

گشایش و رهایش

Gushāyish wa Rahāyish

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گشایش و رهایش

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گشایش و رهایش

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
و به نستعين

【۱】 اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَ الْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ وَ الصَّلَاةُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ
مُحَمَّدٍ وَ آلِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ وَ سَلَّمَ تَسْلِيمًا كَثِيرًا.

【۲】 دانستم ای برادر از بسته گشتن مسئله‌هایی که شبهت اندر آن بسیارست و کسی را نیافتی که وی بگشادن آن توان داشت، ولیکن ما ترا اجابت کردیم در پرسیدن این مسئله‌ها و نام نهادیم این کتاب را گشایش و رهایش از [بهر] آنک سخن بسته را اندرو گشاده کردیم تا نفسهای مؤمنان مخلصان را اندرو گشایش و رهایش باشد.

【۳】 اکنون سؤالهای ترا ای برادر یاد [می]کنیم و جواب هر یک بشرح و بیان و برهان و حجت از آیات قرآن و دلائل از آفاق و انفس و طبایع و ارکان همی آریم.

مسئله اول

【۴】 پرسیدی ای برادر از آفریدگار و آفریده، و گفتی چاره نیست از آنک آفریدگار پیش از آفریده بود، اما خواستی که بدانی که میان آفریدگار و آفریده زمان بود یا نه، و آنچ آفریده است آن وقت که نیافریده بود آفریدگار و پادشاه بود یا نه، و چون آفریده نبود خدا آفریدگار چه چیز بود و پادشاه بر چه بود، پس اگر پادشاه و آفریدگار آن وقت گشت که آفرینش کرد و پادشاهی پدید آورد اکنون که پادشاه و آفریدگارست بهتر و بزرگترست از آنچه آن وقت بود که نه آفریدگار بود و نه پادشاه، چون اکنون که آفرینش پدید آورد بخلاف آن است که پیش از آفرینش بود مر او را [نام] محدثی لازم آید از بهر آنک آنچه حال او گردنده باشد محدث باشد، خواهیم که ببرهان سخن گشاده گردد تا بدانیم که اعتقاد چگونه باید داشت اندرین، و السَّلَام.

جواب

[۵] بدان ای برادر که این سؤال سخت بزرگ است و بسیاری خلق اندرین گم شده‌اند از بهر آنکه مر علم الهی را خزانه‌دارانند و هر که بدیشان باز نگردد و حق ازیشان نجوید در دریای باطل هلاک شود و مخالف شده باشد مرین قول معروف [و] مشهور را که میان مسلمانانست از فرمان رسول صلی الله علیه [وآله] که گفت بگوئید: لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ، و هر که بامام روزگار خویش باز نگردد و علم حقیقت از وی طلب نکند و بر حول و قُوَّة خویش اعتماد کند ستم کار باشد.

[۶] من این گره را از بهر تو ای برادر بکشایم بفرمان خداوند زمان و کمین گاه دیو را که برین راه نهاده است بحول و قُوَّت وی ویران کنم و راه راست بتو نمایم، و همچنانکه علم مستور را پیمانه است و ترازو و [چنانکه] بر من پیموده‌اند و سخته‌اند بر متابعان خاندان مر آن علم را بکیل عدل باز پیمایم و بترازوی حق بر سنجم چنانکه حق تعالی درین معنی «وَيْلٌ لِّلْمُطَفِّفِينَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا اكْتَالُوا عَلَى النَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُونَ وَإِذَا كَالُوهُمْ أَوْ وَزَنُوهُمْ يُخْسِرُونَ» (۸۳: ۱-۳) یاد کرد.

[۷] گوئیم نخست بیاید شناخت که زمان چیست تا این گره گشاده گردد بیاید دانست که زمانه بحقیقت کار کرد کارکن است، از بهر آنکه زمانه جنبش فلک است، چنانکه از فلک مقدار یک برج بگردد گوئیم دو ساعت از شب یا از روز گذشت، و چون نیمی از فلک بگردد گوئیم دوازده ساعت از زمانه گذشت از روز یا از شب، پس اگر فلک را بوهم از راه برگیری از زمانه چیزی نماند از بهر آنکه چون یافتن چیزی بچیزی دیگر باشد، اگر آن چیز از پیش برگیری آن چیز که یافته بدو شده است بر گرفته شود، اگر آفتاب را بوهم بر گیریم روز [بر] گرفته شود، و از این برهان که نمودیم اگر فلک را بوهم برگیری زمان برگرفته شود و گشتن فلک کار کردست بفرمان [کردگار]، پس زمانه خود کار کرد کردگار باشد.

[۸] و نیز گفته‌اند خداوندان حکمت قولی بهمین معنی، گفتند نیست زمان مگر گشتن حالهای جسم از پس یکدیگر، و این قول همین است که زمانه

کارکرد کارکن است از بهر آنک جملگی جسم در میان قبه افلاک است و چون افلاک بگردد حال او دیگر شود از بهر آنک هر نقطه‌ای ازو آنجا که بوده باشد بجای دیگر شود، و گردش آسمانرا آرام نیست از بهر آنک زمانه او را سپری شدن نیست.

【۹】 و اندر وهم مردم ضعیف نیاید که زمانه را بر توان گرفتن بوهم و آن بدان سبب است که نفس مردم با جسم پیوسته است که زیر زمان اندرست نمی‌تواند که بی پرورش علم حقیقت ازو بیرون شود، و خدای تعالی می‌گوید: «يَا مَعْشَرَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنْسِ إِنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَنْ تَنْفُذُوا مِنْ أَقْطَارِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ فَانْفُذُوا لَا تَنْفُذُونَ إِلَّا بِسُلْطَانٍ» (۳۳:۵۵) می‌گوید ای جماعت پریان و مردمان اگر توانید بگریزید از کناره‌های آسمان و زمین پس بگریزید و مگریزید مگر بحجت، یعنی مردم و پری را طاقت نیست که جز چنانک دیده است در آسمان و زمین مرنفس خویش را صورت کند چیزی مگر [از] آن کس که حجت خدای است بر زمین که امام زمانست پرورش [علم حقیقت] یابد [و تواند بیرون شود از] هر چه زیر آسمان و زیر زمانست.

【۱۰】 و چون زمانه بحقیقت گشتن حال جسم باشد که آسمان است نیز هم کارکرد است از کردگار آسمان و زمین، پس از هر روی که حقیقت زمانه را بجوئی مرو را کار کرد یابی، و چون این حال شناسی بدانی که این سؤال باطلست که کسی گوید میان کردگار و آفرینش خود روزگار بود [یا نه]، از بهر آنک چون گفت آفریدگار پیش از آفرینش بود [و] آفرینش خود روزگار بود، چنین که بیان کردیم. پس گفته باشد که آفریدگار پیش از آفرینش بود، چون گوید که میان آفریدگار و آفریده روزگار بود سخن متناقض باشد زیرا که گفته باشد که پیش از روزگار روزگار بود و همچنان باشد این لفظ که کسی گوید پیش از آفرینش آفرینش بود و این محال باشد.

【۱۱】 اما آنچه گفתי آفریدگار پیش از آنک عالم آفرید آفریدگار چه بود و پیش ازین چگونه پادشاه بود، و اگر پس از آفرینش و پادشاهی آفریدگار و پادشاه گشت بخلاف آنست که پیش از آفرینش بود، ببايد شناختن که [آفریدگار و]

آفریده و آفرینش همه در امر باری سبحانه و تعالی بود بجملگی و هیچ چیز درو پیشتر و پستر نبود اندر حال هست شدن، و امر [از] باری تعالی اثرست نه جزو، و اثر ازو چنان باشد که دبیری از مرد دبیرست که از ذات دبیر اثرست و هیچ چیز نیست، ولیکن هویت باری از ماده و آلت و قوّت و صورت و نظر و فعل برترست، امر از وی عزّ اسمّه بدان منزلت است که بذات خویش قائم است و همه بودها و بودنیها اندرو گنجیده است.

[۱۲] و نفس مردم دبیر چون در تیرگی جسد و تاریکی طبیعت نشسته است دبیری که ازو اثرست بذات خویش [قائم] نمی‌شود و عاجزست و تا دبیر از طبیعت یاری نخواهد بفراز آوردن کاغذ و دویت (دوات) و قلم و جای و روزگار و حرکت مر اثر خویش را پدید نتواند کرد و باری سبحانه کز ماده و صورت بی‌نیازست همه بودنیها از امر او عزّ اسمّه که اثر بود جمله شده آمد، و آفریدگار و آفریده و آفرینش و پادشاه و پادشاهی همه اندر آن اثر بود بی آنک مر آن اثر را سوی هویت باری سبحانه و تعالی پیوستگی بود بر مثال دبیری که مر آنرا با نفس دبیر هیچ پیوستگی نباشد و دبیر پس از آنک چیزی نوشته باشد بحال خویش باشد بی هیچ زیادت و نقصان، پس پادشاه بحقیقت آن اوّل است که مبدع اوّل بود که امر باری تعالی بی میانجی با او یکی گشت و آن عقل اوّلست که بفعل و قوّت تمامست و آفریدگار و کارکن بحقیقت نفس کلّست که از عقل کل یعنی عقل اوّل بمنزلت اندیشه است از نفس خردمند.

[۱۳] و [آفریدگار و] آفرینش و آفریده و پادشاه و پادشاهی همه اندر امر باریست و با هویت او پیوستگی ندارد، و برهان عقلی برین قول آنست که آنچه اندرین عالم همی پدید آید از نبات و حیوان بجمله شدن و آمیختن طبایع و مساعدت روزگار و موافقت جایگاه همی حاصل آید، و چون این چیزها همه یکدیگر را یاری دهند دلیل کند بر آنک همه از یک چیز پیدا آمده‌اند چنانک بسیاری در عدد از یکی پیدا آمده است، و اگر این همه چیزها که یاد کرده شد از طبایع و زمان و مکان نه از یک چیز پیدا آمده بودندی مر یک دیگر را یاری ندادندی و مخالفت نمودندی، چون همه کارکن و یاری‌گرند همه فرمانبردار باشند، پس

نخست فرمان باید آن گه فرمان بردار.

[۱۴] پس درست شد که همه بودها و بودنیها اندر بودش امر باری سبحانه جمله بوده است بیک دفعه نه از چیزی بی آنک هیچ چیز را بر یک دیگر پیشی و پسی بود، و امر باری از باری تعالی بنزدیک گردانیدن وهم بر مثال خرما دانه ایست که هر چه بر درخت خرما پدید آید از برگ و شاخ و بیخ و چوب و لیف و خار و خرما و جز آن بیک دفعه اندرو [پدید] آید بی زمان چه اگر [از] این چیزها اندر خرما دانه بعضی یافته نشد درخت خرما را برگ بودی و شاخ نبودی و یا چوب بودی و لیف نبودی، چون این معنیها اندر خرما دانه نیامده باشد هیچ ازو نیامده باشد و آن خود نارسیده باشد که نروید و چون رسیده باشد همه معنی اندرو آمده باشد، پس دلیست که گرد آمدن معنیهای درخت اندر آن دانه بیک دفعه بود بی زمان، و چون در محسوسات چنین یافته شد امر باری که نه از چیزی مر او را یاری بود آنچه کند سزاوارتر باشد که همه بودنیها [اندرو] بود بی زمان و بی مکان چنانک [خدای تعالی] می گوید: «وَمَا أَمْرُنَا إِلَّا وَاحِدَةٌ كَلَمْحٍ بِالْبَصَرِ» (۵۴: ۵۰) همی گوید که نیست امر ما مگر یکی [چون] درفشیدن بچشم یعنی بودش زمان و مکان چنان است که چشم مر روشنائی را بیند و همچنانک از خرما دانه آنچه بیک دفعه اندرو [پدید] آمده است بروزگار بیرون آید آنچه اندر امر باری تعالی بیک دفعه اندرو آمده است بی زمان نه از چیزی بکار کرد همی پیدا آید.

[۱۵] و بحقیقت محدث چیزی باشد که از چیزی دیگر باشد و چیزی که او نه از چیزی باشد قدیم باشد، پس قدیم بحقیقت امر باری سبحانه است که چیزها همه ازو چیز گشتند، و چون درست کردیم [که] نام محدثی بر امر باری سبحانه نیفتد بر پدید آورنده او سزاوارتر باشد که نیفتد و مخلوق آن باشد که او را از چیزی دیگر مدد و قوت باشد، پس مخلوق بحقیقت نفس کلی است که ماده و ی از کلمه باری است بمیانجی عقل، و محدث بحقیقت این عالم جسمانیست از بهر آنک محدث آن باشد که حدث پذیر باشد، و حدث چون جنبش و آرام و زیادت و نقصان باشد و آنچه بدین ماند، و این احوال اندر عالم جسمانی یافتست.

[۱۶] پس درست شد بدین شرح که کردیم که آفریدگار و آفرینش و آفریده همه اندر امر باری تعالی بود و هویت ایزد تعالی [را] با کردگار و کرده و کار پیوستگی و جدائی نیست که وی یگانه است از بهم بودن که هر آن چیزی که با دیگر چیزی بهم بود آن خدائی را نشاید، و آن اشارت مر خالق را و کردگار را که سوی باری کرده شود نه بر آن روی است که باری تعالی کارکن و پادشاه است بل که چون خالق و پادشاه را بودش از امر او بود همه بودها را نسبت با او کنند بر روی بزرگداشت چنانکه مردی کوشکی فرماید آن کوشک را درگر و کارگران کنند و [لیکن] گویند این کوشک [را] فلان کس کرده است، [اگر چه] وی بیش از فرمان [هیچ] نداد و هیچ کار نکرد و نگویند که کارگران کرده اند، اعتقاد اندر آفرینش عالم و آفریدگار و آفریده چنین باید داشت تا نفس رسته شود.

مسئله دوم

[۱۷] پرسیدی ای برادر که دو چیز که میان [بودش] ایشان هیچ زمان نباشد چگونه یکی از یار خویش پیش باشد؟ و گفتی که اندر خرد چنان آید که آن دو چیز که میان [بودش] ایشان روزگار نباشد یا هر دو قدیم باشند یا هر دو محدث از بهر آنکه فرق میان قدیم و محدث آنست که قدیم از محدث بر روزگار پیش بوده باشد چنانکه درخت قدیم باشد و بار درخت محدث که درخت پیش از بار بوده باشد و همه قیاسات قدیم همین باشد، و چون روزگار از میان دو چیز بر گرفته شود پیشی و پسی نماند میان ایشان، یا هر دو قدیم باشند یا هر دو محدث، و چون ازین پیش در ست کردی که میان بودش امر باری سبحانه و میان همه بودنیها هیچ روزگار نبود هرچ خواست بیک دفعه اندرو بوده شد، پس عالم و امر باری هر دو قدیم باشند و هیچ کس منکر این نتواند شد که نخست کارکن باید آن گاه کار کرد پس ازو باشد، باید که ما را بیان کنی که پیش و پس بی زمان چگونه بود تا بدان اعتقاد کنیم و حقیقت آن بتمامت بدانیم.

جواب

[۱۸] بدان ای برادر که سؤال بر قانون راست باید [کرد] چون می گوئی که دو چیزست که یکی از دیگری پیش نبوده باشد [در بودش ایشان] آن هر دو یا قدیم

باشند یا محدث، این سخن درستست و لیکن چون می‌گوئی دو چیز که [یکی] از دیگری پیش باشد اندر بودش [چنانک کارکن از کارکرد] اگر میان ایشان روزگاری نباشد یا هر دو محدث باشند یا قدیم این سخن درست نباشد از بهر آنک گفتی [از] آن دو چیز یکی از دیگری پیش باشد چنانک کارکن از کارکرد بیش است، آن گاه [اگر] گوئی میان ایشان در بودش [اگر] روزگار نبود قدیم و محدث لازم نیاید، اینرا برهان باید، اما اگر بدین آن می‌خواهی که میان دو چیز که روزگار نباشد یکی از ایشان پیش از یار خویش نشاید که بود، چون یکی پیش از دیگری نباشد [بروزگار] یا هر دو قدیم باشد یا هر دو محدث، گوئیم این قاعده [هم] درست نیست و اگر نه قول تو راست بودی از بهر آنک چون دو چیز باشند که از ایشان یکی از دیگری پیش نباشد بروزگار قدیم و محدث لازم آید و اگر یکی از دیگری ضرورت پیش باشد روزگار لازم نیاید و [روزگار] نشاید حکم کردن چون روزگار [لازم] نیاید بقدیم و محدث [بودن] از بهر آنک چیزها هست که میان ایشان هیچ روزگار نیست.

[۱۹] چنانک مردی ساعتی کار کند و ساعتی بیاساید میان کارکرد و آسایش هیچ روزگار نبود و همه کس داند که نخست کارکردن بود آن گاه آسایش، و هر که درین منکر شود و گوید که کار پیش از آسایش نبود با او درین معنی سخن نگویند، یا اگر گوید میان کار و آسایش روزگار بود محال گفته باشد، و بدین بیان که کردیم باطلست قول آن کس که گوید دو چیز که میان بودش ایشان روزگار نباشد یا هر دو قدیم باشند یا هر دو محدث از بهر آنک معلومست که کار کردن پیش از آسایش بود، و قدیم بود و آسایش پس ازو بود و محدث بود و میان این دو حال هیچ روزگار نبود.

[۲۰] و بدین بیان روشن گشت که آفریدگار عالم قدیمست و عالم محدث بی آنک میان این هر دو هیچ روزگار لازم آید، و فائده درین مسئله آنست تا بدانی که میان آفریدگار و آفریده زمان واجب نیاید، و آفریدگار بر آفریده مقدمست بی هیچ روزگاری چه اگر آفریدگار را آن پیشی که بر آفریده است بروزگاری بودی آخر آن روزگار [اول] پدید آمدن آفریده بودی، و چون آخر [آن] روزگار دانسته شود

بضرورت اوّل آن روزگار ثابت شود آن وقت اوّل [آن] روزگار اوّل بودش قدیم بود، و چون قدیم را اوّل پیدا شد نام قدیمی ازو بر خاست، محدث باشد، و خواننده این کتاب چون مرین مسئله را با خصم خود باز تواند گردانید درین که گفتیم تأمل باید کرد که این مسئله بزرگست.

مسئله سوم

[۲۱] پرسیدی ای برادر که چون درست کردی که کردگار قدیمست و عالم محدث و قدیم آن باشد که او را اول نباشد و محدث آنک او را اول باشد پس اقرار کردی که عالم را اولست، باز نمای که آفریدگار که قادرست در آفریدن عالم چرا تأخیر کرد و نیافرید مر او را پیش از آنک آفرید. و اگر در حکمت واجب بود خدای همیشه حکیم بود چرا پیش از آن ابتدا نکرد این حکمت را چون مرو را باز دارنده‌ای نبود، و چون عالم را نیافریده بود چه چیز بود آنک مر او را جَلَّ جَلَّاله برانگیخت بر آفرینش عالم که پیش از آن چیزی نبوده بود و اندر خرد چنانست که [اگر] کسی کاری بخیر تواند کرد و نکند از وی بزشتی شمارند، و اگر کسی کار نیکو نکند یا مر او را باز دارنده‌ای بود از آن یا خود نداند کرد و ایزد سبحانه پاکست و دورست از قهر و از جهل، و اگر کسی کاری نکند بروزگار دراز پس از آن بکند او را بر آن کار برانگیزنده‌ای بود جز ازو، خواهی مر آن انگیزه را اندیشه او گیر و خواهی کسی دیگر و باری تعالی منزّه است ازین هر دو حال اندر آفرینش عالم از بهر آنک او بود و چیزی نه و کسی نه و او یگانه بود از اندیشه کردن و تدبیر پذیرفتن و مشورت خواستن، پس در آفریدن عالم توقف چه بود تا آن وقت که آفرید [و] چرا بود باز نمائی.

جواب

[۲۲] بدان ای برادر که حقیقت وقت حالی باشد میان دو روزگار چنانک کسی گوید که اکنون و اکنون وقتی باشد و معنی این وقت آن باشد که نشانی دهد میان آنچه گذشته است از روزگار و میان آنچه پس ازین پدید آید از روزگار و این حال اکنون میانجی باشد میان این دو روزگار و رزگار خود بحقیقت گشتن حال جسم باشد و چون دانستی از آفرینش عالم که [روزگار خود گشتن حال] جسم بود و چون جسم نبود روزگار نبود، درست شد که چون روزگار نبود وقت نبود و پیشی و

پسی نبود زیرا که نخست روزگار باید تا مرور را پیش و پس بود و وقت و نا وقت باشد همچنانکه صفت بر چیزی افتد و چون چیز نباشد صفت نیز نباشد، و چون وقت میان دو روزگار باشد یکی گذشته و یکی آینده چنانکه بامداد و قتیست آینده و شبانگاه وقتی [است] شده، اگر روز و شب را بوهیم [بر] گیریم وقت بر گرفته شود.

۲۳] [و] وقت میان دو روزگار، یکی گذشته و یکی آینده، چون مثل [گشادگی میان] دو خط باشد که هر خطی را از آن دو خط حدی باشد بر گشادگی میان هر دو خط و چون خط یکی باشد حد بر چیزی نباشد از بهر آنکه آن فراخی که آن را سطح گویند جز بدو خط پیدا نیاید یا بیک خط که آن سر بسر فراز آورده شود و نتوان اندازه آنچ بدو جانب یک خط باشد دانستن همچنانکه مر یکی را حد نیست و کس نتواند گفت صفت [او را] چنانکه مر دو را گویند یکی بر یکیست یعنی جفت شده با هم چون خویشتن و سه را گویند یکی با دو بهم شده است.

۲۴] و جواب این مسئله خود پوشیده اندر [جواب] آن مسئله [پیشین] آمده است که پیدا کردیم که عالم پس از کردگار عالم بود بی آنکه میان ایشان روزگاری بود، چون درست شد که پیش از آفرینش عالم روزگار نبود محال باشد که کسی گوید که ایزد تعالی در آفرینش عالم چرا تأخیر کرد [و نیافرید] تا بدان وقت که بیافرید مر او را، چه وقت خود بآفرینش عالم هستی یافت و اگر آفرینش عالم پیشتر و پستر بوده شود بر سبیل مجاز باشد نه بر سبیل حقیقت، و [گرنه] آن وقت همین سؤال بر جای باشد، پس بحقیقت وقت خود پدید آمدن عالم بود چنانکه جهات جسم رویهای جسم باشد، و این شرح را اندیشه صافی زود دریابد و خاطر روشن ادراک و فهم کند و السلام.

مسئله چهارم

۲۵] پرسیدی ای برادر که مردمان مجسمه همی گویند، خدای جسم است و دلیل همی آرند بر آنکه ما هر کار کرد که همی بینیم در جهان همه کرده جسم است چه از صنعتهای گوناگون که مردم کنند و چه چیزهای دیگر که دیگر حیوانات کنند که مردم از آن عاجزست، چون زنبور که از گل خانه کند و از گل

انگبین، و چون صناعات کرم قز که برگ توت را ابریشم کند، و چون صدف که از آب باران مروارید کند، و چون کارکرد نباتها که هر یکی از آن چیزی همی سازند که مردم از آن عاجزست چنانک درخت خرما که از خاک و آب همی خرما سازد و هر نباتی بخلاف آنچ صورت اقتضا کند [چیزی] همی بیرون آرد، و این همه بجملگی جسم‌اند، و خردمند چون صنعت بیند گواهی دهد که این صنعت ساخته تنومندیست و اگر کسی مر آنرا منکر شود سخن او بنپذیرند، و عالم بجملگی چون صنعتی است [ساخته] بر حکمت پس بحکم این صنعتها که همه کرده جسم است لازم آید که صانع عالم جسم بود، و همی گویند تا صانع جسم نباشد جسم ازو صنعت نپذیرد چنانک می‌بینیم که اگر درگر (درودگر) را جسم نباشد ازو چوب صنعت نپذیرد، و همچنین دیگر پیشه‌ها را، و این برهان پیدااست و روشن، چه دلیل آریم پیش ایشان که صانع عالم جسم نیست، جواب این مسئله را پیدا کن و مبرهن.

جواب

[۲۶] بدان ای برادر که در عالم هیچ صانع جسم نیست نه حیوان و نه نبات و صانع بحقیقت نفس است و جسم او را بمنزلت دست افزارست، و نفس را سه مرتبه است یکی ازو روینده و دیگر خورنده و سوم گوینده، و هر چیزی که ویرا انواع باشد مر او را از جنس چاره نباشد و نوع بسیار باشد، چنانک جانور جنس است و پرنده و خزنده و درنده انواع او اند، و چون نفس را سه [مرتبه] یافتیم دانستیم که او جنس است و آن اصل همه نفسهاست، و چون ازین نفسها شریفت‌تر نفس سخن گوی یافتیم و کار کردهای نیکو و گوناگون مر او را بود دانستیم که وی از کل خویش دانش پذیر است.

[۲۷] و کار کردن نبات و حیوان نه بعلم است بلکه بخاصیت است، و خاصیت آن باشد که مر چیز را بود که جز او چیزی دیگر را آن نباشد چنانک خندیدن و موی سپید شدن مردم را خاصیت است که هیچ حیوان دیگر را نیست، و همچنین زنبور را انگبین کردن و کرم قز را ابریشم کردن خاصیت است، و هر نبات و درخت بیار و دانه خویش مخصوصست که جز آنک مرواست نتواند کرد، و

چون روئیدگی اندر نبات و درخت، و مردم را صنعت‌های بسیار [است]، پس همه صنعت‌ها که هست بجملگی خواهی طبیعی گیر و خواهی اختیاری چون صنعت زنبور و کرم [قَرّ] و صدف و نبات که طبیعی است، و صنعت مردم که اختیاریست همه مر نفس را مطلوبست نه جسم را ولیکن نفس مر آن صنعت را که داند چون در جسم پیدا خواهد آوردن بیاری جسم دیگر تواند آوردن تا چون جسم با نفس یار شود از آن جسم که صنعت پذیر خواهد بود از آن جسم که با نفس یار شده است بهم جنسی که با وی دارد آن صنعت بپذیرد، اما اگر نفس مر صنعت خود را بخواهد که در خود پیدا کند بمیانجی جسم حاجت نیاید و آن صنعت مر اورا خود حاصل باشد چنانک اگر درگر خواهد که دری معلوم کند خود را و بداند که چگونه باشد بی هیچ زمان و آلت و میانجی جسم مر آن صنعت را صورت کند در ذات [خود و] نفس درگر در پیدا کردن آن صنعت [در ذات خود از جسم] بی نیازست، و چون صنعت مر نفس را یافتیم و عالم صنعت پذیر بود دانستیم که صانع او نفس کلّست که این سه نفس که یاد کردیم انواع اویند.

[۲۸] و هم‌چنانک هر صانعی اندر پیدا کردن صنعت خویش بشش چیز حاجتمندست تا آن صنعت ازو درست آید نخست تن اوست، دیگر هیولی که وی صنعت خود را برو پدید آرد چنانک درگر را چوب هیولی است و آهنگر را آهن، و سه دیگر دست افزارست، چنانک درگر را تیشه و ارّه و آهنگر را سندان و پتک، چهارم جنبیدن بایدش تا آن صنعت بتواند کرد و [از] حاجت او بجنبیدن او پیدا گردد خردمند را که کارکن بی نیاز نباشد و بی نیاز کار نکند، پنجم جای بایدش که اندرو آن صنعت بکند، ششم روزگاری که [در] مدّت آن باشد که صنعت خود تمام کند، و چون این شش [چیز] بحاصل کرد صنعت هفتم آن باشد و مقصود ازین شش هفتم است، پس صنعت نفس کل اندرین عالم نبات و حیوانست و نبات علّت حیوانست و حیوان معلول اوست و علّت آن باشد که چون آن را بر گیری معلول او بر خیزد چنانک اگر نبات را بر گیری حیوان بر گرفته شود زیراک غذای حیوان نباتست و مردم علّت چیزی دیگر نیست بلکه مقصودست، و مقصود ازو شناخت خدای است تا باز گردد بدان اصل که ازو پدید آمده است.

[۲۹] پس گوئیم که نفس کل صانع پیشین است و آن چیزها که یاد کردیم [او] بحاصل کرده است نخست بجای تن مر او را این فلک عظیم بی فرسایش است، و دیگر چیز مر او را بجای هیولی این طبائع چهار گانه است چون خاک و آب و باد و آتش کزو همی نبات و حیوان [پیدا] کند و سدیگر مرورا بجای دستافزار، این ستارگان هفت گانه است که از راه ایشان شکلها و فرها و رنگها [پیدا] همی کند نبات و حیوان را، و چهارم او را بجای مکان این فراخی عظیم [است] که این جسم کلّ درو گنجیده است، و پنجم او را جنبش بی نهایت است اندر تن او که فلک است و در دستافزار او که ستارگانند [و] اندر [طبائع] چهارگانه [که بجای] هیولی [است] این جنبش عظیم پیداست، و ششم او را این زمان گذرنده است که می گردد از پس یکدیگر تا هفتم ازو پدید آمده است آنچ همی بینیم در عالم از آرایشهای گوناگون.

[۳۰] و همچنانک ما در صنعت درگر جسم او را و دستافزار او را و صنعت [او را] که بحاصل می آید می بینیم و نفس درگر که صانع اوست ناپیداست ما مرین فلک [را] که نفس کل را بجای جسم است، و طبائع را که بجای هیولی است می بینیم و نفس کل ناپیداست از چشم، و چون نفس درگر از جسم جدا شود جسم از کار بماند همی دانیم که اگر نفس کل دست ازین جنبش و دست افزار بازدارد ازین چیزها هیچ صنعت نیاید بل که براگنده شود چنانک جسم درگر که پراکنده شود، پس [از] جدا شدن نفس از جسم باطل شدن صنعت [را] همی شناسیم و همی دانیم که نفس کل که صانع همین عالمست که اگر یاری نفس ازو باز ماند صنعتها همه ضایع ماند بر مثال جسم درگر، پس هرچ در جزو عالم یافته شود در کل عالم هم همان حکم درست آید، و مردم جزویست از اجزای عالم چون جسم او را بنفس [خویش] برپای و کارکن دیدیم دانستیم که جسم این عالم بنفس خویش برپای و کارکنست، و چون نفس مردم که صانع اوست بحسّ نایافتنی است و جسم و دست افزار او بحسّ یافتنی است دانستیم که آنچ ما در عالم همی بینیم و بحسّ آن را می یابیم جسم و دست افزار است و هیولای آن، و صانع بحسّ یافتنی نیست.

[۳۱] پس درست شد که صانع عالم آنست که بحسّ نایافتنی است و آنچ

بحسّ یافتنی باشد جز جسم نباشد، پس روشن گشت که صانع عالم جسم نیست، این برهان روشن است، تأمل باید کرد و بباید شناخت تا برهی.

مسئله پنجم

۳۲] پرسیدی ای برادر از حال عالم که نفس کلّ مر او را از چه چیز [پیدا] کرد، و نفس کل لطیف است، این کثافت بدین بسیاری از کجا آورد و چگونه از لطیف کثیف پیدا آید، و چون خواست [عالم را پیدا] کردن همین شش چیز که صفت کردی که هر صانعی را بدان حاجت باشد تا مصنوع او پیدا آید مر نفس کل را [همین شش چیز] چه بود از بهر آنک عالم مصنوعیست، پیدا کن تا بدانیم. ان شاء الله.

جواب

۳۳] بدان ای برادر که گفتیم افلاک مر نفس کل را بمنزلت جسم است و ستارگان بمنزلت دست افزار و طبایع چهارگانه بمنزلت هیولی [که] مر هر صانعی را [بدان حاجت باشد] و این همه که گفته آمد مرگب و مصنوعست و ساخته نفس کل است، و لیکن ساختن او مر افلاک را و آنچ اندر وی است نه چون ساختن اوست مر نبات و حیوان را، بل که ساختن او مر افلاک را چون ساختن نفس مردمست مر جسم خویش را و [چون] ما همی بینیم که امروز هر صانعی آن صنعت که داند میکند دانیم که جسم او نیز مصنوعست و جسم او را نیز هم نفس ساخته است ولیکن نفس درگر مر جسم خویش را نه چنان ساخته است که تخت و کرسی را بلکه آن مایه که نفس درگر ازو جسم خویش ساخته [است] مر او را عطائی بود که تخم آن عطا نیز اندر کلمه باری سبحانه بوده است نه از چیزی.

۳۴] و اندر عالم جسمانی آن [عطا] مر نفس درگر را آن قدر آب بود که از پشت پدر در رحم مادر افتاد و در رحم بدان مایه که یافته بود مر خویشتن را جسم راست کرد و حصار خود ساخت چنانک هیچ کس از جایگاه راست کردن او مرین جسم او را که حصار اوست خبر نداشت با آنک آلت داشت که بحسّ آنرا ممکن بود یافتن بل که دست افزار در راست کردن جسم مر نفس مردم را آن قوّت او بود که

ازو اندر رحم هفت اندام اندرونی آمد چون دل و جگر و زهره و سپرز و شش و گرده و مغز سر تا وی بدان قوّت آنچ از طعام لطیف بود آن آلت هفتگانه ساخت همه لطیف و آنچ از طعام کثیف بود ازو استخوان و گوشت و پوست ساخت و جز آن، و بدان قوّت مرین جسم را بگرد خود اندر کشید و حصار خود ساخت در عالم جسمانی تا بدین در [راست] کردن جسمهای دیگر چلاک گشت یعنی قادر.

【۳۵】 همچنانک نفس از هیولای نخستین این عالم که جسم است بساخت عطائی بود از باری سبحانه تا وی از آن هیولی مرین افلاک را جسم خود ساخت پوشیده که هیچ عقل را بر چگونگی آن ساختن بدانستن دست نیست، همچنانک امروز کس نمی‌داند که این نفس جزوی اندر رحم مادر از طعامی که مادر خورد اندامهای اندرونی چون استخوان و گوشت و پوست چگونه می‌سازد بل که همه دانند که آن قوّت اندر نفس مردم آفرینشی است و ذات نفس مردم را [در] بدست آوردن آن قوت توانائی نیست و آن مر اورا عطائست از ایزد سبحانه، و همچنانک نفس مردم را اندر ساختن جسم خویش بدست افزار حاجت نیست نفس کل را اندر ساختن جسم خود نیز بدست افزار حاجت نیست بلکه بدان قوت که اندر ذات او بود چون هیولای نخستین [که] از ایزد سبحانه عطا یافت توانست مرین افلاک را جسم خویش ساختن و همچنانک دست افزار نفس مردم اندر راست کردن جسم خویش آن قوّت بود که اندرون او بوده است دست افزار نفس کل اندر راست کردن افلاک نیز آن قوّت عطائی بود و همچنانک نفس مردم را در حدّ قوت این هفت آلت که برشمرده‌ایم آمد تا جسم او بدان راست گشت مر نفس کل را در عطای نخستین که ذات جسم او بدان هستی یافت آن هفت قوه کزو زحل و مشتری و مریخ و شمس و زهره و عطارد و قمر آمد بیود مر راست کردن عالم را که جسم نفس کلیست، و همچنانک نفس مردم آن غذا را که مادر بخورد بفشرد و لطافت ازو جدا کرد و از آن لطافت آنچ پاکیزه‌تر و صافتر بود بدان هفتگانه آلت اندرونی ساخت و آنچ ازو کثیف بود استخوان و گوشت و پوست ساخت نفس کل نیز مر آن هیولای نخستین را به عطای باری سبحانه که یافته بود روشن کرد هرچ از آن لطافت بود و روشنائیها بدان قوتهای هفتگانه کشید که اندرو بود تا این هفت ستاره کارکن ازو پدید آمد و آنچه بماند پس از آن ازو افلاک و طبایع ساخت برابر کانچ همی بینیم

در عالم به ترازوی عقل بر سخته‌اند.

۳۶] هر که [قوت] آفرینش عالم بداند آن قوت آفرینش خود را بداند و صورت نفس خویش را راست تواند کرد هم بدان ترازو که صورت جسم او بدان راست شده است که خدای تعالی می‌گوید: «وَلَقَدْ عَلَّمْتُمُ النَّشْأَةَ الْأُولَىٰ فَلَوْلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ» (۶۲:۵۶) و هر که از آفرینش باخبر شد و بشناخت از فرمان خدای تعالی بیرون نیامده باشد بحکم این آیت، و هر که از فرمان خدای تعالی بیرون آمده باشد جای او آتش باشد.

۳۷] بسر سخن باز گردیم گوئیم همچنانک جسم و دست افزار [نفس] کلّ از جهت شناختن نبات و حیوان دیدنیست و نادانستنی آن دست افزار که نفس کلّ ازو افلاک و ستارگان ساخت دانستنی است و نا دیدنی، از بهر آنک هر چند که علت عالم باصل خویش نزدیک‌تر شود از یافتن [علت] نخستین دورتر گردد، تا چون [مردم] بعلت نخست رسد که علت مردم آنست، و مردم آنچ چیزها همی بیاید ازو یافته است آن وقت از [یافتن] او عاجز آید از بهر آنک آن علت نخست کلّ جزو مردم است، و جز مردم ازو اثری است، و هیچ اثری بر کلّ خویش واقف نتواند شد همچنانک نبشته‌ای که از دبیر اثرست مر دبیر را نشناسد، گشاده شد این گره، بررس تا بدانی، بشناس تا برهی.

مسئله ششم

۳۸] پرسیدی ای برادر که هست چیست و بر چند رویست، و هر یک را چه خوانند و چگونه باید شناخت و در توحید مرباری سبحانه را هست شاید گفتن یا نه، و اگر هست نگوئیمش نیست باشد و نیست تعطیل باشد، شرح آن بگوی تا بدانیم

جواب

۳۹] بدان ای برادر که هست بر دو رویست یکی را هست واجب خوانند و یکی را هست ممکن، [هست] واجب برترست از هست ممکن و جز بهست واجب

هست ممکن را هست شدن نیست، هست واجب بمثل چون مرغست و هست ممکن چون خایه مرغ، و شاید بود که خایه مرغ از حد خایگی بمرغ رسد مگر بیاری مرغ که ازو بحاصل آمده باشد که هست واجب است اندر منزلت خویش.

۴۰] پس گوئیم که عالم بجملگی هست ممکن است نه [هست] واجب از بهر آنک جزوهای او همه هست ممکن است و ممکن آن باشد که میانجی باشد میان بود و نابود چنانک جزوی از اجزای عالم آتش است و وی هست ممکن است، از بهر آنک شاید بود که گرمی او باستحالت سرد شود و خشکی او باستحالت تر شود آن وقت آب باشد نه آتش، و سرد شدن گرمیها و خشک شدن تریها در عالم گواهی دهند بر درستی این حال، پس آتش آبست اندر حد امکان، و هم چنین همه جزوهای عالم در حد امکانست و نبات و حیوان را یافتن چنین ممکن است نه واجب، از بهر آنک نباتی و حیوانی که امروز هستند شاید که فردا نباشند و شاید بود که نیز بیاشند، و این چنین چیزها را هست ممکن گویند و این دو چیز که نبات و حیوانند هر یکی جزوی اند از اجزای عالم.

۴۱] پس عالم بجملگی بدین شرح که کرده شد هست ممکن است و او را هست شدن نیست مگر بهست واجب، پس صانع عالم ناچاره هست واجب باید که باشد چه اگر گوئیم که وی نیز هست ممکن است باز پدید آورنده را هستی باید که هستی وی واجب باشد، پس بر همین جای بایستیم [و گوئیم که] پدید آورنده عالم هست واجب است [و عالم هست ممکن]، چنانک خرما دانه ای اندر هیولای خویش هست ممکن [است] که شاید بود که ازو درخت خرما آید و شاید بود که نیاید و از بهر آنک هست برین دو گونه آمد که یاد کردیم [که] هر دو نوع آمد، و هر چه آن نوع بود مر او را از جنس چاره نباشد، پس واجب آید که جنس از هر دو نوع که یکی واجب است و یکی ممکن برتر باشد از ایشان بمرتبت نه بزمان [و نه به] چیزی دیگر، و آن امر باری عز اسمه است که وی هست مطلقست هستی نه از هستی هست شده، و هست واجب عقلست و هست ممکن نفس است که زیر عقلست، و ممکنست که روزی بکوشش همچون اصل خویش شود بر مثال خرما دانه ای که ممکنست که ازو روزی درخت خرما آید، و چیزی که او را جنس باشد

خدائی را شاید از بهر آنک جنس منزلت جنسی را سازوار نگردد مگر بدانچ انواع او زیر او بود، پس جنس بمنزلت علّت است و نوع بمنزلت معلول، و شاید که ایزد سبحانه علّت باشد یا معلول، پس شاید گفت که او سبحانه هست است و بیاید شناختن که هست مطلق پدید آورده اوست و هویت او از هستی که نیست ضدّ اوست برترست.

۴۲] و نیز بیاید دانست که هرچ وی بیک مرتبت باشد برتر و پیشتر باشد از آنچه بمرتبه‌های بسیار باشد، و هست واجب بیک مرتبت است و هست ممکن که میانجیست میان بودن و نابودن، بسه مرتبه است، هست مکانی و هست زمانی و هست اضافی. اما هست مکانی چنان باشد که گوئیم بکرمان خرما هست، و بر آسمان ستاره هست و هست زمانی چنانک [گوئیم] به روز روشنائی هست، و هست اضافی چنانک گوئیم مردم را سخن هست و گاو را سم هست، و این همه مرتبتها اندر هست ممکن است، چون هست ممکن را مرتبتها است، و هست واجب را مرتبتها نیست، دانستیم که هست ممکن از هست واجب بمرتبه کمترست و یافتن او بهست واجب است گویی یکیست همچنانک جانور که بمنزلت هست واجب است که وی یکیست و جنس است و پرنده و سخن گوی که بمنزلت هست ممکن است که انواع زیر اوست و یافتن پرنده و خزنده و گوینده بیافتن جانورست که اگر جانور را برگیری این همه انواع برگرفته شود چنانک اگر هست واجب را بوهم برگیری هستهای ممکن برداشته شود، بررس تا بدانی، بشناس تا برهی.

مسئله هفتم

۴۳] پرسیدی ای برادر که نچیز را چگونه دانیم و نیست را چگونه شناسیم [آیا] فرق هست میان نچیز و نیست یا هر دو یکیست بمعنی چنانک چیز و هست، بیان کن تا بدانیم.

جواب

۴۴] بدان ای برادر که گروهی از مردمان چنان دعوی کردند که نیست و

نچیز دو نامست ورنه هر دو یکیست و چنان همی دانند که چیز و هست هر دو یک معنی دارد، اگر دانستی که نام چیز بر نیفتد مگر بر ذاتی که او یافتنی باشد، و نام هست بر چیزی از جهت زمان [مقیم] افتد که اندرو یافته باشند نه از جهت زمان گذشته افتد و نه از جهت زمان آینده، از بهر آنک زمان بر سه رویست یکی از گذشته است که آن را ماضی گویند، [چون دیروز و پارسال] و دیگری آینده که آنرا مستقبل گویند چون فردا و دیگر سال، و یکی مقیم چون امروز و امسال، و نام هست بر چیزی از جهت زمان مقیم افتد نه از [جهت] زمان گذشته و آینده، چنانک نشاید که گوئیم [گرم] هست دی یا سرد هست فردا بل که گوئیم گرم است امروز یا سرد است امسال، و محال باشد که کسی گوید هست و چیز هر دو یکی باشند و معنی یکی دارند و یا گوید نچیز و نیست هر دو یک معنی دارند از بهر آنک اگر چنین بودی روا بودی که گفتیمی نچیز مر فلان را چیزی بدان معنی که نیست مر فلان را چیزی یا گفتیمی نه هست مر فلان را هست بدان معنی که نیست مر فلان را چیز و اگر هست و چیز هر دو یکی بودی بایستی که گفتیمی فلان را هست نیست، چنانک همی گوئیم فلان را چیز نیست.

[۴۵] اما لفظ نچیز بایاد شناخت که باطل کردن چیز نیست به پیوسته کردن نه بدان چیز که او را ذاتی یافتنی هست و اگر نچیز را معنی ای واجب آمدی و یا نچیز ذاتی بودی که اشارت برو افتادی خود چیز بودی [او] از قیاس چون لفظ نه را بهر چیزی که پیوستی بایستی که آن را نیز معنی [ای] لازم آمدی، و این محالست از بهر آنک چون لفظ نه را بچیزی یا بنامی باز بندی از [چیزها و] نامها آن [بر آن] نام [یا] بر آن چیز افتد که لفظ نه [را] برو افکنده باشی نه بر چیزی دیگر که ازو جدا بود چنانک کسی گوید نه دیوار این سخن بر چیزی نیفتد و یا گوید نه گاو و یا گوید نه مردم، اینجا معنی [ای] لازم نشود، اما چون لفظ نه باز بسته شود بنامی [یا] بچیزی که آن چیز پس یکدیگر آید و میان آن چیزها میانجی نبود چون شب و روز و کور و بینا و طاق و جفت و جز آن، چون لفظ نه را بدینها باز بندی نام آن دیگر که پس ازو رونده است ثبت شود چنانک گوئی نه شب گفته شد که روز و گوئی نه شنوا گفته شد که کر و چون گوئی نه کور گفته شد که بینا، اما بر پیوستن لفظ نه به لفظ هست [آن] ناچاره برو افتد یا در زمان گذشته یا در زمان آینده، و گفته باشی که چیزی

بوده است یا خواهد بود، بوده در زمان گذشته یا خواهد بود در زمان آینده، بوده بر زمان گذشته نشان باشد و خواهد بود بر زمان آینده نشان باشد، و چون گوئی نیست شب بر چیزی افتد که در زمان گذشته بود یا در زمان آینده [خواهد بود نه] در زمانی که میانجیست میان این دو زمان، این نشان باشد از چیزی که بوده است در زمان گذشته یا خواهد بود [در زمان آینده].

[۴۶] پس درست کردیم که نیست از دو بیرون نیست یا زمانی باشد گذشته یا زمانی باشد نا آمده و زمانی نباشد حاضر چنانکه بتابستان گوئی این بهارگاه نیست و تیرماه است که یکی از گذشته است و یکی مقیم است، و نتوان گفت که تابستان نیست که این زمان مقیم باشد و نیست بر مقیم نیفتد. شرح کرده شد که معنی نچیز با معنی نیست برابر نیست از بهر آنکه لفظ نچیز بر هر سه زمان نیفتد چنانکه نگوئی نچیز نیست و نه بوده است و نخواهد بود، [و نیست بر زمان گذشته و زمان آینده افتد] بررس تا بدانی، بشناس تا برهی.

مسئله هشتم

[۴۷] پرسیدی ای برادر از قول گروهی که همی گویند نفس مردم جز اعتدال طبایع [چیزی دیگر] نیست چون طبایع براستی بهم فراز آیند آنجا رسد که جنبشی و دانشی بهم یافته می شود، و دلیل همی آرند برین قول آنچه همی گویند چون حال جسم از اعتدال بشود آنجا رسد که نماند، پس نفس جز اعتدال [طبایع] چیزی دیگر نیست که چون طبایع باصلهای خویش باز شوند نفس را هستی نماند، پس ترا اینجا نه ثواب لازم آید و نه عقاب، خواستی تا جواب شافی درین باب گفته شود که قول این گروه را بدان ردّ کنی و اعتقاد تو در آن بقوّت باشد و کار بستن شریعت مصطفی علیه السّلام از آن بسوی تو شیرین شود و بدانی که نفس نه اعتدالست که چون گوهران باصل خویش باز شوند نفس را هستی نماند بل که نفس جز اعتدال [طبایع] است. وَالسَّلَام.

جواب

[۴۸] بدان ای برادر که اگر چون و چرا نبودی مردمان همه دانا بودندی و اگر

گوینده را جواب دهنده نبودی حق از باطل پدید نیامدی، پس گوئیم بتأیید الهی در جواب آن گروه که گویند نفس بجز از اعتدال [طبیاع چیزی دیگر] نیست و این اعتدال که می دعوی کنند که وی نفس است از دو بیرون نیست یا جوهرست یا عرض، اگر جوهرست و معتدلست پس او که ازین اصلهای نا معتدل آید جداست و طبیعت پنجم است ازین چهار طبیاع نیست، پس ما را بنمایند آن پنجم که ازین چهار فراز آمده است و نه این چهارست از بهر آنک [آن] متفق است و این چهارگانه مختلف اند تا ببینیم مر او را چنانک این چهارگانه را می بینیم، و نیابند ایشان مر آن معتدل را که همی دعوی کنند [که] ازین چهار مختلف نا معتدل فراز آمده است و نتوانند نمود از بهر آنک محال باشد که کسی گوید جسم جسم پدید تواند آوردن همچون خویشتن، و چون درست شد که آن دعوی که ایشان می کنند نه جوهرست چه اگر جوهر بودی دیداری و یافتنی او نیز همچو ایشان بودی، دیداری و یافتنی.

【۴۹】 پس باید گفتن باضطرار که آن اعتدال [که] همی گویند [که] وی نفس است عرض است، و چون گویند که عرض است نتوانند گفت که او را فعلست از بهر آنک عرض آن باشد که بذات خود نتواند ایستاد و هر چه بذات خود قایم نباشد ازو فعل نیاید، و دیگر که عرض خود فعلست و نشاید که از فعل فعل آید همچنانک نشاید که از جسم جسمی دیگر آید و [یا] پیدا گردد بذات خود و چون او را که اعتدالست فعل نیست، پس این فعلها که ما می یابیم از نفس، از اندر یافت چیزها و جدا کردن چیز از چیز و جز آن که مر اعتدال را نباشد که ایشان دعوی کرده که آن نفس است، و چون فعل مر او را نباشد دعوی ایشان باطل باشد که اعتدال [طبیاع] نفس است.

【۵۰】 و جواب دیگر آنست که گوئیم مر او را که همی گوید نفس اعتدال طبیاع است که اعتدال نه گرم باشد و نه سرد و نه ترو نه خشک و طبیاع گرم و سرد و خشک و تراند، و اگر روا باشدی که از گرم و سرد و تر و خشک چیزی زائیدی که آن چیز نه گرم و نه سرد و نه ترو نه خشک باشدی پس روا باشد نیز که آتش سردی کند و برف گرمی، پس این محالست و نشاید بود، [اگر این محال است] آن نیز

محالست و مستحیل که گوئی از طبایع مختلف چیزی آید متفق که از آن طبایع هیچ اندرو نیست، و اگر از مخالف متفق روا باشد که آید از متفق نیز روا باشد مخالف آمدن، و فرقی نباشد میان آنک گوید ازین چهار مخالف چیزی آید متفق و میان آنک گوید از یک چیز که عین او یکی بود و اندرو هیچ خلاف نباشد و سرشته باشد از اعتدال و اتفاق هم مرگ آید و هم زندگانی و هم کوری و هم بینائی و هم تندرستی و هم بیماری، و این محال باشد که هیچ خرد[مند] این نپذیرد. و بدعوی این کس که گوید نفس اعتدال [طبایع] است چنان باید که ازو فعلهای مخالف نباید از بهر آنک بیان کردیم که از متفق مختلف نشاید که آید، و نفس آنست که ازو هم سخاوت و هم بخل و هم شجاعت و هم بز دلی و هم پارسائی و هم فساد. پس درست شد که نفس اعتدال نیست، و هم چنانک دو جسم سپید که جمله شوند نشاید که رنگی آید جز سپید و چنانک دو جسم سیاه بهم آیند جز سیاه چیزی دیگر نیاید، روا نباشد که چون مخالفان جمع شوند ازیشان [چیزی] متفق بحاصل آید که محال باشد، و چون طبایع مخالفاند یکدیگر را روا نباشد که از جمله شدن ایشان چیزی آید موافق که اندرو خلاف نباشد.

۵۱] پس درست کردیم که نفس اعتدال [طبایع] نیست و او گوهریست که طبایع مختلف را باتفاق آرد و ایشان را بهم فراز آرد بدان قوتی که ایزد سبحانه اندرو نهاده است [و] حکمتی بزرگ بایستادن نفس [پس از جسد] پیدا شود مر او را چنانک خدای تعالی می گوید پس از تفصیل آفرینش یک پس از دیگر در این آیتها: «وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِنْ طِينٍ، ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ، أَلَى قَوْلِهِ أَحْسَنُ الْعَالِقِينَ» (۱۲: ۲۳-۱۴) فرمود [و هر آینه ما] مردم را از گلی که ثفل ازو جدا گشته بود آفریدیم، پس آن را آب گند کردیم اندر مکان جای گیر، پس آن آب [گند] را خون بسته کردیم، پس مر آن خون [بسته] را گوشت خائیده کردیم، پس مر آن گوشت [خائیده] را استخوان آفریدیم، پس مر آن استخوان را بگوشت بپوشانیدیم، پس بیافریدیم مر آن را آفرینش دیگر، پس بزرگست خدای که نیکوترین آفریدگار آنست. آنگاه گفت: «كُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ لَمَيِّتُونَ، ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ تُبْعَثُونَ» (۱۵: ۲۳-۱۶) می گوید از پس آنک شما مردگان باشید روز قیامت بر انگيخته شوید، چون مراد آفرینش نه این بودی هیچ حکمتی اندرین عالم پدید

نیامدی و این نفس که مرین مخالفان را بهم فراز آورد اندرین کالبد باز ازیشان جدا شود، اگر با شناخت آفریدگار و طاعت و پرستاری جدا شود در عالم جاوید در نعیم باشد و اگر نادان بود و در نادانی و بی طاعتی جدا شود در حجیم ماند، بررس تا بدانی، بشناس تا برهی.

مسئله نهم

۱۵۲] پرسیدی ای برادر که نفس یافته هست یا نه و بذات خویش قایم است یا قیام او بجسد است و از جواهر است یا از اعراض و چه دلیلست که نفس جوهریست و قایم بذاتست، چون ما او را بی جسد نمی یابیم و بی جسد ازو هیچ فعلی [حاصل] نمی آید باز نمای تا بدانیم.

جواب

۱۵۳] بدان ای برادر که جسدهای ما بنفس زنده است، و دلیل بر درستی این قول آنست که جسدهای ما جنبنده است، و هر چیز که جنبنده است جنبش او از بیرونست یا از اندرون، و هر چه جنبش او از بیرونست چیزی دیگر مر او را بجنباند، چنانکه باد مر درخت را و آب مر دولا ب را و کشتی را یا چیزی دیگر مر او را بسوی خویش کشد چنانکه گاو مر گردون را و سنگ مغناطیس مر آهن را، و جسدهای ما همی جنبند بی آنک چیزی دیگر او را می کشد یا دور می کند، پس درست شد که جنبش جسدهای ما نه بیرونست، پس باضطرا ر جنبش او از درون باشد و چیزی که جنبش او از درون باشد یا طبعی باشد یا نفسی، و جنبش طبعی آن باشد که هیچ نیار آمد و از حال بحال نگردد، و جسدهای ما چون نفس ازو جدا شود بیار آمد و تا با اوست وقتی بجنبند و وقتی بیار آمد، پس درست شد که جنبش جسدهای ما طبعی نیست که اگر طبعی بودی بجدا شدن نفس ازو نیار میدی، پس جنبش جسدهای ما نفسیست.

۱۵۴] و بدین شرح درست گشت که زنده دارنده جسدهای ما نفس است، و نفس های جسدهای ما بنفس خود قایم است، و آن جوهری است و قایم بذاتست، و جنباننده و زنده دارنده جسد و جسد جوهر نیست و قایم بذات نیست،

و [جسد] جنباننده جوهر نیست جنباننده جوهر باضطرار جوهر باشد، پس نفس که جنباننده جسدست جوهرست و حدّ جوهر آنست که او مر چیزهای مخالف را بپذیرد و با آن یکی باشد، و حال او بپذیرفتن [آنها] از حال [خویش] دیگر بنشود چنانکه نفس مردم پذیرفتست مر مخالفانرا از گفتن و شنودن و جنبش و آرام و دلیری و بزدلی و جز آن.

[۵۵] اما آنچه گفتی که فعل [از] نفس بی جسد حاصل نمی‌آید جواب آنست که فعل نفس بی جسد دانستن است [و] نفس را بدانستن علم بجسد حاجت نیست و لیکن چون بر جسدی مر آن دانش را صورت خواهد کرد از راه جسد که بدو پیوسته است یاری خواهد تا آن هیولی را که صورت خواهد کرد برو بیاری جسد که با اوست بهم جنسی صورت تواند کرد، پیرس تا بدانی بررس تا برهی، وَالسَّلَام.

مسئله دهم

[۵۶] پرسیدی ای برادر که جوهر چیست و بچند گونه است و هر یک را چه خوانند، و روا باشد که ایزد را سبحانه جوهر خوانیم یا نه.

جواب

[۵۷] بدان ای برادر که جوهر را جنس الاجناس خوانند و وی آنست که چیزی نیست که بزیرو اندر نیاید و همه هستیها زیر اوست و اندروست، و جوهر را نوع دو است یکی را بسیط خوانند یعنی گسترده، و دیگر را مرکب، و مرکب آمیخته بود، و چون ترا پرسند که جوهر چیست بگو که جوهر آنست که ذات او یکی باشد و چیزهای مخالف را جمع کند و بدان جمع کردن از حال خویش بنگردد. و چون پرسند که جوهر چند نوعست بگو که دو نوع، یکی بسیط و دیگر مرکب، و اگر گویند بسیط کدامست، بگو که نفس است، و اگر گویند نفس کدام چیزهای مخالف را جمع کرده است و از حال خویش نگشته است، بگو مر دانش را و نادانی را و نیکی و بدی را و صلاح و فساد را، و اگر گوید جوهر مرکب کدامست بگو این عالمست بجملگی و هر چه دروست از چیزها و [اگر گویند] عالم کدام چیزهای مخالف [را]

جمع کرده است، بگو مرشش جهت خویش را جمع کرده است که هر یک مخالف دیگریست چنانک زیر و زبر و چپ و راست و پیش و پس، هر سه مخالف یکدیگرند و چون خاک و آب و هوا و آتش و روشنی و تاریکی که مخالف یکدیگرند.

【۵۸】 اینست حدّ جوهر بسیط و حدّ جوهر مرکّب که باز نموده آمد تا دانی که روا نیست ایزد را سبّحانه جوهر خواندن و دانستن از بهر آنک حدّ جوهر گفتیم و چون جوهر بدین حدّ بود که گفته شد محدود باشد و محدود عاجز باشد از بیرون شدن [از] حدّ خویش، و مر [اورا] حدّ کننده‌ای لازم آید که آن جوهر را درین حصار باز داشته است، تا خردمند بداند که آنچ او را در حدّ باز داشته باشند نه خدای باشد و باز دارنده او در حدّ او ایزدست سبّحانه که از جوهر و عرض برترست و چیزها همه در حصار آفرینش اوست چنانک خدای تعالی می‌گوید: «وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقَدَرَهُ تَقْدِيرًا» (۲:۲۵) می‌گوید بیافریدم مر هر چیز را و اندازه کردم اندازه کردنی و این اندازه جوهرست، بررس تا بدانی، بشناس تا برهی.

مسئله یازدهم

【۵۹】 پرسیدی ای برادر که نفس مردم در جسد چگونه است و کجاست اندرو، و پیش ازین درست کردی که جنبش جسد مردم از اندرونست، باز نمای که اندرون بر چه رویست، چنانست که کسی بغانه‌ای در باشد اگر چنانست چرا چون رهگذرهای جسد بسته شود نفس هم در وقت ازو بیرون شود، وَالسَّلَام.

جواب

【۶۰】 بدان ای برادر که چیزی در چیزی بر دوازده روی باشد یکی چنانک جزو اندر کل چنانک دست یا پای مردم در تن مردم که آن اجزاست در تن، و دیگر چنانک کل اندر جزو چنانک تن مردمست در اندامها که تن خود بجملگی اندامهاست، و سه دیگر چنانک آب در سبوی، و چهارم چنانک عرض اندر جوهر چون سپیدی موی در پیری، و پنجم چنان باشد که آمیخته با یک دیگر چون سرکه و شهد که او را سکنگبین گویند، و ششم چون کشتیبان در کشتی، و هفتم چون پادشاهی باشد در ملک، و هشتم چون جنس باشد در نوع چنانک حیوان در مردم

که مردم نوعیست از حیوان و حیوان اندر مردمست، و نهم چنان باشد که نوعست در جنس چنانک مردمست در حیوان، دهم چون صورت اندر هیولی چنانک صورت انگشتریست در هیولای سیم، یازدهم چون هیولی در صورت چنانک سیم باشد در صورت انگشتری، و دوازدهم چیزی باشد در زمانه.

[۶۱] پس چاره نیست که نفس اندر جسم بر یک روی ازین رویهاست که یاد کرده شد، گوئیم نفس در جسد چنان نیست که جزو اندر کل باشد چنانک دست مردم در تن از بهر آنک دست از تنست و نفس از تن نیست و نیز نفس [در جسد] چنان نیست که کل اندر جزو باشد که تن در اندامهاست، و تن جز اندامها چیزی نیست و نفس خود تن نیست که جوهر دیگرست، و نفس [در جسد] نیز چنان نیست که آب در سبوی و خم که خم و سبوی مر آب را مکانست و نفس را بمرکان حاجت نیست و نیز نفس در جسد چنان [نیست] که کشتیبان در کشتی که کشتیبان بیک جای باشد و دیگر جایها ازو خالی بود، و اندر تن مردم هیچ جای از نفس خالی نیست که اگر جائی ازو خالی بودی آن جای از جسد نه زنده بودی و نه جنبنده، و نیز نفس در جسد چنان نیست که عرض در جوهر از بهر آنک نفس خود جوهرست نه عرض و چون عرض از جوهر جدا شود جوهر بحال خویش باشد، و چون نفس از جسد جدا شود جسد بحال خویش نماند، و نیز نفس در جسد چنان نیست که سرکه و شهد در سکنگبین از بهر آنک سرکه و شهد از حال خویش بگشته‌اند و هر جا که چنان چیزی ممتزج شود از حال خود بگردد چنانک سرکه و آب را چون مزج دهی نه سرکه باشد و نه آب و نفس و جسد هر دو بحال خویش‌اند با آمیختگی که دارند، و نفس در جسد چنان نیست که نوع در جنس چنانک مردم در حیوان که مردم و حیوان بخوردن و زایش یکی‌اند و نفس [چون] از جسد جدا شود با او نوع نباشد و نیز نفس در جسد چنان نیست که جنس در نوع چنانک حیوان در مردم که جنس با نوع پیوسته است بسیار رویها مگر بصورت که جداست، و نفس با جسد بجنسیت پیوستگی ندارد از بهر آنک نفس لطیف است و جسد کثیف، و نیز نفس در جسد چنان نیست که چیزی در زمانه باشد از بهر آنک چیزی که در زمانه باشد پیش از آن چیز باشد و آن چیز در زمانه پیدا بود و جسد پیش از نفس نبوده است و نباشد.

[۶۲] پس گوئیم که نفس در جسد چنانست که صورت لطیف در هیولای کثیف بر مثال صورت انگشتی در سیم از بهر آنک نفس لطیف است بر مثال صورت و هیولی کثیف است بر مثال جسد و نفس جسم نیست، پیرس تا بدانی بیاموز تا برهی.

مسئله دوازدهم

[۶۳] پرسیدی ای برادر که چه دلیل است بر آنک عالم محدثست و او را پدید آورنده‌ای هست که گروهی از مردمان همی گویند که عالم قدیمست و او را اوّل و آخر نیست و دلیل همی آرند برین قول که ممکن نیست در عالم چیزی بیفزاید یا ازو کم شود، و هر زیادتیی که پیداآید هم ازوست از بهر آنک زایشها و بودنیها از میان این چهار طبایع است و هر چیزی که کمی و بیشی نپذیرد همیشه باشد و همیشه را اوّل و آخر نباشد، و در اثبات این فساد دینست و اثبات کفر، خواستیم که بیان شافی گفته شود در محدثی عالم تا مؤمنان را بدان قول دل قوی باشد و دین سوی همه‌گان عزیز گردد و ما را ثواب دو جهانی باشد، **إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ**.

جواب

[۶۴] بدان ای برادر که عالم بجملگی جسم است یک قسم ازو مواتست و یک قسم نباتست و سوم حیوانست، آنچ مواتست ازو چون سنگ و ریگ و خاک و آب و جز آن خالی نیست از گرد شدن و پراکنده شدن و از جنبش و آرام، و آنچ نباتست خالی نیست از زیادت پذیرفتن و نقصان شدن و آنچ حیوانست خالی نیست از مرگ و زندگانی و تندرستی و بیماری و پیدا آمدن و نا پیدا شدن و آنچ مردمست خالی نیست ازین حالا که گفته شد و دانائی و نادانی و رنج و راحت و جز آن و این حالا که یاد کردیم محدثست و دلیل بر محدثی این حالا آنست که هر یکی ازو ناپدید شود بوقت پدید آمدن یار او در جسم از بهر آنک ممکن نیست گرد آمدن دو حال ازین احوالها در یک جسم یا صفت کردن مر جسم را بهر دو چنانک جسم جنبنده بود یا آرمیده، و مردم دانا یا نادان و یا بیمار باشد یا تندرست، و نتوان گفت که بیمار تندرست است فلان کسی یا چیزی جنبان آرمیده است، و چون حال جسم اینست که یاد کرده شد از حوادث خالی نیست و عالم جسم است،

پس درست شد که عالم محدثست، بدانکه پذیرای کیفیت است مر محدثات را.

[۶۵] و دلیل دیگر آنست بر حدوث عالم که جسم است و جسم از جنبش و آرام خالی نباشد و جنبش و آرام هر دو محدثاند، و چیزی که پیش از محدث نبوده باشد محدث باشد، پس عالم که پیش از جنبش و آرام که هر دو محدثست و شونده نبود دانیم که هم صفت ایشان محدث باشد.

[۶۶] دلیل سوم بر آنکه عالم محدث است آنست که زیادت شدن و نقصان پذیرفتن در طبایع که اجزای عالمست روانست و باز هم چنان در نبات و حیوان زیادت و نقصان رونده است و چیزی که زیادت و نقصان پذیرد محدث باشد از بهر آنکه شرط محدث آنست که نبوده باشد آن وقت بباشد چون صفت زیادت بودن چیز نیست نابوده و صفت نقصان نابوده شدن چیز نیست بوده، پس عالم که این هر دو صفت در جزوهای او رونده است، و هر دو محدث باضطرار محدثست.

[۶۷] و دلیل چهارم بر آنکه عالم محدثست آنست که چیزها که یافته شد دلیل کند بر چیزی که مر او را یافته کرده اند چنانکه آواز یکی از چیزهای یافته است و نبشته نیز از چیزهای یافته است، و هر دو یک از دیگر دورند در یافته بودن، و هر دو دلیل اند بر یافته کننده خویش، و این عالم بجملگی یافته است، هر چند که اندرو چیزهای مخالف است، دلیل همی کند هر چیزی ازو بر یافته کننده خویش و چون هر یافته ای را یافته کننده ایست [و] عالم همه یافته است درست گشت که او را یافته کننده ایست پس هر چه را یافته کننده ای باشد محدث باشد.

[۶۸] دلیل پنجم بر آنکه عالم محدثست آنست که مر دهریان را گوئیم، عالم از دو بیرون نیست، یا هرگز حوادث پذیر نبوده است یا پذیرنده حوادث بوده است، اگر گویند حوادث پذیر نبوده است می بینیم حال عالم که همی گردد از سرما و گرما و روشنی و تاریکی و زایش و جز آن دروغ زن گردند، و اگر گویند پذیرای حوادث است چیزی که حوادث پذیرد محدث باشد از بهر آنکه حوادث جز در محدث پیدا نیاید، و قدیم را حال گردنده نباشد پس عالم که حوادث پذیرست

محدث است.

۶۹] دلیل ششم بر آنک عالم محدثست آنست که هر چه هست درین عالم زیر چهار طبع است که از یکدیگر گریزانند، و چون طبایع گریزان در نبات و حیوان جمله شدند، همی دانیم که این گریزندگان بطبع خویش فراهم نیامدند بل که ایشان را فراهم آورده ایست که ایشان بقهر او مقهور شده‌اند، پس عالم مقهورست و هر چه مقهور باشد محدث باشد از بهر آنک قاهر پیش از او بوده باشد، بررس تا بدانی، بشناس تا برهی.

مسئله سیزدهم

۷۰] پرسیدی ای برادر که هیولی چیست و بچند گونه است و این چه نامست باز نمای تا بدانیم.

جواب

۷۱] بدان ای برادر که لفظ هیولی از تازی گرفته‌اند و بیارسی چنان باشد که آراسته شده‌اول، و هیولی بر دو گونه است یکی [را] ازو مطلق گویند و یکی را مضاف، و هیولای مضاف چنان باشد که چوب مر کرسی را که هیولای اوست، یعنی چوب آراسته شده و ساخته شده مر ساختن کرسی را، و هم چنین هیولای انگشتری سیم است که او [آراسته شده و] ساخته شده است، و هیولای مطلق آنست که او را بی صورت [بحسّ] یافتن نیست چنانکه چوب و سیم هر دو [را] بی صورت کرسی و انگشتری یافته‌اند و مر هیولای مطلق را که او را بحسّ نتوان یافت هیولای نخست گویند و آن معقولست نه محسوس از بهر آنک کرسی محسوس است و چوب هیولای اوست و او نیز محسوس است، و دانیم که چوب بود که ازو کرسی ساخته‌اند، و هیولی [مر] طبایع [را] چون [چوب] است [مر کرسی را] و دانیم که چوب از زمین رسته شود بیاری آب و هوا و آتش.

۷۲] پس طبایع را نیز هیولی باید که باشد از بهر آنک [هر] یکی از طبایع درازا و پهنا و بالا دارد و گرمی [و سردی] و تری و خشکی را بر گرفته است و گوئیم

هر یکی را ازین طبایع چهارگانه هیولی باید تا درازا و پهنا و بالا را که همه لطیف‌اند بر گرفت و به گرمی و سردی و تری و خشکی چیزی بایست که برگرفت چون چوب صورت کرسی را برگرفت نام چوبی ازو بر خاست و نام کرسی بر گرفت و همچنین هیولای نخستین که بعقل درست میاید که بوده است که تا مر درازا و پهنا و بالا را برگرفت ناچار گشت مر این سه صفت را که بر گرفت که آن چیز چهارم آن صفات است از بهر آنک نخست چیزی باید تا آن وقت او درازا و پهنا و بالا پذیرد، پس آن چیز هیولای مطلق است که این صفات برو نشست، و چون آن صفات او را پدید آمد نام هیولی ازو بیفتاد و نام جسمی برو نشست آن هیولای نخست بعقل یافته است و بحسّ نایافته و محسوس بر معقول دلیل کند، پیرس تا بدانی، بشناس تا برهی.

مسئله چهاردهم

[۷۳] پرسیدی ای برادر که صورت چیست و چند گونه است و هر یک را چه خوانند و هیولی و صورت را چرا هر دو بهم گویند و ایشان را [که] از یکدیگر جدا نتوان کرد و جدا نتوان یافت، نام ایشان چرا دو آمده است، بیان کن تا بدانیم.

جواب

[۷۴] بدان ای برادر که صورت بپارسی چهره باشد و صورت را بی هیولی یافتن نیست بحسّ، اما صورت را بی هیولی یافتن در نفس هست چنانک صورت کرسی نخست در نفس درگست بی هیولی آنگاه درگر آن را بر چوب که هیولی است بیرون آرد تا بحسّ مر او را بتوان یافت چنانک پیش ازین گفتیم از بهر آنک هیولای مضاف چوب کرسی است و سیم انگشتی، ولیکن هیولای مطلق را بعقل توان یافت، و شرح آن در سؤال هیولی گفته شده است، پس همچنین صورت نیز بر دو گونه است یکی را صورت مضاف خوانند و یکی را صورت مطلق، صورت مضاف چنان باشد چون [صورت] چهار سواندر چیزی چهار سو و صورت کروی [اندر] کره و صورتهای دیگر شکل‌ها چنانک هست از نبات و حیوان که هر یکی را صورت مخصوص است که آن صورت ازو جدا نشود تا آن چیز بر نخیزد، چنانک تا [چیز] چهارسو بر نخیزد و چیزی دیگر نشود صورت چهار سو از آن بر نخیزد، و همچنین

صورت‌های نبات و حیوان [تا آنها] از آن حال که هست بدل نشود و چیزی دیگر نگردد آن صورتها از آنها جدا نشود، پس گوئیم صورت مضاف آن باشد که از چیزی جدا نشود مگر بیرخاستن آن چیز.

[۷۵] و صورت مطلق آن باشد در چیزی که آن چیز بدان صورت از چیزی دیگر جدا شود چنانکه صورت مطلق اندر زر گداختن اوست و سودن [او] و معنی زری که او بدان صورت از چوب و سنگ جدا شود آن صورت معقول است، و همچنین سیم را صورت مطلق آن معنیهای اوست که وی بدان از زر و سرب جدا شود، و مر صورت مطلق را در حدّ منطق فصل خوانند و فصل جدائی باشد یعنی آن معنی در چیزی که بدان از چیزی دیگر جدا شود آن وقت مر هر یکی را ازین فروعت از بهر آنکه در عالم جسمانی هر چه هست صورتی دارد که آن را بدان بشناسند و جفت کننده صورت لطیف با هیولای کثیف ایزدست سبحانه که لطافت و کثافت هر دو پدید آورده اوست و جفت کرده اوست بحکمت تمام خویش [او] مر صورت را با هیولی [چنان] جفت کرده [است] که خلق از جدا کردن آن از یکدیگر هم بحسّ و هم بوهم عاجز آمده‌اند. پاکست آن خدائی که این صنع اوست از مانده بودن بصنع خویش از هیولی و صورت که ملک اویند، بررس تا بدانی، بشناس تا برهی.

مسئله پانزدهم

[۷۶] پرسیدی ای برادر که چون آفتاب در روزن خانه تابد چرا مر آن ذره‌ها را جز بر آن یک خط [تابش] جایهای دیگر نتوان دید و از چیست [که] آن ذره‌ها کی در هوا همی گردند، بعضی از هر سوی همی شوند و بعضی از سوی زمین همی آیند، و چرا اگر اصل ذره‌ها یکیست همه از یک جانب نمی‌شوند، وَالسَّلَام

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[۷۷] بدان ای برادر که ذره‌ها که همی بینی آن سونش خاکست [که در هوا همی گردند] که هوا مر زمین را گرد گرفته است و همی فرساید، و از خاک آنچه جزوهای اوست سخت خرد شود بهوا اندر آویزد، بدان نسبت که میان هوا و ذره‌ها

افتد در سبکی از بهر [آنکه] هوا سبکست و خاک گرانست، پس آن مقدار که از خاک بساید با هوا بر آمیزد، و نیز آن سونش برگهای نباتست و مویهای حیوان که از آب و خاک مادت همی پذیرد، برگ نبات و موی حیوان همی فرساید هر چه از آن بیرون شود [آنچه] جزو آب باشد بخار گردد و آنچه جزو خاک باشد بغایت باریک بود آن [سونش خاک و] برگها و مویها را هوا بجنباند و برگیرد و با خویشتن ببرد، و هوا جسم سبکست و گداخته و گرم شونده و بخارها که از زمین بر می شود و از آب که آنرا ابر و میغ می خوانیم هوا مر [آنها] را همی جنباند و دودی که از سوختگی نبات برخیزد آنچه ازو تر باشد با بخار یار شود و بیاری آن سوی زمین باز آید، و آنچه ازو خشک بود آن سونش خاک باشد، و چون بغایت سبکی و خردی باشد هوا مر او را بپذیرد و در همه هوای عالم از آن ذره ها هست.

۷۸] و آن ذره ها را بصحرا نتوان دید بسبب آنک در صحرا روشنی آفتاب یکسان باشد و همه هوا یک رنگ دارد، و چون ذره های هوا همه در یک رنگ باشد و مخالف نباشد یک از دیگر پیدا نیاید، و چون آفتاب به روزن خانه در افتد بر آن خط تابش روشنائی افتد و [از] ذره ها آنچه بر آن خط باشد روشنی بپذیرد [و] همچون دیگر جسمها که بآفتاب روشن شوند آن ذره ها هم چنین است، و لیکن بغایت خردی و سودگیست و چون خانه همه تاریک باشد مگر [بر] آن یک خط آن روشنائی ها بدان تاریکیها در فشرده شود آن ذره ها پیدا آید از بهر آنک تاریکی مخالف روشنائیست، مر روشنائی را از خویشتن دور دارد، و چون روشنائی ازو جدا گشت پیدا آید، و ضد را بضد بدین طریق بتوان شناخت.

۷۹] اما آنچه پرسیدی که اگر ذره ها همه از زمین است چرا بعضی ازو می فرو آید و بعضی بهر جائی می شود، جوابش آنست که آن سونشها که از زمین و نبات و حیوانست که همی هوا گیرد متفاوتست بعضی خردترست و بعضی بزرگتر، از بهر آنک نبات و حیوان چنین خرد و بزرگ اند و سونش آنچه قویتر باشد درشت تر باشد و آنچه خردتر باشد از نبات و حیوان همچنین برگ و موی او ضعیف تر، پس آنچه سبکتر و خردتر باشد در هوا همی گردد و آنچه گرانتر بود سوی زمین گراید.

【۸۰】 و همچنین حال نفس مردم کز دهان بروزگار زمستان [بصورت] بخار بیرون آید که هوا سرد باشد مرو را بتوان دید و بتابستان پیدا نباشد، و سبب دیدن او به زمستان آنست که بخارها همه بسوی زمین گراینده است و هوا سرد باشد و آن بخارها که از دهان برون آید گرم باشد و مخالف هوای زمستان و بدان گرمی که درو باشد آن نفس سوی هوا برشود، و بدوگونه آن نفس مر هوای زمستان را مخالف باشد هم بگرمی و هم بفشردن و همه حالهای او مخالف باشد تا در مخالفان خویش فشرده شود و پیدا آید بسبب آنک مخالف مر مخالف خویش را نپذیرد و از خویشتن دور کند، و چون دو مخالف بیک جای فراز آیند حسّ مر ایشان را بیابد، بررس تا بدانی، بشناس تا برهی، **إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ.**

مسئله شانزدهم

【۸۱】 پرسیدی ای برادر که عالم چیست و آنچ نام عالم برو افتد چه چیز است و آنرا چگونه صفت کنیم بجملگی، و عالم چندست، بیان کن تا بشناسیم.

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【۸۲】 بدان ای برادر که نام عالم شکافته از علم است از بهر آنک در جزوهای عالم جسمانی آثار علم پیداست چنانک گوئیم نهاد عالم خود بتمامتر حکمتیست از جفت بودن چهار طبایع هر یک با دیگری بیک روی موافق و بدیگر روی جدا بودن ازو چنانک آتش و باد بگرمی جفتاند و بتری و خشکی از یکدیگر جدا و باد و آب به تری جفتاند و بگرمی و سردی جدا، و آب با خاک بسردی جفتاند و به تری و خشکی جدا و خاک با آتش بخشکی جفتاند و بسردی و بگرمی جدا تا بدین جفتیها که میان هر دو طبعی از طبایع هست عالم راست ایستاده است و پراکنده می نشود و بدان مخالفت و جدائی که میان ایشان هست با یکدیگر جنگ همی کنند و نیامیزند و یکی نشوند که اگر همه یکی شدند زایش عالم که نبات و حیوانست نبود.

【۸۳】 چنانک نه از مرد تنها و نه از زن تنها فرزند باشد، تا دو تن نباشند که هر دو مر یکدیگریرا بیک روی موافق باشند و بدیگر روی مخالف چنانک مرد با زن

بروی جنس موافق است و بروی قوت مخالف ازیشان فرزند می‌آید از بهر آنکه هر جفتی که ازین یاد کردیم مر دیگریرا که بهر دو روی موافق باشد هم بجنس و هم بقوت ازیشان فرزند نیاید و همچنین آثار علم و حکمت را که در نهاد عالم هست بر شمردن دشوارست.

【۸۴】 و باز در اجزای عالم همچنین آثار علمست از ایستادن هر طبعی از طبایع در حصار خویش و منزلت خود و رفتن هر ستاره‌ای از ستارگان در فلک خویش بر اندازه رفتن خویش، و همچنین در زایش عالم نشان علم پیدا است از نگاه داشتن هر نبات مر بار و تخم خویش را و کشیدن فایده آسمانی و زمینی بخویشتن، و در حیوان همچنین آثار علم پیدا است از شناختن هر یک ازیشان رستن خویش را و نگاه داشتن جفت خود [را] و دور داشتن مخالف نوع خود را و خویشتن را در جفت گرفتن که نوعی از حیوان با نوعی دیگر جفت نگیرد و نیامیزد.

【۸۵】 پس گوئیم نام عالم بنسبت علم بر عالم افتاده است و آن صفت که همه عالم را گرد آورنده است از دو حقیقت عالم آنست که فایده دهنده و فایده پذیرنده است و عالم جسمانی خود این دو چیزست و بس، چنانکه افلاک و ستارگان کز فراز جای گرفته‌اند فایده دهندگانند و طبایع کز فرو سو جای گرفته‌اند فایده پذیرندگانند، و این هر دو نوع که یاد کرده آمد عالم‌اند، و جز این دو صفت که یاد کرده شد [صفتی دیگر] مر عالم را گرد نیارد و افلاک و نجوم و طبایع و نبات و حیوان بجملگی اندرین صفت آیند، پس اگر کسی گوید چون صفت عالم اینست که گوئی فایده دهنده است و فایده پذیرنده، پس استاد و شاگرد نیز عالمست که یکی فایده دهنده است و یکی فایده پذیرنده، و حیوان و نبات نیز عالمست و این [گونه] قیاس بسیار است و درست نیاید که کسی گوید که عالم بیش ازین نیست. جواب او باز دهیم، [و] گوئیم از همه چیزی که یاد کرده می‌آید در عالمست و همه اجزا و اشخاص عالم‌اند و کل اندر جزو چنین باشد، و همچنانکه جملگی تن مردم در سر و دستها و شکم و پشت و پایهاست و این همه اندامها بجملگی تن مردمست، همچنین افلاک و نجوم و طبایع و نبات و حیوان بجملگی عالمست و کل عالم درین جزوهاست که یاد کرده شد. و شرح بودن چیزی در چیزی پیش ازین گفته شده

است که بر چند رویست یک روی از آن روی‌ها اینست.

۱۸۶] و همچنانک عالم این دو چیزست که یاد کرده آمد نیز عالم این دو است یکی از آن کثیف جسمانی فرو دین که ما بحسّ می‌بینیم، و دیگر لطیف روحانی علوی که بنفسه‌های لطیف مر آن را می‌جوئیم. پس اگر گوید چه دلیل داری بر آنک جز این عالم عالمی دیگرست جواب دهیم که ما درین عالم چیزی می‌یابیم که نه ازین عالمست و مرین عالم را آن نیست چون نفس سخن گوی و خرد دریابنده که آن مردمست، و عالم خود ازین دو چیز بزرگوار خالیست و بی بهره، و این دو چیز با جسم کثیف ما که مانند این عالم است پیوسته است و مرین جسم را زنده و جنبنده می‌دارد و زاینده و از حد اجزای این عالم بیرون برده است مرین جسم ما را از بهر آنک اجزای این عالم طبایع بی دانش است و جسم ما طبایع با دانش است، و دانا بهتر از نادان باشد چنانک خدای تعالی گوید: «هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ» (۹: ۳۹) همی گوید [آیا] برابر باشند دانایان با نادانان، [هر آئینه] یاد کنند خردمندان، پس جسمهای ما بهتر ازین عالم نادان است.

۱۸۷] و چون مرین دو چیز شریف را که نفس و عقل اند با این تن کثیف پیوسته یافتیم که جزو این عالمست دانستیم بدین دلیل که نفس [کل] و عقل کل که نفسهای ما و عقلهای ما ازیشان خیزد و جزوی اند ازیشان همچنین با این عالم پیوستگی دارند که نفسهای ما با جسمهای ما که از وی جزوی‌اند و این عالم بدیشان پایدار و زنده گشته است چنانک جسم ما بنفس و عقل ما پایدار و زنده و شریف گشته است، اما جسم ما ازین عالم شریفتر بدانست که این عالم از عقل و نفس بر مثال درخت از تخم خویش است و مردم ازو بارست، هر چند درخت از بار بزرگتر باشد بچشم معنی تخم جملگی در بار درخت است که پیدا آید نه در درخت، و چون عالم را ازین دو صفت که گفتیم فایده دهنده و فایده پذیرست بشکل و صورت آن عالم را که تخم این عالم است صفت همین باشد چه اگر آنک لطیف و پوشیده است که عالم علویست برین صفت نبودی این کثیف [و] آشکارا که عالم جسمانیست و از آن عالم پیدا آمده است برین صفت نیامدی.

۱۸۸】 پس گوئیم آن عالم لطیف را نیز همین دو صفت باید فایده دهنده و فایده پذیرنده، فایده دهنده عقلست و فایده پذیرنده نفس چنین که درین حال ظاهر می‌بینیم که نفس نادان بقایه پذیرفتن از عقل همی دانا شود، اگر کسی گوید چه دلیلست بر آنک عالم لطیف جز عقل و نفس نیست که یکی فایده دهنده است و یکی فایده پذیرنده هیچ دلیل هست، و چنین که درین عالم بسیار چیزها هست که در آن عالم چنان نیست، او را جواب دهیم [و] گوئیم چون آخر زایش این عالم مردم بود و چیزی که بآخر پیدا آید آن چیز دلیل باشد بر آنک اصل آن چیز که بآخر پیدا آمده باشد همین چیز بوده است چنانک درخت جوز یا بادام چون بار بیارد خردمندان دانند که آن از اول جوز و بادام نشانده‌اند تا امروز این بار بدان بازگشت، و مردم که آخر زایش عالم آمد بجسم مرد آمد یا زن و بنفس استاد آمد یا شاگرد تا از جفت جسمانی عالم جسمانی آبادان شود و از جفت روحانی عالم دین آبادان شود.

۱۸۹】 و نخست جفت جسمانی آدم و حواست چنانک [جفت] روحانی ناطق است و اساس، همچنانک مر زایش جسمانی را چاره نیست از جفتی، مر زایش دانش را چاره نیست از جفتی، و ایشان از کس نیاموختند بلکه علم ایشان تأییدی بود و پنهانها بزیر آشکارها اند دلیل بر آنک خدای تعالی می‌گوید در صفت هر دو عالم درین آیت: «وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَىٰ وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا تَجَلَّىٰ وَمَا خَلَقَ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَىٰ» (۹۲:۱-۳) سوگندست از ایزد سبحانه بشب چون بپوشاند و بروز چون پیدا شود و بدانچ بیافرید نر و ماده را، امر باری سبحانه، پس گوئیم صفت هر دو عالم درین آمد که سوگندست از بهر آنک آن عالم پوشیده است چون شب و این عالم پیداست چون روز، و آنچه بیافرید نر و ماده را امر باری، نر بحقیقت عقلست و ماده بحقیقت نفس است در عالم روحانی، [و] نر بحقیقت ناطق است و ماده بحقیقت اساس است در عالم دین تا همچنین در عالم جسمانی آنچه بهترین زایش عالم بود آن مردمست هم برین صفت یا مرد آمد چون عقل یا زن آمد چون نفس، مرد چون عالم زبرین آمد و زن چون عالم فرودین، آن فایده دهنده و این فایده پذیرنده، و از دیگر روی مرد چون افلاک و انجم است فایده دهنده و زن چون طبایع فایده پذیرنده.

[۹۰] پس درست کردیم که عالم دو است و صفتی که هر دو را گرد آرد آنست که گوئی عالم فایده دهنده و فایده پذیرنده است، بپرس تا بدانی، بشناس تا برهی.

مسئله هفدهم

[۹۱] پرسیدی ای برادر از آب که چون فرو آید از بالا بنشیب تکیه بر خاک دارد چنانکه همی بینیم که بر سنگ و خاک همی ساید تا بیستی برسد و چون از نشیب کوه بر سر کوه شود تکیه بر خاک و سنگ ندارد، از راه هوا بر شود چنانکه همی بینیم ابرها و میغها را که بر سر کوه همی شوند و آب را آنجا همی برند، در حکمت و قیاس آنست که چون از بالا بنشیب آید تکیه برین خاک قوی دارد چنانکه واجب آمدی که چون از نشیب بر سر بالا آمدی هم تکیه بر خاک داشتی از بهر آنکه آب را از بالا بنشیب آمدن آسان است و از نشیب بیالا رفتن دشوار، پس چون است که در حال آسانی تکیه بر خاک قوی همی کند و در حال دشواری تکیه بر هوا، باز نمای.

جواب

[۹۲] بدان ای برادر که آب میانجیست میان خاک و هوا، نبینی که هر کجا هر سه فراز آیند خاک زیر باشد و آب در میان و هوا زیر، و اگر آب در میان این دو دشمن میانجی نبودی هرگز جنگ و پیکار از میان ایشان بر نخاستی از بهر آنکه هوا گرم و ترست و خاک سرد و خشک، و هر دو بهمه رویها دشمن یکدیگرند و مخالف، نبینی که چون باد و خاک بیکدیگر در آویزند چگونه هر دو آشفته شوند، و تا آب در میان ایشان نیاید آن گرد و شوریگی آرام نگیرد، اکنون چون یاد کردیم که آب در میان خاک و هوا میانجیست و این بفرمان خدای تعالی است، چنانکه هوا و خاک یکدیگر را مخالفاند چون بدان وقت که آب از بالا بنشیب میاید تکیه بر خاک دارد واجب چنان آید بضرورت که چون از نشیب بر بالا رود تکیه بر هوا داشته باشد که مخالف خاکست، این جوابیست که بترازوی عقل سخته شده است.

[۹۳] اگر پرسند که چون آب از بالا بنشیب آمد چرا تکیه بر هوا نکرد تا

چون از نشیب بیلا رفتی تکیه بر خاک کردی، گوئیم آب بر مثال مردیست از طریق علم هیأت ایستاده بر روی زمین، بر یک دستش مناره‌ای بلند و بر یک دستش چاهی ژرف، چون آن مرد خواهد که سوی آسمان شود چاره نیست که بدان مناره بر باید رفت و چون خواهد که سوی [مرکز] زمین رود بضرورت بدان چاه فرو باید رفت، پس آن مناره هواست که یک سرش بر آب نهاده‌اند و دیگر سرش بآسمان پیوسته بچرخ اثیر که مرکز آتش است، و این چاه این خاکست که یک سرش بر آب نهاده‌اند و دیگر سرش بدورتر جایی از آتش، و آن مرکز خاکست که نقطه عالم است که این همه جزوهای خاک سوی او گراینده است و آن نقطه و همی است نه جسمی، پس چون [آب] از جای خویش بآسمان نزدیکتر خواهد [رود] از راه آن مناره بایدش بر رفتن که یک سرش بدو پیوسته است و دیگر سرش بآسمان و آن مناره هواست، و چون آب از جای خویش خواهد که دورتر رود از راه آن چاهش باید رفتن که [یک سرش بمرکز خاک پیوسته است و] دیگر سرش بدو پیوسته است، اینست علت، بشناس تا بدانی، بیاموز تا برهی.

مسئله هژدهم

۹۴] پرسیدی ای برادر که چرا آب گاه از پستی سوی آسمان شود و بر سر کوهها افتد و گاه از سر کوهها سوی نشیب آید، و این دو کار مخالف است، و کار مخالف حیوان کند که او را جنبش بخواست اوست، و تو پیش ازین گفته‌ای که طبایع جانور نیست، و چرا چون آب از بالا بنشیب آید عین آب باشد، و چون از نشیب بیلا رود عین آب نباشد بلکه بخار باشد، و چرا آنچه از بالا بنشیب می‌آید بیش از آنست که بیلا بر شده است از بهر آنکه از بالا بنشیب روده‌های عظیم می‌آید همیشه و از نشیب بیلا ابرها همی رود گاه گاه، پس زیادت که سوی نشیب می‌آید از کجاست که دریا زیادت می‌شود، باز نمای تا بدانیم.

جواب

۹۵] بدان ای برادر که جنبش طبایع بردو رویست یکی را قسری گویند و دیگر را طبعی، اما جنبش طبعی چون گرایستن است مر آب و خاک را بمرکز خویش که آن میانه زمین است، و چون بر شدن باد و آتش سوی حواشی عالم که

مرکز آتش است و فلک اثیر، و جنبش قسری چون بر شدن ابرها و میغها سوی فلک از آب، و چون فرو آمدن آتش است از اثیر بمیانجی فروغ آفتاب و ستارگان، و نیز جنبش قسری چون بر شدن سنگست که آن را مردم سوی هوا براندازد، پس گوئیم بر شدن ابر را سوی بالا بجنبش قسری است از بهر آنک چون گرمی آتش اثیر بمیانجی فروغ آفتاب و ستارگان بزمین رسد و خاک را گرم کند آن گرمی خواهد که سوی اصل خویش باز شود، و اصل او آتش است، و چون آن گرمی سوی بالا شود لطافت‌های آب و خاک کز آن گرمی پذیرفته‌اند با او برخیزند و بهم جنسی با آن گرمی سوی اثیر شتابند و آن گرمی مرایشان را مرکب گردد.

۹۶] و رفتن لطافت آب سوی بالا بدان قدر است که از قوت آتش پذیرفته است [که] اورا طبع سوی آن گردانیده است و گرم کرده است پس از آنجا که گرم شد تا آنجا که گرمی آن ازو جدا شود و آب سرد گردد و گرمی مجرد سوی اثیر شود که اصل اوست، و آب مجرد بطبع سوی مرکز خویش باز گردد، و مرکز او روی خاکست بر مثال سنگ که سوی آسمان انداخته شود میرود بقهر و قسر و می‌آید بطبع و میل که ماده قوت سپری شده باشد، و اگر این دو جنبش مخالف مر خاک و آب را از طبع ایشان بودی آب و خاک خود جانوران بودندی نه طبع مفرد، ولیکن بر شدن آب بی‌بالا [جنبش] قسری است و فرود آمدن [او] جنبش طبیعی.

۹۷] اما جواب آنک گفتی چرا چون آب از بالا بنشیب آید عین آبست، و چون بی‌بالا بر می‌شود بخارست، آنست که چون آب از نشیب بی‌بالا شود از مرکز کثافت بمرکز لطافت شود [و] تا لطافت نپذیرد سوی لطافت نتواند شد که آتش لطیفست و ناپیدا چون آب از طبع آتش حرارت پذیرفت و گرم شد از حال خویش بگردد و ناپیدا شود و با آتش هم گوشه شود آن وقت سوی مرکز آتش تواند رفت، و چون از بالا بنشیب آید از مرکز لطافت سوی مرکز کثافت می‌آید تا همچنانک از پیش بوده است کثیف نگردد و طبع آتش ازو جدا نشود بمرکز خاک باز نتواند شد.

۹۸] اما [جواب] آنک گفتی که آب آنچه از بالا بنشیب می‌آید بیش از آنست که از نشیب بی‌بالا همی شود آنست که بدانی عین آب که ایزد سبحانه

بیافرید هرگز قطره‌ای زیادت و نقصان نکرده است و چون همی بینیم که بر سر کوهها بسیار سالها همی برف بماند که نگدازد و همیشه آن رودها همی رود دانیم که بر شدن آب را سوی بالا راه‌های بسیارست و فراخ، از بهر آنکه آب همه روی زمین در همه جاها بخار کند و پراکنده بر شود پیوسته و آب رودها در هژده فرسنگ و بیست فرسنگ مسافت بیش نمی‌رود، و جای هست که در پانصد فرسنگ زمین هیچ آب نرود و رُود نباشد چنانکه زمین حجازست و مانند آن، ولیکن چون از جایهای پراکنده آب رود همی جمع شود نفس ناآزموده و ناآموخته چنان پندارد که آب رودها بیش از آب برفها و بارانهاست، و چون کسی آزمایش کند و بیند که باران خرد و نرم همی آید که بر خاک ازو اندکی تری پدید آید، آن وقت بیند هم از آن باران سیلی عظیم فرو آید که کوه و صحرا آن قطرها را برندارد. بدانکه این رودهای بزرگ از هر کوهساری اندک اندک فرو آمده است تا چنان بزرگ شده است.

[۹۹] و چون آن بخارها از زمین و آب می‌برود و اندر هوای فراخ گسترده می‌شود آن بخارها بوقت آنکه هوا گرم و خشک باشد بقوت آفتاب [آنجا] همی ماند تا آن وقت که آفتاب بسوی جنوب افتد و گرمی نقصان آغاز کند آن‌گاه آن بخارهای گرم شده سرد شود و اندک اندک بزمین باز می‌افتد در سه فصل تیرماه و زمستان و بهار چنانکه دیده می‌شود، این جواب هر سه سؤال تست، پپرس تا بدانی، بشناس تا برهی.

مسئله نوزدهم

[۱۰۰] پرسیدی ای برادر از چیزهای گران [و] سبک که در ترازو بر کشیده شود، گفتی که چرا آن کفه ترازو که درو چیزی سبک است برتر شود و آن کفه‌ای که درو چیزی گرانست فروتر آید، خواستی تا حقیقت این حالت بدانی هر چند که میان مردمان معروفست و هر کسی بر آن گواهی دهد، اما خواستی تا شناخت تو مرورا ببصیرت باشد، وَالسَّلَام.

جواب

[۱۰۱] بدان ای برادر خردمند آنست که تقلید نپذیرد، و تقلید اقرار دادن باشد بچیزی نادانسته، [و] اقرار کن او دروغ زن باشد بقول خدای تعالی که همی گوید: «إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُنَافِقُونَ قَالُوا نَشْهَدُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُولُهُ وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَكَاذِبُونَ» (۶۳: ۱) همی گوید رسول خویش را [چون] بیایند بتو منافقان و گویند گواهی [می] دهیم که [تو] پیغمبری [از خدای] و خدای داند که تو پیغمبری ازو و خدای گواهی میدهد که منافقان دروغ زنانه، پس باین آیت حکم کردند بدروغ گفتن بر هر که اقرار کند بچیزی نادانسته، و این مسئله که تو پرسیدی بر بیشتر از مردمان پوشیده است.

[۱۰۲] و هر کرا اندک مایه هوش است اقرار کند که [چون] دو چیز [را] در [دو] کفه ترازو [نهی، کفه] گرانتر فرو آید و [کفه] سبکتر بر شود حقیقت این حال آن وقت توان دانست که بدانی که ازین چهار طبایع گرانتر خاکست که در میان عالم جای گرفته است و این سه جوهر خویش را ازینجا بیرون کرده است و ازو سبکتر آبست که بر روی او جای گرفته است، و ازو سبکتر بادست که بر روی آب جای گرفته است، و ازو سبکتر آتش است که بکناره عالم جای گرفته است، پس خاک گران تنهاست [و آتش سبک تنهاست] و سبکی و گرانی این دو طبع دیگر که آب و هواست باضافت است چنانک گوئیم آب بجای خاک سبکست و بجای باد گرانست و هوا بجای آب سبکست و بجای آتش گرانست، و اگر خواهی که بدانی که آب چون بجای خاک سبکست و بجای هوا گران بنگر که جای آب بر روی زمین است و زیر هوا، و بودن آب در میانه همی گوید که فرود من خاکست و من ازو سبکترم و از زیر که هوا است گرانترم، و همچنین هوا باستاندن خویش میان آب و آتش میگوید از فرودین که آبست سبکترم و از زیر که آتش است گرانترم تا ترا گمان نیفتد ای برادر که هوا بغایت سبک است که اگر هوا سبک بودی بر روی آب و خاک خفته نبود.

[۱۰۳] پس اگر کسی گوید که اگر پیوستن هوا با آب و خاک بر گرانی هوا دلیل است هوا نیز از زیر به آتش پیوسته است، پس پیوستن او با آتش بر سبکی او

نیز دلیلمست، پس بدین دو دلیل [هوا هم] سبک و [هم] گران باشد و این متناقض باشد، جواب او باز دهیم [وا] گوئیم هوا جسم است که درازا و پهنا و بالا دارد و مر اورا یک جانب باتش نه از آن پیوسته است که گوئی سبک بغایت است بل که از آنست که عالم از این چهار طبع آگنده است که هیچ جای خالی نیست از آنها، و میان آب و آتش اثیر هوا آگنده است و جزوهای هوا بر یکدیگر تکیه کرده است و از هوا آن روی جزوها که بر روی آب جای گرفته است نمی‌گذارد مر آن جزوها را که برتر ازوست تا فرود آیند، همچنانک آن جزوهای خاک که بمرکز زمین نزدیک شده‌اند و چون ستونها گشته‌اند مرین جزوها را که بر روی زمین‌اند نمی‌گذارند این زیرینها که آنجا فرو شوند، پس خاک و هوا همچنین‌اند، اما چون هوا بجنبند جزوهای زیرین ازو فرو آیند و فرودین بر شوند، از بهر آنک [هوا] گوهر گداخته است، و همچنین اگر آن جزوهای زیرین از میان خاک بیرون کنی آنج برتر ازوست بجای او فرو شود تا بدانی که حال هوا همچون حال خاکست و هوا جسمست، و چون اورا باتش اضافت کنی گرانست.

[۱۰۴] چون این تربیت بدانستی آن وقت گوئیم که چون دو چیز را در [دو] کفه ترازو نهی یکی سبک و دیگر گران آن کفه که گران ترست فرو آید و [آن] کفه [که] سبک [تر است] بر شود از بهر آنک تو مر سبک را با گران برابر کردی و هر دو را برابر از زمین که مرکز گرانیست بر گرفتی ناچار آن گرانتر فرو آید و آن سبک تر بر شود و بایستد، همچنانک آب سبک بر خاک گران ایستاده است پس آن گرانتر [ب] فرو آمدن خویش [سوی زمین] همی نماید که [جای من] زیرتر [از جای تست و من ب] مرکز گرانی که زمین است از تو که سبکی سزاوارترم، و آن سبک [تر] بیر شدن خویش سوی هوا همی نماید که جای من برتر از جای تست و من بمرکز سبکی که آتش است از تو که گرانی سزاوارترم، و اگر این دو چیز را که یکی از دیگری گرانترست برابر از هوا رها کنی آن گرانتر زودتر بزمین آید، چنانک سیبی با برگ سیبی برابر از سر درخت رها کنی نخست سیب بزمین آید از بهر آنک هوا با برگ هم جنسی دارد بسبکی [وا] هوا او را بپذیرد، آن مقدار زمان که بپذیرد، پس گوئیم آن چیز سبک در آن سوی دیگر از ترازو همی فرو گراید سوی زمین ولیکن چون آن گرانتر بدین مرکز گرانی که زمین است سزاوارتر شود بفرو

آمدن رشته ترازو که آن چیز سبک با او برابری همی جست مر او را از برابر بودن باز داشت با خویشتن بگرانی خویش، و آن رشته چون ستون گشته است که آن سبک را نمی‌گذارد بجای آن گران نشستن، همچنانک آن جزوها از خاک که در میان زمین است مرین جزوهای زیرین را نمی‌گذارد که آنجا فرو شود، بشناس تا بدانی، بررس تا برهی.

مسئله بیستم

[۱۰۵] پرسیدی ای برادر از حال نبات چه از گیاه و چه از درختان بزرگ و خواستی که بدانی که درخت چون همی روید سر سوی آسمان چرا همی کشد و چوب از چه بحاصل همی آید که نه بخاک ماند و نه بآب.

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[۱۰۶] بدان ای برادر که علم شناخت طبایع سخت بزرگوار است و فایده او بسیار از بهر آنک عالم جسمانی که اصل او طبایع است مر عالم روحانی را چون کالبدست، و تا کالبد شناخته نشود سوی شناختن نفس راه نبود و همچنانک فعل از راه جسد آشکار شود ناچاره بر راه این عالم مر عالم روحانی را بتوان شناخت، و سوی هستی آن سرای زنده بدانستن این سرای مرده راه توان برد، و بشناختن هر دو عالم توحید باری سبحانه درست شود و جلال و عظمت او را جلّت قدرته شناخته اند، که عالم جسمانی خود از بهر حاصل کردن آن پهای مانده است تا دلیل باشد بر شناختن عالم غیب، و هر که عالم طبایع را نداند نفس او در حصار طبایع بسته باشد، [و] وی نابینا باشد در سرای آخرت و آنک خداوند طبایع است و غافل [از آنها] او نابینا تر باشد، چنانک خدای عزّ و جلّ میگوید: «مَنْ كَانَ فِي هَذِهِ أَعْمَى فَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ أَعْمَى وَأَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا» (۷۲:۱۷).

[۱۰۷] مثل عالم طبایع در ملک خدا چون مثل دربان سلطانست که [بدون شناخت آن] هیچ کس را از رعیت سوی او بار نباشد و مثل عالم روحانی که قوّت و فرمان او درین عالم طبایع روانست چون مثل حاجب سلطانست، پس هر کس که دربان سلطان را نداند و حاجب و حشم او را نداند جلالت و عظمت و قدرت او

را چه داند، و یل بر آن که فرمان گزاران خدا [را] ناشناخته همی پندارد که خدایرا شناخته است، و هیچ چاره نیست مر کسی را ناآموخته در توحید راه جوید از افتادن [در] تشبیه یا در تعطیل چنانک خدای تعالی می گوید: «وَجَعَلُوهُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ جُزْءًا إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَكَفُورٌ مُبِينٌ» (۱۵:۴۳).

[۱۰۸] پس بیاید شناخت که کار کرد در عالم بر دو گونه است یکی را طبیعی خوانند و دیگری را صنیعی. اما طبیعی چون گوهرهاست که در کانه‌ها همی بندد و چون نبات و حیوان که از کارکرد طبایع می بحاصل آید بظاهر، و صنیعی آنست که جانور کند چون مردم و آنچه جانور کند بدو قسم است یکی از او میانجیست میان طبیعی و صنیعی چون صنعت زنبور که انگبین همی کند و چون صدف که مروارید کند و چون آهو که مشک کند، و چون کرم قز که ابریشم کند و دیگر قسم صنیعی حقیقی‌ست، و آن مردم کند از صنعت‌های گوناگون، پس کارکرد طبیعی و آنچه میانجیست میان طبیعی و صنیعی همه مستحیلست از اصل خویش چنانک گوهرها و نبات و حیوان که طبیعی است همه استحالت پذیرفتست از این چهار طبع و بحال دیگر گشته و هر چند که ماده همه از خاک و آب و باد و آتش است همه مستحیل شده‌اند تا گوهر و نبات و حیوان بدین چهار نمانند در حال ظاهر و آنچه میانجیست میان طبیعی و صنیعی چون انگبین و مروارید و مشک و جز آن، و آن نیز دورترست از مانده بودن بطبایع از بهر آنک جانور را بر طبایع فضلست بدان که صنعت خویش را از مانده بودن بطبایع و جز آن دورتر افکنده است و وی زنده است، پس کارکرد او نیز بر کارکرد طبایع فضل دارد، و آنچه صنیعی حقیقی است بعضی ازو مستحیل است و بعضی نه مستحیل و آن صنعت مردمست که از این هر دو کارکرد طبایع [و جانوران] کرده شده است و مردم از هر دو بهره دارد.

[۱۰۹] چنانک از کارکرد مردم چیزی هست که بکارکرد طبایع ماند چون ساختن آبگینه از [سنگ و] نبات و ساختن عقیق از نوعی از انواع سنگ، و چون ترکیب مینا که این چیزها همه صنیعی است که بطبیعی ماند و باز از کارکرد مردم چیزی هست که بکارکرد جانوران ماند چون ساختن روغن از شیر و ساختن سفال از خاک و آب و بیرون آوردن رنگ سبز از میان کبودی و زردی و آن صنعت‌هایی است

که مردم می‌کند همه استحالت پذیرفته است از اصل خویش چون طبیعی، و باز در صنیعت مردم چیزهاست که از اصل خویش مستحیل است و لیکن اصلی که صنعت مردم برو پدید آمده است بدان صنعت شریف شود چون ساختن سلاحها از آهن که بدان صنعت آهن با سیم برابر شود، و چون بافتن دیا از ابریشم و ساختن جامهای قیمتی و جز آن. پس گوئیم چنانکه مردم بار درخت این عالمست و همه قوت عالم اندرو جمع است صنعت طبایع و صنعت جانوران بدان زیادتى که اورا بر عالم حیوانست، و آن نفس سخن گوی است، و مرو را دیگر صنعت هائیست که نه بطبیعی ماند و نه بصنّعی چون بریدن آهن با آهن و چون جفت دادن اسب با خر مر زایش استر را و چون مرغان جنگ آور را کار فرمودن چون باز و شاهین و جز آن، و ددگان سخت را مسخر خویش گردانیدن چون پیل و شیر و جز آن.

【۱۱۰】 چون ترتیب صنعت دانسته باشی چنین که یاد کرده شد آن وقت بیايد دانست که ترتیب حاصل آمدن چوب از آب و خاک بمیانجی آتش و باد [است]، و چون تخم یا دانه‌ای که ازو درخت آید ب خاک در نشاندۀ شود و بآب مر آن خاک را تر کرده شود و آفتاب از فراز مر آن خاک تر کرده را گرم کند آن دانه را خاک بدان گرمی [آفتاب] و تری آب آغشته کند و بگدازد، و چون گداخته شود آن خاک تر را که بدو اندرست بدان قوت که در دانه باشد بخویشتن کشد تا بزرگتر از آن شود که بوده باشد، و آن خاک تر که با او یکی گشته است نیز طبع آن دانه شود و بدان قوت که اندرو آید مر آن خاک را که هم پهلوی اوست بخویشتن کشد و مایۀ حیات و گرمای آفتاب مر آن دانه گداخته را همواره از آن جایگاه سوی بالا همی کشد و بر میرود از بهر آنکه گرمی از آتش بحاصل آمده است و جای آتش سوی بالاست، پس چون آن دانه از خاک خویش مایه یابد و آن مایه درو گداخته باشد آن گرمی که اورا همی گدازد سوی بالا بر می‌شود و مر آن مایه گداخته را با خود سوی بالا کشیدن گیرد تا سر از زمین بر کند و دیگر سویی بخویشتن بگرمی پذیرفتن آن خاک اورا سوی پستی همی کشد و آن خاک را بخود می‌کشد تا بخویشتن بگرمی کند و از زیر سو گرما مرو را می‌کشد تا درازتر همی شود.

【۱۱۱】 و آن بخار گرم که بر آن شاخ بر آمده است ازو جدا می‌شود و بسوی

مرکز آتش می‌رود و آنچه هوا مرو را بسردی خویش بفسراند از آن بخار چوب همی گردد و می‌افزاید برین ترتیب، و هر چند که آن خاک بقوت آن دانه که بدو اندرست مستحیل شود با آن دانه هم قوت گردد و از قوت آن گرمی که بدو پیوسته است از آفتاب چون بی‌لا رسد چوب شود و بسودن باد سرد مر او را سخت کند، و از آن سوی دیگر بیخ شود بزیر زمین و باد بدو کمتر رسد نرم همی شود تا بدان نرمی مر لطافت زمین را بخود تواند کشید و بسوی بالا می‌فرستد بصحبت گرمی آفتاب و [آن] پوست که بر ظاهر درخت است که بخشیکی هوا بفسرده است او را نگذارد که بیرون شود تا درو بفسرد و چوب بحاصل آید، و چون کارکرد طبیعت صنعت پذیرد از حال خویش بگردد هم آب و هم خاک بر مثال اسپرغمی که [کارکرد طبیعت است] چون از کارکرد زنبور صنعت پذیرد انگبین شود که هیچ با اسپرغم نماند، این بود علت حاصل شدن چوب، بررسی تا بدانی، بشناس تا برهی.

مسئله بیست و یکم

【۱۱۲】 پرسیدی ای برادر از قرآن که گروهی از مردمان همی گویند سخن خداست و آفریده نیست و اگر آفریده گویندش کافرشان خوانند، باید که بیان کنی و حقیقت آن باز نمائی تا بدانیم.

جواب

【۱۱۳】 بدان ای برادر که درین مسئله سخن بسیارست هر گروهی را و ما باز نمائیم که هر گروهی درین چه گفته‌اند و حجت چه آورده‌اند، پس آنچه طریق حقست باز گوئیم تا بران مستقیم شوی و اعتقاد خویش بر آن درست داری، پس گوئیم که عامه مردم آیدون گفتند که قرآن سخن خداست و نشاید که گوئی قرآن آفریده است، و حجت برین قول از قرآن این آوردند که: «وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى تَكْلِيمًا» (۱۶۴:۴) همی گوید سخن گفت خدای با موسی سخن گفتنی، و دیگر جای بار رسول خویش مخاطبه کرد که: «وَأَذَلْنَا لَكَ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ أَحَاطَ بِالنَّاسِ» (۶۰:۱۷)، همی گوید [و چون] بگفتیم ترا ای محمد که پرورگار تو محیطست بر مردمان، و نیز گفتند مردمان ازین گروه که اگر کسی گوید قرآن آفریده است خدای را تعالی درین گفتار عاجز خوانده باشد یعنی که از گفتن عاجز بود از آن بیافرید، و آن کس

که مر قدرت خدا را بعجز منسوب کرده باشد کافر باشد.

۱۱۴] و آن گروه که گفتند قرآن آفریده است متکلمانند میگویند سخن گفتن بی کام و دهان و زبان نباشد، و هر که ایزد را این آلت گوید کافر باشد، پس اگر کسی گوید خدای سخن گفت بی کام و زبان ما نیز میگوئیم سخن گفتن بی این آلتها سخن آفریدن باشد نه سخن گفتن، گفتند متکلمان که سخن آفریده است بر آن روی که آفریدگار باشاننده اوست و پدید آورنده او، و اگر قرآن نه هست کرده خدای بودی خود قرآن [خدای] بودی.

۱۱۵] و دلیل آوردند برین قول که قرآن از دو بیرون نیست یا قدیمست یا محدث، اگر کسی گوید قرآن قدیمست و هرگز نبود که نبود [این] صفت خدای باشد، پس گفته باشد که خدای و قرآن دو قدیماند، و این مذهب ثنویانست، لیکن [اندر خرد] چنین است [که] قدیم یکی بیش نشاید، پس آفریدگار قدیمست و قرآن محدث بر آن روی که نبود تا آفریدگار مر او را نبود آورد، و چون درست شد که آفریدگار مر او را بوده گردانید پس محدث باشد و مخلوق از بهر آنکه همه آفریدگان را او بوده کرده است تا آفریدگار بود.

۱۱۶] پس آن گروه که گفتند قرآن آفریده نیست ایدون گفتند که ما دو قدیم نگوئیم و نگفتیم آن وقت دو قدیم گفته بودیم که گفتیمی قرآن دیگرست و خدای دیگر، و ما نمی گوئیم که قرآن جز خدای است بل که می گوئیم قرآن صفت خدای است و خدای تعالی بدو موصوف است بدان روی که خدای سخن گوی است و این سخن اوست، و سخن صفت سخن گوی است و صفت از موصوف جدا نباشد، و چون خدای همیشه بود صفت او باید که همیشه باشد، پس قرآن محدث نیست، و چون محدث نیست مخلوق نیست و سخن خدای است.

۱۱۷] [در] جواب متکلمان مر ایشان را [چنین] می گویند که ما دانیم که این قرآن سخنست که نگوید و نیافریند و روزی ندهد، پس چگونه شاید گفت که آنکه آفریده است سخن گوید و روزی دهد چون این سخن ناگوی ناآفریننده روزی

نادهست بل که این خود هموست، این متناقض باشد و متناقض دروغ باشد، و گفتند متکلمان روا باشد که گوئیم قرآن نه هویت خداست و نه جز خدای بل که صفت اوست و صفت از موصوف جدا نباشد و ذات او نباشد و نیز روا باشد که آسمان و زمین و مردم و جز مردم را گوئیم که ایشان نیز از خدا جدا نیستند بلکه فعل او اند و فعل هویت فاعل نباشد و جز فاعل نیز نباشد همچنانکه شما می گوئید قرآن صفت خدایست و صفت هویت موصوف نباشد و جز موصوف نیز نباشد، پس اگر شما مقرید که فعل از فاعل جداست ما نیز گوئیم صفت از موصوف جداست.

[۱۱۸] و نیز گفتند متکلمان که قرآن از سه بیرون نیست یا هویت آفریدگار است یا جز آفریدگار است یا بعضی از آفریدگار است، پس اگر گویند هویت آفریدگار است محالست از بهر آنک قرآن چیزی نمی آفریند، و اگر گویند قرآن جز آفریدگار است اقرار کرده باشند که قرآن آفریده است از بهر آنک هر چه جز آفریدگار است آفریده است، و اگر گویند بعضی از آفریدگار است کفر باشد از بهر آنک خدای را نقص گفته باشند.

[۱۱۹] و گفتند متکلمان اگر کسی گوید که [ما را] این چنین نشاید گفتن ایشان را گوئیم مر کرا شاید گفتن این سخن اگر گوید هیچ کس را نشاید گفتن ایشان را گوئیم شما را بر خصم خویش حکم نشاید کردن، و اگر گویند ما را این سخن نشاید گفتن ایشان را گوئیم باز ایستادن شما از سخن شما را بر خصم خویش حجت نباشد، و گوئیم ایشانرا شما بچه حجت این سخن می گوئید بحجت قرآن یا بموجب عقل یا بطریق [اهل] سنت و جماعت که در این همه رویها نیامده است که سخن بحجت نشاید گفتن.

[۱۲۰] گفتند متکلمان که [ما] مر خدای را می پرستیم و قرآن را نمی پرستیم و آنک مر او را پرستیم جز آن بود که مر او را نپرستیم و خدای تعالی می گوید: «أَقْمَنُ يَخْلُقُ كَمَنْ لَا يَخْلُقُ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ» (۱۶: ۱۷) همی گوید [آیا پس] آن کس که بیافریند همچون آن کس باشد که نیافریند [پس] چرا یاد نکنید، پس ما مر شما را گوئیم آن کس که مر او را بپرستید چون آن باشد که مر او را نپرستید، پس

خلاف او باشد، پس اگر این هر دو قدیم باشند مذهب ثنویان باشد محض و درین قول فساد توحید باشد.

[۱۲۱] و حجت متکلمان بر آنچ قرآن محدث است و آفریده این آیت است کی می گوید: «وَمَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ ذِكْرِ مِنَ الرَّحْمَنِ مُحَدَّثٌ» (۵: ۲۶) و ذکر قرآنست و خدا بدین آیت او را محدث خواند، و محدث آفریده باشد، پس قرآن آفریده باشد، و جای دیگر میگوید: «وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا» (۴۷: ۴) و امر خدای قرآنست، و در این آیت قرآن را کرده می خواند و کرده آفریده باشد، پس قرآن آفریده باشد، و جای دیگر میگوید: «وَ كَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ قَدْرًا مَقْدُورًا» (۳۸: ۳۳) و در این آیت قرآن را اندازه کرده میخواند، و اندازه کرده آفریده باشد، و جای دیگر می گوید: «أَلَمْ يَكُنْ أَوْحِي إِلَيْكَ أَنْزِلْ الْقُرْآنَ» (۱۰: ۱) همی گوید قرآن را استوار کردم پاره پاره تفصیل را در بر آیتها آن را از نزدیک حکمت داننده خبر یافته.

[۱۲۲] و از رسول الله صلی الله علیه و آله خبرست: «يَأْتِي الْبَقَرَةَ وَ آلُ عِمْرَانَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ كَأَنَّهُمَا غِيَمَتَانِ»، گفت سورة البقره و [سورة] آل عمران روز قیامت چون دو ابر آیند و نشاید مر خدایرا صفت کردن بآفریده او، پس آن صفت قرآنست نه صفت او از بهر آنک اگر صفت خدای بودی مر او را صفت نبودی، و نیز متکلمان حجت آوردند که مر قرآن را نیمه است و چهار یک و هفت یک و این صفت مر خدای را نشاید که آنچ مر او را جزوها باشد آفریده باشد، و گفته متکلمان درین آیتها و خبر باطل کردن قول آن گروهیست که گفتند قرآن صفت خدای است و صفت را صفت نباشد و چون این همه آیتها صفت قرآنست درست شد که وی صفت خدای نیست و آفریده است.

[۱۲۳] پس اگر عامه خلق گویند قرآن آفریده است یا آفریدگار جواب ایشان آنست که گوئیم آن خدای که این قرآن گفتار اوست وی آفریدگار است ولیکن این گفتار آفریده است و گفتار جز گوینده باشد از بهر آنک سخن ها حرفها باشد بی جان [و] بی سخن گوی، و گوینده سخن گوی باشد و جانور، و متکلمان گفتند نام دیگر است و نام برده دیگر، و اگر نام هر چیزی همان بودی هر که گفتی

هزار دینار بایستی که او را هزار دینار بودی و بحاصل آمدی و هرکه خواستی که او را مال بودی نام مال بگفتی و زر [و] نقره گردیدی، و نیز گویند که در قرآن نام آدم و ابراهیم و موسی و عیسی و محمد هست اگر نام خود نامدار بودی پس چگوئیم که پیغمبران بمتن قرآن اندر یا در مصحف نشسته‌اند، پس درست شد که نام دیگرست و نامدار دیگر، پس «لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ» و «الْمُصَوِّرُ» و جز آن همه صفت خداست، اما آنچه همی گوید: «مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ» (۲۹:۴۸) نه صفت خداست [بل] که صفت پیغمبر و متابعان اوست و هر آن نبی که مثل اینست بعضی صفت خداست و بعضی صفت بندگان. اینک یاد کرده شد گفتار عامه است و سخن حجت متکلمان.

【۱۲۴】 اما قول اهل حق از متابعان خاندان رسول صلوات الله و سلامه علیه [وآله] آنست که بدانی که [سخن و] سخن‌گوی که سخن فعل اوست [هر دو] آفریده باری سبحانه است و حجت کوتاه بر درستی این قول آنست که سخن‌گوی چیز نیست و سخن نیز چیز نیست، و خدای تعالی می‌گوید: «لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَأَعْبُدُوهُ» (۱۰۲:۶) میگوید خدائی نیست جز او و [او] آفریدگار همه چیزهاست، پس بپرستید مر او را، پس بحکم این آیت هم سخن‌گوی آفریده است و هم سخن. و حق اینست.

مسئله بیست و دوم

【۱۲۵】 پرسیدی ای برادر از کلمه باری سبحانه که چه دلیلست بر آنچ او قدیمست و سبب همه بودنیها اوست و گفתי چه فرقت میان کلمه و میان عقل و کدام شریف‌ترست و چگونه باید شناخت مر کلمه باری را با عقل که همی گویند عقل از کلمه جدا نیست، پس دو چیز که یک از دیگر جدائی ندارد چگونه باشد و خواستی نیز که شناخت تو مر اصل خویش را ببصیرت باشد.

جواب

【۱۲۶】 بدان ای برادر که ما عالم را کار کن می‌بینیم که او را دانش نیست، پس دانستیم که این کار بذات خویش نمی‌کند و چیزی که کار بذات خویش نکند

ناچار بفرمان دیگری کند، پس اینجا درست شد که عالم و آنچ دروست کار بفرمان کسی میکند و کار کردن نادان بفرمان دانا بود و آن بر دو روی باشد یا بگفتار بود یا بکردار و کردار فرود گفتار است از بهر آنکه کردار ستور راست و گفتار مردم راست. **[۱۲۲]** پس آنچه بکردارست دانا با ندانم خویش مر آن را کار ببندد، و آن کار بستن ازو مر نادان را فرمان باشد، چنانکه در گمر تیشه را کار بندد بدست خویش و تیشه فرمان بردار او باشد، تا دانا مر آن نادان را بحکمت ساخته باشد باید که آن حکمت از دانا درو جای گیر شود و آن نادان کار همی تواند کرد بر مثال آنکه [آسیاگری] آسیا[ئی] بسازد و چون آلت آن راست بکند آن آسیا بدان حکمت که از آسیاگر پذیرد کار همی کند و کار بستن آن حکمت از آن دانا در ساختن آسیا نیز فرمانی باشد از دانا سوی نادان، اما این فرمان کردار است اما فرمان گفتار از فرمان کردار برتر است، از بهر آنکه ما در ظاهر حال همی بینیم که مردی گوید مرا کوشکی بکنید، بدین یک گفتار او صد کارکن و پیشه ور چون خشت زن و گل کار و در گرو و آهنگر بکار اندر آیند.

[۱۲۸] پس گوئیم این فرمان که عالم بدان کارکن گشت از باری سبانه گفتار بود و گفتار هر چند کمتر [بود] از فرماینده بر روانی فرمان بیشتر دلیل کند و کمتر از یکی شمار نیست. پس گوئیم آن گفتار از باری سبانه یک سخن بود و یک سخن را بتازی کلمه گویند و ایزد تعالی مر آن کلمه را کن خواند، پس گفتیم که گفتار باری بدین روی [سبب] بودش عالم بود و این بیانی روشن است.

[۱۲۹] و اما جواب آنچ پرسیدی از فرق میان کلمه و عقل، این سؤال سخت بزرگست و ازین برتر نه مر اندیشه را راهست و نه مر سخن گوی را مجال، که اندرو همچنانکه سخن گفتن درین باب دشوارست شنودن شرح آن نیز دشوارست و من بدستوری خزانه دار علم مخزون و امین سرّ خدای و روزی ده جانهای مؤمنان امام روزگار خویش ابو تمیم معدّالمستنصر امیرالمؤمنین درین سخن گویم بگفتار کوتاه با فایده بی حشو، خدای ترا توفیق دهد بشنودن آن بحق و اعتقاد داشتن آن براستی.

۱۳۰] گوئیم که فرمان باری سبحانه که هستیها همه زیر اوست یک سخن بود و آن کلمهٔ باری [بود]، چنانک شرح آن گفتیم و او بهست آوردهٔ هویت باریست نه از چیزی و هست نخستین وی باشد و چون نخستین هست او باشد باری سبحانه از هست و نه هست برتر است، خردمند داند که میان کلمه و هویت باری سبحانه میانجی نباشد، از بهر آنک [او] خود میانجی نخستین است و اگر در بود آوردن او میانجی بودی او خود [میانجی] نخستین نبود و نخستین هست نبود، پس کلمه بی میانجی بهست آمد.

۱۳۱] این تمامی [مر کلمه را] برترین منزلتی بود و معنی این قول آن باشد که هر چ نام هستی برو افتد همه اندرو بود بجملگی و هستیها بجملگی [یا] علتست و [یا] معلول [او] دیگر چیزی نیست، از بهر آنک علت آن باشد که فایده دادن از وی باشد و معلول آن بود که فایده پذیرد، چنانک نبات علت است و جانور معلول و باز طبایع علت است و نبات معلول و بدان شناسند علت را از معلول که چون علت را برگیری معلول بر خیزد و اگر معلول [را] برگیری علت بر نخیزد، چنانک اگر نبات را بوهیم برگیری جانور بر خیزد و اگر جانور را برگیری نبات بر نخیزد. و چون این حال بدانسته باشی بدانی که کلمهٔ ایزد سبحانه چون بی میانجی بود بغایت تمامی بود و چیزهای بتمام [هم] علت است و [هم] معلول، پس کلمهٔ ایزد مایهٔ علت و معلولست و علت برتر از معلولست بدان روی که چون علت را برگیری معلول بر خیزد [چنانکه] بدانستیم.

۱۳۲] بیاید دانست که کلمه علت همه علتهاست از یک روی و از دیگر روی هم علتست و هم معلول، از بهر آنک تمامست و تمام آن باشد که علت و معلول بهم باشند، تا هر چه هستی دارد همه زیر او اندر آید، پس [کلمه] علت است که معلول او با او بهم است و جدا نیست، چه اگر معلول او ازو جدا بودی، چون دیگر معلولات، وی خود تمام نبود، از بهر آنک یکی از هستیها معلولست، چنانک بیش ازین گفتیم که هست [نخستین] هم علتست و هم معلول، تا درست شود که هر دو عالم را علت کلمهٔ باری سبحانه است، از بهر آنک هر دو عالم بجز علت و معلول چیزی نیست، بدان روی که هر دو عالم خود این دو چیز است یا فایده دهنده، یا

فایده پذیرنده.

【۱۳۳】 اما فرق میان کلمه و عقل جز آنست که در محسوسات است که ایشان یک از دگر جدا اند و [لیکن کلمه و عقل با هم یکی اند و فقط] در گفتار دو اند [و] بنزدیک گردانیدن و هم چون سیاهی است و سیاه، که سیاهی را آن وقت یابند که در سیاه نگرند و هر چند که سیاهی در ذات سیاه موجودست خردمند داند که سیاه نام سیاه بسیاهی یافته است نه بچیزی دیگر و مر کلمه [را] وحدت گویند و مر عقل را واحد خوانند و وحدت یکی باشد و واحد یکی و هر چند یکی را پیدا شدن از یکیست خردمند داند که یکی مرین نام را سزاوار بدان گشت که یکی دروست و بدان دانیم که عقل یکی است در مرتبه که هر چه هستی پذیرفته است و بذات خویش قایم شده است و عدد همی بروافتد یکی خوانندش و یکی دانندش و هرچه او را بدانند او زیرعقل باشد و هرچه زیر عقل باشد عقل پیش از او باشد، چنانکه هرچه هست از شمار همه نام یکی دارند چون یک هزار و یک صد و یک ده و جز آن، این نام یکی بدان دارند که علت شمار یکی است و پیش از او هیچ شمار نیست و یکی بهمه عددها درست بفعل و بیکی در هیچ نیست مگر بعد قوت، از بهر آنکه یکی علت شمارست و شمارها همه معلول اوست، هم چنانکه آهن بهمه شمشیرها درست بعد فعل و بآهن در هیچ شمشیر نیست مگر بعد قوت.

【۱۳۴】 پس گوئیم که چون کلمه هست نخستین بود و تمام بود و نام تمامی مر او را سازوار نیامد مگر آن وقت که بدانی که هم علت بود و هم معلول و چون علتها در عالم بمعلولات پیوسته است ازین سر جدا نیستند یکی از دیگری، بدان روی که چون علت را بر گیری معلول بر خیزد. آن علت نخستین که کلمه است سزاوارتر باشد که از معلول خویش جدا نباشد و هستیها همه زیر معلول او باشد که عقل است، بررس تا بدانی، بشناس تا برهی.

مسئله بیست و سوم

【۱۳۵】 پرسیدی ای برادر از ملک خدای تعالی که چیست و چندست و جز این [دو] عالم یکی روحانی و یکی جسمانی مر خدای را ملک [دیگر] هست، و اگر

بیشتر از این ملکه‌ها بودی خدای را جل جلاله [ملک] او نه بیشتر بودی و قدرت او عظیم‌تر و گنتی که گروهی گفتند که خدای را اوله‌است بی نهایت و مر هر اولی را ثانیه‌است بی نهایت و خواستی تا ترا باز نموده شود درستی این قول ببرهان عقل اگر درستست تا باز گفته شود و الا نادرستی آن بنمای بجعت. وَالسَّلَام.

جواب

۱۳۶] بدان ای برادر کی علم خدای در خزینه اوست و خزینه دار او امام زمانست چنانکه خدای تعالی گفت: «الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ» (۵۵:۱-۴) و هیچ کس را دست بعلم خدای نرسد مگر بدستوری خزینه دار او چنانکه خدای می گوید: «إِنَّهُ لَقُرْآنٌ كَرِيمٌ فِي كِتَابٍ مَكْنُونٍ لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ» (۷۷:۵۶-۷۹) و هر که بی فرمان خداوند زمانه خویش در علم خدای دست درازی کند دزد باشد و چون خواهد که ستایش کند نکوهش کرده باشد و او خود خبر ندارد چنانکه خدای می گوید: «وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَكِنْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ» (۱۱:۲-۱۲) می گوید چون مر ایشان را گویند فساد مکنید در زمین، یعنی در دعوت، ایشان گویند ما همی صلاح کنیم و ایشان تباهی کنندگانند و لیکن می‌دانند.

۱۳۷] و بحدود خداوند روزگار خویش بیان کنیم که ملک خدای چیست و چندست و باز نمائیم بیرهانهای روشن که آن کسانی که گفتند خدای تعالی را اولهای بی نهایت است و مر هر اولی را ثانیه‌است [بی نهایت] و در زمین سیصد و شصت آدم بوده است و در روزگار هر آدمی همچنین سیصد و شصت پیغمبر بوده است همه خطا گفتند و در علم خدا دست درازی کردند بی فرمان خزینه دار او و بر آنج گفتند هیچ برهان نداشتند نه از کتاب خدای و نه از خبر رسول و نه از حجت عقل و بر مؤمنان بسخن بی معنی می ریاست جستند.

۱۳۸] بدان ای برادر که همه خردمندان متفق اند بر آنکه خدای یکیست و کتابهای خدای که پیغمبران آوردند بدین گواهیست و در قرآن که مهر همه کتابهاست چندین جای می گوید: «هُوَ اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ» (۴:۳۹) همی گوید خدای

یکی است و قهر کننده، پس نخست گوئیم مر آن کس را که ملک خدای را بسیاری عدد می بستاید که اگر در بسیاری و بزرگی جلال و عظمت بودی بایستی که ایزد سبحانه در هویت خویش بسیار بودی و نه یکی محض بودی، اگر کسی گوید یکی [که] در هویت خویش بسیارست یا باشد چگونه باشد؟ اورا گوئیم مثال مردی باشد که درو بعد قوت فرزندان باشد و مر فرزندان او را فرزندان باشد بی نهایت چنانکه امیر المؤمنین علی مردی بود که در هویت خویش بسیار بود و امروز آن بسیاری ظاهر شده است ازین چندین هزار علوی که ازو در جهان پیدا شد و همی شود و خدای تعالی مر رسول خویش را بدانچه مر امیرالمؤمنین را بسیار فرزند آفریده بود منت نهاد برو درین آیت که همی گوید: «أَنَا أَعْطَيْتَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ» (۱:۱۰۸) و کوثر مردی بسیار فرزند باشد و اشارت بوی کرد تا فرزندان وی ایستاده باشند بگزاردن فرمان خدای و تأویل کتاب او. بیاید دانست که بسیار چیزی نا تمام بود و اگر امیرالمؤمنین بمنزلت فرزند خویش بودی که عالم جسمانی از بهر بحاصل کردن او بیای مانده است و آن قایم قیامت است مر او را فرزند نبودی هیچ، چنانکه مر آن بزرگوار را علیه السلام فرزند نباشد بل که او مهر خلق باشد و آفرینش بدو تمام شود و هر چه تمام باشد اورا دیگری نباشد، پس از اینجا درست شود که تمامی در بسیاری نیست بلک در یکی است که خدای تعالی مر آن را حقیقت خویش کرد.

۱۳۹] و چون باز نمودیم که بسیاری همه از نقصانست گوئیم که اگر ملک خدای را اولها و ثانیها بودی و جهانهای بسیار ناچار همه موجود بودندی و زیر شمار آمدندی و چیزی که زیر شمار آید اگر چه بسیار باشد شمار بیش از او باشد و چون مر او را بیاری سبحانه باز خوانی سخت اندک باشد و چون ایدون گوید که اگر این ملک چنو چندین بودی بیشتر و بهتر بودی بر قدرت خدای کمال و نقصان افتادی و نیز گوئیم اگر کسی را گمان افتد که اگر خدای [را] جز این دیگر جهانها بودی ملک او بیشتر بودی، نخست باید بنگرد بجشم خرد تا بیند که این جهان خود بحقیقت ملک خدای است یا نه، که اگر این جهان ملک خدای بودی کناره‌هایش پیدا نبودی و این جهان را کناره‌ها پیدااست، پس واجب آید که از کناره‌های ملک خدای بیرون ملک خدای نباشد و نیز این جهان اگر بزرگتر ازین بودی قدرت خدای بیشتر بودی، پس چون بزرگتر ازین شایست کردن جز تنگی قدرت نبود که همین

مقدار بود و نیز این جهان اگر ملک خدای بودی چندین هزار بیابان بی نبات و بی حیوان درو نبود و چندین هزار ریگستان خشک و شورستان تلخ و چندین کوههای بی نبات و بی آب و بی گوهر نبود و چندین آبهای ژیان که همی رود و آبادانیها ویران می‌کند و چندین ددگان درنده که جانوران با فایده هلاک می‌کنند درین ملک خدای نبود و اگر خدای را بایستی که او را جهانهای بسیار بودی و بسیاری ملک او در بسیاری جهان بودی و بسیاری مردم این جهان را که ما همی بینیم آبادان آفریدی که درو هیچ ویران نبود و اگر کسی بچشم بصیرت مرین جهان را ببیند بداند که اگر این [جهان] بجملگی آبادان باشد درو بیش ازین آبادانی و مردم آید صد هزار عالم دیگر باشد همه همچنین که اینست و چون مرد خردمند این حال که گفته شد ببیند بداند که این عالم ملک خدای نیست بحقیقت که اگر این عالم ملک خدای بودی بیرون ازین عالم نه ملک خدای بودی، از بهر آنک این عالم جسم است و جسم آن باشد که شش حد بگرد او در آمده باشد و هرچ شش حد بگرد او در آید آن چیز بدان حدهای خویش از چیزی که نه از او باشد جدا شود و چون چنین باشد این عالم ملک خدای نباشد و آنچ از او بیرون باشد نه ملک خدای باشد.

۱۴۰] و اکنون چون بیان کردیم که این عالم بحقیقت ملک خدای نیست گوئیم ملک خدای بحقیقت آنست که مر او را اول نیست و آخر نیست و مر او را بیرون نیست تا ازو بیرون چیزی باشد و لازم آید که آن چیزی که از ملک خدای بیرون باشد نه خدای را باشد، اگر کسی پرسد که چیست آنک او را اول نیست و آخر نیست و هیچ چیز ازو بیرون نیست گوئیم آن یکی است که باری سبحانه او را بقدرت خویش هست کرده است نه از چیزی، دلیل بر درستی این قول آنست که شمارهها را بیایی همه از یکی جمله شده و بدانی که ده و صد و هزار همه از یکی خاسته است و ندانی که یکی را هستی از کجاست و چیست، آن وقت بدانی که یکی را اول نیست و همچنین اگر یکی را همی افزائی هرگز بآخر نرسد، چنانک نیز برو چیزی نتوان افزود، پس بدانی که یکی را آخر نیست و هر چند شمار بسیار باشد اول او یکی باشد و آخر [او] یکی و هیچ چیز ازو بیرون نباشد، پس بیاید دانست که ملک خدای یکی است که ازو هیچ بیرون نیست و آن یکی قهر کننده

است که مر او را اول و آخر نیست.

۱۴۱] اگر کسی گوید پس آن یکی بحقیقت چیست که نام چیزی در عالم یکی نیابم گوئیم او را که آن یکی بحقیقت عقلست که هیچ چیز از وی بیرون نیست و هرچ عقل مر او را بشناسد او هست باشد و هرچ عقل مر او را منکر شود اثبات[ش] نشود و گوئیم که یکی [که] علت شمارست گواهی می‌دهد که عقل یکی است بحقیقت، از بهر آنکه هرچ هستی دارد شمار برو نشیند و همچنین هرچ هستی دارد عقل مر او را بپذیرد و زیر خود آرد، پس درست شد که یکی عقلست و ملک خدای بحقیقت عقلست نه چیزی دیگر و عقل اولست که اگر وی اول نبودی همه چیزها زیر وی اندر نیامدی و چون اول درست گشت مر او را از ثانی چاره نیست که در آن ثانی اثر او پیدا بود، چنانکه یکی در دو پیدا آمده است که در دو مر یکی را دو تا همی بیابیم، پس گفتیم که ثانی عقل نفس است و گواهی بر درستی این قول پیدا آمدن اثر عقلست بپذیرفتن در نفس مردم مر او را، بر مثال پیدا آمدن یکی در دو و پذیرفتن دو مر یکی را، و آن وقت هرچ شمارست همه ازین دو مرتبه ترکیب یافته است.

۱۴۲] پس گوئیم ملک [خدای] یکی است تمام شده بمرتبه دو، یعنی بسیط است چون یکی و مرگب است چون دو، همچنین ملک خدای عقلست تمام شده با جفت خود که نفس است، یکی خداوند بساطت باشد چون یکی و یکی خداوند ترکیب چون دو، و اگر دو نبودی هیچ عدد پیدا نیامدی، نبینی که اگر چه عدد بسیار است در میان دو است، از بهر آنکه اولش یکیست و آخرش یکی و این دو باشد، پس گوئیم یکی که در هویت خویش تمامست لاجرم هیچ زیادت نپذیرد بذات خویش و اگر یکی در یکی ضرب کنی هم یکی آید و دو که نخستین مرتبه بسیارست ناقص است و نشان چیزی ناقص آن باشد که زیادت پذیر باشد، لاجرم دو زیادت پذیرست، نبینی که چون دو در دو ضرب کنی چهار آید و اگر این چهار را دیگر باره [در دو] ضرب کنی هشت آید و زیادت پذیرفتن گیرد، پس درست شد که تمامی در یکی است و نقصان در بسیار.

۱۴۳] و اگر کسی گوید در ملک خدای اوّل و ثانی بسیار باشد تا ملک او عظیم تر باشد از بی علمی خویش گوید و از نا آموختن علوم ریاضی بود. بدانکه اگر ایزد سبحانه اوّلی آفریدی و او را اوّل خواندی و دیگری همچون او در آن وقت بیافریدی هر دو را اوّل خواندن روا نبود، از بهر آنکه چون مرین دو اول را که هر دو مر ایزد را باشند بیک دیگر اضافه کرده شود این اوّل ثانی آن اوّل باشد و آن اوّل ثانی این اوّل باشد و در آن کتاب که آنرا «ارواح و املاک» نام نهاده است کسی که نه روح شناخته است و نه ملک گفته است که در ملک خدا اوّلهای بی نهایت است اند جای، چنانکه هر اوّلی نداند که در ملک خدا چنو چندست، این سخن بی معنی کسی گوید که نه اوّل داند و نه ثانی.

۱۴۴] از بهر آنکه اوّل را از بهر آن اوّل خوانند که [چنو] چیزی دیگر نباشد و هرچ باشد فرود او باشد و هر گه که چیزی بسیار باشد او را این نام سزاوار نباشد، و دیگر آنکه اول عقلست و عقل باید که بغایت تمام باشد و هیچ چیز ازو غائب نباشد، تا او مر نام عقل را مستحق باشد، پس هر وقت که اول که عقلست چندان نداند که چنو مر خدای را چندست پس جاهل باشد و کم عقل و خداوند کتاب «ارواح و املاک» دعوی کرده باشد که من از عقل کل داناتر و نداند که عقل چه چیز است و همی نداند که می نداند و این عیبی نیست که بر هیچ خردمند پوشیده باشد، و نیز گفته است هم در آن کتاب که هر اوّلی را ثانیهای بسیارست، ای سبحان الله گوئیم کسی [را] که اندک مایه خرد باشد چنین سخن گوید یا هیچ کس که مر او را خواست درست باشد چنین سخن پذیرد که اوّل باشد و مر او را ثانی باشد و باز هم مر این اوّل را ثانی دیگر باشد و ثانی سدیگر و همچنین بی نهایت ثانیها باشد؟ بدانکه چون اوّلی باشد و مر او را ثانی باشد پس از آن اگر دیگری باشد نه ثانی باشد [بل] که ثالث باشد و رابع و خامس و هر چه از پس ثانی باشد ثانی بمیان اول و میان او باشد میانجی و آن بقوت ثانی نباشد و همچنین رابع بقوت ثالث، این گفتار بی معنی و فاسد باشد و چگونه گوید [کسی] اوّلست [که] مر او را بی نهایت ثانیست؟ مگر آن کس که از علم هندسه خبر ندارد و این چنان باشد که کسی گوید [خطی است که] او را یک سر هست و یک سر نیست و خط آن باشد که میان دو نقطه باشد چون نقطه اوّل یافته شود [نقطه] آخر یافته باشد، پس شاید که

اول یکی باشد و ثانی بی نهایت.

۱۴۵] پس درست کردیم که اول عقلست و هیچ چیز برو پوشیده نیست و شاید که چیزی باشد که عقل مر او را نشناسد، که نام عقل ازو بیفتد و نام جهل برو نشیند و اگر کسی گوید چندان اولست خدای را که اول نداند که او را چند اولست، چنین گفته باشد که عدد بسیار هست که درو هیچ یکی نیست و این سخن محال باشد، که در عدد علت یکی است و بی یکی [عدد] نباشد و گوئیم ثانی نفس است و ثالث هیولی و هر یک بمحل خویش ایستاده اند و کار میکنند بامر باری سبحانه، که اول بیش از یکی واجب نیاید و در حکمت مر اول را ثانی یکی بیش روا نباشد و هر که گوید که مر اول را پنج ثانی روا باشد گفته باشد که دو خود دو است و سه نیز دو است و چهار نیز دو است و پنج [نیز] همچنین و این دروغ محض باشد و نیز گفته است در آن کتاب که در گوشه ای از گوشه های فلک باری سبحانه را اولیست، آن نادان که چنین سخن گوید نداند که چیزی که او را گوشه باشد مر او را نهایت باشد و هرچ او را نهایت باشد بدان نهایت خویش از چیزی دیگر جدا شود، آن وقت ملک خدای را از چیزی دیگر جدا کرده بود و گفته باشد آن چیز خدای را نیست.

۱۴۶] و چون درست کردیم که اول بیش از یکی روا نباشد ثانی او [نیز] یکی باید که باشد، درست کرده باشیم که در هر دوری ناطق [و وصی او] یکی بیش روا نباشد، ناطق بمحل [اول یعنی] عقل و وصی او بمحل ثانی [یعنی نفس] و پیدا شد بدین شرح که کردیم که ملک خدای عقلست که او را اول نیست و آخر نیست و هیچ چیز ازو بیرون نیست، بررس تا بدانی، بیاموز تا برهی.

مسئله بیست و چهارم

۱۴۷] پرسیدی ای برادر که مردم را بنده می خوانند چهار پای را بنده نمی خوانند چه دلیلست برآنکه مردم بنده است آیا او را در آفرینش [خویش] توانائی نبود یا گوئیم که در آن گناهی کرد که بدان بنده گشت و اگر نه چنین است چرا او بنده آمد و دیگر [جانور] ان [بنده] نیامدند و السلام.

جواب

۱۴۸] بدان ای برادر که آنچ هست در عالم همه بسته است ببند ایزدی که هیچ چیز از آن بستگی رهایش نمی‌یابد، نخست گوئیم، آسمان و ستارگان بسته‌اند ببند شکل و گردش و مقدار، که هر یکی ازو بشکل و مقداری اندرند که از آن بیرون نتوانند شد، چنانک آسمان هفتم نتواند که چون ششم باشد یا ششم چون هفتم و هر ستاره‌ای در فلکی بسته است، که او را از آن بیرون شدن نیست و همچنین این چهار طبایع هر یکی در بندی‌اند، چنانک آتش ببند گرمی و خشکی بسته است، که از آن رهایش ندارد، و هوا ببند گرمی و تری و آب ببند سردی و تری و خاک ببند سردی و خشکی.

۱۴۹] و چون از طبایع بگذری آنچ موالید عالم است هر یکی بسته است ببندی که نتوانند از آن بیرون آمدن، چنانک نباتی که او را ساق نیست چون کدو و خربزه و جز آن که از زمین بی‌یاری بر نخیزند در بند خفتگی‌اند و آنچ مر او را ساقست چون گندم و جو و باقلی و جز آن که در بند ایستادگی‌اند که نتوانند نشست و هر نباتی ببند تخم خویش بسته شده است، که جز آن که بار اوست نتواند آورد، و چون از نبات بگذری حیوانست، که هر یکی ازو ببندی بسته شده‌اند که از آن بندشان رهایش نیست، چنانک گیاه‌خوار گوشت نتواند خورد و گوشت‌خوار گیاه نتواند خورد و هر یکی را بند ایزدست، بدین معنی که گفتیم، و هر یک از حیوان جز از جفت خویش بار نتواند آورد و این نیز هم بند ایزدست.

۱۵۰] پس از همه چیزها که یاد کردیم جز مردم همه در بندهای ایزدند و هر یکی در حصاری جداگانه باز داشته و ببودن [در] آن بندها گواهی می‌دهند که ایشان مقهورند و بسته و بنده و می‌اقرار کنند که ایشان را قاهری و باز دارنده‌ای هست که وی مقهور و باز داشته نیست: «وَهُوَ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ» (۱۶:۱۳) و هر چند این چیزها را که یاد کردیم سخن گفتن نیست بایستادن خویش هریک در مرتبه خویش بجز خویش و قدرت خدای همی سخن گویند، چنانک حق تعالی می‌گوید: «وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَفْقَهُونَ تَسْبِيحَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا» (۴۴:۱۷)، می‌گوید هیچ چیز نیست [مگر آن] که می‌تسبیح کند بستایش

خدای تعالی ولیکن شما تسبیح ایشان ندانید که وی آهسته پوشاننده است.

[۱۵۱] و چون از این بندها بگذری آن وقت بدانی که بیک روی ستارگان و آسمان چون بندگانند مر طبایع را بفرمان ایزد، بدانچ همی فایده دهند مر طبایع را و برگرد طبایع همی گردند چون خدمتگاران و بندگان که گرد خداوند خویش گردند و از دیگر روی طبایع چون بندگانند مر آسمان و ستارگان را که از ایشان قوت پذیرند و توانگر شوند و همچنین از یک روی طبایع چهارگانه چون بندگانند مر نبات را بدانچ هر نباتی هرچ خواهد بستاند از طبایع چنانک خداوندان از بندگان و از دیگر روی نبات مر طبایع را چون بندگانند که [از] طبایع روزی و قوت خویش همی جویند چنانک بندگان از خداوندان روزی جویند، و باز از یک روی جانوران مر نبات را چون بندگانند که پایداری حیوان بنباتست چنانک قوت بندگان بخداوندان و از دیگر روی نبات مر حیوان را چون بندگانند که حکم جانور بر نبات روانست چون حکم خداوندان بر بندگان.

[۱۵۲] و چون از آفرینش بمردم رسی اورا بر جملگی آفرینش پادشاه یابی، از بهر آنک مردم را در همه آفرینش تصرف است که مردم بتواند که فایده آسمان از زمین باز دارد چنانک اگر کشاورزی تخم نه بوقت کند نه فایده دادن آسمان و ستارگان پیدا آید و نه فایده پذیرفتن طبایع، و مردم بتواند که فایده طبایع [را] از نبات باز دارد بآب نادادن مر نبات را و درودن مر او را بنا وقت و مردم بتواند که فایده نبات [را] از حیوان باز دارد بدور کردن حیوان از نبات.

[۱۵۳] پس دانستیم که مردم پادشاه است بر جملگی آفرینش و فرود او آنچ هست از نبات و حیوان و طبایع و افلاک و انجم گروهی مر گروهی را مسخرند و گروهی مر گروهی را خداوند، چنانک خدای تعالی همی گوید: «أَهُمْ يَقْسِمُونَ رَحْمَتَ رَبِّكَ نَحْنُ قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ مَعِيشَتَهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَ رَفَعْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ لِيَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضًا سُلْحِيًّا» (۳۲:۴۳) چنانک نبات مر طبایع را مسخر گرفته است و حیوان مر نبات را مسخر گرفته است و باز مردم مر همگنان را مسخر گرفته است، و چون ایزد تعالی مردم را بر نبات و حیوان پادشاه گردانید

بدانچ کلمه خویش بدورسانید و از جملگی عالم مر او را سوی بندگی خویش خواند و به [بند] بیم و اومید بند کردش پس از آنک ببند آفرینش بسته بودش ببند دانش مر او را ببست و دانش برتر صفتی است از صفاتی که ایزد مردم را بدان مخصوص کرد چون مردم این صفت خاصه یافت ببند دانش از دیگر بندگان که بدین صفت بسته نبودند و آن بند دانش مردم را عقل است که بدان عقل اندامهای او از ناکردنی بسته شود و زبان او از نا گفتنی، و دیگر حیوان را این نیست و مردم را شرم بند خداست و بیم نکوهش و اومید ستایش بند خداست و دیگر حیوان را این بندها نیست.

[۱۵۴] و از پس این بندها ایزد تعالی سوی مردم رسول فرستاد و کتاب و فرمان داد و باز داشتش از ناشایستها و حریص کردش بر بایستها و سوی شناخت خویش خواندش بدانچ مر او را از عقل بهره ور کرد و محل این کار بمثل چون توانگری باشد که او را بندگان باشند و هر یکی از آن بندگان را نفقه ای داده باشد بر اندازه [بندگی] او و یکی از آن بندگان را گوهری قیمتی دهد و او را بازرگانی فرماید و خواهد تا او توانگر شود همچون خداوند خویش و نپسندد که بنده بر آن سرمایه بزرگ سود نکند و همچون آن دیگر بندگان درویش بماند، گوئیم آن توانگر امر باری است سبحانه و آنچه بندگان او اند این عالمست با هر چ [است] و آن بنده که مر او را آن گوهر گرانمایه داده است مردمست و آن گوهر گرانمایه عقلست و آن سود کرد که می خواهد شناخت حقست، تا مردم بدان سود کرد توانگر شود و بدرجه عقل رسد، پس گوئیم چون ایزد تعالی مردم را بفرمان خویش مخصوص گردانید از بهر نیک آمدن او را فرمان خدا برو بند گشت نام بندگی مر او را خاصه شد، بیرون از دیگر جانوران که ایشان را ازین بند نبود.

[۱۵۵] اما جواب آنچ پرسیدی که اگر مردم گناهی نکرد در آفرینش خویش چرا او بنده آمد و دیگر جانوران بنده نیامدند؟ آنست که نخست بدانی که دیگر جانوران بنده مردم اند و مردم بنده خدای است و این سؤال که گوئی که اگر مردم گناهی نکرد چرا بنده کردش این سؤال آن وقت درست آمدی که او را ازین بندگی بد آمده بودی، چرا نگوئی که اگر مردم پیش از آفرینش خویش نیکی نکرده بودی

سزای بندگی نبودی تا او را سرای جاودانی حاصل شدی و دیگر جانوران را این منزلت نبود.

[۱۵۶] بحکم این مقدمات که گفته شد او بر همه بدین معنی پادشاه بودی که به نیکی سزای بندگی شد و چون مردم بدین بندگی از حد ستوری بعد فریشتگی رسد و عمر جاودانی یابد این منت ایزدی بود که او را بنده نام نهادست از هدیه دادن و مخصوص گردانیدن مر او را بعقل نه بگناه که اگر آن بندگی بگناه بودی از حد فریشتگی بعد ستوری رسیدی نه از ستوری بفریشتگی، پس بنده‌ای بحقیقت مر خدای را آنست که فرمان را بحق پذیرد و نگه دارد تا از بند طبایع برهد و سلطنت نفس شهوانی ازو برخیزد، که مردم چون بنده حقیقی گشت [سلطنت] این نفس شهوانی که دیو بحقیقت است [ازو] معزول شود و [از] هر که [سلطنت] این نفس معزول شد او فریشته گشت و بیهشت جاوید رسید، چنانک خدای تعالی می‌گوید: «إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ» (۴۲:۱۵) می‌گوید مر ابلیس را که ترا بر بندگان من پادشاهی نیست، بشناس تا برهی، بررس تا بدانی.

مسئله بیست و پنجم

[۱۵۷] پرسیدی ای برادر که آویزش مردم بچیست و عقاب چیست و چگونه باید دانست او را، بیان کن.

جواب

[۱۵۸] بدان ای برادر که آویزش مردم بنادانیست، از بهر آنک نفس مردم درین عالم نادان همی آید بی هیچ آلت و اینجا همی آلتها یابد چون چشم و گوش و دل و زبان و جز آن، که بدین آلتها دانشها را در توان یافتن و بدانستن و چون این آلتها بدین سرای همی یابد از بهر حاصل کردن علم را و خداوند این آلتها بر مثال مردیست که خداوند حایطی او را بحایط خویش فرستد و جفت گاو و تخم و آلتهای کشاورزی همه بدو دهد تا کشاورزی کند آنجا [و] بی کار ننشیند، پس گوئیم آن مرد که او را بدان حایط بردند مردمست و آن خداوند حایط نفس کل و آن حایط این جهانست و آن جفت گاو این کالبدست با نفس حسّی و آن آلتهای کشاورزی چشم

و گوش و دل و زبانست و آن تخم عقلست اگر مردم هیچ هوش دارد بدین آلتها که دادندش باید که چیزی بداند و بیاموزد تا چون بسرای لطیف باز گردد که اصلش آنجاست با او چیزی باشد که او را از بهر [آن] اینجا فرستاده‌اند و همچنان نباید روز بیرون شدن از اینجا که آن روز بوده است که اینجا آمد چنانک خدای تعالی می‌گوید: «وَلَقَدْ جِئْتُمُونَا فِرَادَى كَمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَ تَرْكُتُمْ مَا خَوَّلْنَاكُمْ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِكُمْ» (۹۴:۶) همی گویدمر نادانان و بد بختان را که همچنان نزدیک ما آمدید که شما را آفریده بودیم [نخست بار] و دست باز داشتید این آلتها را که شما را داده بودیم و پس پشت خویش کردید [که] نیز او را نیابید.

[۱۵۹] همچنین آلتها که ایزد تعالی داده است مردم را درین سرای اگر مر آنرا در طاعت آفریدگار خویش کار نبندد چون نفس او از کالبد جدا شود نیز هیچ آلت نباید و متحیر بماند چون کسی که نه چشم دارد و نه گوش و نه دل و نه زبان اندیشه باید کرد که حال آن کس چون باشد از رنج و عذاب، و چون مردم بچشم آن کند که او را فرموده‌اند و بگوش آن شنود که فرمانست و بر آن جاده رود که رسول علیه السلام فرموده است و بزبان آن گوید که او گفت و بدل آن داند که او فرمود چون نفس او از کالبد جدا شود با چشم و گوش و دل و زبان باشد که در آن سرای نعمتهای آنرا بتمامت بیابد چنانک خدای تعالی می‌گوید: «إِنْ أَحْسَنْتُمْ أَحْسَنْتُمْ لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَ إِنْ أَسَأْتُمْ فَلَهَا» (۷:۱۷).

[۱۶۰] پس گوئیم که آویزش مردم بنادانیست از بهر آنک چون نفس نادان باشد از این سرای نادان بیرون شود بسرائ آخرت که داناست نرسد بل که در آتش اثیر بماند که سرحد آن جهانست و جاویدان در عذاب بود چنانک این جهان نادان در عذابست از نادانستنی، اگر کسی گوید چرا گفתי این جهان در عذاب است و نادانست گوئیم چون کسی کاری را یک بار بکند و باز ویران کند و دیگر و سدیگر [بار] بکند و همچنان کرده خویش را تباه می‌کند دانیم که از بی دانشی می‌کند [و] در عذاب باشد از کار کردن بنادانی، کار این جهان چنین است که نبات و حیوان بیرون می‌آرد و باز تباه می‌کند از نادانیست بچشم ظاهر و اگر این عالم نادان نبودی آنچ نفس کل او را از بهر آن ساخته است بیک بار بیرون آوردی و از این کار بدین

بسیاری و همیشگی باز رستی و چون مر نبات و حیوان را همی بینیم که از چهار طبع مخالف همی [بیرون] آرد و باز پراکنده می‌کند دانیم که از چه پراکنده می‌کند که از مخالف جمع شده است و باقی می‌نماند و چون نبات و حیوان از جزوهای این جهانست و حال ایشان جمله شدن و پراکنده شدنست دانیم که حال کل این جهان همچنانست و چنین خواهد بود پس گوئیم چون نفس مردم نادان باشد در سرای نادان بهم جنسی که با او دارد نادان و رنجه بماند در آتشی که گرد عالم [را] در گرفته است چنانک خدای تعالی می‌گوید: «إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ نَارًا أَحَاطَ بِهِمْ سُرَادِقُهَا» (۲۹:۱۸).

۱۶۱] اما عقاب باز پس ماندن باشد که هر که از درجهٔ مردمی که دانا شدنست باز پس ماند و بستوری باز گردد او را عقاب باشد و آن باز پس ماندن او باشد از سرای لطیف، بررس تا بدانی، بشناس تا برهی.

مسئلهٔ بیست و ششم

۱۶۲] پرسیدی ای برادر که رهایش مردم بچیست و ثواب چیست، بیان کن تا بدانی.

جواب

۱۶۳] بدان ای برادر که رهایش مردم بدانش است و مردم را دو چیز است که دانش را بدان بتواند پذیرفت یکی ازو دلست که بدان بداند و دیگر تنست که بدو مران دانش را کار بندند بر مثال کسی که پیشه‌ای آموزد مر او را هوش تمام باید و تن درست تا مران پیشه را بتن خود بتواند کرد بروزگار تا آن وقت که آن پیشه معلوم شود، پس کار بستن آن پیشه کثیف گردانیدن آن علمست که ذات پیشه است و معلوم کردن مران کار را بدل لطیف گردانیدن آن کار کثیف است که همی کرد چنانک درگر مر تراشیدن چوب را و اندازه کردن پاره‌های آن و کرسی را از چند پاره چون مثلث و مربع و مسدس بجملگی در نفس خویش جای کند که هر وقت که خواهد مران را برجعت بیرون آرد بی آنک در نفس او باشد هیچ نقصان. پس گوئیم کار کردن کثیف گردانیدن لطیفست و دانستن کار لطیف گردانیدن

کثیف است.

[۱۶۴] پس بپاید دانست که نفس کل که مرین عالم را بر هیولای محسوس بیرون آورد نخست صورت این عالم اندرو بود لطیف تا مر او را بکار کرد کثیف گردانید تا نفسهای جزوی که ضعیف درین عالم آیند نخست مرین کثیف را بیابند و بدانند آن وقت از دانستن او سوی لطافت راه یابند و پیغمبران علیهم السلام والصلوة که گماشتگان نفس بودند بتأیید عقل همچنین کردند، نخست تنزیل را که ظاهر شریعت است بمردمان دادند که عام بود و بفرمودند مردمان را کار بستن آن کار بر مثال زرگر که پارهای برنج بدست شاگردان دهد تا آن را همی کوبند و همی بُرنند اندک اندک تا بر علم زرگری چابک شوند و بر زر پادشا گردند و هرچ خواهند از زر بکنند و چون عمل نفس کل اول بود و آن کثیف گردانیدن لطیف بود که مران علم لطیف را که اندرو بود بدین عمل کثیف بیرون آورد و عمل پیغمبران آخر بود ناچاره عمل ایشان لطیف گردانیدن کثیف بایست، پس شریعت پیغمبران بر مثال این جهانست که هر که بدین جهان در نیاید بدان جهان نرسد همچنین هر که شریعت را کار نبندد بعلم تأویل نرسد، و خدای تعالی میگوید: «وَنُزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَ رَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَا يَزِيدُ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا خَسَارًا» (۸۲:۱۷) میگوید همی فرو فرستیم از قرآن آنچه بهتر و رحمت است مر گرویدگان را و نیفزاید مر ستمکاران را مگر زیان. پس بدان که فرو فرستادن کثیف گردانیدن لطیف باشد، از بهر آنکه لطیف را جای بالاست چون آسمان و کثیف را جای نشیب است چون زمین.

[۱۶۵] پس معنی تنزیل کثیف گردانیدن لطیف است و معنی تأویل لطیف گردانیدن کثیف است و باز بردن [معنی چیزی] باوّل آنچه بوده است، و بپاید دانست که تنزیل بر مثال نردبان پایه است که از آسمان فرو هشته‌اند از برای بر شدن [مر] نفسهای خلق را سوی آسمان، باید که مؤمن از پایان نردبان بسر[ش] بر شود تا با آسمان رسد و از پایان بر شدن او آن باشد که تنزیل و شریعت را بگیرد که پایه فرودینست از نردبان، تا روزی که بسر نردبان برسد که آن علم تأویلیست چنانکه خدای تعالی میگوید: «إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ وَ الْعَمَلُ الصَّالِحُ

يَرْفَعُهُ» (۱۰:۳۵) همی گوید سوی او بر شود [سخن پاک و کار نیکو مر او را بردارد] دلیل آنست که دست در تنزیل باید زدن که فرود آمده است از بلندی و ما [دست] در بستیم [بتنزیل] تا بدو بر توانیم شدن [بتأویل].

[۱۶۶] و چون خردمند بداند که نفس کل چگونه مر علم لطیف خویش را بآفرینش این عالم کثیف گردانید و باز مر علم روحانی را بر زبان پیغمبران بشریعت کثیف و مثلهای جسمانی بخلق فرمودن داد بداند که این رحمت ایزدی بود که بدو رسید، و چون مردم بکار بستن شریعت بکوشد علم تأویل مر او را بحاصل شود و او مر کثیف را لطیف گردانیده باشد و هر دو آلت را که بدو داده‌اند از تن و جان کار بسته باشد و مانند شده مر نفس کل را، از بهر آنک نفس کل [علم] بدانست و کار بکرد و مردم چون کار بکرد علم بدانست پس مانند او گشت، و هر که بکار کردن در شریعت خویش را مانده نفس کل کند نفس کل مر او را بعلم مانده خویش کند، چنانک خدای تعالی می‌گوید: «يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَنصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ» (۷:۴۷) همی گوید ای گروندگان اگر شما خدای را یاری دهید خدای شما را یاری دهد و قدمهای شما بر جای بدارد، چون مردم کار بدانش کرده باشد بفرمان رسول دور خویش و طاعت خداوند روزگار خویش بدارد مانده نفس کل شود و چون نفس او از کالبد جدا شود بعالم علوی باز گردد و برین عالم پادشا شود و کارفرمای گردد، پس از کار کردن بیاساید و از رنج براحث جاوید رسد، راحتی که هیچ زبان آنرا صفت نتوان کرد و نه بر هیچ دلی آن بتواند گذشت.

[۱۶۷] اما ثواب، و ثواب را معنی باز گشتن است، و چون نفس فرمان بردار بود دانا شود و چون دانا شد باصل خویش باز گردد و بعالم دانا رسد بهم جنسی که او را با آن عالم افتاده بود و ازین عالم نادان که دوزخ بقوتست برهد، بررس تا بدانی، بشناس تا برهی.

مسئله بیست و هفتم

[۱۶۸] پرسیدی ای برادر که صراط چیست که ایدون همی گویند بر سر دوزخ است کشیده باریک تر از موی و تیزتر از شمشیر و همه خلق را ازو ببايد گذشت،

نیک بخت ازو بگذرد و به بهشت رسد و بدبخت ازو در دوزخ افتد، بیان کن تا بدانیم.

جواب

[۱۶۹] بدان ای برادر که صراط در پارسی راه باشد و راه از دو گونه بود یکی راه ظاهر که مردم بر روی زمین بران راه روند و دیگر راهی که مردم درو بنفس روند در نیکی و بدی و اگر صراط یکی بودی بر سر دوزخ کشیده که همه خلق را ازو بپایستی گذشت خدای تعالی در کتاب خویش سورة الحمد را یاد نکردی [و نفرمودی] که مرا یاد کنید تا شما را راه نمایم بدین آیت که میگوید: «إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ» (۵:۱) همی گوید ما را راه نمای سوی صراط مستقیم چون صراط مستقیم [یعنی راه] راست همی فرماید خواستن دلیل آنست که بصرات ناراست جز از خدا یافته شود و اگر خدای صراط یکی کرده بودی که ما را بران بپایستی رفت و گذشت ما را نفرمودی این دعا کردن. [یعنی دعا برای نمودن صراط مستقیم که راه انبیا و صدیقین و شهدا و صالحین است، چنانک خدای تعالی میفرماید: «قُلْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ عَلَى اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ» (۶۹:۴).

[۱۷۰] پس درست شد که این راه نفس است و گذشتن [از] او [نفس] را شاید نه جسم را، از بهر آنک خدای تعالی نخست بر پیغمبران مَنّت نهاد و پس بر وصّیان ایشان و پس بر امامان حق و پس بر حجتان ایشان چنانک گفته شد و ایشانند که خدای عزّ و جلّ بر ایشان مَنّت نهاد از خبر دهندگان و آن پیغمبرانند و بدان ایشان را می‌خواهد که خبر آن جهان بخلق رسانند و بر راست دارندگان و بدان وصّیان را می‌خواهد که تأویل شریعت ایشان کردند و پیغمبران را سوی خردمندان راست گوی کردند بدانچه تأویل کتاب بگفتند و مثلثانی که اندرو بود حقیقت آن پیدا کردند و گواهان آنان را می‌گوید که امامان حق‌اند و گواهان خدای اند بمیان خلق و باز صلحا راهمی گوید و [بدان] حجتان را همی خواهد که صلاح نفسهای خلق در ایشانست.

۱۷۱] و چون معلوم کردیم که صراط راه نفس است نه راه جسم گوئیم بدانچ همی گویند که صراط بر سر دوزخ کشیده است باریک تر از موی و تیزتر از شمشیر و خلق را ازو بیاید گذشت تا به بهشت رسند و اگر ازو بیفتند بآتش جاوید رسند، همه راستست ولیکن تأویل آن بیاید دانستن نه ظاهر گفتار، پس گوئیم این صراط منزلت مردمست که میان ستوری و فریشتگی است و مردم را برو راست بیاید رفت تا ازو نگذرد ببهشت نرسد و بهشت عالم علویست و دوزخ آتشی که گرد عالم درست، تأویل این سخن اینست که بهشت رستن ماست از عالم ستوری و دوزخ در ماندنست بدان سیرت و اگر مردم شریعت بی تأویل بیای دارد خویشتن را ستور کرده باشد و سوی دست چپ تافته و از صراط بدوزخ اندر افتد و اگر علم بیاموزد و شریعت را کار نبندد دعوی فریشتگی کرده باشد و سوی دست راست تافته و از صراط بدوزخ اندر افتد و چون بر راه مردمی برود که هم از ستوری بهره دارد و هم از فریشتگی کاری که نصیب جسم اوست بکند و علمی که نصیب نفس است بیاموزد بر صراط مستقیم رفته باشد و چون از صراط گذشت گویند ببهشت رسید و هم چنانست از بهر آنک چون براه راست رود هم علم و هم عمل هر دو [را] کار بندد نفس او چون ازین کالبد برود که صراط اوست بعالم علوی رسد که محل فریشتگانست و بهشت بحقیقت.

۱۷۲] و اندر دین مردم باید که بمنزلت خود بایستد و برتر از محل خویش منزلت نجوید که او را نباشد، چنانک مؤمن مستجیب بر مآذون پیشی نجوید که من بهتر از وی دامن و مآذون منزلت داعی دعوی نکند و نه داعی منزلت حجّت و نه حجّت منزلت امام و نه امام منزلت اساس و نه اساس منزلت ناطق و هر که از این گروه سوی برتر او قصد کند سوی دست راست تافته باشد و هر که از صراط بتابد ناچار بدرخ اندر افتد و هر که از منزلت خویش دست باز دارد و فروتر از خویش بایستد او نیز از صراط مستقیم سوی دست چپ تافته بود، و هر که از صراط بتابد ناچار بدوزخ [اندر] افتد و هر که گوید مرا بآموختن حاجت نیست و من بهتر از آن کس دامن که برتر از منست وی دعوی فریشتگی کرده باشد، و هر که گوید مرا آنچ خدای تعالی از علم روزی کرده است مرا پس است او بستوری رضا داده باشد، اینها همه از صراط مستقیم تافته باشند و جای همه آتش دوزخ باشد، پیغمبر علیه

الصلوة برین هردو گروه لعنت کرده است بدین خبر: «لَعَنَ اللَّهُ الْمُتَشَبِّهِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ بِالنِّسَاءِ وَ الْمُتَشَبِّهَاتِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ بِالرِّجَالِ»، گفت لعنت خدای بر مردانی باد که خویش را بر زنان مانده کنند و بر زنانی باد که خویشان [را] بمردان مانده کنند.

۱۷۳] و ایمان حق آنست که میان بیم و اومید باشی و اگر ترا درجه آن باشد که از تو بیاموزند زیردستان خویش را بیاموزی و از آنک از تو برتر باشد علم طلب کنی، چنانکه خدای تعالی می گوید مر پیغمبر خویش را بآموختن خلق: «وَيَعْلَمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَ إِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ» (۲:۶۲) می گوید بیاموزد مر ایشان را کتاب و حکمت هر چند ایشان از پیش گمراه بوده اند، و پیغمبر را می گوید علیه [وآله] الصلوة بگو که [ای پروردگار من] علم من زیادت کن: «قُلْ رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا» (۱۱۴:۲۰) و چون این دو فرمان ایزد بر رسول خویش فرستاد ما دانستیم که صراط مستقیم آن باشد، و گواهی داد خدای برین قول: «وَأَنَّكَ لَتَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ» (۵۲:۴۲) تو راه نمائی بسوی صراط مستقیم، پس خدای تعالی گواهی می دهد که رسول بر صراط مستقیم است، تا خلق را راه تواند نمود، بررس تا بدانی، بشناس تا برهی.

مسئله بیست و هشتم

۱۷۴] پرسیدی ای برادر که حساب چیست که خدای تعالی مر خلق را بحساب بیم کرد و گفت وعده من حق است، این چگونه باشد، بیان کن تا بدانیم إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ.

جواب

۱۷۵] بدان ای برادر که همه پیغمبران که آمدند پیغام نفس کل آوردند بتأیید عقل از کلمه باری سبحانه و پیغمبر را ناطق از بهر آن گویند که ناطق سخن گوی باشد و سخن مر نفس کل راست و ناطق فرستاده اوست.

۱۷۶] و از حکم خرد همچنین لازم آید که سوی سخن گویان پیغام آن کس فرستد که او سخن گوی بود و ازینجا بغلط افتادند آن کسها که گفتند محمد خدای

بود، و گروهی گفتند علی خدای بود و نبی و وصی از ایشان بیزاراند و هر که رسول ازو بیزار است خدای ازو بیزار است، و آن گروه میمیه و عینیّه اند که چنین گفتند و چنین گمان بردند که چون ایشان را خدای فرستاده است اگر ایشان که فرستادگان بودند با فرستنده خویش هم گوشه نبودندی پیغام او نتوانستندی پذیرفت و این عیب ایشان را از نا شناختن حدود افتاد، و خدای تعالی می گوید: «وَلَيْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا» (۲۲۹:۲) همی گوید از حدهای خدای در مگذرید و هر جا که در قرآن می گوید ما چنین کردیم و ما چنین آفریدیم و ما چنین گفتیم بیاید دانستن که از دو حد روحانی می گوید یا از دو حد [جسمانی]، چنانکه همی گوید: «وَأَذِّقْنَا لِمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ» (۳۴:۲) همی گوید چون گفتیم فریشتگان را سجده کنید مر آدم را، و این لفظ گفتیم و کردیم شاید مگر جز از جماعتی، و عامه مردم که مران را برای خویش چنین گویند [گویند] که لفظ تعظیم است چنانکه پادشاه گوید که ما چنین می فرمائیم و ما چنین می گوئیم مر بزرگی خویش را، بدانکه پادشاه یک تن بیش نباشد و خداوندان حقیقت چنین گویند که چون یک تن سخن گوید بایدش گفت که من چنین می گویم اگر گوید ما چنین کردیم دروغ گفته باشد و هر که گوید خدای تعالی مر هویت خویش را بلفظ جماعت یاد کرده است او بر خدای تعالی دروغ گفته باشد و خدای عزوجل می گوید و حذر می فرماید از گفتن چیزی نادانسته: «تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ» (۸۰:۲).

[۱۷۷] پس گوئیم پیغمبران مر خلق را سوی توحید باری سبحانه خواندند و پیغام نفس کل که بتأیید عقل از کلمه باری سبحانه یافته بودند می گزاردند، تا لازم آمد گفتن که ما چنین گفتیم و ما چنین آفریدیم تا دروغ در نیاید و جائی که می گوید من چنین گفتم از یک حد میگوید چنانکه گفت: «إِنِّي أَنَا رَبُّكَ فَاخْلَعْ نَعْلَيْكَ» (۱۲:۲۰) من پروردگار توام، هر دو نعلت [را بیرون کن] و این گفتار نفس کل است مر موسی را علیه السلام، از بهر آنکه پروردگار ناطقان نفس کل است و چون گفتار از یکی باشد اشارت بتوحید محض باشد چنانکه می گوید: إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِي» (۱۴:۲۰) می گوید من خدایم که جز من خدای نیست پس مرا بپرست، این اشارت سوی توحید باری سبحانه است و پیدا نکرده است مر حدی را تا حدود علوی را بخدائی نگیرند هر چند که بازگشت بدیشانست، چنانکه فرمان

خدای بخلق رسول رسانید و طاعت مر او را بایست داشتن و پیغام از خدا بود و طاعت [رسول] از بهر طاعت خدای بایست داشتن.

[۱۷۸] و پیش از این در مسئله‌ای یاد کرده شده است که عالم جسمانی چیزهای شمرده است واجب چنانست که بودش آن چیزهای شمرده را علت یکی بوده است که بودش شمار او را است تا این بسیار [چیزها] ازو پیدا آمده است چنانک عددهای بسیار از یکی پیدا آمده است، و چون عالم خرد یکیست و نام هر چیز ازو نام یکی یافت واجب آمد که علت همه بودشها یکی بوده است تا هر یکی ازین چیزها که هست و همی باشد نام از علت خویش همی یابد و باقیست و چون عالم خرد یکیست و هر چیز اندرو نام یکی دارد و [از] جملگی عالم دانسته آنست و آن باشد که عقل کل برو چابک شده باشد، دانستیم که ابتدای عالم [از] یکی بوده است و بودش او را علت یکیست نشاید که گوئیم که یکیست این علت و عقل با او که این دو باشد و نشاید که علت عالم یکی بیش باشد، پس دانستیم که این یکی که علت عالمست عقلست و چون درست شد که علت عالم عقلست و او یکی است و عالم و آنچه دروست هستی بدو یافته است و هر چیز را بازگشت بدان باشد که ازو بوده باشد، پس بحکم عقل مرین عالم را بعقل باز باید گشت که یکیست و عالم را علت اوست.

[۱۷۹] پس گوئیم که این عالم را بازگشت بسوی عقل از راه نفس‌های سخن گوئیست که درین عالم پیدا می‌آید و هیچ چیز را بازگشت نیست بعقل کل مگر مردم را و گواهی دهد بر درستی این قول آنک درین عالم مر عقل را جز نفس مردم چیزی نمی‌پذیرد و پذیرفتن نفس سخن گوی مر عقل را درین عالم نشانست بر آنک چون از کالبد جدا شود بعقل می‌باز باید گشت، و چون درست شد که خلق را بازگشت بعقلست و عقل یکیست و یکی شمار است درست شده باشد که خلق را بازگشت بشمارست، و خدای تعالی می‌گوید: «وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذْ وُفِّقُوا عَلٰی رَبِّهِمْ قَالَ آلَیْسَ هٰذَا بِالْحَقِّ قَالُوا بَلٰی وَرَبِّنَا» (۳۰:۶) می‌گوید ای محمد اگر [ب] بینی که چون خلق را بایستاند پیش پروردگار ایشان یعنی پیش عقل که پروردگار جان سخن گوی است و گوید مر ایشان را عقل نه حقست اینک شما بمن بازگشتید یعنی که

پرورش از من یافته بودید سزاوار بود که بمن باز گشتید، ایشان گویند بلی و سوگند خورند که حق این بود، و چون مردم درین عالم می‌بینند که هر چه از چیزی پیدا آید بازگشت هم بدان چیز باشد باید که بدانند که بازگشت مردم بعقلست، بررسی تا بدانی، بشناس تا برهی.

مسئله بیست و نهم

۱۸۰] پرسیدی ای برادر که ترازو چیست که ایزد تعالی خلق را وعده کرده است و گفته است که هرکرا ترازو گران‌تر باشد او بهشتی باشد و هرکرا ترازو سبک‌تر آید او دوزخیست، و عمل مردم طاعت و عصیان بترازو چون باشد و چگونه توان سخت و گرانی و سبکی جز جسم را نیست و کار مردم نه جسم است، بیان کن.

جواب

۱۸۱] بدان ای برادر که چیزهای این جهانی را که بترازو معلوم کنند از پنج گونه است یکی ازو برتر از همه است و آن ترازوی برتر شمارست که هرچ ترازوهای دیگر بر سنجده همه بشمار باز گردد و در عالم چیزهائییست که آنرا بشمارند چون طبایع و درختان و جانوران و از خوردنیها چون جوز و خایه مرغ و جز آن چیزهائییست که شمردنیست و سختنی نیست، دیگر ترازو آنست که بدو در و زر و سیم و جواهر و خوردنیها از نان و گوشت و جز آنک شمردنی نیست بسنجند، و سد دیگر ترازوی پیمانه است که درو گندم و جو و جز آن پیمایند، و چهارم ترازوی مایعاتست که بدو روغن و آب و شیر و چیزهای گداخته پیمایند، و پنجم ترازوی آرش است که بدو دیبا و کرباس پیمایند و هرچ درین عالم چیزییست باین پنج ترازو سخته و پیموده شود و تفاوت که در چیزهاست بدین ترازوها بر خیزد و خلق بحکم این ترازوها کار کنند و بمیانجی ایشان هر کس بحق خویش رسد.

۱۸۲] اکنون ترازو[ها]ی روحانی نیز پنج باید که باشد و آن ترازوهای کثایف بود پس این ترازو[ها]ی لطایف باید تا فرق بود میان جسمانی و روحانی، پس چیزهای لطیف را سختن از نیک و بد و راست و دروغ و حلال و حرام و خطا و صواب و گفتار و کردار و طاعت و عصیان و شرم و شوخی که همه لطیف‌اند ترازو[ها]ی آن نیز لطیف است، و چون ترازوهای کثیف بیک دیگر نماند این

ترازوها نیز بیک دیگر نمانند.

۱۸۳] نادانان از دشمنی خاندان رسول علیه [و آله] الصلوة که علم حقیقت بدست ایشانست می‌گویند ترازوایست از آسمان آویخته مر سختن نیکی و بدی را، یک کفه آن ترازو بمشرق است و دیگر کفه بمغرب و چون ایشان را گوئی چرا پس ما مرین ترازو را نمی‌بینیم و همه جهان بعمود وی اندرست بدعوی شما نیکی و بدی را چگونه توان سخت بدین ترازو؟ خشم گیرند و بغلبه مشغول شوند و حقیقت چیزها را ندانند و نجویند، خدای تعالی نه چنین می‌گوید که ایشان می‌گویند، می‌گوید: «وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ» (۵۷: ۲۵) و چون کتاب قرآنست ما دانیم که ترازو خود او بود زیرا که فرستاده خدای کتاب و رسول است و دروغ زنان اهل آتش‌اند.

۱۸۴] پس گوئیم ترازوهای نفسانی که بدو چیزهای نفسانی توان سخت که نفس را بدان رستگاری باشد نیز پنج است و یکی ازین پنجه‌ها برترست [و] آنک برترست عقلست بمنزلت یکی که علت شمارست و دیگر ترازو نفس کلتست برابر ترازوی زر و سیم و سدیگر ترازو رسول است برابر پیمانه که [بدو] حبوب پیمایند و چهارم ترازو وصی است برابر ترازو که [بدو] آب و روغن پیمایند و پنجم ترازو امام زمانه است، [برابر ترازوی ارش که بدو دیبا و کرباس پیمایند].

۱۸۵] و نیز باید که مر نفس مؤمن را از پذیرفتن سخن خدا نشان باشد و آن نشان شنیدن علم حقیقت است و دست باز داشتن از باطل، و هر نفسی که سخن حق پذیرفته بود بترازوی نفس سخته شده باشد که برابر ترازوی گوهرهاست آن نفس گوهر گشته باشد، و چون بآخرت رسد نفس کل اثر خود در وی بیند او را بجنسیت بپذیرد، و نیز باید که مؤمن ظاهر شریعت ناطق را که برابرست با پیمانه‌ای که [پیمایش] غذای جسم بدوست عزیز دارد و کار بندد، تا کالبدش بظاهر شریعت بر جای بماند که بی او حقیقت را طلب نتواند کرد و نیز باید که مؤمن تأویل وصی را بپذیرد که [برابر است با] پیمانه‌ای که بدان آب [و مایعات دیگر] پیمایند و بکار کردن و خواندن علم مران را بیرزد تا آب زندگانی جاوید

خورده باشد و همیشه باقی گردد و مؤمن باید که خداوند زمانه خویش را که برابر آرش است بشناسد و بپذیرد و طاعت دارد و مرتبه او از نا مستحقان پوشیده دارد و علم او در سفر کار بندد، تا در حرم او جای دهندش، اینست پنج ترازوی نفسانی که کارکرد خلق بدان پیمایند بقیامت و اول ایشان عقلست، بپرس تا بدانی، بشناس تا برهی.

مسئله سیام

۱۸۶] پرسیدی ای برادر که مردم در آنچه می‌کند مجبورست یا مختار، اگر مجبورست پس هرچ کاند کرده خدای بود عقوبت چه لازم آید، و اگر مختارست تواند که چیزی کند که خدای آن نخواهد قهر لازم آید.

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۱۸۷] بدان ای برادر که این مسئله از [امام] جعفر صادق علیه السلام پرسیدند گفت خدای عادل تر از آنست که خلق را بر معصیت مجبور دارد و پس ایشان را بران عقوبت کند، گفتندش هرچ خواهد مردم تواند کرد گفت قدرت خدای بیش از آنست که کسی را در ملک او دست درازی باشد، گفتندش حال مردم پس چگونه است؟ گفت کاریست میان دو کار نه مجبورست و نه مختار.

۱۸۸] و قول امامان [را] تأویل باشد، همچنانک قول خدای و رسول را تأویلیست از بهر آنک ایشان گواهان خدای‌اند بر خلق، پس ببايد دانست که معنی این قول [این است که مردم] میانجیست میان ستور و فریشته و در مردم هم نفس شهوانیست و هم نفس عاقله یکی ستور راست و یکی فریشته را، از فریشته معصیت نباید چون بعد فعل شده باشد و از ستور طاعت نباید که هر دو در مرتبه خویش مجبورند، لاجرم فریشته را بر طاعت ثواب نیست و ستور را بر معصیت عقاب نیست و مردم که منزلت او میان این دو منزلت است او را بر طاعت ثوابست و بر معصیت عقاب.

۱۸۹] و چون خدای مردم را خرد دریابنده داده است که زشت از نیکو جدا

تواند کرد و شرم در خرد نهاده است که مردم را نگذارد که کار ستوران کنند، بیاید دانست که مردم گذاشته نیست چنانک ستور، که شرم در آفرینش اوست، پس حق تعالی سوی مردم رسول فرستاد و ایشان را بر معصیت عذاب وعده کرد و بر طاعت ثواب و چون [منزلت] مردم میان این دو مرتبه باشد یکی ستوری و دیگر فریشتگی بنفس عاقله مجبورست از بهر آنک [او] جز خیر و طاعت نفرماید و عاقل نتواند که جز این کند و بنفس شهوانی مختارست از بهر آنک او از معصیت و [طاعت] و شر [و خیر] و خطا [و صواب] و [عقاب] و ثواب بی نیازست وَالسَّلَام.

تَمَّتْ کِتَابُ گشایش و رهایش

نشانه‌های اختصاری و مآخذ توضیحات متن

نشانه‌های اختصاری

عددهای داخل کروشه [] اشاره به بندهای متن حاضر و عددهای عادی اشاره به سطور بندها دارد. عددهای سمت راست خط فارق (/) اشاره به صفحات و عددهای سمت چپ آن اشاره به سطور صفحات چاپ اول کتاب گشایش و رهایش (لیدن، ۱۹۵۰) تصحیح استاد سعید نفیسی دارد. نشانه‌های دیگر که درین تحقیق بکار رفته عبارت‌اند از:

- رک = رجوع کنید.
 [] = اضافات مصحح در متن.
 ج = جزء یا جلد.
 ص = صفحه یا صفحات.
 س = سطر یا سطور.
 || = اتمام یک توضیح.
 + = کلمه یا کلماتی افزوده است
 - = کلمه یا کلماتی حذف شده است

تحریرات و تصرفاتی که کاتب مجهول در متن گشایش و رهایش وارد کرده ولی از چاپ حاضر حذف شده است بشرح زیر است. شماره صفحات و سطور اشاره به چاپ اول کتاب گشایش و رهایش توسط استاد سعید نفیسی دارد.

- ص ۱، ۷-۸ (اما بعد... میگوید).
 ص ۱، از س ۱۳ تا ص ۲، ۲ (ما نیز... باز شویم).
 ص ۳، ۱۳-۱۴ (اینجا... بیرون نشود).
 ص ۹، از س ۱۶ تا ص ۱۳، ۷ (اکنون... رنجه ندارد).
 ص ۸۲، از س ۴ تا ص ۸۴، ۱۱ (درین... باز شویم).
 ص ۱۰۸، ۷ (اینجا زخم در کرد).
 ص ۱۲۱، ۱۳-۱۵ (اینجا... آمد).
 ص ۱۲۲، ۳-۵ (بهمان... نیست).
 ص ۱۲۳، ۳-۵ (اینجا... باز دیدن).

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- ناصر خسرو، گشایش و رهایش، به تصحیح سعید نفیسی، لیدن، ۱۹۵۰ (=ن).
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- _____ زاد المسافرین، به تصحیح بذل الرحمن، برلن، ۱۹۲۳/۱۳۴۱ (=زاد).
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 ۴- مؤمنان: مؤمن ن م
 [۴] ۵- بادشاهی: + آن وقت ن م
 ۷- آن م: - ن
 ۸- [نام] رک: ۱۴/۸
 [۵] ۶- اعتماد کند: + و کرده باشد ن م، رک: ۹-۸/۱۰
 [۶] ۳- [چنانک]: رک: ۱۴/۱۰ || پیموده م: بنموده ن
 ۴- پیمایم م: نمایم ن
 [۸] ۲- حالهای جسم: حالها بر جسم ن م، رک: ۵/۵، ۵/۱۷، ۵/۱۰-۱۱۲
 ۳- در میان: از ن م، رک: جامع، ص ۹۰
 ۸- است: + و ازون م ||
 [علم حقیقت] رک: ۱۴/۴ ||
 [و تواند بیرون شود از] رک: ۱۴/۴
 [۱۰] ۱- باشد: + گشتن حال جسم ن م
 ۴- [پانه] رک: ۷/۲
 ۶- آفرینش: روزگار ن م
 [۱۱] ۳- آفرینش: + پادشاه ن م، رک: ۱۳/۲ ||
 [آفریدگار] رک: ۵/۲، ۱۲/۶
 ۴- درو: ازون م، رک: ۱۲/۷
 ۵- [از] یاری رک: ۵/۶، ۱۴/۷ ||
 ۶- ازو: از جزون م
 ۷- امر: اثر ن م، رک: ۱۲/۷، ۶/۹
 [۱۲] ۵- از امر... که: که از امر او عزاسمه ن م
 ۹- اول است: اولیت ن م
 ۱۱- بحقیقت: + وی است و ن م، رک: ۱۳/۸، ۸/۱۸
 [۱۳] ۱- [آفریدگار و] رک: ۱۲/۶ ||
 امر: اثر ن م، رک: ۱۲/۷، ۶/۹
 ۷- مر م: هرن
 ۹- که: + از ن م
 [۱۴] ۱۳- یکی [چون]: یک ن م، رک: خوان، ص ۱۵۵: شش فصل، ص ۱۴ ||
 بودش: پرورش ن م، رک: ۱۶/۱۳ ||
 چنان است که: چنانک ن م
 [۱۵] ۱- بحقیقت: حقیقت ن م، رک: ۱۶/۶، ۱۳/۸

- [۱۶] ۶- امر: اثرن م، رک: ۶/۹، ۱۲/۷
- [۱۷] ۱- [بودش]: رک: ۶/۱۵
- ۳- [بودش]: رک: ۶/۵ ||
- باشند: باید ن م رک: ۷/۱۵
- ۷- ازین: در میانه ن م
- ۸- کردی: کردیم ن م
- [۱۸] ۱- گوئی: گوید ن م
- ۲- [در بودش ایشان]: رک: ۶/۱۵
- ۳- گوئی: گوید ن م ||
- [یکی]: رک: ۹/۴
- ۴- [چنانک کارکن از کارکرد]: رک: ۱۰، ۲/۱۴
- ۵- نباشد یا: باشد تا ن م ||
- گفتی: گفت ن م
- ۷- گوئی: گوید ن م ||
- نیاید: + و ن م
- ۸- خواهی: خواهد ن م
- ۹- نباشد: باشد ن م
- ۱۲-۱۳ آید... باشد: نیاید... نباشد ن م
- ۱۳- [لازم]: نیاید: نیامد ن م، رک: ۱۶/۱۴-۱۷
- ۱۴- چیزیها: چیزی ن م
- [۲۱] ۳- چرا: + در آفریدگی عالم ن م
- ۷- چیزی: چیزی ن م، رک: وجه، ص ۱۲۰
- ۱۳- چیزی نه و کسی نه: چیزی نه و کسی نه ن م رک: وجه، ص ۱۲۰
- ۱۴- مشورت: اشارت ن م
- ۱۵- نمائی: نمایند ن م، رک: ۱۶/۴۱، ۱۶/۴۷
- [۲۲] ۵- [روزگار خودگشتن حال]: در ن م، رک: ۵/۱۷
- ۱۰- شده: شونده + واین در میان دو روزگار تواند بود ن م، رک: ۱۰/۱۷
- [۲۳] ۲- [کشادگی میان]: رک: ۱۳/۱۷-۱۴
- ۴-۵ آورده شود: آرد ن م: رک: شش فصل، ص ۸
- ۶- دو: او ن م
- ۷- سه را م: + یکی ن
- [۲۴] ۴- [و نیافرید]: رک: ۶/۱۶-۷
- ۸- جهات: جانها ن م
- [۲۵] ۱- مردمان م: مردان ن
- ۴- که: و ن م، رک: ۱۷/۱۸ ||
- ۱۰- و: + یاقص ن م
- ۱۳- هستها: هستیها ن م
- [۴۳] ۲- چیز: چیزی ن م، رک: جامع، ص ۸۷
- [۴۴] ۳- چیز: چیزی ن م، رک: جامع، ص ۸۷ ||
- بر ذاتی: بذاتی ن م، رک: جامع، ص ۸۷ ||
- یافتنی: یافته ن م، رک: ۹/۳۲

- که م: یکی ن
 ۱۳- جسم: + چوبی ن م
 [۲۶] ۲- بحقیقت: حقیقت ن م رک: ۸/۱۸، ۱۳/۸
 ۵- ودرنده م: - ن || [مرتبه] رک: ۱۳/۱۹
 ۷- از کل: بکل ن م

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- ۴- [مقیم] رک: ۱۶/۳۱
 ۸- از: بر ن م
 ۹- [گرم] رک: ۱/۳۲
 ۱۰- چیز: چیزی
 ۱۱- دارند: دارد ن م
 ۱۵- همی م: هم ن
 [۴۵] ۱- به: و ن م
 ۲- نه: + چیز است ن م ||
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 ۴- معنی [ای]: + بودی تان م
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 ۱۳- در: بر ن م ||
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 ۱۶- شب ن: سبب م ||
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 ۱۷- چیزی: کدی ن م، رک: ۴/۳۳
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 نیست: هست ن م
 ۶- نگوئی: گوئی ن م
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 ۴- رسد: آرند ن م، رک: ۴/۳۴ ||
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 ۱۰- [طبايع] رک: ۶، ۳/۳۴
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 ۵- او: ازو ن م
 ۶- بنمایند: بنمائید ن م
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 ۱۱- شد: شود ن م
 ۱۲- بودی: + داده از جوهر ن م
 ۵- خود: او ن م
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- [۵۰] ۱۲- [طبايع] رک: ۳/۳۴
- ۱۳- نیاید م: بیاید ن
- [۵۱] ۱- [طبايع] رک: ۳/۳۴
- او: + را ن م، رک: ۱۱/۳۹-۱۲
- ۲- آرد: آمدن م
- ۳- حکمتی بزرگ بایستادن نفس [پس از جسد] پیدا شود: حکمتی بزرگ را که از پس جسد بایستادن نفس از جسم پیدا شود ن م
- ۴- پس از + آنک ن م
- ۶- [وهر آئینه] رک: تفسیر انصاری، ج ۲، ص ۱۰۲
- ۷- آفریدیم: آفریدم ن م
- کردیم: کردم ن م
- ۸-۹ کردیم...آفریدیم: کردم...آفریدم ن م
- ۱۰- بیوشانیدیم...بیافریدیم: بیوشانیدم...نیافریدم ن م، رک: تفسیر انصاری، ج ۲، ص ۱۰۲
- ۱۳- بودی: بودن م
- هیچ: مرن م
- ۱۴- نیامدی: نیامدن م
- ۱۵- شود... شود: شد... شد ن م
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- ۱۶- شود: شدن م
- [۵۲] ۳- جوهری م: جوهر ن، رک: زاد، ص ۷۱، ۵۸
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- [۵۳] ۶- دور: بزیرو زور ن م
- [۵۴] ۲- جوهری: جوهر ن م، رک: زاد، ص ۷۱، ۵۸
- ۳- زنده دارنده: زنده دارنده یعنی ن م
- ۶- [خویش] رک: ۱۲/۴۰
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- ۲- علم: عمل ن م
- [۵۷] ۲- چیزی نیست که بزیرو اندر نیاید: بزیرو چیزی نیست که بزیرو جنس عقل اندر آید ن م، رک: جامع، ص ۱۵۱-۱۵۳
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- ۴- آن جوهر را: آن را جوهرست ن م
- ۵- است: اندن م
- ۹- جوهرست: + ون م
- بدانی: + ون م
- [۶۰] ۶- شهد: شکر ن م، رک: جامع، ص ۸۷

- ۷- جنس باشد در نوع؛ نوع باشد و جنس، رک: ۱۷/۴۳ - ۱/۴۴
- [۶۱] ۴-۳ [در جسد] رک: ۱۷/۴۲
- ۵- [در جسد] رک: ۱۷/۴۲
- ۷- نیست: + جسد از پوشیده ن م
- ۱۲- جسد بحال خویش نماند: نفس بحال خویش بماند ن م
- ۱۳- شهید: شکر ن م، رک: جامع ۸۷ ||
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- ۱۵- آب: + و آب ن م
- ۱۷- شود: + و ن م
- [۶۳] ۵- نپذیردم: بپذیرد ن
- ۶- دینست م: نیست ن
- [۶۴] ۱- است: + و پیوسته جسم است ن م
- ۳- آن: + و ن م
- ۹- ازین: از تن ن م [تصحیح نفیسی]
- [۶۵] ۳-۲ محدث نبوده باشد م: - ن
- [۷۱] ۲- اول: مرا و را ن م، رک: روضه، ص ۲۰ ||
- [را] رک: ۲/۴۸
- ۳- یعنی: + کی ن م
- ۵- [آراسته شده و]: + را ن م، رک: ۳/۴۸
- ۶- [بحس] رک: ۷/۴۸
- ۱۰- وهیولی [مر] طبایع [را] چون [چوب] است [مرکسی را]: و وهیولی چون طبایع است ن م
- [۷۲] ۴- گرمی: نرمی ن م
- ۷- صفات: صفت ن م، رک ۴/۳۹
- ۹- صفات: صفت ن م، رک ۴/۳۹
- [۷۴] ۸- کروی: کردی + و صورت ن م
- ۱۰- مخصوص: محسوس ن م
- ۱۱-۱۰ تا [چیز] چهارسو بر نخیز و چیزی دیگر نشود صورت چهارسو: تا چهار سوا از آن چیز بر نخیزد آن چیز بر نخیزد و صورت دیگر نشود نام چهار سون م
- ۱۱- همچنین: + تا ن م
- ۱۳- صورتها از آنها: صورت ازون م
- [۷۵] ۳- شود: + و ن م || معقول: محسوس ن م
- ۲- صورت مطلق اندر زر گذاختن: صورت اندر زر و آن صورت مطلق گذاختن ن م
- ۴- زر: ارزیز ن م
- ۵- مر: هرن

- ۷- فروغ: فرع ن م
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[تابش]: + ون م، رک: ۱۲/۵۲
۳- گردند: + ون م، رک: ۴/۵۳ ||
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۷- آب: این ن م ||
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۹- گرم شونده: بیک اندر شونده ن م، رک: جامع، ص ۲۲۰ ||
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۱۱- بخار: + تر ن م
۱۳- ذره‌ها هست: ذره هست + که از آنجا باز نتواند جنبید ازین سوی ن م
[۷۸] ۱- ذره‌ها: ذره ن م
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۷- نپذیردم: بپذیردن
۸- دو م: - ن، رک: نمونه، ص ۲۳۷
۲- کنیم: + مرعالم را ن م [۸۱]
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- [۸۷] ۱۱- این: ازین ن م
- [۸۸] ۱۱- تا از: + جسم ن م
- [۸۹] ۴- پنهانها بزیر آشکاراها: آشکاراها بزیر پنهانها ن م
- ۷- بیافرید: بیافریدم ن م ||
- باری م: بار ن
- ۱۰- در: + ین ن م
- ۱۱- بهترین: بهتر ن م ||
- بود: + او بود و ن م
- [۹۰] ۲- آنست: ذاتست ن م
- [۹۱] ۴- برند: آرند ن م
- [۹۲] ۴- رویها: روایتها ن م
- ۹- بضورت م: بصورت ن
- [۹۳] ۱۰- پس م: - ن
- ۱۱- بآسمان: بر آسمان ن م، رک: ۱/۶۲
- ۱۳- [یک سرش بمرکز خاک پیوسته است و] رک: ۵-۲/۶۲
- [۹۶] ۳- گرمی آن م: آن گرمی ن
- [۹۷] ۳- نپذیرد م: بپذیرد ن
- [۹۸] ۵- راه های: راویها ن م
- ۶- جاها: هواها ن م
- [۹۹] ۲- باشد: + یا ن: + تا م
- [۱۰۰] ۳- حالت ن: حال م
- [۱۰۱] ۴- [چون]: رک: تفسیر انصاری، ج ۲، ص ۵۲۹
- ۵- [می]: رک: ایضاً || تو م: - ن ||
- [از خدای] رک: تفسیر انصاری، ج ۲، ص ۵۲۹
- ۸- نیست: است ن م
- [۱۰۲] ۲-۱ [چون] دو چیز [را] در [دو] کفه ترازو [نهی، کفه] گرانتر فرو آید و [کفه]: دو چیز در کفه ترازو گرانتر فرو آید ن م، رک: ۵-۳/۶۶، ۲-۱/۶۸ ||
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- حقیقت: + که معنی ن م
- [۱۰۳] ۲- زیر: زیر ن م
- ۶- از آنها: ازون ن م
- ۱۰- گذارند: توانند ن م رک: ۱/۷۰
- ۱۱- جزوها: + اون م
- [۱۰۴] ۳-۲ [آن] کفه [که] سبک [تر است]: کفه سبک ن م، رک: ۵-۳/۶۶، ۲-۱/۶۹-۱/۶۸

- ۶-۷ [ب] فرو آمدن خویش [سوی زمین] همی نماید که [جای من] زیر تر [از جای تست و من] ب [مرکز: فرو آمدن خویش همی نماید که ب زیر مرکز ن م]
- ۷- سبک [تر]: سبک ن م، رک: ۳/۶۹
- ۱۹- برهی: + واللّه اعلم ن م
- ۲- [۱۰۵] چون همی روید: چرا همی روید و ن م
- ۳- [۱۰۶] شناخته: یافته ن م، رک: ۱۲/۷۰
- ۴- شود: شد ن م
- ۹- آنک: آنچ ن م
- ۱- [۱۰۷] در بان: درگاه ن م
- ۲-۱ [بدون شناخت آن] رک: ۹/۷۰
- ۳- حاجب: حاجبان و دربان ن م
- ۴- دربان: درگاه ن م
- ۵- [۱۰۸] صنعت: صفت ن م
- ۱۴- صنعت: صفت ن م
- ۱۷- [و جانوران] رک: ۱۲/۷۱-۱۴
- ۲- [۱۰۹] [سنگ و] رک: خوان، ص ۱۲۰
- ۱۱- جانوران: + و ن م
- ۱۵- جز آن، و: + آن ن م
- ۲- [۱۱۰] حاصل آمدن: پذیرفتن، رک: ۵/۷۰
- ۵- تری: نرمی ن م ||
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- ۱۱- باشد + و ن م
- ۱۲- مایه: تری ن م
- ۱۳- بگرمی: بجربی ن م
- ۱۴- بخود: بدو ن م
- ۱- [۱۱۱] و: + هوا ن م
- ۴- نشود: + و ن م ||
- با آن ن: بآن ن م ||
- ۵- آفتاب: هوا ن م ||
- او را: + چوب گرداند ن م
- ۹- درو بفسردم: در نفسردن
- ۱۱- [۱۱۳] که: + چنین گوید ن م
- ۶- [۱۱۴] قرآن [خدای] بودی: قرآن نبودى ن م
- ۳- [۱۱۷] آنک آفریده: آنچه نیافریده ن م
- ۸- جز: جزو ن م

- ۹- جز: جزو ن م
- ۶- باشند: باشد ن م [۱۱۸]
- ۴- بیافرینند... نیافریند: بیافریدم... نیافریدم ن م، رک: تفسیر انصاری، ج ۱، ص ۵۴۰ [۱۲۰]
- ۲- کَاثَمَا: کَاثَمَا ن م [۱۲۲]
- ۲- گفتار: صفت ن م [۱۲۳]
- ۴- بی سخنگویی: با سخنگویی ن م
- ۷- نقره: نقره ن م
- ۱۲- پیغمبر و متابعان او: پیغمبران و متابعان ایشان ن م
- ۱۳- مثل: مثال ن م
- ۲- گفتی م: + هر ن [۱۲۵]
- ۴- کار کردن م: کارگران ن [۱۲۶]
- ۱- ببندد م: نبندد ن || [۱۲۷]
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- ۲- مر م: مردن || مر: + آن ن م
- ۳- ساخته: شناخته ن م، رک: ۱۴-۱۲/۸۵
- ۵- آسیا[ئی]: + یا دولاپ ن م
- ۵- بیانی: بیان ن م [۱۲۸]
- ۴- خزانه دار علم: + و ن م || [۱۲۹]
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- ۵- معد: معین و ن م، رک: شش فصل، ص ۴۴
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- ۲- بجملگی: + همه ن م [۱۳۱]
- ۳-۲ [یا] علت است و [یا] معلول [و] دیگر چیزی نیست: علت است و معلول دیگر چیزی است ن م، رک: ۶/۸۸
- ۹- [هم] علت است و [هم] معلول، رک: ۵-۴/۸۸؛ شش فصل، ص ۱۰
- ۱۱-۱۰ برخیزد: + و ن م
- ۲- باشندم: باشند ن م [۱۳۲]
- ۲- [لیکن کلمه و عقل با هم یکی اند و فقط]، رک: ۵-۱/۸۸؛ شش فصل، ص ۱۰ [۱۳۳]
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- ۱۴- اوست: + و هیچ بیکی در نیست ن م
- ۱- کلمه م: کلمه ن [۱۳۴]
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- ۱۳۵] ۴- است: + بسیار ن م، رک: زاد، ص ۳۴۳
- ۱۳۶] ۱- خزینه دار: خزینه ن م، رک: ۷/۹۰؛ خوان، ص ۱۶۹
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- ۱۳۷] ۳- هر اولی: هیولی ن م، رک: ۱۷/۸۹-۱/۹۰؛ زاد، ص ۳۴۳ ||
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- ۱۳۸] ۳- یکبست ن: یکست م
- ۱۳- باشند م: باشد ن
- ۱۸- باشد: نباشد ن م
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- ۵- چنو چندین: چه چندین ن م، رک: ۸۰۲/۹۷
- ۹- کناره ها: کناره ن م، رک ۲/۹۳-۳
- ۱۲- بیابان: بیان ن م [تصحیح نفیسی]
- ۱۳-۱۲ بی حیوان م: حیوان ن
- ۱۴- ژیان: زیان ن م [تصحیح مینوی]
- ۲۵- نباشد: باشد
- ۱۴۱] ۵- نشیند: نشست ن م
- ۹- او م: -ن
- ۱۴۲] ۱- ملک [خدای] رک: ۱۷/۹۵
- ۳- بساطت: بسیط ن م
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- ۸- نداند م: بدانند ن
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- ۷- عیبی: عیب ن م
- ۸- هر اولی را ثانیهای: هیولی را انتهای ن م، رک: ۱۷/۸۹-۱/۹۰، زاد، ص ۳۴۳
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- ۱۶- بی نهایت: + و ن م
- ۱۴۶] ۲- دوری: دور وی ن م
- ۳- [اول یعنی] رک: ۹/۹۸ ||
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- ۱۴۷] ۲- آیا: اگر ن م || [خویش]: رک: ۱۰/۱۰۴
- ۴- دیگر [جانور]ان [بنده]: دیگران رک: ۱۱/۱۰۴
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- ۴- وی م: - ن
- ۸- [مگر آن]: رک: تقسیر انصاری، ج ۱، ص ۵۷۰
- ۹- پوشاننده: پرسانیده ن م رک: خوان، ص ۵۰
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NĀṢIR KHUSRAW
*Knowledge
and Liberation*

A Treatise on Philosophical Theology



Edited and Translated by Faquir M. Hunzai
Introduced by Parviz Morewedge

Knowledge and Liberation

Nāṣir Khusraw

KNOWLEDGE and LIBERATION

A Treatise on Philosophical Theology

A New Edition and English Translation of the
Gushāyish wa Rahāyish
by
Faquir M. Hunzai

With an Introduction and Commentary
by
Parviz Morewedge

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The Persian Text

Preface

This edition of Nāṣir Khusraw's *Gushāyish wa rahāyish* is primarily based on the text edited by Professor Sa'īd Nafīsī from a manuscript contained in a *Majmū'a* (collection) in the library of the late Sayyid Naṣr Allāh Taqavī, the celebrated Iranian scholar and editor of Nāṣir Khusraw's *Dīwān*. Professor Nafīsī produced a lithographed edition of the manuscript, which he dated to the 8th/14th century, for the Ismaili Society of Bombay (published by E. J. Brill in Leiden, 1950). Subsequently, he prepared a second, printed edition of the same work (Tehran, 1961), in which he corrected a few orthographical inconsistencies, but which resulted in additional typographical errors. A second manuscript of the *Gushāyish* belonging to the late Iranian scholar Muḥtabā Mīnuvī has also been used for this edition. A facsimile of this text, transcribed in 1307/1928, was kindly provided to me by Professor Bianca-Maria Scarcia Amoretti of Rome University. However, except for some variants in transcription, this manuscript, too, seems to have been copied from the same source as the one that was utilized by Nafīsī.

To all intents and purposes, therefore, there appears to be a single version of the *Gushāyish*, as edited by Nafīsī. In his Forewords to the 1950 and 1961 editions of this text, W. Ivanow noted with much regret the defective nature of the manuscript, due to the errors, excisions, and interpolations caused by the unknown scribe who had copied it. There are basically two types of inaccuracies in the existing text: some are idiomatic and orthographical which, in spite of Nafīsī's efforts to correct them, persist in his second edition; there are other more elusive instances of semantic distortion, resulting from the scribe's efforts

to censor the text, presumably to dilute its Ismaili content and render it more suitable for non-Ismaili readers. These and other features of the manuscript are discussed further in Nafīsī's Persian introductions to his two editions, in W. Ivanow's *Problems in Nāṣir-i Khusraw's Biography* (Bombay, 1956, pp. 3-5), as well as Henry Corbin's French introduction to his edition of Abū Ya'qūb al-Sijistānī's *Kashf al-mahjūb* (Tehran-Paris, 1949, pp. 10-11), based on a text found in the same *Majmū'a* of Taqavī in which the *Gushāyish* was preserved. The problematic nature of our text has also been noted by Professor P. Fillipani-Ronconi in his Italian translation of this work under the title of *Il libro dello scioglimento e della liberazione* (Naples, 1959, pp. ii-vii).

In the preparation of this new edition and translation of the *Gushāyish*, the major problem has been to find a way of rectifying its textual deficiencies, in particular the more substantive ones of an interpolative nature. In the absence of a second independent copy with which to collate and compare the present text, the most feasible alternative was to correlate the conceptual structure of the *Gushāyish* with Nāṣir Khusraw's other philosophical works which are extant, such as the *Shish faṣl*, *Wajh-i dīn*, *Khawān al-ikhwān*, *Zād al-musāfirīn*, and *Jāmi 'al-ḥikmatayn*. The aim of this exercise has been to identify those instances which exhibit clear evidence of scribal error or interpolation and, while maintaining the integrity of the manuscript copy, to correct as far as was possible the more obvious contradictions and inconsistencies between this text and other works of the author. The majority of editorial recensions arising from this comparative analysis have been incorporated in the Persian text within square brackets [] and cross-referenced to other texts of Nāṣir Khusraw in the notes that follow. It is important to note that by thus seeking to improve the accuracy of the text and bring it closer to the spirit and letter of Nāṣir Khusraw's thought, we do not claim to have identified all the inaccuracies that may be found in the manuscript of the *Gushāyish*, and no doubt more instances will be discerned by scholars in the years to come. But in the meantime, until a new, more accurate version of the text is discovered, it is hoped that this revised

edition will help shed more light on the personality and thought of one of the foremost Ismaili thinkers and poets of the Fatimid era.

As for the English translation of the *Gushāyish*, we have endeavoured to provide an accurate, intelligible, and readable interpretation of the Persian text for the contemporary reader. In the case of lines which have been rendered obscure by faulty copying or ellipses in the original text but whose sense is otherwise discernible, a few words have been inserted in square brackets [] to clarify the meaning or complete the construction of sentences. The parenthesis () is used to indicate the transliterated forms or meanings of a number of key Arabic and Persian terms which Nāṣir Khusraw has used in a particular or unconventional sense. Some of these expressions convey special significance in Fatimid Ismaili vocabulary (as distinct from those technical terms commonly used in general Islamic theological-philosophical discourse, many of which were also used by the Ismailis). A few terms, such as *nāṭiq*, *asās*, *tanzīl*, and *ta'wīl*, for which there are no concise and satisfactory equivalents in English, have been occasionally retained. We have also provided chapter headings in the English version and paragraph numberings common to both the English and Persian texts.

Finally, it remains for me to acknowledge with gratitude the assistance of many people in the preparation of this work for publication, and in particular the following individuals: Dr Farhad Daftary, for his continuous interest in and encouragement of the project; Professor Parviz Morewedge, for his illuminating introduction and commentary to this work; Professor Bianca-Maria S. Amoretti, for making available to me a copy of one of the two extant manuscripts of the *Gushāyish*; Kutub Kassam, for his meticulous editing of the English text and acute observations which have helped me to decipher a number of obscure passages in the original; my wife, Rashida Noormohamed Hunzai, for proofreading the text and correcting my English where necessary; as well as Dr Jalal Badakhchani and Ghulam Abbas Hunzai, for their efforts to review the

Persian text and discuss some of its finer points. While the help of all these friends and colleagues is deeply appreciated, the responsibility for any errors or shortcomings in the final product is entirely my own.

FMH

Nāṣir Khusraw's Hermeneutic Philosophical Theology

Parviz Morewedge

This text is of interest both to the specialist in Islamic studies and to the lay person. The specialist finds here a philosophical system integrating purely Ismaili, Neoplatonic, and original constituents which sheds light on both the intellectual history of the Ismaili position and the originality of its author.¹ For the general reader it provides an illuminating formulation of the problem of alienation beyond its religious and historical contexts. Medieval Ismaili thinkers, such as Nāṣir Khusraw and Naṣir al-Dīn Ṭūsī, perceived themselves not merely as theologians and spokespersons of their own religious community, but as global thinkers proffering philosophical wisdom and spiritual therapy for humanity. They teach that true salvation is achieved by a spiritual transformation of the human being from an actuality, which is partially animal, to its potential perfection where it ranks with the angels. This metamorphosis takes place by the rational path of knowledge, a knowledge which includes the science of nature and recognizes that bodies are positive icons and instruments for the spirit. The archetypal appeal of Ismaili thought lies in its confrontation with the universal problem of alienation, which contemporary psychoanalysis, existentialism, and Marxism take to be the most serious problem of humanity. It is beyond the scope of this introduction to expand on the variations of this macro theme; the general theme is that we have suffered by becoming estranged from our primordial state of peace and harmony, and need to return to it through a therapeutic process of reintegration and unification.

Philosophical and Theological Contexts

The success of Ismaili doctrines such as *ta'wīl* or hermeneutic return lies in their proposal for de-alienation; they advocate a spiritual therapy through the intellect and knowledge of the spiritual basis of the cosmos that leads to a vision of unity (*tawhīd*). Besides having this specific existential appeal, the Ismaili system of thought is the offspring of two great traditions, one philosophical, the other religious.

The philosophical paradigm of this vision is found in the works of the Egyptian–Greek philosopher Plotinus (d. 270 AD), who identified the ultimate entity as the One. On the one hand, all existents emanate from the One in the following procession: the First Intelligence, then the World Soul, followed by individual souls, and finally the realm of matter which is the image of the Soul. On the other hand, souls aim to return to the One as their archetypal source. Freedom, happiness, and mystical union are achieved when there is no ‘otherness,’ no ‘alienation’ (*farāq*) between the individual soul and the One. This emanation and return harmonize an integrated universe which offered the Muslim monists, the followers of the *tawhīd*, a suitable framework in their quest for unity without alienation between the transcendent spirit and the receptacle of nature. So inviting is this model – an archetypal vision of it is also found in ancient Egyptian and Indo–Iranian cosmogonies – that the majority of Muslim philosophers sought to accommodate the emanational doctrine of Plotinus to the creation out-of-nothing frame of Biblical and Qur'ānic cosmogony.

An objection may be raised to the primacy of Plotinus himself but not to Neoplatonism as such. After all, Neoplatonic themes are based on the Platonic dialogues, and Plotinus and all his disciples refer to Plato as their master. Such an objection may proceed in the following manner. Take any theme used in Islamic mystical thought: for example, the cycle of revelation–descent (*tanzīl*) and of the hermeneutic return to the primordial origin (*ta'wīl*); these are isomorphic with the Neoplatonic cycles of emanation and ascent. Plotinus' doctrine of the ascent, however, was borrowed from several Platonic

accounts, such as the ladder of love in the *Symposium* (201d–212c) and the allegory of the cave in the *Republic* (514a–521b). If this is so, then why not identify Plato as one of the sources of the Muslim philosophers' doctrine of unity? There are several reasons for continuing to regard Plotinus as the true Greek sheikh. He proffered the first complete philosophical system that was consciously designed as an architectonic monism, with its emanation and return dimensions, in which the ultimate entity or the One is beyond all existents. Plotinus had to overcome Aristotle's criticisms of Plato by rejecting the categories of both Aristotle and the Stoics, to respond to the option offered by the Gnostics, and to integrate the ancient Egyptian, Jewish (Philo's synthesis of Hebraic and Platonic traditions), and Oriental wisdoms of his time. Moreover, Plotinus' system differs essentially from Plato's system. For example, Plato equates the Good and the Beautiful, whereas Plotinus places the Good above Beauty. Second, with a few exceptions, Platonic themes were imported into various Islamic medieval religious systems indirectly through Neoplatonism, which were often wrongly attributed to Aristotle.²

Turning from philosophy to Islamic religious literature, we note that the primacy of the doctrine of oneness and the unity (*tawhīd*) of God is expressed in two ways. First, it is the foundational principle of religion (*uṣūl al-dīn*), the other principles being the necessity of prophecy and the Day of Resurrection. Second, it is the doctrine of unity which is reinterpreted as an essential core of Sufism. In this tenor al-Ghazālī states that while for the many the true doctrine is 'there is but one God,' for those who know 'there is nothing but It'. God, or in some mystical sense the Ultimate Being, is interpreted as the inner essence (*dhāt*) of all entities, which is immanent in all existents, and all entities return to It as their source. A popular Sufi mystical vision is the unity of all existents, the *waḥdat al-wujūd*, according to which all elements are connected in a living spiritual cosmos. Here, the inner essence of the self and God merge, as the Prophetic tradition states: 'Whoever knows his soul-self, knows his God.' What, one may ask,

are the objections to such a *prima facie* attractive vision? Often such objections are rooted in an appeal to a set of bifurcations observed between the transcendent sacred Divine and the secular nature, between the eternal or meta-temporal generator and the contingent ephemeral generated, between the continuous mental and the divisible physical, between the sacred laws of religion and the profane passions of human persons, between the inner intentional existential phenomena and the outer alienating extensional events, between spiritual wisdom or the inner light of collective archetypal contemplation and analytical discursive knowledge. The Ismaili unitive solution to this set of bifurcations was to interpret the apparent physical, secular, outer, extensional dimension of life and its religious consciousness as icons blessed by the Universal Intelligence (or Intellect) which is the agent of the Divine. This vision creates an ecophilic perspective of nature that does not treat human life as a moral fall embedded with the original sin and all its psychological consequences. Its beauty has been totally misunderstood by a number of intellectual historians. Trained in simplistic Aristotelian psychology and in the psychology of 'atoms of impressions or sense data,' they misinterpret the intentional dimension of *ta'wīl* as a blanket term for 'esoteric' and apply it as a collective qualification to Ismaili doctrines. It is true that, for a time, the Ismailis had to hide their true beliefs from their enemies by practising dissimulation (*taqiyya*). But there is no magical mystery which is contrary to reason in Ismaili doctrines. Nāṣir Khusraw in this text states explicitly that only knowledge (*dānish*) is the true mediator to happiness. It is time to translate in clear language this positive Ismaili message and sweep away the prejudicial misreadings; these are projections of our fantasy of an Oriental, secretive, cult-like order of esoteric 'assassins' into 'the alienated other'.

The chief originality of the Ismaili methodology is a phenomenological approach which integrates intentional epistemology with a monistic ontology. Such a system prevents the formulation of an essential dichotomy between the physical and the mental, between facts and values, and thus eliminates

the philosophical problems of mind/body, spirit/nature, and fact/value dualism as pseudo-problems. In addition to methodology, the major originality of the content of Ismaili doctrines includes philosophical positions, such as explicating an existent in terms of time, depicting God as a supra-entity beyond substantiality and existence, and the identification of the spiritual with the intellectual. As its title indicates, this work depicts the doctrine of revelation (*tanzīl*) and hermeneutic return (*ta'wīl*), a dialectical opening (*gushāyish*) and a return to the primordial origin that results in spiritual liberation (*rahāyish*) or revealment (*kashf*).

Historical Context

Let us begin with a brief account of the historical and religious context of the Muslim world during the life of our author. An eleventh-century Iranian, Nāṣir Khusraw became one of the most important theologians of the Ismailis. The Ismailis form the second largest community of the Shī'ī branch of Islam and today live in different parts of the world, in particular India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Central Asia, Iran, Syria, East Africa, Europe, and North America. To outsiders they are known by a few confusing data – the negative connotations of the term 'assassins', which was in the past so often applied to them, or the positive image conveyed by their modern social, economic, and cultural programmes. Until a few decades ago, most reports on the Ismailis were produced by hostile opponents and ignorant historians. For example, the thirteenth-century Persian mystic–poet Maḥmūd Shabistarī calls Nāṣir Khusraw an enemy of religion, empty of knowledge, wisdom, and unity, and a pure infidel – even though there is a close affinity between his own ideas and those of the Ismailis!³ A cursory reading of this text makes it evident that such allegations are totally groundless.

Far from being on the fringes of the Islamic civilization, the Ismailis established powerful states twice in medieval times. First in North Africa and Egypt, under the Fatimid caliphate, the

Ismailis made significant contributions to Islamic intellectual life through institutions like al-Azhar, which was originally founded in 969 to propagate the Shī'ī vision of Islam. Such an intellectual innovation forced the Seljuqs and their celebrated vizier Nizām al-Mulk (d. 1092), to establish their own institutions of learning where Sunni scholars, among them al-Ghāzālī, taught and sometimes wrote against the Ismailis. This is an example of how the Ismailis encouraged an intellectual climate in the Muslim world. The second was the Nizārī state in Iran and Syria which was eventually uprooted by the Mongol hordes in 1256. From early on, the Ismailis achieved considerable success in theology and philosophy, as evident in the works of Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī (d. 934), Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Nasafī (d. 943), al-Qādī al-Nu'mān (d. 974), Abū Ya'qūb al-Sijistānī (d. after 971), Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī (d. after 1020), al-Mu'ayyad fi'l-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (d. 1078), Nāṣir Khusraw (d. after 1072), and Naṣir al-Dīn Ṭūsī (d. 1274). Ṭūsī is, I believe, one of the most versatile thinkers of medieval Islam and, with respect to philosophical originality, second only to Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna). As a mathematician, theologian, logician, and astronomer, he revolutionized intellectual Islam by following Nāṣir Khusraw in integrating theology and philosophy into one discipline. This synthesis was very effective in bringing about a renaissance of philosophy and theology in the eastern parts of the Muslim world, as exemplified by the school of Isfahan which focuses on Shī'ī philosophical theology. The amazing similarity between Ṭūsī's system and that of the German philosopher Leibniz supports the thesis of Harry A. Wolfson concerning an affinity between Spinoza and his contemporaries and the Judaeo-Islamic tradition.¹

Nāṣir Khusraw lived during a period of political and cultural turmoil in the Muslim world prior to the Mongol onslaught. The first four caliphs (632–660) envisioned themselves as vicegerents of the Prophet Muḥammad, implementing the Islamic aspiration for the actualization of one spiritual global world. After the death of 'Alī, the fourth caliph and the first Shī'ī Imam in 661, the vision of expansion and the rule of

spirit were transformed into the pragmatic agenda of the secular dynasties of the Umayyads (661–750) and the Abbasids (750–1258). The unity of the Islamic empire was being challenged from the inside on two fronts. First, in provinces such as eastern Iran, local feudal rulers began to oppose the reign of dynasties perceived to be primarily Arab. Second, a minority of Muslims had identified themselves with the party (*shī'a*) of 'Alī, who was the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law, and the spiritual figure most closely associated with him. They claimed the right of 'Alī and his descendants to the Prophet's succession as the temporal and spiritual leaders of Islam on the principle that the genuine legitimate ruler must also embody the moral ethos of the Prophet, since human beings are both physical and spiritual beings – or as Plotinus put it, the human soul is an amphibian creature. Some of them attempted to synthesize the theoretical and pragmatic wisdom of Plato's philosopher-king with the spiritual Imam, leading to the integration of the City of God with the City of Earth. A serious hope for such an integration appeared when the first Shī'ī state, the Fatimid caliphate, was established in North Africa. This reality promoted much hope among the reformers, including Nāṣir Khusraw, who undertook a pilgrimage to Mecca and Cairo to seek wisdom and to preach it to the world. This is the context in which he was born and flourished.

The Life and Works of Nāṣir Khusraw

In one of his poems, Nāṣir Khusraw gives his birth date as 1004. He was born in Qubādiyān, a district of Balkh in eastern Iran, to a family of landowners. His early education was multifaceted and included a mastery of the Qur'ān and Islamic theology. His works show familiarity with Aristotle and the Peripatetic tradition, as well as the Islamic philosophies of al-Sijistānī, al-Fārābī, and Ibn Sīnā.⁵ For example, in the *Jāmi' al-ḥikmatayn* he quotes Aristotle directly, and in the *Zād al-musāfirīn* he discusses the position that the soul is not a harmony of elements in a manner that recalls Aristotle's views as ex-

pressed in his book *On the Soul* (407b26–409a30).⁶ He tasted the pleasures of a secular life while working for the local government. Having experienced an existential crisis and a spiritual vision, he resigned from his position in the year 1045 to nurture his spiritual rebirth through the archetypal experience of the withdrawal and return of the hero. He began a seven-year journey with two major destinations, one being Mecca, the sacred locus of Islam, and the other Cairo, the capital city of the Fatimid Ismaili state, the living power of what he took to be the true successors of the Prophet. His journey took him to several other cities such as Tabrīz and Jerusalem before he finally arrived in Cairo in 1047. From his account of the journey given in his *Safar-nāma*, it is evident that in addition to having a philosophical mind and a spiritual temperament, he was an acute observer of nature and societies. He wrote extensively about specifics such as the physical features of the Nile, earthquakes in Tabrīz, and the three bazaars in the city of Baṣra. His journey broadened his learning and increased the logical strength of his theological argumentation. It nurtured in him the mission of interpreting Ismaili theology as the true vision of Islamic unity with respect to both knowledge and spirituality. After three years in Cairo, he left for his homeland and arrived in Balkh in 1052. Nāṣir Khusraw was now seasoned as an original theologian, philosopher, and poet. As noted in several of his works, he became the *ḥujja* (proof) or the chief *dā'ī* (missionary) of Khurāsān and also travelled to other regions, such as Māzandarān in northern Iran, to preach Ismaili Islam. In this period, he wrote some of his masterpieces of theology, philosophy, and poetry in Persian. As might be expected, in Khurāsān he was confronted by the hostile '*ulamā*' of the Seljuq state. In his hometown of Balkh, he was harassed and his house destroyed. He escaped to the Ismaili-controlled district of Yumgān in Badakhshān, where he composed most of his poetry and some of his philosophical works, including the *Jāmi' al-ḥikmatayn*. He remained in Badakhshān for at least fifteen years and died not long after the year 1072. Nāṣir Khusraw lived between the reigns of the Ghaznavids and the Seljuqs, a

period which witnessed a number of very creative thinkers in Iran, including the poet Firdawsī (d. 1020), the master-philosopher Ibn Sīnā (d. 1037), Abū Rayḥān al-Bīrūnī (d. after 1050), and al-Ghazālī (d. 1111). Nāṣir seems to have felt that his theology revealed the essence of Islam. In his writings he invited Muslims and humanity to return to their monotheistic roots of Divine unity (*tawḥīd*). According to his own account of the principle of the intellectual *jihād*, no Muslim theologian can be sectarian, alienating his community with a peculiar theology suited to a limited audience. Nāṣir's universalism follows essentially from his religion of unity.

Perspectives on Nāṣir Khusraw

In spite of the philosophical content of many of his works, Nāṣir Khusraw has not received due recognition as a major philosopher. Some implicitly dismiss or ignore him. For example, in the standard texts used in academic institutions, such as Majid Fakhry's *A History of Islamic Philosophy*, only brief references are made to Nāṣir Khusraw's general position, and in his recent book on Islamic ethics Fakhry does not mention him at all, even though his works are suffused with a profound ethical consciousness.⁷ Often he is referred to as a philosophical poet, as noted by Sa'īd Nafīsī, the late Iranian scholar and editor of the *Gushāyish wa rahāyish*: 'The great poet Nasir Khusru (394/1004–481/1088) expounded philosophical thought in all his poetical works in addition to a few books of philosophy that he wrote in Persian prose from the Isma'īlite point of view'.⁸ Jan Rypka noted his 'complicated personality' and calls him a 'free thinker, a heretic, and a poet'.⁹ E. G. Browne labels him 'the celebrated poet, traveller and Isma'īli missionary'.¹⁰ Many recognize Nāṣir Khusraw's fame as a poet but regard his theological works as influenced by others. Paul E. Walker cautiously suggests that Nāṣir's 'Isma'ili works depend on those of al-Sijistānī in part, although how and in exactly what respects remains to be investigated'.¹¹ In contrast, a few others view him as a major thinker. In this tenor, Henry Corbin identifies Nāṣir Khusraw

as a leading Ismaili theoretician whose criticism of Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Zakariyyā al-Rāzī's concept of time makes him an original Muslim thinker.¹² A more balanced view is presented by Farhad Daftary, who takes Nāṣir Khusraw to be 'a prominent Ismā'īlī dignitary ... a *dā'ī*, a philosopher, a traveller, as well as a renowned poet who in fact ranks among the greatest of the Persian poets.'¹³ The solution to this question of the extent to which our author is a philosopher and the originality of his thought may be found only by an analytic investigation of his works.

The Major Works of Nāṣir Khusraw

There are some seven basic works of Nāṣir Khusraw in existence, as well as a number of other writings attributed to him. To begin with there is the *Dīwān*, the collection of his poetry, which includes close to 11,000 verses,¹⁴ and his famous travelogue, the *Safar-nāma*.¹⁵ He has written several texts on philosophical theology or pure theology, the most important of which is the *Wajh-i dīn*,¹⁶ the others being *Jāmi 'al-ḥikmatayn*, *Shish faṣl*,¹⁷ and *Khwān al-ikhwān*.¹⁸ The *Wajh-i dīn* (*The Countenance of Religion*) is a sophisticated account of Ismaili doctrines in which Nāṣir presents a detailed analysis of topics such as the Imamate, spiritual cycles of time, and a depiction of the creative icons. In this text he declares the sacred position of intelligence and knowledge as second to none but God. For him pure knowledge (*'ilm-i maḥḍ*) is both a command (*amr*) and the mercy (*rahmat*) of God. Consequently, the more a person acquires knowledge, the more he or she becomes proximate to God. The entire cosmos, according to Nāṣir Khusraw, is knowable in terms of whether it is apparent (*zāhir*) or hidden (*bāṭin*). The apparent is received through the external senses, while the hidden insights about topics such as the intelligibles, the nature of human life, and the generation of the contingent world from the eternal or atemporal, are available to us through intelligence and the knowledge-sciences. Wisdom is a divine gift which makes the human being a creator, like an oyster that

produces pearls out of rain water, or a silk-worm that turns the leaves of a mulberry tree into silk. A large portion of the text is devoted to the intellectual and spiritual significance of the pillars of Islam and religious rituals. For example, Nāṣir Khusraw distinguishes between the physical and spiritual senses of the *jihād*, and studies the affinity between prayer and pilgrimage. His aim is to present what he considers to be true Islam – that is, a reasonable and rational religion which accepts the exigencies of this world and looks forward to the promises of the next.

The *Jāmi' al-ḥikmatayn* (*A Synthesis of the Two Wisdoms*) is another important work in which Nāṣir Khusraw seeks to harmonize religious and philosophical themes of major importance, such as the nature of unity, universals, and particulars, Aristotle's classification of four types of expressions, the *cogito*, seven layers of light, and so on. This book is an essential reference work on the contextual meanings of the philosophical and theological vocabulary of the Ismailis. Nāṣir Khusraw's most extensive philosophical text is the *Zād al-musāfirīn* (*The Travelers' Provisions*), which contains an elaborate treatment of topics such as: knowledge and its sources; the generation of the cosmos; the nature of prime matter, motion, the soul, time, place, and composite bodies; ten proofs for the existence of the Maker and why God did not create the world earlier; the holy book and the sayings of the Prophet; human existence, the relationship of soul and body, and an analysis of pleasures; the coming and departure of persons to and from the world; as well as a theodicy of reward and punishment. Our present text, the *Gushāyish wa rahāyish*, is a smaller independent work on philosophical theology that deals with certain topics treated in the *Zād al-musāfirīn* without being a summary of the latter. As such, it is a very useful introduction to the philosophical thought of Nāṣir Khusraw.

Organization of the Text

The *Gushāyish wa rahāyish* constitutes Nāṣir Khusraw's responses to a series of thirty inquiries on philosophical and theological topics put to him, presumably by a member of the Ismaili *da'wa* whose identity remains unknown. His discussion of these topics can be organized conveniently under the following headings: (a) chapters 1–5 begin with an analysis of a cosmogony dealing with the origination of the generated from the eternal, with a consideration of temporal 'physical' and 'non-physical' issues; (b) chapters 6–11 examine the meaning of 'existent,' 'not-being,' and the 'mind-soul problem'; (c) chapters 12–20 explore the physics of certain material phenomena; (d) chapters 21–25 are concerned with salient topics of philosophical theology, such as the question of the Qur'ān being created or eternal, the Divine Word, and the Unity of God; (e) and finally, chapters 26–30 focus on issues of theodicy related to free-will, determinism, and the good life.

As explained in detail in the next section, the text outlines a particular Ismaili cosmology according to which the world is originated by the Divine Word or Command through the Universal Intellect (or Intelligence) and the Universal Soul. Salvation is achieved by means of a hermeneutic return (*ta'wīl*) to the spiritual origin (*aṣl*, *arche*) of the self, via knowledge as related to the Intellect. While the author does not directly mention the Sunnī position, in chapter 21 on the status of the Qur'ān, he refers to them politely as 'the people of tradition and community'. Sometimes he departs from standard medieval formulations, as indicated in the fourth inquiry where he implies the faculty of nutrition (*khwūranda*) as a mark of an animal, which is different from the peripatetic tripartite classification of the soul (vegetative, animal, and rational) according to the faculties of nutrition, sense perception, and intelligence. Occasionally he replicates an argument from another text, as for example his refutation of the doctrine that the soul is a harmony of the elements in chapter 8 of this text, which is a summary of the same topic in the seventh chapter of the *Zād al-musāfirin*.

Nāṣir Khusraw and Greek Philosophy

As Farhad Daftary states, 'Ismā'īlī Neoplatonic cosmology came to be generally advocated in its essentials by Fāṭimid authors, including Nāṣir Khusraw, who refined and elaborated various aspects of it in his own metaphysical system.'¹⁹ In this section we shall examine the specifics of how Nāṣir's views embody some – but not all – elements of the Neoplatonic system. For example, he holds to the Neoplatonic creative order of the One to the Intellect, the Soul, and the individual souls, with some major modifications. In the Neoplatonic system, the Intellect and the Soul are generated from the One by a process of emanation, whereas for Nāṣir Khusraw these are originated *ex nihilo* through the Divine Word which is intermediary between God and the Universal Intellect. While in many passages Plotinus takes matter as a mere icon of the lower perspectives of the Soul, Nāṣir Khusraw follows the model of the Empedoclean elements of fire (hot and dry), air (hot and wet), water (cold and wet), and earth (cold and dry). Plotinus rejected the Aristotelian categories, while Nāṣir uses them to define the individual soul as a substance (*jawhar*) which integrates opposite elements due to the power that God has bestowed on it.

In addition, for Nāṣir Khusraw, time in its primary sense is a measure of motion, as it is for Aristotle in his *Physics* (219b1–2). Plotinus' doctrine of time is complex and its exposition beyond the scope of this essay, but he states variously in *The Enneads* that the World Soul generates time (vi.4.15–17), individual souls make time (iii.7.11–12; iii.11.18), and that time is an entity imperceptible in itself (iii.7.12, 25–33).²⁰ Nāṣir Khusraw is very much aware of the various theories on time, as is evident from his discussion of this topic in the tenth chapter of the *Zād al-musāfirīn*. Here, he rejects the views of Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Zakariyyā al-Rāzī and others that time is a substance. He argues that if time were a simple substance, then it would not be divisible; moreover, if time were a substance, it would be impossible for it to pass from an existent entity into no-thing, since the time that has passed no longer exists.²¹

Third, unlike Plotinus' shunning of the body, Nāṣir Khusraw regards the body as an indispensable icon and instrument of spiritual salvation, that is, salvation prescribed according to the religious law established by the Prophet. He classifies five levels of ethical balances of spiritual reward and punishment which are isomorphic with the five mathematical balances and measures assigned to bodies. Also the scale in which gold and silver are measured and balanced corresponds to the measure and the balance of the Universal Soul. For him, the Universal Soul is the maker of the world which it does by using the six entities, that is, the heavenly sphere, space, time, motion, the elements, and the planets.

One cannot label Nāṣir Khusraw as an Aristotelian, for the entire concept of the soul's return is absent in Aristotelian philosophy. According to Aristotle, the Ultimate Being or First Mover is a substance, whereas Nāṣir agrees with Ibn Sīnā and Plotinus that the Ultimate Being or God is not a substance. While Aristotle holds on to co-eternity, Nāṣir like Ibn Sīnā and Plotinus maintains the temporal nature of creation. Nor is he a follower of Ibn Sīnā for whom God is the Necessary Existent, whereas Nāṣir places God above the Necessary Existent. For Ibn Sīnā, an existent is either a concatenation of necessity with being (thus the Necessary Existent) or a contingent entity which has a cause, but Nāṣir specifies existents in term of time, upholding that only entities in present time exist.

On God, Being, Time and Existence

Nāṣir Khusraw presents two remarkable ontological doctrines in this work. One is a radical development of the Neoplatonic idea that existence (*hastī*) cannot be attributed to God and that, unlike the Avicennian tradition, the Necessary Existent is the Universal Intellect and not the Ultimate Being analogous to the God of monotheism. The other is an original doctrine that specifies existence in terms of the 'present time'.

Let us investigate these doctrines in their historical settings. Graeco-Islamic ontology makes a sharp distinction between

the two central notions of being and existent. Being applies to any meaningful concept including an impossibility (such as a round square), a contingency which may be realized (such as Socrates) or not realized (a dragon), or the Necessary Being. The term 'existent' is reserved for actual entities, that is, contingent entities which are realized by an agent. The character of an entire metaphysical system is affected by its specifications of being and existent. Plato's universe is depicted in many different ways. If one emphasizes the *Republic* over *Timaeus* and *The Sophist*, the universe is depicted in a model of a divided line in which there is a continuum of ontic and epistemic hierarchies. The Ultimate Being of this version of the Platonic model is the Form of the Good which is a supra-being or beyond being (*Republic*, 509B) and a source of all other entities. But all forms as such are existents and they are the only permanent existents. For Aristotle, 'the first teacher' of the Muslim Peripatetics, being falls into the categories of substance and accidents. Paradigm cases of accidents are quantity, quality, relation, place, and time. According to Aristotle, an accident is realized only by the mediacy of a first substance; for example the quality 'red' is realized only when it applies to a flower or an apple. Aristotle's ultimate entity is the non-material, non-moveable, non-sensible substance which is co-eternal with the rest of the world, being its first mover. For Ibn Sīnā, being and its modalities of necessity, contingency, and impossibility are the two *a priori* notions of the mind. Once we conceive the concatenation of necessity (*wājib*) with being (*wujūd*), by the second ontological argument the reality of the Necessary Existent (*wājib al-wujūd*) is implied, because a necessary being necessarily exists; then the emanation of other existents are implied from it by its feature of being the supra-perfect (*fawq al-tamām*).

Nāṣir Khusraw has a different theory. His cosmology includes God, the Word (*kalima*) or Command of God (*amr-i bārī*), and two kinds of existents, the necessary and the contingent. The Command of God is the Absolute Existent, under which there is the necessary existent, the Universal Intellect, followed by

the contingent existent, the Universal Soul, which is the actual maker (*ṣāni* ') of the world of contingent existents. God is not an existent and His essence is above the attribution of an entity with an opposition; since not-being is the opposite of being an existent, neither existence nor non-existence can be attributed to God. The model closest to Nāṣir Khusraw's cosmogony is the Neoplatonic system as expressed by Plotinus and Proclus, according to which the One is *hyperousia* (*Enneads*, vi. 9, 3 and 5; *The Elements of Theology*, proposition 20) which may be translated either as supra-existent or beyond-existent.²² Thus, our text warrants that Nāṣir Khusraw rejects the Platonic, Aristotelian, and Avicennian models and accepts the Neoplatonic. However, one should not hold him to be the follower of Plotinus or Proclus for the following reason: Nāṣir Khusraw notes that the expression 'is' is applicable only to that which endures at the present time. A full elaboration of this doctrine is found in the *Zād al-musāfirīn* (pp. 354–64), where he clarifies that just as the statement 'x existed' or 'x was' means that there was a past in which x's state (*ḥāl*) was realized (*ḥāsil gasht*), while the statement 'x exists' or 'x is' applies to a state of an entity as it endures today, in a similar manner the existence of the universe rests (*muta* 'allaq) on the particular time which is 'now' (*aknūn*).²³

An important problem in monotheistic systems, in which God is a transcendent entity, is to clarify the relation between the eternal and the generated. Nāṣir Khusraw affirms that there is no need to postulate a time between the phase when the contingent was not generated and the phase when the contingent became generated, because in this context time is not a self-existent entity. Time has neither a beginning nor an end, and consequently the question of 'whether or not God created in time' implies a categorical mistake as time is a constituent of other entities and not an independent entity. His view is analogous to Immanuel Kant's phenomenological sense of time, namely that it is a transcendental condition of having an experience of any entity. For Nāṣir Khusraw time is a phenomenological feature of the conceptual imagination (*wahm*).²⁴ In the *Zād al-musāfirīn*, he uses time to make a dis-

inction between concrete sensibles and abstract categories, noting that whereas the sensibles are in time, categories such as quantities, qualities, and relations are not in time. But he is careful not to identify time with the essence of an entity, since being in time is a condition of the life of an entity, while the essence (*dhāt*) of an entity relates to the definition of an entity.²⁵

Besides Nāṣir Khusraw, two other philosophers have placed the priority of time in their ontology. In the Islamic tradition, we may note Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī (Mullā Ṣadrā) who considered time as a substantial and necessary constituent of existents.²⁶ Mullā Ṣadrā's theory of time escapes the criticism of Nāṣir Khusraw because for the former time is not a self-independent entity but a necessary constituent of other existents. For example, it is not logically possible that there could be a world in which only time exists, but any world of objects must necessarily include the temporal dimensions of those objects. The other is Martin Heidegger for whom the primary metaphysical notion is *Dasein*, meaning 'being present in the world'.²⁷ Neither of these doctrines is explicitly equivalent to that of Nāṣir Khusraw. For a fuller explanation of his view of time-experience, one needs first to proceed in the manner of Henry Corbin's analysis of the Ismā'īlī notion of time and then take the concept of *ta'wīl* or hermeneutic return in a phenomenological sense.²⁸ The full notion of Ismā'īlī time brings us to a Ghazālīan view of mystical virtues where phenomenological presence is mixed with *dhikr* and other concepts in intentional phenomenology.²⁹ Both al-Ghazālī and some mystics view active normative epistemic processes as an imitation of God's love, command (*amr*), and grace (*karāma*). Accordingly, ultimate realities are not substances nor external processes but intentional, inner vectors of the spiritual will. One of the most sophisticated notions in these proposed sets of inner (*bāṭin*) mystical phenomenological concepts is the notion of *ta'wīl*. Moved by an ethos similar to that which led the ancient Egyptians to create their pyramids as a gesture towards the descent of the Sun-God's love to the world, Nāṣir

Khusraw formulates the process of *ta 'wīl* as a move towards the revelation-descent (*tanzīl*) of God.

Theodicy, Ethics and Salvation

For Nāṣir Khusraw, the physical bodies in this world are symbols, icons, and mediator figures in order to be used for their spiritual significance. For example, the so-called *ṣirāṭ* physically and externally depicts a bridge over Hell, which is thinner than a hair and sharper than the edge of a sword. But intentionally, it is a moral path of choosing virtue and goodness since man is a being between angelicity and animality. Both angels and animals are determined in their acts and, thus, not rewarded or punished. In contrast, since human beings are free and they can use their divinely bestowed intellect and sense of shame-modesty (*sharm*), their acts take moral significance and they have to reckon with the consequences of their actions. This Ismaili doctrine is in fact an Islamic agenda against pure asceticism which considers the body to be evil instead of an icon for spirituality. The fundamental formula for human salvation, for crossing the *ṣirāṭ* in particular and attaining bliss in general, is achieved through knowledge (*dānish*). There are two senses of knowledge, the macro theoretical one, and the practical one which is the implementation of that knowledge through receiving the archetypal and iconic expressions of the religious laws specified by the Prophet, and a hermeneutic return to the Intellect which is our primordial origin. Knowledge allows us to transform our ethical being from animality to angelicity. Faith is the psychic state between fear and hope, but the actual saviour is knowledge. Allegorically, the creative process is a descent which transforms the spiritually subtle into the earthly dense; it is the Universal Soul which embodies the subtle knowledge in the dense cosmos; a part of this task has been transmitted to the Prophet who delivers the knowledge in the form of religious expressions. The hermeneutic return or ascent is analogous to the transformation of the earthly dense

into the spiritually subtle element; that is, by imitating the Universal Soul, one can become its embodiment.

Conclusion

Pedagogically, the popular misunderstanding of the Ismaili intellectual tradition can be divided into four areas of misinformation. The first common mistake has been brought to our attention by recent scholars: it concerns the Crusader type of thinking which perceives the Ismailis in terms of an 'order of assassins' led by an 'Old Man of the Mountain'.³⁰ The second kind of misinformation is found in the works of the opponents of the Ismailis, such as al-Ghazālī and Ibn Taymiyya, who misinterpreted and misrepresented their doctrines as 'heretical'. The third is that of the historians of Ismaili thought who attempt to minimize the originality of their views by labeling them as Muslim Neoplatonists, as if the Ismailis merely copied the works of past philosophers and mixed their axioms with their own contingent theses. Finally, the fourth mistake is the tendency to present Ismaili doctrines as sectarian variations of certain other religious traditions. Indeed, the opposite is true: the significance of the Ismailis lies, among other things, in their global and archetypal visions such as that of hermeneutic knowledge as the path to salvation.

We hope that this text and the introduction to it will shed light on two themes in particular: first, that the Ismaili theories are not just concatenations of Greek sources but contain original creative ideas, both in phenomenological method and content; second, that it is a serious mistake to view the Ismaili vision as a doctrine peculiar to the Ismaili experience and to study their works simply to emphasize their differences from other creeds – this would be like inspecting a mirror for its metallic and glass parts instead of the image reflected in it. The value and beauty of the Ismaili contribution lies in the archetypal message of a universal model of spiritual therapy; in their recognition of the primacy of knowledge, the knowledge that true happiness lies in the intentional dimension

(*bāṭin*) and a non-alienating return to the primordial origin (*ta'wīl*); and finally in the genius of their prescription of an individuation–self-realization process in which the Jungian mediator figure is the science of nature and a spiritual aesthetics of physical icons. One wonders why, in spite of persecution and misrepresentation, the Ismaili tradition has produced great thinkers and persisted in its intellectual vigour. One reason may be the universality of its creative message as an answer to alienation, a problem expressed in legends and world literature, from the story of Jacob and his brothers to the philosophies of Marx and Sartre. In sum, the Ismailis have provided humanity with a vision of a cosmos in which alienation cannot be formulated, because the physical–ephemeral and the spiritual–eternal are interrelated by an iconic relationship, and the human world is harmonized through a hermeneutic phenomenology.

The Institute of Ismaili Studies should be commended for having produced this work. Unless such primary texts are made available, there is no way to analyze their doctrines and to evaluate their import. Translation of technical medieval Persian and Arabic texts into philosophically clear English is a very difficult task. The world of scholarship in Islamic studies owes Faquir Muhammad Hunzai and Kutub Kassam a great debt of appreciation for their labour in editing and translating Nāṣir Khusraw's *Gushāyish wa rahāyish*.

Notes

1 For the most comprehensive survey of the Ismailis, see Farhad Daftary, *The Ismā'īlīs: Their History and Doctrines* (Cambridge, 1990); for the most extensive bibliography, see Ismail K. Poonawala, *Biobibliography of Ismā'īlī Literature* (Malibu, Calif., 1977).

2 See Richard C. Taylor, 'A Critical Analysis of the Structure of the *Kalām fī Maḥẓ al-khair* (Liber de causis)' in *Neoplatonism and Islamic Thought*, ed. Parviz Morewedge (Albany, 1992), pp.11–40.

3 Maḥmūd Shabistārī, 'Sa 'ādatnāma,' in *Majmū'a-yi āthār-i Shaykh Maḥmūd Shabistārī* (Tehran, 1371/1992), p. 186.

4 Harry A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of Spinoza* (Cleveland and New York, 1965), pp. 1, 14, 19 *et passim*.

5 See Paul Walker, *Early Philosophical Shiism* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 21–2, for Nāṣir Khusraw's debt to al-Sijistānī.

6 *Jāmi' al-ḥikmatayn*, ed. H. Corbin and M. Mu'in (Tehran–Paris, 1953), pp. 73–80; *Zād al-musāfirīn*, ed. M. Badhl al-Rahmān (Berlin, 1923), pp. 58–68.

7 Majid Fakhry, *A History of Islamic Philosophy* (New York and London, 1970), pp. 46, 124 and 130, and his *Ethical Theories in Islam* (Leiden, 1991).

8 Sa'id Nafīsī, 'Persian Literature,' in *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, ed. M. M. Sharif (Weisbaden, 1996), vol. 2, p. 1050.

9 Jan Rypka, *A History of Persian Literature* (Dordrecht, 1968), p. 185.

10 Edward G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia* (Cambridge, 1928), vol. 2, p. 200.

11 Paul E. Walker, *Abu Ya'qūb al-Sijistānī: Intellectual Missionary* (London and New York, 1996), p. 107.

12 Henry Corbin, *Temple and Contemplation*, tr. P. Sherrard (London, 1986), p. 134n.7. Corbin points out here that Nāṣir Khusraw's expression 'Khudā shudan', is a paradigm case of the unification of soul and God (p. 147). Corbin relates Nāṣir's doctrine of the ascent of the soul as actualization of an angelic potentiality to the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' (p. 192), and his doctrine of time to Proclus (p. 182). In *Cyclical Time and Ismaili Gnosis*, tr. R. Manheim and J. Morris (London, 1983), pp. 30–4, Corbin presents Nāṣir Khusraw as a major Ismaili thinker on the topic of eternity of time against Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Zakariyyā al-Rāzī's view that time is a substantial reality. In his *History of Philosophy*, tr. L. Sherrard (London and New York, 1993), p. 139, Corbin uses Nāṣir's views on matter and nature as the paradigm case of Ismaili physics.

13 Daftary, *The Ismā'īlīs*, p. 215.

14 See his *Diwān*, ed. M. Mīnuvī and M. Muḥaqqiq (Tehran, 1353/1974).

15 *Safar-nāma*, ed. M. Dabīr Siyāqī (Tehran, 1356/1977); English tr. W. M. Thackston, Jr., *Nāṣir-e Khosraw's Book of Travels (Safarnāma)* (Albany, N.Y., 1986).

16 *Wajh-i dīn*, ed. Gholam Reza Aavani (Tehran, 1977).

17 *Six Chapters or Shish fasl*, ed. and tr. W. Ivanow (Leiden, 1949).

18 *Khwān al-ikhwān*, ed. Y. al-Khashahāb (Cairo, 1940).

19 Daftary, *The Ismā'īlīs*, p. 245.

20 See Steven K. Strange, 'Plotinus on the Nature of Eternity and Time,' in *Aristotle in Late Antiquity*, ed. Lawrence P. Schrenck (Washington, D.C., 1994), pp. 22–56.

21 Ibid., pp. 110–28.

22 See Plotinus, *The Enneads*, tr. A. H. Armstrong (Cambridge, Mass. and London, 1966–1988), vols. 1–7; and Proclus, *The Elements of Theology*, tr. E. R. Dodd (London, 1964).

23 *Zād al-musāfirīn*, pp. 354, 484.

24 See Parviz Morewedge, *Essays in Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Mysticism* (Oneonta, N.Y., 1995), pp. 124–59. This essay proffers an interpretation of *wahm* as a prehensive imagination.

25 *Zād al-musāfirīn*, pp. 117–18.

26 *The Metaphysics of Mulla Sadra*, tr. Parviz Morewedge (New York, 1991).

27 Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, tr. J. Macquairre and E. Robinson (New York and Evanston, 1962), pp. 389–96.

28 Corbin, *Temple and Contemplation*, pp. 38–41, 100, 134–8 *et passim*, and his *Cyclical Time and Ismaili Gnosis*, pp. 30, 76, 88, 90, 97, *et passim*.

29 Parviz Morewedge, 'Theology,' in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Islam*, ed. John L. Esposito (New York, 1995), vol. 4, pp. 214–24.

30 See F. Daftary, *The Assassin Legends: Myths of the Isma'ilis* (London, 1994).

Author's Preamble

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

[1] Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. The [best] end is for those who fear God, and the blessing [of God] be upon the chief of the Messengers, Muḥammad, and all his progeny. May God bestow peace upon [them] abundantly.

[2] Now then, O brother, I have come to know about the intricacies of [certain] inquiries in which there are many ambiguities, and you did not find anyone who was able to answer them. However, we allowed you to ask us those questions, and we named this book *Gushāyish wa rahāyish* because we have solved these problems in it, so that the souls of sincere believers may find [the uncovering of] knowledge in it and be [spiritually] liberated by it.

[3] Now, O brother, I will repeat your inquiries and answer each one, substantiating with elucidation and explanation, demonstration and argument, from the verses of the Qur'ān [and] proofs from the external world (*āfāq*), the internal world (*anfus*), the natures, and the elements.

PART I

Cosmogony

1 ❀ On the Creator and the Created

[4] O brother! You asked about the Creator (*āfarīdagār*) and the created (*āfarīda*), and you said that it is inevitable for the Creator to be prior to the created. However, you wanted to know whether or not there was time between the Creator and the created: 'Was He not Creator and Sovereign prior to what He created? [And] if there was no creation, what was He Creator and Sovereign of? If He became Creator and Sovereign when He created and brought forth His sovereignty, is He now better and greater than when He was neither Creator nor Sovereign? [If that is the case], now that He has originated the creation and is different from what He was before the creation, then the term 'generated' (*muhdath*) necessarily applies to Him because that whose condition changes is generated. We wish that this subject be explained with demonstration, so that we know what our belief about it should be.' Peace!

[5] O brother! Know that this inquiry is extremely difficult and many people have lost their way in it, because there are treasure-houses of divine knowledge, and whoever does not have recourse to and seek the truth from them is drowned in the ocean of falsehood. [Such a person] opposes this well-known and famous saying among Muslims of the Holy Prophet: 'Say, *Lā ḥawla wa-lā quwwata illā bi'llāhi* 'l- '*aliyyi* 'l- '*azīm* (There is no power and strength except in Allah, the High, the Great).' And he who does not have recourse to the Imam of his time, who does not seek knowledge of the truth from him, and who relies on his own power and strength, is a wrong-doer.

[6] O brother! I will untie this knot for you by the command (*farmān*) of the lord of the time (*khudāwand-i zamān*) and, by his power and strength, I will destroy the ambush of the devil which he has placed on this path and show you the straight path. Just as there is a measure and balance for hidden knowledge which is measured and weighed for me, so I will measure that knowledge [for you] with the measure of justice and will weigh it on the balance of truth. As God has said in this sense: 'Woe to the miserly who, when they receive measure from the people, take full measure, but when they measure or weigh for them, do skimp' (83:1-3).

[7] We say that first it is necessary to know what time is so that this knot can be untied. It should be known that in reality, time is [contained in] the act (*kār-kard*) of an agent (*kār-kun*), because it is [a measure of] the movement of the [celestial] sphere. Thus, when a measure [equal to] a constellation passes from the sphere, we say that two hours from night or day have elapsed, and when a half of the sphere passes we say twelve hours of time from day or night have elapsed. [However], if you take away the sphere from [your] imagination, nothing remains of time. When the existence of a thing depends on another thing, then if you remove the latter, the former which had come into existence through the latter [also] disappears. For instance, if we remove the sun from [our] imagination, the day would be removed. From this demonstration it is evident that if from the imagination you remove the sphere, time [too] would be removed. [In reality], since the rotation of the sphere is the act of an agent by the command of the Creator, time is [caused by] the act of the Creator Himself.

[8] In this connection, those in possession of wisdom have also said that time is nothing but [a measure of] change in the conditions of body, one after the other. This view is the same as that of time being [contained in] the act of an agent, because the totality of [the world's] body is within the vault of the spheres, and when the spheres rotate its condition changes as

every point of it moves from its existing place to another place. [Furthermore], the rotation of the spheres does not stop because its time is never-ending.

[9] It is inconceivable for the simple [person] that time can be removed from the imagination. This is because of the fact that since the human soul is linked with a body which is under time, it cannot go beyond [time and space] without being nurtured with the knowledge of the truth. As God says: 'O assembly of *jinn* and men, if you can penetrate the bounds of the heavens and the earth, do so, but you cannot without the proof' (55:33) – that is, *jinn* and men cannot conceive anything in their souls other than what they see in the heavens and the earth, and they cannot go beyond what is under the heavens and time unless they receive nurture [of true knowledge] from the Imam of the time who is the proof of God (*ḥujjat-i Khudā*) on earth.

[10] Since in reality time is [a measure of] change in the condition of the body which is the heavens, it is [caused by] an act of the Creator of the heavens and the earth. Thus, from whichever aspect you seek the truth about time, you will find that it is [contained in] the act [of an agent]. When you know this, you will realize that it is absurd for someone to ask whether or not there was time between the Creator and the creation. This is because [on the one hand], when he declares that the Creator has to come before the creation, while time itself is in the creation as we explained, it is tantamount to his affirming that the Creator exists before the creation; [on the other hand], when he says that there was time between the Creator and the creation, it is a contradiction because it amounts to saying that there was time before time, which is similar to saying that there was creation before creation, and this is absurd.

[11] As for your assertion regarding the Creator and His sovereignty before the creation, that if He became Creator and Sovereign after [establishing His] creatorship and sovereignty [of the world], then He is different from what He was before

the creation: it should be known that both the Creator and the creation in their entirety were in the Command of God (*amr-i bārī*) – purified and exalted is He – and in their state of existentionation nothing was prior or posterior. The Command of God is not a part of Him, but a trace which is like a writer's script, in which there is nothing of his essence. Since God's ipseity [essence] is above matter, instrument, power, form, likeness, and act, His Command is to be understood in the sense that it is self-subsistent, and all existences and existents are contained in it.

[12] Since the soul of the writer dwells in the turbidity of body and the darkness of nature, the writing which is a trace from him cannot come into being by itself and is incapable of existence, unless he seeks help from nature for the provision of paper, ink-pot, pen, place, time, and movement to bring forth his trace. But since God is free from matter and form, all existents came into being together [and] simultaneously from His Command which is a trace from Him. The Creator and the creation, the Sovereign and sovereignty, all of them were in that trace without there being any connection with His ipseity; just as writing has no connection with the soul of the writer who, after having written something, remains intact without increase or decrease. Thus, the Sovereign in a true sense is the First, that is, the First Originated Being (*mubda 'i auwal*) with which the Divine Command immediately became one, and that is the First Intellect (*'aql-i auwal*), which is complete in both actuality and potentiality. The Creator and agent [of creation] in reality is the Universal Soul (*nafs-i kull*) which, in relation to the Universal Intellect (*'aql-i kull*), namely the First Intellect, is like a thought of the rational soul.

[13] Thus, the Creator and creation, the Sovereign and sovereignty, are all in the Divine Command which has no connection with God's ipseity. The rational proof of this statement is that whatever appears in this world, such as plants and animals, come into being by the aggregation and mixture of the elements,

the support of time, and the concurrence of space. The fact that all these things support one another shows that all of them are originated from one entity, just as multiplicity has originated from the number one. Had all the above-mentioned things, such as the elements, time, and space, not originated from one entity, they would not have supported but opposed one another. Since all of them work with and support one another, they all execute one command. Thus, first there has to be a command, then those who execute the command.

[14] It is evident, therefore, that all existences and existents were gathered together in the Divine Command, all at once from nothing, without there being any priority and posteriority over one another. And the Divine Command – to bring it close to the imagination – is like a date-seed in which appears all at once and in no time what [subsequently] appears on the tree, such as its leaves, branches, roots, wood, filaments, thorns, dates, and so on. If some of these things had not been in the date-seed, then the date-palm would not have [been able to bear] leaves, branches, wood, or filaments. If these essences (*ma 'nī-hā*) had not been in the date-seed, nothing would have come from it and it would have remained unripe, without growing; but when it ripens, all essences appear in it. This is a proof of the fact that all those essences of the tree came into existence together in that seed all at once and in no time. When such things are perceptible to the senses, then the Divine Command, which does not need the support of anything, is more deserving to have all existents [gathered] in it without time and space, whatever it does. As God says: 'Our Command is but one, as the twinkling of an eye' (54:50) – that is to say, the existention or coming into being of time and space is [instantaneous] like the seeing of light by the eye. Thus, just as in a date-seed what comes into being all at once comes forth in time, similarly what has gathered together and come into being in the Divine Command in no time, instantaneously and from nothing, comes forth by the act [of the Creator].

[15] [As for] the generated, in reality it originates from a thing, whereas that which originates from nothing is called the eternal (*qadīm*). In reality the eternal is the Divine Command from which all things come into being. Since we have established that the term 'generated' (*muḥdath*) is not applicable to the Divine Command, then it is more befitting for it not to be applicable to [God] who originated it. [As for] the creature (*makhlūq*), it is that which receives help and power from something else. In reality the [first] created being is the Universal Soul whose help (*māddah*) comes from the Divine Command through the mediation of the [Universal] Intellect. And the generated is this physical world, because the generated is that which is susceptible to generation, that is to say, to states such as movement, rest, increase, and decrease, which are all found in the physical world.

[16] It is therefore evident from the explanation which we have given that the Creator, the creation, and the creature were all in the Divine Command. God's ipseity has no connection or disconnection with them because He is free from [all] association, [and] a thing which is associated with another thing does not befit to be God. The attribution of creatorship and sovereignty made to God is not because He is the Creator and Sovereign, but in the sense that the existence of the Creator and Sovereign is from His Command, and all existents are attributed to Him in order to glorify Him – just as when a man commands others to build a mansion, it is built by carpenters and other workmen, yet it is not said that they made it but that this mansion was built by so-and-so, whereas he did no work except to command. Such should be the belief regarding the creation of the world, the Creator and the created, so that the soul may be liberated.

2❁ On the Eternal and the Generated

[17] O brother! You asked that of two entities between whose existence there is no time, how can one be prior to its companion? You stated that it follows reason that if there is no time between the existence of two entities, then both are either eternal or generated. The difference between the eternal and the generated is that the former is prior to the latter in time, just as a tree [may be regarded] as eternal and its fruit as generated because the tree is prior to the fruit – all analogies of the eternal are like this. And when time is removed between two entities, priority and posteriority cease to exist between them; both of them are either eternal or generated. [And you said:] ‘Since you have already established that there was no time between the existence of the Divine Command and all [other] existents, and whatever God willed came into being in it all at once, then the world and the Divine Command are both eternal. However, no one can deny that first there has to be an agent [worker] and then [follows] the work. It is necessary that you explain how it is possible to be prior and posterior without time so that we believe in it and know the reality of that completely.’

[18] Know, O brother, that the question should be asked according to the right principle (*qānūn*). It is correct to state that if there are two entities of which one does not precede the other [in existence], then both are either eternal or generated. But it is not correct when you say that if one of the two entities does precede the other in existence and if there is no time between them, then [each has to be either] eternal or generated. This is wrong because you have already asserted that one of them precedes the other as a worker precedes his work and there is no time between their existence. This statement requires a proof (*burhān*). However, if what you mean to say is that in the absence of time between the two entities, one should not be prior to its companion, this rule (*qā’ida*) is [also] not correct, because if one were not prior to the other, then both will have to be either eternal or generated – otherwise your statement would have been correct. If one of the two entities does not precede

the other in time, it is [still] necessary for one of them to be eternal and the other to be generated; and if one necessarily precedes the other, it is not necessary [to postulate a duration of] time between them; and if time is not necessary, they should not be judged as eternal or generated, because there are entities between which time is inconceivable.

[19] Take the example of a man who works for an hour and then rests for another hour: there is no [passage of] time between [the end of his] work and [the beginning of his] rest. But everyone knows that one first attends to work and then to rest, and whoever denies this and says that work is not prior to rest, then it is deemed not worthy of discussing with him; or if he says that there is time between work and rest, he would have spoken absurdly. By this explanation we have refuted the assertion of the one who says that if there is no time between the existence of two entities, then both are either eternal or generated, because it is known that work is prior to rest, and the rest comes after it. [In this analogy], to work is to be eternal and to rest is to be generated, even though there is no [passage of] time between these two states.

[20] It becomes clear [therefore] that the Creator of the world is eternal and the world is generated without necessitating any time between them. The benefit of this inquiry for you is to know that time is not necessary between the Creator and the creation, and that the Creator precedes the creation without any time. If the priority or precedence which the Creator has over the creation was due to time, then the last of that time would have been the origination of creation; and if the end of that time were to be known, then the beginning of time would also be necessarily established. The beginning of time would then be the beginning of the existence of the eternal, and if the beginning of the eternal were to be established, then [the Creator's status] of eternity would cease and He would become generated. When the reader of this book throws this question

back at his adversary, he should have reflected on what we have said and the importance of this inquiry.

3⊗ On Time before the Creation

[21] O brother! You asked: 'Since you have established that the Creator is eternal and the world generated, and the eternal is that which does not have a beginning, whereas the generated has a beginning, thus affirming that the world has a beginning, tell us why the Creator who is omnipotent delayed in the creation of the world, and why did He not create before He [actually] created it? As it was necessary [for Him] to create in wisdom because God is always wise, why did He not start earlier as there was none to prevent Him [from doing so]? And when God had not yet created the world, what prompted Him to create it, whereas before it there was nothing? According to reason, if someone is able to do a good work but does not do it, this is considered bad on his part; and if he is unable to do a good work, he is either prevented from doing it by someone else or he does not know how to do it – but God is [free] from constraint and ignorance. And if someone does not do a work for a long time and then does it, there is something that has prompted him to do it, whether it be his own thinking or another thing. But God is free from both these states in the creation of the world, because He was there [before the creation] and there was nothing and nobody [other than Him]; and He is independent of thinking, of accepting the plan or seeking the counsel of someone else. Then what was the delay in the creation of the world till the appointed time or period when He created it, and what was the reason for it? Explain!'

[22] Know, O brother, that a period (*waqt*) means a state between two times. When someone says 'now' (*aknūn*), this 'now' is a period, which means that it gives an indication between what has passed from time and what is going to appear from it in the future. The state of 'now' is intermediary between these two times, and in reality time itself is [a measure of] change in the state of body. You come to know from the creation of the world that time is change in the state of body, and that when

there is no body, there is no time. It is evident therefore that when there is no time there will be no period, and there will be neither priority nor posteriority, because first there has to be time for there to be priority and posteriority, period and non-period, just as [when] an attribute is predicated of a thing, if the thing does not exist, there will be no attribute as well. Since a period is between two times, that is the past and the future, as morning is a period which is going to come and night is a period which has elapsed, if we remove day and night from the imagination, the period will also be removed.

[23] The period between two times, the past and the future, is like the space (*gushādagī*, *farākhī*) between two lines, of which each one is a boundary that limits [the space]. But if the line is single, it cannot be a boundary limiting a thing because this space, which is called surface (*sath*), does not come into existence without two lines or by one line which is brought back from one end to [join] the other. It is not possible to know the measure of what is on both sides of one line, just as [the number] one has no limit, and nobody can describe its features in the same way as two is described as one upon one, that is paired with each other, or three as one united with two.

[24] The answer to this question is implied in our response to the previous inquiry. Since we have made it clear that the world comes after its Creator without there being any time in between, [and] having established that there was no time before the creation of the world, it is absurd for someone to ask why God delayed in the creation of the world until the period He created it, because this period itself came into existence as a result of the creation of the world. If the creation of the world is called prior or posterior, it is called so in a metaphorical sense and not in a real sense – otherwise the question will continue [*ad infinitum*]. Thus, in reality the period itself is [embedded in] the origination of the world, just as the dimensions of a body are the surfaces of it. This explanation will be grasped

quickly by a clear thought, and be comprehended and understood by a bright mind. Peace!

4 ☸ On Whether God has a Body

[25] O brother! You asked: 'The anthropomorphists say that God is a body, and [to support this view] they argue that whatever activity we see in the world is all done by bodies, whether these be the diverse works which people do or other things which animals do but man is unable to do. Such [is the work of] the bee which makes a beehive out of mud and honey from flowers, or the craft of silk-worms which turn mulberry leaves into silk, or oysters which make pearls from rain-water. Likewise is the work of plants, of which each one does a thing which man is unable to do, such as the date-palm which makes dates from dust and water, and every plant produces a thing which is different from its form. All these in their entirety are bodies. When the wise see such craft (*ṣan 'at*), they testify that it is created by a powerful agent, and if someone denies this his argument is not accepted. Since the entire world is a craft based on wisdom, and because all these crafts are produced by bodies, it follows that the Maker of the world is [also] a body. And they say that if the Maker were not a body, these bodies would not have admitted the craft from Him, just as if a carpenter [did not have] a body, the wood would not be able to admit his craft. The same is the case with [all] other crafts. This is a clear and bright demonstration. What proof should we posit before them that the Maker of the world is not a body? Find the answer to this problem and prove it!'

[26] Know, O brother, that in this world there does not exist a [single] body which is a maker, neither animal nor plant, because the maker in reality is the soul, and the body is like its instrument. The soul has three levels: one is the vegetative soul (*rūyanda*), the second is the animal soul (*khwūrandā*), and the third is the rational soul (*gūyanda*). [Now, anything] which has species cannot dispense with a genus. There can be many species [under a genus], such as the animal is a genus and its species are birds, reptiles, and wild beasts. When we realize

that the soul has three levels, we come to know that it [too] has a genus, which is the source of all the souls [that is, the Universal Soul]. [Since] we find the rational soul to be the most noble of the [three levels of] the soul with good and diverse deeds, we come to know that it is capable of receiving knowledge (*dānish-padhlīr*) from the Universal Soul.

[27] As for the function of plants and animals, it is based not on knowledge but on their [specific] properties. A property is that which belongs to a thing [or species] to the exclusion of other species, such as [the act of] smiling and [the phenomenon of] hair turning grey are the properties of man that no other animal has. Similarly, to make honey or silk are the properties of the bee and the silk-worm respectively. Every plant and tree is characterized by its grain and fruit, without which it cannot produce anything else, such as the growth [of foliage] in plants and trees. Man has [the capacity for] many crafts. All crafts, whether natural [innate] or voluntary – such as the crafts of the bee, the silk-worm, the oyster, and the plant which are natural, and those of man which are voluntary – all of these are sought by the soul and not by the body. When the soul [in a body] wants to produce a craft which it knows on [another] body, it can do so with the help of that body which is compatible with it and admits its craft because of similarity [between the two bodies]. However, if the soul wants to produce the craft within itself, it does not need the mediation of a body and can produce it by itself [in imagination]. For instance, a carpenter who knows how to produce a door, can conceive it within himself without time, instrument, and the mediation of a body; his soul does not need a body to produce it. [Since] we find that the craft belongs to the soul and the world admits its craft, we come to know that the maker of the world is the Universal Soul and that these three [levels of] the soul which we mentioned are its species.

[28] Every maker requires six entities to produce his craft adequately: firstly, his body; secondly, the matter upon which he

produces his craft, such as wood for a carpenter and iron for an ironsmith; thirdly, the instrument, like axe and saw for the carpenter, or anvil and hammer for the ironsmith; fourthly, movement – and from his need for movement to produce his craft it becomes evident to the wise that a worker is not free from need, [because] the one without need does not work; fifthly, a place in which to produce his craft; and sixthly, a time in the duration of which to complete his craft. When these six are attained, the craft will be the seventh of them, which is the purpose of the six entities. Thus, the craft of the Universal Soul in this world [consists of] the plant and animal [kingdoms]. The plant is the cause of the animal and the animal is its effect. The cause is that which, if it is removed, the effect too is removed; for instance, if you remove the plant, the animal is removed because the animal depends on the plant for nourishment. But man is not the cause of anything else; rather he is the purpose [of creation], and his goal is the recognition of God so that he may return to the [original] source from where he has come.

[29] Therefore, we say that the primordial maker is the Universal Soul which has attained those [six] entities already mentioned. The first thing it has attained, instead of body, is the great imperishable sphere [of the heavens]; the second, instead of matter, are the four elements, namely earth, water, air, and fire, from which it produces plants and animals; the third, instead of instruments, are the seven planets, through which it makes shapes, colours, and splendours for plants and animals; the fourth, instead of place, is this vast space within which is contained the universal body; the fifth is the endless movement visible in its body which is the sphere – this great motion is also evident to all in its instruments which are the planets, and in the four elements which take the place of matter; the sixth is the moveable time which passes successively until it produces the seventh, which we see [manifest in this] world of diverse ornamentations.

[30] Just as in the case of a carpenter, we see his body, his instruments, and the craft which he produces, but the soul within him which is the maker is invisible, [so in the case of the Universal Soul] we see the sphere which stands for its body and the elements which stand for matter, but the Universal Soul itself is invisible to the eye. When the soul of the carpenter leaves his body, the body stops functioning; therefore we know that if the Universal Soul were to abandon its movement and instruments, no craft will be produced from them, but they will be scattered. And just as we know that when the body of the carpenter scatters after the soul has separated from it, there is a nullification of his craft, so we know that when the Universal Soul, which is the maker of this world, abandons its support for the world, then all the crafts of the world will be ruined. Thus, whatever is found in a constituent part [microcosm] of the world is also true of the whole [macrocosm] of the world. Since man is a part from among the parts of the world, when we observe that his body stands and functions because of his soul, so we know that the body of this world also stands and functions because of its Soul. And just as the soul of man, which is his maker, is not perceptible to our senses whereas his body and instruments are perceptible, so we come to know that whatever we see and find with our senses in this world are the body, instruments, and matter of [the Universal Soul], which is their maker, but [the Soul] itself is not perceptible to the senses.

[31] Thus, it is established that the maker of the world is the one who is not perceptible to the senses, and since whatever the senses cannot perceive is other than body, it is clear that the maker of this world is not a body. This is a clear proof for you to reflect upon and understand, so that you may be liberated.

5❖ On the Subtle and the Dense

[32] O brother! You asked about the state of the world: 'From what did the Universal Soul create the world? Since the Universal Soul is subtle, from where did it bring this density [of matter] in such abundance, and how did the dense originate from the subtle? When [the Soul] willed to create the world, what were the six entities which, as you described, are needed by every maker in order to produce his craft, since the world is crafted? Explain so that, God willing, we may know.'

[33] Know, O brother, that for the Universal Soul the spheres are like a body, the stars like instruments, and the four natures [elements] like matter to every maker. All the [six entities] which we mentioned are composite, crafted, and made by the Universal Soul. But its making of the spheres and what they contain is not like the making of plants and animals; it is rather like the human soul making its body. [Just as] we see today that every maker produces the craft which he knows, so we realize that his body is also crafted and made by his soul. But the way the soul of a carpenter has made his body is not like the way he makes a throne or a chair. On the contrary, the substratum from which the soul of a carpenter made his body was a gift whose seed was in the Divine Word [which originated] from nothing.

[34] In the physical world, the gift received by the soul of the carpenter was that water which came from the loins of his father to the womb of his mother. From that substratum which it had received, [the soul] made a body for itself as a receptacle, in such a way that nobody knows [how] it was able to make this body without [the help of] an instrument perceptible to our senses. The instrument [that enabled] the human soul to make its body was that power from which the seven internal organs – that is the heart, liver, gall bladder, spleen, lung, kidney, and brain – were made in the womb. By that power, the human soul fashioned the seven internal organs from what was subtle in the food [consumed by the mother], and from that which was dense it made the bones, flesh, skin, and so on. [In this

way, the soul] enfolded a body around itself and made its enclosure in the physical world, thus becoming able to make other bodies.

[35] Furthermore, just as the prime matter from which the [Universal] Soul made this world as its body was a gift from God, but [the knowledge of] how the Soul created the spheres from it is hidden and no intellect is able to know that, so today nobody knows how a particular soul can make the internal organs, such as bones, flesh, and skin, in the womb of the mother from the food which she eats. But everyone knows that [this is due to] that power which is innate in the human soul and that the essence of the soul cannot acquire this power which is a gift from God – may He be purified. And just as the human soul did not need instruments to create its body, the Universal Soul did not require instruments for the making of its body; rather it was able to make the spheres as its body from the power which was in its essence as prime matter and which it had received as a gift from God. And just as the instrument of the human soul in making its body was that [given] power within itself, the instrument of the Universal Soul in making the spheres was also that given power within itself. And just as the human soul had potentially the seven organs which we mentioned earlier and by which its body was made, the Universal Soul also, in the gift of prime [matter] from which its body came into existence, had those seven powers from which came the seven planets – namely Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury and the Moon – to make the world which is the body of the Universal Soul. And just as the human soul condensed and separated the subtlety (*laṭāfat*) from the food which the mother ate, made the seven internal organs from that which was purer and finer in it, and made bones, flesh, and skin from that which was dense, the Universal Soul also condensed the prime matter which it had received from God as a gift, made the seven active planets from that which was subtle and luminous, and then from what remained made the spheres and the

elements, corresponding to what we see in the world, which is weighed according to the balance of intellect.

[36] He who knows the [power of the] creation of the world, knows the power of his own creation, and he can fashion the form of his soul with the same balance according to which the form of his body has been fashioned. For as God says: 'Verily, you have known the first creation, then why do you not reflect?' (56:62). According to this verse, he who does not comprehend the creation and recognize [its true nature] transgresses God's command, and he who transgresses God's command, his place is in the fire.

[37] Now, let us come to our main point which is this: just as the body and instrument of the Universal Soul, with respect to [our] recognition of plants and animals, are visible but incomprehensible [to us], so the instrument from which it made the spheres and stars is comprehensible but invisible. This is because the more the cause of the world [the Universal Soul] comes close to its origin, that is the First Cause [the Universal Intellect], the farther it recedes from finding and knowing it. [When it is not possible for the Universal Soul to reach the First Cause, how can it be possible for man] to reach it, which is his [first] cause [too]? Moreover, whatever man discovers is due to it [the Intellect], but he is unable to comprehend it, because that First Cause is the universal [macrocosm] of which man is a part [microcosm]. But anything other than man is a mere trace of it, and no trace can ever discern the whole, just as a writer's script which is a trace of him cannot recognize him. This knot has now been untied. Attain so that you may know! Recognize so that you may achieve salvation!

PART II

Ontology

6 ❀ On Different Kinds of Existents

[38] O brother! You asked: 'What [is meant by] the term 'existent' (*hast*), how many kinds of existents are there, what is each one called, and how can it be recognized? In the *tawhīd* [profession of One God], should God be called existent or not, for if we do not call Him existent, then He becomes non-existent (*nist*), which is *ta'īl* [negation of God's existence]? Explain this so that we may know.'

[39] Know, O brother, that the existent is of two kinds: one is called necessary (*wājib*) and the other contingent (*mumkin*). The necessary existent is higher than the contingent existent [because] without the necessary existent the contingent cannot exist. For instance, the necessary existent is like a bird and the contingent existent like its egg; it is not possible for the egg to reach the state of a bird without the help of the bird from which it has come into existence and whose position is like that of the necessary existent.

[40] We say that the world in its entirety is a contingent existent, not a necessary existent, because all its parts are contingent existents. The contingent existent is that which is intermediate between the existent and the non-existent. For instance fire, which is one of the constituent parts of the world, is a contingent existent because its heat may be transformed into cold and its dryness into moisture, thus turning fire into water. The cooling of heat and the drying of moisture in this world testify to the correctness of this state. Therefore, fire is water in contingency, and similarly all components of the world

are in [a state of] contingency. Likewise, plants and animals are contingent and not necessary, because the plants and animals which exist today may or may not exist tomorrow. All such things are called contingent existents, including the two entities of plant and animal, each of which is a part of a part of the world.

[41] According to this explanation, the entire world is a contingent existent which cannot exist without the necessary existent. Inevitably, the creator of the world [that is, the Universal Intellect] has to be a necessary existent, because if we say that it is a contingent existent, then it should also have a necessary existent. Then let us stop at this point [and say] that the originator of the world is a necessary existent whereas the world itself is a contingent existent, just as a palm-date is like a contingent existent because from it the palm-tree may or may not come into existence. Since, as we mentioned, the existent is of two kinds and both of them are species, and whatsoever is a species must have a genus, it is inevitable for the genus to be superior to both species, the necessary and the contingent, in rank and not in time or anything else. That is the Command of God – may His name be mighty – which is the Absolute Existent (*hast-i mutlaq*), the existent which has come into existence from non-existence. Under it there are the necessary existent, which is the [Universal] Intellect, and the contingent existent, that is, the [Universal] Soul which is under the Intellect. The Soul has the potential, through effort, to become one day like its source (*aşl*), just as it is possible for a date-stone to grow one day into a palm-tree. But it is not befitting for God to be a genus, because the status of genus is given only to that which has species under it. The genus then is like the cause and the species like its effect. It is not befitting for God to be either the cause or the effect, and it is therefore not appropriate to say that God is an existent. It should be known that the Absolute Existent [the Command of God] is originated by Him, and His ipseity transcends existence [and] its opposite which is non-existence.

[42] It should be known further that whatever has one rank is superior and prior to that which consists of many ranks. The necessary existent has one rank. The contingent existent, which is intermediate between existence and non-existence, has three ranks: the spatial existent, the temporal existent, and the relative existent. The spatial existent [is exemplified in the statement] ‘there are dates in Kirman’ or ‘there are stars in the sky’; the temporal existent [in] ‘there is light in the day’; and the relative existent [in] ‘man has speech’ or ‘a cow has hooves’. All these ranks are included in the contingent existence. [Since] the contingent existent has ranks whereas the necessary existent does not, we come to know that the contingent existent is lower in rank than the necessary existent and is dependent on it for existence. The necessary existent is one, just as the genus of animal, which is like the necessary existent, is one, whereas bird and rational animal [mankind], which are species under it, are contingent existents. The existence of bird, reptile, and man depends on the existence of the [genus] animal; if you remove the animal, all these species would [also] be removed. Thus, if in imagination you remove the necessary existent, the contingent existents would also be removed. Attain so that you may know! Recognize so that you may be liberated!

79 On the Meanings of ‘no-thing’ and ‘is not’

[43] O brother! You asked: ‘How should we understand [the word] “no-thing” (*na-chīz*) and how should we recognize “is not” (*nīst*)? Is there any difference between “no-thing” and “is not”, or do they have the same meaning as “thing” (*chīz*) and “is” (*hast*)? Explain so that we may know.’

[44] Know, O brother, that a group of people claim that ‘no-thing’ and ‘is not’ are only two names, otherwise they are one [in meaning]; similarly they say that ‘thing’ and ‘is’ both have the same meaning. If you have understood [this, know] that the word (*nām*) ‘thing’ is not applicable except to the meaning (*dhāt*) which is attainable (*yāftanī*), and the word ‘is’ is applica-

ble only to a thing with respect to the present time in which it is found, not with respect to the past nor with respect to the future. [This is] because time is of three modes: the past which has elapsed, the future which is going to come such as tomorrow or the next year, and the present such as today or this year. The word 'is' is applicable to a thing only with respect to the present time, not with respect to the past or the future. Thus, we should not say 'yesterday is hot' or 'tomorrow is cold'; rather we should say 'today is hot' or 'this year is cold'. It would be absurd to say that 'is' and 'thing' are both one and have the same meaning, or to say that 'no-thing' and 'is not' have the same meaning. If it were possible to say so, then [in the case of 'no-thing' and 'is not'] we would have said 'so and so *no-thing*' a thing' in the sense of 'so and so *does not* have a thing,' or we would say '*is not* belongs to so and so' in the sense of '*no-thing* belongs to so and so'; [likewise], if 'is' and 'thing' were both one and the same thing, it would have been permissible for us to say 'so and so does not have an *is*' [in the sense of] 'so and so does not have a *thing*'.

[45] As for the word 'no-thing', it should be known that it means to nullify a thing by applying the prefix 'no' (*na*) to a thing which has an attainable meaning; otherwise if 'no-thing' necessarily had a meaning which could be applied to it or to which it was possible to indicate, then it would itself have been a thing. Logically, when the word 'no' is prefixed to anything, that thing should have a meaning; but this is impossible because when you prefix the word 'no' or 'non' to one of the things or names, [you are negating] that particular thing or name to which you have applied the prefix and not any other thing apart from it. For instance, if someone says 'no-wall', this utterance is not applicable to anything; or if he says 'no-cow' or 'no-man', here a meaning does not become necessary. However, when the word 'no' or 'non' is prefixed to a name or a thing that comes alternately after another thing and between which there is no intermediary [state] – such as day and night, blind and seeing, odd and even – then the name of that [second] which follows

[the first] becomes established. Thus, if you say 'no-night', this amounts to saying 'day', or if you say 'non-hearing', this amounts to saying 'deaf', or if you say 'non-blind', this amounts to saying 'seeing'. But if the word 'no' or 'non' is prefixed to the word 'is', then inevitably it is applied either to the past or to the future, and you would have said that something has been or will be. [The expression] 'has been' signifies the past and 'will be' the future; the former is a sign of the past and the latter of the future. [For instance], when you say 'there is no night,' it refers to something which has been in the past or will be in the future, but does not exist at the [present] time which is intermediate between these two times; it is a sign of a thing which has been in the past or will be [in the future].

[46] Thus, we have established that [the meaning of] *nīst* ('is not') is not free from being either time which has passed or time which has not come, but it is not time in the present. For instance, in summer you may say, 'it is not spring, it is *Tīr-māh*,' in which one [the spring] is past and the other [the first month of summer] is present; but you cannot say [at the same time] 'it is not summer,' because it is the present time and 'is not' does not apply to the present. Thus, it has been explained that the meaning of 'no-thing' is not equal to that of 'is not' because the word 'no-thing' is not applicable to all the three [tenses] – that is, you cannot say that 'no-thing is not,' or 'no-thing has not been' or 'no-thing will not be,' [whereas 'is not' is applicable to both the past and the future]. Attain so that you may know! Recognize so that you may be liberated!

8❀ On the Nature of the Human Soul

[47] O brother! You asked about the doctrine of a group who say that the human soul is nothing but the equilibrium of elements (*i'tidāl-i ṭabā'i*), and that when the elements come together appropriately, they reach a point where movement and knowledge are generated. [The group] supports this doctrine by the argument that when the body loses its equilibrium, the soul ceases to exist. Thus, the soul is nothing but the equilibrium

of elements, and when they return to their origins, the soul ceases to exist. If this is so, then you have neither reward nor punishment [for the soul in the hereafter]. You wanted a categorical answer to be given in this connection, so that you may refute this doctrine and have a firm belief in the survival of the soul, and so that observance of the Holy Prophet's law (*sharī'at*) becomes pleasant. You will learn that the soul is not the equilibrium of elements such that when they return to their origins it ceases to survive; rather the soul is something other than the equilibrium of the elements. Peace!

[48] Know, O brother, that had there not been 'how' and 'why', then all people would have been wise, and had there not been someone to answer the questioner, then truth would not have been distinguishable from falsehood. Thus, by divine help, we say in response to that group who say that the soul is nothing but the equilibrium [of elements], that this equilibrium which they claim to be the soul is not free from being either substance or accident. If the soul is a substance [in] equilibrium, then it is [different from] the origins from which it comes into existence, [in which case] it would be the fifth element, not [a mixture of] the four elements. Then let them show us that fifth one which comes forth from these four elements but is not from them, the one which is harmonious whereas these four are [discordant], so that we may see it as we see these four. But they are not able to find that harmonious one which they claim to have come forth from the four elements which are different and not in equilibrium. They are unable to do so because it is absurd for someone to say that a body can produce another body by itself. Thus, it is evident that what they claim [to be the soul] is not a substance. Had it been a substance [composed of the elements], it would have been visible and accessible like they are visible and accessible [to our senses].

[49] Then, inevitably, the equilibrium which they claim to be the soul will be called by them an accident (*'arad*). If they say that it is an accident, then they cannot say that it has action, because an accident is that which cannot subsist on its own,

and action does not come into being from that which is not self-subsistent. Moreover, since the accident itself is an action [of an agent], it is not possible for that action to produce another action [on its own], just as it is not possible for a body to produce another body or to be originated by itself. And since that which is called equilibrium has no action, then those actions which we find from the soul – such as comprehension of things, discrimination of one thing from another, and so on – these do not belong to the equilibrium which they claim to be the soul. It is evident, therefore, that since equilibrium does not have action, their claim that it is the soul is false.

[50] Another answer we give to the one who says that the soul is the equilibrium of elements is that whereas the elements are hot, cold, wet, and dry, equilibrium is neither hot nor cold, neither wet nor dry. Had it been possible to originate from hot, cold, wet, and dry, something which is neither hot nor cold, neither wet nor dry, then it would also have been possible for fire to produce cold and for snow [to generate] heat. But this is absurd and impossible, [just as] it is equally absurd and impossible to say that something harmonious originates from different elements and which contains within itself nothing of them. If it were possible for the harmonious to originate from opposite elements, then it would also have been possible for something opposite to emerge from the harmonious. Then there would not be any difference between the one who says that these four opposites originate a harmonious thing [which they call the soul], and the one who says that it [the soul] consists of equilibrium and harmony, whose essence is the same without differentiation, and which originates death as well as life, blindness as well as sight, health as well as illness. This argument is absurd and no intelligent person would accept it. And if, according to their claim, one says that the soul is the equilibrium of elements, then opposite actions should not come forth from it because, as we have already explained, the opposite does not come from the harmonious. [But] the soul is that from which comes both generosity and parsimony, bravery and

cowardice, piety and impiety, which makes it clear that it is not the equilibrium of the elements. Similarly, when two white bodies come together, it is not possible to originate something other than white, just as when two black bodies come together, there comes forth nothing but a black thing. [Hence], it is impossible and absurd to originate something harmonious from opposite things when they come together; and since the elements are opposite to one another, it is not possible that from their gathering there should originate something harmonious without any differentiation in it.

[51] Thus, we have established that the soul is not the equilibrium [of elements]. It is a substance which brings opposite elements into harmony and puts them together by the power with which God has endowed it. And great is the wisdom which appears to the soul in its resurrection after [leaving] the body. As God says in the following verse after a detailed description of creation one after the other: 'And certainly We created man from a quintessence of clay, then We placed him as [a drop of] sperm in an unshakeable place, then We made the sperm a clot, then We made the clot a lump of flesh, then We made the lump of flesh bones, then We clothed the bones with flesh, then We made him another creation. So blessed is God, the best of Creators' (23:12–14). Then He has said: 'After that you will most surely die. Then surely on the Day of Resurrection you shall be raised' (23:15–16). If this were not the purpose of creation, then no wisdom would have appeared in this world. But the soul, which brings together these opposite [elements] in the body, leaves them again. If it separates from them with the recognition of the Creator and in obedience and worship, then it will remain in the eternal world in delight, but if it does not acquire knowledge and departs in ignorance and disobedience, then it will remain in hell. Attain so that you may know! Recognize so that you may be liberated!

9 ❀ On the Soul's Existence and Self-subsistence

[52] O brother! You asked about the soul: 'Does it exist or not, and is it self-subsistent or does its subsistence depend on the body? Is it from among substances or from accidents? What is the proof that the soul is a substance and self-subsistent when we do not find it without a body, and without a body no action should come forth from it? Demonstrate [the proof] that we may know.'

[53] Know, O brother, that our bodies are alive because of the soul, and the proof of the soundness of this statement is that our bodies are moveable and that whatever is moveable, its movement is [caused] either from outside or from inside. An entity whose movement is [caused] from outside is moved [either] by another entity, as wind moves a tree or water moves a water-wheel and a boat, or another entity pulls it towards itself, as an ox pulls a windlass and a magnet pulls iron. [However], our bodies move [voluntarily] without being pulled or repulsed by something else. Since the movement of our bodies is not [caused] from outside, it must of necessity be from inside. The movement of an entity which comes from inside is either natural [physical] or spiritual. [The entity with] natural movement is that which never rests and does not alter from one state into another. As for our bodies, sometimes they move and sometimes they rest as long as the soul is with them, but they become [inactive] when the soul parts from them. Thus, it is evident that the movement of our bodies is not due to a physical [cause]; had it been physical, they would not become [motionless] by the separation of the soul from them. The movement of our bodies is caused by the soul.

[54] From this explanation it becomes clear that it is the soul which keeps our bodies alive and that the souls of our bodies subsist by themselves. The soul is a substance and self-subsistent, the mover and keeper alive of the body. The body is not a substance, nor self-subsistent, nor is it the mover of a substance, since the mover by necessity is [another] substance. The soul

which moves the body is a substance [because] the definition of a substance is that it admits opposite things, and yet [its essence always] remains the same; its state does not change from one to another by admitting them. Thus, the human soul admits opposite things, such as speaking and hearing, movement and rest, bravery and cowardice, and so on.

[55] As for the statement that the action of the soul does not come into existence without a body, the answer is that the action of the soul is to know, and in order to know it does not need a body. But when the soul wants to portray [the form of] that knowledge on a [material] body, it seeks the help of the [human] body which is linked to it, and it is able to do this because of compatibility [between the two bodies]. Ask so that you may know! Comprehend so that you may be liberated!

10 ❀ On the Definition of Substance

[56] O brother! You asked: 'What is substance (*jawhar*), how many kinds of it are there, and what is each one called? Are we permitted to call God substance or not?'

[57] Know, O brother, that substance is called genus of genera or *summum genus* [that is, the supreme genus], under which comes everything because all existents are under and within it. Substance has two species: one is called simple (*baṣīṭ*), that is dispersed, and the other compound (*murakkab*), which is mixed. [So] when you are asked what substance is, say that it is that whose essence is one, which brings together opposite things without changing its own state. When you are asked how many kinds of substance there are, say that there are two kinds, one is simple and the other compound. If you are asked which one is simple, say that it is the soul; and if you are asked which one is the compound, say it is this entire world and all things within it. If you are asked what opposite things the soul has brought together without changing its own state, say knowledge and ignorance, goodness and badness, well-being and mischief. And if you are asked what opposite things has the world brought

together, say that it has brought together the six directions of which each one is opposite to another – that is, above and below, left and right, front and back – all three [pairs] being opposite to one another, like earth, water, air, and fire, or like light and darkness, which are [also] opposite to each other.

[58] This is the definition of a simple substance and a compound substance, so that you may know that, according to our explanation of the definition, it is not permissible to call and know God as substance. When substance has this definition, then it is defined, and that which is defined is incapable of coming out of its definition. A definition necessitates a definer who has enclosed a substance within the domain [of that definition]. So that the wise may know, [we say]: that which is [confined] in a definition or a boundary does not deserve to be [called] God. He who keeps it in its defined boundary is God who is free from substance and accident, and all things are contained within the enclosure of His creation. As God says: ‘He created everything and measured it as ought to be measured’ (25:2). This is the measure of substance. Study so that you may know! Recognize so that you may be liberated!

11 ☸On the Soul’s Relation with the Body

[59] O brother! You asked: ‘How and where in the body is the human soul? Previously you have established that the movement of the human body is [caused by the soul] from within. Explain how [the soul] is inside [the body]? Is it like someone who is in a house, and if that is the case how is it that when its ways are closed, the soul can leave the body all at once?’ Peace!

[60] Know, O brother, that one entity can be within another entity in twelve different ways: first, it is as a part in the whole, such as a hand or a foot in the human body; the second is as the whole in the part, as is the human body in its organs, which is the totality of the organs; the third is as water in a pitcher; the fourth is as an accident in a substance, such as the whiteness of hair in old age; the fifth is as one thing mixed with

another, such as vinegar and honey which is called oxymel; the sixth is as a captain in a ship; the seventh is like a king in a country; the eighth is like a genus in a species such as animal in man, that is to say, man is a species of animal and animal is included in man; the ninth is like a species in a genus, as man is in animal; the tenth is as form in matter, as is the form of a signet ring [set] in silver; the eleventh is as matter in form, as is silver in the form of a signet ring; and the twelfth is as an entity in time.

[61] It is inevitable, therefore, that the soul in the body must be like one of these [twelve] ways which have been mentioned. We say that the soul in the body is not like a part in the whole, as is a hand in the human body, because the hand is of the body but the soul is not of the body. Also, the soul in the body is not like the whole in its parts, because the whole of the organs is the body, that is, the body is nothing but the organs, but the soul itself is not the body, rather it is a different substance. Also, the soul in the body is not like water in a pitcher or jar, [because] the jar or pitcher is a place for water, but the soul does not need a place [in which to locate itself]. Also, the soul in the body is not like a captain in a ship, in that the captain is in one place and the rest [of the ship] is devoid of him, but in the human body there is no place devoid of the soul; if a place were to be devoid of it, that place would not be alive and moveable. Also, the soul in the body is not like an accident in a substance, because the soul itself is a substance and not an accident; and when an accident leaves a substance, the substance remains in its state, but the body does not remain in its state when the soul leaves it. Also, the soul in the body is not like vinegar and honey in oxymel, because vinegar and honey have both changed from their states; wherever such a thing is mixed its state changes, as when you mix vinegar and water neither remains in its previous state, but the soul and the body remain in their state despite being mingled. Also, the soul in the body is not like a species in a genus as man is in animal, in that both are alike in eating and reproduction, but the soul leaves the

body and is [therefore] not its species. Also, the soul in the body is not like a genus in a species as animal is in man, since genus and species are linked together in many aspects except in their form which is different, but the soul has no connection with the body as a genus because the soul is subtle and the body is dense. Also, the soul in the body is not like an entity in time, because time is prior to an entity which is in time and comes into being in time, but the body has not been and is not prior to the soul.

[62] We say, therefore, that the soul in the body is like a subtle form in dense matter, as is the form of a signet ring in silver, because the soul is subtle like the form and matter is dense like the body, and the soul is not the body. Ask so that you may know! Learn so that you may be liberated!

PART III

Physics

12 ☉ On the Generation of the World

[63] O brother! You asked: 'What is the proof that the world is generated (*muhdath*) and has an originator? A group of people say that it is eternal and has neither a beginning nor an end. They argue that it is not possible for a thing to increase or decrease in the world, and that whatever appears to us as increase is [derived] from it, because [all] productions and existents come out of the four elements. Anything which does not increase or decrease is therefore eternal, without beginning or end. In the assertion of this argument, there lies the falsification of religion and the affirmation of unbelief (*kufṛ*). We wished that a peremptory explanation be given about the generated nature of the world, so that thereby the heart of the believers may be strong and religion become venerable to all, and we may, God willing, have the reward of both the worlds.'

[64] Know, O brother, that the world in its entirety is a body: one part of it is inanimate, another part is vegetative, and the third is animal. Whatever part of it is inanimate, such as stone, sand, dust, water, and so on, is not free from gathering together and dispersing, from movement and rest; that which is vegetative is not free from growing and decreasing; that which is animal is not free from life and death, health and illness, appearing and disappearing; and that which is human is not free from the states mentioned [above], as well as from knowledge and ignorance, pain and comfort, and so on. [All] these states which we mentioned are generated, and the proof of their generation is that each one of them disappears when its [opposite] equal appears in the body, because it is not possible for these

two states to be together in one body, or to describe the body in terms of both of these states. Thus, the body is either moveable or immovable, and man is either wise or ignorant, either ill or healthy, and it cannot be said that an ill person is healthy or that a moveable thing is immovable. When such is the state of a body, and the world is a body, it is not free from generation. Thus, it is evident that the world is generated, because it is a body that accepts the states of generation.

[65] The second proof for the generation of the world is that [since] the world is a body, and a body is not free from movement and rest which are both generated [states], anything that did not exist prior to a generated state must itself be generated. [As] the world did not exist prior to movement and rest, we know that it is generated because it resembles [these generated states].

[66] The third proof of the fact that the world is generated is that increase and decrease continue to take place in the elements which are its parts, and similarly in plants and animals. That which is subject to increase and decrease is generated, because the condition of the generated is that [previously] it did not exist, then it came into existence. Since the attribute of increase means the becoming of a thing which [previously] did not exist, and the attribute of decrease is the disappearance of a thing which had existed before, the world in which these two generated attributes take place is therefore inevitably generated.

[67] The fourth proof is that all things which are existent indicate someone who has existentiated them. For instance, speech is one of the existent things, and writing is also an existent thing, [although they are] far away from each other in [the nature of] their existence, and both indicate their existentiator [that is, the human being]. This world in its totality is an existent, and even though there are [many] opposite things in it, everything in it indicates its existentiator. Since every existent

has an existentiator, it is evident that the world has an existentiator, and that which has an existentiator is generated.

[68] The fifth proof we assert to the Dahrites [materialists] is that the world is not free from one of these two states: either it has never been subjected to generation or it is subjected to it. If they say that it has never been subject to generation, then we see that the [changing] state of the world – which alternates between cold and heat, light and darkness, production [and dissolution], and so on – establishes them to be liars. And if they say that the world is subject to generation, then a thing which is subject to generation must itself be generated, because such [states] do not occur except in a generated entity, whereas the state of the eternal does not change. Hence, the world which accepts [such states of] generation is [necessarily] generated.

[69] The sixth proof for the generation of the world is that whatever exists in it is under the four elements, which [by their very nature] keep apart from one another. But when these elements gather together in plants and animals, we know that they do not come together because of their natures; rather there is something which brings them together by force. Thus, the world [is held together] by a force, and whatever is forced is generated because the enforcer precedes it. Study so that you may know! Recognize so that you may be liberated!

13§ On the Two Kinds of Matter

[70] O brother! You asked: ‘What is *hayūlā* (matter), of how many kinds is it, and what is [meant by] this name? Show us so that we may know.’

[71] Know, O brother, that the word *hayūlā* is taken from Arabic; in Persian it means the prime formation (*ārāsta-yi auwal*). *Hayūlā* or matter is of two kinds, one is absolute and the other is relative. The relative is like wood to a chair, that is, wood which is prepared and arranged to form a chair. Similarly, the [relative] matter of a signet ring is the silver which has been

prepared and arranged [to make it]. The absolute is that which is not perceptible without form, [unlike] wood and silver which are perceptible without the forms of the chair and the signet ring. [This] absolute matter which is intelligible [to the intellect] but not perceptible [to the senses] is called prime matter (*hayūlā-yi nukhust*). [In the case of relative matter], the chair is perceptible, the wood which constitutes its matter is also perceptible, and we know that first there was the wood from which the chair was made. [In the case of absolute matter, its relation] to the elements is like that of wood to the chair, since we know that wood is grown from earth with the help of water, air and fire.

[72] The [four] elements also need matter, because each of them has length, width, and depth, and it accepts heat, coldness, wetness, and dryness. We say that each of these four elements also needs matter in order to embrace length, width, and depth which are all subtle [properties, just as] heat, coldness, wetness, and dryness also need something to accept them. When wood takes the form of a chair, the term 'wood' is superseded by the term 'chair' which is given to it. Similarly, prime matter whose existence can be established by the intellect, when it takes length, width, and height, it inevitably becomes the fourth of these three properties, because for it to accept [these dimensions], first there has to be a thing. Thus, that thing is absolute matter in which these properties reside, and when they appear in it, then the term 'matter' is dropped and the body's name applied to it. That prime matter is intelligible and not perceptible, and the perceptible is indication of the intelligible. Ask so that you may know! Recognize so that you may be liberated!

14☉ On Form and its Relation to Matter

[73] O brother! You asked: 'What is form (*śūrat*), of how many kinds is it, and what is each one called? Why are form and matter mentioned together? If they cannot be separated from each other and found separately, then why do they have two [different] names? Explain so that we may know.'

[74] Know, O brother, that form, which is called *chihra* in Persian, is not perceptible without matter. But form without matter is intelligible to the soul, just as the form of a chair is first [conceived] in the soul of the carpenter, then he brings it forth on wood which is its matter, [at which point] it becomes possible for the senses to perceive it, as has already been discussed. In [our response] to the inquiry on matter, we have explained that relative matter [is perceptible to the senses] because it is like the wood of a chair or the silver of a signet ring, but absolute matter is intelligible only to the intellect. Similarly, form is also of two kinds: one is relative and the other absolute. The relative is like the [form] of a square or a sphere in a thing, or other shapes such as that of plants and animals, of which each has a specific form which does not disappear unless that thing disappears [too]. Just as the [form] of a square object does not disappear from it unless it disappears or assumes another form, similarly, so long as plants and animals do not change from the state in which they are and do not become other things, their forms do not leave them. Thus, we say that relative form is that which does not leave a thing except by the disappearance of that thing.

[75] The absolute form of a thing is that by which it is distinguished [essentially] from another thing – just as the absolute form of gold is in its pulverized and melted state, which is its essence (*ma' nī*) by which it is distinguished from wood and stone – and that form is intelligible. Similarly, the absolute form of silver is that essence by which it becomes distinguishable from gold and lead. In logical definition, every absolute form is called differentia (*faṣṭ*), namely, that essence of a thing by

which it is distinguished from another thing; [and] each one of these forms [is divided into] branches (*furū* '). In the physical world whatever exists has a form and is recognized by that form. And it is God – may He be hallowed – who joins in a pair the subtle form with dense matter, because both subtlety and density are originated by Him with His perfect wisdom. He has joined form with matter in such a way that the creatures are unable to distinguish one from the other with either sense or estimation. God, to whom belongs this creation, is free from resembling His creations such as matter and form which are His possessions. Study so that you may know! Recognize so that you may be liberated!

15❶ On the Movement of Material Particles

[76] O brother! You have asked that when the sun shines through the window of a house, why is it that we can see particles (*dharrāhā*) on the line [of its rays] and not in other places, and what is the source of these particles moving around in the air? Some of them move in every direction and some of them circulate as they move towards the earth. Why do they all not move in one direction if their origin is one? Peace!

[77] Know, O brother, that the particles which you see moving in the air are minute grains of soil eroded from the earth by the air which surrounds it. These particles, which are extremely tiny, hang in the air because of the [relationship] in lightness between them and the air. Since air is light and soil is heavy, that part of the soil which is pulverized becomes mixed with the air. Also among the particles are fragments of leaves and hair from plants and animals, which receive their [sustenance] from water and soil. [When] leaves and hair [disintegrate], whatever comes out of them, the part that belongs to water turns into vapour, and the part that belongs to soil, which is extremely tiny, is moved, embraced, and carried away by the air. Air is a light, moist, and humid body. The vapours which arise from earth and water [in the form of] mist and clouds are moved by the air. [Similarly], from the smoke which rises

from the burning of plants, whatever is moist in it turns into vapour, and whatever is dry turns into particles of dust. Since the particles are extremely light and tiny, the air receives them, and they [fill] the entire [atmosphere] of the world.

[78] These particles cannot be seen in the desert because of the uniformity of the light of the sun and the colour of [the particles in] the air; since the particles are of the same colour and not opposite to one another, they are not discernible. However, when sunlight enters a house through a window, its line of radiation is illumined and the particles on that line become bright, in the same way as other bodies become lit up by the sun; but these particles are extremely tiny and pulverized. When the entire house except for that one line of light is dark, the light becomes condensed in the darkness, thus making the particles visible. Since darkness is opposite to light and keeps light away from itself, when light [emerges] separate from the dark, it becomes visible. In this way one opposite is recognized from another.

[79] With regard to your inquiry that if all particles are from the earth, why some of them come down and some move in other directions, the answer is that the particles of earth, plants, and animals carried by the air are different [in size and weight]: some of them are smaller and others bigger, because the plants and animals [from which they come] are similarly small and large. The particles of leaves and hair from plants and animals which are stronger are larger, and of those which are weaker are smaller. Those particles which are smaller and lighter move around in the air, whereas those which are [larger] and heavier incline towards the earth.

[80] The same is the case with the breath of man which during winter comes out from the mouth [in the form of] vapour and can be seen because the air is cold; but the breath cannot be seen in summer. The reason for seeing it in winter is that those vapours which emerge from the mouth are warm and opposite

to the air of winter which is cold, [thus making] the breath rise in the air due to the heat which is in it. The breath is opposite to the cold air of winter in two ways, in warmth and pressure, and because of these states of opposition, it is condensed between them and becomes visible. [Normally], two opposites do not accept each other, the one keeps away from the other, but when they come together in one place, they become visible to the sense of sight. Study so that you may know! Recognize so that, God willing, you may be liberated!

16☉ On the Physical and the Spiritual Worlds

[81] O brother! You asked: 'What is the [meaning of] *'ālam* [world] and what is that entity to which this name applies? How should we describe the world in its entirety? And how many worlds are there? Explain so that we may recognize.'

[82] Know, O brother, that the name *'ālam* is derived from [the word] *'ilm* (knowledge), because the traces of knowledge are evident in [all] parts of the physical world. Thus, we say that the very constitution (*nihād*) of the world is based on a profound wisdom. [This is demonstrated, for instance] in the pairing of the [four] elements, each one of which is harmonious with and different from the other. [Thus], fire and air are a pair with respect to heat, but different from each other with respect to wetness and dryness; water and air are a pair with respect to wetness, but different from each other with respect to heat and coldness; water and earth are a pair with respect to coldness, but different from each other with respect to wetness and dryness; earth and fire are a pair with respect to dryness, but different from each other with respect to coldness and heat.

[83] So it is because of this pairing of the elements that the world remains stable and does not disintegrate, and it is because of the differences and separateness between them that they oppose one another and do not mingle or become one. If all of them had become one, then the products of this world, which are the plants and animals, would not have come into

existence – just as children do not come into existence either from a man or a woman alone, unless there are two persons who are in accord with each other on the one side, and different on the other side. Thus, a child is born from a man and a woman who are in accord with respect to species and different with respect to [gender], but if they are in accord in both species and [gender], a child does not come into being. [The same is the case with] the pairs [of elements] which we mentioned. Thus, it is difficult to count the traces of knowledge and wisdom which are [to be found] in the constitution of the world.

[84] There are similar traces of knowledge in all parts of the world, such as in the status and limit of each of the elements, and in the movement of each planet in its sphere according to its pace (*raftan*). These traces of knowledge are similarly visible in the products of the world, such as the way every plant protects its fruit and seed, and absorbs heavenly and earthly benefits to itself. They are also visible in animals, such as the way they recognize how to escape [from danger], to protect their mates, and to keep themselves away from opposite species in mating, so that one species of animals does not mate with a different species and mingle with it.

[85] Thus, we say that the name *'ālam* which is applied to the world is with respect to the *'ilm* [knowledge manifest in it]. The entire world is encompassed by the attribute [of being] either beneficent or beneficiary, and the physical world [consists of] nothing but these two attributes. For instance, the spheres and the planets above are beneficents, and the elements below are beneficiaries. It is these two attributes which constitute the world, and nothing but these two kinds of attributes which we mentioned encompass the world. The spheres, planets, elements, plants, and animals are all included in these attributes. When someone says that if the attribute of the world is to be either beneficent or beneficiary, then a teacher and his pupil also [constitute] a world, since one [of them] is beneficent and the other beneficiary; and so do ani-

mals and plants [constitute] a world. Such syllogisms are many and it is therefore not appropriate for someone to say that there are no worlds other than this one. We will answer him that all those things which we mentioned are within this world; they are all parts and individuals of the world. And [the relation between] the whole and the part is like this: just as the entire [human] body consists of the head, hands, abdomen, back, and feet, which all together constitute the human body, similarly the spheres, planets, elements, plants, and animals together constitute the world, and the whole world consists of these parts which we mentioned. [This is one of] the explanations of how one thing can be in another thing.

[86] Just as there are two [kinds] of entities in this world, there are also two [different] worlds: one of them is the lower, physical, and dense world which we perceive with the senses, and the other is the higher, spiritual, and subtle world which we seek with [our] subtle souls. If [someone] asks what proof do you have that there is a world other than this world, we answer that we find in this world [certain] things which are not from it and do not belong to it, such as the rational soul and the comprehending intellect which constitute man. The [physical] world itself is devoid and deprived of these two noble things that are linked with our dense body which is like this [dense] world, and keep it living, moving, and producing. [The soul and the intellect] have exalted the human body over [other] parts of this world, because the parts of this world are the [four] elements without knowledge, whereas our body [consists of] these elements with knowledge. And he who knows is better than he who does not know, as God says: 'Are those who know and those who do not know alike? Only the men of intellect remember' (39:9). Thus, our bodies are superior to this [physical] world of ignorance.

[87] When we find that these two noble things, the soul and the intellect, are linked with the dense body which is a part of this world, we come to know by this proof that [the Universal

Soul and the Universal Intellect] of which our souls and intellects are parts, are also linked with this world; and the world is stable and alive because of them, just as our body is stable, alive, and noble because of our soul and intellect. Our body is nobler than this world because of the fact that this world in relation to the Soul and the Intellect is like a tree from its seed, and man is the fruit of it. Even though the tree is bigger than the fruit, in reality the seed in its totality is in the fruit when it appears, not in [any other part of] the tree. Since this [physical] world has the two attributes of being beneficent and beneficiary in shape and form, as we mentioned, the [spiritual] world which is the seed of this world must also have the same two attributes. If that subtle and hidden world which is the higher world did not have these attributes, then this dense and apparent world, the physical world which has come forth from that world, would not have come into existence with the same attributes.

[88] We say therefore that the subtle world also must have these two attributes of being beneficent and beneficiary. The beneficent is the Intellect and the beneficiary is the Soul, as we see in the apparent state [of human beings] that the ignorant soul becomes wise by receiving beneficence from the intellect. If someone asks what is the proof of the fact that the subtle world is nothing but the Intellect and the Soul, that the one is beneficent and the other beneficiary respectively, since there are many things in this world which are not in that world, we will answer him and say that the final product of the world is mankind, and what appears in the end is the proof of its origin. Just as when an almond tree or a walnut tree bears fruit, the wise know that the fruit has appeared because almond and walnut were planted in the beginning. The human being, who is the final product of the world, is born with respect to the body as either a man or a woman, or with respect to the soul as either a teacher or a pupil, so that from the physical pair the physical world [may become prosperous] and from the spiritual pair the world of religion may become prosperous.

[89] The first physical pair is Adam and Eve, [and] the spiritual pair is the *nāṭiq* (enunciator-prophet) and the *asās* (founder-imam). Just as physical generation is impossible without pairing, spiritual generation, that is, the production of knowledge, is impossible [without pairing]. But this [spiritual] pair did not learn from anyone, rather their knowledge was given (*ta' yīdī*). [Furthermore], the hidden ones are under the apparent ones, the proof of which is what God says about the attributes of both the worlds in these verses: 'By the night when it enshrouds, and by the day when it appears radiant, and by that which created male and female' (92:13). We say that the attributes of both the worlds are mentioned in these verses, in which there is an adjuration [from God]. The other world is hidden like the night and this world is apparent like the day, and that which created male and female is the Divine Command. In the spiritual world the male in reality is the Intellect and the female in reality is the Soul; and in the world of religion the male in reality is the *nāṭiq* and the female in reality is the *asās*. In the physical world that which is the best of its products is the human being who, according to these attributes, comes either as a man like the Intellect or as a woman like the Soul. Man comes like the higher [intellectual] world and woman like the lower [spiritual] world; the former is beneficent like the spheres and planets, and the latter is beneficiary like the elements.

[90] Thus, we have established that there are two worlds, and the attribute which has surrounded both is that of being either beneficent or beneficiary. Ask so that you may know! Recognize so that you may be liberated!

17 ❀ On the Ascent and Descent of Water

[91] O brother! You asked about water: 'When it comes down from above it relies upon the earth, as we see when it erodes stones and soil until it reaches low land; [but] when it rises to the peak of a mountain, it does not rely on the earth and stones but rises through the air, as we see when clouds and fog ascend

to the peaks of mountains and carry water there. According to wisdom and logic, if water relies on solid earth to come down, then it should also rely on the earth when it goes up, because it is easy for water to come down in comparison to going up; then why is it that in a state of ease water relies on the earth, but in a state of difficulty, on the air. Show us!’

[92] Know, O brother, that water is intermediate between [the elements of] earth and air. Do you not see that wherever all three come together, the earth is below, the water in the middle, and the air above them? If water were not intermediate between these two opposites, the conflict between them would have never ceased, because air is hot and wet, [whereas] earth is cold and dry, and both are hostile and opposite to each other in all aspects. Do you not see that when air and earth are involved in discord, how much they agitate, and the dust and disturbance do not stop until water mediates between them? Now, as we have mentioned, water is intermediate between earth and air, and this is according to the divine command. Since air and earth are opposite to each other, whenever water comes down from above, it relies on earth, [but] when rising up it has necessarily to rely on air which is opposite to earth. This is an answer which is weighed in the balance of intellect.

[93] If you are asked, when water comes down, why does it not rely on air so that when it goes up, it could have [conversely] relied on earth, we say that according to astronomy, water is like a man standing on the earth, on one side of whom there is a lofty minaret, and on the other a deep well. When he wants to go to the heavens, inevitably he has to go up the minaret, but when he wants to go to the centre of the earth, by necessity he has to go down through the well. Thus, that minaret is the air, one end of which is placed on water and the other is linked to the heavens through the sphere of ether, which is the centre of fire. And the well is this earth, one end of which is placed on water and the other end in a very far distant place from the fire, which is the centre of the earth, the point towards which all parts of the earth are inclining. That point is imaginary and

not a physical one. When water wants to be closer to the heavens, it should ascend via that minaret, one end of which is linked to water and the other end to the heavens. That minaret is the air. [But] when water wants to go down, it should do so via the well [one end of which is linked to the centre of the earth and] the other end to [water]. This is the cause. Recognize so that you may know! Learn so that you may be liberated!

18⊗ On the Precipitation of Water

[94] O brother! You asked: 'Sometimes water ascends to the heavens and falls on the peaks of mountains, and sometimes from [there it] comes down to the lowland. These two actions are opposite to one another, and opposite actions are performed by an animal which moves by its will, but you have explained earlier that the elements are not animals. Further, why is it that when water comes down, it is in the same [liquid] form, but when it goes up it is not in the same form, rather it is vapour? And why is it that water which comes down is more than what goes up, because huge streams always flow down, but clouds go up [only] occasionally? Thus, from where comes this addition [in the amount of water] by which the river increases? Explain so that we may know.'

[95] Know, O brother, that the movement of the elements is of two kinds: one is compulsive (*qasr̄*) and the other natural (*ṭabʿī*). As for the natural movement, it is like the inclination of water and earth towards their centre which is in the middle of the earth, and like the rising of air and fire to the edges of the world which is the centre of fire and the sphere of ether. The compulsive movement is like the ascent of clouds and fog from water towards the heavens, like the descent of fire from the ether through the light of the sun and stars, and like the rising up of a stone which man hurls into the air. Thus, we say that the ascent of clouds upwards is a compulsive movement, because when the heat of ethereal fire reaches the earth through the light of the sun and stars and warms the earth, the heat wants to return to its origin which is the fire. When the heat goes upwards, the subtleties (*laṭāfat-hā*) of water and earth

which have absorbed the heat rise with it, and because of their compatibility with heat, they rush [upwards] towards the ether, and the heat becomes a mount for them.

[96] The rising of the subtlety of water upwards is [in proportion to] the power of the fire which it receives, for nature has made it to incline towards fire and become hot. Thus, as soon as hot water begins to turn cold and heat is separated from it, the heat alone goes towards the ether which is its origin, and the water alone returns naturally towards its centre which is the earth; just as a stone when it is hurled towards the heavens, goes up because of the vehemence and force [behind it], and it comes [down] by natural inclination when the substance [momentum] of force has ceased in it. If both these opposite movements of earth and water [had been caused internally] by their natures, they would have been animals, not single elements; but the ascent of water upwards is a compulsory movement and its descent is a natural movement.

[97] As for your inquiry [of why is it] that when water comes down it is the very same ('*ayn*) [liquid], but when it rises up it is [in the form of] vapour, the answer is that when water rises it goes from the centre of density to the centre of subtlety, but so long as it does not acquire subtlety it cannot rise towards the fire which is subtle and invisible. When water is heated by fire and becomes hot, it changes its state [from dense to subtle], becomes invisible and adjoins the fire, after which it can rise towards the centre of the fire. However, when it descends, it has to come down from the centre of subtlety towards the centre of density, but as long as it does not become dense as before and the heat does not separate from it, it cannot return to the centre of the earth.

[98] With regard to your inquiry [as to why] the water which comes down [appears] more than that which rises, the answer is that the [total] quantity of water which God created has never increased or decreased a drop. When we see that snow remains

for many years on the peaks of mountains without melting, even though streams always flow from it, we know that there are many wide and open ways for water to rise; the water on the entire surface of the earth turns into vapour and rises in all places, scattering constantly. But [there are some places where] the water of rivers does not flow more than eighteen or twenty *parasangs* [= 94–105 km], and in such places as the Hijaz water does not flow at all and there is no river for 500 *parasangs* [= 2615 km] of the earth. But when the waters of rivers from different places gather [in one place], the inexperienced and untaught soul thinks that the water of rivers is more than the water from snows and rains. However, if someone experiments, he finds that [sometimes] rain comes down gently and smoothly, creating a little moisture on the ground, and yet from the same rain such a huge flood can come that [even] mountains and deserts cannot bear [its deluge]. You should know that from every mountain these rivers come down little by little, until they become great [and mighty torrents].

[99] Thus, when vapours rise up from the earth and water, and become scattered in the capacious air, they remain there as long as the air is hot and dry by the power of the sun, until the time when the sun inclines to the south and the heat starts to decrease; then those [warm] vapours become cool and they fall back [little by little] on the earth in the three seasons of autumn, winter, and spring, as can be seen. These are the answers to your three inquiries. Ask so that you may know! Recognize so that you may be liberated!

19* On the Scales of a Balance

[100] O brother! You asked about light and heavy things which are weighed in a balance. You asked: ‘Why does the scale of a balance in which there is a light thing ascend and why does the one in which there is a heavy thing descend?’ You wanted to know the reality of this [phenomenon], although it is well known among the people and everybody testifies to it. But you want to know it with insight (*başirat*). Peace!

[101] Know, O brother, that a wise person is the one who does not accept *taqlid*, which means to believe in a thing unknowingly, and the one who believes in it is a liar, according to what God says: 'When the hypocrites come to you, they say, "We bear witness that verily, you are the Messenger of Allah." Verily, Allah knows that you are His Messenger, and verily Allah bears witness that the hypocrites are indeed liars.' (63:1) In this verse, the judgement is passed that he who believes in a thing unknowingly is a liar. And this question which you have asked is not hidden from many people.

[102] Whoever has a little understanding admits that when you place two things on the scales of a balance, the heavy one descends and the light one ascends. It is possible to know the reality of this state when you know that from among the four elements the heaviest is earth, which has taken its place in the middle of the world and displaced the other three elements; then comes water which is lighter than earth and rests on its surface; air which is lighter than water and rests on its surface; and fire which, being the lightest, is at the edge of the world. Thus, earth is absolutely heavy and fire absolutely light, and as for the remaining two, water and air, their lightness and heaviness are relative. Thus, we say that water in comparison to earth is light, but in comparison to air it is heavy, and air in comparison to water is light but in comparison to fire it is heavy. If you want to know how water compared to earth is light and compared to air heavy, then note that the place of water is above the earth and below the air, which is akin to water saying, 'Below me is the earth because I am lighter than it, and above me is the air because I am heavier than it.' Similarly air, by its [position] between water and fire, says, 'I am lighter than water which is below me, but heavier than fire which is above me.' Therefore, O brother, you should not think that air is extremely light. Had it been so, it would not have laid on the surface of the water and the earth.

[103] Suppose someone says that if the connection of air with water and earth is the proof of its heaviness, then it is also connected from above with fire, which is the proof of its lightness, and by these two proofs it may be both light and heavy – but this is contradictory. The answer is that air is a body which has length, width, and height, and one end of it is connected with fire, not because of the fact that it is extremely light, but because of the fact that this world is filled with the four elements and no place in it is empty of them. [The space] between water and ethereal fire is filled with air, the particles of which lie upon one another. The particles of air which lie on the surface of water do not allow those particles which are above them to descend, just as those particles of earth which are closer to the centre of the earth and have become [firm] like pillars do not allow those particles which are on the earth's surface to descend there. Such is the position of earth and air. But when the air moves, its upper particles descend and lower particles ascend, because it is a fluid element, just as if you bring out the lower parts of earth, the parts which are above them will take their place. From this [explanation] you know that the state of air is like that of earth, for it is a body [like earth], but it is [light in relation to earth and] heavy in relation to fire.

[104] Once this order [of the elements] is understood, we say that when two things are placed on the scales of a balance, one light and the other heavy, the scale which is heavier descends and the one which is lighter ascends, because the light and the heavy have been lifted and weighed together from the same level of the earth, which is the centre of gravity. [It is] then by necessity that the heavier one descends and the lighter one ascends and rests, just as light water rests on heavy earth. Accordingly, the heavier one which descends towards the earth says, 'My place is lower than yours and I am more deserving to be at the centre of gravity which is the earth than you because you are light.' And the lighter one which ascends towards the air says, 'My place is higher than yours and I am more deserving of the centre of lightness which is the fire than you who are

heavy.' If you drop these two things, of which one is heavier than the other, from the same level in the air, the heavier one descends earlier to the earth, [just as] if you drop an apple and a leaf from the same level on top of an apple tree, first the apple descends to the earth [and then the leaf], because the air is compatible with the leaf in lightness and accepts it for a while. Thus, we say that the lighter thing inclines towards the earth from the balance, but since the heavier deserves to descend more quickly to the centre of gravity which is the earth, the beam of the balance with which [light and heavy things] compete, denies equality to [them]. Having become like a pillar, it does not allow the light to descend in place of the heavy one, just as those particles of earth which are at the center of the earth do not allow the upper particles to replace them. Recognize so that you may know! Study so that you may be liberated!

20 ❀ On the Growth of Plants and Trees

[105] O brother! You asked about plants from grass to the biggest trees, and you wanted to know why is it that when a tree grows it stretches out its head towards the heavens? [Also], what is wood produced from, since it resembles neither earth nor water?

[106] Know, O brother, that the science of the recognition of elements is extremely noble and has numerous benefits, because the physical world, the foundation of which is the elements, is like the body to the spiritual world, and unless the body is recognized, there is no way to recognize the soul. Just as action appears through the mediation of a body, inevitably it is this world through which the spiritual world can be recognized, and to know the existence of that living abode is possible [only] by knowing this inanimate (*murda*) abode. And it is by the recognition of both the worlds that the *tawhīd*, the Oneness of God, can be established and His majesty and grandeur [be recognized] – may His power be glorified – because this very physical world persists for the attainment of that invisible

world, so that [this world] may lead [us] to its recognition. [Therefore], he who does not know the world of the elements, his soul remains chained and confined by them, and he becomes blind in the next world. As for the king who rules [over this world of] elements but is negligent, he is [even] more blind, as God says: 'And whoever is blind in this [world], he is [also] blind in the hereafter, and far astray from [the right way].' (17:72)

[107] The example of the world of elements in the Kingdom of God is like the doorkeeper of a king to whom none of his subjects has admission without his knowledge; and the spiritual world, whose power and command are enforced in the world of the elements, is like the chamberlain of the king. Whoever does not know the doorkeeper of the king, nor his chamberlain and entourage, how can he know the king's majesty, grandeur, and power? Woe to the one who, without recognizing those who issue the command of God, thinks that he has recognized God! And it is inevitable that the one who seeks the path of *tawḥīd* without learning will fall into *tashbīḥ* [anthropomorphism] or *ta'ṭīl* [denial of God's existence]; for as He says: 'And they made some of the servants of God His partners. Verily, man is clearly ungrateful.' (43:15)

[108] Thus, it should be recognized that the work [of the world] is of two kinds: one is called natural and the other artificial. As for the natural, it is like the coagulation of gems in mines, and like [the growth of] plants and animals which are apparently produced by the elements. As for the artificial, it is [the productive work] which animals do, such as man. Further, the work which animals do is of two kinds: one is intermediate between the natural and the artificial, as is characteristic of a bee which makes honey, an oyster which makes pearls, a deer which makes musk, and a silk-worm which makes silk; the other really artificial kind [of work is that] which man does, such as [the production of] numerous crafts. The natural work and that which is intermediate between the natural and the artificial is

all transmuted from its origin, just as natural things like gems, plants, and animals are transmuted and changed from the four elements into another state. Even though the matter of all [these things] is from earth, water, air, and fire, all [of them] are transmuted to the extent that gems, plants, and animals do not resemble these four [elements] in the external state. That which is intermediate between the natural and the artificial, such as honey, pearls, and musk, is also far from resembling the elements, because the animals [which produce these things] have superiority over the elements by virtue of the fact that they are living things who have ceased to resemble the elements; thus, their work also has superiority over the work of the elements. As for the really artificial work, some of it is transmuted and some not transmuted; these are the crafts of man which are produced from these [natural and artificial] works of elements and animals, and mankind benefits from both of them.

[109] Thus, there is something in the work of man which resembles the work of the elements, such as the making of glass from stones and plants, or cornelian [agate] from one of the [different] kinds of stone, and enamel-work; all these things are artificial which resemble the natural. Again, among the works of man, there is something which resembles the work of animals, such as the making of butter from milk, or earthenware from earth and water, and producing [the colour] indigo from blue and yellow; all these crafts of man are transmuted from their origin like the natural. Also, there are things in the crafts of man which are transmuted from their origin, but because of the [application] of man's craftsmanship upon it, the original [material] becomes nobler, such as the manufacture of arms from iron, by which the product of iron becomes equal to silver, or like the weaving of brocade from silk and the making of precious garments. We say, therefore, that as man is the fruit of this world and all the powers of the world are gathered in him, [the works of all] the elements and animals are also gathered in him. However, because of his superiority over the animal kingdom due to the rational soul, he [is also capable

of] other crafts which resemble neither natural nor artificial crafts, such as to cut iron with iron, to mate the horse with the donkey in order to produce a mule, to command warrior-birds like the falcon to work, and to subjugate strong wild beasts like the elephant and the lion.

[110] When you have understood the disposition (*tartīb*) of this work or craft as mentioned, then you should know that the order of the generation of wood from water and earth is through the mediation of fire and air. When a seed or grain which produces a tree is planted in the soil, and the soil is made wet with the moisture of water and warmed by the heat of the sun from above, the soil moistens and dissolves the seed in the heat and the moisture [it has received]. When the seed dissolves, it absorbs, by the power which is in it, the moist soil within which it lies to grow more than what it was, and the [substance of the] moist soil which has merged with it turns into the seed's nature (*ṭab'*). [And as] the seed, by the power which is produced in it, [continues to] absorb the earth which is in its vicinity, the protoplasm (*māya-yi ḥayāt*) and the warmth of the sun pull it continuously upwards from that place. The seed grows vertically because the heat it receives from the fire [of the sun] comes from above. When the seed receives the substance (*māya*) of the soil that has dissolved in it, the heat which dissolves it rises and pulls [the substance] upwards with it so that [eventually the seed] raises its head [above the ground]. Thus, while the heat from [the sun] above pulls the seed upwards, on the other side the soil, which has been warmed by the heat, pulls it downwards [into the earth], where the dissolved seed continues to absorb [the soil] in order to reach the heat, [and as a result of this contest] it becomes taller.

[111] Thereafter, according to this process, the warm vapour which emerges from the branches [of the tree] ascends towards the centre of the fire, and the part of that vapour which the air congeals by its coldness grows into wood. And as much of the earth which becomes mingled and transmuted with the seed

because of the power which is in it, and which reaches up because of the power of the heat it receives from the sun, [that much] becomes wood, [since exposure to] the air makes it hard and fretted. At the other end, the seed becomes root under the earth. The root is soft because very little air reaches it, and by its softness it can absorb the goodness of the earth to itself and send it [as sap] upwards to accompany the heat of the sun; [but] the bark which has hardened on the outer side of the tree due to the dryness of the air does not allow [the sap] to emerge and congeal into wood. When the work of nature [such as] water or earth accepts a craft, it becomes transmuted from its [original] state, just as sweet-basil which, when it accepts the craft of a bee, turns into honey and in no way resembles sweet-basil. This is the cause of how wood is generated. Study so that you may know! Recognize so that you may be liberated!

PART IV

Theology

21 ❀ On the Qur'ān as the Speech of God

[112] O brother! You asked: 'A group of people say that the Qur'ān is the Speech of God and is not created, and if some people call it created, they are called unbelievers by them. Please explain the reality of it to us so that we may know.'

[113] Know, O brother, that there are many views about this inquiry held by every group. [Therefore, first] we will explain what every group has said and the arguments they have adduced; we will then show what the true path is, so that you will be firm on it and have correct belief about it. Thus, we say that people at large hold the view that the Qur'ān is the Speech of God and it should not be considered as being created. Their argument to support this belief, which they present from the Qur'ān, is this verse: 'Allah spoke to Moses as ought to be spoken' (4:164), and another [verse] in which God addressed His Prophet: "When We said to you, 'Verily, your Lord has encompassed the people'" (17:60). The people of this group also maintain that if someone says the Qur'ān is created, this is tantamount to describing God as being incapable – that is to say, He created the Qur'ān because He was incapable of speech – and that whoever so ascribes incapability to God's power is an unbeliever.

[114] The group who hold that the Qur'ān is created is known as the *mutakallimān* [theologians]. They argue that speech is not possible without palate, mouth, and tongue, and whoever attributes these organs to God is an unbeliever. However, they would agree if someone says that God spoke without palate

and tongue, [because] to speak without these organs would mean the creation of speech without speaking [as humans do]. The *mutakallimān* say that [God's] Speech is created in the sense that the Creator is its existentiator and originator; [thus], if the Qur'ān were not created by God, it would itself have been God.

[115] They [the *mutakallimān*] argue further [on whether] the Qur'ān is free from being eternal or generated [in the following manner]: 'If someone says that the Qur'ān is eternal and there has not been a time in which it did not exist, then since eternity is the attribute of God, he would have said that God and the Qur'ān are two eternals. This is the belief (*madhhab*) of the Dualists, but logically the eternal must not be [attributed to] more than one. Thus, the Creator is eternal and the Qur'ān is generated in the sense that it did not exist [previously] and then the Creator brought it into existence. When it is established that the Creator has brought it into existence, then [it follows that] the Qur'ān is generated and created, because it is the Creator who has brought all creatures into existence.'

[116] Then the group who say that the Qur'ān is not created [reply]: 'We do not say and have not said that there are two eternals; we would have said so if we [had meant] that the Qur'ān is other than God. We do not say that the Qur'ān is other than God; rather we say that it is the attribute of God, and God is attributed with it in the sense that He is the Speaker and this is His Speech, and as speech is the attribute of the speaker, the attribute is not separable from the attributable. Since God is always there, His attribute must also always be there. Thus, the Qur'ān is the Speech of God which is neither generated nor created.'

[117] The *mutakallimān* say in response: 'We know that the Qur'ān is the Speech of God, [but since it] neither speaks nor creates nor gives sustenance, then how is it permissible to com-

pare it to He who has created, who speaks and gives sustenance, and [even] to say that it is identical to Him? This is contradictory and the contradiction is a lie.' They say further: 'It is permissible for us to say that the Qur'ān is neither God's ipseity nor other than Him; rather it is His attribute, and the attribute is neither separate from the attributable nor [identical with] its essence. It is also permissible for us to say that the heavens, the earth, human beings, and other creatures are not separate from God; rather they are [caused by] His act, and the act is [defined as that which is] neither the ipseity of the agent nor is it other than the agent – just as you say that the Qur'ān is the attribute of God [in the sense] that the attribute is neither the ipseity of the attributable nor other than the attributable. And if you declare that the act is separate from the agent, we also maintain that the attribute is separate from the attributable.'

[118] The *mutakallimān* say: 'The Qur'ān is free from being either the ipseity of the Creator, or other than the Creator, or a part of the Creator. If they say it is the ipseity of the Creator, it is absurd because the Qur'ān does not create anything. If they say that it is other than the Creator, then they accept that it is created because whatever is other than the Creator is created. If they say that it is a part of the Creator, this is unbelief because it would amount to imputing imperfection to God.'

[119] The *mutakallimān* also say: 'If someone [objects] that we should not argue in this way, we shall tell them who should argue in this way. If they say that nobody should argue like this, we say that they should not command their adversary. If they say 'We would not use such arguments', we say to them that your desisting from argumentation cannot be a proof for you against your adversary. So we ask them: on what basis do you say this? Is it on the basis of the proof of the Qur'ān, or according to reason, or according to the way of [the people of] tradition and community (*sunnat wa jamā'at*)? In none of these ways is it mentioned that one should not speak with [rational] arguments.'

[120] The *mutakallimān* further say [about the group who hold that the Qur'ān is eternal]: 'They [claim that they] worship God and do not worship the Qur'ān, and what they worship is different from what they do not worship. [In this connection] God says: 'Is He Who creates like him who does not create? Why do you not remember then?' (16:17). Thus, we say to them that if He whom you worship is not like that which you do not worship, then definitely one is different [from the other]. And if both of them were to be eternal, then this would be purely the religion of the Dualists. There is invalidity of the Oneness of God (*tawhīd*) in this doctrine.

[121] The argument of the *mutakallimān* that the Qur'ān is created and generated is based on the verse in which God says: 'And never comes there unto them a new [*muḥdath*, generated] reminder (*dhikr*) from the Beneficent One, but they turn away from it.' (26:5) The *dhikr* is the Qur'ān, which God in this verse calls 'generated', and since that which is generated is created, the Qur'ān is also created. In another place He says: 'The command of God is done.' (4:47) The command of God is the Qur'ān and in this verse the Qur'ān is referred to as 'done', and since that which is done has been created, the Qur'ān is also created. In another place He says: 'The command of God is a determined measure.' (33:38) In this verse God calls the Qur'ān a 'measure', and [since] that which is measured is created, [the Qur'ān is also created]. In another place He says: '*Alif, Lām, Rā*'. [This is] a book whose verses are made firm, then separated from [Allah] the Wise, the Aware, that you should worship none but Allah.' (11:1-2)

[122] [The *mutakallimān* also] report that the Holy Prophet said: 'On the Day of Resurrection, [the Sūras] *Baqara* and *Āl-i 'Imrān* will come as if they are two clouds.' [They cite this saying in order to maintain that] God should not be described with what He has created. [These] are attributes of the Qur'ān and not of God, because had they been God's attributes, they would not have been [universally recognized] as attributes of

the Qur'ān. They argue further that the division of the Qur'ān into halves, fourths and sevenths is an attribute that does not befit God, because that which is divided into parts is created. The intention of the *mutakallimān* in quoting these verses and *ḥadīth* is to refute the doctrine of that group who say that the Qur'ān is the [uncreated and eternal] attribute of God. [Their purpose is to assert that] since all these verses are the attributes of the Qur'ān and not of God, the Qur'ān is not the attribute of God, rather it is created.

[123] Thus, if the masses ask, 'Is the Qur'ān created or Creator?' we would answer that God, whose speech is the Qur'ān, is the Creator, but His Speech is created. The speech is other than the speaker, because speech consists of inanimate and irrational letters, whereas the speaker is rational and animate. [The relation of the speech to the speaker is like that of the name to that which is named. In this connection], the *mutakallimān* say that the name is different from the named. If the name of a thing were identical to it, then whoever says 'a thousand dinars', he would have [in his possession] a thousand dinars, and whoever wanted to have wealth, the moment he utters 'wealth', he would have gold and silver. Also, they say that in the Qur'ān there are the names of [the Prophets] Adam, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad: if these names were identical to them, then what should we say about these Prophets? Should we say that they are sitting in the Qur'ān or in the book (*maṣḥaf*)? It is therefore established that the name is different from the named. Thus, *Lā ilāha illā huwa al-ḥayy al-qayyūm* (There is no God but He, the Everliving, the Everlasting), *al-Muṣawwir* (the Fashioner), [and such expressions in the Qur'ān] all refer to the attributes of God; but the statement, 'Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah and those who are with him are severe against infidels' (48:29), is not an attribute of God but the attribute of the Messenger and his followers. Every scripture is like this, a part of which [signifies] the attributes of God and a part the attributes of His servants.

[124] Whatever has been mentioned [on the Speech of God up to this point] is the doctrine of the masses and an account of the arguments of the *mutakallimān*. As for the doctrine of the people of truth (*ahl-i ḥaqq*) from among the followers of the family of the Messenger – may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him [and his family] – is that you should know that [both] the speaker and the speech which is his act are created by God. The precise proof of the soundness of this doctrine is that the speaker is an entity and his speech is also an entity. [In the words of the Qur'ān]: 'There is no God except Him, the Creator of all things, so worship Him.' (6:102) According to this verse, both the speaker as well as his speech are created by God, and this is the correct doctrine.

22* On the Divine Word as the First Cause

[125] O brother! You asked: 'What is the proof that the Divine Word (*kalima-yi bārī*) is eternal and the cause of all existents? What is the difference between the Word and the Intellect, and which of them is nobler? How should one recognize the Divine Word together with the Intellect, since it is said that the Intellect is not separate from the Word? How can two entities which are inseparable from one another exist?' You also wished that [through our answers to your inquiries], you may be able to recognize your origin with insight.

[126] Know, O brother, that we find the world to be [like] a worker who is ignorant. We know that the world does not work of its own, and since a thing that does not work of its own inevitably works by the command of someone else, it is evident that the world and what it contains work in accordance with the command of someone else. The work of an ignorant worker is in accordance with the command of a wise person, and this work is [expressed] in two ways, either by speech or by action; the action is inferior to speech because action belongs to [all] animals, whereas speech belongs [exclusively] to human beings.

[127] The relationship of command to action [is demonstrated] in the work of a wise man working with his limbs: his performance of that work is [the result of] a command [from the wise] to the ignorant. Thus, when a carpenter uses an axe with his hand, the axe which is ignorant obeys his command because the wise person has made it with wisdom and that wisdom is expressed in the work accordingly. For instance, when a millwright constructs a mill and fixes its instruments, it is able to work by virtue of the wisdom which it has received from him; therefore the wise person's use of his wisdom in making that mill represents a command from the wise to the ignorant. However, this is the command of action. As for the command of speech, it is superior to the command of action, because we see apparently that when a man says, 'Build a mansion for me', hundreds of workers and artisans, such as brick-makers, workers in clay, carpenters and iron-smiths, engage in work [for him].

[128] We say, therefore, that this command by which the world started to work was the Speech of God. And [since] the fewer the words spoken by the commander the more effective is his command, and [because] there is no number less than one, we say that the Speech of God was one Word – which in Arabic is called *kalima* and [in the Qur'ān] is mentioned by God as *kun* ('Be!') – and the Speech of God in this sense was the cause of the existence of the world. This is a clear explanation.

[129] With regard to your inquiry about the difference between the Word and the Intellect, this is an extremely important question, and higher than it there is neither a way for thought nor room for the speaker; it is as difficult [for me] to speak about this as it is difficult [for you] to listen to its explanation. [However], by the permission of the treasurer of the hidden knowledge, the trustee of the secret of God and provider of sustenance for the souls of the believers, the Imam of our time, Abū Tamīm Ma'add al-Mustanşir, the commander of the faithful, I will speak in short useful words free from redundancy.

May God grant you success to listen to it truly and to believe in it truly.

[130] We say that the Command of God, under which are all existents, was one Word; this is the Divine Word, as we explained, which was brought into existence from nothing by God's ipseity, and it is the First [or Absolute] Existent. God is above [both] the existent and the non-existent. The wise person knows that there is no intermediary between God's ipseity and His Word, because the Word itself is the first intermediary. Had there been any other intermediary involved in bringing it into existence, then it [the Word] would not have been the first intermediary and the First Existent. Thus, the Word came into existence [by God's ipseity] without any intermediary.

[131] The completeness [of the Word] is of the highest rank. This means that to whatever the name of existence is applicable, all that in its entirety has to be contained within the Word. [Now], the existents in their totality are either a cause or an effect, and nothing else. The cause is that which gives benefit and the effect is that which receives the benefit. For instance, the plant is the cause and the animal the effect, or the elements are the cause and the plant the effect. The cause is recognized from the effect in that if you remove the cause, the effect ceases to exist, but if you remove the effect, the cause does not cease to exist. Thus, if you remove the plant from the imagination, the animal ceases to exist, but if you remove the animal the plant does not cease to exist. In this sense, the cause is superior to the effect in that if you remove the cause, the effect ceases to exist, as we explained. When you have understood this state, then you should know that since God's Word has come into existence without any intermediary, it is absolutely complete; and since a complete entity is both cause and effect, the Divine Word is the source of both the causes and the effects [of all existents].

[132] Now, you should know that the Word is the Cause of all causes from one aspect, and from another it is both cause as well as effect because it is complete. And [since only] that is complete which is both cause and effect together so that whatever exists comes under it, the Word is the cause whose effect is together with it and not separate from it; had its effect been separate from it, like other [causes and] effects, then it would not have been complete because the effect is one of the existents [and all existents are contained in the Word]. Since, as we have already explained, the First Cause is both cause and effect, it may be established that the Divine Word is the cause of both the [spiritual and material] worlds, because both these worlds are nothing but cause and effect, in the sense that they are two entities, one as beneficent and the other as beneficiary.

[133] As for the difference between the Word and the Intellect, it is not the same as the difference between two perceptible things which are separate from each other; they are two only in speech, but in reality they are one and inseparable from each other. In order to bring them closer to the imagination, [their relationship is like that of] blackness and black, in that blackness is found only when one looks at [something that is coloured] black. Even though blackness exists in the essence of the [colour] black, the wise person knows that it [a black object] has received the name 'black' by virtue of its blackness and not because of anything else. The Word is called 'oneness' (*wahdat*) and the Intellect is called 'one' (*wāḥid*). Even though oneness makes its appearance in the one, the wise person knows that the one deserves to be called 'one' because oneness lies in it. We know that the Intellect is one in rank because whatever has received existence, which subsists by itself, and to which number is applicable, is called and known as 'one'. Anything which is known comes under the Intellect, and the Intellect is prior to that which comes under it, just as [the number one is prior to] whatever exists among the numbers; every one of them has the name of 'one', such as one thousand, one hundred, one ten, and so on. They have this name because of the fact

that the cause of all numbers is one, and beyond it there is no number. The number one actually exists in all numbers, but no number exists in one except in potentiality, because one is the cause of all numbers and all numbers are its effect, just as iron is actually in all swords but there is no sword in iron except potentially.

[134] Thus, we say that the Word is the First [or Absolute] Existent and it is complete, but the term 'completeness' is not appropriate for it until you know that it is both cause and effect. Since all causes in this world are connected to their effects and not detached from one another in the sense that when the cause is removed the effect ceases to exist, the First Cause, which is the [Divine] Word, is even more deserving not to be separate from its effect, [because] all existents come under its effect, which is the [Universal] Intellect. Study so that you may know! Recognize so that you may achieve liberation!

23 ❀ On the Kingdom of God and its Oneness

[135] O brother! You asked: 'What is the Kingdom of God and how many of it are there? Are there other kingdoms of His in addition to these two worlds, the spiritual and the physical? If there had been more than these two, would not His Kingdom have been more in number and His power greater?' You mentioned a group who say that God has endless 'firsts' and every 'first' has endless 'seconds', and you wished that if this be true, the soundness of this doctrine be demonstrated logically, so that it may be quoted, or else to show the falsity of this [argument] with proofs. Peace!

[136] Know, O brother, that the knowledge of God is in His treasure, and His treasurer is the Imam of the time, as God says: 'The Compassionate taught the Qur'ān. He created man, He taught him explanation (*bayān*)' (55:1-4) And nobody has access to God's knowledge except by the permission of His treasurer, as God says: 'That, verily, is the honourable Qur'ān, in a hidden book, which none can touch save the purified ones.'

(56:77–79) Furthermore, whoever tries to extort [the meaning of] God’s knowledge without the command (*farmān*) of the lord of his time (*khudāwand-i zamān*), is a thief; he does not know that when he wants to praise [someone], he blames him instead. As God says: ‘And when it is said to them, ‘Do not make mischief in the earth!’ – that is, in the *da‘wat* [preaching of God’s message] – ‘they say, “Verily, we are the peace-makers.” Verily, they are the mischief-makers, but they do not know.’ (2:11–12)

[137] By the grace of the lord of our time, we will explain what the Kingdom of God is and how many there are. We will also show with clear proofs that those who said that God has endless ‘firsts’ and that every ‘first’ has endless ‘seconds’, and that there have been 360 Adams on earth and 360 messengers in the time of every Adam, they are all wrong. [These people] have extorted [the meaning of] divine knowledge without the command of His treasurer. They have no proof of what they have said, neither from the book of God, nor from the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet, nor from rational arguments – all they seek is leadership over the believers through meaningless talk.

[138] Know, O brother, that all wise people agree that God is One, and the books of God which the Messengers have brought testify to this. The Qur’ān, which is the seal (*muhr*) of all the books, says in several places: ‘He is Allah, the One, the Overpowering.’ (39:4) First, we will say to the one who praises God’s Kingdom with a multitude of numbers that had His majesty and grandeur been [measurable] in multitude and magnitude, it would have been necessary for God to be many in His ipseity and not the pure One. If someone asks how it is possible to be many in one’s ipseity, we shall say to him that it is like a man in whom there are many potential children who, in turn, will have children endlessly – just as the commander of the faithful, Imam ‘Alī, was in his essence multiple, so that today a multiplicity has appeared from him, like the many thousands of ‘Alids who have come and will continue to come into this world from him.

Since God had created the commander of the faithful, Imam 'Alī, with many children, He reminded His Messenger of His favours in this verse where He says: 'Verily, We have given you the *kawthar*' (108:1). The word *kawthar* means a man who has many children, thus indicating to Imam 'Alī that his children will stand to execute the command of God and the *ta'wīl* [esoteric interpretation] of His book. It must be known that the word 'many' [here] suggests that which is not complete. Had the commander of the faithful been in the position of his descendant, who will be the *qā'im* [resurrector] of the Resurrection, to bring forth whom the physical world has persisted, he [the commander of the faithful] would have had no child, just as he, the supreme lord [of the Resurrection], will have no child because he is the seal of the creation which will come to an end with him, and that which is complete does not have another like it. Thus, it is established here that completion is not in multiplicity; rather it is in the unity which God has made His own reality.

[139] Having shown that all multiplicity is due to imperfection, we say that if the Kingdom of God had many 'firsts' and 'seconds' or many worlds, then inevitably all of them would have existed and come under [the rule of] number. A thing which is countable, even though it may be many, [is less than its] reckoning, and when you attribute it to God, it will be very little. When [someone] says that if God's Kingdom were to have been a hundred times more, it would have been more plentiful and better, then he would have applied perfection and imperfection to God's power, [which is absurd]. We also say that if someone thinks that God's Kingdom would be greater if He had more worlds than this [material] one, then first he should see with his eye of intellect whether this world in reality is or is not God's Kingdom. If this world were His Kingdom, its limits would not have been apparent to us, but the fact that its limits are apparent would necessitate that the kingdom beyond these limits does not belong to Him. Also, [to say] that if this world were greater than it is then God's power would have been

greater, necessitates a restriction of [His] power (*tangī-yi qudrat*) [because] had it been necessary [for Him] to create [a world] greater than what it is, [He would have created it]. Also, if this world were the Kingdom of God, then there would not have been so many deserts without plants and animals, so many dry sandy regions and bitter salt-marshes, so many mountains without plants, water, and gems, so many harmful floods of water which ruin numerous flourishing towns, and so many rapacious wild beasts which destroy useful animals. Had it been necessary for God to have a multiplicity of His Kingdom, with many worlds and many peoples, He would have created this world that we see much more populous, and there would not have been any desolation in it whatsoever. And if someone looks at this world with the eye of insight, he will come to know that if the world were to become more populous in its entirety, with prosperous people everywhere in it, [there will be the need for] a hundred thousand other worlds, all of them like this world as it is now. Thus, when a wise person sees the conditions described above, he knows that this world in reality is not the Kingdom of God. If it were the Kingdom of God, then what is outside of this world would not have been part of His Kingdom. Since this world is a body and a body is surrounded by six boundaries, and that which has boundaries is separated by them from [another] thing which does not belong to it, it follows that neither this world nor that which is outside of it is God's Kingdom.

[140] Now that we have explained that this world in reality is not the Kingdom of God, we say that the Kingdom of God in reality is that which has neither a beginning nor an end, nor anything outside of it, because for something to be outside of God's Kingdom means that it does not belong to Him. If someone asks what is that which does not have a beginning nor an end and there is nothing outside of it, we say that it is the One which God by His power has brought into existence from nothing. The proof of the soundness of this doctrine is that you find that all the numbers have come into existence from the

[number] one, and you know that [the numbers] ten, hundred, and thousand have all arisen from the one, but you do not know whence and what is the existence of this one. Then you will come to know that the one does not have a beginning [as there is nothing before it]; likewise, if you continue adding to the one, it never reaches an end where nothing more can be added to it, and you will not come to know that the one does not have an end. Even in the case of a composite number, its beginning is one, its end is one, and there is nothing outside of it. It must be known therefore that God's Kingdom is the One, outside of which there is nothing, and that this One is 'the Overwhelming One' (13:16), which has neither a beginning nor an end.

[141] If someone asks what is that One in reality, because we do not find such a thing in the world which has the name of 'One', we say to him that this One in reality is the [Universal] Intellect, because nothing exists outside of it, and only that which the Intellect recognizes exists, whereas that which it denies does not exist. We say that [the number] one, which is the cause of all numbers, testifies [to the fact] that the Intellect in reality is the One, because [just as] number is applicable to whatever exists, similarly the Intellect includes whatever exists within itself. Thus, it is established that God's Kingdom in reality is the Intellect, and nothing else. The Intellect is the First [Existent]; had it not been the First, then all things would not have come under it. When [the Intellect] is established as the First, then it is inevitable for it to have a second, in which appears a trace of it, just as [the number] one appears in two so that we find one in two twice. Thus, we say that the second to the Intellect is the Soul. The evidence of the soundness of this doctrine is the appearance of the trace of the intellect in the human soul which accepts it, like the appearance of one in two when it is accepted by two. Thereafter, whatever the [sequence of] numbers, all of them are composed of these two ranks, [one and two].

[142] Thus, we say that the Kingdom of God is the One which has become complete in the rank of two; that is to say, it is simple like one and composite like two. God's Kingdom, which is the Intellect, has become complete in its pair, the Soul, [in the sense that the Intellect] is the possessor of simplicity like one, and [the Soul] is the possessor of composition like two. Had there not been two, no number would have come into existence. Do you not see that even though there are many numbers, they are all [a product of] these two numbers, because their beginning is one and their end is one? Thus, we say that one, [because it] is complete in its ipseity, by necessity does not accept any increase in its essence, for if you multiply one with one, its product is still one. But two, which is the first rank of multiplicity, is incomplete, and the sign of an incomplete thing is that it accepts increase necessarily. Do you not see that when you multiply two with two the product is four, and if again you multiply four with two the product is eight, and it [continues to] increase? It is established, therefore, that completeness is in the one and incompleteness is in the many.

[143] If someone says that there should be many 'firsts' and 'seconds' in God's Kingdom so that it may be greater, he says so out of his ignorance and not from knowledge of the mathematical sciences. Know that had God created a first and called it 'the first', then created another like it simultaneously, it would not have been permissible to call both of them 'the first', because when these two which both belong to God are related to one another, this 'first' will be the 'second' of that 'first', and that 'first' will be the 'second' of this 'first'. In the book called *Arwāḥ wa amlāk* (Souls and Angels), the author who has recognized neither soul nor angel has said in many places that there are endless 'firsts' in God's Kingdom in such a way that every 'first' does not know how many [other] 'firsts' like it there are. A statement of this kind is made by someone who neither knows the first nor the second.

[144] The first is called 'the First' because of the fact that there is nothing like it, and whatever exists is below it, and that thing which is many does not deserve this name. Secondly, the First is the Intellect, which has necessarily to be extremely complete and nothing to be absent from it, so that it may deserve the name of 'Intellect'. Thus, if the First, which is the Intellect, does not know how many others like it there are in God's Kingdom, then it would be ignorant and foolish. The author of the *Arwāḥ wa amlāk* could then claim that he is wiser than the Universal Intellect, when he does not know what the Intellect is, and he is not [even] aware that he does not know it. This is a defect which cannot be hidden from a wise person. Also, he has said in that book that every 'first' has many 'seconds'. Glory be to God! We say, would anybody who has a little substance of intellect in him say such words, or would someone who has a sound will accept such words, that there is a 'first' which has a 'second', and that this 'first' has another 'second', a third 'second', and countless other 'seconds'? Know that if there is a one which has a second, and then if there is another one, it will not be a second but a third, a fourth, and a fifth. And whatever comes after the second, the second will be intermediary between [it] and the first, and it will not possess the power of the second; the same [will be the case of] the third [in relation to] the power of the fourth. This [author has made] a meaningless and disgraceful utterance! How could anyone say that there is a 'first' with endless 'seconds' except he who is not aware of geometry? This amounts to someone saying that there is a line which has one end but not the other [end], while the line is [defined as] that which is between two dots; if the first dot is found, the last has to be found. Thus, it is not proper [to say] that the 'first' is one and the 'seconds' are endless.

[145] We have thus established that the First is the Intellect and nothing is hidden from it, and it is not proper [to say] that there is a thing which it does not recognize, lest the name of 'Intellect' be removed from it and the name of 'ignorance' applied to it. And if someone says that God has many 'firsts'

and that the 'first' does not know how many [other] 'firsts' there are like it, this would amount to saying that there are many numbers among which none is one. This would be absurd, because amongst numbers, their cause is the one, without which they do not exist. We say that the second is the Soul, the third is prime matter, and everyone by the Command of God stands in its [proper] place and works. [Just as] it is impossible for the First to be more than one, in wisdom it is not permissible for the First to have more than one second. Whoever says that it is permissible for the First to have five 'seconds', he would have said that the number two is two, but three is also two, four is also two, five is also two, and so on – this is sheer falsehood! In the same book, the author has said that in one of the corners of the sphere, God has a 'first'. That ignorant person who says this does not know that whatever has a corner has an end, and whatever has an end is separated from another thing because of that end; he would have thus separated God's Kingdom from another thing and said that it does not belong to God.

[146] Having established that it is not possible for the First to be more than one, and that inevitably its second also has to be one, we have [also] established that in every [historical] cycle there cannot be more than one *nāṭiq* [enunciating prophet] and one *waṣī* [the prophet's legatee]. The *nāṭiq* is in the place of the First, the Intellect, and his *waṣī* is in the place of the second, the Soul. By this explanation of ours, it has become evident that God's Kingdom is the Intellect, which has neither a beginning nor an end, and nothing exists outside of it. Study so that you may know! Learn so that you may be liberated!

248 On Human Beings as the Servants of God

[147] O brother! You asked: 'Man is called a servant (*banda*), but the quadruped [animal] is not called a servant. What is the reason for man being the servant [of God]? Is it because of the fact that he was created without power, or should we say that he became a servant because he had committed a sin? If not, why did he become a servant and the other [creatures] did not?' Peace!

[148] Know, O brother, that whatever exists in this world is bound by the bond (*band*) of God, from which nothing can be set free. First, we say that the heavens and the planets are bound by the bonds of shape, rotation, and measure, so that each one has a [specific] shape and measure from which it cannot escape. The seventh planet cannot be like the sixth and the sixth like the seventh [because] every planet is bound in a sphere [of its own] from which it is not possible for it to escape. Similarly, each of the four elements is bound in a bond, as fire is bound in the bond of heat and dryness from which it cannot escape, as air is bound in the bond of heat and moisture, as water is bound in the bond of coldness and moisture, and as earth is bound in the bond of coldness and dryness.

[149] When you cross over the elements to the world of generated entities (*mawālid*), [you find that] each one of them is bound in a bond from which it cannot escape. For example, plants without a stem, such as a gourd or a melon which cannot stand up from the ground without support, are bound in the bond of a reclining posture, whereas those plants which are caulescent, such as wheat, barley, or beans, are bound in the bond of a standing posture and cannot lie down. [Similarly], every plant is bound in the bond of its seed, without which it cannot produce. And when you pass beyond plants, there are animals, each of which is bound in a bond from which it cannot escape. Thus, a herbivorous animal does not eat flesh, and a carnivorous one cannot eat grass [because] each one is bound in a divine bond in the sense we have explained; also,

each one of the animals cannot reproduce except from its mate, and this is also a divine bond.

[150] Thus, all those things which we have mentioned, except for human beings, are bound in divine bonds, each one kept apart [from the other] by a separate fence. By being in those bonds, they testify that they are overwhelmed, tied, and bound; they affirm that they [are bound by] One who is overwhelming and compelling, not one who is overwhelmed and compelled, and He is 'The One, the Overwhelming' (13:16). Although these entities which we have mentioned [above] cannot speak [as humans do], each one, by virtue of standing in its rank, speaks [in circumstantial language] of its own inability and of God's [absolute] power. As He says: 'There is not a thing but it glorifies His praise, but you do not understand their glorification. Verily, He is Forbearing, Most-forgiving' (17:44).

[151] When you pass beyond [a consideration of] these bonds, you will come to know that on the one hand, the planets and the heavenly [spheres] are, by the command of God, like servants to the elements, as they benefit the elements and circumambulate them, just as a retinue of servants move around their lord; on the other hand, the elements are like servants to the heavens and the planets, as they receive sustenance from them and become prosperous. Similarly, from one aspect, the four elements are like servants to plants, because every plant takes from them whatever it likes, just as masters take from their servants; from another aspect, the plants are like servants to the elements because they seek sustenance and nourishment from them, just as servants seek their sustenance from their masters. Again, from one aspect, animals are like servants to plants, as the subsistence of animals depends on plants, just as the nourishment of servants depends on their masters; from another aspect, plants are like servants to animals because they are ruled by animals, just as servants are ruled by their masters.

[152] When you reach human beings among the creatures, you will find man as sovereign of the entire creation because he manipulates the entire creation. For instance, he can prevent the benefit of the heavens from reaching the earth; if a farmer does not sow seeds in time, neither the provision of benefit from the heavens and the planets becomes manifest, nor is the benefit of the elements received [by plants]. [Likewise], man can stop the benefit of the elements from plants by not giving water to them or reaping them ahead of time, [just as] he can prevent the benefit of plants from reaching animals by keeping them away from plants.

[153] Thus, we come to know that mankind is sovereign over all creation. And whatever is below him, such as plants, animals, elements, spheres, and planets, is [in a position of being either] subjugated to others or ruling over others. As God says: 'Do they distribute the mercy of your Lord? It is We who have distributed the means of livelihood among them in the life of this world and raised some of them over others in ranks, so that some of them may subjugate the others' (43:32). Thus, plants have subjugated the elements, animals have subjugated plants, and man has subjugated them all. When God made mankind sovereign over plants and animals, by conveying His Word to him He invited him [alone] from the whole world to His servitude. After [first] having bound man in the bond of creation, He bound him in the bond of fear and hope, and in the bond of knowledge. Among the attributes with which God has distinguished mankind, knowledge is the supreme attribute. When man received this specific property, that is the bond of knowledge, he became distinguished from other [creatures] who were not bound in this attribute. That bond of knowledge for man is the intellect, by [virtue of] which his organs are prevented from doing improper things and his tongue is tied from speaking improper things, but the other animals do not have this [attribute]. Shame is another bond by which God has bound mankind, as is also the bond of fear of blame and hope of praise, which the other animals do not possess.

[154] After [having bound mankind in] these bonds, God sent to him [His] Messenger, the book, and the command, prohibited him from unlawful things and persuaded him to lawful ones, and invited him to His recognition by virtue of the fact that He granted him a share from the [Universal] Intellect. This situation is like a rich person who has [many] servants and has given to each one sustenance according to the measure of his servitude, but he has given a precious gem to [only] one of them and commanded him to trade. His wish is that this servant should be rich like his master and profit from that great capital, not remain poor like the other servants. We say that the rich person is [like] the divine command; those who are its servants are this world and all that it contains; the servant to whom the precious gem is given is mankind; the precious gem is the intellect; and that profit which he seeks is the recognition of the Truth (*ḥaqq*), so that man may become prosperous by that profit and reach the rank of the Intellect. Thus, we say that when God distinguished man with His command for his welfare, the divine command became a bond for him and the name of 'servant' became specific for him to the exclusion of other animals which do not have this bond.

[155] You also asked why, if man had not committed a sin when he was created, did he have to become a servant and not other animals? The answer is that, first you should know that other animals are the servants of man, and man is the servant of God. [Your] inquiry would have been valid if man had suffered from this servitude. Why do you not say [instead] that if man had not done good deeds prior to his creation, he would not have been fit for servitude in order to attain the eternal abode, a status which the other animals cannot attain?

[156] In accordance with the premises which have been mentioned, man has become sovereign over all, in the sense that it was due to his good deeds that he deserved his servitude [to God]. And since man, due to this servitude, [has the capacity to] reach the boundary of angelicity from the boundary of

animality and attain the eternal life, it was a favour from God that He bestowed on him the name of 'servant' by giving him the gift of the intellect in order to distinguish him, and not because of a sin. Had that servitude been because of a sin, he would have reached the boundary of animality from the boundary of angelicity, [instead of] from animality to angelicity. Thus, in reality, the servant of God is he who truly obeys His command and guards it, so that he may be liberated from the bond of the elements, and the sovereignty of the carnal soul may cease in him. When man becomes the true servant [of God], the sovereignty of the carnal soul, which in reality is his devil, is removed from him; he becomes an angel and reaches the eternal paradise, as God says: 'As for My [true] servants, you [Iblis] do not have sovereignty over them.' (15:42) Study so that you may know! Recognize so that you may be liberated!

25 ❀ On Knowledge and Ignorance

[157] O brother! You asked: 'What is the cause of man's indeterminate state (*āwīzish*) [between animality and angelicity], and what is the meaning of '*iqāb* (punishment) and how should it be known? Explain!'

[158] Know, O brother, that man's indeterminate state is due to his ignorance, because the human soul comes to this world ignorant without [any] instruments, and receives here organs such as eyes, ears, heart, and tongue, by which knowledge can be acquired and understood. Since these organs received in this world are in order to acquire knowledge, we say that the owner of these instruments is like a man whom the proprietor of a farm sends to his farm with a yoke of oxen, seeds, and agricultural implements, so that he may cultivate the farm and not sit idle. The proprietor of the farm is the Universal Soul, the farm is this world, the one who is sent to the farm is man, the yoke of oxen is his body together with the animal soul, the agricultural implements are his eyes, ears, heart, and tongue, and the seed is his intellect. [Thus], if man has any sense, he must learn and acquire knowledge by [using] the instruments

which are given to him, so that when he returns to the subtle abode which is his origin, he shall have with him something for the sake of which he was sent [to this material world], and that on the day he departs from here, he should not be as he was on the day he came here. As God says, addressing the ignorant and unfortunate ones: 'And indeed you have come to us alone as We created you at first, and you have left behind what We bestowed on you' (6:95) – that is, He says to the ignorant and unfortunate ones: 'You come to Us as We had created you, but you desisted [from using] the organs which We had given you and which you have left behind.'

[159] Thus, if man does not use the organs which his Creator has given him in this abode, when his soul leaves the body, it cannot find any of [these organs] again and therefore it remains perplexed, like someone who has neither eyes, ears, heart, nor tongue; one can imagine how anguished and torturous his condition would be. But if man sees with his eyes that which he is commanded to see, hears with his ears that which he is commanded to hear, walks on that path which the Prophet has commanded him to walk, speaks with the tongue that which he is commanded to speak, and knows with the heart that which he is commanded to know, then when his soul leaves the body, [it retains the faculties of] eyes, ears, heart, and tongue, so that in the abode of delights he will possess them in their entirety. As God says: 'If you do good, you do good for your own selves, and if you do evil, it is against your own selves.' (17:7)

[160] We say, therefore, that man's indeterminate state is due to his ignorance, because when the soul is ignorant and leaves this abode of ignorance, it cannot reach the abode of wisdom in the hereafter; rather it remains in the fire of ether which is the boundary of that world in a permanent [state of] torture, just as this world is in torture because of its ignorance. If someone asks why do you describe this world as ignorant and in torture, we say that when someone accomplishes a work once,

then destroys it, repeats it a second and a third time, and destroys it [again] as before, we know that he does this out of ignorance, and he is in torture because he is acting in ignorance. [In the same way], the work of this world is such that it produces plants and animals, and then destroys them apparently. If this [material] world were not ignorant, then it would have produced all [of them] at once for which it was created by the Universal Soul, and [by so doing] it would have escaped this abundant and constant work for ever. When we see the plants and animals which the world brings forth from the four opposite elements and then disperses them, we know why this is so; it is because they are gathered together from opposite [natures] and they cannot remain [in that state forever]. Since plants and animals are parts of this world and their state is that of [always] coming together and dispersing, we know that this is the state of the entire [material] world, and it will [continue to] be as such. Thus, we say that when the human soul is ignorant, it remains [after the body's death] ignorant and miserable in the abode of fire because of its likeness to that abode which is surrounded by fire. As God says: 'Verily, We have prepared for the unjust a fire, the awning of which encompasses them.' (18:29)

[161] As for the word '*iqāb* (punishment)', it means to remain behind – that is, whoever remains behind in the rank of humanity, [the purpose of whose existence] is to become wise, and instead reverts to animality, [such a person is in a state of] punishment because he lags behind from [reaching] the subtle abode. Study so that you may know! Recognize so that you may be liberated!

PART V

Theodicy

26❁ On the Liberation of the Soul

[162] O brother! You asked: 'What is the means of human liberation, and what does [the word] *thawāb* (reward) mean? Explain so that we may know.'

[163] Know, O brother, that human liberation lies in knowledge. Man has two things by which he can receive knowledge: one of them is the heart by which he knows, and the other is the body with which he puts that knowledge into practice – in the same way as a person learning a profession needs sound intelligence and a healthy body, so that he may be able to practise that profession physically in time until he knows it well. Thus, to practise that profession is the condensation of the knowledge which is the essence of the profession, and to know it with the subtle heart is the rarefaction of the work which the person does. For instance, a carpenter fixes in his soul the knowledge to cut wood, measures its pieces, and calculates how many triangular, quadrangular, and hexagonal pieces are needed in their entirety for a chair, so that when he wants to make it again and again he can do so without any loss [of knowledge] in his soul. Thus, we say that 'to work' means to make the subtle into the dense, and 'to know the work' means to make the dense into the subtle.

[164] It should be known, therefore, that the Universal Soul brought forth the world on prime matter, the subtle form of which was at first in the Soul whose work condensed it [in a form] perceptible to the senses, so that the weak individual souls who come to this world will first find and know this dense

world, and then by knowing it find their way to the subtle world. The Messengers, who were delegated by the [Universal] Soul with the *ta'yīd* (spiritual help) of the [Universal Intellect], acted in the same manner. They gave people the *tanzīl* (revelation) which consists of the exoteric and general (*'āmm*) aspect of the *sharī'at* (religious law). They commanded the people to put it into practice, just like a goldsmith who gives to his students small pieces of brass [instead of gold] several times so that they may [learn how to] beat and cut it, little by little, until they become experts in the science of the goldsmith, master over the gold, and are able to fashion out of it whatever they want to. Since the work of the Universal Soul to make the subtle into the dense was first, in the sense that it brought forth the subtle knowledge which was within itself by condensing it into this dense world, the work of the Messengers was last, in the sense that they had by necessity to make the dense into the subtle [through their teachings]. Thus, the *sharī'at* of the Messengers is like this world, in that he who does not come to this world cannot reach the other world, just as he who does not put the *sharī'at* into practice cannot reach the science of *ta'wīl* [esoteric interpretation]. As God says: 'We send down in the Qur'ān that which is a healing and a mercy for the believers, but for the unjust it causes nothing but perdition.' (17:82) You should know that [in this verse the expression] 'send down' means to make the subtle into the dense, because the subtle has a higher place like the heavens, and the dense has a lower place like the earth.

[165] Thus, *tanzīl* means to make the subtle into the dense, and *ta'wīl* means to make the dense into the subtle, and to take a thing back to its origin (*awwal*). It should be known that the *tanzīl* is like a scaling ladder, which is hung down from heaven for the souls of the people to ascend towards it. It is necessary for a believer to ascend from the bottom rung of the ladder to its top so that he may reach heaven. [This] means that he should hold to the *tanzīl* and the *sharī'at*, which represent the first step of the ladder, so that one day he will reach

the top of the ladder, which is the science of *ta'wīl*. As God says: 'To Him ascend the good word, and the good deed lifts it up.' (35:10) This is proof of the fact that we should hold fast to the *tanzīl* which has descended from on high, [so that] from this base we may ascend [to the *ta'wīl*].

[166] When the wise person knows how the Universal Soul, by its creation of this world, has made its subtle knowledge dense, and then commanded the Messengers to give spiritual knowledge to people through speech, by way of the dense *sharī'at* and concrete parables, he knows that what they have thus received was a divine mercy. When man strives to put the *sharī'at* into practise, attains [understanding of] the science of *ta'wīl*, transforms the dense into the subtle, and uses both his organs, the body and the soul, which are given to him [to attain knowledge], he becomes like the Universal Soul. The Universal Soul had the knowledge, then it worked; man works, then acquires the knowledge, thus becoming like the Universal Soul. And he who makes himself like the Universal Soul by working according to the *sharī'at*, the Universal Soul makes him like itself in knowledge. As God says: 'O you who believe! If you help Allah, He will surely help you and make firm your feet.' (47:8) Thus, when man does work with knowledge, according to the command (*farmān*) of the Messenger of his cycle, and obeys the lord [Imam] of his time, he becomes like the Universal Soul, and when his soul leaves the body, it returns to the higher world, where it becomes sovereign over this world and rules it. There it rests from a life of work and pain in eternal comfort, a comfort which no tongue can describe nor can it occur to any heart.

[167] As for [the word] *thawāb* (reward), it means to return. When the soul is obedient it becomes wise, and when it becomes wise it returns to its origin and reaches the world of wisdom, because of the affinity which it has with that world, and it is thus liberated from the potential hell of this ignorant world. Study so that you may know! Recognize so that you may be liberated!

27 ❀ On the Meaning of the Straight Path

[168] O brother! you asked: 'What is the *ṣirāṭ* (lit. path, way, bridge)? It is said that the *ṣirāṭ* is stretched over hell, that it is thinner than an hair and sharper than a sword, and all people have to cross it. The fortunate ones cross it and reach paradise, whereas the unfortunate ones fall from it into hell. Explain, so that we may know.'

[169] Know, O brother, that [the word] *ṣirāṭ* [in Persian, *rāh*] means a path or a way. The path is of two kinds: one is the external path that the people walk upon the surface of the earth, and the other is the path which people follow with their souls in goodness and badness. Had the path stretched over hell been the only one which people have to cross, God in His book would not have mentioned it in the *Sūrat al-ḥamd* and commanded us to remember Him so that He would show us the path, as He says in the verse: 'Guide us to the straight path (*al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm*)'. (1:5) Since He has commanded us to seek the straight path, it is a proof that on the path which is not straight but crooked is found that which is other than God. If God had made only one path on which we had to walk and traverse, He would not have commanded us to say this prayer. [The straight path is the way of those upon whom God has bestowed His favours, and they are the prophets, the truthful, the witnesses, and the righteous.] As He says: ['All who obey God and the Messenger are in the company of those] upon whom God has bestowed [His] favours: the prophets (*nabiyyīn*) the truthful (*ṣiddīqīn*), the witnesses (*shuhadā*'), and the righteous (*ṣāliḥīn*). (4:69)

[170] Thus, it is established that the *ṣirāṭ* is not [a path for the body] but the path of the soul which it should traverse, because God obliged [this path] first for the prophets, then their legatees (*waṣīs*) and the true Imams, and then their [proofs (*ḥujjats*)], as mentioned. These are the ones whom God has obliged: the prophets who are the Messengers, and they are so called because they convey the news of that world to the peo-

ple; 'the truthful' by which He means the legates who [expounded] the *ta'wīl* of the *sharī'at* and the book to the people, and by so doing disclosed the reality of the parables which they contained and proved to the wise that the Messengers are truthful; by 'the witnesses' are meant the true Imams as they are the witnesses of God among the people; and by 'the righteous' are meant their [proofs] because the betterment of the souls of people is due to them.

[171] When we come to know that the *ṣirāṭ* is the path of the soul and not a path for the body, and with regard to what has been said that it stretches over hell, that it is thinner than an hair and sharper than a sword, that people have to traverse it in order to reach paradise, and if they fall from it they reach the eternal fire – all this is correct, but it is necessary to know its esoteric meaning (*ta'wīl*), not [merely] the exoteric description. Thus, we say that the *ṣirāṭ* has the status of man, [who is positioned] between animality and angelicity, and is required to walk on it straight because unless he traverses it he will be unable to reach paradise. Paradise is the higher [spiritual] world and hell is the fire which surrounds this lower [material] world. The *ta'wīl* of this statement is that paradise means our liberation from the world of animality, and hell means to remain in that [animal] nature. If man practises the *sharī'at* without [understanding] its *ta'wīl*, then he makes himself into an animal, he inclines towards the left hand and falls into hell from the *ṣirāṭ*. If he acquires [esoteric] knowledge, but does not practise the *sharī'at* while claiming angelicity, he inclines towards the right hand and falls into hell from the *ṣirāṭ*. However, when man walks on the path of humanity, in which he has a share from both animality and angelicity – that is, he does the work which is the share of his body and acquires knowledge which is the share of his soul – he walks on the straight path (*ṣirāṭ-i mustaqīm*); then when he traverses the *ṣirāṭ* he is said to have reached paradise. This is so because having walked on the straight path using both knowledge and practice, when

his soul leaves the body which is his *ṣirāt*, he reaches the higher world, the place of angels and the true paradise.

[172] In religion, it is necessary for a man to remain in his place and not to claim a higher status which does not belong to him. Thus, the believer who is in the position of a *mustajīb* (initiate) should not seek precedence over a *ma'dhūn* (authorized), [thinking] that he knows better than him. [Similarly], a *ma'dhūn* should not claim the place of a *dā'ī* (summoner), nor a *dā'ī* the place of a *ḥujjat* (proof), nor a *ḥujjat* the place of the Imam, nor the Imam the place of the *asās* (founder-imam), nor the *asās* the place of the *nātiq* (enunciator-prophet). Whoever from this group intends to assume a status higher than his own inclines towards the right hand, and whoever inclines that way inevitably falls from the *ṣirāt* into hell. Whoever abandons his [proper] place and assumes a status lower than his own, also inclines from the straight path towards the left hand, and inevitably falls from the *ṣirāt* into hell. And whoever says that he does not need to learn and claims to know better than the one superior to him, has [falsely] claimed angelicity, and he who says that whatever knowledge God has given him is enough for him has agreed to remain in animality. The place of these people who have turned away from the straight path is hell. The Holy Prophet has cursed both these groups in this *ḥadīth*: 'May God curse those men who liken themselves to women, and those women who liken themselves to men.'

[173] The true faith (*īmān*) is that you should remain between fear and hope. If you have a rank where people can learn from you, then you should teach your subordinates and seek knowledge from the one who is superior to you. As God says about the teachings of His Messenger: '[He] teaches them the book and the wisdom, though they were aforetime indeed in manifest error' (62:2), and He tells His Messenger: 'Say: "O my Lord! Increase me in knowledge."' (20:114) As God sent these two commands to His Messenger, we know that they indicate the straight path, and He testifies to it: 'Verily, you guide [people]

to the straight path.' (42:52) Thus, God bears witness to the fact that the Messenger is on the straight path and that he is able to show people the self-same straight path. Study so that you may know! Recognize so that you may be liberated!

28* On the Meaning of the Reckoning

[174] O brother! You asked: 'What is the *ḥisāb* (reckoning) by which God has warned the people and said that His promise is true? (13:40; 88:25–26) How is this expression [to be understood]? Explain so that we may know, God willing.

[175] Know, O brother, that all the Messengers who came brought the message of the Universal Soul with the spiritual help of the Universal Intellect from the Divine Word. The Messenger is called the *nāṭiq* meaning one who speaks [or enunciates], and the speech belongs to the Universal Soul by whom the *nāṭiq*, is sent.

[176] Now, logic dictates that a message to speaking beings is sent by one who himself is a speaker. It is on account of this that those people who said Muḥammad is God or the group who said 'Ali is God fell into error. The Prophet and the legates (*waṣī*) are disgusted with them, and those with whom the Prophet is disgusted, God is also disgusted. These people are called the Mīmiyya and the 'Ayniyya, who thought that unless [Muḥammad and 'Ali] were one with God their sender, they would not have been able to accept His message. These people committed this error because they were not able to recognize the [proper] ranks (*hudūd*) of religion. Regarding this matter, God says: 'Those are the limits (*hudūd*) ordained by God, so do not transgress them.' (2:229) And wherever in the Qur'ān God says 'We did such' or 'We created such' or 'We said such,' in all these cases it must be known that God speaks about two spiritual ranks [the Universal Intellect and the Universal Soul], or two physical ranks [the *nāṭiq* and the *asās*]. Take for instance [the verse] where God says: 'When We said to the angels, "Prostrate yourselves to Adam,"' (2:34) the expressions 'we said' and

'we did' are only permissible [for] a group. The masses use it for themselves [and] as an expression of reverence, as when a king says 'we command such' or 'we say such' to [demonstrate] his greatness, even though he is no more than one person. The possessors of truth say that when one person speaks he should say 'I did so,' but if he says 'we did so,' he would have uttered a lie. [Similarly], he who says that God refers to His ipseity by using the word ['We'] which is used for a group, he would have lied against Him. God says and warns against saying such a thing unknowingly: 'Do you say about Allah that which you do not know?' (2:80)

[177] Thus, we say that the Messengers invited people to the Oneness of God (*tawḥīd*). They conveyed to them the message of the Universal Soul which they had received with the spiritual help of the Universal Intellect and the Divine Word. Therefore, it became necessary for the Messengers [to use the expressions] 'We said so' and 'We created so,' in order that it may not be a lie. And [in those verses] where God says 'I said so,' He speaks about only one rank (*ḥadd*), as [in the verse]: 'Verily I, I am your Lord, so take off your shoes.' (20:12) This is the speech of the Universal Soul to Moses, because the Lord of the prophets (*nāṭiqs*) is the Universal Soul. And where the speech is by one being – as [in the verse where] He says: 'Verily I, I am Allah. There is no God but I, so worship Me' (20:14) – this is an allusion to the pure *tawḥīd* (Divine Unity) because He has not indicated any rank, lest the people deify the higher ranks [that is, the Intellect and the Soul], even though their return is to them. Since the command of God to the people was conveyed by the Prophet, he must be obeyed, and since the message is from God, he must be obeyed for the sake of obedience to God.

[178] In a previous inquiry, it has been mentioned that the physical world consists of reckoned things. This necessitates that the cause of the existence of these reckoned things is one, because all reckoning depends on this cause from which the

multiplicity of things has originated, just as many numbers have originated from one. Since the world of the Intellect is one and everything has received the name of 'one' from it, the cause of all existents is necessarily one; each thing which exists and continues to exist receives its name from its cause and it endures [because of it]. [Now], since the world of Intellect is one and everything in it has the name of 'one,' and the entire world is known in the sense that it is comprehended by the Universal Intellect, we come to know that the origin of the world is the One which is the cause of its existence. However, we should not say that this One and the Intellect together with it become two causes because it is not possible for the cause of the world to be more than one. Thus, we come to know that this One which is the cause of the world is the [Universal] Intellect. When it is established that the cause of the world is the Intellect, that the Intellect is one, that the world and what it contains have received existence from it, and that everything returns to its origin, then logically [it follows that] this world has to return to the Intellect.

[179] We say that this world returns to the Intellect through rational souls which come into existence in this world, and nothing but human beings return to the Intellect. The soundness of this view is testified by the fact that in this world nothing receives the intellect except the human soul, and the reception of the intellect by the rational soul in this world indicates that when it leaves the body it has to return to the [Universal] Intellect. When it is established that people have to return to the Intellect which is the One and that the One is the reckoning, then it is also established that their return is to the reckoning (*ḥisāb*) which is the Intellect. As God says: 'If you could but see [O Muḥammad], when they are made to stand before their Sustainer, He will ask: 'Is not this the truth?' They will say: 'Yes, by our Sustainer!' (6:30) [The meaning of this verse] is that the Intellect, which is the Sustainer of rational souls, will ask them: 'Is it not true that you have returned to me, that is you were brought up by me, and therefore you de-

served to return to me?' And they will answer, yes, that this was true. Just as people in this world can see that whatever comes into being from a thing returns to that same thing, it is necessary to know that the return of mankind is to the Intellect [which is their reckoning]. Study so that you may know! Recognize so that you may be liberated!

29 ❀ On the Meaning of the Balance

[180] O brother! You asked: 'What is the *mīzān* (balance) which God has promised to the people? He has said that he whose scale is heavy is among the people of paradise, and he whose scale is light is among the inmates of hell. (101:6-9) How can the work of obedient or disobedient people be weighed in the scale, since heaviness and lightness belong to the body, while [the spiritual quality of] human work is not physical? Explain!'

[181] Know, O brother, that the things of this world which are ascertained by the balance are of five kinds: the first, which is higher than all of them is the balance [measure] of counting, because whatever other balances weigh, all of them have to seek recourse to it. [This is for reckoning the numbers of] those things in the world which are counted and not [normally] weighed such as the elements, trees, animals, and edible things such as walnuts and eggs of birds. The second balance is for things which are weighed and not [normally] counted such as pearls, gold, silver, gems, and edible things such as bread and meat. The third balance is for measuring [grain such as] wheat and barley. The fourth is the balance of liquids for measuring oil, water, milk, and other liquids. The fifth is the balance [rule] of the cubit with which are measured [cloth such as] brocade and canvas. Whatever things exist in this world are [counted], weighed or measured by these five balances which remove the difference among things. People work according to these balances and through them everybody receives his due.

[182] Now, corresponding to these five physical balances are five spiritual balances. The former are the balances of dense

things and the latter are the balances of subtle things, so that the difference between physical and spiritual things may be established. In order to weigh subtle things – such as good and bad, true and false, lawful and unlawful, right and wrong, word and deed, obedience and disobedience, modesty and impudence, all of which are subtle – their balances are also subtle. And just as the dense [physical] balances do not resemble one another, the subtle balances [of the soul] do not resemble one another.

[183] The ignorant people, because of their enmity with the family of the Holy Prophet in whose hand is the knowledge of truth, say that there is a balance hanging from heaven to weigh good and bad, one scale of which is in the east and the other in the west. When they are asked, ‘Why do we not see this balance which, according to your claim, holds the entire world within its beam, and how can goodness and badness be weighed with it?’, they become angry and defensive; they do not know the reality of things nor do they seek it. But God does not agree with what they say. He says: ‘We sent with them [the Messengers] the book and the balance, so that men may stand forth in justice.’ (57:25) Since the book is the Qur’ān, we know that the balance is also [in the message of] the book itself, for the book and the Messenger are [both] sent by God; and those who tell lies [about a balance suspended from heaven] are the inmates of hell.

[184] Thus, we say that the spiritual balances by which spiritual things are weighed and the soul attains salvation, are also five. The first of the five, which is higher than the others, is the [Universal] Intellect in the position of the One, which is the cause of the [the soul’s] reckoning [corresponding to the measure of reckoning things by number]; the second is the balance of the Universal Soul, corresponding to the balance for weighing gold and silver; the third is the balance of the prophet (*nāṭiq*), corresponding to the balance for measuring grain; the fourth is the balance of [the prophet’s] legatee (*waṣī*), corre-

sponding to the balance for measuring water and oil; the fifth is the balance of the Imam of the time [corresponding to the measure of the cubit for measuring cloth].

[185] It is necessary for the soul of the believer to possess a sign of having accepted the Speech of God, and this sign is to listen to the knowledge of truth and to abandon falsehood. Every soul which has accepted the word of truth is weighed with the measure of the Universal Soul, which corresponds to the balance of gems; [such a soul] turns into a gem, and when it reaches the next world, the Universal Soul will see its traces in it and accept it by virtue of their compatibility. It is also necessary for the believer to esteem and act upon the exoteric aspect of the *sharī'at* of the Prophet (*nāṭiq*), which corresponds to the balance [of grain] with which the nourishment of the body is measured, so that his body may remain strong to act according to the exoteric aspect of the *sharī'at*, without which he cannot seek the truth. It is also necessary for the believer to accept the esoteric teachings (*ta'wīl*) of the legatee (*waṣī*) [which corresponds to] the measure for water, [milk, and other liquids], and to study and act upon it, so that he may deserve to drink the water of eternal life and last forever. The believer must also recognize the lord of his time who corresponds to the [measure of] the cubit, to accept and obey him, to keep the lord's [spiritual] rank secret from unworthy people, and to use his knowledge on the journey [of life] so that he may be given a place in the lord's sanctuary. These are the five spiritual balances with which the work of the people is measured in the Resurrection, and the first of these is the Intellect. Ask so that you may know! Recognize so that you may be liberated!

30* On Free-will and Responsibility

[186] O brother! You asked whether man is determined or free in what he does: 'If he is determined, then whatever he does is being done by God – in which case why does punishment become necessary? If he is free, then can he do something which God does not like, thus necessitating that he prevails over God?'

[187] Know, O brother, that this inquiry was addressed to [the Imam] Ja'far al-Ṣādiq. He replied: 'God is more just than to determine someone to disobey Him and then punish him for it.' Then they asked him if man can do what he wishes. He said: 'God's power is greater than one's transgressions in His kingdom.' Then they asked him what the position of man is [in this world]. He said: 'It is between two positions in which he is neither determined nor free.'

[188] The sayings of the Imams have *ta'wīl*, just as the Speech of God and [the sayings of His] Messenger have *ta'wīl*, because they are the witnesses of God over the people. Thus, it must be known that the [inner] meaning of this saying [of the Imam Ja'far al-Ṣādiq] is that the position of mankind is between that of an animal and an angel, because in man there is the carnal soul as well as the rational soul; the former belongs to the animal and the latter to the angel. In the case of an actual angel, it cannot willfully disobey, [and in the case of an animal] it cannot [willfully] obey, because both of them are determined [by God] in their dispositions. Consequently, the angel is not rewarded for obedience and the animal is not punished for disobedience, whereas man, whose status is [intermediate] between these two positions, is [both] rewarded for obedience and punished for disobedience.

[189] God has given mankind the perceptive intellect which can distinguish the ugly from the fair, and He has also endowed it with [a sense of] modesty and shame (*sharm*) which does not allow humans to act as animals do. It must be known that man is not free as animals are because his nature is endowed with

modesty and shame. Then God sent His Messenger to the people with [guidance and] the promise to reward them for their obedience and to punish them for their disobedience. Now, since man's position is between animality and angelicity, [we say that] with respect to his rational soul, man is determined because it urges him to do only the good and to obey [God], and the wise person cannot do other than this; however, with respect to his carnal soul, man is free because it is not constrained by [obedience and] disobedience, [good and] evil, [right and wrong], or reward [and punishment]. Peace.

Here ends the book of *Gushāyish wa rahāyish*.

Analytical Commentary

Parviz Morewedge

It is beyond the scope of this study to present a comprehensive historical comparative commentary, an investigation that must be reserved for Nāṣir Khusraw's larger texts. Consequently, this commentary is merely an analysis (which in its Greek roots signifies 'taking apart', in Arabic *taḥlīl*). Its main aim is to make explicit the logic of the text's arguments and to distinguish between those doctrines Nāṣir Khusraw derived from previous thinkers and his original contribution. A few Greek texts (of Plato and Aristotle) and two metaphysical texts written in Persian (by Ibn Sīnā and Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī) are selected to present Nāṣir Khusraw's doctrine in the context of Greek and Muslim philosophy. A number of comparisons are also drawn with later developments in the Western philosophical traditions. The commentary demonstrates that Nāṣir Khusraw does not blindly follow any previous thinker, as he disagrees with Aristotle, Plotinus, and Ibn Sīnā on many key points.

Textual references in this commentary are specified by three numbers designating Part, Chapter, and Section; for instance, [II.6.39] denotes that the commentary refers to Part II, Chapter 6, Section 39, of the text. The works of Greek and Persian authors used for the contextual analysis are as follows:

Aristotle: *The Works of Aristotle Translated into English*, ed. W. D. Ross (Oxford, 1908–1952), 12 vols.

Ibn Sīnā: *The Metaphysics of Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā)*, tr. Parviz Morewedge (New York–London, 1970).

Plato: *Plato: Greek Texts with English Translation* (London–New York, 1921–1953), 12 vols.

Ṭūsī: *The Metaphysics of Ṭūsī*, tr. Parviz Morewedge (New York–Tehran, 1992).

Part I: Cosmogony

Part I focuses on a number of key issues of cosmogony. First, the essential relation between the generator (the first intelligence) and the generated (the universe). Obviously this relation cannot be a total identity, since the ultimate generator is eternal and the generator is ephemeral. Nāṣir Khusraw needs to form a novel solution in accord with both religion and logic. He cannot blindly adopt the models of Greek philosophy. Major Greek cosmogonies rejected pure monotheistic creationism. Plato holds that the form of the Good itself is not an essence but it is the source of actuality and existence of other forms. [*Republic* 509B] Aristotle's model of depicting the generator as the First Mover is not compatible with the monotheistic creed, because for him this 'God' is merely a postulated principle adopted for constructing a consistent theological model. Unlike Ibn Sinā and Nāṣir Khusraw, Aristotle holds that the First Unmoved-Mover is non-sensible, non-movable substance [*Metaphysics*: 1069b30–35]. The second problem concerns the application of temporality to the act of generation. Obviously the temporal sense of 'priority' is not suitable here. The ultimate being in major Greek philosophical systems ('the Form of the Good' in Plato, 'the First Unmoved-Mover' in Aristotle, and 'the One' of Plotinus) is atemporal and eternal. Ibn Sinā holds that there is a primary entity (the Necessary Existent) which is not in the world but the world comes from it [Ibn Sinā: pp. 6–61]. On this topic, Plotinus and Ibn Sinā influenced Nāṣir Khusraw more than did either Plato or Aristotle.

[I.1.9–10] The sense of 'temporality' is mind-dependent, as it is a transcendental necessary condition of experiencing a body – a position upheld by Immanuel Kant. For Nāṣir Khusraw, 'temporality' is a dependent accident of what he calls 'the act of the agent'. From this specification it follows that time cannot exist independently of an agent, and it is co-present with the act of the agent. Time cannot be postulated between any two entities, including the Creator and the creation, as time is a dimension of an event (work) and not a substance.

[I.1.11–16] Nāṣir Khusraw uses the following scheme to acknowledge God's sovereignty over the world, without postulating any essential concatenation between God and the world. The Divine Command is self-subsistent but is not part of Him; rather it is only a trace. This is expressed by the First Intellect (the Intelligence of Plotinus). Then

there is the Universal Soul which is analogous to the thought of the Intellect. This doctrine corresponds to Plotinus' theory that the One emanates the Soul [*Enneads*: VI.7.14.1]. Since every existent is due to the First Intellect, the problem of clarifying the relation between God and the world is pushed back to the problem of deciphering the relationship between God and the First Intellect.

Part II: Ontology

This part concentrates on the significance of 'exists', the most important ontological expression. As a Muslim theologian and philosopher, Nāṣir Khusraw has an additional task of clarifying how 'existence' may be applied to God. There is a primary dilemma here. On the one hand, God's existence is His essence and He is the generator of all actual entities; on the other hand, nothing is applicable to God, including existence.

[II.6.38–42] The author begins by clarifying the nature of existents within the context of the modalities of 'necessity', 'contingency', and 'impossibility'. So far this appears to be a replication of the position stated by Ibn Sīnā and his followers [Ibn Sīnā: p.47]. In fact, Nāṣir Khusraw departs from Ibn Sīnā's system in three key doctrines, even though he adopts the latter's language. The first distinction is that Ibn Sīnā begins with 'being' and 'modalities', while our philosopher begins with the observation of actual contingent being and the logical specifications of modalities. In this sense, Ibn Sīnā's system is more rationalistic than that of Nāṣir Khusraw. The second difference lies in the type of initial argument for God's existence. Ibn Sīnā attempts to prove the existence of God by the second version of the ontological argument. Simply put, this argument states that 'The Necessary Being is (syntactically) necessarily the Necessary Existent.' In contrast, Nāṣir Khusraw proves a version of the cosmological (and not the ontological) argument as follows: we observe actual contingent existents; no contingency can be self-caused; so, by infinite regress, there must be a Necessary Existent as the ultimate cause of contingent existents. Ṭūsī employs the same argument for the existence of God and names it 'the argument from contingency of essences' [Ṭūsī: I, p. 3]. The third distinction between the two philosophers lies in the order of emanation. For Ibn Sīnā, the ultimate being (the God of monotheism) is the Necessary Existent, which exists even if it is not a

substance. For Nāṣir Khusraw, the ultimate being is God who, in His essence, is beyond existence and non-existence. The Necessary Being, therefore, is the First Intellect, which is the generator of all other existents. Nāṣir Khusraw's order of emanation is much closer to Plotinus' system than that of Ibn Sīnā. For example, Plotinus too asserts that the One is beyond being [*Enneads*: VI.6.5.35]. These distinctions between Ibn Sīnā and Nāṣir Khusraw show that there are very different types of Neoplatonic emanationism in Islamic philosophy. This text serves to refine these distinctions.

[II.7.43–46] In these passages, our philosopher presents a very clever analytical solution to the problem of 'existence'. The question is: what does it mean for an entity to exist? (For example, 'the largest number does not exist.') Nāṣir Khusraw presents a syntactical criterion by which only actual entities exist. We can reformulate his views as follows: 'the statement "x exists" is true if, and only if, "being present" (i.e., "now") applies to x.' This formulation has a merit and a shortcoming. The merit lies in its simplicity, clarity, and validity. The shortcoming lies in the fact that Nāṣir Khusraw does not solve the problem of ontology but shifts the issue to an analysis of time. Another remarkable dimension of this perspective is that Nāṣir Khusraw recognizes, like Heidegger, that 'time' is a key notion of phenomenological ontology. The difference is that, while Heidegger holds that 'Being is time' our author shows that one can construct a language in which time can be at least as primitive as existents, so that given the notion of time, we can talk about existents. Since time is meaningful for him only in a phenomenological sense, Nāṣir Khusraw's ontological system, like that of Ṭūsī, can be constructed on the basis of empirical phenomenology. The author's analysis of the syntax of 'being' is also noteworthy for his explanation of the word 'not' as a 'negation-sign' in a way that avoids the traditional paradoxes which follow postulations of 'non-being'. An earlier formulation of the same problem is found in Plato's *The Sophist* [251A–259D]. Here, Plato's agenda points to a refutation of Parmenides' metaphysics of one substance which makes discourse impossible. Plato proposes a syntactical treatment of an ontological controversy which supports his theory of the dividing line separating reality into the realms of ideas and particulars. In contrast, Nāṣir Khusraw seems to be proffering a syntactical clarification of ordinary language in order to clarify a philosophical confusion. In this

respect, he is much closer to contemporary language philosophers than to ancient metaphysicians.

[II.8.47–52 – II.9.52–55] Our philosopher rejects the thesis that the soul is not a harmony but rather, as maintained by Aristotle, a substance. The rejection of the doctrine of harmony resembles the discussion in Aristotle's *De Anima* [407b27–408a34]. The view that the soul is a substance, the actuality or formulable essence of an entity, is also found in the same text [414a25–29]. Here, Aristotle only hints that the active intelligence is eternal [430a20–25]. In contrast, Nāṣir Khusraw states explicitly that the human soul is eternal and that it needs embodiment for its purification. In this perspective, he goes beyond the Greek epistemological framework and holds truly a medieval monotheistic system compatible with Islamic theology. Our philosopher holds that the soul is the agent and substantial dimension of the human person. Thus, he is against Cartesian dualism as he explicitly asserts that body is not a substance. Ṭūsī attempts to reject the logical possibility of the existence of atomic substance by a number of arguments, some of which are adopted from Ibn Sinā [Ṭūsī: pp. 13–37]. Plotinus too holds that each person is a soul using a body [*Enneads*: VI.7.5.10], and notes further that the pain of the body does not affect the noble part of the rational soul [I.4.13.5–12; III.2.15.47.62].

[II.10.56–58] Nāṣir Khusraw holds the standard notion of a substance as simple and composite. Moreover, a substance is defined by genus and differentia. But he follows Ibn Sinā against Aristotle in maintaining that God is not a substance.

[II.11.59–62] Our philosopher's explanation that the soul is like a subtle form in a dense body lends itself to a *prima facie* confusion. Since there are two kinds of substances, primary (individuals) and secondary (species), the soul has to be both of them. A possible solution to this problem is as follows: with respect to the complex constituents of a living person, a soul is the subtle form of a body and thus a second substance; with respect to its emanation and isolation from the Universal Soul, and its final return, each living soul is an individual first substance.

Part III: Physics

This part delineates physics proper in the medieval sense, specifically the problem of the generation of the world, the nature of form and matter, and the relationship of the physical and spiritual worlds, together with a discussion of various properties of water, balance, motion, and the basics of botany. The latter portion [III. 15 and 17–20] follows the standard Aristotelian *Physics* [224b35 – 267b25] and *Historia Animalium*, which dominated both Christian and Muslim philosophies of nature. The non-Aristotelian contribution occurs mainly in the earlier portion concerning the principles of cosmogony and the analysis of form and matter.

[III.12.63–69] This chapter focuses on the problem of whether or not the world is generated. Following the standard Aristotelian tradition, our philosopher begins by an extensional analysis of the constituents of the world, breaking it into the inanimate, animal, and vegetative. He presents six cosmological arguments to prove that the world is generated and not eternal, all based on the receptivity of bodies to corruption and dissolution. Noteworthy here is an interesting case of the ‘argument from design’, which points out that since the nature of the four elements cannot be the cause of their present composition, there must be an external agent, a cause of the actual composites in the world. This argument was also used by Ṭūsī in his version of the cosmological argument for God’s existence [Ṭūsī: p. 12] Another interesting argument is based on our philosopher’s maxim that every existent must be generated. This dictum corroborates the Neoplatonic kernel of his cosmogony. We recall the author’s insistence that existence cannot be applied to God; instead it is applied to the First Intelligence which is also the Necessary Existent.

[III.13.70–72 – III.14.73–75] To clarify Nāṣir Khusraw’s position on bodies, we need to place his views in the context of four different meta-axioms of ancient and medieval physics. The first model, which may be called ‘physical rationalism’, is a Pythagorean schema illustrated by both Plato’s *Timaeus* [53c–56c] and Ibn Sīnā’s *Metaphysics* [Chapter 42]. According to this view, abstract physics consists of the mathematical geometry of solids. In this tenor, our philosopher asserts that one sense of matter, specifically the prime matter (Arabic/Persian: *hayūlā*; Greek: *hyle*; Latin: *materia prima*) as well as form (Arabic/Persian: *ṣūra*; Greek: *eidōs*; Latin: *forma*), is known intellectually

and not through the senses. For Nāṣir Khusraw, as with Plato, Ṭūsī [I: p.6] and Descartes, the essence of matter in its formal sense is extension, which means having length, width, and depth. The second model, which may be called 'naïve realism' (in the epistemological sense), has the support of both Aristotle and Ibn Sīnā. According to this view, an agent experiences through his/her senses external existents (*mawjūdāt*) which are first substances, such as trees, doors, and cats. Nāṣir Khusraw holds that in this context, an agent abstracts the secondary or relative matter and forms from his empirical observation of the world. His distinction about the particular and the abstract is also found in Ibn Sīnā's metaphysics [Ibn Sīnā: p. 81]. This sense of material composites is used as a principle of individuation by means of which we distinguish among bodies.

[III.16.81–89] The third model, that of 'iconic spiritualism', postulates a purposeful universe in which the spiritual world that is above nature benefits the lower world by giving beneficial pragmatic principles to the physical material nature. Nāṣir Khusraw points to many such configurations of divine knowledge and wisdom embedded in the cosmos, among them the compatibility of the four basic elements: gender and the generation of species, the instinct for self-preservation in animals and the harmony of different parts of the human body. He elaborates on this model in two specific ways. First, he depicts symbolic analogies between the two worlds, such as this world being the day, the other the night, or this world being female, the other male. Second, he depicts a hierarchy in the spiritual world, where the Intellect is the beneficent and the Soul is the beneficiary. What emerges is an eschatological depiction of the universe, in which earlier entities benefit subsequent ones by determining appropriate laws for their harmonious operation in the world. There is indeed a fourth model of physics which is present in the writings of Ibn Sīnā and Ṭūsī but absent in Nāṣir Khusraw's text. This method, which we may label as 'phenomenological', is best exhibited in Ṭūsī's refutation of material substance [Ṭūsī: III, pp. 13–52]. This view, adopted later by European philosophers such as George Berkeley and Gottfried Leibniz, rejects the notion of an indivisible body (*jawhar-i fard*) because it is conceptually impossible and cannot be experienced. What we ordinarily call a (sensible) material entity is significant only in the mental (*dhihnī*) perspective of an agent and cannot be postulated as a thing in itself (*ghayr-i dhihnī*).

Part IV: Theology

In the *Timaeus* [29], Plato formulates his cosmogony using a theologically problematic analogy. Later theologians struggled with the logical implications of this Platonic model. The Maker, for Plato, does not create the world out of nothing. Instead, the Maker is an Artist who constructs the universe according to the eternal patterns which are independent of Him. This theory implies that eternal verities – such as those of mathematics and ethics – are co-eternal with God or the Maker. Such a doctrine has both positive and negative implications for religious systems. The positive dimension implies that God is praiseworthy since He selects the best of all possible worlds. The negative implications suggests that, *prima facie*, God is neither absolute nor simple; other entities are either parts of God or co-eternal with Him. It was in this tenor that Islamic theology faced the problematic issue of the co-eternity of the Qur'ān with God. Nāṣir Khusraw's response is to construct a model which clarifies his version of the Ismaili position on this medieval theological controversy, as well as to reflect about the status and responsibility of human beings in the cosmic scheme of things.

[IV.21.112–124] After a remarkably non-partisan review of various contemporary theological positions on the problem of co-eternity, Nāṣir Khusraw puts forward his view that God is the only uncreated being, beyond existence and non-existence, whereas in the case of the Qur'ān, both the speaker and the speech are created. He identifies the Speech of God with the Divine Word or Command 'Be' (Arabic *kun*), as the cause of the existence of the world. Thus, for Nāṣir Khusraw, the First Cause of all causes is the Divine Word, not the God of the theologians or the Necessary Existent of Ibn Sīnā.

[IV.22.125–134] The relationship of the Word and the Universal Intellect is extremely subtle for Nāṣir Khusraw. On the one hand, the Word is intermediary between God and the Intellect; on the other hand, since the the Word is the source of all causes and effects, it is inseparable from the Intellect which is its first effect. The author describes the essence of this relationship as that between oneness (*waḥdat*) and one (*wāḥid*), or like that between the quality of blackness and the colour black.

[IV.23.135–146] Nāṣir Khusraw then proceeds to equate the Intellect with the Kingdom of God as the best of all possible worlds. While the physical world has a limit, the Kingdom of God is limitless both in its initial and terminal perspectives. For him, the Intellect is the One Reality, containing in it the totality of all that exists, while ‘existence’ as such can neither be attributed nor denied to God. The Intellect is the possessor of absolute unity and simplicity, whereas composition and multiplicity begin with the second entity, the Universal Soul. The doctrine that the rational formative principle of the universe follows from the Intellect is also adopted by Plotinus [*Enneads*: III.2.18].

[IV.24.147–IV.25.161] Nāṣir Khusraw explains the question of human responsibility and accountability to God in relation to human kind's unique status as His servants on earth. To begin with, the entire universe is fully determined by God, except for human beings who are given power over the rest of created nature. They alone are endowed with knowledge, shame, fear of blame, and hope of praise. By these gifts, human beings become bound to God as His servants and responsible for their deeds. The greatest of these divine bonds is the bond of intellect and knowledge which enables mankind to attain both mastery of nature and recognition of God. Nāṣir Khusraw follows the Platonic dictum of ‘knowledge is virtue and virtue is knowledge’ in asserting that man is created to acquire knowledge, and his indeterminate state between the angelic and animal worlds is essentially due to his ignorance. It is precisely this ignorance, caused by his failure to use the various faculties and sense-organs of the body to seek knowledge, and his consequent regression to an animal-like state, which constitutes his punishment in this world and the next. This view of knowledge is shared by Plotinus who holds that only a person who is able to contemplate can be regarded as a knower, and such a person can take part in the production of the world [*Enneads*: III.8.8.1].

Part V: Theodicy

The problem of free will/determinism is discussed in this part of the text, which contains many original thoughts of Nāṣir Khusraw. In V.26.163, he states explicitly that the attainment of salvation through knowledge includes scientific knowledge and technological mastery

of the world. His emphasis on the harmonious development of two kinds of knowledge, the intellectual and the physical, disproves the accusation, commonplace in medieval texts, that the Ismaili epistemological system is non-rational, anti-rational, or dualistic. Nāṣir Khusraw's views on free will and determinism are very different from those expressed by Naṣir al-Din Ṭūsī. For Ṭūsī, free will is meaningful only in the psychological perspective of an agent, not in reality. In contrast, Nāṣir Khusraw actually postulates free will as a divine gift. This difference shows that there is a wide range of philosophical positions held by different Ismaili thinkers and that grouping this rich tradition in one class is inadequate. For Plotinus, the entire world is a determined necessity [*Enneads*: III.2.12.13], and evil is part of the divine plan [*Enneads*: VI.7.7.1].

[V.26.162–167] This important passage specifies a Neoplatonic monistic vision of the universe which begins with the descent and ends with the return. Our philosopher clarifies various dimensions of this circular process, in which the descent is a transformation from the subtle to the dense, and the ascent a transformation from the dense to the subtle. For example, prophetic revelation (*tanzīl*) is a descent of divine knowledge from the subtle to the dense, resulting in the exoteric forms of religious law (*sharīʿat*), whereas the praxis of the law based on esoteric hermeneutics (*taʿwīl*) enables the soul to ascend from the dense to the subtle and return to its origin, the Universal Soul. Thus, religion for Nāṣir Khusraw is the path of rationality, the path of knowledge, and salvation means a return to one's archetypal origin.

[V.27.168–173] For Nāṣir Khusraw, salvation is embedded in the various senses of *ṣirāṭ*, meaning path, bridge or way. This is the path of the soul travelled by the prophets, their legatees, the Imams, and their deputies, the *hujjats* (proofs). It signifies the journey of a human being from a state of animality to the state of an angel. It involves labour of the body accompanied by the soul's search for knowledge. It is this combination of knowledge and practice, the observance of the *sharīʿat* and understanding of its *taʿwīl*, which constitutes the *ṣirāṭ* and results in salvation of the soul after death. In this connection Plato, in his account of the dramatic events surrounding Socrates' death, notes in the *Phaedo* [63e–69e] that death is liberation of life from the body and a true fulfilment of the philosophical life. The paradigm case of the soul's ascent is depicted in Socrates' speech in

the *Symposium* [201d–212c], where salvation is the path of love. Plotinus also asserts that salvation is achieved when one accepts the dictum of reason [*Enneads*: IV.3.32.6–18] and moves from worldly matters to the divine image [*Enneads*: I.2.3]. It is true that in Aristotle's system one does not find a spiritual universe, but he notes that reason is divine and life according to reason is also divine [*Nicomachean Ethics*: 117b26–30]. Ibn Sīnā states explicitly that the highest happiness and the greatest blessing is a union (*payvand*) with the Necessary Existent, which clearly advocates a separation of the soul from the individual body type of entity [Ibn Sīnā: Chapter 7].

[IV.28.174–189] In the final chapters of his treatise, our philosopher upholds the Shī'ī perspectives that divine justice is significant, and that rewards and punishment are justified. He connects responsibility with the free will of persons. Since an agent is responsible only for voluntary behaviour, animals are not punished for their disobedience and angels are not rewarded for their obedience. However, a human being has the propensity for both and is endowed with a perceptive intellect allowing him/her to distinguish between the ugly and the fair, the good and the bad. Consequently, the doctrine of reward and punishment is applicable to mankind. Even though the Neoplatonic system is on the whole deterministic, there are passages of Plotinus which indicate that salvation is within our power and require self-discipline [*Enneads*: I.6.9.22–25]. For Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, free will exists only in the phenomenological realm of the agent, as God's knowledge necessitates actions that are realized. While God is the ultimate cause, the free will of a person is the proximate cause which is a dimension of the divine destiny [Ṭūsī: p.39]. In sum, we become aware of a sense of freedom when we will the inevitable. True salvation comes by knowledge when we attempt to transcend our limited perspectives and move towards the universal perspective.

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