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**Manjah al-Sudur al-Aminah fi ma  
Yata'allaqu bi hadith al-Tinah -  
Sayyid Hashmat 'Ali**

**Translated by  
Syed 'Ali Asdaq Naqvi**

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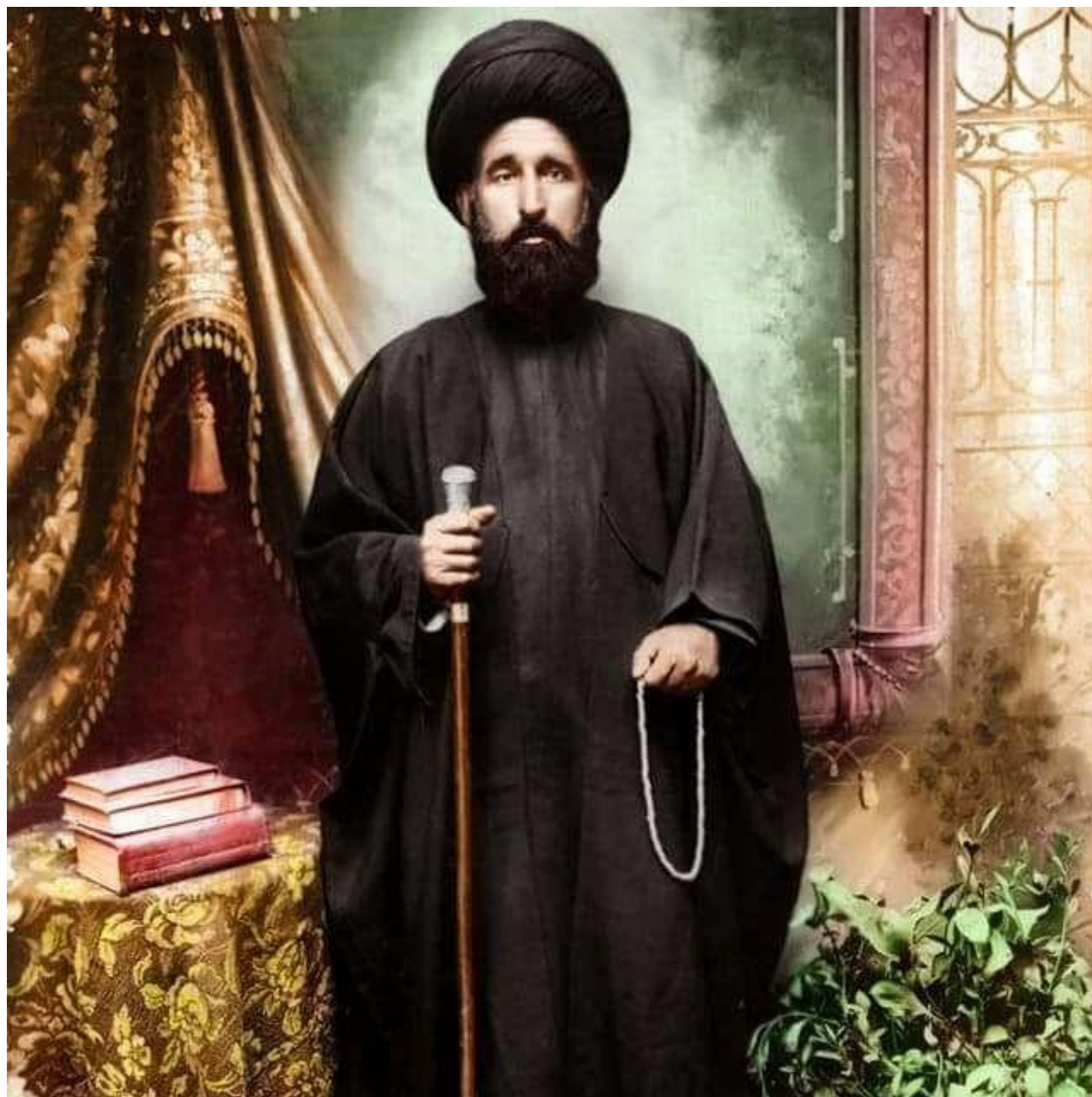
Manjah al–Sudur al–Aminah fi ma Yata’allaqu bi hadith al–Tinah An explanation of the hadith of “The Clay” Author: Allamah Sayyid Hashmat ‘Ali (d. 1354 AH / 1935 AD) Translation and Footnotes: Syed ‘Ali Asdaq Naqvi

# Manjah al–Sudur al–Aminah fi ma Yata’allaqu bi hadith al–Tinah

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**Author: Allamah Sayyid Hashmat ‘Ali (d. 1354 AH / 1935 AD)**

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## About The Author

### Life

Allamah Sayyid Hashmat 'Ali Shirazi of Khairullahpur was born in the year 1858 (1275 AH). His father's name was Haji Sayyid Jama'at 'Ali. His family's elder was Sayyid Sa'id Nawruz Shirazi (buried in Uchi Rasulpur Sayyidan). Sayyid Saeed moved to India to militarily aid the Shah of Iran, Shah Tahmasp, in helping the Mughal Emperor Humayun. In return, Humayun allotted five villages of agricultural land near Sialkot of which Alipur Sayyidan and Khairullahpur Sayyidan are most famous. Sayyid Hashmat's family tree reaches Muhammad Mamun Dibaj (RA), the son of Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) after a few generations.

## **Education**

Sayyid Hashmat ‘Ali gained his initial education in the Arabic and Persian languages in the local seminary of Molvi ‘Abd al-Rashid Hanafi. Later, he completed his religious education in the seminary of Ayatollah Abu al-Qasim Lahori in Mohalla Shi’an, Lahore. After completing his Dars-i-Ni‘ami in The Oriental College of Lahore, he went to the city of Lucknow to complete his religious education. In order to further his knowledge and understanding of the different Islamic schools of thought, he enrolled in the seminary of Deoband in India.

The thirst for knowledge took him to Iraq, Iran and Turkey, where he acquired knowledge from the great contemporary Shiite scholars. One of them was the great scholar of Samarra, Sayyid Muhammad Hasan Shirazi. In Najaf and Karbala, he benefited from great scholars such as Sayyid Muhammad Qazwini (d. 1306 AH), Shaykh Muhammad Hasan Mamaqani (d. 1323 AH), Sayyid Muhammad Ka‘im Akhund, author of al-Kifayah (d. 1329 AH) and Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Shahrastani. In total, he spent 13 years in the holy lands of Iraq and Iran, and 1 year in Constantinople in Turkey. He returned back to his homeland having gained the license for ijtiḥad and the rank of Marja‘iyya. He also helped in the establishment of the famous Aligarh University in Aligarh, India.

## **Academic Stature**

Allamah Hashmat ‘Ali was a mujtahid and an expert in the science of Islamic jurisprudence, principles of jurisprudence, and the rational sciences. Furthermore, the Sayyid was well acquainted with the study of philosophy.

‘Abd al-Majid Salik mentions in the biography of Allamah Iqbal called "Tazkirah-i-Iqbal" that after Allamah Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Alī Harawi, Allamah Iqbal (the great Muslim poet/philosopher) benefitted in theological and philosophical issues (the issue of time and space and the issue of Imamate etc.) from Allamah Hashmat ‘Ali and he mentions that he was well-versed in philosophy and had written a book on the concepts of “time and space”.

Allamah Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Najafi in the preface of his book Ahsan al-Fawa'id Fi Sharh al-‘Aqa'id, has mentioned the names of 100 high ranking scholars of the Shi’a Imamiyyah and writes about Sayyid Hashmat ‘Ali that "he was a religious scholar of high stature and a preserver of the divine law. The list of his religious services in Punjab is immense. He wrote multiple works on Islamic scholastic theology of which the treatise Mi'rajīyya, on proving the bodily Ascension of the Prophet and Ghayat al-Maram, on the necessity of the Imam are especially worth mentioning.

## **Students**

One of Allamah Hashmat ‘Ali Khairullahpuri's students who are mentioned in the books is Molvi Sayyid ‘Ali Shah. Other people who have benefited from Sayyid Hashmat in certain matters include Allamah

Iqbal.

## **Demise**

He passed away between the nights of the 1st and 2nd of January in 1935 (25 Ramadan 1354 AH) and is buried in the Hussainiya in Khairullahpur.

## **Works**

Most of the works he authored were not preserved. However, four treatises of his on theological and philosophical issues have been published:

Mi'rajiyya, on proving the bodily ascension of the Prophet (Urdu).

Ghayat al-Maram, on the necessity of the Imam (Urdu).

Manjah al-Sudur al-Aminah (Farsi), regarding the hadith of the clay.

'Arshiyya, on the disproving reincarnation.

## **The Translator**

Syed Ali Asdaq Naqvi is a student of various Islamic disciplines and has authored articles, book and booklets in Urdu and English on various topics including the science of hadith, 'ilm al-rijal, philosophy, history, comparative religion etc. Some of his articles have featured in Pakistani magazines and he has also recently co-authored a research paper in the English language. He is fluent in English, Urdu, Arabic, Persian, Hindi etc., and currently resides in Calgary, Canada where he is studying at the University of Calgary.

## **About This Treatise**

This treatise by Sayyid Hashmat 'Ali is in the Persian language and is one of the many philosophical works he authored. It highlights his mastery on the rational as well as revealed sciences. The discussion presented in this short epistle is of a deep philosophical nature and requires the reader to have some background in the sciences of kalam and Islamic philosophy in order to fully comprehend the depth of the subject matter.

The author of the treatise has answered a query about the hadith of Al-Tinah (i.e., The Clay) which has been transmitted and transcribed in certain Shiite hadith literature. He discusses the issue of the Necessary Existence i.e., God and how/what has emanated from Him is the most perfect thing that could manifest from His being. He also goes on to discuss the nature of good and evil and the issue of free will and determinism, essence and existence etc. All of these are deep philosophical issues that

have been discussed by philosophers for millennia. As a reference guide, in numerous places in this treatise, Allamah Sayyid Hashmat 'Ali has quoted from the works of the famous Islamic philosopher, Mulla Sadra.

Since the treatise is over a century old with no publication date mentioned and certain words being illegible, I have tried my best to render the work into English and have included footnotes and references where needed.

Syed Ali Asdaq Naqvi

**(Sayyid Khadim 'Ali Wazirabadi posed a question to Sayyid Hashmat 'Ali about the hadith of clay. The following response is in accordance with that question)**

## Introduction

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

***In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful***

الحمد لله الذي اخرج من مكنونات عنايته ما ادرج في القلم و ابرز الى قضاء الوجود ما اخفى في العدم و فتق ما رتق و اظهر ما كتم و علم بالقلم اللوح المحفوظ ما لم يكن يعلم. وفتح بالهباء الموسوم بالهيولى والعنقاء صورة العالم وجعلها مظهرا لإسمه الأعظم. والصلاة على الكلمات التامات والإتيات الفاضلات محمد وآله أولي الفضائل والحكم ذوي المعالي والكرم.

All praise belongs to the Almighty who took out from the concealed care what He wrote with the pen and made it manifest in the space of existence what He had hidden in non-existence. And He made apparent what He concealed and taught with the preserved tablet what was not known. He opened the image of the world with the dust, called hyle (haywala), and made it a manifestation of His greatest name.

May blessings be upon the complete and virtuous words, Muhammad (saw) and his progeny (as). The Holy Prophet and his progeny are those of virtue and wisdom and possessors of elevation and magnanimity.<sup>[1](#)</sup>

To proceed after the praise of God and salutations upon the Prophet and his family, I present the lowly person<sup>[2](#)</sup>, Sayyid Hashmat 'Ali son of al-Hajj Sayyid Jama'at 'Ali Khairullahpuri, who is one of the religious and spiritual friends and is well-versed in the current sciences of mathematics and contemporary philosophy. Sometimes, this person of little (worldly) goods is inquired about certain Quranic verses and ahadith that might be difficult to understand at first glance and whose content

opposes the true beliefs of the Imamiyyah school of thought as well as the intellect.

And this lowly person, according to his capacity and knowledge, gives an answer that is satisfactory. One day, in the populous city of Lahore, during a discussion and dialogue, the aforementioned Sayyid (Khadim ‘Ali Wazirabadi) inquired about the hadith of the clay (al-<sup>4</sup>inah). Since the issue of the clay is one of depth and subtlety, and the hadith of the clay is of those whose content is difficult to understand, it caused many to slip and misunderstand. The commentators of al-Kafi by al-Kulayni were unable to reply to the objection of the opponents satisfactorily and their response drifted away from the core issue.

This humble person was ill with the symptoms of fever and a weak and frail body, which made it difficult to give a prompt reply and I halted his request till I would be healthy and have the chance (to respond). Since I considered the reply to that Sayyid<sup>3</sup>, of repute and good lineage, necessary and required, I decided to make manifest that which was hidden and bring to light what was concealed and take out what was stored and reveal the meanings of the hadith of the clay which would lead to sufficient satisfaction. In addition to solving the meanings of the hadith, the people of virtue and excellence will gain benefits from this short treatise and should remember this lowly person in their prayers. My success is through none except Allah.

## The Question

Shaykh Ya’qub al-Kulayni, via his chain From ‘Ali b. Husayn (peace be upon them both) narrates:

عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ حَمَّادِ بْنِ عِيسَى عَنْ رَبِيعِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَنْ رَجُلٍ عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ الْحُسَيْنِ (عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَام) قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ خَلَقَ النَّبِيِّينَ مِنْ طِينَةِ عَلِيِّينَ قُلُوبَهُمْ وَأَبْدَانَهُمْ وَخَلَقَ قُلُوبَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ تِلْكَ الطِّينَةِ وَجَعَلَ خَلْقَ أَبْدَانِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ دُونِ ذَلِكَ وَخَلَقَ الْكَافِرَ مِنْ طِينَةِ سَجِّينَ قُلُوبَهُمْ وَأَبْدَانَهُمْ فَخَلَطَ بَيْنَ الطِّينَتَيْنِ فَمِنْ هَذَا يُلِدُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْكَافِرَ وَيُلِدُ الْكَافِرُ الْمُؤْمِنَ وَمِنْ هَاهُنَا يُصِيبُ الْمُؤْمِنُ السَّيِّئَةَ وَمِنْ هَاهُنَا يُصِيبُ الْكَافِرُ الْحَسَنَةَ فَقُلُوبُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ تَحْنُ إِلَى مَا خُلِقُوا مِنْهُ وَقُلُوبُ الْكَافِرِينَ تَحْنُ إِلَى مَا خُلِقُوا مِنْهُ.

The Imam (as) said, “Allah, the exalted, created the prophets, their hearts and bodies, from the clay of the ‘illiyyun. And He created the hearts of the believers from that very clay. And He made the bodies of the believers from below that. And He created the disbelievers, their hearts and bodies, from the clay of sijjin. And He mixed both the clays. So, from this, the believer is born from the disbeliever and the disbeliever is born from the believer. And this is why the believer commits sin and this is why the disbeliever does good deeds. So, the hearts of the believers yearn for what they were created from and the hearts of the disbelievers yearn for what they were created from.”<sup>4</sup>

‘Illiyun means paradise as Allah says in the Qur’an:

إِنَّ كِتَابَ الْأَبْرَارِ لَفِي عَلَيَيْنَ

### ***“Verily, the book of the righteous is in the ‘illiyun” (83: 18)***

meaning that the scrolls of deeds of the righteous are in the ‘illiyun in the seventh heaven. And sijjin means hellfire. Thus, they say that sijjin is a rock in the seventh (layer of) the Earth. And Ibn ‘Abbas asked Ka’b al-Ahbar to inform him of the saying of Allah, the exalted, ***“verily the book of the wicked is in sijjin” (83:7)***. Ka’b replied, “Sijjin is the lowest layer of Earth, and this is the place of the army of Satan.”<sup>[5](#)</sup>

What may be understood from the apparent meaning of this hadith is that the believers are forced and compelled to perform good deeds and the disbelievers are forced and compelled to perform evil deeds because the performance of good deeds by the by the Prophets and believers is an outcome of their pure clay whereas the performance of evil deeds by the disbelievers is due to their impure clay. So, it is known that humans do not have free will in their actions, rather, they are compelled and forced.

This premise goes against the true belief of the Imamiyyah school of thought.

## **The Reply**

With the praise of Allah, the exalted, and His good guidance, we shall answer the question and solve this issue. It should not remain concealed or hidden that the answer to this question depends on some preliminary points and two focal matters.

The First matter: That which emanates from the “Necessary Existence” being good and that nothing can be more virtuous than it.

The Second matter: Regarding the meaning of good and evil and that evil is the non-existence of good, and that a non-existent entity is not a creation of God.<sup>[6](#)</sup>

## **The First Matter**

We say that the Necessary Being<sup>[7](#)</sup> is free of all defects and His necessary existence is identical to His essence. He is the superior existence and the source of all grace. So, it is impossible for there to be an existence better or more virtuous than the Necessary Existence. All the existent entities are dependent upon the Necessary Existence, and He is knowledgeable of all existent beings. It is known that the Necessary Being is absolute good the information of that necessary existence is required for it, so He must be good. This is because the Necessary Being, may He be exalted, is at the peak of nobility and glory. So, what emanates from Him must be noble in a way that nothing could be nobler than it.<sup>[8](#)</sup> The exposition of this matter is requires a discussion.

## **The First Subject**

The descending chains, meaning the levels of beginning in the descending chains, are things that are of

the most virtuous manner that is possible for them. Everything falls into one of these categories from the aspect that it emanated from the Creator, such that no emanation more virtuous in its category and type is possible. Either the emanation of something from the aspect that the restriction of each type of that being is necessary, or the non-emanation of the type, due to the principle of there being something more virtuous, which is taken from the philosopher, Aristotle. The principle of there being something more virtuous states that the generous one of truth and absolute grace must not emanate something lower and more despicable and forsake the more virtuous thing that was possible (in its place). Rather, the necessity of His grace and generosity is that the most virtuous be emanated. The proof for this principle is mentioned in the conception of Shaykh al-Ishraq.<sup>9</sup> Do you not see how the Necessary Existence, may His prestige be glorified, first created the active intellects and essences which are elevated from material substances and made of pure strength and aptitude. Since they are the most virtuous of creations from the essences, superior and more luminous than these immaterial entities and beings is the One who is prior to these and more proximate to the light of all lights (God), may His majesty be glorified. Then after that come the rest of the abstract beings in order. The last of them is the one that the philosophers of Persia name as “the psyche”. In the holy law of the Prophet (saw), it is called the holy spirit in the words of Allah, the exalted:

...وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ...

***...And we assisted him with the holy spirit... (2:87 & 2:253)***

***And he is the teacher of immense strength (53:5).***

And the wise one of the Arabs and non-Arabs (i.e., the Prophet), said about the holy spirit:

إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَلَكًا لَهُ سَبْعُونَ أَلْفَ وَجْهِ فِي كُلِّ وَجْهِ سَبْعُونَ أَلْفَ لِسَانٍ يُسَبِّحُ اللَّهَ بِجَمِيعِهَا

God has an angel which has 70,000 faces and every face has 70,000 tongues. He praises God with all of these tongues. <sup>10</sup>

What is meant by 70,000 faces is 70,000 graces and what is meant by 70,000 tongues is 70,000 forms that originate. And what is meant by praise is the testimony of God's oneness. In short, 70,000 graces flow from the holy spirit, and from every grace there originate 70,000 forms according to elemental materials. And all the forms bear witness to God's oneness. Rather, each form is a mirror of God's oneness. Hence, God says in the noble Qur'an:

...وَإِنْ مِّن شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ...

***...And there is not a thing except that it glorifies (God) with His praise... (17:44)***

And the restriction to this amount of flow (70,000) is for instruction and to make the masses comprehend. Otherwise, it is an indication towards being unrestricted. Since the outflow i.e., forms that take place with the permission of their Lord are infinite. After He (God) formed the chain of intellects, He formed the celestial bodies in a manner that they have no defect or deficiency and are without any break in their motion. They are lovers of the holy lights and radiances and obedient to their Creator. They have been granted the best of shapes being circular and the best of motions being orbiting, which is the cause of speech and utterance of the universe. Moreover, the best of the observable qualities i.e., radiance and luminosity, have been given to them. And they are participants with the first forerunners of the proximate angels in having the essences of totality.

After that, He created the existent beings in the composite cosmos with the most excellent quality and best order, because their order is related to the motion of the celestial bodies. The state and system of the celestial bodies are shadows of the system of the divine decree. As it is known that the existent beings did not emanate by chance like the school of the philosopher, Democritus. Moreover, they did not emanate haphazardly as the Asharites<sup>11</sup> believe. Nor did they emanate from an incomplete will as the Mutazilites<sup>12</sup> hold. And not, according to their nature, did they emanate without a will or consciousness as is the school of the impure materialists and atheists. In conclusion, the rational order called the divine providence by the philosophers is the absolute good and perfect source for the existent and rational order. This is because the highest starting point is free of all defects and faults from all aspects. Thus, this present order which is consistent with the rational order must be absolutely good and must have the most complete and perfect attributes that can be. So, it is proven that the existent entities in this chain (of cause and effect) are at the peak of virtue and nobility as such that nothing more virtuous than them could be possible in this chain. This was a short discourse on the first subject concerning the descending chain.

## **The Second Subject**

The ascending chain, meaning that the existent entities found in the ascending chain are at the peak of quality and order. Thus, we say that because the present affairs of this world are related to the motion and states of the celestial bodies; the system of the celestial bodies is a shadow of that system in the ascending chain. Based on this, it is proven by the philosophers that – as we have mentioned – the existent beings did not emanate by chance, as is attributed to the philosopher, Democritus. They did not emanate by haphazardly as the Asharites assert, from an insufficient will like ours as the Mutazilites proclaim or from an unconscious nature as is the view of the impure materialists and atheists.

Rather, it is the rational system, called the divine providence by the philosophers, which is the source of the existent order. And this rational order is absolutely good and sheer perfection because the highest principle is free of all defects and faults. So, this order which is consistent with the rational order must be the most superior possible. Based on this, the source must not be one that is haphazard or coincidental.

Rather, all existent entities are causes that reach the first principle and the unique cause which is the cause of all causes. It is thus found that ***“To Allah return all matters”*** (2:210, 3:109, 8:44, 22:76, 35:4, 57:5).

### The Third Subject

The totality of the cosmos is the most complete “in order” and most perfect in creation. In the books of philosophy, such as the book of Tahsil of Bahmanyar and the book of the Brethren of Purity, it is proven and substantiated that the cosmos is one with the oneness of personality. The view of a group of Godly philosophers and researching Gnostics is the same; that the entire cosmos has natural and personal oneness. In the treatises of the Brethren of Purity, it is proven with a detailed exposition – the mention of which requires elaboration – that the cosmos is one living being. Moreover, the great philosopher, Aristotle also proclaimed that the cosmos is one living being. Hence, we say that since the cosmos is one with all its parts there can be no alternative system more complete or more perfect than this present system. Neither can there be a system imaginable that is more virtuous and better in ranking than this present system. The explanation of this issue is such that either such a system is not part of or included under the nature of oneness or characteristic, or it is included within it. Both of these cases are invalid. Therefore, imagining another system is absolutely invalid.

As for the invalidity of the first case, then it is because of the proof of the non-possibility of existence of just essences and accidental properties that are contrary to the essences and accidental properties of this present cosmos. As for the totality of intellects, selves, the substances of the celestial bodies and common substance, all of them have emanated from their own Doer from one of the aspects of the efficacy such that the doer would necessitate it from that aspect. This is not without that aspect intrinsically, without any capable association or its own capability. Thus, necessarily, there can be nothing other than it. So, everything is present in its own level in the level of existence and it is not possible to imagine another type in these levels. Hence, it is impossible to imagine another category of the types in the level that they are currently present. As for the body in relation to it being a body, then it is not different in its reality and the differences in the types of bodies is due to subsequent external factors.

As for the subtle bodies, then the emanation of something other than these bodies is also not possible. This is because the various forms they have are based on the emanation of those forms from the principles according to certain necessary aspects without the interference of accidental and distinct factors. This means the existence of bodies other than these is impossible. As for accidental properties, then it is because they are subject to essences, based on essences, and with there being an agreement of the subjects and considerations of efficacy and capability there can be no difference in accidental properties. Similar is the case for the aspects of the composite minerals, plants and animals and their types of forms. This is due to the forms being subject to the modes of temperament. And it is proven of nature in the world of composition – so long as the complete conditions for an inferior type are not

present – a type greater than it cannot be included. This is intuitive and has to do with the level of inanimate objects as well as plants and animals. But the nature which appears in the originations of essence and intellect is the most superior of what is in the creation:

وخليفة الله في أرضه كما أن العقل الأول خليفة الله في سمائه

And it is the vicegerent of God on earth just as the first intellect is the vicegerent of God in the sky. [13](#)

Because what is meant by the names (of God) is the totality of the created world and what is meant by the Earth is the entire world of formation. So, when the essences and accidental properties cannot actualize in nature, if we assume another (possible) world which is the same as this world in its essence and contrary to it in its accidental properties, then it would be invalid for it to be contrary in its type.

As for the invalidity of the second case, i.e., another system united in essence to this present system, then this is due to some reasons.

The first reason is that the since the universe with all its parts is one in its nature and type of existence, it cannot be preceded by readiness of matter. And everything that is not preceded by that matter in readiness, its type is based on one being.

The second reason is that since the existence of the universe is not preceded by time, it can emanate from the Creator and Sustainer at one time by way of creativity, and the type of created things is based on one being. Further, it is proven that the gradualness of some of its parts in its own constraints does not negate its emanation from one starting point at once. (Translator's note: the author has translated part of Mulla Sadra's discussion in Sharh al-Hidayah al-Athiriyyah). [14](#)

The third reason is that principle of the possibility of the more noble that is concurrent in us above the cosmos is of a steady decree in the world.

The fourth reason is that the cause of the existence of the universe is the necessary existence by its own self, without any other aspect. And the unity of the cause results in the unity of the effect. [15](#)

The fifth reason is that the knowledge of the Necessary Being regarding the order of goodness – which is identical to His existence – results in the existence of the world, so nothing other than It can be.

The sixth reason is that the prime cause of the existence of the world is the Necessary Existence, and the peak of it must be the most magnanimous and noble of things. Hence, that thing must be at the peak of nobility such that nothing more noble can exist. Moreover, it must be known that the world in totality having multiple and distinct parts, is not objectionable to the emanation of something abundant from the true oneness in one level. What this means is that for the world to be ordained into a single being is based on two aspects. The first being the aspect of singularity and the other being that of multiplicity.

And the difference between these two aspects is like the difference between brevity and detail. Meaning that the difference between the two is based on perception, not in the thing being perceived. Thus, we say that since the world in totality – from the aspect of one singular person – can be seen as being multiple it would be judged as being dependent intrinsically and by the first goal upon the Truth (God), may He be exalted, without any intermediary or stipulation.

Also, since it is observed from the aspect of detailed multiplicity it is judged as having emanated in order or cause and effect such that the most subtle types of the world and the noblest parts of it are closest to the true cause. After that, the prior source would be greater in subtlety and nobility. Based on this reasoning, the ascending chain of causes ends at the farthest point of existence. And the objective of proving a sequence in the contingent beings and the attribution of effects of the other level by its means and intermediation to the higher cause is as the philosophers have mentioned in their own books. We get the same from the narrations of the Imams, peace be upon them all. By itself, the correction of this matter is that the world along with all its parts and facets from the aspect of total multiplicity has emanated from the truth (God) such that the oneness of the true unity has not been tarnished by the emanation in one level of these multiple affairs.

Moreover, their emanation from the true oneness in regard to the oneness in person of the world does not add to the unity of the Truth (God). As for the modality of the emanation of the universe with all its parts in one instant by way of creativity with the existence of some of its parts coming into being gradually with essential or accidental properties and some of its parts coming into being instantly with essential or accidental properties and some being neither this nor that, this requires deep pondering and complete reflection as well as plentiful rationalization. This short discussion does not have the capacity for that, and God is the one Who guides to the correct path.

## **The Second Matter**

The meaning of good and evil and that evil is absolute non-existence and a non-existent matter is not a creation of God.

This is because it is known that whatever emanates from the Necessary Existence must be good. It must be known that the essence of good is existence and the essence of evil is absolute non-existence. This is because it has been researched and examined regarding good and evil and their essences and both things are known (1) that good is essentially existence and (2) evil is essentially non-existence.

This premise is necessary and axiomatic. If someone has an issue or contention with this premise, it is due to not having realized the essence of good and evil. In short, good is equal to absolute existence and evil is equal to absolute non-existence. What this means is that existence being absolutely good is that the good of that thing is something chosen and liked by those who are wise. And (existent) things must yearn for it and existent beings must by nature and will and predisposition seek it. It is also apparent that things are not seeking the meaning of a source of secondary existence and rationality, this

quest is to perceive the emergence of sublimity. The invalidity of this must not remain hidden to the prime human intellects. So, it is proven that the existence of everything to those who are wise is chosen and desired is way of the emergence of that thing in addition to the light of existence to that, things from the direction of the Sustainer (God) who is necessary by Himself.

المنور للماهيات ومخرجها من ظلمات العدم إلى نور الوجود

The illuminator of essences and the one who took them out from the darkness of non-existence to the light of existence.<sup>16</sup> Hence, in reality, returns to the reality. This is the case even when it is mixed with evil which means it is existentially weak. When existence lacks perfection from the perfections of essence or lacks an attribute from the perfect attributes of existence i.e., evil. Hence, evil has no actual existence in the real world. As for the contingent essences and immutable entities in the intellects, they are in their own restrictions and are not described as being good or evil because in regard to themselves in that level they are neither existent nor non-existent. And that which has a completer and more perfect existent has greater goodness than what is below it. Hence, the best of all good things from all aspects and facets which is an existence without non-existence, an action without power, a reality without invalidity, a necessity without contingency, a perfection without defect, a constant without change, and a permanence without renewal is the holy existence of the Necessary Existence.

After that, the existence most proximate to the Necessary Existence is the best of all goods in addition. Similarly, is the affair of the closest to the closest and the farthest to the farthest and the most complete of the most complete to the most defective of the most defective till it reaches farthest level of descent which they call matter. And its matter is the part of existence that it gets, which is a defect in its essence from existence. And its activity is the power of the existence of things. And its completion is its defect, its nobility is its lowliness, its action its acceptance, and its gaining is its vagueness. And this is the source of evils and non-existence and the mine of defects and pains.

In fact, it is a net which traps the heavenly birds i.e., the speaking selves of humans which have elemental cages. Know that existent things remain in their default goodness so long as they do not descend to the world of conflict and clashes and its chain does not end up in the realm of time and space. As when the chain of existence is pulled to the realm of bodies, darkness, constraints of beings and congestions, some existent entities despite being absolutely good in their essence and accidental properties are described as evil by themselves due to their accidental properties. This is because it leads to the non-existence of the essence or of perfection of the essence. Thus, evil is either of these two non-existent things and not existence as existence itself because it is absolute existence.<sup>17</sup> Hence, evil is not an actual creation or necessity of a thing and the unreal evil is a necessity albeit by being an accidental property because it is necessary for actual goodness, and actual goodness is by default essentially existence in origin and nature. And this is a proven and demonstrated matter in itself that the necessities of the essences of the creation are not leaning on the maker. (Translator's note: This part

has been taken from Mulla Sadra's four Asfar<sup>18</sup>).

The inquiry into this matter is that the name of evil is applied according to the common custom to that which is absolutely non-existent like death, poverty, plain ignorance etc. Because they are all sheer non-existence and they are based on two types.

The first type is the non-existence which has no existence due to its own weakness that it may be able to obtain perfections and goodness e.g., the deficiency of contingency from the Necessary Existence and necessary essence. Also like the deficiency of whatever comes after the active intellects from the originated existence preceding it. Also like the deficiency of the selves from the level of the intellects and the deficiency of the bodies from the level of the selves and the deficiency of matter from all the essences. Hence, the good that is opposite to this evil is excluded in existence. Because it comes from its Creator Who is absolute perfection and the true existence without any aspect of contingency. Whatever there is apart from the Necessary Being from the accidental essences is an existence based on the difference of contingencies and the difference of degrees of distance from the spring of existence and source of good and generosity, which means they are not free of an evil defect or darkness. Hence, the source of this evil is the intrinsic contingency.

The second type is the required non-existence of a thing or the non-existence of a thing that can possibly obtain secondary perfections etc. This type of evil cannot be imagined in immaterial things. Thus, created things and those separate from matter (mufariqat) have a more complete existence in their favor, and, therefore, do not have this type of evil at all. Whatever is apart from the immaterial and abstract things which are affairs related to matter, are not free of this type of evil according to the difference they have in contingencies and capacity and according to the difference in their levels in relation to substance. Thus, the source of evil is substance, and the source of substance is contingency. This is since it has emanated from the first principles due to the aspect of contingency in them.

Hence, the source of evil is assuredly contingency, as has been mentioned in their (the philosophers) sayings. Other than that, it can be applied to something that prevents another thing from reaching possible goodness from existence or from the perfection of existence. Just like how cold spoils fruits and hotness makes them rot, and how rain prevents the bleacher from whitening the clothes as well as disapproved morals which prevent the soul from reaching the rational perfection such as stinginess, cowardliness, extravagance, foolishness and absolute ignorance etc. and blameworthy acts such as adultery, theft, gossiping and the likes of them from pains, sadness and griefs and other such things which have the meaning of existence but are followed by them being made non-existent. Hence, we say that the word evil – to the philosophers – applied on the first meaning is a reality and on the second meaning it is metaphorical since evil has no actual essence in reality. Rather, actual evil is essentially non-existence or the absence of the perfection of essence.

The proof for this is that the evil has no actual essence and if evil had been an actual existent thing it would not have either been evil for itself or for something else and the first case is invalid, otherwise it

would not have existed. This is because something cannot necessitate non-existence for itself or lack perfection for itself. How can it necessitate its own non-existence or its own lack of perfection despite everything seeking perfections, not necessitating their non-existence? The second case is also invalid, because for an existential affair to be evil for something else it would devoid the existence of other things or some of its perfections.

If it does not devoid the other thing or its perfection, it is not evil. This is self-evident, that whatever does not devoid something of its existence or its perfection, it is not called evil. If that existential affair is devoid of existence, something or some of its perfections, then it is evil in reality. It is the absence of that thing or some of its perfections and not the existential affair itself which has devoid something of its existence. Rather, that existential matter in itself is a perfection from the personal and bodily perfections such as oppression which albeit is evil for the oppressed but is good in its relation to the strength of anger which is a perfection for vengeance. Similarly, burning fire is its perfection and is good and its relation to the loss of safety for that which is burnt is evil.

Henceforward, evil in reality is the absence of safety of that which is burnt and not the fire and burning itself. Thus, it is known that evil is either the absence of quiddity or the absence of the perfection of quiddity and existence since existence is pure goodness and non-existence is pure evil. From this inquiry, it becomes manifest that the claim of the philosophers is necessary and self-evident. And the examples mentioned for clarification are for a matter that is vague for certain minds. Moreover, it is proven for some essences for which evil has become necessary that these are not called evil.

This is because these are existential affairs and evil is necessary for them, and these are not necessities of the essences of a creation and effect. This is because it is known that essences being contingent beings are in need of a complete and sustaining maker. They do not have a cause and reason in deficiency of contingency from the level of the necessary and their difference in level of lacking. Rather, these affairs are necessities of their essences and the difference in essences are in the restrictions of themselves, not due to an external factor. This is because if all essences were in the same rank, multiple essences would be impossible. Instead, all essences would have become just one essence.

(Translator's note: This part can also be found in Mulla Sadra's Sharh al-Hidayah al-Athiriyyah). [19](#)

Further, it is up to this extent that we restrict our inquiry. The details of these matters have been explained in the Sharh of Isharat by Muhaqqiq Tusi – may God's mercy be on him – and Shawariq al-Alham of 'Abd al-Razzaq Lahiji, as well as the Shifa of Shaykh al-Ra'is and other books of wisdom and theology. Now it should not remain hidden or concealed because with the aforementioned preamble it has become clear and evident that whatever emanates from the Necessary Existence is good, and that nothing more noble than that is possible, and that pure good is pure existence, and sheer evil is sheer non-existence, and a non-existent affair is not a creation of effect, and that the source of evil is devoid of things of existence as well substance, and that whatever comes from the Necessary One is good. This is because it is mentioned in the divine scripture:

... بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

**...In your hands<sup>20</sup> is (all) good. Surely, you are capable of everything. (3:26)**

It has also been narrated from the infallible ones, peace be upon them, that they said:

...وَالْخَيْرُ فِي يَدَيْكَ وَالشَّرُّ لَيْسَ إِلَيْكَ...

... And (all) good is in your hands, and evil is not attributed to you...<sup>21</sup>

In short, it means that emanation of evil from you is impossible. Hence, this is an evidence of the negation of the attribution of evil to God, the Exalted, since evil has no quiddity and reality. It is merely a non-existent affair. And if it had an external existence, it would have been in the hands of God, because in His Hand is the dominion of everything. He himself thus says in the pure book:

...بِيَدِهِ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ...

**... In His Hand is the dominion of everything... (36:83)**

And He says:

...هُوَ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ...

**...He is The Creator of everything... (6: 102, 13: 16, 39:62, 40:62)**

If the concept of “a thing” had also been applied to evil, it would have been impossible to negate the attribution of evil to the Necessary Being. It has thus been proven that evil is a non-existent affair and that the source of evils (shurur) and subtracting something of its existence (i‘dam) is substance (haywala).

Thus, we return to solving the hadith of the clay. Firstly, we say that the committing of a good deed from a believer and a bad deed from a disbeliever is not an effect of the pure or impure clay. Rather, it is due to the free will of man. The effect of the clay is a mere inclination of nature towards good deeds or bad deeds, not the committing of the deed. Thus, the text of the hadith itself bears witness to this. The Imam, peace be upon him, states:

فَقُلُوبُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ تَحْنُ إِلَىٰ مَا خُلِقُوا مِنْهُ وَقُلُوبُ الْكَافِرِينَ تَحْنُ إِلَىٰ مَا خُلِقُوا مِنْهُ.

“So, the hearts of the believers yearn for what they were created from and the hearts of the disbelievers yearn for what they were created from.”

This text of the hadith is conclusive evidence that the effect of the clay is mere inclination of nature, not the committing of the deed. The committing of the deed is due to man’s will and choice, and man can oppose his natural inclination with his will and choice. Hence, this meaning is known intuitively and does not need an argument or proof.

Secondly, that which is mentioned must be heard by the heart and must be accepted with certainty. This being the crux of this hadith that we are explaining. All this labor for a preamble is only so we could explain this concept that you understand the meanings of the hadith correctly. So, the Imam (as) says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ خَلَقَ النَّبِيِّنَ مِنْ طِينَةٍ عَلَيْهِمْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَأَبْدَانُهُمْ

“Allah, The Exalted, created the prophets from the clay of the ‘illiyyun, their hearts and bodies.”

We say that ‘illiyyun means the realm of God’s dominion (malakut). This is of two types:

- (1) The higher dominion and
- (2) the lower dominion which is purely material without forms.

Thus, the hearts of the Prophets are created from the higher dominion meaning the realm of the intellects (‘uqul) and souls (arwah). The bodies of the Prophets are created from the lower realm i.e., that of the selves (nufus) and specters (ashbah). This is why Shaykh Kulayni, in another chapter via his chain, narrates from Imam al-Sadiq (as):

إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَلَقَنَا مِنْ عَلِيِّينَ وَخَلَقَ أَرْوَاحَنَا مِنْ فَوْقِ ذَلِكَ

“God created us from the ‘illiyyun and created our souls from above that.”[22](#)

What is meant by the ‘illiyyun is the lower dominion which is the realm of the selves and specters. In this hadith of the clay the word ‘illiyyun is general to the higher and lower dominion. So, his saying:

وَخَلَقَ قُلُوبَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ تِلْكَ الطِّينَةِ وَجَعَلَ خَلْقَ أَبْدَانِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ دُونِ ذَلِكَ

“And He created the hearts of the believers from that same clay. And He made the bodies of the believers from below that.”

Meaning, He created the hearts of the believers from the clay of the lower dominion which is the realm of

the selves and specters. And He created the bodies of the believers from what is below that clay. Hence, in the rest of the mentioned hadith in the other chapter we quoted from, the Imam (as) states:

وَحَلَقَ أَرْوَاحَ شِيعَتِنَا مِنْ عَلِيِّينَ وَحَلَقَ أَجْسَادَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِ ذَلِكَ

“And He created the spirits of our followers (Shia) from the ‘illiyyun and created their bodies from what is below that.”

Meaning, He created the spirits of our Shia from the lower dominion and created their bodies from what is below the lower dominion. What is meant by “what is below that” is the clay that is a composite of the realm of the lower dominion and the elemental world. This is because the speaking selves of humans are attached to both. As they are in the realm of kingship, they are also attached to a luminous body as well as being attached to a material and elemental body. After departing from the purely elemental world, they are attached to a non–elemental and luminous body. This totally cuts off their relation to the elemental body. In the realm of kingship and being attached to matter, they are not completely immersed in matter as well. So, the Imam’s saying is:

وَحَلَقَ الْكُفَّارَ مِنْ طِينَةِ سَجِّينَ قُلُوبَهُمْ وَأَبْدَانَهُمْ

“And He created the disbelievers from the clay of sijjin, their hearts and bodies.”

What is meant by sijjin is the material realm. The attribution of the creation of the hearts of the believers to sijjin is because of their intense inclination and immersion in the lower realm, which is the material realm. They are eternally in matter, which is equal to sijjin for them. The reason for their immersion in the material and elemental realm, which is the source of evils and devoid of existence and the root of tribulations and misfortunes, is due to their inattention towards the heavenly realm. They have become such that it is as if they are created from that prison and have no share or reward from the heavenly realm. Since matter and substance is the root of evils and misfortunes and the souls of the disbelievers are immersed in matter and they are inattentive towards the holy realm, disapproved and wicked deeds have been attributed to them.[23](#)

The souls of believers are not immersed in matter and they are attentive towards the Holy realm. The Holy realm is the source of good and thus good deeds have been attributed to them. The mixture between both clays is an indication towards the attachment of souls in the purgatory (barzakh) to the elemental bodies and the growth of the souls from the bodies from one thing to another as has been proven in its own place. So, both of these types of growth i.e., the growth of abstraction and the growth of matter that prevails over man, a person becomes as such. So, if a person makes the spiritual growth prevail over him and is attentive towards the Holy realm and the heavenly dominion, he becomes a true believer and good deeds emanate from him. If he makes the material growth prevail over him and is

immersed in matter, he becomes a true disbeliever and wicked deeds emanate from him. If he has both spiritual and material growth in him equally and is attentive towards both realms equally, both good and wicked deeds will emanate from him according to the levels of belief and disbelief. It must be known that in the hadith of the clay, the Imam, peace be upon him, did not mention the elemental bodies of the prophets.

The reason for not mentioning the elemental bodies of the prophets is that the souls of the prophets are not attached to the elemental bodies and due to their intense attachment to the otherworldly realm and spiritual growth it is as if they have removed the cloak of elemental bodies from themselves as well as due to them not being reliant on bodies, they have become free of them, so their hereafter is united in body. Therefore, the Commander of the Faithful 'Ali b. Abi Talib, may the blessing of God be upon him, says:

لَوْ كُشِفَ الْغِطَاءُ مَا إِزْدَدْتُ يَقِينًا

If the cover (of the unseen) is lifted, I would not increase in certainty.[24](#)

So, their reward is the same as their action, and their life is connected such that it has no death. This is why it is mentioned in the hadith of the Prophet (s) regarding the believer:

المؤمن حي في الدارين

The believer is alive in both abodes (i.e., this world and the hereafter).[25](#)

Hence, Prophets are more entitled to perpetual life. Moreover, it is narrated from the infallible Imams, peace be upon them, that they said:

يموت الميت منا وليس بميت

When someone dies from amongst us, he is not deceased.[26](#)

And God, The Exalted, says in the noble Qur'an:

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا ۚ بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ

***And do not think of those killed in the way of Allah as dead. Rather, they are alive with their Lord, receiving sustenance (3: 169)***

...فَرِحِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ

***They are rejoicing for what Allah has given them from His grace... (3: 170)***

Thus, prophets are possessors of voluntary death and eternal life such that they witness the hereafter in both forms and go to heaven from the world without a stoppage in transfer.

One may ask the question: how is it possible that the souls of the prophets are not attached to elemental bodies even when they used to partake in material necessities such as eating, drinking, sitting and standing, sleeping and waking up, marriage and other affairs that are related to elemental bodies?

We say: the relation of the souls of the prophets to the elemental bodies is not like the relation of the speaking selves of humans to the elemental bodies that it may be intrinsic. Rather, the relation of their souls to the bodies is accidental and external such that removing the cloak of these bodies is possible for them at every time and place.

In conclusion, it is said that the souls of the Prophets and the Holy Imams, may the blessings of God be on them all, do not wait for resurrection, reckoning and reward. Rather, they do not have a resurrection, reckoning and reward at all. They are in heaven from the aspect of their abode, albeit they are outside it from the aspect of their form. The details of this issue cannot be stated in this short treatise. Moreover, understanding these issues is dependent upon luminosity of the heart, clarity of mind and the lifting of the veils of darkness. Where is that (trait) to be found? Thus, we suffice on this much.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

***And all praise is to God, the Lord of the worlds.***

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1. Majmu'ah al-Rasa'il al-Tis'ah, pg. 148. [1]

2. It is common in Persian and Urdu literature for a person to speak of themselves in the third person and to present themselves with humility. [2]

3. On the cover page, it mentions that this work was written at the request of Sayyid Khadim 'Ali Wazirabadi. [3]

4. Al-Kafi, vol. 2, pg. 2. [4]

5. Tafsir al-Tabari, vol. 24, pg. 284. [5]

6. This is the philosophical view known as privation theory which considers evil as being the mere absence of good. It has been argued by philosophers such as Augustine and Avicenna among others. [6]

7. The Necessary Being (wajib al-wujud) is God, whereas everything apart from him is contingent (mumkin al-wujud). [7]

8. In Islamic philosophy, this is known as the principle of the possibility of the nobler (قاعدة إمكان الأشرف). [8]

9. Shaykh al-Ishraq refers to the Persian philosopher Shahab al-Din Yahya ibn Habash Suhrawardi. [1]
10. Rawdhat al-Wa'idhin, pg. 492, Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 58, pg. 2 & 5 etc. [2]
11. The Asharites (الأشاعرة) were an early school of Islamic theology founded by Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari (d. 936 AD). [3]
12. The Mutazilites (المعتزلة) were a school of Islamic theology that existed in the early centuries of Islam and differed in many ways with the other schools such as the Asharites and the Maturidis (الماتريدية). [4]
13. Sharh al-Hidayah al-Athiriyyah, pg. 396. [5]
14. Sharh al-Hidayah al-Athiriyyah, pg. 393 – 396. [6]
15. This relates to the philosophical principle that multiplicity cannot emanate from simplicity or oneness (الواحد لا يصدر عنه إلا واحد) since that would lead to a multiplicity in the Necessary Being and would render Him contingent, which is a logical impossibility. Thus, multiplicity occurs as we go down the ontological chain of causes due to gradation in existence. [7]
16. Al-Hikmah al-Mut'aliyyah, vol. 2, pg. 341. [8]
17. This means that evil does not exist, it is merely the absence of something from an existent being that leads it to be called evil. The existential weakness of something due to it being far away from the absolute good cause in the chain of ontology and causation leads it to weakness and not being able to fully manifest the absolute goodness due to a lack of capacity to do so. [9]
18. Al-Hikmah al-Mut'aliyyah, vol. 2, pg. 341 – 342. [10]
19. Sharh al-Hidayah al-Athiriyyah, pg. 399 – 400. [11]
20. Note that the hands of God are a reference to the power and authority of God as well as something being in his possession, this has come in multiple reports from the infallible Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt. [12]
21. Al-Kafi, vol. 3, pg. 310, Man la yahdhuruh al-faqih, vol. 1, pg. 304, no. 916, Tahdhib al-ahkam, vol. 2, pg. 67. [13]
22. Al-Kafi, vol. 1, pg. 389. [14]
23. What this means is that the more materialistic a person becomes, the further away they are from God due to being attached to the material realm. And the more spiritual a person becomes, the more they are attached to God due to their distance from the material realm and proximity to the heavenly realm. [15]
24. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 40, pg. 153 as well as in vol. 46, pg. 135, vol. 64, pg. 321, vol. 66, pg. 209, vol. 67, pg. 142 & vol. 84, pg. 304 etc. [16]
25. Mashariq Anwar al-Yaqin, pg. 305. [17]
26. Nahj al-Balagha, vol. 1, pg. 154, Basa'ir al-Darajat, pg. 295 etc. with a different wording (يموت من مات منا وليس بميت). [18]

[1] [1]

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