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Issue #3

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# The Islamic Journal



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Sayyid Rami al Rifai

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Bismillahi rahmani raheem

Assalamu Alaikum,

The Islamic Journal is a unique Journal in that it doesn't follow the usual methods of other academic journals. It came about as a result of a book I was writing called "The Knowledge Behind The Terminology and Concepts in Tassawwuf and It's Origin", the title is as descriptive as possible because the book was written in the same style as classical islamic texts, a single document without any chapter's since they were a later invention which hindered the flow of the book.

That book looked into the Islamic science of Ihsan, Human perfection, were it's terminology and concepts came from, what they mean and the knowledge and science they were based on. I started researching the subject some five or so years ago and it resulted in a book whose current length is over 300,000 words not counting research notes.

Towards the end of the book I realized that the scientific subjects, at the heart of Islam, needed to be looked into further because i had learned some interesting things which needed to be investigated, so the book was put on hold as i looked at more research papers to gain deeper knowledge.

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The work was done entirely feesabilillah, and because of that I wanted to share what I already understood rather than having it sitting there, so I decided to write a separate book with a smaller scope entitled “Who Was al Khidr”, the prophet Khidr (ra) was the perfect role model for the topic because his story in the Quran is the essence of what a muslim is trying to achieve. The book was about how man gains knowledge from the world around him through his physiology (mans body and senses), essentially how Maarifa (gnosis) works from its scientific aspects, a subject at the heart of this Journal but not its entire scope.

The original book was the heart of all my research and this second book represented its end product, but I felt it was too technical for many people so this resulted in me writing three introductory works on the subject to ease people into its context, the first was “Human Physiology and Its Relationship To Baraka”, “What is The Unseen World and Where Is It: Explaining The Technical Terminology Of The Scholars”, and “How Is Allah The Light Of The Heavens and The Earth”.

These works were only finished recently and are the reason why I decided to put this Journal together. The Book itself was 80% complete when I put it on hold, but because of its large scope I needed to do more work on connecting its many topics together, but this would take almost another year given its length so I came

to realize the best way to present the book would be to create a Journal and present all the information through this medium, in small bites rather than a giant book that people would find hard to read from cover to cover.

Because of how the original book was written, each article has a title that wasn't originally there and created simply for this Journal, which I have tried to make as descriptive as possible, the Journal should also be read in order starting from the first edition, although some articles within could be understood out of sequence others in the later editions may not as they require prerequisite knowledge as they build upon prior information that would have already been explained.

So before reading this work one should read my other work “The Light Of Allah In The Heavens and The Earth”, which combines the three articles I mentioned earlier, into one book that explains what the Light of Allah is in relation to modern science and the universe. All of the books mentioned can be downloaded from my website, [SunnahMuakada.wordpress.com](http://SunnahMuakada.wordpress.com) from the books section.

This won't be necessary for the earlier editions of the journal but eventually it will cover deeper knowledge regarding the unseen world (ghayb) which in today's language is called the subatomic world or the Quantum Universe, discussing topics like what Allah's Arsh (throne) is, what Allah's Kursi (footstool) is, many verses in

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the Quran mention them and ahadith even explain them, but they were not understood by the early scholars of Islam who didn't have the scientific understanding of the Universe we have, hence they declared them unknowable, but Allah reveals things to mankind so they can be known and surpassingly the Quran itself explains what they are once we understand the knowledge that has been missing from man for 1400 years.

The prophet (saws) himself understood the subatomic world and the quantum universe, this is clearly indicated by many ahadith found in the History of Tabari, the first volume begins with the creation of the universe and what the prophet (saws) said about it, but how do you explain that knowledge to desert Arabs except in their vocabulary, hence while we have the prophets (saws) words, we were missing his understanding of space.

His understanding of space is outlined in the work "How Is Allah The Light Of The Heavens and The Earth", in it you will find a very significant hadith mentioned by Imam Tabari which shows that the prophet (saws) not only understood the rotation of the earth, sun and moon, but the rotation of the Stars and Galaxy itself and how this is related to the expansion of the universe.

Allah said regarding the prophet Muhammad (saws) when He saw Him on Isra wal Miraj, the night He was taken into Heaven, "His sight (of the spiritual world) never wavered, nor was it too bold,

and He saw some of the greatest signs of his Lord (in the Universe)." (53:17-18).

"Allah is He, Who is the only God, the knower of the Unseen and the Observed."(59:22) it then should not be a surprise that the Unseen is the subatomic world, all those extremely small particles that exist in space, and while man is made from atoms and molecules Allah has created an entire Universe of things from the finer particles in space, the most significant of this creation are the Angels, created from a single type of particle, in contrast to man, the Photon more commonly known as Light.

So when Allah makes a promise in the Quran that "In time We shall make them fully understand Our messages [through what they perceive] in the utmost horizons [of the universe] and within themselves, so that it will become clear unto them that this [revelation] is indeed the truth." [Qur'an 41:53], it means just that, eventually it would be possible for man to understand everything about the Universe, and we are now living at the end of time when Allah promised to mankind that he would unravel the mysteries of the Universe for them, the prophet (saws) having been shown them earlier.

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All of this relates to how man gain's knowledge through his physiology, something Allah mentions in clear terms in Surah al Shams (91) in the Quran, but man before our time could not understand the relationship between the things being mentioned.

The Islamic journal will present the result of my research into this subject, each edition will be a part of the original Book, slightly changed and split into articles so it can be read independently as much as possible.

Jazak Allah Khairan, wa Ramadan Kareem wa Mubaraak.

Sayyid Rami al Rifai

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# The Universe and What It Means That Everything In It Praises and Worships Allah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Through the Qur'an Allah revealed many things which we take for granted today, it was the work of Muslim Scholars over the past 1400 years that allowed us to arrive at the age we are in now.

In each Era as man advanced in understanding, more of the Qur'an opened up to Him, this is not an exception in our time where we are capable of understanding what Allah meant by verses like the Heavens being smoke (a simile) at the beginning of time, when He ordered them to come together or solidify, it is almost a vision of how the fine quantum particles of the Universe became the Solid matter we see in creation today, such as the Planets.

“And He [it is who] applied His design to the skies, which were [yet but] smoke (loose particles); and He [it is who] said to them and to the earth (planets), “Come [into being], both of you, willingly or unwillingly!” - to which both responded, “We do come in obedience.” (41:12) Matter obeyed the command of Allah, his designs, in a similar way to how matter obeys our own mind to create the images we imagine and see in our mind and self, in this is the understanding of how man was created in Allah’ s image.

“And He [it is who] decreed that they become seven heavens (strata) in two aeons, and imparted unto each heaven its function (because the verse begins with matter before it forms solids, this means the Laws of physics and quantum mechanics). And We adorned the skies (space) nearest to the earth with lights (the stars), and made them secure: such is the ordaining of the Almighty, the All-Knowing.” (41:13) this is an amazing verse because it tells mankind beyond the stars that we see in our sky, there is another entire universe we have yet not seen, a reference to things beyond the stars in our milky way that make up our night sky, man 1400 years ago had no idea what space let alone the stars were.

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"For He (it is who, after creating the earth,) placed firm mountains on it, (towering) above its surface, and bestowed (so many) blessings on it, and equitably apportioned its means of subsistence to all who would seek it: (and all this He created) in four aeons (periods of time)." (41:11)

Regarding the descriptive verses found in the Quran, Imam al Ghazali wrote;

Those with lesser intellect, because of their lack of understanding, would assume that both the Heaven and the earth possess life intellect, and the ability to understand speech. He would also assume that they were addressed by a speech of actually enunciated words which both could hear and reply to with enunciated words saying, "We come willingly." But whosoever has insight would realize that this was a figurative (use of language) and that Allah only expressed that the Heaven and earth are subject to His Will.

Of the same kind, too, are the Words of Allah when He said, "There is nothing that does not proclaim His Praise..." (17:46 Qur'an). Those with lesser intellect, because of their lack of understanding, would assume that the inanimate things possess life intellect, and the ability to speak and enunciate words, so that they would have to say, "Praise is to Allah" in order that His Praise might be es-

tablished. But he who has insight would know that the actual utterance with the tongue was not meant by that but merely that everything, through its own existence, praises Allah, and in its own essence exalts Him and attests to His Oneness (being subject to the laws of physics, chemistry etc... are these inanimate objects praise and worship of Allah, the meaning is then that Allah was teaching man that everything is subject to a Law of "science" ). As has been said: "In everything He has a sign which declares that He is One."

In the same way it is said, "This masterpiece testifies that its Maker possesses the ability and perfect knowledge." This does not mean that the masterpiece actually utter the words, "I testify ..." etc. but merely that, through its form and state, (it testifies to the Ability and Knowledge of its Maker). (Foundations of Islamic Belief, Imam al Ghazali).

According to the Imam the pebbles the Prophet (saws) Heard speak, which was one of the prophets miracles (saws), was an event intended specifically for him, they were literally made to speak the reality of their creation, so that the nature of the pebbles substance could show the Prophet (saws) that every inanimate object in existence attests, exalts and praises Allah through conforming to His command, because

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the prophet (saws) already understood what Imam al Ghazali explained and through this miracle He was in the process of being taught about the universe, Allah was showing him that His laws govern everything in it including the stones man pays no attention to.

From this the Prophet (saws) could understand what Allah meant in the Qur'an when he said, "Allah has encompassed all things in knowledge" (65:12), something we have witnessed ourselves today by the many fields of science on just about anything we can think of in creation from the nature of dirt and dust to the nature of the sun and the moon.

Today we have science to shows this to us, so then how would Allah make that point to mankind 1400 years ago in terms they could understand.

The simple idea that in every thing there is knowledge to be learned was something foreign to people living in the ancient world, books and science were rare things, so the verse was instructing man to begin the process of studying the nature of every object in creation, from which we reached our point in time.

# Allah Created The Universe So Man Can Know Him Because Of The One Who Can Achieve Knowing Him

Allah said: When Adam made an error, he asked: O Allah! I ask you for the sake of Muhammad to forgive me. Allah said: O Adam! How do you recognize Muhammad when I have not yet created him? Adam said: O Allah! When you created me and blew into me the spirit, I lifted my head and saw written on the Arsh (throne) 'La ilaaha illallah Muhammadur rasoolullah'. So, I got to know that you would only join your name with him who is most beloved to you. Allah said: O Adam! You have spoken the truth. Indeed Muhammad is more beloved to me than anything and when you asked me for his sake, I pardoned you. If Muhammad was not in existence, I would not have created you" (Hakim in Mustadrik, Baihaqi in Dalail an-Nubuwah, Tabrani in Kabeer)

Abdullah ibn Abbas (r.a) said that: "Allah revealed to Prophet 'Isa (as) that: O 'Isa! Have Iman in Muhammad and order your ummah to do the same. If Muhammad was not in existence, I would not have created Adam nor would I have made heaven or hell". (Hakim in Mustadrik and Abu as-Shaykh in Tabqat al-Isfahani'in)

Salman al-Farsi (r.a) said that: "Jibra'il came to Rasoolallah (saws) and said that Allah says: I have not created anyone who is more honoured to me than you. I have created the world and all that is therein so that they may know the rank that you possess. I would not have created the world if I had not created you".(Ibn Asakir)

Ibn Hajar 'Asqalani says: "These reports say that if Muhammad (saws) were not created then Allah would not have made the skies nor the Earth, neither heaven nor hell, neither the sun nor the moon".

This is because Allah was referring to the depth all His creatures would achieve in knowing Him, and the Prophet Muhammad (saws) surpassed any other creation in that, among all His creatures Mankind surpassed Allah's other creations, this is mankind's place with Allah because they fulfilled the reason for Allah creating everything, which is to know Him.

Allah created Death and life to see which of us is best in Deed (sura al Mulk), Heaven and Hell are a reward or punishment for

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those who Follow and pick up this burden, and those who ignore it and become evil. If neither existed then our actions would not have worth and real consequences, both heaven and hell serve as a balance in creation being the two most opposite places with Allah representing His best rewards and His most severe punishment.

If they didn't exist no creature would have been deserving of his reward, which means that no creature would have achieved the same depths in knowing Allah to deserve its creation in the first place, everything is in Allah's foreknowledge and it was all created for the sake of mankind so they could achieve knowing Allah.

Because Allah mentioned both Heaven and Hell in relation to why creation was created, Allah was saying He would not have otherwise created a system in the universe that promoted knowing Him to the same Depths, because Allah says "man can not have anything but what he strives for" (53:39) or earns in other words.

If we keep in mind what Imam al Ghazali said we would understand that in the following Hadith, Allah wanted the companions and mankind after them to understand that creation worshiped him by obeying his Laws, which is why it was made to speak in front of the companions.

Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood, may Allaah be pleased with him, said, "We were with the Messenger of Allaah, (saws), on a journey, and we ran

short of water. He said: 'Bring the remaining water with you.' People brought a utensil containing a little water. He dipped his hand in it and said: 'Come to the blessed water - and the Blessing is from Allaah!' I saw the water flowing from among the fingers of the Messenger (saws) and we certainly heard the food glorifying Allaah when it was being eaten [by him]." (Al-Bukhaari)

If man sees that Allah has just made this inanimate object speak then He will understand that it is obeying Allah's will and laws.

Allah began teaching the prophet (saws) this fact about the Universe before He (saws) became a prophet to prepare him for what He would reveal through the Quran. The Prophet (saws) said: "I recognize a stone in Makkah which would salute me before my commissioning as a Prophet. I still recognize it." (Muslim)

'Ali ibn Abi Taalib, may Allaah be pleased with him, said, "I was once with the Prophet (saws) in Makkah and we went out to some location. Every mountain and tree which the Prophet, (saws), passed by would salute him (saying) 'Peace be upon you, O Messenger of Allaah.'" (At-Tirmithi)

Moreover, the tree-trunk which the Prophet (saws) would stand beside while giving his Khutbah (Friday sermon) was one of the inanimate objects which talked to the Prophet, (saws). Ibn 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him, said, "The Prophet (saws) would de-

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liver his Khutbah while standing beside a trunk (of a palm-tree).  
When he had the pulpit made, he used it instead. The trunk there-  
fore began weeping, and so the Prophet went to it and rubbed his  
hand over it.” (Al-Bukhaari)

The signs in Allah's creation point towards his religion because  
they speak of His will , command and laws throughout creation.

# All Matter In The Universe Is Held Together By Forces Allah Calls His Hold On Creation

“Allah is the One who holds the heavens and the Earth (the universe), lest they cease to exist. And if they vanished no one could then keep hold of them. Certainly He is Most Forbearing, Ever-Forgiving.”(35:41)

Ibn Umar reported that the Prophet said, ‘Whoever wishes to behold the Resurrection (the end of the universe) as if he were seeing it with his own eyes should read: “When the sun is folded away” [81:1] (begins the process of turning into a black hole as it folds in on itself), “When the heaven is split open” [82:1] (matter unravels and everything becomes small particles, the subatomic world is made bare, as the expression in the verse says), “and When the heaven is rent asunder” [84:1] (torn apart as the forces holding it

together weaken and eventually disappear altogether).(Tafsir al Tustari)

Allah similarly said in the Quran "THEN THE SUN is shrouded in darkness (it's reaction that create light stop and turns into a black hole, which is how light is shrouded), and when the stars lose their light (do the same as our sun), and when the mountains are made to vanish (as matter falls apart and disintegrates because the forces holding them have ceased to exist), and when she-camels big with young, about to give birth, are left untended, and when all beasts are gathered together, and when the seas are set on fire (as H<sub>2</sub>O becomes a hydrogen fire fuelled by the oxygen atom), and when all human beings are coupled [with their deeds]", and when (on the day of resurrection) the girl-child that was buried alive is made to ask for what crime she had been slain, and when the scrolls [of men's deeds] are unfolded, and when heaven is laid bare (for all to see it's ghayb, what was once unseen in it), and when the blazing fire [of hell] is kindled bright (in this new creation), and when paradise is brought into view: [on that Day] every human being will come to know what he has prepared [for himself].”

(81:1-14)

These verses are speaking of events that will occur when the trumpet is first blown, up to the day of resurrection. When the Trumpet is blown, Allah will stop the forces in the Universe from acting,

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gravity will no longer exist and the forces that make particles create Atoms weaken and fissile out so that even the strong mountains will vanish as the Atoms they are made from vanish, these forces are the electromagnetic force, the strong nuclear force and weak nuclear force.

The universe will no longer expand or contract by this point in time, the speed at which the universe is moving will stop, and everything in it will be affected by it, so the Sun will become dark because it can no longer create light by it's a fission reaction, the stars will also do the same, and all will vanish.

As the bonds between molecules and atoms have no effect solid matter will become like dust, and when the seas are set on fire as the bonds between (H<sub>2</sub>O) hydrogen and oxygen no longer exist, the hydrogen gas will burn as it is fuelled by the oxygen (air).

“and when the heaven is stripped off, torn away from its place, just as the skin of a sheep is stripped off;” (Tafsir al Jalalayn) as it vanishes like the mountains, Allah says about these forces in the universe which will stop working when the trumpet is blown, “Allah keeps a firm hold on the heavens and earth (the particles in them are held together by forces, very literally) preventing them from vanishing away. And if they vanished no one could then keep hold of them. Certainly He is Most Forbearing (this act is a quality of Allah's forbearance), Ever-Forgiving (placing forgiveness for man in

every part of creation, a subtle reference to how forgiveness is tied into creation from the fabric of what it is made of).” (31:45)

As Imam al Ghazali explained this is Allah's figurative speech in the Quran, Allah doesn't literally have a hand holding space, the forces of the universe are honoured with being called His hand because of how crucial they are to all life in the universe, and because it is crucial to life and acts as a direct agent of His will when He decrees something, it is given this honorific of being called His hold on creation and His Hand.

In the verse of light (24:35) Allah explains how He is the Light of the heavens and the earth (the Universe) with a simile for how His light exists in the Universe, in the Verse He calls all subatomic particles His light because they represent His complete will by moulding themselves into what He decrees. Just as everything proclaims His will by obeying His command is the meaning of the verse “There is nothing that does not proclaim His Praise (obey's His will)” (17:46) (Foundations of Islamic Belief, Imam al Ghazali).

The simile Allah gives in the verse of Light is of the Atom and how subatomic particles are created, behaving according to His will and are then used by Allah to guide man in life (this is explained in detail in my book *The Light Of Allah In The Heavens and The Earth*).



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Allah honours these particles by calling them His light in the heavens and the earth because it was from them He created everything as He willed it, in this simile He makes specific mention of these forces calling them the oil of the Lamp (Atom), then in verse 31:45 He mentions how the entire Universe is being held by Him through them because these forces are what keep all Atoms and objects together, even literally saying in the Quran they prevent everything from vanishing away.

As the Quran describes in many verses, everything will disintegrate and turn to “dust” eventually disappearing when the trumpet is blown, because Allah will no longer hold the Universe together meaning the forces will stop existing.

The forces are also likened to His action in creation because they only exist as a result of the expansion of the Universe, and Allah said He is the one expanding it.

“And it is We Who have constructed the heaven (Universe) with might, and verily, it is We Who are steadily expanding it”. (Qur'an, 51:47)

In the verse of Light Allah specifically mentions the forces (oil) are produced by the Universe, so they exist through Him because He is expanding it.

Allah gives another description of the day when the Universe will end, “Assuredly, what ye are promised must come to pass. Then when the stars become dim; and the sky is torn apart; When the mountains are scattered (to the winds) as dust, (70:7-10). This theme of matter coming apart is repeated often in the Quran and is central to Allah’s description of events on that day.

# The Aim Of Creation Is So That Man Can Know Himself and Allah

[71:7] ...And they persist [in their rejection], and act in great arrogance.

Imam Tustari said: Persistence in sin (dhanb) gives rise to ignorance, and ignorance gives rise to transgression into falsehood (bāṭil). The transgression into falsehood gives rise to hypocrisy (nifāq) and hypocrisy in turn gives rise to disbelief (kufr). [He] was asked, 'What is the sign of the hypocrite?' He replied: It is that he perceives something when he is reminded of it, but when he gets up to go, it is as if that thing never entered his heart. Allah, Exalted is He, has said: Whenever it gives them light, they walk therein, and when darkness falls around them, they stand still [2:20].

Allah Said in the Qur'an the main reason He sent the Prophet (saws) was to help people purify their character and selves (nafs) from bad qualities and to nurture and grow good qualities in their

place, "He it is Who sent among the unlettered ones a Messenger (Muhammad SAW) from among themselves, reciting to them His Verses (teaching them), purifying them, and teaching them the Book (Law and science) and Al-Hikmah (Wisdom regarding creation). And verily, they had been before in manifest error"(62:2).

[62:2] It is He who sent to the unlettered [folk] a messenger from among them...

Imam Tustari said: The unlettered are those who believed in Muḥammad (saws) and were connected to him through following (ittibāʿ) him and emulating (iqtidāʿ) him. Whoever does not emulate him is not of his nation.

[62:3] And [to] others from among them who have not yet joined them...

Imam Tustari said; That is, those (later generations) who came after him who believed in him and followed him, Allah will join with the first [generation of believers].

Imam al Ghazali said a man "intends to construct a house. For the first time his vision embraces a perspective of his proposed great house, which is laid originally on the plan of his mind, at the back of which he has the number of walls and rooms, etc., and the order in which bricks are to be placed to make the walls. Unless he plans

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the house according to his prearranged outline, he cannot construct it. Similarly, know that Allah creates man, so that he may attain nearness to Him. This nearness is impossible without the assistance of the intermediaries nearer to Him, i.e. the Prophets. Prophethood, therefore, is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. Allah's claim to nearness is obligatory and binding upon all creatures because He made it obligatory upon them through the words of His Prophets, and not by reason alone." (The Mysteries of the Human Soul).

Meaning science alone isn't enough, and will never be enough, because man's nature is not built that way, rationality is only part of man's physiology while Allah gave man instincts to sense matters through, sound judgment is only partly built upon facts, any person can present fabricated information as facts then person are only left with their instincts to unravel the matter.

People constantly put their faith in things without realising it, a scientist can prove what he likes through experimentation to which he knows all the proofs and evidence, but even the greatest and most devout Atheist must put his faith in the words of the scientist because he didn't conduct the experiments himself, so he is taking the matter at the scientist's words, this is the state of every Atheist secular society.

Because this is man's nature Allah created the universe to accommodate for this, the matter with Allah isn't simply faith it is first learning and understanding and then to have faith our actions will bring results, Islam is faith based upon knowledge. Allah calls this process Jihad, it is the struggle to find a wasila, a means to Him, and every person's wasila, or means to Allah is different because each person's heart is unique.

Upon making the connection between science and faith, scholars began to write works on such matters, Imam Al-Balkhi (933 CE) wrote a book dedicated to maslahah (public interest), which he entitled, Masalih al-Abdan wal-Anfus (Benefits for Bodies and Souls), in which he explained how Islamic practices and rulings contribute to health, physically and mentally, this was one of the earliest works connecting science with religious practice.

One of the most famous and important hadith (narration) in Islam is the hadith of Jibril (Gabriel), which occurred just 86 days before the prophet (saw) death;

Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, said, "While we were sitting with the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, one day a man came up to us whose clothes were extremely white, whose hair was extremely black, upon whom traces of traveling could not be seen, and whom none of us knew, until he sat down close to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him

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peace, so that he rested his knees upon his knees and placed his two hands upon his thighs and said,

'Muhammad, tell me about Islam.'

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, 'Islam is that you witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and you establish the prayer, and you give the Zakat, and you fast Ramadan, and you perform the hajj of the House if you are able to take a way to it.'

He said, 'You have told the truth,'

and we were amazed at him asking him and [then] telling him that he told the truth.

He said, 'Tell me about Iman.'

He said, 'That you affirm Allah, His Angels, His Books, His messengers, and the Last Day, and that you affirm the Decree, the good of it and the bad of it.'

He said, 'You have told the truth.'

He said, 'Tell me about Ihsan.'

He said, 'That you worship Allah as if you see Him, for if you don't see Him then truly He sees you.'

He said, 'Tell me about the Hour.'

He said, 'The one asked about it knows no more than the one asking.'

He said, 'Then tell me about its tokens.'

He said, 'That the female slave should give birth to her mistress, and you see poor, naked, barefoot shepherds of sheep and goats competing in making tall buildings.'

He went away, and I remained some time. Then he asked, 'Umar, do you know who the questioner was?' I said, 'Allah and His Messenger know best.' He said, 'He was Jibril who came to you to teach you your deen'." (Muslim and Bukhari narrated it and has a grade Higher than Sahih and that is "Agreed upon", in terms of authority it is on par with the Quran).

This hadith is described by Imam Nawawi as one of the hadiths upon which the Islamic religion turns. The use of the word deen in the last line, Atakum yu'aallimukum dinakum, He "came to you to teach you your religion" entails that the religion of Islam is composed of the four fundamentals mentioned in the hadith: Islam, or external compliance with what Allah asks of us; Iman, or the belief in the Unseen (parts of the universe) that the prophets have informed us of; Ihsan, or to worship Allah as though one sees Him; and The Hour, or the remembrance of death and the afterlife.

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The reason it is one of the most important Hadiths in all of Islam is because it summed up the entire religion and categorised into into four parts, and the meeting with Jibril occurred 86 days before the prophets (saws) death, a time when Allah revealed the verse, "This day have I perfected your religion for you (sent down all it should be about), completed My favor upon you (decided your blessings and what you shall receive spiritually and materially), and have chosen for you Islam as your religion (All that is mentioned in the Hadith of Jibril)" (Surah Al-Ma'idah 5:3).

Because Jibril (a.s) was the one who brought down this verse to the Messenger, Allah inspired him to prepare the Prophet (saws) and the Ummah for what it meant by first visiting them and instructing them on all the parts of the Deen.

So there is no room to say the hadith is missing any aspect of what Islam is, and to deny any part of it is to deny what Allah revealed and is Kufr (disbelief), because the Prophet (saws) said "He was Jibril who came to you to teach you your deen" these words have the same authority as a verse in the Quran.

The holy Prophet Muhammad (saws) had four Prophetic duties, as illustrated in the holy Qur'an:

"Certainly did Allah confer [great] favor upon the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from themselves, reciting to

them His verses and purifying them and teaching them the Book and wisdom, although they had been before in manifest error."(3:164)

"It is He who has sent among the unlettered a Messenger from themselves reciting to them His verses and purifying them and teaching them the Book and wisdom - although they were before in clear error." (62:2)

These four duties are:

(1) Reciting the Verses of the Qur'an; The Revelation conveyed the Commands of Allah, and is the foundation of Islamic Shari'ah. The final revelation was received at 'Arafat on the 9th day of the Islamic month of Zilhajj during the Farewell Pilgrimage. It declared: "This day I completed your Deen (way of life) for you and My favours upon you, and chosen for you Islam as Deen", according to the Hadith of Jibril Islam means the religion and it's laws, and Deen is the way of life, or end result in each persons life.

(2) Tazkiyah, purifying them; there a number of ways to purify the self, such as through our actions as we practice the acts that purify us, the other was the Prophet's (saws) company, it purified the souls and immediately refined human conduct. This was because of the extent to which He embodied the qualities of Allah, some of the companions converted on the sight of him because they could

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perceive the magnitude of Allah through him. Allah took a number of oaths by the messenger of Allah in the Qur'an, two on the tremendous nature of his character. "Ya Seen, By the wise Qur'an Indeed you, [O Muhammad], are from among the messengers, On a straight path (36:1-5). And "Nun. By the pen and what they inscribe, You are not, [O Muhammad], by the favor of your Lord, a madman. And indeed, for you is a reward uninterrupted. And indeed, thou art of a tremendous nature."(68:1-4) This transformation was most strikingly evident in the character of his Companions, this process of purifying the soul instantly, still continues with those who emulate him and achieve what he did, the Awliya of Allah who are the inheritors of the prophets. "Indeed in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example to follow, for him who hopes in (the Meeting with) Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much".(Surah Al-Ahzab, Verse 21)

(3) Teaching of the Book; It was befitting Allah's majesty that the exalted personality (saws) which received the Book and fully understood the Message, should teach it to the rest of mankind.

(4) Teaching of Wisdom; To expound the deeper meaning of the Book, teach the wisdom behind the words of Allah, raise people up to be wise in conduct and exhibit practical implementation of the Qur'an. Wisdom means that a person considers as much knowledge as possible when judging a matter, and only people with puri-

fied hearts can handle taking in many points of view before their heart settles on the best answer, others may be quick to anger, be short sighted, not intelligent enough to handle more than one kind of knowledge or perspective, and may be hypocritical and only seek self interest, many bad qualities hinder the ability of a person to be wise and sagacious (having an ability to understand difficult ideas and situations and make good decisions).

This is why Allah coupled knowledge and wisdom with Takiyah, purifying the self and a person can only know himself if he purifies it, and he can only know Allah if he knows His self.

# For Each Type of Knowledge In Islam A School Was Created and Devoted To Studying It

From the Hadith of Jibril (r.a) the scholars understood Islam Has four main categories which all other areas of knowledge come under, they are Islam, Iman, Ihsan and The Signs of the Hour.

From what rasul allah (saws) mentioned of Islam we know that the laws for the Shahada, Prayer, Zakat, Fasting Ramadan, and performing the Hajj, each of them comes under the topic of Islam, the legal sciences of Fiqh (Law) and it's codification into the legal system, Shariah, are all under this subject.

If we where to simplify the explanation of how the Legal Schools can be traced back to the prophet (saws), we can say Imam Ali and the companions who lived in Iraq where Hanafi in Law since that schools rolling revolve around their opinions, the companions who lived in Madina are Maliki, and the Shafii and Hanbali madhhabs (legal schools) are a mix of both the companions of Madina and Iraq.

This is all referring to the opinions that the founders of Islam's four legal schools, Imam Abu Hanifa, Malik, Shaffi and Ahmad followed. The Imam's looked into the opinions of the companions that lived in their area, and derived the methods by which these companions came up with their rulings and from all that the science of Usul al Fiqh, principles of jurisprudence, was born which every legal system on earth today relies on, the four legal schools agree on about 75% of these principles (Usul) and have differences on about 25%.

As Jibril (as) defined the Deen into four areas of knowledge, the scholars went through these four areas of knowledge in Islam and codified (to put laws or rules together as a code or system) the knowledge in them and developed sciences around studying them, like the modern sciences related to history or language, in order to preserve and study our Deen with accuracy and reliability for many later generations.

Under the topic of Iman (faith) came the laws and science behind affirming Allah's existence, His angels, His books, His messengers, the existence of the Last Day, and the Decree of Allah, the good of it and the bad of it, which the Islamic science of Aqeedah (Creed) deals with, the two main schools of Aqeedah that were dedicated to the spread of this science are the Maturidi and Ash'ari schools, named after the respective scholars who founded them. These are

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the schools the wider muslim community agreed upon and spread around the Muslim world.

Most muslims know of these categories of knowledge along with the Signs of the Hour (ilm Alamat al Sa'ah) which the Mufasireen, those who wrote commentary on the Quran and Sunnah dealt with, but hardly any in the western and modern world know about the knowledge that comes under the last Islamic Science mentioned in the hadith of Jibril, that of Ihsan or human perfection.

The Deen (religion) today is only learnt from the Fuqaha (Lawyers) who are only knowledgable and qualified in Fiqh (law) and Aqeedah (creed) but not Ihsan (human perfection), so they can't teach what they don't know despite the fact this is the ultimate aim of Allah for mankind which He mentioned in the Quran, hence today they can't fulfil what Allah wants.

While Islam in the hadith comes under the science of Fiqh (Law) and it's four Madhhabs (legal schools), and Iman (faith) comes under the science of Aqeedah and it's Madhhabs (schools), Ihsan in Islam's History came under the science of Tassawwuf, sufism.

Just as schools were created to study the other areas of knowledge, likewise schools were created to study this area of knowledge as well, the main schools dedicated to this science throughout Islam's history were the Qadiri, Naqshbandi and Rifai, there are also many

more that we can mention which developed in different parts of the Islamic world, because each person is different and each nations has it's own identity, it is only natural that a science dealing with human character and reforming should have many different schools around the world.

Typically a scholar in Islam could be Hanafi in his Fiqh (law), Ash'ari in his Aqeedah (creed) and Rifai in his Tassawwuf (Ihsan), since they all dealt with a different area of knowledge in Islam.

Being able to quote many facts about religion is not the same as understanding it, and how it all fits together, this is like being able to quote a lot of facts about the Fiqh of wudu (ablution) and salat (prayer) but not being able to give a tafsir (explanation) of verses in the Qur'an. A fiqh (Law) manual contains a list of facts about wudu, salat, zakat, fasting and hajj while a tafsir (exegesis) contains the understanding of the Qur'an, and Allah doesn't give understanding of the religion to every person,

يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو  
الْأَلْبَابِ

“He granteth wisdom to whom He pleaseth; and he to whom wisdom is granted receiveth indeed a benefit overflowing; but none will grasp the Message but men of understanding” (2:269).



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So there are many Lawyers today but not many Mufasirs, people capable of explaining the religion. Under the Khalifah of Islam and through out history, Ihsan (Tasawwuf) in our academic institutions was taught alongside Fiqh (law) and Aqeedah (creed) because Allah mentions in the Qur'an that Ihsan is the mission (aim) of Rasul Allah (saws), it is the reason why He was sent, and the four reasons Allah gave for sending in the verse all aim to achieve this for man.

Imam an Nawawi wrote in his Sharh Sahih Muslim, "As far as Fiqh and Hikma (wisdom) are concerned, the former (fiqh) means to have a deep understanding of religion, whilst the latter (hikma) refers to having conscious acknowledgment of Allah Most High (ma'rifa), coupled with self-reformation, good character and abstaining from following one's desires and falsehood (this is Tazkiya)." (Nawawi, al-Minhaj Sharh Sahih Muslim, Pg: 158-159)

The prophet (saws) said Ihsan is 'That you worship Allah as if you see Him, for if you don't see Him then truly He sees you.'

Tasawwuf or Tazkiya an Nafs (91:9) is mentioned in many places in the Quran, Imam Tustari said regarding verse [91:9] "successful indeed will be the one who purifies it (the self)", He who is granted [the ability to consider] (nazar) the matter of his final return (ma'ad), succeeds. [91:10] "and he will indeed have failed who eclipses it (in darkness)" He said: The soul which is (punished) by

Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, such that it does not give the matter of its final return any consideration, will fail.

The Prophet (saws) said "be in this world as if you were a stranger", Imam Ali (ra) said "Work for this world as if you will live forever, and work for the hereafter as if you will die tomorrow", Ibn Umar (ra) said "In the evening do not anticipate the morning and in the Morning do not anticipate the evening."

Man should build this world as if he was going to stay in it forever, so he should do what is the best and lasting for mankind in it, even though he won't be here forever his descendants will benefit from what he wished for himself, and he should prepare for the hereafter as if He was going to die tomorrow because his end can come at any moment, and man can only take from this world what he prepared for it. Man should be a stranger to the world (not it's people) and not contemplate in the morning what will occur by evening because he should perfect and be focused on what is occurring in that hour, moving on to his next task and perfecting it when it arrives being unattached from anything he has previously done, so he isn't pleased with himself.

This is how man maintains his constant focus throughout the day, moving from one task to the next and perfecting it.

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Before advancing scientifically, Islamic scholars laid out the foundation for the Islamic state and community to live by, they codified the law, formulated the Sharia and developed the sciences and tools to investigate and understand the sources of Islam, the Qur'an and Sunnah, then they wrote about theories of law and established what the Maqasid (overall Aim and intent) of the Shariah was, which were identified and summarized in five principles known as the Five Maqasid al Shariah, in summary these five are the preservation of Religion, Life, Intellect, Procreation (family) and Property, other scholars added Justice or Happiness. Imam al-Ghazali, said regarding all the Maqasid of the Shariah, they are only for the achievement and the realization of the very benefits of man on earth.

“The muslim community responded to the magnitude of this knowledge (that Allah revealed) and the ethical imperative of living it on a daily basis with a wide range of scholarly disciplines that furnished the means to distill this vast tradition into a clear, practical answer to the question: What does Allah expect of one?”

This then is the basis for the study of sacred Law or Shari'ah in Islam: we have been ordered to follow the prophet (saws), but he is no longer alive to teach us, and All that has reached us of it came to us through men and the works they left behind, these are the

tasks they spent their lives perfecting so later generations like ours could benefit from them.

This is why Muslims from the earliest times have relied on the most knowledgeable of these men to take their religion from - whether in hadith, tenants of faith (Aqeedah), Qur'anic exegesis (tafsir), or the other Islamic sciences. The foremost of them were termed Imams or “Leaders”, in view of their position in each field so their place and knowledge could be accepted and followed by others.

“O ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the messenger and those of you who are in authority” (4:59)

“Say: “Can they who know and they who do not know be deemed equal?”(39:9)

“And so We propound these parables unto man: but none can grasp their innermost meaning save those who are aware (of Us).” (29:43)

# The Objectives Of Ihsan - Human Perfection

“In previous centuries, students would come from their villages or neighborhoods to scholars, who would have them memorize a matn or short basic text of fiqh, then teach the students what the condensed and often technical language of the particular rulings implies, along with the conditions for applying them, their evidential basis from Qur’an and Hadith, and so forth. In this way, students returning to their native places were able to give reliable answers based on qualified scholarship to most of the questions in sacred Law they encountered (since the short text they memorised, mostly in point form, were comprehensive in what they covered), and then go on to explain the details of them that they had learned from their scholars.”

With such educational interests in view, the first priority of a matn's author was often to state the content as briefly as possible to facilitate memorizing. Imam Nawawi's book al Maqasid, simply entitled “The Objectives” (of Religion) is such a text (an English translation is available), we find in it for example that Imam

Nawawi has summarized the law for prayer (salat) in a few brief lists of integrals, its conditions, and sunna's, all in point form to enable students who learn them to answer a wide range of questions on whether a particular prayer is valid.

In his book al Maqasid, Imam al Nawawi, who was one of the Main Scholars of the Shafii Madhhab, outlines the objectives of the Islamic science of Tasawwuf (sufism) and its Principles, clarifying its aim and intent in the following manner.

## The Rules of Tassawwuf:

The basic rules of the way of tasawwuf are five (1) having God fearingness (Taqwa) privately and publicly, (2) living according to the sunna in word and deed, (3) indifference to whether others accept or reject one, (4) satisfaction with Allah Most High in (times of) scarcity and plenty, and (5) turning to Allah in happiness or affliction.

Acquiring these five qualities are the foundation to what the prophet defined as Ihsan, the ability to “worship Allah as if you see him”, which can't occur if we don't know how to be aware of him in our selves.

Imam Nawawi continues, (1) God fearingness (Taqwa) is attained by scrupulousness and uprightness; (2) Following the sunnah is at-

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tained through caution and good character; (3) indifference to others acceptance or rejection is attained through patience and trust in Allah; (4) Satisfaction with Allah is attained through contentment with what one has and submission to the will of Allah; (5) Turning to Allah most High is attained by gratitude to Him in Happiness and taking refuge in Him in affliction.

The foundation of these consist of five things:

(1) high aspiration (2) Keeping Allah's reverence, (3) giving the best of service, (4) keeping one's spiritual resolves, and (5) esteeming Allah's blessings.

(1) whoever's aspiration is high, his rank rises; (2) Whoever reveres Allah, Allah maintains his respect; (3) Whoever's service is godly is necessarily shown generosity; (4) Whoever keeps his spiritual resolves continues to have guidance; (5) whoever esteems Allah's blessings will be grateful for them, and whoever is grateful for them will necessarily see them increased.

The Signs of Tasawwuf's Principles Showing On A Person Through Practice Are Also Five;

(1) seeking Sacred Knowledge in order to perform Allah's command; (2) keeping the company of sheikhs and fellow disciples in order to see with insight; (3) forgoing both dispensations from religious obligations and figurative interpretations of scripture, for the

sake of cautiousness; (4) organizing ones time with spiritual works to maintain presence of heart; and (5) suspecting the self in all matters, in order to free oneself from caprice and be safe from destruction.

(1) Seeking Sacred Knowledge is vitiated (spoilt or impaired) by keeping the company of juveniles (imature people), whether in age, mentality, or religion, who do not refer for guidance to a firm principle or rule; (2) Keeping the company of sheikhs and disciples is vitiated by self-deception and concern with the unimportant; (3) Leaving dispensations and figurative interpretations is vitiated by leniency toward the self; (4) Organizing one's time with spiritual works is vitiated by looking for more and more supererogatory worship; (5) Suspecting the self is vitiated by satisfaction at its goodness and uprightness.

The Principles Of Curing The Ego Are Five;

The principles of curing the ego are also five: (1) lightening the stomach by diminishing one's food and drink; (2) taking refuge in Allah Most High from the unforeseen when it befalls; (3) shunning situations involving what one fears to fall victim to; (4) continually asking Allah's forgiveness (istighfar) and His blessings upon the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace) night and day with full presence of mind; and (5) keeping the company of him who guides one to Allah.

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## Reaching Allah

(Reaching Allah is a descriptive expression of the state of knowing Allah, which encapsulates the acts one does to attain it.)

One reaches Allah Most High by (1) repenting from all things unlawful or offensive; (2) seeking Sacred Knowledge in the amount needed; (3) continually keeping on ritual purity; (4) performing the prescribed prayers at the first of their times in a group prayer (and praying the confirmed sunnas associated with them); (5) always performing eight rak'as of the nonobligatory midmorning prayer (al-duha), the six rak'as between the sunset (maghrib) and nightfall ('isha) prayers, the night vigil prayer (tahajjud) after having risen from sleeping, and the witr prayer (n: an odd-number of rak'as as one's last prayer before dawn); (6) fasting Mondays and Thursdays, and the "full moon [lit. "white"] days" (n: the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth of each lunar month), as well as the days of the year that are meritorious to fast; (7) reciting the Qur'an with presence of heart and reflecting on its meanings; (8) asking much for Allah's forgiveness (istighfar); (9) always invoking the Blessings on the Prophet (Allah bless him and give him peace); and (10) persevering in the dhikrs that are sunna in the morning and evening.

These include:

(1) Allahumma bike nusbihu wa bike numsi wa bike nahya wa bike namutu wa ilayka nashuru (10.39) ("O Allah, through You we reach morning, through You we reach evening, through You we live, through You we die, and unto You is the resurrection") [saying this in the morning; and in the evening substituting ilayka l-masir (10.40) ("unto You is the final becoming") for ilayka n-nushur ("unto You is the resurrection")].

(2) Asbahna wa asbaha al-mulku li Llahi wa l-hamdu li Llahi wa l-kibriya'u li Llahi wa l-'adhamatu li Llahi wa l-khalqu wa l-amru wa l-laylu wa n-naharu wa ma sakana fihima li Llah (10.41) ("We have reached morning and the dominion is Allah's, the praise Allah's, the exaltedness Allah's, the immensity Allah's, the creation, the command, the night and day and all that dwells in them Allah's").

(3) Allahumma ma asbaha bi min ni'matin aw bi ahadin min khalqika fa minka wahdaka la sharlka lak, fa laka l-hamdu wa laka sh-shukr (three times) (10.42) ("O Allah, any blessing that has come to me or any of Your creation is from You alone, without partner, so Yours is the praise and Yours the thanks").

(4) Allahumma inni asbahtu ush-hiduka wa ush-hidu hamalata 'arshika wa mala'ikataka wa jamia khalqika annaka Anta Llahu la ilaha illa Anta wahdaka la sharlka lak, wa anna Muhammadan 'abduka wa rasuluk (four times) (10.43) ("O Allah, I hereby take You as my witness, with the bearers of Your Throne, Your angels, and all

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of Your creation, that there is no god but You alone, without partner, and that Muhammad is Your slave and messenger").

(5) Amantu bi Llahi Rabban wa bi l-Islami dinan wa bi Sayyidina Muhammadin salla Llahu 'alayhi wa sallama nabiiyyan wa rasula (three times) (10.44) ("I accept Allah as Lord, Islam as a religion, and our liege lord Muhammad (Allah bless him and give him peace) as prophet and messenger").

(6) Amana r-Rasuolu ... to the end of the sura (n: i.e. the last two verses of al-Baqara: Amana r-Rasulu bima unzila ilayhi min-Rabbihi wa l-mu'minun(a), Kullun amana bi Llahi wa mala'ikatihi wa kutubihi wa rusulih(I), la nufarriqu bayna ahadin min rusulih(I), wa qalu sami'na wa a-ta'na ghufranaka Rabbana wa ilayka l-masir(u). La yukallifu Llahu nafsan illa wus'aha, laha ma kasabat wa 'alayha ma ktasabat, Rabbana la tu'akhidhna in naslna aw akhta'na, Rabbana wa la tahmil 'alayna isran kama hamaltahu 'ala lladhlina min qablina, Rabbana wa la tuhammilna ma la taqata lana bih(I), wa 'fu 'anna wa ghfir lana wa rhamna Anta mawlana fa-nurna 'ala l-qawmi l-kafirln (10.45) ("The Messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, as do the believers; Each believes in Allah, His angels, His Books, and His messengers; We draw no distinction between any of His messengers; And they say: 'We hear and obey; Your forgiveness, Our Lord, to You is the becoming.' Allah does not charge any soul except its strength: what it earns is

for it, and what it commits, against it. O Lord, do not take us to task if we forget or make mistakes; O Lord, do not burden us with hardship as You did those before us; And do not laden us with what we have no strength to bear; but pardon us, and forgive us, and show us mercy; You are our Master, so give us victory over the unbelieving folk" (Qur'an 2:285-86)).

(7) Fa in tawallaw faqul hasbiya Llahu la ilaha illa Huwa 'alayhi tawakkaltu wa Huwa Rabbu l-'Arshi l-Adhlm (seven times) (10.46) ("So if they turn away, say: 'Allah is enough for me, there is no god but He, on Him I rely, and He is the Lord of the Mighty Throne" (Qur'an 9:129)).

(8) Fa subhana Llahi hina tumsuna wa hina tusbihun. Wa lahu l-hamdu fi s-samawati wa l-ardhi wa 'ashiyyan wa hina tush-hirun. Yukhriju l-hayya min al-mayyiti wa yukhriju l-mayyita min al-hayyi wa yuhyi l-ardha ba'da mawtiha wa kadhalika tukhrajun (10.47) ("So glory

be to Allah, when you reach evening and when you reach morning. And His is the praise in the heavens and earth, and at the coming of night, and when you reach noon. He brings forth the living from the dead, and brings forth the dead from the living, and gives life to the earth after it is dead; thus shall you too be brought forth" (Qur'an 30:17-19)).

(9) Ya Sin (Sura 36).

(10) Auodhu bi Llahi s-Sami'i L-'Alimi min ash-shaytani r-rajlm (three times) (10.48) ("I take refuge in Allah, the AllHearing, the All-Knowing, from the accursed devil").

(11) Law anzalna hadha l-Qur 'ana ... to the end of the sura (n: i.e. the last four verses of al-Hashr: Law anzalna hadha l-Qur 'ana 'ala jabali l-la ra'aytahu khashi'an mutasaddi'an min khashyati Llah(i), wa tilka l-amthalu nasribuha li n-nasi la'allahum yatafakkaruon(a). Huwa Llahu lladhi la ilaha illa Huwa 'Alimu l-Ghaybi wa sh-Shahadati Huwa r-Rahmanu rRahim(u). Huwa Llahu lladhi la ilaha illa Huwa l-Maliku l-Quddusu s-Salamu l-Mu 'minu l-Muhayminu l-Azlu l-Jabbaru l-Mutakabbir(u), subhna Llahi 'amma yushrikun(a). Huwa Llahu l-Khaliq l-Bari'u l-Musawwiru lahu l-asma'u l-husna, yusabbihu lahu ma fi s-samawati wa l-ardi wa Huwa l-'Azlu haklm (10.49) ("Had We sent this Qur'an down upon a mountain you would have seen it humbled, split asunder for fear of Allah. And those similes, We strike them for men, that haply they may reflect. He is Allah besides whom there is no other god; the Knower of the Unseen and the Visible —He is the Most Merciful and Compassionate. He is Allah besides whom there is no other god; The King, the All-Sanctified, the All-Peaceful, the All-Faithful, the Guardian, the Invincible, the Overmastering, the Exalted. Extolled be Allah's glory above what they associate! He is Allah, the Creator, the Origin-

nator, the Former. To Him belong the most beautiful names. All that is in the heavens and earth extols His glory; and He is the Invincible, the All-Wise" (Qur'an 59:21-24)).

(12) Al-Ikhlās, al-Falaq, and al-Nas (Suras 112, 113, and 114) (three times each).

(13) Bismi Llahi lladhi la yadurru ma'a Smihi shay'un fi l-ardi wa la fi s-sama'i wa Huwa s-Sami'u l-'Alim (three times) (10.50) ("In the Name of Allah, with whose Name nothing is harmed in the earth or sky, and He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing").

(14) A'udhu bi kalimati Llahi t-tammati min ghasabihi wa 'iqabihl wa sharri 'ibadihl wa min hamazati sh-shayatina wa an yahdurun (three times) (10.51) ("I take refuge in the perfect words of Allah, from His wrath, His punishment, the evil of His servants, and from the whispering of devils, and lest they come to me").

(15) Astaghfiru Llahi l-Adhima lladhi la ilaha illa Huwa hayya l-Qayyuma wa atubu ilayh (three times) (10.52) ("I ask forgiveness of Allah Most Great, who there is no god besides, the Living, the Ever-Subsistent, and I repent to Him").

(16) Subhana Llahi wa bi hamdih (three times) (10.53) ("I glorify Allah's absolute perfection and extol His praise").

(17) Subhna Llahi wa bi hamdihi 'adada khalqihi wa rida nafsih wa zinata 'arshih wa midada kalimatih (10.54) (three times) ("I glorify Allah's absolute perfection and extol His praise with the number of what He has created, the amount of His satisfaction in His person, the magnitude of the weight of His throne, and the plenitude of that by which His words are eked out"). And if one has enough time, one may recite:

(18) Subhana Llahi wa l-hamdu li Llahi wa la ilaha illa Llahu wa Llahu akbar (a hundred times) (10.55) ("I glorify Allah's absolute perfection, Praise be to Allah, There is no god but Allah, Allah is ever greatest").

(19) La hawla wa la quwwata illa bi Llahi l-'Aliyyi l-'Adhim (10.56) (one hundred times) ("There is no power and no strength save through Allah, the Most High, the Most Great").

(20) La ilaha illa Llahu l-Maliku l-haqqu l-Mubin (10.57) (one hundred times) ("There is no god but Allah, the Manifest True King").

(21) La ilaha illa Llahu wahdahu la sharlka lah(u), lahu l-mulku wa lahu l-hamdu wa Huwa 'ala kulli shay 'in qadlr (10.58) (one hundred times or three times) ("There is no god but Allah alone, without partner, His is the dominion, His the praise, and He has power over everything").

(22) Allahumma salli ala Sayyidina Muhammadin 'abdika wa nabiyyika wa habibika n-nabiyyi l-ummiyyi wa ala alihi wa sahibih wa salim (one hundred times or three times) (10.59) ("O Allah bless our liege lord Muhammad, Your servant, prophet, and beloved, the Unlettered Prophet; and his Folk and Companions, and give them peace").

And in this amount is a sufficiency, for those reached by the divine help, and Allah gives guidance, and guides to the path. Allah is our sufficiency and best to rely on. Ameen.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَىٰ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ وَعَدًّا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ وَالْقُرْآنِ وَمَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِعَهْدِهِ مِنَ اللَّهِ فَاسْتَبْشِرُوا بَبَيْعِكُمُ الَّذِي بَايَعْتُمْ بِهِ وَذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

"Indeed, Allah has purchased from the believers their lives and their properties [in exchange] for that they will have Paradise. They fight in the cause of Allah, so they kill and are killed. [It is] a true promise [binding] upon Him in the Torah and the Gospel and the Qur'an. And who is truer to his covenant than Allah? So rejoice in your transaction which you have contracted. And it is that which is the great attainment" (9:III).

Those who are destined to be closer to Allah have the greater burden, and more is expected from them in the way of Allah for their place in Jannah.



# The Islamic Scholars On Tassawwuf Throughout History

To say that the Scholars did not develop a science around everything Allah and his messenger (saws) mentioned of Ihsan, Human perfection, just as they did with Islam and Iman, is to accuse them of kufr in the ayat (verses) of Allah and to say they have done nothing over the past 1400 years with the knowledge Allah gave them.

A ridiculous accusation as the Scholar's were meticulous in their research and sifting through what the Quran and Sunnah mentioned, there is no other science in the history of Islam which deals with the topic of Ihsan except Tasawwuf (sufism).

This is very clear from our history, in Fiqh we have four madhhabs the Hanafi, Shafii, Maliki and Hanbali, in Aqeedah we have similar schools al Tahawi, Maturidi and Ahsari, and in Tassawwuf we also have Madhhabs (schools) the Naqshbandi, Shadhili, Rifai and Qadiri, other principal schools are the Ashrafiyya, Badawiyya, Bektashiyya, Chishtiyya, Darqawiyya, Dasuqiyya, Firdawsiyya, Khalwatiyya, Kubrawiyya, Mawlawiyya, Suhrawardiyya, Tijaniyya, and

Yasawiyya, all named after a scholar from the region they were founded in.

“Although the practices, appearances and internal structures of different orders may vary from one to another, from region to region, there are no fundamental differences between the tariqas, since the ultimate goal is essentially the same. The variations have nothing to do with religious principles, the Sufi orders are essentially the same, just as the differences in schools of law refer to methods and not the essence of religion”.

Each one of the schools dealt with one of the sciences of the religion, mentioned in the hadith of Jibril, this is how our Ullumah treated the Knowledge Allah entrusted them to know and discover from what they learnt about the universe and our world, this is their legacy and our heritage from the past 1400 years.

The Ottoman Khalifah for example was officially Maturidi in it's Aqeedah, the Ottoman Khalif Muhamad al Fatah who first conquered Constantinople by Consensus was Hanafi in Fiqh (law), Maturidi in Aqeedah (creed) and Naqshbandi in Tasawwuf (Ihsan).

To fight all the Finah (strife and troubles) being caused in the world today we have to know Ilm al Nafs (the science of the self) so we won't become corrupted, because it is through these same sciences of the self that these fitnah's (strife and troubles) are be-

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ing caused, man self has been studied by the corporations and manipulated against him so they can profit from his weakness's.

The Scholars throughout History understood this and acted accordingly, it was for example only after Salah al Deen Ayoubi, who conquered Jerusalem from the crusaders, repented from his old life and began practicing Tasawwuf did he see a need to fight for that city.

Imam al-Hasan al-Basri (d. 110 AH) was a Wali (friend) of Allah and one of the early people who practiced Tasawwuf and developed the science. He (ra) was the son of a freedwoman of Umm Salama's (the Prophet's wife) and a freedman of Zayd ibn Thabit's (the Prophet's stepson), this great Imam of Basra (Iraq), was known for his strict and encompassing embodiment of the Sunna of the Prophet. He was also famous for his immense knowledge, his austerity and asceticism. Ibn al-Jawzi wrote a 100-page book on his life and manners entitled *Adab al-Shaykh al-Hasan ibn Abi al-Hasan al-Basri*.

The hadith master Abu Nu`aym al-Isfanahi (d. 430 AH) mentions in his biographies of companions, tabiin, saints and sufis entitled *Hilyat al-awliya'* (The adornment of the saints) that it is al-Hasan's student `Abd al-Wahid ibn Zayd (d. 177) who was the first person to build a Sufi khaniqa or guest-house and school at Abadan on the

present-day border of Iran with Iraq (Abu Nu`aym, *Hilyat al-awliya'* 6:155).

Imam Abu Hanifa (d.150 AH) who founded the Hanafi madhhab said "If it were not for two years, I would have perished." He said, "for two years I accompanied Sayyidina Ja'far as-Sadiq (a great grandson of Imam Ali) and I acquired the spiritual knowledge that made me a gnostic in the Way" (*Ad-Durr al-Mukhtar*, vol 1. p. 43).

Imam Jaffar like Abu Bakr was called al Siddiq, He was a Major Imam of Ahl al Bayt, a descendant of Rasul Allah (saws) his lineage to the prophet (saws) goes back through his father Sayidina Muhammad al-Baqir (r.a), ibn (son of) Zayn al-Abdin (r.a), ibn Husayn (r.a) ibn Imam Ali (r.a).

Sufyan al-Thawri (d. 161 AH) was a Mujtahid Imam, "Commander of the Believers in Hadith" – He achieved the highest level in hadith Mastership from the first days of Islam, he also earned the qualifications (titles) of Shaykh al-Islam, the Imam of hadith Masters, and the leader of all the practicing Ulema in his time (al-Dhahabi). His father was a junior Tabi'i (one of the early generations of muslims) Muhaddith and he thus began his scholarly career at home.

Abu Nu`aym in his *Hilyat al-awliya'*, states that Sufyan al-Thawri said: If it were not for Abu Hashim al-Sufi (d. 115 AH) I would have

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never perceived the presence of the subtlest forms of hypocrisy in the self... Among the best of people is the Sufi learned in jurisprudence (law).

Abu Hashim al-Zahid (the sufi) said: "Allah has stamped alienation upon the world in order that the friendly company of the muridin (seekers) consist solely in being with Him and not with the world, and in order that those who obey Him come to Him by means of avoiding the world. The People of Knowledge of Allah (ahl al-ma`rifa billah) are strangers in the world and long for the hereafter."(Abu Nu`aym, Hilyat al-awliya)

Imam Malik who founded the Maliki Madhab said:

و من تصوف و لم يتفقه فقد تزندق من تفقه و لم يتصوف فقد تفسق و من جمع بينهما  
قد تحقق

“He who practices Tasawwuf without learning Sacred Law (Fiqh) corrupts his faith, while he who learns Sacred Law (Fiqh) without practicing Tasawwuf corrupts himself. Only he who combines the two proves true.” (‘Ali al-Adawi , vol. 2, p 195.)

This is because trying to fix the self through Tassawwuf with out knowing the Law will distort the mind as it reflects upon itself, while practicing Law without knowing Tassawwuf will harden the heart until it’s rigid and stiff incapable of accepting anything outside it’s now narrow point of view.

Being able to accept and understand what is occurring around us and to us is the essence of what Islam is trying to achieve, Allah for instance will say to the people of Jannah (Heaven) just before they enter it, which is the moment they are about to experience the perfected life of Allah for the first time, “O soul made peaceful, return to your Lord, accepted and accepting” (89:28), because Allah is always revealing more of himself to creation a dead heart will be cut of from that place because they are not fit for it.

Imam Shafi’i (d.204) who founded the Shafii Madhhab said “I accompanied the Sufis for ten years and benefited from them two sayings [and in another report three sayings]: their statement that time is as a sword: if you do not cut it, it cuts you, and their statement that deprivation is immunity.” He is also reported to have said: “their statement: if your soul does not keep busy with truth it will keep you busy with falsehood (batil).”

(“Narrated from Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi`i by al-Bayhaqi in Manaqib al-Shafi`i (2:208) cf. Ibn al-Qayyim in Madarij al-Salikin (3:128) and al-Jawab al-Kafi (p. 208-209) and al-Suyuti in Ta`yid al-H.aqiqat al-`Aliyya (p. 15)”)

The Imam also said “I accompanied the Sufi people and I received from them three (types of) knowledge: ...how to speak; how to treat people with leniency and a soft heart, and they guided me in

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the ways of Sufism (Tassawwuf).” (Kashf al-Khafa, 'Ajluni, vol. 1, p 341.)

And “Three things in this world have been made lovely to me: avoiding affectation, treating people kindly, and following the way of tasawwuf” (al-`Ajluni, Kashf al-khafa wa muzil al-albas 1:341 (#1089).)

Imam Shafii wrote in al Diwan, a work of the Imam’s poetry, as Imam Malik (r.a) himself said, “(Be both) a faqih and a sufi: do not be only one of them, Verily, by Allah's truth, I am advising you sincerely. [al-Shafii, Diwan, (Beirut and Damascus: Dar al-fikr) p. 47)

Imam al-Shafi`i advised: “If a person did NOT exercise Sufism (Tasawwuf) at the beginning of the day, he would not reach Zuhr (noon) except an idiot.” (“Abu Nu`aym narrates this from Muhammad ibn Abd al-Rahman ibn al-Fadl, from Abu al-Hasan [Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn al-Harith] ibn al-Qattat [al-Misri], from the thiqa Muhammad ibn Abi Yahya, from the thiqa Imam Yunus ibn Abdal-A’la, from the Imam.”)

Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal (d.241AH) who founded the Hanbali Madhhab said “O my son, you have to sit with the People of Sufism (Tassawwuf), because they are like a fountain of knowledge and they keep the Remembrance of Allah in their hearts, they are

the ascetics and they have the most spiritual power.” (Tanwir al-Qulub p. 405)

Muhammad Ibn Ahmad al-Saffarini al-Hanbali (d. 1188 AH) relates from Ibrahim ibn `Abd Allah al-Qalanasi that Imam Ahmad said about the Sufis: "I don't know people better than them." (al-Saffarini, Ghidha' al-albab li-sharh manzumat al-adab (Cairo: Matba`at al-Najah, 1324/1906) 1:120)

Abu Isma`il `Abd Allah al-Harawi al-Ansari (d. 481AH) a Sufi shaykh, hadith master (hafiz), and Qur'anic commentator (mufassir) of the Hanbali school, and a student of Khwaja Abu al-Hasan al-Kharqani (d. 425) the grandshaykh of the early Naqshbandi Sufi path. He was a prolific author of Sufi treatises among them are Kitab `ilal al-maqamat (Book of the pitfalls of spiritual stations), describing the characteristics of spiritual states for the student and the teacher in the Sufi path, and Kitab sad maydan (in Persian, Book of the hundred fields), a commentary on the meanings of love in the verse: "If you love Allah, follow me, and Allah will love you!" (3:31). This book collects al-Harawi's lectures in the years 447-448 at the Great Mosque of Herat (in present-day Afghanistan) in which he presents his most eloquent exposition of the necessity of following the path of Tassawwuf. (documented by Dhabhi in his Tarikh al-islam and Siyar a`lam al-nubala', Ibn Rajab in

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his Dhayl tabaqat al-hanabila, and Jami in his book in Persian Manaqib-i Shaykh al-Islam Ansari.)

Fakhr ad-Din ar-Razi (d.606 AH) was a Shafi`i scholar of genius and a mujtahid Imam (one of the highest degrees of scholarship) in tenets of faith (Aqeedah), he was among the foremost figures of his time in mastery of rational and traditional Islamic sciences, and preserved the religion of Ahl al-Sunna from the deviations of the Mu`tazilites (a heretical sect), Shiites, Anthropomorphists (those who say Allah has a body), and other aberrant sects of his era. He said: "The way of Sufis for seeking Knowledge, is to disconnect themselves from this worldly life, and they keep themselves constantly busy with Dhikrullah, in all their actions and behaviors." [Itiqadaat Furaq al-Muslimeen]

He wrote in his I`tiqadat firaq al-muslimin wa al-mushrikin: The summary of what the people of Tassawwuf say is that the way to the knowledge of Allah is self-purification and renunciation of material attachments, and this is an excellent way... The people of Tasawwuf are a folk who work with reflection and the detaching of the self from materialistic trappings. They strive in order that their inner being be solely occupied with the remembrance of Allah in all of their occupations and their actions, and they are characterized by the perfection of their manners in dealing with Allah. Verily these are the best of all the groups of human beings.

Imam Nawawi (d.676 AH) was one of the great Sufi scholars and a Wali of Allah, the strictest hadith master, and the most meticulous of jurists, he was Shaykh al-Islam, along with Imam al-Rafi`i he was the principal reference of the late Shafi`i madhhab. His books remain authoritative in the methodology of the law, in Qur'an commentary, and in hadith. His commentary of Sahih Muslim is second only to Ibn Hajar's commentary of Sahih Bukhari. Allah gave his famous compilation of Forty Hadiths more circulation and fame than possibly any other book of hadith, large or small, and has allowed Imam Nawawi to be of immense benefit to the Islamic ummah, he was also the author of the famous Riyad al Salihin (Gardens of the Righteous).

He Said: "The specifications of the Way of the Sufis are ... to keep the Presence of Allah in your heart in public and in private; to follow the Sunnah of the Prophet (s) ... to be happy with what Allah gave you..." (Maqasid at-tawhid).

Imam Tajuddin as-Subki (727 - 771 AH.) a famous Mujtahid Imam said - "May Allah praise them [the Sufis] and greet them and may Allah cause us to be with them in Paradise. Too many things have been said about them and too many ignorant people have said things which are not related to them. And the truth is that those people left the world and were busy with worship. ...They are the People of Allah, whose supplications and prayer Allah accepts and

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by means of whom Allah supports human beings" [Mu'eed an-Na'am, the chapter entitled Tasawwuf]

Imam Abu Ishaq al-Shatibi (d. 790) Was one of the foundational scholars of Usul al-fiqh, or methodology of law whose books, like Imam al-Ghazali's, are required reading in that field, he laid great emphasis on the requirement of complete knowledge and erudition in the Arabic language, not merely correct understanding for those who practice ijihad (legal reasoning). In his book al-Muwafaqat fi usul al-shari'a (The congruences of the sources of the Divine Law) he held that the language of the Qur'an and the Sunna is the key to the comprehension of such scholars, and that the ijihad (legal judgment) of anyone (that is) deficient in this respect was unacceptable. Since the opinion of the mujtahid is a hujja or proof for the common person, this degree of authority necessitates direct access to the sources and full competence in Arabic. (al-Shatibi, al-Muwafaqa fi usul al-shari'a (Cairo:al-maktaba al-tijariyya al-kubra, 1975) 4:60)

He writes in his book al-Itisam: Many of the ignorant think that the Sufis are lax in conforming to Shari'a. Far be it from them to be attributed such a belief! The very first foundation of their path is the Sunna and the avoidance of what contravenes it!

Jalaluddin as-Suyuti (d.911) He was Shaykh al-Islam al-Suyuti, the Renewer (mujadid) of the Eighth Islamic century and a Mujtahid

Imam, He said in his book on tasawwuf entitled Ta'yid al-haqiqa al-'aliyya wa-tashyid al-tariqa al-shadhiliyya (The upholding of the lofty truth and the buttressing of the Shadhili path): Tasawwuf in itself is a most honorable knowledge. It explains how to follow the Sunna of the Prophet and to leave innovation, how to purify the ego... and submit to Allah truly...I have looked at the matters which the Imams of Shari'a have criticized in Sufis, and I did not see a single true Sufi holding such positions. Rather, they are held by the people of innovation and the extremists who have claimed for themselves the title of Sufi while in reality they are not...Pursuit of the science of the hearts, knowledge of its diseases such as jealousy, arrogance and pride, and leaving them are an obligation on every Muslim. (al-Suyuti, Ta'yid al-haqiqa al-'aliyya wa-tashyid al-tariqa al-shadhiliyya, ed. `Abd Allah ibn Muhammad ibn al-Siddiq al-Ghumari al-Hasani (Cairo: al-matba'a al-islamiyya, 1934), p. 56-57.)

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Hajar al-Haytami (d.974) was a student of Zakariyya al-Ansari, he represents the foremost resource for legal opinion (fatwa) in the entire late Shafi'i school. He was once asked about the legal status of those who criticizes Sufis: Is there an excuse for such critics? He replies in his Fatawa hadithiyya: "It is incumbent upon every person endowed with mind and religion not to fall into the trap of criticizing these folk (Sufis), for it is a mortal

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poison, as has been witnessed of old and recently.” (Ibn Hajar al-Haytami, *Fatawa hadithiyya* (Cairo: al-Halabi, 1970) p. 331).

Mulla `Ali al-Qari (d. 1014) Was one of the great Hanafi masters of hadith and Imams of fiqh, Qur'anic commentary, language, history and tasawwuf, he authored several great commentaries such as al-Mirqat on Mishkat al-masabih in several volumes, a two-volume commentary on Qadi `Iyad's al-Shifa', and a two-volume commentary on Ghazali's abridgment of the Ihya entitled `Ayn al-`ilm wa zayn al-hilm (The spring of knowledge and the adornment of understanding). His book of prophetic invocations, al-Hizb al-a`zam (The supreme daily dhikr) forms the basis of Imam al-Jazuli's celebrated manual of dhikr, Dala'il al-khayrat, which along with the Qur'an is recited daily by many pious Muslims around the world.

The last chapter of Imam Qari's commentary on Imam al Ghazali, perhaps the most valuable of the entire work, is devoted to Imam Ghazali's and Imam Qari's explanations of the verse "If you love Allah, follow me, and Allah will love you!" (3:31) and is reminiscent of al-Harawi's Kitab sad maydan on the same topic. In it Imam Qari cites al-Hasan al-Basri as saying: "Whoever (truly) knows his Lord loves Him, and whoever (truly) knows the world does without it."

Imam Qari begins the chapter with a warning that the various spiritual states of love for Allah described by the people of Tassawwuf in their terminology all proceed from the same Qur'anic source

and that it is not permitted to deny them unless one denies the source itself: Love and the discipline of the path (al-mahabba wa al-suluk) mean the path of love and longing, and whoever does not “scoop his drink from the ocean of gnosticism” (maarifah) does not know the reality of love, even if the genus, examples, and terminology are different. Love has no other meaning than the exhortation to obedience, and whoever denies love denies familiarity (uns) and passion (shawq) and taste (dhawq) and effacement (mahu) and clarity (sahu) and extinction (fana') and subsistence (baqa') and contraction (qabd) and expansion (bast) and all the rest of the necessary characteristics of love and longing, and the rest of the stations of the People of Gnosis. (al-Qari, *Sharh `Ayn al-`ilm wa zayn al-hilm*, Ibid. 2:354-355.)

Ibn 'Abidin (d.1252) Nicknamed the Seal of Self-Realized Scholars (khatimat al-muhaqqiqin), the great scholar and faqih of the Hanafi madhhab and the late Ottoman Khalifah said in his fatwa on the permissibility of loud dhikr in assembly - "The Seekers in this Sufi Way don't hear except from the Divine Presence and they don't love any but Him. If they remember Him they cry, and if they thank Him they are happy; ... May Allah bless them." (Risa'il Ibn 'Abidin)

From the first days of Islam, the science of Tasawwuf was developed, understood and practiced by the tabiin and those who came

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after them. Imam al Shatibi was one of the foundational scholars of Usul al-fiqh or methodology of law, he said regarding tassawwuf:

Their chief spokesman and the master of their ways and group, Abu al-Qasim al-Qushayri, declared that they acquired the name of tasawwuf in order to dissociate themselves from the People of Innovation. He mentioned that the most honorable of Muslims after the Prophet did not give themselves, in their time, any other title than Companions, as there is no merit above that of being a Companion -- then those who followed them were called the Successors. After that the people differed and the disparity of level among them became more apparent. The elite among whom prudence in belief was seen to be intense were then called zuhhad and `ubbad, (Zuhad or Zahid translates as Sufi). Subsequently all kinds of innovations made their appearance, and the elite of Ahl al-Sunna who observed their obligations with Allah, and preserved their hearts from heedlessness became unique in their kind under the name of tasawwuf. ( al-Shatibi, al-I`tisam min al-kutub, quoted in al-Muslim: majallat al-`ashira al-muhammadiyya (Dhu al-qi`da 1373).)



# Tassawwuf and The World Today

Imam al Ghazali said about Ihsan: Simply, Ihsan in the beginning of Islam was referred to as Ihsan or Zuhd which means doing without; a form of purification. Later it became known as Sunni Sufism in which participants have an unconditional discipline of following the Sunni Order (Way of the Prophet). Ihsan is mainly an ethical and spiritual course which respects and follows the scholars of Ihsan as well as the other two parties of scholars namely, the scholars of Iman (Aqeedah) i.e. Imam Ash'ari, Maturidi and the Salaf (first generations of muslims) as well as the scholars of Islamic Jurisprudence (Law) i.e. Imam Shafi'i, Hanball, Malik, and Imam Abu Hanifa.

Ihsan is based on three dimensions: For the sake of self cleansing, one asks Allah for forgiveness repeatedly, over and over again (throughout life). This is followed by the multi repeated remembrance of bearing witness that there is no god except Allah.

Thirdly, by the abundant repeating of the praise of Allah, His angels and for the Prophet Muhammad as prescribed in the Qur'an –

praise and peace be upon him. (From Foundations of Islamic Belief by Imam al Ghazali)

Allah in the Qur'an refers to those who Follow Islam by three names, these names give us the three levels of People in Islam.

He (Aza wa Jaal) calls People in the Qur'an "Muslim", this is the first level and the lowest. Then He (Aza wa Jaal) Calls People in the Qur'an "Mu'min" for example Wal Muslimun, Wa Muslimat, Wal Mu'minun Wa Mu'minat (the male and female Muslim, the male and female believer), this is the second level and is higher than the first because He is calling them by the strength of their Iman.

He (Aza wa Jaal) then calls People in the Qur'an "Muhsin" (from the word Ihsan), this is Higher than a Mu'min (from the word Iman) because He is calling them by the perfection of their selfs.

Muhsin is the one who does Ihsan, Allah says "Those who believe and do righteous good deeds, there is no sin on them for what they ate (in the past), if they fear Allah, and believe and do righteous good deeds, and again fear Allah and believe, and once again fear Allah and do good deeds with Ihsan (perfection). And Allah loves the good-doers" (Muhsinnun) (5:93), this is the highest level, the word Muhsin is derived from the word Ihsan and means those who perfect themselves and their acts.

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Allah gives us the steps and formula for becoming one of these people in verse 5:93, He says First believe and do Good deeds, then fear Allah, then again Believe and do Good deeds and Again Fear Allah, and once again fear Allah and do good deeds with Ihsan, meaning perfect the deeds you are already doing, then after that Allah will love you.

This is a Tariqa (method or path) outlined in the Quran for achieving Ihsan and becoming one of the Muhsinuun, those who perfect themselves because to fear Allah you have to be aware of him in your life, be able to perceive and know the thing you are to fear because of its status or nature.

So when Allah says "fear Allah and once again Fear Allah" He is saying to you be aware of Allah and then again increase that awareness so you come to know Him, or be one of the Arifeen (the knowers as the Quran states) "That is, [signs] for the arifun (knowers of Allah) by which they find evidence for their ma'rifa (gnosis)"(51:20, Tafsir al Tustari).

The aim of this awareness in the verse, in reality is to stop you from reverting back to a lack of perfection, and not back to a state of sinfulness, because if you have reached this point in the path you would have already rid your self of your sins at the start, and began the process of perfecting your Life, this is the path of Ihsan.

We are told in the Quran Jibril (as) took the form of a perfected human being, Rijaalun Sawiya (19:17) when he came to see Maryam (as), we can say the Angels are always perfect but then we have to ask why Allah emphasised this, it is become Jibril emphasised this in His appearance to Mary (as) so she could trust Him, so there is a difference in appearance between those who are perfected and those who are not.

In Islam's history their have been many groups who have deviated in any one of the three areas of knowledge, Fiqh, Aqeedah and Tasawwuf or any combination of them, the most famous are the Khawarij, Rafidiyah, Kharijiya, Qadriya (the rejecters of destiny, not the Qadiri sufi tariqa) and Marjiyah, most sects which are not considered sunni muslims have deviated on the topic of Aqeedah which can take you out of Islam, in contrast you can deviate on matters of Fiqh (law) and Tasawwuuf (sufism) and still be considered a muslim, although some matters in both Fiqh and Tassawwuf touch on Aqeedah and these are more difficult to judge.

Just like any sect which deviated in Aqeedah others deviated in Tasawwuf and our Ullumah dealt with them just like any other sect, this never invalidated the existence of Tasawwuf only the beliefs of that sect but in the modern world where people have never heard of the word Ihsan or Tazkiyah, mentioned in both Ahadith and the

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Qur'an, they make takfir on more than half the muslim Ummah who practice sufism out of ignorance.

The result of getting rid of Tassawwuf, which some people want, is the Kufir in the last part of the hadith of Jibril, and all the commandments in the Qur'an to do Tazkiyah an Nafs. Our Ullumah did not leave a single thing in the Deen but they studied it systematised it and wrote about it, and explained what is part of it and what isn't under specific Headings and labels, this is the same as any modern field of science that categorises and labels everything for the sake of ease in teaching it.

The Ullumah of the past reformed Tassawwuf from the various beliefs introduced by any number of heretical sects Islam had to face, and spoke about what is part of it and not part of it, they never made the Kufir claim that it wasn't part of Islam. It was the people who only learned Fiqh (law) that thought all of Islam was just Fiqh and Aqeedah, but Rasul Allah (saws) himself said i have only come to perfect the character of Man.

This is what both Fiqh and Ihsan are supposed to lead to, that is their entire aim and purpose and Fiqh doesn't deal with Ihsan it only sets the boundaries of what is or isn't permissible while trying to achieve Ihsan. This is why Imam Malik said "He who practices Tasawwuf without learning Sacred Law (Fiqh) corrupts his faith (Iman, because the self and its perfection relate to Aqeedah which

give the heart it's direction in life), while he who learns Sacred Law (Fiqh) without practicing Tasawwuf corrupts himself (because fiqh sets the boundaries for what actions are acceptable, but Law alone hardens the heart and can corrupt it entirely). Only he who combines the two proves true."

The Fitnah of modern sects that have sprung up in the past hundred years, is that they deliberately don't mention the fact that all the fiqh they use comes from a madhhabs, Islams schools of Law who all accepted Tassawwuf (sufism), Saudi Fiqh for example is Hanbali Fiqh, they leave this portion of the equation out in their words so that their words sound like they are speaking for all of Islam, when no scholar in the entire History of Islam thought he Had a right to do so.

The Faqih (Judge) has an obligation to find out which madhhab a particular group of Tassawwuf He criticize's is following, because unless he is blind and thinks they all follow the same school of law, which is impossible because the people of Tassawwuf make up more than Half of the entire Ummah, then he has no right to force his unique fiqh (rules) onto followers of another madhhab, this is common sense and understood by all Ullumah around the world.

In other words the Saudi people who follow Hanbali fiqh are not allowed to force their laws onto Turkish sufi's who follow Hanafi

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fiqh, or the Salafi's who follow Shafii Fiqh are not allowed to force their laws onto African sufi's who follow Maliki fiqh.

The scholar has to also know his interpretation isn't absolute and the end of the Matter unless He thinks He is an Absolute Mujtahid (highest level of Scholar) capable of starting his own school of Law like the four great Imams of this Ummah, if he isn't any of that then he is a Mujtahid making Taqlid (imitation) of the methodology of his madhhab, and if He isn't that then he is a scholar Making Taqlid of the Mujtahids of His Madhhab and that is where all the scholars are today since there are no more Mujatahid Imams alive.

If that is his situation then he is limited to the Law of His Madhhab alone, and can't comment on the Law of another school which He isn't qualified in, and again this is common sense among the Ulumamah.

# Ihsan and It's Place In The Quran and Sunnah

The word Sufism is an English word with Arabic roots, in Arabic the science is called Tasawwuf, and the act you perform is called Tazkiyah an Nafs, Purifying your self of evil and bad while promoting good qualities, and what you try to achieve by it is Ihsan, Human Perfection.

Tasawwuf can be established with Three verses of the Qur'an and a Hadith:

1) In Surah al Shams (91:1-9) Allah takes an oath in the Qur'an like no other and swears by the act of Tasawwuf, Allah says "Qad Aflaha man Zakaha" the word Zakaha means Tazkiya an nafs, in English the sentence reads "He Who Purifies it (his self) succeeds".

This verse is talking about getting rid of your bad qualities, Tazkiya an Nafs, and the one who does it will be granted Jannah (heaven).

2) In Surah Abbasa (80:3) a blind man comes to the Prophet (saws) seeking to learn about Islam and the Prophet (saws) frowns upon

His untimely question because He is busy in a meeting with the leaders of Quraish, Allah responds to the prophet (saws) by saying, "Wama yudrika La-alahu Yazaka" the word Yazaka also means Tazkiyah an Nafs, in English the verse reads, "Yet for all thou didst know, [O Muhammad,] he might perhaps have grown in purity".

So in Surah al Shams Allah mentions the first part of purifying the self (Tazkiyah an Nafs) and that is Purifying your self of Evil, and in Surah Abbasa Allah mentions the second part of tazkiya, which is learning and promoting good qualities in your character and growing as a person. The word zakaha means "purifies it" referring to our selves, which is the first step, and the word yazaka means to "grow in purity" or to build upon the first step of purifying the evil from our self.

3) In Surah Ashurah (26:88-89) Allah says, "The Day whereon neither wealth nor sons will avail, But only he (will prosper) that brings to Allah a sound heart", that is "a heart free of sins and love for this worldly life" (Tanwir al miqbas Min Tafsir Ibn Abbas).

You have to know the acts of Tazkiyah an Nafs (purifying your character) to free your Heart from sin and love for this world, and only one science in Islam deals with this Subject, that is Tasawwuf, Fiqh does not cover Human Character and Psychology, it covers the Laws of Halal (the permitted) and Haram (the prohibited), it

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may touch upon it because it uses the same Qur'an and sunnah but that isn't its focus or aim. How to actually change your self, the Ullumah dealt with that in detail in a different science of Islam.

4) The most famous hadith in Islam, the hadith of Jibril (as), which occurred 86 days before the prophets (saws) death it defines all the Aspects of Islam without a Doubt, into Fiqh (Islam), Aqeedah (Iman), Ihsan (Tasawwuf) and the Signs of the Hour, we have already mentioned the hadith and it is a sound, Sahih Hadith mentioned by Imam Muslim and Imam Bukhari as well as many other Muhadiths in their works.

Ihsan, Perfection is achieved when a person gains the ability to worship Allah as if he is seeing Him every hour in our life, and this is done through Tazkiyah an nafs (Purification of the Self). Allah says about human Perfection in the Qur'an "We sent unto her Our Spirit (Jibril) and it assumed for her the likeness of a perfect man." (19:17), the Angels can take on the form of any man that is sound and healthy but here Allah is stressing that Jibril (Gabriel) chose to show Maryam (as) the likeness of a perfect Human being whose presence alone is not like other men, this was so she could recognise him as a person from Allah.

All the Scholars of Islam in our history knew about tasawwuf and most of the great Scholars practised it because they wanted to achieve human perfection and it was through this practice that Al-

lah granted them knowledge we are benefiting from today. About their practice of tasawwuf Allah says in the Qur'an "So for this let the competitors compete." (83:26), encouraging the Ummah to outdo each other in gaining nearness to Him (Aza wa Jaal) by perfecting the self. The verse itself is referring to illiyyun which is the Highest part of the highest level of Jannah (heaven) just beneath the Throne of Allah.

The List of Ullumah who practiced Tazkiyah an Nafs is extensive and the argument over Tasawwuf by those properly educated in it, is one over which practice in tasawwuf is acceptable in Islam and which isn't, this is Usually Ikhtilaf (difference of legal opinion) between the Hanbali Madhab, which is literalist in its understanding, and the other three Madhhabs of Islam. Not whether tasawwuf is part of Islam or not, which is kufr to claim it isn't since it is mentioned in the Qur'an similar to how Fiqh and Aqeedah are mentioned.

The Subject of Ihsan dates back to the time of the messenger himself (saws) who spoke about it extensively and this is reflected in the major Hadith collections.

The following works are part of the Sahih Sita, Islam's major hadith collections and are chapters found in each scholar's work, they cover an important part of tasawwuf and the sunnah:

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Imam Tirmidhi's Book of Asceticism, Imam Muslims Book of Zuhd (Asceticism) Piety And Softening Of Hearts, Imam Muslims' The Book of Manners and Etiquette (Adab), Imam Bukhari's Book of Good Manners and Form (Al-Adab), Imam Bukhari's Book "To Make The Heart Tender", Imam Malik's Book on Good Character, Imam Ibn Majah's Book of Zuhd (Asceticism), Imam Abu Dawud's Book of General Behaviour (Kitab Al-Adab), Imam Bukhari's Al-Adab Al-Mufrad (on Conduct and behaviour).

All these books mention Ahadith about the prophets (saws) Life that are Important to Tasawwuf.

This understanding that Tasawwuf is part of Islam is established clearly in the history of the Hanbali madhhab, Ibn Taymiyah himself was a Qadiri Sufi and died a Qadiri Sufi, his Major work majmool al Fatawa, which is 36 volumes, the 11th Volume is entitled al Tasawwuf in which he teaches tasawwuf, he has an essay in it called al-Sufiyya wa al-fuqara. In his commentary Ibn Taymiyya stresses that the primacy of the Shari`a (its essence at the start of islam) forms the soundest tradition in tasawwuf, and to argue this point he lists over a dozen early masters, as well as more contemporary shaykhs like his fellow Hanbalis. In his al-Risala al-safadiyya, Ibn Taymiyya defends the Sufis as those who belong to the path of the Sunna and represent it in their teachings and writings.

It is Kufr (disbelief) to deny a single verse in the Qur'an, so denying that the verses on Ihsan or Tazkiyah an Nafs exist itself isn't anything less than Kufr.

Allah in Surah al Shams, 91 verses 1 - 10 takes an Oath on thirteen things He created, like no other oath in the Qur'an, except when He swore on the life of our prophet (saws), that Tazkiya an Nafs, which the science of Tasawwuf deals with, is the aim of every Human and Jinn in this life.

Allah said;

By the Sun and his (glorious) splendour;

By the Moon as she follows him;

By the Day as it shows up (the Sun's) glory;

By the Night as it conceals it;

By the Firmament and its (wonderful) structure;

By the Earth and its (wide) expanse:

By the Soul, and the proportion and order given to it;

And its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right;-

Truly he succeeds that purifies it,

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And he fails that corrupts it! (The Soul or Nafs).

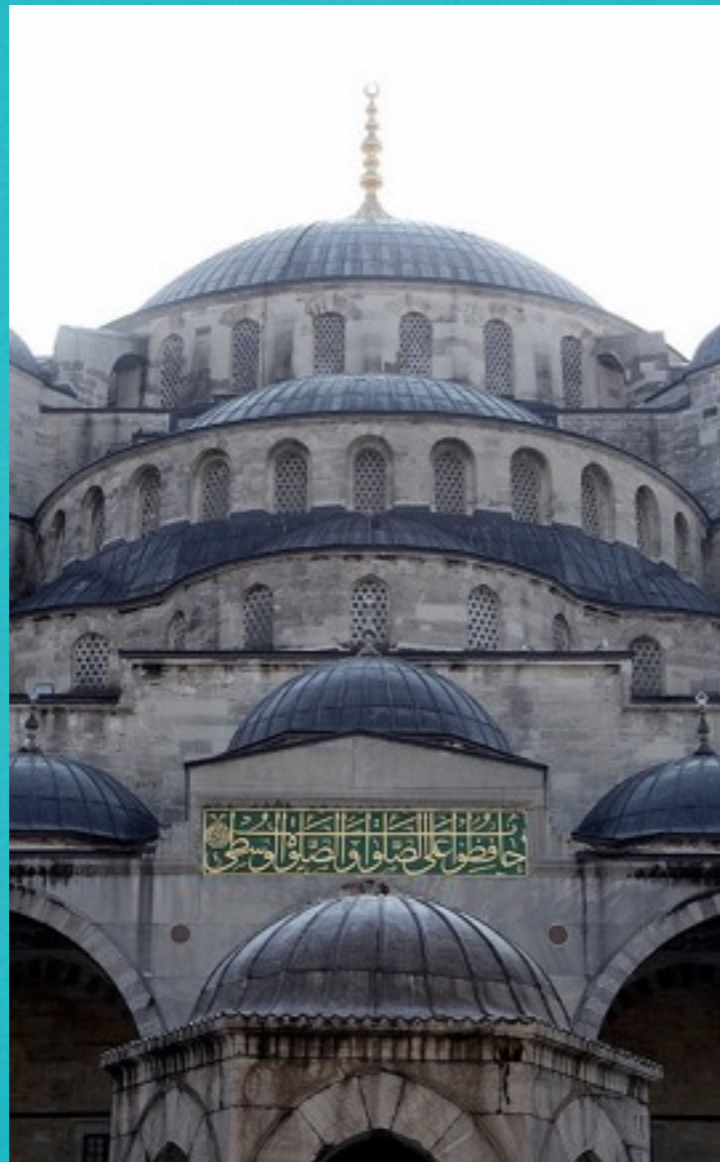
It is clear from the Qur'an itself that the Ullumah did not neglect the topic of Ihsan over the past 1400 years because it is the thing all creatures being tested on this earth by Allah aim for, "He Who created Death and Life, that He may try which of you is best in deed" (67:2).



# Related Material

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**The Islamic Journal**



# The End Of The Universe and Events On The Day of Judgment

Abu Hurairah said that, while the Messenger of Allah was among a group of his companions, he said, "Indeed, when Allah finished creating the heavens and the earth, He created the horn (Trumpet) and gave it to Israafeel. He holds it on his mouth, looking at the 'Arsh (Throne) with his sight, waiting for when he will be ordered." Abu Hurairah asked, "O Messenger of Allah, and what is As-Soor?" He said, "A horn." "And what is it like?" He said, "Huge. And by the One Who has sent me by the truth, the greatness of the circle of his mouth is like the width of the heavens and the earth. He will blow into it three times: the first is the blowing of terror; the second is the blowing of swooning away; and the third is the blowing of resurrection to the Lord of all that exists. Allah will order Israafeel to make the first blowing, saying, 'Blow the blowing of terror' The inhabitants of the heavens and the earth will be terrified except for whomsoever Allah pleases. Allah will order him, and then he will extend it and prolong it without getting tired. This blowing is the one about which Allah said:

"And these only wait for a single Siahah (shout (i.e. the blowing of the Trumpet by the angel Israafeel or Sarafeel)) there will be no pause or ending thereto (till everything will perish except Allah)" (38:15)

"The mountains will move like clouds, and they will be (like a) mirage (the bonds of matter weakening in front of our eyes as solid matter wavers and slowly disintegrates). The earth will shake its inhabitants, and it will be like a ship at sea, and the waves are striking it; it will capsize its inhabitants like a lamp suspended from a throne (the earth floating in space as gravity loses its effect). It will shake the souls. Lo! It is the one about which Allah said:

"On the Day (when the first blowing of the Trumpet is blown), the earth and the mountains will shake violently (and everybody will die), the second blowing of the Trumpet follows it (and everybody will be raised up), (some) hearts that Day will shake with fear and anxiety." (79:7-6)

The earth will shake with its inhabitants; every nursing mother will forget her nursling and every pregnant one will drop her load. Children will turn gray-haired, and people will fly (run), fleeing from the terror. The angels will meet them, striking them on their faces, and they will return. Then they turn around, running away. They will have no protector from Allah. Some of them will call the

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others, and while they are upon that state, the earth will split into two cracks, from one region to another. Then they will see a tremendous matter, never having seen before something similar to it. And for that they will fall into such a state of terror and grief that only Allah has full knowledge thereof. They will look at the sky, and it will be like the boiling filth of oil, (or molten copper or brass, meaning the colors present in space will be awash like different kinds of paint mix in water). Then the sky will be cleft asunder and the stars will be scattered. The sun and its moon will be eclipsed." The Messenger of Allah said, "The dead will know nothing of that."

Abu Hurairah said, "As for those whom Allah exempted when He said, 'and all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth, will be terrified except him whom Allah will (exempt); they are the martyrs. The terror reaches only those who are alive, and the martyrs are alive with their Lord, and they are being given provision. Allah will protect them from the terror of that day, making them safe. It will be a punishment from Allah that he will send upon the worst of the creation. About this terror, Allah said:

“O mankind! Fear your Lord and be dutiful to Him! Verily, the earthquake of the Hour (of Judgment) is a terrible thing. The Day you shall see it, every nursing mother will forget her nursling, and every pregnant one will drop her load, and you shall see mankind

as in a drunken state, yet they will not be drunken, but severe will be the Torment of Allah.”

"They will remain in that state of punishment for a period that Allah wills; and it will be prolonged. Then Allah will order Israafeel to blow the blowing of the swooning away. Except for those whom Allah wills, the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth will swoon away. And they will be silent (dead, destroyed). The angel of death will go to the All-Mighty and say, 'O my Lord, other than those whom You exempted, the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth are dead.' He will say, and He is most knowledgeable regarding who remains, 'And who is left.' The angel will say, 'O my Lord, You, the Ever-Living, Who never dies, remains. The bearers of Your throne remain; Jibreel and Mikaaeel (Michael) remain; and I remain.' Allah says, 'Let Jibreel and Mikaaeel die.' Then Allah will make His Throne speak, and it will say, 'O my Lord, Jibreel and Mikaaeel will die?' Allah will say, 'Be quiet, for I have indeed written death upon everyone who is under my Throne.' And so the two said angels die. Then the Angel of death goes to the All-Mighty 'Azza Wa-Jall (to Whom belongs Might and Majesty), and says, 'O my Lord, Jibreel and Mikaaeel have indeed died. I and the bearers of the throne are left.' Allah will say, 'Then let the bearers of the throne die,' and then they will die. And Allah will order the throne, and it will seize the horn from Israafeel. Then the angel of death will go to the All-Mighty and say, "O my Lord, the bearers of Your

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throne have indeed died.' He will say, and He is most knowledgeable regarding who remains, 'Then who is left?' He will say, 'O my Lord, You, the Ever-Living, Who never dies remains, and I remain.' Allah will say, 'You are one from my creation; I have created you for what you have seen, so die, and he will die.

When no one remains except for Allah, the One, the Irresistible, the single Self-Sufficient Master: He begets not, nor was He begotten. And there is none co-equal or comparable unto Him. He will be the last just as He was the first. He will fold the heavens and the earth like the folding of the registry for a book. Then he will spread them and then wrap them three times. He will say, 'I am the All-Mighty (Al-Jabbaar),' three times. Then He will call with His voice, 'Whose is the kingdom this Day?' He will call out (with this question) three times, and no one will answer Him. He will say to Himself, 'It is Allah's, the One, the Irresistible!' The earth will be changed to another earth and so will be the heavens. Then He will unfold, even out, spread, and then extend it, like the extending of tanned leather... You will see therein nothing crooked or curved. Then Allah will drive out the creation with one driving, and they will be like they were the first time: whoever was inside of it will be inside of it, and whoever was on it will be on it.

[The phrase "in it" is a reference to creatures in physical space like man and animals, if we can imagine the physical stuff in the Uni-

verse like planets, rocks, trees is made from matter larger than Atoms, this is what is meant by "in the Universe". The physical Universe is surrounded by the non physical particles smaller than Atoms, in all directions, so "on it" refers to, on top of physical matter and all the small particles that fly through everything solid, ti si what "on it" means, the prophet (saws) was talking about the quantum universe and it's creatures like the Jinn and Angels which are made from these small particles like photons (light). The term on it may be the translators choice of words, but this is the perspective of the heavens, they look down upon the physical world. It should be understood that the prophet (saws) saw the entire Universe which is what is being described in this narration in a language desert Arabs can understand, and we shouldn't mistake His words for simple explanations because if we gather all that He said about the Universe, including what is in the Quran this negates any simpleton understanding of His words. It takes a high level intellect to be capable of discussing all the complex topics mentioned in the Quran in simple terms everyone can understand].

Then Allah will send water from underneath the Throne on you. Then Allah will order the sky to give rain, and it will rain for forty days, until the water will be above them by 12 arm-spans. Then Allah will order bodies to grow (underneath the ground), and they will grow like the growing of vegetables (the resurrection of bodies with out souls), until their bodies will be complete, becoming as

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they were. Allah will say, 'Let Jibreel and Mikaaeel live,' and they will come back to life. Then Allah will call the souls. They will be brought, and they will be shining: the souls of the Muslims (believers in Allah) are light; and the (souls of the) others (not destined to Jannah) are dark. He will seize them all and throw them into the horn (Trumpet). Then Allah will order Israafeel to blow the blowing of resurrection, and he will blow the blowing of resurrection. The souls will come out as if they are bees; they will have filled what is between the heavens and the earth. Allah will say, 'By My Greatness and Majesty, each soul will indeed return to its body. The souls will enter the earth to the bodies, and they will enter into the noses, moving in the body like poison in a poisonous (creature). Then the earth will split (open) for you, and I am the first for whom the earth will split (open). You will come out in a hurry, going quickly to your Lord:

"Hastening towards the caller, the disbelievers will say: "This is a hard Day." (54:8)

"You will be barefooted, naked, Ghulfan Ghurlan (uncircumcised). Then you will stand in one place of standing for a period of seventy years, and you will not be looked at. Nor will any judgment be passed between you. Then you will cry until your tears are depleted.

Then you will cry blood and you will sweat, until that (sweat) bridle you (i.e., reaches your faces, just as a bridle does for a horse) or it will reach the chins (of some). Then you will shout, saying, 'Who will intercede for us to our Lord, so that He judges between us?' They will say, 'Who is more worthy of that than your father, Adam. Allah created him with His Hand, and He blew into him from His Rooh, and He spoke to him Qublan.' They will go to Adam and request that from him, but he will refuse... Then they will go to the Prophets, one Prophet at a time. Each time they go to a Prophet, he will refuse them."

The Messenger of Allah said, "Until you come to me, and I will go until I reach Al-Fahs, where I will fall down, prostrating." Abu Hurairah said, "O Messenger of Allah, what is Al-Fahs?" He said, "A place before the Throne; until Allah sends an angel to me, who will take me by my upper arm. He will raise me and say to me, 'O Muhammad.' I will say (to Allah), 'Yes, I am answering your call, O my Lord.' Allah will say, 'What is your affair?' - and He is Most Knowledgeable thereof. I will say, 'O my Lord, You promised me intercession, so allow me to intercede for Your creation - so judge between them.' He will say, 'I have granted you intercession. I am coming to you all and I will judge among you.'"

The Messenger of Allah said, "I will then return and stand with the people. As we are standing, we will hear a powerful sound from

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the sky. The inhabitants of the heaven and of the earth will descend, (in number) like those who are on earth from jinn and mankind. When they come near to the earth, the earth will shine with their light. And they will take their places in rows. We will say to them, 'Is our Lord among you.' They will say, 'No, He is coming.'...Until the All- Mighty - Blessed is He, The Exalted - will come in the shadows of the clouds and the angels (Allah will allow a direction to be perceived on that day, there is no risk as this time of confusing His nature with created things and the judgment would have begun). At that time, eight will carry His Throne; and today they are four... Then Allah will call out with His voice, saying, 'O group of jinn and mankind; indeed, I have listened to you from the day you were created until this day of yours: I have listened to your speech and seen your deeds, so listen to Me. Verily, it is only your deeds and your scrolls that are read out to you.

Whosoever finds goodness then let him praise Allah. And whosoever finds otherwise, then let him blame no one except himself. Then Allah will order the Hellfire, and a manifest dark neck will come out from it. Then He will say:

And O you Al-Mujrimoon (criminals, polytheists, sinners, disbelievers in the Islam, wicked evil ones, etc.)! Get you apart this day (from the believers)" (36:59)

"Did I not ordain for you, O Children of Adam, that you should not worship Shaitan (Satan). Verily, he is a plain enemy to you. And that you should worship Me (Alone, and set up not rivals, associate-gods with Me). That is a Straight Path and indeed he (Satan) did lead astray a great multitude of you. Did you not, then, understand? This is Hell which you were promised! Burn therein this Day, for that you used to disbelieve."(36:60-64)

"Allah will separate the people, making each group distinct. He will call the nations, calling each nation to its Book. And the nations will be kneeling from the terror (of the situation). Allah said:

"And you will see each nation humbled to their knees (kneeling), each nation will be called to its Record (of deeds). This Day you shall be recompensed for what you used to do." (45:28)

"Then Allah will rule between the creation except for Ath-Thaqaalain: mankind and jinn. Allah will rule between wild beasts and animals, to the degree that the hornless animal will exact retribution from the horned one (that attacked it).

When Allah finishes that, and there remains no liability upon anyone else (from other than jinn and mankind), Allah will say to them (to beasts and animals): 'Be you all dust.' At that juncture, the disbeliever will say, 'Would that I were dust.' Then Allah will rule between (His) slaves, and the first matter that will be ruled

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upon will be (issues of) blood (these are examples of what will occur, not the sum of everything that will occur). Everyone who was killed in the way of Allah will come, and Allah will command the one who killed (justly), and he will carry his head (i.e. the head of the one who was killed); (blood) will be coming out from its veins. He will say, 'My Lord, for what did this one kill me?' Allah will say, and He knows best, 'For what did you kill him?' He will say, 'O my Lord, I killed him so that the Glory be Yours.' Allah will say, 'You have spoken the truth.' Then Allah will make his face become like the light of the heavens, and then the angels will precede him to Paradise. Then all will be brought who were killed for other reasons.

He will command the one who killed (unjustly), and he will carry his head (i.e. the head of the one who was killed), the veins of which will spill blood. He (the one who was killed) will say, 'O my Lord, for what did this one kill me?' Allah will say, and He knows best, 'For what did you kill him?' He will say, 'O my Lord, I killed him so that the glory be mine.' Allah will say, 'You have become wretched (or destroyed; or: be wretched).'

There will remain no soul that was killed by a killer except that it will be killed for, nor will any transgression remain that one person wronged another with, except that Allah will take it for the wronged from the transgressor, to the degree that one who mixed

milk with water (to fool people he was selling it to) will be called upon to purify the milk from the water. When Allah finishes that, then a caller will call out, and all of the creation will hear him. He will say, 'Let every people go to their gods and those that they worshipped instead of Allah.

Anyone that was worshipped other than Allah will be given a shape before him: at that time an angel from the angels will be made to take the appearance of 'Uzair; and another angel will be made to take the appearance of 'Eesa (Jesus). The former will be followed by the Jews, and the latter will be followed by the Christians. Then all of their (false) gods will steer them to the Fire.

About this, Allah said: "Had these (idols, etc.) been aliha (real gods), they would not have entered there (Hell), and all of them will abide therein." (21:99)

When only the believers remain, the hypocrites will remain among them. Allah will come to them upon whatsoever form He pleases. He will say, 'O people, the people have gone, so catch up to your gods and to whatever you worshipped' They will say, 'By Allah, we have no one save Allah: we would not worship anyone save Him.' Then he will leave them — and He is Allah — and they remain for what period Allah wills for them to remain.

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Then He will come (again) to them and say (in a kind of test), 'O people, the people have gone, so catch up with your gods and with those you used to worship' They will say, 'By Allah, we have no one save Allah, and we would not worship anyone save Him.' He will reveal His Shin (man's body is used as a simile for the extent of how much they will know of Allah, the shin is meant in relation to whole body) to them, and such of His Greatness will become plain to them that they will know that He is their Lord.

They will fall down, prostrating on their faces. Every hypocrite will fall on the back of his neck, and Allah will make their spinal columns become like the horns of cows (i.e., they will not be able to bend except according to their deeds, another hadith explains this further, the hypocrites will be stiff not able to move). Then Allah will give permission to them, and they will raise their heads. And Allah will place the Siraat (bridge) over (to) Paradise, like a strap of (thin) hair or a knot of hair or like the blade of a sword.

Upon it will be hooks and grapples and hard thorns of steel like the thorns of Sa'daan (a kind of thorny plant). Before it (hell) is a bridge (Siraat) that is slick and slippery. They will pass over it (according to their light, which is measured by their Ihsan, perfection) like the blinking of an eye, (then others) like the flash of lightning, (then others) like the passing of wind, like racing horses, like other racing animals, or like racing men. Some will go by safely,

some will be safe but scratched (by the hooks), and some will be pushed onto their faces (falling) into the Hellfire.

When the people of Paradise will reach Paradise, they will say, 'Who will intercede for us to our Lord, so that He will make us enter Paradise?' (this is the second intercession of the prophets (as) on this day).

They will say, 'Who is more worthy of that than your father, Adam? Indeed Allah created him with His Hand and blew into him from His Rooh, and spoke to him Qublan (directly).' They will go to Adam and request that from him. He will mention a fault and say, 'I am not the one for that, but go to Nooh, for he is the first of His Messengers to His creation.' They will go to Nooh and request that from him, but he will mention something and say, 'I am not the one for that, but you should go to Moosa.' They will make that request to him, but he will mention a fault and say, 'I am not the one for that, but you should go to Roohullah and His Word, 'Eesa Ibn Maryam.' They will request that from him, but he will say, 'I am not the one for that, but you should go to Muhammad.'"

The Messenger of Allah, said, "Then they will come to me, and for me are three intercessions that my Lord promised. Then I will go to Paradise and take the ring of the door. Next, I will ask for it to be opened, and it will be opened for me. I will be greeted and welcomed. When I enter Paradise, I will look at my Lord 'Azza Wa-



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Jall (to Whom belongs Might and Majesty), and I will fall down to Him, prostrating. Allah will inform me of something from His praise and glorification that He never before informed anyone from His creation. Then Allah will say to me, 'Raise your head, O Muhammad, and intercede, for you will be granted intercession. And ask, for you will be given.' When I will raise my head, Allah will say, and He knows best, 'What is your affair?' I will say, 'O my Lord, you promised me intercession, so grant it to me for the inhabitants of Paradise, so that they enter Paradise. Allah 'Azza (to Whom belongs Might and Majesty) will say, 'I have granted you intercession, and I have given permission for them to enter Paradise.

The Messenger of Allah used to say, "By the One Who has sent me by the Truth, you do not recognize your wives and abodes in this world as well as the inhabitants of Paradise will recognize their wives and abodes."

"Each man from them will enter upon 72 wives as Allah created them (i.e. Allah created them for the dwellers of Paradise; they are not from the women who lived in the world), and two will be Adamiyyatain (two from the children of Adam). Because of their worship of Allah in the world, they (the women of this earth) will have the favor of whomsoever Allah pleases.

He (the dweller of Paradise) will enter upon one of the two in a room made of sapphire (or ruby), upon a bed made of gold,

wreathed in pearls. He will have 70 levels of fine and thick silk. He will place his hand between her shoulders and then look from her chest to what is behind her garment in terms of skin and flesh. And he will indeed look at the flesh of her shin...His liver will be as a mirror to her and her liver will be as a mirror to him (an Arab expression about the closeness of their nature).

While he is with her — he does not tire of her nor does she tire of him — it will be called out, 'We indeed know that you do not tire and that she does not tire, but you have wives other than her.' Then he will go out, going to them one by one. Every time he goes to one, she will say, 'By Allah, there is none in Paradise who is better than you, and there is none in Paradise who is more beloved to me than you.'"

He said, "And when the people of the Hellfire fall into the Hellfire, some among your Lord's creation will fall into it — their deeds will have destroyed them. As for some of them, (the fire) will take them until their feet, not going beyond that from them; others will take until the loins; and yet others it will take their entire body, except for the face..." The Messenger of Allah said, "I will say, 'O my Lord, grant me intercession for those from my Nation who entered into the Hellfire.' Allah 'Azza Wa-Jall (to Whom belongs Might and Majesty) will say, 'Take out those you know,' and they will come out, until not a single one from them remains.

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Then Allah will give me permission to intercede. There will remain no Prophet or martyr except that he intercedes. Then Allah will say, 'Take out the one in whose heart you find Eemaan (actual faith) equal to the weight of a Deenaar.' Those will come out, until not a single one from them remains. Then intercession will be sought from Allah, and He will say, 'Take out the one in whose heart you find Eemaan equal to two-thirds of a dinar.' Then He will say, 'One-third.' Then He will say, 'A Qeeraat.' Then He will say, 'A mustard seed' They will come out until there remains not a single one from them, and until there remains no one in the Hell-fire who ever did even a single deed for Allah, and until there remains no one who is granted intercession except after his intercession is granted.

Even Iblees (Satan) will stand tall from what he sees of Allah's mercy, hoping that he will be interceded for. Then Allah will say, 'I remain, and I am the Most Merciful of the merciful ones. He will enter His Hand (a simile) into the Hellfire and take out an amount that none can enumerate except He, as if they are grain. Allah will spread them on a river that is called the River of the Animals. And they will grow...from beside a green sun and a shade that has yellowness to it. They will grow until they become the likes of pearls. Written on their necks is Al-Jahannamiyyoon (the people of Hell-fire) the ones freed by the Most Merciful 'Azza Wa-Jail (to Whom belongs Might and Majesty).

The People of Paradise will know them by that writing. They never did any good for Allah, and they will remain in Paradise."  
(End of the Narration)

Imam Ibn Katheer narrated it up to here from the text of Abu Bakr Arabee from Abu Ya'laa (may Allah have mercy on him), and it is a famous Hadeeth. Many groups from the Imams related it in their books; like At-Tabaraanee in Al-Mutawwilaat; Al-Haafiz Al-Baihaqee, in Al-Ba'ath Wan-Nushoor; Al-Haafiz Abu Moosa Al-Madeenee, in Al-Mutawwilaat.

# One Of The Trees Of Jannah and Meeting With Allah

In a hadith related by Al-Mu'aafah ibn 'Imraan, the Messenger of Allah, said, "Verily, in Paradise there is a tree that is called Tooba. If a good rider were made to travel in its shade, he would travel in it for one hundred years. Its leaves are green emeralds and its flowers... are yellow. Its courtyard is fine and thick silk. Its fruits are robes. Its secretion is ginger and honey. Its valley is red rubies and green emeralds. Its soil is musk, and its grass is saffron, which exudes fragrance without needing to be ignited. Rivers of Salsabeel gush forth from its source, as well as wine. Its shade is a gathering place from the gathering places of the dwellers of Paradise. They will be acquainted with it, and all of them will talk in it (Underneath its shade).

"One day, while they will be talking in its shade, angels, riding superior mounts of rubies, will come to them. Ar-Rooh (a soul) will be blown into those mounts. They will be drawn tight by chains of gold, and their faces (i.e. faces of those mounts) are lamps (lit). Upon them are saddles whose Alwaah (literally, plates) are made of

pearls and rubies, which are lobed by pearls and corals, the covers of which are of red gold... The Angels will kneel those mounts down before them and say to them, 'Verily, your Lord sends peace to you and wishes to visit you, so that He looks at you, and you look at Him; so that you love Him, and He endows you with life (possibly akin to vigor); so that you speak to Him and He increases you in comfort and in His Favors. Verily, He is the Possessor of Vast Mercy and Tremendous Favors.'

Each man from them will go to his mount, and then they will go in one, even row... They will not pass any tree from the trees of Paradise except that it will confer its fruits upon them. Those trees will move out of their way, hating to spoil their row or to divide between a man and his companion. When they will be raised to the All-Mighty, He will reveal to them His Noble Countenance and He will appear to them with the Glory (and Majesty) of the All-Mighty. And they will say, 'O our Lord, You are As-Salaam (the One Who is free from all defects and deficiencies), and from You is all peace (you are the source of All peace felt in creation). You have the right of all Majesty and Honor.'

Their Lord 'Azza WaJall (To Him belongs Might and Majesty) will say to them, 'I am As-Salaam (peace) and from me is all peace, and I have the right of all Majesty and Honor. Welcome to My slaves who preserved My commands, who attended to My right (over

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them), who feared Me in the unseen (ghayb, of the universe). They would fear Me in every situation.' They will say, 'By Your Glory, and the Highness of Your Place, we have not estimated You (perceived your measure) with a true estimation. And we have not fulfilled all of Your rights (due your measure), so give us permission to perform prostration to You.'

[Allah created this Universe with a balance and measure, so everything has its estimated worth based on its ability to draw near to Allah, Mankind having the highest worth because they can know him the most while stones and dead things have the least because they are incapable of knowing him like us. In this scale Allah gave creation we still have not given Allah his proper measure because we still only know little of Him.]

Their Lord will say to them, 'I have removed from you the provision (need) of worship (in order to know Him), and I have made your bodies to rest. Long it is that you have tired your bodies for Me and now you have come to My Mercy and Generosity, so ask me whatever you please and hope from Me: I will give you all of your wishes, for I will not reward you today in proportion to your deeds, but rather in proportion to My Mercy, My Generosity My Exaltedness, My High Place, and the Greatness of My Affair.' They will continue to wish and to be given until the one who has more limited wishes hopes for the likeness of the world from the time

Allah created it until the day of its annihilation. Allah 'Azza Wa-Jall (To Him belongs Might and Majesty) will say to them, 'You have fallen short in your wishes, and you have become pleased with less than what you deserve. I have made obligatory for you that which you asked and wished for, and I have made your progeny to catch up with you. And before you is that which your wishes have fallen short of.'" (Related by Abu Na'eem, In Imam Ibn Kathir's al Bidya wal Nihaya 729).

# The Spiritual Significance of the Miraculous Night Journey and Ascension of the Prophet Muhammad (saws)

by: Shaykh Muhammad Hisham Kabbani, with additions from myself in brackets.

Bismillah ir-Rahman ir-Raheem

Glory be to him who made his servant to go on a night from the sacred mosque to the far-distant mosque of which we have blessed the precincts, so that we may show to him some of our signs; surely he is the hearing, the seeing. [17: 1]

Allah (swt) has revealed this as the first verse of quran's chapter al-isra, the night journey, which is also known as the chapter of the children of israel or the chapter of glorification (subhan). in it allah

mentions the night journey (al-isra') in which he called the prophet (saws) to his divine presence.]

As Allah began the Holy Qur'an in the Opening chapter al-Fatiha, with the words "Al-Hamdu Lillah - Praise be to Allah," He similarly opens Surat al-Isra (17:1), the chapter of the Night Journey, with "Subhana - Glory be to Allah." Allah is glorifying Himself saying, "Subhana alladhi asra" which means "Glory to Me, the One who brought the Prophet on the Night Journey calling him to My Divine Presence."

Reaching beyond comprehension of the human mind, Allah is not just reminding us about this event. Rather, He is glorifying Himself in regards to it, whereby He transported the Prophet (s) almost instantaneously from Makka to Masjid al-Aqsa followed by the the Prophet's (s) Ascension, traversing in an incredibly short span of time the worldly domain of this universe and beyond, transcending the laws of physics.

There is no scientific, worldly way to comprehend how the Prophet (s) moved across the globe and was then carried to Allah's Divine Presence: such a journey is beyond the scope of imagination. Therefore Allah glorifies Himself saying, "Yes it happened! Glory to Me Who can do this! I am beyond these laws and systems. I am the Creator of all systems."

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## ANGELIC PREPARATION FOR THE MIRACULOUS JOURNEY

Malik bin Anas <sup>®</sup> related that the Prophet (s) said, “I was lying in the Hijr (of the Sacred Mosque of Makka) when someone [the archangel Gabriel (as)] came to me and cut open my chest from throat to belly. He removed my heart and cleaned it with the water of the well of Zamzam before putting it back in its place. Then he brought me a white creature called al-Buraq by whose means I was lifted.” Another narration relates that the two archangels “Gabriel and Mika’il (as) came to the Prophet (s) when he was laying down in al-Hijr [of the Sacred Mosque in Makka] and carried him to the well of Zamzam. They laid him down on his back and Gabriel (as) opened his chest from top to bottom, despite which there was no bleeding. He said to Mika’il (as), ‘Get me water from Zamzam,’ which he did. Gabriel (as) took the Prophet’s (s) heart and washed it thrice before putting it back. He filled it with faith and wisdom. Then he closed his chest and they took him out from the door of the masjid to where the Buraq was waiting.”

Archangel Gabriel could have removed the Prophet’s heart miraculously by means of a small opening or without opening his chest at all. Yet we see in this Tradition of the Prophet (s) a hint of how to perform open heart surgery. This same technique of opening the entire chest cavity is used by heart surgeons today.

## PERFECTION OF SERVANTHOOD

How did Allah describe the one whom He brought on the Night Journey? He describes him (s) as “His servant” - `abdi hi. Abu Qasim Sulayman al-Ansari said that when the Prophet (s) reached the highest levels and most distinguished stations. Allah revealed to him, “With what shall I honor you?” The Prophet said, “By relating me to You through servanthood (‘ubudiyya).” This is why Allah revealed this verse of the Holy Qur’an honoring the Prophet (s) by the title “His servant” when describing the Night Journey. Allah did not grant such an honor to Moses (as). Rather He said, “And when Moses came to Our appointed tryst...” [7:143] referring to Moses (as) by his name. Instead of saying, “Glory be to Him Who made Muhammad to go...” Allah honored the Prophet (s) by referring to him as `abdihi, “His servant.” Another subtle inference from Allah’s use of the term “`abdihi”, - His servant (a construct in the absent form or third person) is the meaning that, ‘He called the Prophet (s) to a void where there was nothing except His Own Presence.’ More miraculous than calling the Prophet (s) to His Presence was His bringing the Prophet’s (s) body and soul, which exist in time and place, to where there is no time and place, no ‘where’ and no ‘when’. Allah brought His sincere servant, our master Muhammad (s), from a physical form of this worldly life to the completely abstract Divine Presence.

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[Here the scholar is slightly wrong in saying “no where”, what does “no ‘where’ and no ‘when’” actually mean. If we can understand what “no when” means then understanding “no where” becomes easier. Without going into how physics proved this is fact, time is “physically” interwoven with space, this means that if we can bend space we can bend time making it flow at a different rate, than say there being 60 seconds in a minute. In fact the earth and any planet bend space around them and this is why time flows very slightly differently on earth than in space.

If time is interwoven with space, then we can say if we leave space time won't exist for us and in fact physics has also established this is true, subatomic particles are smaller than atoms and in reality not in physical space because they are so small, they fly through everything in space even planets, and aren't affected by what is in it like gravity or time, light for instance is entirely made up of the subatomic particle the photon, and it is very literally timeless because it is too small for time and space to affect it.

Basically this explains how “no when” is possible, the prophet was taken to ghayb the “unseen parts” of this universe and it is entirely made up of subatomic particles that aren't affected by time, ghayb is almost timeless the deeper we go into it and closer we near the Arsh of Allah. We can illustrate this with ease because the scholars said Ghayb (the unseen part of this universe) is the world we our

self experience when we dream and the place we go to when we die, and science has shown that when a person dreams they experience dreams lasting for hours but in reality those dreams don't take more than a few seconds to occur, this is because our consciousness, that experiences the dream is looking or going deeper into the subatomic world where time isn't flowing the same as the physical world, time almost comes to a stand still in it which is why hours there are only seconds here, that world we are seeing is entirely made up of subatomic particles and as we leave physical space behind we also leave time.

The prophet (saws) didn't just travel there with his consciousness but his body as well, the trip occurred almost instantaneously in a few seconds the same length of time a person would take to have a dream, but He (saws) lived it over a long period of time.

So then how does this relate to “no where”, the shaykh is right in saying “no where” in the physical universe and this is in line with the prophet's own description of ghayb, the unseen world, He (saws) said about the Universe on the day of judgment “You will see therein nothing crooked or curved (when Allah re-creates it). Then Allah will drive out the creation with one driving, and they will be like they were the first time: whoever was inside of it will be inside of it, and whoever was on it will be on it.” The prophet (saws) was no longer “in the universe” but “on it”, although on it is

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still a place with Allah even if “when” is not as relevant. The only place that has “no where” is above the Arsh, the throne of Allah, at the Arsh that is the point of furthest limit in the universe, as Allah states in the Quran, were no created being can pass beyond and the prophet (saws) traveled to that point, but Allah in the Quran said He reached a distance of “two bows-length - qaba qawsayn.” [53: 9], if this is meant above the Arsh then it has “no where” because it isn’t part of created things, it is in the light of Allah which is above the Arsh, otherwise the shaykh made a slight mistake in calling the two bows length “no where” if that point is beneath the Arsh.

The Shaykh also said “There is no scientific, worldly way to comprehend how the Prophet (s) moved across the globe and was then carried to Allah’s Divine Presence”, this is slightly not true because there is one significant thing that makes us different from subatomic particles, which Angels are created from, that is our Mass, light for example moves like it does because it has no Mass, there are things in this universe that give everything their mass (like the higgs field) if we stop them from affecting us (our Atoms) then we will no longer have Mass and the laws of physics won’t be relevant to us any longer, just the laws of ghayb, quantum mechanics which is the physics of subatomic particles].

## STATIONS OF PROXIMITY TO THE DIVINE

The verse goes on to describe the Prophet’s movement through countless stations. Having perfected his character through constant worship, `ubudiyya, the Sacred Mosque, or Holy Sanctuary, is here an indication of the Prophet’s r having already been elevated beyond all sin. Allah’s description of the Prophet (s) as “`abd” - servant - precedes His mention of the two mosques: the Sacred Mosque (Masjid al-Haram) and the Far Distant Mosque (Masjid al-Aqsa). Allah did not say His Servant was taken “from Makka,” rather He said, “from the Sacred Mosque,” Masjid al-Haram. “Sacred” means inviolable, no sin being permitted within its precincts, nor backbiting, cheating, or lying. There one must be ever mindful of Allah’s (swt) Presence.

Masjid al-Haram, represents here a station where those sins which signify the animal life can never be committed. ‘Aqsa’ in Arabic means ‘the Farthest’. Thus Masjid al-Aqsa here is named as the farthest mosque in relation to Masjid al-Haram and symbolizes the spiritual realm. The literal meaning is, ‘He brought His servant from Masjid al-Haram to the mosque at the farthest end.’ Symbolically, Allah brought the Prophet away from that which is forbidden things of this earthly life, haram, to the place furthest away from it - al-Aqsa. The furthestmost point from the animalistic life is the spiritual dimension.



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The subtle meaning derived from the order of the words here is that Allah's one true servant, the Prophet Muhammad (s), began from station of `ubudiyya, servanthood, for which he was created. This allowed him to begin from the station of perfected and flawless character (`ismat), shunning the forbidden and the love of this worldly life (al-haraam) and move from there to the farthest station, the highest rank of all creation, as indicated by the station of the farthest mosque, al-aqsa.

#### STAGES OF TASAWWUF

In the Science of Purification of the Self, tasawwuf, these stages are termed Shariah (the Law we follow), Tariqat (the Path we live) and Haqiqat (the reality we experience as a result). The first corresponds to the realm of physical discipline, whence the seeker moves on the path, tariqat, with the vehicle of `ubudiyya, worship, and thence ascends to the station of haqiqat, reality (his practice becomes his reality), in which all falsehood vanishes and the Lordship of Allah is made eminently manifest to the servant.

Allah brought Prophet Muhammad (s) to Masjid al-Aqsa in Palestine from which most of the prophets hail. There he found all of the prophets gathered, and they prayed in congregation behind him (s). From there Allah raised him to the heavens, as if saying, 'O My prophets! I did not raise any one from Masjid al-Aqsa as I am raising Muhammad (s).' This was in order to demonstrate to them

Prophet Muhammad's (s) ascendancy - unlike any one of them, he was not restricted by the laws of this universe (meaning Allah took these away so he could travel on his journey into the unseen, the shahkh is slightly wrong here in that Allah granted this to other prophets before him, just not to the same extent as the prophet muhammad (saws) because He (saws) was their leader).

#### RISEN BY NIGHT, ILLUMINATING LIKE THE FULL MOON

Allah then lifted him from Masjid al- Aqsa by means of the Ascension (mi`raj), to His Divine Presence. Why did Allah use the words, 'laylan - by night'? Why didn't He say, 'naharan - by day'? 'Laylan' (is an emphasis it) illustrates the darkness of this world; it becomes illumined only by the bright moon of the Prophet (s) rising to brighten every darkness.

Subhan alladhee asr'a bi `abdihi laylan. "Glorified be He Who carried His servant by night..." Look at every word of this holy verse. First Allah praised Himself in the third person, in absence. Allah then miraculously moved the Prophet from Makka to Masjid al-Aqsa (asra'). Then He referred to the Prophet as "abd - servant", distinguishing him through that elevated title as being related to the spiritual life, not the animal life. The message of Prophet Muhammad (s) completed and perfected both the physical discipline and jurisprudence (shari`a) of Moses and the spirituality (rawhani-

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yya) of 'Isa (as). The shari`a of Moses (as) relates to the worldly life and the spirituality of 'Isa (as) relates to the heavenly life. By passing from the worldly life, represented by the Night Journey, to heavenly life, represented by the Ascension, the Prophet (s) was carried on these two wings (practices in life). No prophet was carried in both these dimensions except our master Muhammad (s).

### PROPHETIC CONVEYANCES

One of the great scholars of Qur'anic exegesis, al-'Ala'i said, "On the Night of Ascension the Prophet used five different vehicles. The first was the Buraq, a winged creature which carried him from Makka to Masjid al-Aqsa. The second was the Ascension by which the Prophet (s) reached the sky of this world, as-sama' ad-dunya.' There are two explanations for Mi`raj: one that the Buraq carried the Prophet (s) up and the second that a ladder descended and raised the Prophet (s) very rapidly. The third vehicle was the wings of angels taking the Prophet (s) up to the seventh heaven. The fourth were the wings of Gabriel from the seventh heaven to the Furthestmost Lote Tree, sidrat al-muntaha. The fifth vehicle was the carpet (ar-raf raf) to the station of "two bows-length - qaba qawsayn." [53: 9] "Similarly, the Prophet (s) stopped in ten different stations: seven heavens and the eighth at the Furthestmost Lote Tree, sidrat al-muntaha (the furthest limit). The ninth is where he heard the sound of the angels' pens writing the actions of human

beings and the tenth level was at the Throne. And Allah knows best."

### THE MIRACULOUS ASPECT OF ISRA AND MI`RAJ

All these miraculous events took place on the night of the Night Journey and Ascension, Laylat al-Isra wal-Mi`raj. The many hadiths detailing the events of the Night Journey were authenticated by numerous huffaz (hadith masters) such as Ibn Shihab, Thabit al-Banani, and Qatada. Allah supports His prophets with miracles (mu`jizat) to be able to transcend the laws of physics and the constraints of our human realities. If Allah grants a miracle we should not view it as something improbable, otherwise we will be like scientists who cannot understand anything beyond what they perceive (and Allah isn't limited by what a scientist can or can't perceive).

Scholars differ as to what night this great journey occurred on. Imam Nawawi said that it took place in Rajab. In Nawawi's ar-Rawda, he states it occurred ten years and three months after the beginning of the Prophecy, while Fatawa states it was five or six years after the onset of revelation. Whatever the case, all scholars concur that the Night Journey and Ascension took place both in body and spirit.

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## ABRAHAM'S VISION AND THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION

Allah said in the Holy Qur'an: "So also did We show Abraham the kingdom of the heavens and the earth that he might have certitude." [6: 75-79]

Allah showed the kingdom of heavens and earth to Prophet Abraham (as), by opening Abraham's spiritual vision (baseera) to see the wonders of the universe from where he was on earth. Allah showed him what is beyond the laws of the physical universe through the eyes of his heart (the vision in our mind are the eyes of our heart, we call it imagination because we make things up as we think about them and so they are not real but when our imagination no longer exists our inner sight cant make things up and only sees what is real like our normal eyes). Yet immediately after this verse Allah has shown Abraham (as) the glories behind the physical universe, "When the night covered over him he saw a star. He said 'This is my lord.'" [6:77] In the following verses Abraham (as) similarly "mistakes" the moon and sun for his lord: "When he saw the moon rising in splendor he said, 'This is my lord.' But when the moon set he said, 'Unless my Lord guides me I shall surely be among those who go astray.' When he saw the sun rising in splendor he said, 'This is my lord.'" [6: 78] These verses regarding the stars, moon, and sun are directed to the non-believers. Allah showed Abraham (as) the Truth and he had reached certitude of

faith (in a time when people around the world mistook all of these for there Lord).

As a prophet he was also free of sin, and thus could not have considered other than Allah as his Lord. However, Abraham's duty was to convey a heavenly message. Seeking to bring everyone under Allah's mercy, Abraham (as) attempted to teach his people in a way that would not cause them to reject his message. Wisely using a process of elimination, he demonstrated to them that a spiritual dimension exists. He eliminated the star (something small), then the moon, then the sun (the biggest heavenly body). Abraham (as) then reaffirms his true belief in Allah and his turning away from worldly distractions saying, "But when the sun set he said, 'O my people, I am innocent and free from the sin of you ascribing partners to Allah. For me I have set my face firmly and truly towards the One Who created the heavens and the earth, and I am not one who ascribes partners to Allah.'" [6:79] The meaning of this demonstration: don't chase the things of this worldly life, but seek the spiritual dimension which transcends the laws of the physical universe.

In our time, materialistic scientists and certain narrow-minded Islamic sects try to negate spirituality, the (other) dimension (of life), which Allah showed to Abraham (as). Those rejecting the spiritual dimension of Islam are falling into the same trap as the people of

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Abraham. The Prophet (s) said, ‘what I fear most for my community is the hidden shirk (associating partners to Allah).’ Hidden shirk is for a person to be prideful of himself, most easily manifest in rejecting the words of others (the prophet (saws) feared this the most because today it is the very thing used to corrupt all mankind, and He (saws) said about our time that in the earth will experience the most oppression ever to exist on earth).

#### DISTINCTION OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S ASCENDANCY

Prophet Abraham (as) was shown the kingdom malakut, of heavens and earth. Prophet Moses (as) did not see this kingdom. However he was able to hear Allah and speak with Allah from Mount Sinai, thus being known as Kalimullah (the one who spoke with Allah directly). Although Abraham (as) was granted the ability to see in spiritual dimensions, and Moses (as) was granted to hear Allah directly, both of these great prophets’ bodies remained on earth, subject to its physical laws. Prophet Abraham’s vision and Prophet Moses’ (as) hearing went beyond the physical by means of the power of the soul, but their bodies did not move beyond the physical world.

However, Allah caused Prophet Muhammad (s) to move in spiritual dimensions with his body in complete freedom from physical laws. Allah called the Prophet “to show him from Our signs...” [17:

1] Allah showed Abraham the kingdom of this universe, but He moved the Prophet (s) in body and spirit beyond the physical laws of this universe to show him ‘Our signs’, ayaatina. This possessive form relating the Signs as belonging to Allah directly, indicates the greater honor and knowledge bestowed on the Prophet (s). The kingdom of heavens and earth shown to Prophet Abraham (as) was the workings of this physical universe and did not reach Paradise, whereas Allah’s signs manifested to Prophet Muhammad (s) are directly related to Allah and are not associated with this (physical) world.

#### THE PROPHET'S VISION OF HIS LORD AND PERFECTION OF ONENESS

"Allah revealed to His servant what he revealed. The Prophet’s heart in no way falsified what it saw. Will you then dispute with him about what he saw? And he saw Him again another time at the Lote-tree of the utmost boundary, at the Garden of Abode. Behold the Lote-tree was shrouded with what shrouds. His sight did not swerve or waiver. Indeed he saw of the Signs of his Lord, the Greatest." [53: 10-19]

Imam Nawawi and the late Imam Mutwalli Sha`rawi concur with the majority of scholars in interpreting these verses to mean that the Prophet saw his Lord another time, not that he saw Gabriel another time, as some assert. Imam Nawawi relates in his commen-

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tary on Sahih Muslim, “Most of the scholars say that the Prophet saw his Lord with the eyes of his head - ra’a rabbahu bi ‘aynay raasi hi. The Prophet came all the way to the Divine Throne (‘arsh), reached qaba qawsayni (the distance of two bow’s length), and reached the Paradise of Jannat al-Ma’wa near the Furthestmost Lote-Tree (sidrat al-muntaha).

After all this Imam Sha`rawi asks, “What would make the Prophet’s sight swerve? Some say it was Gabriel (as), but the Prophet (s) had seen Gabriel (as) many times and Gabriel was with him for the duration of the Night Journey and Ascension. It is irrelevant to say at this juncture that the Prophet’s sight did not swerve or waiver, because if this was in reference to Gabriel the Prophet had many opportunities to see him already. Allah doesn’t say anything irrelevant which is why I side with the majority of scholars (including Imam Nawawi) in saying that with his physical eyes the Prophet saw Allah (swt).”

“Indeed he saw of the Signs of his Lord, the Greatest.” [53:18]

What then could the Greatest Sign be for the Prophet (s) other than the vision of his Lord? For the Prophet (s) saw all seven levels of Paradise, then ascended further than any creation before or after, to “two bows-length”. It is stated in hadith that the greatest reward for believers in the next life will not be the pleasures of Paradise, but the vision of their Lord every Friday. If the believers, the

common and the special, are going to see their Lord in the after-life, then clearly nothing less than that could be “the Greatest Sign” for His Beloved Prophet Muhammad (s).

“And We granted the vision which We showed you (O Muhammad) but as a trial for mankind.” [17:60]

Regarding this verse, Ibn `Abbas said, “Allah’s Messenger (s) actually saw with his own eyes the vision (of all which was shown to him) on the night of his Night Journey to Jerusalem (and then to the heavens)...” That is the greatness of Prophet Muhammad. No one saw his Lord other than Muhammad (s), making him (s) the only true monotheist (muwahhid). No one except Muhammad (s) achieved a perfect grasp of Divine Unity – tawhid - everyone else’s understanding of tawhid remains imitated (taqleed).

Prophet Abraham (as) was the father of the prophets and was granted spiritual vision to see the workings of the universe and Prophet Moses (as) was granted to speak with his Lord. But Allah moved Prophet Muhammad with his physical body in defiance of the physical laws of the universe to the Unseen, a place where there is nothing and no possibility of anything - “la khala wa la mala.” Allah took Muhammad there and revealed to him Himself, in the manner He wished. How this was we do not know. It is unseen and unknown (ghayb). Thus, as Ibn `Abbas (ra) said, it is a

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matter to be believed with acceptance, not a matter to be questioned.

[Here I don't agree with the scholar, *ghayb* the unseen world isn't no where, because *Jannah* (heaven) and *Jahanam* (hell) are there along with many other creatures, Here I don't agree with the scholar, *ghayb* the unseen world isn't no where, because *Jannah* (heaven) and *Jahanam* (hell) are there along with many other creatures, Allah referring to life on other planets as well as life in *ghayb* says " And among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the living creatures that He has scattered through them: and He has power to gather them together when He wills."(42:29) all exist in a location.

Allah gave *ghayb* a definite location and structure in space because He arranged it in order of nearness to Him starting with the lowest Heaven and ending with the highest, so they each have a location and the prophet (saws) gave their size in relation to each other. *Ghayb* is in the same location space is, it is space, it is just the unseen part of space. Everybody sees light we see the light of the sun all the time, but the sun also creates invisible light called ultra violet light, we know it exists because if we stay out in the sun for too long it burns our skin, simply because it is invisible and in the unseen part of our universe does not mean it has no location, it is just invisible which is why it is called *ghayb*, the unseen.

Another clear example of all this is the fact Angels live in *ghayb* and they are created from light, or photons, it does not mean Angels also have no location because they are invisible, they are tangible like us and Allah told us many things about them that show us they are made from matter in this universe and live in it like us, in the prophet's (saws) terminology "on it" but even being on something still has a location on that thing.]

#### EXPLANATION OF THE IDOL VERSES

"His sight did not swerve or waiver. Indeed he saw the Greatest Signs of his Lord. Have you seen *Lat* and '*Uzza* (two pagan idols) and the third one *Manat* (another idol)?" [53: 17-20]

Why does Allah mention these three false deities, *Lat*, '*Uzza* and *Manat*, which the polytheistic idolaters of Makka worshipped, immediately after mentioning the "Greatest Signs of his Lord" in 53:18? Scholars say that 53:18 shows that Muhammad (s) reached perfect grasp of Allah's Unity, while the verses 53:19-20 by contrast show these idols as nothing more than fabrications of their makers. If "Greatest Signs" [53: 18] referred to Gabriel then it would not follow to mention the false idols after it.

Prophet Abraham (as) mentioned a star, the moon and the sun - three entities of this worldly life - as objects falsely taken as gods besides God. And in the chapter of the Star (*an-Najm*), Allah men-

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tioned al-Lat al-ʿUzza and Manat, again three false gods, immediately describing Prophet Muhammad's seeing his Lord, as explained by most scholars. Both these revelations reject the false concept of idol-worship, and subtly stress the false notion of a trinity (or intermediary between Allah and man), which pervades most forms of idolatry. Oneness is for Allah the Exalted and Glorious, the One - al-Wahid, the Unique - al-Fard, the Eternal - as-Samad.

# Muslim Contributions To Science and Art

This is an excerpt from Ch. 13, 'Muslim Contributions to Science and Art' from the book "Introduction to Islam" by Dr. M. Hamidullah.

Just as many are there sciences, so many do we require specialists from among the historians to describe adequately the Muslim contribution to each branch and to collaborate in the compilation of a general survey of this vast subject. Far from pretending to deal adequately with the topic, an attempt is made here to give information of a general nature relating to the role the Muslims have played in the development of the various arts and sciences.

## General Attitude

444. Islam is a comprehensive concept of life and not merely a religion describing the relations between man and his Creator. Therefore it becomes necessary to, first of all, give an account of the attitude of Islam with respect to the pursuit of arts and sciences.

445. Far from discouraging a life of well-being in this world, the Qur'an gives expression again and again to directions like: "Say (O Muhammad): Who hath forbidden the adornment (beautiful gifts) of God which He hath brought forth for His bondsmen and the good things of His providing?" (7:32) It praises those "who say: Our Lord! Give unto us in this world that which is best and in the Hereafter that which is best, and guard us from the torment of Fire." (2:201) It teaches mankind: ". . . and neglect not thy portion of the world, and be thou kind even as God hath been kind to thee. . ." (28:77). It is this quest for well-being which attracts man to study and to learn, in as perfect a manner as possible, all that exists in the universe so as to profit by it and to be grateful to God for it. The Qur'an says: "And We have given you (mankind) authority on the earth, and appointed for you therein a livelihood; small are the thanks ye give:" (7:10; cf. 15: 20-21): And again: "He it is Who created for you all that is in the earth. . ." (2:29) further: "See ye not how God hath made service able unto you whatsoever is in the skies and whatsoever is in the earth and hath loaded you with His favours both without and within?" (31:20, cf. 14:32-33; 16:12, 33:65, 65:11-12, etc.). On one hand, the Qur'an reminds men of their duty of worshipping the One "Who hath fed them against hunger, and hath made them safe from fear" (106:4) and on the other hand, it tells them of the need for effort in this world of cause and effect: "And man hath only that for which he maketh effort." (53:39) The



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Qur'an (30:42) urges men not only to go on exploration: "Say: Travel in the land and see the nature of the end of those who were before you," but also for new discoveries ..." "... who meditate over the creation of the heavens and the earth, (and say:) Our Lord! Thou createdst not this in vain." (3:191)

446. As to the method of increasing knowledge, it is inspiring to note that the very first revelation that came to the Prophet, who was born amongst illiterate people, was a command to read and write, and the praise of the pen which is the only means or custodian of human knowledge: "

Read with the name of thy Lord, Who createth,

Createth man from a clot. Read, and thy Lord is the Most Bounteous,

Who teacheth by the pen: Teacheth man that which he knew not." (Q. 96:1-5).

It also reminds us: "... and ask the people of remembrance if ye know not" (16:43, 21:7), as also: "... and of knowledge ye have been vouchsafed but little" (17:85). Further: "... We raise by grades whom We will, and over every possessor of knowledge there is one more knowing" (12:76). What a beautiful prayer is the one which the Qur'an teaches man: "... and say: my Lord! Increase me in knowledge" (20:114).

447. Prophet Muhammad said: "Islam is built on five fundamentals: Belief in God, Service of worship, Fasting, Pilgrimage of the House of the One God, and the Zakat-tax." If belief demands the cultivation of the theological sciences, the other requires a study of the mundane sciences. For the service of worship, one faces towards Mecca, and the service must be celebrated on the occurrence of certain determined natural phenomena. This requires knowledge of the elements of geography and astronomy. Fasting also requires the understanding of natural phenomena, such as the appearance of the dawn, the setting of the sun, etc. The pilgrimage necessitates knowledge of the routes and the means of transport in order to proceed to Mecca. Payment of the Zakat requires knowledge of mathematics, which knowledge is also necessary for calculations for the distribution of the heritage of the deceased. Similarly there is the fundamental need of the understanding of the Qur'an in the light of historical facts and allusions and references to the sciences contained therein. In fact, the study of the Qur'an requires first of all a knowledge of the language in which it is compiled (the linguistic sciences) and its references to various peoples demand a knowledge of history and geography, and so on and so forth.

448. Let us recall that when the Prophet began an independent life, settling down in Madinah, his first act was the construction of a mosque with a portion reserved for the purpose of a school (the

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celebrated Suffah) which served during the day as a lecture hall, and during the night as a dormitory for students.

449. God helps those who help the cause of God, is repeated often in the Qur'an (47:7, 22:40). It is not surprising if Muslims had the good fortune to possess abundant and cheap paper so as to spread knowledge among the masses. Since the second century of the Hijrah, there began to be established factories for the manufacture of paper all over the vast Muslim empire.

450. For purposes of this short sketch, we shall refer only to a few sciences in which the contribution of the Muslims has been particularly important for mankind.

### **Religious and Philosophical Sciences**

451. The religious sciences began, naturally enough, with the Qur'an which the Muslims received as the Word of God, the Divine Message addressed to man. Its perusal and understanding necessitated the study of the linguistic, grammatical, historical, and even the speculative sciences, along with many others – which gradually developed into independent sciences of general utility. The recitation of the sacred text brought into being, and developed, the religious “music” of Islam (to which we shall revert later). The preservation of the Qur'an led to improvements in the Arabic script, not only from the point of view of precision, but also of

beauty. With its punctuation and vocalization, the Arabic script is incontestably the most precise for the needs of any language in the world. The universal character of Islam necessitated the understanding of the Qur'an by non-Arabs; and we see a series of translations, from the very time of the Prophet (Salman al-Farsi had translated parts of it into Persian) continuing to our own day, and there is no end to it in sight. It is necessary to point out that these translations were made solely for the purpose of understanding the contents by those who did not know Arabic, yet never for liturgical purposes. For in the service of worship, one uses only the Arabic text. And the method adopted by order of the Prophet for the preservation of the integrity of the sacred text was perpetuated, namely recording by writing, and learning by heart, both done simultaneously. Each process was to help the other in guarding against forgetfulness or the commission of error. The institution of a judicial method of verification further perfected the system. Thus, one was required not only to procure a copy of the Qur'an, but also to read it from the beginning to the end before a recognized master, in order to obtain a certificate of authenticity. This practice continues to this day.

452. As in the case of the Qur'an, Muslims were also attached to the sayings of the Prophet. The reports of his sayings and doings, both public and private, were preserved. The preparation of such memoirs began even in the lifetime of the Prophet, on the private

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initiative of certain of his companions, and was continued after his death, by a process of collection of first hand knowledge. As was the case of the Qur'an, authenticity was insisted on in all transmissions. One could relate all that is known of the lives of Noah, Moses, Jesus, Buddha and other great men of antiquity, in a few pages only, but the known details of the biography of the Prophet Muhammad fills hundreds of pages, so great was the care that was taken to preserve for posterity documented and precise data.

453. The speculative aspect of the Faith, particularly in the matter of beliefs and dogmas, shows that the discussions which I began in the lifetime of the Prophet, became later the root cause of different sciences, such as the Kalam (dogmatico-scholastic), and tasawwuf (mystico-spiritualistic). The religious polemics with non-Muslims, and even among Muslims themselves, introduced foreign elements from Greek and Indian philosophy, etc. Later on, Muslims did not lack their own great philosophers endowed with originality and erudition, like al-Kindi, al-Farabi, Ibn-Sina (Avicenna), Ibn-Rushd (Averroes) and others. The Arabicization of foreign books resulted in the fortunate feature that scores of Greek and Sanskrit works, whose originals have now been lost, became preserved for posterity in their Arabic translations.

## **New Sciences**

454. The part played by the Muslims in the development of the social sciences has been very important. A remarkable characteristic of Muslim science is the rapidity of its development. The Qur'an was the first book ever written in the Arabic language. Scarcely two hundred years later, this language of the illiterate Bedouins developed into one of the richest in the world, later to become not only the richest of all languages of the time, but also an international language for all sorts of sciences. Without stopping to discover the cause of this phenomenon, let us recall another fact. The first Muslims were almost all Arabs, yet with the exception of their language, which was the repository of the Word of God and of His Prophet, they effaced their own personality, under the influence of Islam, in order to receive in Islam all races on the basis of absolute equality. Therefore it is that all races have participated in the progress of the "Islamic" sciences: Arabs, Iranians, Greeks, Turks, Abyssinians, Berbers, Indians, and others, who have embraced Islam. Their religious tolerance was so great, and the patronage of learning so perfect, that Christians, Jews, Magians, Buddhists and others collaborated with a view to enrich the Muslim sciences, not only in the domain of their respective religious literature, but also in other branches of learning. Arabic had spread more widely than any other language of the world, since it was the official language

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of the Muslim State whose territory extended from China to Spain.

## **Law**

455. In its comprehensive character, legal science developed among Muslims very early. They were the first in the world to entertain the thought of an abstract science of law, distinct from the codes of the general laws of the country. The ancients had their laws, more or less developed and even codified, yet a science which should treat the philosophy and sources of law, and the method of legislation, interpretation, application, etc., of the law was wanting, and this never struck the minds of the jurists before Islam. Since the second century of the Hijrah (800 C.E.) there began to be produced Islamic works of this kind, called Usul al-Fiqh.

456. In the days of antiquity, International Law was neither international nor law. It formed a part of politics and depended on the discretion and mercy of statesmen. Moreover, its rules applied only to a limited number of States inhabited by peoples of the same race, who followed the same religion and spoke the same language. The Muslims were the first to accord it a place in the legal system, creating both rights and obligations. This may be observed in the rules of international law that formed part of a special chapter in the codes and treatises of the Muslim law ever since the earliest times. In fact the most ancient treatise which we possess is the

Majmu' of Zaid ibn 'Ali, who died in 120 H/737 C.E. That work also contains the chapter in question. Further, the Muslims developed this branch of study as an independent science, and monographs on the subject, under the generic title of Siyar, were found existing even before the middle of the second century of the Hijrah. In his Tawali at-Ta 'sis, Ibn Hajar relates that the first monograph of the kind hailed from the pen of Abu Hanifah, the contemporary of the above-mentioned Zaid Ibn 'Ali. The characteristic feature of this international law is, that it makes no discrimination among foreigners. It does not concern inter-Muslim relations, but deals solely with the non-Muslim States of the entire world. Islam in principle forms one single unit and one single organic community.

457. Another contribution in the legal domain is the comparative Case Law. The appearance of different schools of the Muslim law necessitated this kind of study, in order to bring into relief the reasons of their differences as well as the effects of each divergence of principle on a given point of law. The books of Dabusi and Ibn Rushd are classics on the subject. Saimuri wrote even a work of comparative jurisprudence or methodology of law (Usul al-Fiqh).

458. The written-constitution of the State is also an innovation of the Muslims. In fact, Prophet Muhammad was its author. When he established a City-State at Madinah, he endowed it with a written constitution, which document has come down to us, thanks to

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Ibn Hisham and Abu 'Uбайд, and its contents could be divided into 52 clauses. It mentions in precise terms the rights and obligations of the head of the State, of constituent units, and of subjects respectively, in matters of administration, legislation, justice, defence, etc. It dates from the year 622 of the Christian era.

459. In the field of law proper, codes have appeared since the beginning of the second century of the Hijrah. They are divided into three principal parts: (i) cult or religious practices, (ii) contractual relations of all kinds, and (iii) penalties. In keeping with its comprehensive view of life, there was no differentiation in Islam between the mosque and the citadel. The doctrine of the State or constitutional law formed a part of the cult, since the leader of the State was the same as the leader of the service of worship. The revenues and finances also formed part of the cult, since the Prophet had declared them to be one of the four fundamentals of Islam, side by side with worship, fasting, and pilgrimage. International law formed part of the penalties, war being placed on the same level as action against marauding brigands, pirates and other violators of law or treaty.

460. It is due to this comprehensive view of law among Muslims, that we have discussed the question at length.

## **History and Sociology**

461. The share of Muslims in these is important from two points of view, one being assurance in the matter of authenticity and the other the collection and preservation of the most varied details. Born in the full light of history, Islam did not require legends and hearsay. With regard to data concerning other peoples, each narration was accorded the value it merited. But the current history of Islam required a fully reliable measure to maintain such an integrity through the ages. Attestation by witnesses was once an exclusive feature of judicial tribunals. The Muslims applied it to history; one required evidence for each reported narration. If, in the first generation after the event, it sufficed to have one trustworthy witness of the event, in the second generation it was necessary to cite two successive sources: "I have heard A, telling me that he had heard B, who had lived at the time of the event, giving the details". And in the third generation, three sources were required, and so on and so forth. These exhaustive references assured the truthfulness of the chain of the successive sources, for one could refer to biographical dictionaries which indicated not only the character of individual personages, but also the names of their teachers as well as of their principal pupils. This kind of evidence is available not merely in connection with the life of the Prophet, but even for all branches of knowledge transmitted from one generation to an-

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other, sometimes even in the domain of anecdotes meant simply for amusement and pastime.

462. Biographical dictionaries are a characteristic feature of Muslim historical literature. The dictionaries were compiled according to professions, towns or regions, centuries or epochs, etc. Equally great importance was given to genealogical tables, particularly amongst the Arabs; and the relationship of hundreds of thousands of persons of some importance, thus learnt, facilitates the task of the researcher who should desire to penetrate the underlying causes of events.

463. As to history proper, the characteristic trait of the chronicles is their universalism. If the pre-Islamic peoples produced national histories, then Muslims seemed to be the first to write these world histories, Ibn Ishaq (d. 769) for instance, who is one of the earliest historians of Islam, not only begins his voluminous annals with an account of the creation of the universe and the history of Adam, but he also speaks of other races that he knew, of his time – a task which was pursued with ever-increasing passion by his successors at-Tabari, al-Mas'udi, Miskawaih, Saa'id al Andalusī, Rashiduddin Khan and others. It is interesting to observe that these historians, (to begin with at-Tabari) commenced their work with a discussion on the notion of time. Ibn Khaldun dove deeper into these socio-

logical and philosophical discussions, in his celebrated *Prolegomena to Universal History*.

464. Already in the first century of the Hijrah, two branches of history began to develop independently, and were later combined with one composite whole. One was Islamic history, beginning with the life of the Prophet and continuing through the time of the caliphs, and the other non-Muslim history, whether concerning pre-Islamic Arabia or foreign countries such as Iran, Byzantium, etc. A very clear instance is that of the history of Rashiduddin Khan, the major portion of which still remains to be printed. This was simultaneously prepared both in Arabic and Persian versions, and speaks with equal familiarity of the prophets, caliphs, and popes as well as the kings of Rome, China, India, Mongolia, etc.

### **Geography and Topography**

465. Pilgrimage as well as commerce in the vast Muslim empire needed communication. Baladhuri and Ibn al-Jauzi report: "Every time the post departed for some destination or other (ranging from Turkestan to Egypt, and this happened almost daily) the Caliph 'Umar used to have it announced in the metropolis so that private letters could also be despatched in time through the official courier." The Directors of the Post prepared route-guides, whose publication was always accompanied by more or less detailed historico-economic description of each place, place-names being

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often arranged alphabetically. This literary geography led to other scientific studies. The geography of Ptolemy was translated into Arabic, and so were the Sanskrit works of Indian authors. Tales of travels and voyages increased daily the knowledge of the common man. The very diversity of the data counteracted all possibility of Chauvinism and one was obliged to put everything to practical test and trial. The dialogue of Abu-Hanifah (d. 767) reported by al-Muwaffaq, (I, 161) is well known: A Mu'tazilite asked him where the centre of the earth was, and he replied: "In the very place where thou art sitting!" This reply can be given only if one meant to convey that the earth was spherical. Even the earliest world maps, prepared by Muslims, represent the earth in circular shape. Ibn Hauqual's (cir. 975) cartography, for instance, presents no difficulty at all in recognizing the Mediterranean or the Near-Eastern countries. The map of al-Idrisi, prepared for King Roger of Sicily, (1101-54), astonishes us by its great precision and exactitude; it marks even the sources of the Nile. One has to remember that the Arabo-Muslim maps point upwards to the South, the North downwards. The maritime voyages necessitated the tables of Latitude and Longitude as well as the use of the astrolabe and other nautical instruments. Thousands of Muslim coins, discovered in the excavations of Scandinavia, Finland, Russia, Kazan, etc., show conclusively the commercial activity of Muslim caravan-leaders during the Middle Ages. Ibn Majid, who served as pilot to Vasco da Gama

as far as India, already speaks of the compass as a familiar thing. Muslim mariners astonished us with their skill and daring in their voyage from Basrah (Iraq) to China. The words arsenal, admiral, cable, monsoon, douane, tariff, which are all of Arabic origin, are substantial proof of the Muslim influence on modern Western culture.

### **Astronomy**

466. The discovery and study of a number of stars is acknowledged to be a valuable and unforgettable contribution of the Muslims. A very large number of stars are still known in Western languages by their Arabic names, and it is Ibn-Rushd (Averroes) who recognized spots on the surface of the sun. The calendar reform by 'Umar al-Khayyam outdistances by far the Gregorian one. The pre-Islamic Bedouin Arabs had already developed very precise astronomical observations, not only for their nocturnal travel in the desert, but also for meteorology, rain, etc. A number of books called Kitab al-Anwa, gives us sufficient proof of the extent of Arabic knowledge. Later, Sanskrit, Greek and other works were translated into Arabic. The confrontation of their divergent data required new experiments and patient observation. Observatories surfaced everywhere. Under the Caliph al-Ma'mun, the circumference of the earth was measured, the exactness of these results was astonishing. Works were compiled very early dealing with the ebb and flow of

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the tide, dawn, twilight, rainbows, halos, and above all the sun and the moon and their movements, since they are immediately related with the question of the hours of prayer and fasting.

### **Natural Science**

467. The characteristic feature of this aspect of Islamic science is the emphasis laid on experiment and observation without prejudice. The Arabian method was quite unique and wonderful. The authors began their study of the sciences by the preparation of categorized dictionaries of technical terms, which were found in their own language. With extraordinary patience, they painstakingly scrutinized all books of prose and poetry, in order to sorting out terms -with useful citations – in each branch separately, such as anatomy, zoology, botony, astronomy, mineralogy, etc. Each successive generation revised the works of its predecessors so as to add something new thereto. These simple lists of words, with some literary or anecdotic observations, proved of immense value when the work of translation began. Rare were the cases in which one required to Arabicize, or conserve a foreign word in Arabicized form.

468. Words used in Botany are quite characteristic. Except for the names of certain plants which did not grow in the Muslim empire, there is not a single technical term of foreign origin therein; one found words for every term in Arabic. The Kitab an-Nabat, Ency-

clopaedia Botanica of ad-Dinawari (d. 895) in six thick volumes was compiled even before the first translation into Arabic of the works on the subject in Greek. In the words of Silverberg: After a thousand years of study, Greek botany resumed with the works of Dioscorides and Theophrastus, but the very first Muslim work, of ad-Dinawari, on the subject far surpasses them in erudition and extensiveness.(1) Ad-Dinawari describes not only the exterior of each plant, but also their alimentary, medicinal and other properties. He classified them, spoke of their habitat, among other details.

### **Medical Science**

469. Medicine also made extraordinary progress under the Muslims, in the branches of anatomy, pharmacology, organization of hospitals, and training of doctors, who were subjected to an examination before being authorized to start practice. Having common frontiers with Byzantium, India, China, etc., Muslim medical arts and science became a synthesis of the world medical knowledge. And if the old lore was subjected to trial and test, new original contributions were also made. The works of Razi (Rhazes), Ibn-Sina (Avicenna) Abu'l-Qasim (Abucasis) and others remained until recent times the basis of all medical study even in the West. We know now that the fact of the circulation of blood was also known to them, thanks to the writings of Ibn an-Nafis.



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## Optics

470. This science owes a particular debt to the Muslims. We possess the book of rays by al-Kindi (of the 9th century), which was already far in advance of the Greek lore of the incendiary mirrors. Ibn al-Haitham (Alhazen, 965), who followed him, has rightly merited a lasting celebrity. Al-Kindi, al-Farabi, Ibn-Sina, al-Birun and others who were representatives of Muslim science, yield their place to none in the world history of science.

## Mineralogy, Mechanics, etc.

471. This attracted the attention of the learned, both from the medical point of view and for the purpose of distinguishing precious stones, so much sought after by kings and other wealthy people. The works of al-Biruni are still functional in this field.

472. Ibn-Firnas (d.888) had invented an apparatus, with which he flew a long distance. He died in an accident, and left no successor to pursue and perfect his work. Others invented mechanical instruments for floating sunken ships, or pulling out trees without difficulty that are of an enormous dimension.

473. For the underwater lore, numerous treatises were written on pearl-fishery and the treatment of their shells.

## Zoology

474. The observation of the life of the wild animals and birds had always fascinated the Bedouins of Arabia. Al-Jahiz (d. 868) has left a huge work for popularizing the subject while referring to evolution, which theme was later developed by Miskawaih, al-Qazwini, ad-Damiri, and others, not to speak of numerous works on falconery and hunting by means of domesticated and trained beasts and birds of prey.

## Chemistry and Physics

475. The Qur'an has repeatedly urged Muslims to meditate over the creation of the universe, and to study how the heavens and earth have been made subservient to man. Therefore there has never been a conflict between faith and reason in Islam. Thus it is that the Muslims began very early an ever-progressive and serious study of chemistry and physics. Scientific works are attributed to Khalid ibn Yazid (d. 704) and to the great jurist Ja'far as Sadiq (d. 765); and their pupil Jabir ibn Hayyan (cir. 776) has justly remained celebrated throughout the ages. The characteristic feature of their works has been objective experimentation, instead of simple speculation; and it was through observation that they accumulated facts. Under their influence, ancient alchemy was transformed into an exact science, based on facts and practical demonstration. Already Jabir knew the chemical operations of calcination and reduction

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and he also developed the methods of evaporation, sublimation, crystallization, etc. It is evident that in such paths of human knowledge, patient work for generations and centuries was required. The existence of Latin translations of the works of Jabir and others (for a long time were used as textbooks in Europe) suffices to show how greatly modern science is indebted to the works of the Muslim savants, and how fast it developed, thanks to the applications of the Arabo-Muslim method of experimentation rather than the Greek method of speculation.

### **Mathematics**

476. Mathematical science had left ineffaceable traces of the Muslim share in its development. The terms algebra, zero, cipher, etc., are of Arabic origin. The names of al-Khwarizmi, 'Umar al-Khayyam, al-Biruni and others shall remain as famous as those of Euclid and the Indian author of Siddhanta, etc. Trigonometry was unknown to the Greeks – the credit for its discovery undoubtedly goes to Muslim mathematicians.

### **Summary**

477. Muslims continued their work in the service of science until great misfortunes afflicted their principal intellectual centres, Baghdad in the East, and Cordova-Granada in the West. These were occupied by barbarians, to the great misfortune of science, at

a time when the printing press had not yet come into vogue. The burning of libraries with their hundreds of thousands of MSS led to untold and irreparable loss. And the wholesale massacres did not spare the learned. What had been constructed over the course of centuries was destroyed within days. Once a civilization declines, owing to such calamities, it takes several centuries as well as numerous resources, including the facilities to study the achievements of others – who should have taken the relay after the fall of the previous standard-bearers of civilization – before one can make up the distance. Moreover noble characters and great minds cannot be had at will – they are the gift and grace of the Almighty on a people. That men of noble character are held in check, and not invested with the direction of their countrymen, which is assumed by incompetent and unscrupulous persons, is another tragedy which one has often to deplore.

### **Arts**

478. As in the case of the sciences, the Qur'an took the initiative in the development of art among Muslims. The liturgical recitation of the Holy Qur'an created a new branch of music (cf infra 485). The conservation of its text necessitated calligraphy and book-binding. The construction of mosques developed architecture and decorative art. To these were added later the secular needs of the wealthy. In its care for an equilibrium between body and the soul,

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Islam taught moderation in all things, led the natural talents in the right direction, and tried to develop in man a harmonious whole.

479. We read, in the Sahih of Muslim, and the Musnad of Ibn Hanbal, an interesting saying of the Prophet: "God is beautiful and likes beauty." Another of his sayings is: "Beauty is prescribed in everything; even if you kill somebody, kill him in a nice manner." God has spoken in the Qur'an: "We have beautified the lower sky with lamps" (67:5), or "Lo! We have placed all that is on the earth as an ornamental thing that We may try men: which of them is best in conduct." (18:7) It goes so far as to ordain: "Put on your dress of adornment on every occasion of prostration (service of prayer)." (7:31)

480. In the life of the Prophet, we come across the following instructive incident: One day he saw the interior of a grave which was not fully levelled. He ordered the defect to be mended, adding that it would do neither good nor harm to the dead, but it was more pleasant to the eye of the living, and whenever one does something, God likes that one does it in a perfect manner. (cf. Ibn Sa'd, VIII, 156)

481. The taste for fine art is innate in man. As in the case of all other natural gifts, Islam seeks to develop the artistic talents with the spirit of moderation. It may be recalled that excess even of self-mortification and of spiritual practices is forbidden in Islam.

482. The first minbar (pulpit) in the mosque, which was prepared for the Prophet, was decorated with two balls, like pomegranates, and the two little grandchildren of the Prophet enjoyed playing with them. This was the beginning of wood-carving. Later on, copies of the Qur'an were illuminated in colour, and the greatest care was taken in their binding. In short, Islam never forbade artistic progress. The only restriction is the one against the representation of animal (including human) figures. The prohibition does not seem to be absolute, and we shall revert to it, yet the Prophet has placed a restraint on this activity. The reasons for this are metaphysical as well as psychological, biological and social. In the creation of the different kingdoms, animal life is the highest manifestation, vegetables and minerals succeed it in a lower order. Therefore in his anxiety to pay his profound respect to the Creator, man reserves for God the privilege of the supreme creation, and contents himself with the representation of inferior objects. The psychologists point out that, seeing the privileged position which the animal kingdom occupies in creation (with the faculty of movement and, for man in particular, the faculty of invention), animal representation gives man the double temptation to which he cannot always resist: the temptation to believe that he "creates," whereas he merely manufactures, (and as a proof the famous story of a Greek sculptor who had become amorous of his own sculpture), and the temptation to attribute to the representation the soul and the

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ideal virtues of an accessible Divinity (cf. the history of human antiquity of idolatry, and the modern taste for the cult of heroes, champions and stars). The biological aspect is that an unutilized talent reinforces those in constant use. Thus, a blind man possesses a memory and a sensibility which are far superior to those of ordinary men. By abstaining from animal representations in painting, engraving, sculpture, etc., the innate talent of the artist seeks other outlets and manifests itself with greater vigour in other domains of art, (cf. the pruning down of the superfluous branches of a tree in order to increase its fruits). As regards the social aspect, the horror of Chauvinism, which degenerates into idolatry, and a restraint on animal representation would lead to restraint on idolatry. There are however several exceptions: such as toys of children, decoration of cushions and carpets – both these were expressly tolerated by the Prophet – scientific needs (for teaching anatomy, anthropology, etc.), security needs (of the police, etc., for identification, for search of the absconding criminal), and others of like import, cannot be banned.

483. History has shown that this check on “figurative” art among Muslims has never curbed art in general; on the contrary an astonishing development was achieved in the non-figurative spheres. The Qur’an itself (24:36) recommended grandeur in the construction of mosques. The Prophet’s Mosque at Madinah, the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem, the Sulaimaniyeh Mosque in Istanbul, the

Taj- Mahal in Agra (India), the Alhambra Palace at Granada, and other monuments are in no way inferior to the masterpieces of other civilizations, either in architecture or in artistic decoration.

484. Calligraphy as an art is a Muslim speciality. It makes writing a piece of art, in place of pictures; it is employed in painting or mural sculpture, to decorate fine cloth, and other material, excellent specimen of this art, with their powerful way of execution, grace and beauty, are things to see, and impossible to describe.

485. Another art which is peculiar to the Muslims is the recitation of the Qur’an. Not accompanied by instruments of music, and not being even in verse, the Qur’an has been an object of great attention for recitation purposes, since the time of the Prophet. The Arabic language lends to its prose a sweetness and melody hardly to be surpassed by the rhymed verses of other languages. Those who have listened to the master singer, or Qari, reciting the Qur’an or pronouncing several times a day the calls to the prayer, know that these specialities of the Muslims have unequalled charms of their own.

486. Even mundane music and song, under the patronage of kings and other wealthy people, have had their development among Muslims. Theoreticians like al-Farabi, the authors of the *Rasa’il Ikhwan as-Safa*, Avicenna and others have not only left monumental works on the subject, but have even made appreciable corrections

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in Greek and Indian music. They have employed signs to denote music, and have described different musical instruments. The choice of appropriate melody for different poems and selection of instrument according to the requirements of the occasion – of joy and of sadness, in the presence of sick men, etc. – have been objects of profound study.

487. As for poetry, the Prophet recognizes: “There are verses of poems which are full of wisdom, and there are discourses of orators which produce a magical effect.” The Qur’an has discouraged immoral poetry. Following this direction, the Prophet surrounded himself by the best poets of the epoch, and showed them the road to follow and the limits to observe, thus distinguishing between the good and the bad use of this great natural talent. The poetic works of Muslims are found in all languages and relate to all times and it would be impossible to describe them here even in the briefest manner. An Arab, even a Bedouin, finds himself always “at home” in his poetry, as if borne out by synonymous terms: Bait means both a tent and a verse of two hemistiches. Misra means not only the flap of a tent, but also a hemistich. Sabab is rope of the tent as well as the prosodical foot. Watad: means a tent peg as well as the syllables of the prosodical foot. Further the names given to the different metres of poems are synonymous with different paces – fast, slow, etc. – of the camel. These are but a few among great many peculiarities of the language.

488. In short in the realm of art, Muslims have made worthy contributions, avoiding its harmful features, developing its aesthetic aspects, and inventing things quite new to it. In this sphere also, their share in development has been considerable. In passing, remarks may be made on two points:

(1) Had the Muslims no culture of theirs – the all-pervading Islamic culture with which the Prophet had inculcated them intensely – they would certainly have been absorbed by the culture of those whom these Muslims had so easily and so swiftly subjugated.

(2) Among the subjects of the extremely extensive Islamic State, there were peoples of all religions: Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians, Sabians, Brahmans, Buddhists among others, each with its own cultural tradition, even if these did not collaborate with each other, all of them did collaborate with the Muslims, who were their political masters, and each explained its own point of view to the Muslims who were thus obliged not to imitate any of them – since there was even contradictions in the different scientific strains – but to test them all and create a sort of synthesis, to the benefit of science and humanity.

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**Notes:**

1. The actual words are: “Anyhow it is astonishing enough that the entire botanical literature of antiquity furnishes us only two parallels to our book (of Dinawari). How was it that the Muslim people could, during so early a period of its literary life, attain the level of the people of such a genius as the Hellenic one, and even surpassed it in this respect.” (Zeitschrift fuer Assyriologie, Strassburg vols. 24-25, 1910-1911, see Vol. XXV, 44).

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