

Imam Ghazali's Works

(Firaq al-Islamiyah)

Al-Mustazhari

being a Translation of **Fadiah al-Batinyah wa-Fadail al-Mustazhariyah** of **al-Ghazzali** with Translation and Annotation.

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APPENDIX II

Faḍā'ih al-Bāṭiniyya wa Faḍā'il al-Mustazhiriyya

This is the book to which Ghazālī refers in the *Munqidh*, Para. 61 (Note 122). I translate its title as *The Infamies (Enormities) of the Bāṭinites and the Virtues (Merits) of the Mustazhirites*. By the Mustazhirites Ghazālī means the reigning Caliph, al-Mustazhir Billāh, and his family. He was Caliph from 478/1094 to 512/1118. The book was partially edited and translated by Goldziher in his *Streitschrift des Ġazālī gegen die Bāṭinijja-Sekte*, Leiden, 1916. He used a manuscript of the British Museum. The complete text (which is the basis of my translation) was edited by Dr. 'Abdurrahmān Badawī, Cairo, 1964, who used the British Museum manuscript and another of the Qarawiyyin Mosque in Fez (Morocco). Goldziher's book contains a good deal of useful and interesting information.

My translation is fairly literal, without, I hope, being too barbarous. Some parts are summaries of certain sections completely translated in Goldziher's splendid book. I have added certain explanations, references, and alternate translations in square brackets. For more complete details on Ghazālī's "politics" I refer the reader to: H. Laoust: *La politique de Ġazālī*, Paris, 1970.

Laudatory Preface [Khuṭba]

1 Praise be to God, the Living the Subsistent, the essence of Whose Subsistence cannot be mastered by the description of a describer; the Glorious, the quality of Whose Glory cannot be encompassed by the knowledge of a knower; the Mighty—and there is no mighty one save that he clings to the threshold of His Might with the foot of infants; the Splendid—and there is no monarch save that he circumambulates the pavilions of His Splendor; the Coercer [Omnipotent, Compeller]—and there is no ruler save that he hopes for the gusts of His pardon and fears the outbursts of His wrath; The Imperious [Proud, Great]—and there is no holy one [*walī*: master, governor, proprietor, holy one] save that his heart is the mortmain of His Love and his soul stands ready for His service; the Compassionate [All-merciful]—and there is no thing save that it would mount the back of danger in terrifying situations, were it not for its expectation of His Mercy by reason of His prevenient and previous promises; the Gracious [Beneficent, Benefactor]—if He wish good for you, nothing can repel or turn away His favor; the Avenger—if He afflict you with harm, none but He can remove it; sublime His Majesty

and hallowed His Names, unbeguiled by any intimate, and unharmed by any adversary; mighty His power, unduped by any covert trickster and unopposed by any overt enemy!

2 He created men parties and quantities [different factions and descents ?], and ordered them, with respect to the vanities of the world, as base and noble; and brought them into proximity, with respect to the truths of religion, as attached and deviate, ignorant and learned; and divided them, with respect to the bases of belief [fundamental dogmas], into sects and classes [categories] agreeing with each other harmoniously and separating from each other in disagreement, so that they were divided regarding dogmas by denial and confession, arbitrariness and fairness, moderation and excess. They likewise differed in origin and qualities. This one is a wealthy man whose riches multiply daily and who receives wholesale [on a large scale] and spends wholesale. This other is a weak man who has to support frail offspring and who lacks a day's supply of food so that he has been reduced to importuning people. Another finds a ready welcome in men's hearts and in his need meets only with compliance and aid. But another is hated by men and his claims are unjustly treated with inequity and unfairness. This one is godly and aided by God and grows daily in his piety and godliness in boundlessness and loftiness. But this other is forsaken [by God] and grows with the passage of the days [p. 2] in his transgression and wickedness in excess and deviation. That is the ordaining of your Lord [cf. Qur. 6.95-96], the Powerful, the Wise, from Whose domination no sultan can turn away, the Irresistible, the Omniscient, Whose decision no one can withstand, despite the Bāṭinite unbelievers who deny that God appoints disagreement among the People of the Truth, for they know not that mercy follows disagreement among the Community just as admonition [warning, example] follows their differing in ranks and qualities.

3 Thanks be to God Who has aided us to profess His religion publicly and privately [openly and secretly], and Who has guided us to submit to His rule [authority] outwardly and inwardly. He has not made us of the number of the erring Bāṭinites who make outward confession with their tongues while they harbor in their hearts persistence and willfulness [in their error]. They bear heavy loads of misdeeds, and manifest regarding religion piety and gravity, and store up [fill their saddle-bags with] burdens of iniquities, because they do not hope for forbearance from God [do not ask gravity of deportment of God, or, do not show grave deportment toward God]. And were the summoners to Truth to address them night and day, their appeal would only make them flee the more [from the Truth]. When the sword of the People of the Truth dominates them they quickly choose the Truth, but when its shadow lifts from them they persist in their arrogance. So we ask God not to leave any of their dwellings on the face of the earth. And we ask God's blessings upon His Elect Apostle and his family and his orthodox Caliphs who came after him—blessings as numerous as the drops of the clouds which pour forth abundant showers, which will continually increase with the passage of the days and will be renewed as the years succeed uninterruptedly and repeatedly!

[Introduction]

4 *Now then:* During the length of my stay in the City of Peace [Baghdad] I never ceased longing to serve the sacred, prophetic, caliphal, Mustazhirite positions [stands, policies, attitudes, positions]—may God multiply their glory and extend their shadow [protection, patronage] over all the strata [classes] of men—by composing a book about the science [or: *bi'alam*—the star, luminary, eminent person—i.e. the Caliph?] of our religion, by which I would pay my debt of gratitude for his kindness and fulfill my obligation to serve, and, by the trouble I would take, reap the fruits of approval and closeness [to him]. However, I tended to temporize because of my perplexity about specifying the area of learning which I would aim at in my composition and particularizing the discipline which would meet with the approval of the [Caliph's] noble and prophetic opinion. This perplexity was surpassing my intent and preventing my natural disposition from compliance and submission until the noble, sacred, prophetic, Mustazhirite orders came with an instruction [suggestion, intimation, command] to the servant to compose a book on the refutation of the Bāṭinites which would contain the exposure of their innovations and their errors, and of the kinds of their cunning and artfulness, and of the way they allure common and ignorant men. It would also make plain the hidden dangers in their deception and their dupery, and their slipping out of the noose of Islam and their abandoning and being stripped of it [Islam]. And it would bring out their infamies and their abominations by what would result in rending their veils and revealing their depths. Thus the [Caliph's] precedence in employing me in this weighty matter was, in appearance, a favor which answered before the request and responded before the appeal, although in reality it was a goal which I was seeking and a wish at which I was aiming.

5 So I considered obedience a duty and hurrying to comply a firm obligation. And how could I not hasten to do that?! For if I considered it from the standpoint of the commander, I found it to be a command forwarded by the Leader of our Community and the Glory of our Religion and originating [p. 4] in the Delight of the Nations, the Commander of the Faithful, obedience to whom is enjoined by the Creator of Creatures and the Lord of the Worlds—for God Most High has said: "Obey God, and obey the Apostle and the Rulers among you" [4.62/59]. And if I considered the command, it was to defend the plain truth and to stand up for the Proof of our Religion and to eradicate the godless. And if I consulted myself—and I, among all creatures, had been honored with a message about it—I saw that hastening to submit and comply was, on my part, a personal duty. For rare in the world is the man who, in the matter of the fundamental dogmas, can independently [undertake to] establish proof and demonstration in such fashion that he raises it from the lowlands of conjecture and reckoning to the highlands of positiveness and certainty. For it is a momentous concern and a weighty matter to the essentials of which the resources of the jurists are not equal and with the basic elements of which only he is conversant who has devoted all his attention to this

problem become devilish ["hairy"] because of the capricious tendencies regarding the fundamentals of religions which have appeared and become intermingled with the method of the early philosophers and sages. For it is from the depths of the latter's error that these Bāṭinites seek provision, since they vacillate between the doctrines of the dualists and the philosophers and buzz around the limits of logic in their wranglings. I had indeed long sought the like of its [Bāṭinism's] antagonist [opposition], when it was appointed for me to subdue and overcome it. In a similar case the poet has said:

I got to know evil, not
For evil's sake, but to guard against it:
And he who knows not the evil
Of men falls into it.

6 [p. 5] The reasons of obligation and necessity made common cause against me and I welcomed the inevitable with the embrace of one duty bound. I hurried to obey and comply and applied myself to composing this book built on ten chapters, begging from God—Praised be He!—help to pursue the right course. I have called it *The Infamies of the Bāṭinites and the Virtues [Merits] of the Mustazhirites*. And God Most High is He Who gives help for the fulfillment of this intention!

7 Here is the list of the chapters:

Chapter One: The clear statement of the method I have chosen to follow in the course of this book.

Chapter Two: Explanation of their appellations and disclosure of the reason which moved them to institute this misleading propaganda.

Chapter Three: Explanation of the degrees of their artifices in deceiving and disclosure of the reason for men's being misled by their artifices despite their patent wrongness.

Chapter Four: Account of their doctrine in general and in detail.

Chapter Five: On their interpretations of the literal meanings of the Qur'ān and their arguing from numerical matters. It contains two sections:

*Section 1—*On their interpretation of the literal meanings.

*Section 2—*On their arguments from numbers and letters.

Chapter Six: Presentation of their rational proofs in defense of their teaching and disclosure [p. 6] of their argument which they embellished with their allegation in the form of apodeictic proof of the invalidation of intellectual reasoning.

Chapter Seven: Refutation of their argument from textual designation to the appointment of the infallible Imam.

Chapter Eight: On the necessity of the legal opinion about them with respect to taxing with unbelief and charging with error and the shedding of blood.

Chapter Nine: Establishment of the canonical and legal proof that the

true Imam in this age of ours is the Caliph al-Mustazhir Billāh—God preserve his sovereignty!

Chapter Ten: On the religious duties by persistence in which the Imamate [Caliphate] is continuously merited.

8 This is the account of the chapters. It is suggested to the noble, prophetic view [of the Caliph] that he read the book as a whole, then single out Chapters Nine and Ten for him who wishes to make a close study. Thus he will learn from Chapter Nine the extent of the Most High's favor to him, and perceive, from Chapter Ten, how to render thanks for that favor, and he may also know that if God Most High is not content to have a servant of His on the face of the earth higher in dignity than the Commander of the Faithful, then the Commander of the Faithful will not be content that God should have on the face of the earth a servant more devoted and more grateful than he himself. We beg God Most High to supply him with His succor and to guide him to His own right path. This is the sum total of the book—and God is the resort for help in following the thoroughfare of the Truth and in treading the road of sincerity!

CHAPTER ONE

*The Clear Statement of the Method I Have
Chosen to Follow in the Course of This Book*

9 [p. 7] You should know that the method of discoursing in books differs (1) with regard to meaning, in profundity and precision as against carelessness and meretriciousness, and (2) with regard to expression, in prolixity and elaborateness as against brevity and conciseness, and (3) with regard to intention [aim, purpose], in multiplying and prolonging as against restricting and reducing. These, then, are three standpoints [aspects, approaches], and each of these divisions has its advantage and its disadvantage.

[The First Standpoint]

10 As for the first standpoint, its purpose—in profundity and precision and plumbing the mysteries and meanings to their farthest limits—is to guard against the ridicule of experts and the reproach of specialists. For if they look attentively at this book and do not find it in conformity and agreement with what thinkers [speculators] regard as the rules of dialectic and the prescriptions of logic, they will find the author's performance feeble and his discourse nauseating [or, from another root: scrawny, weak, thin] and will think him unacquainted with the goal of inquiry [investigation] and one affiliated with the masses.

11 But this has a disadvantage, viz. its small benefit and utility with respect to most men. For if the discourse be to the taste of disputation and dialectic, and not to the point of persuasive speech, [p. 8] only the experts will be able to understand it and only skilled researchers will know how to fathom its abstruse meanings. As for following the way of indulgence

[simplicity, ease] and restricting oneself to a kind of discourse which is deemed nice in addresses to others, this has the advantage of being pleasing to men's ears and most natures are not too dull to understand it and to grasp its aims, and it induces conviction in everyone who has brains and intelligence, even though he has not delved deeply into the sciences. This kind of discourse is a cause of praise and commendation—on the part of the superficial; its disadvantage is that it is a motive for contempt on the part of experts. So I have thought it best to follow the *via media* [middle way] between the two extremes. I shall not leave my book devoid of matters apodeictical which the skilled researchers will understand, nor of rhetorical remarks from which those who proceed by conjecture will derive profit. For the need for this book is general, with respect to both the elite and the common folk, and embraces all the strata of the adherents of Islam, and this procedure is the closest to the straight path. How often has it been said:

Each of the two extremes of seeking things is reprehensible.

The Second Standpoint

On Prolivity and Conciseness in Expressing the Aims

12 The advantage of prolixity is explanation and clarification which spare one the trouble of thought and long reflection; but its disadvantage is being boring. The advantage of conciseness is uniting and compacting intentions and conveying them to minds quickly; but its disadvantage is the need for intense scrutiny and reflection to deduce the subtle meanings from the concise and elegant expressions. The best procedure in this standpoint is to adopt a middle course between remissness and excess, for prolixity is inseparable from boring, while conciseness [p. 9] is not free from harm. So it is preferable to lean toward brevity—and many an utterance is brief and to the point while not boring.

The Third Standpoint

On Reducing and Multiplying

13 I have already read the books written about this subject and I have found them filled with two kinds of discourse. One concerns histories of accounts of them and their circumstances from the beginning of their affair until the appearance of their error, and naming every one of their propagandists in each and every region, and enumerating their events in bygone times. This is a kind [of writing] engaging in which I consider a preoccupation with long talks more suitable for historians and chroniclers. But the discourse of those learned in the Law should be restricted to the important religious matters and to establishing apodeictic proof of what is the clear truth. For each job there are men.

14 The second kind [of discourse] is concerned with refuting doctrines of theirs which are beliefs they have taken from the dualists and the philosophers, and which they have twisted from their places and changed their terms with the aim of obscuring and deceiving. I also do not think

it worth occupying myself with this [kind of discourse], because argument against such things and laying bare their falseness is not the concern of the group which constitutes their present generation. So the duty designated is to strip down one's intent to reporting their peculiar doctrines which they alone believe in contradistinction to all the other sects. Hence a writer should direct himself in his book only to the intention which he seeks to attain and the aspect which he desires to pursue. For it belongs to the excellence of a man's Islam that he leave aside what does not concern him—and that is something which does not concern him in this standpoint. And even though [p. 10] engaging in it is, in general, a defense of Islam, yet each piece of writing has its own standpoint. So in this book of ours let us confine ourself to the amount which will make known the peculiar features of their doctrine and call attention to the ways of their artifices. Then we shall disclose the falseness of their specious objections in such fashion that the attentive observer [intelligent man] will have no doubt about it and the muddiness of misrepresentation will be removed from the face of the truth.

15 Then we shall close [our] book with that which is [its] heart and essence [underlying reason and core], viz. the establishment of the legal apodeictic demonstrations of the validity of the holy, prophetic, Mustāzhirite positions on the basis of rational and juristic proofs, as its [the book's] contents were clearly stated in the account of the chapters.

CHAPTER TWO

Explanation of Their Appellations and Disclosure of the Reason Which Moved Them to Institute This Propaganda: It Contains Two Sections

Section One

16 On their appellations [designations, nicknames, agnomens] which have been current on men's tongues in different ages and times. These are ten appellations: (1) the Bāṭīnites [*al-Bāṭīniyya*]; (2) The Qarāmiṭa [*al-Qarāmiṭa*]; (3) the Qarmaṭiyya [*al-Qarmaṭiyya*]; (4) the Khurramites [*al-Khurramiyya*]; (5) the Khurramdinities [*al-Khurramdīniyya*]; (6) the Ismailis [*al-Ismā'iliyya*]; (7) the Seveners [*al-Sab'iyya*]; (8) the Bābakites [*al-Bābakiyya*]; (9) The Muḥammara, or, Muḥammira [*al-Muḥammara, al-Muḥammira*]; (10) the Ta'limites [*al-Ta'limiyya*]. And there is a reason for each appellation.

17 (1) *al-Bāṭīniyya*: They were thus named simply because of their claim that the literal texts [*zawāhir*, pl. of *zāhir*: outward, exterior] of the Qur'ān and the Traditions have inner meanings [*bawāṭin*, pl. of *bāṭin*: inward, interior] analogous, with respect to the literal meanings, to the kernel with respect to the shell, and that the literal meanings by their forms [representations] instill in the ignorant and foolish clear forms, but in the view of the intelligent and discerning they are symbols and indications [signs] of specific [or: spiritual, reading *ma'nawīyya*] truths [realities]. [They also claim] that he whose mind is unequal to delving deeply into

hidden things and mysteries and inner meanings and depths and who is content with their literal meanings as he hastens to be deluded, is in bonds and fetters and tormented by heavy loads and burdens. By "fetters" they mean the prescriptions [p. 12] of the Law. For he who rises to the knowledge of the inner meaning is relieved of prescription and freed from its encumbrances, these are the ones meant by the Most High's saying: "and who removes [1. *yaḍā'u*] from them their burden and the fetters which were upon them" [7.156/157]; and often they falsify their witness against him [or: for their doctrine] by asserting that the ignorant men who deny the inner meaning are those who were meant by the Most High's saying: "And a wall shall be set up between them having a door in the interior [*bāṭinuhu*] of which is Mercy, and facing its exterior [*zāhiruhu*] Torment" [57.13]. Their ultimate goal is to destroy revealed Laws [religions]. For if they tear away from creeds the exigency of the literal meanings, they will be able to impose the claim of the inner meaning in accordance with what will necessitate the abandonment of the bases of religion, since confidence [trust] in the binding force of plain expressions will fall away and thus there will remain for the Law no resort and support.

18 (2) and (3) al-Qarāmiṭa and al-Qarmaṭiyya: from a man named Ḥamdān
19 Qarmaṭ [cf. EI(2)], one of their early propagandists. The story of Ḥamdān....

20 (4) and (5) al-Khurramiyya and al-Khurramdīniyya [Bāqillānī: *Tamhīd*, 190.6 has al-Khurramdāniyya]—so called from the substance and essence of their teaching which comes down to libertinism "*khurram*," a Persian word for something pleasurable and delightful. Was also a name for the Mazdakiyya. The Khurramdīniyya differ on some nonessential points from the Khurramiyya.

21 (6) al-Bābakiyya—a group who swore allegiance to a man named Bābak al-Khurramī, who emerged in the mountains near Adharbaijān in the days of al-Mu'taṣim Billāh. A group of them has survived [cf. Laoust: *Les schismes dans l'Islam*, p. 95].

23 (7) al-Ismā'īliyya—from Muḥammad bin Ismā'il bin Ja'far. They claim that the stages of the Imāmate ended with him, since he was the seventh from Muḥammad, and in their view the stages of the Imāmate are seven by seven....

24 (8) al-Sab'iyya—so called (1) because of their belief that the stages of the Imāmate are seven, and (2) because of their view that regulation of the lowest [sublunary] world belongs to the seven planets: the highest Saturn, then Jupiter, Mars, the Sun, Venus, Mercury, the Moon—a doctrine filched from the godless astronomers [*al-munajjimīn*] and turned to the teachings of the dualists about the mixture of light and darkness in these seven planets.

25 (9) al-Muḥammira—so called because they dyed their clothes red in the days of Bābak. Also said that it was because they judged their adversaries to be *ḥamīr* [donkeys]. The first explanation is more correct.

26 (10) al-Ta'limiyya—so called because the basis of their doctrine is the invalidation of individual reasoning [*al-ra'y*] and the invalidation of the exercise of intellects and the call to men to instruction issuing from

the infallible Imam and the affirmation that the only way to acquire knowledge(s) is instruction [teaching]. They say at the beginning of their disputation: "Truth must be known either by individual reasoning or by [authoritative] instruction; but reliance on individual reasoning is useless because of the mutual contradiction of individual reasonings and the mutual opposition of the passions [*al-ahwā'*] and the disagreement of the results of the speculation of the intelligent: so recourse to [authoritative] instruction and learning [from an Imam] is obligatory. This name is the most appropriate for the Bāṭinites of this era, because their greatest reliance is on summoning to [authoritative] instruction and invalidating individual reasoning and imposing the following of the infallible Imam and putting him—with regard to the necessity of believing him and following him—on a par with the Apostle of God—God's blessings and peace be upon him!

Section Two: Explanation of the Reason Which Led Them to Institute This Propaganda and to Elaborate This Innovation

27 All the transmitters of views agreed that this propaganda was not initiated by anyone belonging to a religion or believing in a creed and supported by a prophetic mission, because its course is being gently pulled from religion as the hair is gently pulled from the dough [?]. Rather a group of the Zoroastrians and the Mazdakites and a gang [party] of the godless dualists and a large band of the godless early [?] philosophers deliberated and actively devoted their individual reasoning to finding [devising, contriving] a measure [plan] which would relieve them from what had befallen them of the domination of men of religion and give them a respite from the distress which had come over them from the power of the Muslims. So they gagged [held] their tongues from speaking of what their belief was—viz. denying the Maker and branding the Apostle with lying [or: calling the Apostle a liar] and rejecting the Assembling and the Resurrection and the return to God at the end of the affair.

28 They alleged: "After we have come to know that all the Prophets are swindlers and cheats, because they enslave men by what they make them believe through different sorts of legerdemain and shrewd analysis [cf. Dozy under *Zaraq*—Sab'iyya usage]—and the matter of Muḥammad has become grave and his call has spread in (all countries, quarters) and his rule has become widespread and his means and might are well organized. As a result they [Muslims] have possessed the property of our forbears and abandoned themselves to a life of luxury in their governments [administrative districts], disdaining our minds. Indeed they have covered the face of the earth in its length and its breadth. There is no hope of opposing them by a fight. The only way to make them forego what they have made up their minds about is by cunning and guile. Were we to address to them a call to our doctrine, they would rage against us and be unable to listen to us. So our way is to take over the creed of a group from their sects [a group] who are the feeblest in minds and the most fatuous in individual reasoning and the most pliable in disposition to accept ab-

surdities and the most compliant in believing embellished lies—and these are the Rāfiqites.

29 “We shall strengthen our position by affiliating with them and by tracing our descent to the people of the [Prophet’s] house to avoid their evil [i.e. their being against us], and we shall ingratiate ourselves with them by that which suits their character, viz. the mention of the great injustice and terrible humiliation effected against their forbears. We shall pretend to weep with them over what befell the family of Muḥammad—God’s blessings and peace be upon him!—and thereby we shall succeed in denigrating the leaders of their forbears who are their model and pattern. The result will be that, once we have made the circumstances of their [forbears] repulsive in their eyes, and also what their ‘Law’ transmits to them by the transmission and report of those [forbears] the door of recourse to the Law will be closed [or: hard] for them and it will be easy for us to entice them into being stripped of [forfeiting, losing] religion. If there then remains among them anyone holding fast to the literal meanings of the Qur’ān and unimpeachable Traditions, we shall suggest among them that those literal texts contain secrets and inner meanings, and that the mark of the stupid man is being deceived by their literal meanings and the sign of acumen [intelligence] is believing their inner meanings. Then we shall communicate to them our beliefs, alleging that they are what is meant by the literal meanings of the Qur’ān. Then when we have duped [read: *makarnā*] these, it will be easy for us to entice the rest of the sects after joining [siding with] these [Rāfiqites] and pretending that they support us.”

30 Then they said: “Our method will be to choose such a man as will help us in our doctrine. We shall claim that he belongs to the ‘People of the House’ [Muḥammad’s family], and that all men must swear allegiance to him and are bound to obey him, for he is the Caliph of the Apostle of God and preserved from error and slip by help from God Most High. [p. 20] Moreover we shall not make this propaganda known near to the vicinity of the Caliph whom we have characterized with infallibility, because the proximity of his abode might rip apart these veils. But if the distance be remote and far away, then when will the one who responds to the propaganda be able to investigate his condition and to get to know the reality of his real situation?”

31 Now their aim in all that was power and domination and making free with the wealth and women of the Muslims, and revenging themselves on them for what they believed about them and for what they had overtaken them of pillage and bloodshed and had poured upon them of various kinds of misfortune. This, then, is their ultimate aim and the fundamental principle of their affair. The confirmation of that will become clear to you through our clear exposure of the evils of their teaching and the infamies of their creed.

CHAPTER THREE

On the Degrees of their Artifices and the Reason Why Men are Seduced by Them Despite their Patent Falsity—It Contains Two Sections

Section One:

On the Degrees of their Artifices

32 They have arranged [classified] their artifices according to nine ordered degrees, and each has a name. The first is shrewd analysis [discernment] and scrutiny [detection of qualities—cf. Dozy], then (2) putting at ease, (3) inducing doubt, (4) suspending, (5) binding, (6) swindling [cheating], (7) duping [making unclear, confusing], (8) stripping [denuding], (9) skinning [flaying]. Let us now explain in detail each of these degrees, for in becoming aware of these artifices there are numerous advantages for the masses of the Community.

33 (1) *Discernment and scrutiny*: This consists in their saying: “The propagandist [emissary] must be astute, intelligent [sharp-witted], correct in surmising, true in discerning, understanding the inner [qualities] by looking at the characteristics [?] and exterior [signs, qualities]. Let him be able to do three things: (a) the first and most important—to discern one regarding whom it can be hoped to entice him and one can rely on the pliability of his disposition to accept what is presented to him contrary to his belief. For many a man is inflexible about what he has heard (and) it is impossible to wrest from his mind what is firmly rooted therein. So let not the emissary waste his speech with such a one. Let him cut off any hope regarding him and let him seek out one who is passive and is influenced by what is said to him. Such are those characterized by the qualities which we shall mention in Section Two, which follows this Section. In any case, we must be wary of scattering seed in salty soil and of entering a house in where there is a lamp [light]. By this is meant warning away from summoning the ‘Abbāsids—may God prolong their dynasty in defiance of its enemies!—because that [propaganda] will never become implanted in their minds, just as seeds will not take root in the salty marsh, as they allege. They also warn against propagandizing the intelligent among eminent men and those who possess insight into dialectic [argument] and the ambuscades of trickery—this is what they mean by warning away from a house which contains a lamp.

34 (b) [He must also] be on fire with intuition and [be] clever minded in interpreting the literal texts and reducing them to the inner meanings, either by [linguistic] derivation from their wording, or by learning [?] from their number, or by likening them to what resembles [?] them. In general, if the responsive man will not accept from him denial of the Qur’ān and the Sunna, he ought to draw forth from his heart its meaning, which he has understood, leaving with him the wording reduced to a meaning which is conformed to this innovation—for were he to speak directly of the denial to him, it would not be accepted from him.

35 (c) The third element of discernment and scrutiny is that he should not invite each one to one and the same way [course of action]. [p. 23] Rather he should first inquire into his belief and what he inclines to in his nature [character] and his belief. As for his character, if he sees him inclined to asceticism and mortification and piety and purification, he calls him to obedience and submission and following the command issuing from the [one to be] obeyed, and warns him away from following [his] passions, and charges him with the duties of the religious observances and the execution of the things he is entrusted with, viz. veracity [sincerity] and right behavior [conduct] and good morals and the lessening of trouble [?] for those in need and holding fast to commanding the good and forbidding the evil. But if he is naturally inclined to buffoonery and wantonness he fixes it in his mind that worship is foolishness and piety stupidity and that those afflicted by the injunctions of the Law are like asses tormented by heavy loads; but intelligence is simply in following passion [desire] and procuring pleasure and getting what one wants out of this moribund life for the delights of which there will be no way to make up once one's days are ended.

36 As for the state of the one called with reference to orientation, if he be of the Shi'ites, then we begin by telling him that the whole matter lies in hating the Banū Tamīm and the Banū 'Adiyy and the Banū Umayya and the Banū 'Abbās and their factions and in having nothing to do with them and their followers and in being partisans of the Good Imāms and in waiting for the emergence of the Mahdī. And if the one called be a Nāsibite [dissenter violently hating 'Alī], he mentions to him that the Community agreed only on Abū Bakr and 'Umar, and precedence is to be given only to him to whom the Community gives it. Finally, when his mind tranquilly accepts it the emissary thereafter begins to communicate the mysteries [secrets] according to the way of enticement which will be mentioned later. Similarly, if the one responding be a Jew or a Zoroastrian or a Christian, the emissary will discuss with him what corresponds to [resembles] their doctrine from his own beliefs—because the creed of the emissaries is gleaned from various kinds [p. 24] of innovations and unbelief, so that there is no species of innovation but that they have adopted some of it that thereby it might be easy for them to address these sects, as we shall relate of their doctrine.

37 As for the artifice of *putting at ease* [cultivating togetherness or intimacy], it is that he conform to [harmonize with] him who pays attention to his summons [propaganda] in actions which he undertakes with him whose mind inclines to him, and the first thing by which intimacy is effected is by observing what in his own Law [? the *dā'ir*?] accords with the belief of the one called. They prescribed for the emissaries and the licensed [*ma'dhūnīn*] to pass the night at the home of one of the responders [*mustajibīn*] and to strive to take along one who had a good voice for reciting the Qur'ān to recite for them for a time. Then the emissary should have all that followed by some tactful discourse and bits of fine sermons which captivate hearts. Then he should complement that by defaming the

authorities [Sultans] and the ulema of the time and the ignorant masses and mention that relief from all that is awaited by the benediction of the People of the House of the Apostle of God—God's blessing and peace be upon him!—and during that he should weep at times and sigh deeply. And when he mentions a verse of the Qur'ān or a Tradition he should mention that God has a secret meaning in its [His] words which is made known only to him whom God has chosen from His creatures and favored with a superabundance of His bounty [*lutf*]. And if he is able to watch the night, praying and weeping, in the absence of the master of the house, so that the latter will get to know about him, and he then perceive that he has come to know about him, let him return to his lodging and lie down like one who intends to keep secret his worship—and all that so that his intimacy with him [the one called] will take deep root and [the latter's] heart will incline to hearkening to what he has to say. This, then, is the degree of *ta'nīs* [cultivating intimacy].

38 [p. 25] As for the artifice of *inducing doubt*, it means that the propagandist, after *al-ta'nīs*, must strive to change the belief of the respondent [prospect, candidate] by shaking his conviction regarding what he firmly holds. The way to achieve this is to approach him first by questioning the wisdom in the things laid down by the [revealed] laws [*al-sharā'ī*] and in obscure problems [questions] and about the ambiguous verses [of the Qur'ān] and about what does not immediately yield a rational sense. Thus he should say about the sense of the ambiguous [verses]: "What is the meaning of the 'R,' and of 'KHY'S,' and of 'Ḥā' Mīm 'Ayn Sin Qāf' [ḤM'SQ], and of the likes in the beginnings of the sūras [chapters of the Qur'ān]? And one should say: 'Do you think the assignment of these letters took place in accord with the outstripping [anticipation] of the tongue, or that their specification was intended because of mysteries depicted under them and not found elsewhere? I do not think that could be in jest or in vain and useless [meaningless].'" And he should induce doubt regarding the legal ordinances: "Why should the menstruating woman be free from the fast, but not the prayer? [And] why is a major ritual ablution obligatory with respect to pure semen and not obligatory regarding unclean urine?"

39 And he should induce doubt regarding the reports of the Qur'ān and say: "Why are the gates of the Garden eight, and the gates of the Fire seven? And what is the meaning of God's utterance 'And upon that day eight shall carry above them the Throne of the Lord' [69.17]? And of His utterance—Exalted He!—'over it [*Saqar*, "Fire"] are nineteen' [74.30]? Do you suppose (think) that the rhyme (the 'r') was too confined [cramped, narrow?] and therefore the [number] twenty was not completed? Or did that take place in accord with the force of the outstripping [?] of the tongue? Or was this restriction intended to give the impression that there is a mystery beneath it, and that in itself [it] is a mystery knowable only to the Prophets and the Imams 'rooted in knowledge'? I do not think that that is devoid of a mystery and without a secret sense: and the amazing thing is that men ignore it and do not strenuously seek it out!"

40 Then he should induce doubt about the constitution of the world and the human body and say: "Why are the heavens seven rather

than six or eight? And why are the planets [p. 26] seven and the stations of the zodiac [*burūj*] twelve? And why are there seven holes in man's head—the eyes, ears, nostrils and mouth—and only two holes in his body? And why is man's head made in the shape of a *mim*, and his hands—when he extends them—in the shape of a *hā'*, and his rump in the shape of a *mim*, and his legs in the shape of a *dāl*, so that when the whole is combined it is shaped in the form of MĤMD (Muhammad)? Do you therefore think that it contains a simile and a symbol? How great are these wonders! And how great is man's indifference to them!" And he should keep on presenting to him this sort of thing until he makes him doubt and he has a glimmering [a sudden flash] that beneath these literal texts [senses] there are mysteries barred to him and his fellows and there springs up in him a desire [longing] to seek that out.

41 As for the artifice of *suspending* (*al-ta'liq*), it consists in concealing from him the aspects of these doubts if he inquires of him about them and in not reassuring him at all, but leaving him in suspense and making the matter seem terrible to him and making it seem great in his mind and saying to him: "Don't be in a rush! For religion is too serious to be toyed [played] with or to be put in the wrong place and to be revealed [disclosed] to those unworthy of [unfitted for] it—absolutely not!"

The two of you have come to me to learn the secret of my happiness!

You find me stingy [niggardly] with the secret of my happiness!

Then he will say to him: "Don't be in a hurry! If good fortune favors you we shall divulge to you the secret of that. Have you not heard the utterance of the Master of the Law: 'This religion is strong [solid]; so penetrate [apply yourself to] it gently, for the one cut off [from it?] has not traversed the land nor left behind a rear part [l. *zahrān*—or *walā zahrān baqiya*—nor has remained behind ?].'"

42 Thus he will not cease driving [urging] him, then resisting him, until, if he sees him turning from him and despising [p. 27] him and saying: "What have I to do with this meddling?" and the vehemence of these doubts does not leave a mark on his interior, he will give up any hope of [winning] him [over]. But if he sees him yearning [thirsty] for him he will make an appointment with him and will bid him to offer fasting and prayer and penance before it, and he will make much of this hidden mystery. Then, when the appointed time comes, he will say to him: "These mysteries are hidden; they will not be entrusted save to a fortified [pure] heart. So fortify [purify] your sanctuary and strengthen its entrances so that I may entrust this matter [mystery] to it." And the prospect will say: "And what is the way to do this?" And he will reply: "That I exact the pact and covenant of God on concealing this mystery and keeping it from being dissipated, for it is the precious pearl and the priceless treasure. The least degree of the one coveting it is to guard it from being

dissipated. And God entrusted these mysteries to His prophets only after exacting their pact and covenant: and he will recite the Most High's utterance: 'And when We took the compact from the Prophets, and from thee, and from Noah, and Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, Mary's son; We took from them a solemn compact' [33.7]; and the Most High said: 'Among the believers are men who were true to their covenant with God' [33.23]; and the Most High said: 'and break not the oaths after they have been confirmed' [16.93/91].

42 The Prophet—God's blessing and peace be upon him!—divulged it only after exacting the pact of the caliphs [successors] and exacting fealty from the Helpers beneath the tree. So if you covet (it), swear to me to hide it, and thereafter you will be of the elite [or: well-off, blessed], and if you are divinely helped to grasp its reality [truth], you will be extremely happy. But if your soul recoils from it, small wonder, for every one is facilitated for that for which he was created. And we shall presume that it is as though you have neither heard nor sworn and no harm will come to you regarding a true oath." So if he refuses to swear, he should leave him; but if he is graciously disposed and complies, he should direct the oath to him and exact it fully.

44 [p. 28] As for the artifice of *binding*, it is that he bind his [the prospect's] tongue by sacred oaths and confirmed pacts which he will in no circumstance dare to break. This is the text of the pact:

"The propagandist [emissary] will say to the prospect: 'You impose on yourself the pact of God and His covenant and the compact of His Apostle—Peace upon him!—and the pact and covenant which God exacted from the Prophets, that you will keep secret what you have heard and will hear from me, and what you have learned and will learn about me and about the representative, resident in this country, of the Master of the Truth, the Rightly guided Imam, and about his brethren and his fellows and his children and the members of his household, and about those who obey him according to this religion, and the sincere following of the Rightly guided One and sincerity toward his faction, men and women, young and old; and you will not disclose of that little or much by which you would show [indicate] it [him?], except for what I permit you to speak of or [what] you are permitted by the "Master" residing in this country or in another; and then you will do just so much as we prescribe for you and not go beyond it. You have obliged yourself to carry out what I have mentioned to you and you have obligated yourself to it in the state of desire and of fear, of anger and of satisfaction, and you have bound yourself by God's pact and covenant to follow me and everyone I shall name to you and disclose to you of what you will keep yourself from, and to be very sincere to us and to the Imam, the Friend of God, outwardly and inwardly, and not to betray [be disloyal to] God or His Friend or anyone of his brothers and his friends and anyone who is related to him and to us by any reason such as kinship and property and favor; and that no view [*ra'y*] and no promise [pact] will you accept against this pact which would render it vain.

45 [p. 29] "If, then, you do anything of that, knowing that you have

contravened it, you will be quit of God and His Apostles, early and recent, and His favored Angels, and all of His Books revealed to His preceding Prophets, and you will be outside of every religion, and outside of God's party and that of His Saints, and you will be included in Satan's party and that of his friends; and may God forsake you most patently [in a way that] will quickly bring upon you vengeance and punishment if you violate anything of what I have made you swear to, with an interpretation or with no interpretation. And if you violate any of that you will owe God thirty pilgrimages, as of binding vow, on foot and unshod. And if you violate that, then all you possess at the time you go back on your words will be alms [to be given to] the poor and destitute unconnected with you by any kinship. And every slave you possess on the day you violate it will be free. And every woman you have or marry in the future will be triply and irrevocably divorced if you violate any of that. And if you intend or secretly harbor, regarding this oath of mine, the contrary of what you have [outwardly] purposed, this oath, from its first to its last, will be binding on you. God is the witness of the sincerity of your intention and the bond [contract, document] of your conscience [innermost mind]—and He is the best of witnesses between me and you!—Say 'Yes!' and he will say: 'Yes!' This is [the artifice of] *binding*.

46 As for the artifice of *swindling* [cheating, falsifying], it is that after the oath and the confirmation of the pact it is not allowed to divulge [p. 30] the mysteries [secrets] to him all at once, but that is done gradually and with regard for several things. *The first* is that at the beginning one confirm oneself to mentioning the [prime] fundament of the doctrine and say: "The lighthouse of ignorance is men's making judges of their defective minds and their clashing views and their turning away from 'following' [compliance] and receiving [taking, learning] from God's best friends and His Imams and the tent pegs [poles, sustainers] of His earth and those who are the Vicegerents of His Apostles after him. Among them are those to whom God has consigned His hidden mystery and His secret religion. He has revealed to them the inner meanings of these literal expressions and the secrets of these allegories. Right guidance and salvation from error are by returning [resorting] to the Qur'ān and the People of [the Prophet's] household. That is why he said—Peace be upon him!—when someone asked: "Whence will the truth be known after you?" he replied: "Have I not left among you the Qur'ān and my family [kin]?" By this he means his progeny—and it is they who are familiar with [aware of] the meaning of the Qur'ān. He will confine himself at first to this much and will not clearly state the detail of what the Imam says.

47 *The second* is that he use artful means [stratagems] to nullify the second way of the ways of attaining the truth, viz. the literal meanings of the Qur'ān. For the seeker of truth either takes refuge in thought and reflection and consideration of the sources of the intelligible [?] as God Most Praiseworthy has commanded; and the reflection of the mind is spoiled for him by the imposition of the obligation of learning and following; or he takes refuge in the literal meanings of the Qur'ān and the Sunna. If one were to state openly to him that it is deception and a

contrived thing, he would not be listened to. So let him concede to him the formal expression, but let him snatch from his mind its meaning by saying: "This literal text has an interior [meaning] which is the quintessence [core, pith], and the exterior is a skin in relation to it which contents the man beset by inability to grasp the real meanings [of things]"—so that there will remain for him no intellectual support or traditional help.

48 *The third* is that he give no personal indication that he is opposed to the whole Community and that he has cast off the Religion and the Creed, for hearts would shun him. Rather he should ascribe himself to the sect farthest from the right way and readiest to accept fables. He should hide behind them and adorn himself with affection for the people of the [Prophet's] family, i.e. the Rawāfid [cf. Laoust, p. 35].

49 [p. 31] *The fourth* is that he place at the head of what he says that the false is evident and clear, but the truth is so subtle that, were most men to hear it, they would reject it and shun it; and that the seekers of truth and those who profess it are, among the seekers of ignorance, single persons and individuals, so that he will make it easy for him to be distinguished from the masses regarding the denial of intellectual speculation and the literal traditional texts.

50 *The fifth* is that, if he sees him shunning being singular among the masses, he says to him: "I shall divulge to you a secret, and you must keep it." And if he says "Yes!" he will say: "Such a one and such a one believe in this doctrine, but they keep it a secret"—and he will mention some distinguished person who is believed by the prospect to possess acumen and astuteness. But let the one mentioned be far from his country so that it will not be easy for the prospect to have recourse to him—just as they make their propaganda far from the abode and country of their Imam. For if they were to manifest it in his vicinity they would be exposed by the impeccable report of his views and his circumstances.

51 *The sixth* is that he awaken his desire [raise his hopes] for [by?] the appearance of the power of this sect and the spread of their affair and the loftiness of their view and the victory of its supporters over their enemies and the vastness of their wealth and [the fact that] every one of them attains his desire so that there will be combined for them the happiness of this life and the afterlife; and let some of that be attributed to [p. 32] the stars, and some of it to the [true] vision in sleep—if he can make up some dreams that will reach the prospect on the tongue of another.

52 *The seventh* is that the emissary prolong not his stay in one and the same country, for his affair might become known and his blood shed. So he must be careful about that, and deceive people about himself and make himself known to each group of people by a different name [lit. by one name and another]. At times, let him change his appearance and dress for fear of hurt so that that may be a more effective means of precaution.

Then, after these premises, gradually and little by little he will make known the detail of the doctrine to the prospect and mention it to him according to what we shall report of his belief.

53 As for the artifice of *duping* [confusing, making unclear] it is that he agree with the prospect on premises which he will accept from him, outwardly acceptable and well known and widespread among men, and he will implant that in his mind for a time. Then he will lure him from them by false consequences, e.g. his saying: "Those engaged in speculation hold contrary views, though the circumstances [read *wa l-ahwāl*] are the same—and 'each faction is happy about its own beliefs'" [23.55/53; 30.31/32]. The one perfectly cognizant of the substance [essence] is God. And it cannot be that God hides the truth, and there is no one—[gap of two words]—all the matter to men: they fumble about it like a nyctalopic she-camel and plunge into it in blind ignorance [folly]—and other such premises—[gap containing four or five words] [deemed] baffling [puzzling].

54 As for the artifice of *stripping* [denuding] and [that of] *skinning* [flaying], they are in accord and differ only in that *denuding* has to do with action—so if they lead the prospect to give up the precepts and ordinances of the Law, they say: I have reached the degree of denuding. As for *skinning*, it has to do with belief—which is the denuding [stripping off] of religion. So if they pluck that from his heart they call that *skinning* [flaying]. And this rank [stage] is called "the ne plus ultra" [the ultimate attainment]. This, then, is the detailing of their step by step ensnaring of men: so let the observer consider it and let him ask God's forgiveness for erring about His Religion.

[p. 33]

Section Two:

Explanation of the Reason for the Ready Circulation [Marketability] of Their Trickery and the Spread of Their Propaganda [Call] Despite the Weakness of Their Argument [Proof] and the Wickedness of their Creed

55 Someone may say: "It is inconceivable that the enormities you have disclosed be hidden from an intelligent man. But we have indeed seen many men and a large number of people who follow them in their belief and have followed them in their religion. So perhaps you have wronged them by transmitting these opinions from them contrary to what they [really] believe! And this is likely and possible. For if they had divulged these secrets hearts would have eschewed them and minds would have known their cunning [trickery]. (But they divulge them) only after pacts and covenants and they guard them save from one agreeing with them in belief—so whence has it happened to you to become cognizant of them, since they hide their religion and strive to keep their beliefs secret?"

56 I reply: As for becoming cognizant of that, we came across it simply through many men who had professed their religion and responded to their propaganda, then they became aware of their error and returned from their seduction to the plain truth and [then] reported the views those men had proposed to them. As for the cause of men's submission to them in some countries of the earth, they divulge this matter only to some of those who answer their call, and they advise the propagandist and say to him: "Beware of following the same way with all: for not everyone

who can accept these doctrines can put up with 'stripping' and 'skinning,' nor can everyone who can stand 'stripping' stand 'skinning'; so let the propagandist speak to men in accordance with the capacity of their minds." This, then, is the reason for the attachment and [ready] circulation of these artifices.

57 *If it be said:* "This also, despite the secrecy [concealment], is patently false: how, then, could an intelligent man be deceived by the likes of this?"

We say: The only ones deceived by it are those who deviate from a state of equilibrium and soundness of opinion. And for the intelligent there are impediments which make them blind to the ways to what is right and condemn them to being deceived by the shimmering of the mirage—and they are eight classes [kinds]:

58 *The first class* is a group of men with weak minds [p. 34] and little insight [intelligence] and with silly ideas about religious matters because of their ingrained stupidity and silliness—like the masses and the rude Arabs and the Kurds and the uncouth foreigners [Persians?] and silly youngsters—and perhaps this class is the largest in number. And how can their acceptance of that be considered far-fetched when we see a group in one of the towns near Baṣra who worship men, claiming that they have inherited divinity from their fathers, who are known as the Shabāsiyya. And a group believed about 'Alī—God be pleased with him!—that he is the God of the heavens and the earth, the Lord of the Worlds; and they are numerous men unrestricted by a number and uncontained by a country. So wonder at man's ignorance ought not to increase when Satan gets mastery over him and abandonment [by God] overwhelms him.

59 *The second class* is a group of men whose forebears' power [dynasty, empire, rule] was cut off by the power [rule] of Islam—like the descendants [scions, sons] of the Khosraws [Persian kings] and the [Persian] grandees and the children of the arrogant Zoroastrians. These are wronged persons [wronged by the murder of a relative but still denied blood vengeance] in whose hearts rancor is hidden like a secret malady: then, when the suggestions of the liars stimulate it, its fires flare up in their hearts and they submit to the acceptance of every absurdity out of a longing to attain their vengeance and to redress their affairs.

60 *The third class* is a group of men who have ambitions directed toward the exalted [heights] and are bent on mastery [influence, authority] and domination. However, the time does not help them, but rather misfortunes [the current calamities] make them lag behind their contemporaries [comrades] and peers. So when these are promised the attainment of their aspirations [desires, longings] and are enticed by victory over enemies, they hurry to accept what they think will lead to their aims and be a path [way] to their desires and demands. And how often it has been said: "Your love for a thing blinds and deafens." And there shares in this everyone whom a master from the class of Islam overcomes, and he can find a way to triumph [p. 35] and taking vengeance only by seeking the help [backing] of these gullible dolts, so he has many motives for accepting that in which he sees his desire.

61 *The fourth class* is a group of men with a natural propensity for love of being distinguished from the masses and of being marked off from them because they deem themselves above resemblance to them and claim the honor of siding with a special class which claims that it possesses the cognizance of realities [truths], and that the people in their ignorance are like frightened asses and wandering [forlorn] beasts. This is the chronic disease which overcomes the intelligent, to say nothing of the ignorant [and] stupid. And that is a love for the rare [and] the unusual and an aversion for the common and the ordinary. This is a natural trait of some men, as is witnessed to by experience and indicated by observation.

62 *The fifth class* is a group of men who have followed the ways [methods] of reasoning, but they have not fully attained the degree of independence [competence] [in their reasoning], although they have indeed risen above the rank of the ignorant. So they are always craving [longing for] [a show of] indolence and indifference and the manifestation of intelligence to attain things which the masses imagine to be remote and shun, especially if the thing be ascribed to someone renowned for superiority, so that the longing to be like him takes possession of [their] nature. How many groups of men have I seen believe in pure unbelief [in downright infidelity] out of servile conformism to Plato and Aristotle and a group of philosophers who had become noted for superiority! Their motive for that servile conformism was the desire to be like the philosophers and to side with [be numbered among] their crowd [*ghumārihim*] and against whoever is believed to be inferior to them in intelligence and excellence. So they are drawn [*yustajarrāna*] to this innovation by attributing it to someone of whom the respondent has a good opinion and so [then] he rushes to accept it, seeking to be like him who is reported to be one of its followers.

63 [p. 36] *The sixth class* is a group of men who happened to grow up among the Shī'ites and the Rawāfiḍ [Rāfiḍites] and who believed in the profession [of their creed] because of association. They saw this sect helping them to that [?], and so their minds inclined to help them and to be friendly with them, and they were drawn with them [the Bāṭinites] to what was beyond that, viz. the special features of their doctrine.

64 *The seventh class* is a group of the godless philosophers and dualists and those baffled about religion who believe that revealed Laws are compiled laws [rules, codes], and that apologetic miracles are elaborate tricks. So when they see these [Bāṭinites] honoring those affiliated with themselves and pouring out the treasures of [their] wealth upon them, they stand ready to aid them, seeking the vanities of the world and disdaining the outcome of the matter. This group of men are those who have contrived [fabricated] for them [Bāṭinites] specious arguments and adorned for them, by way of misrepresentation, proofs, and arranged them, with respect to the exterior, according to the requisites of dialectic and the prescriptions of logic, and covered [concealed] the hidden places of deception and deceit in them beneath compendious words and general and vague expressions, of which the weak reasoner is rarely rightly guided to untying their intricacy and removing the veil from the hidden place of their

deceit, as we shall present their fabrication [falsification] and call attention to the way and path [method] they have followed and pursued and reveal its viciousness [wrongness] from a number of aspects.

65 *The eighth class* is a group of men who have been mastered by passions and lured by the pursuit of pleasure and for whom the threats of the Law have become unbearable and its injunctions burdensome; so their life is not happy, since they are loathed because of [their] sinfulness and depravity and are threatened by a bad end in the abode of the afterlife. So when they encounter one who opens the door to them and removes from them restraint and barrier and depicts to them as desirable [good] what they themselves deem good by [their] nature, they rush to believe passionately and spontaneously—and every man gives credence to what accords with his inclination [passion, craving, caprice, pleasure] and suits his purpose and desires. These, and those who follow the same course, are they who are deprived of [divine] assistance [guidance] and are deceived by these tricks and swerve from the straight path and the borders [limits] of verification [i.e. of what is true].

[p. 37]

CHAPTER FOUR

On the Report of their Doctrine, Summarily and in Detail

66 As for the summary, it is that it is a doctrine, the exterior of which is *rafḍ* [rejection, i.e. of first three Caliphs], and its interior out-and-out infidelity [unbelief]; and its beginning is the restricting of the ways to attain knowledge [sure cognitions] to the utterance of the Infallible Imam, and the removal [isolating] of minds [intellects] from being [able to] perceive [grasp] the truth because of the doubts which befall them and the disagreements to which reasoners are open, and imposing, for the seeking of the truth, the way of instruction and learning, and the judgment that the Infallible Imam is *the seer* [the only one able to see], and that he is informed—from the part of God—of all the secrets of the revealed Laws: he guides to the truth and explains problems [difficulties], and that every age must have an Infallible Imam to whom recourse is to be had concerning any ambiguities in religious matters.

67 This is the beginning [basis, starting point] of their propaganda. Then, in the end they present [produce] what contradicts the Law. And it is as though this is their ultimate aim. For the manner of their propaganda is not fixed in one way, but rather they address each group with that which accords with its opinion, after they have obtained from them submission to themselves and friendship for their Imam: thus they agree with Jews and Christians and Zoroastrians on the sum of their beliefs and they confirm [?] them in them [their beliefs]. This, then, is the sum of their doctrine.

68 As for its detail, it is concerned with matters pertaining to God, and prophetic missions, and the Imamate, and the Gathering and the Resurrection [eschatology]: and these are four areas. And I shall limit myself, in each area, to a small part of the account of [p. 38] their doctrine,

for the report from them differs [disagrees]. Most of what is related from them, when it is presented to them, they disown, and when those who have answered their summons are consulted about it, they deny it. And what we have premised about the sum of their doctrine undoubtedly requires that the report from them be different and disordered, since they do not address men in one and the same way, but rather their aim is to seduce and to dupe: therefore their words disagree and the transmission of the doctrine from them differs. For they bring forth what is related from them about "stripping" and "skinning" only with him who has reached the ultimate stage: nay, but they may speak of "stripping" to one with whom they would deny "skinning." Let us then return to the exposé of the areas of [their] doctrine.

69 [The First Area] On their belief about matters pertaining to God.

The statements of the transmitters of views [*maqālāt*] are unhesitatingly agreed that they profess two preeternal Gods, whose existence had no beginning with respect to time: however, one of them is the cause of the existence of the other. The name of the cause is *al-sābiq* [The Preceder], and the name of the caused is *al-tāli* [the Follower]. [They hold] that the Preceder created the world by the intermediary of the Follower, not by Himself. The first may also be called *'aql* [Intellect], and the second *nafs* [Soul]. And they claim that the first is the perfect in act, and the second, in comparison with Him is imperfect, since He is His effect. And they sometimes confuse the masses by concluding to that from certain verses of the Qur'ān, like the Most High's saying: "Surely We have sent down" [15.9 and 76.23] and "We have divided" [43.31/32]. They claim that these [i.e. verses] are an allusion to a plural [*jam'*—combination] which does not proceed from one: and therefore He said: "Glorify the Name of Thy Lord the Most High" [87.1], alluding to the Preceder of the two Gods, for He is the Most High—and were it not that there is with Him another God Who also possesses "highness," it would not be correct to apply the expression "the Most High." And sometimes [p. 39] they say: The Law calls the two of them by the name *al-Qalam* [the Pen] and *al-Lawḥ* [the Tablet]. The first is the Pen, for the pen benefits and influences and the tablet derives benefit and is influenced—and what benefits is superior to what derives benefit. And sometimes they say: the name "*al-tāli*" is "*qadar*" [divine foreordaining] in the language of revelation, and it is this by which God created the world, where He said: "Surely We have created everything in measure [Blachère: selon un décret]" [54.49] [Pickthall: by measure; Rodwell: after a fixed decree; Dawood: according to a fixed decree; Yusuf Ali: in proportion and measure; M. Zafrulla Khan: in due measure].

70 Then they say: *al-Sābiq* is described [qualified] neither by existence, nor by nonexistence, because nonexistence is a negation and existence is its cause: so He is neither existent nor nonexistent; nor is He known [knowable] nor unknown [unknowable]; nor is He qualified nor unqualified. They claim that all the Names are to be denied of Him—and it seems that, in general, they have in mind denying the Maker. For if they were to affirm that He is nonexistent, it would not be accepted from them. Rather, they prevent people from calling Him existent—and this is the

very same denial with a change of expression; but they are clever and call this denial deanthropomorphism, and they call its contrary anthropomorphism, so that minds may incline to accepting it. Then they say: The world is preeternal, i.e., its existence is not preceded by a temporal nonexistence, but rather it had its inception from *al-Sābiq-al-Tāli*—and He is a first producer. And from the first producer the universal soul had its inception whose particulars are diffused [spread] in these composite bodies. From the motion of the soul hotness was engendered, and from its quiescence coldness; then wetness and dryness were engendered from both of them. Then, from these qualities were engendered the four elements, viz. fire and air and water and earth. Then, when they were mingled in an imperfect equilibrium the minerals were engendered from them. Then, when their proximity to equilibrium increased and the activity of mutual contrariness destroyed from them, plants were engendered from them; and when it increased, animals were engendered; and when it increased in proximity, man was engendered—and he is the ultimate in equilibrium.

71 [p. 40] This, then, is what is related of their doctrine, along with other matters more monstrous than what we have mentioned. We did not think it well to blacken the white [paper] by transmitting them or by explaining how to refute them, for two reasons. One of them is that those deceived by their deceit and falsehood and those dangling by the rope of their deception in this age of ours have not heard this from them, [and] so they would deny all that if it were reported of their doctrine and they would say in themselves that these [adversaries] are opposed simply because they do not possess the true nature of our doctrine: and were they to know it, they would concur with me about it. So we think it best to busy ourselves with refuting them in what they agree on—viz. invalidating reasoning and summoning to learning from the Infallible Imam. For this is the main point of their belief and the essence [fresh butter] of their churning—so let us turn our attention to it. What is beyond that is divided into patently false drivel and unbelief filched from the dualists and Zoroastrians about the profession of the two gods, with the change of the expression "the Light and the Darkness" into "*al-Sābiq* and *al-Tāli*," and error taken from the discourse of the Philosopher, in their saying that the First Principle is a cause of the existence of the Intellect [Intelligence] by way of necessary following from it, not by way of purpose and choice, and that it comes to be of itself, without any intermediary distinct from it. Yes indeed! They affirm preeternal existents, necessarily following one from another, and they call them "intellects" ["intelligences"]. And they assign the existence of each sphere to an intellect of those intellects—in a long mishmash of theirs. We have already gone deeply into the way to refute them on that in the discipline [science] of *kalām*, and in this book we are devoting ourselves only to what is peculiar to this sect, viz. the invalidation of *ra'y* [reasoning] and the affirmation of *ta'lim* [authoritative teaching].

72 [The Second Area] On the Explanation of their belief about matters concerning the Prophetic Missions.

What has been transmitted from them is close to the doctrine of the Philosophers, viz. that "the Prophet" is an expression for an individual [a person] upon whom there emanates from the *Sābiq*, by means of the *Tāli*, a pure, holy power disposed [prepared], when united to the Universal Soul, to have impressed in it what the latter contains of particulars, just as that may happen to certain pure souls [p. 41] in sleep so that they see one of the courses of events [?] in the future, either clearly and as it is, or embodied in an example [image] which bears some resemblance to it, so that there is a need regarding it for an interpretation. However, the Prophet is he who is disposed for that while awake. Therefore, the Prophet perceives [the] intellectual universals at the shining of that light and the clarity of the prophetic power, just as the likeness of the sensibles is imprinted in the eye's visual power at the shining of the sun's light on the surfaces of the sublunary bodies [or: polished bodies].

73 They also pretend that "Jibril" is a designation of the Intellect emanating upon him [Prophet] and a symbol of it, and not that he is a materialized individual composed of a body, subtle or dense, compatible with a locus so that he can move from high to low. As for the Qur'an, in their view it is Muhammad's interpretation [expression] of the cognitions [information, lore] which emanated upon him from the Intellect, which is what is meant by the name "Jibril." It is called "the speech of God Most High" figuratively, for its ordering [arrangement] is from Him. But what emanates upon him [the Prophet] from God through the intermediary of Jibril is simple, without any composition in it; it is also interior, without having any exterior [external manifestation]. But the speech of the Prophet and his interpretation of it is external without possessing any "interiority." They also pretend that this holy power emanating on the Prophet is not perfected at the beginning of its descent, just as the sperm descending into the womb is not perfected save after nine months. So it is with this power: its perfection lies in its being transferred [conveyed] from the speaking Prophet to the silent *asās* [foundation]. And thus it is transferred to [p. 42] individuals one after another, and becomes perfect in the seventh—as we shall relate the meaning of their doctrine about *al-nāṭiq* and *al-asās* and *al-ṣāmit*.

74 These doctrines are also extracted [drawn] from the doctrines of the Philosophers on Prophetic Missions, with some alteration and change. But we shall not plunge into the refuting of them concerning it. For some of it can be interpreted in a way we do not reject, and the amount which we reject we have already gone deeply into the way to refute the Philosophers regarding it. In this book we aim only at the refutation of what is currently prominent regarding the doctrine of theirs which is unique to them as opposed to others, viz. the enjoining of *ta'lim* and the invalidation of *ra'y* [personal reasoning].

75 [The Third Area]: Exposé of their belief about the Imamate.

They are indeed agreed that there must be, in every age, an Infallible Imam, practicing in charge of the truth, to whom recourse is to be had regarding the interpretation of the literal meanings and the solution of

difficulties in the Qur'an and the Traditions and rational matters [intelligibles, objects of thought or reasoning]. They are [also] agreed that he is the one who undertakes this matter, and that that goes on among their lineage uninterruptedly and forever, and it cannot be interrupted, because in that would be the neglect [dereliction] of the Truth, and the concealment of it from men, and the falsifying of the Prophet's statement—Peace be upon him!—"Every relationship and lineage will be interrupted [cut off] except my relationship and my lineage," and his utterance "Have I not left among you the Qur'an and my family [relations]?" And they are agreed that the Imam equals the Prophet in infallibility-impeccability and in knowledge of the realities of the truth in all matters, except that revelation [*al-wahy*] is not sent down to him, but he simply receives that from the Prophet, for he is his vicar [deputy, successor] and of comparable status. And it is inconceivable that there be two Imams in one and the same age, just as it is inconceivable that there be two Prophets with different [religious] Laws.

76 To be sure the Imam seeks help from *al-hujaj* and *al-ma'dhūn* and *al-ajniha* [proofs—authorized—wings]. The *hujaj* [Proofs] are the summoners [propagandists]. They affirmed that the Imam in every period must have twelve "Proofs" who are assigned among countries and scattered among cities. And four of the total of twelve must be constantly in his presence and not leave him. And each "Proof" must have his helpers in his business, for he is not of himself the sole possessor of the summons [call, propaganda]. And among them the name of the helper is "*al-ma'dhūn*" ["authorized"]? And the propagandists must have messengers to the Imam who will carry the circumstances to him and proceed from him to them. And the name of the messenger is "the wing" (*al-janāh*). [p. 43] And the propagandist must be extensive in knowledge. The *ma'dhūn*, though he be inferior to the former, yet there is no objection to his being learned in general, and so also the *janāh*.

77 Then they asserted that each Prophet's Law has a certain duration [limited period]. So when one's period is finished God sends another Prophet to abrogate his Law. The period of the Law of each Prophet is seven lifetimes, i.e. seven generations. The first of them is the "speaking Prophet," and the meaning of "the speaking" is that his Law abrogates what preceded it. The meaning of "silent" [*al-ṣāmit*] is that he keep [preserve, look after] what was established [founded] by another. Then there arise, after his death, six Imams: Imam after Imam. Then when their lifetimes are terminated God sends another Prophet to abrogate the preceding Law. And they claim that the affair of Adam proceeded according to this pattern, and he was the first Prophet sent by God at the opening of the door [category, field] of bodily things and the termination of the stage [phase, period] of spiritual things.

78 And every Prophet has a *sūs* [? spokesman, mouthpiece, representative lit.: root]. The *sūs* is the door to the Prophet's knowledge during the latter's lifetime and the executor [curator, authorized agent, trustee] after his death, and the Imam for his contemporaries, as the Prophet—Peace be upon him!—said: "I am the City of Knowledge and 'Ali is its Gate." They allege

that Adam's *sūs* was Seth, and he was the second, and [each one] after him is called "Finisher" [*mutimm*] and "Appended" [*lāhiq*: attached, subsequent] and "Imam." The completion of the period of Adam was seven, because the completion of the turn [rotation] of the Upper World is by seven of the stars. And when Adam's stage was finished, God sent Noah to abrogate his Law, and Noah's *sūs* was Sām [Shem]. And when his stage was finished by the passing of six others and seven including him, God sent Abraham to abrogate his Law, and his *sūs* was Isaac; and among them are those who say: No, but rather Ishmael.

79 And when his [Isaac's] stage was finished by the seventh, including him, God sent Moses to abrogate his Law, and his *sūs* was Aaron: and Aaron died in Moses' lifetime, then Joshua son of Nūn became his *sūs*. And when his stage was finished [p. 44] by the seventh, including him, God sent Jesus to abrogate his Law, and his *sūs* [was] Simon. And when his stage was finished by the seventh God sent Muḥammad—God bless him!—and his *sūs* [was] 'Alī—Peace be upon him! And his stage finished with Ja'far son of Muḥammad. For the second of the Imams was al-Ḥasan son of 'Alī, and the third al-Ḥusain son of 'Alī, and the fourth 'Alī son of al-Ḥusain, and the fifth Muḥammad son of 'Alī, and the sixth Ja'far son of Muḥammad—Peace be upon him!—and were finished seven including him [Muḥammad] and his Law became abrogative [*nāsikha*]. And thus the matter goes on perpetually.

This is what has been transmitted from them, along with a lot of nonsense which we have left out to spare the white [papers] from being blackened by it.

80 [*The Fourth Area*:] Exposé of their Doctrine on the Resurrection and the Return [to God].

They have agreed completely on the denial of the Resurrection [of the body], and that this order [situation, regularity] seen in this world, viz. the succession of night and day, and man's coming to be from sperm and sperm from man, and the generation of plants, and the generation of animals, will never, never finish; and that the nonexistence of the bodies of the heavens and the earth is inconceivable. They interpreted the Resurrection and declared: it is a symbol of the emergence of the Imam and the rising of the Head of the Age [Master of the Time] i.e. the seventh who abrogates the Law and changes the ordinance. Sometimes some of them say: The celestial sphere has universal rotations, [and] the circumstances of the world change completely by reason of a universal flood or some cause. So the meaning of the Resurrection is the finishing of our stage in which we are.

81 As for the Hereafter [afterlife, Return], they deny what the Prophets have brought, and affirm neither the gathering and resurrection for [of] bodies nor the Garden and the Fire. Rather they say: the meaning of the Hereafter is the return of everything to its origin [principle]. Man is composed of [something from] the spiritual and the corporeal world. And the corporeal part of him, i.e. his body, is composed of the four humors: the yellow bile, the black bile, the phlegm and the blood. Then the body is resolved [disintegrates] and each humor returns to the higher [high]

nature [element]: [p. 45] the yellow bile becomes fire, the black bile earth, and the blood air, and the phlegm water—and that is the *ma'ād* [hereafter] of the body.

82 As for the spiritual [part], i.e. the perceptive rational soul of man, if it be purified by the assiduous performance of the acts of worship, and cleansed [rendered sinless] by the shunning of caprice and the passions [appetites], and nourished with the food of learning and lore received from the Imam-Guides, when it leaves the body it is united to the spiritual world from which it was separated [detached], and it is made happy by the return to its original homeland. Therefore it is called "a return," and it has been said: "(O soul at peace), return unto thy Lord, well-pleased, well-pleasing!" [89.27–28]—and this is the Garden. The symbol of it occurred in the story of Adam and his being in the Garden, then his separation from it and his descent to the lower [base] world, then his return to it in the end.

83 They also claim that the perfection of the soul is realized by its death, because thereby it is freed from the straitness [confinement] of the body and of the corporeal world—just as the perfection of the sperm is in freedom from the darknesses of the womb and emergence into the space of the world. Man is like the sperm, and the world is like the womb, and knowledge is like nourishment, and when the latter is effective [operative] in him it [soul] truly becomes perfect and is freed [delivered]. So when the soul is disposed for the emanation [outpouring] of spiritual cognitions [lore], by the acquisition of cognitions from the Imams and following their [the cognitions'] ways, profitable by their [Imams'] guidance, it is perfected when it leaves the body and there appears to it what had not appeared.

84 Therefore the Prophet—Peace be upon him!—said: "Men are asleep: then, when they die, they awake." And the more remote the soul becomes from the world of sensible things, the more disposed it is for spiritual cognitions [lore]. Similarly, when the senses are still [suspended?] in sleep, the soul becomes aware of the invisible world and becomes conscious of what will appear in the future, either as it is, and then it needs no interpreter, or by a likeness [example], and then there is need of interpretation. So sleep is the brother of death, and in it becomes evident the knowledge of what did not exist in wakefulness: and thus, by death, things are revealed which did not occur to a man's mind in [his] lifetime. This [will be] for the souls hallowed by practical and theoretical askesis.

85 But the inverted [upside-down, topsy-turvy] souls which were immersed in the natural world [p. 46] and turned away from their right guidance [received] from the Infallible Imams will remain forever and ever in the Fire in the sense that they will remain in the material world, transmigrating [into] bodies in which they will ceaselessly be subjected [exposed] to pain and sickness, and will not leave one body but that another will receive them. Therefore the Most High said: "as often as their skins are wholly burned, We shall give them in exchange other skins,

that they may taste the chastisement" [4.59/56]. This, then, is their doctrine of the Philosophers.

86 And it spread among them simply when a group of the Dualists and the Philosophers devoted themselves to the support of their doctrine. And each one supported their doctrine out of greed [covetousness] for their possessions and their robes of honor and to seek the backing of their followers for what he had become familiar with in his own doctrine. So most of their doctrine came to agree with the Dualists and the Philosophers interiorly, and with the Rāfidites and Shi'ites exteriorly. Their aim, by these interpretations was to wrest exterior [literal] beliefs from the souls of men that desire and fear might thereby come to naught [be abolished, become void]. Furthermore, their deceptive drivel is not understandable in itself, nor does it effect any awakening of desire or any incitement to fear. We shall indicate a concise discussion on refuting them in this field, and information about it at the end of the chapter.

87 [*The Fifth Area*]: On their belief concerning legal prescriptions [injunctions].

What is transmitted from them is absolute licentiousness [libertinism, license], and the lifting of the barrier, and the deeming forbidden things lawful and licit, and the rejection of the [religious] Laws. However, they will all of them deny that when it is ascribed to them. What is authentic of their belief about it is simply that they say: There must be obedience [submission] to the Law regarding its ordinances [injunctions] according to the detail set forth by the Imam, without following al-Shāfi'ī and Abū Ḥanīfa and others. That is incumbent on men and those who respond [to the propaganda] until they obtain the rank of perfection in the sciences. Then, when they comprehend through the Imam the real natures [realities] of things and become aware [informed] [p. 47] of the "interiors" [inner meanings] of these "exteriors" [literal texts] these fetters are loosed from them and the action-oriented injunctions fall away from them. For the aim of the acts of the members is to alert the mind that it may undertake the quest for knowledge. So when one has obtained it, he is ready for the maximum happiness, and the enjoining of the members drops from him. Indeed, the enjoining of the members is with respect to him who, by his ignorance, is analogous to asses which can be trained only by hard labors.

88 But the intelligent and those who perceive [grasp] realities are higher in rank than that. This is a kind of seduction [enticement] very effective with the intelligent. Their purpose is to destroy the precepts of the Law. But they try to deceive each weak man by a way [method] which allures him and suits him. This is a weak [inane] kind of leading astray, and it is equivalent to giving an example: like one's saying that abstaining from harmful foods is obligatory only on one whose temperament [mixture of humors, physical constitution] is impaired: but let him who has acquired a well-balanced complexion [constitution] persist in eating what he wants when he wants. For the man who hears this error will lose no time in overindulging in harmful comestibles until they vie in bringing about his ruin!

89 *Someone may say*: You have reported their doctrines, but you have not mentioned how to refute them: what is the reason for this?

We say: What we have reported from them is divided into matters which can be explained in a way we do not reject and into what the Law enjoins is to be rejected. And what is to be rejected is the doctrine of the Dualists and the Philosophers. Refuting them on that would be a lengthy affair. But that is not one of the things peculiar to their doctrine so that we should busy ourselves with it. But we shall refute them simply regarding what is peculiar to their doctrine, viz. the invalidation of reasoning [*ra'y*], and the affirmation of *ta'lim* [instruction] by the Infallible Imam. However, along with that, we shall mention one way which is really a mortal blow [to them], we mean regarding the refutation of their doctrine on all that we shall report, and have reported, from them.

90 This is that, regarding all their claims by which they are distinguished from us—such as the denial of the Resurrection, and the pre-*eternity* of the world, and the denial of the resurrection of bodies [p. 48] and the denial of the Garden and the Fire according to what the Qur'ān has indicated [regarding those beliefs] with the fullest explanation in description of them, we say to them: Whence do you know what you have mentioned? From necessity? Or from reasoning? Or from transmission from the Infallible Imam and orally [by hearing]? If you have learned it by necessity [necessarily], then how is it that men with sound minds have contradicted you on it? For the meaning of a thing's being necessary and in no need of reflection is that all intelligent men share in perceiving [grasping] it. And if it were allowable for a man to talk wildly about the claim of necessity regarding anything he fancied, then it would be allowable for their adversaries to claim necessity regarding the contrary of what they claimed. And at that [point] they find no escape in any way at all!

91 And if they allege: We have known that by reasoning, this is false from two standpoints. *One of them* is that, in their view, reasoning is invalid, for it is making use of the mind, not of *ta'lim* [being guided in behavior by reason, not by *ta'lim*]. But the propositions [?] of [men's] intellects are mutually contradictory and untrustworthy. Therefore, they [reject *ra'y* completely] regard *ra'y* as completely futile. [and (but) we have not composed this work with a view to refuting this doctrine, so how can that be possible on their part?!]—[Badawi thinks these words, in the brackets, are to be omitted]. *The second* is to say to the Philosophers and those who acknowledge the ways of reasoning: How did you learn the Maker's inability to create the Garden and the Fire and to raise bodies as has come down in the Law? Have you anything but a pure thinking [it] unlikely [farfetched] which, if its like were presented to one who had not seen the first creation, he would have thought it unlikely [farfetched] and that denial would have occurred to him? So the refutation of them is by the argument hidden beneath the saying of God Most High: "Say: He shall quicken them, who originated them the first time" [36.79]. One who reflects on the wonders of workmanship [design] in the creation of a man from a dirty drop [unclean sperm] will not think anything remote from

the power of God and will know that the bringing back [restoration] is easier than the beginning [cf. 36.79].

92 [p. 49] *If one says:* The bringing back is unintelligible, but the beginning is intelligible, since, once a thing has ceased to exist, how can it return? *We say:* Let us understand "the beginning" so that we may build on it the bringing back. The view of the *mutakallimūn* regarding it is that the beginning is by the creation of life in a body—although life is an accident which is renewed hour after hour by the creation of God Most High. So it is not impossible, according to their principle, for [God] to refrain from the creation of life in the body for a period, then to return to creating the life, just as it is not impossible [for Him] to create motion after quiescence and black after white. And the view of the Philosophers is that the foundation [basis] of life is the disposition [readiness] of a particular body—by a kind of equilibrium—to be acted upon by the soul, which is a substance subsisting in itself, not occupying a space [locus], and not embodied, and not imprinted in a body, and with no relation between it [masc. refers to *jawhar*] and the body save by acting upon it, and no relation between the body and it save being acted upon by it. And the meaning of death is the cutting off [interruption, cessation] of this act-relation by the stopping of the disposition of the body. For the body is disposed to be acted upon only when it possesses a certain specific mixture of humors, just as iron is disposed to receive in it the impression of a sensible form or for the reflection of rays from it only when it possesses a certain specific form: so if that form does not exist, the iron will not be acted upon by the form opposite it and no imprint will be made in it.

93 If this, then, is their doctrine, how can the one able to produce the relation between a soul—which is not embodied, and not localized, and not describable as united to the body or separate from it—and the body to which [the soul] is not similar in its essence and to which it is not united sensibly, be unable to bring back [restore] that relation?! The surprising thing is that most of them allow the affirmation of that relation with another body by way of metempsychosis [transmigration]: why, then, is it not allowable for the soul to return to its own body?! For it is more unlikely that, in the case of a body of which its mixture of humors has corrupted, its mixture will be repaired and that relation will be restored to it. That, then, is what is meant by the bringing back [restoration], and it resembles waking up after sleep, for it [the latter] restores the motion [activity] of the senses and the remembrance of bygone things.

94 [p. 50] *If one says:* Once the mixture of humors has corrupted it will return to equilibrium only through the resolution of the body's parts into the elements, then their being combined a second time, then its becoming a living being, then its becoming sperm; for this equilibrium belongs to the sperm particularly. *We say:* And whence do you know that it is not in God's power to repair the rupture which has occurred in any way except the way mentioned? And whence do you know that this which you have mentioned is a way? And do you you have any support [for that] other than the observation of [actual] status [circumstances]? And have you, for the refutation of other ways, any support other than the

absence of observation? Had you not observed the creation of man from sperm [a sperm drop] your minds would shrink from believing in it. And among the causes which change the status of bodies are marvels which would be rejected by one who does not observe them.

95 One man will reject peculiar properties, and another will reject magic, and another the apologetic miracle, and another information about the invisible [prediction of the future]. And each relies, in his affirmation, on the amount of his observation, not on a rational method in establishing impossibility. Then [moreover?] one who has not observed it and known it for certain, announces that his natural shrinking from belief is due to the absence of observation. Among the things God can do are marvels which no man has come to know. So it is not impossible that the bringing back of those bodies and the restoration of their mixture of humors would be due to a cause with God which He alone knows. When He brings it [the body] back, the soul again becomes active in it as was the case, by their claim, during life. One is astonished that a man who claims expertise in rational matters, and then sees the marvels and signs in the world, has, nevertheless, too narrow a craw to accept that regarding God's power. But when what he has not observed is referred to what he has observed, he does not see anything more wonderful than it!

96 To be sure, *if someone were to say:* This is a matter which the intellect does not prove to be impossible, but it also does not prove [p. 51] its possibility: rather it refrains from pronouncing on it—for there may be something there unknown to it which makes it impossible or something unknown to it which makes it possible, *this man* would be closer [to the truth] than the first, and by his judgment it would be necessary to believe the Prophet—God bless him!—if it was reported from him. For he would report about something the existence of which is not impossible in reason.

97 In general [in short] the utterance of God Most High has indeed embraced the stages and ranks of creation: "We created man of an extraction of clay, [then We set him, a drop, in a receptacle secure, then We created of the drop a clot, then We created of the clot a tissue, then We created of the tissue bones, then We garmented the bones in flesh; thereafter We produced him as another creature. So blessed be God, the fairest of creators! Then after that you shall surely die, then on the Day of Resurrection you shall surely] be raised up" [23.12–16]. Thus He encompassed creatures with belief by the totality of the premises, except for raising, because they had seen all that except raising. Had they never seen a death, they would have denied the possibility of death. And had they not seen the creation of a man from sperm [a drop] they would have denied its possibility. So the raising is in unison [uniform] with what is prior to it in the balance of the intellect: let us, therefore, believe the Prophets regarding what they brought, for it is not impossible. All of this is a discussion with the Philosophers who employ reasoning. But the Bāṭinites who reject reasoning cannot hold on to reasoning.

98 Of course, *if a Bāṭinite were to say:* The Infallible Imam informed me that the raising is impossible, so I believe him—*one would say*

to him: And what has called you to believe the Imam, who is infallible by your pretension, when he has no apologetic miracle, and has turned you away from believing Muḥammad, the son of 'Abdallāh, with his apologetic miracles, [p. 52] and the Qur'an from its beginning to its end proves the possibility and the actuality of that? And have you any obstacle save that his [Muḥammad's] infallibility is known by his apologetic miracle, whereas the infallibility of him whom you claim is known by your senseless jabber [mania, delirium] and your passion [by your passionate drive]!?

99 *If he says:* What is in the Qur'an are literal expressions which are symbols of inner meanings which they [men] did not understand, but the Infallible Imam has understood them and we have learned [them] from him. *We say:* You have learned from him by actually seeing that in his mind [heart] with [your] eye, or by hearing from his utterance [words]. There can be no claim of seeing, so it must be a question of reliance on hearing his words. *[Then] we say:* And what assures you that his words do not have an inner meaning which you have not come to know [you are not aware of], so that you cannot rely on what you have understood from the literal expression of his speech? *If you then claim* that he has spoken clearly with you and said: What I have mentioned is a literal expression containing no symbol, and what is meant is its literal meaning. *We say:* And how do you know that this utterance of his—viz. that it is a literal expression containing no symbol—is not also a literal expression containing a symbol of what you are not aware of?

100 *Then he will* continue affirming his utterance, and *we will say:* We are not in the category of one who is misled by literal expressions, so perhaps there is an underlying symbol. *And if he denies* the inner meaning, *we say:* Underlying his denial there is a symbol. Even if he swears by the [formula of] triple divorce [repudiation] that he means only the literal meaning, *we say:* In his "divorce" there is a symbol, and he is simply manifesting one thing and concealing another. *If you say:* That would lead to shutting the door of communication. *We say:* It is you who have shut, for the Apostle, the door of communication. For two-thirds of the Qur'an is about the description of the Garden and the Fire and of the Assembling and the Resurrection, [all] confirmed by swearing and oaths. Yet you say: Perhaps there is a symbol underlying that, and you say: What difference is there between delaying in understanding matters such as that known regarding the Qur'an and the Traditions, and your saying: I mean only the literal meaning? *[We say (?):* If it was allowable for him to communicate the literal expression while his meaning was other than that which he positively knew would reach the understandings of men, and he would [thus] be lying in all he said for the sake of some advantage and secret in that, then it would be allowable for your Imam—the infallible by your claim—to conceal, in your regard, the opposite of what he manifests [declares] and the contrary of what he communicates and the contradictory [antithesis] of what he knows for certain is what reaches your understandings, and for him to corroborate that by binding [mighty] oaths for some advantage of his own and some secret in that. And to this there will never, never be an answer.

101 And at this point a man ought to recognize that the rank of this sect is lower [viler, baser] than that of any of the erring sects, [p. 53] since we do not find any sect whose doctrine is invalidated by that doctrine itself save this sect. For its doctrine is the invalidation of [the use of] reason and changing words from their [agreed upon] meanings by the claim of symbols. But everything they can conceivably give tongue to is either reasoning or transmission. But they have invalidated reasoning, and as for utterance [= transmission], it is declared allowable [by them] that one intend by the utterance something different than its [agreed upon] meaning. Hence there remains for them nothing to cling to.

102 *If it be said:* This can be retorted against you! For you also allow the interpretation of literal texts, such as your interpreting the verse of "the being firmly seated" and the Tradition of [God's] descent, and others. *We reply:* How wide off the mark this retort is! For we have a norm for interpretation, viz. when reasoning and its proof show the falsity of the literal meaning of a text we know of necessity that what is intended is something different, provided that the utterance be in conformity with it by way of figure and metaphor. And proof has indeed shown that falsity of "the being firmly seated" and "the descent [of God]," for that belongs to the qualities [attributes] of incipients—so it is interpreted as [taken to mean] "mastery [domination]," and this agrees with linguistic usage.

103 But the mind [intellect] has no proof of the falsity of the Assembling and the Resurrection and the Garden and the Fire; nor is there any agreement between the expressions which have come down regarding that and the meaning in which they interpret it so that it can be said that the latter was intended. On the contrary, interpretation in this case is out-and-out imputation of lying [to the Prophet]. What agreement is there between God's words: "therein a running fountain, therein uplifted couches and goblets set forth and cushions arrayed and carpets outspread" [88.12–16], "mid thornless lote-trees and serried acacias, [and spreading shade and outpoured waters, and fruits abounding unfailing]" [56.27–32/28–33], and what they believe, viz. the union of spritual substances with [p. 54] spiritual intellectual things in which there is no entry for sensible things?!

104 If it is allowable for the possessor of an apologetic miracle to be branded as a liar by these interpretations which [have] never occurred to the mind of him who hears them, why, then, is it not allowable to brand as a liar your infallible one, who has no apologetic miracle, by reason of his interpretation of things which do not occur to men's minds, for the sake of some advantage or some pressing need? For the purpose of his utterance is to speak plainly and to swear, and these expressions in the Qur'an are plain and are corroborated by swearing. But they pretend that that is mentioned [cited] for some advantage and that what is meant is different from what spontaneously occurs to understandings from [hearing] them [expressions]. There is also no escape from this [argument].

CHAPTER FIVE

*Refutation of Their Interpretations of
the Clear Literal Texts and of Their
Arguments from Number-related Matters
It Contain Two Sections*

*The First Section
On Their Interpretations of the Literal Texts*

105 A concise [summary] statement about this is that, since [when] they are unable to turn men away from the Qur'an and the Sunna, they turn men from their meaning to trickery [*makhāriq*] they have elaborated, and they seek, by what, on their own part, they have wrested from the exigency [requirement] of words [expressions], the invalidation of the meanings of the Law, and, by the interpretations they have elaborated, to effect men's submission to allegiance and friendship. But if they were to declare openly plain denial and naked imputation of lying, they would not gain the friendship of friends but would be the first to be sought out and killed.

106 We shall relate a small part of their interpretations that we may infer from them their infamies. They have asserted that all the literal texts which have come down regarding injunctions [precepts], and the Assembling and the Resurrection, and divine matters, are allegories [images] and symbols of inner meanings. As for legal matters, they hold that *al-janāba* [major ritual impurity] means a "respondent's" embarking on divulging a secret to him [i.e. to someone else] before he attains the stage of deserving it [or: having a right to do that?]. And the meaning of *al-ghusl* [major ritual ablution] is the renewing of [p. 56] the pact with one who has done that. And they hold that *mujāma'at al-bahīma* [bestiality] means the treatment of one who has no pact and who has paid nothing of the *ṣadaqat al-najwā* [alms of confidentiality]—and this, according to them is 119 dirhams. And therefore the Law imposes killing on the one doing it [bestiality] and the one to which it is done—and otherwise the beast—when is killing obligatory regarding it? and adultery [fornication] is casting the sperm of inner knowledge into the soul of him who has not previously been bound by the pact. And pollution [lit. attaining puberty, wet dream] is that one's tongue spontaneously divulges the secret out of its proper place—then he is bound to *al-ghusl*, i.e. the renewal of the pact.

107 *Al-tuhūr* [ritual purity] is being free and clean from believing any doctrine except allegiance to the Imam, *Al-ṣiyām* [fasting] is refraining from divulging the secret. The Ka'ba is the Prophet, and the Bāb 'Alī, al-Ṣafā is the Prophet and al-Marwa 'Alī. And the *mīqāt* [rendezvous of the pilgrims] is *al-asās*. And the *talbiya* [response—the *labbayka* "at your service! here am I!" of the pilgrims when they reach Mecca] is the response to the propagandist. And the *ṭawāf* of the House seven times [circumambulation of the Ka'ba] is making the rounds of Muhammad to the completion of the seven Imams. And the five canonical Prayers are the indication

of the four fundamentals and of the Imam: the Dawn Prayer is the indicator of the *Sābiq*, and the Noon Prayer is the indicator of the *Tāli*, and the Afternoon Prayer of the *Asās*, and the *Sunset Prayer* is the indicator of the *Nāṭiq*, and the Evening Prayer is the indicator of the Imam. Likewise they claim that the forbidden things [*al-muḥarramāt*] are an expression for those men who are evil, and that we have been enjoined to shun them, just as the acts of worship [*al-'ibādāt*] are an expression for the innocent, good [men] whom we have been commanded to follow.

108 [p. 57] As for the Hereafter [*al-Ma'ād*], some of them claim that the

Fire and the fetters are an expression for the commands which are the [legal] precepts. For they are imposed on those who are ignorant of the science of the "inner meaning," and so long as they remain [bound] by them they are [being] punished [tormented, afflicted]. Then, when they acquire the science of "the inner meaning," the fetters of the precepts are removed from them and they are made happy by freedom from them.

109 Moreover, they undertake to interpret every expression that has come in the Qur'an and the Sunna. Thus they say: "rivers of milk" [47.16/15], i.e. the mines [sources] of religion: the inner knowledge, by which the one worthy of them [the rivers] is suckled and by which he is nourished in a way by which his subtle life continues, for the nourishment of the subtle spirit is by being suckled on the knowledge from the teacher, just as the life of the dense body is by being suckled on the milk from the mother's breast. And "rivers of wine" [47.16/15] are "exterior" knowledge, and "rivers of honey purified" [47.17/15] are the science of "the interior" received from the "Proofs" and the Imams.

110 As for the apologetic miracles, they interpreted all of them and

said: The meaning of the Flood is the flood of knowledge by which were drowned those clinging to the Sunna; and the ship [is] the refuge [sanctuary] of him who responds to the "call" by which he is fortified. And the "fire of Abraham" is an expression for the anger of Nimrod, not for real fire. And the "sacrifice of Isaac" means imposing the pact on him. The staff of Moses [cf. 20.72/69] is his proof which swallowed their lying sophisms, not the wood. The splitting of the sea is the separation [division] of Moses' knowledge among them according to divisions [parts]. And the sea is the world. And the cloud[s] which overshadowed them mean the Imam whom Moses appointed to guide them aright and to pour forth knowledge upon them. The locusts and the ants [ticks, winged insects—gnats] and the frogs are the questions [demands] of Moses and his injunctions which were imposed on them. And the manna and quail are a knowledge which came down from heaven to a certain propagandist [emissary] who is the one intended by the quail.

111 The praising of the mountains [cf. 21.79 and 34.10] means the praising of men strong in religion [and] deeply rooted in [p. 58] sure and certain knowledge. The jinn whom Solomon son of David mastered were the Bāṭinites of that time, and the devils were the Literalists on whom the hard labors were imposed. Jesus had a father, with respect to the exterior—and he meant by "the father" simply the Imam, since he had no Imam but derived knowledge from God without an intermediary [i.e. God

was his "Father" in the sense that He was his Imam]; and they claimed—God curse them!—that his father was Joseph the carpenter. His speech in the cradle was his coming to know in the cradle of the mould [i.e. the body?] before becoming free from it what others come to know after death and freedom from the mould [body]. The quickening of the dead on the part of Jesus means quickening by the life of knowledge from the death of ignorance of "the interior." And his healing the blind man means from the blindness of error and the leprosy of unbelief by the understanding of [insight into] the plain truth. Iblis and Adam are a designation of Abū Bakr and 'Alī, because Abū Bakr was commanded to prostrate himself to 'Alī and to obey him and he refused and was proud [arrogant]. They pretend that Antichrist [*al-dajjāl*] is Abū Bakr, and he was one-eyed because he saw only with the eye of the exterior and not with the eye of the interior. And Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj [Gog and Magog] are the devotees of the exterior.

112 This is some of their drivel [insane babbling] about interpretations. We have related it to be laughed at [ridiculed, mocked, derided]. We take refuge in God from the felling [i.e. being felled in a wrestling match because of negligence] of the negligent and the stumble of the ignorant. In refuting them we follow only three ways: [direct] refutation, confrontation [contradiction, objection], and verification [substantiation].

113 [*The first way*] [Direct] refutation [invalidation, proving false] consists in saying: How do you know that what is meant by these expressions [p. 59] is what you have cited? If you have gotten it from the reasoning of the intellect [mind]—why, in your view, this is futile [useless, invalid]. And if you have heard it from the utterance of the Infallible Imam—why his utterance is not stronger in clarity than these expressions which you have interpreted: so perhaps its [his] meaning is something else of even greater "interiority" than the "interior" [inner meaning] which you have mentioned. But he goes a step beyond the literal meaning to such an extent that he claims that by "the mountains" is meant "the men": what, then, is meant by "the men"? Perhaps something else is meant by that expression. And the meaning of "the devils" is "the literalists"—and what [is the meaning of] "the literalists"? And by "milk" is meant "knowledge"—and what is the meaning of "knowledge"?

114 *If you say*: "knowledge" and "the men" and "the literalists" are plain [obvious] regarding what they require by linguistic convention—you are looking with one eye at one of the two sides, and so you are the Antichrist—since he is one-eyed—because you see with one of the two eyes, for "the men" is exterior [literal], but you are blind in the other eye which is looking at "the mountains," for they also are something exterior—[literal]. *If you say*: It is possible to allude by "the mountains" to "the men," *we say*: And it is possible to allude by "the men" to something else, as the poet expressed [designated] by the two men of whom one was a tailor and the other a weaver [certain] astronomical matters and celestial causes, and said:

Two men: a tailor and another a weaver
confronting one another in Spica Virginis

One unceasingly weaving a cloak of one going
and his companion sewing the garment of the one coming.

[Spica Virginis: *al-simāk al-a'zal* (unarmed): One of two stars in constellation Virgo; it is so called because it has nothing before it, unlike the other, *al-simāk al-rāmih* (Arcturus: "the lance-throwing") which has before it a small star known as "its banner and lance."]

115 And so [it is] in every case [branch of knowledge]. And if "the praising of the mountains" stands for "the praising of the men," then let the meaning of "the men" in the Most High's utterance: "men whom neither commerce nor trafficking diverts from the remembrance of God" [24.37] stand for "the mountains," for the fitness [aptness] exists on both sides. Then, if "the mountains" is made equivalent to "the men," and "the men" is made equivalent to something else, it would be possible to make that third inner meaning equivalent to [p. 60] a fourth and there would be a continuous sequence to a degree which would destroy mutual understanding and communication, and it would be impossible to decide that the one having the second rank is inferior to the third, or that the third is inferior to the fourth.

116 *The second way* is the confrontation of the false with the false. This consists in taking all the traditions in [a sense] opposed to their doctrine. For example, one would say: The Prophet's statement "the angels will not enter a house containing an image" means: Reason will not enter a brain containing belief in the Infallible [Imam]. And his utterance "If a dog licks [laps] in a dish of one of you, let him wash it seven times" means: If a Bāṭinite marries the daughter of one of you, let him wash her from the filth of the association with the water of knowledge and the purity of action after her having been begrimed by the dust of degradation. Or a speaker says: Marriage is not contracted without witnesses and a guardian. As for the Prophet's saying: "Every marriage not attended by four" is fornication—it means that every belief not attested to by the four caliphs—Abū Bakr and 'Umar and 'Uthmān and 'Alī is false. And his statement: "There can be no marriage save with a guardian and two just witnesses" means: There can be no intercourse save by a male and two females—and other such farces ["humbuggery"—lies].

117 My intention in mentioning this much is the confrontation of the false with the false and the communication of the way to open this door. Then, when you have been guided to it, you will not be unable to make every expression from Book or Sunna mean the opposite of their belief. *If they claim* that you have made "the image" mean "the Infallible [Imam]" in the Prophet's utterance "Angels will not enter a house containing an image"—and what agreement is there between the two? *I say*: And you have made "the serpent" mean "the demonstration," and the Father—with respect to Jesus—"the Imam," and "the milk" "the knowledge" in the case of the rivers of milk in the Garden, and "the Jinn" the Bāṭinites, and "the devils" "the Literalists," and "the mountains" "the men"—and what is the agreement [fitness]? *If you say*: The demonstration crunches specious arguments as the serpent crunches another [something

else], and the Imam gives scientific [knowledgeable] existence as the Father gives personal [individual?] existence, and milk nourishes the individual as [p. 61] knowledge nourishes the spirit, and the Jinn are interior [hidden] like the Bāṭinites.

118 *Then one would say to them:* If, then, you are content with this amount of sharing, why God has never created [any] two things without there being between them a sharing in some quality! For we made the image mean the Imam, because the image is a likeness [figure] [and] contains no spirit, just as the Imam, in your view, is infallible but has no apologetic miracle; and the brain is the abode of the intellect, as the house is the abode of the intelligent; and the angel is a spiritual thing just as the intellect is such. So it is certain that the meaning of his utterance "The angels will not enter a house containing an image" is: The intellect will not enter a brain containing the belief in the infallibility of the Imam.

119 So if you have learned this, then take any expression they mention, and take also whatever you wish, and seek their sharing in some aspect, and then interpret it in that sense and it will be a proof by the exigency of what they affirm, as I have informed you about the sharing between angel and intellect, and brain and house, and image and Imam. When the door is opened to you, you will become aware of the way of their stratagems in deception by extracting the necessities of the expressions and supposing wild fancies in place of them as a means of destroying [invalidating] the Law. This amount is enough to show the falsity of their interpretation.

120 *The third way* is verification [substantiation]. It consists in *your saying:* These inner meanings and interpretations which you have cited, were we to be indulgent with you and admit that they are correct [authentic], what is their status in the Law? Should they be concealed, or should they be divulged? *If you say:* They should be divulged to everyone. *We say:* Then why did Muḥammad—God bless him and grant him peace!—conceal them and not mention anything of that to the Companions and to the masses so that that age passed without anyone's having a report of this sort? [p. 62] And how could he have deemed it permissible to conceal the religion of God, when God Most High had said: "You shall make it clear with the people, and not conceal it" [3.184/187], to give notice [warn, call attention to the fact] that it is not lawful [licit] to conceal [our] Religion.

121 But if they claim that it ought to be concealed, *we say:* What it was made incumbent on the Apostle of God—God bless him and grant him peace!—to conceal of the mystery [secret] of [our] Religion, how is it licit for you to divulge it? The crime regarding a secret by its being divulged by one who has come to know it is among the greatest of crimes. So were it not that the trustee of the Law [i.e. Muḥammad] knew a great secret and a universal advantage in concealing these [such] secrets, he would not have concealed them, and he would not have repeated these literal meanings to the ears of men and there would not have been reiterated in the words of the Qur'ān the description of the Garden and the Fire in plain terms—

because he would have known that men would understand from that the contrary of its inner meaning, which is [the] true [one], and would believe these literal expressions which would have no truth.

122 And if you ascribe to him ignorance of what men understood from him, this is to accuse [him] of ignorance of the meaning of speech, for the Prophet—God bless him and grant him peace!—knew positively that men would understand from God's utterance "and spreading shade and outpoured waters, and fruits abounding" [56.29–31/30–32] only what is understood from it in the language [linguistic usage]—and so [of] the other expressions. Furthermore, despite his knowledge of that, he used to corroborate it for them by repetition and swearing, and he did not divulge to them the inner meaning which you have mentioned, because he knew it to be the hidden secret of God—why, then, have you divulged this secret and rent this veil? Is this anything but a departure from [our] Religion, and an opposing of the trustee of the Law, and a wrecking of all he founded?!—if it be granted to you for the sake of argument that the inner meaning you have mentioned is true in God's view. They have no way to escape from this!

123 *If it be said:* This is a secret which it is not permissible to divulge to the masses of men, and for this reason the Apostle of God—God bless him and grant him peace!—did not divulge it. But the Prophet had the right to divulge it to his *sūs*, who was to be his trustee and vicar after him. And he did divulge it to 'Alī and not to anyone else. *We say:* And 'Alī—did he divulge it to anyone other than his *sūs* and vicar, or not? [p. 63] And if he divulged it only to his *sūs*, and so the *sūs* of his *sūs* and the vicar of his vicar down to the present—then how did it finally come to these ignorant men among the masses so that they bandy it about, and books are loaded with the account of it, and it is the talk of the town? *It must be replied:* One of the vicars disobeyed and divulged the secret to those for whom it was not intended, and so it spread—but in their view they are impeccable and cannot conceivably disobey!

124 *If it be said:* The *sūs* mentions it only in the company of him with whom he has made a pact about it. *We say:* And what was it that prevented the Apostle from making a pact and mentioning it, if it was allowable to divulge it with a pact? *If it be said:* Perhaps he did make a pact and mention [it], but it was not transmitted because of the pact which he exacted from him to whom he divulged [it]. *We say:* And why did that spread among you, since your Imams disclose that only in the company of him from whom a pact has been exacted? And what was it that preserved the pact of those but not the pact of these? Moreover, *it should be said:* If it is allowable to divulge this secret with a pact, and it is conceivable that the pact be violated, is it conceivable that he divulge it to one who the Infallible Imam *knows* will not violate it, or is it sufficient that he suppose this by reason of his intuitive knowledge of human nature and his personal judgment and what he infers from the signs?

125 *If you say:* It is permissible [to divulge it] only to him who the Infallible Imam knows will not violate it by a notification received

from God, then how did these secrets spread to all men, since they could spread only from him who had heard [them]? So either the informer violated the pact, or no pact was made at all. In one of these [alternatives] there is an ascription of ignorance to the Infallible, and in [p. 64] the other an ascription of disobedience [sin]. But according to them there is no way to either one. *And if you claim* that it is licit to divulge with a pact when discernment testifies about the one with whom the pact is made that he will not violate it by inference from the signs, then in this is the destruction of the basic principle of their doctrine. For they pretend that it is not permissible to follow the proofs of reason and its speculation, because the intellectuals [because men of reason] disagree about speculation [reasoning] and in it is the danger of error—how, then, can they judge by intuition and sign in which error is more prevalent than the right, when that involves divulging the secret of religion, which is the most dangerous of things? They have indeed forbidden adherence to supposition and personal reasoning in juridical matters which are a judgment among men by way of mediation in disputes, but then reduced the divulging of the secret of religion to the realm of fantasy and intuition.

126 This is a strong [solid] way [to argue], understood by the intelligent man and gloried in by the one engaged in the legal sciences, because he knows positively that the speaker is two kinds: *One* is he who holds that these literal expressions have no inner meaning and admit of no interpretation—hence interpretation is absolutely false [futile]. *The other* is he to whom it occurs [?] that that may possibly be allusions to inner meanings, [and] God did not permit the Apostle of God—God bless him and grant him peace!—to declare plainly the inner meanings, but obligated him to utter the literal meanings—so speaking of the inner meaning became an illicit falsehood and a forbidden iniquity and a hostile break with the Lawgiver—this is a principle agreed upon [by convention]. And the men of our age—given their remoteness from the trustee of the Law, and the spread of corruption and the domination of the passions over men and the turning away of all from religious matters—are not more submissive to truth and more disposed for [receptive of] the secret and more trustworthy keepers of it and better suited to understand it and profit from it than the men of the time of the Apostle of God—God bless him and grant him peace!

127 These secrets and interpretations, if they have any reality, [p. 65] he [the Apostle] closed their hearings against them and bridled [curbed] the mouths of speakers from speaking [constantly] of them. Now we have in the Apostle of God a splendid model in his speech and his action. So we say only what he said, and manifest only what he manifested, and are silent about what he passed over in silence. And in actions we observe the acts of worship, and even the vigils [night-watching] and supererogatory prayers [practices] and the different kinds of strivings [against self-mortifications]. We also know that what the trustee of the Law did not dispense with, we cannot dispense with it. Nor are we taken in by the assertion of the stupid that when our souls become pure through knowledge of the inner meaning we can dispense with external acts.

128 Rather do we contemn this deluded speaker and say to him: Poor man! Do you think your soul is purer and cleaner than the soul of the Apostle of God—God bless him and grant him peace!? Yet he used to rise at night to pray until his feet became swollen! Or is it thinkable that he [Muhammad] used to practice deception on 'Ā'isha to make her think that [his] religion was true, while he knew it to be false? If you think the former, how stupid you are—and we can't add to it! And if you think the latter—how godless and unbelieving you are—and we are not going to argue with you about it!

129 But we say: If we assume the worst of circumstances, and our rational proofs [?], for example, fail to overtake your error and your ignorance and to grasp the veracity of the Apostle of God—God bless him and grant him peace!—we see the fundamental principles [truths] of our minds judging that "loss" [i.e. being a loser] in the group of Muhammad—God bless him and grant him peace!—and conformity to him and contentment with what he wanted for himself, is better than victory [i.e. being a winner] with you, O abandoned and ignorant man—nay more—demented and [p. 66] deranged man! So let the fair-minded [equitable] man now consider the last of this and its first: its last convinces the masses—and even old women; and its first provides true apodeictic proof to every inquirer familiar with the legal sciences. And let it suffice you to know a discourse [argument] which is profitable to all men despite the difference of their categories regarding knowledge and ignorance.

The Second Section

On Their Argument from Numbers and Letters

130 This is a kind of folly [ignorance, stupidity] peculiar to this sect from among all the sects. For the erring groups, despite the ramification of their discourse [*kalām*] and the spread of their methods in organizing specious arguments, never was one of them soiled by this kind [of stupidity], but men found it feeble and the masses and the ignorant knew of necessity its falsity and detested it. But these [Bāṭinites] adhered to it—and small wonder, since the drowning man clings to anything and the dolt [numbskull, ignoramus] is shaken and doubts because of every deception. We shall mention a small part of it that the man considering it may thank his Lord for integrity of mind and equilibrium of the mixture of humors and soundness of constitution, because being deceived [taken in] by the like of that can proceed only from idiocy and disorder in the mind.

131 They have asserted that the holes [apertures] in the head of man are seven, and the heavens are seven, [p. 67] and the regions are seven, and the stars are seven—I mean the planets—and the days of the week are seven. This, then, shows that the stage of the Imams is completed in [by] seven. They also pretend that the elements are four, and that the seasons of the year are four—and this shows that the principles [fundaments] are four: the *sābiq* and the *tālī*, the two divinities, and the *nāṭiq* and the *asās*, the two Imams. Moreover, they claim that the

stations of the zodiac are twelve, and [this] indicates the twelve proofs, as we have reported concerning their doctrine [cf. Para. 76].

132 And often they elicit from the form of the animals indications. Thus they assert that man is in the shape of the letters of "Muḥammad." For his head is like a *mīm*, and his two arms are outstretched like the *hā'*, and his rump is like the *mīm*, and his two legs are like the *dāl*. And in such fashion they discourse about the form of the birds and the beasts.

133 And often they make interpretations from letters and numbers. Thus they say: The Prophet—God bless him and grant him peace!—said: "I have been commanded to fight men until they say: There is no god save God: and when they say it they safeguard [immunize] from me their lives and their property except for what is due [owed] of them." It was said: And what is due of them? He said: "The knowledge of their limits." [p. 68] And they pretend that "their limits" [the pronominal suffix seems, from the following, to refer to the phrase *lā ilāha illa llāh*] are the knowledge of the secrets [mysteries] of their letters, viz. that *lā ilāha illa llāh* consists of four words, and seven divisions [syllables], viz.

1 234 56 7

the parts [divisions: *qiṭa'*] of *lā ilāha illa llāh*, and three substances [*jawāhir*], because *lā* is a particle, and there remain *ilāha* and *illa* and *allāh*, and these are three substances, and the total is twelve letters [lām—alif—alif—lām—hā'—alif—lām—alif—alif—lām—lām—hā'].

134 They claim that the four words indicate the two supernal governors: *al-sābiq* and *al-tālī*, and the two lower governors: *al-nāṭiq* and *al-asās*. This is its indication of the spirituals. But it also indicates the corporeals, because they are the four elements. As for the three substances, they indicate Jibrīl and Mikā'il and Isrāfil from among the spirituals, and from the corporeals they indicate length and breadth and depth, since by these bodies they are seen [visible]. And the seven syllables indicate from the spirituals the seven Prophets, and from the corporeals the seven stars: because, were it not for the seven Prophets, the religious Laws would not differ; and were it not for the seven stars the times [seasons] would not differ. And the twelve letters indicate the twelve Proofs, and among the corporeals the twelve stations of the zodiac.

135 Similarly they arbitrarily explain what was said by Muḥammad the Apostle of God, and the letters, and the beginnings of the Suras, and present varieties of silliness which would make madmen laugh, to say nothing of reasonable men. Let this suffice to show you the ignominy of a group which argues in this way! We are not going to prolong the account of this kind of argument of theirs, being content with this amount to make known their infamies. This is a kind [of argument] the falsity of which is known by logical necessity, [p. 69] and so it requires no refutation. However, we shall inform you of two ways to silence those of them who are stupid and obstinate: demanding [*muṭālabā*: importuning], and objecting [confronting—*mu'ārada*].

136 As for demanding, it consists in saying: And whence do you know these indications? Were a man to pass judgment on them, he would pronounce against himself that that was from a bad mixture of his humors

which had stirred up his blend of humors against him and produced confused dreams [nightmares]—and God had indeed led them [text—you] astray to such a point that they [read: you?] are not ashamed of them. Do you know their authenticity [correctness] by logical necessity, or a reasoning or a hearing from your Infallible Imam? If you claim necessity you flabbergast [slander] your minds and are guilty of forgery, and then you are not safe from an objector who would claim that he knows the falsity of that by necessity, and then his position vis-à-vis the mutual opposition of the true by the false would be the position of him who opposes the false by the false.

137 And if you know [that] by the reasoning of the mind, why you hold reasoning of the mind to be futile [false] because of the disagreement of the intelligent in their reasoning. But if you believe it, then apprise me of the mode and process of reasoning and from what one infers these stupidities. And if you know that from the words of the Infallible Imam, then show that the one who reports from him is infallible, or that the transmitters from him reach the degree of impeccable transmission; then establish as true that the Infallible Imam cannot err; then show that he cannot communicate what he knows to be false—for perhaps he has deceived you by these stupidities, and he knows them to be false, as you claim that the Prophet—God bless him and grant him peace!—deceived men by the description of the Garden and the Fire, and by what is related of [p. 70] the Prophets such as the quickening of the dead and the changing of the staff into a serpent, and [that] he [Muḥammad] lied in all those things and mentioned them despite his knowledge that none of those things existed, and that men would definitely understand from them their literal meanings, and that he intended [purposed] the communication of the literal meanings while knowing that they would understand the literal meanings he communicated to them, though this was the contrary of the truth—but he saw in that some advantage.

138 Perhaps, then, your Infallible Imam saw some advantage in contemning your intelligences and laughing at you [leading you round by the nose]—so he tossed to you these hoaxes to show his absolute mastery and enslavement of you and to vaunt his supreme cunning and cleverness in deceiving you. I would like to know how you can be sure he is not lying for some advantage he saw, when you have plainly stated that about the Prophet—God bless him and grant him peace!! Is there any difference between them? Except that the Prophet—God bless him and grant him peace!—was corroborated by the apologetic miracle proving his veracity, whereas he upon whom you rely has no apologetic miracle save your stupidity! This is the way of demanding [importuning].

139 As for objecting [confronting], we do not propose to specify [all] the forms, but we shall teach you a method which embraces [p. 71] all the forms [shapes] and letters there are in the world. For every existent is undoubtedly from one to ten or more. So whenever you see one thing, then argue from it to Muḥammad—God bless him and grant him peace! And if you see two, then say that it is an indication of the two Shaykhs, Abū Bakr and 'Umar. And if it be three, then Muḥammad—God bless him and grant him peace!—and Abū Bakr and 'Umar. And if it be four,

then the [first] Four Caliphs. And if it be five, then [an indication] of Muḥammad with the Four Caliphs. And say: Do you not know the secret [of the fact] that the holes in man's head [face] are five? What is one, i.e. the mouth, indicates the Prophet Muḥammad, for he is one; and the two eyes and two nostrils indicate the Four Caliphs. *And we say:* Do you not know what the secret is in the name of Muḥammad and its being four letters [i.e. *mīm*, *ḥā'*, *mīm*, *dāl*—as written]? *If they say:* No! *We say:* It is the secret known only to an angel brought near [an Angel of the Throne or Presence], for he builds it on the fact that the name of his vicar is four letters and he is old [mature], not 'Ali whose name is three letters.

140 And if you find [a] seven, argue therefrom to seven of the Caliphs of the Umayyads to emphasize contempt [hatred] for them and to exalt the 'Abbāsids above comparison with them. And say: The number of the seven heavens and of the stars and of [the days of] the week indicates Mu'āwiya and Yazid, then Marwān, then 'Abd al-Malik, then al-Walīd, then 'Umar son of 'Abd al-'Azīz, then Hishām, [8 here! leave out Mu'āwiya?] then the seventh the Awaited—and this is the one called al-Sufyānī, and this is the doctrine of the Umayyad Imāmites. Or confront them with the doctrine of the Rāwandīyya and say: It indicates al-'Abbās, then 'Abdallāh son of al-'Abbās, then 'Alī son of 'Abdallāh, then Muḥammad son of 'Alī, then [p. 72] Ibrāhīm, then Abū 'l-'Abbās al-Saffāḥ then al-Mansūr. And likewise what you find of ten or twelve, reckon the same number of the 'Abbāsīd Caliphs, and see whether you find any difference between the two utterances. By this the falsity of their *kalām* [of what they say] is clear [evident] as is their being exposed and constrained by their own [way of] argument [inference]. This kind of *kalām*, it is not fit for its collector to expatiate on it: so let us turn from it to something else.

[p. 73]

CHAPTER SIX

On the Disclosure of the Deceptions Which They Bedecked with Their Claim in the Form of Apodeictic Proof of the Invalidation of Intellectual Reasoning and of the Affirmation of the Necessity of Learning from the Infallible Imam

141 Our method will be to put in order their specious arguments to the limit of our ability and then to disclose where deception is hidden in them.

Their ultimate claim is that he who knows the realities of things is the one occupying the post of Caliph in Egypt, and that it is incumbent on all creatures to obey him and to learn from him that they may obtain through him [or: thereby] happiness in this life and the next.

142 Their proof of it is their assertion that

(1) Everything which can conceivably be negatively and affirmatively enunciated has true and false in it; and the true is one, and the false is what confronts it, for all is not true, nor all false: and this is a premise.

(2) Then, the true must be distinguished from the false, and this is a

matter of obligation which no one can dispense with in the matter of his best religious and secular interests: and this is a second premise.

(3) Then, the attainment of the truth must be known to man either through himself, from his intellect by his reasoning, and not by a learning process, or he knows it from another by a learning process: and this is a third premise.

143 (4) And if knowledge of it [the true] cannot be by the way of independent reasoning and making minds [the] judge of it, learning from another is imperative; moreover, the teacher [p. 74] must either be stipulated to be safeguarded from error and slip, and uniquely qualified by this property, or it is allowable to learn from anyone. And if learning from anyone—whoever he be—is untenable, because of the multiplicity of the speakers and teachers and the mutual contradiction of their utterances, it is certain that the learning must be from a person who among all men is the unique possessor of infallibility: and this is a fourth premise.

144 (5) Then, it must either be possible for the world to be devoid of that infallible one, or be impossible for it to be devoid [of him]. But allowing it to be devoid is impossible, because, since it has been established that he is the means of attaining the truth, allowing the world to be devoid of him would involve a concealing [eclipse] of the truth and a closing down of the way to perceive [attain] it—and in this would be the ruin of men's religious and secular affairs. But this would be injustice itself, opposed to wisdom—and that is impossible on the part of God—Praised be He!—since He is the Wise and the far removed from injustice and shameful deeds: and this is a fifth premise.

145 (6) Then, that infallible one, who must exist in the world, must either be allowed to conceal himself and not [to] appear or [to] call men to the truth, or he must publicly declare himself. But it is false that he can legitimately conceal [himself], for this would be a concealment of the truth, and it would be an injustice opposed to innerrancy: and this is a sixth premise.

146 (7) Now it is indeed certain that there is in the world an infallible one who openly makes this claim, and it remains to consider his specification. If, then, there are in the world two claimants, it would be complicated for us to distinguish the right one from the wrong one. But if there is only one claimant, in the place of complication that one is [p. 75] definitely the infallible one, and there is no need of any proof and any apologetic miracle. The likeness of that would be: If it be known that in a room in the house there is a man who is an *'ālim* [scholar jurist]; then we see in a room a man; and if the house contains another room, we have a lingering doubt about the one whom we have seen, whether he is that *'ālim* or someone else is. So if we know that there is no room in the house except this room, we know of necessity that he is the *'ālim*. So it is to be said of the Infallible Imam: and this is a seventh premise.

147 (8) It is known decisively that the only one in God's world claiming that he is the true Imam and the knower of God's secrets regarding all problems [and] the deputy of the Apostle of God concerning all rational and religious matters [and] the one who knows the revelation and the

interpretation with a peremptory, not a conjectural, knowledge is the one who occupies himself with the matter [or: the Imamate] in Egypt: and this is an eighth premise.

148 Therefore, he is the Infallible Imam from whom it is incumbent on all men to learn the realities of the truth and to become acquainted with the meanings of the Law—and this is the conclusion we were seeking.

149 At this point they say: It is indeed a mercy of God and of His way of acting with creatures that He allows no one among creatures to claim infallibility save the true Imam. For if another claimant were to appear it would be difficult to distinguish the right one from the wrong one, and creatures would err in the matter. So for this reason we never see an antagonist of the Imam, but rather we see a disavower [repudiator] of him: just as the Prophet—God bless him and grant him peace!—never had an antagonist. The antagonist is he who says: You are not a Prophet, but I am the Prophet; and the repudiator is he who does not claim [it] for himself, but simply denies his prophethood. This, then, is the case with the Imam.

150 *They say:* As for the 'Abbāsids—although the time has not been free from opposition to them—there was no one among them who claimed for himself infallibility and coming to know, from God Most High, the realities of things and the secrets of the Law, and dispensing with reasoning and the independent exercise of [personal] opinion. And it is this property which is sought. The sole ones to make this claim were the family of the Apostle [p. 76] of God—God bless him and grant him peace!—and his progeny. And God turned men's motives away from opposing them in the claim of the like of that, that the truth might firmly abide in its proper place and that doubt might be dislodged from the hearts of the Believers, [as] a mercy and favor from God. As a result, if one assume a person who would claim that for himself, he would mention it only in the form of jesting or argument: but that he would persist in believing that, or act on the strength of it—certainly not!

151 These are clear premises; of their sum total we have omitted only the proof of the invalidation of the mind's [intellect's] reasoning when we said: Either a man knows the truth by himself through his [own] mind [intellect], or he learns it from another. We shall now prove the invalidity of the mind's [intellect's] reasoning by rational and Law-based proofs. These are five:

152 (1) *The first* is a rational proof. He who follows what reason [the intellect] requires and assents to it, unconsciously has in his assent to it disbelief of [denial of] it. For there is no speculative question which he believes by his intellectual reasoning, but that he has regarding it an adversary who believes by the reasoning of the intellect its contrary. So if [your] intellect is a truthful judge, why the intellect of your adversary is also truthful. *If you say:* My adversary is not truthful, *what you say* involves a contradiction, since you believe one intellect and disbelieve its like. And *if you say:* My adversary is truthful—*your adversary says:* You are lying and wrong. And if you pretend that "My adversary has no intellect, but I only have it"—this is also the claim of your adversary. So by what

are you distinguished from him? By length of beard? Or whiteness of face? Or by frequency of coughing? Or by vehemence in claiming?! At this point they loose the language of mockery and disdain, believing that by what they say they have the upper hand which is unanswerable.

153 [p. 77] (2) [*The Second Proof*] is their saying: When a judge seeking guidance is doubtful about a legal or rational problem and claims he is unable to get to know its indication [proof—i.e. the way to solve it], what do you say to him? Do you refer him to his intellect—and perhaps he is a rude common man who is unacquainted with rational proofs, or he is an intelligent man who has shot the arrows of *ra'y* [personal judgment or opinion] to the best of his ability, but the problem has not been disclosed to him and he remains doubtful? Do you, then refer him to his intellect the deficiency of which he acknowledges? This is absurd. Or do you say to him: Learn the way of reasoning and the guide to the problem from me? If you say that, you have contradicted your affirmation of the invalidation of *ta'lim*: for you have enjoined *ta'lim* and made it a way [method]—but it is *our* doctrine. Unless, indeed, you refuse for yourselves the office of *ta'lim*, and are not ashamed of your adversary who opposes you and who, in his intellect, is like you in yours.

154 This learner will say: Your adversary has invited me to learn from him, but indeed I am also perplexed about the designation [specification; selection] of the teacher. No one of you claims infallibility for himself, nor has he an apologetic miracle which marks him out, nor is he the sole possessor of anything by which he differs from others. So I do not know whether to follow the Philosopher, or the Ash'arite, or the Mu'tazilite—since their assertions are mutually contradictory though their intellects are like one another. I do not find in myself a preference because of length of beard and whiteness of faces, nor do I see any difference save in that, if it occurs. As for the intellect and the claim and the delusion of each about himself that he is the one right and his fellow is the one wrong which is like the delusion of his fellow—how intense is the contradiction of this way of talking in the view of him who is familiar with it!

155 (3) [*The third proof*] is their saying: oneness is the indication of the true, and multiplicity is the indication of the false. For when we say: How much is five and five? the true is one, viz. that one say: Ten. But the false is multiple [and] boundless, viz. everything other than ten, which is above or below it. And oneness is an inherent property of the doctrine of *ta'lim*, for a thousand thousand are agreed on this belief and all say the same thing, and disagreement among them is inconceivable. But to men of *ra'y* [personal reasoning] there continually attaches disagreement and multiplicity. So this shows that the truth is in the sect to the word of which oneness cleaves. This was shown by the Most High's utterance: "If it had been from other than God surely they would have found in it much inconsistency" [4.84/82].

156 [p. 78] (4) [*The Fourth Proof*] is their saying: If the reasoner does not perceive the similarity between himself and his adversary, and has a good opinion of himself and a bad opinion of his adversary, it is no wonder, then, that this delusion is one of the things which dominates men,

viz. their infatuation with their own opinions and the excellence of their own intellects—even though that is one of the indications of folly [stupidity]. The astonishing thing is simply that he does not perceive the similarity between his two states. How many times he has seen himself in one state, and his state has changed and he believes a thing for a while and judges it to be the truth imposed by the reliable [truthful] intellect, then there suddenly occurs to him a thought and he believes its contrary and claims that he now has become aware of the truth, and that what he formerly believed was a fancy [imagination] by which he was deceived: he sees himself possessed of a decisive belief, in his second state, which is equivalent to his preceding belief, for it was decisive with the like of his present decisiveness! I would like to know whence he is safe against being deceived and sure that he will not become aware of something by which it will become clear that what he now believes is false. There is no reasoner but that he often believes the like, then he ceaselessly glories finally in his belief which is like the other beliefs of his which he abandoned and came to know their falsity after deciding on them and holding them positively.

157 (5) [*The Fifth Proof*], and it is Law-based, is their saying: The Apostle of God—God bless him and his family and grant them peace!—said: “My Community will split into seventy-odd sects of which one will be saved.” And it was said: “Who are they?” He said: “The people of *al-sunna* [the custom] and *al-jamā’a* [the consensus].” It was said: “And what is the custom and the consensus?” He said: “What I and my Companions are now doing [saying and doing].” They say: And what they were doing [p. 79] was only following the *ta’lim* regarding what happened among them [their disputes] and constituting the Apostle—Peace upon him!—judge regarding that, and not following their own personal opinion and their intellects. So this proves that truth is in following, not in the reasoning of intellects.

158 This is the accurate formulation of their proofs in the strongest mode of presentation—and perhaps most of them would be unable to attain such a degree of perfection in precisely formulating them. So we say—and in God is succor—the argument against that is [by way of] two methods: general [summary] and detailed.

The First Method, viz. the General [Summary]

159 This is that we say: This belief which you have deduced from putting together these premises and ordering them by way of reasoning and reflection—if you claim to know it of necessity you are obstinate [pigheaded], and your adversaries are not unable to claim necessity in their knowledge of the falsity of your doctrine. And if they claim that, they would, in the view of a fair man, have a sounder claim. And if you claim to perceive it by consideration of the combining of these premises and ordering them in the form of valid syllogisms, then you acknowledge the validity of intellectual reasoning—and its falseness is claimed [by you]! This argument will silence him and disclose his vileness [ignominy].

160 Or one should say to him: Do you know the falsity of reasoning of necessity or by reasoning? And there is no way to claim necessity, because the necessary is that the knowledge of which is common to [shared by] the possessors of sound intellects [minds]—like our saying: The whole is greater than the part, and, Two is more than one, and, One and the same thing cannot be eternal and incipient, and, One and the same thing cannot be in two places [simultaneously]. And if he claims to perceive the falsity of reasoning by reasoning, his words involve a contradiction. And there will never, never be a way out of this! And this [argument] comes against every Bāṭinite who claims knowledge of something peculiar to himself. For he must claim either necessity or reasoning or hearing from a truthful infallible one, whose veracity and infallibility he also claims to know either of necessity or by reasoning. But there is no way to claim [p. 80] necessity; and in the claim of reasoning is the refutation of the very doctrine itself! Marvel, then, at this evident contradiction and the disregard of it by these deluded men!

161 *If some denier of reasoning says:* This can be retorted against you, because one can say to you: And how do you know the validity of reasoning? If you claim necessity, you rush into what you have deemed farfetched, and you are embroiled in precisely what you have rejected. But if you claim: We have perceived it by reasoning, then how do you know the validity of the reasoning by which you have perceived that, since there is a dispute about it? If you then claim to know that by a third reasoning, the same difficulty is inevitable regarding a fourth and a fifth and so on *ad infinitum*. *We say:* To be sure, this argument could be retorted if intelligibles [the objects of *‘aql*] were obtained by [due to] verbal comparisons [counterbalancings, weighings], but that is not the case. Consider, then, the subtlety of the difference: For we say that we know intellectual reasoning to be a guide to knowledge of the object of reasoning by following the path of reasoning and arriving at it. So he who follows it, arrives; and he who arrives knows that what he followed is the way [path]. But he who doubts before following should be told: The way to remove this doubt is to follow [the path].

162 And an example of this is: When we are asked about the way to the Ka’ba and we indicate a specific way, and it is said to us: Whence do you know it to be a way? *We say:* We know it by following [it]—because we have followed it and reached the Ka’ba, and so we know it to be a way. And a second example of this is that when it is said to us: How do you know that reasoning on arithmetical matters, such as geometry and geodesy [surveying] and others, is a way to knowing what is not known of necessity? *We say:* Following the way of arithmetic [reckoning], since we have followed it and it has given us a knowledge of the object of the reasoning, so we know that reasoning of the intellect is a proof [guide] in arithmetic. And so regarding intellectual matters: we have followed the way of reasoning and arrived at the knowledge of intelligibles; so we know that reasoning is a way; [p. 81] and there is no contradiction in this.

163 *If it be said:* And how do you know that what you have reached is a knowledge concerning the cognoscible as it is—and not rather an

ignorance you have assumed to be a knowledge? *We say*: If someone were to deny arithmetical cognitions, what should be said to him? Is he not to be called mentally incompetent and to be told: This proves the slightness of your understanding of arithmetical matters. For the reasoner on geometry, when he brings together the premises and arranges them according to their requirements, acquires knowledge of the conclusion necessarily in a way that cannot be doubted. Thus, also, we answer regarding the intelligibles. For if the speculative premises be arranged according to their conditions, they afford knowledge of the conclusion in a way that cannot be doubted, and the knowledge derived from the premises, once they exist, will be necessary like the knowledge of the necessary premises which produce it.

164 And if we wish to disclose that to him who has scanty resources of scientific knowledge, we give him a geometric example, and then give him an intellectual example, so that the veil may be lifted for him and hiddenness removed from his belief. The geometric example is that Euclid draws [traces] in his work regarding the first figure, from the first treatise, a triangle, and claims that it is equilateral. Now that is not known by an intuition of the intellect. But he claims that it is known by apodeictic proof through reasoning. And his apodeictic proof is by premises. *The first* is that straight lines proceeding from the center of a circle to the circumference are equal in every respect; and his premise is necessary, because the circle is drawn by the compass [dividers] opened in one way, and the straight line from the center to the circle [i.e. the circumference] is simply the opening of the compass, and this is one and the same in [all] directions.

165 [*The second premise*]: When two circles are equal by straight lines from their center to their circumference, the lines are also equal—and this also is necessary. [*The third premise*] is that the equal to the equal is equal—and this is also necessary. Then, let us now occupy ourselves with the triangle and point to two lines from it and we say: They are equal because they are two straight lines proceeding from the center of the circle to its circumference. And the third line is like one of them because it also [p. 82] proceeds from the center of the circle to its circumference along with that line. And if it is equal to one of the two lines, it is equal to the other, because the equal to the equal is equal. So after this reasoning we know decisively the mutual equality of the sides of the posited triangle, as the other premises are known, such as our saying: Straight lines from the center of the circle to the circumference are similar, and others of these premises.

166 The metaphysical [lit. divine] intellectual example is: When we wish to prove the [existence of the] necessarily existent being, subsistent in itself, independent of any others, from whom every existent derives its existence, we do not perceive the existence of a being necessarily existent and independent of any other of necessity, but by reasoning. And the meaning of reasoning is that we say: There is no doubt about the principle [fundament] of existence, and that it is certain. For he who asserts that there is no existent at all in the world has staggered necessity and sensation.

So our affirming that there is no doubt about the principle [fundament] of existence is a necessary premise. Then we say: The existence acknowledged by all is either necessary or possible. This is also a necessary premise because it is restrictive between negation and affirmation, like our saying: The existent is either external or incipient—so its truth will be necessary; and so of every every division revolving [turning] between negation and affirmation. Its meaning is that the existents either are independent or they are not independent. Independence of a cause is what is meant by “necessity” [*al-wujūb*], and the lack of independence is what is meant by “possibility” [*al-jawāz*]. This, then, is a third premise.

167 Then we say: If this acknowledged existent is necessary, then a Necessary Being exists; but if it is possible, every possible needs a Necessary Being. The meaning of its possibility is that it can not-exist and exist indifferently. But what has this quality [is of this description] its existence is distinguished from its non-existence only by a specifier—and this also is necessary: so by these necessary premises a Necessary Being certainly exists, and [p. 83] the knowledge, after its coming to be becomes necessary and cannot be doubted.

168 *If it be said*: There is room in it for doubt, since he may say the acknowledged is possible and say: Your assertion that every possible needs a necessary is inadmissible; rather it needs a cause, then that cause may be possible of existence. *We say*: In those premises is what contains potentially [?] the removal of this. For everything which certainly possesses possibility, its need for a cause is necessary. Then, if the cause is taken to be possible, it enters into the totality which we call “a whole.” And we know of necessity that all the possibles need a cause.

169 So if you assume the cause to be possible, then assume it to enter into the totality and seek its cause, since it is impossible for another possible to support that, and so on *ad infinitum*. For in that case all the causes and the caused would be a possible totality and the attribute [description] of possibility would apply to its individuals and to its whole, and so the whole would require a cause outside the attribute of possibility to bring it forth [i.e. make it—the whole—emerge into existence]; and therein of necessity is the affirmation of a Necessary Being. And after that we would discourse about His quality and show that a Necessary Being cannot be a body, or impressed in a body, or changeable, or localized—and so on of all that follows that, and each one of those affirmations would be certain by premises not open to doubt, and the conclusion, after its advent [resulting, coming to be] from the premises, would be in clarity [obviousness] commensurate with the immediate perception [*dhawq*: experience] of the premises.

170 *Someone may say*: Arithmetical cognitions are acknowledged because they are necessary, and therefore there has been no disagreement about them. But intellectual matters involving reasoning, if their premises are such, why has disagreement about them taken place? For the occurrence of disagreement about them cuts off safety [from error]. *We say*: This is false in two ways: (*One of them*) is that there has been disagreement about arithmetical cognitions in detail and in general in two ways: *One of them*

is that the ancients disagreed about many of the forms of the celestial sphere [*al-falak*] and the knowledge of their quantities, and these are based on arithmetical premises. But [p. 84] when there is an increasing concatenation of the premises, the mind is too weak to retain them, and perhaps one slips from the mind and so it errs regarding the conclusion. But the possibility of that does not make us doubt about the method. True enough, disagreement about arithmetical premises is rarer because they are clearer [more evident], and in intellectual matters it is more frequent, because they are more hidden and veiled. But among matters involving reasoning [there are some] that are clear, and on which they have agreed, viz. that the eternal cannot not-exist. This is a question involving reasoning and no one has ever been opposed regarding it: so there is no difference between the arithmetical and the intellectual.

171 *The second* [way of disagreement about arithmetical cognitions] is that one may restrict the avenues of cognitions to the senses and deny cognitions involving reasoning *in toto*, the arithmetical and the non-arithmetical: but does the opposition of men like that make us doubt our knowledge that arithmetical cognitions are true and real? *If you say:* Yes!, your inclination to be unfair is clear. *And if you say:* No!—then why has the opposition regarding it occurred? *If you say:* His opposition does not make us doubt the premises, so why should it make us doubt the conclusion? So likewise the opposition of him who opposes us regarding the detail of what we know of the proof of the existence of a Necessary Being does not make us doubt the premises of the proof: why, then, should it make us doubt the conclusion?

172 *The second way* [first way was begun in Para. 170] to reply is that the Sophists deny "necessaries" and are opposed regarding them and claim that they are figments of the mind without any foundation. They argue to this from the fact that the clearest of them are the sensibles, and there is no reliance on a man's being positive about his sensation. The more he sees a man and speaks to him, the more positively he affirms his presence and his speech: and this is an error. For perhaps he sees him in sleep [a dream]. How many a dream does a man see and is certain of it [thinks it certain] and has no personal doubt of its reality: then he wakes suddenly and it is clear that it has no [real] existence. He may even see in a dream his own hand cut off and his head severed and think it certain, yet what he thinks certain has no existence. Moreover, the opposition of these does not make us doubt the necessaries, and so also the matters involving reasoning, for once the latter come to be from the premises they remain necessary [and] no doubt is had about them, as in the case of arithmetical matters.

173 All of this is an argument [polemic] against him who denies reasoning *in toto*. But the *Ta'limites* are unable to [p. 85] hold peremptorily the invalidation of reasoning *in toto*, because they propound the proofs and demonstrations of the affirmation of *ta'lim*, and they organize the premises as we have related. How, then, can they reject that? And hereupon *they say:* The reasoning of the intellect is false. Then *one should say:* And how do you know its falsity and the existence of *ta'lim*? By a

reasoning or by a necessity? And the answer must be: By a reasoning. And whenever one argues from the opposition [disagreement] about matters involving reasoning to the wrongness of such matters, confront him with the disagreement [opposition] on the part of the Sophists regarding "necessaries." There is no difference between the two positions.

174 *If they say:* And how are you safe from error? How many times have you believed something through reasoning, then its contrary became evident! *Then one should say to him:* And how do you know you are present in this place in which you are, and how many times your soul has believed and seen itself to be in another place in which it was not—so how do you distinguish between sleep [dreaming] and wakefulness? How can you be safe from yourself—for perhaps now in this polemic you are sleeping! *If he claims:* I perceive the difference of necessity. *One should say:* And I have also perceived the difference between that in the premises about which there can be error, and that about which there cannot be, of necessity: and there is no difference. Similarly, how often does a man err in arithmetic, then he becomes aware [of it]. And when he becomes aware, he knows [perceives] of necessity the difference between the state of being right and that of being wrong.

175 If a Bāṭinite speaker says: We reject reasoning *in toto*. But what you have mentioned has nothing to do with matters involving reasoning, but they are necessary, peremptory premises which we have organized [arranged]. *We say:* Then you now do not understand the meaning of the reasoning which we hold. For we do not hold other than the like of the necessary true premises which you have set in order, as we shall show. For every syllogism which is not [constructed] by the ordering of necessary premises, or by the ordering of premises deduced from "necessaries," contains no proof [*hujja*]. This is the intelligible [rational] syllogism. It is always composed simply from two premises: either absolute or "divisional" [disjunctive], and they may be called categorical and conditional. The "absolute" is like our saying: The world is incipient; but every incipient has a cause. These two are two premises the first a fact of sensation, and the second an intellectual "necessary." The conclusion of it is: That the incipients [or: incipience] of the world have a cause [rather: Therefore the world has a cause. ?].

176 [p. 86] The "divisional" is that we say: If it is certain that the incipients of the world have a cause, the postulated cause is either incipient or eternal. And if it is false that it is incipient, it is certain that it is eternal. Then we invalidate [show the falsity of] its being incipient by such syllogisms as these, and so finally it is certain that the existence of the world has an eternal cause. This, then, is the reasoning professed [by us]. So if you are doubtful about its validity, then how do you deny him who refrains from accepting your premises which you have set in order and says: I am doubtful about their validity? If you ascribe to him the denial of necessity, we ascribe the like to you regarding what we claim to know by reasoning—and there is no difference.

177 This is the general [summary] method of refuting them, if they declare invalid the reasoning of intellects. And it is the decisive

way necessary to silence them. So we ought not wade with them into detail and should confine ourselves to saying to them: All that you know of your doctrine, viz. the veracity and infallibility of the Imam, and the falsehood of *ra'y* [personal reasoning], and the necessity of *ta'lim*—how do you know it? The claim of necessity is impossible: so there remains reasoning and hearing. And the veracity of "hearing" also is not known of necessity: so there remains reasoning. There is no way out of this!

178 *Someone may say*: It is unthinkable that an intelligent man would claim a doctrine that is not necessary, and then reject reasoning. So perhaps they acknowledge reasoning, but hold that learning the method of reasoning is obligatory, because a man cannot be independent regarding matters involving reasoning. If you deny that, you have spontaneously [instinctively] denied intellects. For instructors and teachers are trained [nominated] only to teach: why, then, do they undertake it, when they can be dispensed with? If you acknowledge that, you have acknowledged the necessity of a teacher, and that intellects are not of themselves alone sufficient: So it remains that you allow *ta'lim* on the part of anyone, and they enjoin learning from an infallible one, because the views of teachers differ and contradict one another and one is not preferable to another.

179 [p. 87] *We say*: This question also is unsound, for we do not deny the need for learning [in another reading: *ta'lim*-teaching]. On the contrary, cognitions are divided into three divisions. A *division* which can be acquired only by hearing and learning, like information about bygone events and the apologetic miracles of the Prophets and what will happen on [the Day of] the Resurrection and the circumstances of the Garden and the Fire. This is knowable only by hearing from the infallible Prophet, or by impeccable transmission from him. So if it is heard from the report of individuals it results in a knowledge that is conjectural, not sure and certain. This is one division.

180 The *second division* comprises the intellectual, speculative cognitions. In the natural constitution [of man] there is not anything to guide to the proofs regarding it, but for it there must be learning, not that one may blindly follow the teacher on that, but that the teacher may call attention to the way to it; then the intelligent man returns regarding it to himself and perceives [grasps] it by his own reasoning. At this point let the teacher be who he will, even the most sinful and untruthful of men. For we do not follow him blindly but become aware by his pointing out, and so we do not need for that an infallible man. It is like the arithmetical and geometrical cognitions: they are not known by [one's] natural constitution and need a teacher. But we have no need of an infallible teacher, but rather the method of demonstration is learned and the learner is equal to the teacher after reasoning about intellectual matters in our view, and arithmetical matters in theirs. How many a person errs in arithmetical matters, then becomes aware finally after a time: but that does not induce doubt about the arithmetical proofs and demonstrations, nor does it entail [imply?] a need, for them, of an infallible teacher.

181 *The third division* comprises religious and juridical cognitions, i.e. knowledge of the licit and the illicit, and the obligatory and the recommended. The basis of this knowledge is hearing from the trustee of the Law. Hearing from him engenders knowledge. However, the acquisition of peremptory knowledge of this is not possible absolutely with regard to every person and every case. Rather one must be satisfied with conjecture [probability] about it necessarily in two ways: One of them concerns the hearers. For men in the Prophet's era—God bless him and grant him peace!—were divided into those who saw and heard and verified and knew [p. 88] and those who were absent and then heard from the informers and individual leaders and rulers and derived a probability from the utterance of the individuals. But it was obligatory on them to act according to the probability because of [the] necessity. For the Prophet—God bless him and grant him peace!—was unable to make each one hear personally without an intermediary, and it was not a condition that there be an impeccable transmission from him of every word about every incident, because of the impossibility of this. Knowledge results from one of these two ways, and it is definitely impossible [impracticable] [i.e. to have *tawātur* in every case?].

182 [And the second way, or part] [*al-taraf*: should it be *al-tariq*—or 1.21 of p. 87 should have *ṭarafayn*—p. 89, 1.2 has *al-ṭarafayn*] concerns the juridical form [model, formula] itself and the actual incidents. Therefore there is no case [incident] save that there is a precept regarding it. But the cases are unlimited, nay, in possibility, infinite. The texts cannot be assumed to be other than limited and finite and what is finite can never compass what is infinite. The aim of the trustee of the Law, for example, was [not] to designate textually [?] the legal status of every form [model, formula] contained in the work of the writers on *fiqh* [jurisprudence] down to this age of ours. But had he done that exhaustively, the possible cases outside of the works would be more numerous than those written down in them—nay, there would be no proportion of the former to the latter! For those written down are limited, and those possible are unlimited. How, then, could he exhaust textually what is infinite!

183 So of necessity opinion must be made to judge the relationship to the former of the generalities, even though it is probable that they have been expressed out of a desire for the particular, for with this [desire] most of the generalities [are concerned?]. Therefore, when the Apostle of God—God bless him and grant him peace!—sent Mu'adh to al-Yemen, and said to him: "By what will you judge?" Mu'adh said: "By the Book of God." The Apostle said: "And if you do not find [anything there]?" Mu'adh replied: "Then by the custom [*sunna*] of the Apostle of God." The Apostle said: "And if you do not find [anything there]?" Mu'adh replied: "I shall exercise my personal reasoning." Then he [the Apostle] said—God bless him and grant him peace!—"Praise be to God Who has guided [helped] the apostle of His Apostle to what His Apostle approves." So he permitted him to exercise personal judgment simply because it was necessarily impossible for specific texts to contain all the cases.

184 This is the explanation of this division, and for it there is no need of an Infallible Imam, nay but [p. 89] the Infallible Imam is of no use at all! For he adds nothing to the Trustee of the Law, and the latter was not of use in both of the parts [i.e. in reaching all men personally (*al-'ulūm al-diniyya*) and in textually settling every case possible (*al-'ulūm al-shar'iyya*)]; for there is [he has] no power to include all the forms in the texts, nor can he speak to all men or enjoin them to stipulate impeccable transmission in everything which is transmitted from him—Peace be upon him! Then I would like to know [of] what use your infallible teacher is in these two parts. Do all men know the texts of his utterances, and they are in the Far East and the Far West, by the utterance of these individual propagandists—and these have no infallibility so that they should be relied on—or is it stipulated that there be impeccable transmission from him regarding every word, when he in his own person is concealed and is met only by individuals and isolated persons? This—even though it were conceded that he knows the truth by revelation regarding every case, as did the Trustee of the Law. How, then, when the situation is as we know it and as his leading followers know it who surround him in his town and his province! [add. in ms. Q: viz. stupidity, and little understanding, and ignorance, and silliness, and foolishness, and bad stumbling (?), and scarcity of religion, and multiplicity of treason (betrayal) and invalidation of the religious Laws, and commanding the evil and forbidding the good, and claiming divinity].

185 It has indeed become clear from this polemic that they are deceitful and say: If you say there is no need for *ta'lim*, you have indeed denied what is customary; but if you acknowledge [it], then you have indeed agreed with us in the affirmation of *ta'lim*. Thus they take *al-ta'lim* as a general admitted expression, then they detail [particularize] it as containing the acknowledgment of the necessity of learning from the Infallible [Imam]. You have understood what knowledge needs no teacher, and what knowledge needs a teacher. And if there is need of a teacher, what is obtained from him is his method, and he is not blindly followed in his own person—so there is no need of his infallibility. But when he is to be blindly followed in himself, then there is need of his infallibility.

186 And [you know] that that infallible [Imam, teacher] is the Prophet—God bless him and grant him peace! And [you know] how what is received from him is divided into what is known to be certain [lit. by verification] and what is a matter of probability, and [p. 90] how all men are forced to be content with probability regarding the veracity of him who passes on the information from the Trustee of the Law, and regarding the attachment of what is not textually specified to [specific] texts. If you know this rule for certain, you have mastered the disclosing of all their deceptions. For it is always their wont to lay down unpointed [i.e. ambiguous] premises on which they build a false conclusion—like their saying: You, when you acknowledge the need for *ta'lim*, have indeed acknowledged our doctrine. So we say: our acknowledgment of learning

[or: teaching ?] in the case of matters involving reasoning is like your acknowledgment of it in the case of arithmetical matters.

This is the general method of the polemic against them.

The Second Method in Refuting Them in Detail

187 Our method will be to speak of each premise of the eight premises which we set in order. So we say: (*The first premise* [cf. Para. 142]) This is your assertion that everything which can be stated negatively and affirmatively contains true and false, and the true is one and the false is what confronts it. This is a true premise, about which we do not think there is any dispute: but it is not right on your part to use it. *For we say:* Among men is he who denies the realities of things, and claims that there is neither any true nor any false, and that things follow beliefs: so what is believed to have existence exists with respect to that believer, and what is believed not to exist is nonexistent with respect to the believer. This is the thesis of one of the sects of the Sophists.

188 And perhaps *they will say:* Things have no reality and they will liken things sensed to dreams, the reality of which is definitely believed, though their contents have no reality. *We say:* Is this premise a premise they hold for certain? You see things in sleep and they have no reality—so how are you safe from error about them? How often you have seen yourselves in sleep holding something for certain which had no reality! And what has assured you that your adversaries are not right and you wrong? And we would continue to bring up to them what they bring up to the partisans of reasoning to induce doubt about it [reasoning]—and they will find no distinction.

189 *If they claim* that: We know of necessity the error of the [p. 91] Sophists who oppose us, and we know of necessity the truth of this premise—*One should say to them:* How, then, do you repudiate the partisans of reasoning when they claim that about their own doctrine, and about their distinguishing between that in which they err and that in which they do not err, and about their making a distinction between themselves and their adversaries?

190 *If they claim* that that requires reflection, whereas what concerns us is something intuitive. *We say:* And in arithmetical matters there is need of the subtlest reflection. So if in an arithmetical question with which you are familiar a man errs whose reasoning is inadequate or whose intelligence is feeble, does that make you doubt that the arithmetical cognitions are true? If you say: No!—one should say: That is exactly like the state of the meticulous reasoners when adversaries oppose them. And this ought to be [urged] against them regarding every position, because they flaunt so much the disagreement of reasoners and [hold] that that ought to do away with safety [from error]. But our disagreeing with them has not done away with their safety from error about their premises which they set in order, then wanted, along with that, to do away with our safety from error about matters involving reasoning by the disagreement of him who disagrees about them. This is an inane desire and feeble

assumption by the like of which no intelligent man would be deceived. 191 (*The second premise* [cf. Para. 142]) is their assertion: If it is certain that there is in every case [a] true and [a] false, then the true in it must be known.

This is a fallacious premise, since they take it generally, and in it there is a particularization. But this is their wont in deceiving—so let not the knowledgeable man be heedless of it. *So we say*: One's saying: "The true must be known" is like one's saying "The question must be known," or "The questions must be known." It should, then, be said: This is an error. On the contrary, "the question" is a common noun which includes what must be known and what need not be known—so there must be a particularization. Similarly also [p. 92] the true: we can dispense with it in most matters.

192 For the totality of the chronicles and the annals [of events] which have been and shall be until the end of the world or are today taking place in the world—all this can be stated negatively and affirmatively. And the true is one—but we do not need to know it. This is like one's saying: Is the King of the Byzantines existing now or not? The true is undoubtedly one of them. And the earth beneath my feet, after going beyond five cubits, is it dirt or stone? And are there worms in it or not? The true is undoubtedly one of them. And the quantity of the sphere of the sun or of Saturn and their distance—is it a hundred parasangs or not? The truth is one of them. And so also the areas of the mountains and the countries, and the number of the animals on the land and in the sea, and the number of [the grains of] sand. In all these there is a true and a false—but there is no need to know these things. Nay, but the well-known sciences such as syntax and poetry and medicine and philosophy and *kalām*, etc., contain true and false—but we do not need [to know] most of what is said in them.

193 Rather, what we admit must be known comprises two questions: the existence of the Maker Most High, and the veracity of the Apostle—God bless him and grant him peace! This is a must! Then, once the Apostle's veracity is established, the rest is connected with it by unquestioning acceptance, or by knowledge of report of impeccable transmission, or by supposition based on the report of an individual. That much knowledge is enough for this life and the next, and anything else can be dispensed with. As for the Maker's existence and the Apostle's veracity, the way to know it is reasoning on [consideration of] creation [creatures] to deduce from it [them] the [existence of the] Creator, and [consideration] of the apologetic miracle to deduce from it the veracity of the Apostle. 194 And regarding these two there is no need for an infallible teacher.

For men, regarding this, are two divisions. *One division* is of those who have believed that by unquestioning acceptance and hearing from their parents and they resolutely accepted it, positively affirming it and giving voice to it by their saying: There is no god save God; Muhammad is the Apostle of God—God bless him and grant him peace!—without any inquiry into the demonstrative methods—and these, these are truly the Muslims. That belief suffices them, and they are not obliged [p. 93] to seek out the

methods of apodeictic proofs. We have come to know that for certain from the Trustee of the Law. For he used to be repaired to by the rude Arabs and by the gullible common folk: in sum, by a group who, had they been cut to pieces, would not have grasped anything of the rational demonstrations—nay, they can clearly be distinguished from the beasts only by speech. He used to propose to them the word of the two witnesses, then judge them to have the faith and to be content with that on their part, and he enjoined on them the acts of worship. So it is known positively that resolute belief is sufficient, even though it be not the result of an apodeictic demonstration but rather of an unquestioning acceptance. Often a desert Arab would come to him [Muhammad] and make him swear that he was the Apostle of God and that he was truthful in what he said—and he would swear to him, and the latter would believe him, and he would judge him to have accepted Islam. So these—I mean the unquestioning accepters—do not need the Infallible Imam.

195 (*The second division*) includes him whose unquestioning acceptance has been unsettled [disturbed] either by reflection, or by another's inducing him to doubt, or by his considering that error is possible regarding his views. This man can be saved only by the positive apodeictic demonstration proving the existence of the Maker, viz. reasoning on [His] creation, and [proving] the veracity of the Apostle, viz. reasoning on the apologetic miracle. And I would like to know what use their Infallible Imam is to them [such men]! Would he say to such a one: Believe that the world has a Maker and that Muhammad—God bless him and grant him peace!—is truthful out of servile conformism to me, without any proof, since I am the Infallible Imam? Or would he cite to him a proof and call his attention to how it proves? And if his inclination is servile conformism, then how can he believe him, nay more, whence can he know his infallibility, when he does not know the infallibility of his fellow, who claims that he is his vicar, after many steps [stages]?

196 And if he cites the proof, does the one seeking guidance need to consider the proof and to reflect on its composition and the mode of its proving, or not? If he does not reflect, then how can he grasp [it] without reasoning and reflection, since these cognitions are not necessary? But if he reflects and perceives [grasps] how the necessary, valid premises sought by his reflection lead to a conclusion, and thereby is outside the limit of servile conformism to him, then what is the difference between the one who calls his attention to the mode of the proof and the arrangement of the premises being [p. 94] the infallible one alluded to, or a propagandist or some other one of the ulema [learned men] of the time? For each one does not call him to blind following of himself, but leads him simply to what the proof necessitates, and the latter is perceived only by reflection. So if he reflects and perceives, he is not a blind follower of his teacher, but he is like the learner of arithmetical proofs. And in that there is no difference between the most sinful of men and the most godly—just as the teacher of arithmetic is not required to possess godliness, to say nothing of infallibility, because he is not the object of servile conformism, but it is simply the proof which is followed. Therefore men do

not go beyond these two divisions: the first does not need the infallible [one], and the second gets no benefit at all from the infallible [one]. So two premises are already false [invalid]: one of them that every truth [everything true] must be known, and the other that the true can be known only from an infallible one [this seems to involve three premises: cf. Paras. 142-43].

197 *If it be said:* The knowledge of God Most High and of His Apostle is not sufficient, but there must also be knowledge of God's Attributes and knowledge of the prescriptions of the Law. *We say:* The Attributes of God Most High are two divisions: One [The second division is not discussed: presumably it includes other attributes, for which revelation suffices.] is such that knowledge of the Apostle's veracity and mission can be had only after it is known—e.g. God's being knowing and able to send envoys. This is known, in our view, by intellectual proofs, as we have mentioned; but the infallible one is of no use, because the one who believes it by servile conformism or hearing from his parents has no need of the teacher—as has preceded. And of what use is the infallible one to one who hesitates about it? Would he say to him: Follow me blindly in the matter of God Most High's being able and knowing. Then he would say to him: How can I follow you blindly, when my soul will not allow me to follow blindly Muḥammad son of 'Abdallāh—God bless him and grant him peace!—although he is the possessor of an apologetic miracle?! But if he cites to him the modality of the proof, discussion of it comes back to what has preceded about the foundation [principle] of the existence of the Maker and the veracity of the Apostle—without any difference.

198 As for the prescriptions of the Law, everyone must know what he needs concerning his duties. These are two divisions: (*The first division*) is that which can be known for certain, and this is what is included in the text of the Qur'ān and [that] on which there is an impeccable tradition from the Trustee of the Law: e.g., the number of *rak'as* in the five prayers, and the amounts of the *nuṣub* [minimum amounts of property liable to the alms tax] with respect to the *Zakāt* [alms taxes], and the regulations of the acts of worship, and the pillars [chief elements] of the Pilgrimage, or that on which there is a consensus of the Community. For this division there is no need whatever of an Infallible Imam.

199 (*The second division*) is that which cannot be known for certain, but it is open to doubt [conjecture]. This is *either* a text the transmission of which is open to uncertainty because it is transmitted by individuals: so it must be believed tentatively, as it was obligatory on men in other countries in the time of the Apostle of God—God bless him and grant him peace!, *or* a case about which there is no explicit text, and so it needs to be compared with what is textually specified and to be approximated to the latter by the exercise of personal judgment: this is that of which Mu'adh said: "I shall exercise my personal opinion." The fact that this is an object of probability is necessary regarding both sides together, because one cannot stipulate impeccable transmission for everything, and all cases cannot be exhausted by specific textual designation.

200 So in this the infallible one is of no use. For he cannot make what an individual transmits *mutawātir* [an impeccable transmission]—nay, even if he were certain of it he would not speak of it to all men, nor could he enjoin it on their hearing it from him by impeccable transmission, so that his partisans would blindly follow the propagandists of the infallible one, when they are not infallible, but rather can err and lie. We unquestioningly follow the ulema of the Law, who are the emissaries of Muḥammad—God bless him and grant him peace!—who was confirmed by dazzling apologetic miracles. So what need is there of the infallible one in this regard? As for the case which is not the object of an explicit text, let personal judgment be exercised about it, since the infallible one is of no use in it.

201 For either he must acknowledge that he [the infallible one] also is a "conjecturer"—and error is possible for everyone who has a conjecture, and that is not different in individuals—so what is it that distinguishes his conjecture from that of others, when he allows error of himself?! *Or* he claims knowledge of it: Does he claim it from a revelation, or from hearing an explicit text about it, or from a rational proof? If he claims the impeccable transmission of revelation to him [p. 96] in every case, then he is a claimant of prophethood and needs an apologetic miracle. How [could it be otherwise] when the assumption of the apologetic miracle is inconceivable, since it is clear to us that Muḥammad—God bless him and grant him peace!—is the Seal of the Prophets? So if we allow of Muḥammad lying in his statement: "I am the Seal of the Prophets," despite the establishment of the apologetic miracle, how can we be secure against the lying of this infallible one, even though he establish an apologetic miracle?!

202 And if he claims to know it from a specific text which has reached him, how can he not be ashamed of claiming a specific text of the Trustee of the Law on cases which cannot conceivably be limited or numbered: nay, but even though a man were granted a life as long as that of Noah, and were to apply himself only to counting the cases and the explicit texts about them, he would not exhaust a hundredth of them. So in what lifetime did the Apostle—God bless and grant him peace!—exhaust all the cases with textual explicitness! And if he claims such knowledge by a rational proof, how ignorant he is of both juridical and rational matters! For juridical matters are positive, conventional [technical] matters which differ with the circumstances [conventions, usages] of the Prophets and of ages and nations, as we see religious Laws to be different: how, then, is it possible to have decisive rational proofs of them? And if he claims it from a rational proof helpful for reasoning—why all the jurists possess this rank!

203 So it is clear that what they mention is a deception far removed from verification, and that the common man deceived by it is extremely stupid. For they dupe the common folk into following conjecture, and conjecture is of no help at all to truth. But in juridical matters one must follow conjecture, and this is [something] necessary—as in commercial and political matters and in deciding disputes for the general advantage—for

all matters touching the general advantage are built on conjecture. And how can the infallible one dispense from [be a substitute for] this conjecture when the Trustee of the Law did not dispense from it, and was unable to, but rather permitted the exercise of personal judgment and reliance on the utterance of individuals reporting from him and on holding fast to general [or broad] principles [statements of principle] and all that is conjecture which was a basis for action in the Apostle's time and while he existed—so how can that be disapproved of after his death?

204 [p. 97] *Someone may say*: And when those exercising personal judgment differ because of the different ways conjectures are arrived at, what is your opinion? If you say: "Everyone exercising personal judgment is right," what you say involves a contradiction, because your adversaries, however much [?] they are right in their belief, assert that you have erred [are wrong]. So you are not right therefore—and how [could you be] when among the sects is that which deems the shedding of your blood licit [lawful]? So if they also are right, then we are right in shedding your blood and plundering your possessions: so why do you censure us? And *if you say*: The one right is one—then how do we discern the right one from the wrong one? And how can we be free from the danger of error and conjecture?

205 *We say*: There are two views regarding it. If we say: "Everyone exercising personal judgment is right," we are not involved in a contradiction, because we mean by it that he attains [is right regarding] the prescription of God regarding him and those who unquestioningly follow him, because God has prescribed for him that he follow what he thinks more probable in every case, and he has done this. And this is [also] God's prescription for his adversary. And their assertion that he is therefore right regarding the shedding of blood is the utterance of one ignorant of juridical matters. For what the sects have differed about of that in which the shedding of blood is deemed proper are definite intellectual problems [questions] in which the one right is [only] one. But the juridical conjectural questions on which there is disagreement between al-Shāfi'i and Abū Ḥanīfa and Mālik do not lead to fighting one another and the shedding of blood, but rather each group believes in respecting the other group to such a point that it judges that its judgment is not to be opposed if sentence is given for it [or: based on it] and that it [p. 98] is incumbent on the opponent to follow [it]. To be sure, they disagree about whether or not one should apply the name of error [mistake] to the other sect in other than a denial and objection.

206 And [regarding] their saying: Your adversary says "You are wrong"—and if he is right, then you are wrong—*we say*: If my adversary says "You are wrong," i.e. I think you are wrong, he is truthful; and I also am truthful in my saying "I am right"—and there is no contradiction. But if he says: "I know for certain that you are wrong," then he is not right in this assertion: rather, the falsity of the assertion of him who is certain of error in matters of personal judgment is not an object of conjecture, but is an object of certainty in the sum total of the decisive

questions touching on the *uṣūl* [the bases of Islamic Law, or, here dogmatic beliefs, i.e. *uṣūl al-dīn*]. So the assertion "Of two exercising personal judgment the one right is both of them or one of them" is an *uṣūl* problem [question] involving certainty, not conjecture—but for them *uṣūl* matters have become mixed up with *fiqh* matters which are conjectural. But whenever the veil is removed, the discussion does not involve a contradiction.

207 *Someone may say*: If you consider everyone to be right, then let it be permissible for the one exercising personal judgment to accept his adversary's declaration and to act on it because the latter is right, and let it be permissible for the servile conformist to follow whom he will of the Imams who exercise personal judgment. *We say*: As for the one who exercises personal judgment following another—it is an error. For God prescribes for him that he follow his own conjecture—and this is certain. So if he follows another's conjecture, he errs in a decisive *uṣūl* question, and that is known by decisive consensus.

208 But the matter of those blindly following the Imams—some have held it [this opinion], but it seems preferable to us that he ought to follow blindly him whom he thinks to be the best and most knowledgeable of the people. The support of his belief is either aural conformism from his parents, or general inquiry about his circumstances, or what has got around on the tongues of jurists: in general he comes [p. 99] to have a more probable conjecture from these supports, and so he must follow his own conjecture, just as the one exercising personal judgment must follow his own conjecture. But this is not universal regarding the Law, because the Law contains a particular benefit in each question, and a universal benefit in the totality. The particular is that of which is known the proof [indication?] and rationale of every precept. But the universal benefit is that everyone obligated to be under a specific law [rule?] of the precepts of the Law regarding all his movements and his utterances and his beliefs, so that he is not like the freed beast which does as it pleases, so that he schools himself by the bridle of piety and the discipline and division of the Law into what it gives him free rein in, and what it forbids him: so he is bold when the Law gives him free rein and abstains where it forbids, and does not take as his god his caprice [cf. 25.45/43] and follow therein his desires.

209 And whenever we inform the servile conformists about the views of the Imams that one may take from them the best in his view, those speaking about it are confused and there remains for him no recourse save his caprice regarding the choice, and this is opposed to the general aim. So we think it best to confine him to [one] mold and to control him by [one] rule, viz. the opinion of one person on this matter. Because of this the laws of the Prophets in the [various] ages have differed in relation to detail, but they have not differed regarding the basic principle of imposing obligation and calling men from following caprice to obedience to the rule of the Law. This is what we consider preferable regarding individual servile conformists. This is one of the two views, viz. that everyone exercising personal judgment is right.

210 And he who thinks that the one right is [only] one—there is also no contradiction in what he says. And [regarding] his utterance: “How are you [text: he] safe from the possibility of error?”—*We say*: First their clash [mutual opposition]. He whose dwelling was remote from the Apostle of God—God bless him and grant him peace!—and was relying on the statement of an individual, and so also he whose dwelling is remote from your infallible one, and he is divided from him by obstructing seas and perilous deserts—how can he be safe from error on the part of the informant, when the latter is not infallible? *They will say*: He judges by conjecture and is not bound [p. 100] to more than that. Then this is our reply!

211 *If you say*: He does have a way to escape conjecture. This is that he go to see the Prophet—God bless him and grant him peace!—for directing oneself to him is one of the possibles: and likewise, one should go to see the Infallible Imam in every age. *We say*: Is it obligatory to purpose that when[ever] he allows the possibility of error? If you say “No,” then what profit is there in its possibility, when it is allowable for him to plunge [rush, hurtle] into the roadway [surface, the very midst] of danger regarding that about which he allows the possibility of error? So if that be allowable, there is no harm in the passing of the possibility. How [could it be otherwise] when every penniless sick man flat on his back is unable to traverse a thousand parasangs to ask about an actual legal problem [question]? And how, even if he did make that trip, how would his suspicion [conjecture] about your Infallible Imam pass away, even though he were to speak to him directly about it, since he has no apologetic miracle attesting his veracity? So in what way could he trust in what he says? And how could his suspicion of him abate?

212 *Then he says*: There is no escape for him from the possibility of error: but it does him no harm, since the farthest one can go on this subject is that attaining what is right contains an excellent [or: increased?] advantage. In all matters connected with [his] worldly [material] advantage a man speaks according to conjectures and cannot escape the possibility of his being in error: but it does him no harm. Nay more, were he clearly to err about a legal problem, it would do him no harm. On the contrary, error on details of legal matters is legally excused by reason of his declaration—God bless him and grant him peace!—“He who exercises personal judgment and is right will have two rewards; and he who exercises personal judgment and errs will have one reward.”

213 So the danger of error about which they make a great fuss is disdained in itself among those men of religion who are knowledgeable and the matter is thereby magnified only for the masses [common people] who are unaware [heedless] of the secrets [mysteries] of Revelation [the Law]. Error in legal matters is not [p. 101] one of the causes of perdition in the afterlife. Nay more, the commission of a grave sin does not necessitate the eternity of the punishment or require it in a way not susceptible of forgiveness [pardon]. As for matters involving personal effort, no sin is imputed to him who errs therein. The Ḥanafite declares: The traveler prays [should pray] two *rak'as*, and the Shāfi'ite declares: He prays [should

pray] four [*rak'as*]. However he acts, the difference is slight, and even if it were rated as an error in him, it would be forgiven him. The acts of worship are simply endeavors [strivings] and exercises which bestow on souls purity and assure an honored place in the afterlife, just as the repetition of profit [*manfa'a*—cf. Wehr—term of Islamic Law] for what one learns makes one the *faqih* [expert] of the soul and brings him to the rank of the ulema. And his advantage [benefit] differs because of the multiplicity of the repetition and its paucity, and his raising his voice therein and lowering it.

214 If, then, he errs in limiting himself to repeating one lesson twice, when three [times] would make a greater impression on his soul in God Most High's knowledge, or if he errs in [limitation to] three, when limiting himself to two would be more effective in safeguarding him from dulling boredom, or if he errs in lowering his voice, when raising it would be better suited to his nature and to altering [rousing] his soul, or lowering it would be more conducive to reflection on its [the lesson's] essential meaning—the error in anything of that one night or several nights would not cause despair of [attaining] the Imamate [rank of Imam] and procuring *fiqh* of the soul. And he, in all that he conjectures [projects] and arranges [determines, fixes] regarding the amounts of repetition with respect to quantity and quality and time, would be therein one exercising personal effort and a conjecturer and one travelling to the way of achieving [accomplishing, gaining] his goal so long as he continues to apply himself steadily to the fundamental thing, even though he is certain to err at time in the details [particular points].

215 The danger lies simply in attributing error [or: neglect?] and being opposed and being misled by native intelligence on the supposition that the latter makes one able to dispense with personal effort, as a group of the Bāṭinites supposed that their souls were pure [and] well exercised [trained] [and] in no need of the exercises of the legal acts of worship, and so they neglected them and because of that they ran the risk of the grievous punishment in the abode of the afterlife. So let the seeker of guidance believe that the leading of the legal strivings to the honored, sublime stations in the abode of the afterlife is like the leading of personal effort in mastering sciences and applying oneself assiduously to them to the station [rank] of the Imams. And at this [point] [or: in view of this] we disdain what the Bāṭinites have made a great to-do about [p. 102], viz. the danger of error for those exercising personal effort regarding raising one's voice in the *Basmala* [saying: *Bismillāh al-rahmān al-rahīm*] and repeating [doubling] the performance [of the Prayer] and the likes. Difference in this, after applying oneself assiduously to the well-known basic elements is like difference regarding raising or lowering the voice in the repetition [of lessons] without any difference. And how [could it be otherwise] when the Law has called attention to the facilitation of the excuse of him who errs therein, just as there has been unimpeachable report of that from the Trustee of the Law. This is the complete argument [polemic] against the second premise.

216 *The third premise* [cf. Para. 142] is their assertion: If the obligation of knowing the true be certain, then a man must either know it of [through] himself or from another. This is a true and undisputed premise. To be sure, the argument against it by what will silence the Bāṭinites and prevent *them* from using it is like what we have mentioned regarding the first premise—and it applies to every true premise.

217 *The fourth premise* [cf. Para. 143] is their assertion: If it be false that a man know the true of himself by the way [method] of reasoning, then the obligation of learning from another is certain. This [premise] is true on the supposition that reasoning is futile and granting the obligation of knowing the true. But we do not grant the futility of reasoning, as has been said previously and as we shall mention in showing the falseness of their embellished [tinselly] specious arguments in support of the invalidation of reasoning; nor do we concede the obligation of knowing the true, since the totality of the latter contains what is left to our choice, and what is [really] needed is the knowledge of the Maker and of the Apostle's veracity. This knowledge men have believed in firmly by hearing and by blindly following their parents: in that is what suffices them so that there is no need for them to recommence learning from an infallible teacher. And if they are content with instruction [received] from [their] parents, [why] we concede that children in their early growth [development] have need of that and we do not deny it. But there is no solace for them [Bāṭinites] in this concession.

218 Belonging to [A part of] this premise is their assertion: If the need for the teacher is certain, then let the teacher be infallible. This [p. 103] is a subject of dispute. For if the teacher gives his teaching [instruction] and mentions along with it the rational proof and calls attention to the way it proves that, the learner [disciple] may reflect on it with the intellectual power he has, and he can have confidence in [rely upon] what his intellect requires after the teacher has called attention; then let the teacher be the most sinful of creatures—and why is there any need of his infallibility, since the learner [disciple] does not get from him the blind following of what he gets? Rather it is like arithmetic, of which one must know the truth regarding it for the advantages [sought] in transactions. A man does not know this of himself, but needs a teacher. However, there is no need of his infallibility, since arithmetic is not a rote science but one based on demonstration.

219 If you claim that the learner does not learn by demonstration and proof, because he attains that by the reasoning of his intellect—and there is no confidence in his intellect, given the weakness of men's intellects and their disparity: therefore he needs an infallible [teacher]—then this is now stupidity! For he knows his infallibility either of necessity or by servile conformism—and there is no way to claiming anything of that. So he must know it by reasoning, since there is no person in the world whose infallibility is known of necessity or whose assertion "I am infallible" can be relied upon, however much he urges it. And if his infallibility be not known, how can he blindly follow him?! And if he does not trust in his reasoning, how can he know his infallibility?! So if

the matter be as you have mentioned it, then men would stray from [i.e. give up] learning the truth and that would become one of the impossible things.

220 *If they say*: There must be learning of the truth [but] not by way of reasoning—it is like one's saying: There must be union of white and black. For if he learns from another by reflecting on the proof of the question [problem] which he learns, he is a reasoner rushing into the danger of error. But if he blindly follows him because he is infallible, he is a perceiver of his infallibility by reasoning about the proof of infallibility. And if he does not believe in infallibility and is taught by anyone, then the matter finally comes down to what they have disqualified [considered farfetched], viz. learning from one whose infallibility is not known—and among these there is a multiplicity and their statements contradict one another, as they have mentioned. And they will never never find an escape from this!

221 *The fifth premise* [cf. Para. 144] is their assertion: The world is either not devoid of containing that Infallible [one] who must be had, or is devoid of him. But there is no way to suppose [assume] that the world is devoid [p. 104] of him, because that would lead to the concealing [eclipse] of the truth—and this would be an injustice unbefitting the wisdom [of God]. This also is an unsound premise. For if we conceded the other premises, and conceded men's need of an Infallible Teacher, we would then say: It is not impossible for the world to be devoid of him. On the contrary, in our view it is possible for the world to be unendingly devoid of a Prophet. It is even possible for God to torment all His creatures and to compel them to [enter] the Fire. For in all that He can act without restriction in His realm according to His will, and there can be no opposition to the Sovereign on the part of reason regarding His behavior [free actions]. Injustice would be simply in putting something in other than its [proper] place and acting freely in something other than what the free agent is entitled to. But this is inconceivable on the part of God. So perhaps the world is devoid of him [the Infallible one] in the sense that God has not created him.

222 *Someone may say*: So long as God is able to guide men to the path of salvation and the attainment of happiness by sending Apostles and setting up [appointing] Imams, and yet does not do that, this would be to do injury to men while denying of God Most High any benefit resulting from this injury—and this would be most shameful and contrary to the perfect qualities of His Wisdom and His Justice—and that does not befit the divine attributes. *We say*: This argument is faulty and it is a "cover" by which the simple man is deceived, but which is despised [scorned] by experts in the sciences. Indeed, some groups of the Mu'tazilites were deceived by it. Exhaustive treatment of the way to refute them is found in the discipline of Kalām. I shall now limit myself to a single example which will show decisively that God Most High is not bound, in the qualities of His perfection, to consult [have a regard for] the advantage of His creatures.

223 This is that we suppose three children one of whom died as an infant, and one attained puberty as a Muslim, and the other reached maturity and embraced unbelief, then died. Then God requites each according to his merits, and He will execute justice. So He will lodge the one who matured and embraced unbelief in the depths of hell, and the one who matured and embraced Islam in the ranks of the blessed [lit. the ascending steps of exaltedness] [p. 105] and the one who died an infant without embracing Islam and sustaining an act of worship after puberty in a rank inferior to that of him who reached maturity and embraced Islam. Then the one who died as an infant will say: O Lord! Why have you put me behind my brother the Muslim who reached maturity and died? Only justice is worthy of Your magnanimity, yet You have indeed denied me the prerogatives of that rank. But had You favored me with them I would have benefited from them they would not have harmed You. How, then, does that befit [Your] justice? And God will tell him, according to the pretension of him who claims "Wisdom," that [the other] reached maturity and embraced Islam and toiled and endured the hardships of the acts of worship—"So how does justice demand putting you and him on an equal footing [on the same level]?"

224 Then the infant will say: O Lord! You are the one who caused me to live and caused me to die. And You ought to have prolonged my life and caused me to reach the stage of independence and guided me to Islam as You guided him. So putting me off from it [or: making me second to him] in life was a swerving from justice. Then God will say to him—according to the pretension of him who claims "Wisdom"—It was to your advantage to cause you to die in your childhood: for had you reached maturity, you would have embraced unbelief and deserved the Fire. Whereupon the unbeliever who dies after he had reached maturity will cry out from the depths of hell and say: "O Lord, You knew of me that if I reached maturity, I would embrace unbelief. Could You not, then, have caused me to die in my childhood? For I would be satisfied with the lower rank in which You have lodged the child who yearns for the sublime ranks." At this point it remains for him who claims "Wisdom" only to stop replying and venturing [any farther]!

225 By this disparity [in the three cases] it is clear that the matter is more sublime than what they suppose. For the attributes of Lordship [Divinity] are not weighed in the scales of conjectures [suppositions], and God does what He will "and is not answerable for what He does, but they [p. 106] are answerable" [21.23]. And by this it is clear that there is no obligation to send a Prophet or to set up [appoint] an Imam. So their assertion that the world must contain him is indeed false.

226 *The sixth premise* [cf. Para. 145] is their assertion: If it be certain that the Imam is existing in the world, then he either must openly declare the claim [to be the Imam] and claim infallibility, or he must hide it. But hiding it is false, because it is obligatory on him and concealment is [would be] a sin contrary to infallibility [impeccability]—so he must openly declare it. This premise is unsound, because it is not unlikely that he should not openly declare that because of his being encompassed

by enemies, conscious [of that] in his soul and fearful for his spirit [i.e. his life], so he conceals that through dissimulation [prudence]—and that is something on the possibility [permissibility] of which they are agreed. This was the view of the Imamites, all of them. They alleged that the Imam is living, in office, existing, and that he possesses infallibility, but he is waiting for the end of the rule of the false and the extinction of the strength [power] of [his] enemies. Now he is simply protected [fortified] by the garment of concealment, guarding himself from destruction to preserve the secret from disclosure until his time comes and the Imam of the false and his time pass away.

227 What, then, is the answer of these Bāṭinites to this view [doctrine, belief] of the Imamites? And what prevents the likelihood of that? For they [Imamites] support them on all their [Bāṭinites] premises except this premise. And that because of what they saw of the defective state of him whom these [Bāṭinites] characterized with infallibility, and [what] they ascertained of reasons contrary to godliness and respectability. So they were ashamed to claim infallibility [impeccability] for one from whose circumstances they saw its contrary [opposite]. So they alleged that the Infallible [one] is concealed and that we await his appearance at his [proper] time. And at [p. 107] this point we say: By what do the Bāṭinites know the falseness of the view of the Imamites regarding this question? If they know it of necessity, then how has disagreement arisen regarding necessary truths? And if they know it by reasoning, then what has necessitated the soundness of their reasoning as against their adversaries' reasoning, and the announcement of the credibility of their intellects as against that of the intellects of their adversaries? Is that known by the length of beards or the whiteness of faces—and so on, to the same path they have followed? From this there is no escape in any circumstance whatsoever!

228 *The seventh premise* [cf. Para. 146] is their assertion: If it is certain that the Infallible [one] must declare [himself] openly, and if there is in the world only one who declares [himself] openly, then he is that Infallible [one], since he has no adversary, nor has he a second to himself in the claim so that distinguishing would be difficult. This is unsound in two ways [from two aspects]. *One of them* is: By what do they know that there is no claimant of infallibility and no one declaring openly in the countries of the world save one person [individual]? Perhaps in farthest China or in the extremities of the Maghrib there is one who claims something of that: and the negation of that is something known neither of necessity nor by reasoning.

229 *Someone may say*: That is known of necessity. For if there were [such a one], it [knowledge] would be widespread, because there are many motives [reasons] for transmitting such a thing as this. *We say*: It is possible that this was, but it did not spread to our country, given the great distance, because the claimant of that could not [cannot] mention it save in the company of his *sūs* and the possessor of his [its] secret, and about him was a party of his enemies, so he feared the exposure and disclosure of his secret and thought it best to conceal it. Or he disclosed it, but those who heard him were prevented from spreading in [other] countries and

informing men of it because they were beleaguered by enemies and compelled to stay in [their] native country out of fear of the harm [that might be inflicted] by those who had overwhelmed them. What, then, annuls this possibility, when [since] it is a fact, be it supposed likely [near] or farfetched [or far], and is something possible which does not belong to the category of the impossibles? Yet you claim to be positive about what you adduce: how, then, is such positiveness undisturbed by [free from] this possibility?

230 *The second way* to upset this premise is that you suppose [have supposed] that no one claims [p. 108] infallibility in the world save one person [individual]—and this is an error. For by unimpeachable report we hear from others of [several] claimants. One of them is in Jilān [south of the Caspian Sea?]. For that country is never without a man who gives himself the honorific title of Nāṣir al-Ḥaqq [Champion of the Truth] and claims infallibility for himself and that he occupies the place of the Apostle and he so enthralls the stupid among the inhabitants of that region that he allots to them the parts [sections] of the Garden by surface reckoning and is so severe on a man that the latter [or: is so severe among them that *he*] will not sell a cubit [rod] of the Garden—no, not for a hundred dinars. And they carry to him the treasures of their wealth [possessions] and buy from him dwellings in the Garden. This, then, is one of the claimants [summoners?]. By what, then, have you known that he is wrong? And since the claimant is [may be] indeed multiple, and no one is preferable, since there is no apologetic miracle, do not think that stupidity is restricted to you, and that the tongue of no other does not utter this word. Rather astonishment at your thinking that this stupidity is at present restricted to you is greater than astonishment regarding the basis [principle] of this stupidity!

231 The second claimant is a man in the “islands” [peninsula? delta?] of Baṣra who claims Divinity and who has prescribed a religion and put together a “Qur’ān” and appointed a man who is called ‘Alī son of Kaḥlā, and alleged that he [himself] is in the position of Muḥammad—God bless him and grant him peace!—and that he [‘Alī b. Kaḥlā] is his Apostle to creatures. And indeed there surrounded him a group of simpletons [fools], roughly ten thousand souls—and perhaps their number exceeds yours—and he claims for himself infallibility and what surpasses it. And what is your answer to a man of the Shābāsites who cites these premises up to this premise, then [p. 109] says: If there must be an infallible teacher, and the infallible one has no apologetic miracle but is known simply by the claim [to infallibility], and the Master of the Bāḥinites does not claim Divinity—how could he when the Master of the Shābāsites claims Divinity—then following him [the latter] is preferable. *If you say:* When one claims Divinity the falseness of his assertion is known of necessity—the answer is in two ways. *One of them* is that he claims that simply by way of indwelling [*al-ḥulūl*] and alleges that it is an inheritance in their genealogy [family or ancestral line], and that has continued in their family for a long period, and that the grandfather of the present claimant claimed that. And “indwelling” has been the belief of many groups.

232 The falseness of the belief of the “Indwellers” [partisans of *al-ḥulūl*] is not a necessary [truth]. And how could it be necessary when there is regarding it such well-known disagreement as can scarcely be hidden. [This disagreement was such] that a large group of Sūfī inquirers and a great many Philosophers inclined to [had a propensity for] that. To this al-Ḥusayn son of Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj who was crucified in Baghdad alluded where [when] he used to say “Anā l-ḥaqq, anā l-ḥaqq [I am the True—i.e. God],” and he was reciting at the time of [his] crucifixion “But they did not kill him nor crucify him, but he was likened to them” [4.156/157]. And Abū Yazīd al-Biṣṭāmī alluded to it in his utterance: “Praise to me, praise to me! How great is my dignity!” And I have indeed heard one of the Sūfī Masters who was most highly regarded and a cynosure regarding solidarity [strength] of religion and abundance of learning, relate to me of his own Master highly regarded for religion and piety [godliness] that the latter said: “What you hear of the Most Beautiful Names of God, which are ninety-nine, all of them become a description of the Sūfī proceeding by his way to God while he [p. 110] is still of the totality of those in via to God and not of the group of the ‘attainers’ [reachers, those who have arrived].”

233 And how can this [“indwelling”] be rejected [denied] when it is the belief of the Christians regarding the union of the Divinity with the humanity of ‘Isā [Jesus]—peace upon him!—so that some of them call him “a God,” and some “The Son of God,” and some assert: He is a demigod [the half of God]. And they are agreed that he was slain, his humanity was slain, not his divinity. How [can this “indwelling” be rejected (denied)] when a group of the Rāfīdites imagined that in [the case of] ‘Alī—God be pleased with him!—and alleged that he was God! And that happened in his own time, so that he commanded their being burned by fire. They did not recant, but said: By this is shown [clear] our veracity in our assertion that he is God, because the Apostle of God—God bless him and grant him peace!—said: “Only its Lord punishes by fire.” By this, then, it is plain [evident] that the falseness of this belief is not necessary [i.e. known of necessity], but it is a kind of stupidity and its falseness is known by intellectual reasoning, as the falseness of their [Bāḥinites] doctrine is known. Hence their assertion “No one claims infallibility save our Master” is indeed false—on the contrary, there has indeed appeared he who claims infallibility and more.

234 *The second way* [goes back to Para. 231] to answer their assertion “The falseness of their [Indwellers] doctrine is known of necessity”: There is no difference between the falseness of something being known of necessity and its falseness being known [p. 111] by seeing or by unimpeachable transmission. Now the nonexistence of infallibility-impeccability in him whose infallibility you have claimed is known by seeing what is contrary to the Law in several ways. The first of these is collecting property [wealth] and the taking of taxes and petty levies and claiming [demanding] obsolete land taxes—and this is something impeccably transmitted in all regions; then luxury in life style and augmenting rich ornaments and extravagance [prodigality] in the kinds of self-adornment and the use of

sumptuous garments of silk, etc.; and honesty [probity] of testifying would be prohibited by a tenth of a tenth of that—how, then, infallibility!

235 If they deny these circumstances, they deny what many people of those regions have seen and what their tongues have impeccably transmitted to the other countries. That is why you do not see a single one of the inhabitants of those countries misled or deluded by these deceptions—because they have seen what contradicts them. And among their artifices is the fact that they disseminate [their] propaganda only in far away [distant, remote] regions where the prospect would need to traverse an enormous distance if there occurred to him a doubt about it so that the obstacles may repel him from undertaking the journey. For if they were to see [with their own eyes], there would be disclosed to them the defect of those elaborate deceptions and contrived artifices.

236 *The eighth premise* [cf. Para. 147—put a bit differently here] is their assertion: If it is clear [evident] that so long as the claimant of infallibility is one there is no need to infer [seek proof] that he is infallible; and our Master, then, is alone the claimant of infallibility; therefore he is the Infallible Imam. This is a premise regarding which we give them the lie. And we do not concede that their Master claims infallibility for himself. For we have never heard him [it] at all, nor has it come to us in impeccable transmission on the tongue of one who heard it from him. On the contrary that has been heard simply from their individual propagandists, and these are not infallible, nor do they attain the level of impeccable transmission.

237 And even if they did attain the level of impeccable transmission sure knowledge would not be obtainable by their declaration and their report for two reasons. *One of them* is that those directly speaking [uttering] this propaganda on the part of their Master are few [in number], for he is concealed and appears only [p. 112] to the elite, and moreover he speaks directly only to the elite of the elite, and furthermore he discloses this propaganda [call] only in the company of one of the elite of the elite. So those who hear [directly] from him do not attain the number [required for] impeccable transmission. If they did attain it and were all spread out, there would be only one of them in a district. And also most places are devoid of their individuals.

238 *The second reason* is that even if they attained the level of impeccable transmission, the condition of the latter would be lacking in their report. For the condition of that report is that it be not related to an event collusion on which might spread from a large group for some advantage uniting them, as [such as something] what is related to policies [politics, political or administrative matters?]. For a single purpose might unite the men [people] of one camp so that, by agreement, they would relate the same thing, and that would not engender [sure] knowledge. But one or two might report a thing, and it would be known that some purpose did not unite them, and that would result in [sure] knowledge. Perhaps these propagandists were in collusion on this invention that by it they might succeed in seducing the common folk and appropriating their property, and by the latter they would attain their hopes.

239 In general, then, [their?] good opinion [high regard for] of their Master requires [us] to give them the lie. For if they reported that from a sick man in the hospital we would believe that a lie on his part. However it would be thought madness in that sick man since no intelligent man would claim immunity from interdicted things and accepting forbidden things when men of learning were seeing his acceptance of them and his pursuing [pursuit, practice of] them. One of the least signs [marks, effects] of intelligence [intellect] is being ashamed of the degradation [humiliation, ignominy, disgrace] of boldness. And when one bedecks himself with something other than what is in him, and that is plain and clear to him who reflects on it, it may be inferred thereby that his intelligence is defective. Therefore their veracity in attributing this claim to their Master is not clear to us—and this is their last premise.

240 *It may be said:* Had men in distant parts of the world in the time of God's Apostle—God bless him and grant him peace!—denied the veracity of the emissaries of the Apostle of God and said: We do not believe you in your assertion that Muḥammad claims the [apostolic] mission—nay, but such a thing is not to be supposed of his intelligence: what would have been said to them? *We say:* How evil is your likening (the) angels to blacksmiths! For there is no equality, since he—God bless [p. 113] him and grant him peace!—used to appear personally with his followers, manifestly engaging in battle, coming and going in regions, explaining the call to a crowd of men, not hidden or concealed, and, moreover, manifesting apologetic miracles which violated custom. So his call spread because of the spread of his going forth and his fighting and the diffusion of (the fact of) his existence. But that is not the case now regarding your Master. To be sure, there is impeccable report of his existence and of his being a candidate, along with his forbears, for the Caliphate, and their claim that they are worthier of it than others.

241 But his claim, and that of those of his forbears who preceded, of immunity from sin and from error and slip and negligence [inadvertence], and of the knowledge of the truth regarding all rational and legal secrets—that is not manifest to us. Nay, but there is in no wise manifest his claim of knowledge of any of the disciplines such as jurisprudence or kalām or philosophy in the manner in which individual ulema in [different] regions claim it. How, then, could there be a manifest claim of his to know the secrets of prophecy and to be familiar with the lore of this life and the next?! This is something fabricated by collusion in order to entice and deceive the prospect.

242 This is the complete and detailed refutation of them regarding their premises, although in the first way comprising the general refutation of them there is a convincing sufficiency. It remains only to speak of the refutation [upsetting] of their proofs, already mentioned, of the invalidation of reasoning.

243 *The first proof* [cf. Para. 152] is their assertion: He who believes his intellect gives it the lie: for he believes his adversary's intellect, and his adversary explicitly states that he gives him the lie. *We say:* This is an empty [a vain] show [deception, put-on] for several reasons [from several

aspects]. The first is opposing it by the like. This is that we say: We believe intellects regarding their speculative matters and you believe them regarding their necessary matters; but your sophist adversaries give you the lie regarding them. So if that required having to acknowledge the falseness of the necessary knowledges [cognitions], we would have to acknowledge, as a result of your opposition, the falseness of speculative knowledges. For if the intellect believes [p. 114] in necessary matters, then why is it that the intellect of the sophists disbelieves? And what is the difference between your intellect and their intellect? Do you say that that on their part is stupidity and a bad complexion [mixture of humors]?

244 *We say:* Just so is your state regarding the denial of speculative matters, and it is like him who denies arithmetical cognitions. For he does not make us doubt about the arithmetical demonstrations, even though the dull-witted person does not understand [lacks comprehension]. One who rejects reasoning *in toto* denies it. But our way of proceeding with him is to present to him the premises, which are necessary. Then, if he grasps them, he grasps the conclusion. Thus, too, if our adversary gives us the lie [disbelieves us] in one of the problems [questions], such as the denial of the existence of a Necessary Being, we lay before him the premises of the syllogism proving it and say: Do you contest our statement "There is no doubt about the principle of existence"? Or our statement "Every existent is either possible or necessary"? Or our statement "If it is necessary, then a Necessary Being is established"? Or our statement "If it is possible, then undoubtedly every possible is founded ultimately on a Necessary Being"?

245 If he is unable to doubt about the premises, he cannot doubt about the conclusion. Men do disagree about it simply because their natural [native] temperament [ability] is not sufficient to determine [explain] the organization of these premises, but they must be learned from the learned. And such a learned man must have learned most of them [from another] or must have succeeded in discovering some of them by himself. Thus the matter finally ends in an infallible teacher who is a prophet to whom revelation from God Most High has come. Such is the case with all cognitions [scientific lore?]. If they then claim that you have acknowledged the need of a teacher, and he who does not acknowledge it offers stubborn resistance to ocular witness—so the need for him is acknowledged.

246 But this need is like the need for a teacher in the science of arithmetic. For one does not need therein an infallible [teacher], since there is no servile conformism in it. But one needs an arithmetician who will call attention to the method of reasoning. Then, when the learner is alerted he is the equal of the teacher in the necessary knowledge derived from the premises, one after [upon] the other. And there is no doubt that the teacher of arithmetic also learned [from another] most of what he teaches, though he may independently have discovered how to put together some [of that]. The same is to be said of the teacher's teacher and so on until the origin [beginning, start] of the science of arithmetic ends finally in one of the prophets confirmed by revelation and an apologetic miracle. But after God sent down the science of arithmetic among men,

there was no need, for learning it, of an infallible teacher. So, too, speculative intellectual cognitions—with no difference.

247 [p. 115] *The second objection* [goes back to Para. 243] is that one say to them: You have denied, on the part of your adversaries, giving credence to the intellect in its reasoning and have chosen to give it the lie. By what, then, do you know the true and distinguish between it and the false? By the necessity of the intellect?—but there is no way to claim it. Or by its reasoning?—and then you would be forced to return to reasoning—and you would have given it credence after giving it the lie: so what you say would contain a contradiction. *If you say:* We accept it from the Infallible Imam. *We say:* And by what do you know his veracity? *If you say:* Because he is infallible. *We say:* And by what do you know his infallibility? *If you say:* By the necessity of the intellect—you are well aware of your shame [ignominy] and you know in the interior of your souls the contrary of what you proclaim. For the infallibility of God's Apostle—God bless him and grant him peace!—accompanied by his apologetic miracle, was not known by the necessity of the intellect. Consequently some groups denied his apostolic mission; nay more, all the Brahmins denied the sending of the Apostles. And most Muslims deny the impeccability of the Prophets, arguing from God Most High's utterance "And Adam disobeyed his Lord and went astray" [20.119/121] and other accounts contained in the Qur'an about the circumstances of the Prophets. So if the infallibility of the possessor of the apologetic miracle was not known of necessity, then how can the infallibility of your Master be known of necessity?

248 *It may be said:* We know it by reasoning—but the reasoning was learned from him. And reasoning is divided into sound and unsound, and distinguishing the sound from the unsound is impossible for all men save the true Imam. This is the scale [norm] which makes clear the difference between the specious argument and the demonstration. So we indeed know the soundness of the reasoning which we have learned from him and our souls are sure of [have confidence in] it by reason of his attestation and his instruction. *We say:* And the reasoning which he has taught you: to understand it, did you have need of reflection, or was it grasped intuitively? If you claim intuition, how intense your ignorance [folly] is, since the purport of this comes down to the knowledge of his infallibility being known intuitively—and this is a downright lie!

249 But if you needed reflection, then was that reflection known [recognized] by the intellect or not? *And one must answer:* By the intellect. *Then we say:* And if, upon reflection, the intellect decided something, was it veracious or not? If they say it was not—then why did they give it credence? And if they say it was veracious—then they have indeed invalidated the principle [basis] of their doctrine: viz. their assertion that there is no way to give credence to intellects. *If it be said:* [p. 116] The Imam knows certain things about the profound secrets of God, and if he mentions them, the learner, when he hears them, gets an intuitive necessary knowledge of his veracity and thereby has no need of subtle reasoning and reflection. *We say:* And the Apostle of God—God bless him and grant him peace!—did he know that [i.e. those things] or not? If you say "No," you

have preferred the successor to the original. But if you say "Yes," then why did he conceal those things, and why did he not manifest and disclose them so that intellects would have been compelled intuitively to remember them and would have rushed to believe him in his claims? And why did he leave groups of men forced to dive into specious arguments, tripping over the tails [hems] of errors, fighting with their possessions and their lives to champion empty fancies?

250 How [could that be?]-And when you had learned that from your Imam and were able to mention it so that his veracity would be known intuitively why was that particular hidden and to what day was it deferred-when the concealing of religion is one of the greatest of the grave sins?! Furthermore, how were the hearers of the varieties of your error divided into one giving ear and one rejecting and one mistaken and one alerted [mindful]-and [why] were not all inserted into the noose of belief and submission? In general, the claim of such polemic indicates only impudence [insolence] and lack of shame-otherwise we would know of necessity that you have not perceived intuitively the veracity and infallibility of your Imam, but perhaps you are forced, to promote deception, to cast off the garment of shame-thus does God do to the masters of error and caprices. So we take refuge with God from the tumble [error] of the foolish. This lie issuing from you is not a remark to be uttered or a false step to be advocated or a deception to be reached beforehand by the ignorant, to say nothing of learned men!

251 *The third objection* is that we say to one seeking guidance, for example, if he doubts about the soundness of reasoning and argues from the general disagreement: You must specify [particularize] the question [problem] about which you doubt. For questions are divided into what cannot be known by the reasoning of the intellect, and what can be known with conjectural knowledge, and what can be known with sure and certain knowledge. But there is no meaning to accepting a general question: [p. 117] rather one must specify the question in which the difficulty occurs so that the veil may be removed from it and the questioner informed that the one opposed therein has failed to understand the way to put together the premises which lead to its conclusion. We now claim knowledge of only two questions: one of them is the existence of the Maker, the necessarily existent, in no need of maker and manager [governor]; and the second is the veracity of the Apostle. And regarding the remaining questions it suffices us to learn them by blind acceptance from the Apostle-God bless him and grant him peace! This is the amount [the absolute minimum] which must be had regarding religion.

252 There is no obligation to acquire the other knowledges-rather men can do without them, even though that be possible, e.g. arithmetical, medical, astronomical, and philosophical lore. Those two questions we know for certain-the existence of a Necessary Being by the premises which we have known, and the veracity of the Apostle by premises which are like them. One who comprehends them does not doubt about them, but knows the error of him who opposes them as one knows the error of the arithmetician in arithmetic. And our adversaries are also forced [impelled] to know

these two questions by reasoning: otherwise the Prophet's utterance is of no avail regarding them-how, then, is the utterance of the infallible one of any avail regarding them?!

253 *If it be said:* The knowledge of God's attributes and the knowledge of the revealed Laws and the knowledge of the Assembling and the Resurrection are all necessary: whence, then, is it known? *We say:* It is learned from the Prophet-God bless him and grant him peace!-infallible and confirmed by the apologetic miracle, and we believe him in what he reports as you blindly follow your Master who has neither infallibility nor apologetic miracle. *Then if it be said:* And by what do you understand what he says? *We say:* By that by which we understand this speech of yours in your questions and you understand our speech in our answers, viz. the knowledge of the language and of the conventional meaning of words-as you understand from him who in your view is infallible.

254 *If it be said:* In the discourse of the Apostle and in the Qur'an there are difficulties and generalities, such as the letters of the beginnings of the sūras, and what is ambiguous [obscure, unclear], such as the matter of the resurrection. Who, then, acquaints you with its interpretation, since the intellect does not show [indicate] it? *We say:* The words [expressions] of the revealed Law have three divisions. [*The first comprises*] plain words not open to probability, so for them there is no need of a teacher. Rather, we understand them as you understand the speech of the Infallible Imam. For if the plain speech of the Legislator needed a teacher and interpreter, then the [p. 118] plain speech of the infallible teacher would need another interpreter and teacher and there would be a processus ad infinitum.

255 *The second [division]* comprises general and ambiguous words [expressions], such as the letters of the beginnings of the sūras. Their meanings cannot be grasped by the intellect, for languages are known by convention and there was no prior convention on the part of men regarding the letters of the alphabet. And the "rā" and "hā-mīm," "'-s-q" are an expression of what? So the infallible one also does not understand it, but that is understood simply from God Most High if [when] He explains what is meant by it on the tongue of His Apostle-and that is understood by hearing. And that must either have *not* been mentioned by the Apostle, because there was no need to know it and it was not enjoined on men. So the infallible one shares in not knowing it, since he has not heard it from the Apostle. And if he knew it and mentioned it, then he has indeed mentioned what men were not obligated to know, because it will never be [or: it was not] enjoined on them. But if the Apostle mentioned it, then knowledge of it is shared by whomever the report reached-by impeccable transmission or through individuals-and there is a transmission regarding it from Ibn 'Abbās and a group of the commentators. If it be impeccable transmission, it affords [sure] knowledge, otherwise it affords conjecture. And conjecture is sufficient regarding it-nay, but there is no need to know it since there is no prescription regarding it.

256 As for the time of the Resurrection, God Most High did not mention it, nor did His Apostle-Peace be upon him! It is obligatory simply

to believe in the fundament [i.e. the basic dogma] of the Resurrection, but it is not obligatory to know its time—rather the advantage of men lies in concealing it from them, and therefore it has been hidden from them. So whence has the infallible one known that utterance since neither God nor His Apostle mentioned it, and there is no scope for the necessity of the intellect or its reasoning to pinpoint the time? Furthermore, let us suppose that he knew that and claimed that he—God bless him and grant him peace!—mentioned it secretly [privately] in the company of ‘Alī bin Abī Ṭālib—God be pleased with him!—and every Imam mentioned it in the company of his *sūz*; then what advantage is there for men in it, since it is a secret which can be mentioned only in the company of the Imams? So if your Infallible [Imam] were to mention and disclose this secret which God Most High commanded to conceal—since the Most High said: “I would [am about to, intend to] conceal it” [20.15]—he would oppose God and His Apostle; but if he does not divulge it, then how can one learn from him what cannot be taught? So it shows [proves] that intellectual matters [p. 119] need teaching. However, if the teacher calls attention to the method of the reasoning about it, his infallibility is not required. But if he be blindly followed, without [affording] any proof, then his infallibility must be known by an apologetic miracle. And this is the Prophet: let him suffice you as teacher, then there is no need of anyone else!

257 *The third division* comprises the words [expressions] which are neither general nor explicit, but they are evident, for they cause [give rise to] a conjecture—and conjecture is enough in that kind and sort [of thing]. And it is all the same whether that concern legal affairs or the matters of the afterlife or God’s attributes. So men are bound only to believe in [the proclaiming of] God’s unity—and the expressions are explicit regarding it—and to believe that He is powerful, knowing, hearing, seeing, there is nothing like Him [42.9/11], and the Qur’ān contains all of that and explicitly declares it. As for speculation on the modality and real nature of these attributes and whether they are equivalent to our power and knowledge and right or not—His utterance “there is nothing like Him” [42.9/11] indicates the negation of likeness to all [other] existents. With this men may be content, so they have no need of an infallible [teacher, Imam].

258 To be sure, one who reasons about it and argues to it from rational proofs may reach certainty [sure and certain knowledge] in [on] part of what he reasons about and conjecture regarding other points. That will differ according to the difference of acumen and intelligence and the difference of obstacles and motives and the aid of [divine?] help in reasoning. But the “knower” [*al-‘arif*—gnostic] “tastes” [*yadhūq*—has an experimental (direct) knowledge of] the certain, and when he is certain he does not doubt about it nor is he made to doubt by the inability of others to grasp [what he knows]. Perhaps his [?] soul may be weak and he will be made to doubt by the opposition of others. But all that contains no harm [for him], because he is not commanded that; and the infallible one would be of no avail, were he to follow him, because pure servile conformism is not enough for him. And if the matter of the proof is

mentioned, it makes no difference whether it issues from an infallible one or from another, as we have previously declared.

259 *The second proof* [cf. Para. 153] is their assertion: If a perplexed man seeking guidance comes to you and asks about religious knowledges, do you refer him to his intellect that he may reason independently—and he is incapable [of that], [p. 120] or do you command him to follow you in your doctrine—and you are challenged by the Mu’tazilite and the Philosopher, and so of the other sects? So by what is one doctrine distinguished from another, and one sect from another? *The answer* is in two ways. *One of them* is that we say to them: If one perplexed about the basis of the existence of the Maker and the veracity of the Prophets were to come to you, this difficulty would be turned [retorted] against you—so what would you say? If you cited a rational proof we would not trust his reasoning, and if you referred him to his intellect, the same would be true. Perhaps, then, you would quench his thirst by referral to the Infallible [Imam]? How cold [inane—stupid] this quenching would be! For he would say: Suppose me to have come in quest of guidance in the time of Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdallāh accompanied [as he was] by his apologetic miracle—but your Infallible [Imam] cannot [adduce] an apologetic miracle! Or suppose that I were to see your Infallible [Imam] turn a staff into a serpent, or quicken the dead, or cure the born blind and the leper while I saw it, yet his veracity would not be clear to me by the necessity of the intellect, nor do I trust reasoning. How many kinds of men saw that and rejected it! Some of them ascribed it to magic and trickery, and others to something else.

260 Perhaps, then, you would satisfy his hunger [need] by saying to him: Blindly follow the Infallible Imam and ask not about the reason.

Then he would say: And why should I not follow those opposed to you in rejecting prophethood and infallibility? Is there between the two any difference in length of beard or whiteness of face or other such things as they rave about? This is a retort which, were they to unite from their first to their last in escaping from it without commanding reflection and reasoning about the proof, they would find no way to do so.

261 (*The second answer*) is verification [pinpointing, precise determination, substantiation]. This is that *we say* to the one seeking guidance: What do you seek? For if you seek all cognitions [lore, knowledges], how intense is your curiosity, and how great your concern, and how large your expectation! So busy yourselves with those cognitions which concern you. *If he says:* I want what concerns me. *We say:* The only important [serious] thing is knowledge of God and of His Apostle. This is the meaning of His utterance: “There is no god [divinity] save God; Muḥammad is the Apostle of God.” It is easy for us to teach you these two questions. And thereupon [p. 121] should be mentioned to him the necessary premises which we have mentioned in establishing the existence of a Necessary Being, then the like of them in the apologetic miracle’s proof of the veracity of the Apostle. *If he then alleges:* The opposition of the adversaries is what makes me doubt about this knowledge: shall I, then, follow you or follow your adversaries? *We say to him:* Do not follow us, and do

not follow our adversaries, for learning the way of servile conformism is allowed: but servile conformism regarding the conclusion is not to be trusted. Your doubt, then, concerns which of our premises? Is it about our assertion: The basis of existence is acknowledged [i.e. that there must be a reason for the existence of a thing]? If that be so, then your treatment should be in the hospital, for this is due to a bad mixture of the humors. For one who doubts about the basis of existence has indeed doubted first of all about his own existence.

262 *If you say:* I do not doubt about this, contrary to the Sophists. *We say:* Then you are indeed certain of one premise. So do you doubt about the second, viz. our assertion: If this existence be necessary, then there exists a Necessary Being? We say this is also something necessary. [Then] we say: So do you doubt about our assertion: If it be possible, one of the two extremes of the possibility is not particularized respecting the extreme like it save by a "particularizer." This also is a necessary premise in the view of him who grasps the meaning of the expression [wording], and if there is any hesitation in him it is hesitation about grasping what the speaker means by his words. *If he says:* Yes—I do not doubt about it. *We say:* And if that needed "particularizer" be possible, then the statement about that is like the statement about it [the former] and so it requires a "particularizer" which is not "possible"—and this is what is meant by a Necessary Being. So what do you doubt about?

263 *If he says:* I still have a doubt—one knows thereby his stupidity and misunderstanding, and there is no hope of his being sensible. He is not the first stupid man who fails to grasp truths—so we leave him alone. He is like one who seeks knowledge of arithmetic and we mention to him the obscure premises of arithmetic dealing with form [sector] [p. 122] which comes at the end of Euclid's book and he does not understand it because of his stupidity. Nay more, even regarding the first figure, which contains the establishing of demonstrations concerning the equilateral triangle, he does not grasp it. [So] we know that his temperament is not capable of this subtle science [knowledge]. Not every nature is capable of the sciences, or even of the arts and crafts. So this does not prove the unsoundness of this principle [basis].

264 *If the seeker of guidance says:* I do not doubt about these premises nor about the conclusion. But why are you opposed by him who opposes you? *We say:* Because he does not know how to put together these premises, or because of his obstinacy [pigheadedness], or because of his stupidity. The veil is removed by our directly addressing one of them inclined to be fair and our asking [consulting] him about these premises so that it may be clear to you that either he understands and is fair and acknowledges, or he does not understand because his stupidity, or fanaticism [partisanship] and servile conformism prevent him from giving it a fair hearing and so he does not understand it—and thereupon his error is known [revealed]. So one should do with him regarding each question, and one should consider in him what his circumstance can tolerate and his acumen and intelligence accept, and not impose on him what he cannot stand, but rather he may be convinced by what is be-

queathed to [effected for] him by determined [resolute] belief regarding the truth. For with that the Law is content on the part of most of the common folk. And the modality of the demonstrations should not be disclosed to him, for he might not understand them.

265 *The third proof* [cf. Para. 155] is their assertion: Oneness is the proof [indication, sign] of the true and multiplicity is the proof of the false. And oneness is the property of [cleaves to] the doctrine of *al-ta'lim* [authoritative teaching], whereas multiplicity is the property of your doctrine. For the disagreement of the group opposed to *al-ta'lim* constantly multiplies, whereas the way of the group accepting *al-ta'lim* is ceaselessly united. *The answer* is in several ways. One of them is objecting [confrontation], another refutation, and the third verification. *Objecting* [confrontation] is that you say: Those who hold the need for an infallible teacher have disagreed about that infallible one. The Imamites hold that he is not visible and not known individually [and his identity is not known], but he has concealed himself out of prudence. Others hold that he is not existing, but his existence is awaited, and he will exist when the time can bear the manifesting of the truth, and if [p. 123] the time did bear its manifesting, he would exist—for there is no advantage in his existing when it is impossible to show [himself] because of prudent fear. And others said of one [? some ?] of the Caliphs who have died that they are alive and will appear at its [the proper] time [Wehr: = at the right time]. And they disagreed about pinpointing him so that one group believed that the one called al-Ḥākim [al-Ḥākim bi Amr Allāh—EI(2)] is still alive. And others held that of another—to a long kind of disorder [random claims].

266 *If it be said:* These are a crowd of simpletons not to be numbered in our group. If you join them to us and combine us and them multiplicity would attach to us: why, then, do you add to us him who opposes us as he opposes you? On the contrary fairness [[demands] that you look at us alone—and there is no disagreement at all in what we say. *We say:* And we also, if we are considered by ourselves, do not oppose ourselves. This objection may undoubtedly be warded off by one who believes on all questions a doctrine which does not oppose itself [and] who has with him a group of men who agree with him on his belief regarding all [the questions]. So if you regard him with his group, and do not join to them one who opposes them, then you will find their "word" united by silliness and stupidity and inadequate reasoning: so it does not prove that the truth is among them. *If you then say:* And by what do you know the folly of your opponents?—that is turned against you regarding your opposition to those who hold the necessity of *al-ta'lim* from the Infallible [Imam]. And if you allege that those holding that reasoning is sound are one sect, although they disagree about the details of the doctrine, *We say:* And those who hold that there must be an Infallible Imam are one sect, even though they disagree about the detail. And there will never, never be any escape from this!

267 *The second answer* is that we say: Your assertion that oneness is the sign of the true and multiplicity is the sign of the false is false in both parts: for many a one is false, and many a multiple [p. 124] is not

devoid of the true. For if we say: The world is incipient or preeternal, and the incipient is one and the preeternal is one; so they indeed share in the property of oneness, but they are divided into the true and the false. And if we say: Are five and five ten or not? Then our saying "No" is one negation, as our saying "Ten" is one affirmation: then they differ, so one of them is true and the other false.

268 *If you say:* Your saying "Ten" you cannot divide or separate save by one; and your saying is not separable by nine and seven and the other numbers—so there is multiplicity in it. *We say:* And the necessity of multiplicity in the like of this separating does not indicate falseness. For if we apply ourselves to two bodies approximating each other, we say: Are they equal or not? Our saying "Equal" is one but it is false, and it cannot be separated [divided] save by one. And our saying "No," if we say "Different" is true, and it is one, and it is susceptible of separation [division] by what is divided into the true and the false, since one can say: This body is different from that body, i.e. it is larger, or it is explained by its being smaller, and the true is one of the two and the false faces it in its being one and in its sharing in being included under one expression. This is something true which shows that what they have mentioned is a deception.

269 *The third answer* to their assertion that multiplicity is the sign of the false [is that] our doctrine is one and contains no multiplicity. But the multiplicity is simply in the individuals who are united on one question, then divided on some questions. Why, then, have they confronted this with a multiplicity in answer to the question, viz. about our saying: How many are five and five? Rather is his view of [from; regarding ?] the doctrine that he give a legal opinion about one question by many contradictory legal opinions. Thereupon it can be said: Multiplicity is an indication of the false. But we give a legal opinion on each question only by one: for we say: God is one, and Muḥammad—God bless him and grant him peace!—is His Apostle, and he is veracious and confirmed by the apologetic miracle, so this is one legal opinion: let it, then, be true. But if it be false, it agrees with their doctrine.

270 And our assertion that the reasoning of the intellect is a way which brings [one] to grasp what is not grasped of necessity is one doctrine containing no multiplicity—so let it be true, just as our assertion that arithmetical cognitions [knowledges] are true knowledges is one assertion and is true. One must marvel at their going so far in deception, since they take the word "multiplicity" which is [p. 125] an annexed, shared [common] word by which at one time is meant multiplicity in the answers to a single question, such as the answer to five and five, and seven and six, and others, and at another time it is used in the sense of the multiplicity of individuals agreeing on a doctrine and disagreeing about it. Then they see the separation of the false [to be] due to the multiplicity annexed to the number of answers regarding a single question and infer from it the falseness of a single assertion regarding a single question on which a numerous group agree whose utterance disagrees regarding questions other than that difficulty.

271 But although this is a deception unlikely [to influence] a knowledgeable person, the intention of its author is to deceive the masses, and

the [ready] circulation is something to be expected [anticipated]. So the artifice against the masses to seduce them is not impossible for a group of the stupid who claim Lordship [divinity]: how, then, could it be too difficult for others? As for the Most High's utterance: "If it [Apostle's Preaching] were from another than God, they would find in it much disagreement" [4.84/82], [the use of] it is of this kind in deceiving. For what is meant by it is the contradiction of the words in the single speaker: if his speech is contradictory, it is unsound. But the speech of one of us regarding a question is not contradictory. Rather, a group have agreed on a question, viz. the affirmation of reasoning, just as a group have agreed on *al-ta'lim* and its affirmation: then they have disagreed about other questions. What, then, has this to do with the disagreement of one and the same speech?!

272 *If it be said:* If the learners [disciples] agree on *al-ta'lim* and on one teacher, and all hearken to [heed] him, there is no opposition among them, even if they are a thousand thousand. *We say:* And those who reason, if they agree on the reasoning on the proof and on specifying one proof for each question and stop at [learn, understand] the latter, opposition among them is inconceivable. *If you say:* And how many a reasoner on that very proof has opposed! *We say:* And how many a listener to your Teacher has indeed opposed! *If you say:* Because he did not believe him to be infallible. *We say:* And because the reasoner did not know the mode of the proving of the proof. *If you say:* Perhaps he knows the mode of the proving, then denies [it]. *We say:* This is inconceivable save out of pigheadedness, just as [when] one believes the existence of the Infallible Imam to be true, then opposes him, that is only because of pigheadedness. There is no difference between the two procedures.

273 *The fourth proof* [cf. Para. 156] is their assertion: If the reasoner does not perceive the equality [p. 126] between him and his adversary in the matter of belief, then why does he perceive the equality between his two states [or: then he does not perceive, etc.]? How many a question he has believed through a reasoning, then his belief changed. So by what does he know that the second is not like the first? *We say:* He knows that by a necessary knowledge about which he does not doubt. This is also your belief [as exemplified ?] in two examples—and no polemic is stronger [more effective] than retort and opposition [objection, confrontation] in such discourses as these. For they are wont to extend the hand of adherence [preservation] to difficulties which are not peculiar to the doctrine of [any] group, and thereby they perplex the minds of the masses and lead [them] to think it is peculiar to the doctrine of their opponents. And when will the poor common man advert to that's being turned [retorted] against him regarding his doctrine?!

274 *So we say:* Did this speaker believe the doctrine of *al-ta'lim* and the invalidation of reasoning out of servile conformism because he heard it from his parents, or did he hear a doctrine from his parents and then after that advert to its falseness? *If he says:* I believed it because of hearing [it] from my parents. *We say:* Now the children of the Christians and the Jews and the Zoroastrians and the children of those who oppose you on the question of reasoning happened to grow up in the opposite of your

belief—so by what do you distinguish between yourselves and them? By length of beards, or blackness of faces, or some other reason, when the servile conformism is universal?

275 *And if you say:* We believed your doctrine, then we abandoned servile conformism and became aware of the soundness of the doctrine of *al-ta'lim*. *We say:* Did you become aware of the falseness of our doctrine intuitively or by reasoning of the intellect? If it happened intuitively, then how was the object of the intuition concealed from you in the beginning of your affair, and from your forefathers [parents], and from us, who are [among the] intelligent and have indeed covered the face of the earth far and wide? And if you know that by your reasoning, then why did you trust in reasoning when perhaps your subsequent state was like the prior state—so what is the difference [distinguishing factor]? *If you say:* We knew it from the Teacher. *We say:* If it was servile conformism, then what is the difference between servile conformism to the last and servile conformism to the first, and between your servile conformism and that of the groups of [your] opponents from among the Jews and the Christians and the Zoroastrians and the Muslims? And if you understood [it] by reasoning, then what is the difference between you and other reasoners? There is no answer to this save to say: Of necessity we perceive the difference between what is known for certain and about which there can be no error and that [about which] there can be [error]. Just so is our answer.

276 *The second example* [cf. Paras. 273–74]: One who errs in an arithmetical question and then adverts to it—is it conceivable that his doubt passes away after his being alerted? *We reply:* He knows that he is not wrong and that error is not possible [p. 127] for him, and that the error in the past was because of a premise which eluded him. If you say “No,” you have indeed denied ocular witness. And if you say “Yes,” then by what do you perceive the difference if not by necessity? And the very same difficulty is turned against [you]. And how can you deny that when you have certainly seen one who claims acumen and intelligence in the science of arithmetic judge that going to the right regarding the *qibla* [direction faced in Prayer] is obligatory in the city of Nishapur, and that one must incline to the right from its agreed upon *mihrāb* [prayer niche]. He inferred that from an admitted premise, viz. that the sun stands in the middle of the heaven at the zenith in Mecca at the longer [part] of the day at noontime. Then he said: At the longer [part] of the day at noontime in Nishapur you see the sun inclining a little to the right of one facing its *mihrāb*, so one knows that it is directly over the head of one standing in Mecca, and that Mecca inclines to the right.

277 So a group of arithmeticians followed him in that and believed that to be obligatory by reason of this proof, until they adverted to the place of the error in it and their violating [infringing] of another premise, viz. that it binds one only if noontime in Nishapur is noontime in Mecca. But such is not the case, but rather it falls an hour later and the sun will have begun [to decline ?] in the direction of the west to the right side [?], so one sees noontime inclining from the *qibla* of Nishapur,

because noontime and setting [time] are not in agreement [do not coincide] in all places. And that is known by the ascension [elevation] and declension [sinking] of the two poles, nay, more by their occultation and their being revealed in the different regions. So this error and its likes [occur] in arithmetic. Does that, then, show that reasoning in arithmetic is not a way leading to the knowledge of the truth? Or the one alerted thereafter will doubt and say: Perhaps [p. 128] another premise has eluded me and I am unaware of it as in the first case. This, if its door be opened, is pure sophistry, and that would lead to the invalidity [falsity] of all knowledges and beliefs: How, then, could there remain along with it the necessity of learning [from an infallible one] and knowledge of infallibility and knowledge of the invalidation of reasoning!

278 *The fifth proof* [cf. Para. 157] is their assertion: The Trustee of the

Law—God bless him and grant him peace!—said: “The one saved from among the sects will be one [sect], viz. the people of the custom and the consensus.” Then he said: “What I and my Companions are now holding.” This belongs to the “amazing” [wonderful, astonishing, remarkable, odd] inferences [proofs]. For they deny [reject] reasoning about rational proofs because of the possibility of error in it, and begin holding fast to the reports of individuals and the noncanonical additions in them. The origin of the report belongs to the class of [reports of] individuals, and this addition is noncanonical: so it is conjecture upon [added to] conjecture. Moreover it is an expression susceptible of innumerable ways of interpretation. For what he and his Companions were holding, if it all be stipulated regarding words and actions and movements [policies, undertakings, procedures, impulses] and skills [? crafts?], is impossible. And if some of it be taken [adopted, accepted], then who is to specify and determine [evaluate] that “some”? And how is its accuracy to be grasped? Is that conceivable save by a weak conjecture the like of which would not be approved in *fiqh* matters despite their triviality: how then could it be the basis of arguing to [basic] positive matters?

279 However, *we say:* They were [engaged] in following a Prophet confirmed by an apologetic miracle. You, therefore, do not belong to the sect which will be saved, for you follow one who is neither a prophet nor confirmed by an apologetic miracle. *Then they will say:* It is not necessary to be equal to him [lege: them] in every respect. *We say:* We are equal to them in every respect: for we enjoin following the Book and the Sunna and exercising personal effort when it is impossible to hold fast to them, as he commanded Mu'adh, and as the Companions continued to do after his death, viz. consultation and the exercise of personal effort about things. So the tradition determines [appoints] salvation for us and perdition for you, because you have deviated from following the infallible Prophet to another.

280 *If it be said:* And the meanings of the Book and the Sunna: [p. 129] how do you understand them? *We say:* We have already explained that they are three divisions: explicit, apparent and general [cf. Paras. 254ff.]. And we have shown that our knowledge of them is like the knowledge of all the Companions, and like the knowledge of him for whom you claim

infallibility, without any difference. *If it be said:* But you call for the reasoning of the intellect, and this was not the wont [habit] of the Companions. *We say:* Far from it! For we call for following and for believing the Apostle of God—God bless him and grant him peace!—in the utterance of “There is no divinity save God: Muḥammad is the Apostle of God.” Whoever believes in that spontaneously without contention and disputation we are content [with that] on his part as the Apostle of God—God bless him and grant him peace!—[was] content with it on the part of the rude [desert] Arabs.

281 Men are three divisions. *One* [comprises] the blindly accepting masses brought up in belief of the truth through hearing [it] from their elders: and the soundness of their Islam is acknowledged. *The second* [division] comprises the unbelievers brought up on the contrary of the truth through hearing from their elders and servile conformism. These, in our view, are called to follow blindly the infallible Prophet confirmed by the apologetic miracle and to follow his Sunna and his Book: but you call him to your Infallible [one]. I would like to know which of us resembles more the Companions of the Apostle of God—God bless him and grant him peace!—he who summons to the Prophet confirmed by the apologetic miracle, or he who summons to him who claims infallibility of his own wish [craving, passion] without an apologetic miracle!

282 *The third division* comprises the man who has left the position of the servile conformists and knows that in servile conformism there is danger of error, so that he has become dissatisfied with it. We invite him to consideration of the creation of the heavens and the earth that he may know thereby the Maker and to reflection on the apologetic miracles of the Prophet—God bless him and grant him peace!—that he may know thereby his veracity. But you call him to blind following of the Infallible [one] and you deny and denigrate the reasoning of the intellect. I would like to know which of the two calls is more in accord with the call of the Companions of the Apostle of God—God bless him and grant him peace! So when they say to the seeker of guidance who is in doubt: Be wary of the reasoning of the intellect and reflecting on it, for in it is the danger of error and therefore reasoners have disagreed; [p. 130] rather you must blindly accept what you hear from us without understanding or reflection—this, were it to issue from a madman, would be laughed at.

283 And one should say to him: Why should we follow you blindly and not follow blindly him who gives you the lie? So if the carpet of the proof which distinguishes by way of reasoning between you and your adversary be rolled up, and it is impossible to grasp a discerning [differentiating] of necessity, then by what are you distinguishable from your opponent who gives [you] the lie?! I would like to know whether he who opens the door to reasoning which leads to the knowledge of the truth, following therein what the Qur’ān contains of urging consideration and reflection on the verses [signs?] in the Qur’ān and [on] the inability of men to produce its like and his [the Apostle’s] arguing therefrom, [whether he] is closer to agreement with the Companions and the people of the Sunna and the Consensus, or he who makes men despair of reason-

ing on the proofs by [his] imputing of falsehood [disbelief, denial] so that there remains to religion no strap [thong, support] to cling to save claims which contradict one another?! Is this other than the doing of him who wishes to extinguish the light of God and to eclipse [cover over] the Law of the Apostle of God—God bless him and grant him peace!—by stopping up his way leading to Him?

284 *If it be said:* So we see you inclining at one time to following and at another to reasoning. *I say:* So you should believe it—but concerning two [types of] individuals. Those who have the good fortune to be born among the Muslims and have accepted the truth by unquestioning acceptance have no need of reasoning. The same is true of unbelievers if it be made easy for them to believe the Apostle of God—God bless him and grant him peace!—by unquestioning acceptance, as it was made easy for the rude [desert] Arabs. But one who doubts and knows the risk of servile conformism, must know our veracity in our saying “There is no divinity save God: Muḥammad is the Apostle of God.”

285 Then after this he will be in a position to follow the Apostle of God—God bless him and grant him peace!—but he will not know the proclamation of God’s unity and the prophetic mission save by reasoning about the proof which the Companions indicated and by which the Apostle called men. For he did not call them by pure arbitrariness and naked force, but rather by disclosing the ways of the proofs. So this is the way to speak with every doubter. Otherwise let the Bāḥīnite expose his belief respecting him [or: this] and how he escapes from his doubt if the door of reflection and reasoning be closed to him!

286 [p. 131] This, then, is the solution of these specious arguments [doubts, sophistries]. In the view of a knowledgeable man they are too feeble to require for their solution all this prolixity. But some men’s being deceived by them and the conspicuousness [show, visibility] of deception in this time demand this disclosure and elucidation [clarification]. God Most High will aid us to knowledge and action and [to] right conduct and right guiding by His favor and His kindness!

[p. 132]

CHAPTER SEVEN

Refutation of Their Holding Fast to Textual Designation Concerning the Establishment of the Imamate and of Infallibility It Contains Two Sections

Section One On Their Holding Fast to the Textual Designation of the Imamate

287 A group of them turned [from the use of reasoning] to the method of the Imāmites, i.e. the claim of textual designation of the Imam, ‘Alī, and the designation by each father of his son.

288 This they cannot do because it would involve them in reports of individuals. So they are forced to claim an unimpeachable report about

it from the Trustee of the Law [Muḥammad]. This is impossible, as it was impossible for the Imāmites.

289 For it would require unimpeachable report in each age regarding each individual [Imam].

290 This cannot be, for in each case four things would be required. (1) That he actually died leaving a son. (2) That he actually designated his son before he died.

291 (3) That there also be unimpeachable transmission that the Prophet put the designation of all his children on the same level as his [own] designation regarding the necessity of obedience, etc., so that error in specifying would be inconceivable in any one of them. (4) That there also be transmission of the perdurance of infallibility and fitness for the Imamate from the time of the designation to the death of the designator. [132.6–134.17]

292 If there were really *tawātur* [unimpeachable transmission] about these things, they would be known as are other subjects of *tawātur*. But men do not share in such knowledge of their *tawātur*—quite the contrary! It cannot be established.

293 They themselves even disagree about details regarding this or that Imam. . . . They are hopeless, and in leaving reasoning for textual designation are like one who plunges into the sea to avoid getting wet! [134.19–135.9]

294 *Objection:* You press them in many ways; but really they need only one report, viz. that the Apostle of God said: “The Imamate, after me, goes to ‘Alī, and after him to his children; it will not go outside of my lineage, and my lineage will never be cut off; and no one of them will die before charging his son with the commission”—this is enough for them.

295 *Answer:* Certainly—if any error can be contrived and reported unimpeachably! But this is not true of their claim. And it could be matched by an opponent.

296 *Objection:* These claims may not work for these Bāṭinites: but do they work for the Imāmites concerning ‘Alī? *Answer:* No! they can claim only probable words transmitted by individuals, e.g. “He whose Master I am, ‘Alī is his Master” and “You are to me in the position of Aaron to Moses,” etc. Such texts are dealt with in Kalām works [cf. al-Bāqillānī: *Tamhīd*, ed. Khudayrī and Abū Rīdah, pp. 164 ff.]. This is not our aim now, but we mention its impossibility by two ways. [135.10–136.18]

297 *One way:* If such texts were unimpeachable, we would not doubt about them; for the Apostle’s statements about designation would be of such importance as not to be passed over in silence.

298 This is a decisive proof of the falseness of their claim. Their assertion is no different from that of the Bakriyya regarding the designation of Abū Bakr or of the Rāwandiyya regarding that of Al-‘Abbās. [136.18–137.12]

299 *The second way:* The partisans of ‘Alī against Abū Bakr clung to the probable expressions transmitted by individuals. How could they be

silent about an unimpeachable text? They were egged on by godless opponents of religion who inspired the Jews to report utterances of Moses.

300 Our way to refute such men is that they used every artifice to discredit Muḥammad and his Law: why, then, did they refrain from transmitting explicit texts from Moses?

301 *Objection:* Perhaps they did, but the transmission has been lost.

Answer: There has been transmitted the contention of the Anṣār [Helpers] about the Imamate—and there were more motives for transmitting textual designation. To open this door would be to allow every godless man to claim that the Qur’ān was rivaled but that was not transmitted and Muslims concealed it.

302 *Objection:* You are compelled to know this *tawātur* report, but you stubbornly conceal it out of fanaticism. *Answer:* Why do you deny him who retorts this against you and claims that you are obstinate in inventing? How are you differentiated from the Bakriyya and the Rāwandiyya in their claiming that about the textual designation of Abū Bakr and al-‘Abbās?

303 *Objection:* You claim among the Apostles’ apologetic miracles the splitting of the moon and the speech of the wolf and the yearning of the [palm] trunk and the multiplication of a little food, etc.—all denied by all unbelievers and by groups of the Muslims; yet their opposition has not prevented you from claiming *tawātur*. *Answer:* We claim the *tawātur* which imposes necessary knowledge only regarding the Qur’ān. As for the other miracles, they were transmitted by a group less than that needed for *tawātur* whose veracity is known by different speculative proofs and inference from circumstances and others’ refraining from denial, etc. which lead to knowledge through scrutiny and subtle thought—and one who turns from the latter will not have knowledge. But you cannot do so, because you invalidate the ways of reasoning.

304 *Objection:* The splitting of the moon is a heavenly sign; how could it be peculiar to a number less than that needed for *tawātur*? If the number were that needed for *tawātur*, how could there be any hesitation or denial?

305 As for a small number seeing it, the ulema declare it took place at night when people were asleep or indoors, and many might not advert to it, as in the case of those who do not see a falling star; and the splitting did not last long and may have been seen only by those around the Apostle. And some say that God restricted seeing it to those with whom the Apostle was contending with at the time for a good reason.

306 So it was the Prophet’s miracle in two ways violating custom: (1) showing it to those; (2) concealing it from others. Such things mentioned by the ulema. One said that the splitting of the moon is certain from God’s saying: “The Hour is nigh and the moon is split” [54.1]. Discussion of it would be lengthy. In any case, what reaches the level of *tawātur* cannot conceivably be doubted: this is a known rule [*qā’ida*] on which are built all the rules of religion. Proximity is not in accord with our purposes, so I think concinnity best. [137.13–141.18]

Section Two
 Refutation of Their Claim That the Imam
 Must Be Preserved [Immune] from Error and Slip
 and from Sins Great and Small

307 We say to them: By what do you know the correctness of the Imam's being infallible and the existence of his infallibility? By a necessity of the intellect, or by a reasoning, or by hearing a *tawātur* report from the Apostle which gives rise to necessary knowledge? There is no way to claim necessity or a *tawātur* report, because all men would share in knowing that. Not even the fact of the Imam's existence is known of necessity: how, then, his infallibility? And reasoning, in your view, is futile. The Imam's say-so is not enough until his infallibility be proved.

308 However, we say: What reasoning has made known to you the necessity of the Imam's infallibility? *If it be said:* The proof is the necessity of agreement that the Prophet must be infallible, since we learn the truth by means of him: otherwise there can be no reliance on what he says. So also the Imam since we have recourse to him about difficulties: otherwise there can be no reliance on him.

309 *We say:* The cause of your error is your supposing that we need the Imam to acquire knowledge from him: not so! Cognitions [knowledges] are rational and traditional [*sam'iyya*]: the former decisive and probable, each with its own way and proof, which can be learned from anyone and involve no *taqlid* [servile conformism].

310 The traditional rest on hearing of *tawātur* reports or reports of individuals—and the Imam is not needed here.

311 *Objection:* Why, then, do we need the Imam, if he can be dispensed with? *Answer:* And why is there need of a *qāḍī* [judge] in every town? Does the need of him prove that he must be infallible? *They say:* He is needed for practical reasons such as warding off disputes, effecting harmony, etc. And the totality of the world regarding the Imam is like one town regarding the *qāḍī*.

312 [We say:] Just as the *qāḍī* need not be infallible, but his office [function] is needed, so the Imam need not be infallible, but he is necessary for general administrative reasons such as defending Islam, etc.

313 For such reasons an Imam is needed, and he must possess justice, knowledge, intrepidity, competence, and the other requisites which we shall mention in Chapter Nine: but he need not possess infallibility. If they insist on the infallibility of *qāḍīs* and governors and every least officeholder—as the Imāmites believe—

314 we take refuge in God from a belief which forces its upholder to deny what he sees and perceives by intuition and necessity. The wrong done to the classes of men is seen from the circumstances of their Imam's appointees. When an adversary denies necessity one can only let him alone and limit oneself to offering condolences for the blow his mind has suffered!

CHAPTER EIGHT

*Disclosure of the Legal Opinion Regarding Them
 with Reference to Imputing Unbelief and the
 Shedding of [Their] Blood*

The contents of this chapter are jurisprudential decisions. We limit its aim to four sections.

Section One
*On Imputing Unbelief to Them,
 or Declaring Them Astray, or Imputing Error to Them*

315 Whenever we are asked about one of them or a group of them "Do you pronounce on their unbelief [find them guilty of unbelief]," we do not hasten to impute unbelief save after inquiring about their belief and doctrine, consulting the one judged or appealing to trustworthy witnesses, and then we judge accordingly.

316 Their doctrine has two grades [degrees]: one necessitates charging with error and straying [deviation] and innovation; the other necessitates charging with unbelief and washing one's hands of them ["excommunication"].

The first grade—which necessitates charging with error and deviation and innovation—is that we meet a common man who believes that entitlement to the Imamate is on the principle of the House [i.e. Muḥammad's family], and that the one now entitled to it is the one of them who undertakes the office, and that in the first age it was 'Alī. He also claims that the Imam is preserved from error and slip [is infallible and impeccable] and must be so. But he does not declare licit the shedding of our blood or believe that we are unbelievers, but thinks we are men of injustice whose minds erroneously fail to attain the truth out of obstinacy and misfortune.

317 Such a man's blood is not licit, nor is he to be charged with *kufir* [unbelief] because of such views, but with error and innovation, and he is to be warned away from his error and innovation. This because he does not believe in what we have related of their doctrine on divine and eschatological matters [Paras. 69–71 and 80–86], but in this believes as we do.

318 *Question:* Would you not charge them with unbelief for holding that 'Alī should have been Imam rather than Abū Bakr and 'Umar and 'Uthmān? In that is a contravention of Consensus. *Answer:* Granted the contravention; and so we ascend from *takhtī'a* [charging with error] to *tadlīl* [charging with deviation] and *tafsīq* [charging with sinfulness] and *tabdī'* [charging with innovation], but not to *takfīr* [charging with unbelief]. It is not clear to us that the contravener of Consensus is a *kāfir* [unbeliever]....

319 *Q:* Would you not charge them with unbelief for holding that the Imam is *ma'šūm* [infallible-impeccable]—a quality proper to the prophetic mission? *A:* This does not necessitate unbelief: what does

that is affirming the prophetic mission of one after Muhammad, or affirming of another the function of abrogating Muhammad's Law. *'Iṣma* [preservation, immunity, from error and sin] is not a property of prophethood. 320 Some of our associates hold that immunity from venial sins is not certain of a Prophet; they infer this from 20.119/121 and some stories of the Prophets. A matter of error, not of unbelief.

321 Q: If one were to believe in the sinfulness of Abū Bakr, 'Umar and others of the Companions, but not in their unbelief, would you judge this to be unbelief? A: No, but we would judge it to be sinfulness, error and opposition to the Consensus of the Community. God ordained only eighty stripes [lashes] for one falsely accusing a chaste person of adultery—and this prescription extends to all persons thus accused, even Abū Bakr and 'Umar, had they been so accused.

322 Q: If one were to explicitly declare the unbelief of Abū Bakr and 'Umar, should he be assigned the same position as that of one who declares the unbelief of another Muslim person or judge or Imam? A: So we hold. So, declaring the unbelief of the former differs from declaring the unbelief of other Muslims only in two things: (1) opposition to and contravention of Consensus; (2) contradicting reports about the former being promised the Garden and praise of them, etc.—so, one accusing them of unbelief is himself guilty of unbelief, not because he charges them with unbelief, but because he gives the lie to the Apostle of God.

323 Q: What do you hold about him who charges a Muslim with unbelief—is he an unbeliever or not? A: If he knows that the Muslim believes in the Oneness of God and in the Apostle etc. and charges him with unbelief in such things, then he is an unbeliever. But if he thinks the Muslim believes false doctrines and charges him with unbelief, then he is mistaken in his supposition, but truthful in charging with unbelief one he thinks holds such doctrines.

324 But "thinking" unbelief of a Muslim is not unbelief. Such thoughts may be right or wrong—but no one is bound to know the Islam of every Muslim and the unbelief of every unbeliever. A person might believe in God and His Apostle without ever hearing of Abū Bakr or 'Umar, and would die a Muslim. Faith in them is not a pillar of religion.

325 Here we must rein in our discussion, for plunging into this would lead to problems and stir up fanaticisms. Not all minds are ready to accept truth supported by demonstrations because of deeply-rooted beliefs. In fine, it would take a volume to treat even summarily what necessitates unbelief and "excommunication"—so let us restrict ourselves in this book to what is important.

The Second Grade Doctrines Entailing Charging with Kufr

326 This grade is that one believe what we have mentioned, and more, and believe in our unbelief and the licitness of our property and our blood. This undoubtedly entails charging with *kufr* [unbelief]. For they know that we believe in sound doctrines... which are the pivot of authentic

religion: so one who thinks them unbelief is undoubtedly an unbeliever. If there be added to that any of their dualistic, eschatological errors, the latter certainly entail charging with unbelief.

327 *Question*: What if one were to believe basic doctrines, but were to engage in interpretation [*ta'wīl*] of certain eschatological matters? viz. that beatitude is something spiritual, not corporeal, and that [eternal] misery is failing to attain that beatitude;

328 and that the Qur'an uses the parable of material pleasures for common men who cannot grasp that spiritual beatitude. For this reason the Prophet used pleasures they could understand—the houris, etc.—but really God has prepared for His servants what "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard...."

329 And that advantage in representing such things in familiar images is like that in expressions indicating *tashbīh* [anthropomorphism] regarding God's Attributes. If one were to tell men that "the Creator of the world is an existent, neither substance nor accident nor body, neither united with the world nor distinct from it, etc.," they would forthwith deny His existence because their minds could not believe in something beyond sense and image. So representation is used to anchor in them belief and obedience.

330 *We say*: Holding two Gods is downright unbelief. As for the other matters, one might hesitate and say: If they hold the basics, dispute about details does not entail charging with unbelief. What we opt for and hold positively is the charging with unbelief of anyone who holds any of that, because it is plainly giving the lie to the Trustee of the Law [Muhammad] and to all the words of the Qur'an from their first to their last. Descriptions of the Garden and the Fire are in plain terms plainly intended—so what such a person holds is *takdhīb* [charging with lying], not *ta'wīl* [interpretation].

331 In the days of the Companions such a one would have been slain. *Objection*: Perhaps they so acted and exaggerated for the advantage of the common people, because the latter were incapable of understanding mental pleasures and their simple faith had to be protected.

332 *Answer*: You acknowledge by the consensus of the Companions that such a one is an unbeliever and is to be killed, which is all we say. There remains your assertion that the reason for declaring their unbelief was regard for the welfare of the common people. This is pure fancy and supposition. We know positively that they [the Companions] believed that to be giving the lie to God and to His Apostle and rejection of that which the Law brought and which was not contradicted by reason.

333 *Objection*: Did you not follow such a way regarding the similes [*al-tamthīlāt*] about God's attributes, such as the verse of "the being firmly seated [on the Throne]" and the tradition about [God's] "descent" [to the lower heaven] and other reports [numbering] perhaps more than a thousand? Yet you know that our pious forbears did not interpret these literal texts. Then you have not charged with *kufr* [unbelief] the one who rejects literal meanings and interprets them—but rather you believe in and openly declare the interpretation.

334 *We say:* How [p. 155] can this comparison be established when the Qur'an explicitly states that "there is nothing like Him" [42.9/11] and the reports indicating it are too many to be enumerated? If anyone had explicitly declared among the Companions that God is not contained by a place or bounded by a time...and other such things denying anthropomorphic attributes, they would have considered that to be of the essence of *tawhīd* [proclamation of God's Unity] and *tanzīl* [revelation; or perhaps *tanzīh*: deanthropomorphization?] But had he denied the houris, etc., that would have been regarded as a kind of lie and denial—and there is no equality between the two degrees.

335 Moreover we have already called attention to the difference in the chapter on refuting their doctrine [Chap. 5, Sect. 1] in two other ways. *One of them* is that the expressions which have come down [revealed] on the Assembly, Resurrection, Garden and Fire are explicit, without any *ta'wīl* [interpretation] or way of turning except neutralizing and denial; but the expressions on *istiwā'* [being firmly seated] and *al-ṣūra* [the form], etc., are allusions and verbal extensions which admit *ta'wīl* [interpretation] in description of God. *The other* is that rational demonstrations repel belief in anthropomorphism, "descent," "motion," and "occupying a place" by a proving which cannot be doubted; but no rational proof precludes the possibility of what is promised in the after-life regarding the Garden and the Fire; on the contrary, the eternal power comprehends them and they are things possible in themselves, and the eternal power is not incapable of what is possible—how, then, can this be likened to what concerns God's attributes?!

336 The course of this discussion would require the unfolding of a mass of the mysteries of religion, were we to start treating it exhaustively. But since it occurs as an objection in the context of our discussion, let us be content with saying this much and occupy ourselves with the more important aims of this book. In this section we have indeed shown who of them is to be charged with unbelief, and who not, and who strays [errs, deviates], and who does not.

Section Two
On the Legal Status of
Those of Them Guilty of Unbelief

337 Briefly, they are to be dealt with like apostates with regard to [the shedding of their] blood, property, marriage, sacrifice, the execution of judgments, and the performance of acts of worship. As for "spirits" [i.e. souls, lives], they are not to be treated like the original *kāfir* [unbeliever] with respect to whom the Imam has the option of (1) boon [favor], (2) ransom, (3) enslavement, and (4) killing. But with the apostate his only option is killing him and ridding the world of him. This is the legal status of Bāṭinites guilty of *kufr* [unbelief].

338 The allowability of killing them is not peculiar to the state of their fighting [i.e. when they actually engage in combat], but we even assassinate them and shed their blood. For if they engage in fighting, they can be

killed; and if they be of the first group not judged guilty of unbelief, but in battle they attach themselves to the unjust—why the unjust is to be killed even if he is a Muslim—but not to be pursued if he flees, nor, if wounded, is he to be killed; but if we judge him guilty of unbelief, then there is no hesitation about killing him.

339 *Question:* Are their children and wives to be killed? *Answer:* Their women, yes, so long as they are guilty of unbelief. To be sure, the Imam can exercise his own personal effort, and if he follows Abū Ḥanīfa's opinion, he can refrain from killing the women. When their children grow up we propose [p. 157] Islam to them. If they accept, fine; if they persist in their unbelief, they are treated like apostates.

340 As for *property*, theirs has the status of that of apostates....

341 If they die, no bequest or inheritance is valid....

342 Their women cannot be married....Other points on the validity of their marriages [p. 158] and on the use of property.

343 Their sacrifices [animals for slaughter: cf. EI(2), 213] are not licit, like those of a Zoroastrian or a Zēndīq—but those of Jews and Christians are. Their judgments inoperative and their testimony rejected. So, too, their fasting, prayer, pilgrimage and poor tax. If they repent, they must perform all the duties omitted or performed in the state of unbelief, as in the case of the apostate.

344 This is as much as we wish to call attention to of their *ahkām* [legal statutes]. *Question:* [p. 159] Why do you judge them to be attached to the apostates? The latter once held to the true religion, but the former never did. So why not equate them with the original *kāfir* [unbeliever]? *Answer:* What we said is clear about those who embrace their religion after believing its opposite, or not belonging to it. Those who are raised in it are the children of the apostates, for their forbears embraced it. It is not like the belief of Jews and Christians based on Prophets and Scripture, but an innovation introduced by the godless and zēndīqs in recent times.

345 And the status of the zēndīq is like that of the apostate. It remains only to consider the children of the apostates. One view is that they are followers in apostasy like the children of unbelievers, in war, and of *dhimmis* [protected ones who pay a tax]. Another view is that they are like original unbelievers. Another view is that they are judged to have Islam, unless they grow up and manifest unbelief.

346 The latter view in our view is preferable regarding the children of Bāṭinites. Muḥammad said: "Every one is born in the *fiṭra* [cf. Note 22 to my translation] and his parents make him a Jew or a Christian or a Zoroastrian." So the children have Islam, and as soon as they are of age the truth is to be disclosed to them: if they accept it, fine; otherwise they are to be treated as apostates.

Section Three
On the Acceptance and Rejection of Their Repentance

347 We have annexed them to the apostates, and from an apostate

repentance must be accepted. It is even preferable not to kill him before urging him to repent. But the repentance of a Bāṭinite and of any zendiq who harbors unbelief and considers *taqiyya* [dissimulation] a religious practice and believes in hypocrisy when he is filled with fear is a matter on which the ulema differ. Some hold that the repentance of such is to be accepted because of the Apostle's saying: "I am commanded to fight men until they say 'There is no divinity save God.' If they say this, they preserve from me their life and property except for what is due [owed, for some other reason]"; and because the Law has built religion only on the external, and so we judge only by the external, and God takes care of hearts.

348 The proof of it is that if one coerced embraces Islam at sword's point while he is fearful for his life, [and] we know by some circumstances that he conceals something other than what he manifests, we judge him to have embraced Islam and ignore what is known from circumstances about his heart [interior]. It is also proved by the Prophet's displeasure with Usāma who slew an unbeliever after the latter had pronounced the *shahāda* [the word of witnessing: There is no god etc.]. Usāma said: [p. 161] "He did that only to escape the sword." The Prophet said: "Surely you split open his heart," calling attention to the fact that creatures are not informed about interiors and that the place [*manāṭ*: place to which something is attached] of *al-taklif* [imposing obligation] is external things. And it is also proved by the fact that this sort of unbelievers, and all other sorts, must not be cut off from the way to repentance and return to the truth. So also in the present case.

349 And some hold that his repentance is not to be accepted. They allege that if this door were opened it would be impossible to overcome their danger [harm]. For part of their inmost belief is *taqiyya* [dissimulation] and concealing unbelief when they feel fear. This they could always do when pressed. The report mentioned concerned unbelievers whose religion did not allow them to declare anything opposed to their religion. Therefore you see them cut to ribbons rather than agree with Muslims in a word. So how can one who believes otherwise repent and give up his religion?

350 We have exhaustively treated this disagreement in our *Shifā' al-'alīl* [The Cure of the Ailing—cf. Bouyges, p. 18, Note 4]; here we limit ourselves to what we opt for regarding them. We say: The one who repents of this error [may be in one of] several states. *The first* is that he hastens to manifest repentance without any fighting or pressure or compulsion, but by preference [p. 162] and choice, voluntarily and without any fear. This one's repentance positively must be accepted. For we must believe what he says and think it more probable that his interior agrees with that, since there is no motive for *taqiyya*. And the way of guidance cannot be closed to him. Such is the case of many an ordinary man, deceived for a time.

351 *The second state*: One who embraces Islam at sword's point, but belongs to their ordinary and ignorant men, not to their propagandists and erring. His repentance is also to be accepted. For his harm is

limited to himself; and the ignorant common man is easily deluded in religious matters; but his interior agrees with his exterior. . . .

352 Therefore you see captive slaves and bondwomen from lands of unbelief transported to the House of Islam [Islamic territory] readily and gratefully adopting Islam. If asked the reason, they know no reason save agreement with their masters for the advantage of their state, and this influences their interior beliefs. If it is known that the common man changes quickly, then we believe him in his change to the truth as we do in his turning from it. . . . for we are between condoning a secret unbeliever and not killing him, and killing a Muslim, if such a one holds interiorly what he manifests. Condoning the unbelief of an unbeliever who is no threat is not a big deal [a big prohibited thing]. How many unbelievers have we treated kindly and overlooked because of the spending [offering] of a dinar [reference to the tax ?]. But risking killing one who is Muslim outwardly, and may very well be so inwardly, is prohibited.

353 *The third state*: One of their propagandists who is known to think their doctrine false, but embraces it as a means to power and worldly vanities—such a man's evil is to be feared. The case of such a man depends on the *ra'y* [personal opinion] of the Imam who examines the circumstances and seeks signs to determine his sincerity or his hypocrisy and *taqiyya* [dissimulation] and acts accordingly: if he has any doubt, he charges someone to observe him carefully and acts according to what thus becomes clear to him.

[p. 164]

Section Four

On the Artifices [Legal Devices]

of Getting Out of Their Oaths and Pacts

If They Have Concluded Them with the Prospect

354 *Question*: What is your view regarding their covenants and pacts and oaths—are they valid [in force]? It is allowable to break them? Or is breaking them obligatory or prohibited? And if the one swearing breaks [them], is he thereby bound by a sin and an expiation [atonement, amends] or not? How many a person has been the subject of a pact and been confirmed by an oath and accepted that through being seduced by their delusion, then, when their error was disclosed to him, he desired to expose them and lay bare their weaknesses, but was prevented by the binding oaths imposed on him: so there is an urgent need to teach the legal device for getting out of those oaths. *Answer*: Escape from those oaths is possible, and it has ways which differ according to the difference of states [conditions] and expressions.

355 *The first* is that the swearer was aware of the gravity of the oath and the possibility of its containing deception and deceit: so he mentioned to himself following that the "exception," i.e. his saying "If God Will"—so the oath is not valid and he can violate it. And if he violates it he is not bound by any legal determination at all. This is the legal status of any oath followed by the phrase of exception, such as one's saying "By God I shall do thus, if God will," and "If I do such and such, my wife is divorced, if God will," and the like.

356 *The second* is that he convey in his oath a thing and intend the contrary of what he manifests, and the interior holding be in a way borne by the expression so that he concert between himself and God. Then he can violate his external words and follow them in the dictate of his conscience and his intention. *Objection*: In an oath the dependence is on the intention of the exactor, for if one were to rely on the intention of the swearer and his "exception," oaths in judgment meetings [assemblies, sittings, of judges] would be null and the one sworn could conceal [harbor] an intention and "exception" which would lead to the nullification [ruin, frustration] of rights [*al-ḥuqūq*].

357 *Answer*: The analogy [*qiyās*: norm] is that one rely on the intention and "exception" of the swearer—and the one making to swear presents the oath to him, but it is a status about [or: a judgment about] following the intention of the exactor of the oath out of concern for and protection of rights in virtue of the necessity calling for that, and that concerns one in the right in exacting [an oath] which is conformed to the Law and the data of *tawqīf* [positive data] about it: but as for one unjustly coerced and one aggressively [hostilely] duped—no. And one must consider the affair of the swearer along with that [?] in the analogous law regarding consideration of the side of the swearer, because the reason for turning to the consideration of the side of the exactor is the intensity of the need. And what need have we to make injustice rule over imposing [?] an oath on weak Muslims by varieties of deceit and deception?! So one must return regarding it to the law [*al-qānūn*]. [This Para. is rather involved. It seems to say that normally one considers the intention etc. of the one exacting the oath; but in this case, i.e. of a Bāḥīnite unjustly exacting an oath from a prospect, it is the latter's intention which is paramount.]

358 *The third* is that one look at the wording of the oath. If he said: "God's covenant and pact upon you, and what covenants were exacted of the Prophets and the just; and if you disclose the secret, you are quit of Islam and the Muslims," or, "an unbeliever in God, Lord of the Worlds," or, "all your goods are an alms"—no oath at all is concluded by these words. For if he said: "If I do such and such, I am quit of Islam and of God and His Apostle," this would not be an oath because of the saying of Muḥammad—God bless him and grant him peace!—"Whoso swears, let him swear by God or be silent." And swearing by God is that he say "*Tallāhi*" and "*Wallāhi*" [By God] and the like.

359 We have already discussed at length the unambiguous oath in the discipline of jurisprudence, and these expressions are not part of it. So also is his saying "Upon me God's covenant and pact and what God exacted from the Prophets." For if God does not exact their pact and His covenant, it is not concluded by the utterance of another; and God did not exact their pact to conceal the secret of unbelievers and deviants, and this covenant is not like that of God—so nothing is obligatory because of it. Similarly, were a man to say: "If I do such and such a thing, my goods are an alms," nothing would be incumbent on him—unless he says: "God's due from me that I give my property as alms":

and this is the oath of anger and obstinacy, and there frees him [from it], according to the preferable opinion, an oath expiation.

360 [p. 166] *The fourth* is to look at what is sworn to. If the swearer's expression regarding it was what we have related [Paras. 44–45], i.e. their saying "You will conceal the secret of the friend of God and champion it and not oppose it"—then let him expose the secret whenever he will, and he will not break his oath, because he swore to conceal the secret of the friend of God, and what he has divulged is the secret of the enemy of God. So also his saying "You will champion his relatives and followers"—for that is referred to the friend of God and not to the one meant by the exactor, for he is God's enemy.

361 But if the person was specified by name or indication... then one man held that he does not break his oath by divulging the secret, having in view the quality [i.e., friend of God] and turning from the indication. And they have said that it is as though one were to say "I buy from you this ewe," and the thing indicated is a mare—for it is not valid. We opt for the view that the oath is valid; it is not like saying "By God I shall drink the water of this *idwāt* [a small vessel for carrying water]," and there is no water in it.

362 And were he to restrict and say that he will not divulge the secret of *this* person, or of Zayd, it would be valid, even though he refrained from saying that he is the friend of God. But whenever the oath is concluded in this way, he is allowed to, indeed must, disclose the secret, and then is bound to an expiation—enough to feed ten poor men, or, if he is unable, to fast three days. An easy matter requiring no meticulousness in seeking a legal device [p. 167]. And there is no sin in breaking his oath, for the Apostle said: "Whoso swears an oath, then sees something else to be better, let him do what is better and expiate his oath." One who swears to fornicate and not to pray must break his oath and is bound to expiation.

363 *The fifth*: If the swearer left out intention and exception, and the exactor left out the expression of covenant and pact and "friend of God," and produced plain oaths by God and attachment of divorce and manumission and all he would ever possess and obligation of a hundred pilgrimages and fasting a hundred years and praying a million *rak'as* and the like—then his way out of oath by God is feeding ten poor people, as we have said. This also releases him from the pilgrimage, fasting, etc., because that is an oath of anger and obstinacy.

364 As for the attachment of future divorce and manumission—it is null and void. So let him break his oath and marry when he will, for there is no divorce before marriage and no manumission before possession. If he owns a slave and fears manumitting him, let him sell him to a relative or friend, then disclose the secret, then get him back by sale or donation or whatever. Everyone has such a friend. As for his wife, let him divorce her for a dirham [small coin], of hers or of a stranger, then divulge the secret, then remarry her and be safe from any divorce thereafter.

365 *Question:* [p. 168] What if he had previously divorced her twice and had only one divorce left—and in divorce at his wife's instance is what makes her illicit for him until she marries another? *Answer:* He should say: "Whenever my divorce falls on you, you are divorced before it three times." So whenever he breaks his oath his divorce does not occur. This is the "circular oath" which frees from breaking [the oath] and prevents the incidence of divorce. *Objection:* The ulema disagree about that, and perhaps the cautious man will not be pleased to risk a doubtful divorce. *Answer:* If the asker be a blind follower [*muqallid*], he must blindly follow the mufti [one who gives a legal decision]. And the responsibility is assumed peculiarly by the mufti, not the *muqallid*; and if the mufti exercises *ijtihād* [personal reasoning], he is responsible for what his *ijtihād* necessitates. If his *ijtihād* leads to that [?—the incidence of the divorce ?], the incidence of the divorce is not excluded: so he [the asker] has the option of substituting another or of refraining from divulging their secret, but giving up their belief.

366 And in refraining from divulging there is no agreeing with them about religion: rather agreeing lies in believing what they believe and expressing his belief and summoning to it. So if he dismisses their error outwardly and inwardly, he is not bound to speak of what he has heard from them, since there is no specific obligation to recount unbelief from every unbeliever. These, then, are the methods of the legal device to get out of the oath. Some who have studied this branch [discipline] hold that in no case are the oaths issuing from them valid, but this is an utterance proceeding from scanty insight into jurisprudential determinations [statuses, decisions, consequences]. What agrees with the practice of *fiqh* [jurisprudence] and the prescriptions [*ahkām*] of the Law is simply what we have mentioned. Peace!

CHAPTER NINE

*On the Establishment of the Legal Demonstrations
That the Imam Charged with the Truth Whom All
Men Are Bound to Obey in This Age of Ours Is
the Imam al-Mustazhir Billāh—
God Guard His Authority!*

367 The aim of this chapter is to prove his Imamate [Caliphate] in accordance with the Law and to show that all the ulema of the time must give the legal decision that men are definitely and positively bound to obey him and to carry out his decisions in the way of the truth [in the true way] and [to acknowledge] the validity of his appointment of governors and investiture of *qādīs* [judges], and that he is quit of obligation to his subjects at the turning over to him of God's rights, and that he is God's vicegerent over men, and that obedience to him is a duty incumbent on all men.

368 This chapter, with respect to religion, calls for the turning of attention to ascertaining [verifying] it and establishing the demonstration

of the way and path of the truth. For what the discussion of most writers about the Imamate is directed to is that we do not believe [that there is] a Caliph in this age of ours and in bygone ages who does not unite the requisites for the Imamate and is not qualified by their qualifications so that the Imamate would remain inactive [suspended] without anyone exercising it and the one undertaking [occupying] it would remain in violation of the conditions of the Imamate, unworthy of it and unqualified by them.

369 This is a serious attack on Law-based judgments [*ahkām*: prescriptions] and an explicit declaration of their inoperativeness and neglect, and it would call for the clear declaration of the invalidity of all administrative posts and the unsoundness of the judging of *Qādīs* [judges] and the ruin of God's rights and prescriptions and the invalidation of [retaliation for] blood and wombs [offspring] and property and the pronouncement of the invalidity of marriages [marriage contracts] issuing from *Qādīs* in [all] the regions of the earth and the remaining of the rights of God Most High in the custody [care] of creatures. For all such things would be legal only if their fulfillment issued from *Qādīs* duly appointed by the Imam—which would be impossible if there were no Imamate. So the exposure of the corruption of a doctrine calling for that is an important task and duty of religion, but not an easy one. With God's help we shall attempt it.

370 We claim that the Imam al-Mustazhir Billāh is the true Imam who must be obeyed. Our detailed and convincing argument:

There must be an Imam in every age.
But only he is qualified for the office.
Therefore he is the rightful Imam.

371 What if the first premise be denied? We reply that it is agreed upon by us and by the Bāṭinites and by all the Muslims. The principle is not questioned, but only the specification of an individual—except for the man known as 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Kaisān.

372 All knowledgeable men agree on the falseness of the latter's doctrine: two things to be pointed out to those seeking guidance on it. . . (1) The haste of the early Companions, after Muḥammad's death, to set about appointing an Imam. . .

373 (2) The defense and championing of religion undoubtedly necessary and obligatory. To preserve order there must be someone to keep a watchful eye on men and to nip danger in the bud: otherwise anarchy, etc.

374 The conflict of wills and passions would lead to the neglect of the afterlife and the triumph of vice over virtue, and of the lowly over the learned with the consequent dissolution of religious and secular checks. So it is clear that the Imam is an indispensable necessity of men.

375 *Question:* How do you repudiate one who challenges the second premise, viz. that only al-Mustazhir is fit [suited] for the Imamate? For the Bāṭinites summon men to another. How can they make this claim? *Answer:* We do not deny that some claim the Imamate undeservedly. But we say: If the Bāṭinites' claim is false, the Imamate is specified for him who claims it and our aim is achieved. For if, by agreement, there must

be an Imam, and if it is certain that the Imamate is not outside of two persons, and if it is certain that the Imamate of one of them is false, then there remains no doubt about its being certain of the other.

376 The ways showing the falseness of the Imamate claimed by the Bāṭinites are innumerable. We confine ourselves to two factual, decisive [irrefutable] proofs, convincing to all and understood by all. *The first* is that the key conditions of the Imamate are correctness of belief and soundness of religion; and we have related of the doctrine of the Bāṭinites and their Master what at the least entails charging with innovation and deviation, and at the most entails charging with unbelief and excommunication [being quit of them], viz. their affirmation of two preeternal Gods according to what all their sects are agreed upon.

377 *The second* is their rejection, by false interpretations, of many eschatological details revealed in the Qur'ān. How, then, could anyone who holds such things be fit for the Imamate?

378 *The second [general] way* [of showing the falseness of the Imamate claimed by the Bāṭinites and the preference of what we claim]: Even if we concede, for the sake of argument and gratuitously, that the Master of the Bāṭinites is fit for the Imamate... still the Imamate we claim is something agreed upon by all the leaders and ulema of the age and by all the masses of men in farthest East and West, so that obedience and submission to him [Mustaẓhir] are embraced by all save the little gang of Bāṭinites who all together do not equal the number of the followers of the 'Abbāsīd Imamate in a single township, much less those of a district or province!

379 Could an impartial man doubt that the Bāṭinite extremists do not equal a tenth of a tenth of those who support this conquering State [government of the 'Abbāsīds]?—If the Imamate is by might [power], and might is by mutual help and the plurality of followers, etc., then this is a most powerful argument for preferring our Imamate!

380 *Objection*: Truth does not follow plurality, but is hidden and is attained only by a minority, whereas error is plain and the majority hasten to submit to it. Your argument uses the false premise of plurality. But the Imamate, according to the Bāṭinites, is valid simply by textual designation, whether the one so designated be acknowledged or not. So how can such an argument from plurality be valid?

381 *Answer*: The mode of that argument is clear to one who understands the source of the Imamate. In Chapter Seven we showed that its source is not textual designation... So if the latter is false, there remains only choice [*ikhtiyār*: election] by the people of Islam and their agreement on submission.

382 Hence it is clear that whenever there is agreement, anyone who ambitions the Imamate for himself is unjust—and the overwhelming majority is for our Imamate—the dissenters are a mere drop in the sea.

383 *Question*: How do you repudiate one who states "The source of the Imamate is either textual designation or choice; so if choice is false, textual designation is certain"? And he proves the falseness of choice by arguing that one must consider in it the consensus of all men, or the

consensus of the authorities in all the regions of the earth, or the consensus of the men in the town in which the Imam lives, which may be estimated as the consensus of ten or five—or the allegiance may be that of a single person. Now the consensus of all men is impossible, nor was it imposed in bygone times.

384 And the consensus of authorities is impossible, since it might involve waiting over a period longer than the Imam's life. Then there is the case of Abū Bakr. So also regarding the consensus of the men of a town, etc.: mere arbitrariness....

385 There remains only being content with the allegiance of a single person—in a plurality there is diversity of circumstances, etc., and one is preferable to another only by *'isma* [infallibility-impeccability]. So the Master of the agreement is one person, and let him be *ma'sūm* [infallible-impeccable], which is our doctrine and belief, and the plurality of dissenters will be of no avail. So your attachment to plurality is of no help.

386 *We say*: To be sure, the only source of the Imamate is either textual designation or choice; and we say that if textual designation is false, then choice is certain. Your argument against choice is really ignorance of the doctrine we choose and prove. We choose to hold that one person can suffice if he is on the side of the multitudes: his agreement is theirs.

387 We also say: When 'Umar swore fealty to Abū Bakr, the latter's Imamate was established, but by the succession of those who followed 'Umar's lead. Not so had there been a split and factions—for the aim we seek by an Imam is the uniting of views—and one would not be followed unless his authority and influence were recognized and revered. The pivotal point here is *al-shawka* [personal power and influence].

388 If this [choice] is the source of the Imamate, there can be no doubt about al-Mustaẓhir's Imamate....

389 It is now clear to you how we have ascended from this dark depth and resolved the problem about the number of the men of choice: for we specify no number; one is sufficient, if all follow him—and this is a gracious gift from God.

390 Apparently we have reduced the specification of the Imamate to the choice of a single person; but really we have reduced it to God's choice and appointment. The real justification of the choice is that all follow and obey the Imam—a grace and gift of God, unattainable by any human contriving.

391 The only way the Bāṭinites support their view is by claiming an invention [forgery], viz. that Muḥammad textually designated 'Alī, and by claiming that the designation passed from father to son—false claims! Their argument that we designate the Imam by passion and choice is false: since we have shown that God does the choosing.

392 Were ever so many men to unite in trying to turn men from the 'Abbāsīd, Mustaẓhirite Imamate, their efforts would be completely fruitless.

393 This is the method of establishing the demonstration of the fact that the true Imam is Abū l-'Abbās Aḥmad al-Mustaẓhir Billāh. It remains only to refute the challenge of opponents in their claim that the

conditions of the Imamate and qualities of the Imam are lacking in him. We shall do this in the form of question and answer.

394 *If it be said:* Your argument in support of Mustazhir is valid only if you show the existence of the conditions of the Imamate and the qualities of the Imam. These are many and the lack of even one precludes the Imamate. So detail the conditions and show their fulfillment....

395 *Answer:* What the ulema of Islam have enumerated of the qualities of Imams and the conditions of the Imamate is limited to ten qualities, six of them innate [inborn, natural, physical] and not acquired, and four of them acquired, or increased by acquisition. The six innate qualities must undoubtedly exist and their existence cannot conceivably be contested. (1) *al-bulūgh*: maturity [Altersreife; attainment of puberty]; (2) *al-aql*: intelligence [Integrität der Vernunft]; (3) *al-hurriyya*: freedom; 396 (4) male sex; (5) *nasab Quraysh*: descent from [the tribe] Quraysh; 397 (6) *salāma ḥāssat al-sam' wa l-baṣar*: soundness of hearing and sight.

It is disputed whether or not there should be freedom from leprosy and elephantiasis and palsy and amputated limbs and other loathsome and repugnant defects....

398 The four acquired qualities: (1) *al-najda*: intrepidity [bravery, courage; Kampfestüchtigkeit—fitness for combat, war, fighting]; (2) *al-kifāya*: competence [Kompetenz zur Regierung]; (3) *al-'ilm*: knowledge; (4) *al-wara'*: piety [godliness; fromme, zweifelhafter Dinge sich enthaltende Lebensführung; pious way of life refraining from doubtful things]. These they are agreed upon. We shall show that the quantity of these requisite for the Imamate exists in al-Mustazhir Billāh.

399 *On the first quality:* intrepidity [*al-najda*], i.e. so circumstanced as to be able to handle rebels, unbelievers, insurrections, etc.—and through power based on the Turks.

400–404 Answer to an objection....

405 *On the second quality:* competence [*al-kifāya*]. Al-Mustazhir's reflection and governance based on his astuteness and intelligence admired by all.

406 He seeks enlightenment from consulting men of insight and experience and choosing an able Wazir [Minister]....

407–408 This is the competence sought. Example of al-Mustazhir's competence in dealing with the circumstances which followed the death of al-Muqtadī....

409 *On the third quality:* piety [*al-wara'*]. This is the fundamental and noblest quality....

410 Praise be to God Who has so abundantly gifted al-Mustazhir with piety and godliness from his youth onwards....

411–417 Reply to an objection. Al-Mustazhir's use of funds, etc. And *al-iṣma* [impeccability, sinlessness] is not a requisite for the Imamate.

418 *On the fourth quality:* knowledge [*al-'ilm*]. *If it be said:* The ulema are agreed that the Imamate is only for one who has attained the rank of personal effort [*al-ijtihād*] and giving a [legal] decision [*fatwā*] in the science of the Law. You cannot claim this requisite is present, nor can you deny that it is a requisite. *We say:* If one denied that it is a requisite

he would only be departing from past ulema. Requisites for the Imamate must be proved, and proof is either a text from the Trustee of the Law [Muḥammad], or a reasoning about the good [*maṣlaḥa*: advantage] for which the Imamate is sought. The only text is that about descent from Quraysh.

419 The other requisites from necessity and need involved in the purpose of the Imamate. The rank of "personal effort" is not indispensable: piety calling for consultation with the learned would suffice. The Imam can know by his own reasoning or by that of others.

420 Why can he not fulfill the aim of knowledge through the best men of his time, just as the aims of power and competence can be fulfilled through others? Most of the problems of the Imamate are jurisprudential and conjectural and may be solved by following the prevailing opinion.

421 But I do not wish to follow a singular opinion and depart from past ulema. I seek a way borrowed from the argument of the Imams mentioned. Men differed about choosing as Imam an inferior when there was a better man present: most say that such a choice is valid.

422 I start from this and say: In principle one ought to prefer one of independent personal effort to one who follows that of others. But if the latter is chosen, and has the support and the submission of all, and there is no Qurayshite *mujtahid* [one who can exercise personal effort] who has all requisites, the choice is valid.

423 But if there were a qualified Qurayshite, but the deposition of the other would lead to various vexations, insurrections and disturbances, it would not be licit to depose the first and change him. For we know that knowledge lends luster to the Imamate, but that the fruit sought from the Imamate is to extinguish dissensions—and this is not to be sacrificed out of a desire to have more precision in differentiating between reasoning and conformism to the views of others.]

424 But this is a supposition that we have indulgently allowed—i.e. that there is a fully qualified Qurayshite now, and that men can effect a change of Imam; both of these are impossible in our time, for men cannot be turned from al-Mustazhir and the ulema are bound to acknowledge formally the validity and legality of his Imamate.

425 This said, there remain two conditions. *One* is that he not settle any problem except after exploiting the talents of the ulema and seeking their help, and, in doubt, choose to follow the best and most learned—and the City of Peace [Baghdad] will rarely be without such men. *The second* is that he strive to acquire knowledge and gain the rank of independence in the science of the Law—for God has enjoined the acquisition of knowledge. And he is young enough to do that in a short time.

426 If it is clear in this chapter by these proofs that al-Mustazhir Billāh is the true Imam, how worthy this grace is of being met with thanks. Gratitude is evidenced by knowledge and by action and by assiduous application to what I have set forth in the last chapter of this book. In general gratitude for this grace is that the Commander of the Faithful be not content that God have on the face of the earth a more faithful and grateful servant than himself, just as God has not been content to have on

the face of the earth a servant dearer and nobler than the Prince of the Faithful!

CHAPTER TEN

*On the Religious Duties
by the Assiduous Performance of Which
Worthiness for the Imamate Is Perpetuated*

427 The Commander of the Faithful [Imam, Caliph] is religiously bound to read and reflect on this chapter continually; and if God's help aids in striving for the mastery of one of these duties, even though it takes a year, it will be maximum success [ultimate bliss]. Some of these tasks are theoretical [pertaining to knowledge]; others are practical [matters of action, or practice]. The former have pride of place, because knowledge is the root [*al-aṣl*] and practice is a branch of it, for cognitions are countless. But we shall mention four basic and fundamental matters.

[Duties Connected with Knowledge (*ilm*)]

428 *The first* is that he knew why man has been created in this world, and to what good directed, and for what quest prepared [nominated, assigned]. It is well known to a man of insight [discernment] that this "house" [world, life] is not a house of abiding but is simply a house of passage, and that in it men are like voyagers. The starting point of their voyage is their mothers' wombs, and the house of the Hereafter is the goal of their voyage. Its distance is the span of life, its years are its [his] stopping-places, its months are its [his] parasangs and its days are its [his] miles [milestones], its steps are his breaths, and men are brought [go] [like] a ship's passage [transit] with its passenger. Each person, with God, has an allotted life without increase or decrease. Therefore Jesus said: "The world [this life] is a bridge: so cross it and do not dwell on it."

429 Creatures are summoned to the meeting [encounter: *apantēsis*, *apantēma* —Matthew 25:6] with God in the Abode of Peace and the bliss of eternity [10.26/25]. The voyage will not lead to the goal save by a provision [stores] which is piety [*al-taqwā*: godliness (2.193/197)]. He who is not supplied [does not supply himself] with provisions [*viaticum*] in this life of his for his Hereafter by assiduous application to worship will have taken from him what he was dazzled [seduced] by of his body and his wealth and will sigh [grieve] where sighing will avail him not and will say: "Would that we were returned [to life on earth], and we would not treat as lies the signs of our Lord, and we would be among the believers" [6.27], and, "Have we intercessors to intercede for us, or can we be returned [to life on earth] so that we could do other than we used to do?" [7.51/53], and then "its faith will be of no avail to a soul which did not believe before or did not acquire any good in its faith" [6.159/158].

430 In another way, man is a tiller [*hārith*] and his action is his tilling and his "world" [i.e. his life on earth] is his tilth [tillage] and the time

of [his] death is his harvest. Therefore Muḥammad said: "This life is the plantation of the next life." The sowing [seed] is the span of life. If a single breath of a man goes by without his worshiping God in it by an act of reverence, he is defrauded because of the loss of that breath, for it will never return. In his life span man is like one who was selling ice in the summer time and who had no other wares; so he used to call out, saying: "Have mercy on [be kind to] one whose capital is melting": man's capital is his span of life which is the time of obedience, and it is constantly melting away. The older he gets the more the remainder of his life diminishes—so a man's increase is really his decrease.

431 So one who does not take advantage of his breaths to bag all the acts of obedience [he can] is defrauded. Hence Muḥammad said: "One whose two days are alike [equal] is defrauded [gulled]; and one whose today is worse than his yesterday is cursed." Whoever directs his life to worldly things is a failure and his work is lost, as God Most High said: "Those who will have desired the present life and its showiness We shall pay them in full for their works..." [11.18/15]. But he who works for his Hereafter, his effort succeeds, as God Most High said: "He who desires the next life and strives for it, while being a believer, the striving of such will be thanked [recognized]" [17.20/19].

432 *The second duty* [connected with knowledge] is that whenever he recognizes the fact that the viaticum for his voyage to the afterlife is piety [godliness] he must then know that the seat and source of piety is the heart, because of Muḥammad's saying: "Piety is here" while he pointed to his breast. So diligence ought to be had first of all in the correction [reform, amelioration] of the heart, since that of the members follows on it, because Muḥammad said: "In the body of the son of Adam is a bit [little piece]: if it be sound, all the rest of the body is sound because of it; but if it be corrupt, all the rest of the body is corrupt because of it: of a certainty it is the heart."

433 The condition for ameliorating the heart is first to purify it—and its purity is in its being clean of the love of the world, because of Muḥammad's saying: "And this is the malady which paralyzes [cripples] men." One who thinks he can combine enjoyment of this life and greed for its luxuries with the bliss of the afterlife is deceived, because of the Commander of the Faithful's [Ali] saying: "This life and the afterlife are two fellow-wives: the more you please one of them, the more you displease the other."

434 To be sure, if a man were to occupy himself with his life for the sake of religion, not for the sake of his own desire, like one who would devote his life to the advantage of men out of sympathy for them, or were to devote some of his time to acquiring nourishment, his intention in that being to have strength for undertaking obedience and piety, this would be of the very essence of religion. This was the attitude of the Prophets and the rightly guided Caliphs toward worldly things. Since, then, the viaticum is piety, and the condition of piety is the heart's being free from the love of this world—then effort must be devoted

to freeing it from this love. The way to this is that man recognize the world's [this life's] flaw [blemish] and defect, and recognize the dignity and beauty of bliss in the afterlife, and know that regard for this despicable life [world] contains the escaping [slipping away] of the momentous [important] afterlife.

435 The least of this life's [world's] defects, known for certain by every intelligent and ignorant man is that it soon passes away [is soon ended], whereas the afterlife has no end. This is so when this life is free from flaws and annoyances and exempt from painful and disturbing things. But not so! Not so! For no one in this life is free from length of trouble and suffering of miseries [adversities, hardships]. And once one knows [recognizes] the passing of this life and the permanence of bliss in the end, let him reflect [on this]: If a man were so infatuated with, and so doted on, a person that he could not bear parting from him, and were to be offered a choice between having the meeting with him advanced by one night, and being patient apart from him for one night, overcoming himself, then being alone with him for a thousand nights, how would it not be easy for him to be patient for one night in expectation of the pleasure of seeing him for a thousand nights! If he chose the other, he would be considered silly and outside the group of rational men. This life [world] is a beloved, [and] we are enjoined to renounce her for a short time, but we are promised many times these pleasures for a period without end. Giving up a thousand for one is irrational: and the choice of a thousand in the place of one brought forward is not difficult [impossible] for the reasonable man.

436 At this point a man ought to compare the longest period of his abiding in this life, e.g. a hundred years, and the length of his abiding in the afterlife, which is endless. Nay, but were we to seek an example of the length of eternity, we could not find it. However, we say: Were we to suppose that the whole world [*al-dunyā*] to the end of the heavens were filled with tiny particles [*al-dharra*: powder, salt, sand?], and to suppose that a bird would with his beak take a single grain every thousand years and to keep returning until there did not remain of the tiny particles a single grain—these tiny particles would be finished and there would remain many times more of them. How, then, would an intelligent man, if he verified for himself this matter, be unable to despise the world and to devote himself exclusively to God Most High?!

437 This [is so] were the duration of life supposed to be a hundred years, and the world were supposed to be free of odious things: how, then, when death lies in wait [ambush] at every moment and the world is not free of [all] sorts of toils and trouble! This is something one ought to meditate on at length until it is firmly fixed in his heart and piety arises [springs] from it. So long as the vileness of the world is not evident to a man he will not conceivably strive for the other abode [of the afterlife]. He ought to be helped to the knowledge of that by consideration of the preceding children of the world—how they toiled in it and departed from

it with no profit, accompanied only by sorrow and regret [remorse]. That poet spoke truly who said:

The intensest [most violent] distress [grief] is in a joy
The possessor of which is sure that it will go away.

438 *The third duty* [connected with knowledge] is that [he know that] the meaning of being God's vicegerent [Caliph] over men is the betterment of men; and only he will be able to better men of the world who is able to better the people of his town and the people of his household and himself. He who cannot better himself ought to begin with the reform of his heart and the management of his soul. One who does not better himself and yet is desirous of bettering others is deceived, as God Most High said: "Do you enjoin pious goodness on men and forget yourselves?" [2.41/44]. And it is in a Tradition that God said to Jesus the son of Mary: "Admonish [preach to] your soul, and if it be admonished, then admonish men: otherwise be ashamed to face Me." The likeness of one unable to better himself and desirous of bettering others is the likeness of a blind man when he wishes to guide blind men—it will never go well for him.

439 One is able to better himself only through knowledge of his soul [of himself]. A man's knowledge in his body is like that of a governor in his town [district]; his members and senses and limbs are in the position of artisans and workers, and the Law is to him like a sincere counselor and an efficient minister; and desire [appetite, passion] in him is like an evil servant fetching supplies and food, and his nerves are like a chief of police; and the servant fetching supplies is wicked and wily, representing himself to the man in the form of a sincere counselor, but his counsel is the infiltration [influx—*dabīb*] of succession [reptiles? of consequence?], and he opposes the minister in his management, and not for a single hour does he neglect fighting and opposing him. So the governor in his state, when he consults his minister about his regulations, and not this wicked and evil servant, and trains his chief of police and makes him a counselor [adviser, collaborator] of his minister and empowers him over the wicked servant and his followers so that this servant is ruled, not ruling, and managed, not managing—the affairs of his district are in good order.

440 So also the soul. When it seeks the help, in its arrangements [dispositions], of the Law and of reason and so disciplines ardor [passion] and anger [irascibility] that it is aroused [excited, stirred] only at the signal [intimation] of the Law and of reason, and empowers it [the latter] over passion [appetite, concupiscence], its affair is well ordered; otherwise it becomes corrupt and follows vain desire and worldly pleasures, as God Most High said: "[O David]... follow not passion..." [38.25/26]; and the Most High said: "Have you seen him who has taken his caprice [passion] as his God..." [45.22/23]; and He said: "He inclined to the earth and followed his passion and his likeness is that of the dog" [7.175/176]; and the Most High said in praise of those who resist it [passion]: "As for him who feared the standing of [i.e. standing before] his Lord and restrained

his soul from passion..." [79.40]. In general, the servant all his life long ought to be in combat with his anger and his passion, working hard [briskly] to resist them as he does to resist his enemies, for they are two enemies, as Muḥammad said: "The greatest enemy is your soul which is between your two sides."

441 An example [parable] of one who occupies himself with pleasure at the onslaughts of concupiscence and with vengeance at the onslaught of irascibility is a horseman-hunter who has a horse and a dog heedless of his hunting. He loses his time in trying to train and tame them. Man's passion is like his horse and his anger is like his dog. If the horseman be skillful and the horse trained and the dog disciplined and taught, he will be fit for attaining what he wants of hunting. But when the horseman is clumsy [stupid] and his horse unruly or refractory and his dog voracious [mordacious], neither will his horse move under him submissively nor will his dog let itself go at his signal obediently, and he will be fit to perish, to say nothing of attaining what he seeks.

442 Whenever a man combats in it [soul] his passion three circumstances are possible for him: (1) that vain desire [passion] overcome him and he follow it and turn away from the Law, as God Most High said: "Have you seen him who has taken his caprice [passion] as his God" [45.22/23]; (2) that he combat it and conquer it at one time, and it conquer him at another—and he will have the recompense of those who combat—and this is what is meant by Muḥammad's saying: "Combat your passion as you combat your foes"; (3) that he overcome his passion, like many of the Prophets and of God's choicest friends—because of Muḥammad's saying: "There is no one but that he has a devil, and God helped me against my devil until I mastered him."

443 In general, Satan holds sway over a man according to the existence of passion in him. Passion [appetite] is likened to a horse and anger to a dog because, were it not for them, the worship leading to the bliss of the afterlife would be inconceivable. For a man, in his worship, has need of his body, and cannot subsist save by nourishment, and is able to take in nourishment only because of appetite; and man needs to protect himself from perils by repelling them, and repels the harmful only by the motive [incitement] of anger [irascibility]. So the two of them are, as it were, servants for the survival of the body; and the body is the ship [mount] of the soul, and by means of the two of them man comes to worship—and worship is his way to salvation.

444 *The fourth duty* [connected with knowledge] is that he recognize that man is compounded of angelic and bestial qualities and is perplexed [confused] between angel and beast. His likeness to the angel is by knowledge and worship and temperance [*al-'iffa*: also—chastity] and justice and the praiseworthy qualities; and his resemblance to beasts is by passion and anger and rancor and the blameworthy qualities. One who directs his ardor to knowledge and action and worship is worthy to be joined [annexed] to the angels and to be called an angel and "divine" [spiritual, lordly, godly, *rabbānī*], as the Most High said: "This is naught but

a noble angel!" [12.31]. But one who directs his ardor to following passions and pleasures, eating like the beasts do, is worthy to be joined to the beasts and to become either gullible like the ox, or greedy like the pig, or weak [submissive] like the dog, or spiteful [malicious] like the camel, or proud like the leopard [tiger], or wily and hypocritical [dissembling] like the fox—or he unites all that and becomes like the rebellious devil. To that alludes the Most High's saying: "and He made of them [objects of His anger] apes [monkeys] and pigs and the idol-worshiper" [5.65/60]. And He said: "like the beasts, nay, they are even more astray" [25.46/44]. And He said: "The worst of beasts in the eyes of God are the deaf and dumb who do not understand [reason]" [8.22].

445 The blameworthy qualities are combined in a human being in this world, and he in the form of a man, so that the quality is interior and the form exterior. But in the afterlife the forms and qualities are united so that each person is represented in [by] the quality which was predominant in him during his life [on earth]. So one dominated by evil [wickedness] is raised in the form of a pig, and one who was dominated by anger is raised in the form of a beast of prey, and one who was dominated by stupidity is raised in the form of an ass, and one who was dominated by pride is raised in the form of a leopard [tiger]—and so on of all the qualities. But one who was dominated by knowledge and action, and by them mastered these [bad] qualities, is raised in the form of the angels "[they are with] the Just, the Witnesses [Martyrs] and the Saints... and they are good companions!" [4.71/69].

446 These duties which we have mentioned are connected with knowledge [are theoretical] [and] must be mediated upon until they are represented [take shape] in the heart and are before the eye at every moment [are the cynosure of the eye at every instant]. These cognitions become deeply rooted in the soul only when they are strengthened [confirmed] by action [practice] according to what we shall presently have to say about the duties [tasks] related to action [the action-oriented duties].

On the Duties Connected with Action [al-'amal]

Note: This section is interesting because of the insights it gives into Ghazālī's thought and spirituality and into what might be called a truly Islamic ideal of politics and government. But I can give it here only in a brief outline form lest this Appendix assume too great a length. The reader may consult F. R. C. Bagley: *Ghazālī's Book of Counsel for Kings*, London, 1964, pp. 14 ff. The latter is another work of Ghazālī.

- 447 (1) In every case he settles he ought to judge himself, and what he would not approve of for himself he should not approve of for another.
- 448 (2) He should have a great desire for, rejoice at, and be grateful for the counsel of the ulema [the learned].
- 449 (3) He should respond quickly to those in need and not keep them waiting.

- 450 (4) He should give up comfort and luxury and finding pleasure in
the passions regarding food and raiment.
- 451 (5) He should know that his office facilitates worship and seize every
454 opportunity to serve God thereby, by humility and justice and sincere
counsel to the Muslims and sympathy with them.
- 455 (6) Kindness in all matters should be more predominant in him than
456 harshness [severity].
- 457 (7) His most important aim should be to gain the approval and love
of men in a way conformed to the Law.
- 458 (8) He should know that the approval of men can be rightly gained
461 only by conformity to the Law, and that obedience to the Imam is
incumbent on men only when he invites them to conformity to the Law.
- 462 (9) He should recognize that the Imamate is momentous and perilous:
472 it can lead to bliss and to unsurpassed misery.
- 473 (10) He should be eager for the counsel of the ulema of religion and
487 profit from the admonitions of the rightly guided Caliphs and peruse
the religious elders' admonitions to bygone princes—many examples. . .
- 488 (11) As far as lies within his power his prevailing custom should be
498 pardon, clemency, good morals, and restraining his anger. . .
- 499 This amount of traditions and accounts and the lives of the Caliphs
and rulers is enough for the attentive man concerning the refinement
of morals and the knowledge of the duties of the Caliphate.

British Museum Ms.—dated Rabi' II, 665 A.H.

Qarawiyin Ms.—dated Rabi' II, 981 A.H.