

Marāqī 'l-Sa'ādāt

ASCENT TO FELICITY

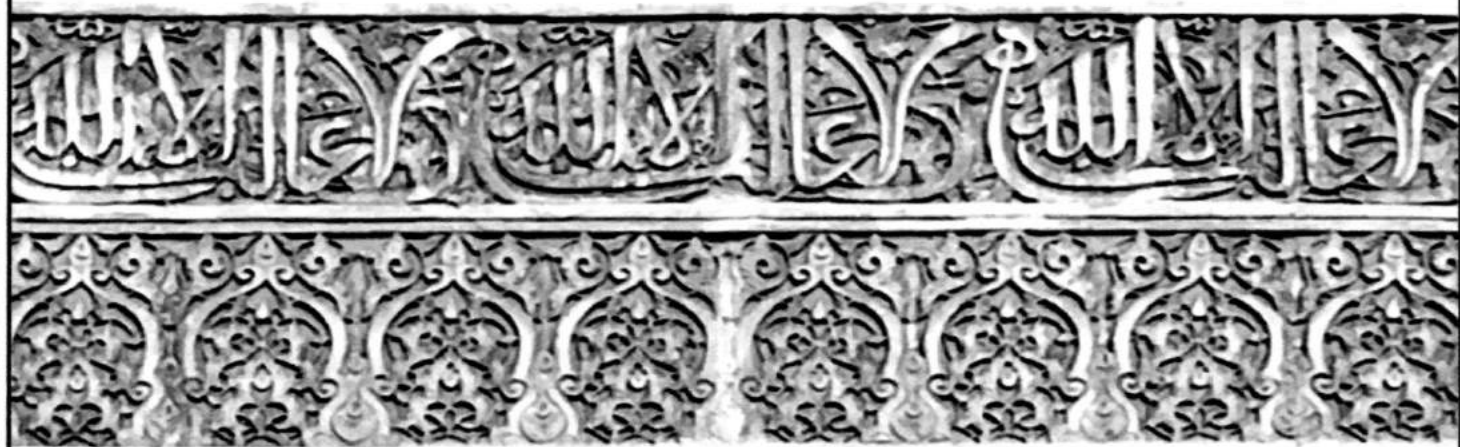
A MANUAL ON ISLAMIC CREED AND ḤANAFĪ JURISPRUDENCE

Abū 'l-Ikhlāṣ al-Shurunbulālī

Author of Nūr al-Īdāh

Translation, Notes and Appendices

Faraz A. Khan



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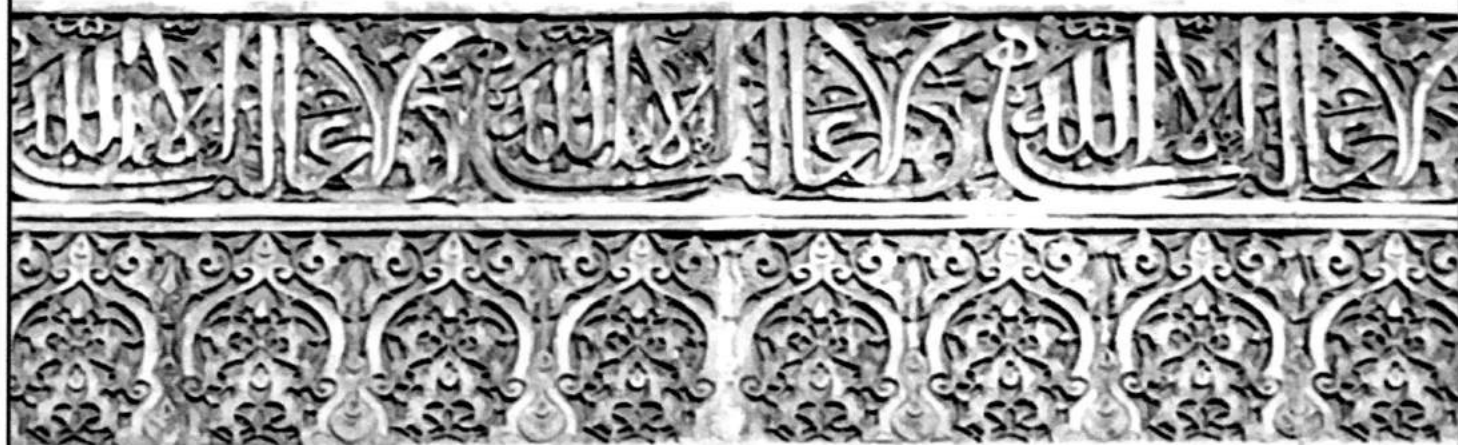
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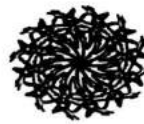
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*In the name of Allāh, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.
All praise be to Allāh, Lord of the Worlds, and peace and
blessings be upon His Messenger Muḥammad,
Mercy to the Worlds.*

Marāqī 'l-Sa'ādāt

ASCENT TO FELICITY

A Manual on Islamic Creed and Ḥanafī Jurisprudence

ABŪ 'L-IKHLĀṢ AL-SHURUNBULĀLĪ

Author of *Nūr al-Īdāh*

Translation, Notes and Appendices

FARAZ A. KHAN



White Thread
P R E S S

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To

Shaykh Aḥmad al-Jammāl al-Ḥamawī,

who is a true inheritor of the Prophet ﷺ

and to my mother and father,

whom I can never thank enough

TRANSLITERATION KEY

ء (أ) ' (A slight catch in the breath. It is also used to indicate where the <i>hamza</i> has been dropped from the beginning of a word.)	ع 'a, 'i, 'u (Pronounced from the throat.)
ا a, ā	غ gh (Pronounced like a throaty French <i>r</i> with the mouth hollowed to produce a full sound.)
ب b	ف f
ت t	ق q (A guttural <i>q</i> sound with the mouth hollowed to produce a full sound.)
ث th (Should be pronounced as the <i>th</i> in <i>thin</i> or <i>thirst</i> .)	ك k
ج j	ل l
ح ḥ (Tensely breathed <i>h</i> sound.)	م m
خ kh (Pronounced like the <i>ch</i> in Scottish <i>loch</i> with the mouth hollowed to produce a full sound.)	ن n
د d	و w, ū, u.
ذ dh (Should be pronounced as the <i>th</i> in <i>this</i> or <i>that</i> .)	ه h
ر r	ي y, ī, i
ز z	ﷺ Ṣalla 'Llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam—used following the mention of the Messenger Muḥammad, translated as, "May Allāh bless him and give him peace."
س s	ﷺ 'Alayhi 'l-sallam—used following the mention of a prophet or messenger of Allāh, translated as, "May the peace of Allāh be upon him."
ش sh	ﷺ Raḍiya 'Llāhu 'anhu—used following the mention of a Companion of the Messenger ﷺ, translated as, "May Allāh be pleased with him."
ص ṣ (A heavy <i>s</i> pronounced far back in the mouth with the mouth hollowed to produce a full sound.)	ﷺ Raḍiya 'Llāhu 'anhum—used following the mention of more than one Companion of the Messenger (and also after a female Companion in this work for lack of an appropriate glyph), translated as, "May Allāh be pleased with them."
ض ḍ (A heavy <i>d/dh</i> pronounced far back in the mouth with the mouth hollowed to produce a full sound.)	
ط ṭ (A heavy <i>t</i> pronounced far back in the mouth with the mouth hollowed to produce a full sound.)	
ظ ḏ (A heavy <i>dh</i> pronounced far back in the mouth with the mouth hollowed to produce a full sound.)	

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*And He taught you that which you knew
not; and the favor of Allāh upon you has
been immense indeed.*

Qur'ān 4:113

Translator's Foreword

IN THE NAME OF ALLĀH, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate. All praise is for Allāh, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe, the Bestower of sincerity. May His peace, blessings, and mercy be upon the best of creation, His final Messenger, our beloved Master and Liegelord, Muḥammad ﷺ, the Imām of the people of *ikhlāṣ*; and upon his beloved family, venerable Companions, and all those who follow him ﷺ in excellence until the Day of Arising. *Amīn*. The eminent 7th-century Levantine scholar Imām Nawawī relates the following ḥadīth in his famous collection of Forty Ḥadīths (*Arbaʿīn*):

Islam is built upon five: testifying that there is no deity except Allāh and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh, establishing the ritual prayer, almsgiving, making the pilgrimage to the House, and fasting in Ramaḍān (*Bukhārī, Muslim*).

These five components of the religion serve as its foundation and are hence known as its “pillars,” since the “edifice” of Islam—or one’s entire religious practice—is most centrally based on them. No matter how large a structure one constructs, or how elaborately one decorates that structure, the whole edifice is in peril if its foundation is not firmly established. This is spiritually no light matter. Therefore, an appropriate measure needs to be taken by the believer to ensure his foundation is established in the most perfect and firm fashion. He must learn how the five pillars are performed and diligently apply that knowledge in consistent practice. He then may turn to his Lord in hope of acceptance, in gratitude for the ability to perform them, and in repentance from his shortcomings therein. Aside from the very belief in one’s heart, no

other affair, whether worldly or religious, is of greater import. No tree stands tall or bears fruit unless its roots run deep, providing strength to withstand the forces of nature and ensuring it is adequately nourished; the foundation is of utmost concern.

The text before us, then, is an invaluable resource for this weighty agenda. It is entitled "Ascent to Felicity in the Sciences of Theology and Jurisprudence of Worship" (*Marāqī 'l-Sa'ādāt fī 'l-Mayi 'l-Tawhīd wa 'l-'Ibādāt*). It is a concise yet comprehensive manual on these two sciences, the latter based on the Ḥanafī school of law. Theology is an extension of the first pillar, since the testification of faith forms the basis of the entire corpus of Islamic beliefs, while jurisprudence of worship deals with the remaining four pillars. The text additionally covers the legal rulings pertaining to slaughtering, ritual sacrifice and hunting, and therefore as a primer, is quite broad in its range of subjects. At the same time, it does not delve into extraneous juridical and creedal minutiae that would otherwise overwhelm the reader, but is rather a clear presentation of the most salient issues pertaining to these two sciences.

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endowed with the utmost understanding [of jurisprudence]."¹ He gives this title to only one other jurist in his entire marginal gloss, namely, the 6th-century master Qādikhān.

IMĀM SHURUNBULĀLĪ

Born in a village in Upper Egypt in 994/1586, his father took him to Cairo at the tender age of six. He memorized the Qur'ān and subsequently studied the Islamic sciences under numerous scholars, specifically Qur'ānic recitation under Shaykh Muḥammad al-Ḥamawī and Shaykh 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Masīrī, and jurisprudence under Imām 'Abdullāh al-Naḥrīrī, 'Allāma Muḥammad al-Maḥabbī, and Shaykh 'Alī ibn Ghānim al-Maqdisī. He then went to Azhar University, which at that time was the sanctuary for advanced students. He pursued higher education there and surpassed his peers, for he was foremost in his knowledge of juridical passages and maxims. Word spread of his rank and skill, and he eventually became one of the most renowned jurists of the entire Muslim world. He assumed the post of professor at Azhar, whereby numerous aspiring students sat at his feet and benefited from his knowledge, many of whom themselves later developed into notable scholars of law. These included, from Egypt, 'Allāma Aḥmad al-'Ajmī, Sayyid Aḥmad al-Ḥamawī, Shaykh Shāhīn al-Armanāwī, and from the Levant, 'Allāma Ismā'īl al-Nāblūsī (father of the illustrious saint and jurist, Shaykh 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Nāblūsī). Moreover, the high demands and taxing lifestyle of his roles as professor, jurist-consult (*muftī*) and jurist, did not in the least take away from his occupation as writer. He authored over sixty works, ranging from the aforementioned two commentaries, as well as his distinguished *Shurunbulāliyya*,² to numerous smaller treatises covering an array of specialized legal matters.

Upon visiting Cairo, one contemporary described him as follows: "[He is] the shining lantern of Azhar and its brilliant star . . . He gives life to eager minds . . . [and] possesses a beautiful character and magnificent eloquence . . .

¹ In Arabic, *shadīd al-fahm bi 'l-ṭab'* (*Radd* 4:305, quoting *Al-Talwīh*).

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He is indeed the most extraordinary jurist of his age." His departure from this lowly abode took place on a Friday after the 'aṣr prayer, the 21st of Ramaḍān, in the year 1069/1659. He was approximately 75 years old. May Allāh Most High envelop him with His infinite mercy. *Amīn*.³

When examining the Imām's life and career, one readily notes a unique success afforded to him by Allāh, as manifested in the extensive use of his written works by scholars and students in seminaries around the world. Historically, he is considered one of the finest scholars of the late Ḥanafī school with regard to his proficiency and expertise (*malaka*) in the field. Such an accomplishment can be attributed to a particular trait of the Imām, namely, sincerity (*ikhhlās*). He was a member of the Wafā'ī order, a branch of the Shādhilī path of Sufism, and had truly perfected his intention through his spiritual training and ethic. He not only possessed *ikhhlās*, but as indicated by his agnomen *Abū 'l-Ikhhlās*, he perfected it. He was "the father—or master—of sincerity." This, then, could serve as the greatest lesson to be learned from the Imām; the believer must earnestly strive to attain unto perfect *ikhhlās* in all his endeavors. As the esteemed Maliki jurist and saint Ibn 'Aṭā'illāh states in one of his famous aphorisms, "Actions are but erected forms; what gives them life is the presence of the secret of *ikhhlās* in them."⁴

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In translating this text, I used the edition published by Dār al-Kitāb al-Lubnānī, Beirut, edited by Muḥammad Riyāḍ al-Māliḥ, who did a wonderful service by using two different manuscripts, as well as one previously published version, for his edition. I did not, however, include any of his footnotes or appendices. With regard to the bracketed text he inserted in the original Arabic, only what I deemed relevant was retained. Moreover, there are several areas in the text that are either typos or mistakes in transcription. These were corrected based on a Turkish manuscript, as well as other legal works, and most are indicated in footnotes. Shaykh Husain Kadodia of South Africa was kind enough to

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In rendering the work into the English language, I attempted to stay close to the text while avoiding unnecessary paraphrasing. At times I paraphrased, for the sake of clarity, but only when it was of primary import for a manual on creed. I indicated these instances in footnotes. In addition, I attempted to correlate the chapter on jurisprudence with the chapter on creed were provided by the author in a well-organized fashion.

Considering "Ascent to Felicity" (Tawḥīd), I attempted to supplement the text with additional references to provide a more complete picture of the work. I attempted to provide a more complete picture of the work by providing brevity and ease of mastery, a primary goal of the author. I provided rulings. Other works within the school of thought (sharḥ) and discussion of related issues were provided to aid in understanding of those rulings. For the purpose of this translation, several authoritative works of theology were used for the former are commentaries by Maydānī and Ghaznawī; Imām Bāqī's *al-Tawḥīd*; and the section on creed in *al-'Alā'iyya*. Those primarily used for the latter are *Imdād al-Fattāḥ* and *Marāqī 'l-Falāḥ* by Ṭaḥṭāwī; Imām Ḥaṣkafī's *Al-Durr al-Muḥīṭ*; and the marginal gloss, *Radd al-Muḥtār*; and other works were less commonly used. I provided the following works were less commonly used: Mawṣilī's *Ikhtiyār*, Imām Zaylā'ī's *Tawḥīd*, and Imām Shalabī. Several other works were provided in the bibliography. It is the hope that these are clear in presentation and reliable. I have spent years of sitting with and learning from the author, and I am encouraged to study the present work. I am a qualified scholar to ensure correct understanding. The reader is requested to pardon the translation. It might be in the work, despite the author's prayer for all who had a part in translating it.

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As this is a translation, all supplications found in the main text are presented in English, while the original Arabic script is provided in an appendix. To facilitate the reader's learning of the supplications, a complete transliteration is also presented, followed by a translation. Additional relevant supplications related to the five pillars, such as those for ablution and various rites of the pilgrimage, are also included. Lastly—in the spirit of *Khitāmuhū misk* ("Its seal is pure musk") (Qur'ān 83:26)—a beautiful section on the etiquette of visiting the Beloved Messenger ﷺ in Madīna taken from Imām Mawṣilī's *Ikhtiyār* has been translated in the final appendix.

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It is rigorously authenticated that our Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever does not thank people, has not thanked Allāh" (*Tirmidhī, Aḥmad*). Therefore, after thanking Allāh, I would like to extend sincere gratitude to the following people: to my parents and family, for all their love and support throughout my life; to my colleagues and co-students, whose dedication to the field only enhances my own; and to my teachers, who spend their days and nights transmitting sacred knowledge and thereby fulfilling an immense trust. It has been a tremendous honor to have simply met them, let alone to have sat at their feet as a student. Here, I would like to briefly mention those with whom I studied jurisprudence and who have encouraged me to impart that knowledge. Shaykh Aḥmad al-Jammāl is not only a Ḥanafī jurist (*faqīh*), but also a reflection of the Prophetic light in his character, words, and overall presence. Moreover, his sincerity to authentic tradition does not prevent him from being fully cognizant of the realities of our current times and circumstances when issuing legal verdicts. Dr. Ṣalāh Abū 'l-Ḥājj is an exceptional researcher of Ḥanafī law; his relentless work ethic and devotion to this knowledge reminds one of the great scholars of past whom we read about in biographical sources. I was honored to read *Marāqī 'l-Falāḥ* with him, which was very helpful in this translation and annotation. Dr. Ashraf Muneeb is a Ḥanafī scholar of immense knowledge, wisdom and spirituality, and is like a father for many of us in Amman. He first commissioned me to translate this text for Sunnipath's online course. He is a constant source of inspiration for us, and he patiently answers our questions related to both law as well as general advice. Shaykh Faraz Rabbani is a specialist of Ḥanafī law and was my first teacher of both creed and jurisprudence. I was

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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>Badā'i'</i>	Kāsānī's <i>Badā'i' al-Ṣanā'i'</i> on 'Alā' al-Dīn al-Samarqandī's <i>Tuhfat al-Fuqahā'</i>
<i>Bājūrī</i>	Bājūrī's <i>Tuhfat al-Murīd</i> on Laqqānī's <i>Jawharat al-Tawhīd</i>
<i>Baḥr</i>	Ibn Nujaym's <i>Al-Baḥr al-Rā'iq</i> on Nasafī's <i>Kanz al-Daqā'iq</i>
<i>Birgivi</i>	Birgivi's <i>Dhukhr al-Muta'ahhilīn wa 'l-Nisā'</i> treatise on menstruation
<i>Bukhārī</i>	<i>Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī</i>
<i>Durr</i>	Ḥaṣkafī's <i>Al-Durr al-Mukhtār</i> on Tumurtāshī's <i>Tanwīr al-Abṣār</i>
<i>Fawā'id</i>	Lakhnawī's <i>Al-Fawā'id al-Bahiyya</i>
<i>Ghaznawī</i>	Ghaznawī's commentary on Ṭaḥāwī's <i>Aqida</i>
<i>Hadiyya</i>	'Alā' al-Dīn 'Ābidīn's manual on Ḥanafī law (<i>Al-Hadiyya al-'Alā'iyya</i>)
<i>Hidāya</i>	Marghinānī's commentary on his <i>Bidāyat al-Mubtadī</i>
<i>Imdād</i>	Shurunbulālī's <i>Imdād al-Fattāḥ</i> on his <i>Nūr al-Idāḥ</i>
<i>Itr</i>	Dr. Nūr al-Dīn 'Itr's <i>Al-Ḥajj wa 'l-'Umra</i>
<i>Kanz</i>	Nasafī's <i>Kanz al-Daqā'iq</i>
<i>Maydānī</i>	Maydānī's commentary on Ṭaḥāwī's <i>Aqida</i>
<i>Multaqā</i>	Ḥalabī's <i>Multaqā 'l-Abḥur</i>
<i>Muslim</i>	<i>Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim</i>
<i>Nafahāt</i>	Dr. Ṣalāḥ Abū 'l-Ḥājj's <i>Nafahāt al-Sulūk</i> on Rāzī's <i>Tuhfat al-Mulūk</i>
<i>Radd</i>	Ibn 'Ābidīn Shāmī's <i>Radd al-Muḥtār</i> (<i>Ḥāshiya Ibn 'Ābidīn</i>)
<i>Shalabī</i>	Shalabī's marginal gloss on Zayla'ī's <i>Tabyīn al-Ḥaqā'iq</i>
<i>Tabyīn</i>	Zayla'ī's <i>Tabyīn al-Ḥaqā'iq</i> on Nasafī's <i>Kanz al-Daqā'iq</i>
<i>Ṭaḥṭāwī</i>	Ṭaḥṭāwī's <i>Ḥāshiya</i> (marginalia) on Shurunbulālī's <i>Marāqī 'l-Falāḥ</i>
<i>Tanwīr</i>	Tumurtāshī's <i>Tanwīr al-Abṣār</i>

Introduction

IN THE NAME OF ALLĀH, the Most Merciful, the Most Gracious. All praise is for Allāh, Lord of all the worlds. May His blessings and peace be upon our Master Muḥammad, his family and Companions, all of them.

To proceed. The impoverished servant, Ḥasan al-Shurunbulālī, may Allāh constantly bless him with His everlasting grace, says:

This is a condensed primer whose purpose is to explicate the beliefs of the People of the Sunna and the Community (*Ahl al-Sunna wa 'l-Jamā'a*), as well as the basis of valid worship, with regard to ritual prayer (*ṣalāt*), fasting (*ṣawm*), almsgiving (*zakāt*), and the greater pilgrimage (*ḥajj*). I have named it "Ascent to Felicity in the Sciences of Theology and Jurisprudence of Worship" (*Marāqī 'l-Sa'ādāt fī 'l-Mayi 'l-Tawḥīd wa 'l-'Ibādāt*). And Allāh [Most High] is the One who will provide success and ease in its completion, out of His pure generosity.

Islamic Creed

DIVINE ONENESS, ATTRIBUTES, AND REVELATION

Know that Allāh (may He be Glorified and Exalted) says in His Preserved Book, "And I have not created jinn and mankind except that they worship Me" (51:56). Hence, it is absolutely necessary for every legally responsible individual to know the reality of faith (*īmān*) and religious practice (*islām*), and his knowledge must be based on proofs. It is obligatory (*farḍ*) for him to learn that by which his worship will be sound and valid and to practice accordingly, while believing in those tenets of faith for which he has been made responsible in this life, in order to succeed [in both abodes] with the good pleasure of his Master (may He be glorified and exalted) and with His reward.

As for [sound] creed, it is for the heart to believe in, and the tongue to affirm, all that is known to have come from Allāh Most High. We declare that a person is of this creed by [his own] assertion, i.e., by his saying: I bear witness that there is no deity but Allāh;¹ and I bear witness that Muḥammad ﷺ is His servant and Messenger, the one sent with truth for all of humanity and jinn.

This amount of belief, along with its utterance [even] once in a lifetime, is sufficient for the believer's salvation from eternal punishment in the Fire, yet it is encouraged to repeat it constantly in order to attain unto higher degrees [in Paradise].

¹ The first directive that is obligatory (*farḍ*) on every sane adult is to know—with firm conviction in the heart accompanied by affirmation of the tongue—that Allāh Most High *exists*, both preeternally and eternally, in an absolute manner, as opposed to the contingent existence of created things. That is, created things exist yet are bound by time, space, quantity, and quality, and this existence is contingent on the divine will. The existence of Allāh Most High, however, is not bound by anything, and is not contingent on any external factor. It is absolute, and it transcends time, space, quantity, and quality (see *Hadiyya* 364; *Bājūrī* 107, 134).

This statement of belief incorporates one's faith in Allāh, His angels, [His books,] His messengers, the Final Day, as well as predestination (*qadar*), both its good and its evil.

For verily we believe in our hearts, and affirm with our tongues, that Allāh Most High is One, without any partner;² that there is nothing like³ Him; that nothing incapacitates Him; and that there is no deity other than Him.

He is preeternal, without beginning; eternal, without end.⁴ He never perishes, nor ceases to exist. Nothing occurs except as He wills.⁵

Thoughts cannot reach Him, and minds cannot grasp Him. Creation cannot resemble Him.⁶ He is Living (*Ḥayy*) and never dies. He is Self-Subsisting (*Qayyūm*)⁷ and never sleeps. He is All-Hearing (*Samīʿ*) and All-Seeing (*Baṣīr*).

2 For He has no partner in His essence (*dhāt*), meaning that His essence is not made up of composite parts, and that no other divine essence exists; nor in His attributes, meaning that each divine attribute is singular, and that nothing else shares any of His attributes; nor in His actions, meaning that nothing other than Him can be a cause *in reality* that creates an effect, but rather, everything that exists is created by Him alone, based on His knowledge, will, and power—may He be glorified and exalted. All of this, then, is the meaning of His attribute of “oneness” (*Maydānī* 47–8; *Bājūrī* 151–2).

3 The negation of any likeness or similarity of Allāh is based on the Qurʾānic verse, “There is indeed nothing like unto Him; and [yet] He is All-Hearing, All-Seeing” (42:11). This verse is unequivocal and hence serves as the basis by which all other texts of the Qurʾān and ḥadīth related to His attributes are understood (*Ghaznawī* 33).

4 That is, He Most High exists before creating time, and exists after annihilating time, for He is the Creator of time itself, and the Creator must exist before and after the existence of that which is created. Indeed, *change* is inconceivable with regard to Allāh Most High. Hence in reality, preeternity and eternity are one and the same with respect to Him—may He be glorified and exalted (*Hadiyya* 367).

5 His divine will (*irāda* or *mashīʾa*) is His preeternal attribute of specification, i.e., whatever is specified by His will, comes into existence, and whatever exists was willed by Him Most High. This is evident in the well-known phrase of the early Muslims, “Whatever Allāh wills, exists; and whatever He does not will, does not exist” (*mā shāʾ Allāhu kān, wa mā lam yashāʾ lam yakun*) (*Maydānī* 54). The divine will also specifies the characteristics and traits of every existent thing, such as size, shape, location, and duration (*Bājūrī* 164).

6 These three phrases all express His divine attribute of “differing from creation,” which entails that He Most High is neither a body, particle, accident, or quality; and hence does not possess related attributes, such as size or occupying space (*Bājūrī* 145). His attributes are not created, and His actions are neither an effect of a cause, nor acquired from an external source (*Maydānī* 55). One must be extremely cautious to not allow his mind to delve into the nature of Allāh's essence, for as mentioned above, it can never be grasped or perceived by thought or conception. On the contrary, attempting to do so will lead either to *nothing*, entailing utter disbelief, or to *something*, entailing likening Allāh to His creation. Rather, whatever occurs to one's mind is in contrast to Allāh (*Hadiyya* 365). Indeed, this inability to comprehend the Divine is our very comprehension of the Divine.

7 Allāh Most High is *Qayyūm*, meaning that (a) He is free from need of anything, whether a place or physical entity wherein to subsist (*maḥall*) or a specifier to cause existence (*mukhaṣṣis*), and (b) all that exists is in need of Him, for He not only brings His creation into existence, but

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He is an Interlocutor (*Mutakallim*) with preeternal speech that is an attribute of His essence, transcendent above any letters or sounds.

Physical directions cannot contain Him. He begets not, nor was He begotten. There is no equivalent to Him whatsoever.

His divine attributes are preeternal, and to Him belong the most beautiful Names.

Everything in the seven heavens and seven earths glorifies Him, "And there is not a thing except that it glorifies Him with praise" (17:44).

We praise Him for His continuous blessings, for He creates without need [for His creation]; sustains without difficulty; causes death without fear; and resurrects without hardship.

He was always preeternal, along with His attributes, before He created anything. He did not acquire any new attribute [after creating His creation] that did not exist before creation. So He was Lord without servant, Creator without creation, and the Giver of life and death before having given any life or death.

This is [true] because He is able to do all things, while everything is in utter need of Him. Every matter is easy for Him, and He is in need of nothing. Nothing is hidden from Him.

He existentially created, and apportioned out its lifespans and livelihoods. He knew all that mankind and jinn would do before creating the universe. He commanded them to obey Him, and prohibited them from disobeying Him.

All that exists runs its course based on His divine will (*mashī'a*) and power (*qudra*). He safeguards⁸ and protects whomever He wills, out of His divine grace; and He diverts and forsakes⁹ whomever He wills, out of His divine justice. So no one may object to His judgment, and no one may overrule His decision.

Good and evil are both predestined for His servants; their actions are His creation (*khalq*), yet their own acquisition (*kasb*).¹⁰

also continuously maintains its existence until its appointed term, as determined by His divine will (*Maydānī* 55–6).

8 In this context, "to be safeguarded" refers to a quality in the individual that propels him to avoid acts of disobedience, despite having the ability to do them (*Maydānī* 62).

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10 That is, there is no creator that exists other than Allāh Most High. He is the Creator of everything, which includes the actions of the servant, who has no ability to *create*. However, the servant does have the ability to *choose* his actions, as he has free will. Based on that choice then, Allāh *creates*

He is an Interlocutor (*Mutakallim*) with preeternal speech that is an attribute of His essence, transcendent above any letters or sounds.

Physical directions cannot contain Him. He begets not, nor was He begotten. There is no equivalent to Him whatsoever.

His divine attributes are preeternal, and to Him belong the most beautiful Names.

Everything in the seven heavens and seven earths glorifies Him, "And there is not a thing except that it glorifies Him with praise" (17:44).

We praise Him for His continuous blessings, for He creates without need [for His creation]; sustains without difficulty; causes death without fear; and resurrects without hardship.

He was always preeternal, along with His attributes, before He created anything. He did not acquire any new attribute [after creating His creation] that did not exist before creation. So He was Lord without servant, Creator without creation, and the Giver of life and death before having given any life or death.

This is [true] because He is able to do all things, while everything is in utter need of Him. Every matter is easy for Him, and He is in need of nothing. Nothing is hidden from Him.

He existentially created, and apportioned out its lifespans and livelihoods. He knew all that mankind and jinn would do before creating the universe. He commanded them to obey Him, and prohibited them from disobeying Him.

All that exists runs its course based on His divine will (*mashī'a*) and power (*qudra*). He safeguards⁸ and protects whomever He wills, out of His divine grace; and He diverts and forsakes⁹ whomever He wills, out of His divine justice. So no one may object to His judgment, and no one may overrule His decision.

Good and evil are both predestined for His servants; their actions are His creation (*khalq*), yet their own acquisition (*kasb*).¹⁰

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Allāh did not burden them with more than they can bear, yet they cannot bear more than what He has burdened them with. This, in turn, is the explanation of the well-known phrase: "There is no power nor might except through Allāh, the Sublime, the Great."

That is to say, no one has any strategy, strength, or movement away from disobeying Him except by His divine succor; and no one has the power or ability to uphold His obedience and to remain steadfast therein except by enablement (*tawfiq*) granted by Him.

All matters take place according to His divine knowledge, will, power, and decision. The divine will, then, has overcome all wills, and the divine decision has surmounted all strategies. He does whatever He wills, yet He never oppresses anyone whatsoever. He is transcendent above every evil or harm, exalted above every defect or blemish. "He is not asked about what He does, but they will be asked [about what they do]" (21:23).

He possesses everything, yet nothing incapacitates Him. Nothing can be independent, free from needing Him, for even a blink of an eye. Whoever then deems himself free from needing Allāh, for even a moment, has disbelieved.¹¹

The ability (*istiṭā'a*)¹² by which an action must occur—such as divine enablement to obey (*tawfiq*), which cannot be ascribed to any creature—occurs *with* that action. The ability that refers to health, capacity, readiness, and sound limbs, however, *precedes* the action.¹³

We believe in all of the above. We also believe that Muḥammad ﷺ is His

the action, if He Most High also wills for it to happen. Yet because the servant himself decided to do it, he is said to have *acquired* that action. Hence, the servant is judged by his "acquisition," while the act of "creating" belongs to Allāh alone (*Maydānī* 122; *Ghaznawī* 123; *Bājūrī* 247–51).

11 All of creation is in utter need of Allāh, who constantly maintains their existence, while true independence and freedom from need is a divine attribute, belonging only to Allāh. Hence, if the servant ascribes such an attribute to himself, he ascribes to himself a divine attribute and has in turn disbelieved (*Ghaznawī* 125).

12 There are some typos here in the Arabic published edition; the sentence has been translated correctly based on Imām Ṭaḥāwī's creed (see *Ghaznawī* 121–2).

13 Ability (*istiṭā'a*) is of two types—real (*bāṭina*) and apparent (*ẓāhira*). Real ability is that which is concurrent with the servant's action. Allāh Most High creates it at the moment of the action, such that both exist simultaneously. If the act is one of obedience, the concurrent ability is termed "enablement" (*tawfiq*); if one of disobedience, then "forsaking" (*khidhlān*). In either case, the servant is not ascribed with real ability; rather, it is a creation of Allāh. Hence, at every moment of his existence, the servant is in utter need of Allāh and His will, aid, and enablement. Apparent ability, on the other hand, refers to the servant's own capacity to act, namely, "means" that he is endowed with, including health, well-being, and sound limbs, and it precedes the action. This is the ability that is perceived by creation, and hence the basis of the servant's accountability (*Ghaznawī* 121–2).

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Every claim to prophecy after him is heresy and utter disbelief.

He is the one sent with truth and guidance to all of jinn and all of mankind. Allāh manifested clear miracles to verify the prophecy of his message, such as the splitting of the moon, the walking of trees, the salutation of stones, and his informing of the unseen realm.

We believe that the Qur'ān is the speech of Allāh—speech without any modality.¹⁴

He sent it down to His Prophet ﷺ as a revelation. The believers confirm it as truth, and are certain that it is literally the speech of Allāh, not a speech that is created. No speech of man resembles it. Anyone that ascribes a human characteristic to Allāh Most High has disbelieved.

We believe that Allāh created all creatures as well as their actions. He measured out their livelihoods and lifespans. Everyone fully receives his own apportioned sustenance, whether lawful or unlawful, as it is inconceivable for one human to consume the sustenance of another, or vice versa.

Similarly, everyone completes his own appointed lifespan, in its entirety. Hence, one who is killed dies at the time of the end of his lifespan.¹⁵

DEATH, THE GRAVE, AND THE AFTERLIFE

Once the servant has completed his lifespan, Allāh commands the Angel of Death (to take his soul). When he is buried, Allāh returns life to the person

¹⁴ By negating any modality of divine speech, the author intends to affirm its preeternality, as well as maintain its transcendence above any aspects of human speech, such as letters, sounds, grammar, syntax, order, declension, initiation, silence, or any other quality associated with the finite. Rather, the speech of Allāh is a preeternal divine attribute of His essence. It is not created speech, and it bears no resemblance to speech that is created. However, the letters and words of the Qur'ān that are recited, as well as the resulting sounds, are created; yet those words indicate *some* of the meanings that are indicated by His preeternal divine attribute of speech. Because they indicate meanings also indicated by His preeternal divine attribute, it is not permissible for one to maintain that "the Qur'ān is created" (*Maydānī* 67–8; *Ghaznawī* 59–60; *Bājūrī* 176–9).

¹⁵ That is, the killer did not reduce his lifespan at all. Rather, the deceased completed it in its entirety. Regardless of the crime, the victim's life was to end at that moment, as one's predetermined lifespan cannot be shortened or lengthened. The killer is punished, however, due to the enormity that he chose to commit (*Bājūrī* 383–4).

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such that he comprehends the questioning of the grave and is able to respond. Then two angels, Munkar and Nakīr, come to him and make him sit up. They then ask him: "What did you used to say regarding this man?"

If the servant was a believer, he responds: "He is the servant of Allāh and His Messenger. I bear witness that there is no deity except Allāh, and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh."

The two angels then say: "We surely knew that this is what you would say."

They then expand for him his grave the measure of seventy square cubits, and fill it with light for him. It is then said to him, "Sleep."

The servant will then say: "Shall I return to my family and inform them?"

The two angels will respond: "Sleep like a newly-wed bride who is not awakened except by the most beloved of family members."

The servant, then, remains in that state until Allāh resurrects him from that [comfortable] abode of his.

The hypocrite, on the other hand, responds to the questioning by saying: "I heard people saying something, so I said the same thing. I know not."

The two angels then say: "We surely knew you would say that."

It is then said to the earth: "Constrict upon him." It does so, such that his ribs are put out of place. He remains therein, being punished, until Allāh Most High resurrects him from that [horrible] abode of his.

This questioning occurs for every dead person, whether young or old. This includes those that disappear [and are not buried], like one in the body of a lion or one drowned in the sea. The prophets, however, are not questioned, according to the sounder position.

This questioning occurs after the soul is returned to the body, so that the deceased can answer Munkar and Nakīr's questions regarding his Lord, his religion, and his Prophet ﷺ. After the believer responds, it is said to him: "Look to your seat in the Fire. Allāh has replaced it for you with one in Paradise." So the believer sees both seats.

On the contrary, it is said to the disbeliever or hypocrite after his saying "I know not": "You do not know, and you never recited [the Qur'ān, in your life]." He is then struck with an iron hammer once, causing him to bellow a shout heard by all, other than men and jinn.

The punishment of the grave, then, is a reality for disbelievers, as well as some of the disobedient believers. And the bliss of the grave is a reality for whomsoever Allāh Most High wills.

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There is benefit for deceased believers when the living supplicate [for them] and donate charity [on their behalf].¹⁶

The gathering of bodies and their revival on the Day of Judgment is a reality as well. The believer is given his book in the right hand, and the disbeliever in the left hand. The Scale, by which the measure of both good and bad deeds is known, is placed [for Judgment]. The Traverse is placed over the top of the Fire, and all creatures pass over it. Some cross at the speed of light; others like wind; others like fast steeds; others at a walking pace; and yet others like ants treading on earth—each individual crossing the Traverse based on his level [of faith and works]. This crossing is considered to be the fright of the Day of Judgment for the believer.

The intercession of the Chosen Prophet ﷺ, which is the greatest intercession¹⁷ for the final ruling on that Day, as well as approaching his Watering Pool, are realities.

The speaking of body parts on that Day is also a reality.¹⁸

Paradise and Hell are realities, and both currently exist. Neither of the two, nor their inhabitants, will ever become extinct.

We affirm that Allāh Most High created both Paradise and Hell before creation, and then created inhabitants for each one. The people of Paradise enter it by His grace and generosity.¹⁹ We affirm that He will endow them with the Beatific Vision of His essence, Exalted and Most High, without modality [i.e.,

16 According to *Ahl al-Sunna wa 'l-Jamā'a*, a person may designate the reward of any voluntary good deed to another person, whether alive or deceased, without it decreasing from the performer's reward whatsoever. This applies to all types of worship, including ritual prayer (*ṣalāt*), fasting (*ṣawm*), pilgrimage (*ḥajj*), charity (*ṣadaqa*), recitation of Qur'ān or litanies, and the like. If the one for whom it is designated is deceased, the reward reaches him and provides some sort of benefit to him. Ṭabarānī relates in his *Awsaf*, on the authority of Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنهما, that the Prophet ﷺ said, "If one of you donates voluntary charity, then let him designate it for his parents, so that they both receive its reward, without decreasing his reward in the least bit" (*Marāqī 'l-Falāḥ, Ṭaḥṭāwī* 2:276–7). For obligatory acts of worship, see the section, "Being Absolved of the Obligation of Praying or Fasting" on p. 95 and its related footnotes.

17 His intercession ﷺ is for those of his nation that committed enormities (*Hadiyya* 398).

18 With regard to the events and states of the next life mentioned above, we wholeheartedly affirm them as realities, with full conviction and absolute certainty, since our knowledge of them is based on what is reported by definitive, unequivocal texts of the Qur'ān and narrations of our Prophet ﷺ. We have no doubts or misgivings in their being true and literal. However, our minds are unable to comprehend any aspect of them, and therefore we do not attempt to do so. For delving into their modalities might lead one to lose absolute certainty regarding them, which would entail disbelief (*Hadiyya* 400–01).

19 That is, not based on their good works, as the Prophet ﷺ informed us that even his entrance into Paradise is due only to being immersed in divine mercy (*Ghaznawī* 119–20). Nevertheless, the

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17 His intercession ؓ is for those of his nation that committed enormities (*Hadiyya* 398).

18 With regard to the events and states of the next life mentioned above, we wholeheartedly affirm them as realities, with full conviction and absolute certainty, since our knowledge of them is based on what is reported by definitive, unequivocal texts of the Qur'ān and narrations of our Prophet ﷺ. We have no doubts or misgivings in their being true and literal. However, our minds are unable to comprehend any aspect of them, and therefore we do not attempt to do so. For delving into their modalities might lead one to lose absolute certainty regarding them, which would entail disbelief (*Hadiyya* 400–01).

19 That is, not based on their good works, as the Prophet ﷺ informed us that even his entrance into Paradise is due only to being immersed in divine mercy (*Ghaznawī* 119–20). Nevertheless, the

indulging in the method of how this occurs] or corporealism [i.e., suggesting any resemblance between Him and creation].²⁰

The people of the Fire enter it by His justice.²¹ Some believers will enter it temporarily for certain sins, after which they are taken out, since no believer will remain in the Fire eternally.

SINS AND DISBELIEF

It is possible that Allāh Most High pardon those who are deserving of punishment due to sins, by His grace and through the intercession of His Prophet ﷺ, or the intercession of some elite of the faithful. However, this does not hold true for those deserving punishment due to disbelief, for pardoning them is not possible.²²

We do not pronounce anyone who prays toward the *qibla* to be a disbeliever based on a sin he commits, unless he deems that sin to be legally permissible.

We believe in the possibility of evil deeds being erased by good ones, as He Most High has said, "Verily, good deeds cause evil ones to disappear" (11:114).

It is not possible for good deeds to be wiped out by the evil of sins, except by disbelief, as He Most High has said, "And whosoever rejects faith, indeed his works are obliterated, and he shall be among the losers in the Hereafter" (5:5).

We do not maintain that a sin committed by a believer will not harm him. We do hope for Paradise to be granted to all believers that perfect their actions, yet we do not guarantee Paradise for anyone except for those that Allāh Most

believer must fully strive to attain that mercy, since as the author later states, "Those deeds for which a person was created are facilitated for him" (see p. 31).

20 That is, because there is nothing whatsoever that is *like* Him Most High, the Beatific Vision granted to the believers in Paradise is one without any modality. His essence is not a physical body, and hence He Most High does not occupy space. There is no direction of gaze, nor distance between the one seeing and that which is seen. Rather, Allāh Most High will create in the believers the ability to see His essence, with their very eyes, in a way that cannot be understood by the intellect (*Maydānī* 68; *Ghaznawī* 62; *Bājūrī* 268–70).

21 That is, since He Most High commanded them to believe, based on their own free wills, and informed them of the punishment entailed in rejecting Him. Therefore, their punishment is out of His justice and divine wisdom (*Ghaznawī* 120).

22 That is, based on the divine decree, as Allāh Most High preeternally willed that those who would choose to disbelieve in Him would dwell in the Fire forever. Hence, even though it is logically possible that they be pardoned, in reality it is impossible since Allāh informed us of their punishment in the Qur'ān (*Bājūrī* 449–50).

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High has honored with entrance, when explicitly mentioned in texts of the Qur'ān or ḥadīth.

We seek forgiveness for believers that commit sins, yet we fear for them. However, we do not cause them to despair. For indeed, both feeling secure from Allāh's wrath, as well as despair in His mercy, can take one out of the fold of Islam.²³ The way of truth, then, is between the two; it is the position of the people of the *qibla*.

A servant is not considered to have left his faith except by denying that which originally caused him to enter into it.²⁴

The covenant that Allāh Most High took with Ādam ﷺ and his progeny is a reality.²⁵

Allāh Most High preeternally knew the total number of inhabitants of Paradise and of Hell. Hence, no one can be added or subtracted from these numbers. The same holds true for the actions of creation. As such, those deeds for which a person was created are facilitated for him. The value of actions is determined by how one ends his life.

The one who has eternal felicity (*sa'īd*) is he for whom eternal felicity was decreed by Allāh, while the eternally damned (*shaqī*) is he for whom eternal damnation was decreed by Allāh.

PREDESTINATION AND TYPES OF KNOWLEDGE

The basis of predestination (*qadar*) is a secret of Allāh in His creation, to which no angel drawn near nor prophet-messenger has been exposed. To delve into this matter is a means of being forsaken [by the Divine], and a path toward being prevented [from steadfastness of faith]. So beware—take every precau-

23 Some scholars maintain that when disbelief is mentioned in some creedal statements, such as above, it is not to be understood literally, but rather as an exaggeration to divert believers from falling into the act being described. This interpretation is supported by the next statement: "A servant is not considered to have left his faith except by denying that which originally caused him to enter into it" (*Maydānī* 97).

24 That is, his very belief in Allāh's oneness, his submission to Him, and the resulting faith in all that is necessarily known of the religion (*Maydānī* 97).

25 As mentioned in the Qur'ān, "And when your Lord brought forth from the Children of Adam—from their loins—their descendants, and made them testify against themselves, [saying] 'Am I not your Lord?' They said, 'Indeed! We bear witness!' Lest you say on the Day of Resurrection, 'Verily, of this we were heedless'" (7:172).

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tion not to dwell on this matter, whether in thought, reflection, or insinuations from the devil.²⁶ For indeed, Allāh Most High has veiled the knowledge of predestination from His creation and has prohibited them from seeking it, as He Most High has said, "He is not asked about what He does, but they will be asked [about what they do]" (21:23).

Hence if someone asks, "Why did He [Most High] do such and such?" then he has indeed rejected the command of the Qur'ān and has disbelieved.

This portion [of belief], then, is what is needed by one whose heart is illumined and who is among the saints of Allāh (Most High); it is indeed the level of those firmly rooted in knowledge. This is because knowledge is of two types: that which is accessible to creation, and that which is not. To deny knowledge that is accessible is disbelief, and to claim knowledge that is not accessible is also disbelief. Faith is not valid except by accepting knowledge that is accessible and by leaving the pursuit of knowledge that is not. And Allāh knows best.²⁷

We affirm the existence of the Preserved Tablet, the Pen, and all that has been inscribed in it.

If all of creation were to unite in order to eliminate something whose existence had been inscribed in the Tablet based on Allāh's decree, they would not be able to prevent its existence. Likewise if they were to unite altogether in order to bring into existence that which was inscribed in the Tablet to not exist, they would prove incapable. The [ink of the] Pen has dried with regard to the existence of all that shall exist until the Day of Arising.

That which does not afflict the servant could never have afflicted him; and that which afflicts him would never have missed him.

The servant must know that Allāh's knowledge has preceded the existence of all that exists in His creation. So He decreed that which exists by His will, in

²⁶ Because such thoughts are without doubt from the plotting and trickery of the devil. Hence, whenever they occur to one's mind, one should take refuge in the All-Merciful from the devil, and consign the matter of understanding predestination over to the One who knows it, in a state of belief, acceptance, and submission to the divine will (*Maydānī* 87).

²⁷ Knowledge that is accessible to creation is that which is known by clear proofs, such as knowledge of Allāh's existence; knowledge of His oneness, power, and majesty; and knowledge of the Sacred Law, as revealed to the Prophet ﷺ. To deny such knowledge entails disbelief. Inaccessible knowledge refers to that which Allāh Most High has kept hidden from creation, which He alone knows. This includes the understanding of the divine decree and predestination, or knowledge of when the Day of Resurrection will occur. To claim or seek out such knowledge is also disbelief, as doing so entails a claim of partnership with the Divine in something He has preferred for Himself alone (*Ghaznawī* 80–81).

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So woe to him who becomes a foe to Allāh's decree, who brings forth a diseased heart, and who is surely a transgressing fabricator.

The Throne and the Footstool are realities, as Allāh has made clear in His Book, yet He is free from need of the Throne or anything else. He encompasses all things in knowledge, and He has incapacitated His creation from encompassing anything. Therefore, that which He has explicitly mentioned in the Qur'ān is as He has said, while its meaning is that which He intended. We do not delve into such matters, neither interpreting them based on our opinions, nor falsely understanding them based on our vain desires. For indeed, no one is safe in his religion except he who submits to Allāh Most High and to His Messenger ﷺ, and who consigns unclear matters over to those who understand them. The foundation of one's entire religious practice will not be steadfast unless it is based on submission and surrender.

The Heavenly Ascent (*mi'raj*) is a reality, as is the Night Journey (*isra'*) from the Sacred Precinct (al-masjid al-harām) [in Makka] to the Furthest Mosque (al-masjid al-aqṣā) [in Jerusalem]. The Prophet ﷺ was honored thereby, while awake, with his noble body.²⁸ He then ascended to the heavens, and finally to the summit where Allāh willed for him to reach; He honored him ﷺ with what He willed, and revealed to him ﷺ that which He revealed.

THE RANKS OF PROPHETS, COMPANIONS, AND SAINTS

We do not prefer any of the saints²⁹ over any of the prophets; rather, we affirm that a single prophet is better than all of Allāh's saints.

²⁸ This statement serves to refute two other minority opinions that existed among the first generation of Muslims, namely (1) only his soul ﷴ was taken on the Night Journey and Heavenly Ascent, or (2) that his body ﷴ was taken as well, but while asleep. Rather, the correct position is that both his body and soul ﷴ were taken, and that he was awake throughout. The second generation of Muslims, as well as the entire community of believers since, reached consensus on this position (*Bājūrī* 332).

²⁹ A saint is defined as one with experiential knowledge (*ʿarif*) of Allāh Most High and His divine attributes, based on what is possible for creation to know of Him. He remains steadfast in obedience and shuns acts of disobedience, meaning that he does not commit a sin without

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The elite of the children of Ādam, i.e., the prophets, are better than all of the angels, while the pious among the masses of humanity are better than the masses of angels. However, the elite³⁰ of the angels are better than the masses of humanity.³¹

Every believer after his death is an actual believer—not simply in terms of legal judgment—just as he is in his sleep or inattentiveness. Similarly, prophets and messengers are actual prophets and messengers after their death. This is because that which actually possesses the attribute of prophethood or belief is the spirit (*rūḥ*), which does not change with death.

The miracles (*karāmāt*)³² of saints are a reality; hence, we believe in that which has been transmitted regarding them in rigorously authenticated narrations.

It is possible for a saint to know that he is a saint, as well as for him to not know, as opposed to a prophet [who must know that he is a prophet].

It is permissible for a saint to manifest his miracle to one seeking guidance, in order to encourage the seeker, or to aid him in bearing the weightiness of acts of worship, but not out of pride or to impress others.

We love all of the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, yet we are not excessive in our love for any one of them.³³

repenting from it thereafter, not that he does not commit sins at all, as he is not safeguarded from disobedience as prophets are (*Bājūrī* 364).

30 The elite of the angels are four: (1) Jibrīl (or Jibrā'il), the Angel of Revelation; (2) Mikā'il, the Angel of wind, rain, and vegetation; (3) Isrāfil, the Angel selected to blow the Trumpet; and (4) 'Izrā'il (or 'Azrā'il), the Angel of Death (*Hadiyya* 394, with marginalia of Shaykh Muḥammad Sa'id al-Burhānī; Lane's Lexicon 1:2035).

31 The Māturīdī position on this matter, which is the stronger position, is that the order of rank in creation is as follows: our Liege Lord Muḥammad ﷺ is the best of creation, without exception; followed by the other four Messengers of Firm Resolve, in this order—Ibrāhīm, Mūsā, 'Isā, and Nūḥ; followed by the rest of the messengers; followed by the prophets that are not also messengers, with their own relative ranks among each other; followed by Jibrīl, then Mikā'il, then the rest of the elite angels; followed by the righteous saints of the masses of humanity; followed by the masses of the angels, with their own relative ranks among each other (*Bājūrī* 306, 309).

32 The miracle of a saint differs from that of a prophet in that the latter is conjoined with a *challenge* (*taḥaddī*) to those that deny the message to replicate the miracle—which they are unable to do—as a confirmation by Allāh of the truth of the prophet in his claim to prophecy. The effect of the miracle, then, is as if Allāh says, "My servant is truthful in all that he conveys on My behalf" (*Bājūrī* 310–311). The miracle of a saint, however, poses no such challenge. In fact, because every saint is a follower of a prophet, the miracle that appears at the hand of the saint is no more than a miracle of that prophet, as Allāh honors a saint with such miracles only due to the blessing of his emulation of his prophet. It is, therefore, another proof of the truthfulness of that prophet (*Ghaznawī* 134).

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repenting from it thereafter, not that he does not commit sins at all, as he is not safeguarded from disobedience as prophets are (*Bājūrī* 364).

30 The elite of the angels are four: (1) Jibrīl (or Jibrā'il), the Angel of Revelation; (2) Mikā'il, the Angel of wind, rain, and vegetation; (3) Isrāfil, the Angel selected to blow the Trumpet; and (4) 'Izrā'il (or 'Azrā'il), the Angel of Death (*Hadiyya* 394, with marginalia of Shaykh Muḥammad Sa'īd al-Burhānī; Lane's Lexicon 1:2035).

31 The Māturīdī position on this matter, which is the stronger position, is that the order of rank in creation is as follows: our Liegelord Muḥammad ﷺ is the best of creation, without exception; followed by the other four Messengers of Firm Resolve, in this order—Ibrāhīm, Mūsā, 'Isā, and Nūḥ; followed by the rest of the messengers; followed by the prophets that are not also messengers, with their own relative ranks among each other; followed by Jibrīl, then Mikā'il, then the rest of the elite angels; followed by the righteous saints of the masses of humanity; followed by the masses of the angels, with their own relative ranks among each other (*Bājūrī* 306, 309).

32 The miracle of a saint differs from that of a prophet in that the latter is conjoined with a *challenge* (*taḥaddī*) to those that deny the message to replicate the miracle—which they are unable to do—as a confirmation by Allāh of the truth of the prophet in his claim to prophecy. The effect of the miracle, then, is as if Allāh says, "My servant is truthful in all that he conveys on My behalf" (*Bājūrī* 310–311). The miracle of a saint, however, poses no such challenge. In fact, because every saint is a follower of a prophet, the miracle that appears at the hand of the saint is no more than a miracle of that prophet, as Allāh honors a saint with such miracles only due to the blessing of his emulation of his prophet. It is, therefore, another proof of the truthfulness of that prophet (*Ghaznawī* 134).

33 That is, such that it would lead to disdain of others (*Ghaznawī* 127).

The elite of the children of Ādam, i.e., the prophets, are better than all of the angels, while the pious among the masses of humanity are better than the masses of angels. However, the elite³⁰ of the angels are better than the masses of humanity.³¹

Every believer after his death is an actual believer—not simply in terms of legal judgment—just as he is in his sleep or inattentiveness. Similarly, prophets and messengers are actual prophets and messengers after their death. This is because that which actually possesses the attribute of prophethood or belief is the spirit (*rūḥ*), which does not change with death.

The miracles (*karāmāt*)³² of saints are a reality; hence, we believe in that which has been transmitted regarding them in rigorously authenticated narrations.

It is possible for a saint to know that he is a saint, as well as for him to not know, as opposed to a prophet [who must know that he is a prophet].

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We do not disassociate ourselves from any of them [implying that they were guilty of a wrongdoing], and we do not speak of them except in a goodly manner.³⁴

Whoever speaks well of the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ; his wives, the mothers of the believers; and his children, has proven free from hypocrisy.

The righteous scholars of the early generations of Muslims, as well as those after them who follow their path—among the people of excellence and tradition, and those of jurisprudence and erudition—are not to be mentioned except in a beautiful manner. Whoever makes mention of them in an unbecoming manner has indeed deviated from the straight path.

We believe that Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq ﷺ is the best of people after the prophets, followed by ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ﷺ. Indeed, all of the Companions were in agreement regarding the caliphate of them both ﷺ; thus, whoever denies their caliphate has committed disbelief.

They are followed [in merit] by ‘Uthmān, the Possessor of Two Lights³⁵ ﷺ; and then Imām ‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib ﷺ, the Drawn Sword of Allāh, cousin of the Chosen Prophet ﷺ, and husband of Fāṭima al-Zahrā’, the Chaste (*batūl*). The entire community agreed to his worthiness of the Imamate, and such an agreement does not exist for other than him ﷺ.³⁶

So these four, then, are the rightly-guided caliphs and upright imāms.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ bore witness for ten of the Companions that they shall attain unto Paradise, and they are (1) Abū Bakr [al-Ṣiddīq]; (2) ‘Umar [ibn al-Khaṭṭāb]; (3) ‘Uthmān [ibn ‘Affān]; (4) ‘Alī [ibn Abī Ṭālib]; (5) Ṭalḥa [ibn

34 Speaking ill of any of the Companions is impermissible. We remain silent regarding the conflicts that erupted among them, since those conflicts were based on earnest attempts at legal independent judgment (*ijtihād*) by them, and according to our religion, one who exercises legal independent judgment receives one reward if his judgment is incorrect and two rewards if correct. Thus, it is incumbent upon us to venerate the Companions, without exception, and to have full conviction in the moral integrity of them all (*Hadiyya* 405; *Bājūrī* 354).

35 He was given this title because he was blessed with the immense honor of marrying two daughters of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ—Ruqayya, and then after her demise, Umm Kulthūm ﷺ.

36 This statement must be understood in light of the entire discussion, as the author has already stated regarding the caliphate of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, “Indeed, all of the Companions were in agreement regarding the caliphate of them both ﷺ; thus, whoever denies their caliphate has committed disbelief.” Hence, his affirmation here that ‘Alī was the only one whose Imāmate found unanimous agreement is merely an acknowledgement of historical fact. It does not imply that the Imāmate of other Companions like Abū Bakr or ‘Umar did not deserve such unanimous acceptance. And Allāh knows best.

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MATTERS OF FAITH

We deem communal unity to be a binding right, founded on submission to the head of state and obedience to him; we consider dissent and opposition to him to be disobedience.³⁸

It is not permissible to establish two heads of state in one time period. We do not allow rebellion to our leaders, even if they are oppressive.

We deem congregational prayer behind any Muslim, whether righteous or corrupt, to be valid. We also perform the funeral prayer over every Muslim that dies, whether righteous or corrupt.

We believe that the religion of Allāh is one and the same, both in heaven and on earth; it is the religion of Islam. He Most High has said, “Indeed the only religion with Allāh is Islam” (3:19).

It is [a perfectly balanced religion, one that is] between extremism and laxity; between likening Allāh to His creation and denial of His divine attributes; between the negation of free will [compulsion (*jabr*)] and the assertion that the servant creates his own actions (*qadar*); and between feeling secure from Allāh’s wrath and despairing in His mercy.

Actions are not a part of faith, as opposed to what the People of Ḥadīth have claimed.³⁹

37 And their rank in merit is in the same order, followed by those Companions who fought at the Battle of Badr; and then those who fought at Uḥud; followed by those who took allegiance with the Messenger ﷺ at Ḥudaybiyya, for which they attained unto Allāh’s good pleasure; followed by the rest of the Companions ﷺ (*Ḥadiyya* 404; *Bājūrī* 340–50).

38 Since obedience to the ruler is effectively obedience to Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ, as the Qur’ān says, “And obey Allāh, His Messenger, and the people of authority among you” (4:59). Hence, the ruler must be obeyed, unless he commands the citizenry to disobedience. Political dissent, on the other hand, entails rebellion, sowing corruption on the earth, and inciting tribulation among Muslims. This ruling holds true even if the ruler is oppressive, as mentioned next in the text. Finally, we do not make supplication against our rulers; rather, our way is to ask Allāh to rectify them and grant them safety, well-being and success, in both their religious and worldly affairs (*Ghaznawī* 108).

39 The essence of faith is conviction in the heart (*taṣḍīq*), of everything that the Prophet ﷺ brought in his message. It entails both submission (*idh‘ān*) and acceptance (*qabūl*), as many disbelievers *knew* the veracity of his message ﷺ yet did not submit to it and accept it in their hearts, and

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Faith itself does not increase or decrease; thus, the increase of faith mentioned [in the Qur'ān and ḥadīth texts] refers to an increase in its fruits and the illumination of its light [that dawns on the believer].⁴⁰

It is not permissible to describe Allāh Most High as having the ability to oppress, to be foolish, or to lie because that which is inherently inconceivable does not fall under the realm of the divine attribute of power (*qudra*).

It is not possible for Him to break His divine promise, yet there is disagreement with regard to His divine threat. Some of our scholars⁴¹ maintain that it is possible for Him to not execute His divine threat [of punishment], out of His divine generosity, as that is becoming of His majesty. Yet this is not possible with regard to His divine promise [of reward], as that would be baseness, which is inconceivable for His Exalted Majesty.

It is not obligatory on Allāh Most High to do that which is good or best for the servant.⁴²

It is not possible, according to us, for Him to place on the servant a burden greater than he can bear.

hence were not *believers*. Internal conviction (*taṣḍīq*) is the condition of the validity of faith. Its expression on the tongue, specifically with the phrase “There is no deity but Allāh, and Muḥammad is His Messenger ﷺ,” is a condition for being considered Muslim in this life, along with its accompanying legal rights and rulings. The condition for the perfection of faith is its manifestation on one’s limbs through spiritual works; hence, actions are not part of faith itself, yet are essential for its perfection (*Bājūrī* III, 116–9).

40 This is the position of some scholars, including Imām Abū Ḥanīfa. It is based on the definition of faith as firm conviction in the heart based on certainty, which does not have any disparity or levels. The other position, which is deemed stronger and is held by the majority of scholars, is that faith itself does increase or decrease, based on spiritual works. One of the central proofs of this position is the obvious disparity of faith between prophets or saints versus laymen or corrupt believers (*Bājūrī* 128–31). As the author of the *Ḥadiyya* states, faith does not increase or decrease with respect to its *quantity* but does with respect to its *quality*; and no one has any doubt about this (404).

41 Ahl al-Sunna wa 'l-Jamā'a is in agreement that the divine threat against disbelievers will be executed and that the divine promise of reward for righteous believers will not be broken. However, there is disagreement regarding the divine threat against corrupt believers. The opinion of some Māturīdīs is that it is not possible for Allāh to break His threat, while the position of the Ash'arīs and other Māturīdīs is that He could choose to not execute His threat, as that is not deemed treachery or deceit but rather a manifestation of His magnificent generosity and compassion (*Bājūrī* 242–3; *Minah al-Rawḍ al-Aẓhar* 366–367).

42 Nothing is *obligatory* on Allāh Most High, as He does whatever He wills with His creation. As for any Qur'ānic verses or ḥadīth texts that appear to indicate obligation on Him Most High—such as, “And there is no creature in the earth except that *upon* Allāh is its sustenance,” (11:6)—they are understood as referring to His divine promise, out of His infinite bounty (*Bājūrī* 257).

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The faith of a blind follower is valid, due to his conviction, even though he might be sinful for not basing his faith on any logical proof.⁴³

If one repents from an enormity, his repentance is valid and accepted, even if he is persisting in another enormity; hence, he will not be punished for the one from which he repented.

One's repentance from enormities does not absolve him from having to repent from minor sins; it is possible, then, for him to be punished for those minor sins.⁴⁴

THE DIVINE NAMES

The Divine Names are only those that have been revealed; hence, one cannot ascribe a name to Allāh (Glorified and Exalted) unless it has come to us through revelation and the Sacred Law (*sharī'a*).

It is permissible to refer to the Truth [i.e., Allāh] (may He be Glorified) with the terms "thing" (*shay'*)⁴⁵ or "existent" (*mawjūd*), whether in Arabic or another language (*fārisiyya*). Similarly, one may use "self" (*nafs*)⁴⁶ to refer to Allāh. He Most High is a "thing," yet like no other thing.

As for the terms *nūr* (light), *wajh* (face), *yad* (hand), *ʿayn* (eye), *janb* (side), and the like, they may not be used to refer to Allāh Most High in a language other than Arabic without being interpreted [nonliterally], because they are from the Vague and Unclear Terms (*mutashābihāt*)⁴⁷ [used in the Qur'ān and ḥadīth], as opposed to the first two terms [i.e., "thing" and "existent"].

43 The blind follower in faith spoken about here is one who has conviction, yet without any deduction or proof, but rather only by believing someone else without knowing that person's proof. His faith is valid, yet he is sinful for not basing it on *some* level of logical proof, if he is able to do so; otherwise if unable, he is not sinful (*Bājūrī* 92-4).

44 Yet as mentioned in authentic ḥadīths, minor sins can be effaced by various acts of obedience, such as ablution (*wuḍū'*), the ritual prayer (*ṣalāt*), the Friday prayer (*jumu'a*), fasting (*ṣawm*), and an accepted pilgrimage (*hajj mabrūr*), as well as by simply avoiding enormities (*Bājūrī* 417-19). The author is emphasizing, however, that one cannot simply rely on such effacement, but rather should repent from minor sins as well, as he could be taken to account for them.

45 This is because, according to Muslim theologians, a "thing" is defined as "that which exists" (*Bājūrī* 461), and there is no doubt that Allāh Most High exists.

46 What is meant by "self," when referring to Allāh Most High, is His essence (*dhāt*) (*Bājūrī* 148).

47 With regard to such terms, there were historically two central approaches among scholars. The early generations in general believed in them as Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ intended, without feeling the need to understand the realities of their meanings. They consigned that understanding

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It is permissible to refer to the Truth [i.e., Allāh] (may He be Glorified) with the terms "thing" (*shay'*)⁴⁵ or "existent" (*mawjūd*), whether in Arabic or another language (*fārisiyya*). Similarly, one may use "self" (*nafs*)⁴⁶ to refer to Allāh. He Most High is a "thing," yet like no other thing.

As for the terms *nūr* (light), *wajh* (face), *yad* (hand), *ʿayn* (eye), *janb* (side), and the like, they may not be used to refer to Allāh Most High in a language other than Arabic without being interpreted [nonliterally], because they are from the Vague and Unclear Terms (*mutashābihāt*)⁴⁷ [used in the Qur'ān and ḥadīth], as opposed to the first two terms [i.e., "thing" and "existent"].

43 The blind follower in faith spoken about here is one who has conviction, yet without any deduction or proof, but rather only by believing someone else without knowing that person's proof. His faith is valid, yet he is sinful for not basing it on *some* level of logical proof, if he is able to do so; otherwise if unable, he is not sinful (*Bājūrī* 92-4).

44 Yet as mentioned in authentic ḥadīths, minor sins can be effaced by various acts of obedience, such as ablution (*wuḍū'*), the ritual prayer (*ṣalāt*), the Friday prayer (*jumu'a*), fasting (*ṣawm*), and an accepted pilgrimage (*ḥajj mabrūr*), as well as by simply avoiding enormities (*Bājūrī* 417-19). The author is emphasizing, however, that one cannot simply rely on such effacement, but rather should repent from minor sins as well, as he could be taken to account for them.

45 This is because, according to Muslim theologians, a "thing" is defined as "that which exists" (*Bājūrī* 461), and there is no doubt that Allāh Most High exists.

46 What is meant by "self," when referring to Allāh Most High, is His essence (*dhāt*) (*Bājūrī* 148).

47 With regard to such terms, there were historically two central approaches among scholars. The early generations in general believed in them as Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ intended, without feeling the need to understand the realities of their meanings. They consigned that understanding

The faith of a blind follower is valid, due to his conviction, even though he might be sinful for not basing his faith on any logical proof.⁴³

If one repents from an enormity, his repentance is valid and accepted, even if he is persisting in another enormity; hence, he will not be punished for the one from which he repented.

One's repentance from enormities does not absolve him from having to repent from minor sins; it is possible, then, for him to be punished for those minor sins.⁴⁴

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Some words may be used to refer to Allāh Most High when used in compound constructions, but not otherwise, such as: "Raiser of degrees," "Fulfiller of needs," "Destroyer of legions," "Remover of worries," and "Fierce in punishment." This is because, with regard to the Names of Allāh Most High, we do not exceed the limits set up by the Sacred Law, whose texts do not mention these names other than in compound constructions.

It is not permissible to refer to Him as "the veiled" (*mahjūb*). Some scholars, however, did permit the use of "The One who veils Himself" (*muḥtajib*). This is because the first name suggests being overcome by another, as opposed to the second name. And Allāh knows best.

Some terms are such that neither they nor their opposites may be used to refer to Allāh Most High, such as "the still," "the awake," or "the intelligent," since the Sacred Law does not mention them or their opposites.⁴⁸

Likewise, one may not use the terms "the one who enters" or "the absent" to refer to Him; it is permissible, however, to say "He (Most Glorified) is hidden from creation."

The events that unfold at the end of time, as reported to us by the Prophet ﷺ, are realities. These include the emergence of the Anti-Christ (*dajjāl*); the Beast of the Earth (*dābbat al-ard*); Gog and Magog (*ya'jūj wa ma'jūj*); the descent of 'Īsā ﷺ; and the rising of the sun from the West.

We do not give credence to any diviner or soothsayer, nor one who claims anything in opposition to the Book, Sunna, or scholarly consensus.

This, then, is our religion and belief, both outward and inward. We are absolved, in front of Allāh Glorified and Exalted, of anyone who opposes what we have mentioned and clarified above. We ask Allāh Most High to make us steadfast in faith, and to end our lives upon it. We ask him to safeguard us from whims contrary to the aforementioned, and from vile opinions, such as of those who liken Allāh to His creation (anthropomorphists—*mushabbihā*);

over to Allāh Most High and, while negating their literal meanings, did not attempt to interpret them. Later scholars, however, encountered many innovations and deviant sects that made it incumbent upon them to interpret those texts in a manner befitting the majesty of Allāh, so as to safeguard the community from falling into disbelief by likening Allāh to His creation. For example, they maintained that "His hand" refers to "His power," and "His descent" refers to the "descent of His mercy," etc. The latter approach provides more understanding and is more useful in refutation, and is hence a stronger position (for later times), while the former is deemed safer and therefore, according to some, more ideal for the believer (*Hadiyya* 401-2; *Bājūrī* 215).

⁴⁸ Their opposites being "the moving," "the one asleep," or "the unintelligent," as Allāh Most High is well exalted and transcendent above such terms.

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who deny any of His attributes (*mu'atṭila*); who allege that the servant creates his own actions (*qadariyya*); who deny the free will of servants (*jabriyya*); or others who contravene what is agreed upon by the community and who side with deviation. We absolve ourselves from them, and they are, according to us, misguided.

We believe in the noble angelic scribes, as well as the appointed guardian-angels⁴⁹—while we consign their number over to the Lord of all the worlds—just as we believe in the prophets and messengers. May Allāh's blessings and peace be upon them all, forever into eternity, as many blessings as the number of all that ever existed and all that exists, in this life, the next life, and the Day of Judgment. All praises are for Allāh, the One who guided us to this, and we would not have been guided had Allāh not guided us. We ask Allāh for pardon and well-being, in our religious and worldly affairs, for us and our parents, children, teachers, and brethren in Allāh. And Allāh knows best.

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