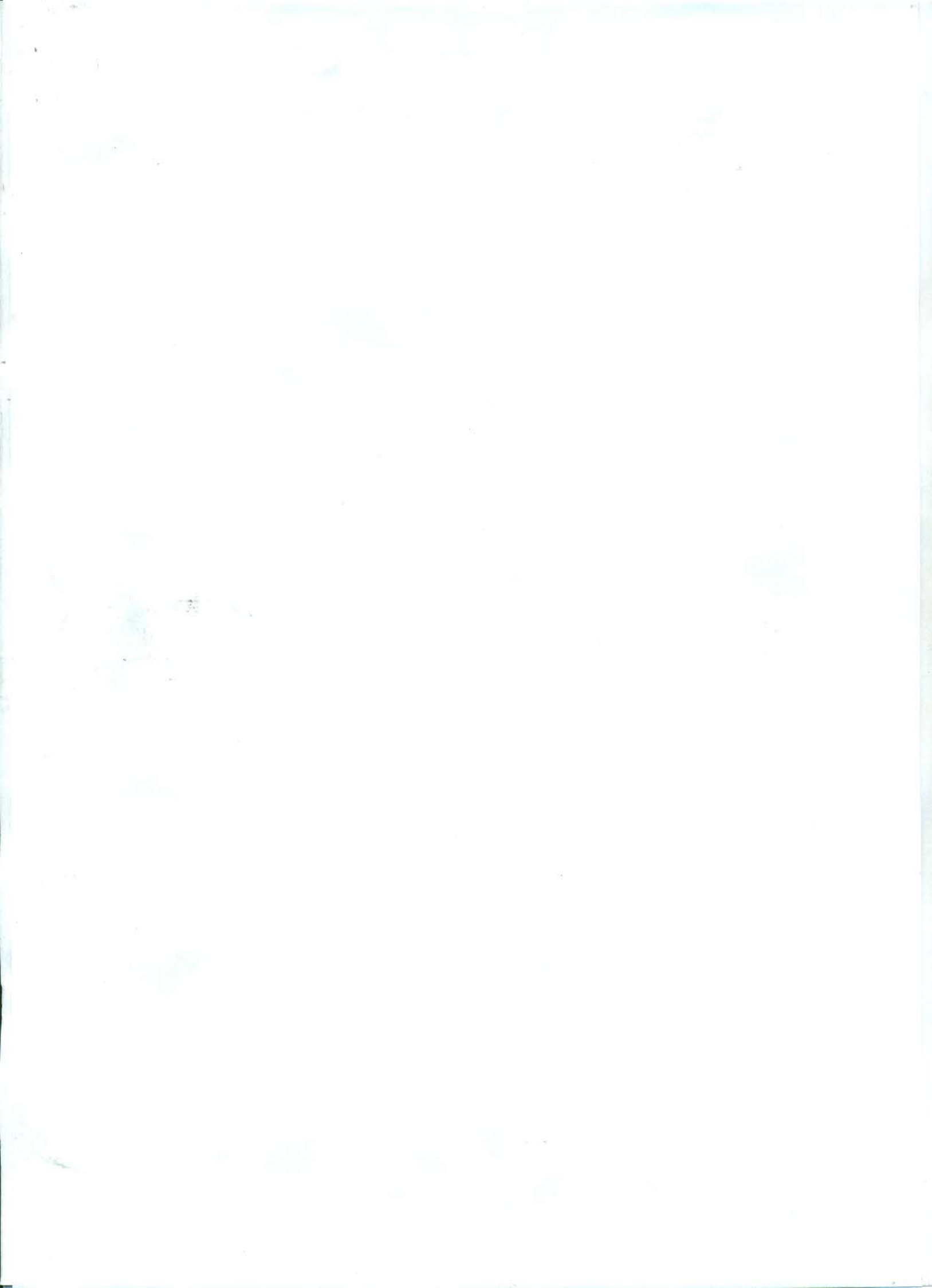


GOOD MANNERS

IMĀM ʿABDALLĀH IBN ʿALAWĪ AL-ḤADDĀD

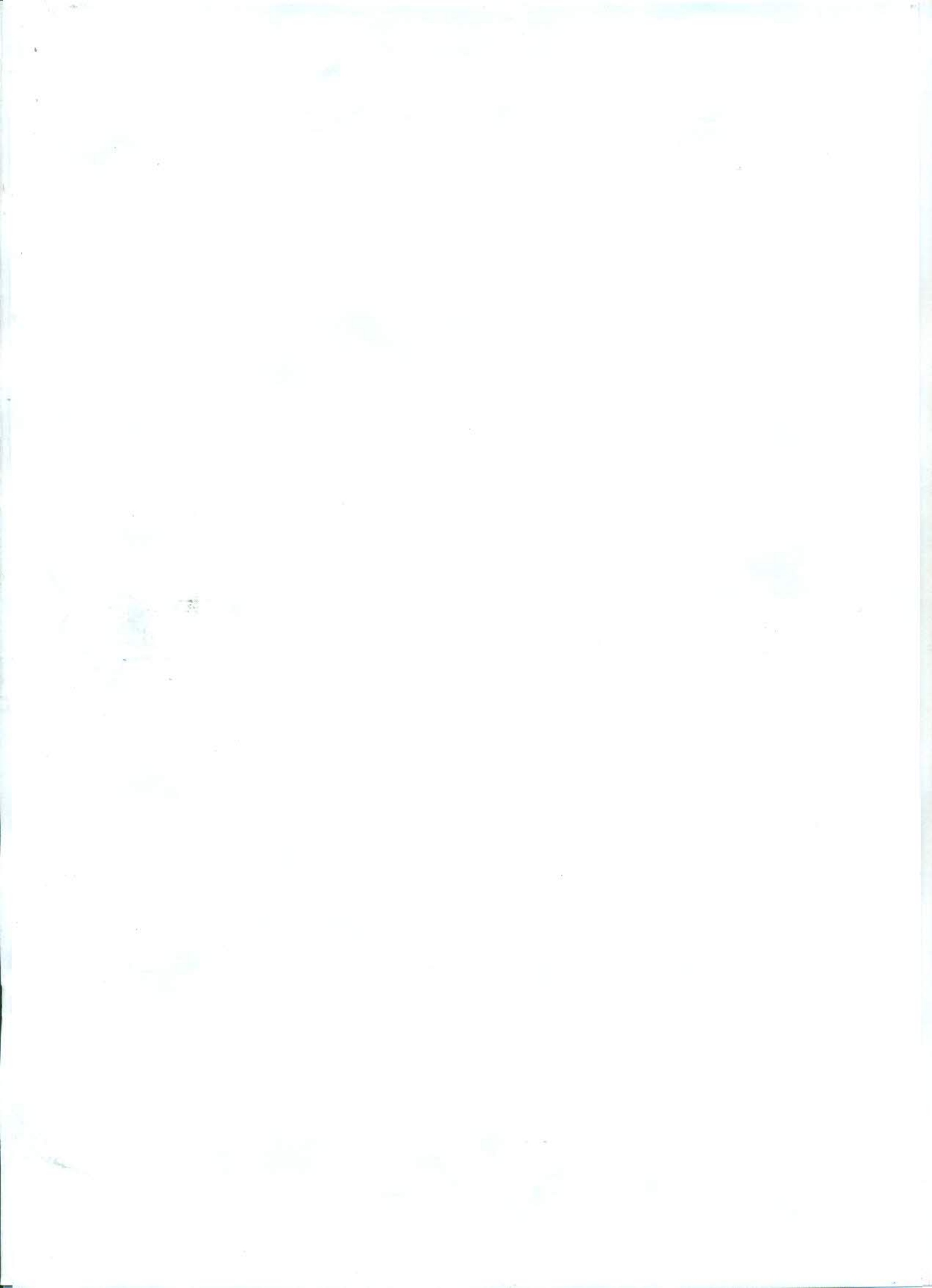
Translated by
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GOOD MANNERS

*The Treatise on the Good Manners
of the Spiritual Disciple's Wayfaring*



PROLOGUE

In the name of God, the All-Merciful, the Compassionate

All ability and strength are only by God, the High, the Formidable. Praise belongs to God, who, when He wills, casts into the hearts of seekers the anguish of longing, thereby driving them to travel the path to happiness, which is faith, worship, and the extinction of all formalism and habits.

May God send His blessings and peace upon our master Muḥammad, the master of masters, and upon his family and Companions, who themselves are masters and leaders.

God the Exalted has said (who is more truthful than He!), *Whoever desires the immediate, We shall hasten what We will of it to whomever We will; then We shall appoint for him Hell, in which he will be plunged, blamed, and defeated. And whoever desires the Hereafter and earnestly strives for it, and he is a believer—these shall have their strivings rewarded* (QURAN, 17:18-19). The *immediate* as mentioned here is this fleeting world. Therefore, the one who [merely] desires this world, let alone actively pursues it, ends up in the Fire, blamed and belittled. Should not a man of reason beware and turn away from it?

The *Hereafter* here means the Garden [or Heaven]. It is not enough to merely desire it in order to gain it. Faith and good works are both necessary, as is indicated in the passage, *and earnestly strives for it, and he is a believer*. The *strivings* to be rewarded are those deeds that are accepted by God, thereby deserving praise and such great rewards without limits nor endings—all by the grace of God and His mercy.

The complete loser is the seeker of this world, whose end was described in the Quran. His desire for the world is so powerful that it causes him to forget and deny the Hereafter. He is a disbeliever, and he will be in Hell forever. The one who acknowledges the Hereafter but does not strive for it is astray and yet another loser. The Messenger of God ﷺ has said, "Deeds depend on intentions; each man receives according to what he has intended. He whose migration was for the sake of God and His Messenger, then he has migrated for God and His Messenger. He whose migration is for worldly things that he wishes to acquire or for a woman he wishes to marry, then he has migrated for that which he had intended."

The Prophet ﷺ thus informed us that [one's] deed is only as valid as the intention behind it, and that people are rewarded according to their intentions. When these [intentions] are good, they receive nothing but good. When these are evil, they receive nothing but evil. He whose intention is good, his deed then is inevitably good, and he whose intention is malicious, his deed is inevitably malicious, even if it appears good outwardly, as in the case of a man who behaves in a righteous way only to appear righteous in the eyes of people.

The Prophet ﷺ also informed us that he who acts for the sake of God by following in the footsteps of the Messenger of God ﷺ, his reward is with God, who will be pleased with him and make his last abode His Garden—near Him and in the company of the best of His people. Those whose intentions are directed toward other than God and who act as such, their rewards are with those to whom their intentions are directed, those they performed for, those who can neither benefit nor harm them or anybody else, those who can cause neither life, death, nor the resurrection. The Prophet ﷺ elected to speak of "migration" by way of providing an example. As it is well known to people of understanding, rules such as these can be generalized to all the laws of Islam.

I now say this: Know, O disciple, O seeker, who is intent on

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directing himself [toward God], that when you requested me to send you some of our teachings, I found nothing [ready] that could suit your purpose. Therefore, I decided to record brief chapters containing some of the good manners of discipleship, in an accessible manner of expression.

It is God whom I ask to benefit me, you, and all other brothers with what He will inspire in me of this matter and allow me to reach. He is my sufficiency and the best of Guardians.

ONE

The Beginning of the Path is a Powerful Urge of Divine Origin Which Should be Strengthened, Protected, and Responded To

Know that the path begins when a powerful urge is cast into the heart of the servant which troubles and unnerves him, and drives him towards God and the last abode. It turns him away from this world and from being, like others, engaged in amassing and grooming it, tasting and enjoying its pleasures, and being deceived by its ornaments. This urge is one of the hidden warriors of God; it is a gift of solicitude and a sign of right guidance. It is often bestowed upon a servant as he listens to those people who stir in him the fear [of God] as well as desire and yearning [for Him], and when he looks at the men of God and they look at him. It can be given without cause.

It is commanded and encouraged to actively subject oneself to receive such gifts, for to expect to receive something when not standing at the door and subjecting oneself therein is foolish and unintelligent. The Messenger of God ﷺ said, "Your Lord has gifts in these days of your time, subject yourself to receive them!"

He whom God honors with such a noble urge must know how precious it is. Let him also know that it is one of the greatest favors

TWO TREATISES OF IMĀM AL-ḤADDĀD

of God, Exalted is He, such that he will never fully know how truly precious it is, nor will he ever be able to show gratitude enough for it. So let him thank God, Exalted is He, to his utmost for having selected him from among his peers to receive it. How many a Muslim reaches the age of eighty or more and neither finds this yearning nor is affected by it a single day of his life!

A disciple [*murīd*] should do his best to strengthen, protect, and respond to this urge. Strengthening it is by remembering God often, reflecting on what He has, and keeping the company of the people of God. Protecting it is by keeping away from the company of those who are veiled and by ignoring the insinuations of devils. Responding to it is by hastening to return to God and sincerely seeking His nearness—by neither waiting, postponing, procrastinating, nor delaying. This is a chance that one is given and should seize; the door is now open for him, and he should enter. He is being called, and he should be swift. Let him beware of letting one day pass after the other, for this is the work of the Devil. He must advance and not weaken. He must refuse manufacturing excuses, such as saying that there is no time or that he is not good enough for the task. Abū'l-Rabīʿ, may God have mercy on him, said, “Go to God with your limps and your broken limbs. Do not wait for full health for that would only be idleness.”

Imām Ibn ʿAṭāʾillāh said in his *Ḥikam*, “To say that the work must be postponed until one is free is but the idleness of the soul.”

TWO

Repentance, its Conditions, and Protecting Oneself from Sins

A disciple on the path to God should begin with sound repentance from all his sins. If he has treated unjustly any of God's creation, he should correct this by giving everyone their due. If this is not possi-

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ble, he should ask them to release him from those obligations. Whoever is encumbered with debts to creation cannot proceed towards the Real.

It is a condition for sound repentance that one feel sincere remorse for his sins and be wholly determined not to repeat such actions as long as he lives. If he does not refrain from them, or is still harboring the intention to repeat them, his repentance is false.

A disciple should always be extremely aware of his shortcomings towards his Lord. When these shortcomings bring him sadness and his heart breaks, let him know that God is with him, for He says, Transcendent is He, "I am with those whose hearts break for My sake."

A disciple should protect himself from the smallest of sins—let alone the major ones—with more urgency than protecting himself from lethal poison. Should he commit [such a sin], he should be more frightened than if he had taken poison, for sins are to the heart what poison is to the body. The heart of a disciple is more precious to him than his body. A disciple has no capital other than protecting and improving his heart. The body is a target for disease, soon to be destroyed by death. Its death, however, means only that one has to leave this grief and anxiety-laden world. But if the heart is ruined, the Hereafter is ruined. The only one to be rescued from the wrath of God and gain His rewards and win His pleasure will be the one who comes to Him with a heart that is "whole."

THREE

Guarding the Heart Against Insinuations, Ailments, and Ill-Thinking

A disciple should strive to guard his heart against insinuations, ailments, and bad thoughts. He should guard its gate by constant vigilance and prevent these things from entering. Once they enter his

heart, they will ruin it and it becomes difficult to expel them. He should purify his heart—which is the place his Lord's gaze falls upon—from worldly desires, spite, rancor, deceitfulness, or thinking ill of any Muslim. He must be of good advice to them, compassionate, and merciful; he must think well of them all, desiring for them whatever good he desires for himself, and disliking for them whatever evil he dislikes for himself.

Know, disciple, that the heart commits sins which are uglier, fouler, and more offensive than those committed by the senses: a heart remains unfit for the gnosis of God and for His love to descend into it, until it rids itself of all such things.

Among the worst sins of the heart are arrogance, ostentation, and resentful envy. Arrogance is proof of great foolishness, excessive ignorance, and stupidity. Arrogance does not become one who knows that he was made from a drop of fetid semen and soon enough will end up a decaying corpse. If he possesses virtues and good qualities, they are but gracious gifts from God; a person can achieve nothing by his own power, neither can he acquire anything through his own strength and cleverness. When he behaves with arrogance toward the servants of God, employing therein the gifts that God has graciously bestowed on him, does he not fear that by behaving discourteously and attributing to himself what belongs to God, He would take away everything from him? Prominence and greatness are attributes of God, the Compeller, the Supreme.

The presence of ostentation is proof that the heart is devoid of the vastness and majesty of God because it seeks the approval of creatures through feigning and is not content with the knowledge that God, the Lord of creation, knows all that he does. The one who performs good deeds and likes it to be known, so that people would revere and serve him, is an ignorant hypocrite whose desire is but for this world. The detached man is one who finds it repugnant when people offer him reverence and wealth, and seeks to avoid them. Who can be more ignorant than one who seeks the

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Hereafter by acts of this world? If he is unable to renounce the world, he should seek it from its Owner. The hearts of creation are in the hand of God; He makes them incline toward the one who seeks Him, and He makes them serve him.

As for resentful envy, it is manifest enmity to God, and opposition to Him in His Kingdom. When [God] the Exalted bestows gifts on some of His servants, it is evidence that He intends them to be given them and has chosen them for them, for none forces His hand. If the servant wants something different from what his Lord wants, he is discourteous and deserves to come to grief.

Resentful envy can also target things associated with the Hereafter, such as knowledge and virtue. It is ugly of a disciple to be jealous or to resent a companion on the path who has given him help. On the contrary, he should rejoice for the help he receives from his companion, and derive strength from the fact that they are alike. A believer finds strength in his brother. What a disciple should do is inwardly desire and outwardly act to gather people on the path to God and [help in their] submitting to Him. He should not care whether they become better than him or he better than them, for this is given by God, and He, Exalted is He, selects whom He will for His mercy.

The blameworthy qualities of the heart, are many. We have not mentioned them all for the sake of brevity, but we have cautioned against the major sources producing them. The origin, foundation, and root of them all is love of this world. Its love is the head of every sin, as has been handed down. When the heart is free from it, it becomes healthy and clear, enlightened and fragrant, fit to receive the lights and have the secrets unveiled.

FOUR

*Guarding the Senses Against Transgressions and
Against Being Deceived by This World*

A disciple should strive to restrain his senses and limbs from transgressions and sins, and only use them in obedience. He should use them only in those things which would benefit him in the Hereafter. He should take great care in guarding his tongue, for its size is small, but its crimes are great. Let him prevent it from lying, backbiting, and other forms of forbidden speech. Let him beware of lewdness, and of delving into what does not concern him, even if it were not forbidden, for it hardens the heart and wastes time. A disciple should not only move his tongue in reciting the Quran, the remembrance of God, giving advice to a Muslim, enjoining good, and forbidding evil, but also only for those worldly things that relate to the Hereafter. The Prophet ﷺ said, "The speech of the Son of Adam will be counted against him, not for him, except for enjoining good, forbidding evil, and remembering God."

Know that hearing and eyesight are two open doors, whatever enters through them reaches the heart. How many a thing does a man hear or see, which he should not have, but that once they have entered the heart, it proves difficult to remove them? For the heart is rapidly affected by what enters it, then the effect is difficult to erase. Let the disciple then be careful to protect his hearing and eyesight, and strive to restrain all his senses and his limbs from sins and from what is in excess of the necessary. Let him beware of looking with approval at the ornaments of this world, for its outward is deception and its inward is a lesson in wisdom. The eye looks at its deceptive manifestations, but the heart looks at the lesson hidden within. How many a disciple looked at some of the beauties of this world and his heart leaned toward them, liked them, and became inclined to build and acquire. So lower your eyes, disciple, and look at creation only with the intention of seeing

the lesson within it. Remember as you look that it will wither and go from whence it came. It came from nonexistence. It was gazed upon by many people who are now gone, while it still remains. Generation after generation have received it as an inheritance. Look at creatures with an eye that sees them as evidence of their Creator's perfect power. Every creation says with the tongue of its state, "There is no god but God, the August, the Wise." This is what the people of enlightened hearts—who perceive by the light of God—can hear.

FIVE

Remaining in a State of Purity and Preferring Hunger to Satiety

A disciple should maintain a state of purity, and whenever he loses it should perform his ritual ablutions followed by two *rak'as*. When he is intimate with his wife, he must take immediate *ghusl* and not remain impure. He should make it easy for himself to maintain ritual purity by eating little, for the one who eats much breaks his *wudū'* often and finds it an effort to maintain purity. Eating little is also of help in keeping awake at night, which is one of the most important activities of a disciple. He should eat only when necessary and sleep only when it overcomes him. He should speak only when necessary and mix only with people from whom he can benefit. The one who eats much, his heart grows hard, and his limbs become too heavy for acts of worship. Eating much makes one sleep and talk much. When a disciple sleeps much and talks much, his quest becomes an empty shell devoid of substance.

A hadith states, "The Son of Adam never fills a vessel worse than his stomach. It should suffice the Son of Adam a few morsels to keep his back straight. If he must, then a third [of his stomach] for his food, a third for his beverage, and a third for his breath."

SIX

*Directing One's Whole Attention to God and
Devoting Oneself to His Worship*

A disciple should be the furthest of people from sins and forbidden acts, the most conscientious in carrying out his obligations, the most eager to do what draws him nearer to God, and the swiftest in performing acts of goodness.

A disciple differs from other people only in attending wholly to God, being obedient, and freeing himself from everything that may distract him from His devotions. Let him spend his breaths carefully, hold on to his time avariciously, and only expend it in what takes him nearer to God and benefits him on the Day he meets Him. He should have a daily *wird*¹ of every kind of worship, so that he will have a number of those to hold on to tenaciously and never allow any of them to be neglected, however difficult his circumstances. He should recite the Magnificent Quran frequently, reflect on its meanings and chant its words correctly. While reciting he should be full of the immensity of the Speaker, unlike those who recite with expert tongues and loud voices but are distracted and have hearts which harbor neither exaltation nor reverence for God. They read it in the form it was sent down, from its opening to its end, yet know nothing of its meanings, nor of the reasons why each verse was revealed. Had they known, they would have acted: knowledge alone is of no use. One who is ignorant and one who knows but does not act on his knowledge are no different, except that the latter will have a stronger case made against him before God. Seen in this light, the ignorant is in a better situation. This is why it was said, "Ignorance is better than knowledge that is of no benefit."

O disciple, have a share in Night Prayers, for the night is the time when the servant is alone with his Lord. Make abundant pleas for help and forgiveness. Commune with your Lord with the

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tongue of the humble and needy, and a heart where complete helplessness and abasement are realized. Beware of neglecting night worship, for dawn must always find you awake and remembering God, Transcendent and Exalted is He!

SEVEN

Excellence in the Performance of Ritual Prayers, Presence with God is the Essence of all Acts of Worship

O disciple, strive to your utmost to make your performance of the five Prayers satisfactory, and do that by making your standing, recitation, humility, bowing, prostrations, and the Prayers' other obligations and *sunnas* complete in every way.

Before entering into Prayer, bring to your heart the awesomeness of the One you wish to stand before, Majestic and High is He. Beware of communing with the King of kings, the Subduer of tyrants, with a distracted heart, deeply lost in the valleys of unawareness and whisperings, roaming the places of incidental thoughts and worldly ideas; you would thus deserve to be hateful to God and expelled from His doorstep.

The Messenger ﷺ has said, "When a servant stands up to pray, God turns His face toward him. Should the servant look behind him, God the Exalted, says, 'The Son of Adam has turned towards a better than I!' Should the servant turn away again, God says the same. When he looks away for the third time, God turns away from him and abandons him." If this is the state of one who looks away physically, what about one who when in Prayer directs his heart to the fortunes and beauties of this world? God, Transcendent and Exalted is He, looks at hearts and secrets, not at forms and appearances.

Know that the essence and meaning of worship is presence

with God. Acts of worship which are devoid of presence are like dust, easily blown away. The one who is not present with God in worship is like the one who offers as gift to a great king an empty coffer or a dead maid! How deserving will such a man be of punishment and being deprived of reward!

EIGHT

Cautioning Against Neglecting the Friday Prayer and Other Congregational Prayers, and Exhorting to Keep the Regular Supererogatory Prayers

Beware greatly, O disciple, of leaving the Friday and other congregational Prayers, for such is the pattern of the indolent and the mark of the ignorant. Take care to perform the regular supererogatory Prayers before and after the obligatory ones; persevere with the *Witr* and *Ḍuḥā* Prayers and with keeping alive the interval between the two night Prayers, through remembrance [of God].

Be extremely careful to always keep alive the periods between the dawn prayer and sunrise, and between the afternoon prayer and sunset, for these are noble times where those servants who turn to God receive the flow of His assistance. The time following the dawn prayer, when kept alive, has a powerful and specific effect in attracting material provision, whereas, the time following the afternoon prayer, if kept alive, has a powerful effect in attracting provisions for the heart. This has been experienced by the people of clear vision among the great gnostics.

A hadith states, "The one who sits where he has just prayed, remembering God after the Dawn Prayer, is quicker to receive his provision than the one who travels the horizons [seeking provision]."

NINE

*Exhorting to Perseverance in Remembrance and
Reflection*

What really counts on the path of God the Exalted, having obeyed commands and avoided forbidden things, is to persevere in remembering God; so keep to it, O disciple, in all situations, with heart and tongue, at all times and places.

The invocation which contains the meaning of all invocations and their fruits, invisible and visible, is *Lā ilāha illa'llāh*. This is the invocation which people of beginnings are enjoined to keep and which people of ending return to.

He who would delight in tasting some of the secrets of the path and having some of its realities unveiled before him, let him be intent on remembering God, the Exalted, with a heart that is present, courtesy that is abundant, attention that is sincere, and concentration that is piercing. Whenever these are combined in a person, to him is revealed the highest *Malakūt*, his spirit beholds the realities of the World of Utmost Purity, and the eye of his secret witnesses the Highest and Holiest Beauty.

And reflect in abundance, O disciple. Reflection is of three kinds. The first is reflection on the wonders of [Divine] Power and the marvels of the heavenly and earthly kingdoms. And its fruit is gnosis of God. The second is reflection on the gifts of God and His graces. And its fruit is the love of God. The third is reflection on this world, the next, and the states of creation in both. And its benefit is turning away from this world and becoming attentive to the Hereafter. We have discoursed on the various avenues of reflection in the *Book of Assistance* where they can be found by those who want them.

TEN

*How to Rebuke the Soul From Being Lazy in
Obedience and Inclined Towards Disobedience*

If you feel, O disciple, that your soul, through laziness and sloth, moves away from submission and good actions, then lead it back by the reins of hope, remind it of what God has promised those who obey Him: vast bounty, permanent bliss, grace, and contentment, eternity in the vastness of the Garden, honor, and high rank and eminence accorded by God the Exalted and His servants.

If you feel that your soul is leaning toward rebellion or heading for sin, then use the whip of fear to rebuke it. Remind it of that with which God has threatened those who disobey Him: humiliation, calamity, debasement and vengeance, expulsion and deprivation, dejection and loss.

Beware of falling into the error of those who strayed and belittled the Garden and the Fire! Magnify what God and His Messenger have magnified and act only for the sake of God, for He is your Lord and you are His slave. Ask Him to let you enter His Garden and ask His protection from His Fire by His grace and mercy.

Should the Devil—may God curse him!—tell you that God, Transcendent and High is He, neither needs you nor your deeds, that neither your submission will benefit Him, nor your rebellion harm Him, reply to him, “This is true! But I am the one in need of the graces of God and the good deeds. I am the one who benefits by submission and is harmed from disobedience. This is what my Lord has said to me in His Noble Book and on the tongue of His Messenger ﷺ.” If [the Devil] then says to you, “If, in the knowledge of God, you are among the fortunate, you will inevitably end up in the Garden, whether you submit or rebel; and if, in the knowledge of God, you are among the wretched, you will end up in the Fire, even if you are obedient!” You must ignore him for the

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decree is hidden, only God knows and none of creation has anything to do with it. Submission and obedience are the surest proof of good fortune, nothing stands between the obedient and the Garden should he die in a state of obedience. Whereas disobedience is the surest proof of wretchedness, nothing stands between the sinner and the Fire should he die in a state of sin.

ELEVEN

The States of the Soul and Being Patient

Know, disciple, that the beginning of the path is patience, and its end is thankfulness. Its beginning is difficulty, and its end is bliss. Its beginning is toil and weariness, and its end is opening, unveiling, and arrival at the ultimate goal which is gnosis of God, arrival to Him, being comforted by Him, and standing in His noble Presence with His angels standing before Him. The one who makes gracious patience the foundation of all his affairs attains to every goodness, reaches everything that he hopes for, and wins all that he seeks.

Know that to begin with, the soul is "inciting," it exhorts to evil and forbids good. When one resists its commands and patiently endures what comes from contradicting its whims, it becomes a "reproachful" soul. The reproachful soul is changeful because it has two faces, one "serene" and the other "inciting." It can be this on one occasion, and that on another. If one then gently guides it and leads it by the reins of desire for what God has in store, it becomes serene, enjoining good and finding its pleasure and comfort in it, and forbidding evil and being repelled and fleeing from it.

The one whose soul is serene is greatly amazed by the way people turn away from acts of obedience and [turn away] what they bring on of delight, comfort, and pleasure; and then they rush into rebellion and lusts and what they hold of grief, estrangement, and

bitterness. [The possessor of the serene soul] may think that the way they taste these two states is the same as his; he then draws on his own experience for comparison and remembers how pleasurable he had once found it to satisfy his lusts, and how bitter to perform acts of obedience; then he understands that he had only reached his present state after a long struggle, and by the immense grace of God.

You now know that it is but *patience* to stay away from sins and lustful desires and to keep to acts of obedience that makes you reach everything that is good, every noble station, and every lofty state. Has [God] not said, Transcendent and High is He, *O you who believe, have patience, persevere, be vigilant, and fear God, that you may succeed!* (QURAN, 3:200)? And He said, Exalted is He, *And the gracious word of your Lord was fulfilled in the Children of Israel because of their patience* (QURAN, 7:137); and He said, *And We made of them leaders to guide by Our command, when they had patience and certainty in Our signs* (QURAN, 32:24). And a hadith says, "Certainty and determined patience are among what you possess the least. The one who has a share of these is not worried by what he misses in night worship and day fasting."

TWELVE

Heeding the Example of the People of Fortitude— Provision is Apportioned

A disciple may be put through the hardships of poverty, need, and the narrowing of the channels of provision. He should thank God and consider this a great blessing. For this world is an enemy, and God pushes it towards His enemies, but deflects it away from His protégés. Let him thank God for making him resemble His prophets, saints, and virtuous servants.

The Master of Messengers and the best of creation,

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Muhammad, may the blessings of God and His peace be upon him, used to tie a stone to his stomach out of hunger. Two months and more would pass and no fire would be lit in his house—neither for cooking, nor for any other purpose. He survived on dates and water. One day he received a guest, so he sent for food to each of his nine houses, but none was found. When he died he left his armor pawned with a Jew for a few measures of barley which was on that day all that there was to eat in his house.

O disciple, let your worldly requirements be no more than a cloth to cover what should be covered and a morsel of licit food to allay your hunger. Beware of the deadly poison of longing for worldly luxuries and pleasures and of envying those who enjoy them, for they will be asked to account for what they took and enjoyed. If you knew the hardships they have to endure, the bitterness they have to swallow, the troubles and anxieties they have to carry in their hearts and breasts, all of which come from pursuing the world, nurturing it, and guarding it carefully, you would see clearly that these far outweigh the pleasures enjoyed, if indeed pleasures there are.

It is enough to repel you from loving the world to know that God, Exalted is He, says, *Were it not that people would have become all alike, We would have given those who disbelieve in the All-Merciful silver roofs for their houses and stairways to climb on, and for their houses doors [of silver] and couches on which to recline, and ornaments of gold. These are but the fleeting pleasures of the world, while the Hereafter is with your Lord for the God-fearing* (QURAN, 43:33-35). And the Messenger of God ﷺ said, “This world is the prison of the believer and the Garden of the disbeliever. Had it been worth the wing of a gnat to God, He would never have allowed a disbeliever a sip of its water.” And [it is enough] to know that since He created it, He has never looked at it.

Know that provision is divided and allocated by [Divine] decree. Some servants are given a large share, some small. This is

the wisdom of God. If, O disciple, you are one whose share is small, have patience and be content. Be pleased with what God has allotted to you. If you are one of those who have received a large share, take what you need and spend the rest in ways of goodness and benevolence.

THIRTEEN

*Moving Toward God is Compatible With Earning,
Divesting Oneself of the Means of Livelihood is Not
Required*

Know that it is not necessary for a man who wishes to enter the path to God to leave his wealth, craft, or commerce. What is necessary for him is to fear God in what he does, and to have moderation in pursuing his livelihood so as not to miss obligatory or supererogatory acts of worship. Neither should he fall into the forbidden, nor the superfluous which is of no help on the way to God.

Should the disciple know that his heart would not be firm, nor his religion safe, except by shedding off his wealth and all other means, then this becomes incumbent upon him. If he has wives and children who require expenditure and clothes, he has to provide their needs and strive for this. If he becomes incapable of doing so due to any of the reasons acceptable by *Sharī'a*, he will be blameless and safe from sin.

O disciple, know that only when you realize that your days in this world are few and your death near, will you be capable of acts of obedience, of avoiding lusts, and of turning away from this world. Keep your ultimate end before your eyes, make ready for death, and know that it may descend upon you at any moment. Beware of long hopes, for they sway you toward the love of this world and make it difficult for you to persevere in obedience. Be intent on worship or devote yourself to the path of the Hereafter.

From the realization of the nearness of death and the brevity of time comes all good. Seek this, may God grant you and us success!

FOURTEEN

Being Patient When Harmed by Others and Being Wary of Being Tempted by Them

People sometimes show hostility to a disciple. They may hurt him, treat him harshly, or talk about him disparagingly. Should you become afflicted by any such thing, you must remain patient, forsake retaliation, and maintain your heart pure of grudges and evil intentions. Beware of asking God to send down His wrath on those who injure you. Should they happen to suffer a mishap, never say, "It is because of what they did to me."

Even better than to endure injury with equanimity is to forgive and ask God to increase them, for such is the behavior of the *siddiqūn*.

When creation shuns you, consider this to be a blessing from your Lord, for if people come to you, they may distract you from His obedience. Should you become afflicted by their coming to you, respecting and praising you, beware of the effect this may have on you, and thank God for hiding your faults from them. If you feel that they are distracting you from God, or if you fear the imprint of affectation upon yourself and strive to appear fairer in their eyes, then shut your door and isolate yourself, or else leave the place where you are known for [a place] where you are unknown.

Always opt for anonymity. Flee fame and publicity. They are a test and a hardship. One of our predecessors said, "By God! A servant, if truthful with God, will always love to pass unnoticed." Another has said, "I have never known a man to wish to become known but that his religion quit him and he became exposed."

FIFTEEN

Getting Rid of the Need to Obtain People's Approval

O disciple, strive to purify your heart both from the fear of people and from putting your hopes in them, for this would make you remain silent when faced with falsehood, compromise your religion, and neglect enjoining good and forbidding evil. This would be ample humiliation. A believer is strong by his Lord; he feels no fear nor hope except with regard to Him.

When one of your brother Muslims offers you something by way of showing affection, take it if you need it, but thank God, for He is the real giver, and thank the one whom God has chosen to deliver it to you. If you do not need it, see whether it would be better for your heart to take it or refuse it. If you refuse, do it tactfully so as not to hurt the heart of the giver, for the feelings of a Muslim are of consequence to God.

Beware of refusing for the sake of acquiring a reputation, or of accepting for your appetites. However, to accept for your appetites is better than turning something down to acquire a reputation of asceticism and of turning away from the world. The truthful will not be confused, for his Lord gives him a light in his heart by which he knows what is required of him.

SIXTEEN

Rebuking the Seekers of Unveilings and Supernatural Events

One of the most harmful things for a disciple is his wish for unveilings and longing for *karāmāt* and for supernatural happenings. These will never come to him as long as he desires their appearance, for they come mostly to those who have a dislike for such things and no wish for them.

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Things can happen to certain conceited people to lure them even more and test those among them who are weak believers. In this context, these things are to debase rather than to honor. They would be considered *karāmāt* only if they appear in people of rectitude. O disciple, should God honor you with such things, then thank Him for them, Transcendent is He, do not dwell on them and become overconfident. Keep them hidden and do not mention them to other people. If none appears to you, do not wish for them, nor grieve for their absence.

Know that the *karāma* that encompasses every other *karāma*, whether of realities or forms, is rectitude, which manifests in complying with [God's] commands and avoiding what is forbidden, outwardly and inwardly. Strive to fully achieve those qualities, and then the higher and lower worlds will serve you, but in such a way as not to veil you from your Lord, nor distract you from what He wants for you.

SEVENTEEN

Seeking Provision and Striving For It

O disciple, think well of your Lord. Think that He will help you fulfill your needs, guard and protect you, and entrust you neither to creation nor to yourself. He has informed us that He is as good to His servant as His servant thinks Him to be.

Remove from your heart the fear of poverty and the expectation that one day you may need people. Beware of directing your whole attention to such matters. Trust in your Lord's promise and His providing for you. He says, Exalted is He, *Nothing walks the earth but that God provides for it* (QURAN, 11:6). And you are one of those who walk the earth, so occupy yourself with what He has commanded you rather than with what He has already guaranteed for you, for your Lord never forgets you. He has informed you that

provision is with Him and commanded you to seek it from Him by acts of worship. He has said, Exalted is He, *Seek provision from God, and worship Him, and be thankful to Him. To Him shall you return* (QURAN, 29:17). Do you not see how He provides for those who reject Him and worship other than Him? Will He not provide for the believers who worship Him alone? When He provides for those who sin and disobey, will He not provide for the obedient ones who remember and thank Him in abundance?

EIGHTEEN

Keeping the Company of the Best of People, the Good Manners of the Disciple with His Shaykh, and the Attributes of the Perfect Shaykh

O disciple, you must take the greatest care to keep the company of the best people and to sit with the virtuous and the righteous. Search with utmost care for a good shaykh, a man of guidance and good advice, who has knowledge of *Sharī'a*, has traveled the path of *tariqa*, and tasted *ḥaqīqa*.² A man who has perfection of mind, vastness of breast, wisdom in management, knowledge of the ranks of people, and the ability to discern the variations in their instincts, innate qualities, and states. When you find him, surrender to him, give him command over all your affairs, and take his advice and suggestions in everything that concerns you. [SEE "TRANSLATOR'S APPENDIX TWO."] Follow his example in everything he says or does, except in those things which are specific to his status as a shaykh, for a shaykh has to mix with people, speak to them gently and evenly, and draw the near and far among them to God. Object not, neither publicly nor secretly, to any behavior of his. Should a disturbing thought about him enter your heart strive to cast it out. If you do not succeed, speak to the shaykh about it so that he can teach you how to rid yourself of it. You should also inform him of

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everything that occurs to you, especially concerning the path. Beware of obeying him publicly and when in his presence, then disobeying him in secret—you can otherwise perish.

Do not meet any shaykh known to take people on the path unless you have your shaykh's permission. If he permits you, guard your heart and meet whoever you will. If he does not, know that he has chosen what is best for you. Do not accuse him of being envious or jealous. God forbid that such may occur from [God's] people, His elect.

Beware of asking the shaykh for *karāmāt* or that he reveal to you what you secretly think. Knowledge of the hidden belongs exclusively to God. The limit of a saint is that God reveals to him some of the hidden, some of the time. A disciple may enter the presence of his shaykh wishing to be told his own thoughts and the shaykh may refrain from telling him although they are unveiled to him. This is to guard his secret and hide his state, for they are, may God be pleased with them, the most careful to guard secrets and the farthest from showing off by *karāmāt* and supernatural events, even when given command over them. Most *karāmāt* appearing on saints do not happen by choice. When any such event occurs, those who witness it are asked not to divulge what they have witnessed until the shaykh leaves the world. Saints may sometimes openly bring about such events when there is greater benefit in doing so than in keeping them hidden.

Know that a perfect shaykh is one who benefits the disciple through his spiritual power,³ his actions, and his words. He protects him whether present or absent. If the disciple is physically far from his shaykh, he must seek from him guidelines as to what he should do and what he should refrain from doing. The most harmful thing to the disciple is a change in his shaykh's feelings toward him. If this happens, then even were the shaykhs of the East and the West to unite to improve him they would never succeed, until his own shaykh becomes pleased with him again.

TWO TREATISES OF IMĀM AL-ḤADDĀD

Know that a disciple in search of a shaykh should not surrender command over himself to anyone said to be a shaykh and a guide on the path until he comes to know that the shaykh is worthy of this description and until he can accept him wholeheartedly. Similarly, if a disciple goes to a shaykh asking to be taken on the path, he should not be permitted to enter it until his sincerity has been tested, as well as the extent to which he thirsts for someone to guide him to his Lord.

All this relates to the shaykh of *tahkīm*.⁴ They made it a condition that the disciple remain with him like the body of a dead man in the hands of the one washing it for burial, or like a child with his mother. This does not apply to the shaykh of *tabarruk*.⁵ If the disciple's intention is to gather *baraka* and not hand over command over his affairs, then the more shaykhs he meets the better.

A disciple who is not succeeding in finding a shaykh should persevere in resolutely striving. He should turn to God with total sincerity and poverty and ask Him to give him a guide. He will be answered by the One who answers those in desperate need; He will send him a servant of His to take him by the hand.

A disciple may be searching for a shaykh thinking that he is without one, while in actual fact a shaykh he has never seen is rearing and teaching him by directing his gaze and concern toward him, while the disciple remains unaware. In reality, the vital factor is sincerity. Real shaykhs are there but, "Transcendent is He who has made the evidence that points to His saints through the evidence that points to Him, and does not allow anyone to reach them except those He wishes to make reach Him."⁶

If you want something from your shaykh, or if you have a question to ask, do not refrain out of awe and respect. Ask once, twice, and three times. Do not think that it is courteous to refrain from asking, unless of course the shaykh himself indicates that you should remain silent and leave this question, in which case you must obey.

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If the shaykh prevents you from doing something, or shows preference to someone else, beware of thinking ill of him. Be convinced that he has done what is best for you and most beneficial. If you do something wrong which angers your shaykh, be quick to apologize until he again becomes pleased with you. If you suspect a change in the shaykh's feeling toward you, when for instance you find that he does not smile at you as much as he usually did, you must tell him of your fear that he has changed toward you, for it may be due to something you did, in which case you can repent. Or it may be that you only imagined the shaykh to have changed and that this was a thought thrown into your heart by the Devil so as to distress you, in which case when you find out that the shaykh is pleased with you your heart will regain its peace. This cannot happen if, rather than talking about it, you keep quiet in the knowledge that you have done nothing wrong.

When you see a disciple who is full of respect and awe for his shaykh, who believes in him and obeys him fully, outwardly and inwardly, and behaves towards him with the appropriate good manners, such a disciple will inevitably inherit his secret⁷ or part of it should he survive him.

CONCLUSION

The Attributes of the Sincere Disciple and How He Should Behave

A certain gnostic, may God be pleased with him and make us benefit from him, once said, "A disciple is not one until he is able to find in the Quran everything that he wants, know the difference between diminution and increase, become independent of the servants by the grace of [his] Lord, and regard gold and dust as equal.

A disciple is one who observes limits, keeps his promises, is content with what he has, and is patient when deprived.

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A disciple is one who is thankful in prosperity, patiently endures afflictions and bitter decrees, praises his Lord in ease and in hardship, and remains true to Him in private and in public.

A disciple is one who is not enslaved by other than God, nor by events; he is one who is neither vanquished by appetites nor dominated by habits. His words are invocation and wisdom, his silence reflection and heeding examples. His actions precede his words and are proof of his knowledge. His inner garment is reverence and gravity, his cloak humility and modesty. He follows truth and prefers it, and rejects falsehood and denounces it. He loves the best of people and is their ally, and he detests evil people and is their enemy. Dealing with him proves him better than what is said about him, and keeping his company proves him better than his reputation. He helps others abundantly, but his own demands are slight. He is far from frivolousness. He is honest and trustworthy. He neither lies nor betrays, and is neither a miser nor a coward. He neither insults nor curses, is not concerned with what is not his share, and is not parsimonious with what he has. What is within him is good, so are his intentions, and there is no evil in him. He is very resolute in drawing nearer to his Lord, disdainful of this world, and does not repeat his errors. Whether he acts or refrains is not due to his appetites. Loyalty and chivalry are his companions, modesty and manliness his allies. He exacts everyone's rights from himself, but never seeks to exact his rights from anyone. When he is given, he thanks, when withheld, he is patient. When he commits an injustice, he repents and asks for forgiveness. When an injustice is committed against him, he forgives and pardons.

He likes to remain unknown and hidden, and dislikes prominence and fame. He does not talk of what does not concern him, and his heart is saddened by his shortcomings. He accepts no compromise in religious matter and does not please people by displeasing the Lord of the Worlds.

He finds solace in isolation and loneliness, but estrangement in

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mixing with people. Whenever you meet him, you find him engaged in acts of goodness or acquiring knowledge. He is a person from whom people expect goodness and do not fear evil. He does not repay harm with harm, and does not shun those who shun him. He is like a palm tree, throwing tender dates at you when you throw stones at it; like soil on which filth is thrown, but out of which grow beautiful things.

The light of his truthfulness shows outwardly, and what is shown on his face indicates what is hidden inwardly. He strives and aspires to please his Lord, and is eager and careful to follow His Messenger, His Chosen, His Beloved, whom the disciple takes for example in all his affairs, and follows in his character, behavior, and speech, in compliance with the command of his Great Lord in His Noble Book:

Take what the Messenger has brought to you and refrain from what he has forbidden you. (QURAN, 59:7)

You have in the Messenger of God a good example for whoever has hope in God and the Last Day and remembers God in abundance. (QURAN, 33:21)

The one who obeys the Messenger obeys God. (QURAN, 4:80)

Those who give allegiance to you are giving allegiance to God. (QURAN, 48:10)

Say [O Muhammad], "If you love God, follow me and God will love you and forgive your sins; God is Forgiving, Compassionate. (QURAN, 3:31)

Let those who contravene his commands beware lest they become afflicted or stricken by a painful torment. (QURAN, 24:63)

So you see, [the disciple] is extremely careful in following his Prophet ﷺ, obeying the command of his Lord, aspiring to the generous promise, and fleeing the threat of suffering mentioned in those verses we have just quoted and those we left out but which carry the same meaning: good tidings of utmost success to the fol-

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lowers of the Messenger and warnings of utmost shame and disgrace to those who disobey him!

O God! We ask You—by Your being God and there being no God but You, the Affectionate, the Bountiful, the Designer of the heavens and the earth, the Lord of Majesty and Generosity—to confer on us perfection in following Your servant and Messenger, our master Muḥammad, may God's blessings and peace be upon him, in his character, behavior, and words, outwardly and inwardly. Make us live and die according to this by Your mercy, O Most Merciful! God, our Lord, to You belongs abundant fragrant praise, as full of blessings as befits the majesty of Your Countenance and the magnitude of Your sovereignty. *"Transcendent are You, we have no knowledge save that which You taught us. You are the Knowing, the Wise"* (QURAN, 2:32). *"There is no God but You. Transcendent are You! I have been among the unjust"* (QURAN, 21:87)

This treatise is now complete. [It is guidance] for the disciple, to whom firmness, support, and right direction are granted by his Lord, the Glorious.

It was dictated—may God be praised—in seven or eight nights of Ramadan of the year 1071 of the emigration of the Prophet, may the best of God's blessings and peace be upon him. And praise belongs to God, Lord of the Worlds.

NOTES

(For Good Manners)

1. A *wird* is often translated as “litany,” namely, a litany of supplications and phrases of remembrance of God that one says each day. But a *wird* may also be any kind of supererogatory worship that is repeated regularly, such as non-obligatory ritual prayers, recitations of the Quran, and the like.
2. *Sharīʿa* is the sacred law. To practice it with excellence and effectiveness one must have received adequate knowledge and training, both of which constitute *ṭarīqa*, the method that leads to inward purification. This method permits one to combat the lower tendencies of the soul so as to reach the state where the lights of *ḥaqīqa*, or realization, begin to shine upon the heart of the seeker. Most of the writings of Imām al-Ḥaddād are concerned with the second term of the triad, that is, the method.
3. Spiritual power (*himma*) is the shaykh’s ability to influence his disciple’s heart either by transmitting to him some of the lights and knowledge he has attained or raising the disciple’s spiritual resolution, concentration, and eagerness for the path to God.
4. The shaykh of *taḥkīm* is the spiritual master in the fullest meaning of the word. He is the one who has power of decision over the disciple’s outward and inward religious affairs.
5. The shaykh of *tabarruk* is the saint one sits with to receive some of the radiation of his *baraka* and to benefit from his prayers, knowing that they are accepted by God.
6. This is one of the *ḥikam* of Ibn ‘Aṭā’illāh.
7. The secret meant here is part of the spiritual bond between the saint and his Lord. A spiritual master may have thousands of disciples, many of which will reach God through him, so that the secrets he may bequeath to his children and successors on leaving this earth are not a necessity for reaching the end of the path, rather they are extra lights and powers contributing to the flowering of sainthood.

