice is not one of the essential Divine Attributes, like Omniscience or Omnipotence; rather it is an optional Divine Attribute, like Generosity or Withholding. They say that since Allah is not bounded by an outside system of laws, He is free to do whatever He pleases. The saying goes, "If He wants to place a sinner in Paradise and a saint in Hell, He can do so." Opposing Islamic theological schools, however, affirm that Justice is just as innate to the Divine Essence as it is to human essence. To them, the desire for justice is a divine-given quality.

The third chapter touches upon the office of Divine Messengership and the role of the Qur'ān. This chapter also briefly mentions a point of theological debate in one of its sub-sections: the creation of the Qur'ān.

The doctrine of the Generality holds that the Qur'ān, in its essence, is eternal. Some of their scholars have declared that the actual recitation of it is eternal speech, as well as the writing and reading of such. The Generality's theologians have sought to reconcile the doctrine of the eternity of the Qur'ān and its actual physical existence as a created book by stating that the Divine Speech that the Qur'ān is emanated from is an uncreated Speech from the very Essence of Allah. They have used the term *Kalām an-Nafsi* to indicate this. In this book, however, the author cites textual proof to suggest that the Qur'ān is nothing but the audible recitations heard from the mouths of people and read from between two covers. It is the Speech

of the Creator, but it has no other plane of existence in which it is eternal along with the Creator. Consequently, it is a creation.

The fourth chapter deals with the concept of Imamate. This is another chapter typically absent from the theological texts of the Generality. They hold that Imamate is a topic within the sciences of *furū' ad-dīn* (the Branches of Religion), not *usūl ad-dīn*. That is, one can find the necessity and qualifications of an imam in their books of jurisprudence rather than their books of creedal doctrine.

In one of the commentaries of *Al-'Iqdu* called: *Al-Kāshifu al-Amīn 'an Jawāhir al-'Iqdu ath-Thamīn* (Tr. "The True Uncovering Regarding the Jewels of the Precious Necklace"), the author states that the reason why the concept of Imamate is a fundamental of the Fundamentals of Religion in that all of the other fundamentals are preserved through it. It states:

“...because it is the succession to the sealed Prophethood and it takes the place of Messengership by means of enjoining the Divine laws. It is the preservation of Divine Oneness from the perversion of atheism. It is the protection of Divine Justice, Divine Promise (*al-Wa'd*), and Divine Threat (*al-Wa'id*) from the dubiety of the people of disobedience.”

The logic is that which maintains a fundamental is a fundamental itself.

It continues by quoting two Qur'ānic verses that establishes the Imamate: {On that Day, We shall summon all humankind with their imam} (Q. 17:71) and {Verily, We shall appoint you an imam for the people} (Q. 2:124).

The fifth chapter concludes the book with the beliefs concerning the Hereafter. In this chapter, Amir al-Hussein delves into the concepts of *al-Wa'd wal-Wa'id* (The Divine Promise and Threat) as well as *al-Manzila Baynal-Manzilatayn* (The Position between the Two Positions). Both terms were developed by the Mu'tazilites to explain the early development of theological problems posed at the time.

The first problem was that of the nature of the Divine Promise and Threat. As was stated earlier, the Generality holds that Allah is not obligated to reward the righteous or punish the sinner. The opponents of such a view retorted by stating that since Justice is an essential Divine Attribute, He is bounded by His Promise in the Holy Writ to reward the believers; and by His Threat to punish the disbelievers. The doctrine of Divine Promise and Threat was also used to counter the belief that the disbelievers and sinners will be released from the torment of the Hellfire by the eventual destruction of Hell (this belief was held by certain philosophical trends).

The second problem was that of the classification of Muslims. With the emergence of the Kharijites, who labeled all disobedient Muslims as disbelievers, their opponents were pressed to classify the Muslims based upon their consistent actions. They did not want to apply the blanket statement of “disbeliever” to the body of disobedient Muslims. Likewise, they did not want to designate a wayward Muslim as a “believer” as to equalize them with the obedient. Rather, they adopted the middle ground by positioning the delinquent Muslim in a place between the two. This entailed that although the disobedient Muslim was censured, exiled, fought against, or the like, he was still entitled to be buried in the Muslim cemetery, married to Muslim women, and inherited by his parents.

We pray that the reader is able to benefit from this translation and gain some beneficial knowledge concerning some of the theological principles involved, as well as appreciate the scholarship of an early authority on the sciences of the Fundamentals of Religion. We have attempted to stay close to a literal translation of the original meaning but yet evoke the use of idiomatic expressions when needed. If there are any mistakes, they are ours and if you are able to benefit, the praise belongs to Allah.

Imam ar-Rassi Society  
20<sup>th</sup> Dhul Hijjah 1429 AH

## **Translation of *Al-'Iqdu Ath-Thamīn fi Ma'rifat Rabbil-'Alamīn*:**

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful...

All praise is due to Allah, the only One qualified (*al-Mukhtass*) with the attributes of Godhood (*al-Ilahiyah*) and timelessness (*al-qidam*); the Overpowering (*al-Mut'āli*) over in-time existence and nonexistence (*al-'adam*); the One which time does not precede, nor ages (*zamān*); the One who cannot be pointed to and is not confined to place (*makān*). Majesty exalts Him. The One whose Entity (*dhātihi*) is shown from what He originated, the variety of His designs, and the amazing things amongst His creatures; until its dumbness speaks and declares His Lordship without a tongue. He manifests a convincing argument against everyone who attempts to thwart [i.e. His reality] and against atheism.

May His prayers and peace be upon our master, Muhammad, the one who was supported by miracles; the bringer of awe and honour to the Messengers. [May the prayers and peace] also be upon his Family, the sources of guidance and the guardians over all of the guardians. [May the prayers and peace] also be upon his noble Companions that maintained true faith, as well as the Followers that follow them in excellence until the Day of Judgment. As to what follows...

### Divine Oneness (*at-Tawhīd*)

#### The Proof that Allah Created the World

O righteous student and warrior against one's soul, the atheist may ask: Who is your Lord?

Say: My Lord is Allah.

He then may say: How do you know that?

Say: Because He created me. The One that has created everything is its Lord.<sup>1</sup>

He then may say: How do you know that He created you?

Say: Because I was nothing and I became something. I didn't have ability and I gained ability. I did not have intellect but I gained intellect. One can witness things coming into existence but then afterwards, it ceases to exist. One sees a boy develop and learn things. Then he becomes a suckling, then a baby, then a child, then a young boy, then a mature being, then a young man, then an adult, and then an old man. Then one sees in a direction that a strong wind blows and then afterwards, it is not. Afterwards, it will blow again. The planets rise and fall. The clouds compact and dissipate; similarly, the rain, plants, and various fruits. All of this demonstrates in-time creation (*al-hudūth*).

If something was existent (*muhdath*), then it is necessary that there be One that caused it to exist (*muhdith*); because there are certain associations in corporeality and then divisions of objects and images. Look at the heavens, earth, fruits, trees, wells, stones, rivers, females, males, the living, the dead, the collective, and the dispersed. Look at the necessary consequences of actions. Then, they share in the nature of consequences. Consequently, it divides and parts between its desire, abundance, life, power, dryness, moisture, foods that we like and hate, various fragrances, heat, cold, the coming annihilation, opposite colors at the same time, the death that ceases provision, and hope.

We know that it is necessary that there be differences to differentiate from. These occurrences of in-time creation are witnessed. It changes from another. These occurrences cannot transpire by themselves. Because if a thing happens, it demands that whatever brought it about exists before it and outside of it. Similarly, an image cannot produce itself, and there are no disputations amongst itself regarding its preparation. One cannot overcome that by anything from the statements of the ignoramuses. They say that everything comes from Nature, a body, orbit, a star, a cause, an intellect, a spirit, a soul, or other than that. Consequently, these would be the kinds of affirmations without fail: One who brings into existence or one

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<sup>1</sup> The textual proofs for Allah's creating the universe are numerous. For the sake of brevity we confine ourselves to the following: {Allah is the Creator of everything} (Q. 39:62), {All Praise is due to Allah who created the heavens and earth and made the darkness and light} (Q. 6:1), and {He is the One who begins creation and then renews it} (Q. 30:27).

who does not bring into existence. The one who brings into existence is, without fail, pre-existent or existent. It is not possible that a First Cause be brought into existence or that it is nonexistent. Consequently, it is necessary, to the knowledgeable one that He should be eternal and completely independent from that which was caused first.

It is not possible that the First Cause be existent because it is without fail that it either brings itself into existence or it is brought into existence by a different being. If it brought itself into existence, its effect [i.e. its created-ness] is a result of another cause of its like. Our knowledge of differences of the world could prove the invalidity of the statement that the First Cause be the exact same one that brought itself into being or that there be similar First Causes.

It is not possible that there be another First Cause because the First Cause would no longer be the First Cause. This is because at the moment that this takes place, this would bring about a sharing of the world, which causes a need. This will, in turn, cause a vicious circle (*duwr al-kalām*)<sup>2</sup> from the First Cause that will not be understood or enclosed (*yanhašir*).

The conclusion must be based on certainty and determinative judgment that it [i.e. the world] is existent and fashioned. This is a result of the Chief Doer. He is the Ever-Living (*al-Hayyu*), the Self-Existent (*al-Qayyūm*).

#### Concerning Allah, the Exalted being Omnipotent

If it is said: Is Allah Omnipotent or not?

Say: Indeed, He is Omnipotent because the existence of these creative acts is evident in the world, and these creative acts cannot exist except by means of power. It exists by the will of the Exalted. The verse says: {Verily whenever He desires a matter, He simply says to it “Be!” and it becomes} (Q. 36:82).<sup>3</sup>

#### Concerning Allah, the Exalted being Omniscient

If it is said: Is your Lord Omniscient or not?

Say: Indeed, He is Omniscient.<sup>4</sup> An evidence of that is that one can witness creation as the expression of His wisdom and the uniqueness of His workmanship. Verily, in [creation] are rules and sequence. It being figured out by the intelligent person falls short. All of that is not sound except by means of an intelligent person. It is similar to a completely cohesive book. It cannot be sound except by means of an intelligent person [authoring it]. He, the Exalted, is not qualified by the known without that which is known. Then it is obligatory that One knows all of the known things. Upon everything is the manifestation that demonstrates it being known about.

He, Glorified be He, knows what the night hides and what the day illuminates. He knows the number of rain drops and the slightest speck of the ocean. He knows the secrets that are between two people; whether one hides it or whether it doesn't even exits from between the two lips. {There is no intimate conversation amongst three except that He is the fourth of them. Nor are there five except that He is the sixth of them. No less than that or no more except that He is with them wherever they are} (Q: 58:7). By His knowledge, they do not shut Him out, nor do they detach themselves from Him. He is another person to them.

#### Concerning Allah, the Exalted being Ever-Living

If it is said: Is your Lord Ever-Living or not?

Say: Indeed He is Ever-Living.<sup>5</sup> Because if He was not Ever-Living He could not be Omnipotent nor Omniscient. Consequently, a dead or inanimate being could not do any action and could not originate creation.

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<sup>2</sup> In the language of the philosophers and theologians, this is also known as *tasalsal* which implies an unending chain of events that continues ad infinitum. Such concept denotes an impossibility.

<sup>3</sup> Allah's omnipotence is also proven by the verse: {Verily He has power over all things} (Q. 2:120).

<sup>4</sup> Allah's omniscience is textually proven by the verses: {Verily Allah knows everything} (Q. 2:231), {"You are the Knower of the unseen!"} (Q. 5:109), {...Knower of the unseen and seen} (Q. 59:22).

<sup>5</sup> The textual proof of Allah being Ever-Living is {And place your trust in the Ever-Living who will never die} (Q. 40:65).



### Concerning Allah, the Exalted being Pre-Existent

If it is said: Is your Lord Pre-Existent or not?

Say: He is Ever-Present (*mawjūd*) not the first of the existents because if His existence was first, he would be amongst the in-time creations.<sup>6</sup> If he was amongst the in-time creations, then He wouldn't be necessary to in-time creation, in that He wouldn't be maintaining it. That is impossible because He is Pre-Existent, Omnipotent, Ever-Living, and Omniscient. He is not prone to error or nonexistence. It is simply that concerning a state from the states.

Consequently, if that wasn't the case, it would prevent there being a Doer of an action and prevent the idea that One possesses the attributes of perfection. This would be a defect. It is established that the Exalted is Pre-Existent. There is no truer statement than that.

### Concerning Allah, the Exalted Hearing and Seeing

If it is said: Is your Lord Hearing and Seeing or not?

Say: Indeed; because He is All-Living, as was established earlier. He is not afflicted by any defects because defects are only possible for bodies (*al-ij̄sām*).<sup>7</sup> He, the Exalted, is not a body because a body is in-time creation, as was established earlier as well as the proof that He, the Exalted, is the Pre-Existent.<sup>8</sup>

### Concerning Allah, the Exalted, Not Resembling Anything

If it is said: Is your Lord like anything?

Say: My Lord is something unlike anything else. Things comprise of quintessence, accidents,<sup>9</sup> or bodies. It is not possible that He is quintessence or an accident because those two things are not alive nor do they have power in and of themselves. He, the Exalted, is Ever-Living and Omnipotent. These two things [i.e. quintessence and accidents] are in-time creations and He is Pre-Existent. It's not possible that He is a body because we have already established that He is the Creator of bodies. Something cannot create its like. A body produces something that is already fashioned. It divides, combines, stops, and moves. It also has directions and exists in passing time. All of that is witnessed in in-time creation. It is already established that He, the Exalted, is Pre-Existent. It is not possible that He is in-time creation. {He is unlike anything and He is the All-Hearing, All-Seeing} (Q. 42:11).

If He is not quintessence, or a body, or accident, He cannot be described in any way: whether it be colour, place, division, a face, sides, and hands. He does not retrogress afterwards, progress beforehand, split into parts, nor combine into a whole. He is not in the Earth or the Heavens. He is not incarnate in anything originally. He is not confined above or below. He has no right or left. He has no front or behind. It is not possible for Him to arrive or go anywhere. He does not descend or ascend. He was before the creation of the world without a place, and He will be after the annihilation of the world without a place. He is the Creator of place without being in need of place. He is the Creator of time without being bound in time. He is not of light or darkness. Consequently, all of that would be contradictory to His Pre-Existence.<sup>10</sup>

On the account of that, we say: It is not permissible for one to say, "He is tall, not short, not broad, not deep, not ugly, and not beautiful." One cannot say, "He is veiled. He grieves. He ponders. He is anxious. He makes up His mind. He is anguished. He is bewildered. He strongly desires. He is shy." This is because all of this is evident from that which is existent after nonexistence. This is incompatible with what

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<sup>6</sup> The textual proof of His Pre-Existence is the verse: {He is the First} (Q. 57:3).

<sup>7</sup> "Body": It is known from that which is known; for example, humans, trees, stones, water, and wind.

<sup>8</sup> The textual proof of His Seeing and Hearing is {Verily We are with both of you [i.e. Aaron and Moses] Haring and Seeing} (Q. 20:46) and {Verily, He is All-Hearing, All-Seeing} (Q. 17:1).

<sup>9</sup> "Accident": It is the characterization of the body in shapes, colors, groupings, and divisions. It is what characterizes by heat and cold, humidity and dryness, stillness and movement, significance and whispering of the soul, anxieties and anguish, joy and sadness, pleasure and anger, mercy and compassion, lust and antipathy, desire and hatred, and determination. It is like man's knowledge, life, ability, reputation, vision, ignorance, death, incapacity, as well as the sweetness and bitterness present in foods.

<sup>10</sup> In their attempt to uphold both the corporeality of Allah and His transcendence, some have stated: "Allah is a body unlike other bodies." This statement is incorrect because this is contradictory and unknown in the language. Just as it would be incorrect to say that Allah is a body unlike other bodies, it would be incorrect to say that someone is a man unlike other men, seeking to differentiate one from the other in essence. That is, the designation of "man" in the both instances denotes that both share the same essence.

is in line with the attributes of perfection, greatness, and majesty.

#### Concerning the Verses of Description

If it is said: It is mentioned in the Qur'ān: {His Hands are outstretched} (Q. 5:64). [It also mentions] Him having a side, eyes, a soul, a face, and hands, as the verse says: {...from the work of our Hands?} (Q. 36:71).

Say: "His Hands" means "His beneficence."<sup>11</sup> "Hand" also refers to His power. Also, "His Hands" denotes power and strength. "Side" in the Exalted's statement: {O, how great is my regret that I neglected the Side of Allah...} (Q. 39:56) means "obedience."<sup>12</sup> "Soul" in the Exalted's statement: {You know what is in my soul and I don't know what is in Your Soul...} (Q. 5:116) means the following: "You know my secrets and innermost thoughts and I don't know Your secrets and innermost thoughts." His "Face" means "His Essence" and "His Self." Additionally, the Exalted states: {There is the Face of Allah} (Q. 2:115); that is, any direction you face is to Him.

Regarding what is mentioned concerning His "Eye" or "Eyes",<sup>13</sup> the intended meaning is protection, watchfulness, and knowledge. Also, the Exalted states: {He is established (*istawā`u*) on the Throne} (Q. 7:54). The term "established" denotes "seizure by means of power and authority." He is unlike anything and He does not resemble anything dead or living.

#### Concerning Allah, the Exalted Being Independent

If it is said: Is your Lord Independent or not?

Say: Verily, He is Independent. He is not prone to error or nonexistence. It is not possible for Him to be in need in any state because need is not possible except for one who gains benefit or detriment, as well as pleasure and pain. This matter is not possible except for one who has desire and disgust.

Those two things are not possible except for a body. A body is facilitated by means of attaining what it desires, and it takes recourse in it. It is nourished and it increases by what it takes. It is distressed by what is kept away from it and is damaged by it. It is diminished by having something taken from it. It is already established the Exalted is not a body. Moreover, He is the Creator of bodies. How can He create something that resembles His Essence? How can a body share in any of His attributes? That is not possible.

#### Concerning Allah Not Being Seen

If it is said: Can your Lord be seen or not?

Say: This is an invalid statement due to the fundamentals of vision. If one could see in a place then that proves that the [object of vision] is in-time creation because that which is limited and encompassed in space is in-time creation.

If it is then said that He can be seen in a different realm (*makān*). This is not conceivable. Furthermore, regarding the negation of the Vision (*ar-Ru`yah*), the Exalted says: {Vision does not reach Him; rather, He reaches all vision} (Q. 6:103). This negates the general negation of all of the opponents whether it [i.e. the Vision] is in this world or the afterlife.<sup>14</sup>

Allah, the Exalted, also said to Moses, when the latter inquired about the Vision: {You will never

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<sup>11</sup> This interpretation is also narrated in *Tafsīr Tabari* and *Tafsīr Ar-Razi*. Such interpretation is known in the language. It is as the Arab poet says:

The two, white hands of the clement (*muhallim*) should prevent you from withholding and injustice.

<sup>12</sup> "Side" being a metaphor of "obedience" is known in the language. This interpretation appears in *Tafsīr al-Bayd'awi* and *Tafsīr ath-Tha'labi*.

<sup>13</sup> This refers to the verse: {It [i.e. the Ark of Noah] floats under our Eyes} (Q. 54:14)

<sup>14</sup> As evidence for the Vision, the Generality cites numerous textual references; principal of which is the verse: {Faces on that day will be looking to [or "at"] their Lord} (Q. 75:22-23). Opponents of this view point out that the word for "looking" (*naẓara*) means "anticipating" (*intaẓar*), and the verses of the negation of the Vision are more decisive than the verses that seemingly support it. Regarding the *hadīths* that seemingly support the Vision, if they are authentic, they are meant to be understood in a way as to avoid the concept that Allah is a body. For example, the *hadīth* ((You will see Allah like you see the moon)) cannot be taken literally; otherwise Allah will be likened to the moon. Consequently, this contradicts the very clear verse: {He is unlike anything and He is the All-Hearing, All-Seeing} (Q. 42:11). Rather the "seeing" in these narrations refer to a knowledge that is clear and perceptive and thus, is compared to seeing in the literal sense.



see Me (*lan tara`ani*)} (Q. 7:143).<sup>15</sup> Moses, peace be upon him, did not inquire about the Vision for himself; rather, he inquired on behalf of his people. Similarly, Allah relates the incident of his people by saying: {Verily, they asked Moses for something greater than that! They said: “Show us Allah clearly!” We seized them with thunder.} (Q. 4:153). If he asked on his own behalf, he would have been seized by thunder. He never fell victim to sin; instead, their question about the Vision was without permission. He said to his Lord: {Will we be destroyed by the action of the foolish amongst us?} (Q. 7:155).

#### Concerning Allah, the Exalted Being One

If it is said: Is your Lord One and not Two or not?

Say: Indeed. He is One in His majesty and not two. He exclusively possesses the attributes of perfection. Consequently, if there was another with him, then they will have to share in the attributes of perfection that only one is qualified to have. If that was the case, then they would be equal. If that was the case, then it would be necessary for the two of them to fight and dispute. The two of them would be in constant contradiction and opposition. If we take that into consideration, it would either permit the consolidation of actions amongst the two opponents, or the First One’s will would incapacitate the other’s will. All of that is impossible.

The Exalted is the Possessor of Majesty. This is demonstrated by His words: {If there were more than one god besides Allah, they would be ruined} (Q. 21:22), as well as His statement: {Have they have given Allah partners who created similar to His creation so that the creation seemed like them? Say: “Allah is the Creator of everything. He is the One, the Overwhelming.”} (Q. 13:16). It is clear that this creation was witnessed by one God and a second god was not there to witness. This is obvious. This world is a proof that there is one God. This is what was conveyed by the Messengers and the clear path. This is proven by the statements of the Mighty, Majestic: {So know that there is no god but Allah} (Q. 47:19), {Allah bears witness that there is no god but He; as well as the angels and those entrusted with knowledge. He establishes with justice.} (Q. 3:17), {Your God is One} (Q. 2:163), and {Say: He is Allah, the One} (Q. 112:1).

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<sup>15</sup> Proponents of the Vision argue that this negation is limited to this life only, and Moses and others will see Allah in the next life. However, the particle “*lan*” in the verse not only indicates emphasis but also indicates a future negation. This means that at no time, now or in the future, will Moses see Allah. If a chief prophet like Moses will not have this honour, what of the rest of us?

## Divine Justice (*al-Adl*)

### Concerning Allah, the Exalted, being All-Just and All-Wise

If it is said: Is your Lord All-Just and All-Wise?

Say: Indeed. This is because He does not commit an obscenity (*al-qabīh*)<sup>16</sup> and does not infringe by obligating one in regards to judiciousness. All of His actions are good. We say: He does not commit any obscenities;<sup>17</sup> rather He points out the ignorance of the obscene. It is necessary that He be repelled from doing it if He knows that it is obscene. He knows what is the most obscene of the obscene things; because it is from amongst the known things. He knows all, as we have already mentioned. He is independent from doing it, as we have already mentioned also. He knows what is in futility and everything that has these qualities. So, He does not do the obscene.

Have you not considered the one who owns thousands of thousands pounds of gold? He will not steal counterfeit money, for he knows how obscene stealing is, he knows that he is too rich to steal, and he knows that he doesn't need it. Similarly, if it is said to the intellect: If someone tells the truth about giving you a *dirham* and if someone lies to you about giving you a *dirham*, you will not choose the lie over the truth. This is the only way and the path of continuity. There is no defect in that except as we mentioned.

### Concerning the Actions of the Slave Being From Them Only

If it is said: Is your Lord the Creator of the actions of the slaves?

Say: The only ones who would say something like that are the people of deviation and obstinacy. How could He command one to do something that he had already created for them not to do and punish them for it? Likewise, how could He prohibit them from an action that He had already created for them to do and carry out judgment? Consequently, it is imperative that humans follow a ruling. One's action is either laudable, praiseworthy, calumny, ridicule, meritorious, or recompense. How can that be the case for the exaltedness of the Exalted? It takes place based upon an objective and motive, and it does not take place based upon dislike and aversion to one way.

Allah, the Exalted, could increase the actions of the slave to an extent. He says: {...you earn...}, {...they plot...}, {...they do...}, {...they form...}, {...they disbelieve...}, and {...you produce falsehood...}. This is mentioned in the Qur'an in many places.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, the Exalted enjoins them to make a choice. He prohibits and warns. This enables them to act upon two opposites, have two paths placed in front of them, be placed in two states, and they are not prevented from committing acts of disobedience by Predestination. They are not coerced into acts of obedience by force. If He willed to do that, it would be as what the Mighty and Majestic says: {If your Lord willed, those on earth would have believed; all of them...} (Q. 10:99). The act of willing denotes coercion, and not willing denotes choice. Consequently, if they were forced, they will not be responsible and this will invalidate the whole purpose of sending the Messengers.

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<sup>16</sup> In the language of the theologians, a *qabīh* refers to something that cannot exist because its existence contradicts an attribute of Allah.

<sup>17</sup> Some textual proofs include the following verses: {Allah does not commit injustice; even an atom's weight...} (Q. 4:40), {The decree will not be changed for Me. I will never be unjust to the slaves} (Q. 50:29), {All of that is evil; according to your Lord, it is hated} (Q. 17:38), and {Never will I allow the deeds of the doer to be in vain} (Q. 3:195).

<sup>18</sup> The proof that the actions of the slave are from the slave can be found in the Qur'an, *Sunnah*, and statements of the *salaf*: Regarding the proofs from the Qur'an: {Whoever follows the footsteps of Satan...He enjoins immorality and sins} (Q. 24:21); {And when they commit immorality, they say: "We found our forefathers doing it and Allah ordered us to do it." Say: "Verily, Allah does not order immorality. Do you say about Allah that which you not know thereof?"} (Q. 7:28); {Whatever good comes to you is from Allah. Whatever bad comes to you is from yourself} (Q. 4:79). Regarding the proofs from the *Sunnah*: Imam Muslim related a *hadīth qudsi* where Allah says: ((O my slaves, I have created all of you on the state of uprightness; however, it is Satan that comes to you to remove you from your religion. He commands you to disbelief and you disbelieve; disobedience and you disobey; and oppression and you oppress)). He also related in a long *hadīth*: ((Whenever you perform an action, Allah gives you your full due for it. Whoever finds good should praise Allah. Whoever finds contrary to that, the blame is on none but himself)). He also related that when the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, made his opening supplication for the prayer, he said: ((O Allah, all good is in your Hand (*bi yadayk*) and evil is not [ascribed] to You (*ilayk*))). Regarding the proofs from the statements of the *salaf*: 'Ali said: "It is not for Allah to do injustice to his slaves." It is related that Abu Bakr said: "I say what my opinion is. If there is benefit, it is from Allah. If there is a mistake, then it is from me and Satan." The same statement is recorded from 'Umar and Ibn Mas'ūd except with the addition, "...and Allah and His Messenger are free from it [i.e. my mistake]."

### Concerning Allah Not Punishing Anyone Except for His Own Sin

If it is said: Does your Lord punish someone for anything other than his own sin?

Say: He does not punish anyone except for his own sin because if one is penalized while not sinning, this would be injustice. Injustice is obscene and Allah does not commit any obscenities. The Exalted says: {No bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another} (Q. 6:164).<sup>19</sup>

### Concerning Allah Not Decreeing Except in Truth

If it is said: Does your Lord decree outside of truth?

Say: Certainly not! He does not decree<sup>20</sup> with disbelief and disobedience; insomuch that it is contradictory to wisdom and appropriateness. It is as the Exalted says: {Allah decrees in truth} (Q. 40:20). Thus, the statement does not permit that one be disobeyed by the judgment of Allah, the Exalted, and His decree by means of creation and command. This is invalid and the consensus of the Muslims hold to the belief that contentment with disobedience is not permissible. The also concur that contentment with the decree of Allah is obligatory. This wouldn't be consistent except by the statement that disobedience is not from the decree of Allah. This is the intent of He creating it, and not commanding it.

Regarding He being completely cognizant of it, He is completely cognizant of it. This is because it is amongst the known principles. However, His knowledge of it does not necessitate that the slave does it. [The slave] is not compelled to do anything, as was mentioned earlier.

### Concerning Allah Not Burdening One Beyond One's Capacity

If it is said: Does your Lord burden one beyond one's capacity?

Say: No. He does not burden one except what one can endure. This is because to burden someone beyond their capacity is obscene and the Exalted does not commit any obscenities. The Exalted says: {Allah does not burden a soul except what it can bear} (Q. 2:286). To "bear" means "to stipulate capacity". He says: {...except by what He has given it} (Q. 65:7).<sup>21</sup>

### Concerning Allah Not Committing Any Obscenities

If it is said: Does your Lord commit any obscenities?

Say: He does not desire anything from anyone. He does not desire injustice, He is not pleased with

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<sup>19</sup> The proof that Allah does not punish one for another's sin can be found in the Qur'an, *Sunnah*, and statements of the *salaf*. Regarding the proofs from the Qur'an: {And there is naught for man except that for which he strives} (Q. 53:39), {What would Allah do with your punishment if you are appreciative and you believe?} (Q. 4:147), and {Every soul will be held responsible by what it earned} (Q. 74:38).

Regarding the proofs from the *Sunnah*: Imam Muslim related: ((The sin of fornication does not fall upon the son if his father sins. {No bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another})). Imam Murshid Billah related: ((The children of the idolaters will be in Paradise, and anyone who claims that they will be in Hellfire is a liar. This is because the Exalted says: {When the girl is buried alive will be asked for what sin was she killed} (Q. 81:8-9).)) It is also related that he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said about the children of the idolaters who died: ((They did not do any good to be amongst the people of Paradise; nor did they do any sins to be amongst the people of Hellfire. Rather, they will be the servants of the people of Paradise)).

Regarding proofs from the statements of the *salaf*: It is narrated that someone mentioned to A'isha that Ibn 'Umar related from the Prophet: ((Verily the dead are punished by the crying of the living)). She said: "The one that related that to you is not a liar but there is a mistake in what was heard. What's in the Qur'an should be sufficient for you: {No bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another}."

<sup>20</sup> "Decree" (*qad'a*) has three possible meanings: First, "to create" or "to complete" as in the Exalted's statement: {He completed them (*qad'ahunna*) as seven heavens in two days} (41:12); that is, He completed their creation. Second, "to inform" or "to notify" as in the Exalted's statement: {We declared (*qad'ayna*) to the Children of Israel in the Book: "You will cause corruption of the Earth twice..."} (Q. 17:4); that is, We informed them that they would do so. Third, "to make obligatory" as in the Exalted's statement: {Allah has decreed (*qada*) that you be obedient to your parents...} (Q. 17:23); that is, He has commanded you.

It is not possible that Allah decree disobedience or disbelief according to the first meaning because we already demonstrated that the slaves' actions are from the slaves. The second meaning would not be possible from a linguistic standpoint. The third meaning would not be possible because Allah does not make disobedience or disbelief obligatory. Rather, he makes the opposite obligatory.

<sup>21</sup> This issue may seem obvious; however, this chapter serves as an additional proof that Allah does not burden His slave with disobedience or disbelief; both of which are burdens.

disbelief, nor does He love disobedience because all of that refers to the desire of the obscene. The desire of the obscene is obscene. The Exalted does not commit the obscene.

Do you not notice that we reported justice (*al-adālat*) in an apparent report? This is because, according to the intellect, if one desires fornication and injustice, this negates justice and diminishes one's rank. There is no defect in that except that one approaches obscenity. By that, one desires obscenity.

The Exalted says: {Allah does not love disobedience} (Q. 2:205), {He is not pleased with disbelief for His slaves} (Q. 39:7), and {Allah does not desire injustice for His slaves} (Q. 40:31).<sup>22</sup>

#### Concerning Allah Not Doing What He Declares as Evil

If it is said: Does your Lord do to His slave what He declares as evil?

Say: Certainly not! He does not act except in righteousness. He does not test them unless He calls them to success; whether one meets disaster or blessing. This is because the Exalted does not act except in virtue and wisdom, as we mentioned earlier. If they are afflicted, tried, and tested by that which exceeds what they were bestowed with; it justifies the statements of the opponents. By that, the idea of Him bringing something frivolous into existence is expelled. This is what the Exalted indicates by His statement: {Do they not see that they are tested each year once or twice but then, they do not repent nor do they remember?} (Q. 9:126). It necessitates that there's a compensatory fulfillment a hundredfold. By that, the idea of Him bringing injustice into existence is expelled. This is mentioned many times in the *Sunnah*<sup>23</sup> and [it is] the intended goal, in brief.

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<sup>22</sup> Opponents of this view cite the following verses to demonstrate that Allah wills the slave's disobedience: First, {And you do not will except that Allah wills} (Q. 76:30) However, the context of this verse makes its meaning clear. The previous verse says: {Verily, this is a reminder, so that he who wills may take a path to his Lord} (verse 29). {And you do not will} to take a path to your Lord {except that Allah wills} to reward you. Consequently, the following verse says: {He admits whom He wills to His mercy} (verse 31). Second, {And your Lord creates what He wills and He alone chooses. They didn't have a choice} (Q. 28:68). Some exegetes say that this "choice" refers to guidance. However, in *Asbābul-Nuzūl*, al-Wāhidi said that this verse was revealed as an answer to al-Walīd bin al-Mughīra. He and the other pagan Arabs asked why wasn't the Prophet a man from Makkah or Ta'if (see Q. 43:31). Allah revealed this verse as a response to them. Also, noteworthy is the past tense used {They didn't have a choice} and not the present tense, "They don't have a choice". This lends credence to the view that it was addressing the ridicule of the pagans, {They didn't have a choice} to choose the Prophet and where he was from.

Third, {Allah created you and what you do [or "what you manufacture"]} (Q. 37:96); the argument being that Allah creates the actions of the disobedient. The verse, however, is part of Abraham's statement to the idolaters. The first part of the statement is {"Do you worship that which your hands carve..."} (verse 95). He completes the statement with the aforementioned verse: {"...while Allah created you and what you do [or "what you manufacture"]} (verse 96). The implication is that they should worship Allah, the One who created them and the stones that they carve images from.

<sup>23</sup> Some examples of Allah testing the believers, from the *Sunnah* include: Imam at-Tirmidhi narrated on the authority of Jābir: ((On the Day of Judgment, while viewing the rewards, the people of misfortune would desire to cut their skins with blades)). Imams Mālik, Murshid Billah, al-Bukhārī narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayra: ((The one whom Allah wants good for, He tries him)). Imam al-Bukhārī narrated: ((When the slave is sick or on a journey, Allah writes for him the reward of a good deed)).

## Prophethood

### Concerning Knowing the Prophet

If it is said: You have perfected the knowing your Lord, who is your Prophet?

Say: Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny.

If it is said: What is your evidence for that?

Say: This is because he came with miracles<sup>24</sup> that succeeded his Prophetic mission; all of which can only exist for a true prophet.

If it is said: What is your evidence that he came with miracles that succeeded his Prophetic mission?

Say: It is from necessary knowledge that he was from the tribe named *Quraysh*. In this tribe, there was a family named *Bani Hāshim*. In [this family] was a man named Muhammad bin Abdullah. It is from the necessary knowledge that he had the Prophetic mission and came with the Qur'ān after this Prophetic mission. He came with challenging verses that he recited to the polytheists. They heard it and were finished by its eloquence. It is from necessary knowledge that they showed great enmity against him.

Regarding our earlier statement: It [i.e. the Qur'ān] is a miracle because they were challenged to produce the like of it,<sup>25</sup> but they were defeated. Then, they were challenged to bring a chapter like it, but they couldn't do that. Consequently, if they were able to do so, they would have opposed him with great enmity. They would have known to counter him with the like of what he came with to invalidate his claim. They would have done so by means of coming with something equal to it and causing great difficulty to him in their conflict. However, there is no proof that they invalidated his claim. That proves that he came with a miracle.

Also, the Qur'ān contains unseen information about the future<sup>26</sup> and past matters<sup>27</sup>. Its conveyance of information about the past and future proves that it is a miracle. This is not possible for a human being.

He also performed many miracles that numbered to one thousand.<sup>28</sup> For example, a rock came to him; it overflowed water like a ship; a tree walked to him; the dead was revived; and pebbles in his hand glorified Allah. There are many more examples. Regarding that which we have mentioned, it took place because he is a true Prophet. This is because the manifestation of miracles by the hands of liars is obscene and the Exalted does not do that. If his truthfulness is established and his Prophethood is authentic, then the truthfulness of what he conveyed to us about the previous prophets and messengers is established. Also, this obligates the authenticity of their Prophethood and the truthfulness of the messages they conveyed. This is clear.

### Concerning Knowledge of the Qur'ān

If it is said: What is your belief concerning the Qur'ān?

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<sup>24</sup> The meaning of "miracles" is that which cannot be duplicated.

<sup>25</sup> {Do they say: "He has concocted it"? But they do not believe. Then, let them produce the like thereof if they are truthful} (Q. 52:33-34) {If humans and jinn were to come together to produce the like of this Qur'ān, they could not produce the like thereof; even if they were to assist each other} (Q. 17:88) {Do they say, "He invented it"? Say: "Then bring ten chapters like it that have been invented an call upon whomever you can besides Allah, if you are telling the truth. If they do not answer you, know that it was revealed by Allah's knowledge. There is no god but He. Would you be Muslims?} (Q. 11:13-14)

<sup>26</sup> For example, the Exalted says: {Allah has certainly showed His Messenger the dream in truth. You will certainly enter the Sacred Mosque safely, if Allah wills} (Q. 48:27). This, of course, took place not long after the prophecy. One may propose that such prophecies took place after the events; however, this is untenable because if such blatant distortion of facts would have occurred at such an early stage in Islam's development, the persecuted, fledging community would have deserted him as a pretender.

<sup>27</sup> This refers to the accounts of the previous prophets and communities. This is considered miraculous because the Prophet Muhammad was not schooled in the religious traditions of the Jews and Christians but yet showed in-depth knowledge of their textual traditions and histories. This can only come about by means of Divine inspiration.

<sup>28</sup> It is also said that he performed three thousand miracles. In the book, *Ash-Shifā'*, Qādī Iyād said:

Know that the miracles of our Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, are many and cannot be accurately enumerated. Only one of them is the Qur'ān. You can not enumerate the number of his miracles; whether it is one thousand, two thousand, or more.

Say: I believe that it is the speech<sup>29</sup> of Allah, the Exalted; and it is audible, and existent (*muhdath*), created speech.

If it is said: What is your proof for that?

Say: Regarding my statement that it is the speech of Allah, the Exalted: The Exalted says: {If any of the polytheists seek protection from you, grant it to them so that he may hear the speech of Allah} (Q. 9:6). Since it is known that speech was something audible to the polytheist, it is nothing other than this Qur'ān. Because it is necessary knowledge that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, called to and conveyed that. He does not call to anything but the right, and he does not convey anything but the truth. Since the miracle was manifested at his hand, he was entrusted with eliminating any errors and lies manifested by means of what he conveyed.

Regarding my statement that it is audible: It is known as that which is heard, as well as by the statement of the Exalted: {...Indeed, we have heard an amazing Qur'ān!} (Q. 72:1). It is from necessary knowledge that that audible speech is this Qur'ān.

Regarding my statement that it is existent (*muhdath*):<sup>30</sup> It is amongst the actions of the Exalted. By necessity, the actor precedes the action. That which is preceded by Him is other than Him, which makes it existent. Consequently, something precedes something else. That proves that it is existent. [It is also proven] by the statement of the Exalted: {No Reminder (*adh-dhikr*) comes to them existent (*muhdath*) from their Lord...} (Q. 21:2). The "Reminder" is the Qur'ān; as the Exalted states: {Verily, it is a Reminder for you and your people...} (Q. 43:44); that is, it is an honor for you and your people.<sup>31</sup>

Regarding my statement that it is created: It is arranged in proportionate order. It is well-known that it is arranged in sections and exists between pages. It is created. Regarding what was narrated on the authority of 'Umar bin al-Khattāb—the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((Allah was when there was nothing and then, He created the Reminder)).<sup>32</sup> The Reminder is the Qur'ān, as was mentioned earlier.<sup>33</sup>

Then say: I believe that it is the truth with no falsehood in it. This is based on the Exalted's statement: {Verily it is in a Mighty Book. Falsehood cannot enter it from the front of it or behind it.} (Q. 41:41-42).

Then say: I believe that there is no deficiency, mistakes, or contradictions in it. {If it was from other than Allah, you would find many contradictions in it.} (Q. 4:82).

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<sup>29</sup> "Speech" is defined as that which consists of at least two letters or more and conveys a meaning.

<sup>30</sup> This is to distinguish it from being "Pre-Existent" (*qadīm*).

<sup>31</sup> There are no explicit proofs in the Qur'ān or the *Sunnah* for the eternity of the Qur'ān. The proofs are simply philosophical and have thus been philosophically opposed. Regarding the textual proofs that are used to disprove the pre-existence and eternity of the Qur'ān, some of the following are cited:

First, {And when they would not let themselves be guided by it [i.e. the Qur'ān], they say: "This is an ancient (*qadīm*) lie!" Before this [i.e. the Qur'ān] was the Book of Moses...} (Q. 46:11-12). The implication of the verse indicates that something [i.e. "the Book of Moses"] existed before the Qur'ān; therefore, the Qur'ān cannot be pre-existent.

Second, {Verily, We have made (*ja'ala*) this an Arabic Qur'ān so that you may use intellect} (Q. 43:3). The word "make" (*ja'ala*) means to create or to change the state of something into another state; both of which only applies to creation. For example, {...and made (*ja'ala*) the darkness and light} (Q. 6:1) and {Verily I will make (*ja'ala*) you an imam for mankind} (Q. 2:124).

Third, {The month of Ramadan in which the Qur'ān was revealed} (2:185). The proof in this is twofold. First, the Qur'ān was said to be revealed during a certain period of time. That which is enclosed in time is created and cannot be eternal. Second, the Arabic word for "revealed" literally means "to send down from one place to another". This implies space and that which is enclosed in space is created and cannot be eternal.

<sup>32</sup> Narrated in *Tafsīr ar-Rāzi*.

<sup>33</sup> Imam at-Tirmidhi in his *Sunan* and Imam as-Suyūti in his *Durr al-Manthūr* narrated that Ibn Mas'ūd said: "Allah did not create anything from the heavens and earth greater than the Verse of the Chair [i.e. Q. 2:255]."



## Imamate

### Concerning the Imamate of Imam ‘Ali, peace be upon him

If it is said: Who was the leader (*imām*) after the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, and the first successor for the community without interruption (*bilā faṣl*)?

Say: The Commander of the Believers (*Amīr al-Muminīn*) and the Most Excellent of Executors (*Sayyid al-Waṣṣī ‘in*), ‘Ali bin Abi Tālib.

If it is said: This is a claim. What is your evidence?

Say: The Book, the *Sunnah*, and the consensus of the Descendants [of the Prophet] (*al-‘itra*).

Regarding the Book: The Exalted says: {Verily your only Guardian is Allah, His Messenger, and those who believe--those who establish the prayer and pay the alms (*Zakāt*) while bowing.} (Q. 5:55). No one paid the alms while in the state of bowing, other than ‘Ali, peace be upon him. A beggar asked [for alms]; based upon the promise of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, he came to him while ‘Ali was bowing in the prayer. That occurred while in the mosque of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, and no one else responded to his request. He indicated to him to take his ring as alms while he was bowing, and the beggar took it. Then Gabriel revealed this verse to the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny. This was something that was unique to ‘Ali, peace be upon him, and no one else in the community.<sup>34</sup>

It is restricted in its denotation of Imamate because “guardian” (*wali*) means “one who has authority to govern affairs.” It is like if someone said: “This is the woman’s guardian”, or “This is the orphan’s guardian”; that is, he has the authority to govern their affairs.

Regarding the *Sunnah*: It is the narration of the Pond (*al-Ghadīr*)<sup>35</sup> in which he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((Do I not have more authority (*awla*) over you than you have over yourselves?)) [cf. Q. 33:6] They all replied, “O Messenger of Allah, indeed!” He said: ((Then, whomever I have authority over, ‘Ali has authority over. O Allah, help those that help him and oppose those that oppose him! Assist those that assist him, and abandon those that abandon him!)) Then ‘Umar said, “Hearty congratulations to you, O son of Abi Tālib! You have become the master of all of the believing men and women!”

We narrate on the authority of Mu’ayyad Billah with his chain of authority (*isnād*) going to Ja’far as-Sādiq bin Muhammad al-Bāqir that he was asked about the meaning of this narration. He said: “By Allah, the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, was asked about it and he said: ((Allah is my Guardian. He has more authority over me than I have over myself, and I have no say in

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<sup>34</sup> The overwhelming majority of the books of *tafsīr*, history, and *hadīth* narrated that this verse was revealed concerning ‘Ali. For the sake of brevity I mention a narration from the *tafsīr* of Imam as-Suyuti, *Durr al-Manthūr*: At-Tabarāni in *al-Awsat* and Ibn Mardawayh narrated on the authority of Ammār bin Yāsir:

A beggar came to ‘Ali for charity while he was bowing in prayer. He removed his ring and the beggar took it. The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, came in and asked him [i.e. the beggar] about that. Then the following verse was revealed to the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him: {Verily your only Guardian is Allah, His Messenger, and those who believe--those who establish the prayer and pay the alms while bowing.} The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, recited it to his Companions. He then said: “Whomever I have authority over, ‘Ali has authority over. O Allah, help those that help him and oppose those that oppose him!”

<sup>35</sup> Regarding the authenticity of the *hadīth* of the Pond: Ibn al-Jarīr at-Tabari narrated it with 75 different chains in his book *Kitāb al-Wilāyat*. Ibn ‘Uqda narrated it with 105 chains. Adh-Dhahabi said: “I am amazed at a narration with so many chains! As-Suyūti includes it amongst the mass-transmitted (*al-mutawātir*) *hadīths*.” Al-Ghazzālī said: “There is consensus from the Generality concerning the sermon in the *Hadīth* of the Pond. Ibn Hajar even admits in *Sawā’iq* that it has been narrated by 30 companions.” Al-Hākim related it with multiple chains in his *Mustadrak* and said: “These are authentic according to the conditions of the two shaykhs [al-Bukhari and Muslim].” Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī in *Kanz al-Ummāl* related it. An-Nisā’ī narrated it in his *Khasā’is*. Ibn Hajar mentioned it in his *Sawā’iq* and said: “Adh-Dhahabi authenticated it.” Al-Haythami mentioned this in his *Majmū’* and said: “Ahmed related it and his narrators are all reliable. He narrated it in his *Musnad* on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās.” Even the “*salafī*” *hadīth* scholar, Nasr ad-Dīn al-Albāni authenticated it in his *As-Silsila as-Sahīha*. After relating the various chains, he said:

The conclusion is that the aforementioned *hadīth* is authentic; both parts. But, only the first part [i.e. “Whomever I am his guardian...”] is mass-transmitted on his authority, peace and blessings be upon him. This should be clear to the one who follows its narrators and chains of transmission. What I mentioned should be enough... The reason why I mentioned this and clarified that the *hadīth* is authentic is that I saw that Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyya weakened the first part of the *hadīth* and claimed that the second part [i.e. “O Allah, help those that help him...”] is a lie. In my estimation, this is the product of his hastiness in exaggerating to weaken *hadīths* before collecting all of the chains of narration and thoroughly examining them.

the matter with Him. I am the guardian of the believers. I have more authority over them than they have over themselves, and they have no say in the matter with me. Whomever I am the guardian of, I have more authority over him than he has over himself, and he has no say in the matter with me. So, ‘Ali is his guardian. He has more authority over one than one has over himself, and he has no say in the matter with him)).

If that is established then it is restricted in its meaning to denote Imamate. The intended meaning cannot be derived from the statement: “So-n-so is an imam; however, the community has authority to govern its own affairs.” This is because the guardian (*mawla*) is understood to govern affairs. It is similar to the statement: “This is the slave’s guardian”; that is, he governs [the slave’s] affairs. This is the restricted meaning of “Imamate” as we mentioned earlier.

One can also prove that from the *Sunnah*: (The Narration of Position (*al-Manzila*)). It is well known like the narration of the Pond. He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said to ‘Ali: ((You are to me as Aaron was to Moses, except that there will be no prophet after me.))<sup>36</sup> He excludes Prophethood; which proves that he [i.e. ‘Ali] encompasses a virtuous trait similar to it. Its clause proves his governance of the community’s affairs and that he is foremost of the people in their governance. That is the meaning of Imamate, as we mentioned earlier.

Regarding the consensus: The Descendants [of the Prophet] all concur with that.

#### Concerning the Imamate of al-Hassan and al-Hussein

If it is said: Who was the imam after ‘Ali, peace be upon him?

Say: It was al-Hassan, his son, after him;<sup>37</sup> and al-Hussein, al-Hassan’s brother, after him<sup>38</sup>, peace be upon them both.

If it is said: What is your proof for their Imamate?

Say: It is the well-known narration in which the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((Al-Hassan and al-Hussein are both imams; whether standing or sitting. Their father is greater than them)).<sup>39</sup> This is an explicit designation regarding their Imamate. Also, there is an implicit indication of their father’s Imamate; because one cannot be greater than another unless he is an imam that shares with him the trait of Imamate while exceeding over him. At that point, he is greater than him. This is clear.

The consensus concurs that the two of them did not exercise governmental authority during the era of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, and the era of ‘Ali, peace be upon him, respectively. Al-Hussein did not exercise governmental authority during the era of his brother, al-Hassan. The Imamate endured distinctly by consensus.

#### Concerning the Imamate After Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein

If it is said: Who was the imam after the both of them?

Say: It is restricted to the descendants of the Two Grandsons (*as-Sibtayn*) and prohibited from anyone other than them. It belongs to the one from the descendants whose ancestry reaches back to one of the two [i.e.

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<sup>36</sup> Al-Bukhari related it in his *Sahih*; Muslim narrated it in his *Sahih*; Ibn Mājah narrated it in his *Sahih*; Ahmed bin Hanbal related it in his *Musnad*; Abu Dawud at-Tayālisi related it in his *Musnad*; Abu Nu’aym narrated it in his *al-Hilayah*; An-Nisā’i narrated it in his *Khasā’is*; At-Tahāwi narrated it in *Mishkil Athār*; al-Khatib related it in *Tarikh*; and at-Tirmidhi related it in his *Sahih*. Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalāni narrated it in *Fath al-Bāri*; al-Hākim narrated it in his *Mustadrak* and said that the chain is authentic; and As-Suyūti mentions it in his *tafsir* of {It was not fitting for the people of Madinah and the Bedouin Arabs of the neighbourhood...} (Q. 9:120).

<sup>37</sup> The consensus of the Muslims recognized the Caliphal authority of al-Hassan after the assassination of his father. Although, he had a brief stint as the Caliph, he is generally regarded as the fifth of the “Rightly-Guided Caliphs.”

<sup>38</sup> Although al-Hussein was never recognized as a Caliph, he posed a threat to the existing authorities because they knew that after the death of his brother, al-Hassan, the people (specifically, the Kufans) were leaning towards him to fight for the Caliphate. Al-Hussein’s failed attempt and subsequent martyrdom does not disqualify him from the Imamate because consensual recognition is not a precondition for Imamate. The proof for this is that many scholars recognize Abdullah bin az-Zubayr as one of the “12 caliphs” although he was similarly defeated and killed without being recognized by consensus.

<sup>39</sup> Although I could not locate this *hadith* in the Sunni sources, there are other *hadiths* that seemingly imply this. First, ((Al-Hassan and al-Hussein are the masters of the youths of Paradise and their father is greater than them)); Referring to al-Hassan, he, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((My son is master (*sayyid*). By his hand, Allah will rectify two warring parties from the Muslims)). He also said: ((Whoever makes war against them, makes war against me)).

al-Hassan and al-Hussein], that rises and calls to himself.<sup>40</sup> All of the following are the traits of Imamate: expansive knowledge, evident virtue, courage, generosity, excellence in opinionated thought without dissimulation, ability to carry out commands, and manifest religious scrupulousness.

If it is said: What is your proof for that?

Say: Regarding the proof of its restriction: The intellect mandates that the Imamate can be obscene, because it necessitates that the governance of inimical affairs can be terminated by killing, crucifixion, and removal. The consensus of the Muslims concurs that it is permissible for the descendants of Fātima, peace be upon her. There is no proof that it is permissible for anyone other than them. Their enemies were not righteous. This is because the Descendants have agreed that it is not permissible for anyone other than them. Their consensus is a proof.

Regarding the proof of the traits of Imamate that we mentioned: It is the consensus of the Muslims.

If it is said: Can you elucidate these traits for us?

Say: Regarding knowledge:<sup>41</sup> It is necessary for him to be knowledgeable of the Divine Oneness of Allah and worship of Him; as well as what comes subsequent to that. He has to be knowledgeable of the sources of Islamic Law (*ash-Shari'a*), as well as its proofs. These [i.e. the sources] are four: the Book, the *Sunnah*, Consensus, and Analogical Reasoning (*al-Qiyās*). What is meant by that is that one has a thorough understanding of the commands and prohibitions of the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*; as well as their generalities, specificities, applications, expositions, what abrogates, and what is abrogated. He has to also be knowledgeable concerning the conciliatory subjects and the different channels of disagreements in *fiqh*; so as to not form an independent judgment contrary to consensus. Then, he has to be able to investigate a body with analogical reasoning and form an independent judgment. He has to be able to refer an action back to the legal source.

Regarding virtue:<sup>42</sup> He has to be the most eminent of the people of his time; constantly increasing in such over other than him in this trait of Imamate. If not, he has to, at least, be similar to them in eminence.

Regarding courage:<sup>43</sup> He has to be willing to meet the enemies of Allah and not be accused of cowardice. He has to be composed in times of anxiety. He must not feign fighting or the battlefield.

Regarding generosity:<sup>44</sup> He must be generous in the distribution of rights to its owners.

Regarding opinionated thought:<sup>45</sup> He must be in a state of mind to manage affairs and not be

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<sup>40</sup> Among the textual proofs for the imamate belonging to the Descendants are: ((Verily, I leave you something by which if you hold on to them, you will never go astray after me: the Book of Allah and my descendants, the People of my House. Verily, the Subtle and Aware will not separate them until they meet me at the Pond.)); ((The stars are a means of safety for the people of the earth from drowning. The People of my House are a means of safety for my community whenever they differ. Consequently, when the tribes of Arabs differ from them, there will arise the party of Satan.)) ((There are three people that I will intercede for on the Day of Judgment: The one who commands the good, the one who forbids the bad, and the one who strikes with the sword on behalf of an imam from my offspring)).

<sup>41</sup> Some textual proofs for the knowledge of the imam are: {Allah has chosen him over you [i.e. as ruler] and has increased him in knowledge and build. Allah gives dominion to whomever He wills} (Q. 2:247); {Judge between them by what Allah has revealed and do not follow their whims} (Q. 5:49); and {And We made them imams guiding by our command...} (Q. 21:73).

<sup>42</sup> Some textual proofs for the virtue of the imam are: {We wanted to grant favour to upon those who were oppressed in the land and make them imams and inheritors. We established them in the land and by means of them, show Pharaoh, Haman, and the soldiers what they feared} (Q. 28:5-6); {Obey Allah, obey His Messenger and the holders of authority amongst you} (Q. 4:105); and {Fear Allah and be with the truthful} (Q. 9:119).

<sup>43</sup> Some textual proofs for the courage of the imam are: {It is only Satan that frightens his supporters (*awliyā'a*). Fear them not, rather fear Me; if you are indeed believers} (Q. 3:175); {And when something comes to them about safety or fear, they spread it. If they had referred it back to the Messenger or the holders of authority amongst them, those who can draw correct conclusions would have known about it} (Q. 4:83); and {How many prophets fought along with many religious authorities and they never lost conviction by what afflicted them in the way of Allah?} (Q. 3:146)

<sup>44</sup> Some textual proofs for the generosity of the imam are: {Do not consume each other's wealth unjustly and send it to the rulers to consume a portion of the people's wealth in sin} (Q. 2:188); {Take from their wealth charity by which you purify them} (Q. 9:103); {Give the full amount and weight in justice} (Q. 6:152); {Charity [i.e. *zakāt*] is only for the poor, destitute, the ones charged with collecting it, reconciling the hearts, manumission of slaves, freeing those in debt, in the way of Allah, and the traveler} (Q. 9:60).

deficient in his intellect. He must not have any type of disease in his body [i.e. one that inhibits his functions] or weakness so that he can accurately oversee the affairs of the religion and rectify the affairs of the Muslims.

Regarding religious scrupulousness:<sup>46</sup> It is enough that he turns away from obscenities and establish the obligations.

#### Concerning the Way of Knowing the Specifications of the Imam

If it is said: What is the way for one to exist with these traits?

Say: Regarding him being knowledgeable: He has to achieve this by taking the knowledge of the scholars by means of thorough research and debate. Other than them are called to obedience by knowledge of the existence of a scholar. He has to be knowledgeable of the occurrences of possible attack. There is consensus of opinion regarding that.

Regarding the rest of the traits, it is necessary that knowledge be obtained for them to exist. If it [i.e. knowledge] is absent, then one must obtain the successively transmitted (*at-tatwātiri*) knowledge in that. The ruling of knowledge is similar to that of its absence. The means of this knowledge is through the mass transmitted texts of the scholars and others. If it is present, then it is necessary that the acquisition of knowledge exist for all of it. This is because it is from the Fundamentals of Religion (*Usūl ad-Dīn*). Otherwise, one would not take hold of the required indications needed for all of it.

#### Concerning Commanding the Good and Prohibiting the Bad (*Amr bil-Ma'rūf wa an-Nahī 'an al-Munkar*)

If it is said: What do you mean by “commanding of the good and prohibiting of the bad”?

Say: Allah makes it clear that the commanding of the good and prohibiting of the bad is religiously obligatory. He does so by His words: {Let there be from you a community inviting to the good; commanding the good and prohibiting the bad. They are the successful ones} (Q. 3:104).<sup>47</sup>

Regarding our statement that it is religiously obligatory to command the good and prohibit the bad: The consensus of the Muslims hold that it is religiously obligatory that one be delegated to command the good and prohibit the bad. This cannot be maintained except by means of a judiciary that commands the obligations to the utmost of one's ability. Otherwise, it would invalidate the import of the verse. The caliphate is meant by this, as is well known.

We also say that the prohibition of the bad is obligatory by the consensus of the Muslims. This is because the bad are obscenities and it is religiously obligatory to prohibit all of it to the utmost of one's ability, just as it is necessary to command the good to the utmost of one's ability.

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<sup>45</sup> Some textual proofs for the opinionated thought of the imam are: {Do not approach that in which you have no knowledge} (Q. 17:36); {Say: “This is my path. I invite to Allah with insight; I and those who follow me} (Q. 12:108).

<sup>46</sup> Some textual proofs for the scrupulousness of the imam are: {“Verily I will make you an imam for the people.” He [i.e. Abraham] said: “And my descendants?” [Allah] replied “My covenant will not reach the unjust.”} (Q. 2:124); {And do not obey every despicable perjurer, backbiter that goes around gossiping, preventer of good, transgressor persistent in sin, and an extremely crude person that's villainous} (Q. 68:10-13).

<sup>47</sup> Other textual proofs for the commanding of the good and prevention of bad are: {Those who disbelieved amongst the Children of Israel were cursed by the tongues of David and Jesus, son of Mary, because they disobeyed and persisted in sin. They did not refrain one another from the wrongdoing that they did} (Q. 5:78-79); {If two groups of believers fight one another, seek reconciliation between the two of them. However, if one of them oppresses the other, then fight against the oppressive one until they return to the command of Allah. If it [i.e. the oppressive group] returns, reconcile them in justice and act just with them} (Q. 49:9).

## The Hereafter

### Concerning the Promise and Threat (*al-Wa'd wa al-Wa'id*)

If it is said: What do you mean by “the Promise and Threat”?

Say: Allah makes it clear that it is necessary that the believers be rewarded when they die with true belief on the straight path. Consequently, they will enter Paradise. {They will not be touched by weariness therein nor will they be removed from there} (Q. 15:48). {They shall abide therein forever}.

Allah makes it clear by authenticating what He promises by the vastness of Paradise, as well as the blessedness of its dwellings; the recline of its bedding; the deliciousness and delectability of its foods; the abundance of its fruits that will never end or be prohibited; the sweetness of its rivers that will never be defiled, spoil, change, or become brackish; its beautiful, pure, and resplendent spouses. What we mention is made clear by Allah, the Exalted, in His Blessed Book. {Falsehood cannot enter from the front of it or behind it. It is a revelation from a Wise and Praiseworthy One} (Q. 41:42).

Allah makes it clear that it is necessary that the unbelievers be punished in Hell with a tremendous punishment. They will drink putrid liquids (*al-hamīm*); eat from the accursed tree of Zaqqūm; abide therein forever; wear clothes of fire and garments of tar; Allah will burn their skins and it will be replaced by new skins; and they will suffer other punishments. All of this is known from the necessary knowledge of the religion.

### Concerning the People of Major Sins

If it is said: What do you mean by the “people of major sins”; people of disbelief”?

Say: They are designated as the following: profligates, criminals, despots, and wrongdoers. The consensus of the Community agrees with this designation. They are not designated as disbelievers under any circumstances, nor are they believers. There is no proof for that.<sup>48</sup>

Allah makes it clear that if they die while persisting in the major sins, they will enter the fires of Hell. They will abide therein forever. They will not be removed from one state to another. The Exalted says: {Verily, the criminals shall eternally abide in the punishment of Hell} (Q. 43:74). The defiant disobedient person’s acts of disobedience are similar to the disbeliever’s acts of disobedience. Consequently, what happens to one should happen to the other; the only distinction being guidance. The Exalted says: {And those who do not invoke other gods with Allah; kill the soul that Allah has forbidden, except by right; and commit fornication. Whoever does such shall meet a punishment. The punishment shall be multiplied for him on the Day of Resurrection and he shall eternally abide therein, utterly debased} (Q. 25:68-69).<sup>49</sup> There is consensus of the Descendants concerning this. Their consensus is a proof.

### Concerning the Characteristics of the Believer and What is His Obligatory Right

If it is said: Who is the believer and what is his obligatory right?

Say: The believer is the one who performs the obligations and avoids the obscenities; or similarly. If this is the case, then this person is a believer, Muslim, blameless, upright, saintly, and righteous. This is agreed upon.<sup>50</sup> Therefore, it is obligatory to honor, esteem, regard, assist, protect, and love him. It is prohibited to have enmity for, hate, engage in tale-bearing or backbite him. This is agreed upon also. It is guaranteed that

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<sup>48</sup> True believers are differentiated from disobedient {Is the one who believes like the one who is disobedient (*fāsiq*)? They are not the same} (Q. 32:18).

<sup>49</sup> Other verses used to prove the eternity of the punishment of the major sinners include: {But whoever deliberately kills another believer, his payment shall be hell, to abide therein forever. Allah’s anger and curse are be upon him, and He has prepared for him a great punishment} (Q. 4:93); {But as for those who return to it [i.e. usury]—they are companions of the Fire, therein to abide forever!} (Q. 2:275); {Whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger and exceed the limits [i.e. laws of inheritance mentioned in previous verses]—He will place him into the Fire, therein to abide forever! He will have a contemptible punishment} (Q. 4:14); and {They say: “The Fire shall not touch us except for a few days.” Say: “Have you taken a covenant from Allah, for He never breaks His promises? Do you say that about Allah which you have no knowledge of? Indeed; whoever earns evil and his sin has engulfed him—they are the companions of the Fire, therein to abide forever!} (Q. 2:80-81).

<sup>50</sup> True believers are defined in the Qur’ān as: {The believers are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, their hearts tremble. When His verses are recited to them, it increases them in faith and they rely upon their Lord; those who establish the prayer and spend from what We have provided for them. It is those who are really believers} (Q. 8:2-4).

we love for him for what we love for ourselves and hate for him what we hate for ourselves. This is mentioned in the *sunnah*.<sup>51</sup>

#### Concerning the Characteristics of the Disbeliever (*Kāfir*)

If it is said: Who is the disbeliever?

Say: The one who does not take into account that there is a Creator or one who does not take into account anything from His Divine Attributes that distinguishes Him from others: He is Omnipotent in His Essence, Omniscient in His Essence, Ever-Living in His Essence, as well as all of the Divine Attributes that we mentioned previously. The one who denies, doubts, or blindly accepts (*qallad*) anything from that is a disbeliever. Likewise, whoever believes that He is in a place outside of a place (*fi makān dūn makān*) is a disbeliever. Whoever believes that He is everywhere (*fi kulli makān*) is a disbeliever. Also, the one who has doubts about it is a disbeliever. The one who believes that He has partners, He commits acts of disobedience, or that He desires disobedience is a disbeliever. Likewise the one who has doubts concerning this is a disbeliever. The one who denies the Messenger of Allah as well as confusingly disagrees with any of the necessary knowledge of the religion is a disbeliever. Likewise the one who has doubts about this is a disbeliever by consensus. It is permissible to designate him as: tyrant, profligate, despot, renegade, criminal, wrongdoer, sinner, or brute. All of these names are derived from one's actions and there is no disagreement concerning this.

Whoever outwardly displays belief but hides disbelief can be designated as a hypocrite, by consensus. The one who is in this state (that is, other than a hypocrite) is permissible to fight, kill, and confine him; as well as seize his money. His actions are deficient as we mentioned in relation to the right that we owe a believer. We mentioned this in detail in *Thamarāt al-Afkār fī-Ahkām al-Kufār*.

#### Concerning the Characteristics of the Disobedient (*Fāsiq*)

If it is said: Who is the disobedient and what is his ruling?

We say: Regarding the disobedient, he is one who persists in the major sins. This includes the fornicator; the alcohol-drinker; the one who flees from the Muslim army other than as a war strategy or to deflect the other side; the one who avoids *jihād* after it has been made obligatory on him; the one who avoids prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, along with the other obligations outside of those which are impossible to do because of ability or fear; and the thief who steals more than ten *dirhams* that were secure and over what he needed. These are some of the major sins. It is permissible to designate the one who does these things with the names previously mentioned in the section on the disbelievers. The exception being that one does not designate them as “disbeliever” or “hypocrite”. It is agreed upon that it is permissible to designate him with other names other than these two. Regarding the hypocrite, it is necessary from proof that one proves this without fail.

Regarding the term “disbeliever”, many scholars prohibit this. The ones that permit it, do so with caution. They say: “He is an ingrate (*kāfir ni'ma*).” This is authentic because it is narrated on the authority of ‘Ali (as) as well as the consensus of the Descendants. It is with conformity with the Book.

Regarding his ruling, it is the same as what we mentioned concerning the disbeliever except for fighting, killing, and seizing his money. It is not permissible except to extract rights. Similarly, it is not permissible to kill him under any circumstances. This also applies to confining him. It is not permissible at any time.

#### Concerning the Difference Between Allah's Actions and the Slave's Actions

If it is said: What is the difference between Allah's actions and that of the slave?

Say: The actions of Allah are quintessence, accidents, and a body. Human actions will always fall short of His actions. It is guaranteed that the slave's actions will come to a stop despite their intentions. They may

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<sup>51</sup> Ibn Mājah and at-Tabarāni related on the authority of Ali (as) that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((Belief is a gnosis with the heart, a statement with the tongue, and an action by the pillars)). Al-Bukhāri, Muslim, Ahmed, an-Nisā'i, and Ibn Mājah relate on the authority of Abu Hurayra that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((The fornicator is not a believer while he is fornicating. The one who drinks alcohol is not a believer while he drinks. A thief is not a believer while he steals...)).



choose to accomplish something or not; regardless it is his action. If this is not the case, then it is not His action.

### Concerning the Necessity of Death and Annihilation

Then say: O righteous student, Allah makes clear that death and annihilation is necessary. After which is the granting of reward and punishment, the blowing of the Trumpet,<sup>52</sup> compression of the graves,<sup>53</sup> the Earthly Gathering (*al-Hashr*),<sup>54</sup> the witnessing of one's actions without false testimony,<sup>55</sup> the placing of the Scales,<sup>56</sup> the taking of the books with the right or left hands,<sup>57</sup> the Resurrection,<sup>58</sup> the Questioning,<sup>59</sup> and them being separated for Paradise<sup>60</sup> or Hellfire.<sup>61</sup> All of such is from the necessary knowledge of the religion. It is necessary that there be a division between the oppressed and wrongdoer. This is the proof of justice with certainty.

### Concerning the Intercession

If it is said: What do you say about the Intercession?

Say: Allah makes it clear that it will be established on the Day of Reckoning. It is a distinction that the believers have. It will not be for those criminals who persisted in the major sins. They [i.e. the believers] will be increased in all blessedness to utmost blessedness and from delight to the utmost delight. Whoever will have his past deeds displayed and his good deeds equals that of his bad deeds, the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, will intercede for him that he be raised in degrees over that of the child and insane. Regarding that, we say that it is necessarily established by the Exalted's statement: {Perhaps your Lord will raise you to a Praiseworthy Station (*maqām mahmūd*)} (Q. 17:79). It is said: This means the Intercession.<sup>62</sup> He, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((Whoever belies my Intercession will not be granted it on the Day of Judgment)).

Regarding what we said regarding it, the Exalted says: {For the wrongdoers there shall be no friend or intercessor obeyed} (Q. 40:18) and {For the wrongdoer there shall be no helper} (Q. 2: 270). The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said: ((My intercession is not for the people of

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<sup>52</sup> The textual proofs for the blowing of the Horn include: {And the Day that the Horn will be blown, and whoever is in the heavens and earth will be in fear except those whom Allah wills. Then, all will come to Him humbled} (Q. 27:87); {The Horn will be blown, and, all of a sudden, and they will hasten to Him from their graves} (Q. 36:51).

<sup>53</sup> Although compression of the grave is not specifically mentioned in the Qur'ān, it is mentioned in the *hadīth*. For example, it is narrated that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, stood over two tombs. He said: ((Verily there are two people being tortured with a severe punishment: The first one is the person who failed to free himself of urine. The second one is the person constantly engaged in tale-bearing (*namīma*)). Some reports specifically mention the grave squeezing the person until his ribs interlocked.

<sup>54</sup> One of the textual proofs for the Gathering is: {We shall gather them together and we will not miss even one of them} (Q. 18:47).

<sup>55</sup> One of the textual proofs for the testimony of the limbs is: {On that day, We will seal their mouths, and their hands will speak to Us, and their feet will testify about what they earned} (Q. 36:65).

<sup>56</sup> One of the textual proofs for the Scales is: {The weighing on that day will be precise. So those whose scales are heavy—it is they who will be successful. Those whose scales are light will lose themselves for their injustice towards our verses} (Q. 7:8-9).

<sup>57</sup> One of the textual proofs for the Giving of the books is: {As for the one who is given his book in his right hand, he will say: "Read my book. Indeed, I was sure that I would be accountable...As for the one who is given his book in his left hand, he will say: "Woe is me! I wish that I had not been given my book! I wish I had not known my account!"} (Q. 69:19-20; 25-26).

<sup>58</sup> One of the textual proofs for the Resurrection is: {Only those who listen will respond. But the dead—Allah will resurrect them. To Him will they be returned} (Q. 6:36).

<sup>59</sup> One of the textual proofs for the Questioning is: {Allah establishes them with an established statement in this world and the Hereafter} (Q. 14:27). The exegetes have agreed that this refers to the questioning of the grave.

<sup>60</sup> One of the textual proofs for Paradise is: {And give the good news to those who believe and do good deeds that they will have gardens under which rivers flow...} (Q. 2:25).

<sup>61</sup> One of the textual proofs for the Hellfire is: {Indeed those who disbelieve in our verses—We will drive them into the Fire} (Q. 4:56).

<sup>62</sup> Among the narrations that support this interpretation: Al-Bukhārī, at-Tabarī, and Ibn Mardawayh relate on the authority of Ibn Umar who said: "People will be made to gather on the Day of Judgment until every community will be preceded by its prophet. They will say: 'So-n-so, intercede for us.' This will take place until Intercession will be granted to the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny. On that day, Allah will grant him the Praiseworthy Station." Ahmed, at-Tirmidhi, Ibn Abi Hātim, Ibn Mardawayh, al-Bayhaqi, and at-Tabarī relate on the authority of Abi Hurayra that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, said regarding the verse: {Perhaps your Lord will raise you to a Praiseworthy Station}: ((It is the Station in which I intercede for my community)). At-Tabarī and al-Bayhaqi related on the authority of Abu Hurayra that the Messenger of Allah said: ((The "Praiseworthy Station" is Intercession)).

major sins from my community)).<sup>63</sup> The Exalted also says: {They cannot intercede for one unless He is pleased with him} (Q. 21:28). All of this proves what we said.

That which we mentioned is recalled by the upright. That which we touch upon is seeking reward of the Lord of the Worlds. Our Lord, do not allow us to go astray after we have been guided. Grant us Your Mercy for You are the Generous Provider. O Allah, may You bless Muhammad and grant him peace. He is Your representative and the seal of Your Prophets. May Your blessings be upon his progeny, the Arks of Salvation, Amen. Make us amongst the Muslims. Amen, O Allah, Amen.

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<sup>63</sup> It is said that this *hadīth* is narrated on the authority of al-Hassan al-Basri. I was not able to find this *hadīth* in any Sunni collection of *hadīth*. I found the opposite: ((My intercession is for the people of major sins from my community)). Opponents of the doctrine of “the intercession for major sinners” reply to this in various ways. I quote from the author of *Jawaab ar-Raaqi*:

Regarding what has come to us regarding the intercession for those that commit the major sins, it has been argued that a narration says: ((My intercession is for the people of major sins from my *ummah*.) This can be answered from the following points:

**First:** This counters the Qur’ān and intellectual proofs. Whenever something counters the Qur’ān, then something attributed to him [i.e. the Prophet] is false and therefore, a lie. Consequently, the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, does not say anything contrary to the words of Allah. How can he when Allah says concerning him: {He does not speak out of his own caprice; rather, he speaks words that are inspired} (Q. 53:3-4)?

**Second:** We say that the “people of major sins” in this *hadīth* refer to those who repent. It shows the invalidity of this doctrine that Muslims are unanimous that a supplication to Allah to make us from among the people of Intercession is considered a recommended act. It is necessary from this that if we supplicate to Allah to make us from among the people of indecencies, thievery, murder, forsaking the prayer, withholding the charity (*zakāt*), and not fasting during Ramadan; this will lead to a doctrine that is repulsive and abominable.