Stages of Spiritual Growth is an English translation of the original Arabic text of *Kitāb al-Insān* (published in Beirut in 1989), a mystico-theological treatment of the realm of command (i.e., the non-spatial and atemporal world of angels and human spirits, the life of man in this world, and the human existence after this world.

SAYYID MUḤAMMD ḤUSAYN TABĀTABĀʾĪ (1904–1981) was a philosopher, an exegete, and a mystic who left his indelible mark on Muslim scholarship in the twentieth century. As a superb teacher of Islamic sciences, he trained many important scholars and authored the renowned twenty-volume Qurʾanic commentary *al-Mizān fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān* as well as several groundbreaking works on Islamic philosophy and mysticism. Additionally, he wrote numerous books on Shiʿa history and doctrine to bring about a better understanding of Shiʿism throughout the world.

Contemporary Thoughts Press

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Stages of Spiritual Growth

Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabataba'i

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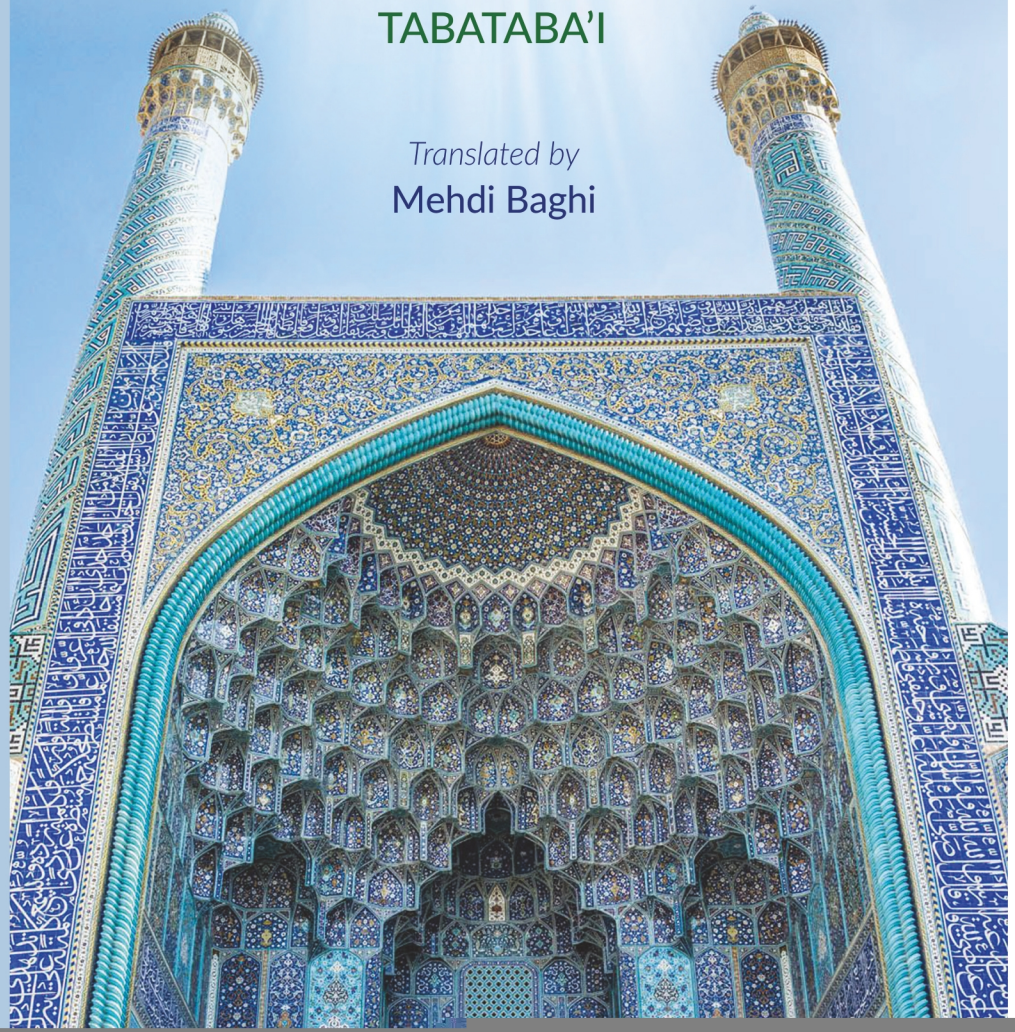
(KITĀB AL-INSĀN)

Sayyid Muhammad Husayn
TABATABA'I

Translated by
Mehdi Baghi



STAGES OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

STAGES OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

(Kitāb al-Insān)

by

Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabāʾī

translated and annotated by
Mehdi Baghi

Contemporary Thoughts Press

BRITISH LIBRARY CATALOGUING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN: 978-1-914282-01-0 (pbk)

© Contemporary Thoughts Press, 2021

This edition first published in Great Britain in 2021.

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Production services by Advent Publishing Services, Leeds.

Printed in Turkey.
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Contemporary Thoughts Press
71 Kendal Road, London NW10 1JE
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www.contemporarythoughtspress.com

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PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabāʾī (d. 1981) is one of the most distinguished Muslim scholars of recent times. Known by the epithet ʿAllāma' – which is a title used to denote a person who has a profound understanding of many fields of knowledge – he is remembered especially for his voluminous commentary on the Holy Qurʾān, *al-Mīzān fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān*. This present book is a translation of the *Kitāb al-Insān* of the ʿAllāma, a mystical and theological work in which a concise exposition of the stages of human creation is presented in three parts.

In Part 1, Man before the World, three realms of existence are discussed: matter, imaginal form (*mithāl*), and intellect. The existence of the realm of command (*ʿālam al-amr*) and the non-spatial and atemporal world of angels and human spirits are also discussed.

In Part 2, Man in the World, real entities and mentally posited entities are distinguished and a brief discussion on universal guidance is also elucidated.

In Part 3, Man after the World, which comprises the bulk of the book, ʿAllāma Ṭabāṭabāʾī discusses in detail the human existence after this world and what is in store for a person after death. The Day of Resurrection, the Day of Recompense (*yawm al-jazāʾ*), intercession (*shafāʿa*), purgatory (*aʿrāf*), paradise, and hell all receive attention. The last chapter of Part 3 is devoted to remarks on the universality of resurrection. The topics treated in this third part relate to the philosophy of the creation of man, the modality of creation, the different modes of life in this world and the next world, the stages of human creation, the grave, purgatory, and a person's 'book of deeds'.

Throughout his work our erudite author makes references to the Qur'ān and other reliable sources of Islamic beliefs.

I would like to express my appreciation of Dr Mehdi Baghi who translated from the Arabic original and who annotated his translation. Also, my thanks goes to Dr Amir Dastmalchian for his helpful comments and for his assistance with preparing the translated manuscript for publication.

SEYED HASHEM MOUSAVI
Director of the Contemporary Thoughts Press
July 2021

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Stages of Spiritual Growth is an English translation of the original Arabic text of *Kitāb al-Insān* (published in Beirut in 1989), a mystico-theological treatment of the realm of command (i.e., the non-spatial and atemporal world of angels and human spirits, the life of man in this world, and the human existence after this world. The author, Sayyid Muḥammd Ḥusayn Tabātabāʾī (1903–1981) was a most distinguished and prolific scholar who is mainly known for his voluminous commentary on the Holy Qurʾān, the complete and readable English translation of which is yet to be completed.

Although the author has provided details for some of the references he cites in many places I have provided extra detail. I have also added a number of annotations in order to clarify some of the ambiguities in the text. The present translator assumes full responsibility for all the errors and mistakes in rendering the original Arabic text into English and adding to the footnotes. This English translation is but an initial step towards introducing a treasure trove of Islamic theology and mysticism to English readers.

The translator appreciates the efforts of Dr. Amir Dastmalchian who has made an admirable layout of the book and provided invaluable comments. A note of appreciation is also owed to Dr. Mortaza Rezaeezadeh who kindly considered it for publication and most diligently supervised the process.

MEHDI BAGHI
1 May 2021

ABBREVIATIONS

AS

ʿalayhi al-salām
peace be upon him

ʿalayhā al-salām
peace be upon her

ʿalayhumā al-salām
peace be upon them (dual)

ʿalayhum al-salām
peace be upon them (masc., plural)

SAW

ṣall allāhu ʿalayhi wa ālih
blessings of God be upon him and his descendents

Part One

MAN BEFORE THE WORLD

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

All praise belongs to God, the Lord of the worlds. Blessed are His near-stationed friends, in particular Muḥammad (SAW) and his pure household (AS).

This is the treatise of *Man before the World*, in which we will discuss what happened to man before his Fall and coming into life in this world, as dispensed by the omniscient and omnipotent God, and as deduced by demonstrations and as understood from the exoteric aspects of the Book and the *Sunna*. God is the Helper.

1

CAUSE AND EFFECT

It is demonstrably proved in metaphysics that causality is produced by a cause leading to existence as well as essence (*kamālāt al-awwaliyya*, i.e., *jawhar*) and accidents (sg. *ʿaraḍ*, pl. *aʿrāḍ*). This is the product of descents (*tanazzulāt*)[1] of cause unaffected by imperfections (*nawāqiṣ*) and modes of inexistence (*jahāt al-ʿadamiyya*).[2]

Similarly, the world of matter is existentially preceded by another world which is immaterial, even though it is mingled with the properties (*aḥkām*) of matter. Preceded by another world, the immaterial world serves as the cause of the world of matter and it is unaffected by matter and its properties. It is, in fact, the cause which originates the cause of the world of matter. These two worlds are termed the imaginal world (*ʿālam al-mithāl*)[3] and the intelligible world (*ʿālam al-ʿaql*)[4] – the latter is also termed the intermediate world (*ʿālam al-barzakh*)[5] or the spiritual world (*ʿālam al-rūḥ*).[6]

Thus, man, with his essential properties, attributes, and acts, in their entirety, exists in the imaginal world and is divested of the actualization of his vices, vicious acts, concomitants of imperfection (*lawāzim al-nāqiṣa*), and modes of inexistence.[7]

Man in the imaginal world thus leads the most felicitous and the most delightful life among the pure and holy angels. There he is delighted to see the light of his Lord, the luminosity of

his essence, and resplendence of his horizon, and rejoices the company of the righteous and conversation with the elect. It is in the imaginal world that he is neither touched by discomfort and anguish, nor is he affected by imperfections and defects, nor is there any impediment between him and what he desires, nor is he disturbed by pain or exhaustion. It is in that world that he is free from imperfections and defects and enjoys the fulfilment of his desires and intentions.[8]

NOTES

[1] i.e., individuations.

[2] Mode (sg. *jaha*, pl. *jahāt*) is a term that denotes the manner of relation (*nisba*) between the predicate (*maḥmūl*) and the subject (*mawḍūʿ*), i.e., necessity (*ḍarūra*), impossibility (*imtināʿ*), and possibility (*imkān*). In other words, the relation between a predicate and its subject in the real world, unaffected by our judgement, has some quality (*kayfiyya*) of necessity (necessity of existence or inexistence) or lack of necessity or possibility. Such real qualities are termed material of the proposition (*māddat al-qaḍiyya*). The term that signifies that real quality is mode (*jaha*). When the veracity of a proposition is intended by the mode of a proposition (e.g., in demonstration or *burhān*), it needs to correspond to the quality of relation in the external or objective world. A proposition without mode is termed absolute proposition (*qaḍiyyat al-muṭlaqa*), as opposed to existential proposition (*qaḍiyyat wujūdiyya*).

[3] That is the second individuation (*taʿayyun*) of creation. The imaginal world is between the intelligible world and the material world. In other words, it is incorporeal and above the material world; even though it has forms, shape, size, and colour. It is below the intelligible world. Since the intermediate world (*barzakh*) is between the intelligible world and the material world, its abstraction is termed intermediate imaginal abstraction.

[4] The first stage of individuation of creation, further divided into two minor stages: world of intelligences (*jabarūt*) and spiritual world (*malakūt*).

[5] The intermediate world lying between corporeal beings (*māddiyyāt*) and abstract entities (*mujarradāt*).

[6] Existence of these three worlds is also demonstrable through knowing the self and its stages, see the author's *al-Rasāʾil al-Tawḥīdiyya*, pp. 101–104.

[7] With respect to a cause, an effect may not be independently existent, in that existence of an effect is identical with need for cause. In other words, need is essential to the effect. Had an effect been essentially needless of a cause, it

would have been essentially needless and independent of a cause and it would not correspond to causality and the attribute of some entity, rather than the entity *per se*, would have been the effect. Accordingly, an effect is the link (*ʿayn al-rabṭ*) to the cause and it may be best termed 'manifestation' (*tajallī*), in that an effect is the manifestation of its cause and it is not in the least separable from it.

An effect is not independently existent, but it is a stage of the existence of the cause. For instance, causality or the link between a cause and an effect is the relation between the soul and the forms dependent on it. Our conceptions or imaginations are inexistent in the objective or external world, but they are forms of the manifestation of our soul, in that it is the soul that has manifested, at some stage, itself in such forms. Such forms are not existent independently of the soul, but they are in need of and dependent on the soul.

Nevertheless, such illustration is but for understanding the point as the need, as discussed in causality, is the link, the manifestation, and the like. It thus becomes evident that an effect is termed as descent (*tanazzul*) and individuation (*taʿayyun*) of a cause. This question will be understood but through direct and intuitive understanding of the soul and its stages.

[8] It is to be noted that any corporeal being is preceded by some being in the imaginal world and that being, in turn, is preceded by a more perfect being in the intelligible world. Man is a being whose existence extends in the three worlds of being, i.e., the corporeal, imaginal, and intelligible worlds; as a result, man may be quite weak in the intelligible or imaginal worlds, similar to a newly born child or the majority of people in terms of intellect. The majority of our thoughts and reflections are thus said to be, in philosophical terms, of an imaginative rather than intellectual nature. The imaginal world of man, with respect to his outward body is his inward aspect and the intelligible world, with respect to his imaginal world, is his inward aspect. Man thus has outward and inward aspects and his inward aspect has another inward aspect as well. All these stages are constituents of human ipseity and self not things outside him.

A question arises here: how may such being that extends in these worlds be subject to the said principle? The author may intend to argue that in his onset of existence, man, that is the particular soul termed 'I', is endowed with weak imaginal and intelligible stages and has thus acquired the necessity of his ipseity from a more perfect and stronger stage of the imaginal and intelligible worlds, in that the particular soul is a manifestation of a more perfect being in the said two worlds that serves as the soul's place of return in Resurrection in its different stages. Accordingly, prior to such manifestation or individuation man was in another world in which he was endowed with a more perfect being, free from the imperfections arising from causality.

2

BETWEEN THE CREATION AND THE COMMAND

The above arguments are substantiated by the outward aspects of the Book and the *Sunna*. God Almighty says: *Look! All creation and command belong to Him. Blessed is God, the Lord of all the worlds* (7:54). A distinction is divinely made between creation and command which indicates that creation is different from command in some respect, and command is not restricted to the effects (*āthār*) of the haecceities (*aʿyān*)[1] of beings.

It may be thus inferred that creation consists of the haecceities of beings and command is their effects,[2] since in the blessed verse: *Say, 'The spirit is the command of my Lord'* (17:85), spirit, one of the haecceities of beings, is divinely collocated with 'command'; similarly, it is reflected in the blessed verse: *All His command, when He wills something, is to say to it 'Be' and it is* (36:82) that the divine command is the existentiating command of 'Be!', irrespective of its being a haecceity or an effect of a haecceity, and since the existence of a being is the being *per se*, it is proved that there exists some divine command in any being.

Gradual creation is reflected in verses like: *Indeed, We created them from viscous clay* (37:11). *Indeed, We created man from the drop of a mixed fluid* (76:2). Nevertheless, the gradualness (*tadrīj*) of the command is attested in verses like:

> And Our command is but a single [word], like the twinkling of an eye. (54:50)

> Your creation and your Resurrection are not but as of a single soul. (31:28)[3]

> The matter of the Hour is just like the twinkling of an eye. (16:77)

It is clearly reflected in these verses that 'command', unlike 'creation', is not gradual, even though 'creation', at times, implies 'command' as well.

In short, what is existentiated gradually, that is all corporeal beings and their effects, have two modes in their divinely emanated existence: the mode of non-gradual (*ghayr tadrījī*) command and the mode of gradual creation. This is intended by the term 'creation', that is, union following separation (*jamᶜ baᶜda tafriqa*).

Precedence of command over creation, posteriority of creation to command, and creation arising from command are reflected in the blessed verse: *All His command, when He wills something, is to say to it 'Be!' and it is* (36:82). The same theme is attested in the blessed verses: *Rather they are [His] honoured servants. They do not venture to speak ahead of Him, and they act by His command* (21:26–27). The last verse implies that that angels, as the intermediaries (*mutawassiṭūn*) of the beings originated temporally and spatially (*ḥawādith*), act upon command.

It is understood from the above statements that there exists above the world of bodies, in which lies the gradual system, another world which encompasses a system of non-gradual, that is, atemporal (timeless), beings. Any temporal being in the system of gradualness depends on and arises from the beings in the world of command and arises from the circumstances (*maẓrūfāt*) of the system of gradualness. In other words, beings of the world of command coexist with and comprehend those of the system of

gradualness. This theme is attested in a number of verses which will be mentioned below.

Divine dispensation (*tadbīr*)[4] lies in issuing a command followed by another, a command which is issued from the Throne; then, it descends from a heaven (*samāʾ*) on another, and a command specific to a heaven descends on it. The command is the divine word, which He sends down[5] on something to which He reveals it. The command thus descends from a heaven on another until it reaches the earth from which it commences its ascent (*ʿurūj*). This theme is reflected in the following verses:

> And then [He] settled on the Throne, directing the command. (10:3)

> Then, He settled on the Throne. You do not have besides Him any guardian or intercessor. Will you not then take admonition? He directs the command from the heaven to the earth; then it ascends toward Him. (32:4–5)

> It is God who has created seven heavens, and of the earth [a number] similar to them. The command gradually descends through them. (65:12)

> Then, He turned to the heaven. (2:29; 41:11)

> Then, He set them up as seven heavens in two days, and revealed in each heaven its command. (41:12)

These verses further demonstrate that in its descent the command is hierarchical, as mention is divinely made of the descent of the command between heavens requiring some relation between descent and any of the heavens; further, the command is descended from the highest heaven to the lowest one until it comes to the last heaven following which it will descend on the

earth.[6] This theme is reflected in the blessed verse: *He directs the command from the heaven to the earth* (32:5).

Thus is the state of command following its measuring by precise measures and its delimitation by restrictions and limitations; as reflected in the verse *and God's commands are ordained by a precise ordaining* (33:38). Such command is neither restricted nor ordained, as attested in the verse *There is not a thing but that its sources are with Us, and We do not send it down except in a known measure* (15:21).

In other words, there is some source for anything with God Almighty from which descent is made but in a known measure. The relation between descent and measured ordainment demonstrates that the sources (*khazāʾin*) of all things with God Almighty are unrestricted and unmeasured and they belong to the pre-creation world of command. As multiplicity is divinely expressed by the plural form 'sources', the members of those sources are different in terms of intensity (*shadda*) and weakness (*ḍaʿf*) of existence,[7] in that such differences are hierarchical rather than individually distinct through the properties of different members of a species (*nawʿ*); otherwise there would be delimitation and measurement.[8] Nevertheless, it was mentioned in the above verse that there exists no measurement prior to descent.[9]

This kind of unrestricted being, originated by command, is thus hierarchical and command from these sources is not descended through separateness (*tajāfī*) and separation (*takhliya*) from a prior place through descending to a subsequent one. This theme is attested in the verse: *That which is with you will be spent but what is with God shall last* (16:96). Further, since these beings are not restricted by any limits, they, despite their multiplicity, are existentiated through one being and comprehend all the perfections of their world. They are unaffected by the inexistence and imperfections necessitated by the world of matter and contingency (*imkān*), that is, restriction and privation.

The Command descends from one degree to another until it

comes to the world of bodies and in all its degrees it encompasses all perfections and is untouched by imperfections. Comprehending those perfections in any stage is commensurate with that stage in terms of the intensity of being. There exists neither veil nor concealment,[10] but the rays of the universal are shed from the universal on the universal and they are reflected from the universal on the universal. Those are pure rays of light by which the spirit (*rūḥ*), that is from the world of command, is divinely characterized by the attributes of purity and holiness. This is reflected in these verses:

> …And confirmed him with the Holy Spirit. (2:87, 253)

> Say, the Holy Spirit has brought it down. (16:102)

We proclaim Your sanctity in the blessed verse *When your Lord said to the angels, 'Indeed, I am going to set a viceroy on the earth,' they said, 'Will You set in it someone who will cause corruption in it, and shed blood, while we celebrate Your praise and proclaim Your sanctity?'* (2:30) implies that the angels make manifest His sanctity and purity from imperfections through their essences and acts since their essences and acts are dependent on His command.

The two stages are being alluded to in these verses: *Rather they are [His] honoured servants. They do not venture to speak ahead of Him, and they act by His command* (21:26–27). The second verse (*They do not venture…*) is subsumed (*farʿ*) by the preceding verse and it may be stated that it implies essential veneration (*ikrām dhātī*) for them.[11]

The point of significance is that *they act by His command* implies that the acts of these *honoured servants* correspond to command rather than creation, since their being divinely honoured lies but in this respect, as any act performed by any agent is ordained by some divine command. This theme is attested in these verses:

> That is God, your Lord, the creator of all things. (40:62)
>
> All His command, when He wills something, is to say to it 'Be,' and it is. (36:82)

The angels are here specified by saying that their acts are dependent on divine command and that their acts and their essences correspond to command.[12]

This theme is attested in other verses, like:

> Say, 'Everyone acts according to his character.' (17:84)
>
> …As We began the first creation. (21:104)
>
> …The good land its vegetation comes out by the permission of its Lord, and as for that which is bad, it does not come out except sparsely. (7:58)

In addressing God Almighty by saying: *Will You set in it someone who will cause corruption in it…* (2:30) the angels relied but on the divine saying: *Indeed, I am going to set a viceroy on the earth* (2:30) to claim that man would commit sins; whereas viceroyship (*khilāfa*), in the sense of deputyship (*niyāba*), requires that the viceroy be in possession of the sacred and admirable divine attributes. It would be thus inappropriate to say *while we celebrate Your praise and proclaim Your sanctity?'* (2:30).

Accordingly, the angles relied but on the divine word *I am going to set…* (2:30), whereby they learned that the viceroy's acts would be affected by his life on the earth and that his essence would be affected by the impurities of the world and the darkness of the earth. Having thus established some relation between this alteration in essence and character and the viceroy, they said: *someone who will cause corruption in it, and shed blood* (2:30). This is the name (*ism*)[13] collocated with their claim, *while we celebrate*

Your praise and proclaim Your sanctity. As a result, it is implied here that the angels are pure and holy in their names or essences[14] in terms of attributes (*waṣf*).

Let us return to our topic of discussion. In short, the world of command is the world of holiness and purity, and its being termed as command arises from the fact that in terms of its existence it needs but the word 'be'; that is, 'word' is divinely intended by it 'command', as attested in the verse: *and His Word that He cast toward Mary and a spirit from Him* (4:171).

Further, 'word' also implies 'inevitable decree' (*qaḍāʾ al-maḥtūm*), as it is intended in verses like the following:

> That is how the word of your Lord became due concerning the faithless, that they shall be inmates of the Fire. (40:6)

> Certainly, Our decree has gone beforehand in favour of Our servants, the apostles, that they will indeed receive [God's] help, and indeed Our hosts will be the victors. (37:171–173)

'Decree' is from the world of command, as it is referred to in many verses by command, instances of which include:

> God's edict is coming! (16:1)

> …And God's command is bound to be fulfilled. (4:47; 33:37)

> God has [full] command of His affairs. (12:21)

It is said in the blessed verse *there is no altering [in] the words of God* (10:64), as 'altering' (*tabdīl*) is a concomitant of accepting change (*qabūl al-taghayyur*). Alteration is one of the separable attributes (*lawāzim*) of matter and potentiality (*quwwa*), and the world of command, as it is known, is beyond them. This theme is attested in these verses:

> Say, 'If the sea were ink for the words of my Lord, the sea would be spent before the words of my Lord are spent, though We brought another like it for replenishment.' (18:109)
>
> If all the trees on the earth were pens, and the sea replenished with seven more seas [were ink], the words of God would not be spent. (31:27)[15]

The world of command is thus composed of numerous hierarchical worlds, some of which encompass unrestricted beings that, except for their being the effects of God Almighty, are neither bound by limitation (*taḥdīd*) nor by preordainment (*taqdīr*). They are pure, luminous, transcendental, permanent, flawless, intransient, and unrestricted. Some of these worlds encompass luminous, pure, flawless, but limited, beings.

All the beings of the world of command are endowed with all the perfections of this modality of being (*nashʾa*) and its excellences are most perfect, unadulterated by the flaws of corporeity and its concomitant inexistence, impurities, and pains. There exists no veil between them and God Almighty. They are endowed with all these excellences according to their existence and the hierarchies of their essences.

It is thus reflected in the verse: *They question you concerning the Spirit. Say, 'The Spirit is of the command of my Lord, and you have not been given the knowledge except a few [of you]'* (17:85). The reality of spirit is expressed in the blessed verse: *Say, 'The Spirit is of the command of my Lord'* and it does not evade the question in expressing the reality.[16] The spirit is divinely termed as a being of command rather than one of creation. This theme is also reflected in the verse: *Then, We produced him as [yet] another creature. So blessed is God, the best of creators!* (23:14).

The spirit thus shares qualities, attributes, and modes with beings of the world of command. It is attested in the verse: *So when I have proportioned him and breathed into him of My spirit*

(15:29; 38:72) that spirit is different from body; it abides in this corporeal form by virtue of the divine breath and has descended from its exalted station. It is also reflected in the verse: *We will bring it back as We began the first creation a promise [binding] on Us* (21:104) that this holy bird will before long depart from this dark corporeal form through divine attraction, as it had formerly abided in it through divine breath.

God Almighty says:

> We did not create the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them except with reason and for a specified term… (46:3)

> They say, 'When we have been lost in the dust, shall we be indeed created anew?' (32:10)

It is reflected in these verses that disbelievers and deniers unfoundedly identify them with bodies which decompose and scatter on the earth. In the verses: *Rather they disbelieve in the encounter with their Lord. Say, 'You will be taken away by the angel of death, who has been charged with you. Then you will be brought back to your Lord'* (32:10–11) God Almighty clearly says that it is their spirits that will encounter Him and will be taken away by the Angel of Death. This spirit is referred to as 'you' (*-kum*). What is referred to by man as 'I' (*anā*) is his spirit that is taken away by God following its being divinely breathed into his corporeal form and it is different from body.

It is attested in verses: *From it did We create you, into it shall We return you, and from it shall We bring you forth another time* (20:55) and *He said, 'In it you will live, and in it you will die; and from it you will be raised [from the dead]'* (7:25) that despite the discreteness of spirit and body they are identical with respect to living this worldly life.[17] This theme is attested in a tradition narrated through an uninterrupted transmission chain (*musnadan*) from ʿAbd al-Raḥmān who narrates it from Abū ʿAbd Allah,

Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS), 'Why does man feel that his spirit is being taken away from the body but he may not feel the arrival of the spirit in the body?' He replied, 'Because the body grows through it [i.e., spirit].'[18]

It is attested in verses: *Then, He proportioned him and breathed into him of His Spirit, and made for you the hearing, the sight, and the hearts* (32:9) and *Say, 'It is He who created you, and made for you hearing, eyesight, and hearts'* (67:23) that in union with body and possessing qualification of bodily organs the spirit is most perfectly endowed with the faculties of hearing, sight, reflection, and reason, since these are all physical acts performed by the spirit but through possessing the qualifications of bodily organs. Further, God Almighty has endowed man with the power of controlling the physical realm in the sphere of volition and *He disposed the sun and the moon for him, constant [in their courses], and He disposed the night and the day* (14:33).

It is reflected in *disposed by his command* (7:54; 16:12) that disposing and disposition (*taskhīr wa tadbīr*) of and by command, rather than of and by creation, are intended. Creation encompasses the corporeal world of organs and instruments. God Almighty says *and He gave you all that you had asked Him. If you enumerate God's blessings, you will not be able to count them* (14:34).

The first distinctive feature of spirit and angels is the union of spirit and body. Despite their being of the world of command, spirit is an immaterial being, adorned by real perfections,[19] free from disposition (*istiʿdād*), potentiality (*quwwa*), imperfection, and privations (*ʿadamiyyāt*), divested of temporal and spatial veils, and faring through the hierarchies of command and degrees of light. It is able to descend from its world and come into union with bodies and dispose in all aspects of corporeality, modes of potentiality, and disposition through direct union; in contrast to angels who are existentially restricted to the world of command and are unable to transcend the horizon of imaginal world.

It is reflected in verses *We said, 'Get down from it, all together!*

Yet, should any guidance come to you from Me, those who follow My guidance shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve. But those who are faithless and deny Our signs, they shall be the inmates of the Fire and they shall remain in it forever' (2:38–39) that the descent of spirits on the earth and the world of corporeality make the path branch into the path leading to happiness and the one leading to misery and makes wayfarers fall into two groups: the one dwelling in paradise and the one abiding in hell.

The path to misery, as reflected in the verse: *Have you not regarded those who have changed God's blessing with ingratitude, and landed their people in the house of ruin?* (14:28), in reality leads to ruin and perdition, which will be such wayfarers' final destination after departing from the world of holiness. In contrast, the path to happiness leads to everlasting life.

It is reflected in verses: *that they are in good standing with their Lord* (10:2); *that which is with you will be spent but what is with God shall last* (16:96); *but the abode of the Hereafter is indeed Life* (29:64); *even as He brought you forth in the beginning, so will you return. A part [of mankind] He has guided and a part has deserved [to be consigned to] error* (7:29–30) that both groups return to their original states prior to descent and fall; though the miserable group, following their return, will lead a life in the form of ruin and death, as attested in the verse *then neither live in it, nor die* (87:13).

In contrast, the happy group returns to the happy life which they had enjoyed prior to their descent and fall, as attested in the verse: *We shall revive him with a good life* (16:97).[20] They are rewarded as such because of their deeds which arise from their happy essences. Their reward is increased by divine blessing through which their rewards surpass their deeds. *And God provides for whomever He wishes without any reckoning* (2:212; 3:37; 24:38). The final goal of the spirits' faring and their descent lead to the ruin of some of them in this world and the return of some others to their prior sublime station along with their acquired excellences.

God Almighty says:

> Say, 'God is the creator of all things, and He is the One, the All-paramount.' He sends down water from the sky whereat the valleys are flooded to [the extent of] their capacity, and the flood carries along a swelling scum. And from what they smelt in the fire for the purpose of [making] ornaments or wares, [there arises] a similar scum. That is how God compares the truth and falsehood. As for the scum, it leaves as dross, and that which profits the people remains in the earth. That is how God draws comparisons. (13:16–17)

This is the second distinctive feature of spirit and angels. It is through its descent in this modality of being (*nashʾa*) and abiding in it that the spirit encounters two paths: a path which finally leads to ruin and perdition and another whose final destination is abiding in exalted stations, everlasting paradise, and station of proximity to God. In contrast, angels have only one path to tread – the path of happiness.

The present author has devoted a detailed discussion to this topic in *Treatise of Acts* (*Risālat al-Afʿāl*), in the chapter on Happiness and Unhappiness (*bāb al-saʿāda wa 'l-shaqāwa*), in which it is discussed that branching out of these two paths, that is, those leading to happiness and unhappiness, occurs prior to the corporeal modality of being.[21]

In describing believers God Almighty says: *He has written faith into their hearts and strengthened them with a spirit from Him* (58:22). We thus learn that besides the spirit shared by all mankind there exists another spirit termed as the spirit of belief that is specific to believers. This spirit is termed in another verse as the spirit of God wariness (*taqwā*): *God sent down His composure upon His Apostle and upon the faithful, and made them abide by the word of God wariness* (48:26), exhibiting that this spirit is closely connected to God wariness.

It is narrated in *al-Kāfī*, through an uninterrupted transmission chain from Abū Baṣīr who narrates from Abū ʿAbd Allah, Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (AS), as saying, 'The heart has two ears and when a servant turns towards sin the spirit of belief says to it, 'Do not [sin]!' Satan says to it, 'Do!' When it enters its interior, the spirit of belief departs from it.'[22]

The spirit in question is termed as 'light' in other verses, for example, *O you who have faith! Be wary of God and have faith in His Apostle. He will grant you a double share of His mercy and give you a light to walk by, and forgive you* (57:28).

It is reflected in other verses that there is another spirit specific to apostles (AS) and that light guides others as the spirit of belief is the light whereby human soul (*nafs*) is guided. Such verses include: *He casts the Spirit of His command upon whomever of His servants that He wishes, that he may warn [people] of the Day of Encounter* (40:15); *Thus have We revealed to you the Spirit of Our dispensation. You did not know what the Book is, nor what is faith; but We made it a light that We may guide by its means whomever We wish of Our servants. And indeed you guide to a straight path* (42:52).

'*You did not know*' implies that it is through the knowledge of the Book and the light of belief that the spirit of belief is dominated by this spirit. The difference between these two spirits is thus a matter of existential intensity and weakness rather than individuality. It is implied by *indeed you guide to a straight path* that there is some union (*ittiḥād*) between this spirit and man's spirit and the difference between the two is also owing to intensity and weakness rather than individuality; there is one reality of spirit and the difference arises from intensity and weakness.

The verses *He sends down the angels with the Spirit of His command* (16:2) and *they act by His command* (21:27) indicate that the spirit's station is higher than that of angels and despite their identity, the spirit dominates the angels, as attested in these verses: *Say, 'Whoever is an enemy of Gabriel [should know that] it is he who has brought it down on your heart'* (2:97); *brought down*

by the Trustworthy Spirit upon your heart so that you may be one of the warners (26:193–194); *Say, the Holy Spirit has brought it down* (16:103). Mention is divinely made in these verses to the spirit as well as to Gabriel (AS), implying some identity between the two and it is known that this is different from the union and immanence (*ḥulūl*) beyond which lies the realm of existence.

It is narrated in *Baṣāʾir*, through an uninterrupted transmission chain, from al-Ḥasan ibn Ibrāhīm as saying, 'I asked [Imam] al-Ṣādiq (AS) about the knowledge of the guides.[23] He said, 'There are five spirits in apostles and trustees (*awṣiyāʾ*):[24] sprit of body; the Holy Spirit; spirit of faculty (*quwwa*), spirit of desire (*shahwa*); spirit of belief. There are four spirits in believers (excluding the Holy Spirit): spirit of body; spirit of faculty; spirit of desire; spirit of belief. There are three spirits in disbelievers: spirit of body; spirit of faculty; spirit of desire.' Then, he said, 'The spirit of belief is attached to body that the latter may not commit grave sins and when it commits a grave sin, the spirit leaves it. When the Holy Spirit abides in the body, it never commits grave sins.'[25]

It is narrated in al-ʿAyyāshī's *Tafsīr*, under the verse *They question you concerning the spirit* (17:85), from Imam al-Bāqir (AS) and Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) as saying, 'Indeed, the spirit is a divinely created being, endowed with sight, faculty, and divine inspiration (*taʾyyīd*), that is placed in the hearts of believers and apostles.'[26] The identity of these spirits is reflected in this tradition.[27]

This is affirmed in another tradition narrated by al-ʿAyyāshī under the same verse that one of the Imams (AS) was asked about the spirit. He replied, 'It is in moving creatures (*dawāb*) and mankind.' He was asked, 'What is that?' He said, 'It is from the spiritual world (*malakūt*) and from power (*qudra*).'[28]

It is reported in al-Qummī's *Tafsīr* that Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) was asked about the verse in question. He said, 'It is a creature greater than Gabriel and Michael and this spirit was with the Messenger of God (SAW) and is with the Imams and it is from the spiritual world.'[29]

It is reported from Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) in al-ʿAyyāshī's *Tafsīr*

that the Imam (AS) was asked about spirit. He said, 'It is a creature higher in rank than Gabriel and Michael and it was with but Muḥammad (SAW) and the Imams and provided them with support and guidance. It may not be found by all those seeking it.'[30] It is reflected in this tradition that the spirit rendering support to apostles (AS) is also hierarchical.[31]

Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) is reported in al-Qummī's *Tafsīr* as saying, 'The spirit is greater than Gabriel and Gabriel is higher in rank than [other] angels. The spirit is a creature from among angels. Does not God Almighty say *In it the angels and the Spirit descend* (97:4)?'[32]

Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) is reported as saying in al-Qummī's *Tafsīr* and Imam al-Kāẓim (AS) is quoted as saying in *al-Kāfī*, 'By God! We are those who will be [divinely] granted authority over them on the Day of Resurrection and the ones speaking the truth.' They asked, 'What will you say when you speak?' They said, 'We glorify our Lord. We bless our messenger. We intercede with God on behalf of our followers. Our prayers will not be divinely rejected.'[33] Allusion is made by the Imams (AS) to the verse: *on the day when the Spirit and the angels stand in an array. None shall speak except whom the All-beneficent permits and who says what is right* (78:38), which implies a reference to the unicity (*tawḥīd*) of the spirits.[34]

This is the third distinctive feature of the angels and the spirit, in that the spirit is from command, it is higher in station than the angels, and it dominates them. God knows best.

God Almighty says *but We made it a light that We may guide by its means whomever We wish of Our servants* (42:52). Considering the angels' dependence on the spirit and their unicity with it in terms of essence and act, it may be stated that they are divine lights whereby some light may be shed on these verses:

> God is the Guardian of the faithful: He brings them out of darkness into light. (2:257)

> They shall have their reward and their light. (57:19)

> The parable of His Light is a niche wherein is a lamp the lamp is in a glass, the glass as it were a glittering star lit from a blessed olive tree, neither eastern nor western, whose oil almost lights up, though fire should not touch it. Light upon light. God guides to His Light whomever He wishes. (24:35)[35]

We are thus content with this level of exposition. God is the Guide.

NOTES

[1] That is entities existing in the object world outside human minds, as opposed to *adhān* or those existing in the subjective world or inside human minds.

[2] The author seemingly refutes al-Ṭabarsī's (or al-Ṭabrisī's) argument in *Majmaᶜ al-Bayān* (vol. 4, p. 428) wherein the latter states that a distinction has been made between creation and command, as their denotations and connotations differ: *creation belongs to Him* implies that God existentiates beings and entities and *command belongs to Him* implies that He commands His creation as He wishes and He acts as He wills.

Creation thus belongs to the principle of existentiation of the haecceities (*aᶜyān*) of entities and command belongs to the matters between these haecceities or their effects, in that God dispenses the order between haecceities as He wills. In *al-Mīzān* (vol. 8, p. 152) the author states that when creation and command occur independently, they may imply all entities (including essences, attributes, and orders); as a result, each according to its own convention (*iᶜtibār*); but when they collocate, creation may be best attributed to essences, as such entities are existentiated after the determination or preordainment (*taqdīr*) and the effects of their essences. We may then attribute command to the effects of essences and the orders permeating them arising from the general interaction generated between them; since effects are preordained or determined for essences and determining the determined or preordaining the preordained would be meaningless. Command is thus coordinated with or in explicative apposition (*ᶜatf*) to creation, which is indicative of the distinction of the two. Creation thus seemingly implies the existentiation of the essences of entities, whereas command implies what belongs to the effects, conditions, and the order generated between essences.

[3] This blessed verse seems, at first sight, to be irrelevant here as command, rather than creation, is being discussed or it may even seem to be contrary to

the argument, as it substantiates the instantaneity of creation. Nevertheless, the blessed verse in question perfectly supports the argument, since the main argument is that there exist two real modalities in entities: the modality of command which is instantaneous (*daf*ʿ*ī*) and the modality of creation which is gradual (*tadrījī*), and command (*amr*) and creation (*khalq*) are not in the least contextually implied. The point is that as the creation of all entities is regarded as similar to the creation of one single soul, creation necessarily implies some instantaneous modality, as the creation of souls in the objective corporeal world is not instantaneous and this is the main argument according to which there is some instantaneous modality in the creation of entities. As mentioned by the author, the blessed verse in question implies that the term creation at times substitutes command as well.

[4] That is dispensing matters and affairs through considering what will happen that is true about divine dispensation, but metaphorically attributed to human beings.

[5] That is revealed.

[6] It is reflected here that creation is subsumed by command, since the main argument treats of the subsumption (*tafrīʿ*) of creation by command and the author states that this theme is implied by the said verses. In other words, the descent of command from a heaven to another in reaching the earth is existential descent. In other words, it is the existence of that heaven or the existential perfection (*sīʿat al-wujūd*). The same may be applied to the earth, in that descent of command on the earth is the life and existence of the earth, rather than independent existence of the earth and the descent of the command, similar to other attributes, is accidental to it; nonetheless, descent of command on the earth is the realization of the earth; the world of matter, i.e., the earth, is constantly revived through the descent of command. This is intended by descent.

[7] Entities participate in terms of existence, but they are subject to hierarchies in terms of intensity or weakness of existence through which they are differentiated.

[8] Applicable to the sources.

[9] It goes without saying that limitedness may not be justified by hierarchical multiplicities, as any degree is the effect of its higher degree, and causality is a concomitant of limitedness and individuation and it may be said that any individuation and ordainment is produced by causality. In short, the author in *al-Mīzān* (vol. 1, p. 118) and *al-Rasāʾil al-Tawḥīdiyya* (p. 181) states that the term 'treasuries' (*khazāʾin*) implies divine Names. The multiplicity of such treasuries is thus clarified, as different Names, e.g., All-knowing (ʿ*alīm*), Almighty (*qādir*), and All-living (*ḥayy*), are required in the actualization of any entity in the world, and no divine Name is limited and determined, but they are beyond the realm of creatures and are from the divine place (*ṣuqʿ*). They are thus free from the limits applicable to creatures. Proving treasures for each entity

implies proving the names involved in the actualization of some entity, as each Name is in fact a treasury for descended entities and determined creatures. The difference in treasuries is not produced by intensity and weakness (*shidda wa ḍaᶜf*), since the same reality is implied by divine Names and weakness and intensity is not applicable to them, but such difference implies some conceptual priority and posteriority as proved with respect to Names and priority of some individuation over another individuation is based on some conception or notion (*mafhūm*) rather than some referent (*miṣdāq*).

[10] It is to be noted in passing that lack of veil and lack of concealment are not absolute, since concealment of any lower degree with respect to a higher degree is a necessity, in that any lower degree may attain to a certain extent of knowledge and presence of the higher degree that it is allowed to obtain and any effect may attain to the presence and knowledge of the cause, considering its existential extent, and the existence of the cause is stronger than that of the effect. Accordingly, some reality of the cause will be finally concealed from the effect.

[11] Essence and acts are implied by both stages, in that *Rather they are [His] honoured servants* implies purity of essence and *they do not venture to speak ahead of Him* is a reference to the act. Further, the blessed verse implies that angels' essence and acts are dependent on command, as reflected in *they act by His command* which indicates that their essence may not have the modality of creation, since the createdness of essence necessitates the createdness of at least some effects and acts and it is given that all the acts of the angels are dependent on command and lie in the modality of command. Any perceptive agent is a servant of God, but the attribution and specification of servanthood to angels are indicative that angels observe their servanthood, in that they observe but servanthood *per se* and this is their essential veneration. Accordingly, veneration here implies emanation of perfect servanthood to angels and perfection of servanthood lies in observing it in one's essence.

[12] Reference is made in the last blessed verse to both stages, but reference to the dependence of angels' acts on command is direct, but the dependence of essence on command must be proved through reflection and demonstration, as mentioned in the preceding footnote.

[13] That is the essence (*dhāt*) in question.

[14] Rather than in terms of acts.

[15] The last two verses seemingly imply the multiplicity of the worlds of command, since it was said above that any divine word is from the world of command. Further, such multiplicity is said in the last two verses to be beyond conception. Accordingly, the worlds of divine command are also multiple.

[16] Ibn Masᶜūd, Ibn ᶜAbbās, and some other exegetes have been narrated as saying that God commands the Prophet to refrain from producing a real answer by saying that *the Spirit is of the command of my Lord* (*Majmaᶜ al-Bayān*, vol. 6, p. 636). Nevertheless, some other exegetes argue that this is a real answer

to the question, in that the reality of spirit is from the world of command, as mentioned in the blessed verse, and there is no evasion involved here, as maintained by Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, in *Asrār al-Āyāt* (p. 105) and the author, ʿAllāma Ṭabāṭabāʾī.

[17] The pronoun you (*-kum*) implies that man has been created from the earth, though the reality of man, i.e., his spirit, is not from the earth or the world of matter beyond which lies human life.

[18] *ʿIlal al-Sharāʾiʿ*, vol. 1, p. 359, chapter 261, tradition 1.

[19] Instead of 'words' (*kalimāt*), the word 'perfections' (*kamālāt*) is used in the original text which is apparently a typo.

[20] It is to be noted that any entity in its return rests in a degree from which its essence has been individuated and beyond which is its cause. Any entity returns to its source of origination. There is a difference between return (*ʿawd*) and origin (*badʾ*): the world of return is divided into the world of happiness and that of wretchedness; in contrast, the world of origin is but the world of happiness, which is universal happiness rather than a form of happiness serving as the opposite of wretchedness. There is thus no contrariety between the happiness of origin and the individuation from which the essence of the wretched is produced and the return to the same degree despite its wretchedness. Nevertheless, return and origin constitute the same reality; see *al-Rasāʾil al-Tawḥīdiyya*, pp. 71–72.

[21] The origins of happiness and wretchedness exist in the world before this material world, but its actualization occurs in this world which is the place where commands and injunctions are legislated. Reference was made to this point above.

[22] *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 189, chapter 295, tradition 2.

[23] Literally denoting 'road signs, guide posts, signposts' (*maʿālim*, plural form of *maʿlam*), but herein connoting divine trustees appointed to provide people with guidance.

[24] The singular form is *waṣī* which denotes heir and trustee and connotes successor, i.e., Imam, as the successor to the Messenger of God (SAW).

[25] *Baṣāʾir al-Darajāt*, vol. 9, p. 467, tradition 3.

[26] al-ʿAyyāshī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 339, tradition 160, where 'hearts of the apostles and the believers' is recorded instead of 'hearts of the believers and the apostles'.

[27] The faithful are endowed with the spirit of faith rather than the spirit of holiness which is particular to the prophets and trustees. It is, however, attested in this tradition that the hearts of the faithful are endowed with the spirit, indicating that the spirits of believers and the spirits of the prophets share a kind of union, in that the spirit of faith is a stage of the spirit of the prophets or the spirit in absolute terms. It may be thus stated that the spirit is in the prophets as well as in the believers. The meaning of the two spirits is thus clarified: that of faith and that of holiness.

[28] Ibid., tradition 163.

[29] al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 25.

[30] al-ʿAyyāshī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 339, tradition 161.

[31] The Holy Spirit is also hierarchical: a degree of it is particular to Muḥammad (SAW) and other degrees are shared by other prophets.

[32] al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 370; *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 4, p. 481, tradition 1; *Tafsīr Nūr al-Thaqalayn*, vol. 5, p. 638.

[33] *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 493, chapter 164, tradition 91; al-Baraqī, *al-Maḥāsin*, vol. 1, p. 183; *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 4, p. 422.

[34] There is one single reality behind such multiplicities (*katharāt*) as they are the degrees (*darajāt*) and modalities (*jahāt*) of the same reality. The spirit is in union with the soul of the Imam (AS) and their words are both divinely approved.

[35] The light attested in these verses may imply the spirit; as a result, the spirit, similar to the light, is hierarchical. It is attested in some traditions that the light implies the Imams (AS) and their guardianship, e.g., see *Uṣūl al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 194.

3

FURTHER ILLUSTRATION OF THE ABOVE DISCUSSIONS

God Almighty says:

> When your Lord said to the angels, 'Indeed, I am going to set a viceroy on the earth,' they said, 'Will You set in it someone who will cause corruption in it, and shed blood, while we celebrate Your praise and proclaim Your sanctity?' He said, 'Indeed, I know what you do not know.' And He taught Adam the Names, all of them; then presented them to the angels and said, 'Tell me the names of these, if you are truthful.' They said, 'Immaculate are You! We have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Indeed, You are the All-knowing, the All-wise.' He said, 'O Adam, inform them of their names,' and when he had informed them of their names, He said, 'Did I not tell you that I indeed know the Unseen in the heavens and the earth, and that I know whatever you disclose and whatever you were concealing?' (2:30–33)

It is apparently reflected in *Will You set in it* that they (i.e., angels) make a comparison between the viceroyship of the viceroy of the earth with their viceroyship in heavens, stating that the heavenly viceroyship is a perfect one wherein divine holiness and transcendence (*tanazzuh*) are manifested, standing

in contrast to viceroyship on the earth from which corruption, bloodshed, and vice emerge, even though according to the divine Book these things are not to be attributed to God Almighty. The emergence of such vices alters the reality of viceroyship and that the viceroy's holiness is thereby adversely affected. Divine perfection, as befitting His holiness, is not thus manifested in earthly viceroyship.

Accordingly, the angels are questioning the modality of such viceroyship, considering the said imperfection, rather than throwing divine command into question and attributing error to God Almighty.[1] This argument is substantiated by the angels' saying: *Indeed, You are all-knowing, all-wise* (2:32). The verse *He said, 'Indeed, I know what you do not know'* (2:30) demonstrates the imperfection of their viceroyship, in that the attribute 'all-knowing' is not perfectly manifested in them, but it is urging to silence them, as we, for instance, say to someone who criticizes us that we know something which is not known by that person.[2]

This argument is supported by the verse *And He taught Adam the Names, all of them; then presented them…* (2:31), demonstrating that all these Names, which Adam was divinely taught, are animate, intelligent, and knowing beings;[3] as the name is identical with the named (*musammā*). Adam was thus divinely taught all the Names as animate and knowing beings. The names were certainly not the words (*alfāẓ*, pl. of *lafẓ*), but they were essences in terms of their attribution to attributes of perfection, as the manifestations of those attributes, as reflected in verses: *tell me the names of these…* (2:31) *and when he had informed them of their names…* (2:33) whose contextual content is to be found in another verse: *There is not a thing but that its sources are with Us, and We do not send it down except in a known measure* (15:21). These Names are unseen sources encompassing all beings and they are unrestricted by any limits.[4]

The angels inquiring about Adam's viceroyship were not thus disentangled from the realm of limitation and measurement,

as attested in *Indeed, I know what you do not know* (2:30) and *I indeed know the Unseen in the heavens and the earth* (2:33).[5] The meaning of some traditions is clarified in some of which it is said that God has angels unaware of the creation of Adam and the world[6] and in some others it is stated that when the angels found out that they had erred in their speech they sought refuge in the divine Throne (*ʿarsh*).[7]

It is attested elsewhere in the divine Book: *With Him are the treasures of the Unseen; no one knows them except Him* (6:59), in which *mafātiḥ* implies either the 'treasures' or the 'keys' to them. Adam's knowledge is thus divine knowledge[8] which is not disclosed to angels; as discussed in its proper place it may not be realized but through guardianship (*wilāya*).[9] Adam's essence and innate disposition (*jibilla*) were divinely endowed with 'guidance' and assuming the qualities (*takhalluq*) of the Names and the attributes of those Names, whereas angels were unaware of them when they were informed by Adam of the Names. Unlike Adam, they were not thus informed of the Names, or the divine answer to their inquiry would not have been manifestly appropriate.

It is to be noted that there is only one instance of this dialogue attested in Chapter 2 (Sūrat al-Baqara), but instead of this elaborate treatment we find this theme in other forms elsewhere, for example, *When your Lord said to the angels, 'Indeed, I am about to create a human being out of clay. So when I have proportioned him and breathed into him of My spirit, then fall down in prostration before him.'* (38:71–72). These two verses indicate that *breathed into him of My spirit* (15:29; 38:72) is a brief reference to *and He taught Adam the Names* (2:31), demonstrating the reality of the divinely breathed spirit and thus its specification (*takhṣīṣ*) by *My spirit*.[10] The attribution (*iḍāfa*) of the spirit to God Almighty is not attested elsewhere in the Qurʾān, but other instances are to be found, for example, *whereupon We sent to her Our Spirit* (19:17); *brought down by the Trustworthy Spirit* (26:193); *and confirmed him with the Holy Spirit* (2:87, 253).

It is reflected in *and that I know whatever you disclose and whatever you were concealing…* (2:33) that some matter was concealed (*maktūm*). The following verse: *and when We said to the angels, 'Prostrate before Adam,' they prostrated, but not Iblīs: he refused and acted arrogantly, and he was one of the faithless* (2:34) is indicative, through *and he had been one of the faithless*,[11] of that concealed matter. It is thus attested in some traditions, recorded in al-Qummī's *Tafsīr*, that the concealed matter is Iblīs' failure to prostrate before Adam, which he had concealed inwardly.[12]

It was discussed by the present author in *Treatise on Intermediate Principles* (*Risāla dar Wasā'iṭ*) that there exists no distinction between happiness and unhappiness in this modality of being (*nash'a*), but distinction lies in abode (*mawṭin*) and its point of departure is the world. Iblīs' state in this modality of being is not different from that of other angels. Iblīs was addressed to prostrate whereby he was excluded. As a result (of his failure to do so), he was excluded from angels and was accursed.[13] This is reflected in these verses:

> Then, Adam received certain words from his Lord, and He turned to him clemently. Indeed, He is the All-clement, the All-merciful. We said, 'Get down from it, all together! Yet, should any guidance come to you from Me, those who follow My guidance shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve. But those who are faithless and deny Our signs, they shall be the inmates of the Fire and they shall remain in it forever.' (2:35–39)[14]

God Almighty says: *We said, 'Get down from it!'* (2:38) and elsewhere He says: *Get down both of you from it!* (20:123). al-Qummī narrates from Imam al-Ṣādiq (as) that 'Iblīs did not enter it [i.e., paradise].'[15] Having refused to prostrate himself before Adam, it was said to Iblīs: *He said, 'Begone hence, for you are indeed an outcast'* (15:34; 38:77). Considering these verses, how may Iblīs (May he be divinely accursed!) tempt Adam in paradise

despite the fact that he had not been allowed to enter it? How could the infallible Adam be tempted by Iblīs?[16] The answer was provided above in discussing indistinction between happiness and unhappiness before the Fall.[17]

Adam's disobedience did not correspond to his infallibility, but it was due to inherent, innate obedience wherein lay his choice of Fall onto this world, abandoning the world of light and purity, and opting for darkness and shadows. The verse *lest you should be among the wrong doers* (2:35; 7:19) alludes to such choice. This theme is attested in the verse: *Adam disobeyed his Lord, and went amiss* (20:121), which is also reflected in the following verse: *Then his Lord chose him, and turned to him clemently, and guided him* (20:122).

God Almighty says: *And God does not guide the wrongdoing lot* (2:258). Had Adam's disobedience arisen from impiety (*fisq*), paradise would have been an abode of choice, in which case it would have necessitated matter and darkness and realization on the earth rather than in the heavens.[18]

It is reflected in verses *We said, 'Get down from it!'* (2:38) and *on the earth shall be your abode and sustenance for a time* (2:36; 7:24) that the Fall was from the heavens onto the earth, as apparently attested elsewhere: *In it you will live, and in it you will die; and from it you will be raised [from the dead]* (7:25). In reply to a question raised by a Syrian as to the noblest place on the face of the earth, Imam ʿAlī (as) said, 'A region called Sarandīb[19] whereon fell Adam from the heavens.'[20]

In *Nahj al-Balāgha*,[21] in a sermon in which the Imam (as) recounts the story of Adam (as), it is said, 'Then, God Almighty granted his repentance, bestowed on him the word of His mercy, promised to him his return to paradise, made him fall onto the abode of trials and tribulations, and had him procreate offspring.'[22] The Imam (as) alludes to these verses: *Yet, should any guidance come to you from Me, those who follow My guidance* (2:38) and *Then his Lord chose him, and turned to him clemently, and guided him* (20:122).

The verse *We said, 'Get down from it, all together!'* (2:38)

might imply that Adam's descendants, having entered paradise, participate with their ancestor in departing from it. This argument is supported by the verse: *Yet, should any guidance come to you from Me* (2:38), since Iblīs is disappointed to be granted divine mercy. God Almighty thus says with respect to Iblīs: *The truth is that and I speak the truth. I will surely fill hell with you and all of those who follow you* (38:84–85). Accordingly, Adam and his wife are but addressed in the verse: *Yet, should any guidance come to you from Me* (2:38), and it is obvious that they are addressed in the dual rather than in the plural.

It is reported in a number of traditions that there was a snake among those who fell down from paradise onto the earth and the snake was persuaded by Iblīs to tempt them (that is, Adam and his wife);[23] however, its inclusion may not justify their being addressed in the plural, since that snake, unlike Adam and Eve, was not under obligations and it could not thus be addressed. Accordingly, Adam, his wife, and their offspring are beyond doubt addressed here. It is stated elsewhere in the Qurʾān: *Certainly, We created you, then We formed you, then We said to the angels, 'Prostrate before Adam'* (7:11).

It is attested in these verses that they entered paradise following their proportioning, breathing into their bodies, and the angels' falling in prostration before them (15:29; 38:72). This point may be inferred and even explicitly attested in traditions. It is reported in two or three traditions that God Almighty had breathed His spirit into Adam's body on a Friday and had admitted him to paradise in the afternoon of the same day, but he had stayed but six or seven days from that day there before departing from it.[24]

It is reflected in all these verses and traditions that Adam and his wife experienced those happenings in an intermediate state (*ḥālan barzakhiyan*)[25] and the forbidden tree appeared to them in the imaginal realm from which they ate and wronged themselves; as a consequence, they fell onto the earth, lived thereon, and their vices emerged.

It is reported in traditions that wheat is implied by that tree[26] and it is also narrated that the tree, similar to other trees in paradise, bore all kinds of fruit.[27] It is also reported that it was the tree of the knowledge of Muḥammad (SAW) and his Ahl al-Bayt (AS) and their guidance.[28] All these interpretations are directly obvious to those intimately acquainted with similar interpretations which are attested in revealed law (*shar*ᶜ).

The tree originally led to the Fall onto the world and its goal, as indicated by the above verses, lay in the realization of knowledge of all the Names, that is, guidance. This tree is thus represented by wheat,[29] a tree bearing all kinds of fruits,[30] and the tree of the knowledge of Muḥammad (AS) and his Ahl al-Bayt (AS). Wheat may imply the dependence of human life on it and it may thus represent Adam's (AS) life in this world. This argument may be supported by the emergence of vices and their concealment. God knows best.

The verse *Indeed, We presented the Trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to bear it, and were apprehensive of it; but man undertook it. Indeed, he is most unfair and senseless* (33:72) may allude to what was mentioned above,[31] as *Indeed, he is most unfair and senseless* (33:72) is indicative of the unfairness (*ẓulm*) and senselessness (*jahāla*) which had occurred before refusing to bear the Trust (*amāna*). Had the presentation of Trust arisen from existence in this world, the 'unfairness' should have been realized in the preceding modality of being (*nashʾa sābiqa*).

The Trust is the obligation which is identical to what is expounded by a number of traditions. Had it occurred prior to the existence in this world, the unfairness would have preceded it (i.e., the modality of being preceding this world) following the line of 'an argument from a yet stronger reason'[32] and the Trust should have been identical with guidance, as expounded in some other traditions. Both explanations are accurate, as the world takes the same course of happiness and unhappiness which it had taken earlier.

The goal of presentation of the Trust is attested in the following verse: *God will surely punish the hypocrites, men and women, and the polytheists, men and women, and God will turn clemently to the faithful, men and women, and God is all-forgiving, all-merciful* (33:73). In this verse, mankind fall into two categories of the faithful and disbelievers and the verse implies that man is required to bear the Trust. Some people carry it outwardly and inwardly, but some others carry it but outwardly, rather than inwardly. It is obvious that the outward aspect of that modality of being is the inward aspect of this modality of being, and vice versa.

A disbeliever in this modality of being is thus a disbeliever in his outward aspect, but he inwardly admits that his innate nature and disposition are divinely created and *there is no altering in God's creation; that is the upright religion* (30:30). In short, these two verses correspond to making the covenant (*mīthāq*) with God which was discussed to some extent in *Treatise of Acts* (*Risālat al-Afʿāl*), that is, the third treatise of the *Book of Unicity* (*Kitāb al-Tawḥīd*).[33]

This treatise comes to an end here. Praise be to God. Blessed are His Messenger and his Ahl al-Bayt. Sunday night, 20 Ṣafar, the night of holy Arbaʿīn 1361 / 8 March 1942. The treatise was written in the village of Shādābād in the administrative district of the city of Tabriz.

NOTES

[1] Some scholars, e.g., Qayṣarī (*Sharḥ Fuṣūṣ*, p. 77), maintain that angels protested against such viceroyship. In contrast, some other scholars, e.g., Ibn al-ʿArabī (*Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, pp. 50–51) and Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī (*Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 308; *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, p. 375), hold that the angels simply made an inquiry, rather than a protest.

[2] It is by teaching Adam the Names that God Almighty made manifest the imperfection of angels' viceroyship and the imperfection of the manifestation of the taught Names in them. God Almighty is saying that Angels' knowledge is imperfect and there should be a creature free from imperfection

and that creature is Adam who is endowed with all Names and excellences.

[3] The antecedent of the pronoun 'them' (*-hum*) is the Names. The Names divinely taught to man are intelligent and knowledgeable, since given that the antecedent, i.e., the Names were not intelligent a feminine pronoun would have been used in the singular or the plural.

[4] The nature of the knowledge of such Names is different from our knowledge of entities otherwise angels could gain knowledge of the Names through Adam's endowment with them. Further, angels are needless of such forms of words as they are endowed with meanings without recourse to such forms. Name (*ism*) thus implies the Named (*musammā*) and the Names (*asmāʾ*) imply luminous realities (*ḥaqāʾiq al-nūriyya*) which may not be perfectly and entirely acquired by angels despite teaching them to Adam (*Tafsīr al-Mīzān*, vol. 1, p. 117).

[5] This is further substantiated by the repetition of them in verses 2:30 and 2:33, in that there are thus the unseen in the heavens and on the earth, and the Names that God taught Adam but not angels. The divine Names taught to Adam are luminous beings concealed in the unseen of the heavens and the earth and they are not restricted by any limits and any entity is the heavens and on the earth is but their descent. The divine Names are considered from the divine place (*ṣuqʿ*), but they neither besides God nor subject to making (*jaʿl*). See Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, *Asrār al-Āyāt*, pp. 42–43. Further, lack of descent would be equal to the restriction of Names which would be contrary to our assumption.

[6] *Rawḍa Kāfī*, p. 231, traditions 300–301.

[7] *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, p. 74, traditions 4, 6.

[8] Knowledge of such unseen treasuries is particular to God, as attested in the last blessed verse. It is on the other hand implied by the verse on viceroyship that knowledge of the unseen treasuries, i.e., the divine Names, were taught to Adam. Accordingly, Adam's knowledge is necessarily divine knowledge.

[9] That is divine guidance.

[10] The spirit divinely breathed into Adam is Adam's knowledge of all divine names and the specification of this spirit to God is that knowledge of all Names, i.e., the unseen treasuries, are particular to God.

[11] Past perfect is implied here by *kāna min al-kāfirīn*, in that faithlessness of Iblīs had been manifest before the command as to prostration before Adam. Had his faithlessness been because of his failure to prostrate, it would have been appropriate to use 'disbelieved' (*kafara*) without *kāna*. Such faithlessness is thus related to the principle of human viceroyship rather than his prostration. Such argument is further supported by *I know whatever you disclose and whatever you were concealing…* (2:33).

[12] Iblīs, rather than other angels, had concealed something which was disclosed by his refusing to prostrate himself before Adam. This is not in contradiction to concealment of disbelief and such concealment may not be generalized with respect to other angels; see *al-Mīzān*, vol. 1, p. 124.

[13] It is to be noted that there had been no happiness and wretchedness in the former sense, i.e., impediment to being admitted to paradise, before the Fall. Wretchedness thus implies in general terms being far from the Truth which is assumed to have occurred after the failure to prostrate before Adam. Satan had been an angel before his refusal to prostrate. Different traditions have been narrated in this regard.

[14] Happiness and wretchedness are dependent on the Fall following which is divine guidance and the happy and the wretched are those who follow divine commands and guidance and those who deny divine signs respectively.

[15] al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 1, p. 7.

[16] The plural form of the verb in this verse implies that more than two persons are addressed and Satan might have been addressed there which indicates that Satan could have entered paradise. The pronoun *min-hā* (from it) implies that the Fall had been from paradise. The dual verbal form *ahbiṭū* (get down) may imply that Satan was not necessarily included and that Adam and Eve had to get down.

[17] Indistinction between happiness and wretchedness before the Fall may present some solution to Adam's disobedience; however, the coming of Iblīs to paradise and tempting Adam there is not seemingly related to such indistinction; because, as mentioned above, driving Iblīs out of paradise was not owing to his Fall onto the earth, rather due to his failure to prostrate before Adam. It may thus be said that it had occurred before temptation. In *al-Mīzān* (vol. 1, pp. 142–143) ʿAllāma Ṭabāṭabāʾī presents three suggestions: (1) The antecedent of the pronoun 'it' (*-hā*) in 'from it' (*min-hā*) is not the sky (or paradise) and it may be metaphorically implied that Iblīs was expelled from the circle of angels or the exalted station of proximity to God. (2) The command as to expulsion could imply the permanent expulsion of Iblīs from the circle of angels rather than his expulsion in absolute terms, impeding him from passing by them. This suggestion may be supported by the verses implying the eavesdropping of devils (seemingly an allusion to the blessed verse 15:18). It is also narrated that prior to the birth of Jesus (AS) devils could ascend to the seventh heaven, but it was after his birth that they were impeded from transcending the third heaven and it was after the birth of the Seal of the Prophets, Muḥammad (SAW), that they were impeded from entering the heavens. (3) There is no Qurʾānic evidence as to Iblīs' entering paradise for temptation and his entering paradise is only attested in traditions with interrupted transmission chains. It is to be noted that the pronoun 'this' (*hādhihi*) in the verse…*he said, 'Your Lord has only forbidden you from this tree lest you should become angels, or lest you become immortal'* (7:20) does not imply spatial proximity of God to that tree.

[18] It is to be noted that the disobedience (*ʿuṣyān*), contrary to infallibility (*ʿiṣma*), lies in disobedience in terms of worshipping God and disobedience to simply divine commands (*awāmir-i mawlawī*, as opposed to commands based on divine command and reason or *awāmir-i irshādī*) and commanding

Adam to keep away from the forbidden tree did not fall into this category, as the contextual aspect of the blessed verses dealing with this point implies that legislation of commands, shedding light on the path to guidance, and formulation of simply divine commands and injunctions occurred after the Fall; similarly, happiness and wretchedness as the outcomes of deeds and misdeeds occurred following the Fall and revelation of divine guidance (*al-Mīzān*, vol. 1, pp. 136–137).

[19] Identified as Sri Lanka.

[20] *ʿAmal al-Sharāʾiʿ*, vol. 2, p. 320, chapter 385, tradition 44.

[21] Edited by ʿAbduh, Egypt, vol. 1, p. 16.

[22] *Nahj al-Balāgha*, 43, in a sermon wherein he describes the creation of Adam.

[23] *al-Burhān fī Tafsīr al-Qurʾān*, vol. 1, p. 179, tradition 1.

[24] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 11, p. 188, chapter 3, tradition 45.

[25] *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, p. 87, tradition 4.

[26] *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, pp. 82–83, traditions 11–13.

[27] Ibid., vol. 1, p. 83, tradition 13.

[28] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 11, p. 164, chapter 3, tradition 9; *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, p. 79, tradition 1.

[29] *Tafsīr al-Burhān*, vol. 1, pp. 82–83, traditions 11–13.

[30] Ibid., vol. 1, p. 83, tradition 13.

[31] That is the symbolic representation (*tamaththul*) of the forbidden tree and eating of it in an intermediate state and that this act of unfairness served as one of the factors leading to the Fall.

[32] *Argumentum a maiore ad minus*, *bi-ṭarīq al-ūlā*, a subclass of *a fortiori* arguments. *A maiore ad minus* describes a simple and obvious inference from a claim about a stronger entity, greater quantity, or general class to one about a weaker entity, smaller quantity, or specific member of that class. For instance, if a vessel can contain 2 litres of some liquid, it can also contain one litre.

[33] *Rasāʾil al-Tawḥīdiyya*, pp. 83–89.

Part Two

MAN IN THE WORLD[1]

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

All praise belongs to God, the Lord of the worlds. Blessed are His near-stationed friends, in particular Muḥammad and his pure Ahl al-Bayt.

This is the treatise of *Man in the World*, wherein we will discuss in brief what happens to man when he sets foot in the abode of life in this world following what happened to him before being admitted to this world, as was treated by us in brief in the *Treatise of Man before the World*. God Almighty is the Helper.

NOTE

[1] This chapter mainly deals with the reality of convention (*iʿtibār*, or mode as opposed to substance or *ḥaqīqa*), its origin, and the emergence of multiplicity (*kathra*) in conventions which are discussed in further details in *Uṣūl-i Falsafa wa Rawish-i Riʾālīsm* (Principles of Philosophy and the Method of Realism), Daftar-i Intishārāt-i Islāmī, p. 269 f.

4

FORMS OF OUR KNOWLEDGE AS IMPRESSED IN THE MIND

The meanings (*maʿānī*)[1] or the forms of our knowledge impressed in the mind fall into two categories:[2]

First, the meanings impressed by external (*khārijī*)[3] beings *per se* are in agreement with them in that they are essentially as such[4] whether or not we derive those meanings from them, exercise intellection on them, and establish correspondence between them as those meanings. For instance, there are referents[5,6] in the external world for meanings of the earth, the sky, stars, and man *per se* whether or not we derive from them these meanings, exercise intellection on them in our mind, and establish correspondence between them and the meanings derived from them. These meanings are termed realities (*ḥaqāʾiq*).

Second, the meanings which we correspond to external entities, but when we cease to exercise intellection on and imagine them, there will not be any referent or realization for them, an instance of which would be ownership through which an owner, without interference from his species, may exercise control toward some property. Another instance would be directorship through which a director may direct the affairs in his discretion and urge his subordinates to act on his orders. However, if we reflect on these two meanings we will find out that there exists no reality in the

external world but man and some external object and there are no referents for ownership, owner, and property or directorship, director, and subordinate in the real world.

We thus see that such meanings, unlike realities, are subject to numerous disagreements and alterations through different views. For instance, there is agreement as to the ownership of something in some society but such agreement is not recognized in another society. There is agreement as to a man's supremacy in a society, whereas it is not recognized in another society. In contrast, realities are different in that man is man in all societies irrespective of exercising or not exercising human reasoning.[7]

These meanings are different from realities. As they do not exist in the external world, they should be subjective or mentally posited. Nevertheless, they neither emerge nor vary independently of the external world, since the mind establishes correspondences between these meanings and external realities estimating that they exist extraneously and correspond to objective entities invariably and in the same manner and that there is no alteration in this respect.

For instance, speech consists of sounds signifying linguistically conventionalized meaning to which, for instance, ownership and directorship do not apply. Were these meanings produced by the mind without any recourse to the external world, they would be inapplicable to the external world or they would be applicable to all external entities owing to the equality of relation with lack of correspondence.[8]

The mind abstracts such meanings through recourse to external entities, that is, from the real meanings which are subjectively constructed and since this relationship is not based on assuming a real correspondence, the relationship is mentally estimated (*wahmī*), in that the mind estimates the meaning which is one of the real meanings; in other words, the meaning is assumed to be an external entity. It may thus be stated in general terms that such meanings are originated by the mind that accords to them

the modalities of real entities, whereas, in reality, such meanings are not endowed with such modalities.

These meanings are thus estimated and mirage like,[9] in that their relationship to meanings is similar to a mirage between realities and objective entities. Meanings falling into this type are termed as subjective constructs (*iʿtibārāt*)[10] and estimations (*wahmiyyāt*),[11] in contrast to the former category which consists of real objective entities. It is obvious that such meanings are subjective and estimated, rather than real.[12]

When we reflect on real objective entities and consider the individual's particular circle of existence from the time of origination and then his life that is specific to him until it comes to inexistence and take into account all the matters related to this being in terms of its interrelation within this circle such that the circle includes all the related entities and excludes any other entity, we will notice that this composite totality constitutes one single real entity in the world of existence and it is a distinct (*mutafarrid*) entity whose constituents are particularly and indubitably interrelated in terms of the existing real unicity (*waḥdat al-ḥaqīqiyya*).

When we analyze this single entity through the entirety of its circle of existence, we will notice that this entity has multiple constituents and modalities (*jahāt*) and is analyzed in terms of a constant entity *per se*, resembling the roots[13] and other entities revolving around that constant entity and relying on it resembling boughs branching off from trunks which subsist on roots. The root is termed as 'essence' (*dhāt*) and the boughs are termed as accidents (*ʿawāriḍ*) and concomitants (*lawāḥiq*). This analysis is applicable to all beings in their existential receptacle (*waʿāʾ al-wujūd*).

For instance, there is some constant entity termed as 'I' and any other meaning is derived from and related to it. This totality, consisting of essence and accidents, is termed as particular order (*niẓām al-juzʾī*) in the particular being, and the totality composed of all these particular orders existing in the recep-

tacle of existence is termed as universal order (*niẓām al-kullī*).

Accordingly, there is a real objective order consisting of real constituents for any real entity whose essence, since its coming into existence is accompanied by a series of concomitant and non-concomitant accidents and then a series of accidents, one after another, return to it. It is unceasingly being perfected until its essence is completed by its accidents wholly and perfectly. The essence, when unimpeded, is completed and perfected. Its particular circle of existence, that is, its life, comes to an end and becomes inexistent upon the arrival of its time. It is similar to the sun which, as perceived, arises from a horizon and, having passed through different points on its course, sets on another horizon.

In short, with respect to these orders it may be stated that concomitance (*luḥūq*) of accidents with essence is essentially required by them, in that when the essence is unimpeded by concomitants, it is followed by its accidents through their essential relationship with it. All these are universal principles are self-evident (*badīhī*) or almost self-evident.

Such essential requirement (*iqtiḍāʾ*) with respect to accidents is thus associated with knowledge. In other words, this species (i.e., human) knowingly draws a distinction between agreeable and disagreeable entities and, keeping away from the disagreeable, he proceeds toward the appropriate. Some other species of animals are similar, in this respect, to humans; however, we are unaware of the equality of all corporeal beings with man in this respect, owing to the insufficiency of our perception and experiences; even though some theological demonstrations indicate that knowledge permeates in all beings.

In short, agreeability and disagreeability are distinguished through knowledge. Essence seeks the agreeable and turns away from the disagreeable. Movement towards the agreeable arises from volition (*irāda*) and knowledge (*ʿilm*) and movement from the disagreeable stems from volition and knowledge. A particular image of the agreeable is knowingly impressed in the mind

and another particular image of the disagreeable is knowingly impressed in the mind. These two images depict the seeking of something or turning away from something by essence.

When it is said, 'This act is obligatory' the obligation of the act implies the image of seeking something by essence. This image is abstracted by soul from the relation of necessity in objective real propositions (*qaḍāyā al-ḥaqīqiyya al-khārijiyya*).[14] There is an image for not seeking which is prohibition of the act or necessity of its inexistence in saying that something is prohibited; in other words, it is an obligation to not perform it. The image is abstracted by the soul from the relation of impossibility (*imtināʿ*) in objective real propositions.

The agreeable must be based on the object of the image and the disagreeable from which one turns away must be based on another object of image. The soul obviously abstracts both from some relation between some constituents of the individual (*shakhṣ*) and the individual, or an individual and that individual; or it may abstract it from some relation of an individual's inexistence or inexistence of some constituents of that individual in relation to that individual. This necessitates the motion towards or turning away from that individual.

Such subjective construct may serve as the primeval matter (*māddat al-ūlā*) in relation to all consequent subjective constructs. This judgment is applicable to and multiplies types of subjective constructs and varies depending on human needs and his encountering imperfections from which his essence turns away. This argument may be supported by reflecting on the state of a human child and his passing through stages of life and considering the state of an animal whose community is limited and simple and discerning its perception is easy.

A human individual *per se* is unable to acquire all the perfections agreeable to his essence, since he is, with respect to all modalities of his essence, in need of development and the requirements of his life are various, whereas there are innumerable impediments

to his acquisition of each of the perfections. He is thus innately in need of living in society, cooperation, and urban life with the members of his species such that each individual may acquire one or a few of their accomplishments depending on his capacity and lead a social life. Man thus developed some need for communication and mutual understanding. Aiming at meeting this demand, man commenced with non-verbal communication and proceeded to improve it by making use of sounds and then perfected it by using distinct sounds for different purposes.

This argument is supported by considering the non-verbal aspect of animal communication in which they use sounds indicative of various purposes. The number of such sounds depends on their communities, like the sounds of mating, quarreling, training, and affection. The means of communication develops until the word verbally signifies the meaning and hearing the word brings to the mind but its meaning and some connection is established between the ameliorative and pejorative aspects of meaning on the one side and the word (form) on the other.

Cooperation in daily life and particularity (*ikhtiṣāṣ*) of any individual by his product(s) necessitate the convention (*iʿtibār*) of ownership in terms of features (*mukhtaṣṣāt*) whose basis is particularity. This is similar to the convention of conjugality. The need of all the members of a society for what is in another individual's possession necessitates the convention of transference of possession and various transactions like purchase, sale, lease and hire as well as maintaining relations between transferrable possessions of large and small quantities, significance and insignificance, and other things which necessitate the worth of different currencies. This maintains the relation between transferrable possessions.

Human behaviors vary with respect to such transactions and particular instances may be carried out accurately and fairly and at times unfairly. Different individuals differ in their moral values and their disposition tends towards wrongdoing and gaining personal advantages; as a consequence, laws are required to

maintain moderation in society and certain individuals are also required to enforce and support those laws. Further conventions, like leadership, leader, subordinate, and law, thus come into being from which other conventions are derived. Such conventions branch off into numerous further conventions the treatment of which lies beyond the scope of the present treatise.

These conventions unceasingly grow larger in scope owing to the multiplicity of needs and they thus affect all universal and particular matters in human society and they are tinged in their entirety with estimative (*wahmī*) hues and are donned in imaginative (*khayālī*) garbs such that man, by virtue of his perception, is engaged in such activities and turns towards, turns away from, likes, dislikes, loves, hates, sets his hopes on, loses his hopes from, is gladdened by, is saddened by, chooses, and/or abandons them out of acceptability, unacceptability, obligation, prohibition, gain, loss, good, evil, knowledge, and will; however, man finds nothing in them but imaginative conceptions and perceives them but through recourse to such semblances (*wujūh*).

Human life, that is, social life, is thus intertwined with these means, restricted to such semblances, and affected by such spheres. When man happens to be outside the sphere of such relations he will be similar to a fish out of water: he will wither away and die.

When, in contrast, the life of some beings, for example, vegetative compounds (*murakabbāt al-nabātiyya*), and their natural structures are taken into consideration, it will be observed that their life and survival depend on nutrition, growth, and reproduction and such functions are performed as required by their essence and without any extraneous support. It is through essential and natural actions and reactions and with respect to absorption, consumption, and release that plants complete and perfect such modes. They thus survive until they come to the end of their course of life which is inexistence. The course of development of such natural system is unaffected by others.

Nevertheless, we find that the human natural system is intertwined with solely subjective concepts and illusions through which man but perceives natural objects and encounters them from behind the veils of such concepts and illusions. Man thus seeks but such subjective constructs which he pursues and desires in his life cycle and follows their tracks. However, it is objective real entities that exist in the real world.

Human state in the natural and material modality of being (*nashʾat al-mādda wa 'l-ṭabīʿiyya*) is totally dependent on estimative and illusory conceptions that serve as intermediaries between his essence, which is devoid of perfections, and extraneous (*ṭāriʾ*) subsequent (*lāḥiq*) perfections.

NOTES

[1] The singular form is *maʿnā*, denoting concept, idea, entity, and meaning.

[2] Clarification of the role played by the faculty of intellect and reasoning is of utmost significance in defining perception, its types, and its relation to logic. Perception falls into the following four categories. (1) Sensory perception: perception through the five senses: vision, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. The mind affects them and is affected by them. This is the first stage of gaining knowledge. (2) Imaginative perception: perceiving through sensory images of what is impressed in the mind by the forms of perceptibles following detachment from objective perceptibles. (3) Estimative perception: perception of particular concepts devoid of matter and quantity, e.g., parental love for one's child, the enmity of one's enemy, and fear of the fearful. (4) Intellect, the most perfect perception, unimpeded by any limit. It is through this faculty that human sensory, imaginative, and estimative perceptions operate. It distinguishes between correct and incorrect perceptions, and derives universal perceptions from particular ones. It brings perceptions to reason, compares them, proceeds from some known object to another, draws conclusions and makes judgments, and makes use of what is in one's possession of intellective and reasoning powers. The most perfect perception is produced through intellection which distinguishes man from animals.

Logic is established as a discipline to organize the applications of this faculty lest it may be affected by estimation and imagination and may veer off the straight path. Thus, we may make use of the meaning of perception to define knowledge as an impression of the forms of things in the mind. There

is no difference between perceptibles in their hierarchies, as a result of which knowledge may be defined as the presence of the image of something in the mind through sense perception or the faculties of imagination, estimation, and intellection. (1) Acquired knowledge is the presence of the form of the known by the knower. The presential knowledge is the presence of the reality of the known in the knower. (2) The existence of the known obtained by acquired knowledge is perceptual rather than objective, but the existence of the known obtained by presential knowledge is perceptual as well as objective. (3) Acquired knowledge is divided into conception and judgment, but presential knowledge does not follow such classification. (4) Acquired knowledge is subject to error but presential knowledge is not as such.

[3] That is actual or objective.

[4] That is these beings or objects are essentially in agreement with these meanings.

[5] That is signified (*madlūl*), referent or meaning in contrast to signifier (*dāll*), the relation between the two is termed signification (*dalāla*).

[6] Signification is commonly defined as the being of something in a state that when one knows its existence his mind proceeds towards the existence of something else. Signification is always subjective and rational in all the types, but there are particular and various causes of such subjective connection which divide signification into three types in terms of origin and cause of such signification. (1) Essential, rational signification wherein an essential connection exists between the signifier and the signified in their objective existences, like effect and cause. (2) Natural signification wherein there exists some connection between two things which are associated by nature, as required by human nature or disposition. For instance, when we hear the word 'ouch' our mind proceeds towards the person who is in pain. (3) Conventional signification wherein there is some connection between two things which arises from convention in that the existence of one of the two is indicative of the existence of the other; instances of which include the words conventionalized to indicate the goals towards which the mind proceeds and also the writing or written form which is conventionalized to indicate words. A logician directs his attention towards conventional signification which is accorded particular significance in discussions on words.

Conventional signification falls into the following two types. (1) Non-verbal signification wherein the signifier is non-verbally conventionalized, like gestures, writing, and pictures. (2) Verbal signification wherein the signifier is verbally conventionalized. The reason behind the signification of meaning by words is that such connection is firmly established in the mind between the word and the meaning, and that such connection arises from conventional association between the word and the meaning and in cases when such association is known to the speaker of the system. Accordingly, verbal signification may be defined as the state of the word arising from the knowledge of its issu-

ance by the speaker of the message to indicate the meaning intended by him.

Verbal signification falls into the following three types. (1) Signification by complete accord wherein the word indicates all the entire conventionalized and corresponding meaning; an instance of which is the word 'home' in the full sense of the word, i.e., all the rooms and their furniture. (2) Significance by partial accord wherein the word signifies a conventionalized partial meaning included in its significance; an instance of which is the word 'home' to indicate only the dining room and when one buys a home he knows that the purchased home includes a dining room as well. (3) Signification by association wherein the word signifies a meaning beyond its conventionalized meaning associated with it; an instance of which is the driveway signified by the word 'home'. A condition governing this signification is that it requires association between the word and what is beyond the conventionalized denotative meaning which is a subjective association. Another condition is that the association should be quite clear.

[7] For further details, see ʿAllāma Ṭabāṭabāʾī's Commentary (*Ḥāshiya*) on *al-Makāsib*, part 1, p. 5.

[8] That is they are applicable to all objective entities because of lack of actualization of correspondence between it and objective entities and equality of relation to all things.

[9] That is, illusory.

[10] Subjective constructs (*iʿtibārāt*, *iʿtibāriyyāt*) are those conceptions which have been discovered by the mind or formed by it. Existence (*wujūd*), contingency (*imkān*), and causality (*ʿilliyya*) are not subjective constructs.

[11] Estimations (*wahmiyyat*) are the propositions which are accepted or judged by the estimative faculty but they are contrary to reason. For instance, darkness is scary and I will be harmed by it. When the judgements of reason are based on or correspond to sensibles (*maḥsūsāt*), they will be accepted by the estimative faculty, but when reason comes to some conclusion which does not correspond to sensibles, it will be denied by the estimative faculty. Accordingly, all estimations are not false. In other words, perception of particular meanings is specific to sensibles and it is higher in rank than that of sense perception and specific non-sensible conceptions of the sensibles of imagination, e.g., good and evil, opponent and exponent.

[12] For a detailed discussion by ʿAllāma Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabāʾī, see his *Ḥāshiyat al-Kifāya*, p. 107 f.

[13] Seemingly an allusion to the blessed verse 14:24.

[14] The author is seemingly stating that human essence is inclined towards some acts which it has found agreeable and it does not incline towards some other acts which it has found unfavourable. Man finds some image from these two relations imprinted in his soul and these two forms are real. No convention may be applied to the relation of man and his acts. Nevertheless, man is not content with it but makes the relation of requirement (*iqtiḍāʾ*) and necessity

(*wujūb*) which he has found between real propositions. This is a convention, since the relation between man and his acts, before their actualization, is not based on necessity. Regarding the necessity of acts is some conventional (modal) or mentally posited perception. In other words, the necessity of some act is the subjective or conventional form of the requirement of essence with respect to something, in that the essential necessity with respect to something is not the real referent or instance of the form of necessity or requirement but it is the agent's conventional conformity (*taṭbīq*) that considers such requirement as a necessity.

5

HUMAN LIFE, THE RECEPTACLE (*ẒARF*) OF THE SOUL

It is reflected in the verse *He said, 'Our Lord is He who gave everything its creation and then guided it'* (20:50) that following the completion of its essence, any entity will be divinely guided towards its particular perfection which is derived from its essence and is the essential requirement of its perfections (*kamālāt*), as attested in the verses *who created and proportioned, who determined and guided* (87:2–3). It is after their creation and proportioning (*taswiya*) that beings are divinely determined. Such determination (*taqdīr*) lies in the elaboration of their existential properties, as attested in the verse *and We have elaborated everything in detail* (17:12).

Such determination and elaboration are followed by divine guidance towards the properties determined for beings. The manner of this guidance is that the being is divinely endowed with some essential requirement with respect to all its existential accomplishments and concomitants serving as the complement (*mutammim*) of its essence. This is the real order realized in individual beings and also in their entirety; one of these beings is man.

God Almighty says: *We certainly created man in the best of forms; then We relegated him to the lowest of the low, except those*

who have faith and do righteous deeds. There will be an everlasting reward for them (95:4–6). Following the completion of his creation, man will be relegated to the lowest of the low, though righteous believers are exceptions to the rule, as the reference to them is followed by *There will be an everlasting reward for them*. As that reward (*ajr*) is not apparently realized in this world, it is indicative of disjunction of exception (*inqiṭāʿ al-istithnāʾ*).[1] Having been relegated to the lowest of the low, the believers will be thus elevated.[2]

The command as to relegation (*radd*) is applicable to mankind in their entirety and no individual may turn away from it. This theme is reflected in these verses:

> Whoever seeks honour [should know that] honour entirely belongs to God. To Him ascends the good word, and He elevates righteous conduct. (35:10)

> There is none of you but will come to it: a [matter that is a] decided certainty with your Lord. Then, We will deliver those who are God wary, and leave the wrongdoers in it, fallen on their knee. (19:71–72)

> God will raise those of you who have faith. (58:11)

> Had We wished, We would have surely raised him by their means, but he clung to the earth and followed his [base] desires. (7:176)

> Get down, being enemies of one another! On the earth shall be your abode and sustenance for a time. (2:36; 7:24)

> In it you will live, and in it you will die; and from it you will be raised [from the dead]. (7:25)

It is reflected in the verse: *This life of the world is only a [passing] enjoyment* (40:39) that Man will be relegated to this worldly life,

that is, the lowest of the low. Life in this world is depicted in the verse: *the life of this world is just play and diversion* (47:36; 57:20). Play (*laʿb*) is the act of pleasure whose goal is but imagination (*khayāl*). Diversion (*lahw*) is something which makes one preoccupied with oneself at the expense of ignoring others. It is said in this verse that this life wherein the soul is attached to the body and prompts it to tread the path of acquiring perfections.

Nonetheless, the soul is too preoccupied with itself to pay heed to others. As a consequence of such oblivion, the soul is so allured by this worldly life that it considers itself as one with the body and is thus disentangled from the immaterial world, consigns to oblivion the glory, beauty, luminosity, light, brightness, joy, and happiness with which it had been endowed in the pre-material modality of being, and is unable to recall the stations of intimacy and proximity to God, pure companions, and the expanse of intimacy and holiness. The soul thus spends the life in this world on 'play' and in its encounters with favourable and unfavourable entities seeks but imaginative goals and illusory desires and the fulfilment of the desires will not help him with finding any existing entity.[3]

God Almighty says:

> Then, We shall attend to the works they have done and then turn them into scattered dust. (25:23)

> As for the faithless, their works are like a mirage in a plain, which the thirsty man supposes to be water. When he comes to it, he finds it to be nothing; but there he finds God, who will pay him his full account, and God is swift at reckoning. (24:39)

Their deeds and goals are likened to a mirage in a desert towards which a thirsty man moves but upon reaching it he will not find what he sought, rather what he did not seek. It then becomes manifest that what he had sought did not help him to

fulfil his desire, as attested in the verse: *God has [full] command of His affairs* (12:21).

This theme is reflected in these verses: *Indeed, We have made whatever is on the earth an adornment for it that We may test them [to see] which of them is best in conduct. And indeed We will turn whatever is on it into a barren plain* (18:7–8). Adornment (*zīna*) is applied to a beauteous entity which is loveable *per se*. Another entity accompanies the beauteous one in order to derive beauty from it, in that the adornment is attractive to the mind and the entity accompanying it becomes attractive, even though the adornment is the real goal.[4]

What is on the earth is thus its adornment to be sought on the earth by seekers who reach the earth, even though the adornments, rather than the earth, is the goal of the seekers. God Almighty says: *The life of this world is just play and diversion, and glitter, and mutual vainglory among you and covetousness for wealth and children like the rain whose vegetation impresses the farmer; then it withers and you see it turn yellow, then it becomes chaff* (57:20).

The life of this world thus consists of imaginary matters, beyond which lie real entities. Following the completion of his creation man commences perfecting the affairs of this world. It is in this process that he turns from one goal towards another and pursues what he regards as perfection; however, the perfection he has in mind is but play, digression, adornment, vainglory, and wealth growth which are but illusory. The vanity and transience of such illusions will be manifest to him upon his departing this life.

It is possible that *while in the Hereafter there is a severe punishment and forgiveness from God and His pleasure* is a reference to the beginning of the same verse: *The life of this world is just play and diversion…*and it serves as predicate (*khabar*) following another notification,[5] that is, *the life of this world…*in that this, to some extent, is affirmed by the following verse.[6]

Accordingly, the life of this world with its modalities, for example, play, digression, and adornment, is but an illusion and an

imaginary mirage. This life in reality is but torment, forgiveness, and pleasure. These inward modalities are manifested by the fact that all the modalities of worldly life, similar to *vegetation* which *becomes chaff*, come to naught (*bāṭil*) and are illusory. This theme is reflected in these verses:

> Were you to see when the wrongdoers are in the throes of death, and the angels extend their hands [saying]: 'Give up your souls! Today you shall be requited with a humiliating punishment because of what you used to attribute to God untruly, and for your being disdainful towards His signs.' 'Certainly, you have come to Us alone, just as We created you the first time, and left behind whatever We had bestowed on you. We do not see your intercessors with you those whom you claimed to be [Our] partners in [deciding] you[r] [fate]. Certainly, all links between you have been cut, and what you used to claim has forsaken you!' (6:93–94)

These two verses, as noticed, deal with death and what separates man from his life in this world and say that man will, before long, return to Him in the same manner whereby he had been created and he will abandon all his organs, faculties, and means which he regarded as reliable pillars, the powers from which he derived strength, the means to which he resorted and those which he trusted. The relation between man and them will be severed, that is, the relations with which he sought comfort and vainglory will entirely wither away and will be lost. He will thus find out that he had been allured by all of them.

God Almighty says:

> So do not let the life of the world deceive you, nor let the Deceiver deceive you concerning God. (31:33; 35:5)

> This life of the world is only a [passing] enjoyment, and indeed the Hereafter is the abiding home. (40:39)

> And the life of this world is nothing but the wares of delusion. (3:185; 57:20)

Matāʿ (wares, commodities; enjoyment) in these verses implies something used as an instrument in order to attain to something else. The life of this world is thus a means of alluring man to turn away from the most sublime perfection in his origin (*mabdaʾ*) and return (*maʿād*).

This theme is attested in this verse:

> The parable of the life of this world is that of water which We send down from the sky. It mingles with the earth's vegetation from which humans and cattle eat. When the earth puts on its luster and is adorned, and its inhabitants think they have power over it, Our edict comes to it, by night or day, whereat We turn it into a mown field, as if it did not flourish the day before. (10:24)

This theme is frequently attested in narrations, but for the sake of brevity we suffice to quote the Commander of the Faithful, Alī (AS), on this theme. It is attested in *Nahj al-Balāgha* that the Imam (AS) in a sermon said, 'O servants of God! The survivors will be treated by the world in the same manner as experienced by the departed…One whose soul is preoccupied with other matters will be astray in the shadows and will tread the path to perdition. His disobedience will grow by his devils that embellish his vices before him. Paradise is the goal of the foremost ones (*sābiqīn*) and fire will be the goal of those lagging behind (*mufriṭīn*)…[7]

'As if the Cry (*ṣayḥa*) of Resurrection has been heard, the Hour has overtaken them and has appeared to them to render judgement. Having been disposed of illusions, excuses will have faded away from you, realities have been proved to you, and you have been led by destiny to what you had been supposed to encounter. Take lessons! Learn from the changes of the world! Benefit from warners![8]

The cited passage is an allusion to these verses:

> Take care of your own souls. He who strays cannot hurt you if you are guided. (5:105)

> Those who deny Our signs are deaf and dumb, in a manifold darkness. God leads astray whomever He wishes, and whomever He wishes He puts him on a straight path. (6:39)

> Whoever turns a blind eye to the remembrance of the All-beneficent, We assign him a devil who remains his companion. Indeed, they bar them from the way while they suppose that they are [rightly] guided. (43:36–37)

Accordingly, man has no life outside the receptacles of his own soul and existence. When he consigns his soul to oblivion and is preoccupied with other things, he will tread the path to perdition and error; as a consequence, the acts of his faculties will be lost. His hearing, sight, and speech will lose their actuality. He will be in reality sunk into inescapable shadows. All his goals will turn into illusions. All his deeds will be lost to him. Upon appearing on the Day of Truth[9] he will be empty-handed, carrying a meagre provision of deeds. His illusions will have left him and he will have been introduced to his realities. God is the guardian of all the matters.

This discussion drifts from one topic to another and brevity wards off verbosity. References are made to the topics treated in this treatise and similar subjects discussed and touched upon in the preceding one.

God Almighty is the best guide to the right way. All praise belongs to God and blessed are Muḥammad and his pure Ahl al-Bayt.

This treatise comes to an end here. Praise belongs to God. Blessed are His Messenger and his Ahl al-Bayt. Sunday 4 Rabīʿ al-Awwal 1361 / 22 March 1942. May the Emigrant[10] and his

household be blessed. The treatise was written in the village of Shādābād in the administrative district of the city of Tabriz.

NOTES

[1] That is 'the excepted' (*mustathnā*) and 'that from which the exception is

[7] Seemingly an allusion to the blessed verse 16:62.

[8] i.e., apostles and prophets; *Nahj al-Balāgha*, sermon 157, 221. See ᶜAbduh, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāgha*, Egypt, vol. 2, pp. 66–68, sermon 152.

[9] That is the Day of Resurrection.

[10] That is Muḥammad (SAW), the Messenger of God, whose migration (*hijra*)

Part Three

MAN AFTER THE WORLD

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

All praise belongs to God, the Lord of the worlds. Blessed are His near-stationed friends, in particular Muḥammad and his pure Ahl al-Bayt.

This treatise deals with afterlife (*maʿād*) wherein we discuss, by divine grace, the state of man after his life in this world based on arguments derived from the Book and the *Sunna*. In our discussions brevity will be preferred over general ideas, since the method which we employ, that is, exegesis of verses by verses and traditions by traditions is profound, hardly approachable, and so wide in scope that it may not be exhaustibly treated in one single treatise wherein similar instances are compared. God willing we will demonstrate the veracity of our argument.

It would be fair to state that this method was not employed by our predecessors from among the exegetes of the Qurʾān and the traditions in inferring the denotations and connotations of the verses and traditions. They did not leave anything for us in this regard. It is not easy for one who braves such goals and destinations since attaining to such goals entails difficulties and requires delicacy in wayfaring. It may be likened to charging towards a battlefield without any weapons. God is the Helper.

6

ON DEATH AND SPECIFIED TIME

God Almighty says: *We did not create the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them except with reason and for a specified term* (48:3).[1] It is clear in this verse that all beings in the heaven and on the earth and those between the two are existentially limited by some specified term which is divinely measured determined and no being may violate its specific term. This theme is frequently attested in verses, like the following:

> There is a [preordained] time for every nation: when their time comes, they shall not defer it by a single hour nor shall they advance it. (7:34)

> No nation can advance its time nor can it defer it. (15:5; 23:43)

Specified term of something is the time when it comes to its end and where it en[redacted]

the verse *That which is with you will be spent but what is with God shall last* (16:96) that what is with Him is not subject to depletion, alteration, generation, and corruption, but it is preserved from passage of time and occurrences of days and nights. The specified

inexistence. The day of death is the day of return and being driven toward God, as reflected in these verses: *No indeed! When the soul reaches up to the collar bones, and it is said, 'Who will take him up?' and he knows that it is the [time of] parting, and each shank clasps the other shank, that day he shall be driven toward your Lord* (75:26–30).

This theme is supported by a prophetic tradition narrated on the authority of Shaykh al-Ṣadūq and others: 'You have been created for survival rather than for annihilation and inexistence, and it is by death that you move from one abode to another.'[4]

Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) is narrated, in *ʿIlal*, as saying, 'Man is thus created out of two modes (*shaʾn*, pl. *shuʾūn*): the world and the hereafter. When these two modes are divinely intertwined human life is made possible on the earth, since life descends from the mode of heaven onto the mode of the world. Death occurs when the two are divinely separated and it is in that state that the mode of the hereafter will return to heaven. Life and death are thus in this world and heaven respectively, since death separates soul from body. Soul and light will be returned to the primal holiness (*quds al-ūlā*) and leaving the body which is from the mode of this world.'[5]

It is narrated from al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī (AS) in *Maʿānī al-Akhbār*[6] as saying,

> ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad visited a companion of his who had been taken ill when the latter was weeping and restless from fear of death.
>
> He said to him, 'O servant of God! You are afraid of death because you do not know it. Tell me! When you see that you suffer from wounds and you become unclean and you suffer from so much wounds and uncleanliness and being afflicted with wounds and scabies and you know that you will dispose of all of them by washing, will you wash them away or will you be unwilling to do

so and intend to remain in such state?' The patient replied, 'Yes, I prefer to wash them away. O son of the Messenger of God!'

The Imam (AS) said, 'Know that death is such washing and it will be the last thing which will absolve you of your sins and vices. If you encounter death and pass through it you shall be delivered from any sorrow, anguish, and uneasiness and you shall attain to any kind of happiness and felicity.' That man regained his composure and was gladdened and submitted to death. He closed his eyes and departed this life.

It is narrated from Imam ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn (AS) in *Maʿānī al-Akhbār*[7] on the authority of Imam al-Jawād (AS) as saying,

When al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī (AS) was beset with dire circumstances, his companions found him [illegible]

Imam al-Jawād Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī (as) is narrated as saying that upon being asked about death Imam ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn replied,

> To a believer death resembles casting off filthy garments, unfettering heavy fetters, and changing them to the best and the most fragrant of garments, the most comfortable mounts, and the most secure homes. To a disbeliever it is like casting away luxurious attires, moving out of secure and nearby homes and changing them to the filthiest and the coarsest garments, the most faraway and the most insecure homes and the worst of torments.[8]

Imam Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Jawād (as) was asked about death. He said,

> That is the sleep which comes to you every night, but its duration is longer and one will wake up but on the Day of Resurrection. How are the states of happiness and fear experienced by one who sees indescribable joys and boundless fears in his dreams? Death is similar to that. So, prepare yourselves for it![9]

The present author states that the Imam's (as) considering death as a kind of sleep is also attested in the blessed verse: *God takes the souls at the time of their death, and those who have not died in their sleep. Then, He retains those for whom He has ordained death and releases the others* (39:42), in that both matters are divinely termed as 'taking' (*tawaffī*) and then they are referred to as 'retaining' (*imsāk*), rather than 'seizing' (*qabḍ*).[10]

Considering death as an attribute of the soul in this tradition, narrated from the Imam (as) and other traditions, and stating that the soul leaves the body through death and that it is 'taken' is derived from the blessed verse: *God takes the souls at the time of their death*, as *tawaffī* denotes 'taking one's due in full from the object of possession (*maṭlūb*)' which is attributed to the

souls. Similarly, 'taking' (*tawaffī*) is attributed in the verse: *It is He who takes your souls by night* (6:60) to 'your' (*-kum*) which is designated by man as 'I' (*anā*).[11] This theme was discussed in the *Treatise of Man before the World*.

Human spirit and soul thus enter the other modality of being (*nashʾa*), as indicated in the blessed verse: *O man! You are laboring toward your Lord laboriously, and you will encounter Him* (84:6).[12] *Kadḥ* denotes 'laboring towards some object' and man labors towards the Lord, as he has been moving towards Him from his creation onwards; as a result, his dwelling in this world is referred to in numerous verses by *labth* (to remain) and *makth* (to stay). God Almighty says: *He will say, 'How many years did you remain on earth?'* (23:112).

In the blessed verse: *God takes the souls at the time of their death* (39:42) 'taking the souls' is attributed to God Almighty; however, in the verse: *Say, 'You will be taken away by the Angel of Death, who has been charged with you…'* (32:11) it is attributed to the Angel of Death and in *When death approaches anyone of you, Our messengers take him away and they do not neglect [their duty]*(6:61) it is attributed to the messenger angels, even though these instances share the same antecedent. It was also expounded above that these are all divine acts, though they are hierarchical and such acts are performed by classes of beings according to their existential degrees.

This theme is also supported by traditions and narrations. Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) is narrated in *al-Tawḥīd* as saying, 'The Angel of Death was asked about the manner wherewith he takes away the souls in one moment even though some are in the west and some in the east.' The Angel of Death replied, 'I call these souls and they answer my call…In my hands the world is like a vessel from which you eat and drink what you wish, and to me the world is like a dirham to you in that you flip it over as you wish.'[13]

It is narrated in *al-Faqīh* that Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) was asked about these verses: *God takes the souls at the time of their death*

(39:42); *Say, 'You will be taken away by the angel of death, who has been charged with you…'* (32:11); *Those whom the angels take away while they are wronging themselves* (16:28); *Those whom the angels take away while they are pure. They say [to them], 'Peace be to you! Enter paradise because of what you used to do!'* (16:32); *Our messengers take him away* (6:61); *Were you to see when the angels take away the faithless* (8:50). He was asked how these verses could be true when it is common knowledge that numerous people die in one single moment the world over and their number is only known by God.

The Imam (AS) replied, 'God Almighty has designated helpers to the Angel of Death who take the souls, similar to a chief guard who has assistants whom he assigns to carry out different tasks. Angels take the souls of different people and the Angel of Death, besides taking souls himself, receives the souls taken by his helpers and those souls will be divinely taken from the Angel of Death.'[14]

A similar tradition is narrated from the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ʿAlī (AS) in *al-Tawḥīd* which ends as follows, 'Any scholar may not convey his knowledge to all people, as some of them are powerful and some are weak. Some kinds of knowledge may be conveyed and some kinds may not, unless God Almighty facilitates its conveyance to them and renders aid to His devoted friends. It suffices to know that God is the giver of life (al-Muḥyī) and the giver of death (al-Mumīt) and it is He Who vests taking souls in whom He wills, angels or those other than them (*ghayra-hum*).'[15]

The present author states that 'those other than them' (*ghayra-hum*) in the tradition narrated from the Imam (AS) implies that God Almighty has souls taken by beings other than angels which sounds strange. These non-angels may imply some near-stationed friends of God who are higher than angel in degrees. It may as well imply that God at times takes some souls without any intermediation by angels; however, these two interpretations share the same source.

It is narrated in *al-Kāfī* from ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn (AS) on the authority of Imam al-Bāqir (AS) that his father frequently said, 'The word of God *Have they not seen how We visit the land diminishing it at its edges?* (13:41), implying the scholars' departing, makes my soul generous at the time of our death and murder.'[16] Some scholars, like the author of *al-Gharībīn*,[17] maintain that the Imam (AS) seemingly took *aṭrāf* (lit. 'edges') as the plural form of *ṭarf*, implying scholars and eminent men.[18]

In short, there is a hierarchy for souls in terms of their proximity to the Truth and those who take them vary as to the same hierarchy. Some souls are taken by God Almighty and they do not encounter others. Some are taken by the Angel of Death and they do not encounter angels occupying lower ranks, as attested in the above tradition narrated from Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS), that is, 'it is He Who vests taking souls in whom He wills, angels or those other than them.' Finally, there are other souls which are taken by the helpers of the Angel of Death. As mentioned above, it is the soul, rather than the body, that is being taken.

God is nearer to the soul than the soul itself, and His angels are from the world of command and act upon His command. The soul is also from the world of command which is not restricted by any temporal or spatial veils. Taking the soul is performed from within the soul rather than from without the soul or body.

God Almighty says:

> Were you to see when they are stricken with terror [and left] without an escape, and are seized from a close quarter. (34:51)

> So when it reaches the throat [of the dying person] and at that moment you are looking on and We are nearer to him than you are, though you do not perceive. (56:83–85)

As the taken soul, wherein lies human reality, does not perish by death and that it dwells in the world, finds peace there, and lives

in and accustomed to the abode of delusion (*dār al-ghurūr*), the first reality discovered by the soul at the time of death is the vanity of what is in the world and the effacement of its conventions. It is through the disruption of outward causes that deeds and goals turn into a mirage.

God Almighty says:

> Were you to see when the wrongdoers are in the throes of death, and the angels extend their hands [saying]: 'Give up your souls! Today you shall be requited with a humiliating punishment because of what you used to attribute to God untruly, and for your being disdainful towards His signs.' 'Certainly, you have come to Us alone, just as We created you the first time, and left behind whatever We had bestowed on you. We do not see your intercessors with you those whom you claimed to be [Our] partners in [deciding] you[r fate]. Certainly, all links between you have been cut, and what you used to claim has forsaken you!' (6:93–94).

Man encounters two kinds of beings and modes (*shuʾūn*) in this abode of the world: first, what man considers in his possession from the adornment of the worldly life and its ornaments which he utilizes as recourse to fulfil his goals, aims, wishes, and desires; second, what man considers as the only means wherewith he may fulfil his demands, instances of such means include spouses, children, relations, friends, and acquaintances of substance and distinction.

The vanity of the former is attested in the verse: *Certainly, you have come to Us alone* (6:94). Reference is made to the evanescence (*zawāl*) of the former in *and left behind whatever We had bestowed on you* (6:94) and that of the latter in *We do not see your intercessors with you* (6:94). Reference is made to the cause of their vanity and evanescence in *certainly all links between you have been cut* (6:94) and to the effect of such vanity and evanescence in *and what you used to claim has forsaken you* (6:94).

In short, what belongs to the world is left in the world and another life commences for man from the time of death, a life divested of what is in the world; that is why death is regarded as the Minor Resurrection (*qiyāmat al-ṣughrā*). The Commander of the Faithful, Imam ᶜAlī (AS) is quoted as saying, 'One who dies his Resurrection comes to pass.'[19]

Accordingly, man loses his attributes of volition and God wariness with respect to performance (*fiᶜl*) or non-performance (*tark*) when the soul leaves the body; as a result, the subject of obligation is removed.

God Almighty says: *The day when some of your Lord's signs do come, faith shall not benefit any soul that had not believed beforehand and had not earned some goodness in its faith* (6:158). It is in such state that man finds two paths before him: one leading to happiness (*saᶜāda*) and another leading to wretchedness (*shaqāwa*); in that either of these realities, happiness or wretchedness, will be prescribed for him. He will receive the promise of happiness or the threat of wretchedness.

God Almighty says:

> Were you to see when the wrongdoers are in the throes of death, and the angels extend their hands [saying]: 'Give up your souls! Today you shall be requited with a humiliating punishment…'. (6:93)

> Those whom the angels take away while they are pure. They say [to them], 'Peace be to you! Enter paradise because of what you used to do.' (16:32)

It is attested in *because of what you used to do* (16:32) that the glad tidings will be given after the world, that is, in the hereafter.

It goes without saying that glad tidings are given before the arrival of something. Accordingly, good tidings for being admitted to paradise must be given before being admitted there. Further, good tidings are given because of some inevitable matter and

man enjoys his free choice until his departing from this life and may still opt for either of the two paths leading to happiness or wretchedness. Glad tidings for being admitted to paradise are not thus given in this world.

It is for this reason that God Almighty says: *Look! The friends of God will indeed have no fear nor will they grieve. Those who have faith and are God-wary. For them is good news in the life of this world and in the Hereafter* (10:62–64). God Almighty assures the believers of divine guardianship (*wilāya*) before saying that they should not have any fear or grief and that they are given good tidings in this world that they will be admitted to paradise. Such divine guidance implies that He dispenses their affairs without the intervention of their choice. Giving such good tidings in this world is thus true since they are not exposed to wretchedness when their affairs are divinely dispensed.

In depicting their God-wariness the diction of the verse changes to *Those who…are God-wary* (*wa kānū yattaqūn*) (10:63), whereas the verse was expected to read as 'They believe and are God wary' (*āmanū wa ʾttaqū*). Such a stylistic change indicates that such belief of the believers, following their earlier belief, is acquired by God-wariness and its reality lies in sincerity of faith unadulterated by any shadow of polytheism caused by trusting anyone besides God.

This theme is reflected in the blessed verse: *O you who have faith! Be wary of God and have faith in His Apostle. He will grant you a double share of His mercy and give you a light to walk by, and forgive you* (57:28).[20] This is the divine bounty bestowed on believers which is termed blessing (*niʿma*). It is said in the blessed verse: *Those to whom the people said, 'All the people have gathered against you; so fear them.' That only increased them in faith, and they said, 'God is sufficient for us, and He is an excellent trustee'* (3:173).

Accordingly, believers entrust the dispensation (*tadbīr*) of their affairs to God and divest themselves of any dispensation and choice, as reflected in the verse: *So they returned with God's*

blessing and grace, untouched by any evil (3:174). The believers are thus untouched by any harm by virtue of the blessing divinely bestowed on them which is but the guardianship wherewith their affairs are divinely dispensed and it is by virtue of His dispensation and efficiency that they are untouched by evil or harm.

This theme is attested in the blessed verse: *God fortifies those who have faith with an immutable word in the life of this world and in the Hereafter, and God leads astray the wrongdoers, and God does whatever He wishes. Have you not regarded those who have changed God's blessing with ingratitude* (14:27). God's blessing implies divine guidance.

God Almighty says that he will soon help the obedient join His friends who have been bestowed such blessing: *Whoever obeys God and the Apostle they are with those whom God has blessed, including the prophets and the truthful, the martyrs and the righteous, and excellent companions are they!* (4:69). The obedient only wills what the obeyed wills; as a result, the obeyed substitutes the soul of the obedient in terms of actions and volition. That is why the obeyed is the guardian (*walī*) of the obedient. One who is obedient to the obeyed will enjoy the latter's guardianship as there will be no being there but the obeyed.

Accordingly, God Almighty appoints some of His friends as the guardians of others, as attested in the verse: *Your guardian (walī) is only God, His Apostle, and the faithful who maintain the prayer and give the zakāh while bowing down* (5:55), in which reference is made to the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ʿAlī (as). Without a doubt, *walī* does not imply affection (*maḥabba*), since *inna-mā* (only)[21] is used here; secondly, *walliyyu-kum Allāh…* (your guardian is only God…) is an expression of reality, which is in contrast to these verses:

> Whoever takes for his guardians God, His Apostle and the faithful [should know that] the confederates of God are indeed the victorious. (5:56)

> But the faithful, men and women, are comrades of one another. (9:71)[22]

That God Almighty joins the obedient and their guardian becomes manifest here: He is the guardian of all of them, but some guardians are nearer to Him and some others are lower in rank. They experience neither fear nor grief and they receive the good tidings of being admitted to paradise and keeping the company of the righteous in the afterlife. This is reflected in numerous traditions.

Sadīr al-Ṣayrafī is narrated in *al-Kāfī* as saying,

> I said to Abū ʿAbd Allah, 'O son of the Messenger of God (SAW)! May I be your ransom! Does a believer dislike that his soul will be taken?'
>
> The noble Imam replied, 'By God! No. He is anxious about the arrival of the Angel of Death to take his soul. The Angel of Death says to him, "O friend of God! Do not worry! By God who chose Muḥammad (SAW) as His apostle! I am kinder and more affectionate to you than a kind father! Open your eyes and see!" Then, The Messenger of God, the Commander of the Faithful, al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn, and the Imams descending from them appear to him. The Angel of Death will say to him, "These are the Messenger of God, the Commander of the Faithful, al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn, and the other Imams who will keep you company." The believer lying on his deathbed will open his eyes and a caller will call him on behalf of God, saying, "O soul who found peace in Muḥammad and his Ahl al-Bayt! Return to your Lord as you have acknowledged the guardianship of the Imams and you are happy with that. God Almighty is pleased with you. Join my servants and enter the paradise which I have prepared: *Then enter among My servants! And enter My paradise!* (89:29–30)." There will be nothing dearer to the believer than the deliverance of his soul and joining the caller.[23]

In his *Tafsīr*, al-ʿAyyāshī narrates from ʿAbd al-Raḥīm al-Aqṣar as saying,

> Abū Jaʿfar (AS) said, 'When the soul of anyone of you reaches his throat, the Angel of Death will descend on him, saying, "You will be granted what you wish and you will be secure of what you fear." Then, a door to his abode in paradise will be opened to him and it will be said to him, "Look at your abode in paradise and see your companions: the Messenger of God, al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn!" This is reflected in the blessed verses: *Those who have faith, and are God wary. For them is good news in the life of this world and in the Hereafter* (10:63–64).'[24]

In his *Majālis,* al-Mufīd reports al-Ḥārith al-Hamdānī's conversation with the Command of the Faithful (AS) on the authority of al-Aṣbagh ibn Nubāta:

> The Imam said, 'O Ḥārith! I bear you the glad tiding that you will know me at the time of death, on the Ṣirāṭ (Bridge),[25] the Ḥawḍ (the pond in paradise),[26] and *muqāsama*.'
>
> al-Ḥārith inquired, 'What is *muqāsama*?'
>
> The Imam replied, 'I will have some just partnership (*muqāsama*) with the Fire, saying to it, "This is my friend. Leave him alone! This is an enemy, take him away!"'[27]

This very frequently narrated tradition is reported by a number of transmitters and it has been acknowledged as genuine by some of the Imams.

The Commander of the Faithful (AS) is narrated in al-Nuʿmānī's *al-Ghayba* as saying, 'Behold! None of my friends will die without finding me where he likes and none of my enemies will die without finding me where he dislikes.'[28]

Imam al-Ṣādiq (as) is narrated in *al-Kāfī* as saying, 'When someone's death comes Iblīs calls his devils to bid him to disbelieve and make him doubt his faith until his soul separates from the body, but believers will not be overcome by those devils. When you visit one lying on his deathbed, say to him the formula "Indeed, there is no god but God and indeed Muḥammad is the Messenger of God" until he departs this abode of transience.'[29]

The theme of this tradition is reflected in these verses:

> God fortifies those who have faith with an immutable word in the life of this world and in the Hereafter, and God leads astray the wrongdoers, and God does whatever He wishes. (14:27)

> Like Satan, when he prompts man to renounce faith, then, when he renounces faith, he says, 'Indeed, I am absolved of you. Indeed, I fear God, the Lord of all the worlds'. (59:16)

The outward aspect of the latter verse exhibits that 'to renounce faith' (*akfur*) and 'indeed I am absolved' (*innī barīʾun*) are identical in terms of kind and time; however, considering that someone is addressing someone else, these words cannot express someone's state.[30]

It is narrated from Abū ʿAbd Allah (as) in al-ʿAyyāshī's *Tafsīr* as saying, 'When the death of a friend of ours arrives Satan will visit him from his left and right hand sides to urge him to turn away from his faith, but God will impede that attempt. This is attested in the verse: *God fortifies those who have faith with an immutable word in the life of this world and in the Hereafter* (14:27).'[31]

The present author states that there are numerous traditions in this respect narrated by numerous narrators from guiding Imams. What was mentioned above was taken from the Book and *Sunna*, and attested in arguments, is indicative of the incorporeity of the soul (*tajarrud al-nafs*) and its not becoming non-existent

through its separation from the body which will be discussed in the following chapter, God willing.

NOTES

[1] This verse, as noted, is similar to verses with a similar theme, does not deal with the specified time (*ajal*) for beings beyond the heaven and the earth and between the two. The origin and end of the creation of these beings is not attested in Qurʾānic verses. Nevertheless, the opposite of such theme is attested in verses (i.e., their boundlessness and lying beyond the realm of createdness), e.g., *There is not a thing but that its sources are with Us, and We do not send it down except in a known measure* (15:21); *That which is with you will be spent but what is with God shall last* (16:96); and the verse in question: *We did not create the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them except with reason and for a specified term* (48:3). The last verse indicates that 'reason' and 'specified term' are not implied in the verse, i.e., creating with reason and for a specified term; as a result, they are intermediaries of creation rather than the created.

[2] It is to be noted that *ajal* implies to meanings. (1) The receptacle holding something, i.e., lifetime or duration of life, as in the blessed verse 2:282. (2) The end of sometime or receptacle, i.e., the end of life, as in the blessed verse 28:27–28. ʿAllāma Ṭabāṭabāʾī maintains that *ajal* and *ajal musammā* in the blessed verses in question imply the end of life rather than lifetime or duration of life. For further details, see *al-Mīzān*, vol. 7, pp. 8–9.

[3] Day in the blessed verse seemingly implies *ajal* in the sense of the end of some timespan, rather than *ajal* in the sense of lifetime.

[4] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 6, p. 249, *The Book of Justice and Return* (*Kitāb al-ʿAdl wa 'l-Maʿād*), part 8, tradition 87; al-Ṣadūq, *ʿIlal al-Sharāʾiʿ*, p. 11, tradition 5.

[5] al-Ṣadūq, *ʿIlal al-Sharāʾiʿ*, vol. 1, p. 132, part 96, tradition 5; Najaf edition, p. 107.

[6] al-Ṣadūq, *Maʿānī al-Akhbār*, p. 290, Chapter on the Meaning of Death (*Bāb Maʿnā al-Mawt*), tradition 9.

[7] Ibid., p. 288, Chapter on the Meaning of Death (*Bāb Maʿnā al-Mawt*), tradition 3.

[8] Ibid., p. 289, tradition 4.

[9] Ibid., tradition 5.

[10] Taking the soul implies detachment of soul from body. *Imsāk* (retaining), rather than *qabḍ* (taking) implies that death and sleep share the same reality.

[11] See above, p. 8.

[12] The reality of man and also the pronoun you (*-ka*) imply human spirit and soul rather than body.

[13] It could not be found in *al-Tawḥīd*, see *Man Lā Yaḥḍuruhu 'l-Faqīh*,

vol. 1, p. 150, chapter 23, 'Funeral Ablution' (*ghusl al-mayyit*), tradition 12.

[14] *Man Lā Yaḥḍuruhu 'l-Faqīh*, vol. 1, p. 150, chapter 23, 'Funeral Ablution' (*ghusl al-mayyit*), tradition 26.

[15] *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 262, chapter 36, tradition 5.

[16] *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 56, Book of Merit of Knowledge (*Kitāb Faḍl al-ʿIlm*), chapter 7, tradition 6, wherein *fi-nā* (*in us*) is misspelt as *fī-hā* (*in it*).

[17] Abū ʿUbayd Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Harawī's (d. 401/1010) book on the lexicon of the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth is most probably intended. It served as one of the two main sources relied upon by Ibn al-Athīr in authoring his *al-Nihāya fī Gharīb al-Ḥadīth wa 'l-Athar*.

[18] *Tafsīr al-Ṣāfī*, vol. 3, p. 76.

[19] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 70, p. 67.

[20] The faithful are here addressed to believe. It implies that belief here implies some particular kind of faith which is different from faith or belief in general terms. Such particular belief is the result of sincere devotion unadulterated by any form of polytheism and insincerity. This is the belief of the exclusive servants of God.

[21] Connoting restriction (*ḥaṣr*).

[22] The faithful in the blessed verse 5:55 implies a reference to the external world, rather than a universal law; whereas in the blessed verse 5:56 reference is made to a universal law, rather than a particular referent or instance in the external world.

[23] *al-Kāfī*, vol. 3, pp. 127–128, chapter 83, tradition 2.

[24] al-ʿAyyāshī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 124, tradition 32.

[25] Name of a bridge over the hell on which every soul should pass on the Day of Judgement from which the souls of wrongdoers will be cast into hellfire.

[26] Name of a pond or river in paradise attested in traditions narrated from the Infallibles.

[27] al-Mufīd, *Amālī*, p. 6.

[28] This tradition is not attested in al-Nuʿmānī's *al-Ghayba*; see *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 6, p. 191, *The Book of Justice and Return* (*Kitāb al-ʿAdl wa 'l-Maʿād*), part 8, tradition 38.

[29] *al-Kāfī*, vol. 3, p. 124, chapter 80, tradition 6.

[30] The author seemingly maintains that this blessed verse implies Satan's casting doubts into the hearts of those on deathbed, though the faithful may not be affected by such doubts.

[31] al-ʿAyyāshī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 225, tradition 16.

7

IN THE INTERMEDIATE WORLD

It was discussed above that there are two worlds between the corporeal world and divine Names: the intelligible world (*ʿālam al-ʿaql*) and the imaginal world (*ʿālam al-mithāl*); and that all beings necessarily return to their origin. The worlds, from corporeal entities to the primeval origin (*mabdaʾ al-awwal*) and the universal originator (*mubdiʿ al-kull*), have different hierarchies in terms of perfection and imperfection; however, they are existentially congruent (*mutaṭābiq*); in other words, the superordinate (*ʿālī*) descends to a lower degree and the subordinate (*sāfil*) reflects like a mirror the rays of light, colours, and quantities before it. The superordinate's manifestations correspond to the mirror's capacity. Further, the subordinate's modes are also in line with the perfect or imperfect properties of the mirror.

The intermediate world (*ʿālam al-mithāl*) is like an inter-world (*barzakh*) between immaterial intelligence (*ʿaql al-mujarrad*) and corporeal entities. It is immaterial, but it has some concomitants (*lawāzim*) of matter, for example, quantity, form, and actual accidents (*aʿrāḍ al-fiʿliyya*). These preliminaries shed light on the human state in departing from this world to that of after death.

The precise meaning of matter (*mādda*) must be understood. Matter is substance (*jawhar*) which is capable of receiving material impressions and is subject to material transformations. It is neither corporeal nor sensible (*maḥsūs*). It must not be

understood as the corporeity (*jismiyya*) of corporeal entities. This fact is ignored by superficial scholars; as a consequence, arguments of the theologians resorting to demonstration have been misunderstood, in that when it is said that the intermediate world is immaterial, its pleasures are imaginal (*khayālī*), and there are intellectual pleasures, it is implied that they are only illusory and they exist but in imagination (*khayāl*) and delusion (*wahm*). Such misconception is a fallacy and a deviation from understanding the subject.[1]

The intermediate state, as mentioned above, is attested in the Book and the *Sunna*; however, as the traditions narrated in this respect include the majority of verses, the discussion is arranged in the section devoted to traditions in which reference will be made to the verses as well.

The Commander of the Faithful (AS) is narrated in al-Nuʿmānī's *Tafsīr* as saying, 'It will suffice to mention these verses to refute denial of divine rewards and punishments after death and before Resurrection:

> The day it comes, no one shall speak except by His leave. [On that day] some of them will be wretched and [some] felicitous. As for the wretched, they shall be in the Fire: their lot therein will be groaning and wailing. They shall remain in it for as long as the heavens and the earth endure except what your Lord may wish; indeed your Lord does whatever He desires. As for the felicitous, they will be in paradise. They will remain in it for as long as the heavens and the earth endure except what your Lord may wish an endless bounty. (1:105–108)[2]

Reference is made here to the heavens and the earths before the Resurrection, those that will transform upon the Resurrection into further heavens and earths. This theme is attested in the verse: *And ahead of them is a barrier until the day they will be resurrected* (23:100). Reference is made here to *barzakh* as the rewards and

punishments given between this world and the hereafter, as reflected in the verse *the Fire, to which they are exposed morning and evening. And on the day when the Hour sets in* (40:46). There will be neither morning nor evening on the Day of Resurrection, the Abode of Eternity (*dār al-khulūd*), rather mornings and nights are in this world.

It is divinely said with reference to the dwellers of paradise: *And therein they will have their provision morning and evening* (19:62). It is obvious that the mornings and evenings mentioned here is a reference to the days and nights of the paradise before the Resurrection. This theme is reflected in these verses as well:

> They will find in it neither any [scorching] sun, nor any [biting] cold. (76:13)

> Do not suppose those who were slain in the way of God to be dead; rather they are living and provided for near their Lord, exulting in what God has given them out of His grace… (3:169–170)

The Fire, to which they are exposed (40:46) is a reference to the fire in the hereafter, even though those exposed to the fire are in the intermediate world. This is further attested in the rest of the blessed verse in question: *And on the day when the Hour sets in Pharaoh's clan will enter the severest punishment* (40:46).[3]

This theme is further attested in traditions; for instance, a door opens in the grave to the fire whose flames and sparks enter it. The hellfire in the hereafter and its torment is similar to that of the hereafter. However, the fire in the intermediate world is implied in the verse: *As for the wretched, they shall be in the Fire: their lot therein will be groaning and wailing* (11:106). Being in the fire and being exposed to it are thus reconciled. This theme is also reflected in these verses: *When, [with] iron collars around their necks and chains, they are dragged into scalding waters and then set aflame in the Fire* (40:71–72). Being dragged into scalding

waters (*ḥamīm*) will be followed by 'groaning and wailing' in the fire which shall happen on the Day of Resurrection. These themes are also narrated in al-ʿAyyāshī's *Tafsīr*.[4]

al-Qummī[5] and al-ʿAyyāshī,[6] in their *Tafsīrs*, al-Kulaynī, in *al-Kāfī*,[7] and al-Mufīd, in *Amālī*,[8] through their transmission chains, narrated from the Commander of the Faithful (AS) on the authority of Suwayd ibn Ghafla as saying,

> The wife, wealth, children, and deeds of the son of Adam appear before him on his last day in this world and the first day in the hereafter. Turning towards his affluence, he will say, 'By God! I was consumed by avarice to amass you. Now, say to me what of me is with you?'
>
> His wealth will say to him, 'Here is your shroud. Take it from me.'
>
> Then, turning towards his children, he will say, 'By God! I was emotionally attached to you and supported you. What of me is with you?'
>
> They will reply, 'I will carry you to your grave and will cover you there.'
>
> Finally, turning towards his deeds, he will say, 'By God! I turned away from you and found you a heavy burden on me. Say to me that what of me is with you?'
>
> His deeds will say, 'I will keep you company in the grave and on the Day of Resurrection until we will be presented to your Lord!'
>
> If he happens to be a friend of God, he will be visited by the handsomest and the most fragrant person in the most beautiful attire, saying to him, 'I bear the glad tidings of your being granted freedom from any grief, provisions from paradise, and an everlast-

ing abode and that you have been admitted to the best of abodes.'

The friend of God will ask him, 'What are you?'

He will reply, 'I am your righteous deeds.'

Addressing the friend of God he will say, 'Depart from this world for paradise!'

Then, he will ask the one in charge of performing the funeral ablution and carrying his body to hasten in performing his duty. Placed in the grave, the deceased will be visited by two angels who inspect the graves, carrying their hair and searching the ground with their teeth. Their voices will resemble thunder and their eyes are likened to lightning.

The deceased will be asked by them about his Lord, his prophet, and his religion. He will reply, 'God is my Lord. Muḥammad (SAW) is my apostle. Islam is my religion.'

The two angels will pray to God for him, 'O God! Make him steadfast in what he likes.'

This is the word of God in the blessed verse: *God fortifies those who have faith with an immutable word in the life of this world…* (14:27). They will make his grave as spacious as his eyes can see and they will open for him a door to paradise, saying to him, 'Rest assured like the youth who have been bestowed bounties!' This is reflected in the blessed verse: *On that day the inhabitants of paradise will be in the best abode and an excellent resting place* (25:24).

If the deceased happens to be an enemy of God, he will be visited by a person with the foulest smell and the ugliest garments, saying to him, 'I bear you the tiding of being cast into hell and into its fire.'

He will ask the one in charge of performing the funeral ablution on his body and in charge of carrying it to delay the performance of his duty. He will be visited by the inspectors of the grave upon his being placed in it. He will be stripped of his shroud and he will thus be asked, 'Say who your Lord is? What is your religion?'

He will reply, 'I do not know.'

The inspectors will say to him, 'You do not know and you have not been guided.' They will hit him with an iron mace so hard that all creatures on the earth, except for the jinn and mankind (*al-thaqalān*), will be scared.

They will open a door for him to the Fire, saying, 'Lie down in the worst state! He lies down in a grave which will be as tight as the space between a spear and its head, such that his brain will come out of his fingernails and ears. He will be divinely tormented by snakes, scorpions, and the insects of the earth. He will remain in such state until he will be divinely raised from his grave. He will wish for Resurrection every single moment from the intensity of the suffering.[9]

The present author states that this is the word of God in the blessed verse: *God fortifies those who have faith with an immutable word in the life of this world…* (14:27).' There is an allusion in this tradition to these verses:

Have you not regarded how God has drawn a parable? A good word is like a good tree: its roots are steady and its branches are in the sky. It gives its fruit every season by the leave of its Lord. God draws these parables for mankind so that they may take admonition. And the parable of a bad word is that of a bad tree: uprooted from the ground, it has no stability. God fortifies those who have faith with an immutable word in the life of this world and in the Hereafter,

and God leads astray the wrongdoers, and God does whatever He wishes (14:24–27).

It is divinely said in these verses that some words are firmly rooted and come to fruition at different times. These words are divinely depicted as 'pure' and it is divinely said elsewhere that these words ascend towards Him and righteous deeds also make them ascend to the heavens. It is also said: *Whoever seeks honour [should know that] honour entirely belongs to God* (35:10); further, the means of attainment is also mentioned in the same verse: *to Him ascends the good word, and He elevates righteous conduct*.

It is divinely manifested in these verses that God Almighty fortifies believers in this world and the hereafter by these firm and pure words. The word is described as firm through producing firmness in terms of intention (*niyya*) and belief (*iʿtiqād*). It is in the hereafter that man is either fortified through firm word or deviates from the straight path through lacking firm word and is led astray, as there will be neither volition nor equality of happiness and misery in the afterlife. Accordingly, firmness of word and its consolidation will be actualized but through inquiry. This will be manifest through reflection on the matter.[10]

God Almighty says that this firm word and pure tree come to fruition upon divine leave. The blessed verse indicates the usefulness of the firm word in all states. The inquiry will be thus made at all times and in all states. This blessed verse encompasses many other meanings as well.

It may be inferred from Imam al-Ṣādiq's (AS) reference to the blessed verse that the intermediate world is divinely made the remainder of the life of this world. This is true in that respect. The Imam's (AS) saying, 'Dwellers of paradise…' alludes to the following blessed verses:

Those who do not expect to encounter Us say, 'Why have angels not been sent down to us, or why do we not see our Lord?' Certainly,

> they are full of arrogance within their souls and have become terribly defiant. The day when they see the angels, there will be no good news for the guilty that day, and they will say, 'Keep off [from paradise]!' Then, We shall attend to the works they have done and then turn them into scattered dust. On that day the inhabitants of paradise will be in the best abode and an excellent resting. (25:21–24)

The verses referring to the intermediate world are the clearest of the verses. 'Resting' (*maqīl*) in 25:24 implies the nap taken around midday (*qaylūla*); but it goes without saying that there will be no nap or sleep in paradise. The intermediate world, despite being free from worldly rest, may be likened to sleep and resurrection may be compared to awakening. The people are thus divinely depicted as being raised on the Day of Resurrection. Further, the Imam (AS) thus depicts the state by saying that a door will be opened to the deceased to paradise and it will be said to him to rest peacefully, or a door will be opened to the deceased to hell and it will be said to him to sleep in the worst state.

This theme is frequently attested in traditions, but it is not explicitly said in them that the deceased will be admitted to paradise. It is reflected in all such traditions that a door to paradise will be opened to the deceased believer and he will see his abode there. A breeze of happiness will blow towards him and he will be said to sleep peacefully like a bride.

In an inquiry as to death, Imam al-Bāqir (AS) is narrated as saying, 'Death is the sleep which you encounter every night, only it is longer in duration and the sleeper will awaken but on the Day of Resurrection.'[11]

The intermediate world is a representation of Resurrection, which is delicately depicted in the Imam's (AS) saying that the grave of the deceased will be as spacious as his eyes can see; as the representation is but the extent to which the represented is understood by man and nothing is visible beyond the extent of

human sight. The blessed verse: *The day when they see the angels, there will be no good news…* (25:22) implies the day on which they will see the angels as it is reflected in their saying…*Why have angels not been sent down to us…* (25:21). Further, this encounter will take place in the intermediate world where good and bad tidings will be made.

The blessed verse implies that inquiries will be only made of believers and wrongdoers, mention is not made of the weak (*mustaḍʿafūn*) and the middle ones (*mutawassiṭūn*). This theme is reflected to this extent in traditions. Abū ʿAbd Allah, Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) is narrated in *al-Kāfī* on the authority of Abū Bakr al-Ḥaḍramī as saying, 'Only wholehearted believers and outright disbelievers will be asked in the grave, but others will not be questioned.'[12] The present author states that this theme is attested in widely transmitted traditions narrated from the Imams (AS).

It is narrated in al-Qummī's *Tafsīr* from Abū Jaʿfar, Imam al-Bāqir (AS) on the authority of Ḍurays al-Kunāsī as saying,

> I asked Abū Jaʿfar, 'May I be your ransom! How will monotheists who believe in Muḥammad's (SAW) apostleship but commit sins and fail to recognize imamate and your guardianship be treated?'
>
> He replied, 'They will remain in the grave. If they have done righteous deeds and have not expressed their enmity [to the Ahl al-Bayt], a path leading westwards to paradise will appear before them from which a gentle breeze will blow towards them until they encounter their Lord and their good and bad deeds be reckoned by Him. Their state will depend on divine command. The weak, the imbecile, children, and Muslim children before the age of adolescence will have the same state.'[13]

The present author states that the Imam's (AS) saying, 'Their state will depend on divine command' is an allusion to the blessed verse: *[There are] others waiting God's edict: either He shall punish*

them, or turn to them clemently, and God is all-knowing, all-wise (9:106). In short, all mankind, but the weak and the like of whom, will be asked about their deeds and will be accordingly rewarded or punished. This theme will be discussed further below.

Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) is narrated by al-Mufīd in *Amālī* as saying, 'When God takes some soul it will be divinely sent in its worldly form to paradise. Those souls will partake of food and drink there and when others come to them they will recognize them in their worldly forms.'[14]

It is narrated in *al-Kāfī* that Abū Wallād al-Ḥannāṭ said to Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS), 'May I be your ransom! People say that believers' souls are in the gullets of green birds flying around divine throne.' The Imam (AS) said, 'No, believers are more divinely revered than that, but their souls will be placed in bodies similar to theirs.'[15] It is also narrated from Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) in *al-Kāfī* that the souls will be in bodily form on a tree in paradise. They know one another and inquire from one another about others. When a soul visits other souls they will say, 'Call it that it was so scared.' They will ask it about the deeds of such and such people. If it says that it departed him alive, they will set their hopes on him, but if he replies that that person has already died, they will say, 'He was cast down. He was cast down.'[16] This theme is attested in numerous traditions all of which are only about believers. The state of disbelievers will be touched upon below.

Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) is narrated in *al-Kāfī* as saying, 'The believer will visit his family after death and will see his likes, but his dislikes will be concealed from him. The disbeliever will meet his family and will see that his likes and dislikes will be concealed from him.'[17]

It is narrated from Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) in *al-Kāfī* as saying, 'Any believer and disbeliever will visit his family at midday. When the believer sees that his family is engaged in performing righteous deeds he will praise God. When the disbeliever sees that his family is engaged in performing righteous deeds he will be envious of them.'[18]

It is narrated in *al-Kāfī* that Abū al-Ḥasan the First, Imam Mūsā al-Kāẓim (AS)[19] was asked by Isḥāq ibn ʿAmmār,

> 'Will the deceased visit his family?'
>
> The Imam (AS) replied, 'Yes.'
>
> Isḥāq asked, 'How often?'
>
> The Imam replied, 'Weekly, monthly, or yearly, according to his station before God.'
>
> Isḥāq said, 'In what form will he meet his family?'
>
> He replied, 'In the form of a lovely bird perching on the wall of their home, looking at them from above the wall. When he sees them in a good state, he will be gladdened. When he sees them in hardship and need, he will be grieved and saddened.'[20]

Traditions sharing the same theme have been frequently narrated and the present author maintains that representation in the form of a lovely bird is a symbolic representation (*tamaththul*). The above tradition is thematically attested in the following blessed verses:

> Do not suppose those who were slain in the way of God to be dead; rather they are living and provided for near their Lord, exulting in what God has given them out of His grace, and rejoicing for those who have not yet joined them from [those left] behind them that they will have no fear, nor will they grieve. They rejoice in God's blessing and grace, and that God does not waste the reward of the faithful. (3:169–171)

Rejoicing (*istibshār*) implies receiving glad tidings and rejoicing

at them. *They rejoice in God's blessing and grace* clarifies *rejoicing for those who have not yet joined them*. It is thus reflected in these verses that those who were slain in the cause of God rejoice at seeing that those behind them (i.e., living believers) are enjoying divine blessings and bounties and are free from fear and grief, entailed by obedience to divine guardianship. They rejoice that they perform righteous deeds and the believers' rewards will not be divinely withheld, but their good deeds will be reckoned, their vices will be forgiven, and divine blessings will be bestowed on them. Martyrs see all those things. This point requires reflection.

This theme is attested in the blessed verse: *And say, 'Go on working: God will see your conduct, and His Apostle and the faithful [as well], and you will be returned to the Knower of the sensible and the Unseen, and He will inform you concerning what you used to do'* (9:105).

Imam al-Ṣādiq (as) in narrated in *al-Kāfī* on the authority of Abū Baṣīr as saying about the tradition of the two angels' questioning, 'When the deceased person is a disbeliever, the two questioning angels thus address him, 'Who is the one in your company?' The disbeliever says that he does not know and they will leave him with Satan.'[21] A similar tradition is narrated by Bashīr al-Dahhān.[22] al-ʿAyyāshī, in his *Tafsīr*, narrates this tradition from Imam al-Bāqir (as) on the authority of Muḥammad ibn Muslim.[23]

This is reflected in the blessed verses: *Whoever turns a blind eye to the remembrance of the All-beneficent, We assign him a devil who remains his companion. Indeed, they bar them from the way while they suppose that they are [rightly] guided. When he comes to Us, he will say, 'I wish there had been between me and you the distance between east and west! What an evil companion [are you]!'* (43:36–38). One needs to know that the intermediate world is vaster than this world, as the imaginal form (*mithāl*) is vaster and more intermediate than the corporeal body, as it was discussed above with respect to matter. Attestations in the Book and the *Sunna* as to the intermediate world are but generalities

representing certain instances rather than an elaborate exposition of the subject.

It must be known that the earth is referred to in some traditions as a place for paradise and hell of the intermediate world and also a place where the deceased meet their families and others. It may be inferred from this theme that corporeal attachment to the world of spirits is not totally severed. It was discussed above that this is applicable here.

It is attested in traditions that the paradise of the intermediate world is in Wādī al-Salām,[24] its hell in Wādī Barahūt,[25] and the spirits' assembly is in the Dome of the Rock.[26] It is narrated in further traditions that the Imams (AS) visited spirits in different places.[27] Numerous accounts have been reported about the miraculous deeds (*karāmāt*) of the friends of God (*awliyā'*). These attestations are truly indicative of some attachment between spirits (through some illustrious feature or *shirāfa*) and some place, time, or state (*ḥāl*).

NOTES

[1] Corporeity (*jismiyya*) implies having specific dimensions and such reality is not particular to the world of matter, as it occurs in the imaginal world. Materiality (*māddiyya*), rather than corporeity, is negated by theologians. In contrast, exotericist or literalist (*ẓāhirī*) scholars maintain that materiality and corporeity are identical and negation of the former entails negation of the latter. It is to be noted as well that the imaginativeness or intelligibility of pleasure would not entail their illusory nature. The world of imagination and its entities are by far greater than those of the corporeal world and considering the entities of the world of imagination and the world of intelligibles as weak and ineffective entities arise from man's intense adulteration with the world of matter and turning away from the incorporeal world. Were the veils removed the greatness of the incorporeal world and its entities would be disclosed to man.

[2] al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 1, p. 46, introduction; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 90, p. 84.

[3] They were cast into the fire in the intermediate world before the Resurrection. It is to be noted that they were cast into a fire which is a manifestation of the fire in the Major Resurrection (*qiyāmat al-kubrā*).

[4] al-ʿAyyāshī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, pp. 159–160, tradition 66.
[5] al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 1, p. 399.
[6] al-ʿAyyāshī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 244, tradition 20.
[7] al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 3, p. 221, chapter 158, 'That the Deceased sees Appearances Before Him', tradition 1.
[8] The reference could not be found in al-Mufīd's *Amālī*; see al-Ṭūsī, *Amālī*, p. 347, *majlis* 12, tradition 719; *Wasāʾil al-Shīʿa*, vol. 16, p. 105, chapter 100, 'From Chapters on Struggle against the Self', tradition 1.
[9] A quite detailed tradition in this respect is narrated from the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ʿAlī (AS), see ʿAlī ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 1, p. 340; al-ʿAyyāshī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 227; *Furūʿ al-Kāfī*, vol. 3, pp. 231–233; al-Ṭūsī, *Amālī*, Maṭbaʿa Nuʿmān, Najaf, vol. 1, pp. 357–359.
[10] What is entertained in human hearts and their firm or weak intentions and beliefs will be made manifest through questioning in the other world.
[11] Ibid., p. 289, tradition 4.
[12] *al-Kāfī*, vol. 3, p. 224, chapter 159, tradition 1.
[13] al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 264.
[14] It was not found in al-Mufīd's *Amālī*, see al-Ṭūsī, *Amālī*, p. 418, *majlis* 14, tradition 942; *Furūʿ al-Kāfī*, vol. 3, p. 245, tradition 6.
[15] *al-Kāfī*, vol. 3, p. 231, chapter 162, tradition 1.
[16] Ibid., tradition 3.
[17] Ibid., p. 220, chapter 157, tradition 1.
[18] Ibid., tradition 2.
[19] Abū al-Ḥasan the First, Abū al-Ḥasan the Second, and Abū al-Ḥasan the Third are Imam al-Kāẓim (AS), Imam al-Riḍā (AS), and Imam al-Hādī (AS) respectively.
[20] Ibid., tradition 3.
[21] *al-Kāfī*, vol. 3, p. 225, chapter 159, tradition 10.
[22] Ibid., tradition 7.
[23] al-ʿAyyāshī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 244, tradition 19.
[24] Name of a cemetery in Najaf in Iraq. It is attested in some traditions that a number of Prophets, Imams, and believers will return to it on the Day of Return. *al-Kāfī*, vol. 3, p. 230, chapter 161, 'On the Believers' Spirits' (*fī arwāḥ al-muʾminīn*), tradition 1; *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 1, p. 471, chapter 23, 'On Saying the Formula of Creed to the Dying Persons' (*fī talqīn al-muḥtaḍarīn*), tradition 1525.
[25] Name of a wadi in Ḥaḍramūt, Yemen, where the spirits of disbelievers will assemble. A wadi is a dry ephemeral riverbed or valley. See *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 6, p. 287; *al-Kāfī*, vol. 3, p. 233, chapter 163, 'On the Disbelievers' Spirits' (*fī arwāḥ al-kuffār*), tradition 3.
[26] Ṣakhra Bayt al-Muqaddas/Bayt al-Maqdis, where, according to some traditions, Iblīs will be slain by Muḥammad (SAW) one day following al-Mahdī's Return; see al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 246. *Tuḥaf al-ʿUqūl*, p. 173, 'Imam

al-Ḥusayn's (AS) Answers to Questions Posed to Him by the Byzantine King' (*jawāb al-Imām al-Ḥusayn (ʿA) ʿan masāʾil saʾalahu ʿan-hā malik al-rūm*); *al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimma fī Uṣūl al-Aʾimma*, 33611, tradition 413.

[27] *Baṣāʾir al-Darajāt*, pp. 274–282.

8

ON BLOWING THE TRUMPET

God Almighty says:

> The day when the trumpet will be blown, whoever is in the heavens will be terrified and whoever is on the earth, except whomever God may wish. (27:87)

> And the Trumpet will be blown, and whoever is in the heavens will swoon and whoever is on the earth, except whomever God wishes. Then it will be blown a second time, behold, they will rise up, looking on! (39:68)

It is narrated from Imam al-Sajjād (AS) as saying, 'There are three types of blows: the terrifying blow; the swooning blow; the revival blow.'[1] This theme may be reflected in the blessed verse: *They do not await but a single Cry that would seize them as they wrangle* (36:49). God knows best.

There are thus two types of blowing: that of causing to die and that of reviving. The literal aspect of the word *ṣūr* (trumpet) cannot be expounded by Qurʾānic verses; however, the word denotes 'horn' in which a hole was at times pierced through it into which it was blown. The first blow is only attested in two verses: 27:87 and 39:68. Mention is made of it in other verses by the words *ṣayḥa* (cry); *zajra* (shout); *ṣākhkha* (deafening cry); *naqr* (trumpet):

> It will be but a single Cry, and, behold, they will all be presented before Us. (36:53)
>
> Yet it will be only a single shout, and behold, they will be awake. (79:13–14)
>
> So when the deafening Cry comes the day when a man will evade his brother. (80:33–34)
>
> When the Trumpet will be sounded, that day will be a day of hardship, not at all easy for the faithless. (74:8–10)
>
> …And be on the alert for the day when the caller calls from a close quarter, the day when they hear the Cry in all truth. That is the day of rising [from the dead]. (50:41–42)

Accordingly, the Trumpet and its two blows imply the trumpet used on battlefields. The first blow signals, 'Be silent and be prepared for moving forward!' The second blow into the trumpet signals, 'Stand up and move forward!' The Trumpet is thus a reality and there are two types of cry: one causes death; the other is the reviving cry. There is no complete explanation in the Qurʾān for 'Cry' (*ṣayḥa*), but it is attested in at least twelve instances. It has undoubtedly some real and original meaning. It is divinely referred to by *nadāʾ* (shout, cry) and it goes without saying that it may not be meaningless.

God Almighty says that people *hear the Cry in all truth* (50:42) and it is clear that only animate beings are endowed with hearing. Further, reference is divinely made to their swooning (39:68) which indicates that their life and existence are but hearing the 'Cry' and it would be unreasonable that such living beings are given life by the reviving 'Cry'. *Ṣayḥa* and *nafkha* are divine words causing people to die and be revived. God Almighty says: *So when He decides on a matter, He just says to it, 'Be!' and it is* (40:68).

These two blows are two divine words: one causing death and the other reviving. However, 'swooning' (*ṣaᶜq*), rather than 'death' (*mawt*), is used, which may imply that 'death' is applied to the spirit's leaving the body, whereas 'blowing' (*nafkha*) is applicable to all the beings of the heavens and the earth, including angels and spirits. This theme is reflected in this verse which deals with the dwellers of paradise: *There they will not taste death except the first death* (44:56).[2]

It is to be noted that *mawt* is elsewhere applied to *ṣaᶜqa*, when the dwellers of hell say: *Our Lord! Twice did You make us die, and twice did You give us life. We admit our sins. Is there any way out [from this plight]?* (40:11). This suggestion makes sense when 'twice' does not imply 'repetition' (*tikrār*) or 'preference' (*taghlīb*).[3]

The blessed verse *And ahead of them is a barrier until the day they will be resurrected* (23:100) indicates that 'barrier' (*barzakh*) is applicable to all. 'Whoever is on the earth' (*man fī 'l-arḍ*) in 27:87 and 39:68 is not a reference to those living on the earth before entering the intermediate world.

God Almighty says:

> And on the day when the Hour sets in the guilty will swear that they had remained only for an hour. That is how they were used to lying [in the world]. But those who were given knowledge and faith will say, 'Certainly, you remained in God's Book until the Day of Resurrection'. (30:55–60)

> He will say, 'How many years did you remain on earth?' They will say, 'We remained for a day, or part of a day; yet ask those who keep the count.' He will say, 'You only remained a little; if only you had known'. (23:112–114)

> Indeed, those who deny Our signs and are disdainful of them the gates of the heaven will not be opened for them, nor shall they enter paradise until the camel passes through the needle's eye…

And there will be a veil between them… (7:40–46)

Accordingly, they are the dwellers of the earth, even though they have entered the intermediate world.[4]

Those in the heavens are the angels and happy spirits, as reflected in verses like the following:

And in the sky is your provision and what you are promised. (56:22)

Your promised hour is a day… (34:30).

God has promised those who have faith and do righteous deeds forgiveness and a great reward (5:9).

…the specified term is with Him… (6:2).

To Him ascends the good word… (35:10).

God will raise those of you… (58:1).

The angels and the Spirit ascend to Him… (70:4).

The verses in which reference is made to the occurrence of the Cry to the dwellers of the earth and its annihilation all imply that this modality of being (*nashʾa*) and its dwellers will come to an end. This theme is also reflected in these verses:

They do not await but a single Cry that would seize them as they wrangle. Then they will not be able to make any will, nor will they return to their folks. (36:49–50)

Everyone on it is ephemeral. (55:26)

Accordingly, there will be a Cry wherewith this world and its

inhabitants will come to an end. There will be a Cry wherewith the dwellers of the intermediate world will die. There will be a Cry which will lead to Resurrection and raising the dead.

The 'term' (*ajal*) is applicable to all beings in these verses:

> We did not create the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them except with reason and for a specified term. (46:3)

> The specified term is with Him (6:2).

Thus, neither death occurs by itself nor may it be brought about by 'Cry' or 'blowing into the Trumpet'. Death occurs but by the 'term'.

The exceptive clause *except whomever God wishes* (27:87; 39:68) explains the following verses: *Whoever brings virtue shall receive [a reward] better than it; and they shall be secure from terror on that day. And whoever brings vice, they shall be cast on their faces into the Fire [and told:] 'Shall you be requited except with what you used to do?'* (27:89–90). It also elucidates the following verses: *Whoever brings virtue shall receive [a reward] better than it; and they shall be secure from terror on that day. And whoever brings vice they shall be cast on their faces into the Fire [and told:] 'Shall you be requited except with what you used to do?'* (27:89–90).

It is worthy of note that *ḥasana* (virtue), collocated with *amn* (secure) and also with *sayyiʾa* (vice) and warning (*īʿād*) against it, implies absolute virtue, as virtuous deeds adulterated with vice will not be secure from 'terror' (*fazaʿ*). In other words, one whose character (*dhāt*) is pure and whose deeds are unadulterated by vices will be secure from fear. Vicious deeds are in some verses referred to as *khabāʾith* (vicious ones); for instance, in these verses:

> …And place the bad on one another, and pile them up together, and cast them into hell. (8:37)

> Vicious women are for vicious men, and vicious men for vicious women. Good women are for good men and good men for good women. (24:26)

Disbelief, hypocrisy, and polytheism are divinely enumerated as impurities, as reflected in these verses:

> But as for those in whose heart is a sickness, it only adds defilement to their defilement, and they die while they are faithless. (9:125)

> …The polytheists are indeed unclean. (9:28)

Some degrees of faith are also enumerated as polytheism: *And most of them do not believe in God without ascribing partners to Him* (12:106).

Accordingly, one who does not believe in anything besides God and finds no peace except by Him is the one whose essence is unadulterated by polytheism. Such person ascribes no partners to God, neither in His existence, nor in His attributes, nor in His acts. This is *wilāya* (guardianship; guidance), as reflected in *those whom the angels take away while they are pure* (16:32); that is they are essentially pure through *wilāya*. Peace (*salām*) in *they say [to them], 'Peace be to you!'* (16:32) implies the security in question.

Ḥasana (virtue) is thus *wilāya*, as reflected in the verse: *Say, 'I do not ask you any reward for it except love of [my] relatives.' Whoever performs a good deed, We shall enhance for him its goodness. Indeed, God is all-forgiving, all-appreciative* (42:23).

The Imam (AS) is narrated in al-Qummī's *Tafsīr* regarding *Whoever brings virtue shall receive [a reward] better than it* (27:89) and as saying, 'By God! Ḥasan is the *wilāya* of the Commander of the Faithful (AS) and *sayyiʾa* is following his enemies.'[5] It is narrated in *al-Kāfī* from Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS), who narrates from the Commander of the Faithful (AS), as saying, '*Ḥasana* is to know the *wilāya* and love for us, the Ahl al-Bayt, and *sayyiʾa* is the denial

of *wilāya* and enmity against us, the Ahl al-Bayt.' He then recited the blessed verse in question.'[6]

Another verse may thus be elucidated as well: *And the Trumpet will be blown, and whoever is in the heavens will swoon and whoever is on the earth, except whomever God wishes. Then it will be blown a second time, behold, they will rise up, looking on!* (39:68). The blessed verse denotes that those who will 'swoon' upon the first blow into the Trumpet will be those who will 'rise up' on the day when all people will rise before the Lord of the worlds, as reflected in the verse: *It will be but a single Cry, and, behold, they will all be presented before Us* (36:53).

Those are the ones arraigned before God Who will separate His devoted servants from among them, as attested in the verse: *So they will indeed be arraigned [before Him, all] except God's exclusive servants* (37:127–128). These devoted servants are then praised by the expelled Iblīs: *By Your might, I will surely pervert them* (38:82). It is thus divinely elucidated that they may not be approached by Satan and his attempts at alluring devoted servants prove useless.

Satan's allurement is in the form of promises, as reflected in the verses: *When the matter is all over, Satan will say, 'Indeed, God made you a promise that was true and I [too] made you a promise, but I failed you…So do not blame me, but blame yourselves. I cannot respond to your distress calls, neither can you respond to my distress calls. Indeed, I disavow your taking me for [God's] partner aforetime. There is indeed a painful punishment for the wrongdoers.'* (14:22).

Satan thus argues that they should be blamed and their sin lies in their polytheism. They are wrongdoers because of their essential wretchedness and wrongdoers will be afflicted with a painful punishment. The devoted servants are thus those who are essentially untouched by polytheism. They see no existent being but God and they find no trace of any name or attribute for anyone besides God. They have no choice or power over their own benefit, loss, death, life, or Resurrection. This is intended by *wilāya*.

In short, the friends of God Almighty are only excepted from 'swooning' (*ṣaʿqa*) and 'fear' (*fazaʿ*), whereas all the inhabitants of the earth and the heavens die upon the 'blow' (*nafkha*). God Almighty says:

> The day We shall roll up the sky, like the rolling of the scrolls for writings. (21:104)
>
> …And the heavens, scrolled, in His right hand. (39:67)

God Almighty says that it will be at that time that the heavens with all their inhabitants will encounter their specified term and they will be scrolled up.

It is thus elucidated that the excluded devoted servants are not in the heavens, but their abode is beyond the heavens and the earth, even though they are present everywhere. This theme is reflected in the verse: *Everything is to perish except His Face* (28:88), wherein 'Face' (*wajh*) implies such servants. The verse *so whichever way you turn, there is the face of God* (2:115) indicates that they encompass this world through divine encompassment of the world.

Having said that the dwellers of paradise are in the heavens and the inhabitants of fire are in fire, this theme is divinely elucidated in other words: *And there will be a veil between them. And on the Elevations will be certain men who recognize each of them by their mark* (7:46). This theme will be discussed below.

The devoted servants will be thus untouched by hardships, fears, and other happenings which will occur between the two blows: *When the Trumpet is blown with a single blast and the earth and the mountains are lifted and levelled with a single levelling; then, on that day, will the Imminent [Hour] befall* (69:13–15). The root *d-k-k* denotes 'to level, to devastate'. *Dakaktu 'l-shayʾ* denotes 'I beat down and levelled something with the earth'.

The following verses are mainly indicative of the preliminaries

of the Hour, Resurrection, destruction of the world and its inhabitants:

> The day when the Quaker quakes and is followed by the Successor. (79:6–7)
>
> The day when the earth and the mountains will quake, and the mountains will be like dunes of shifting sand. (73:14)
>
> Indeed, the quake of the Hour is a terrible thing. The day that you will see it, every suckling female will neglect what she suckled, and every pregnant female will deliver her burden, and you will see the people drunk, yet they will not be drunken, but God's punishment is severe. (22:1–2)
>
> When the mountains are set moving (81:3).
>
> And the mountains will be like carded wool [101:5].
>
> But when the eyes are dazzled, and the moon is eclipsed, and the sun and the moon are brought together. (75:7–9)
>
> When the sun is wound up (81:1).
>
> When the stars are scattered (82:2).
>
> When the pregnant camels are neglected (81:4).
>
> When the seas are set afire (81:6).

It is worthy of note that this[7] substantiates the argument that Resurrection will happen after this world, as death exhibits that the intermediate world (*barzakh*) will be after this world; otherwise, 'modality of Resurrection, following the aforesaid

argument, comprehends this world and the intermediate world as the imaginal world (*ʿālam al-mithāl*) encompasses the world of matter, that is, this world. Notwithstanding the question of encompassing, scrolling up the time and cessation of the movements between the two modalities of existence will necessitate cessation of the temporal relation wherewith there will be neither 'after' nor 'before'.

There are other verses which are thematically similar to the above verses, but they imply another kind of meaning. God Almighty says: *and the mountains will be set moving and become a mirage* (78:20). It goes without saying that the movement of mountains and being scattered like dunes of 'shifting sand'[8] and 'carded wool' (101:5) will not lead to their 'becoming a mirage'.

God Almighty says: *And you see the mountains, which you suppose to be stationary, while they drift like passing clouds the handiwork of God who has made everything faultless* (27:88). This 'seeing' occurs at the time of addressing or at the time of 'blowing' (*nafkh*); as it[9] is supported by the fact that this verse follows the verse of 'blowing'.

The verse in question is thus thematically similar to the quake of the Hour:[10] *The day that you will see it, every suckling female will neglect what she suckled, and every pregnant female will deliver her burden, and you will see the people drunk, yet they will not be drunken* (22:2). Nevertheless, such meaning would not correspond to the verse: *And you see the mountains, which you suppose to be stationary, while they drift like passing clouds* (27:88), as the latter verse implies that notwithstanding their movability, mountains remain moveable with their physical features, like loftiness, grandeur, stability, and stationariness.

This theme is reflected in the verse: *the handiwork of God who has made everything faultless* (27:88), as its meaning does not correspond to destruction and levelling of mountains; but it implies that mountains are essentially incorruptible and hardly destructible. The movement of mountains does not correspond

to their firm establishment and faultlessness of their existence in their places, but their levelling occurs simultaneously with their firm establishment. Accordingly, their becoming a mirage stands in no contradiction to faultlessness of their creation and permanence (*baqāʾ*) of their ipseity (*huwiyya*) and existence.

NOTES

[1] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 6, p. 318.

[2] The soul leaving the body or the first death is intended. Ṣaʿqa is not considered as death since in that experience the soul does not leave the body.

[3] If the dual implies two times, the two deaths and the lives referred to in the blessed verse might imply the death of the body and the death of *ṣaʿqa* and also life after the soul leaves the body and life after the *ṣaʿqa*, in which case death is also applied to *ṣaʿqa*. For further details, see Shaykh al-Bahāʾī, *Arbaʿīn*, pp. 259–263.

[4] Those on the earth or the people of the earth may imply those who live in pursuit of their desires and when they find themselves in the incorporeal intermediate world they are grieved and despite their arrival in the intermediate world they are still like people inhabiting the earth. The other possibility is that those on the earth are all those in the intermediate world, rather than only the wretched. The intermediate world is seemingly regarded as the continuity of this worldly life and the people in this world are termed the people of the earth. This theme is implied by some verses and in particular some traditions and the author makes references to it in this book.

[5] al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 132.

[6] *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 207, chapter 64, tradition 14.

[7] That is, destruction of the world before Resurrection.

[8] See Qurʾān 73:14.

[9] That is, the latter suggestion.

[10] See the blessed verse 22:1.

9

ON THE DAY OF RESURRECTION

God Almighty says:

> The day when they will emerge [from their graves], nothing about them will be hidden from God. 'To whom does the sovereignty belong today?' 'To God, the One, the All-subjugating!' (40:16)
>
> A day when you will turn back [to flee], not having anyone to protect you from God. (40:33)
>
> Answer your Lord before there comes a day for which there is no revoking from God. On that day you will have no refuge, neither will you have [any chance for] denial. (42:47)
>
> The day when a friend will not avail a friend in any way. (44:41)
>
> And they will not conceal any matter from God. (4:42)
>
> And all command that day will belong to God. (82:19)

These verses, among others, depict the Day of Resurrection through attributes which are not seemingly particular to that day, as sovereignty (*mulk*), command (*amr*), and power (*qudra*) permanently belong to God and beings are always obvious before

God rather than concealed from Him. They have neither refuge nor protection from Him. However, God Almighty says:

> Among the people are those who set up associates besides God, loving them as if loving God but the faithful have a more ardent love for God though the wrongdoers will see, when they sight the punishment, that power, altogether, belongs to God, and that God is severe in punishment. When those who were followed will disown the followers, and they will sight the punishment while all their means of recourse will be cut off. (2:165–166)

It will be at that time that all means will be cut off and relations will be severed. All the effects made or received by beings in their order of existence in the world of matter and bodies and its ensuing world will be before long effaced.

Nothing will thus affect anything else nor will be affected by it. Nothing will have any benefit or loss to something else. Existence of the same circumstances and relations would have necessitated their existence on the Day of Resurrection. Nothing may violate any of its decrees nor may it leave its place, unless essences cease to exist and quiddities transform. This is impossible, since divine words are not subject to alteration.

The illusory existence of these beings, subsisting in God but inexistent by themselves, will be effaced. It is but their relation to God that remains, but other relations are all rendered inexistent. Since they had been inexistent *per se*, their inexistence simply become 'obvious', but they had not been existent to become inexistent. In other words, there is neither any existence nor any effect for any entity besides God. There is no sovereignty for any entity besides God and there is no possessor but He. This theme is reflected in these verses:

> Master of the Day of Retribution. (1:4)

> It is a day when no soul will be of any avail to another soul and all command that day will belong to God. (82:19)

> To whom does the sovereignty belong today?' 'To God, the One, the All-subjugating!' (40:16)[1]

Manifestation of the inexistence of illusory beings and outward means, rather than their inexistence, is reflected in these verses: *Were you to see when the wrongdoers are in the throes of death, and the angels extend their hands [saying]: 'Give up your souls!'… Certainly, all links between you have been cut, and what you used to claim has forsaken you!* (6:93–4). It is to be noted that they are considered as inexistent despite the fact that the means of recourse and relations still exist upon death. Accordingly, it is their inexistence which will be discovered.[2]

Imam ʿAlī (AS) says in a sermon in *Nahj al-Balāgha*, 'God Almighty will be alone and unaccompanied by any other entity following the annihilation of the world as He was likewise before the creation of the world. There will be neither time nor place. Time and specified terms will be inexistent, years and moments will disappear and there will be no entity but the One and All-subjugating God to Whom will return all matters.'[3]

It is narrated from Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam in *al-Iḥtijāj* that a heretic (*zindīq*) was asking questions from Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS), including: 'Will the soul decompose upon leaving its cast or will it survive?' The Imam (AS) replied, 'The soul will survive until the Trumpet will be blown into when all entities will become inexistent; there will be neither intelligence nor any intelligible. All entities will then become existent as they had been created by their Planner (*al-Mudabbir*). That will take place after four hundred years when there will be no creation. The interval between those two blows will be those four hundred years.'[4]

It is narrated from Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS), in al-Qummī's *Tafsīr*, as saying, 'God Almighty will then say, '*To whom does the sov-*

ereignty belong today?' and He replies, '*To God, the One, the All-Subjugating.*'[5] It is narrated from the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ʿAlī (AS), in *al-Tawḥīd*, as saying, 'God Almighty asks, '*To whom does the sovereignty belong today?*' And the souls of His prophets, messengers and proofs (*ḥujaj*) will reply, '*To God, the One, the All-subjugating.*'[6]

Imam al-Sajjād (AS) is narrated, in al-Qummī's *Tafsīr*, as saying, 'The All-subjugating God will say in a loud voice which will be heard in all corners of the heavens and the earth, '*To whom does the sovereignty belong today?*' As there will be no one to answer, He will say, '*To God, the One, the All-Subjugating.*'[7]

The present author states that it is befitting to consider the traditions narrated from the Imams (AS) who are unanimous that they have reconciled the annihilation of the heavens and the earth and their existence with the annihilation of years, moments, and their permanence, and lack of an entity to reply to the divine call and the existence of the one providing the answer. It is worthy of note to consider the answer provided by God Almighty: '*To God, the One, the All-Subjugating.*' The veracity of our argument is manifest by reflecting on the divine names 'the One' (*al-Wāḥid*) and 'the All-subjugating' (*al-Qahhār*).[8]

When entities become divested of independent existence all subsistents (*thubūtāt*) will return to mirage-like and illusory (*wahmī*) realizations and all means and causes will become inexistent, as reflected in these verses:

> They shall have no one to protect [them] from God. (40:33)

> On that day you will have no refuge, neither will you have [any chance for] denial. (42:47)

> My wealth did not avail me. My authority has departed from me. (69:28–29)

> The day when a friend will not avail a friend in any way. (44:41)
>
> There will be neither any bargaining nor friendship. (14:31)
>
> Nor shall any intercession benefit it. (2:123)
>
> Then they will be told, 'Where are those you used to take as partners besides God?' They will say, 'They have forsaken us. Rather, we did not invoke anything before.' That is how God leads astray the faithless. (40:73–74)

Their saying: *Rather, we did not invoke…*implying that they did not call anyone besides God and they did not worship any partner ascribed to Him indicates that they had been allured by the illusion and play of the world which proved to be in vain. God Almighty says: *That is how God leads astray the faithless* (40:74). This theme is reflected in these verses as well:

> We shall say to those who ascribe partners [to God],' Stay where you are you and your partners!' Then, We shall set them apart from one another and their partners will say, 'It was not us that you worshipped.' (10:28)
>
> We plead for non-liability before You: it was not us that they worshipped. (28:63)
>
> You do not worship besides Him but [mere] names that you and your fathers have coined, for which God has not sent down any authority. (12:40)
>
> I did not create the jinn and the humans except that they may worship Me. (51:56)[9]

When the causes, that is, the hierarchies of determined and

preordained existence and the effects between them become inexistent, the hidden decree (*ḥukm al-bāṭin*) becomes manifest. It goes without saying that the manifest (*ẓāhir*) appears through the hidden (*bāṭin*). It is at that time that the invisible (*ghayb*) and the visible (*shahada*) become united, since each entity is the visible *per se* and the invisible is a relative meaning which is actualized by inexistence of some entity with respect to another entity and disappearance of one from another, whether such imperceptions arise from sense-perception (*ḥiss*) or from some other cause. In short, the veils concealing entities from each other will be effaced through the inexistence of causes.

This theme is reflected in these verses:

> The day when they will emerge [from their graves], nothing about them will be hidden from God. (40:16)
>
> Together they will be presented before God. (14:21)
>
> On the day when the secrets are examined (86:9).
>
> Does he not know, when what is in the graves is turned over, and what is in the breasts is divulged, indeed their Lord will be best aware of them on that day? (100:9–11)
>
> The day when neither wealth nor children will avail, except him who comes to God with a sound heart. (26:88–89)

These verses may shed light on the verses and traditions dealing with the projection of the earth (*burūz al-arḍ*). It is narrated from Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) in *al-Kāfī* regarding the verse: *The day when neither wealth nor children will avail* (26:88) as saying, 'A sound heart is implied that encounters its Lord when there will be no one there but it.' Then, he said, 'Any heart touched by polytheism or doubt is fruitless. By asceticism (*zuhd*) in this world they (i.e.,

prophets and friends of God) intended to concentrate simply on and keep away their hearts from things other than the hereafter.'[10]

The present author states that the blessed verse *No indeed! They will be alienated from their Lord on that day* (83:15) is in no contradiction to what was discussed above, since, as it will be mentioned below, this verse excludes the veneration of believers from others and affirms the divine judgement according to which rewards and punishment are accorded based on deeds and *every soul shall be recompensed fully for what it has earned* (3:161) and *Whatever [good] it earns is to its benefit, and whatever [evil] it incurs is to its harm* (2:286). As they cast a veil on themselves before God, its consequences will inevitably become manifest on the Day of Resurrection, as reflected in these verses:

> The day when the catastrophe occurs, and they are summoned to prostrate themselves, they will not be able [to do it]. With a humbled look [in their eyes], they will be overcast by abasement. Certainly, they were summoned to prostrate themselves while they were safe. (68:42–43)[11]

Inexistence of causes, effacement of veils, and manifestation of the hidden (*bāṭin*) that comprehends (*muḥīṭ*) and constitutes (*muqawwim*) the manifest (*ẓāhir*) indicate that Resurrection comprehends that modality of being and what exists in it or will be ensued by it. The existence of the manifest depends on the hidden and the former is present before the latter, not vice versa. This is reflected in these verses:

> And they say, 'When will that be?' Say, 'Maybe it is near…' (17:51)

> When they see it brought near, the countenances of the faithless will be distorted. (67:27)

> And they are seized from a close quarter. (34:51)

> The matter of the Hour is just like the twinkling of an eye, or [even] swifter. (16:77)

> The day when every soul will find present whatever good it has done; and as to whatever evil it has done. (3:30)

> And were it not for a prior decree of your Lord [granting them reprieve] until a specified time, decision would have been made between them. (42:14)

It is to be noted that priority (*sabaq*) with respect to some specific entity leads to interposition (*ḥaylūla*). If one says 'I arrived before (*sabaqtu*) at such and such place' it implies that there is some other entity which one has interposed between that and the place in question before that entity could arrive there earlier. Accordingly, the word of God with respect to 'specified term' (*ajal al-musammā*), as reflected in *on the earth shall be your abode and sustenance for a time* (2:36), implies that Resurrection comprehends them and is near them and had it not been for the barrier divinely placed before them, they would have been encompassed by the final judgement on the Day of Resurrection.[12]

This theme is reflected in these verses:

> The day they see it, it shall be as if they had not stayed [in the world] except for an evening or forenoon. (79:46)

> The day when they see what they are promised. (46:35)

> He will say, 'How many years did you remain on earth?' They will say, 'We remained for a day, or part of a day; yet ask those who keep the count.' He will say, 'You only remained a little; if only you had known.' (23:112–114)

> But those who were given knowledge and faith will say, 'Certainly, you remained in God's Book until the Day of Resurrection.' (30:56)

What was mentioned above regarding the manifestation of the hidden and the inexistence of the manifest requires the manifestation of God, removal of the veil of quiddities (*māhiyyāt*), and casting aside the veil of ipseities (*huwiyyāt*) on that day. It will be at that time that all wayfarers attain to the final goal and return to the ultimate goal through their endeavours. This is the divine word:

> They ask you concerning the Hour, When will it set in, considering your frequent mention of it? Its outcome is with your Lord. (79:42–44)

> And that the terminus is toward your Lord. (53:42)

> O man! You are laboring toward your Lord laboriously, and you will encounter Him (84:6).

> And to Him you shall be brought back. (2:245)

> And to Him you will be returned. (29:21)

> And toward Him is the return. (5:18)

> To God do all matters return. (42:53)

> They say, 'When will this promise be fulfilled, should you be truthful? Say, 'Its knowledge is only with God…' (67:25–26)

> They question you concerning the Hour, when will it set in? Say, 'Its knowledge is only with my Lord: none except Him shall manifest it at its time. It will weigh heavy on the heavens and the earth. It will not overtake you but suddenly.' They ask you as if you were

in the know of it. Say, 'Its knowledge is only with God, but most people do not know.' (7:187)

Having imagined that Resurrection is some temporal entity attached to their time through some chain, they inquired about the time of its happening. God Almighty turns to something that may be appreciated by them. When they insisting on making the query, He says that knowing it will not be manifested by Him and knowing the time of Resurrection is essentially concealed from any being besides God; rather it is concealed for some good and unlike our knowledge it may not be acquired by others. It is for the same reason that their query is followed by the divine words: *but most people do not know* (7:187).[13]

Upon the removal of the veil of hierarchies and ipseities on the Day of Resurrection, when nothing will be concealed by something else, the space will be the space of light, since ipseities will have been changed and will have been luminous, as reflected in these verses:

And the sky will be opened and become gates. (78:19)

The day the earth is transformed into another earth and the heavens [as well], and they are presented before God, the One, the All-subjugating. (14:48)

Yet the entire earth will be in His fist on the Day of Resurrection, and the heavens, scrolled, in His right hand. (39:67)

And the earth will glow with the light of her Lord. (39:69)

But the abode of the Hereafter is indeed Life. (29:64)

When the earth is spread out and throws out what is in it, emptying itself. (84:3–4)

> And the earth discharges her burdens (99:2).

It is narrated from Imam al-Sajjād (AS), in al-Qummī's *Tafsīr* regarding *the earth is transformed into another earth* (14:48), as saying, 'Another earth implies the earth on which no sin is committed, where it is evident and manifest and on which there is neither mountain nor plants, as it had been divinely levelled. His Throne will be established on water as it had been likewise only through divine greatness and omnipotence.'[14]

What was inferred above from the verses as to the luminosity of beings is not in contradiction to other verses wherein the light of disbelievers is negated; instances of which include the following verses:

> And one whom God has not granted any light has no light. (24:40)

> And on the Day of Resurrection We shall raise him blind. (20:124)

> The day the hypocrites, men and women, will say to the faithful, 'Please let up on us, that we may glean something from your light!' (57:13)

This last verse implies that believers will have light in the hereafter. Regarding believers God Almighty says:

> …With their light moving swiftly before them and on their right… (57:12)

> They shall have their reward and their light… (57:19)

> …Like one who dwells in a manifold darkness… (6:122).

> Their patrons are the Rebels, who drive them out of light into darkness. (2:257)

These are all manifestations of the darkness which they acquired in this world and they will inevitably emerge in the hereafter. There will be thus two things in the hereafter: darkness and light divinely bestowed by God of which polytheists are deprived. Reference was made above to removal of veil between man and his Lord.

There are further verses regarding this theme:

…They forswear themselves… (6:24)

…Thereat they submit: 'We were not doing any evil!' Yes, indeed God knows best what you used to do! (16:28)

…They will swear to Him, just like they swear to you [now]. (58:18)

It is attested in some traditions that polytheists will lie on the Day of Resurrection. As mentioned elsewhere, this will be the manifestation of the sin committed by them in this world. This is not in contradiction to the theme that untruth may not be said on that day, as all virtues and vices acquired by man will be inevitably manifested on the Day of Resurrection; as reflected in the verse: *And they will not conceal any matter from God* (4:42).[15]

This theme will be further discussed in the chapter devoted to Elevations (*aʿrāf*)[16] where it will be elucidated that it constitutes one single entity, but the point is that it is compassion and dignity for believers and misery and punishment for disbelievers. It requires reflection as it is a delicate point.

NOTES

[1] The beings and entities in this world in their entirety are essentially inexistent and totally dependent and such inexistence and dependence will be disclosed on the Day of Resurrection. They never had any real existence and independence to be divested of them.

[2] As they were inexistent from the beginning.

[3] *Nahj al-Balāgha*, p. 276, from the Imam's (AS) sermon on divine oneness (*tawḥīd*); ʿAbduh's edition, sermon 184, pp. 359–360.

[4] *al-Iḥtijāj*, vol. 2, p. 86; Najaf edition, vol. 2, pp. 97–98.

[5] al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 260.

[6] *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 227, chapter 32, tradition 1.

[7] al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 255.

[8] All entities are dependent on God and He is the only independent and sovereign being in the entire world of existence. Divine manifestations depend in their existence on God and they lack any independent existence. Divine manifestations are endless.

[9] Those who have associated partners to God and have worshipped such idols will see the manifestation of the glory and beauty of the Truth on the Day of Resurrection. They will say that they did not worship but the truth, as they will see that there is no independent being to be worshipped but God. They worshipped idols which were inexistent.

[10] *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 40, chapter on devotion (*ikhlāṣ*), tradition 5.

[11] They are being veiled from the divine blessings particularly bestowed on the faithful, rather than being veiled from divine manifestations. There is thus no contradiction between being veiled in this sense and not being veiled in the sense of seeing divine wrath, subjugation, and comprehensiveness and other divine manifestations of glory (*tajalliyyāt al-jalāliyya*), see *al-Mīzān*, vol. 20, 234.

[12] It is commonly believed that the intermediate world and resurrection, with respect to this world, are temporally remote, in that the world will remain until the advent of sometime and it will be followed by the intermediate world and then resurrection. Nevertheless, resurrection and the intermediate world comprehend this world and they exist now. It is to be noted that 'now' does not imply some temporal limitation as resurrection does not occur in time but it will be manifest to individual souls. Each and every soul will tread the path towards resurrection, but some attain to it speedily in this world and in this modality of being and pass through its stages. In contrast, some will experience death as the first stage when they enter the intermediate world where they stay for a certain period of time only known to God and they enter resurrection.

[13] The Truth will be manifest in resurrection when no being will remain unless it sees the manifestation of Truth.

[14] al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 252. The author states that it is attested in the Book that water implies the source of life in its entirety as well as the omnipotence and greatness in bearing the impressions of creation manifested in beings and when those impressions are effaced the Throne will return to being on the water.

[15] One who is accustomed to lying in this world will be raised in the hereafter with such vice and despite the manifestation of all truths he will continue to tell lies and thus manifest his vice.

[16] That is purgatory.

10

ON MAN'S RISING UP FOR FINAL JUDGEMENT

As return (*maʿād*) lies in the return of all entities with their existence in its entirety towards the reality from whence they were originated, and as the necessity of such return was mentioned above, a hierarchical existence endowed with different modes, some of which are in unity, is thus supposed to return towards its origin with the entirety of its existence. The human body will necessarily join the soul upon return, but this worldly modality will transform into another modality of ultimate perfection and life and, similar to a living soul, the body will be revived and luminous.

Imam al-Ṣādiq's (AS) words with the atheist, narrated in *al-Iḥtijāj*, referred to above, is a reference to this point: 'The soul abides in its own place: that of the beneficent abide in light and comfort and that of the maleficent abide in darkness and discomfort. But the body will transform into the earth whence it was created. Body parts will be eaten and disposed of as waste by savage beasts and insects will remain in their entirety in the earth and will be preserved before the One from whom an iota of earthly darkness is not concealed and knows the quantity and weight of entities.

'The earth of animate beings, compared to other earths, is similar to gold in the earth. It will rain on the earth upon the

time of rising (*baʿth*) and that rain will be for rising. The earth then will swell and tremble violently, like a water skin trembling. Compared to other earths, the human earth will become like gold which will be washed away with water. Butter is milk when it is churned. The earth of any cast will then assemble and by the leave of omnipotent God will be transported to the place of the soul and the forms will, by the leave of the Fashioner (*musawwir*), return to their original forms in which the soul will be infused. When their beings become balanced they will not find anything alien to them.'[1]

The present author states that the theme of the tradition narrated from the Imam (AS), 'It will rain on the earth upon the time of rising and that rain will be for rising…' is reflected in allegories wherein rising and revival are divinely likened to rejuvenation of the earth:

> And with it We revive a dead country. Likewise will be the rising [from the dead]. (50:11)

> And you see the earth dormant, yet when We send down water upon it, it stirs and swells, and grows every delightful kind [of plant]. That is because God is the Reality and it is He who revives the dead, and He has power over all things, and the Hour is bound to come, there is no doubt in it, and God will resurrect those who are in the graves. (22:5–7)

As it is understood from these verses, changes and transformations occur whereby the material man or only his body attains to the divinely designated final goal. It is reflected in the blessed verse: *He draws comparisons for Us, and forgets his own creation. He says, 'Who shall revive the bones when they have decayed?' Say, 'He will revive them who produced them the first time, and He has knowledge of all creation. He, who made for you fire out of the green tree, and, behold, you light fire from it!'* (36:78–80) that One

who makes fire out of a green tree and such fire is seemingly in contradiction to greenness is also able to revive decayed bones.

This theme is also attested in these verses:

> We have ordained death among you, and We are not to be out manoeuvred from replacing you with your likes and recreating you in [a realm] you do not know. (56:60–61)

> We created them and made their joints firm, and whenever We like We will replace them with others like them. (76:28)

It is worthy of note that replacing them with others like them implies successive creations, as reflected in these verses:

> Rather they are in doubt about a new creation. (50:15)

> Every day He is engaged in some work. (55:29)

Amthāl (like ones) does not imply the terms frequently used in rational sciences, that is, specific unity (*ittiḥād al-nawʿī*) and individual difference (*ikhtilāf al-shakhṣī*), since some similar entity in this sense is different from the entity in question and conclusive arguments may not be presented to those who deny Resurrection based on verses like: *Is not He who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like of them? Yes indeed! He is the All-creator, the All-knowing* (36:81).

The reason is that creating 'the like of them' does not necessarily imply making them return, but creating 'the like of them' and 'replacing them with others like them' imply making transformations in them such that such transformations are not made outside them. It is similarly in such context that God changes 'like' (*mithl*) into the 'object' (*ʿayn*):

> Do they not see that God, who created the heavens and the earth

> and [who] was not exhausted by their creation, is able to revive the dead?. (46:33)

> Nothing is like Him. (42:11)

The 'like' of an entity is the 'entity' *per se*. This is a kind of delicacy in expression. All these verses indicate that bodies are unceasingly subject to change, transform from one kind into another, and their hierarchies are subject to alteration until they reach the moment of Resurrection and are reunited with their souls. God Almighty says:

> When the graves are overturned. (82:4)

> Does he not know, when what is in the graves is turned over [100:9].

The raised bodies are referred to as 'what' (*mā*) in the latter verse.[2] As reflected in the blessed verse: *Yet it will be only a single shout, and behold they will be awake* (79:13–14), bodies will be reunited with souls.[3]

The soul has its own course and movement, as attested in these verses: *From God, Lord of the lofty stations. The angels and the Spirit ascend to Him in a day whose span is fifty thousand years* (70:3–4). Similar to angels, the soul ascends on divine ladders (*maʿārij*, pl. of *miʿraj*) towards Him. This theme is also attested in this verse: *Raiser of ranks, Lord of the Throne, He casts the Spirit of His command upon whomever of His servants that He wishes* (40:15).

Mention is made of the happy and the wretched together in these verses:

> For everyone there are ranks in accordance with what they have done. (6:132)

> Yet the Hereafter is surely greater in respect of ranks and greater in respect of relative merit. (17:21)

With reference to the dwellers of paradise God Almighty says: *Whenever they are provided with their fruit for nourishment, they will say, 'This is what we were provided before,' and they were given something resembling it* (2:25). Referring to the dwellers of hell, God Almighty says: *Their refuge shall be hell. Whenever it subsides, We shall intensify the blaze for them* (17:97).

The dwellers of hell will be subject to such change since God Almighty says that they will be the fuel of that fire[4] whose dying out represents the exhaustion of the dwellers in the blaze.[5]

NOTES

[1] *al-Iḥtijāj*, vol. 2, p. 86; Aʿlamī Publishers, Beirut, p. 350.

[2] It may imply that as long as the body is in the grave, it is divested of soul and is regarded as inanimate. *Mā* and *man* imply inanimate and animate entities respectively.

[3] Reunion of bodies and souls is seemingly implied by the pronoun *-hum* (they), as it collocates with non-intelligent entities.

[4] An allusion to the blessed verses 2:24 and 66:6.

[5] It is implied that there are specific degrees for each person, in that each and every soul passes through degrees in its course.

11

THE BRIDGE OVER HELL

God Almighty says:

> Indeed, those who are faithless and do wrong, God shall never forgive them, nor shall He guide them to any way except the way to hell (*ṭarīq*). (4:168)

> 'Muster the wrongdoers and their mates and what they used to worship besides God, and show them the way (*ṣirāṭ*) to hell! [But first] stop them! For they must be questioned.' 'Why is it that you do not support one another [today]?' (37:23–25)

It is reflected in these verses that there is a way to hell which will be shown by it to wrongdoers and their mates. It is implied in verses: *By your Lord, We will surely gather them and the devils; then We will surely bring them up around hell [scrambling] on their knees…There is none of you but will come to it: a [matter that is a] decided certainty with your Lord. Then, We will deliver those who are God wary, and leave the wrongdoers in it, fallen on their knees* (19:68–71) that 'mate' (*zawj*, pl. *azwāj*) implies Satan.

As attested in these verses the *ṣirāṭ* is thus a way over or into the hell, as mention is divinely made of 'coming to it' and 'leaving' it and 'being delivered' from it. It is mentioned elsewhere that hell will be surely filled: *Had We wished We would have given every*

soul its guidance, but My word became due [against the defiant]: 'Surely, I will fill hell with all the [guilty] jinn and humans' (32:13).

All men and jinn, good doers and wrongdoers, will tread the path stretching throughout the hell. The pious will be delivered and wrongdoers will be cast into hell. It is worthy of note that 'wrongdoing' (*ẓulm*) is repeated in these verses and its meaning is frequently collocated with other terms in verses like the following:

> Those who rebelled [against God] in their cities. (89:11)

Rebellion (*ṭughyān*) in this verse implies wrongdoing (*ẓulm*) and arrogance (*istikbār*) to excess.

> And caused much corruption in them, so your Lord poured on them lashes of punishment. Indeed, your Lord is in ambush. (89:12–14)

> Indeed, hell waits in ambush. (78:21)

Wrongdoing lies in negligence in honouring the obligations due to people, one's self, and/or God, that is, the guardianship (*wilāya*) of the friends of God, and the consequences of following Satan and concupiscent desires. Its root lies in being allured by the adornments of this worldly life and attachment to such illusions which are generally termed as civilization, that is, their mutual support (*tanāṣur*) of illusions which are devoid of any hue of truth. This theme may be the subject of the question in these verses: *'[But first] stop them! For they must be questioned.' 'Why is it that you do not support one another [today]?' Rather today they are [meek and] submissive!* (37:24–26).

The traditions in this regard are elicited by the above discussion. For instance, Imam al-Bāqir (AS) is narrated, in al-Qummī's *Tafsīr* under the blessed verse: *the day when hell is brought [near]* (89:23), as saying, 'The Messenger of God (SAW) was asked about the verse

the day when hell is brought [near] upon its divine revelation.' The tradition continues in the words of the Messenger of God (SAW), who said,

> The Trustworthy Spirit (Rūḥ al-Amīn, i.e., Gabriel) said to me that when God, the One God, assembles all mankind and the jinn, from the first to the last [generations], upon the Day of Congregation (*yawm al-ḥashr*), hell, dragged by a thousand reins, will be divinely brought forth when each of those reins will be held by a hundred thousand severe and mighty angels. The hell will be so intimidating, irascible, and breathing in and out so loudly that they will perish out of fear to stand divine reckoning. The hell will appear to everyone,[1] the righteous and wrongdoers. When no single one of the divinely created beings, neither a prince nor an apostle, will remain he will cry: 'O Lord! Help me! Help me!'
>
> O prophet of God! You will say, 'My people! My people!'
>
> The Bridge (*ṣirāṭ*) will be placed on it which will be narrower than a hair and sharper than a sword. There will be three bridges on it: first trust and compassion, second *ṣalāh*, third [justice of] the Lord of the worlds, the One God. Mankind and the jinn will be obliged to cross it and they will be preserved by trust and compassion. If they find deliverance from it, they will be preserved by *ṣalāh*. If they find deliverance from it, they will be led towards the Lord of the worlds. God Almighty says: *Indeed, your Lord is in ambush* (89: 14).
>
> Those who stumble on it will find some hold with their hands and feet. The angels surrounding them will call, 'O the All-forbearing! Forgive! Pardon! Come back with Your Compassion! Grant salvation!' people will fall into the fire like moths. Those who find deliverance by divine mercy will cross it, saying, 'Praise belongs to God. It is through His blessing that righteous deeds attain perfection and good deeds turn out pure. Praise belongs to

God who granted me deliverance by His grace and bounty from you when I had lost my hope. *Indeed, Our Lord is all-forgiving, all-appreciative* (35:34).'[2]

Similar traditions have been narrated by al-Kulaynī in *al-Kāfī*[3] and by al-Ṣadūq in *al-Amālī*.[4] It is narrated from Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) in *al-ʿIlal* that in his commentary on *For they must be questioned* (37:24) he said, 'No servant will take any step without being questioned about four matters: how he lived his youth; how he lived his life; how he amassed and spent his wealth; and about affection for us, the Ahl al-Bayt.'[5]

al-Qummī, in his *Tafsīr*, narrates from Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) and al-Ṣadūq, in *al-Amālī* and *al-ʿUyūn*, narrates from the Prophet (SAW) that questions will be asked about the *wilāya* (guardianship) of the Commander of the Faithful (AS).[6]

The Prophet (SAW) is narrated, in *Majmaʿ*, as saying, 'All people will enter the fire. Then, they will leave it [with different paces] based on their deeds: the first of them like lightning; then like blowing of wind; then like galloping of a horse; and finally like walking.'[7] He is also narrated as saying, 'The believer will be thus addressed by the Fire on the Day of Resurrection, 'cross quickly that my flames are [almost] dying out by your light!'[8]

When asked about *There is none of you but will come to it* (19:71) the Prophet (SAW) said, 'Some people of paradise upon entering paradise ask others, 'Did our Lord not promise us that we would all enter hell?' Others will reply, 'You have entered it but the fire has died out.'[9]

The present author states that these traditions will be elucidated by reflecting on what was discussed above and what will be discussed below in the chapter devoted to intercession (*shafāʿa*). God is the guide.

NOTES

[1] It literally denotes that it sticks out its neck to encompass mankind and the jinn.
[2] al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 451.
[3] *al-Kāfī*, vol. 8, p. 246, tradition 486.
[4] *Amālī al-Ṣadūq*, p. 176, *majlis* 33, tradition 3.
[5] *ʿIlal al-Sharāʾiʿ*, vol. 1, p. 256, chapter 158.
[6] al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 224.
[7] *Majmaʿ al-Bayān*, vol. 6, p. 812.
[8] Ibid., vol. 2, p. 812.
[9] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 8, p. 250, chapter 24.

12

ON THE BALANCE

God Almighty says:

> The weighing [of deeds] on that Day is a truth. As for those whose deeds weigh heavy in the scales, it is they who are the felicitous. As for those whose deeds weigh light in the scales, it is they who have ruined their souls, because they used to wrong Our signs. (7:8–9)

It is divinely said in these verses that 'weighing'[1] is an unchangeable reality. The plural form *mawāzīn*,[2] in *as for those whose deeds weigh heavy in the scales* and *as for those whose deeds weigh light in the scales*, may imply weighing quantitatively.

It is also reflected in these verses that weight and lightness lie in good and deeds; even though this suggestion seemingly corresponds to verses like:

> And He elevates righteous conduct. (35:10)

> God will raise those of you who have faith. (58:11)

> Then, We relegated him to the lowest of the low (95:5).

Weight of good deeds and lightness of bad deeds, as reflected in the Qurʾān, arises from the permanence of good deeds and

annihilation of bad ones: *As for the scum, it leaves as dross, and that which profits the people remains in the earth* (13:17).

Weight thus lies in performing good deeds not bad deeds, as attested in the verse: *it is they who have ruined their souls* (7:9). In the blessed verse: *We shall set up the scales of justice on the Day of Resurrection, and no soul will be wronged in the least. Even if it be the weight of a mustard seed We shall produce it and We suffice as reckoners* (21:47) the term 'scales' (*mawāzīn*) is elucidated by justice (*qisṭ*) and weight of good deeds and lightness of bad deeds are also mentioned.

It narrated from the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ʿAlī (AS), in *al-Tawḥīd*, regarding *as for those whose deeds weigh heavy* (7:8), as saying, 'Reckoning [of deeds] is implied. Good and bad deeds will be weighed: the heaviness and lightness of scales arise from having done good and bad deeds.'[3] The Imam is narrated in al-*Iḥtijāj* as saying, 'a small or large number of good deeds is intended.'[4]

The meaning of the verse: *They are the ones who deny the signs of their Lord and the encounter with Him. So their works have failed. On the Day of Resurrection We will not set for them any weight* (18:105) is thus elucidated, since 'failure of works' will leave no room for the scales of divine justice. Weighing by the scales of justice on the Day of Resurrection will be restricted to deeds which have not been failed. The above verse is not thus in contradiction to these verses:

> Then those whose deeds weigh heavy in the scales it is they who are the felicitous. As for those whose deeds weigh light in the scales, they will be the ones who have ruined their souls, [and] they will remain in hell [forever]. The Fire will scorch their faces, and they will be sullen in it. 'Was it not that My signs were recited to you but you would deny them?' They will say, 'Our Lord! Our wretchedness overcame us, and we were an astray lot. (23:102–106)

The traditions narrated in this respect are thus elucidated by the above discussions. It is narrated in *al-Iḥtijāj* that when a heretic asked Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) whether deeds would be weighed, he replied, 'No, deeds are devoid of corporeity. Further, one who is ignorant of the quantity and weights of entities will need to weigh them, but nothing is concealed from God.' The heretic inquired, 'What is intended by balance (*mīzān*)?' He replied, 'Justice (*ʿadl*) is intended.' He asked, 'What is thus intended in *Then those whose deeds weigh heavy in the scales* (23:102)?' The Imam replied, 'That is the ones whose deeds are of greater weight.'[5]

The Commander of the Faithful, Imam ʿAlī (AS) is narrated in *al-Tawḥīd*, in response to alleged contradiction between Qurʾānic verses, as saying, 'By *We shall set up the scales of justice on the Day of Resurrection* (21:47) the scales of justice is intended with which everyone's deeds will be weighed on the Day of Resurrection and it will be by the scales of justice that people's rights will be divinely restored to them and they will be rewarded and punished by the scales.'[6]

It is narrated in *al-Kāfī* and *al-Maʿānī* from Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) who in response to a question about *We shall set up the scales of justice on the Day of Resurrection* (21:47) said, 'The Prophets and trustees are intended by the scales.'[7] This response is further elucidated by the above discussion.

It is narrated from Imam al-Sajjād (AS) in *al-Kāfī* that regarding asceticism (*zuhd*) he said, 'O servants of God! Know that the scales will not be set up for polytheists nor will the scrolls of their deeds be opened, rather they will be all assembled towards hell, but the scales and the scrolls of deeds will be for Muslims. O servants of God! Be God wary!'[8]

NOTES

[1] *Wazn* here may be an infinitive denoting 'to weigh', implying that *al-ḥaqq*

(the truth) modifies *wazn*. It may thus imply that *yawmaʾidhin* (on that day) is the predicate of *al-wazn al-ḥaqq* (true weighing), connoting that true weighing will occur on that day, see *al-Mīzān*, vol. 8, p. 12. *Wazn* may as well imply *thiql* (weight, heaviness), rather than the infinitive to weigh, thus implying that the truth will serve as the standard of assaying deeds on the Day of Resurrection. Further, *mawāzīn* may be considered as the plural form of *mawzūn*, implying the measured deeds and the plurality here connotes the multiplicity of assayed deeds. For further details, see *al-Mīzān*, vol. 9, pp. 9–14.

[2] The singular form *mawzūn* literally denotes 'weighed', implying the deeds to be weighed in the balance.

[3] *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 262, chapter 36, tradition 5.

[4] *al-Iḥtijāj*, vol. 1, p. 321.

[5] Ibid., vol. 2, p. 86.

[6] *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 261, chapter 36, tradition 5.

[7] *al-Kāfī*, p. 1475, chapter 164, tradition 36; *Maʿānī al-Akhbār*, p. 31, *Bāb Maʿnā al-Mawāzīn* (Chapter on the Meaning of the Scales), tradition 1.

[8] Ibid, vol. 8, p. 66, tradition 29.

13

ON THE BOOK

God Almighty says:

> We have attached every person's omen (*ṭāʾir*) to his neck, and We shall bring it out for him on the Day of Resurrection as a wide open book that he will encounter. 'Read your book! Today your soul suffices as your own reckoner.' (17:13–14)

In these verses God Almighty says that He made man's omen (*ṭāʾir*) attached to him. *Ṭāʾir* implies the act deemed by man as a good or bad omen. Man's *ṭāʾir* is thus his own acts which are attached to him, depicted in these verses as something attached to his neck.

Man's deeds which lead to his benefit or loss are neither appreciated by nor clear to him in this world, as the outward aspects of entities are only perceived by the senses and their inward aspects are but perceived through effects. However, the modality of being in the other world is such that *the secrets are examined* (86:9) in it and *together they will be presented before God* (14:21). *Ṭāʾir* is thus depicted as *a wide open book* (17:13).

In the blessed verses: *God has kept account of it, while they forgot it* (58:6) and *rather, now has become evident to them what they used to hide before* (6:28) 'keeping account of' (*iḥṣāʾ*), 'becoming evident' (*badāʾ*), and 'attachment' (*luzūm*) are attributed to the

deeds *per se*, as the book (*kitāb*, i.e., account of deeds) includes the deeds or their truths, rather than the writings conventionally representing certain meanings.

God Almighty says:

> On that day, mankind will issue forth in various groups to be shown their deeds. So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it, and whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it. (99:6–8)

> For each [person] there will be degrees [of merit] pertaining to what he has done, that He may recompense them fully for their works, and they will not be wronged. (46:19)

There are other verses with a similar theme, for instance the following:

> The day when hell is brought [near], on that day man will take admonition but what will the admonition avail him?. (89:23)

> That day man will be informed about what he has sent ahead and left behind. (75:13)

It was mentioned above that the Day of Resurrection will encompass entire hierarchies of existence. The deeds as well as their realities will be presented there. In this respect, God Almighty says: *And you will see every nation fallen on its knees. Every nation will be summoned to its book: 'Today you will be requited for what you used to do'* (45:28), in which 'book' is a particular account of all the deeds. 'The book' in the blessed verse: *This is Our book, which speaks truly against you. Indeed, We used to record what you used to do* (45:29) implies *guarded book* (*kitāb maknūn*) (56:78) in which all past, present, and future happenings are recorded.

It is attested in traditions that all copies will be made from

this book and deeds are also written from it. It encompasses the realities of deeds and serves as the authenticity of other books. Reference may be made to it in the verse: *And the earth will glow with the light of her Lord, and the Book will be set up* (39:69).

Imam al-Ṣādiq (as) is narrated in *al-Kāfī*, in a tradition about the Tablet (*lawḥ*), as saying, 'That is the *guarded book* which is the original copy of all books. Are you not Arabs? One says to his friend to write a copy of this book. Does he not transcribe from a book transcribed from the original copy (*aṣl*)? This is intended in the verse: *Indeed, We used to record what you used to do* (45:29).'[1]

Imam al-Ṣādiq (as) is narrated, in al-ʿAyyāshī's *Tafsīr*, on the authority of Khālid ibn Nujayḥ, as saying, 'The book of man will be given to him on the Day of Resurrection, and he will be asked to read it.'

The narrator asked the Imam (as), 'Will he know its contents?'

He replied, 'He will be reminded by God Almighty and he will not fail to remember any twinkling of an eye, taking any step, saying any word, and any deed, as if he did that at that moment. It is thus said, *Woe to us! What a book is this! It omits nothing, big or small, without enumerating it*' (68:49).[2]

Another tradition with a similar theme is narrated in the same source.[3] The present author states that the Imam (as) explained 'reading' by 'recollecting'. Further details on this topic are to be found in my two treatises titled *Treatise of Acts* (*Risālat al-Afʿāl*) and *Treatise on Intermediate Principles* (*Risāla dar Wasāʾiṭ*).

God Almighty says: *Indeed, it is We who revive the dead and write what they have sent ahead and their effects [which they left behind]* (36:12). Recording the deeds thus includes the acts directly performed and also the effects and results of such deeds. As a result, everyone's deeds will be reckoned. This elucidates the blessed verse: *That day man will be informed about what he has sent ahead and left behind* (75:13).

It is narrated from Imam al-Bāqir (as), in ʿAlī ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qummī's *Tafsīr*, regarding *he has sent ahead and left behind*

(75:13), as saying, 'It implies what good and bad [deeds] he has sent ahead and what example he sets, in that if he sets bad examples he will carry the burden of his followers. He will be rewarded like his followers if he sets good examples but his followers' rewards will not be lessened.'[4]

It is worthy of note that *Indeed, it is We who revive the dead and write what they have sent ahead and their effects [which they left behind]* is followed by *and We have figured everything in a manifest Imam* (36:12) which indicates that the Preserved Tablet, referred to herein by *a manifest Imam* will be used in reckoning the servants' deeds, as the deeds of each servant will be reckoned by particular tablets. The Preserved Tablet is thus intended in the verse *This is Our book, which speaks truly against you* (45:29), as the Book is referred to here as *Imam*, that is following somebody's deeds. The original copy from which transcribing was made was referred to above in the blessed verse 45:29. Both meanings thus share the same origin.

It is reflected in blessed verses that people receive their records of deeds in different manners in that some receive their books happily and some other miserably:

> That day you will be exposed: none of your secrets will remain hidden. As for him who is given his book in his right hand, he will say, 'Here, take and read my book! Indeed, I knew that I shall encounter my account'…But as for him who is given his book in his left hand, he will say, 'I wish I had not been given my book, nor had I ever known what my account is!' (69:18–26)

The right and the left imply the two strong and weak sides of man or the two hands related to those two sides or the two states of happiness and wretchedness.

It goes without saying that unlike the views of literalist traditionists and some others, the right and left hands are not simply intended, since God Almighty does not say: *utiya kitāba-hu*

li-yamīnihi aw li-shimāli-hi (is given his book in his right hand or his left hand), rather *yamīni-hi* (his right hand) and *shimāli-hi* (his left hand) are preceded by the preposition *bi-* (in, to) which is indicative of causality. This argument is based on these blessed verses:

> Then as for him who is given his record in his right hand, he shall soon receive an easy reckoning, and he will return to his folks joyfully. But as for him who is given his record from behind his back, he will pray for annihilation. (84:7–11)

From behind his back (*warāʾa ẓahri-hi*) here substitutes *shimāl*, which indicates that the left hand is not intended, since the meaning of 'left hand' is not implied by *warāʾa ẓahri-hi*.

This argument is further substantiated by these verses: *The day We shall summon every group of people with their imam, then whoever is given his book in his right hand they will read it, and they will not be wronged so much as a single date-thread. But whoever has been blind in this [world], will be blind in the Hereafter, and [even] more astray from the [right] way* (17:71–72). They are called here *bi-imāmi-him* (with their imam), rather than *ilā imāmi-him* (towards their imam). However, in other instances wherein causality is not intended the preposition *ilā* (to, towards) is used, as in *kulla ummatin tudʿā ilā kitābi-hā* (*Every nation will be summoned to its book*) (45:28), rather than *bi-kitābi-hā*. Accordingly, *al-daʿwa bi-'l-imām* (summoning through the imam) is different from *al-daʿwa ilā al-kitāb* (calling towards the Book).

Having made mention of summoning people by their Imam, God Almighty elaborates on this expression by saying that some of them receive their record of deeds by the right hand and their true Imam, by whom they are called, is intended by the right hand (*yamīn*). Instead of saying, 'Another group will receive their records of deeds by the left hand (*shimāl*)', it is said: *But whoever has been blind in this [world], will be blind in the Hereafter* (17:72), implying that being endowed

with light and finding the path are intended by the right hand.

This theme is reflected in these verses:

> …With their light moving swiftly before them and on their right. (57:12)

> Those who have faith in God and His apostles it is they who are the truthful and the witnesses with their Lord; they shall have their reward and their light. (57:19)

This theme can be discussed further in detail.

In short, *yamīn* and *shimāl* seemingly imply 'good omen' and 'bad omen' and also 'happiness' and 'wretchedness', rather than 'right hand' and 'left hand'. This argument may be supported by these verses:

> And the People of the Right Hand what are the People of the Right Hand? (56:27)

> And the People of the Left Hand what are the People of the Left Hand? (56:41)

> The People of the Right Hand and what are the People of the Right Hand? And the People of the Left Hand and what are the People of the Left Hand? (56:8–9)

> And if he be of the People of the Right Hand, then 'Peace be on you,' [a greeting] from the People of the Right Hand! But if he be of the impugners, the astray ones, then a treat of boiling water. (56:90–93)

In the last two verses *People of the Left Hand* (*aṣḥāb al-shimāl*) are substituted by *the impugners* (*al-mukadhdhibīn*) *the astray ones* (*al-ḍāllīn*). The *People of the Left Hand* are thus those who

deny the truth and stray from the straight path. These two verses are seemingly a reference to the blessed verses: *As for those whose deeds weigh light in the scales, they will be the ones who have ruined their souls, [and] they will remain in hell [forever]. The Fire will scorch their faces, and they will be sullen in it. 'Was it not that My signs were recited to you but you would deny them?' They will say, 'Our Lord! Our wretchedness overcame us, and we were an astray lot'* (23:103–106), in which mention is made of deniers, the wretched, and the astray.

It was mentioned above that these verses are about the wretched who have been led astray by following false beliefs and those who violate the covenant of true Imams; however, disbelievers who deny God are not addressed in these verses, since no mention is made of divine reckoning of their deeds and there will be no book and reckoning for their deeds.

In short, the People of the Left Hand are the wretched and those who have been led astray. They are thus quoted as saying in these blessed verses: *My wealth did not avail me. My authority has departed from me* (69:28–29). They were withheld from following and admitting the truth by their worldly wealth and authority.

Each of the two groups of the happy and the wretched are called by their own Imams whom they join and it is through their Imam that they receive their record of deeds. This theme is attested in the traditions dealing with their natural disposition (*ṭīna*) and their essential happiness and wretchedness. Mention will be made of these traditions below, God willing. The wretched receive the records of their deeds from the left side and from behind them, since their Imams face them as their faces are reversed (*mankūsa*) and effaced (*maṭmūsa*).

It is about the Pharaoh that God almighty says:

> On the Day of Resurrection he will lead his people and conduct them into the Fire. (11:98)

> O you who were given the Book! Believe in what We have sent down confirming what is with you, before We blot out the faces and turn them backwards. (4:47)

> They will be told: 'Go back and grope for light!' (57:13)

It was mentioned above that the true Imam is intended by light. This is supported by reflection as well, since man through his worldly existence, that is, his body, faculties, and feelings, as descended from the All-wise and All-aware and as fashioned by the All-knowing, the Almighty, tends ahead and towards the right hand side and the two sides of left and back are but the annihilation of faculties and feelings.

When man treads the path of wretchedness, he attaches himself to the material world and gratifies his desires of the flesh. He has thus turned away from the truth towards the earth. Standing before his Lord on the Day of Resurrection, when he will be summoned for reckoning of his deeds, he will have turned backwards, similar to a blind man groping in perplexity for some goal, unaware of what to do and how he will be treated.

The true Imam and those summoned by him watch over the false Imam and his followers. God Almighty says: *Indeed, it is We who revive the dead and write what they have sent ahead and their effects [which they left behind], and We have figured everything in a manifest Imam* (36:12). The book which encompasses all deeds of happiness and wretchedness is described in this verse as the Imamate.

It is reflected in the verse: *This is Our book, which speaks truly against you* (45:29) that the Imam, identified as the book, makes judgements about the two groups, the happy and the wretched, and watches over them. This does not correspond to our above argument that calling the book is different from calling by the Imam, as records of deeds are not divinely described as Imamate, but the attributes of attachment (*ilzām*) and adherence are

mentioned, as reflected in the blessed verse: *We have attached every person's omen to his neck* (17:13). Further, the Preserved Tablet, from which the deeds are transcribed, is only described as Imamate. This is the Preserved Tablet from which the records of deeds are written and it is the followed Imam (*imām al-muqtadā*) and the axis of all the matters of the world.

It is worthy of note that *imāma* is divinely elucidated in many verses as *wilāya*, but *wilāya*, rather than *imāma*, is only divinely attributed to Him; since *imāma* clearly necessitates some homogeneity between the followed (*imām*) and the follower (*maʾmūm*). In short, the true Imam is the believers' guardian (*walī*) and the false Imam is that of disbelievers. These entirely clear truths shed light on many traditions dealing with making judgements by the guardians on the Day of Resurrection. Some of these traditions will be mentioned below.

It is worthy of note that the record of deeds will be given to two groups, but there will be another group: the Foremost Ones (*al-sābiqūn*) who have been brought near (*muqarrabūn*), as attested in these blessed verses: *You will be three groups: the People of the Right Hand and what are the People of the Right Hand? And the People of the Left Hand and what are the People of the Left Hand? And the Foremost Ones are the foremost ones: they are the ones brought near [to God]* (56:7–11).

These brought near Foremost Ones are the sincere servants of God who will be excluded from experiencing the blow in the Trumpet, being summoned, the scales, and being given their record of deeds. Further features of their states and deeds on the Day of Resurrection will be mentioned below. The record of deeds will be thus given to other groups who have committed good or bad deeds. However, the enemies of God and deniers have been excluded in the manner mentioned above.

The blessed verse: *We have attached every person's omen to his neck* (17:13) is applicable to those who have committed good and bad deeds, but those – like the sincere servants, who have

transcended the level of deeds and have no one but God – and also those – like deniers of the prophets who encounter God and their deeds have failed – each in their own manner, will not have basically a record of deeds.

The book mentioned in the blessed verse: *and We shall bring it out for him on the Day of Resurrection as a wide open book that he will encounter* (17:13) is different from the omen attached to man's neck (17:13), since had they been identical, it would have been appropriate to say, 'and We shall bring out for him a book', whereas it is said: *and We shall bring it out for him on the Day of Resurrection as a…book*. This verse, stylistically similar to verses like: *When the [scrolls of the] scriptures are unrolled* (86:10), is elucidated by the verse: *Read your book! Today your soul suffices as your own reckoner* (17:14), in that the manner of the book and reading it will be different from this world and it will be but recollection.

It is reflected in the blessed verse: *That day man will be informed about what he has sent ahead and left behind* (75:13) that man will be reminded about the particulars of his deeds. On the other hand, the blessed verse: *Rather man is a witness to himself* (75:14) indicates that man is briefly aware of his state. The tradition about the manner of reading the book was mentioned above. God knows best.

NOTES

[1] This tradition was not found in *al-Kāfī*, see al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 398.

[2] al-ʿAyyāshī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 254, tradition 34.

[3] Ibid., tradition 35, wherein Khālid ibn Nujayḥ is replaced by Khālid ibn Yaḥyā.

[4] al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 421.

14

WITNESSES ON THE DAY OF RESURRECTION

Witnesses (*shuhadāʾ*)[1] are divinely mentioned in the blessed verse: *And the earth will glow with the light of her Lord, and the Book will be set up, and the prophets and the witnesses will be brought, and judgment will be made between them with justice, and they will not be wronged* (39:69). Mention is divinely made of kinds of witnesses testifying against deeds on the Day of Resurrection. *Shahāda* (lit. testimony) to something is both applied to bearing and also presenting it.

It is evident that testifying against deeds will not be restricted to the outward aspect of deeds, but it will encompass testifying against the inward aspect of deeds and their manner as to obedience and disobedience to God as well as happiness and wretchedness, since judgement based on testimonies, by the Fairest of the Judges (*aḥkam al-ḥākimīn*), will necessitate bearing witness to the reality and inward aspect of deeds.

These attributes may not be perceived but through the relation of the witness who is aware of their origin as well as hidden intentions and secrets behind the deeds. Bearing witness on the Day of Resurrection, as reflected in the blessed verse: *no one shall speak except by His leave* (11:105), is a veneration of the exalted degree of the witness, but it is restricted to those endowed with such degree.[2]

God Almighty says: *None shall speak except whom the All-beneficent permits and who says what is right* (78:38). 'Right' (*ṣawāb*) is the opposite of 'wrong' (*khaṭāʾ*). This theme is also reflected in the blessed verse: *except those who are witness to the truth and who know* (43:86). Bearing witness on the Day of Resurrection will be possible only for those who precisely and unerringly record the realities of the deeds and are aware of the hidden intentions and secrets of those who perform those deeds.

Further, reflecting on human external senses and faculties we find out that such testimony and perception are impossible even regarding the deeds of those present and assuming the presence of the witness, let alone those of the absentees and assuming the absence of the witness. This is also applicable to the deeds of those near and also those far from us. We may thus clearly conclude that possession of some extraordinary power and perception is required to know hidden intentions.

It is through such power that one may know what is inside hearts as clearly as what is apparent and may also know what is absent and remote as clearly as what is present and near. Such power is actually some immaterial light which is needless of what is required by material matters in causing effects. Such requirements include time, place, and state. It is through this light that one may see what is inside hearts and distinguish between good and bad, pure and impure.

God Almighty says:

> No indeed! The record of the vicious is indeed in Sijjīn. And what will show you what is Sijjīn? It is a written record. Woe to the deniers on that day. (83:7–10)

> No indeed! The record of the pious is indeed in Illiyūn. And what will show you what is Illiyūn? It is a written record, witnessed by those brought near [to God]. (83:18–21)

It was discussed in the preceding chapter that the People of the Right Hand and the People of the Left Hand receive the records of their deeds from their Imams.

The blessed verse: *And say, 'Go on working: God will see your conduct, and His Apostle and the faithful [as well], and you will be returned to the Knower of the sensible and the Unseen, and He will inform you concerning what you used to do* (9:105) is not addressed to hypocrites but to all people. The deeds of the faithful will be thus seen. The believers mentioned along with God Almighty and the Prophet (SAW) as the seers of deeds are indubitably a particular group of the faithful. It is implied in this blessed verse that seeing the deeds of people by the Prophet (SAW) and the faithful will be among what will be divinely made known to people.

Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) is narrated, in ʿAlī ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qummī's *Tafsīr*, as saying, 'The good and bad deeds of servants are presented to the Messenger of God (SAW) every morning. Behold and be ashamed of the presentation of your misdeeds to your Prophet!'[3]

It is narrated from Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS), in al-ʿAyyāshī's *Tafsīr*, that the Imam was asked about the blessed verse: *Go on working…* (9:105) and he replied, 'The Imams are intended by *and the faithful*.'[4]

Numerous traditions have been narrated in this regard in *al-Kāfī*, *al-Amālī*, *al-Manāqib*, *al-Baṣāʾir*, and the *Tafsīr*s of al-Qummī and al-ʿAyyāshī.

In short, bearing such testimony is based on the presence of servants' deeds before the witness and it is applicable to the presentation of the testimony on the Day of Resurrection as well as to rewarding and retribution of the deeds, as reflected in these blessed verses:

> …And the prophets and the martyrs will be brought, and judgment will be made between them with justice, and they will not be wronged. Every soul will be recompensed fully for what it has done, and He is best aware of what they do. (39:69–70)

A group of the witnesses will be the near-stationed guardians from among men, for example, the prophets and the righteous guardians, as reflected in the verse: *and the prophets and the martyrs will be brought* (39:69). Distinction between prophets and witnesses is seemingly indicative of veneration of the exalted degree of the prophets.

In the blessed verse: *The day We shall raise a witness from every nation, then the faithless will not be permitted [to speak], nor will they be asked to make amends* (16:84), 'nation' (*umma*) implies a group of people distinguished from other groups when it is mentioned together with a prophet or some particular time and/or place. This blessed verse encompasses all groups as 'nation' is free from such association. It thus includes all guardians even though some of them happen to be among the nation of one single prophet.

It is clearly attested in the blessed verse: *Thus We have made you a middle nation that you may be witnesses to the people, and that the Apostle may be a witness to you* (2:143) as well as the above discussions on the meaning of witness that all the members of the Prophet Muḥammad's (SAW) nation are not endowed with such exalted degree of witnessing, but some of them are implied. It is to be noted that the entire nation is apparently addressed, as the particular group in question belong to that nation.

Similarly, the attribute 'hard' (as in 'strict') in the blessed verse: *Muḥammad, the Apostle of God, and those who are with him are hard against the faithless* (48:29), undoubtedly implies some of his followers, since, as unanimously acknowledged by the Muslim community, some of his followers were hypocritical (*munāfiq*) and disobedient to God (*fāsiq*) and such attribute is not applicable to them. Instances of general address and particular implication are frequently attested in other verses.

Accordingly, the witnesses of this nation testify as to the deeds of people and the Messenger of God (SAW) bears witness to them. These witnesses serve as intermediaries between the

Prophet (SAW) and people, as attested in the preceding verse as well as the following verse: *He has chosen you and has not placed before you any obstacle in the religion, the faith of your father, Abraham. He named you 'Muslims' before, and in this, so that the Apostle may be a witness to you, and that you may be witnesses to mankind* (22:7–8).

This verse, compared to the preceding one, is more explicitly indicative of the particularity of the witnesses of this nation. *He named you 'Muslims'* is an allusion to the prayers of Abraham (AS) and his son, Ismael (AS) in building the Kaʿba:

> Our Lord, make us submissive to You, and [raise] from our progeny a nation submissive to You, and show us our rites [of worship], and turn to us clemently. Indeed, You are the All-clement, the All-merciful. Our Lord, raise amongst them an apostle from among them, who should recite to them Your signs, and teach them the Book and wisdom, and purify them. Indeed, You are the All-mighty, the All-wise. (2:128–129)

Considering that he was praying for his children, Ishmael, and in general the Meccans, it may occur to us that he also prayed for the Quraysh as well, but as he prayed to God Almighty to make them Muslims, teach them their religious obligations, forgive them, and raise among them an apostle to purify them, it may be inferred that Abraham did not intend all the Quraysh, but a particular group of them simultaneously endowed with purity of innate disposition (*ṭahārat al-dhāt*), guidance (*hidāya*), acting upon divine covenants, belief in the Prophet (SAW), and purification through him. They must be thus particular individuals chosen from among the nation and specially endowed with divine blessings.

The theme of the above discussion on the meaning of the blessed verse in question is also attested in the traditions narrated from the Ahl al-Bayt. Imam al-Bāqir (AS) is narrated in *al-Kāfī*[5]

and al-ʿAyyāshī's *Tafsīr*[6] as saying, 'We are *the middle nation* and the *witnesses* of God *to the people*, and divine authorities on the earth and in heavens.'

The Commander of the Faithful, Imam ʿAlī (AS) is narrated as saying in *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl* as saying, 'We are only intended in *that you may be witnesses to the people* (2:143). The Messenger of God (SAW) is a witness to us. We are the divine witnesses to the people and also His authority on the earth. We are intended in *Thus We have made you a middle nation* (2:143).'[7]

Imam al-Bāqir is narrated, in *al-Manāqib*, as saying, 'The Imams and the Prophets (AS) may only serve as witnesses to people, but the nation may not be divinely endowed with bearing witness, as there are people among the nation whose testimonies will not be accepted even as to a bunch of vegetables.'[8]

Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) is narrated, in al-ʿAyyāshī's *Tafsīr*, as saying, 'Do you think that all Muslims are addressed in the verse: *that you may be witnesses to the people* (2:143)? Do you think one whose testimony as to a *ṣāʿ*[9] of dates is not acceptable will be asked by God to bear witness [to people's deeds] before all nations on the Day of Resurrection? God would never expect such a thing from the likes of such people. The Imams are intended in this verse regarding whom Abraham's prayer has been divinely answered. They are the *middle nation* (2:143) and *the best nation [ever] brought forth for mankind* (3:110).'[10] Numerous traditions with this theme have been narrated.

The meaning of this blessed verse is thus elucidated: *So how shall it be, when We bring from every nation a witness and We bring you as a witness to them?* (4:41). As the Messenger of God (SAW) is not directly a witness to his nation but he will be a witness to the witnesses of the nation, it is clearly inferred that witnesses of nations, rather than the nations themselves, are intended in this verse.

This theme is more explicitly reflected in the blessed verse: *The day We raise in every nation a witness against them from among*

themselves, We shall bring you as a witness against these (16:89), since bringing witnesses from other nations to testify on the Day of Resurrection is intended by *We raise* (*nabʿathu*), whereas the Messenger of God (SAW) is implied in *and We bring you* (*wa jiʾnā bi-ka*) and the witnesses of other nations are referred to by *from among themselves* (*min anfusi-him*).[11] The Messenger of God (SAW) is thus the witness to witnesses from his nation as well as the witness of witnesses from other nations.

It is narrated by al-Qummī regarding *a witness against these* (16:89) that the Imams are intended in *these* (*hāʾulāʾ*); the Messenger of God (SAW) is a witness to the Imams and they serve as witnesses to people.[12]

It is narrated in *al-Iḥtijāj* from the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ʿAlī (AS), in a tradition depicting the states of people of stopping places (*ahl al-mawqif*),[13] as saying,

> The Prophets will be raised and they will be asked about the fulfilment of their [prophetic] missions and they will say that they have conveyed the divine message to their nations. The nations will be asked about the missions of the prophets and they will deny: *We will surely question those to whom the apostles were sent, and We will surely question the apostles* (7:6) and they will reply: *There did not come to us any bearer of good news nor any warner* (5:19).
>
> The prophets will ask the Messenger of God (SAW) to bear witness and he will testify to the veracity of their claim and will refute the claim of those denied the prophetic missions. He will say to each nation from among them, 'Yes, a bearer of good news and a warner came to you [and conveyed the divine message]. God is Almighty, in that He is able to make your organs and limbs testify against your claim and that the prophets conveyed the divine message to you. God Almighty thus addresses the Prophet [as the witness to the prophets]: *So how shall it be, when We bring from every nation a witness and We bring you as a witness to them?* (4:41).

In depicting the Day of Resurrection, the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ʿAlī (AS) is narrated in al-ʿAyyāshī's *Tafsīr* as saying, 'They will all assemble in a specific place [on that day] and everyone will be investigated, but no one may speak unless he will be granted leave by the All-Compassionate and that he tells the truth. Then, the prophets will be raised and questioned. This is reflected in the blessed verses addressed to the Prophet: *So how shall it be, when We bring from every nation a witness and We bring you as a witness to them?* (4:41). The Messenger of God (SAW) is thus the witness to the witnesses and the witnesses are the prophets.'[14]

Mention was made above of denying prophetic missions by nations, their taking oaths, and also their lies in this regard.

The angels recording the deeds will be another group of witnesses, as reflected in these verses:

> You do not engage in any work, neither do you recite any part of the Qurʾān, nor do you perform any deed without Our being witness over you when you are engaged therein. (10:61)

> Certainly, We have created man and We know to what his soul tempts him, and We are nearer to him than his jugular vein. When the twin recorders record [his deeds], seated on the right hand and on the left: he says no word but that there is a ready observer beside him. (50:16–18)

> Then every soul will come accompanied by a driver and a witness. (50:21)

> Indeed, there are over you watchers, noble writers who know whatever you do. (82:10–12)

Testimonies of organs and limbs are attested in verses like the following:

> Today We shall seal their mouths, and their hands shall speak to Us, and their feet shall bear witness concerning what they used to earn. (36:65)

> On the day when witness shall be given against them by their tongues, their hands, and their feet concerning what they used to do. (24:24)

> The day when the enemies of God are marched out toward the Fire, and they shall be held in check. When they come to it, their hearing will bear witness against them and their sight and their skins concerning what they used to do. They will say to their skins, 'Why did you bear witness against us?' They will say, 'We were given speech by God, who gave speech to all things. He created you the first time, and to Him you are being brought back. You did not use to conceal yourselves lest your hearing should bear witness against you, or [for that matter] your sight, or your skin, but you thought that God did not know most of what you did. That misjudgment that you entertained about your Lord ruined you. So you became losers.' (41:19–23)

The above verses are addressed to the dwellers of hell and the witnesses borne by organs and limbs are addressed to them rather than the faithful and the dwellers of paradise.

Bearing witness by organs and limbs of the dwellers of hell to their sins may be indicative of disbelievers' obligation to follow the laws and precepts of religion, as the skins of the dwellers of hell are addressed. This theme is reflected in the blessed verse: *They will say to their skins* (41:21) in which the dwellers of hell ask their skins' about their bearing witness against them. Asking the skins, rather than other organs, may be justified by considering that senses of hearing and seeing transcend matter and are nearer to life and understanding, unlike skins which consist of pores which are not under obligation, and that they are absorbed in

matter and their bearing witness is more surprising and more definitive.

Organs and limbs reply in the blessed verse: *They will say, 'We were given speech by God, who gave speech to all things'* (41:21) in which 'speech' (*nuṭq*) substitutes 'witness' (*shahāda*), implying that this is divine command rather than their own act and they are divinely endowed with the faculty of speech; as a result, there would be no point in reproaching them as independent entities with free choice. In other words, speech is a divinely endowed faculty and no being is independent in its acts and matters.

This theme is thus followed by *He created you the first time, and to Him you are being brought back* (41:21), in that the origin and end of all beings are dependent on Him and *He sustains every soul* (13:33). He is not unaware of anything (7:7), but He watches over entities by themselves (11:93) and conceals Himself from entities by themselves. This theme is attested in the blessed verse: *You did not use to conceal yourselves* (41:22). God Almighty says that you were not able to conceal the sins which you had committed by your organs and limbs, not because you did not heed the organs and limbs and were not unaware of their bearing witness, but because you imagined that entities were independent of divine essence and they were not known to God Almighty.

Nonetheless, human organs and limbs are divine watch posts. You thus imagined that God Almighty is unaware of many of your deeds and you neglected God Almighty and His omnipresence and witnessing all things. God Almighty is all aware of whatever is known to any being. This theme is reflected in the blessed verse:

> That misjudgment that you entertained about your Lord ruined you. So you became losers. (41:23)

It is worthy of note that the principle according to which knowledge, power, and the perfections of intermediaries in their entirety are identical with divine knowledge, power, and

perfections is frequently attested in the Qurʾān. For instance, divine knowledge is referred to in these verses:

> Not an atom's weight escapes your Lord in the earth or in the sky, nor [is there] anything smaller than that nor bigger, but it is in a manifest Book. (10:61)

> Do they suppose that We do not hear their secret thoughts and their secret talks? Yes indeed! And with them are Our messengers, writing down. (43:80)

> Certainly, We have created man and We know to what his soul tempts him, and We are nearer to him than his jugular vein. When the twin recorders record [his deeds], seated on the right hand and on the left. (50:16–17)

God Almighty thus identifies His knowledge with the knowledge recorded in tablets and records.[15] Accordingly, the meaning of the frequently attested theme reflected in the blessed verse *then you will be returned to the Knower of the sensible and the Unseen and He will inform you concerning what you used to do* (9:94) is elucidated.

It is also to be noted that, as reflected in the preceding verses, life is a reality permeated in all beings; otherwise, according speech to organs and limbs would not have been considered as bearing witness, since speaking about some entity will be regarded as witness that the speech actually belongs to the speaker, which is impossible without life. On the other hand, bearing witness may not be actualized by simply giving life to witnesses on the Day of Resurrection and apprising them of the happenings of the world without their being alive at the time of their occurrence, as bearing witness is dependent on perception and presence.

All witnesses testifying on the Day of Resurrection, for example, hearing, seeing, skins, time, place, and all other entities are

endowed with life in this world. The meaning of these blessed verses is thus elucidated: *Who is more astray than him who invokes besides God such as would not respond to him until the Day of Resurrection, and who are oblivious of their invocation? When mankind are mustered [on the Day of Judgement] they will be their enemies, and they will disavow their worship* (46:5–6). The meaning of this verse dealing with the goddess of the disbelievers is thus clarified: *They are dead, not living, and are not aware when they will be resurrected* (16:21).

The present author states that this theme is widely attested in traditions. Imam al-Bāqir (AS) is narrated in *al-Kāfī* as saying, 'Organs and limbs only bear witness against those who deserve divine chastisement and the believer will receive his record of deeds by his right hand.'[16] This tradition is an allusion to the blessed verse: *We have assigned them companions who make to seem decorous to them whatever is before them and whatever is behind them, and the word became due against them, as it did against the nations that passed away before them of jinn and humans. They were indeed losers* (41:25).

Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) is narrated in al-Qummī's *Tafsīr*[17] and also in *Man Lā Yaḥḍuruhu 'l-Faqīh*,[18] regarding the blessed verse: *their hearing will bear witness against them and their sight and their skins* (41:20), as saying, 'Skins (*julūd*) implies private parts (*furūj*) and thighs.'

Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) is narrated in al-Qummī's *Tafsīr* as saying, 'When God Almighty assembles people on the Day of Resurrection, the records of deeds of everyone will be given to his right hand. Having looked at their records, they will deny that they committed those deeds. Then, angels will bear witness against them. The sinners will swear that they have not committed any of those deeds, as reflected in this verse: *The day when God will raise them all together, they will swear to Him, just like they swear to you [now], supposing that they stand on something. Look! They are indeed liars!* (58:18) Then, God Almighty will seal their

tongues and will make their organs and limbs reveal what they have committed.'[19]

Time and place, for example, noble and sacred days, months, feasts, Fridays, the earth, tombs, and mosques, are among the witnesses. God Almighty says: *and We make these days rotate among mankind, so that God may ascertain those who have faith, and that He may take witnesses from among you, and God does not like the wrongdoers* (3:140). The manner of testifying by days is thus elucidated. It is also clarified that the preposition 'from' (*min*) in *He may take witnesses from among you* (*wa yattakhidha min-kum shuhadāʾ*) is introductory (*ibtidāʾiyya*) rather than partitive (*tabʿīḍiyya*)[20] and days (*ayyām*) are intended by witnesses (*shuhadāʾ*).

Bearing witness by times and places is attested in these verses: *Then to Me will be your return, whereat I will inform you concerning what you used to do. 'O my son! Even if it should be the weight of a mustard seed, and [even though] it should be in a rock, or in the heavens, or in the earth, God will produce it. Indeed, God is All-attentive, All-aware'* (31:15–16).

Similarly, these verses are thus elucidated. God Almighty says:

> And the earth discharges her burdens, and man says, 'What is the matter with her?' On that day she will relate her chronicles for her Lord will have inspired her. (99:2–5)

Imam al-Ṣādiq (as) is narrated in *al-Kāfī* as saying, 'When the day arrives, it thus calls: 'O son of Adam! Do good deeds that I bear witness for you before God Almighty on the Day of Resurrection. I did not come to you in the past, nor will I come to you in future.' When night falls it will say the same.'[21] Similar traditions are narrated from Imam al-Bāqir (as) and Imam al-Ṣādiq (as) by Ibn Ṭāwūs in *Muḥāsabat al-Nafs*.'[22]

In *ʿIlal al-Sharāʾiʿ* Shaykh al-Ṣadūq reports that ʿAbd Allah al-Zarrād narrates that Kahmas asked Imam al-Ṣādiq (as), 'Should

one perform his supererogatory (*nāfila*) prayers at the same place or should he perform them in different places?' The Imam said, 'No, he should establish them in different places as they will bear witness to his benefit on the Day of Resurrection.'[23] The Holy Qurʾān and prayers and deeds will be among the witnesses. This will be briefly touched upon in the chapter devoted to intercession.

What was said above regarding witnesses may be demonstrably proved, since any relation realized between deeds and entities will be existentiated between those entities and the essence of the performer of those deeds. The point is that the deeds arise from the descents (*tanazzulāt*) of essences on which their existence is dependent. It is thus through the continuity (*baqāʾ*) of essence that its emanations (*ṣādirāt*) continue based on the kind of their realization and it is through the continuity of emanations that the relation between them and the realized entities continue.

Likewise, it is through the continuity of relations that entities continue, as the existence of relations is the existence of a connection (*rābiṭ*) which may not be realized without the existence of the two. It is through the existence of essence that deeds, relations, and entities are existent and it is through the presence of the essences before God Almighty with the entirety of their essences, witnesses, and expressions as to what is with them that the consequents (*tawābiʿ*) of the essence will do likewise.[24] God is Omniscient.

NOTES

1 The plural form of *shahīd* (witness).
2 That is knowing the hidden intentions and secrets.
3 al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 421.
4 al-ʿAyyāshī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 115, tradition 125.
5 *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 213, tradition 2.
6 al-ʿAyyāshī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 1, p. 81, tradition 110.
7 *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl*, vol. 1, p. 119, tradition 129.

[8] *Manāqib Āl Abī Ṭālib*, vol. 4, p. 194.
[9] A unit of measurement equal to 2,948 grams.
[10] al-ʿAyyāshī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 1, p. 82, tradition 114.
[11] In other words, the Messenger of God (SAW) is the witness to witnesses rather than the witness to the entire nation.
[12] al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 1, p. 167.
[13] That is the resurrected, those raised from the dead on the Day of Resurrection.
[14] al-ʿAyyāshī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 1, p. 268, tradition 132.
[15] These two are identified as one single reality. It is a reference to the principle according to which knowledge and other perfections of intermediaries are identified with divine knowledge and perfections.
[16] *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 58, chapter 203, tradition 1.
[17] al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 268.
[18] *Man Lā Yaḥḍuruhu 'l-Faqīh*, vol. 2, p. 370, chapter 227.
[19] al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 267.
[20] ʿAllāma Ṭabāṭabāʾī considered the preposition *min* to be partitive here, see *al-Mīzān*, vol. 4, p. 29.
[21] *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 447, chapter 389, tradition 12.
[22] *Muḥāsabat al-Nafs*, p. 15.
[23] *ʿIlal al-Sharāʾiʿ*, vol. 2, p. 39, chapter 46, tradition 1.
[24] That is they will testify before God Almighty.

15

ON RECKONING

It goes without saying that *ḥisāb* (calculation, arithmetic; reckoning), in the sense of discovering a numerical unknown (*majhūl al-ʿadadī*) through the application of methods whereby it will be known makes sense within the context of knowledge and ignorance. However, if we disregard knowledge and ignorance in assuming the reality *per se*, the meaning of *ḥisāb* will be unintelligible, since what is realized as a reality is the conclusion derived from premises and some effect arising from some cause.

For instance, when we apply arithmetic rules and operations to $8 \times 6 - 6 \times 3$ they will yield 30. However, coming to this conclusion through the application of arithmetic rules is imaginable at the outset, notwithstanding our initial ignorance of the conclusion, but in reality and in the external world only two concomitant numbers or some conclusion deriving from real premises without any temporal or spatial distance between them may be considered.

Divine knowledge of real entities, based on demonstrative principles, is identical to those entities. It is unlike the forms derived from the external world as it is the case with our acquired knowledge. Speech in divine knowledge is identical to speech in real matters. Divine reckoning is thus identical to real reckoning, in that conclusions follow real premises. God Almighty says that any entity in this world produces some effect of happiness and wretchedness.

God Almighty says:

> He said, 'I am Joseph, and this is my brother. Certainly, God has shown us favour. Indeed, if one is God wary and patient God does not waste the reward of the virtuous.' (12:90)

> We confer Our mercy on whomever We wish, and We do not waste the reward of the virtuous. (12:56)

> If the people of the towns had been faithful and God wary, We would have opened to them blessings from the heaven and the earth. (7:96)

> Then the fate of those who committed misdeeds was that they denied the signs of God. (30:10)

> How many a town defied the command of its Lord and His apostles, then We called it to a severe account and punished it with a dire punishment. So it tasted the evil consequences of its conduct, and the outcome of its conduct was ruin. God has prepared for them a severe punishment. (65:8–10)

> So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it, and whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it. (99:7–8)

> Whatever affliction that may visit you is because of what your hands have earned. (42:30)

> No affliction visits [anyone] except by God's leave. (64:11)

These verses and many others sharing the same theme indicate that results inevitably follow the matters in this world and the hereafter, as it has been demonstratively proved.

Causes and effects or premises and conclusions may not be

existentiated *per se*. Conclusions are not produced by premises, but they are all realized by divine emanation of existence. The consequentiality (*istitbāʿ*) of some entity in relation to some result is its existentiation through divine emanation. Likewise, blessing those provided for with the means of subsistence is actually being divinely existentiated so that the being may continue its existence.

Reckoning (*ḥisāb*) is in a way similar to provision (*rizq*), in that the cloud of divine blessing (*fayḍ*) always arises from the ocean of compassion and showers blessings on the ocean of contingency (*imkān*). Any subsequent drop seeks existence for the previous drop (i.e., provision) and a means of meeting some demand required by its essence, that is, reckoning. As reflected in the blessed verse: *By the Lord of the sky and the earth, it is indeed the truth, just as [it is a fact that] you speak* (51:23) blessing beings with sustenance as well as reckoning between them are permanent and necessary.[1]

As attested in *Nahj al-Balāgha*, the Imam (AS) was asked about the manner of divine reckoning of creatures notwithstanding their multiplicity. He replied, 'In the same manner that they are divinely being provided for notwithstanding their multiplicity.' He was asked, 'How will He reckon them as they do not see Him?' He said, 'In the same manner that He blesses them with sustenance but they do not see Him.'[2] This is one of the most precious words in this regard.

In short, matters, including our deeds, which are realized in the external world, are not subject to separation. As attested in the blessed verses: *God judges, and there is none who may repeal His judgement, and He is swift at reckoning* (13:41); *Look! All judgement belongs to Him, and He is the swiftest of reckoners* (6:62) judgement belongs to God Almighty and there is no other judge to contradict or override His judgement, that is, His judgement may not be nullified, postponed, debilitated, delayed, altered, facilitated, or rendered subject to any other change. Such semantic usage is thus indicative of the acquisition of meaning with respect to the

understanding of those whose deeds will be reckoned. This theme is attested in the following verses:

> They are afraid of an adverse reckoning. (13:21)
>
> Then, We called it to a severe account (65:8).
>
> The angels and the Spirit ascend to Him in a day whose span is fifty thousand years (70:4).

Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī is narrated in *Majmaʿ al-Bayān* that it was said to the Messenger of God (AS), 'That day will be so long!' He said, 'By the One in whose Hand is Muḥammad's life! That day will be more convenient for the faithful than establishing an obligatory prayer in this world.'[3] Abū ʿAbd Allah, Imam Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (AS) is narrated in *Majmaʿ al-Bayān* as saying, 'Had there been anyone else besides God to reckon the deeds on that day, creatures would have to wait for fifty thousand years, but it will be done by God Almighty in one moment.'[4]

These two traditions elucidate *a day whose span is fifty thousand years* (70:4). The ease of the Reckoning and the Day of Resurrection for the faithful are the result of their looking happily at their Lord. They thus see the reality as it will be, as attested in the blessed verse: *The matter of the Hour is just like the twinkling of an eye* (16:77). In contrast, the Day of Resurrection and reckoning will seem too long to the faithless and those disobedient to God as they will be unable to see their Lord. Accordingly, the difference in reckoning comes from people and other creatures, but divine command is one and there is no difference in it.

As discussed above, reckoning is permanent, but reckoning on the Day of Resurrection, as attested in Qurʾānic verses, will be similar to specification of sovereignty to God. It is attested in the blessed verses of the Qurʾān that all creatures will be present before the Lord on the Day of Resurrection and He will reckon the

deeds on that day. It is not seemingly specified that these matters will occur on the Day of Resurrection, but the meaning of such specification was touched upon above.

Reckoning the deeds on the Day of Resurrection thus indicates that the consequences of all matters will be fully and really manifested. Such manifestation is actually the result of creation and attainment of contingent beings to the final goal of their course, beginning from the Lord and ending in Him.[5]

God Almighty says:

> We shall set up the scales of justice on the Day of Resurrection, and no soul will be wronged in the least. Even if it be the weight of a mustard seed We shall produce it and We suffice as reckoners. (21:47)

> Did you suppose that We created you aimlessly, and that you will not be brought back to Us? (23:115)

> And that the terminus is toward your Lord. (53:42)

These verses indicate that the nearer man who comes to the path of happiness and treads the straight path will have an easier reckoning, in that he will have come closer to the final goal of creation, as attested in these verses: *Then as for him who is given his record in his right hand, he shall soon receive an easy reckoning* (84:7–8).

The more one keeps away from the truth and the more one deviates from the straight path, the more difficult will be his reckoning, as he will have kept away from the result of creation and the existential goal divinely endowed in his innate disposition (*fiṭra*). God Almighty says:

> That day will be a day of hardship not at all easy for the faithless. (74:9–10)

> And the faithless one will say, 'I wish I were dust!' (78:40)

> But as for him who is given his book in his left hand, he will say, 'I wish I had not been given my book, nor had I ever known what my account is'. (69:26)

The members of both groups will have no reckoning, in that the guardianship of all the deeds of the members of the first group is with God and they have done no deed and there will be no reckoning or record of deeds for them. They are the near-stationed exclusive servants divinely referred to in these blessed verses: *So they will indeed be arraigned [before Him all] except God's exclusive servants* (37:127–128). The members of the second group have no guardian; as a consequence, all their deeds will be in vain, and they will have no records of deeds and their deeds will be neither reckoned nor measured.

The messenger of God (SAW) is narrated in *Maʿānī al-Akhbār*, on the authority of Imam al-Bāqir (AS), as saying, 'Anyone whose deeds will be reckoned will be tormented (*muʿadhdhab*).' He was asked by someone, 'O Messenger of God! What about the divine words: *he shall soon receive an easy reckoning* (84:8)?' He replied, 'Presentation, that is, investigation [of deeds] is intended.'[6] Shīʿī and Sunnī authorities are unanimous as to the transmission and authenticity of this tradition.

al-ʿAyyāshī and other narrators narrate through numerous transmission chains from Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) that with regards to *and are afraid of an adverse reckoning* (13:21) he said, 'It implies thorough investigation (*istiqṣāʾ*) and precision (*mudāqa*) as to all the deeds and that their sins will be reckoned as their deeds but their good deeds will not be reckoned to their benefit.'[7]

What is intended by questioning (*suʾāl*) is thus elucidated by the above discussion. It is interlaced with reckoning, in that questioning lies in investigating the reality of some matter for which one is accountable. The matter on that day will revolve around the axis of the manifestation of the results and consequences of happiness and wretchedness acquired by the soul. In other words,

it revolves around the axis of accountability as to the acquisition of their results and consequences.[8]

God Almighty says:

> On the day when the secrets are examined. (86:9)

The secret places of souls (*makāmin al-nufūs*) are intended by secrets (*sarāʾir*, plural of *sarīra*).

> Rather, now has become evident to them what they used to hide before. (6:28)

> And they will not conceal any matter from God. (4:42)

> And whether you disclose what is in your hearts or hide it, God will bring you to account for it. (2:284)

It is narrated that this last verse is abrogated (*mansūkh*) by the verse: *Excepting [minor and occasional] lapses. Indeed, your Lord is expansive in [His] forgiveness* (53:32) which implies that the former is elucidated by the latter, as abrogation (*naskh*) herein implies to elucidate, to expound. Further, the verse in question does not imply the abrogation of the command, since the latter meaning is specific to commands and laws but it is not applicable to realities (*ḥaqāʾiq*).[9]

It is reflected in the following three verses that questioning and reckoning will be applicable to all deeds and bounties:

> By your Lord, We will question them all concerning what they used to do. (15:93)

> We will surely question those to whom the apostles were sent, and We will surely question the apostles (7:6).

[But first] stop them! For they must be questioned. (37:24)

This theme is also reflected in a number of traditions. It is narrated from Musā ibn Jaʿfar, Imam al-Kāẓim (AS) in al-Rāwandī's *Nawādir* that the Imam narrates from the Messenger of God, on the authority of his predecessors, as saying, 'All bounties will be subject to questioning on the Day of Resurrection except those employed in the cause of God.'[10]

It is reported in al-Mufīd's *Amālī* that Abū ʿAbd Allah is narrated through an uninterrupted transmission chain (*musnadan*) as saying on the authority of Ibn ʿUyayna, 'There is no servant against whom there is no divine proof as to sins and the bounties for which the grantee was ungrateful.'[11]

Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) is narrated as saying in Ḥusayn ibn Saʿīd's book, 'The registers of the records of deeds (*dawāwīn*) on the Day of Resurrection will be of three kinds: those of divine bounties; those of good deeds; those of sins. Those of bounties and good deeds will be compared and divine bounties will encompass all good deeds, but sins will remain.'[12]

There are numerous traditions with this theme, but the most comprehensive one is narrated in al-Ṣadūq's *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd* which is narrated from Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS), on the authority of Ibn Udhayna. In this tradition the narrator asks the Imam (AS), 'May I be your ransom! What is your opinion about free choice and predestination?' He replied, 'I say that when God Almighty assembles all people on the Day of Resurrection he will question them about the covenant which they alleged to Him, but they will not be questioned about what was predestined.'[13]

Shīʿī traditionists narrate from Imam ʿAlī (AS), Imam al-Bāqir (AS), Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS), and Imam al-Riḍā (AS) regarding the blessed verse: *Then, that day, you will surely be questioned concerning the blessing* (102:8) that *blessing* (*naʿīm*) implies guardianship (*wilāya*), rather than food, clothes, and other things by which human needs are met.

It is narrated that Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) said to Abū Ḥanīfa, 'I have heard that you had said that *naʿīm* implies clean food and cool water in a summer day.'

He replied, 'Yes.'

The Imam (AS) asked him, 'What do you say about someone who invites you to partake of clean food and cool water and then reminds you of your indebtedness to him?'

He replied, 'Miserliness (*bukhl*).'

The Imam (AS) asked, 'Is God Almighty miserly?!'

Abū Ḥanīfa asked, 'Then, what is intended by *naʿīm*?'

The Imam said, 'Loving us, the Ahl al-Bayt.'[14]

It is narrated from Imam ʿAlī (AS) in *al-Iḥtijāj*, 'The *naʿīm* regarding which it will be questioned implies the Messenger of God (SAW) and his successors who are divinely chosen and by whom God Almighty blesses their followers.'[15]

It is narrated in al-Baraqī's *al-Maḥāsin* on the authority of Abū Khālid al-Kābulī that having said the blessed verse in question, Imam al-Bāqir (AS) said, 'You will be questioned about the path of truth which you tread.'[16]

This meaning stands to reason, as *wilāya* is to know God and to attain to the degree of knowing Him, in that it is the goal of creation beyond which there is no other goal. An emanation (*ifāḍa*) may only be considered a bounty (*niʿma*) leading to human perfection and comfort of the soul that is on the path leading to the goal or it may be considered on the path leading to the final goal due to the veracity of its occurrence; however, such bounty will turn into torment (*naqma*, *niqma*) when it is against the goal. It will be in vain if it is not employed. Bounty is thus exclusively what lies on the path wherewith man may attain to *wilāya*.[17] Absolute bounty is truly divine oneness, apostleship, and *wilāya*, as reflected in a number of traditions. It is also attested in some other traditions that the bounty bestowed on us lies in *wilāya*. This is worthy of note. God is the Guardian (*walī*) of truth.

NOTES

[1] *Rizq* (provision) and *ḥisāb* (reckoning) are identical in terms of reality and the difference simply lies in mode (*ḥaythiyya*), in that in terms of the order of effects with respect to causes, the mode of the order of effects with respect to cause is a kind of reckoning, whereas the mode of the need of effect with respect to cause in terms of existence and its perfections are regarded as being provided for (*irtizāq*).

[2] *Nahj al-Balāgha*, p. 528, aphorism no. 300; ʿAbduh's edition, Egypt, part 3, p. 226.

[3] *Majmaʿ al-Bayān*, vol. 10, p. 531.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Manifestation of divine glory and beauty is here intended. It is to be noted that the final goal of any contingent (*mumkin*) being on its course is to return to some Name whence it has been originated. This argument, therefore, does not undermine the difference between souls in terms of happiness and wretchedness on the Day of Resurrection, as the wretched will not be outside the circle of divine Names but they will be the manifestations of divine subjugation.

[6] *Maʿānī al-Akhbār*, p. 262, Chapter on any one whose deeds are reckoned will be tormented (*bāb kullu muḥāsib muʿadhdhab*), tradition 1.

[7] al-ʿAyyāshī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 225, tradition 39.

[8] Reckoning is the acquisition of the results and consequence of deeds, in that it will disclose the realities hidden in souls. This question deals with objective existentiation (*takwīn*), in that the reality of a question lies in its making manifest some reality which is with the questioned and it occurs in our world through speech whereas it occurs in other forms in other worlds.

[9] Advantages and disadvantages forming the basis of judgements and laws are relative, in that spatial, temporal, and other factors affect their realization. Such advantages and disadvantages are subject to alterations according to different circumstances. In contrast, reckoning and the manifestations of the outcomes of deeds and misdeeds are not realities specific to particular individuals and groups nor may they be affected by the spatial and temporal circumstances.

[10] al-Rāwandī, *Nawādir*, p. 137, tradition 182.

[11] *Biḥār al-Anwār* (quoting al-Mufīd's *Amālī*), vol. 7, p. 262, chapter 11, 'Reckoning [the deeds of] the servants', tradition 13.

[12] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 7, p. 262, chapter 11, 'Book of Justice (*kitāb al-ʿadl*)', tradition 34.

[13] *al-Tawḥīd*, p. 354, chapter 60, tradition 3.

[14] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 7, p. 49, chapter 11, 'Book of Justice' (*kitāb al-ʿadl*), with slight differences in wording.

[15] *al-Iḥtijāj*, vol. 1, p. 332.

[16] *al-Maḥāsin*, vol. 2, p. 163, chapter 6, tradition 83.

[17] Guardianship of the Messenger of God (SAW) and the Imams (AS); divine guidance.

16

ON REQUITAL

God Almighty says:…*that He may requite those who do evil for what they have done, and reward those who do good with the best [of rewards]*(53:31). Rewarding good doers and punishing evil doers are attested in numerous verses. Such requital is one of the reasons for the occurrence of the Resurrection: *We did not create the sky and the earth and whatever is between them in vain. That is a conjecture of the faithless. So woe to the faithless for the Fire! Shall We treat those who have faith and do righteous deeds like those who cause corruption on the earth? Shall We treat the God wary like the vicious?* (38:27–28).

The wisdom of the wise lies in performing no fruitless deed. The All-wise God never forsakes the righteous and the evil doers, the wrong doers and the wronged, and He never fails to reward and chastise them for their deeds.

The relation between deeds and requital is divinely established in that God rewards good deeds and punishes misdeeds. The promise of granting blessings and warning against committing misdeeds come to absolute good deed (*iḥsān*) and absolute misdeed (*isāʾa*). Some qualities, based on some qualities of acts, are enumerated with respect to requital of good deeds and misdeeds which are indicative of particular relations between deeds and their requital. Further, God Almighty says that there is some identity (*ʿayniyya*) between a deed and its requital.

The blessed verse: *For each [person] there will be degrees [of merit] pertaining to what he has done, that He may recompense them fully for their works, and they will not be wronged* (46:19) commences with some specific relation and mention is made of the unity of deed and its requital in the middle. The rest of the verse is a reference to the just requital which is actually the cause of the said relation and unity. What was mentioned in the preceding chapter regarding the meaning and reality of reckoning is also applicable here.

It is reflected in numerous verses like *And beware of a day in which you will be brought back to God. Then every soul shall be recompensed fully for what it has earned, and they will not be wronged* (2:281) and *So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it, and whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it* (99:7–8) that man's good deeds and bad deeds will be fully returned to him.

This identity is attested in the blessed verse: *Indeed, those who conceal what God has sent down of the Book and sell it for a paltry gain they do not take in, into their bellies, [anything] except fire, and God shall not speak to them on the Day of Resurrection, nor shall He purify them, and there is a painful punishment for them* (2:174). It is thus elucidated that their disobedience in this worldly modality of being lies in concealing the divinely revealed verses and exchanging them for some worthless wares of delusion. Such exchange occurs in the inward modality of being appearing in the form of consuming fire. This is also attested in unfair use of orphans' possessions.

The last verse is followed by *They are the ones who bought error for guidance, and punishment for pardon: how patient of them to face the Fire!* (2:175) which indicates that they have turned guidance and forgiveness into disobedience and punishment which are based on steadfastness (*istiqāma*) and God wariness (*taqwā*), as consuming fire, disobedience, and punishment are based on concealing divine verses and exchanging them for some worthless wares of delusion.

The divine reference to changing forgiveness and guidance

to the effects arising from misdeeds, rather than misdeeds *per se*, and changing consuming fire and the like to some general meaning, like disobedience and punishment, indicates that altering the forms of deeds from a modality of being into another is generally established with regard to all instances of obedience and disobedience.[1] Understanding this theme requires reflection.

Regarding the faithful this theme is attested in verses like the following:

> God is the Guardian of the faithful: He brings them out of darkness into light. (2:257)

> He has written faith into their hearts and strengthened them with a spirit from Him. (58:22)[2]

> But We made it a light that We may guide by its means whomever We wish of Our servants. (42:52)[3]

> He will grant you a double share of His mercy and give you a light to walk by, and forgive you. (57:28)

> They shall have their reward and their light. (57:19)

In short, the forms of their knowledge, morals, and deeds are divine pure lights with which they are endowed that they find deliverance from impurities and shadows and thereby see the greatness and glory of God and the spiritual world (*malakūt*) of heavens and the earth. *Happy are they and good is their [ultimate] destination* (13:29).

With respect to the faithless and the disobedient God Almighty says:

> As for the faithless, their patrons are the Rebels, who drive them out of light into darkness. (2:257)

Those who deny Our signs are deaf and dumb, in a manifold darkness. God leads astray whomever He wishes and whomever He wishes He puts him on a straight path. (6:39)

We unleash the devils upon the faithless to urge them impetuously. (19:83)

Indeed, the devils inspire their friends to dispute with you. (6:121)

Whoever turns a blind eye to the remembrance of the All-beneficent, We assign him a devil who remains his companion. (43:36)

That is how to every people We have made their conduct seem decorous. (6:108)

We transform their hearts and their visions. (6:110)

Whomever God desires to guide, He opens his breast to Islam, and whomever He desires to lead astray, He makes his breast narrow and straitened as if he were climbing to a height. Thus does God lay [spiritual] defilement on those who do not have faith. (6:125)

Indeed, We have put iron collars around their necks, which are up to the chins, so their heads are upturned. And We have put a barrier before them and a barrier behind them, then We have blind-folded them, so they do not see. (36:8–9)

As for the faithless, their works are like a mirage in a plain, which the thirsty man supposes to be water. When he comes to it, he finds it to be nothing; but there he finds God, who will pay him his full account, and God is swift at reckoning. (24:39)

It is reflected in the above verses that polytheism and disobe-

dience to God in any form lead to being driven out of light into darkness whereby they are divinely led astray and are divinely divested of sight, hearing, and speech. Devils keep their company until the Day of Resurrection. Their hearts and visions are so altered that they seek but mirages and illusions, but they are not strong enough to approach the truth and benefit from it. They may be likened to one who extends his hand towards water to drink but he is unable to reach it. Their necks are in fetters and they are confined within the walls built by their own hands. All these instances are but the forms of deeds and the consequences of reckoning and requital of their deeds.

These themes are attested in numerous traditions. The Messenger of God (SAW) is narrated as saying, 'You will die as you live and you will be resurrected as you die.'[4] This tradition is reported in *Jawāmiᶜ al-Kalim*. The Prophet (SAW) is also narrated as saying, 'People are like mines of gold and silver.'[5] The knowledge of human origin and resurrection is reflected in these two Prophetic traditions.

Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) is narrated in *al-Kāfī* as saying, 'Having been interred in the grave, someone will appear to the deceased, saying, "We are three things to you: your means of sustenance (*rizq*) which came to an end upon your death; your spouse and children who abandoned you and returned; I am your deed, so I remain with you. But, I was the most worthless of these three to you."'[6]

Shaykh al-Bahāᵓī narrates through Shīᶜī transmission authorities from Qays ibn ᶜĀṣim, 'A group from the Banū Tamīm and I went to visit the Prophet (SAW) as Ṣalṣāl ibn al-Dalahmas was in his presence. We said, 'O Messenger of God (SAW)! Give us a useful piece of advice to us nomads living in deserts.'

The Messenger of God said, 'O Qays! Indeed, glory is accompanied by humility and life is with death. There will be the hereafter and there will be a reckoner for anything and a book[7] for any specified term (*ajal*). O Qays! You will have a companion at any rate that will be buried with you. He is living and you are dead.

If he happens to be respectable you will be respectable and if he happens to be contemptible you will be contemptible. He will be raised but along with you and you will not be raised but with him. You will be questioned as to him. So, make him righteous that if he becomes righteous you will be accustomed to him and if he becomes corrupt you will be in fear but of him. He is your deed.'[8]

There are innumerable traditions about the representation of fasting, *ṣalāh*, *zakāh*, *wilāya*, patience, kindness, the Qurʾān, expression of formulas such as 'Glorified is God' (*subḥāna 'llāh*) and 'There is no god but God' (*lā ilāha illa 'llāh*), and other acts of devotion and disobedience in particular forms corresponding to their real forms. This theme is supported by the above argument.[9]

Similarly, it may be stated that obedience and disobedience to God will be divinely rewarded and punished. It was discussed in Part 2 that obedience and disobedience, in this sense, are conventional (*iʿtibārī*) and mentally estimated (*wahmī*),[10] whereas reward and punishment are realities and no relation may be established between conventions and realities, unless the convention be surrounded (*maḥfūf*) by some reality.

Since obedience and disobedience are realized through the realization of man, even though some other matter be assumed to exist in the world, and as these two become inexistent by man's inexistence, even though some other matter be assumed to exist in the world, the reality that accompanies obedience and disobedience and leads to being rewarded and punished is inevitably with man.

Man consists of body and soul, though the body inevitably and gradually transforms and the attributes of obedience and disobedience and also happiness and wretchedness remain. Accordingly, what revolves around the axis of that reality is the soul, that is, the reality of man. There is thus some reality with man with which the said relation[11] is established. This reality is identical with particular meanings that are derived from the qualities of obedience and disobedience.

NOTES

[1] There is a kind of connection between deeds and misdeeds on the one hand and their rewards and retribution on the other. Concealing what has been divinely revealed entails error and divine chastisement; in contrast, sincere God-wariness results in guidance and divine forgiveness. The question is not the alteration of the forms of misdeeds as the consequences of certain acts of disobedience to God, but it is a universal matter permeating any act of disobedience.

[2] Here by 'spirit' the spirit of faith is intended.

[3] Reference is made here to the light revealed to the Messenger of God (SAW), namely, the Holy Spirit.

[4] *ʿAwālī al-Laʾālī*, vol. 4, p. 72.

[5] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 58, p. 65, chapter 42, 'Book of the Heavens and the World' (*kitāb al-samāʾ wa 'l-ʿālam*), tradition 51; *Rawḍa Kāfī*, p. 177, tradition 197; *Man Lā Yaḥḍuruhu 'l-Faqīh*, vol. 4, p. 380, tradition 5821.

[6] *al-Kāfī*, vol. 3, p. 228, chapter 159, tradition 14.

[7] That is divine ordaining (*taqdīr*).

[8] al-Ṣadūq, *Amālī*, p. 50, *majlis* 1, tradition 4.

[9] See also *al-Rasāʾil al-Tawḥīdiyya*, pp. 101–104.

[10] Man is made through his deeds and misdeeds that are inseparable from him and the particulars of such effects lie in the particulars of the kinds of deeds and misdeeds committed by him.

[11] That is rewarding obedience and punishing disobedience.

17

ON INTERCESSION

God Almighty says:

> Beware of the day when no soul shall compensate for another, neither any intercession shall be accepted from it, nor any ransom shall be received from it, nor will they be helped. (2:48)

> And beware of the Day when no soul shall compensate for another, neither shall any ransom be accepted from it, nor shall any intercession benefit it, nor will they be helped. (2:123)

> O you who have faith! Spend out of what We have provided you before there comes a day on which there will be no bargaining, neither friendship, nor intercession. (2:254)

The above blessed verses deny intercession (*shafāʿa*) for another; nevertheless, such denial is specified and elucidated as 'not being helped' is specified and elucidated.

God Almighty says:

> The day when a friend will not avail a friend in any way, nor will they be helped, except for him on whom God has mercy. Indeed, He is the All-mighty, the All-merciful. (44:41–42)

> Who is it that may intercede with Him except with His permission? He knows that which is before them and that which is behind them. (2:255)

> Intercession is of no avail with Him except for those whom He permits. (34:23)

It is reflected in the last three verses that no intercession will be made on that day nor will such intercession be of any avail without divine leave as to the intercession of the intercessor and to the intercession made on behalf of the subject of intercession. What is intended by granting leave to the intercessor is attested in the blessed verse: *Intercession will not avail that day except from him whom the All-beneficent allows and approves of his word* (20:109). In other words, granting leave to the intercession lies in divine approval of intercession.

It is reflected in the blessed verse: *On the day when the Spirit and the angels stand in an array. None shall speak except whom the All-beneficent permits and who says what is right* (78:38) that the approved word (*qawl al-marḍī*) is identical with the right word (*qawl al-ṣawāb*). As mentioned above in the chapter devoted to witnessing (*shahada*), reference is made to the deeds of agents leading to the permitted intercessor with whom it is present and that the intercessor actually serves as the intermediary of divine blessings bestowed on the subject of intercession.

It is also implied here that God Almighty granted the intercessor the permission to intercede as to witnessing the realities and knowledge of deeds, as reflected in the blessed verse: *Those whom they invoke besides Him have no power of intercession, except those who are witness to the truth and who know [for whom to intercede]* (43:86).[1]

In short, the divine leave as to invoke Him is indicative of its divine approval. It goes without saying that such approval arises from the perfection qua perfection of the entity. The approved

word is identical with perfection of word (*kamāl al-qawl*) which is another expression for the right word. Those whose words are divinely approved are allowed to intercede with God on behalf of others. They must be righteous in their deeds. Their essences should be divinely approved, as words are the effects of essence. No such effect may attain perfection unless the soul causing that effect has attained perfection.[2] Nevertheless, the opposite is not applicable, as the essence may be approved due to original purity and sincerity of beliefs, but the deeds and effects caused by it may not be approved through certain impediments and veils.

Intercessors are thus those whose essences and deeds are divinely approved; in other words, their perfection and perfect words are not clearly subject to imperfection and defect. Their knowledge is thus that of God Almighty, unadulterated by doubts of illusions and errors arising from carnal desires, since perfect and true knowledge is divine. God Almighty says: *And they do not comprehend anything of His knowledge except what He wishes* (2:255).

The apostles of God have excelled other people in being divinely approved and they deny any knowledge when they are divinely addressed: *The day God will gather the apostles and say, 'What was the response to you?' They will say, 'We have no knowledge. Indeed, You are knower of all that is Unseen'* (5:109). However, they indubitably excel others in their vast and true knowledge. They have preserved the primeval purity of their essences and have honoured their covenant with their Lord, as reflected in the blessed verse: *No one will have the power to intercede [with God], except for him who has taken a covenant with the All-beneficent* (19:87).

In short, intercessors are those whose essences and deeds are both divinely approved. Such approval of the essence is also required by those on whose behalf intercession is made, as reflected in the blessed verse: *And they do not intercede except for someone He approves of* (21:28). Approval is of general application

rather than restricted to deeds, since, as reflected in this blessed verse, the intercessees' (*mashfūʿīn*) words, rather than their deeds, are approved. Their being approved is identical with the purity of their souls through having faith. Our argument is based on the divine verse *He does not approve ingratitude for His servants; and if you give thanks He approves that for you* (39:7), which indicates that having belief, as opposed to disbelief, is divinely approved.

It is reflected in the blessed verse: *God shall not be reconciled to the transgressing lot* (9:96) that intercession changes the sins entailing transgression to good deeds whereby divine approval is granted. God Almighty has promised that turning away from grave sins will lead to divine forgiveness of minor sins, as attested in these blessed verses:

> If you avoid the major sins that you are forbidden, We will absolve you of your misdeeds. (4:31)

> Those who avoid major sins and indecencies, excepting [minor and occasional] lapses. Indeed, your Lord is expansive in [His] forgiveness. (53:32)

Accordingly, committing grave sins will entail divine wrath and disapproval. Intercession is thus made for grave sins. The Messenger of God (SAW) is narrated, through Sunnī and Shīʿī transmission authorities, as saying, 'Indeed, I only intercede on behalf of my followers committing grave sins.'[3] Intercession thus changes such grave sins. This is reflected in the blessed verse: *Excepting those who repent, attain faith, and act righteously. For such, God will replace their misdeeds with good deeds* (25:70) that intercession is a substitute for righteous deeds.

It is also attested in the verse: *To Him ascends the good word, and He elevates righteous conduct* (35:10) that similar to the righteous deed, intercession elevates the good word, that is, faith, towards God Almighty. Intercession thus joins but believing sinners

to the righteous. In this sense, intercession may be likened to a body suffering from some serious wound or ailment. When the physical constitution happens to be strong and healthy the body will recover its health and the ailment will be driven away. Otherwise, some medicine will be required to remedy the ailment and help the physical constitution with recovery and changing the corrupt matter (*mawād al-fāsida*) gathered in it to good and suitable material.

The physical constitution is thus the efficient agent in maintaining health, even though it may independently drive away ailments may at times require some help. It is frequently attested in the verses of the Qurʾān that any soul earns benefits and incurs harms by itself. It is more clearly reflected in the blessed verse: *The faithful and their descendants who followed them in faith We will make their descendants join them, and We will not stint anything from [the reward of] their deeds. Every man is a hostage to what he has earned* (52:21) which commences to say that children will, before long, join their fathers.

Nevertheless, such reunion is not basically compassion, as reflected in the verse: *And We will not stint anything from [the reward of] their deeds* (52:21); further, this reunion is acquired, as attested in *Every man is a hostage to what he has earned* (52:21), even though the deeds performed by descendants are too insignificant to lead to reunion.[4]

It is thus perceived that faith leads to some kind of connection between the higher and the lower and any impediment to the equality of degrees between the higher and the lower will be removed by faith. Faith leads to the exaltation of both to an identical degree. Similarly, intercession first leads to joining the intercessees and the intercessor; then, the intercessee's misdeeds will be changed, through intercession, to good deeds.

This theme is reflected in: *God will replace their misdeeds with good deeds* (25:70), since when there is no established connection between the changed (*mubaddal*) and the original subject of the

change (*mubaddalun min-hu*), the change will actually entail causing the inexistence of the changed and the existentiation of the original subject of the change, rather than changing one to another. In this sense, forgiveness is similar to intercession which will be further elucidated below, in the following two chapters devoted to elevation (*aʿrāf*)[5] and forgiveness (*maghfira*).

Intercession, in terms of the said change, is clearly a kind of dispensation (*taṣarruf*) of deeds. God Almighty thus specifies that intercession belongs to Him: *Then, He settled on the Throne. You do not have besides Him any guardian or intercessor* (32:4). As mentioned above, intercession is only possible when the intercessor has perfectly attained to divine proximity.

This is attested in the blessed verse: *Intercession is of no avail with Him except for those whom He permits. When fear is lifted from their hearts, they say, 'What did your Lord say?' They say, 'The truth, and He is the All-exalted, the All-great'* (34:23). 'Lifting fear from the heart' (*tafzīʿ ʿan al-qalb*) implies removing the fear (*dahsha*) and stunning (*ṣaʿqa*) which lead to unconsciousness (*ghaybūba*). When the verse: *Then settled on the Throne, directing the command. There is no intercessor, except by His leave* (10:3) precedes the previous verse (34:23), it will indicate that divine approval of intercession will be subject to divine leave (*idhn*); in other words, having granted such leave, the words of the intercessor and his act of intercession will be identical with divine word and act.

This is clearly reflected in the verse: *Who is it that may intercede with Him except with His permission? He knows that which is before them and that which is behind them* (2:255). It is the divine leave that leads to perfect proximity and the identity of the act of the intercessor and the divine act. Mention was made above that leave is approval (*riḍā*).

As it is attested in the verses: *The day when a friend will not avail a friend in any way, nor will they be helped, except for him on whom God has mercy* (44:41–42), what is termed as intercession

(*shafāʿa*) is dependent on mercy, that is divine mercy, as reflected in the verse: *My mercy embraces all things. Soon I shall appoint it for those who are God wary* (7:156).

Addressing His Messenger (SAW) God Almighty says: *We did not send you but as a mercy to all the nations* (21:107). This is of general application, indicating that the Messenger of God (SAW), besides intercession, is endowed with a more exalted station: the degree of leave that precedes and causes granting intercession. The Messenger of God (SAW) is the intercessor of all intercessors, as mentioned above, and he is the witness of all witnesses.

The privilege granted the Messenger of God (SAW) in this verse is different from what is granted others in the verse: *Certainly, We gave the Children of Israel the Book, judgement, and prophethood and We provided them with all the good things, and We gave them an advantage over all the nations* (45:16), as the literal aspect of this blessed verse indicates that the children of Israel are preferred over others in terms of being provided with manifest signs rather than proximity to God, in that the latter arises from God fearing.

This is attested by afflicting them with adversity and torment. Granting advantage over all the nations is different from granting advantage to a single individual, in particular granting advantage in terms of mercy as the perfect intermediary between God Almighty and His creatures. Mercy (*raḥma*) is both an entity and a non-entity, since God Almighty creates any entity by Himself, grants means of sustenance, dispenses all the affairs, and causes the return, but at the same performs all these through mercy.[6]

This theme is attested in the blessed verse: *It may be that your Lord will raise you to a praiseworthy station* (17:79). *Yabʿatha* implies raising and Resurrection (*iqāma*), and the praiseworthy station (*maqām al-maḥmūd*) is not restricted at all in this verse. The praised station is thus intended which is praised by any laudatory (*ḥāmid*). Such station, as required by praise, is the station of being endowed with any form of perfection and beauty; as a result, any beauty and perfection arises from it.

In the blessed verse: *All praise belongs to God, Lord of all the worlds* (1:2), God Almighty attributes any praise by any agent of praise to Himself. The praiseworthy station is thus a degree between God and praise and, as with mercy (*raḥma*), it is an entity and a non-entity. This is termed the major guardianship (*wilāyat al-kubrā*).

The general application in the verse *Soon your Lord will give you [that with which] you will be pleased* (93:5) is clearly a divine unlimited bounty (*ʿaṭiyya al-muṭlaqa*) that is the unrestricted mercy. The theme of this blessed verse is a reference to these verses: *We did not send you but as a mercy to all the nations* (21:107); *It may be that your Lord will raise you to a praiseworthy station* (17:79), though it is added to them to serve as a reminder as to divine approval. God Almighty did not say 'that you will be pleased' (*ḥattā tarḍā*) to indicate gradualness, as such unrestricted bounty is not gradual but it is granted in sequence.

Numerous points of significance are implied by such station a discussion of which will be beyond the scope of this treatise and they will not be touched upon for the sake of brevity. It may be thus concluded that besides having been granted the station of interceding on behalf of the sinners from among his nation (*umma*), he is also divinely vested with the station of being endowed with divine leave to intercession. This is attested in numerous traditions.

Imam al-Bāqir (AS) is narrated in al-Qummī's *Tafsīr* as saying, 'There is no one from the first to the last generations who will be needless of Muḥammad's (SAW) intercession on the Day of Resurrection.[7] A similar tradition is narrated from Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) in *al-Maḥāsin*.[8] In his *Tafsīr*, al-ʿAyyāshī narrates a long tradition from Imam al-Ṣādiq as saying, 'Any apostle, from Adam (AS) to Muḥammad (SAW), has been but under Muḥammad's (SAW) flag.'[9]

In his *Tafsīr* al-Qummī narrates from Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) on the authority of Samāʿa as saying,

> I inquired from him about the Prophet's (SAW) intercession on the Day of Resurrection.
>
> He said, 'Mouths will be restrained by sweating on that day and souls will be restless by scorching heat. They will call each other to ask Adam for his intercession. They will visit him, saying, "Intercede with your Lord on our behalf!" Adam will say, "I have committed a misdeed. Ask Noah!" They will act upon his suggestion, but Noah and he will be asked by each of them to call upon his successor. Each prophet will ask the inquirer to ask the prophet who succeeded him until they will ask Jesus (AS) and he will reply, "Ask Muḥammad (SAW)!" They will ask Muḥammad to intercede on their behalf and he will say, "Follow me!" He will lead them to the gate of paradise, turning towards the Gate of the All-Merciful (*bāb al-raḥmān*), prostrating himself as long as God wills. God Almighty will say, 'Lift up your head and intercede on their behalf that your intercession will be granted. Pray for them that your prayer will be answered.' This is reflected in the blessed verse: *It may be that your Lord will raise you to a praiseworthy station* (17:79).'

A similar tradition is attested in al-ʿAyyāshī's *Tafsīr*. This theme is attested in more detail in The Gospel of Barbanas in the tidings of Jesus son of Mary (AS) to Muḥammad (SAW).[10]

In his *Tafsīr*, Furāt ibn Ibrāhīm narrates on the authority of Bashīr ibn Shurayḥ as saying, 'I asked Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī (AS) about the most promising verse in the Book of God.' The Imam (AS) asked, 'What do your people say about this?' I replied, 'They say the verse: *O My servants who have committed excesses against their own souls, do not despair of the mercy of God* (39:53).' The Imam said, 'But we, the Ahl al-Bayt, do not agree to it.' I asked, 'What do you say about this question?' The Imam (AS) replied, 'We say: *Soon your Lord will give you [that with which] you will be pleased* (93:5). Intercession! By God! Intercession! By God! Intercession!'[11]

DISCOURSE ON THE TYPES OF INTERCESSORS FROM AMONG THE APOSTLES AND THE GUARDIANS FROM MANKIND, WHOSE INTERCESSION WAS DISCUSSED ABOVE, AND FROM ANGELS

God Almighty says:

> How many an angel there is in the heavens whose intercession is of no avail in any way except after God grants permission to whomever He wishes and approves of! (53:26)

There are other verses with this theme.

The believers are also among the intercessors, as reflected in these verses: *And no one led us astray except the guilty. Now we have no intercessors, nor do we have any sympathetic friend. Had there been another turn for us, we would be among the faithful* (26:99–102). It is indicated here that the guilty will find out on the Day of Resurrection that there will be an intimate friend to help them, as attested in their saying, '*for us* (*la-nā*).' It is reflected in these verses that the believers will have the intercessor and intimate friend to help them.

Imam al-Bāqir (AS) is narrated in *al-Kāfī* as saying, 'The intercession [of the believer] will be divinely approved, but the intercession of the enemy of ʿAlī (*nāṣib*) will not be divinely granted. A believer may intercede on behalf of his neighbour when the latter has performed no righteous deed. The believer intercedes on behalf of his neighbour, saying to his Lord, 'O Lord! My neighbour did not do me any harm.' God Almighty says, 'I can disapprove of your beneficence.' But he will be divinely admitted to paradise, even though he has not done any righteous deeds.' A believer of the lowest rank may intercede on behalf of thirty people. The dwellers of hell will then say: *Now we have no intercessors, nor do we have any sympathetic friend* (26:100–101). This theme is attested in numerous traditions.

As attested in traditions, the Qurʾān and divine Trust (*amāna*) and kinship (*raḥim*) are among the intercessors. The Prophet (SAW) is narrated in al-Daylamī's *Firdaws* on the authority of Abū Hurayra as saying, 'There are five intercessors: the Qurʾān, the Trust, kinship, the Prophet, and your Prophet's Ahl al-Bayt.'[12]

The present author states that the intercession of the first three may be reflected in these verses:

> …and as a guidance and mercy and good news for the Muslims (16:89).
>
> The day when a friend will not avail a friend in any way, nor will they be helped, except for him on whom God has mercy (44:41–42).[13]

The intercession of the Trust is attested in these verses: *Indeed, We presented the Trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to bear it, and were apprehensive of it; but man undertook it. Indeed, he is most unfair and senseless. God will surely punish the hypocrites, men and women, and the polytheists, men and women, and God will turn clemently to the faithful, men and women, and God is all-forgiving, all-merciful* (33:72–73). These verses indicate that the presentation of the Trust to man and his bearing it implies forgiving the believers and punishing the hypocrites and polytheists. This is intercession. These verses were elucidated above by *wilāya* (guardianship). They are not in contradiction, as the term *amāna* (trust), rather than *wilāya*, is attested in the divine words. Elucidating *amāna* by *wilāya* is thus an instance of specification (*akhdh al-khāṣṣ min al-ʿāmm*) and application of general to specific.

The intercession of the kin is reflected in these verses: *Indeed, he had no faith in God, the All-supreme, and he did not urge the feeding of the needy, so he has no friend here today* (69:33–35). *Ḥamīm* (lit. close friend) here implies next of kin and their intercession

is attested in the last verse: *So he has no friend here today* (69:35).

Imam al-Bāqir (as), as narrated in *al-Kāfī* on the authority of Saʿd al-Khaffāf, said, 'O Saʿd! Learn the Qurʾān as the Qurʾān will be manifest on the Day of Resurrection in the best form ever seen by people.' He then added, 'That form will pass along each and every line of Muslims, witnesses, Apostles, and angels. Every group will see that representation as one of them. Then, the Qurʾān will intercede and the intercession will be divinely approved and it will call for certain things that will be granted…'

Saʿd asks the Imam (as) at the end of the tradition, 'May I be your ransom! O Abū Jaʿfar! Will the Qurʾān speak?'

The Imam (as) smiled and said, 'May God forgive the weak from among our followers who are obedient.' Then, he said, 'O Saʿd! Yes, the Qurʾān will speak and *ṣalāh* will speak too. It will have a form and disposition that it will command and forbid.'

Saʿd said, 'I went pale and said, 'This may not be said to people.'

Imam al-Bāqir (as) said, 'Are people other than our followers? One who does not know the *ṣalāh* he has denied our right.' The Imam (as) added, 'O Saʿd! Do you wish to hear the word of the Qurʾān?'

Saʿd said, 'May God bless you.'

He said, '*Indeed, the prayer prevents indecencies and wrongs, and the remembrance of God is surely greater* (29:45). Preventing (*nahy*) is word of indecency (*faḥshāʾ*); the wrong implies people's misdeeds; the remembrance of God (*dhikr Allāh*) implies us, and we are greater.'[14]

Further details are to be found elsewhere. This theme is also attested in the above argument. There are other traditions in this regard that are to be found in chapters devoted to acts of devotion (*ʿibādāt*) and teachings (*maʿārif*).

Righteous deeds are also among the intercessors, as attested in the blessed verse:…*Excepting those who repent, attain faith, and act righteously. For such, God will replace their misdeeds with good deeds* (25:70). It was mentioned above that intercession implies

changing a sinner's misdeeds into righteous deeds through the proximity of the intercessor (*shāfiʿ*) and the intercessee (*mashfūʿ*). The tradition narrated above regarding the intercession of the Qurʾān implies a general treatment of the intercession of deeds.

NOTES

[1] Two conditions, as reflected in this verse, are applicable to intercession: knowledge; and true, rather than false, intercession. Witnessing here seemingly implies the stage of bearing it rather than declaring it, even though they arise from the same source.

[2] For instance, it may be said that the true words of a disbeliever is approved even though his essence is not. Nonetheless, it must be said that true and sincere words of a disbeliever are approved from this respect but they are disapproved from other respects. The point is that there is a particular motive behind any word. A disbeliever has no divine motive and this is error and imperfection and necessarily disapproved; but truth and sincerity of his words, as opposed to its falsehood, constitute some kind of perfection which arises from his essence and it is approved to such extent.

[3] *Man Lā Yaḥḍuruhu 'l-Faqīh*, vol. 3, p. 369, chapter 179, 'Knowing the Grave Sins' (*maʿrifat al-kabāʾir*), tradition 33. It was discussed above in the chapter on witnessing that particular intercession is intended by intercession in this tradition.

[4] Such reunion does not arise from mercy but from the exalted degrees of ancestors.

[5] That is purgatory.

[6] Mercy is existentially an entity and its non-entity arises from the fact that the existence of any entity arises from mercy and if we consider mercy as an entity it will necessitate that it should have been subject to existentiation through itself or through some other mercy and it will entail a vicious circle. The point is that terming 'mercy' an entity is owing to some particular mode (*ḥaythiyya*) and negating it arises from another mode.

[7] al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 202.

[8] *al-Maḥāsin*, vol. 1, p. 293, tradition 188.

[9] al-ʿAyyāshī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 334, tradition 145.

[10] *The Gospel of Barnabas*, translated into Persian by Ḥaydar Qulī Khān Kābulī, pp. 125–128.

[11] Furāt al-Kūfī, *Tafsīr*, p. 570.

[12] Ibn Shahrāshūb, *Manāqib Āl Abī Ṭālib*, vol. 2, p. 14, Chapter on the Water-Giver and the Intercessor (*Faṣl fī anna-hu 'l-sāqī wa 'l-shafiʿ*); *Biḥār*

al-Anwār, vol. 8, p. 43, chapter 21, tradition 39; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Jāmiᶜ al-Ṣaghīr*, vol. 2, p. 86, tradition 4942.

[13] The reality of intercession is a kind of intermediation (*tawassuṭ*) between God and the intercessee (*mashfūᶜun lahu*), in that intercession is applicable to divine attributes, e.g., divine mercy. In other words, divine attributes are intermediaries between divine essence and His creatures and they emanate existence and perfection. These attributes are thus intercessors, as reflected in verses 39:44 and 32:4.

[14] *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 591, Book of Excellence of the Qurʾān (*kitāb faḍl al-Qurʾān*), tradition 1.

18

ON ELEVATIONS[1]

Aʿrāf al-ḥijāb in the blessed verse: *And there will be a veil between them. And on the Elevations will be certain men who recognize each of them by their mark* (7:46) denotes elevations of veil and also high sand hills. The collocation of *aʿrāf* (elevations) in this blessed verse with *ḥijāb* (veil) implies the former sense and standing of people on them implies the latter sense, since veil is something that conceals something from something else, and this sense is more befitting this context.

The dwellers of *aʿrāf* stand on an elevated place looking down at hell and paradise and their dwellers. They basically stand on *aʿrāf* to recognize the members of both groups. This theme is expressed differently elsewhere in the Qurʾān: *The day the hypocrites, men and women, will say to the faithful, 'Please let up on us, that we may glean something from your light!' They will be told, 'Go back and grope for light!' Then there will be set up between them a wall with a gate, with mercy on its interior and punishment toward its exterior* (57:13).

The expression *Please let up on us, that we may glean something from your light* is similar to the expression in the blessed verse: *The inmates of the Fire will call out to the inhabitants of paradise, 'Pour on us some water, or something of what God has provided you.' They will say, 'God has indeed forbidden these two to the faithless!'* (7:50) The collocation of the word 'gate' (*bāb*) in verse

57:13 with 'hypocrites' indicates their hypocrisy and their outward appearance through which they resemble the faithful. That is why they are tormented by the appearance of a veil and by its gate.[2]

In short, these verses indicate that one single thing is implied by 'veil' (*ḥijāb*) and 'wall' (*sūr*), something which has outward and inward aspects. The outward is punishment for the wretched and the inward is mercy for the happy. Had the wretched been able to see the inward aspect through the outward aspect of this veil, they would have attained blessings and they would have been endowed with mercy. Nevertheless, the faithful and the faithless encounter the same reality, but the difference lies in their different perceptions. Similarly, they had different perceptions in this world. That single entity is the divine path trodden steadfastly by the faithful, but from which deviated the faithless. This is reflected in these blessed verses:

> The inhabitants of paradise will call out to the inmates of the Fire, 'We found what our Lord promised us to be true; did you find what your Lord promised you to be true?' 'Yes,' they will say. Then a caller will announce in their midst, 'May God's curse be on the wrongdoers!' Those who bar [others] from the way of God, and seek to make it crooked, and disbelieve in the Hereafter. (7:44–45)

There is thus one single path and that is the path of God leading to God. A wayfarer trod the path steadfastly and another deviated from it. This theme is frequently attested in the Qurʾān both explicitly and implicitly:

> They know just an outward aspect of the life of the world, but they are oblivious of the Hereafter. Have they not reflected in their own souls? God did not create the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them except with reason and for a specified term. Indeed, many of the people disbelieve in the encounter with their Lord. (30:7–8)

> As for the faithless, their works are like a mirage in a plain, which the thirsty man supposes to be water. When he comes to it, he finds it to be nothing; but there he finds God, who will pay him his full account. (24:39)

> So avoid those who turn away from Our remembrance and desire nothing but the life of the world. That is the ultimate reach of their knowledge. Indeed, your Lord knows best those who stray from His way, and He knows best those who are [rightly] guided. (53:29–30)

> Indeed, those who do not expect to encounter Us and who are pleased with the life of this world and satisfied with it, and those who are oblivious of Our signs. It is they whose refuge shall be the Fire because of what they used to earn. (10:7–8)

This theme is attested in many verses, but it is for the sake of brevity that such verses are not included and their contents are not discussed here.

However, this theme is more clearly reflected in the blessed verse: *Have you not regarded those who have changed God's blessing with ingratitude* (14:28). It was discussed above that *wilāya* in this verse implies the path of God and its opposite is faithlessness, as attested in these verses:

> …And landed their people in the house of ruin? Hell, which they shall enter, and it is an evil abode! (14:28–29)

Their course will finally end in inexistence and annihilation, because they stopped at the outward aspect and turned away from the inward aspect; whereas the outward aspect is transient and the inward aspect is intransient, as reflected in these blessed verses:

> And give good news to the faithful that they are in good standing with their Lord. (10:2)

In the abode of truthfulness with an omnipotent King. (54:55)

They will not hear therein any vain talk or sinful speech. (56:25)

Therein they shall hear neither vain talk nor lies. (78:35)

Unlike the faithless, the faithful will finally attain to the abode of truthfulness wherein there is neither vain talk nor sinful speech.

The people of the Elevations (*aʿrāf*) are those who look at both places[3] from above and their inhabitants. The hill implied by '*aʿrāf*' is not similar to earthly sand hills, attested in the verse: *You will not see any crookedness or unevenness in it* (20:107), but it is their exalted station which is higher than those who will be raised and gathered. They are not thus among those who will gather on the Day of Resurrection, but they are the exclusive servants (*mukhliṣūn*), those who are divinely protected from the swooning caused by blowing in the Trumpet and the fear of Resurrection. Their station is the veil (*ḥijāb*) wherein they are encompassed by divine mercy that comprehends all things. Hell fire will encompass the people of the hell.

This theme is attested in the blessed verse: *Then a caller will announce in their midst, 'May God's curse be on the wrongdoers!'* (7:44); but it is not said, 'Then a caller in their midst will announce…'[4] They will be the judges (*hākimūn*) on the Day of Resurrection, as reflected in these verses: *And the occupants of the Elevations will call out to certain men whom they recognize by their marks, Your rallying did not avail you, nor what you used to disdain. Are these the ones concerning whom you swore that God will not extend them any mercy?* (7:48–49) Mercy here implies paradise, as attested in these verses:

Enter paradise! You shall have no fear, nor shall you grieve. (7:49)

On the day when the Spirit and the angels stand in an array. None

shall speak except whom the All-beneficent permits and who says what is right. (78:38)

They are implied by the companions of the Spirit who will be divinely permitted to say what is right. The meaning of the spirit, and his faith and knowledge was discussed above in Part 1, under the blessed verse: *Thus have We revealed to you the Spirit of Our dispensation. You did not know what the Book is, nor what is faith* (42:52).

The people of the Elevations are seemingly intended by the faithful in the blessed verse: *You will see them being exposed to it, humbled by abasement, looking secretively. And the faithful will say, 'Indeed, the losers are those who have ruined themselves and their families on the Day of Resurrection'* (42:45). They are referred to as losers in this verse.

The people of the Elevations are also seemingly implied by *those who were given knowledge and faith* in the blessed verse: *And on the day when the Hour sets in the guilty will swear that they had remained only for an hour. That is how they were used to lying [in the world]. But those who were given knowledge and faith will say, 'Certainly, you remained in God's Book until the Day of Resurrection. This is the Day of Resurrection, but you did not know'* (30:55–56).

The baseless assumption of the guilty that they were in their lifetime (*dahr*) but for a moment arises from their mundane attachments and short-sightedness through which they were impeded from perceiving but one single moment of their lifetime; as a consequence, they are unaware of their states before their descent in the world and after their departure from it. They are dominated by time in their lifetime and in the world, required by a temporal domination (*sayṭarat al-zamān*) unceasingly following sequences of concealment and manifestation.

They thus swear by the time of Resurrection that they had remained in the world but for an hour,[5] as attested in these verses:

> …As though they had remained only an hour of a day. This is a proclamation. (46:35)

> He will say, 'How many years did you remain on earth?' They will say, 'We remained for a day, or part of a day; yet ask those who keep the count.' He will say, 'You only remained a little; if only you had known.' (23:112–114)

Now, we perceive that the claim and swearing of the guilty do not arise out of underestimation of their lifetime compared to everlasting life which they see at the time of Resurrection. This blessed verse thus follows their claim: *That is how they were used to lying [in the world]* (30:55).

The saying of *those who were given knowledge and faith*, '*Certainly, you remained in God's Book until the Day of Resurrection*' (30:56) is seemingly a reference to the verse: *and were it not for a prior decree of your Lord [granting them reprieve] until a specified time, decision would have been made between them* (42:14). The meaning of this verse was discussed above under specified time (*ajal*) and death (*mawt*). As they were certain about its duration and end, they further said, 'This is the Day of Resurrection' which is the conclusion of the argument. They said, 'But you were not aware of such end and limit, nor did you know that Resurrection will come like the twinkling of an eye or even sooner than that and that the faithless will be encompassed by hell.'[6]

It is worthy of note that such baseless claim of the raised and the manifestation of its falsity, similar to other instances like the debates on the Day of Resurrection between the weak and the arrogant or between the subjects and the leaders and the followers, is in no contradiction to the above discussion on the manifestation of reality and removal of veils on the Day of Resurrection, as manifestation arises from concealment and it is hierarchical. As a result, such manifestation is too long and hard to some people and short and easy to others.

The above discussion is supported by traditions. al-ʿAyyāshī narrates on the authority of Salmān that the Prophet (SAW) said more than ten times to ʿAlī (AS), 'O ʿAlī! You and the trustees (*awṣiyā'*) succeeding you are the Elevations between paradise and hell. No one will be admitted to paradise unless you know each other. No one will be cast into hell unless he denies you and you deny him.'[7]

Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) is narrated in al-Qummī's *Tafsīr* as saying, '[The deeds of] any nation are reckoned by the Imam of their time and the Imams know their friends and enemies by their mark, as attested in the blessed verse: *And on the Elevations will be certain men who recognize each of them by their mark* (7:46).[8] The Imams thus give their friends their record of deeds from their right hand and they will be admitted to paradise without reckoning; they will give the record of deeds of their enemies to their left hand and they will be cast into hell without reckoning.'[9]

The Commander of the Faithful, Imam ʿAlī (AS) is narrated in *al-Kāfī*, regarding the verse *and on the Elevations there will be certain men* (7:46) as saying, 'We are on Elevations and we know our friends from their mark. We are the Elevations: those through whom God Almighty is but known. We are the Elevations who will stand on the Bridge by divine command. No one will enter paradise unless he knows us and we know him and no one will be cast into hell unless he denies us and we deny him.'[10]

The present author states that the Imam's (AS) words are a reference to the derivation of *aʿrāf* from *maʿrifa*, as attested in the blessed verse: *men who recognize* (*yaʿrifūna*) *each of them by their mark* (7:46), and the Imam (AS) might have regarded both 'men' (*rijāl*) and 'each' (*kullā*) as the antecedents of 'their' (*-hum*) in 'their mark' (*sīmā-hum*).[11]

It is narrated by al-Qummī that in response to a question about the people on the Elevations, Imam al-Bāqir (AS) said, 'They are those whose good deeds and bad deeds are equal. Their deeds are thus inadequate and they are in the manner referred to by God

Almighty.'[12] The present author states that the Imam (AS) alluded to the verse: *They will call out to the inhabitants of paradise, 'Peace be to you!'* (7:46)

It is narrated from Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) in *al-Jawāmiᶜ* that the Elevations (*aᶜrāf*) is a hill between paradise and hell whereon apostles and their successors stand along with the guilty from among the people of his time, similar to an army general standing before his weak soldiers, as they have been outstripped by the righteous in attaining to paradise. The guilty will greet them, as attested in the verse: *'Peace be to you!'* (7:46). They have not been admitted to paradise but they hope to be admitted through the intercession of the Prophet and the Imam. They look at the dwellers of hell, saying: *Our Lord, do not put us among the wrongdoing lot!* (7:47).

The people of the Elevations, that is, the apostles and their successors, will censure the chiefs of the unfaithful and notorious dwellers of hell, saying, 'What you amassed of worldly possessions wherewith you were arrogant to others will be of no avail to you. Look at the dwellers of paradise! They are those whom you swore that they would never be granted divine mercy.' The people of the Elevations, addressing those who had been oppressed and humiliated by the chiefs of the arrogant, will say, 'Enter paradise!' the saying of the people of the Elevations is based on the divine command to them: *Enter paradise! You shall have no fear, nor shall you grieve* (7:49).[13]

The present author states that this tradition is in line with the verses on the Elevations and there are numerous traditions with this theme in the *Tafsīr*s of al-Qummī and al-ᶜAyyāshī, and also in *al-Kāfī*, *al-Baṣāʾir*, *al-Majmaᶜ*, and *al-Iḥtijāj*.

The station, attested in traditions, from which the place of the dwellers of paradise and that of the dwellers of hell are derived and that the weak and the middle people will join them is reflected in the above argument. The Elevations thus have different stations and degrees. There is no Qurʾānic attestation for standing of the oppressed (*mustaḍᶜafūn*) on the Elevations, similar to those

judging on such Elevations, but it is reflected in the verses that the oppressed will refer to those on the Elevations when they are standing before them and they are those on the Elevations who bid them and grant them safety.

NOTES

[1] That is purgatory.

[2] Mention of mercy veiled to the faithful and mention of the outward aspect of it to hypocrites and their being tormented by it correspond to their belief or disbelief in this world. The faithful are happy with the blessings of faith and mercy but they resemble torments to hypocrites who resort to the outward aspect of belief. Further, despite their connection to the faithful, hypocrites veiled as to the reality of belief. The 'gate' represents a channel through which they may see the inhabitants of paradise and regret their hypocrisy in this world and it is by such regrets that they are tormented.

[3] Namely, paradise and hell.

[4] *Then a caller will announce in their midst* seemingly implies that the caller is one of the raised (from among believers, hypocrites, and the faithless), i.e., someone from among the raised people will rise to make such announcement addressed to everyone else; but 'Then a caller in their midst will announce' seemingly implies that the caller is not from the raised, as referred to by the pronoun *–hum* (them) in *bayna-hum* (amidst them), but his announcement will be heard by them. *Bayna-hum* is thus the adverb or receptacle (*ẓarf*) for the occurrence of the call, rather than that of the caller. Accordingly, based on the latter interpretation, attested in the Qurʾān, the caller must be of some exalted rank higher than the raised. Further, the caller's announcement must be heard by the faithful and the faithless and such call must be of the rank of exclusive servants (*mukhliṣūn*).

[5] It is to be noted that they swear within the timespan between death and resurrection and they find this span, rather than their lifetime, but a moment. They erroneously find the span between death and resurrection as a temporal timespan as they still feel that they are in this world as they never believed in another world. They are attached to the material world and sensual pleasures. They are unaware of the fact that resurrection comprehends the intermediate world and the intermediate world encompasses this world.

[6] It is to be noted in passing that manifestation of realities on the Day of Resurrection will be hierarchical and they will not be manifest to everyone.

[7] al-ʿAyyāshī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 22, tradition 44.

[8] They seemingly serve as the agent of the passive verb in the blessed verse:

The guilty will be recognized by their mark; so they will be seized by the forelocks and the feet (55:41). Nothing is concealed from God Almighty and the guilty are too preoccupied with knowing.

[9] al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 404.

[10] *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 239, chapter 64, tradition 9.

[11] 'Each of them' (*kullā*) is the antecedent of the pronoun 'their' (*-hum*), i.e., the people on Elevations will know everyone by their marks.

[12] *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 388, chapter 360, tradition 1.

[13] *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 80, p. 332, chapter 25, with slight differences in wording.

19

IN PARADISE

A detailed discussion on paradise and an exposition of the themes, reflected in the verses and traditions, fall beyond the scope of this treatise. References have been made to paradise in about 300 verses throughout the Qurʾān except for twenty chapters (18 short chapters and chapters 60 and 63). Nevertheless, a brief account of paradise, as depicted in the verses and traditions, will be touched upon below.

A particular connection between the earth and paradise is reflected in this verse: *They will say,ʿAll praise belongs to God, who has fulfilled His promise to us and made us heirs to the earth that we may settle in paradise wherever we may wish!' How excellent is the reward of the workers [of righteousness]!* (39:74) The saying of the people of paradise: *God, who has fulfilled His promise to us* may be an allusion to *Indeed, My righteous servants shall inherit the earth* (21:105). The reality of inheritance lies in the possession of something following someone else's possession of the same and also to make use of what his predecessors have used.

The reality of inheriting something depends on some fixed thing which is handed over to someone else and from a predecessor to a successor. It is required by the contextual content of the blessed verse in expressing the fulfilment of the promise that it had been said, 'and made us heirs to the earth that we may settle in it' (*wa awrathana al-arḍa natabawwaʾa min-hā*) or 'and made

us heirs to the paradise that we may settle in it' (*wa awrathana al-janna natabawwaʾa min-hā*). However, *and made us heirs to the earth that we may settle in paradise* (*wa awrathana al-arḍa natabawwaʾa min al-janna*) implies an association (*irtibāṭ*) and particular identification (*ittiḥād*) between the earth and paradise.[1]

On the other hand, mention is at times divinely made of the following transformations:

> The day the earth is transformed into another earth. (14:48)

> And the earth will glow with the light of her Lord. (39:69)

> The entire earth will be in His fist on the Day of Resurrection. (39:67)

Mention is also made of what was said above in the verse:

> Soon the faithless will know in whose favour the outcome of that abode will be. (13:42)

This theme is most clearly attested in these verses:

> Those who are patient for the sake of their Lord's pleasure, maintain the prayer, and spend out of what We have provided them, secretly and openly, and repel evil [conduct] with good. For such will be the reward of the [ultimate] abode: the Gardens of Eden, which they will enter along with whoever is righteous from among their forebears, their spouses, and their descendants, and the angels will call on them from every door: 'Peace be to you, for your patience.' How excellent is the reward of the [ultimate] abode! (13:22–24)

In the preceding verses, *the [ultimate] abode* is elucidated by *the Gardens of Eden which they will enter*. Entering requires being

formerly out of some place, and their state is thus similar to one who having stayed on some land lot, constructs some building on it to reside in it and then erects some dome on it and then enter it. All these stages require elevation following residing in a lower place or elevation following elevation.[2]

God Almighty says: *Whenever they are provided with their fruit for nourishment, they will say, 'This is what we were provided before,' and they were given something resembling it* (2:25). This theme is attested in other verses, like the following:

> The earth indeed belongs to God, and He gives its inheritance to whomever He wishes of His servants, and the outcome will be in favour of the God wary. (7:128)

> This is the paradise We will give as inheritance to those of Our servants who are God wary. (19:63)

> That is the paradise you have been given to inherit for what you used to do. (43:72)

The Prophet (SAW) is narrated in *Majmaʿ al-Bayān* regarding the last verse as saying, 'There is some abode for anyone both in paradise and in hell; however, the disbeliever inherits the believer's abode in hell and the believer inherits the disbeliever's abode in paradise. This is intended in: *you have been given to inherit for what you used to do* (43:72).'

The present author states that given the authenticity of this tradition, it is not in contradiction to what was mentioned above regarding inheriting the earth, which is attested in different verses, for example, *Moses said to his people, 'Turn to God for help and be patient. The earth indeed belongs to God, and He gives its inheritance to whomever He wishes of His servants, and the outcome will be in favour of the God wary'* (7:128). Similarly, such inheriting is also reflected in the above argument.

The purification of paradise and its inhabitants from impurities and shadows is frequently attested in different verses. For instance, in the verse: *Peace be to you! You are welcome! So enter it to remain forever* (39:73) in which the subsuming (*tafrīʿ*) particle *fa-* indicates that the abode of the people of paradise has been purified like themselves. Similarly, in the blessed verse: *Peace be to you, for your patience. How excellent is the reward of the [ultimate] abode!* (13:24) subsumption (*tafrīʿ*) indicates purity of the abode, that is, the earth, through the purification of its inhabitants which is a reward for their patience. The difference between these two instances of peace is that the former implies gratitude and the latter glad tidings.

God Almighty says:

> And good dwellings in the Gardens of Eden. (9:72)

> We will remove whatever rancour there is in their breasts; [intimate like] brothers, [they will be reclining] on couches, facing one another. Therein neither weariness shall touch them, nor will they [ever] be expelled from it. (15:47–48)

> In it we are untouched by toil, and untouched therein by fatigue. (35:35)

There are other verses with this theme the most comprehensive of them is this blessed verse: *Enter paradise! You shall have no fear, nor shall you grieve* (7:49). Fear arises from some possible unpleasant thing and grief is the consequence of the realization of some undesirable situation. Any defect or inexistence is thus actually and potentially negated by God Almighty with respect to the inhabitants of paradise who are perfect in their beings and they are untouched by unpleasant experiences in this world. They thus live a life of ultimate salvation, security, and peace, as reflected in these verses:

> Enter it in peace and safety! (15:46)
>
> They will not hear therein any vain talk or sinful speech, but only the watchword, 'Peace!' 'Peace!' (56:25–26)

The inhabitants of paradise are divinely promised to be granted any kind of joy, happiness, beauty, and perfection, as attested, for instance, in these verses:

> They will have whatever they wish near their Lord. That is the reward of the virtuous. (39:34)
>
> We are your friends in the life of this world and in the Hereafter, and you will have in it whatever your souls desire, and you will have in it whatever you ask for, as a hospitality from One All-forgiving, All-merciful. (41:31–32)

The majority of verses dealing with paradise make references to its characteristics, for example, palaces, *houris*, birds, trees, fruits, streams, shades, drinks, young servants, and eternity. These concepts should be perceived in absolute terms rather than adulterated by defects and inexistence.

The inhabitants of paradise are divinely promised to be granted a more exalted station, as reflected in the verse: *No one knows what has been kept hidden for them of comfort as a reward for what they used to do* (32:17). Such promise follows a divine depiction of granting any attribute of perfection and beauty, implying that the promise is beyond human understanding.

In his *Tafsīr* al-Qummī narrates a tradition about the attributes of paradise from Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) on the authority of ʿĀṣim ibn Ḥumayd[3] that ʿĀṣim had asked the Imam for further explanation. The Imam said, 'God created the paradise by His own Hand that is unseen by and unknown to any creature. It is opened by God Almighty every morning and says to it to be purer and more

fragrant. This is reflected in the blessed verse: *No one knows what has been kept hidden for them of comfort as a reward for what they used to do* (32:17).'[4]

'Reward' (*jazāʾ*) in this verse implies that what lies beyond human understanding and is promised to be granted against human deeds has been concealed. It is also implied by *There they will have whatever they wish, and with Us there is yet more* (50:35) that what is desired by man will be in his possession there.

It is attested in the verses: *And that nothing belongs to man except what he strives for and that he will soon be shown his endeavour; then, he will be rewarded for it with the fullest reward* (53:39–41). Anything with which man will be blessed there, whether within or beyond his understanding, as implied by *there they will have*, will be absolutely desired by him, as it is reflected in *whatever they wish*. The blessed verse thus implies that there is some human perfection beyond his understanding. Such perfection may be acquired by deeds.

This theme may be attested in the blessed verse: *Some faces will be fresh on that day, looking at their Lord* (75:22–23), in which *looking at their Lord* implies intuitive perception (*mushāhada bi-'l-qulūb*) which is free from dimension (*jaha*), corporeity (*jismiyya*), and anthropomorphism (*tashbīh*). This theme is reflected in another verse: *So whoever expects to encounter his Lord let him act righteously, and not associate anyone with the worship of his Lord* (18:110). It is implied here that such encounter will be the result of beneficial knowledge and righteous deeds.

There they will have whatever they wish, and with Us there is yet more (50:35) may also imply that the existence of more rewards following a promise of granting what they wish may indicate that such added reward will be beyond their wish and will. It is also obvious that such added reward will be a kind of perfection and any perfection is desired by man. The fact that such added reward will be beyond their wish and will is that it will be beyond restriction, since anything lying within wish and will is limited.

The Imam (AS) is narrated in al-Qummī's *Tafsīr* regarding *with Us there is yet more* (50:35) that considering divine mercy is intended.[5]

The present author states that the theme of this tradition may be implied by this verse: *So that God may reward them by the best of what they have done, and enhance them out of His grace, and God provides for whomever He wishes without any reckoning* (24:38). This verse indicates that *there is yet more* (50:35), which is divine provision (*rizq*) without reckoning arises from His grace.

It is attested in the verse: *Were it not for God's grace and His mercy upon you, not one of you would ever be pure* (24:21) that grace (*faḍl*) arises from mercy (*raḥma*) which is actually a kind of undeserved mercy. *There is yet more* (*mazīd*) (50:35) indicates divine mercy that embraces all things and is written for the God wary: *but My mercy embraces all things. Soon I shall appoint it for those who are God wary* (7:156).

If we reflect on the following verses we will understand that mercy may be regarded as paradise and paradise is a stage in the hierarchy of mercy:

> Then there will be set up between them a wall with a gate, with mercy on its interior… (57:13)

> 'Are these the ones concerning whom you swore that God will not extend them any mercy?' 'Enter paradise!' (7:49)

> Indeed, God's mercy is close to the virtuous. (7:56)

> And paradise will be brought near for the God wary, not distant [any more]. (50:31)

NOTES

[1] *Arḍ* implies the outward world and corporeal world, e.g., 7:176 and 17:95, even though it is used in numerous verses in the sense of the earth. In his *Nathr-i Ṭūbā* (vol. 1, pp. 16–17), Shaʿrānī maintains that *arḍ* in its astronomical sense is not attested in the Qurʾān, but the Qurʾānic meaning of *arḍ* is the surface of the dry part or parts of the earth and that even mountains are not included in the semantic domain of *arḍ*, as reflected in the blessed verses 73:14; 69:14; 16:15.

[2] It is to be noted that the earth is subject to unceasing evolution towards the inward, spiritual, and luminous form of it. The Gardens of Eden (*jannāt ʿadn*) are related to this spiritual form or aspect of the earth, as if the earth consists of interconnected layers of the earth. The outward layer of the earth is its inhabited surface and its inward layers are illumined by the light of Truth.

[3] Ṣamad in the original Arabic text must be a typo for Ḥumayd.

[4] al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 170.

[5] al-Qummī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 2, p. 334.

20

IN HELL

We seek refuge in God Almighty from it. The verses dealing with hell and details of punishment in it, running to 400 verses, are more than those about paradise. Except for twelve small chapters, all other chapters explicitly or implicitly make references to hell. The inhabitants of hell, in brief, are deprived of real life in the hereafter. God Almighty says:

> …They have despaired of the Hereafter, just as the faithless have despaired of the occupants of the graves. (60:13)

> Indeed, no one despairs of God's mercy except the faithless lot. (12:87)

> Who despairs of his Lord's mercy except those who are astray?! (15:56)

The hereafter is divinely depicted in *the abode of the Hereafter is indeed Life* (29:64) and that is the divine mercy as the source of perfection and beauty, as reflected in the verse: *My mercy embraces all things. Soon I shall appoint it for those who are God wary…* (7:156). It implies that the inhabitants of hell, despite being deprived of real life, are all embraced by divine mercy.

Further, the blessed verses: *And there will be a veil between*

them… (7:46) and *Then there will be set up between them a wall with a gate, with mercy on its interior and punishment toward its exterior* (57:13) imply that despite being embraced by divine mercy, the inhabitants of hell are deprived of it, since mercy lies in the interior of the veil but they cannot reach beyond it. Reference was made to this theme in Chapter 18.

Such veil thus impedes the dwellers of hell to be granted blessings and they are punished by its exterior. On the other hand, it is divinely elucidated that the dwellers of hell are punished for their misdeeds which lead to different kinds of punishment. These punishments arise from the source of the veil, that is, negligence (*ghafla*).

God Almighty says:

> Certainly, We have created for hell many of the jinn and humans: they have hearts with which they do not understand, they have eyes with which they do not see, they have ears with which they do not hear. They are like cattle; rather they are more astray. It is they who are the heedless. (7:179)

> No indeed! Rather their hearts have been sullied by what they have been earning. No indeed! They will be alienated from their Lord on that day. (83:14–15)

They are impeded by the veil of their deeds.

> Then, We shall attend to the works they have done and then turn them into scattered dust. (25:23)

> As for the faithless, their works are like a mirage in a plain, which the thirsty man supposes to be water. When he comes to it, he finds it to be nothing; but there he finds God, who will pay him his full account. (24:39)

> Have you not regarded those who have changed God's blessing with ingratitude, and landed their people in the house of ruin? (14:28)
>
> …And their plotting shall come to naught. (35:10)

It is thus elucidated that the inhabitants of hell dwell in the mirage of illusions, rather than reality; they are in the exterior rather than the interior, in nothingness and perdition rather than life. All these things are in this world and *the life of this world is nothing but the wares of delusion* (3:185). There is thus a particular connection between this worldly life and hell.

Hell is most clearly depicted in these verses:

> There is none of you but will come to it: a [matter that is] decided with certainty by your Lord. Then, We will deliver those who are God wary, and leave the wrongdoers in it, fallen on their knees. (19:71–72)
>
> Had We wished We would have given every soul its guidance, but My word became due [against the defiant]: 'Surely, I will fill hell with all the [guilty] jinn and humans'. (32:13)

It is thus narrated from the Imams (AS), for instance from Imam al-Ṣādiq (AS) in *Thawāb al-Aʿmāl*, that one who is eager to know about paradise and its attributes must read Chapter 56 of the Qurʾān (Sūrat al-Wāqiʿa) and one desiring to know about hell must read Chapter 31 (Sūra Luqmān).[1]

The theme of the preceding verse is also attested in these blessed verses: *We certainly created man in the best of forms; then We relegated him to the lowest of the low, except those who have faith and do righteous deeds. There will be an everlasting reward for them* (95:4–6).

The meanings of some other verses are thus elucidated, for example,

> Beware the Fire whose fuel will be humans and stones, prepared for the faithless. (2:24)

> Save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones (*al-ḥijāra*). (66:6)

The stones contextually imply the idols of stone worshipped by idolaters.

> It is they who will be fuel for the Fire (3:10).

> Indeed, you and what you worship besides God shall be fuel for hell (21:98).

The following verses exclude the righteous servants who were worshipped:

> Indeed, those to whom there has gone beforehand [the promise of] the best reward from Us will be kept away from it. (21:101)

> [It is] the fire of God, set ablaze, which will overspread the hearts. (104:6–7)

References were briefly made to the characteristics of hell which is also reflected in the above argument.

NOTE

[1] *Thawāb al-Aʿmāl*, p. 117.

21

GENERAL APPLICABILITY OF RESURRECTION

God Almighty says: *God did not create the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them except with reason and for a specified term* (30:8). The blessed verse is saying that what has been created in the heavens and the earth and what has been created between them is based on reason (*ḥaqq*) and a specified term (*ajal musammā*). The preposition *bi-* in *bi-'l-ḥaqq* (with the reason) implies either causality or accompaniment. It was discussed in the first chapter that 'specified term' is 'life before God' (*ḥayāh ʿind Allāh*), a perfect happy life, untouched by any annihilation and worldly entanglements and pains.

The specified term is thus the perfect life whence the existence of entities descend, as reflected in the blessed verse: *There is not a thing but that its sources are with Us, and We do not send it down except in a known measure* (15:21). The source of all creatures, despite their multiplicity, is a perfect, unlimited life and their return will be towards that source. This is implied by creation through reason in the above verse, since falsehood lies in an action which is not conducive to the final goal originally intended by that deed.

Further, the final goal of an action or creation may never be the action or creation *per se*, unless the action or creation is

originally and existentially perfect, unchangeable, and not subject to gradation from imperfection to perfection. This is proved by all demonstrations produced in this respect, and this proposition is attested along with its syllogisms.

Similar to the above verse, the blessed verse: *We did not create the sky and the earth and whatever is between them in vain* (38:27) proves the general applicability of Resurrection, since no difference is divinely made between animate and inanimate or between rational and non-rational beings, hence the general applicability of Resurrection to creatures in their entirety.

It is attested in the blessed verse: *There is no animal on land, nor a bird that flies with its wings, but they are communities like yourselves. We have not omitted anything from the Book. Then they will be mustered toward their Lord* (6:38) that animate creatures on land will be resurrected because, similar to mankind, they are nations (*umam*, pl. of *umma*) and there is a goal behind their creation: return and resurrection. Separation (*farq*) and diffusion (*nashr*) are intended by union (*jamᶜ*) and gathering (*ḥashr*) and vice versa, as implied in the blessed verse: *There is not a thing but that its sources are with Us* (15:21). It is worthy of note that this is applicable to divine attributes and names as well.[1] This may be perceived through reflection, God willing.

Resurrection of animals and birds towards the Lord is the consequence of the fact that, similar to mankind, they are nations, as elucidated by the blessed verse: *We have not omitted anything from the Book* (6:38). The Book in this verse implies the 'true Book' mentioned in the verse: *This is Our book, which speaks truly against you* (45:29).

The truth of this Book requires that the differences between animals, birds, and other creatures – mentioned by their various kinds differing with each other in terms of form, acts, and effects of a diverse nature – are not in vain, rather they have effects on attaining to their final goals without causing their annihilation on their paths; otherwise, the said differences would be vain and

entailing omission in the Book and in contradiction to its veracity. The animals on land, similar to mankind, have different kinds and, like mankind, return to their Lord and assemble before Him.

Union and resurrection are generally applied to all animate beings in the heavens and the earth in the verse: *Among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and whatever creatures He has scattered in them, and He is able to gather them whenever He wishes* (42:29).

This theme is also reflected in verses: *There is none in the heavens and the earth but he comes to the All-beneficent as a servant. Certainly, He has counted them [all] and numbered them precisely, and each of them will come to Him alone on the Day of Resurrection* (19:93–95). 'Servant' implies that any of the said beings, in terms of its essence, has its own servanthood and wayfaring towards God whereby it seeks proximity to its Lord.

The term 'alone' (*fard*) was elucidated above. It is worthy of note that considering the elucidation of 'alone' in Qurʾānic verses, *and each of them will come to Him alone on the Day of Resurrection* indicates that *He is able to gather them* (42:29) connotes some sense different from 'union' (*jamʿ*).

The terms 'union' (*jamʿ*) and 'gathering' (*ḥashr*) are frequently implied in Qurʾānic verses on resurrection (*baʿth*), instances of which include:

> He will surely gather you on the Day of Resurrection, in which there is no doubt. (4:87)

> The day when He will gather you for the Day of Gathering (64:9).

This theme thus elucidates what is intended in these verses:

> Those who are wary of their Lord will be led to paradise in throngs. (39:73)

> The faithless will be driven to hell in throngs. (39:71)
>
> …So that God may separate the bad ones from the good, and place the bad on one another, and pile them up together, and cast them into hell. (8:37)[2]

Let us return to our main discussion. The verses implying the resurrection of inanimate beings are the following: *Who is more astray than him who invokes besides God such as would not respond to him until the Day of Resurrection, and who are oblivious of their invocation? When mankind are mustered [on Judgment's Day] they will be their enemies, and they will disavow their worship* (46:5–6). The antecedent of 'are' (*kānū*) in both instances are the objects of worship besides God.

This theme is also reflected in these verses:

> That is God, your Lord; to Him belongs all sovereignty. As for those whom you invoke besides Him, they do not control so much as the husk of a date stone. If you invoke them they will not hear your invocation, and even if they heard they cannot respond to you, and on the Day of Resurrection they will forswear your polytheism, and none can inform you like the One who is all-aware. (35:13–14)

Forswearing (*kufr*) polytheists' worship by the objects of worship besides Him is divinely referred to in their own words in the verse: *We plead for non-liability before You: it was not us that they worshipped* (28:63).

Who would not respond to him clearly indicates that they worshipped plants and inanimate objects, other than mankind and angels, and those beings will be resurrected on the Day of Resurrection. This theme is clearly attested in these blessed verses:

> When mankind is mustered [on Judgment's Day] they will be their enemies. (46:6)

> They are dead, not living, and are not aware when they will be resurrected. (16:21)

These verses further imply a connection between resurrection, life, and knowledge, as is made clear by the pronouns in the above verses. This theme is so delicately implied in this verse: *Among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and whatever creatures He has scattered in them, and He is able to gather them whenever He wishes* (42:29).[3]

It was mentioned above in the chapter devoted to witnesses that the verses indicate a general application of life and knowledge to all beings.

It is worthy of note that reference was made above to the application of resurrection to beings other than mankind and angels, that is, to all beings in the heavens and the earth and those between them. This is also attested in traditions. However, such traditions deal with individual cases, for example, the dog of the Companions of the Cave (*aṣḥāb al-kahf*) (18:18, 22); Ṣāliḥ's she-camel (*nāqa*) (7:73); animals used in pilgrimage to Mecca for three or seven years will be admitted to paradise; dogs and wild beasts will enter hell and will tear miscreants asunder.[4]

It is attested in the blessed verse: *when the wild beasts are mustered* (81:5). It is narrated from the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ʿAlī (AS) in *al-Maḥāsin*[5] and from the Prophet (SAW) in *al-Majmaʿ*,[6] that hornless animals will be divinely derived from horned animals. It is narrated in *Man Lā Yaḥḍuruhu 'l-Faqīh* that having seen a she-camel tied to the ground with a load on her back, the Prophet asked, 'Where is her owner? Say to him that he will be accountable for this tomorrow [i.e., the Day of Resurrection].'[7]

It is narrated from the Imams (AS) that those who fail to pay *zakāh* will be torn asunder by a ferocious animal and will be trampled under the hooves of animals.[8] There are further traditions narrated with similar themes, for example, regarding sacrificial animals.

It is to be noted that the manner of resurrection of those divinely created beyond the heavens and the earth is not reflected in such verses.[9] The beings divinely created with no limits to their essence have transcended bounds and measure; as a result, there will be neither resurrection nor return applicable to the essence of their creation. They are thus permanently endowed with the attributes emerging on the Day of Resurrection, as discussed in Chapter 9. Accordingly, origin (*badʾ*) and return (*ʿawd*) are identical to them and their Resurrection is not thus attested in Qurʾānic verses.

The exclusive servants (*mukhliṣūn*) are included in this group. Some of the attributes of such exclusive servants were referred to in the preceding chapters; for instance, they have attained to the station of being in the presence of God (*ʿind Allāh*); no veil is between them and God Almighty; they are neither in the heavens nor on the earth, but they dominate and judge all beings; they are intermediaries between God and His creation in the beginning and upon return; they are excepted from their souls and are seized by the Angel of Death and his helpers; they are secure from the terror (*fazaʿ*) caused by the blowing of the Trumpet on the Last Day (*nafkha*), and swooning (*ṣaʿqa*); they will not be summoned on the Day of Resurrection; they are in the veil (*ḥijāb*) and judge all creatures. Further details must be discussed in another treatise.

It is to be noted that the above is based on above arguments and demonstrations as well, since the final goal is necessarily identical to the agent, in that the source of emanation of some being whereby the essence of the emanated is determined[10] is necessarily the final goal of the existence of the emanated.

Accordingly, there are hierarchies for paradise and hell; those of paradise start from below, but those of hell start from above. It is thus elucidated that the higher the degree in paradise the lower will be the agent's degree. Given that this is applicable to hell, the opposite must be applied there.[11]

The meaning of concomitance (*luḥūq*) and intercession

(*shafāʿa*) are thus elucidated. As it was frequently mentioned above, the meaning of many Qurʾānic verses and traditions are thus clarified. God is the Guide and He is the Helper.

NOTES

[1] Actualization of the world of multiplicity (*ʿālam al-kathra*) aims at attaining to the world of union (*jamʿ*) and unicity (*waḥda*) that will occur on the Day of Resurrection, even though the world of multiplicity has been individuated from the world of union and unicity, as reflected in the blessed verse 15:21. Multiplicity in this world arises from primeval union and unicity and multiplicity of this world proceeds towards its desired unicity. Such ascent and descent are seen in divine names and attributes, in that particular names constitute the stage or degree of descent (*nuzūl*) and individuation (*taʿayyun*) of universal names and universal names and attributes constitute the stage of ascent (*ṣuʿūd*) and absoluteness (*iṭlāq*) of particular names and attributes. 'Treasuries' (*khazāʾin*) in the blessed verse implies the universal names and attributes that serve as intermediaries of creation but they lie beyond the circle of creatures.

[2] It is to be noted that *fard* here implies that man is divested of all his individuations (*taʿayyunāt*) and possessions (*tamallukāt*) and he will find out that what he imagined as the means of meeting his demands was but an illusion.

[3] The pronoun *–hum* (them) in *jamʿi-him* (gather them) implies intelligence and its antecedent is seemingly all the heavens, the earth, and the creatures between them. A kind of life and intelligence is thus attributed in this blessed verse to all the heavens, the earth, and the creatures between them; further, the verse connotes general application of union and resurrection.

[4] Also see: al-Ṣadūq, *Thawāb al-Aʿmāl*, Maktabat al-Ṣadūq, p. 74; al-Baraqī, *al-Maḥāsin*, vol. 2, p. 641, tradition 157; *Man Lā Yaḥḍuruhu 'l-Faqīh*, Jāmiʿa Mudarrisīn, vol. 2, p. 293, tradition 2495.

[5] *al-Maḥāsin*, vol. 1, p. 68, tradition 18; *Uṣūl Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 433.

[6] *Majmaʿ al-Bayān*, vol. 10, p. 673.

[7] *Man Lā Yaḥḍuruhu 'l-Faqīh*, vol. 2, p. 189, chapter 93, tradition 1; Jāmiʿa Mudarrisīn edition, vol. 2, p. 292, tradition 2490.

[8] al-ʿAyyāshī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 1, p. 221, tradition 177; *Man Lā Yaḥḍuruhu 'l-Faqīh*, vol. 2, pp. 9–10, tradition 1583.

[9] A kind of angel is seemingly intended.

[10] That is individuated, *taʿayyana*.

[11] In other words, the higher degrees of paradise are the causes of its lower degrees; in contrast, the weaker stages of hell are the causes of its stronger stages.

EPILOGUE

We had formerly in mind to devote a separate chapter, at the end of this third part, to the meaning of forgiveness (*maghfira*), but we have been impeded from doing so for the sake of brevity as well as numerous engagements and undesirable impediments. I pray to God Almighty to grant me success to write a supplement to this treatise wherein such subjects could be covered. I hope that God Almighty grants me this blessing. *Indeed, God has power over all things* (2:20, passim).[1]

It is to be noted that discussions on 'return' (*maʿād*) are quite wide in scope, as elucidated through reflection on the origin and return as reflected in Qurʾānic verses and divine words. Nevertheless, it has been for the sake of brevity that discussions in the preceding chapters were kept from getting into detail. Further, engagement in further elaboration is impossible before the seekers of truths. As a result, hints and suggestions regarding such topics prevail over expositions, and we thus turned towards another course in Part 3 which is different from the style adopted in Part 1 and Part 2.

Praise belongs to God at all times and may His near-stationed friends be blessed, in particular, our master, Muḥammad, and his Ahl al-Bayt.

Writing this treatise came to an end in the first ten days of the month of Jumādā al-Thānī 1360 AH (27 June–6 July 1941). The present author, the servant of God, is Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ḥasanī al-Ṭabāṭabāʾī. The treatise was written in the village of Shādābād in the administrative district of the city of Tabriz.

NOTE

[1] For further details, see *al-Mīzān*, vol. 6, pp. 361–377.