

THE PRINCIPLES OF ŞŪFISM

(QAWĀ'ID AL-TAŞAWWUF)



SHEIKH AĤMAD ZARRŪQ



THE ROYAL ISLAMIC STRATEGIC STUDIES CENTRE

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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Translation by

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THE PRINCIPLES OF SUFISM

by Aḥmad Zarrūq

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THE PRINCIPLES
OF ŞŪFISM

(*QAWĀ'ID AL-TAŞAWWUF*)



THE PRINCIPLES OF ŞŪFISM (*QAWĀ'ID AL-TAŞAWWUF*)

The Purpose of Şūfism

Praise be to God as befits the greatness of His glory and majesty! May the blessings and grace of God be bestowed upon our master Muḥammad and his family.

Now then, the purpose of this abridged text and its sections is to introduce the principles and foundations of Şūfism in a manner that integrates the Sacred Law with the Truth, and links the principles of religion and jurisprudence with the Path. In simplifying the meaning of what I wish to convey and in realizing my intent, I place my trust in God. He is sufficient unto us, and how excellent a guardian is He!

Furthermore, I say:

SECTION [I]

PRINCIPLE [I]

The discussion of something is a deductive procedure permitting us to express the thing's essence and its benefit through the use of acquired or innate intellectual perception. The intellectual perception is needed to refer to the thing so as to single out what it really is through refutation and acceptance, or establishment of its origin and detailed elaboration. That must be set forth in advance before going into a subject, since the introduction provides information

on it, creates an incentive to pursue it, and delineates its content. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [2]

The essence of a thing is its reality. Its reality is to what its total nature refers. The determination of that can be through a definition, which is the most comprehensive way, or through an illustration, which is the clearest, or through an explanation, which is the most complete exposition and the quickest to understand. Nearly two thousand meanings have been used to define, illustrate, and explain Şūfism. The source of all these definitions is turning to God Most-High with a sincere heart. In reality they are only different aspects of the same thing. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [3]

Differences of opinion with regard to a single reality prove the incomprehensibility of its total nature. If the varying opinions refer back to a single point of origin that embraces all of the ideas expressed about this reality, then the explanation concerning the origin would correspond to how it was understood. The sum of the statements is dependent on the differentiated aspects of the origin. Each one's perspective is in keeping with how he got at that origin, whether through knowledge, through action, through a spiritual state, through intuition, and the like. From that come the varying opinions on Şūfism. Thus, the traditionalist Abū Nu'aym (may God have mercy on him!), when describing the characteristics of most people mentioned in his *Hilyah*,¹ quotes a definition of Şūfism from each one that is consonant with his spiritual state, saying: "It is said that Şūfism is such and such."

I feel that whosoever has a measure of sincerity in turning towards God has a measure of Şūfism, and that the Şūfism of everyone is the sincerity of his turning towards God. So, understand this!

PRINCIPLE [4]

The sincerity of turning towards God is conditioned by its being pleasing to God Most-High or by that which pleases Him. That which is conditioned is invalid without its condition. “He approves not unthankfulness from His servants:”² so faith is a condition that must be fulfilled. “If ye are thankful, He will approve it in you:”³ so submission is a condition that must be fulfilled.

Thus, there is no Şūfism without jurisprudence, because divine exoteric rules can be known only through jurisprudence. Nor is there any jurisprudence without Şūfism, for action cannot be carried out without sincerity and turning towards God. Nor can jurisprudence and Şūfism be without faith, since neither of the two is valid without it. So all three are necessary because they are attached to one another in principle as souls are attached to bodies: souls have no existence without bodies just as bodies have no life without souls. So, understand this!

Along these lines is the saying of Mālik (may God have mercy on him!): “He who follows the path of Şūfism while neglecting jurisprudence is a heretic; and he who learns jurisprudence while neglecting the Path commits transgression. But he who combines both has attained realization of the Truth.” I maintain that the first is a heretic because of his belief in the doctrine of predestination, which leads to the negation of divine wisdom and general rules. The second committed transgression because his deeds lack any

turning towards God through divine wisdom and general rules, a turning that veils him from disobeying God; and because his deeds also lack sincerity, which is a condition in acting for God's sake. The third attains to the realization of the Truth in that very same act of holding on to the Truth. So, know this!

PRINCIPLE [5]

Referring something to its principle and supporting it with its relevant proof nullify the argument of the one who rejects its reality. The foundation of Şūfism is the station of spiritual virtue (*iḥsān*), which the Messenger of God (may peace be upon him!) defined as being: "That thou adore God as though thou didst see Him, and if thou dost not see Him, He nonetheless sees thee."⁴ That is because the various meanings of sincerely turning to God are based on this station and revolve around it. Indeed, the word itself points to the quest for the vigilance required by the station. So insistence on vigilance is insistence on the essence of virtue (*iḥsān*). Similarly, jurisprudence revolves around the station of submission (*islām*), and the principles of religion around the station of faith (*īmān*).

Şūfism is one of the elements of religion which Gabriel taught the Prophet (may peace be upon him!), in order that the Companions might learn it (may God be pleased with them all!).

PRINCIPLE [6]

The technical term for something points to its definition and makes one sense its reality. The term corresponds to its content and fixes its meaning without obscurity or opposition to any judicial or customary principle. Nor must it

abolish any fundamental or secondary axiom or contradict either a legal conclusion or legal proposition. Assuming the term has been inflected and properly vowelized, there can be no ground for rejecting it.

The noun *Şūfism* (*taşawwuf*) is of that category because it is an Arabic word that is understood, perfectly derived, non-misleading, unambiguous, and clear. Actually, its etymology gives us an idea of its meaning just as jurisprudence does for the general rules of Islam and exterior actions, and just as the principles of religion do for the principles of faith and the implementation of its meaning. Whatever is held to be necessary in the domains of jurisprudence and principles of faith is necessary also in *Şūfism*, for they are all equal both in principle and traditional authority.

PRINCIPLE [7]

Etymology requires that the meaning of the derived noun and its root be taken into consideration. The meaning of the derived word is to be perceived from the word itself. If the meanings are multiple, the perceptions are multiple. If a synthesis is possible, than it is to be made from all of them; if not, then everyone takes into account a single idea—so understand!—providing the word is free of contradiction in its origin.

Many explanations have been made about the derivation of the word “*Şūfism*.” The explanations closest to the truth are five:

First: those who say that the term is derived from a piece of wool (*şūfab*). The reason is that the *Şūfī vis-à-vis* God is like a piece of wool tossed on the ground with neither will nor direction.

Second: the term is derived from the lock of hair on the

nape of the neck (*ṣūfat al-qifā*) because of its softness. The Ṣūfī, like this lock of hair, has a soft and flexible nature.

Third: the term is derived from “attribute” (*al-ṣifah*). This is to say that the Ṣūfī is characterized (*ittasaḥafa*) by performing good deeds and turning away from bad qualities.

Fourth: the term is derived from purity (*al-ṣafā'*). Abū al-Faḥ al-Bustī (may God have mercy on him!) has confirmed this, going so far as to say:

“People have argued and differed about the term ‘Ṣūfī’. Some think it derived from wool (*ṣūf*). I do not grant this name save to the noble person who dealt purely with God and was purified till he was called a Ṣūfī.”

Fifth: the term is derived from the Bench (*al-ṣuffah*). For the Ṣūfī has the same characteristics as the People of the Bench,⁵ whom God has endowed with certain characteristics, saying of them: “They call upon their Lord at morning and evening desiring His countenance.”⁶ This is the origin to which every explanation of the word goes back. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [8]

In observing the rules of conduct of his predecessor, the follower is subject to the same conditions, even though the predecessor has greater pre-eminence. In the beginning the People of the Bench were so poor that they were known as the guests of God. Later on, their ranks were joined by rich men and princes, and by those who worked for a living and the poor. They were thankful for their prosperity when it existed, and were patient when it did not. Whatever state they found themselves in, they did not lose the attribute with which their Lord described them, namely, that “They call upon their Lord at morning and evening desiring his

countenance.”⁷ Likewise, they were not praised for the loss of their prosperity, but for seeking the face of the King, the Judge. The latter is not restricted either by poverty or wealth or the sufficiency thereof. Therefore, Ṣūfism is distinguished by neither poverty nor wealth as long as its possessor seeks the face of God. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [9]

The difference of relationships may be due to differing realities or it may be due to different levels in a single reality. Accordingly, it has been said that Ṣūfism, poverty, leading a spiritual life under apparently blameworthy circumstances, and drawing near to God belong to the first category; and it has been said that they belong to the second category, which is correct. The Ṣūfī is he who strives to sift his time of everything but the Truth. If he eliminates everything but the Truth from himself, then he is a man of spiritual poverty (*al-faqīr*). The person who leads a spiritual life under seemingly blameworthy conditions (*al-malāmatī*) among the two categories is he who neither manifests good nor harbors bad feelings towards anyone like the artisans and tradesmen who follow the path. The one who is drawn near to God (*al-muqarrab*) is he whose spiritual states are perfect. Through his Lord, he “is,” for the sake of his Lord. He has nothing to say about anything except the Truth, nor has he any abode with whatever is other than God. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [10]

Because of a difference of ways, it does not follow that their goals are different: the goal may be one with different ways leading to it. Thus, religious observance, asceticism, and

gnosis are ways leading to nearness with God through spiritual grace. The three are intertwined with one another. The gnostic must therefore observe religious rituals; for if he does not worship the object of his devotion, his knowledge is of no consequence. His observance of religious rituals must be accompanied by asceticism; for if he has not turned away from what is not He, then there is no spiritual substance in him.

He who observes the rituals must partake of both asceticism and gnosis, for there can be no religious observance without knowledge, nor can there be any time set apart for religious observance except through asceticism. And the same holds true for asceticism, for there can be no asceticism without knowledge, nor can there be any without religious observance; otherwise, it is worthless.

Indeed, the devotee (*‘ābid*) is the one mainly engaged in acts of devotion; the ascetic (*zāhid*) is the one mainly concerned with abandoning the world; and the gnostic (*‘ārif*) is the one mainly occupied in considering the dispositions of the Truth. All are Ṣūfis! But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [I I]

Everything has its adherents, a purpose, a place, and a reality. Ṣūfism is suitable for whomsoever has true guidance, or for a gnostic who has achieved realization, or for a sincere lover, or for a righteous seeker, or for a doctor of the Law who is bound by esoteric truths, or for a jurist who is bound by the extended meanings of words. Ṣūfism is not suitable for whomsoever is prejudiced by reason of his ignorance, or pretends to be knowledgeable, or speaks rashly in disputation, or is a stupid common man, or is a reluctant seeker of truth, or is a person determined to imitate blindly

the great men he has in general known. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [12]

The nobleness of something may be due to its essence, so that it is sought only for the sake of its essence; or it may be due to its benefit, so that it is sought as a means of reaching that benefit; or it may be due to something connected with it, so that the benefit is in seeking the related matter.

As a result of that, it has been said: “Knowledge without action is a means without purpose, and action without knowledge is an offense.”

The intelligence is the best way to know Him, and knowledge of God Most-High is the most excellent knowledge because it is the most sublime. Knowledge that is sought for its own sake is the best knowledge because its special attribute is in its essence, such as the knowledge of the reverential fear of God and of intimacy with Him, and the like.

Accordingly, he whose actions do not reflect his knowledge, then his knowledge acts against him, not for him. And sometimes this testifies to knowledge having left him, if his knowledge had been conditioned by his action (if only by way of perfecting his knowledge). So, understand this and reflect upon it!

SECTION [2]

PRINCIPLE [13]

The advantage of something is that which was intended by its existence. Its inner reality, either at the beginning or at the end, or in both together, is its advantage. For example,

Şūfism is the science of purifying and restoring the heart, making it devoted to God alone; jurisprudence is the science of purifying one's actions, preserving order, and manifesting wisdom by carrying out religious rules; the principles of religion are to investigate beliefs by providing proofs, thus embellishing faith with certainty; medicine is for the protection of the body; grammar is for improving language; and so on. So, understand.

PRINCIPLE [14]

Knowledge of the benefit and fruit of something is an inducement and encouragement to pursue and seek it. For the self will attach itself to whatever it finds useful; otherwise, it will not.

It is correct to state that the nobility of something is determined by the nobility of its content. Nothing is more noble than the contents connected with the discipline of Şūfism, for its principle is the fear of God, the fruit of knowing Him and the premise for following His commands. Its purpose is to make the heart uniquely Him, exalted by Him. For that reason al-Junayd (may God be pleased with Him!) said, "If I knew that under the face of the heavens there was a discipline more noble than the one we discuss with our companions, I would have pursued it." Thus ends his remark which is clear enough.

PRINCIPLE [15]

The suitability of something is determined by its being necessarily available to whomever qualifies for it, inasmuch as he gives it its proper worth and situates it in its proper place. Whosoever does not qualify for it might actually waste his opportunities, and this is generally so; or it might

induce him to seek it out in his own way, and this is rare. Therefore the Ṣūfīs differ on sharing their knowledge outside their own following. Some say it should be made available only to those suitable for it. This is the view of al-Thawrī and others.

Others say that it should be available to everyone, suitable or not, for knowledge is too sacrosanct to reach the unworthy. This is the opinion of al-Junayd (may God have mercy on Him!), who was asked, “How often you call out to God in the presence of common-folk!” He replied, “Rather, I call on them while I am in the presence of God.” Thus ends his remark, its meaning being that he reminds them of that which makes them turn to God.

So the argument is clear to one group but not to the other. The truth is that different opinions are due to differences in relationships and characters. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [16]

The uniqueness of worthiness is deducible from the immediate evidence. The matter might be confused, in which case a cautious attitude is best toward fleeting accidents. Both a person deserving of knowledge and an undeserving person might compete against each other, making knowledge available to one party only. Sahl was referring to this principle with his remark: “If after two hundred years, there is anyone left who believes in what we teach, let him hide it. For people’s asceticism has reached the point where it is only in their speech, while their object of worship is their stomachs.”

Then he listed a number of things that will lead to the corruption of this discipline to the degree that propagating it will be forbidden because it will have been misinterpreted

counter to its aims, and its teacher will be like one who sells a sword to a highway robber.

This is the state of many people at the present time. They have used the knowledge of subtle truths and realities as a ladder to enhance themselves, seducing the hearts of the common people, taking the wealth of the oppressed, despising the unfortunate, and committing acts that are obvious innovations and clearly forbidden. Some have gone so far as to depart from religion altogether, yet many ignorant people follow them because of their hereditary claims and the privileges they assume in this discipline. We ask God to protect us by His grace!

PRINCIPLE [17]

In every discipline there is that which is special to it and that which is general. Ṣūfism is no different from any other discipline in this respect. Indeed, the propagation of God's rules pertaining to human conduct is binding on everyone, whether they be general or go beyond that, in accordance with the listener's receptivity, not the speaker's. This is based on the *ḥadīth*: "You should speak to the people according to what they know. Do you want God and His Messenger to be disbelieved?" Once the following was said to al-Junayd (may God have mercy on him!): "Two men asked you the same question, yet you answered each one differently." He answered, "The answer should be in accordance with the questioner's level of understanding. The Prophet (peace be upon him!) said, 'We were commanded to speak to people in accordance with their intelligence.'"

PRINCIPLE [18]

Consideration of that which is important and always put-

ting it at the forefront are the marks of those who are sincere in everything. Whoever seeks the subtle esoteric truths of the discipline of Şūfism before knowing the sum of the principles of servanthood within those truths, and who deviates from the obvious rules toward the vague, is tricked by his own passion. This is particularly true if he has not perfected the rituals of worship, or has not realized the difference between innovation and the *Sunnah* in circumstances, or has not demanded of himself that he be adorned with the virtues before renunciation, or has claimed that he has them in himself. How exquisite is Sarī (may God be pleased with him!), who said, “Whoever knows God, lives; whoever inclines to the world, strays. The fool gets up in the morning and goes to sleep at night while the wise man seeks out his Beloved.”

In the *Hikam*,⁸ it is said: “Your being on the lookout for the vices hidden within you is better than your being on the lookout for the invisible realities veiled from you.” But God know best!

PRINCIPLE [19]

The consideration of inter-connecting links in obstacles necessitates separating a particular rule from its general framework. As a result of that, the rejection of Şūfism leads to the existence of vigilant care over the initiatic sciences of the esoterists, and the protection of the minds of the mass of believers from being involved in those disciplines that are of a special type leads to the desire to separate them from the others. This is so, in spite of the abundance of what is singled out for special treatment or of the opportunities for error therein, both in theory and practice. So understand, and give every rule its proper due. Actions, therefore, are

for the believers in general; spiritual states are for the initiates; moral lessons for the devotees; and esoteric truths for the gnostics. Symbolic expressions are the sustenance of those who listen; yours is what you can eat thereof. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [20]

Participation in a principle requires participation in the regime thereof. Jurisprudence and Ṣūfism are partners in pointing to God's regulations and His rights; and as regards perfection and imperfection, both are subject to the regime of the same principle, for neither is worthier than the other in its content.

It is correct to say that, in both Ṣūfism and jurisprudence, action is the condition for the perfection of knowledge. This is not the case in other disciplines, where knowledge would not be lost as a result of a lack of action. In fact, knowledge may exist without action because knowledge is before action; it is prior in its existence, as determined by evidence and wisdom.

If knowledge were conditioned by action, no one would have attained it. Also, if action were to be required in commandments and prohibitions, then it would have been necessary to remove these requirements by virtue of the decadence of the age; but this is not permissible by law nor commendable at all. In fact, God has affirmed knowledge to belong to those who fear Him, but he has not prohibited it in those who do not fear Him.

The Prophet (may God's blessings and peace be upon him!) sought refuge from knowledge without benefit. He said, "The person who will be most severely punished on the Day of Judgement will be the man of knowledge whom

God did not benefit by his knowledge.” Although the man did not benefit by his knowledge, the Prophet nonetheless called him “a man of knowledge.” Therefore, the benefits of knowledge must be sought from a man of realization and action. There is more at stake in a man not acting upon his knowledge than in his manner of expressing it. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [21]

The general rule with regard to manifestation is that it must seek the help of that which is inseparable from it. It is known that the path of Şūfism cannot be realized except by actively participating in it. Seeking its assistance without practice is deceit, for practice is the condition for perfecting the path. It has been said: “Knowledge is attained by action; otherwise it will be lost.” May God protect us from knowledge unaccompanied by action! Amen.

PRINCIPLE [22]

It is improper to put anything into action unless its principle and purpose are known. A person saying “I do not learn until I act” is like someone saying, “I will not take any medicine until I am cured of my illness”: he does not take any medicine, therefore he will not be cured.

Rather, knowledge is first, then action, then the promulgation of it, and then the mastery of it. Success comes through God!

PRINCIPLE [23]

Seeking something as it should be sought and pursuing it where it is expected to be found will most likely result in obtaining it. It is indeed true that the subtle points of the

Şūfis are divine favors and special gifts not obtained by the usual practice of asking for them. Consideration of the reasons for that is necessary, and they are three:

First: as much as possible, one should act in accordance with what one knows;

Second: one should seek refuge in God in illumination in conformity with one's spiritual aspiration;

Third: one should seek to investigate the meanings behind the principles of the *Sunnah* to deepen one's understanding, so that error may be extinguished and illumination rendered easier.

Al-Junayd (may God be pleased with him!) referring to the above, said, "We did not learn Şūfism through gossip, hypocrisy, and discussion. We learned it through hunger, vigilance, and performing proper actions"—or words to that effect.

The Prophet (peace be upon him!) said, "Whosoever acts according to what he knows, God will bequeath to him knowledge of what he did not know before." Abū Sulaymān al-Dārānī (may God be pleased with him!) said, "When the self resolves to shun sin, it roams in the World of Dominion (*‘ālam al-malakūt*). Then it returns to its master with the most exquisite wisdom without having received instruction from any teacher."

PRINCIPLE [24]

No esoteric truth has ever appeared in existence without being confronted with an opposing false doctrine, or without unorthodox ideas infiltrating it, or without its being made to seem like a falsehood. All of that is for the sake of manifesting the excellence of being occupied with it alone to the exclusion of all else. Its inner reality is made clear

through the refutation of its opponents. “But God annuls what Satan casts, then God confirms His signs.”⁹

To every heir belongs a relationship with what is inherited: accordingly, those who are most intensely tried are the Prophets, then the saints, then those who follow them, and so forth.¹⁰ Man is burdened only in proportion to the degree of his faith. Thus the followers of this path are burdened, first of all, with the dominion of mankind over them; then with the deferential treatment mankind bestows on them; and finally, with both. It is said that they are afflicted in this fashion so that they would not forget to express their gratitude to God for the praise they receive or to be patient for the censure that comes to them.

Whoever desires to follow this path must accustom himself to trials. “Assuredly God will defend those who believe.”¹¹ “And whosoever puts his trust in God, He shall suffice him.”¹² So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [25]

There is no knowledge except what is learned from the Legislator or someone appointed in his place with his authority. For the Prophet (peace be upon him!) said, “Knowledge comes only through learning, and discernment comes only through reflection. He who seeks good will be given it: he who guards against evil will be protected.”

Piety is fruitful only because of its leading to a comprehension that is in agreement with principles, that expands the mind, and that increases intelligence. Comprehension is divisible into different kinds: there is a kind that falls within the scope of precepts; a kind that cannot be reduced to expression but can be alluded to symbolically; a kind that the mind cannot grasp even though esoteric truths refer to it,

while being clear to the one who contemplates it and verified by the one who received it. Our use of the word “comprehension” is permissible to a certain degree in order to establish the principle of piety, and for no other reason. Know, then, what we are referring to! Success comes through God!

PRINCIPLE [26]

The authority of jurisprudence is universal for the community because its goal is to establish the form of religion, to champion its cause, and to manifest its teachings. On the other hand, the authority of Şūfism is specific for some members of the community because it deals with the behavior between the servant and his Lord without going beyond that. As a result, it is acceptable for a jurist to rebuke a Şūfī, but not vice versa. One must turn from Şūfism to jurisprudence; one must be content with jurisprudence without Şūfism.

Şūfism cannot renounce jurisprudence, for it is invalid without the latter. Nor can one turn from Şūfism to jurisprudence except through the agency of jurisprudence. Although Şūfism has a greater pre-eminence than jurisprudence, the latter is safer and more general for the public good. For this reason it is said, “Be a jurisprudent Şūfī and not a Şūfī jurisprudent.” The Şūfī of the jurists is more perfect and surer than the jurist of the Sufis because the former has realized the Path in spiritual state, deed, and intuition, contrary to the latter. The former is firmly rooted in his knowledge and spiritual state. This perfection did not come to him except through sound jurisprudence and sincere intuition. Neither jurisprudence nor Şūfism is valid without the other, just as medicine is of no avail if it is a theory with-

out experience, or an experience without theory. So, understand this!

PRINCIPLE [27]

Differences of opinion—negatively or affirmatively—regarding a single principle are invalid if the argument for both types is based on an unproved premise; or they are false if the argument leads to an absurd conclusion. This is contrary to the argument based on a proven premise, where everything is sound, and yet the evidence in the hand of its opponent cannot be wrested from him. Consequently, we must distinguish between contradiction and differences of opinion.

So let us charge with disbelief whoever upholds a doctrine leading to an absurdity in the intellectual content of dogmas; and let us charge with heresy whoever upholds a doctrine leading to an absurdity in the transmitted form of dogmas. This, if the doctrine is held to be binding; otherwise, whatever is dubious about it should be examined and judged in accordance with the contradictions of the religious scholars on a binding doctrine.

But we neither charge with disbelief nor with heresy whosoever sticks to a doctrine that is not absurd inasmuch as we cannot be absolutely sure of the unsoundness of its principle, given its probability. In this way, the acceptance of contradictions amongst the religious scholars of the *Sunnah*, while they refute one another in general, is made manifest. This is usual in the category of legal regulations under the heading of rejection and acceptance. So, reflect upon this so as to get the point! And success comes through God!

PRINCIPLE [28]

There is a method for everything. At the beginning, the conditions that a seeker of knowledge must fulfill are listening and acceptance; afterwards, he must have reflection and understanding, then explanation and reasoning, and finally practice and propagation of knowledge. Whenever a stage is reached before it should be, access to knowledge of its inner reality is prohibited. So, a knower without study is an object of ridicule, and an academician without formation is of no significance. A mental image not strengthened by understanding is useless without it; and knowledge stripped of authority cannot expand the mind: that which is fruitless is sterile.

Study is the seeker's life, but on condition it is accompanied by objectivity and humility, the latter being the acceptance of the truth through a virtuous nature. But when the number of seekers is too great, objectivity and humility are non-existent.

So, limit yourself to the essentials and seek no victories; search for knowledge but neglect not your duties. Success comes through God!

PRINCIPLE [29]

The rules governing the manner of seeking knowledge are a help in reaching the goal. Hence, asking the proper question is half of knowledge because the response is in keeping with the discipline implied in the questions. Ibn al-^cArīf (may God have mercy on him!) said, "Every true seeker of knowledge must have the following three characteristics: one, knowledge of objectivity and adherence to it through the proper qualities; two, the formulation of precise questions, stripping them of all aspects of ambiguity in general;

and third, realizing the distinction between contradiction and differences of opinion.”

I say this: “That which refers back to a single principle is a difference of opinion, which is God’s decree as determined in all things by independent legal authority. That which refers back to two principles, the falsehood of one becoming apparent upon investigation, is a contradiction.”

But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [30]

Cooperation on seeking a thing facilitates its quest and renders the difficulties and obstacles easier for the soul to bear. This is why people seek to cooperate with one another, so much so that it became a commandment based on righteousness and piety, not on sin and rancor; so the former two must be observed in everything, not the latter two.

Sayyidī Abū ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbād (may God have mercy on him!) said, “Let me give you a piece of advice which only a man of intelligence and experience will understand, and only a neglectful and veiled person will disregard. This is that you must not seek knowledge from a proud man, an innovator, or an uncritical conformist. As for pride, it is a characteristic that prevents the understanding of signs and moral lessons. Innovation causes one to fall in great tribulations. Blind conformism prevents one from reaching the goal and obtaining victory.”

He also said, “Do not give cause to the exoterists to rebuke the esoterists.” I say: “Rather, one should prompt the exoterists to favor the esoterists rather than oppose them, for every esoteric view that is stripped of its exoteric aspect is invalid and false. Esoteric truth is what is tied with the sacred Law.” So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [3 I]

Jurisprudence is pursued to establish legislation. Its theme has to do with determining whatever makes sinfulness come to an end.

The way of Şūfism is the search for perfection; and its basis is the realization of the most perfect both in law and wisdom. The principles of jurisprudence are conditions establishing prohibitions and commandments; they revolve around investigation. "All the people knew now their drinking-place."¹³ So, understand!

SECTION [3]

PRINCIPLE [3 2]

The fundamental nature of a discipline is deducible from its principles; yet, it might share with another discipline the same fundamental nature and differ from it as regards its methods of argumentation, as in the examples of jurisprudence, Şūfism, and theology. Their principles are the Book and the *Sunnah* and the approved legal decisions based on the Book and *Sunnah*. But, the jurist considers ascertaining the exoteric rule applicable to outward action insofar as the rule requires it; the Şūfī considers things from the perspective of the Truth in the very nature of realization; the jurist cannot consider things from this point of view until his outer and inner being are united. The theologian considers the issues of negation and affirmation and nothing else. As a result of all that, Ibn al-Jallā' (may God have mercy on him!) said, "Whoever deals with both God and creatures using the esoteric truth is a heretic; whoever deals with both God and creatures using the Law is a traditionalist; and whoever deals with God using the esoteric truth and with

creatures using the Law is a Ṣūfī.” This is remarkable and appropriate to the precious observations; examples of this will appear later.

PRINCIPLE [33]

Only through an example can a thing be made manifest, and only through proof can it be supported.

An example of the heretic is he who rejects free will (al-Jabarī), who abrogates wisdom and general rules. An example of the traditionalist is illustrated in the *ḥadīth* (considered sound) of what befell the three men in the cave whose entrance had been blocked, when God asked each one what his best deed was.¹⁴ (The soundness of the *ḥadīth* is to be found in its self-evident proofs, used by way of encouraging the love and fear of God; but God knows best!) An example of the Ṣūfī is illustrated in the *ḥadīth* telling the story of a man who borrowed one thousand dinars from another man. The borrower said, “Help me to find a witness for this transaction.” The lender replied, “God suffices as a witness.” The borrower said, “Help me find a guarantor.” The lender replied, “God suffices as a guarantor.” So the borrower accepted the conditions. When the deadline for the loan had expired, the man went out to search for a boat, but was unable to find one; so he made a hole in a piece of wood and placed the thousand dinars in it along with a note telling the story, leaving it in the care of the One with whom he was content—who is God (glory be to Him!). So it arrived at its destination; then the borrower gave the lender another thousand dinars, thus faithfully fulfilling his obligation towards the Law. (Al-Bukhārī has transmitted both *ḥādīths* in his collection.¹⁵)

A similar illustration is: “We feed you only for the sake

of God; we desire no recompense from you, no thankfulness; for we fear our Lord.”¹⁶ Thus, the one who dedicates himself to practicing the fear of God is made to seem devoid of intelligence. But God knows best!

A man once asked al-Shiblī (may God have mercy on him!), “How much *zakāh* should I pay for five camels?” He said, “One sheep is your legal obligation; but, as for us, everything belongs to God.” The man asked, “What is the religious basis of your statement?” Al-Shiblī replied, “When Abū Bakr left all his wealth behind, it was for the sake of God and His Messenger.” Then he added, “Whoever turns his back on all of his wealth, his model is Abū Bakr. Whoever casts aside some of it, thereby abandoning some of it, his model is ‘Umar. Whoever takes, gives, collects, and withholds for the sake of God, his model is ‘Uthmān. Whoever leaves the world to its partisans, his model is ‘Alī. Every kind of knowledge that does not lead to the abandonment of the world is not knowledge.” This is a magnificent comment on the subject.

PRINCIPLE [34]

The silence of a man who knows a particular field of knowledge is better than his discussing it if he does not connect its branches to its origin; if he does not investigate the origin through its branches; if he does not connect the intellectual content with the traditional form, thereby connecting the tradition to its inner sources; if he does not submit his understanding of that particular field to what the experts therein have concluded. Otherwise, he is closer to error than to correctness, quicker to stray than to be guided, unless he limits himself to the traditional form stripped of ambiguity and vagueness. Many a transmitter of jurispru-

dence has not been a jurisconsult; yet his transmission was accepted while his doctrine was not. And success comes through God (glory be to Him!).

PRINCIPLE [35]

A practical application (*far^c*) is to be considered in the light of its fundamental principle (*aşl*) and general rule (*qā'idah*). If it agrees with its principle, it is accepted; if not, it is referred back to its proponent, if he is worthy; or if it is accepted, it is interpreted in accordance with his standing; or if his rank in knowledge and religion is lofty, his word is authoritative. Moreover, he does not by nature impugn anyone, for the corruption of the immoral man falls back upon him, nor does he impugn one bit the righteousness of the moral person. Thus, the extremists among the Şūfīs are like the people of erroneous opinions among the theologians and the defamed among the jurists: their doctrine is to be refuted and their behavior is to be avoided. The true, certain way is not to be abandoned because of their relations with it or because of their appearance therein. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [36]

It is important to regulate a science by means of its principles, because they control its controversial points, explain its meanings, make known its forms, refute errors arising from its misrepresentation, guide whosoever reflects upon it, assist the one who is mindful of it, support the proof of the legal disputant, make the way clear for the seeker, distinguish the truth for its followers, and separate it from error, wherever it is. To extract those principles from the branches of a science through investigation is possible for

the one who wants to know them; however, shallowness of understanding is an obstacle in the way. This is why later generations, not the earlier ones, were concerned with the branches. But God (glory be to Him!) knows best!

PRINCIPLE [37]

If the origin of a science has been verified, if its substantive contents are known, if its branches are everywhere recognized, and if its principles are apparent, then the comprehension of it is widespread amongst its followers. With respect to this science, he who belongs to an earlier generation is not more worthy than he who belongs to a later one, even though the former has the merit of precedence; thus the science is the decisive factor. The investigation of the later scholar is more perfect because it is an increase over the knowledge of the earlier scholar: God's inspiration is hoped for by each one. What an excellent man was Ibn Mālik (may God have mercy on him!), when he said, "Since the sciences are divine favors and special gifts, it is not too far-fetched to say that what was difficult for the earlier scholars has been stored up for some of the later ones. We seek refuge in God from an envy which closes the door of justice and is a block to beautiful qualities." It is a wonderful remark.

PRINCIPLE [38]

Religious scholars are to be given credence with regard to what they transmit because it was entrusted to their safe-keeping and was the object of investigation in whatever they held to be true, and because it was the fruit of their intelligence. But infallibility has not been ascribed to them. So, discernment is necessary out of a desire for the truth

and in order to verify what was said, but not for the purpose of contradicting the speaker or transmitter. Accordingly, if the scholar of a later generation holds to a teaching not held by anyone before him, he is to be judged in accordance with his rank. Nor must he feel obliged to belittle the scholar of an earlier generation or to treat him with uncivil manners. For, the justice that has been affirmed to exist in an earlier scholar decrees that he should return to the Truth when it is expounded, were he to hear it; it would be binding on him, if it were to lead to the refutation of his teaching because of the reality, not the probability of the Truth, for probability has already been affirmed in the teaching of the earlier scholar. As a result of all that, later religious leaders contradicted the earlier ones without any belittlement in either of the two camps. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [39]

The basis of religious knowledge is study and investigation, whereas the basis of a spiritual state is submission and belief. If a gnostic speaks about religious knowledge, his statements are examined in order to ascertain their sources in the Book, the *Sunnah*, and the traditions of the pious ancestors, for religious knowledge is to be given due consideration by examining its principles. If he speaks from the point of view of a spiritual state, his intuition is to be considered sound; for no one can evaluate remarks made under such circumstances unless he is in a similar state; thus, his remarks are given their due because they result from his state of ecstasy.

Our teacher said to a novice of his, “My son, cool the water. For when you drink cold water, you praise God with all your heart. But when you drink it hot, you praise God

resentfully.” The novice asked, “Master, what about the man who finds that his jug is in the sun and says, ‘I am too embarrassed in front of God to move it just to satisfy my own needs?’” He replied, “My son, that man is in a spiritual state of ecstasy and is not to be followed.”

PRINCIPLE [40]

Whatever is intelligible (*al-ma^cqūl*) contains its proof in itself. As a result, it is not necessary to know who said a particular thing except that it gives it more credence. What is transmitted (*al-manqūl*) is entrusted to the safekeeping of the transmitter; it is thus necessary to investigate and define his methodology. That which is a combination of the intelligible and the traditional form is to be dealt with carefully using both information and explanation. Ibn Sīrīn (may God be pleased with him!) said, “This discussion has to do with religion. Be sure of the person from whom you take your religion.” This detailed explanation is with regard to one who has mastered religious knowledge and is aware of its goals. As for the layman or the novice at the beginning of his studies, he must know the methodology to use to obtain both the intelligible content and the traditional form, so that he might emulate his teachers rather than follow them blindly. But God (glory be to Him!) knows best!

PRINCIPLE [41]

Blind conformism (*taqlīd*) is the acceptance of a teaching without regard to the reputation of the teacher or to the methodology of the teaching. It is absolutely objectionable because the person of blind conformism is making a mockery of his religion. Emulation (*iqtidā*) is the acceptance of a teaching by taking into consideration the religiosity of the

teacher and his knowledge. This is the method of the jurists of the schools of jurisprudence in following the founders of their schools. Calling emulation “blind conformism” is figurative speech.

Discernment (*tabaṣṣur*) is the acceptance of a teaching by virtue of its specific proof without being self-opinionated or disregarding the teaching at its face value. This is the method of the masters of the schools of jurisprudence and of the elite among the seekers of religious knowledge.

Independent judgment (*ijtihād*) is proposing rules based on proofs without reference to other authorities; then, if no previous principle is to be considered as a precedent, the judgment is absolute; otherwise, it is limited.

A school of jurisprudence is that which grows stronger in a person’s soul until he follows it. The general meaning of the above has been mentioned in *Miftāḥ al-Sa‘ādah*.¹⁷

PRINCIPLE [42]

None but the infallible (*al-ma‘ṣūm*) is to be followed, because he is free of errors; or else we should follow the one who testifies to the excellence of the former, because he who vindicates the just is himself just. The Prophet (peace be upon him!) testified that the best of the ages was his, then that of those who followed his, then that of those who followed afterwards. Thus, their excellence was established by rank, and emulating them was to be by following their rank also. However, the Companions were dispersed throughout the lands, each one carrying a certain aspect of religious knowledge, as Mālik said (may God have mercy on him!). Perhaps one of them had knowledge of the abrogating Qur’anic verses, whereas another had knowledge of the abrogated verses; perhaps one had independent absolute judg-

ment, whereas another had limited judgment; perhaps one knew the general principles, whereas another knew the particular ones, as happened often.

The transmission of all that devolved upon those who came afterwards, who collected the scattered information and verified the narratives contained therein. But, they did not encompass the totality of all that within the framework of jurisprudence, although they did so partially.

It was left to the third generation to transmit all of that material inasmuch as they collected it, evaluated it, and studied it; consequently, its codification, evaluation, and understanding were perfected. Hence, nothing remained to anyone but to carry out what that generation had discovered and to accept what they had set up as rules and principles.

Every discipline in that particular generation had its leaders whose pre-eminence in knowledge and piety was well-known, such as Mālik, al-Shāfi‘ī, Aḥmad, and al-Nu‘mān in jurisprudence; like al-Junayd, Ma‘rūf, and Bishr in Ṣūfism; like al-Muḥāsibī in Ṣūfism too and in creedal formulations, for he was the first to teach the doctrine that affirmed the Divine Attributes, according to Ibn al-Athīr. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [43]

The rendering of a verdict in a particular case does not mean that its rationale is applicable generally; and the opposite holds true also. Purification is binding on everyone, contrary to the *ḥadīth* that runs “A minority of the community...” That was because it was construed in the light of its general attributes, quite apart from the sum total of its particular members; and thus, purification existed on it.

PRINCIPLE [44]

The teachings of the leaders of every discipline that have been codified are in themselves proof of their authenticity. This is due to the fact that the teaching is being handed down with its known point of origin, its correct meaning, and its clear form, that it circulates among its followers and that its problems are well-known among its leaders, each of whom is joined to his predecessor. So it is both correct and necessary to follow these teachings even though their individual expositors have passed away.

The teachings that have not been codified are not of the same nature: it is not correct to follow them because their expositors have passed away and because there is an element of probability in all of them.

The above might be treated more specifically or generally: for example, the schools of al-Layth and the two Sufyāns¹⁸ in general have died out, as have the rest of the schools of jurisprudence except the Mālikī school in North Africa, the Shāfi'ī in Persia and Iraq, and the Ḥanafī among the Turks.

As for the Ḥanbalī school, it is to be found alongside the others. Therefore, all that we are able to know as being of sound transmission—but not that which is merely possibly so—is binding on us. This is why Ṣahnūn delivered a legal opinion to the effect that no legal opinion was to be issued in North Africa outside the Mālikī school; Ibn al-Khaṭīb agreed with him.

According to the scholars of Egypt, the ordinary man has no school of jurisprudence because of the multiplicity of teachings regarding his case in that country; and this, to the point where they have written innumerable deductions and juridical opinions on the matter. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [45]

That a fundamental principle (*aṣl*) can be subdivided decrees that its practical application (*farʿ*) can also be subdivided. Hence it is necessary to attach oneself to a fundamental principle to which one can refer in jurisprudence, theology, and Ṣūfism. He who maintains that “the Ṣūfī has no school of jurisprudence” is wrong, except in the sense that the Ṣūfī chooses from each school what is best as a proof, a goal, a precaution, or something else, which will lead him to a spiritual state; otherwise, al-Junayd was a Thawrī, al-Shiblī a Mālikī, al-Jurayrī a Ḥanafī, and al-Muḥāsibī a Shāfiʿī. These men were the leaders and pillars of the Path.

He who holds that “the way of the Ṣūfī with respect to practical applications is based on the *ḥādīths*” is right in the sense that the Ṣūfī will not undertake any action in his way unless it conforms to the text of a *ḥādīth*, and for so long as it does not oppose prudence or piety. This should be done without pointing a finger at the doctors of the Law and without being inclined toward special dispensations, as al-Suhrawardī (may God have mercy on him!) mentioned in regard to Ṣūfī meetings. His teaching is to be understood in this context.¹⁹ But God knows best! So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [46]

The inspiration and light of a person will be according to the inspiration and light of the one he follows. Thus, he who extracts the knowledge of his state from the teachings of the doctors of the Law, has an inspiration and light from them. If he receives his knowledge from the Qurʾan and the *Sunnah*, his inspiration and light will be perfect, although he would miss the inspiration and light of emulation (*al-*

iqtidā'); and for that reason, the religious authorities have taken care to observe it. This, to the point where Ibn Madīnī (may God have mercy of him!) said, "Ibn Maḥdī followed the teachings of Mālik, Mālik the teachings of Sulaymān ibn Yasār, Sulaymān the teachings of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. Consequently, the way of Mālik is the way of ʿUmar (may God be pleased with them all!)."

Al-Junayd (may God have mercy on him!) said, "He has not heard *ḥādīths*, who has not sat in the sessions of jurists, who has not learned proper conduct from the virtuous, will corrupt anyone who follows him." God Most-High said, "Say: 'This is my way. I call to God with sure knowledge, I and whoever follows me...'"²⁰ He Most-High also said, "Follow not diverse paths lest they scatter you from His path."²¹ So, understand.

PRINCIPLE [47]

What one school of jurisprudence rejects is not to be taken from another school, even though a matter has been allowed or recommended to the follower of the latter school, unless necessity dictates otherwise by a clear text from the authorities of the former school. But, what has not been rejected by a school can be followed by someone belonging to another school, especially if it requires circumspection or results in ritual conformity, like avoiding the call of nature in the sunlight or moonlight; wiping the neck during the ritual ablution; lengthening the hair; not drying the limbs of the body with a towel; performing the special prayer of *tasbīḥ*²² or of need²³ or of repentance,²⁴ and the like; refraining from fasting the second half of Shaʿbān if one has not fasted the first half, because it would not be considered a valid fast among the Mālikīs, contrary to the

Shāfi‘īs;²⁵ praying in seclusion (*i‘tikāf*) for a part of the day,²⁶ which can be construed as being a rejection of seclusion, otherwise it is an act of devotion; and likewise making the intention to pray superogatory prayers (*nāflah*) after the dawn prayer,

Some Ṣūfīs say, “In such a manner ought to be the jurisprudential school of the ascetic (*al-mutajarrid*), for he is the guest of God, so that he not waste his hunger.” Both al-Qarāfi in his *Qawā‘id*²⁷ and Ibn al-‘Arabī in his *Sirāj*²⁸ refer to greater matters in the domain of piety; our master al-Qawrī was inclined towards this in his practice, as was Ibn ‘Abbād in his advice to the novice in his *al-Rasā’il al-Ṣughrā*.²⁹ But God (glory be to Him!) knows best.

PRINCIPLE [48]

The ambiguities that appear when expressing an idea have many aspects. If its intended meaning occurs to the mind at the very first instance without any reflection, and its ambiguity does not occur to the mind except through thoughts, then it is rare that a verbal expression be devoid of ambiguity. Following this path leads to confusion and uncertainty; it is not one of the aims of legal rules. But if an ambiguity is evident at first glance, while the intended meaning does not come to the mind except after reflection, then it is to be construed in accordance with the preceding principle. But if the understanding is drawn to both directions, then the idea will be disputed to the degree the mind is drawn one way or the other.

Heterodoxy is due to the principle of multiplicity in ambiguity, either because of the insufficiency of language in expressing an idea, which is the case for the books of the Ṣūfīs of later times, to the point where they were accused

of disbelief and of creating innovations, and the like; or because of the falsehood of a premise, which is how those who rejected the Ṣūfis construed their words.

Everyone is deceived, so it seems, except that the rejecter of Ṣūfism is more excusable, the Muslim is safer, and the one who follows a creed is in danger and should be on his guard! But God (glory be to Him!) knows best!

PRINCIPLE [49]

Verification of a religious principle is necessary for everyone subject to its practical application, who cannot avoid it. It is incumbent to study the principles of religion and to interpret religion in accordance with the rules established by the enlightened religious leaders. In this respect, the doctrine of the Ṣūfis is subject to the teachings of the pious ancestors with regard to what is affirmed and rejected.

There is a threefold division of creedal belief:

Firstly, concerning what is to be held with respect to Lordship: the authorities hold to naught but belief in God's incomparability (*tanzīh*), while rejecting comparability (*tashbīh*); this, while delegating to others the solution of ambiguous problems, after negating the impossible aspects in them. There is nothing more agreeable than the decisive proof of an authority!

Secondly, concerning what is to be held with respect to Prophethood: the authorities hold to naught but belief in affirming Prophethood and declaring it to be beyond any knowledge, action, or state that does not suit its perfection; this, while delegating to others the solution of ambiguous problems, after negating the aspect of defectiveness in the Prophet. (For the Master may say whatever He pleases to His servant, while the servant may attribute to himself any

attribute that he chooses, as long as he remains humble with his Lord. Furthermore, we must conduct ourselves properly with the servant and appreciate the worth of his relationship to God.)

Thirdly, concerning what is to be held with respect to the Hereafter and the details thereof: the authorities hold to naught but the belief in the truth of what was revealed and in the way it was revealed, without going into any discussion of its details, except as regards what is correct and clear. The final word on any problem is what al-Shāfiʿī (may God have mercy on Him!) said, “We believe in what was revealed by God and in accordance with God’s meaning, and we believe in what was ascribed to the Messenger of God and in accordance with the Messenger’s meaning.” Mālik (may God have mercy on him!) said, “The act of God’s sitting on the throne is known, but how it is done is not comprehensible. Believing in it is incumbent on everyone, but inquiring about it is an innovation.” It is a response to any difficulty of this sort regarding the nature of Lordship. As al-Suhrawardī said, “It is the method of all the Ṣūfīs when discussing every traditional attribute of God.” But God (glory be to Him!) knows best!

PRINCIPLE [5 I]

Discourse on the probable, taking into account the permissible aspects that are required on it, does not infringe on the principle of delegating authority (*tafwīd*) by invalidating it, so long as it is not believed that invalidation is the same thing as the probable. As for invalidating it through the ambiguity of probability, this also is inoperative, inasmuch as the principle of delegating authority is the foundation after negating the impossible. So, there is no invalidating it, even

though it might be inconsistent in itself. As a result of this, people speak of “interpretation” (*ta’wīl*) after having committed themselves to the delegation of authority; otherwise, had they not agreed upon this, interpretation would not be valid.

Yes, indeed, verification would have it that there is no delegation of authority in regard to a fundamental principle (*aṣl*); rather, it exists only with respect to the determination of the probable (*muḥtamal*) because of the necessity of rejecting the impossible. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [52]

The decisions of the Lord’s attributes are immutable and their effects are non-transferable. As a result of this, al-Ḥātimī (may God have mercy on him!) said, “It is believed, concerning the People of the House, that God has forgiven all of their erroneous ways, not because of any deed they performed, nor because of any good they have stored up in the Hereafter, but because of God’s Providence towards them. For God Most-High says, “People of the House, God only desires to put away from you abomination ...”³⁰ Thus, he attached the governing principle to the Divine Will whose decisions are immutable. Consequently, it is not permissible for a Muslim to degrade or slur the honor of anyone about whom God testifies that He has cleansed him and removed impurity from him.

As for disobedience in one of the People of the House, it does not break the bonds of relationship to the House, so long as the principle of that relationship, which is faith, has not left him. However, we can ourselves by the authority of the Law remind him of his duties. In that case, we are like a servant who disciplines his master’s son with the

permission of the master, carrying out the wishes of the master without ignoring the pre-eminence of the boy. God Most-High said, “Say: ‘I do not ask of you a reward for this, except love for the kinsfolk.’”³¹ Ibn ‘Abbās explained this as meaning “except that you shall love those who are close to Me.”

Whatever injustice befalls us from the hands of the People of the House should be considered as a divine decree without a reason. For the Prophet (peace be upon him!) said, “Fāṭimah is a part of me. Whatever distresses her distresses me.”³² That which devolves upon the whole in the way of respect devolves upon the part. God Most-High said, “Their father was a righteous man.”³³ He therefore praised the righteousness of the father; what, then is to be your thinking about his station as a Prophet? If this is so for the sons of the righteous, then what do you think about the sons of the saints? If it is thus for the sons of saints, what do you think about the sons of Prophets? And, if it is thus for the sons of Prophets, then what do you think about the sons of Messengers? In fact, tell me what words would be appropriate to describe the children of the most pre-eminent among the Messengers. It is evident that the excellence they have cannot be evaluated by anyone except the One who endowed them with it. So, understand!

When I mentioned to our shaykh, al-Qawrī (may God have mercy on him!), the above opening lines, he said, “This is with respect to us, but with regard to them, a sin committed by a person close to the Prophet is not the same as that committed by one who is not.” Then he recited, “Wives of the Prophet, whosoever among you commits a flagrant indecency.”³⁴ The phenomenon of the harsh conditions imposed on the People of the House is due to the

rapidity with which calamities leading to the charge of disbelief can occur in this world, as was mentioned by Ibn Abī Jamrah when he spoke from a rooftop about the people of Badr (in the *ḥadīth* about falsehood). Along these lines was the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him!), “O ‘Abbās, uncle of the Messenger of God, I shall be of no use to you when you stand before God. Buy your souls from God!” I maintain that this is like prohibiting the virtuous from disobeying, and the innocent from making accusations, so that the argument be more persuasive to others. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [53]

Affirming a judgement of an essence is not like affirming one of the accidental aspects of attributes. For the Prophet’s saying (peace be upon him!), “Salmān is one of us, the People of the House,”³⁵ is because of his being characterized by the totality of religious relationships, to such an extent that were faith to be in the Pleiades he would have attained it. It has been remarked that by his saying, “Those nearest of kin are more worthy of kind favors,” he means those who are “nearest to God.” For two groups of people from opposing religions cannot both be inheritors. The persons taken into consideration are the people who are related to the Prophet through the bond of religion and its offshoots exclusively. If one of them happens to be a blood relative as well, then that emphasizes his pre-eminence, but in no way does he attain to the rank of his master.

And in that manner does one answer the statement by Shaykh Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Qādir (may God have mercy on him!), “This foot of mine is on the neck of every saint”—in his day! For he united in himself such loftiness

of ancestry and nobleness of religious observance and knowledge as no one else in his time could do. Have you not pondered the story according to which he ejaculated and performed the full ablution seventy times in one night? Or the story that he gave a legal opinion to a king who had sworn “that he would worship God with a form of worship in which no one else could participate,” wherein he ordered the area of circumambulation around the *Ka‘bah* to be emptied, everyone stopping in front of the king in the process of leaving? But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [54]

Biographies were written in order that the ranks of saints be known. A work on the life of a saint whose stature is known becomes a burden and is not useful in itself. But when mentioning a saint whose rank is unknown, it is necessary to describe him in a manner that makes one aware of his rank. From this principle, it is permissible to say: “Abū Bakr narrated...”, “Umar said...”, “Uthmān did...” “Alī heard...”, “Ibn al-Musayyib used to...”, “Ibn Sīrīn reported...”, “al-Ḥasan said...”, “Mālik believed...”, “It was reported about al-Junayd...”, and so forth. But God knows best!

SECTION [4]

PRINCIPLE [55]

The Ṣūfī’s view of dealings with God is more particular than that of the jurist. For the jurist considers that which makes difficulty disappear, while the Ṣūfī considers that which brings about perfection. The Ṣūfī’s view is also more particular than that of the theologian, because the latter

examines the orthodoxy of the belief, while the former seeks that which strengthens certitude (*al-yaqīn*). His view is also more particular than that of the Qur'anic commentator and the traditionalist, because both of them examine the rule and idea, and nothing else, while the Ṣūfī goes beyond that, seeking the inner meanings after ascertaining what they have established; otherwise, he is an “esoterist” (*bāṭinī*) who has departed from the Divine Law and from the Ṣūfīs. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [56]

The subdivisions of a practical application (*farʿa*) is due to the subdivision of its principle (*aṣl*). It has already been established that the principle of Ṣūfism is the station of spiritual virtue (*iḥsān*), which is divisible into two kinds, each of which is a substitute for the other. They are: “That thou adore God as though thou didst see Him: for if thou dost not see Him, He nonetheless sees thee.”³⁶

The first part of the statement deals with the rank of the gnostic; the second deals with the rank of others below the gnostic. The Shādhilīs and those who hold their beliefs follow the first, whereas al-Ghazālī and those who hold his beliefs follow the second. The first is closer to the Truth because the planting of this type of tree brings forth fruits that can be reaped. Its foundation is the principles which every believer has access to. The personal nature of a person is conducive to acceptance of the principles, and the Divine Law is based on them. For the goal of the principles is to strengthen certitude and actualize it by practicing the deeds of the God-fearing. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [57]

The fact that there are differing paths is a comfort for the seeker and an aid for him to reach his goal and attain his desires. This is why there are different Ṣūfī orders and methods. There is the devotee who clings to the virtues under all circumstances, the worshipper who carries out good deeds, the ascetic who shuns creatures, the gnostic who clings to the divine truths, the pious who reaches a high station by being prudent, the adherent who attaches himself to the people of the Path in every way, and the novice who carries out the duties of service. All of them are within the circle of Truth through giving the Law its due and fleeing from every censurable and disgraceful deed.

PRINCIPLE [58]

Following the best of everything is ever preferred and is demanded by the religious Law: “Those who give ear to the Word and follow the best of it. Those are they whom God has guided; those—they are men of understanding.”³⁷ Indeed, God loves superior things and hates the inferior. God is beautiful and He loves beauty. This is why Ṣūfism is based on following the best of things to the point that Ibn al-ʿArīf (may God have mercy on him!) said, “The greatest secret is in the manner of seeking.” “Those who give ear to the Word and follow the best of it:”³⁸ The different types of virtuous men are what cause the different types of commendable actions. But God knows best!

Principle [59]

The multiple aspects of the good (*al-ḥasan*) decrees that there be a multiplicity of whatever is deemed good (*al-istiḥsān*) and of obtaining the good by everyone seeking it.

Thus, every group has its own path. For the layman, there is a Ṣūfism described in the books of al-Muḥāsibī³⁹ and those who share his beliefs. For the jurists, there is a Ṣūfism described by Ibn al-Ḥājj in his work *al-Madkhal*.⁴⁰ For the traditionist, there is a Ṣūfism described by Ibn al-ʿArabī in his *Sirāj*.

For the devotee, there is a Ṣūfism discussed by al-Ghazālī in his *Minhāj*.⁴¹ For the ascetic, there is a Ṣūfism brought to our attention by al-Qushayrī in his *Risālah*.⁴² For the hermit, there is a Ṣūfism described in the *Qūt*⁴³ and the *Iḥyāʾ*.⁴⁴ For the philosopher, there is a Ṣūfism introduced by al-Ḥātimī in his works.⁴⁵ For the logician, there is a Ṣūfism illustrated by Ibn Sabʿīn in his works.⁴⁶ For the cosmologist, there is a Ṣūfism written about by al-Būnī in his *Asrār*.⁴⁷ For the theologian, there is a Ṣūfism realized by al-Shādhilī.

Every group should be taken into consideration by examining its principle in its proper place. In God is success!

PRINCIPLE [60]

The lot of the layman, other than being cautious and apprehensive, is in following religion in the easiest and clearest way available to him. This is done initially through fear of God before the occurrence of sin, and is rectified through repentance afterwards, while carefully reflecting upon the sin, excluding all else. Al-Muḥāsibī was preoccupied with this, having written about it thoroughly, except that he was too strict at the beginning; but his purpose became clear later in his *Riʿāyah*⁴⁸ and *Nasāʾiḥ*.⁴⁹ Sayyidī Aḥmad ibn ʿĀshir (may God be pleased with him!), the most unique man of his time in knowledge and worship, and the most pre-eminent in piety and asceticism, said, “No one but the saint can carry that out,” or words to that effect, as trans-

mitted by Sayyidī Abū ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbbād (may God be pleased with them all by His grace!).

PRINCIPLE [61]

Knowledge of anything must be learned from its masters. One should not depend on a Ṣūfī in seeking knowledge of jurisprudence unless he is known to act upon it. Nor should a jurist be sought for knowledge of Ṣūfism unless he is known to have achieved realization in the Path. Nor should one depend on someone who discourses on both unless he is known to partake of both. So, it is necessary for the aspirant in Ṣūfism to study jurisprudence under the auspices of a jurist. He is only referred to the people of the Path in regard to the bearing that jurisprudence or another discipline might have on the improvement of his inner being. For that reason, Shaykh Abū Muḥammad al-Marjānī (may God be pleased with him!) used to order his followers to refer to jurists in questions dealing with jurisprudence, although he himself was conversant therein. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [62]

A word is to be given consideration through its meaning, and the meaning is extracted from the word. Every seeker who is concerned with “the word” more so than with its meaning will miss all meanings altogether. Every seeker who disregards the word will not grasp the meaning. He who limits himself to the superficial meaning of the word without depth or development is closer to its message and to benefit therefrom. If he adds to his understanding of the meaning a certain reflection on its reality through examining its root consonants, he will be guided to realization. For if knowledge is not a part of you and you a part of it, then

you are far from it. If you do not partake of it, you will be led to corruption and perdition, and if you partake of it without real understanding, it is risky and you are engaged in blind conformism. However, if it becomes a part of you and you a part of it, it will lead to reflection and realization. As a result, it is said, “Stop where they stopped, then comment.” But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [63]

The reason for observing devoutness (*taqwā*) is in order to gain scrupulous piety (*warā*^c). The latter is the abandonment of that which, while not evil in itself, troubles the mind, out of a fear of the evil that might be in it. It has been rightly said: “A man does not reach the rank of the God-fearing until he abandons whatever troubles his mind.”

Unfounded doubt is a diabolic suggestion, and piety not founded on the *Sunnah* constitutes innovation. An example of the latter is abstaining from taking an oath with regard to God in a correct manner without excess. Thus, he who believes in the following is mistaken: “It is good religious practice not to swear by God whether in telling the truth or lying,” for the numerous acts of the pious ancestors and the *ḥadīths* of the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) prove otherwise.

He (may peace and blessings be upon him!) said, “If you must take an oath, swear by God and be righteous and truthful.” God Most-High has forbidden His becoming an object of oaths. Hence excessive oath-taking should be avoided, although it should not be altogether avoided. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [64]

The existence of righteousness (*istiqāmah*) pertains to the perfection of devoutness. This righteousness consists in making oneself conform to the virtues of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. As God says, "Keep to forgiveness, and enjoin kindness, and turn away from the ignorant;"⁵⁰ and "The servants of the All-merciful are those who walk in the earth modestly;"⁵¹ and the verse "Repel evil with that which is fairer ...;"⁵² and so on. Righteousness can only be perfected under the guidance of a sincere shaykh or an upright brother who guides the servant according to his needs in order to better himself. For many a person has been harmed by that which has benefitted others. This is attested to by the difference in the spiritual states of the Companions as reflected by their actions, in the counsels that the Prophet (peace be upon him!) gave them, and in the Prophet's interaction with them. For example, he forbade ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿUmar from carrying out a continuous fast, but instructed Ḥamzah ibn ʿUmar al-Aslamī to carry it out. With regard to Ibn ʿUmar he said, "How superior a man he would have been had he awakened during the night to pray."⁵³ He instructed Abū Hurayrah to go to bed only after performing the *witr* prayer.⁵⁴ He told Abū Bakr to raise his voice and ʿUmar to lower his during their prayers. He searched for ʿAlī and Fāṭimah to begin their prayers during the night, yet did not awaken ʿĀ'ishah who was fast asleep in his presence at the time. He also informed Muʿādh that "Paradise is binding upon him who says 'There is no divinity but God,'" but told him to conceal this fact from everyone. He favored Hudhayfah by disclosing divine secrets to him, and he confided special invocations to some of his Companions while awakening in them the desire to

perform acts of worship in general. All of the above are examples of personal guidance from the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace!) concerning the station of righteousness. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [65]

Getting knowledge (*‘ilm*) and practice (*‘amal*) from the shaykhs is more perfect than getting it from others: “Nay; rather it is signs, clear signs in the breasts of those who have been given knowledge,”⁵⁵ and “Follow the way of those who turn to Me.”⁵⁶ So, mastership (*mashyakhah*) is necessary, all the more so in that the Companions learned from the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him!), and he for his part learned from Gabriel, following his instructions to be a servant of God and a Prophet. The Followers in their turn learned from the Companions. Then each one was surrounded by a group of men who focused on him, such as Ibn Sīrīn, Ibn al-Musayyib, and al-A‘raj who gathered round Abū Hurayrah, and Ṭāwūs, Wahb, and Mujāhid round Ibn ‘Abbās, and so on. Gaining knowledge and learning proper conduct from others are evident in the things they said and in the way they said them.

As for gaining benefit through the inspiration and spiritual state of another, Anas said, “We had barely wiped our hands clean from the earth in which we buried the Prophet than we denied our hearts.” So it is clear that seeing his noble person was beneficial to the Companions in their hearts; for, he who realizes a spiritual state has an effect on those around him. It is for this reason that seeking the company of the righteous was commanded while befriending transgressors has been forbidden.

SECTION [5]

PRINCIPLE [66]

Attaching one's self to a principle that is referred to in knowledge and action is necessary to prevent disunion and disintegration. Thus, it is necessary to seek guidance from a shaykh whose adherence to the *Sunnah* has been ascertained and whose knowledge has been established, so that he may be consulted in regard to what is unacceptable or acceptable; and this, while we receive benefits that refer indirectly to the principle he follows. For wisdom is the looked-for goal of the believer, who is like a honey bee that gathers nectar from every flower and then returns to its own beehive, otherwise its honey would be of no benefit.

The latter-day initiates (*fuqarā'*) of Andalusia disagreed among themselves as to whether reading books sufficed to do without shaykhs. So they wrote to various parts of the Islamic world and received answers, each one answering in accordance with his enlightenment. The sum total of the responses revolves around three points:

The first considers the shaykh. Books allow one to dispense with the Shaykh who gives theoretical instruction (*Shaykh al-ta'lim*), if the reader is an intelligent person who knows the sources of knowledge.

Companionship with others allows one to dispense with the shaykh who gives actual spiritual instruction (*Shaykh al-tarbiyah*), if the person is religious, intelligent and sincere. Meeting a shaykh who teaches contemplative ascension (*Shaykh al-tarqiyah*) and being blessed by him allows one to dispense with following him. Getting all of this from a single source is the best of all.

The second considers the state of the seeker. The dull-

witted man must have a shaykh to guide him. A book suffices the intelligent man in his contemplative ascension, but he is not safe from the dispersion of his ego (*nafs*)—even though he has reached the goal—because of the servant’s being afflicted by the vision of himself.

The third considers spiritual combats (*al-mujāhadāt*). Devoutness (*taqwā*) does not need a shaykh to explain or encompass its nature, whereas righteousness (*istiḳāmah*) needs a shaykh to distinguish that which is more pious. The intelligent man can do without him by the use of books and the spiritual combat that leads to illumination (*kashf*). On the other hand spiritual ascension requires a shaykh to whom one can turn regarding its “revelations,” in the same manner that the Prophet (peace be upon him!) turned to Warāqah to present to him what came suddenly upon him from God in the beginning of his mission. (This last method is close to the first one mentioned above in considering shaykhs; but the *Sunnah* is with both.)

PRINCIPLE [67]

The jurist considers a legal opinion by examining its principle, its meaning, and the rule under which it falls, and providing either refutation or affirmation, unless there is a text that actually deals with the matter. The jurist takes the principles as his focal point, even though the content (*matn*) of what he is considering is correct, so long as there is nothing to contradict it. Therefore, Ibn Ḥabīb and other religious leaders accepted in its entirety anything that had a religious principle as long as there was nothing to oppose or refute it.

They accepted it like all of the obligatory and recommended religious duties and other acts of worship that

are optional as long as they did not clash with the principles of religion and were not acts of innovation, such as the seven-day fast, the reading of *Yā-Sīn* to a dead man, or the claim that groups are superior over individuals because of their multiplicity, and other similar things that, as a whole are deemed to be desirable in their principle while at the same time are barely encouraged in themselves; and so on, as in the *Adhkār*⁵⁷ of Ibn al-^cArabī.

PRINCIPLE [68]

The traditionist considers a *ḥadīth* both as a text and as a content, if it has been correctly transmitted. He examines the *ḥadīth* as it comes to him labeled “genuine” (*ṣaḥīḥ*), “good” (*ḥasan*), “weak” (*ḍaʿīf*), and if he is careless “not inauthentic” (*la mawḍūʿ*)—even though rules for precise determination have been established! Al-Bilālī (may God have mercy on him!) said, “Transmitting a *ḥadīth* that is inauthentic, with the knowledge that it is so, is forbidden, except as an example; and following its precepts is absolutely forbidden.” Among these are the practices of the special prayer of desire (*ṣalāt al-raghāʾib*),⁵⁸ the supererogatory prayers specific to each day of the week (*ṣalāt al-usbūʿ*),⁵⁹ and whatever has been transmitted by Ubayy ibn Kaʿb in expressing the virtues of the chapters of the Qurʾan chapter by chapter. (The commentators on the Qurʾan have made an error in mentioning him.)

Al-Nawawī, Ibn ^cAbd al-Salām, and other Shāfiʿīs, in addition to al-Ṭurṭūshī of the Mālikī school, have all forbidden the practice of the prayer of desire. Ibn al-^cArabī permitted it, and it is required by that particular school of jurisprudence, according to Ibn al-Ḥājj and others. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [69]

Ascetic practice is a training for the self (*nafs*) to imprint upon it virtuous behavior while ridding it of baseness. This is the area of specialization of Ṣūfism. It is best to consult the books of al-Sulamī on the subject because he provides definitions of Ṣūfism, a study of it, and a means of attaining to it since he constantly refers to its origin and describes its details.⁶⁰ This is in contrast to the *Risālah* of al-Qushayrī which does not do the above. But rather, its contents revolve around stories and minor rules that have no final authorities.

It is impossible to follow these two texts as a spiritual method for three reasons: first, the lack of discipline in applying the texts comes from the turning away of the self; and the lack of discipline in the self is because the verification of the religious principle is lost.

Second, to use these texts as a spiritual discipline (*sulūk*), a guide is needed, who can be either a pious, perceptive brother, or a righteous realized shaykh who can perceive the blemishes in the self and pinpoint the sources of error and confusion.

Third, if the sense of well-being occurs in the soul, it is a sense of well-being that comes from the presumption of the soul; it is impossible that it be positive, because the self is looking at itself to see what it is going to acquire or repel; but the ego is a matter that cannot be cast off except through the intermediary of a shaykh. For that reason, the followers of the Path have stipulated that a shaykh reside over it. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [70]

Piety (*nusuk*) is practicing as many virtues as possible without regard to anything else. If one desires realization in that

practice, he is a devotee (*‘ābid*). If one desires to carry out what is most prudent, he is a God-fearing man with scruples (*wari‘*). If he chooses renunciation seeking inner peace, he is an ascetic (*zāhid*). If he surrenders himself to the Divine Will, he is a gnostic (*‘ārif*). If he molds himself on someone and is attached to him, he is a novice (*murīd*). Both the *Qūt* and the *Iḥyā’* have dealt with this topic.

Regarding the first work, it is to be considered as a work transmitting the virtues both in general and in detail by whatever means possible, so long as the virtues (*faḍā’il*) do not oppose a tradition of the Prophet, contradict a fundamental rule, establish an innovation, set aside a principle, or disregard a legal judgment.

The two writers mentioned many subjects and *ḥadīths* whose basis are false, such as the prayer of desire and the supererogatory prayers specific to each day of the week, and prayers and invocations that have no authentic source whatsoever, such as the invocations made during the ablutions and the like.⁶¹

With regard to all the types mentioned above, they have been made to desire Heaven and have had the fear of God instilled in them by the likes of such books, and have shown self-evident signs resulting therefrom. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [71]

The philosopher examines existence from the point of view of its inner realities, seeking the nature of its inner realities wheresoever this may lead him; so he rests his case on investigation. This is prejudicial to discipleship except in regard to a person of sound disposition, righteous states, and correct thinking. For the majority of believers, this way is impossible to follow.

The logician refers to the principle he follows when he seeks to investigate intelligible things. As a result, he veils the issue with excessive and exaggerated concepts.

Both the philosopher and logician should be avoided because of the accessibility of their principles in general. The discourse of any of them should not be taken into consideration except to verify that what he has to say can be found in the works of others, thereby attributing to others what he has to say, rather than attributing to him what others have to say; otherwise, one is in danger. We ask God for our wellbeing!

PRINCIPLE [72]

For the cosmologist to consider whatever is in the soul as a principle (*aṣl*) and to subsume under the rubric of practical application (*farʿ*) whatever the elite do by way of strengthening themselves, calls for deep perception, clear vision, and abundant knowledge. For some things are particular and others are general, and still others are extremely specific; so, one must have a perfect shaykh in these things. Therefore it has been said, “Stay away from al-Būnī and his likes; stick to Khayr al-Nassāj and his followers.” This is only by way of pointing out the danger in these things. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [73]

The traditionalist (*uṣūlī*) is concerned with embellishing faith with certainty and realizing certainty to such a degree that he is ready for the direct vision of the Truth and even disavows his own realization. Reality has such power over him that he is bold and aggressive in regard to whatever he carries out in the way of esoteric teachings without any

hesitation at all. Because of that, his mind expands from the beginning of the Path to the end; and he reaches the goal in the shortest period of time. For whosoever goes towards God because of his innate disposition will reach Him to the degree he detaches himself from his disposition.

Ibn ‘Aṭā’Allāh has said in his *Tāj*:⁶² “Do not use any invocations except those which the powers of your soul will help you to love.” Shaykh Abū al-Ḥasan (may God have mercy on him!) said, “The shaykh is the one who leads you to repose, not the one who leads you to weariness.” When Shaykh Abū al-Ḥasan asked Shaykh Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Salām ibn Mashīsh (may God be pleased with him!) about the Prophet’s saying, “Facilitate matters; do not make them difficult,”⁶³ he said that it means: “Guide them to God, not to something else. For he who guides you to the world deceives you; he who guides you to do work tires you; and he who guides you to God advises you well.” The details of this path are described in the books of Ibn ‘Aṭā’Allāh and those who follow his teachings.⁶⁴

PRINCIPLE [74]

The multiplicity of subdivisions in a fundamental principle (*aṣl*) decrees that there be a multiplicity of subdivisions in the practical application (*far*^c). The initiates of each path do not refer to a single principle of their path but to a number of principles, except the Shādhilīs. For their path is founded on one principle, namely, the abandonment of self-determination face-to-face with God as regards whatever He determines in the way of decrees and commandments. The practical applications (*furū*^c) of their way are based on following the *Sunnah*, contemplating God’s grace, and submitting to the divine rules while understanding the

wisdom behind them. These are the fine points of the various paths and their followers have revolved around them, but they have not been able to express them as clearly as the Shādhilīs. In the *Tanwīr*,⁶⁵ Ibn ‘Aṭā’Allāh (may God be pleased with him!) explains more clearly and briefly what is to be found in the lengthy works or summaries of the Ṣūfīs: “The path that is to be followed is the path of Unity (*maslak tawḥīdī*) which no one can either reject or defame, which leaves no praiseworthy quality behind without securing it for the seeker, nor any blameworthy quality without ridding him of it through purification.” It is indeed as he has said (may God be pleased with him and have mercy on him!).

PRINCIPLE [75]

Subdividing a general discourse into principles and applications is of benefit to whosoever has a fundamental principle to which he can refer, although it is confusing to someone else. Reflecting on such general works as the *Qūt* and the *Iḥyā’*, and the like, is useful for anyone who has a path which he follows with knowledge or action or a spiritual state, for he can see where he stands. This is all the more the case given that these works are especially concerned with consoling the soul, with its obscure problems, and whatever its state is, while closely examining the mishaps of its deals with God, or referring to the aspects of close relations with God, or verifying whatever occurs in the Path, and explaining what is beneficial and what is the most beneficial.

Although these works in themselves are not a path for the aspirant or the man of knowledge, they are useful from the point of view of realization and verification. The first is

manifested in the *Qūt* more than in the *Iḥyā'*, while the second is more manifest in the *Iḥyā'*. It is for this reason that Shaykh Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī (may God be pleased with him!) said, “The work *Qūt al-Qūlūb* bequeaths light unto you, while the work *Iḥyā'* ‘*Ulūm al-Dīn* bequeaths knowledge unto you.”

Any work that follows the aforementioned books is to be viewed in the same light. But God knows best!

SECTION [6]

PRINCIPLE [76]

Knowledge is useful either as an incentive to seek more and as an encouragement thereto, or else it teaches us the right mode of action and its underlying reason, or it acquaints us with a matter that is beyond all of the foregoing, something that is informative, to which it will lead us. Among the sciences of the Ṣūfīs, the first category is to be found in the knowledge of exhortation (*waʿz*) and of admonition (*tadhkīr*). An example of the second is the knowledge of the practical aspects of religion and of servanthood. An example of the third is the knowledge of revelation.

The first revolves around the word of God Most-High: “Call thou to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and fair exhortation, and reason with them in the better way.”⁶⁶ One group follows the former instructions while another follows the latter, each in accordance with its receptivity. The second revolves around the word of God Most-High: “And whatsoever the Messenger gives you, take it. And whatsoever he forbids, abstain from it.” As for the third, it refers to the word of God Most-High: “And fear God; God teaches you,”⁶⁷ and to the tradition, “Whosoever acts

according to what he knows, God will bequeath to him the knowledge of what he did not know before.” Although the “knowledge” is only through learning, it has to do with a fundamental principle, not a practical application. Hence, Abū Sulaymān said, “When the self resolves to shun sins, it roams in the World of the Dominion (*‘ālam al-malakūt*). Then it returns to its master with the most exquisite gems of wisdom without having received instruction from any teacher.”

PRINCIPLE [77]

The source of every principle in the sciences of this world and the Hereafter is to be taken from the Qur’an and the *Sunnah*, which contain praise for what is praiseworthy, censure for what is objectionable, and a description of what is commanded. In understanding these things, people follow three approaches. The first belongs to those who are attached to the external letter without considering the meaning at all. These are the people of unbelief among the exoterists, and they are of no consequence.

The second belongs to those who examine the meaning itself, reconciling the different inner truths; so they interpret what is to be interpreted and straighten out what is to be straightened out. These are the people of investigation among the rhetoricians and the jurists.

The third belongs to those who have fixed the meanings and ascertained their contents, and have understood the symbolic significance from both the external word and its internal meaning. They are the realized Ṣūfīs and the meticulous religious authorities, not the sect of Bāṭinīs⁶⁸ who construe everything symbolically: for they have fixed neither the inner meaning nor the outer expression, and

have deviated from the community and rejected the entire religion. We ask God for well-being through His grace!

PRINCIPLE [78]

The “necessary” (*darūrī*) is that whose non-existence would not allow us to be safe from perdition. The “needful” (*ḥājī*) is that whose non-existence would lead to error without perdition. The “complementary” (*takmīlī*) is that whose existence is preferable to its nonexistence, and this takes place in every thing acquired. Thus, it is necessary to take into consideration the various ranks of things according to their sequence, first things coming first.

“Necessary knowledge” is that which we must not ignore, if we are to be safe from perdition. This is what is specified as binding on everyone. “Needful knowledge” is that whose non-existence in someone is an imperfection; it is in the category of a “collective duty” on his part. “Complementary knowledge” is that whose existence constitutes an increase in a person’s excellence, such as logic, rhetoric, poetry, and the like. Obligatory acts of worship are “necessary,” those prescribed by the *Sunnah* are “needful,” and those recommended are “complementary.” Each has subdivisions in itself. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [79]

No one is permitted to undertake an act until he knows God’s precepts therein. In agreement with the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him!), al-Shāfi‘ī said, “Knowledge is the leader of action, and action is its follower.” Accordingly, everyone must acquire knowledge of his state, according to his capacity, in an overall manner, so that he will thereby rid himself of his ignorance concerning the fun-

damental precept in the deed, for he is not under obligation to investigate all aspects of an act; rather, each event and situation has its own conditions. Whatever goes beyond that pertains to the domain of collective duty, which is borne by whosoever performs it. The earth is never empty of someone who stands on God's side with authoritative proof. Thus, there is no excuse for everyone else. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [80]

Seeking something at its source makes it more likely to obtain it. Therefore it has been said, "The layman asks so that he can act"; hence it is his right to mention a particular event. The student "asks in order to know"; therefore, he has the right to inquire about a problem by posing another problem. The religious scholar should provide an answer in such a clear manner that he cuts off any further questions. I say that the student's questioning should be in a way similar to what is in the *ḥadīth* about 'Ā'ishah, that she never heard anything about which she knew nothing without inquiring about it until she knew it. The Prophet (peace be upon him!) said, "Whoever is held accountable for his misdeeds will be punished."¹⁶⁹ So 'Ā'ishah (may God be pleased with her!) said, "Does not God say 'He shall truly have an easy reckoning?'"⁷⁰ An answer stemming from knowledge is such as the Prophet's (peace be upon him!) reply to 'Ā'ishah's question, "This means only the presentation of the accounts, but whoever will be argued with about his account will certainly perish."

Al-Nawawī determined that the reason the Prophet denounced the man who said, "And whoever disobeys the two of them," was because of the superficial manner in

which he was trying to make a point, not because of the use of the personal pronoun (*humā*), for that has often occurred. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [81]

No misleading or vague ideas can be accepted when dealing with the articles of faith; nor should one submit to anyone having such ideas without discussing them; rather, they should be refuted in themselves and whenever they are mentioned. If they are lacking in something, they should be interpreted in a way that brings them back to the principle of the Truth, as long as they agree with a canonical principle in all ways, and as long as the authority of their proponent has been established, as we see in the question of “God’s sitting on the throne” in the *Risālah*⁷¹ of Ibn Abī Zayd (may God be pleased with him!) and others. The Ṣūfī is not more worthy to be followed in this matter of vagueness and similar ones than the jurist, nor is the jurist more worthy than the Ṣūfī. In fact, the Ṣūfī has more of an excuse to be vague because of a lack of terms to express what he means, because of a limitation in his ability to discuss certain matters, and because of his desire to substantiate his ideas by the use of symbols.

If interpretation be permitted to one of these two groups, then it should be permitted to the other. If it be said, “Only the works of an infallible person are to be interpreted,” then the interpretation that religious leaders make of the words of their peers contradicts what has just been said, or else it refutes them, or, finally, everyone has his own independent judgment. For the differences of opinion on the question are due to the existence of everything just mentioned and are of such a number as to imply that the Truth cannot be

conceived in any way whatsoever. But God (glory be to Him!) knows best!

PRINCIPLE [82]

It is not permissible for anyone to claim to have knowledge beyond the actual knowledge which he knows. “And pursue not that thou hast no knowledge of.”⁷² He who denies a certain knowledge is like the one who does not follow it; he who is biased towards falsehood is like the one who denies something about which he knows nothing. Moses (peace be upon him!) rebuked al-Khidr (peace be upon him!), but he did not reject a single one of his rights since each one is wisdom.⁷³ For this reason our shaykh Abū al-^ᶜAbbās al-Ḥaḍramī (may God have mercy on him!) said after discussing a certain matter, “A person who denies that a man can receive knowledge in the form of a revelation is to be excused and his state accepted as an instance of weakness, shortcoming, or well-being, for he has the faith of those who fear God. A person who understands anything of this matter does so because of the power of his faith, the extent of his intelligence, and his point of view is one that is vast. It is alike whether he has light or darkness in him, for this has to do with the things deposited in human receptacles and created in accordance with any attribute whatsoever. This is something known and understood.”

PRINCIPLE [83]

An outstanding spiritual quality does not necessitate setting the legal precepts to one side; and the necessity for the canonical laws does not abolish the special status of such a characteristic. Whoever has been adjudged punishable and has had a punishment imposed upon him, then that

punishment is to be carried out, above all, by maintaining the integrity of his faith; accordingly, his sense of honor must not be impugned except justly and in accordance with what he is allowed in the way of rights; and if an outstanding religious quality exists in him, then this is not to be disregarded except insofar as disregarding it is necessary. A saint is a saint, even if he commits an error and is punished for it, as long as he is not in a persistent and continuous state of sinfulness, which would nullify the self-evidence of his sanctity. Do not curse him, for he loves God and His Messenger. “Had Fāṭimah, the daughter of Muḥammad, committed theft,” the Prophet said, “I would have cut off her hand.”⁷⁴ But God protected her from that fate: “And in the matter of God’s religion, let no tenderness for them seize you.”⁷⁵ As a result, al-Shiblī issued a juridical opinion condemning al-Ḥallāj to death, while al-Jurayrī permitted him to be flogged and imprisoned for a lengthy period of time, and said, with regard to shedding the blood of al-Ḥallāj, “There is nothing more important for Muslims than to execute him as an admonition for the sake of religion” —because of the claims of heresy, not because he confirmed taking the blood of al-Ḥallāj or because he sought to help in having al-Ḥallāj executed, for he knew of the latter’s innocence from assessing the inner reality of al-Ḥallāj. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [84]

Attaining knowledge by virtue of one’s outstanding spiritual quality does not permit silence on the part of another when the truth is distinctly known, unless the latter has unquestionable knowledge of the reality wherein the former operates. Then, if the former is refuted, neither of the two

can be approved, inasmuch as each is acting in accordance with a knowledge taught him by God, as al-Khidr said to Moses (peace be upon them!) at the beginning of their undertaking.⁷⁶ The silence of the third party was because judgment belonged to someone else, without it being certain whether the judgment called for the fixing of a punishment of something else; for what happened as a result of his action bears being interpreted in such a way that he would have been justified for the excuse he gave at the end. Had he produced a deed that was not permissible in any way whatsoever, then no interpretation would have been acceptable, except that which sees his deed as disobedience and transgression. What is not permitted under any circumstance is homosexuality, adultery with a given woman, addiction to winebibbing, and the like, but not killing, or the taking of money, and the like, which may be permitted when certain conditions are fulfilled.

Only hesitation over what is probable is uncertainty; but there is no hesitation with regard to a clearly stated rule when it has been determined in a correct manner. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [85]

Hesitation in a doubtful case is desirable as is its opposite when something good or bad is clearly evident. The methodology of evaluation is based on a preference for thinking well in a matter, when this is necessary, even though contradictions may appear, to the point where Ibn Fūrak (may God have mercy on him!) said, “It is wrong for a thousand non-believers to enter the community where there is uncertainty over their Islam, but it is not wrong to expel a single believer because of a legal error that manifested itself in

him.” Mālik was asked concerning heretical sects, “Are they non-believers?” He answered, “They fled from non-belief.” ‘Alī (peace be upon him!) indicated that one must refrain from passing judgment on the Kharijites⁷⁷ by saying, “Are we going to wrangle over superior men?” Some say, “That which personal authority (*ijtihād*) decrees must be asserted positively; then, the inner content is to be handed over to God.” Therefore, there have been differences of opinion about a number of Ṣūfīs, such as Ibn al-Fāriḍ, Ibn Aḥlā, al-‘Afīf al-Tilimsānī, Ibn Dhī Sakan, Abū Ishāq al-Tujībī, al-Shushtarī, Ibn Sab‘īn, al-Ḥātimī, and others. Our shaykh Abu ‘Abd Allāh al-Qawrī was asked, while I was listening, “What is your opinion of Ibn ‘Arabī al-Ḥātimī?” He answered, “He is more knowledgeable about every subject than the specialists in those fields.” They replied, “We did not ask you about this!” He said, “Opinions about him vary from denouncing him as a non-believer to praising him as a pole.” “Which do you favor?” he was asked. “I accept both sides,” he answered. I say: He said this because, in declaring Ibn ‘Arabī to be a disbeliever, there is a danger, because his listener might follow the vagueness and obscurities of Ibn ‘Arabī. But God knows best!

SECTION [7]

PRINCIPLE [86]

Perfection of worship is achieved by observing the acts of worship and being mindful of them. This is achieved by following their inner and outer rules without negligence or exaggeration. Negligence leads to perdition while exaggeration leads to innovation, especially if excessive deeds are thought to lead to proximity to God. Thus it has been said,

“Doubt is an act of innovation” based on ignorance of the *Sunnah* and confusion in the mind. Doubt is dispelled by repeating “Praise be to the King, the Creator” and “If He will, He can put you away and bring a new creation; that is surely no great matter for God”⁷⁸ with each *wird*. Other bases for doubt are clinging to distractions and following the concessions (*rukhaṣ*) of some scholars that are contrary to the *Sunnah*. Do not follow these dispensations; they are error. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [87]

The bases of all good are the morsel of food that is consumed and the company that is sought. So eat whatever you want, since you will act accordingly; and seek the company of whomever you wish, since your religion will be in accordance with his. It has been said that whatever is eaten out of heedlessness is used in being unheedful. Therefore, it is preferable to recite the *basmalah*⁷⁹ over every morsel of food and the *ḥamdalah*⁸⁰ after swallowing it. Ibn al-Ḥājj said, “This is good, but say the *basmalah* first and give thanks to Him last without anything additional, for the *Sunnah* is best.” I mentioned this to an eminent man, who accepted it with hesitation. So I discussed it with him again saying that it was contrary to the *ḥadīth* regarding eating. He said, “That is so if someone joins him.” I accepted his explanation. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [88]

Undertaking to do what one is incapable of doing is theoretically possible, but is not found in the Law: “God charges no soul save with what God has given him.”⁸¹ Every believer is commanded to seek what is lawful. Its existence is

possible to find for everyone in every age and in every country, because its principles are generally in existence and because the earth is not devoid of saints and righteous men whose sustenance is the lawful. God will not take us to task through His knowledge, but by what we know insofar as we know it. He who knows not that he possesses something unlawful or has no suspicions about it, even though he has been given clear signs thereof, has no grounds for thinking it to be unlawful or for having any suspicions therein. Rather, it has been said, “Wealth is like water. God created the former lawful just as He created the latter pure. The latter is not rendered impure except by that which changes its nature, as the former is not rendered unlawful except by that which changes its nature.” Details of this are given in the chapters of what is lawful and unlawful in the *Iḥyā’* and other works. Everyone agrees on its existence as al-Suhrawardī said. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [89]

Preservation of order is a duty and consideration of the public good is necessary. For this reason, there was a consensus among the Muslims forbidding disagreement with the religious leader by word or deed. They extended this consensus to praying behind every pious and sinful man among the rulers and others, as long as he does not commit a sin in the very prayer itself. Participation in a holy war (*jihād*) led by a Muslim prince, whether impious or not, was considered under the same light. Ibn Mujāhid claims that the Muslims reached a consensus on this matter, although Ibn Ḥazm denies it. Both have written arguments about the matter.

What is known is the prohibition of turning against the

leader. For the Prophet (may God's blessings and peace be upon him!) said, "No people have ever cursed their prince without his good being withheld from them." He (may God's blessings and peace be upon him!) also said, "The believer does not humiliate himself." Ibn 'Abbās said, "He opposes the sultan but gets no justice from him." In al-Tirmidhī is found: "If a group makes one step to humiliate the sultan, God Most-High will surely humiliate them." There are further sayings too numerous to mention that are embodied in the Prophet's saying (peace be upon him!): "Part of one's being a good Muslim is abandoning that which does not concern him."⁸² The Ṣūfīs are the people who flee the most from that which does not concern them. But God (glory be to Him!) knows best!

PRINCIPLE [90]

Religious observance is carrying out actions included within or excluded from the religious rituals, and that are required by the Law whether as commandments or concessions. For God's decree is one with regard to both. Thus, performing the ablution with water (*wuḍū'*) is not more pre-eminent than performing the ablution with sand (*tayammum*) in its proper place; nor is fasting more pre-eminent than eating in its right place; nor is the complete version of the prayer more pre-eminent than its shorter version in its proper place. Based on this is the saying of the Prophet (may peace and blessings be upon him!): "It pleases God that his concessions be followed, just as it displeases Him that His commandments be ignored."⁸³ This does not refer to a concession about which there might be a difference of opinion. Scrupulous piety is required concerning any matter wherein there is doubt about its precept. This is opposite to an

established matter whose disregard would be abstinence. It is because of the latter point that the followers of the Path depreciate “concessions” and “interpretations.” But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [91]

The goal (*al-maqṣūd*) is to be in conformity with the Truth, even though it might be in conformity with egocentric desire; so that ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (may God be pleased with him!) said, “If the Truth is in accordance with desire, that is honey mixed with butter.”

Some people have so immersed themselves in opposing their egos that they have opposed the Truth without being aware of it. An example: excusing themselves from performing obligatory and necessary duties that cannot be disregarded; or abandoning most of the practices of the *Sunnah* without rejecting it in principle, even to the extent of abandoning practices they were accustomed to follow. This, while agitating the self, pushes it towards falsehood and leads the seeker away from the goal. We ask God for our well-being.

PRINCIPLE [92]

Reward is based on how much instruction is followed, not on the difficulties therein. This is due to the pre-eminence of faith, knowledge, remembrance, and recitation over physical action, which is much more difficult than the above. His saying (may peace and blessings be upon him!): “Your reward is according to your difficulties,” is with special reference to a specific case and is not to be generalized, inasmuch as, when he was given a choice in a matter, he invariably chose the easier one, as he said, “He who knows

God best and fears Him most is I,” and “The best of your religion is what is easiest,” and so forth. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [93]

Excess in worship is forbidden, just as laxness therein is forbidden. Moderation is drawing from both sides, as has been said: “The best of ways is moderation,” “Those who, when they expend, are neither prodigal nor parsimonious...”⁸⁴ and “Be thou not loud in thy prayer, nor hushed therein ...”⁸⁵ He (peace be upon him!) said, “As for me, I rise and sleep, fast and break the fast.”⁸⁶ He used to stay up for one half, one third, or two thirds of the night, which is the middle ground between the one who stays up all night and the one who stays up for a short amount of time. ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar was instructed to be moderate by fasting for one half of the time, staying up for one half of the night, completing the recitation of the Qur’an in seven days, in addition to other duties. Hence, moderation is required for every acquired habit because it is gentler on the soul and more effective for worship.

PRINCIPLE [94]

Regulating as law that which has not been mentioned in the Law is an act of innovation in religion, particularly if it opposes a legal principle. An example is fasting for a day because of a missed prayer the night before, which the Legislator has not designated as a recompense; rather he has stated that the prayer must be made up before the morning prayer or before the end of the day. Other examples are the recitation of the *Fātiḥah*⁸⁷ before the prayer, specifying a time for the *wird*, and the like, which have no

textual basis from the Legislator. This does not include what has been mentioned by a text or referred to, such as the assigned prayers before and after the obligatory prayers (*al-rawātib*),⁸⁸ the invocations after the prayers,⁸⁹ the recitation of the Qur'an, voluntary fasting,⁹⁰ and the like. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [95]

The extraction of something from its place always requires the introduction of its very opposite. If it is multiple, then there are many opposites. If there is one, then there is one, according to the Law of God, not according to one's point of view, even though reason dictates otherwise. This is why the initiate at the beginning is given their powers what is in his self. Halfway into the path, a particular prayer is singled out for the initiate in order to concentrate his aspiration and make the ultimate Reality stand out all the more. This is after he has born in mind the canonical litany, whether it be an invocation (*dhikr*) or something else, in accordance with what is generally found. But God knows best!

SECTION [8]

PRINCIPLE [96]

Whatever is incorporated in one's nature is an aid to obtaining what it desires, depending on one's capacity. For this reason it has been said: "If a child learns the lawful things to which his soul is inclined, he will become a leader in them; if a novice embraces the invocations and prayers that his true self prefers, this will aid him to reach his goal by his continuing to do so." As long as his determination does not diminish, God will aid the servant according to his

intention. As long as he enters into a state of spiritual expansion, he will be more inclined to continue to be so. Shaykh Ibn ‘Aṭā’Allāh refers to this phrase in his *Tāj al-‘Arūs* and Shaykh Ibn Abī Jamrah has discussed it in reference to Hudhayfah’s saying: “People used to ask the Messenger of God (may God’s blessings and peace be upon him!) about goodness ...”⁹¹ But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [97]

Seeking a thing by repeatedly using one method makes it more likely to be obtained, and is more conducive to preserving the cause for seeking it in itself, which comes through stripping one’s inner reality of all else. Thus, it is necessary to adhere to a particular litany (*wird*). Do not move onwards from it until you obtain its results. Otherwise, he who moves on before obtaining benefits is like a digger of wells who does not dig repeatedly in one place, or he is like a person who drips water drop by drop everywhere, wanting to leave an imprint of his deed on the place through the drop. It has been said: “The continuing pursuit of something is an increase in the intensity of the pursuit as life goes by; it is not merely constant repetition.” He who passes two days at the same level has accomplished nothing. He who spends his today in a manner opposite to his yesterday is destitute, for he has nothing but the work of his yesterday. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [98]

The permanence of something is through the permanence of that which is derived from it. A person’s reward is based on the intention; a person’s rank, on his proximity to something. God is in a permanent state of Lordship. The precepts

of servanthood are permanently incumbent upon His creation and are never lifted. The highest form of worshipping Him is that which proceeds from His servant. For he was made for worship accompanied by hope in Him, fear of Him, reverence, modesty, and the like. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [99]

The yield from anything depends on its benefit. The benefit is to be considered for its own self and its significance, not quantitatively. For many an excess has led to greater excesses. As a result, what is usually praiseworthy becomes reprehensible, such as the pursuit of virtues.

Working for general benefits leads to the greatest harm, depending on temporal circumstances and the mentality involved. If it were not for the general benefits, the adept would not look for the trifles of the idle, such as treasure-hunting, alchemy, and the like, which no one seeks but he who is deficient in religion, intelligence, nobleness, and good deeds. As for his deficiency in religion, it is manifested in his search, in his actions, and in his behavior, which is not devoid of prohibited conduct, the least of which is the absence of clarity and deception.

As for his mental deficiency, it is manifested in his being distracted by an illusion, which he cannot grasp, from something certain, and by a presumption that will not leave him. As for his deficiency in nobleness, it is because of his involvement in deception, treachery, and sorcery, if it gains the upper hand over him.

One must not hide the fact that, in the search for general benefits, a person is exposed to danger and to the charge of practicing magic. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [100]

Gaining one's livelihood is, in principle, attributable to a transcendent reason: the establishment of the world is for the sake of keeping its existence in order. For this reason, anything that opposes the maintenance of order or anything that is found to be unnatural in the creation, such as one's means of livelihood and the like, is censured. The divine solicitude affirmed this by requiring the existence of the opposite to a certain goal, such as poverty in alchemy (*kīmiyā'*), submission in the pursuit of numerology (*sīmiyā'*), and the death of evil in the science of astrology. All of the above are a deviation from the underlying reason for gaining a livelihood, a resistance to the judgment of the Truth, and a resistance to the Truth itself because, instead of seeking the most perfect of things, illusion is sought. The last-named, astrology, adds more illusion by seeking to find out what is in God's Kingdom (glory be to Him!), as the author of *al-Tanwīr*⁹² has observed. Each of these fields has a share in the others, even though their perspectives differ. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [101]

Establishing the effect of Wisdom is necessary, as is resignation in the face of Power. The servant must stay where he has been established without looking at someone else's case, even though someone else may be more perfect in the servant's opinion, so long as his condition is not devoid of benefits or he has not lost the capacity to carry out legal obligations. Moving out of one's state in such a case is necessary. If the observance of all precepts becomes impossible, then isolation (*tajrīd*) is permissible, and even necessary. For the Prophet (peace be upon him!) confirmed the People

of the Bench (*Ahl al-Ṣuffah*) in their isolation from worldly things while he ordered Ḥakīm ibn Ḥizām to seek a means of livelihood when his soul was attached to giving. Thus al-Khawāṣṣ (may God be pleased with him!) said, “So long as the desire to seek a livelihood exists in one, it is best to make a living. Eating through one’s own effort is more lawful, because sitting in worship is not proper for him who cannot do without making efforts.” This is the definitive word on the subject.

PRINCIPLE [102]

The equality of performing or not performing a useful deed requires that non-performance be preferred, for that is the principle, and because there is safety therein. Hence, silence surpasses speech, when the latter is not preferable; abandoning the world surpasses embracing it; isolation surpasses companionship, especially in an age in which a man cannot feel safe with his companion; hunger surpasses satisfying one’s appetite; and so on with whatever is abandoned in the present in view of a benefit in the future. In the opinion of some people, the abandonment of passion is in that category, so long as it is not held that nearness to God is to be found therein, for it is unacceptable without a sincere intention that transforms it into repentance, the more so as God has permitted him that repentance.

Neither of the two sides, therefore, is more worthy than the other with respect to performance or non-performance except by virtue of what is preferable. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [103]

Whatever is praised or blamed for a non-essential reason might have its status reversed through a cause that requires

the opposite judgment. Sound are the *ḥadīths*: “The world is damned: what is in it is cursed except the remembrance of God and that which protects it;”⁹³ and “Do not curse the world! How excellent a mount it is for the believer!”

Leadership has been praised for the role it plays in maintaining order, to the extent that God commends the person who seeks religious leadership. He said, “And make us a model to the God-fearing.”⁹⁴ But it has been blamed because it leads to arrogance and departure from the Truth. Silence has been praised for maintaining peace while blamed for not carrying out duties that are necessary. Hunger has been praised for purifying one’s inner being while blamed for disturbing the mind. Hence, moderation is necessary, which is hunger accompanied by an appetite for only some bread, while exaggeration is desiring all bread. What is false is having additional desires that are out of the ordinary. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [104]

What is prohibited may become permissible in anticipation of a matter greater than itself, such as lying during the Holy War (*jihād*) to confuse the enemy, or lying to promote peace among people for the sake of the good, or to protect the wealth and honor of a Muslim, even though he may admit a wrong-doing when confronted, or when confronted about money that was to be extorted from him or someone else. The above is acceptable because the evil consequences of the truth are greater than the act itself and because there is the fear that the wife and son would be estranged as a result. In general, this is allowed to avert a greater evil, but not to bring about personal gain. In like manner, speaking about someone in his absence is permissible for precaution-

ary reasons, or for seeking a legal opinion, and the like, which are amongst the things mentioned by religious leaders. It is not permissible to dishonor the rank of someone by forbidden means, using as an analogy of the drinking of wine when choking. For rank is acceptable in the eyes of the Law. What is prohibited is not rendered permissible when used to avert something licit, even if the latter is harmful. So, know this!

PRINCIPLE [105]

Accustoming the self to take and abandon something, while driving it onwards slowly, makes its reaching the goal easier. This is why it has been said, “Refraining from sinning is easier than asking for repentance. He who abandons a passion seven times, so that every time it tempts him, he abandons it, will not be burdened with it. God is too generous to punish a heart with a passion abandoned for His sake.” Al-Muḥāsibī (may God have mercy on him!) said in reference to repentance, “One repents from everything, then follows the details of abandonment, for that is easier.” This is correct. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [106]

The perspective of Generosity decrees that there be no sin which is too great to be forgiven by God Most-High. The perspective of Majesty decrees that He bring the sinner to task and not make things easy for him. Thus, the servant must keep in mind these two perspectives at all times. For even if he were to exhibit the greatest obedience, he should not feel safe from God’s designs. And if he were to commit the worst sin, he should not despair of the Spirit of God. So, according to this, he must fear God as much as possible

and repent unto Him even if he commits the same sin a million times a day. So, understand!

SECTION [9]

PRINCIPLE [107]

The special characteristics of words, deeds, and individuality are firmly fixed. The greatest of these are the characteristics of the invocations (*adhkār*). No man can undertake a greater deed that will save him from God's punishment than the remembrance of God (*dhikr Allāh*).

God has also placed these special characteristics in material things, such as liquids and solids that, in their benefits, have their own traits. He has made binding the observance of what is general upon both the public and the elect, in those things that conform to the state of an individual or that can be known through consideration of the legal aspect both in respect to justice and implementation. For Mālik (may God have mercy on him!), when referring to unknown things said, "How do you know? They might be disbelief," I say, "I have seen those who have been elevated through blasphemous utterances." But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [108]

The perspective of the Sacred Law (*Sharī'ah*) decrees that it is permissible to use invocations (*adhkār*) and supplications (*ad'iyah*) whose meanings are clear, even though the soundness of the chain of transmission is in doubt, as Ibn 'Arabī has pointed out in *al-Sirāj* and other works. There are traditions that have been related concerning the effect of supplications uttered by the servant that stem from his aspiration. So, Mālik has placed in his *Muwatta'*,⁹⁵ in "A

Chapter on His Supplications” (peace be upon him!), the saying of Abū al-Dardā’, “Eyes have fallen asleep, eyelids are calm. No one remains but You, O Living, O Self-subsisting One.” The Prophet (peace be upon him!) said, “You have called upon God by His Greatest Name,” to the man who said, “I implore You by Your Being God, the One, the Everlasting,” and so on. He said the same to him who said, “O Loving One, O Loving One, O Lord of the Glorious Throne,” in addition to other things. This indicates that anything with clear meaning is commendable in its essence and can be used, especially if it has a legal basis, such as a sound vision or an inspiration of established excellence, such as the litanies (*aḥzāb*) of al-Shādhilī,⁹⁶ al-Nawawī,⁹⁷ and the like. In the litanies (*aḥzāb*) of Ibn Sabʿīn,⁹⁸ there are many obscurities and misleading things. Everyone should avoid this as he would a place of danger, except the man of knowledge who considers the meaning and is not bound to superficial expressions.

Ritual recitations collected from the *ḥadīths* are a more perfect matter because there are no interpolations in them, they had only to be put in collections, and they are the more perfect if taken from masters. Most of the litanies (*aḥzāb*) of al-Shādhilī are of the nature mentioned above and he who is knowledgeable in *ḥadīths* will recognize them as such when he makes a thorough study of them. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [109]

Whatever is held forth by way of a teaching should be taken as it is with neither addition nor subtraction. We are told that a man, at the end of each prayer, used to recite a hundred times each, “Glory be to God,” “Praise be to God,”

and “God is Most-Great.” In a vision, he saw someone saying, “Where are those invoking at the end of the prayer?” So he stood up. He was told, “Go back! You are not one of them. This characteristic pertains only to those who limit themselves to thirty-three times each.”

Everything that has been assigned a certain number should be limited to that. This includes every expression. Yes, there has even been disagreement about the addition of “our master” in the given way of invoking blessings on him (peace and blessings be upon him!). The correct procedure is to confine oneself to the formula when ritual worship through it is intended, but to add the words when one is looking for grace in general. Ibn al-‘Arabī said that the addition of “and have mercy on Muḥammad” is close to being an act of innovation. (He mentioned this in *al-‘Arīḍah*.⁹⁹) But God knows best

PRINCIPLE [110]

The duty of the servant is that he not exaggerate in carrying out a command, that he not resolve to perform a prohibited matter, and that he not neglect to undertake something recommended. If the situation is such that he falls into the first or the second or the third category, he must turn to his Lord with repentance, seeking refuge and forgiveness. If the situation is due to a fault in himself, he should blame and reproach himself. If it is not his fault, there is no blame in a situation which is not the servant’s doing. The proof of this is the *ḥadīth* concerning the question addressed to ‘Alī and Fāṭimah: the Prophet (peace be upon him!) asked them the reason for their not having prayed during the night. ‘Alī answered him saying, “God seized our souls.” The Prophet went away saying, “Man is the most disputatious

of things.”¹⁰⁰ But when they overslept the night they stayed in the valley till the sun had risen, he (peace and blessings be upon him!) said, “God seized our souls.”¹⁰¹

‘Alī and Fāṭimah justified themselves because they were in a state of major ritual impurity (*janābah*) as Ibn Abī Jamrah (may God have mercy on him!) has mentioned. Thus, their answer was an excuse, although for the sake of argument it was a similar situation and they were asked about the case. The Companions in the valley did not justify themselves, but rather they entrusted someone else to undertake the matter for them. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [I I I]

Emptying the heart for the sake of worship and knowledge is desirable. Thus, detachment is necessary, as is renouncing excesses and choosing whatever is the most appropriate. For whatever is less but sufficient is better than whatever is excessive but distracting. Among the distracting things are the immature in age, intelligence, or religion. Therefore, companionship with them is forbidden, for being influenced by them prevents inner repose.

Therefore, avoiding companionship and preferring solitude are in order, especially in these times. But this is subject to the condition that he can do without mankind and they without him in carrying out whatever is necessary in respect to religion and the world; that they are to feel secure from his negative thoughts; and that the Islamic rituals, both the obligatory ones and those that are of the nature of reinforced *Sunnah*, are to be performed. But God (glory be to Him!) knows best!

PRINCIPLE [112]

Spiritual retreat (*khalwah*) is more particular than isolation (*‘uzlah*). In its nature and form, it is a type of seclusion (*i‘tikāf*), but not in a mosque, although it can be. For most of the Ṣūfīs, it has no time limits, although the *Sunnah* indicates it is forty days, based on the time appointed for Moses (peace be upon him!). In general, thirty days is approved of, for it is the basis of appointed time. The Prophet (peace be upon him!) stayed a month in Ḥirā’ as mentioned by Muslim. He also withdrew from his wives for a month which is the period of fasting. Going beyond or falling short of one’s goal is like the action of a novice as he treads the path. The least number of days in a *khalwah* is ten in view of the Prophet’s seclusion (*i‘tikāf*) for ten days.

Spiritual retreat for the perfect man is a bonus to his spiritual state. For others, it is an advancement in state. There must be a principle on which it is based: its principle is to purify the heart of the impurities of its contacts and to confine it to a single invocation and a single reality. But, undertaking it without the guidance of a master (shaykh) is dangerous. It leads to great inspirations, but it may not be proper for some people. So, let each one take his own measure through the *khalwah*. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [113]

Devotion, gnosis, and asceticism are incumbent upon every devotee, gnostic, and ascetic. But he who is overcome by seeking knowledge is a devotee whose knowledge and asceticism depend upon his devotions. He who is overcome by abandoning all excess is an ascetic whose devotion and knowledge depend upon his asceticism. He who is overcome by contemplating the Truth through abandoning the crea-

tion is a gnostic whose devotion and asceticism depend upon his point of departure.

Relationships depend upon their points of departure. Otherwise all the paths are intertwined; he who understands differently is mistaken. Yes, an affair is lightened or strengthened according to its perspective. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [114]

The obligation of the obligatory upon the obligated leads to Him. As a result, invocation (*dhikr*) is more excellent than anything else. If you want it to adhere to you, cling to its obligations. God Most-High has said, “So remember Me, and I will remember you;”¹⁰² there is nothing greater than this miracle (*karāmah*). He has put a time and a limit on everything except the invocation of Him Most-High, for He said, “Remember God often,”¹⁰³ “Standing and sitting,”¹⁰⁴ and “As you remember your fathers or yet more devoutly.”¹⁰⁵

A man said, “O Messenger of God, the rituals of Islam have been too numerous for me. Tell me what to do to make up for what I have neglected.” He said, “Your tongue should always be moist with the invocation of God.”¹⁰⁶ To Ibn Sa‘īd, according to Ibn Ḥabbān, he said, “Invoke the name of God until they say, He is mad.”¹⁰⁷

Invocation (*dhikr*) is the proclamation of sanctity (*wilāyah*). He who has been given the invocation has been given the proclamation. Our master Abū al-‘Abbās al-Ḥaḍramī (may God be pleased with him!) said, “You must invoke continuously and you must pray often upon the Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him!), for those prayers are a ladder, an ascent, and a path to God

Most-High, if the seeker does not find a master to guide him.”

I heard this in the 840s in the sanctuary at Mecca from a righteous man, who narrated it to me on the authority of a man who was amongst those who are sincere towards God. They were both well-known; I saw them. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [115]

The luminosity (*nūraniyyah*) of the invocations (*adhkār*) burns the attributes of the servant, and agitates the passions of his nature because it is opposed to their nature. Thus, prayers upon the Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him!) have been ordered along with the invocation because the prayers are like water, providing strength for one’s soul and extinguishing the flame of one’s nature. The secret of that lies in the Angels’ prostration to Adam, when they said, “While we proclaim Thy praise and call Thee holy.”¹⁰⁸ This is why the spiritual masters have ordered prayers upon the Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him!) when one is overcome by the burden of ecstasy. One’s intuition attests to this. Al-Ṣiddīq referred to this, saying, “Prayers upon Muḥammad annihilate sins more than cold water extinguishes fire.” Do you not see the end result? So, consider it! It has been mentioned in *Miftah al-Falah*¹⁰⁹ that “The sign of inspiration is the stirring up of heat inside oneself.” But God knows best.

SECTION [10]

C [116]

Reflection on the antecedent nature of destiny and on the necessity of an underlying reason decrees that personal prayers (*du^cā'*) is a form of worship connected with a reason, like the connection of ritual prayer (*ṣalāh*) with its time zone. And the same holds true for an invocation that is based on a benefit, and so on. If you say that personal prayer is a reminder, then it only reminds those who may be forgetful. If you say that it is a warning, it only warns those who may be neglectful. If you say that it is a result of a cause, the decree of the Eternal is much too sublime to be considered a cause. The command has come as well as the makeup of the response to be given it. Thus, through an already established method, it is correct for one to say: "Give us what Thou hast promised us by Thy Messengers"¹¹⁰ "Do Thou not burden us beyond what we have the strength to bear,"¹¹¹ and "Take us not to task."¹¹² Thus for whomsoever holds to this teaching: it is the personal prayer to the "Alternates" (*abdāl*). But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [117]

The equality of two acts of worship emanating from a single fundamental principle, with the lawful permission to substitute one for the other, decrees that there is interchangeability between them. The invocation (*dhikr*) may be substituted for personal prayer (*du^cā'*) when there is difficulty in performing the latter, and the opposite holds true. The following tradition is sound: "He who is so occupied with My remembrance (*dhikr*) that he asks not of Me, I shall give him the best of what is given to those who do

ask.”¹¹³ So, the pre-eminence of the invocation appears in this case.

Realization shows that the most pre-eminent in every place is whatever is revealed therein, for everything is revelation to the Prophets of God while they were in a spiritual state, and during that time they were in the most excellent of states. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [118]

The rendering of a verdict in a general case does not mean that its rationale is applicable in a specific case. The specific case requires proof that is relevant to it to the point that it is even peculiar to it. In this category falls the performance of the invocation (*dhikr*) and personal prayer (*du‘ā*) aloud, combining the two, and assembling for them. As for the remembrance, its proof is: “He who remembers Me in an assembly, I remember him in an assembly better than it.”¹¹⁴ It has been said that among its proofs is: “As you remember your fathers or yet more devoutly.”¹¹⁵ Ibn ‘Abbās said, “I was not aware of people departing from prayers at the time of the Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him!) except with the invocation.” Al-Bukhārī has related this.

The invocation is said aloud by the servant at the end of prayers, at times of war, and while travelling. So loud was it that the Prophet (peace be upon him!) said, “Lower your voices, for you are not calling a deaf or absent one!”¹¹⁶ The Prophet (peace be upon him!) had made loud invocations and personal prayers in numerous places, as did the pious ancestors (*salaf*). His answer to those at the Battle of the Trench has been established: “O God, there is no goodness but the goodness of the Hereafter. So, grant forgiveness to the Helpers (*Anṣār*) and the Immigrants (*Muhājirah*).”¹¹⁷

All of this proves their being together and aloud. But in some particular cases they are contingent upon something else and are not in themselves proofs, because of the possibility of their being limited to a single incident or because they are intended for something else, not for themselves. So, the introduction of another principle is imperative.

PRINCIPLE [119]

Affirming a rule for a special case does not apply to all instances of its kind, because it might be possible only in its own limited case. This is especially true for him who adheres to the following: “The rule is prohibition until authorization is given.”

Assembling for the invocation or personal supplication or recitation of the Qur’an is more specific than assembling in itself, because in the latter case it is assembling that is intended, which is not so for the former. Hence, the latter is more general than the former and requires proofs to render it special. As for assembling for the invocation, based on the *ḥadīth* transmitted by Abū Hurayrah, it has been agreed upon that: “God has Angels who rove about seeking the circles of invocation.” At the end of the tradition: “Their Lord asks them, ‘What are my servants saying?’ They reply, ‘They were glorifying You, praising You, exalting You, witnessing that there is no god but You, and proclaiming Your majesty.’”¹¹⁸ So, the recommendation to assemble for the invocation is very clear. Its purpose is to motivate the servant to pursue the invocation. As for the last words of the *ḥadīth*: “‘There is one among them who is not of this group,’ God Most-High replies, ‘He who sits with such people shall not suffer!’”—as for this *ḥadīth*, permission to limit the assembly for the sake of the invocation itself is

given in a way that cannot be interpreted otherwise, as would be the case for the *ḥadīth*: “No group of Muslims gathers in an assembly invoking God without the Angels surrounding them, tranquility descending upon them, mercy enveloping them, and God making mention of them amongst those who are with him.”¹¹⁹ This tradition has been at times interpreted to mean knowledge and at times to mean remembering divine favors.

It has also been understood in its literal meaning. Thus, adhering to it for the sake of the invocations themselves has been abandoned because of other possibilities indicated by the different interpretations. It is said that: “They assemble, each person with his own invocation,” the answer is that if the invocation is done inwardly, then its benefits are not apparent; if it is done aloud, each person with his own invocation, it is evident that it is improper conduct to mix the invocations, in addition to other things which are not proper in ordinary conversations, let alone the remembrance of God. So, it is necessary that assembling be permitted, or rather recommended, provided that it fulfills its conditions. Yes, the interpretation that would have it that exalting God, praising Him, and glorifying Him, while everyone reminds one another of His Unity, is very far from the Truth. Its interpretation is unacceptable because it is so far from occurring to the mind of the servant that it does not occur except with serious consequences. This is very far from the goals of the Law. So, understand!

As for assembling for personal supplication, it has been mentioned in a tradition by Ḥabīb ibn Salamah al-Fihrī, whose prayers were answered (may God be pleased with him!). He said, “I heard the Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him!) say, ‘No group of people gather

together, some of whom supplicate and some of whom believe, except that God will grant their desires.” Al-Ḥakīm related the above and added, “provided that he is a Muslim.” Our master Abū Zayd al-Tha‘ālibī (may God Most-High have mercy on him!) mentioned this in *Dalā’il al-Khayrāt*,¹²⁰ but I believe he quoted it from al-Mundhirī’s *Targhib*.¹²¹ Shaykh Abū Ishāq al-Shāṭibī spoke of ‘Umar’s (may God be pleased with him!) carrying out the above, and how he censured it; he considered it a blameworthy innovation because of what is associated with it, but not because of its essence.

As for the recitation of the Qur’an, al-Nawawī and others have authenticated the following tradition: “No people gather together in one of the houses of God, reciting the Qur’an and studying it among themselves, without the Angels surrounding them.” It is the same for the invocation. From this tradition, it has been concluded that it is permissible to recite litanies (*aḥzāb*) in mosques. All of this is according to al-Shāfi‘ī and his school. As for the school of Mālik, it discourages such a practice because the pious ancestors (*salaf*) did not undertake it and, in addition, to block pretexts (*sadd al-dharī‘ah*) for innovations and heretical matters. What he (may God be pleased with him!) feared has occurred!

PRINCIPLE [120]

The merit of something is not the same as its superiority; a temporal prescription is not the same as the regime of a principle.

Superiority does not necessitate desiring something, even though its merit has been established. Nor does rejection of the authority of the principle necessitate either its

abandonment or its being adopted because of an obstacle of time.

It has been established by the aforementioned *ḥadīths* that assembling for personal supplication, or the invocation, or the recitation of the Qur'an, is recommended. So, it is not proper to reject the principle of its authority. If something else is preferred, that is because of its superiority, such as silent invocation or other acts of devotion, whose benefit is transcendent, such as gaining knowledge, participation in the holy war (*jihād*) seeking one's livelihood to support a family, and other things which the Companions were attentive to. They were so occupied with these matters that they were distracted from assembling for the invocation, and from devoting themselves to it to the exclusion of all else. Do you not see that when they had the opportunity of doing so, they did it on the occasion of travelling, on feast-days, at the end of the prayers, and the like? For when the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him!) approached a circle of people invoking, he walked by it and joined those discussing knowledge. He preferred the latter because their benefit transcended them and because of their need for him in the state they were in, since they had no knowledge except from him. Their goal was to learn what he brought forth. This was the opposite of the state of those invoking, because their activity was self-evident in itself and its benefits were limited to themselves. But he did not reject them, even though he preferred the others. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [121]

Time has a legal principle peculiar to it so that it may render an acceptable act forbidden or reprehensible or an obligation; or it may render a recommended act forbidden or rep-

reprehensible. This is true if the accepted or recommended act derives from the legal principle through a different argument that calls for such an act.

The opinion that prohibits congregating for the invocation and that discourages it in this day and age belongs to the above category, as does the prohibiting of women from going to mosques, and so on. These are prohibited because of the dangers therein, or the ones they may lead to, not because they are a danger in themselves, for the Law originally allowed or recommended them.

People belong to two different schools of thought concerning this issue. There are those who believe in blocking the means that may lead to wrong-doing, thus prohibiting all possibilities by prohibiting the main one. This is the school of Mālik (may God have mercy on him!). Others say the prohibited is that which falls in the category of forbidden activity. This is the school of al-Shāfi‘ī and others. When Sayyidī Abū ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās (may God have mercy on him!) spoke about the question of litanies (*ahzāb*), he said, “It is one of the concessions of religion to which one can adhere with certainty because of the disappearance of the inner truths of religion in these times, even though it is an innovation. There have been different opinions about it. The predominant opinion is that it should be discouraged, but it is proper to engage in it according to those who believe in it.” I say that the invocation falls into this category in some places and at some times under certain conditions. Perhaps the Legislator intended to encourage it after the first generation because of the people’s need for it. As for the statement of Ibn Mas‘ūd (may God be pleased with him!), addressing a group he found invoking: “You have either unjustly made an innovation or you have sur-

passed the Companions of Muḥammad in knowledge,” the answer to this is that he was not aware of the *ḥadīth* encouraging it, or he objected to the form, or the like. Otherwise, it is not correct to censure it in this manner since the correctness of the *ḥadīth* has been established. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [122]

Observation of the conditions in the thing conditioned is necessary for its seeker. Otherwise it will not be valid for him, although its outer form may exist. There are three conditions to be observed when assembling for the invocation.

The first is that the time allotted to the invocation should not take up the time of performing a duty or a strongly recommended act. Otherwise it would necessitate forsaking the duty in order to participate in the invocation. This would be like one being forgetful and sleeping rather than performing the obligatory prayer, or being lazy in performing it, or exaggerating in performing his litany (*wird*), or bringing harm to his family, or other things.

The second is that there should be an absence of anything forbidden or reprehensible in him or around him to which he may become attached, such as the presence of women listening to the invocation, or their participation therein, or the participation of adolescents whose company should be avoided, or partaking of ritually unclean food, or food about which there is doubt even in small amounts, or sleeping on a bed made of forbidden material, such as silk and the like, or speaking of people’s bad qualities, or spreading rumors, and so on.

The third is observing the proper manner of carrying out the invocation, so that it is correct and clear from the legal

and linguistic points of view. One's invocation must be carried out in a tranquil manner, even though one may stand up and sit down as occasion demands, but without dancing or shouting, or the like. For these are the actions of mad men as Mālik (may God be pleased with him!) pointed out when he was asked about them. He replied, "Are they mad?" The purpose of his words was to express disapproval in such a way that prohibition of the act would be more appropriate.

PRINCIPLE [123]

The soul is naturally attracted to what is suitable for its lawful religious benefit. Thus, invocations and devotions for worldly affairs have been sought, such as the recitation of *Surat al-Wāqī'ah*¹²² to combat poverty; or "In the name of God, He with whose name nothing, either in the earth or the sky, can do any harm,"¹²³ to dismiss sudden calamities; or "I seek refuge through the complete words of God from the evil of that which He has created,"¹²⁴ to avoid the evil of poisonous animals, and to protect the home; and other invocations to dismiss worries and debts and to help in one's livelihood, such as gaining riches, honor, and the like. The explanation of this is that, if an invocation actually benefits whatever it was addressing, then that is an invitation to love it. Loving it is an invitation to love the one who brought it and the one related to it by both in principle and practice, thus leading to loving God. If it does not lead to its intent, there is nonetheless a grace in it, nothing less than the intimacy of the soul with the invocation of the Truth: entering into this state is more plausible and easier so far as human nature is concerned. It is on this very principle that Shaykh Abū al-^cAbbās al-Būnī and those who hold his

belief composed works on the invocation of the divine names and their qualities. Otherwise, in principle, do not use the invocations and devotions as a means to gain worldly matters, out of veneration for them. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [124]

Every name or invocation has a quality derived from its meaning, a required way of dealing with it, a mystery in its number, and a response depending on a person's aspiration. Thus, a man of knowledge does not benefit by an obvious meaning, while the ignorant man does not benefit except by something hidden whose meanings he knows not. There remains the person who is between the two.

The number of repetitions established by the Law must be considered as well as what has been deduced through careful investigation, so that it can be realized according to the *Sunnah*. As for written formulas and plunging into the science of forms, and the like, these are matters acquired from science of nature and cosmology whose distance from the Truth and realization is no mystery. This is why Ibn al-Bannā' (may God be pleased with him!) said, "Leave al-Būnī and those like him. Follow Khayr al-Nassāj and those like him." Al-Ḥātimī (may God have mercy on him!) said, "The science of numerology is a noble science, but it is reprehensible from the religious and material points of view. Know this! Success comes from God (may He be exalted!)!"

I say: "It is so from a religious point of view because the person engaged in it is interfering in fate and this violates the station of trust in God (*tawakkul*). It is like resorting to cauterization during healing to speed up recovery; this act is a result of the self's frivolity. So, understand! As for the

material point of view, it is a profession that harms material prosperity. So, understand!”

PRINCIPLE [125]

Consideration of relationships having to do with legal principles occurs in legal matters in such a way that the relationships arise therefrom. Thus, the number of repetitions in an invocation is to be considered because the source of its existence has to be viewed from the standpoint of its substance and accidents. If the relationship conforms to its locus, the effect will take place in keeping with the eternal decree.

The fixed number of repetitions has its basis in the Law, for the Prophet (peace be upon him!) said to a group of faithful women, “Tie knots with your fingers, for they will be held responsible and will speak.” He allowed one of his wives to keep count with pits that were in her hands. Abū Hurayrah had a piece of string that he knotted with five hundred knots and used to keep count. The prayer beads are more helpful in carrying out the invocation, more likely to lead to the divine presence, and greater as regards reward. There is a recompense for the number of repetitions, for ceasing it out of necessity, or for ceasing it out of mistake, or the like, for it has a fixed nature, and there is a recompense for obtaining the reward of an invocation that embraces a number, such as one’s saying “Glory be to God the number of His creatures,” whatever the number might be, with or without multiplication, or leaving the words stand on their own power, without multiplication. It has been said that invocations that arise from circumstantial causes, such as the formula of glorification (*tasbīḥ*)¹²⁵ at a time of surprise, are more pre-eminent than the unrestricted

at the proper time. But God (may He be exalted!) knows best!

SECTION [11]

PRINCIPLE [126]

What has been permitted for a cause or for a particular or general reason must not be indiscriminately implemented in all situations, to the point where it takes on such a special form that it is no longer the previously mentioned particular reason. Thus, it is not proper to deduce that audition (*samāʿ*) is unconditionally permissible from the fact that singing during celebrations and the like is permissible. Nor is it proper to deduce from the fact that reciting poetry is acceptable, that the well-known method of audition is acceptable on the score that its particularity is probably of the same regime. For this reason, Ibn al-Fakihānī (may God have mercy on him!), in commenting on the *Risālah*,¹²⁶ said, “There is no text that either permits or bans audition,” meaning for a specific purpose. Otherwise, it is permitted for celebrations, feast-days, and the like, including legal festivals, and as an aid to work. Therefore, the question is to be decided on the basis of the legal rule of things existing before the Law addressed them. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [127]

Concerning matters before the Law addressed them, it has been said: caution is best, so audition (*samāʿ*) should not be approached; or permissibility is best, so audition should be permitted; or prohibition is best, so audition should be forbidden.

The Ṣūfis have differed, like the jurists, about this matter

along the lines mentioned above. Shaykh Abū Ishāq al-Shāṭibī (may God have mercy on him!) said, “It is not originally or accidentally a part of Ṣūfism. Rather, it was taken from the doings of the philosophers,” or he said words to that effect. Under investigation it appears that it is a doubtful act that should be avoided because it resembles a false doctrine, since it is an amusement. It should be avoided except out of a necessity that requires one to have recourse to it; so, it may be permitted as a result. *Al-Maqdisī* mentions that Abū Mus‘ab asked Mālik (may God be pleased with him!) about it. He said, “I do not know except that the people of knowledge in our country neither reject nor renounce it. No one renounces it except a stupid devotee or a harsh ignorant man.” Ṣāliḥ ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may God have mercy on them!) said, “I saw my father listening to an audition session at our neighbor’s from behind the wall.” Ibn al-Musayyib said to a group finding fault with poetry, “They are living the life of foreign ascetics.”

It is true that Mālik disapproved of audition and found it reprehensible. But its lawfulness can be deduced from the *Mudawwanah*;¹²⁷ all of that on condition that it is devoid of musical instrument. Otherwise, all agree that it is forbidden except for al-Anbārī and Ibrāhīm ibn Sa‘d, whose views are known. Al-Tarṭūshī and others have exaggerated in their opinions about religion. Investigation indicates that opinion is more inclined towards prohibition. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [128]

A person’s belief that an act not leading to proximity to God does indeed lead to proximity is an innovation. The same applies to establishing a law without precedent. All

of the above is in error unless it refers back to a fundamental principle from which it was deduced; and thus its legal rule refers to the principle. There is no proof recommending audition among those who accept it, even though people have discussed it in detail. For investigation shows that for those who permit it, audition is a dispensation that is allowed out of necessity. In general, its conditions must be upheld; otherwise, it is prohibited. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [129]

One's preparation to be receptive depends on how one listens to what is taught. He who listens with the Truth will achieve realization. He who listens with the ego will acquire a bad state. He who listens with his natural disposition benefits only temporarily. Thus a seeker of knowledge who inclines towards the worldly will only be increased by God in inclination away from the Truth. Most people do not benefit from public festivities such as marriages, funerals, and the like, except as an enjoyment at the time. It benefits the possessor of Truth in whatever form it comes. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [130]

Whatever emerges from the heart enters the heart, and whatever is limited to the tongue does not go beyond the ears. Then, upon penetrating the heart, it may encounter an opposing force totally rejecting it, as in the case of non-believers, or a reluctance, as in the case of hypocrites; or a thin veil interferes with its touching the heart, as in the case of sinners; or it may touch its essence and reality, so that boldness and restraint with respect to its regime are necessary as in the case of novices. As for the gnostic, he

benefits from everything that benefits, whether it comes from the heart or elsewhere. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [131]

Al-Shāfi‘ī (may God Most-High have mercy on him!) said, “What is good in poetry is good and what is bad is bad. He who quotes it follows the poet in being criticized or praised.”

Furthermore, in all probability, it depends on the intention of the reciter, whether he is the author or a quoter, just as it depends on the intention of the listener. So, consideration of the state of both, the person addressed and the reciter, is required. A base attribute may not be attributed to an honorable person because that is immoral conduct, and the opposite is unacceptable because it violates a state. Illustrating this is the following that has been reported: Abū Sa‘īd al-Kharrāz said to a person who saw him in a dream, “God (*al-Ḥaqq*) placed me in front of Himself and said, ‘Are you describing Me with the same attributes attributed to Layla and Su‘dā? Had I not beheld you at a spiritual station wherein you purely desired Me, I would have punished you.’” So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [132]

The confession of a realized person of a deficiency in his rank generally means that he is criticizing it in the manner he described in his confession. For his avowal is dependent on his honesty; and thus he would not have mentioned except what he experienced as blameworthy. Otherwise, he is a liar. In any case, in this state, he is either to be excused or is not acting well. It is better that he be excused and forgiven, but he should not be emulated, because this leads

to reproach and the like, which causes one to be estranged. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [133]

The prohibition of something because of an impediment in it or because of the thing itself does not imply a deficiency in its underlying rule. The latter-day investigators among the Ṣūfīs and most of the jurisconsults decided to prohibit audition (*samāʿ*) because of the circumstance of time, whose passage opens the way to innovation and error, so that al-Ḥātimī (may God have mercy on him!) said, “In these days a Muslim does not believe in audition. No master who holds sessions of audition or believes in it should be followed.”

Shaykh Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī (may God be pleased with him!) said, “I asked my teacher about audition and he replied, ‘They found their fathers erring, and they run in their footsteps.’”¹²⁸ Ibn ʿAbd (may God have mercy on him!) said, “Audition is an error, an evil extracted from such and such. It is a practice that defamed people.” It was said to al-Junayd, “You used to attend the sessions of audition. Why have you abandoned them?” He said of the one to whom it was said, “This is from God,” that he answered, “So, with whom?”

The reason the prohibition is emphasized, as in the case of assembling for the invocation, is because the rule governing the fundamental principle has been lost. So, he who believes in closing the door on legal acts that may lead to innovation will totally prohibit them, while others will only prohibit that which is false. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [134]

Whatever is permitted out of necessity is restricted by the degree of that necessity or else allowance is made for the conditions surrounding it as regards both validity and completeness. Audition (*samāʿ*) is in that category. The necessity that upholds it is threefold:

First, stirring the heart so that it acquires knowledge of what agitates it. To achieve this, it may be enough to acquaint oneself with the forces arousing desire and fear, or to interact with a fellow brother or master,

Second, gently treating the body by making it aware of its senses so that it does not perish as a result of the power of illuminations.

Third, making audition available to the novices so that their hearts would be devoted to receiving the Truth. For they do not have the capacity to receive the Truth in a vessel of worthlessness, and they do not have the capacity to receive the Truth directly without an intermediary of sorts. Al-Shushtarī (may God have mercy on him!) was inclined towards this point of view, as his strophic poetry (*azjāl*) indicates, from what I have understood. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [135]

Attracting the soul by supporting its natural inclination makes it much easier to bring benefit to it. Thus, benefit can take place through poetry and stories that define the path and allude to its realities. But the “perfume” of a perspective accompanies whatever issues forth from it; the benefit cannot be appreciated without the perspective. Therefore, you will not find anyone overcome by poetry having a true sense of his religion. If he does, it is with confusion and pretension, for he is generally accompanied by these two in the

very nature of his existence. Those who support the recitation of poetry say that it is bound by three conditions. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [136]

If a matter depends on a condition in order to have soundness or completeness, then allowance must be made for that condition. Otherwise, undertaking the matter will lead to a deviation from its norm.

Audition is bound by three conditions:

First, consideration of the manner in which it is carried out, what accompanies it, and what it leads to; the time and place in which it is carried out, and the companions who participate in it.

Second, the time allotted to audition must be free of any necessary or needful legal or customary obligation, inasmuch as to abandon the more binding in favor of concession contradicts the Truth and violates the reality of things.

Third, there must be sincerity in everyone and a serene mind in one's state. No person who is moved should show outward signs of being moved unless he is overwhelmed. If anything else emanates from him, those beneath him should concede it to him, those above him should discipline him, and his peers should remind him.

The Ṣūfīs will remain on the right path as long as they disagree amongst themselves. If they agree on everything their knowledge of religion will become deficient. For they cannot agree except by overlooking each other's faults; now no man is free of error. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [137]

Celebrating someone in love poetry, praising, making allu-

sions, giving oneself up to passion or someone, indicate one's distance from the contemplation of God (*mushāhadah*). For the Divine Majesty checks the manifestation of the self (*nafs*) whereas poetry is one of the commendable acts of the self. Those in whose hearts Divine Light is reflected are not preoccupied with anything else. Thus, what emanates from them is more desirable than fresh water. For this reason there is little poetry composed by the realized masters such as al-Junayd, Shaykh Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Qādir, al-Shādhilī, and the like. They have as models the masters among the Companions, for they were the most knowledgeable about poetry; yet they did not mention it except in a manner that does not allude to any esoteric truths; and if those truths are included therein, it is in keeping with the Companion's capacity. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [138]

Punishment or reward for anything is dependent on what the thing is. "He will assuredly recompense them,"¹²⁹ "a suitable recompense."¹³⁰ He who commits adultery does so against his family. Thus, he who likes to attend audition and yet encourages people to be critical of it, is punished; whereas he is rewarded for encouraging people to praise it. So he remains a praiser and blamer in such a manner that the two cannot be separated from him until he becomes detached from the state in which he finds himself, as happens by following the *Sunnah* of God. Illustrative of this is the story of Yūsuf ibn al-Ḥusayn in which he said, "May the self-opinionated have a feast;" and the punishment that befell Ibn al-Jallā' when he mentioned his finding beautiful the face of a young man, which was his forgetting the Qur'an: for perception is like sight. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [139]

Upholding intelligence is obligatory in order to uphold wealth and dignity. Thus, it is agreed that, with regard to the one who knows his intelligence will be overcome by audition, prohibiting him from the audition is in order. Nor is tearing up one's patched frock permitted, even if it be for the sake of vying in a generous deed, because this is a waste of property.

It is not permissible for anyone to keep the company of the Ṣūfī adepts if he is not one of them, even though he may be a devotee or an ascetic. He may not participate in the audition or even see it. The same applies to the gnostic as well because his state is more perfect, which would lead him to find fault with the group, with their imperfection and the appearance of worldly desires in them, and they would find fault with him.

Shaykh Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Haḍrāmī (may God be pleased with him!) said, "A jurist used to keep the company of a shaykh. When the time came for the audition, the shaykh would ask him to leave even though he was a friend of his, saying, 'There is a path in audition, but only for him who has knowledge.'" But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [140]

A person in ecstasy is excused for being in a state in which he cannot contain himself. The rules that apply to persons afflicted with insanity are applied to him by not considering his actions while he is in that state. He must, however, make amends for the past if, like the drunkard, he is to blame from the very beginning. Moreover, permission to emulate his actions is invalidated, as was the case for al-Nūrī in his ecstasy, when he volunteered to be executed, his

action being based on his doctrine of altruism; otherwise, it is a means to commit suicide. Another is the state of Abū Jamrah, when he stayed in a well only to reemerge when his life was threatened by danger; or the state of al-Shiblī, when he shaved off his beard and threw away his money into the sea upon becoming aware of miserliness in himself; not to mention other things which on the surface are not in agreement with the Law. But their actions are dominated by the element of ecstasy, as is evident from their stories, and hence the rules governing insanity apply to them. This includes dancing and the like.

In general, a person is excused and not to be blamed when he does not mean to disobey but cannot help himself because of an inability to restrain his actions. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him!) said to an insane woman, "If you wish, be patient and you will attain Paradise. Or I will make a prayer to God and He will cure you."¹³¹ She was content to go to Paradise. This decision is better than obdurately denying her state or affirming it: it is closer to the Truth; for she was not immune from error had she chosen to be healed. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [141]

If an ecstatic observes a hidden meaning in his ecstasy that confers upon him knowledge, action, or a state, in spite of his tendency towards quietness and tranquillity outwardly, then his ecstasy is from an inner reality and its hidden meaning. If he observes its having poetical meter and melody, then it is of natural origin, especially if he is in a state of confusion and has a burning in his soul. But if he notices nothing but the very movement itself, then it is satanic, especially if it is followed by great unrest, bodily tur-

moil, and fiery burning. That must be given thorough investigation; otherwise, it is better and more preferable for a religious person desiring peace to abandon seeking the cause of his ecstasy.

PRINCIPLE [142]

A person who imitates the Ṣūfī initiates is considered to be a follower of those whom he imitates, based on the *ḥadīth*: “He who imitates a group is one of them,”¹³² for he is permitted to do so out of love. The man who loves the Ṣūfīs is right; when he follows them, he says, “You are among those whom you love.”

It is permissible to imitate the righteous in their dress, except that if one intends deception and fraud in the wearing of the patched frock, carrying prayer beads, a staff, a prayer mat, and dyeing one’s hair, and the like, then, because of what has already been mentioned, the self is protected from committing mortal sins by all that; and if it can sin mortally, it cannot do so openly. Furthermore, donning the patched frock is more excusable in order to avoid burdens; it is more effective in combatting mortal sins; and it gets one closer to God, while allowing one to emulate ‘Umar (may God be pleased with him!). For he wore it despite having other things to wear in order to cleanse his heart. Do you not see that when he was made to wear something else he said, “I have denied myself”? Also, the patched frock is the most lawful garment to wear. Yes, and it also protects against many dangers during travels and at other times. God has commanded the faithful women, along with the wives of the Messenger of God (may God’s peace and blessings be upon him!) and his daughters, to be humble, so that they would be known and thus not hurt.

And ʿUmar (may God be pleased with him!) used to punish the woman-slaves for veiling themselves with silk-like material. Shaykh Abū Yūsuf al-Raḥmānī (may God be pleased with him!) said to one of his disciples whom the Bedouins had taken prisoner and not been wearing the garment of the Ṣūfīs, “He who exaggerates is more likely to lose.” For this way of life is a weapon: he who enters the path is respected; whoever does not respect him violates God’s compact. He who violates the protection of God will not achieve success.

A shaykh said to some young men, “Beware of these patched frocks, for you will be honored for their sake.” One said, “O master, we are only honored by them because of their relationship to God.” He replied, “Yes.” They said, “How perfect is He for whose sake we are honored.” The shaykh replied, “May God bless you!” or words to that effect.

PRINCIPLE [143]

The miracle of the follower is a witness to the sincerity of the one being followed; for he has a relationship to his sanctity by virtue of his right of inheritance from him. Thus, it is permissible to seek blessings from the remains of the righteous, whose miracles have appeared in their practice of religion, or in their knowledge, or in their actions, or in external deeds, such as in multiplying the scarce, giving information about the invisible world according to his discernment, having his prayers answered, subjugating to himself water and air, and other things correctly described as the “signs” (*āyāt*) of prophets and the “miracles” (*karāmāt*) of saints. For the principle is consolation, until such time as one’s predestined portion arrives.

The great authorities of religion have always sought the blessings of the virtuous ones in every age and country. It is necessary to emulate the virtuous depending on the degree to which one's opinion about persons is well guided. But God knows best!

SECTION [12]

PRINCIPLE [144]

The inner being of a servant is known from his outward state, because facial features reflect the heart: whatever permeates the heart manifests itself in the face: "Their mark is on their faces, the trace of prostration."¹³³ A certain man said to the Messenger of God (may God's peace and blessings be upon him!), "When I saw him I knew that it was not the face of a liar." He Most-High said about the hypocrites, "Thou shalt certainly know them in the twisting of their speech."¹³⁴ It has been said, "People are closed shops: when two men speak, the seller of perfume is distinguishable from the veterinarian," because speech is an attribute of the speaker. What is inside you appears on your tongue. For knowledge of a man is determined by three things: his speech, his behavior, and his nature. The nature of all of these is discovered when he is angry with someone: if he clings to sincerity, prefers the Truth, and forgives people, then he is indeed as he is; otherwise, he is not. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [145]

Every country is dominated by good and bad qualities. If you desire to know who is a righteous person in a particular country, examine the bad qualities of its people: is he free

of them or not? If he is, then he is righteous; otherwise, he is worthless. So, according to this, look for the qualities of generosity and high moral behavior in the people of the Far West. If you find them, well and good; if not, so much the worse. The same applies to the people of Andalusia. In the East, look for the qualities of zeal for God, inner well-being, and others. The Messenger of God (may God's blessings and peace be upon him!) has alluded to this principle, for he mentioned the attributes of various countries and their incidental traits, such as his reference to the East: "Here discord is to be found;" he said the same about Najd. Regarding the Persians, he said, "Were faith to be in the Pleiades some of their men would have attained it."¹³⁵ Regarding the inhabitants of al-Yaman, he said that they possess sensitive hearts.

As for the inhabitants of Medina, he said that they were the best of people, what with God's describing them in this verse: "They love whosoever has emigrated to them,"¹³⁶ not to mention His description of the negative and other qualities of the Egyptians, mentioned in seventeen places in God's Book. He (peace be upon him!) said, "Tranquility and sedateness are to be found in shepherds; pride and arrogance in horsemen; rudeness and roughness in gross peasants who follow the tracks of camels and cattle. Regarding Africa, 'Umar (may God be pleased with him!) said, "It is a country of cunning and deceit." Our Lord (may His might be glorified!) said to Dhū al-Qarnayn¹³⁷ regarding the inhabitants of the Far West, "Either thou shalt chastise them, or thou shalt take toward them a way of kindness."¹³⁸ This indicates that they deserve whatever treatment they receive, be it good or bad, for they are indeed that way. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [146]

Speculation that is concerned with absolute perfection decrees that deficiency exists in whatever is not deficient upon examination. But no one but the Prophets possesses the quality of infallibility (*‘iṣmah*); though states that are predominant in a person must be examined, not all of them. If goodness dominates, then that aspect outweighs all else; if something else predominates in him, then that outweighs all else; if both aspects are equal, he must be examined with ease and accorded a conciliatory judgment. If it is possible to explain everything, then let it be so, so long as he does not transgress the limit of evident wrongdoing or attach himself to something that violates his path. Al-Junayd (may God be pleased with him!) was asked, “Can a gnostic commit adultery?” He was silent for a long time and then replied, “God’s commandment must be performed.”¹³⁹ ‘Aṭā’Allāh (may God be pleased with him!) said, “If only he had been asked, ‘Does the zeal of the gnostic attach itself to anything other than God,’ he would have answered, “No.” I say it is so because the sign of his knowledge is his attachment to his Lord. If that is disturbed, he will lose his knowledge. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [147]

A man who possesses the ability to perform a supernatural marvel (*khāriqah*) that is more universal than a miracle (*karāmah*) should be examined and judged according to his deeds. If his religiosity is established, it is a miracle (*karāmah*); if not, then it is either a deception or magic. If, after his standing has been established, there appears something incompatible, which is permissible to a certain degree, it is to be explained away, so long as the Law, wherever

applicable, is not infringed. If it cannot be made acceptable in any way, then the rules must be applied and there is not room for interpretation, for essential truths do not change, and rules are based upon essences. So, he must be judged according to the rule that applies to his situation. The principle of explaining away that which is permitted to a certain degree is mentioned in the matter of al-Khidr and Moses (peace be upon them!), for al-Khidr explained the underlying motive upon his departure.¹⁴⁰

PRINCIPLE [148]

An outstanding trait does not require high esteem, for a person is not to be emulated unless he is perfect in knowledge and religion. If esteem depended on possessing outstanding abilities then Iblīs should be held in higher esteem than the generality of believers because he has the ability to fly through the air, walk on water, and penetrate into the earth in a second. God Most-High has given him and those of his kind the ability to see us while we cannot see him. It also would have been incumbent to hold al-Khidr in higher esteem than Moses (peace be upon them!). All of the above is improper. Thus, preferring someone over another is in general determined by a judgment from God, and this should not be unless there is a definite inspiration in the matter. However preference should be given to proofs: one should refrain from absolute judgments; to discuss the matter of preference is permitted if circumstances require it. Otherwise, it is best not to discuss it. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [149]

Examining times and persons from a non-legal point of

view is a Jāhili perspective, as the non-believers said, “Why was this Qur’an not sent down upon some man of moment in the two cities?”¹⁴¹ To them God Most-High replied, “Is it they who divide the mercy of thy Lord?”¹⁴² So they said, “We indeed found our fathers upon a community, and we are guided upon their traces.”¹⁴³ God answered them, “Say: ‘What, though I should bring you a better guidance than you found your fathers upon?’”¹⁴⁴ Thus, it is necessary to examine all of the kindnesses of God Most-High without considering the time or person involved unless God Most-High specifically indicates so. In this, the saints are the successors of the Prophets because a saint’s miracle (*karāmah*) is a witness to the miracles (*mu‘jizāt*) of the Prophets. Religious scholars are the inheritors of the Prophets in mercy and sanctity although they differ in the principle of pre-eminence.

PRINCIPLE [150]

In the view of a person related to someone or something, one’s relationship is indicative of the grandeur of the person or thing to which one is related. Therefore, it is necessary to respect him who is related to God (may He be exalted!) in any way or manner as long as he does nothing that would diminish his glorification of God. A deficiency in his behavior would be a clear-cut case of violating the Sacred Law.

His relationship must be respected as well as his established relationship with the Truth, for He to whom he clings is the One who commands him. Yes, it is necessary to ascertain how he stands in regard to the Truth; otherwise, harm will befall his opponent for intending to disgrace, out of mere passion, someone connected with a lofty

Being. Many have been harmed as a result of their opposition to those connected with God (may He be exalted!), even though they were right to do so, for the Truth jealously guards against those who would dishonor His majesty. Therefore, it is necessary to ascertain the spiritual rank of a person before disapproving of him, and to correct one's intention to the maximum. Otherwise, beware, beware! But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [151]

Nobleness decrees the preservation of the servant's relationship on his terms, as witness these words: "I am as My servant thinks I am."¹⁴⁵ As a result, it has been said that "The well-being of the one who is afflicted with major sins lies in his affliction." For he has no other need except to please his Lord, and His pleasure with him may take any form. Rather, he should seek to meet Him in a manner pleasing to Him, even though it may be the death of him. Do you not see how ʿUmar (may God be pleased with him!) used to seek martyrdom and that this was accorded him? ʿUthmān (may God be pleased with him!) chose to be killed unjustly to spare the shedding of the blood of Muslims and to hasten his reunion with his friends and the Prophet; and there are other examples.

Even Bilāl, when he was on his deathbed and his wife said, "Woe unto us!" answered, "What joy! Tomorrow I shall meet the loved ones Muḥammad and his followers." Muʿādh, when speaking about an epidemic, said, "It is a mercy to the community. O God, do not forget Muʿādh and his family in this mercy." Then, he contracted the disease at a risk to his own life, and would lose consciousness and regain it, saying, "Strangle me as You wish, for by Your

power, You know that I love You;” and so on. As al-Ḥajjāj was killing Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr (may God have mercy on him!), Sa‘īd said, “I am the last one to smite you with the evil eye.” He said, “I have killed better men than you.” Sa‘īd replied, “Those people had their hearts attached to the next world; hence they were unconcerned with this world. Rather, they were the people most aware of their proximity to the Hereafter while my heart is attached to my own self.” So he killed him, and he was the last person that al-Ḥajjāj killed because of the curse the man had uttered against al-Ḥajjāj; so terror was manifested.

The well-being of every person depends on his spiritual state, and his dealing with the Truth depends on his relationship with Him. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [152]

No one intercedes before God except by His permission; and He has commanded us to seek the means of reaching Him. It has been said that the means of reaching Him is: “There is no god but God;” or that it is following the example of the Messenger of God; or that it is following any means in general. So one may seek the means of reaching God through deeds, as in the case of those who were in the cave, each of whom implored God through his best deed.

One may also seek the means of reaching God through persons, such as ‘Umar’s (may God be pleased with him!) imploring al-‘Abbās (may God be pleased with him!) to pray for rain. A man is encouraged to pray for his brother in a general sense: the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him!) said to ‘Umar (may God be pleased with him!), when he went on the lesser pilgrimage (*‘umrah*), “Include us in your supplication, my brother.”¹⁴⁶ He did this to teach

others; otherwise, he himself (peace and blessings be upon him!) is the ultimate in the means of reaching God, the foundation of righteous deeds and virtues.

It is related that Mālik said, “No creature should ever be used as a means to reach God,” to which has been answered, “except the Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him!).” This is similar to what Abū Bakr ibn al-‘Arabī said concerning visiting graves: “No grave should be visited for the purpose of benefit except his grave (peace be upon him!).” God-willing, this will be discussed in the future.

PRINCIPLE [153]

The donning of the patched frock (*khirqah*), the presentation of the prayer beads (*subḥah*), the giving of the pledge, the handshake (*muṣāfaḥah*), and the hand-clasp (*mushābakah*) have to do with the knowledge of tradition, unless they are sought for in a spiritual state, in which case they are its fruit. Ibn Abī Jamrah mentions giving the pledge (‘*ahd*) in his chapter in initiation (*bay‘ah*), and he included the pledge in its subdivisions. The donning of the frock was taken from traditions that mention the Prophet’s (peace and blessings be upon him!) removing his and giving it to one of his Companions. The initiation of Salamah ibn al-Akwa‘ indicates the conferral of a mystery therein. As for its purpose and method, this is not the place to discuss them: yes, it is for the lover (*muḥibb*) or for the associate (*muntasib*) or for the realized person; it has hidden secrets known by its followers. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [154]

Whatever is considered to be sound, clear, and coupled with action must of necessity be permissible, such as visiting cemeteries. It is said that visiting them would not be considered but for the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him!), “They remind us of the Hereafter.”¹⁴⁷ This has been said: “They are beneficial for the recitation of the Qur’an, the invocation, and personal supplication which everyone agrees reaches God like charity.” Again: “They are beneficial because if blessings are sought from someone in his lifetime, it is permissible to seek his blessings after his death.” This is what Imān Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī said in “The Book of Proper Conduct During Journeys.”¹⁴⁸ He said, “It is permissible to travel for this purpose. The following *ḥadīth* does not oppose it: ‘Do not undertake a journey except for the purpose of visiting the three mosques,’¹⁴⁹ because all mosques are equal in pre-eminence except for the aforementioned three.” Men of knowledge and the righteous surpass one another in pre-eminence; therefore, it is permissible to travel from a pre-eminent man to one more so. Pre-eminence is known by his miracles (*karamāt*), knowledge, and acts, especially if his miracles are manifested after his death as they were in his lifetime, as in the case of al-Sabtī; or if they are even more manifested after his death, as in the case of Abū Ya‘zā; or at whomsoever’s tomb a personal prayer is answered, and there is more than one in each country. Al-Shāfi‘ī (may God have mercy on him!) referred to this, saying, “The tomb of Mūsā al-Kāẓim is a tested medicine that heals every ailment.”

Our master Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Qawrī (may God have mercy on him!) used to say, “If mercy used to descend dur-

ing their invocation, what do you suppose happens in the places where they meet their Lord, or on the day on which they unite with Him abandoning this abode?" (which is the day of their death). For visiting them on that day at their tombs is a way of gladdening them and an exposure to the gusts of mercy that are renewed upon them. Therefore, visiting cemeteries is a recommended act if it is devoid of anything clearly forbidden or reprehensible by the principles of the Law, such as meeting women there or other things that occur. One should observe proper conduct there: one should refrain from touching the tomb and not pray therein to seek blessings, even though a mosque has been built on the spot, for the Prophet (peace be upon him!) forbade that and insisted upon it. Showing respect for the deceased is like respecting him while alive. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [155]

Proofs based on assumptions might lead to actual certainty, although one must not apply this method in all circumstances, as in the certainty we have in the faith of a Muslim whose deeds of submission are evident, or in the certainty we have in the sanctity of a righteous man whose deeds, words, and self-evident states point to his spiritual station. All of that has to do with our own knowledge without our being certain of how God's knowledge stands on the matter, except with respect to those whom God Himself has specifically dealt with, such as the ten who have been promised Paradise.

The following is correct: "If a man habitually goes to a mosque, bear witness that he has faith;"¹⁵⁰ and "Two characteristics are not to be found in a hypocrite: good manners and understanding of religion." Also: "Two characteristics

are not to be found in a believer: miserliness and improper conduct.” The Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him!) did not reproach Sa‘d for his having made an oath about the faith of a man, although the Messenger asked, “Is he a Muslim?”¹⁵¹ And this *ḥadīth* is also correct: “He is a hypocrite in whom appear three things...”¹⁵²

Because of exceptions to the rule, one must not conclude that all believers are of the same stamp. Rather, these negative traits apply to one who is indifferent about how these characteristics appear in him, whether in contract, deed, or word. The following saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him!) attests to this: “The believer is disposed naturally towards all characteristic qualities except for treachery and lying.” He denies their being a natural characteristic of him, and that is all. But if the negative characteristics manifest themselves in him, this is so by accident, not by their being deeply rooted in him, which is the opposite in the case of the hypocrite. Therefore, these negative characteristics are not embedded in the whole being of the believer, certain parts being exempted, such as faith and the affirmation of Unity, which is the opposite in the case of the hypocrite, in whom no parts are exempt in the matter of disbelief, inasmuch as he does not hold to it outwardly, whereas someone else might; and yet these negative traits are in him, not in someone else. But God knows best! Perhaps he sought to appear as a hypocrite without really being one, but the generality of religious authorities would have gone by the appearance. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [156]

Discernment in the Law is the light of faith that expands in the heart, so that he who possesses it might distinguish the

state of the person whom he is examining from everyone else, or better, that he might distinguish his states by examining him at various times.

Every believer has a share of discernment, but only he whose heart has been purified of distraction and strife is guided to its reality. Then, it is not right that he accept the first thought coming from discernment except after hesitating for a moment in the beginning, and after getting used to it in keeping with his habits. Reference is made to this in the following saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him!): “There have been inspired men (*muḥaddathūn*) in the ancient communities; and if there be any such in my people, then it is ‘Umar.”¹⁵³ Abū Bakr (may God be pleased with him!) said to a woman, “Divide this up with your brothers.” ‘Uthmān (may God be pleased with him!) said, “One of you has entered my presence with eyes full of adultery,” to the man who entered his presence after seeing the charms of a woman.

Discernment through wisdom is consideration of the inner being of people through observation based on one’s outer senses. The *ḥadīths* in which the Prophet said, “Be righteous” refers to this, as well as: “You will fight a group whose footwear is made of fur, and you will fight the Turks,”¹⁵⁴ and the like. The benefit of the two aforementioned is that they make us aware of what they indicate, so that one may take heed or act accordingly, not sureness in judgment inasmuch as they do not lead either to certitude or even—in place of it—probability. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [157]

Disturbance in the mind, whether by reason of imagination or delusion, causes a person not to be taken into considera-

tion, whether from an inner or an outer point of view. But, from the point of view of divine realities, he is to be considered if he utters noble things. His spiritual state and his utterances point to his general well-being, such as the following saying of a madman: “O misfortunate ones! Do not let Satan delude you, for when he enters Hell-Fire he returns to his home, whereas punishment and estrangement will be inflicted upon you!”

Shaykh Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Qādir (may God be pleased with him!) said, “God has sane and insane servants: the sane are better than the insane,” or words to that effect.

When a judge took over the case of a man who had been formally set free and found him sitting on a dung heap, he said to himself, “He who believes this is weak in the mind.” So the man immediately called out to him, “O jurist!” “Yes?” he replied. “Have you been surrounded by knowledge of God?” “No,” said he. He replied, “I am God’s knowledge with which you have not been surrounded,” which is wonderful! Submit yourself and all will be well!

PRINCIPLE [158]

God’s coming to the aid of his servant depends upon his inability to take care of his own welfare, to attract goodness and avoid harmful things. People’s affection for him depends upon the distance he maintains from participating in whatever they are engaged in. Thus, the affection that people hold for children and madmen is strong, and they prefer ascetics and secluded ones to scholars and men of knowledge although the latter two are better when the situation is truly examined. The Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him!) referred to this when he said, “Withdraw from the world and God will love you.

Withdraw from what is in the hands of people and they will love you.”¹⁵⁵ So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [159]

The tongues of creatures are pens of the Truth. For, praising Him by means that are pleasing to Him is actually an act of praise of Him from the Truth by the very act itself. If one is in the Truth, then the praise is from Him; otherwise, it is a warning. If he thanks Him by performing the duties that are due Him, He will perfect him and increase His bounties; otherwise, He will withdraw them from him.

What is to be considered is the general situation and what is in hearts, not by challenging unbelief, whose invalidity is indicated by the writer losing his ability to write or a speaker becoming agitated while speaking.

The following *ḥadīth* has been authenticated: “If God loves a servant He calls upon Gabriel...”¹⁵⁶ So love is considered at the time of meeting and the like. Otherwise the opposite does not triumph over the Truth. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [160]

It is because of the relationship between the Truth and man’s existence that a man does honor to his religion, provided that he seeks God in his daily conduct through religion, and that he seeks His pleasure for a religious purpose. In this he has the righteous as brothers and the predecessors (*salaf*) as examples. Its criterion, after the transformation of intention, is the loss of special standing, for the one who deals with another does not lose the salary of the one he deals with. But if it is simply for everyday living, self-glorification, or the seeking of a higher position and the like, then this is an abuse of religion, which is forbidden. This is why if one of the aforementioned were brought something,

he would tell the giver, “Keep it and see if your intention remains as it was before. If so, give it to me. Otherwise, no!” Al-Junayd said to the rich man who gave him a thousand dinars, “Distribute it among the poor.” He said, “I know more about the poor than you. I brought this so that you would use it for your retreats and the like.” He said, “It is accepted from the likes of you.” “It is given to the likes of you,” the man replied. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [161]

If acceptance of people’s praise and avoidance of their criticisms entail a departure from the truth in either case, then this signifies the dependence of the truth on them. This is a departure from the truth, which is looking to God Most-High for praise and criticism, which means not to overlook the truth in examining the praise of the praiser or the criticism of the critic. Even if he who usually criticizes you now praises you, you should limit yourself to the issue facing you at that instance and whatever praiseworthy attributes of his with which you are familiar. If he who usually praises you now criticizes you, then this should not stop you from praising him, if that is his due. This applies to giving and withholding. So, never praise anyone unless God would do so, and never criticize anyone unless God would do so. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [162]

Whether a miracle (*karāmah*) is manifest or secret depends upon its origin and practical application. If it is through the perspective of one’s own spiritual virtue, then an error against God will render him silent. If it is through the perspective of God’s gift, he will not be silenced even if he

errs. That some of the elect should manifest miracles is correct, just as it is correct that others should keep them secret. For example, Shaykh Abū al-^cAbbās is of the former while Ibn Abī Jamrah is of the latter (may God be pleased with them!), so that one of the latter's students said, "Their paths differ." When word reached his master he said, "Our paths are not at all different. But he is expanded by knowledge while I am restrained by scrupulous piety." This is a subject that will be discussed under a section of its own. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [163]

Jurisprudence includes the legal principles that have been established to combat the ego (*nafs*), which cannot be known by anyone unless he has been taught these things. This comes after a thorough study of the nature of the principles has been conducted, which leads to necessary grace.

For he who knows that arrogance dwells in his self (*nafs*) and is led by his self, approvingly glorifying its pretenses, is unacceptable. But he who is sincere towards God will be blessed by pious servants who will seek him. Thinking well of them with respect to themselves should be sufficient for him at any time. It is harmful to prohibit people from seeing a man who is insincere towards himself, but is sincere towards other people, or is simply indifferent to them, because of the capacity of the ego to pretensions and evil manifestations. Or perhaps the opposite is true as well. He who is afflicted with this condition is like a young bride who has committed adultery and yet is hoping to keep things secret. If that happens, it is for the good of all. If not, there is no blame on those at the banquet. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [164]

God's solicitude for his saints (*awliyā'*) stems from the tranquility of the zeal of their hearts for Him. Their being occupied with things other than Him is the necessary factor for fulfilling their needs and the needs of others with which they were concerned. So it has been said, "When a saint (*walī*) desires something, he is enriched." Some people say to him, "Give it some thought," i.e., "Let it be on your mind and perhaps God will take my situation into consideration, and I will cease to be a bother to you."

Thus, at the beginning, the goals of this world were quickly fulfilled for the saints of God because they were preoccupied with something accidental. This is contrary to the situation at the end of the path, for the Truth prevents their hearts from being preoccupied with anything but their Lord, except for that with which they were commanded. So only the initiates on the path seeking the Truth would benefit from him.

It has been said that the needs of people were fulfilled because of the prayers of Shaykh Abū Madyan (may God have mercy on him!). Yet, he found it difficult to ask for the fulfillment of the least of his needs.

It has been said that there are two types of saints: the saint (*walī*) and the purified one (*ṣafī*). The saint is he whose every desire is fulfilled. The purified one is he whose heart is content with whatever befalls him! So, understand!

SECTION [13]

PRINCIPLE [165]

The uniqueness of God Most-High in being perfect decrees the existence of imperfection in everything but He. So, there

is no perfect being unless He Most-High perfects him. His perfecting him is a result of His grace. So, imperfection is the norm, whereas perfection is exceptional. Accordingly, seeking perfection as a norm in the world is false. Thus, it has been said, "Look at people as if they were perfect and consider imperfection to be in their natures. If perfection appears in them, it is a grace. Otherwise, what has previously been mentioned is the norm." Through this outlook, prudence, good feelings, companionship, and overlooking mistakes take place. This is how this world should be dealt with, as al-Junayd (may God have mercy on him!) said: "I have established a principle through which I shall no longer find repulsive whatever comes to me from this world. This principle is that the world (*dunyā*) is their dwelling and is a source of distress, trials, and strife, and that the world in its entirety is evil. Its decree is to encounter me with everything which I hate. If it encounters me with everything I love, that is a grace. Otherwise the norm is the former." Or he said something to that effect, which is remarkable.

PRINCIPLE[166]

Poverty and wealth are existential attributes, the second of which may be attributed to the Truth to the exclusion of the first. So it must be preferred to the other. Then, is it more pre-eminent for the servant to be attached to an attribute of his Lord, or is his realization of His attribute more perfect? This is the case for the wealthy who are grateful and the poor who are patient. People have two opinions on this. The fact is that the two are connected to each other without the pre-eminence of one over the other. The Messenger (may God's peace and blessings be upon him!) chose

both ways. For he said, “I am hungry one day and full the next...”¹⁵⁷ So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [167]

There are persons who are overcome by wealth through God. So, they perform miracles (*karamāt*) and their tongues make statements immodestly and incessantly; they speak truthfully in the name of the Truth, to the Truth, and in the Truth, such as Shaykh Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Qādir, Abū Ya‘zā, and most of the late Shādhilīs. Others are overcome by poverty towards God. So their tongues are dull and dependent on piety, such as Ibn Abī Jamrah and others. Finally, some persons have different states, and they are the most perfect, such as the states of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him!). For he fed a thousand people from one measure (*sā’*) of dates, and yet he tied a stone to his stomach. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [168]

The servant’s possessing what is placed in his hands of the forms of this world is not in reality so. Rather he is kept in them to the exclusion of everything else because of his inability to deal with and benefit from them. Thus, God has forbidden the servant from being stingy and from being extravagant. The Messenger of God (may God’s peace and blessings be upon him!) even considered the seeking of a middle course between poverty and wealth as an act of salvation. He (peace and blessings be upon him!) forbade the loss of one’s money in addition to other things. Thus, Abū al-‘Abbās al-Haḍramī (may God be pleased with him!) said to us, “It is not a matter of knowing how to dispense with things of this world and thus distributing them here and

there. It is rather a matter of knowing how to hold on to them, thus managing them.” I say that it is so because the world is like a snake. It is not a matter of killing it, but of seizing it while it is alive.

There is the *ḥadīth*: “Asceticism is neither achieved by forbidding what is allowed nor by the loss of money. Rather, asceticism is that you are in God’s hands more trustful than of what is in your hands.”¹⁵⁸ Shaykh Abū Maḍyan (may God be pleased with him!) said, “The world (*dunyā*) is a locust and its head is its love for it. If the locust’s head is cut off, the love dissolves.” When Shaykh Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Qādir (may God be pleased with him!) was asked about the world (*dunyā*), he said, “Remove it from your heart and place it in your hand. For it cannot harm you there.” All of these statements indicate that withdrawing from worldly pleasures does not mean a literal abandonment of them. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [169]

Renunciation of something is indicated by a cool inclination of the heart towards it, so that its availability or absence is of no interest. Thus, al-Shādhilī (may God be pleased with him!) said, “By God, you have granted it [the world] great importance by renouncing it.” I say: This is so when done openly, because evading it gives it importance and is a punishment for abandoning its outward appearances, to which Ibn al-‘Arīf referred in his *Majālis*¹⁵⁹ and al-Harawī in his *Maqāmāt*.¹⁶⁰ He (may God be pleased with him!) also said, “I saw al-Ṣiddīq in a dream in which he said to me, ‘The sign of the absence in the heart of love for worldly things is dispensing with them when they become available.’”

There is comfort in the absence of worldly things, as can

be seen in the case of the Companions (may God be pleased with them all!). For they did not seek out worldly things when they were absent, nor did they preoccupy themselves with them when they were available: “Neither commerce nor trafficking diverts them from the remembrance of God.”¹⁶¹ He did not say, “Nor trafficking nor movement.”

God Most-High has instructed the wealthy, saying, “Do not give to fools your property...”¹⁶² and He instructed the poor saying, “Do not covet that whereby God in bounty has preferred one of you above another.”¹⁶³ In addition, God Most-High said, “Ask God of His bounty,”¹⁶⁴ which does not require a particular form or time. So, it is necessary to carry out all the commandments of God. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [170]

Whatever is blamed for a non-essential reason may be praised for a non-essential reason. Into this category fall wealth, fame, leadership, and the like, which are not reprehensible in their essence, nor are they praiseworthy in their essence. Rather, they are praised and blamed for their consequences. It is for this reason that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him!) blamed the world, saying, “The world is damned: what is in it is cursed.”¹⁶⁵ Yet he also praised it saying, “How excellent a mount it is for the believer!” God (may He be exalted!) commends people who seek religious leadership by their saying, “Give us the grace to lead the righteous.”¹⁶⁶ He (peace be upon him!) said, “I ask You for mercy through which I shall attain the honor of Your grace in this world and the Hereafter.”

A certain man said to him (peace and blessings be upon him!), “Tell me of an act I can perform that will make me loved by God and the people.” He replied, “Withdraw from

the world and God will love you. Withdraw from what is in the hands of people and they will love you.”¹⁶⁷

Yūsuf the Righteous¹⁶⁸ (may God’s blessings and peace be upon him!) said, “Set me over the land’s storehouses; I am a knowing guardian”¹⁶⁹ and so on. So it is necessary to consider the rank of the person and to know his state in order to determine whether something should be allowed or forbidden to him.

Avoidance is best for the well-being of a weak person because of his weaknesses, not because of a fault in the essence of the rule, for originally it was permitted. Thus, the Prophet (peace be upon him!) said to Abū Dharr, “You are a weak man: if you ask for leadership you will be overcome by it. But if it is bestowed upon you without your asking for it, you will be helped against it.”¹⁷⁰ So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [171]

What is prohibited does not become permissible simply for the purpose of averting the use of something reprehensible, and what is permitted does not become permissible if something reprehensible may come of it; for one must ascertain whether one would commit a prohibited act greater than the former without having any other alternative. Thus, it is not permissible for anyone to avert the use of something prohibited by the use of something prohibited that has been agreed upon as such. In addition, he has other alternatives under different circumstances, if there is less of a dispute about it being prohibited, and if the reprehensible act becomes unaccepted after having been rendered unacceptable by an undesired permissible act, as in the story of the thief at the bathhouse, and the like, not as in the story of a witness, which does not fall into this category. Rather, in it is

mentioned the rule in order to illustrate the importance of the rule itself until the error of prohibiting it became evident to him. The matter is analogous to one who is choking on a morsel of food and finds no other possibility of saving himself except by taking a gulp of wine. It is not right that he should lose his life, which is necessary for his existence, in which case he would have had a hand in killing himself and prevented himself from fulfilling the duties of a lifetime. Otherwise, he simply becomes less perfect and nothing else.

The intent of the Ṣūfīs in this is to escape from themselves, not to hide from people. For hiding from them is an exaltation for them. So the matter has returned to where it began. It is not the business of the Ṣūfī to glorify people in any way or manner. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [172]

Devoting the heart to God Most-High is required under any circumstance. So, it is necessary to expel ostentation from one by sincerity, arrogance by outward gratitude, and greed by having trust in God. The purpose of all this is to cause people to drop in the estimation of the servant. Therefore, Sahl ibn ʿAbd Allāh (may God be pleased with him!) said, “The servant will not attain the reality of this matter until his self (*nafs*) falls in his estimation, so that he sees nothing in the two worlds except himself and his Lord; or until people drop in his estimation, so that he does not care in what state they see him.” I say: Therefore, everything becomes non-existent for him thereafter; otherwise, he will become ostentatious. Thereby people will not look up to him for his knowledge because they will be aware of his characteristics.

Shaykh Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Mursī (may God be pleased

with him!) said, “Whoever wishes to manifest his state, then he is the servant of appearances; and whoever wishes to veil his state, then he is the servant of veiling. He is nonetheless a servant of God whether he manifests it or veils it.” This is the kernel of this section.

PRINCIPLE [173]

If the fundamental principle of intention is sound, then obstacles do not cause any harm, as Mālik (may God have mercy on him!) said about the man who liked to be seen on the road to the mosques, but not on the road to the market, and as he said about the man who went to the mosque only to find that everyone had prayed. So he departed with them out of shame. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him!) said, “If Satan approaches you during your prayer saying, ‘You are a hypocrite,’ drive him away immediately.” Al-Fuḍayl said, “Acting for the sake of people is associationism (*shirk*); abandoning action for the sake of people is ostentation. Sincerity is that God may rid you of both traits.”

Within this is the idea that ostentation (*riyāʿ*) occurs as much in abandoning an action as in undertaking it. For it is derived from sight (*ruʿyah*): the hypocrites sighting of people, not their sighting of him. If this were not so, hypocrisy in him would have occurred while he was in retreat. So, he should intend piety and not intend merely to be seen by mankind, for this is the greatest associationism (*shirk*) or is close to it. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [174]

The purpose of refuting ideas by presenting arguments nullifying them consolidates them in the mind because of their

precedence therein in time, and because their forms have been established in the imagination. So it appears that driving them away is accomplished by submitting them to a higher power and by distracting oneself from them by any means available. Thus Sufyān said, “Drive him away immediately,” and the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him!) said, “Let him say: Praise be to God Who rendered his cunning into temptation.”¹⁷¹

It is said, “Satan is like a dog: if you occupy yourself with resisting it, it will bite you and tear your clothes. But if you call its master, he will call it off gently.” He did come to me one night as I was praying and said, “You are a hypocrite.” So I opposed him in his presence, but he did not leave until he began to submit his claim as to how it applied to my actions, to which I replied, “Hypocrisy in this is proof of sincerity in others. All my actions are defective, but this is all I can do.” So he left me at that point, and praise be to God!

PRINCIPLE [175]

The disclosure or the concealment of one’s actions are the same when sincerity has been achieved. But, before sincerity is achieved disclosure and concealment encourage ostentation. One might want to observe a certain pious deed because of the Law without being aware either of sincerity or hypocrisy. So it might be that one’s observance of the deed is through the fear of disequilibrium or for the sake of peace of mind from struggling against disclosure in general, or for the sake of suppressing some matter that might lead to one’s being praised. Superogatory devotions are preferred, based on the saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him!): “Perform some of your prayers in your homes, for

God will render them a blessing therein, and do not take them as tombs!”¹⁷² But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [176]

Deceit is to repulse falsehood and truth by a falsehood that resembles the truth. Gentle courtesy is to repulse falsehood by acceptable methods, thus confirming the truth whether it is for your good or someone else’s good.

The following is correct: “Gentle courtesy is an act of charity,” and “Whoever intercedes on behalf of his brother but is presented with a gift for his efforts has opened the grand door of usury for himself.” The difference between a gift and a bribe is that what was done for the sake of love only is a gift, but what was done for the sake of a nonreligious benefit (not for the wealth of the person himself), and which was for a gainful purpose, is a bribe. These four are difficult to discern in some matters even for the most intelligent sages. So scrupulous piety is required. But God (may He be exalted!) knows best!

PRINCIPLE [177]

Moral character is a state that is deeply rooted in one’s self, from which things easily arise: what is good in those things is good, and what is bad is bad. They manifest themselves in opposites, such as avarice and generosity, modesty and arrogance, aspiration and contentment, begrudging and goodwill, envy and benevolence, greed and pride, victory and forgiveness, and so on. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [178]

Inner moral qualities should not be judged by opposing outside criteria except for what they might indicate. It appears

that avarice is the burden of giving to others, whereas generosity is the pleasure of giving. So, the miser is he for whom giving is burdensome, even though he has nothing for himself, whereas the generous man is he for whom it is a pleasure, even though he has given nothing. Thus it has been said, “If one hesitates between two opposites that is miserliness.”

Arrogance is the belief that one possesses outstanding spiritual qualities even if he be in the lowest levels of humbleness, while modesty is the opposite. If this were not true, arrogance would not be so found among the destitute as to be reproached, and so on. So, understand this, and pursue the subject in the books of the elite, where you will find it treated exhaustively.

PRINCIPLE [179]

What souls are naturally disposed towards should not be denied them, for the weakness and strength of the inclination are in the souls, and they change its purpose from one thing to another; for example: ordinary greed becomes the greed of the heart attached to God, placing trust and hope in Him, and striving for the Hereafter rather than for this world; avarice becomes miserliness in performing forbidden or unacceptable actions; ordinary arrogance becomes arrogance towards those who are deserving thereof by way of raising one’s aspiration beyond creatures to the point where all things decreed, to say nothing of all creatures, are effaced on one’s aspiration; envy becomes envy for the sake of seeking felicity; anger becomes anger for the sake of God (may He be exalted!) in situations where He has so commanded it to be; begrudging becomes begrudging those who oppose God and have no relationship to Him; pride

becomes pride against the world (*dunyā*) and those of it; victory becomes victory for the Truth when the occasion demands it; and so on. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [180]

The meaning of envy is based on an inner grievance. The purpose of the envious person is to ruin the very thing envied, for the person envied. If virtues appear in people, the envy is directed against the virtues themselves and their destruction is sought. Thus, the purposes and goals of the envious differ. The man who is envious of all does not attribute to the likes of himself the attributes of the common man, except treachery, cheating, and the like. The man who is envious of soldiers exhibits naught but a lack of respect, a minimum performance of duties, and the like. The man who is envious of jurists exhibits naught but unbelief, error, and the like, in order to ruin his inner being and its continuous state of virtue by actions which destroy it unceasingly. The man who is envious of poverty exhibits naught but tricks, fabrications, and pretensions that he is a man of honor and the like. There are more examples that are too lengthy to discuss. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [181]

For those with understanding, repulsing evil with its like is indicative of something quite grave. So, it is necessary for him who treads on the path of virtue (*iḥsān*) to repulse evil with an act better than evil, as God (may He be exalted and glorified!) instructed us: “Behold, he between whom and you there is enmity shall be as if he were a loyal friend.”¹⁷³ None resorts to this but a righteous man who has abandoned his own fortune and has received a mightier fortune

from his Lord, as He Most-High said. Furthermore, if anger is roused in him, refraining from reacting is commanded: “If a provocation from Satan should provoke you, seek refuge in God...”¹⁷⁴ As for him who does not accept the path of virtue and goodwill, he should be shunned: “Turn away from the ignorant,”¹⁷⁵ and so on. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [182]

Discipline, when the occasion arises, is carried out either to maintain order or because it is an act of mercy for the person disciplined, so that he not perpetrate an offence against anyone and no offence be perpetrated against him. Implementation of the penalties and the holy war (*jihād*) is a mercifulness for us, and has as its goal others’ sharing in the mercifulness with us; and it is also a punishment for them because of their having strayed from the path of righteousness. So, whichever point of view is examined is correct, for everyone has a role for propagating the word of God, establishing His religion, and maintaining the order of Islam.

God Most-High said, “Fight them, till there is no persecution and the religion is God’s.”¹⁷⁶ The Mālikīs consider this a mercy on us and on them, so they categorized it under the heading of devotions (*‘ibādāt*). The Shāfi‘īs consider it a punishment on them, so they place it under that category. The traditionalists consider it a means. However, the first school is closer to the way of the Ṣūfīs in this matter, for everything is a mercy. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [183]

Anger is an ember in the heart which fades away in the person in whom it had become enflamed rightly or wrongly. If the possessor of this ember is in the right, his anger will

amount to nothing because of the power of his generous disposition, out of which the anger originated. If he is in the wrong, the matter will continue to subside until it fades away.

God has praised the believers for their helping one another for the sake of the Truth. For He Most-High said, “And those, who when an oppressive wrong is inflicted on themselves do help themselves.”¹⁷⁷ Then He recommended that they be forgiving: “But whosoever pardons and puts things right, his reward is due from God.”¹⁷⁸ It has been said, “Among the noble traits of character is to forgive him who has wronged you.” In the *ḥadīth* God Most-High said to him who prayed for revenge upon his oppressor, “You pray for revenge upon the one who has oppressed you, and the one whom you have oppressed does the same against you. If I grant the prayer for you I shall grant the prayer against you.” The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him!) said, “Is it difficult for any of you to be like Abū Ḍamḍam?”¹⁷⁹ However in al-Bukhārī there is: “They dislike to be humiliated and when they had the upper hand they would be forgiving.” This is the core of one’s obligations, of the strength of the believer, of his carrying out the requirements of the Law, and is the essence of noble character. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [184]

Nullification of bad qualities when they surface occurs by reacting against them, such as praising the envied party, invoking blessings upon the oppressor, and facing him in a beneficial manner, all of which are based on God Most-High’s saying, “Repel with that which is fairer and behold, he between whom and you there is enmity shall be as if he

were a loyal friend;”¹⁸⁰ and the Prophet’s (God’s peace and blessings be upon him!) saying, “Man is not free of three things: envy, doubt, and foreboding. When you feel envious do not have any wants. If you see an evil omen, continue onwards. If you have a doubt, confirm it.”

Most cases point to pursuing the opposite course of action with regards to such things in order to repel their evil. It has been said, “Righteousness is that which does not harm the smallest particle. The believer is likened unto the earth on which is put every ugliness, but from which only good things emerge.” May God grant us well-being through His grace!

PRINCIPLE [185]

Well-being is tranquility and calmness whether for a reason or not. If it is due to God, then it is perfect well-being; otherwise, it is not. The well-being of every people is according to their state, as has been discussed earlier, and the like applies to their discord. Ibn al-‘Arīf said, “Inner strife has become common. It is one’s ignorance of his values.” Thus, it is necessary for the servant to consider well-being in himself for himself, so that strife not overtake him. Otherwise, he will fail materially and spiritually in promoting the welfare of the people. So, consider this point, for it is among one’s duties. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [186]

What has no harmful effect on the outer body is simply to be considered a disturbance that is without benefit. Thus, one has been commanded to bear with patience any thing harmful to one’s honor, whether a word or a doubt, according to God Most-High’s saying: “Be patient with what

they say,”¹⁸¹ which is opposite to taking action. For the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him!) ordered emigration (*hijrah*) when the Meccans’ intent was to harm him with action. He (peace and blessings be upon him!) said, “The believer is bright, intelligent, and cautious: two thirds of him is disregard,” that is, a disregard for words and doubt, not for action. He (peace and blessings be upon him!) desired to avoid strife. Al-Bukhārī said that this is a part of religion, so it is necessary to give it due consideration.

PRINCIPLE [187]

The perfection of a thing is to be sought in the mode of its beginning: the inheritor’s portion is in proportion to what he inherits. For “Religion began as an exile and will again be an exile.”¹⁸² It will not become complete in the time of its exile except through emigration, as happened at its onset. No Prophet has had the support of all his people, but only of a few, as Waraqah said, “No man has ever brought forth a similar thing as yours without being persecuted,” for the relationship is always subject to the existence of evil; and thus you never find a great man in religion but he is exposed to that evil, as the *ḥadīth* says: “The people most prone to trials are ...”¹⁸³

PRINCIPLE [188]

Acquiring moral qualities, when the need arises, through the disintegration of their opposite qualities is difficult, unless a previous adjustment has been made. Otherwise, the seeker of these qualities will become fatigued. He (peace and blessings be upon him!) has said, “Knowledge comes only through learning, and discernment comes only through reflection. He who seeks good will be given it: he who

guards against evil will be protected.” Abū Nū‘aym quoted this in “The Rules for the Scholar and the Apprentice.” But God knows best!

SECTION [14]

PRINCIPLE [189]

A man acknowledging his own faults and the blessings bestowed upon him by God without pursuing all the implications, increases his insolence and is prevented from realizing his true nature. Pursuit of the matter in detail requires its expression in the person in a general way, so that this in turn be the motivation for recognizing imperfection on the one hand and for manifesting gratitude for a blessing on the other. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [190]

The reason for examining the faults of the ego (*nafs*) and its manifestations, and for being familiar with the intricacies of spiritual states (*ahwāl*), is that man might know himself, be humble *vis-à-vis* his Lord, and see his faults and shortcomings. Nevertheless, it is not in the power of man to be absolved of every fault by having it eradicated. For, you could not reach God except after the annihilation of your bad qualities and the eradication of your pretensions, you would never reach him. So, understand!

Principle [191]

Discerning the source of suggestive thoughts (*khawāṭir*) is one of the tasks of contemplatives in order to remove distraction from the heart. There are four sources of thoughts: divine (*rabbānī*), which is direct and without means, psy-

chical (*nafsānī*), angelic (*malakī*), and satanic (*shayṭānī*), All of them occur with God's power, will, and knowledge. Thoughts of divine source are immovable and unchanging like the psychical, and are directed towards a desired object or otherwise. What is concerned with strict unity is divine, whereas what is concerned with carnal desires is psychical. If it agrees with a legal principle without the intrusion of a special dispensation or whim, it is divine; otherwise it is psychical.

Coolness and expansion of the heart follow the thought occurring from a divine source, whereas dryness and contraction follow the psychical. The divine is like a brilliant dawn which is ever-increasing in clarity, while the psychical is like a standing column which remains in the same state even if it gets smaller. As for the angelic and satanic thoughts, they are unstable. The angelic brings forth only good, while the satanic may bring forth good while causing confusion. The difference between the two is that the angelic is supported by proofs and is accompanied by the expansion of the heart, and is strengthened by the remembrance (*dhikr*) of God. Its effect is like the twilight and it has a penetrative effect. This is in opposition to the satanic, which weakens remembrance, blinds one from seeing the proofs, and is followed by heat accompanied by a burning, cloudiness, anxiety, and dullness in time, and laziness may even follow. The satanic emanates from the left side of the heart, while the angelic is from the right. The psychical is from the back of the heart, while the divine is from the opposite side. In reality they are all divine, except that, with respect to relationships, they are attributed to whatever they are related to; otherwise, they are related to the divine by wisdom. The realization of this is only through intuition,

for it has been said, “He who understands what enters in himself will know what comes to his mind.”

PRINCIPLE [192]

Being moved by news of things that occurred is better than hearing of them and being moved by something else. Thus, it has been said that stories are among the soldiers of God through which God strengthens the heart of the gnostics. It has been asked, “Is there proof of this in God’s Book?” He said, “With all that We relate to you of the stories of the apostles, We make firm your heart.”¹⁸⁴ The meaning of which is that he who witnesses the Truth by experience is more likely to have a clear and stronger reaction than the witness of Truth and deed by word of mouth. For the being of the agent is continuous in the act, throughout the past. Thus it has been said that poetry is a psychological force: it only strengthens the ego (*nafs*). If poetry recitation takes place in the presence of a praiseworthy man, his good qualities are strengthened; otherwise, it helps to push them away. This is why the pious ancestors did not engage in it except when necessary to rally the self to perform a commendable act, such as the holy war (*jihād*) and like deeds. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [193]

“Everything gets its due and is given short measure,” as ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (may God be pleased with him!) said. He in whom an outstanding quality manifests itself is a denigrator if he denies the quality in someone else, whether it pertains to knowledge, action, or spiritual state. However, if he, by an open statement or allusion, attributes to himself the virtues of someone else, he is a thief. He who has sat-

urated himself with what he was not given is like the wearer of two sets of lies. Thus, it has been said, “He who relates a story about the pious ancestors and considers himself to be in that spiritual state, will see his feet slip, causing him to fall into the abyss of error, and soon the witnesses of examination will expose him.” This is so because he who claims for himself a rank higher than his actual rank will be demoted to a status lower than his rank. He who stands below his rank will be elevated beyond it. He who claims a spiritual rank will struggle to attain it. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [194]

If one transmits someone else’s words, one should do so verbatim and by attributing them to him; otherwise, the words are counterfeit. The same applies to a paraphrase of the speaker’s utterance without adding to it by referring to the manner of its transmission. If changes have occurred in it, its meaning can still be discerned without nullifying the discourse. It is necessary to clarify every meaning; otherwise, it is best to quote the utterance or show its relationship to the discourse if a change has occurred. Whatever has been added to the utterance or attributed to it must be examined. For it has been said: “Whoever quotes the meaning merely quotes his understanding of it.” For perhaps there are additional meanings in the utterance which the quoter is unaware of, even though *qamḥ* (wheat) is rendered *burr* (wheat). For the purposes of rendering something complete or probable or stronger, it is not necessary to suppress one authority or point to the claims of another, for that procedure is detrimental to the manifestation of the truth. As for making that procedure necessary through the utterance of the truth, this is an articulation of something

that cannot be repudiated; otherwise, the accuser falls back into contradiction. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [195]

The correct use of a word to give the proper meaning is necessary, just as is the observation of the meaning to convey the essence of a word. So, it is necessary for one to capture correctly the meaning so that the tongue might adequately express it. The source of the first and the second is the speaker. Because of this the religious leaders have identified the errors of the common people and have cautioned against the many facets of errors in some expressions. Perhaps one would be accused of unbelief, innovations, and manifest error because of a deficiency in expressing his intent in proper terms free of obscurities. How often this kind of thing has happened to the Ṣūfīs so that, dead or alive, they have been rejected. The harm may occur from another source, which is that of not having widespread authority among the Ṣūfīs, the result being that an esoteric truth is accepted from one man but not from another. Indeed, it may be accepted from one person and not from another despite the use of the exact wording and meaning. We have seen this happen often. Shaykh Abū al-^ḥAbbās al-Mūrsī addressed this matter.

PRINCIPLE [196]

Resorting to symbolism is due to a lack of self-control in being expressive, which is the result of a psychic faculty that cannot be kept silent; or it occurs because of the intention of an inspired person to give meaning to the symbols, so that he might attest to it; or it occurs so that the followers of esoterism, and not others, might observe the essence of

wisdom therein; or it occurs to incorporate many meanings into a few words so as to make it accessible or be noted, or cast it in people's minds, or protect it, or avoid the evil of an envious person or one who rejects its meanings and principles. Along these lines is the saying of al-Shādhilī (may God have mercy on him!): “*Qāf jīm* are two secrets of your essence that point to other than yourself.” If you consider the two from the point of view of language, *qāf* is the last letter of the word *farq* (“separation”), which is the beginning of *jam*^c (“union”), whose first letter is *jīm*. From the point of view of number, by means of which existence is completed and operates, *jīm* is the addition of an even and an uneven number, which is the goal of number, like the *qāf*, which is its goal; it is used to define even and odd numbers; the *qāf* ends in *jīm* through the even and odd numbers. The position of *qāf* to *jīm* is the utmost limit of *jīm* to *qāf*. From the point of view of cosmology they are united in one reality. The *qāf* comes from the *jīm*, in spite of its number in itself; and thus the *jīm*, by virtue of its rank, has a symbolism that would astonish intelligence and understanding. From the point of view of its shape, the *qāf* has an encompassing and dominating nature, but not from the point of view of its pronunciation, calligraphy, or meaning. *jīm* shares in this aspect amongst lower things, because its top points to the psychical world of dominion (*malakūt*), its bottom to the material world of royalty (*mulk*), while its base points to the spiritual world of Almighty (*jabarūt*). This brings to one's attention that the shape of existence and its laws is a triangle to which logic and everyday rules attest. Explaining this would require much time and space, so consider what we have alluded to above. Indeed your Lord is the Opener of all, the Knower of all!

PRINCIPLE [197]

Knowledge contains its proof in itself. A person claiming to have knowledge is believed by examining him and is disbelieved by his lack thereof. The knowledge of one's receptivity is limited to the receptive person. His claims are either corroborated or uncovered as false by witnessing his state. However, the viewer may be mistaken because he has not attained the same state due to a passion in him. So, he should limit himself to what is correct and to what is known to be refuted rather than to acknowledge the latter. Making an error rejecting a matter is harmful, whereas acceptance is a kindness. He who has achieved realization has not achieved victory in any way unless a lawful matter becomes a part of him, such as guiding a novice or advising one who deviated from the right path, which do not occur except through his claim. Whatever arguments appear are enough to indicate the goal. So, there is no need to manifest special characteristics to the non-elect. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [198]

There is no criterion but Revelation. No appeal is to be made but to It. God Most-High said, "If you differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to God and to the Messenger if you believe in God and the Last Day."¹⁸⁶

The religious scholars have imposed, forbidden, recommended, discouraged, and rendered acceptable things based on Revelation by explaining their methods and proofs. So, it is necessary to examine their principles in this process without going into different aspects of the Truth and without deviation from the Truth. He who follows the way of the early Muslims is categorized with those who reach an agreement by the process of consensus (*ijmāʿ*).

When a difference of opinion occurs, his religious leader is sought for his judgment. He is not repudiated except for what his school has agreed upon if it repeatedly occurred, but not out of necessity. Otherwise, necessity has rules.

No one has one way of determining what is beyond being obligatory and forbidden. If he has established its principle as it is, unconnected to something else, then he should let it be. In that fashion, the matter will not lead him to the limit of deprecation, nor will his circumstances testify to his belittling of that. Many a grateful eater is better than a patient fasting person. So, the Şūfīs agreed that they would not awaken a sleeping person nor would they force someone eating to fast. This is from the point of view of ostentation and effort, because the concern for fulfilling the obligations and nothing else is the essential thing, and the entire *Sunnah* attests to that. But God knows best!

SECTION [15]

PRINCIPLE [199]

To seek realization with sincerity requires relaxation in deeds most of the time, without being concerned about anything except what is obligatory and forbidden. Many Şūfīs have committed errors in their actions, and many people repudiated them because of those errors, which is the opposite of what they merit. So, the Şūfī must be anxious to carry out the method of the order by abandoning what causes doubt, and repulsing what caused censure, even if it is permitted, because his engaging in it causes criticism of the Path. So, understand!

Seeking the Absolute Truth is harmful to the methodology of the Path. Thus some Şūfīs have encountered dis-

asters, making ecstatic remarks (*shataḥāt*), so that some actually blasphemed or committed transgression in the light of the Law or knowledge both inwardly and outwardly. Thus, one must be careful so as not to accept anything but what derives from the Book and the *Sunnah*. In following a matter, it should be followed only in the current sense given to the two sources without dispute. Otherwise, there is no blame on one who disagrees provided his argument is based on a correct principle.

Abū Sulaymān al-Dārānī (may God be pleased with him!) said, “The expressions of the Ṣūfīs make an impression in my heart for days till I say, ‘I do not accept you without the two witnesses of justice: the Book and the *Sunnah*.’”

PRINCIPLE [200]

Every Ṣūfī who, because of his spiritual states, neglects observing his duty *vis-à-vis* mankind as he was commanded, and turns his concern towards the Truth without observing the proper norm towards His servants, will without doubt fall into error in his actions or spiritual states, or a calamity will occur in his utterances. He will either destroy himself or others, or both. But the above will not befall him if he befriends an established master or a righteous jurist or a knowledgeable initiate or a loyal friend who becomes a mirror to him: if he errs, the other corrects him; if he makes claims about himself, the other dismisses them; if he asks questions, the other guides him. The other is just to him with regards to his state and advises him on all his states without accusation or neglect. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [201]

There are many pretenders on this path because of its strangeness, and there is a lack of understanding because of its subtleties. There is a great deal of rejection of its followers because of its purity. People giving advice have cautioned against pursuing the path due to the numerous errors therein. Religious leaders compiled works to refute its followers because of what heretics have done to it and because of erroneous things attributed to people on the Path. Even Ibn al-^cArabī al-Ḥātimī (may God have mercy on him!) said, “Beware of this path, for most of those who deviate from it were of it. It is but a path of doom and a path of this world. He who actualized his knowledge, action, and spiritual state will gain the glory of eternity. He who abandons realization in the Path will be doomed and will come to an end.” We ask God for well-being through His grace and generosity.

PRINCIPLE [202]

As long as jurisprudence is concerned with action, Ṣūfism cannot be sound without it. Holding on to jurisprudence with the intention of acting upon it allows one to reach one’s goal. Thus, the jurisprudent Ṣūfi has attained a perfect state, which is the opposite of him who has no jurisprudence. Jurisprudence suffices without Ṣūfism, but Ṣūfism does not suffice without jurisprudence. Thus, religious leaders insisted on carrying out the exoteric forms when they were asked about the esoteric sciences. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him!) said to the man who asked him to teach him some of the subtle points of knowledge, “What have you done with the elementary knowledge you have?” Then he said, “Go and learn what is there.” He

(peace and blessings be upon him!) also said, “Whosoever acts according to what he knows, God will bequeath to him knowledge of what he did not know before.” So understand!

PRINCIPLE [203]

The existence of denial prevents one from accepting the thing denied, or its like, because of the heart’s aversion to it. Faith is the key to attaining what is believed in even if one does not actively pursue the matter, for there is nothing to repel it from the heart. He who has been made to understand with jurisprudence knows the possibility of being blessed with a gift or an illumination without this depending on time, place, or a person, for God’s power is not dependent for its cause on anything; otherwise, he would be deprived of the very thing he rejects. But, he is excused if his rejection is based on a principle; otherwise, there is no excuse for rejecting something of which he has no knowledge. Rather, accept, and all will be well. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [204]

A person’s rejection is based either on independent judgment, or on blocking the means that may lead to wrongdoing, or on a lack of investigation, or a lack of understanding, or a deficiency of knowledge, or an ignorance of the thing in question, or on the vagueness of perspective, or on stubbornness. The characteristic of all, except for the last one mentioned, is reference to the Truth when necessary. For the stubborn man does not accept what is manifest, nor can his claim be justified, nor is there evenhandedness in his perspective. If the one who perceives

a misdeed, refers to the Truth, he cannot but stand firm on his rejection as long as the aspect of wrong-doing remains in what he rejects. In this category fall the warnings of Abū Ḥayyān in his *Naḥr* and *Baḥr* and Ibn al-Jawzī in his *Talbīs*,¹⁸⁷ as they claim and agree upon. In their statements there are indications that both used independent judgment. Ibn al-Jawzī specialized in embroidering his books with the discourses of the Ṣūfis while repudiating them, and this indicates that he intended to block the means leading to wrong-doing. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [205]

Defining faults while forgiving them is sound counsel, but making them known and exposing them is a scandal. He who acquaints you with yourself without anyone else knowing is a counselor. He who exposes your fault in front of others is a scandalmonger. No Muslim should dishonor another Muslim except in conformity to a rule that the disciplined can sustain, and this without going into those things having no connection with the rule or mentioning a fault that is extraneous to the rule; otherwise, the rule will come down over his own head through the domination of the Divine Power, in conformity with the Divine Wisdom and the sincere promise indicated by the Prophet's saying: "Do not show malice towards your brother, for God will heal him and afflict you." He (peace and blessings be upon him!) forbade the slandering of a slave when she was being whipped as a punishment for having committed adultery. How then should it be for the believing freeman who upholds the letter of the Law?

The following is correct: "He who conceals the fault of a Muslim, God will conceal his faults in this world and in

the next. But he who exposes the faults of a Muslim, God will expose his faults on the Day of Judgment.”¹⁸⁸

PRINCIPLE [206]

The preservation of religions has priority over the preservation of non-essential elements in general. Therefore, it is permissible to refer to them in order to put things in order or give credence to a saying or a testimony, or to carry out a judgment, or to set in motion a state such as marriage, teaching, and to caution against a person of leadership lest others be deluded by his rank. Perhaps in this category lies the *Ta^cbīr* of Ibn al-Jawzī, as well as the intention behind the refutation of his work by the Ṣūfis. But, exceeding the limits by slander is the opposite of this, and because of this the realized sages have repudiated him. Otherwise, it is the most beneficial book that points out the aspects or error so that we would take heed, and he has drawn attention to the *Sunnah* in the clearest way that he could. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [207]

Men of good counsel have cautioned us against the *Talbīs* of Ibn al-Jawzī, the *Fuṭūḥāt* of al-Ḥātimī—and indeed all of his books or most of them—as well as the works of Ibn Sab^cīn,¹⁸⁹ Ibn al-Farīḍ,¹⁹⁰ Ibn Ḥalā, Ibn Dawsakīn, al-^cAfīf al-Tilimsānī, al-Aykī al-^cAjmī, al-Aswad al-Aqṭa^c, Ibn Ishāq al-Tujībī, al-Shushtarī,¹⁹¹ sections of the *Ihyā’* by al-Ghazālī, which they considered perilous, as well as his *al-Nafkh wa al-Taswiyah*, his *al-Maḍnūn bihi ‘alā Ghayr Ahlih* and his *Mi^crāj al-Sālikīn*,¹⁹² his *al-Munqidh*,¹⁹³ sections of *Qūt al-Qulūb* by Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī, the works of al-Suhrawardī,¹⁹⁴ and the like. So, it is necessary to be

cautious of peculiarities born out of error, but one should not avoid everything and oppose the pursuit of knowledge. This occurs only through three means: having a sincere disposition and sound character, and accepting what is self-evident and not involving oneself in anything else. Otherwise, he who examines this matter will be doomed by objecting to its followers and by accepting things for the wrong reasons. So, understand!

SECTION [16]

PRINCIPLE [208]

There are five reasons for repudiating the Ṣūfīs: the first of these is with reference to the perfection of their path, for if the Ṣūfīs latch on to a special dispensation, or if they misbehave, or are negligent in a matter, or if a fault manifests itself in them, people hasten to repudiate them. This is because the slightest flaw is manifest in something clean. No servant is free of fault unless he is granted infallibility or protection by God. The second reason is the sensitivity of the observer, and as a result, criticism of the Ṣūfīs' knowledge in their states occurs, inasmuch as the ego (*nafs*) hastens to deny knowledge that it does not possess. The third reason is the existence of many who fall short of their claims and of those who seek gain through the guise of religiosity. This is the reason for denying any claim that they might make even though there is proof of it, because it is found doubtful. The fourth reason is fear for the generality that they might be led astray by following esoteric doctrines without upholding the letter of the Law, as happens to many ignorant people. The fifth reason is the covetousness some people have for the ranks of Ṣūfism, since the appear-

ance of Truth invalidates a lesser truth. Thus, people are quick to become inflamed with the Ṣūfīs, moreso than with any other group, and persons in official positions exert pressure on them more than on anyone else. He who falls in any one of these categories, except for the last, is either rewarded or excused. But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [209]

A relationship, when it is realized, decrees that a sign of the affiliation be manifest. Therefore, the saint is remembered more than the jurist because the jurist is linked to one of the attributes of himself, namely, his understanding and his jurisprudence, which disappear with him, while the saint is affiliated with his Lord. So how can he who has realized a relationship with the Living, Who without a defect in Himself never dies, die? And when he who strives knows to such a point that he dies a martyr in the realization of God's word and in elevating it both in word and meaning, his life is spiritual through his constant miracles and the remembrance of his grace for all time. Some persons die but are alive through people.

PRINCIPLE [210]

The books that have been written to repudiate the Ṣūfīs are beneficial in that they caution against error. But there is no benefit unless three conditions are met: Firstly, there must be a good intention in the critic through adhering to his personal authority, for his goal is to block the way leading to wrong-doing, even though he uses harsh language in exaggerating his repudiation, as does Ibn al-Jawzī. Secondly, one must undertake to excuse what the critic said by giving it an explanation or pointing out its errors and the like. For

the critic is not infallible. Indeed, a saint may commit errors and mistakes and have faults and lapses because of his fallibility and because of the hand of Destiny, as al-Junayd (may God have mercy on him!) indicated by quoting His Words: "God's commandment must be performed."¹⁹⁵ Thirdly, one must restrict oneself by examining himself with regard to the matter in question without passing judgment on others. One should not disclose it to one who has no intention of following the path, thus causing doubts in his beliefs which had hitherto been the reason for his salvation and success. If it is necessary, let him oppose what was said without indicating the speaker, and let him refer to his greatness and majesty while giving him his due. For forgiving the errors of the sages is a duty and protecting the religion is even more obligatory.

He who follows the religion of God will be rewarded; he who supports it is helped; dealing justly with the Truth is obligatory. There is no good in religion when accompanied by passion. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [211]

The claim of a claimant is judged by the fruit of his claim. If the fruit appears as claimed, the claim is valid; otherwise, he is a liar. Repentance not followed by devoutness (*taqwā*) is invalid. Devoutness unaccompanied by scrupulous piety is incomplete. Scrupulous piety that does not bring forth asceticism is deficient. Asceticism that does not lead to trust in God is barren. Trust whose fruit is not cutting off ties from all but God and seeking Him, is a form without reality. For true repentance occurs when what is forbidden is opposed. Perfect devotion occurs when God is the only goal. Righteousness occurs through the recitation of the li-

tanies (*wird*) without innovation. Scrupulous piety exists when the occasions of passion give rise to confusion; otherwise, it is non-existent. Asceticism is abstinence when given a choice and acquiescence when opposition takes place. It is of no consequence whether or not the things of this world fall into the hands of the ascetic. Trust in God occurs when difficult circumstances arise, when on all sides we see the absence of rain and the infertility of the earth and the death of every creature. If the heart becomes tranquil, it has attained the aforementioned state; otherwise, it has not. Every action whose obligatory nature has been decreed otherwise, or whose recommended nature has been decreed, is sought by the ego. It is passion that seeks it, even if in itself the deed is right. If it has been invalidated by a supposition of its invalidity, then its purpose is simply that it be mentioned. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [212]

Among the incentives to action is the existence of the fear (*khashyah*) of God, which is glorification of Him accompanied by awe. Fear (*khawf*), which is alarm in the heart, stems from fear of the Lord's revenge. Hope (*rajā'*) is tranquility due to Him Most-High through the evidence of His work in everyone; otherwise it is conceit. The sign of perfect love is to act in a manner pleasing to the beloved; if one acts in a displeasing manner, then it is not.

Falling short should not be a cause for slander, this being based on the Prophet's saying (peace and blessings be upon him!), "Do not curse him, for he loves God and His Messenger," even though he saw the man drinking wine often. There is also the tradition of the Bedouin who asked "When is the Day of Judgment?" The Prophet replied, "What have

you prepared for it?” He answered, “Nothing, but I love God and His Messenger.”

Yes, the lover does not permit himself to disobey his beloved, for he cannot be insistent. Should a passionate desire or the like overcome him he hastens to the state of satisfaction through frequent repentance and contrition.

PRINCIPLE [213]

Realization is but a prelude to success. For every law is an aspect of the Truth, but not vice versa. The *Sharī'ah* is evident, whereas the Truth (*Ḥaqīqah*) is without legal prescriptions. However, both are attributes of the Truth (*Ḥaqq*). Nullifying one of the two necessarily indicates that there is an imperfection in one's religion, and nullifying a law causes imperfection in the carrying out of one's obligations. So, it is necessary to give everything its proper due by following the *Sunnah*, experiencing blessings and reflecting upon the judgments of fate, while affirming the *Sharī'ah* and one's livelihood in the world. Thus, it is necessary to abandon self-determination when overwhelmed by Destiny, while carrying out time-restrained directives in submission to God's commands and prohibitions. For both are from the one God who commands and prohibits: “He shall not be questioned as to what He does, but they shall be questioned.”¹⁹⁶

So, you must be content with His judgment, for even being discontent with it is blasphemous. In addition, do not fail to be satisfied with what has already been decreed, for to do so is an act of imperfection. The difference between the two is that the former is His judgment, whereas the latter is that upon which the judgment was made. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [214]

It is necessary to exaggerate the burden of self-examination because of the nature of the ego (*nafs*). Any failure to dispute with it is an invitation to self-satisfaction. Restraining the ego necessitates a dislike of it, while gentleness towards it leads to passivity. So, it is necessary to carry out unceasing self-examination rather than disputations, and to perform proper actions or what is closest thereto, without any exceptions to what is manifestly called for, and without seeking the hidden meanings of actions. Consider what is to be done and what is to be set aside. Consider the following saying: “He whose today is not better than his yesterday is a loser.” He who does not advance forward is actually at fault; persistence in a particular act is advancement because adding today to “yesterday” and previous days constitutes an increase, especially since it has been said that: “The conquest of every station is doubling the previous one, for truly the conquests are like the doublings of the squares of a chess board.” Thus, al-Junayd (may God have mercy on him!) said, “If a seeker seeks God by following the *Sunnah*, and then turns away from it, that which he misses will be more than what he gained from it.” The following verse attests to this: “He will multiply it for him manifold.”¹⁹⁷ So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [215]

Every sincere seeker must recite the litanies (*wird*) at their appointed time, if possible. If a human obstacle or a legal obligation prevents him from doing so, then he must carry it out after performing what he must without any excess that would undermine the time-bound obligation. Then, he must take steps to prevent something similar from recurring

lest he become idle. Owing to the fact that night and day follow each other and that all times belong to God, you should not appoint anything to yourself except what has been appointed to you. Thus, a certain shaykh said, “Your Lord knows neither day nor night.” God refers to the creation in temporal terms, but not as the ignorant understand it to be with regard to the litanies. A shaykh who was seen carrying a *subḥah* was asked, “Do you count with it?” “No, for Him,” he replied.

Every novice who disregards time-bound duties is idle; while every novice who is heedful of his time-bound duties, but does not contemplate the divine wisdom behind them, is devoid of any realization. He who does not know the causes of the states in which he finds himself, is not intelligent, or rather, is heedless. Therefore, it has been said: “He who is in a state of contraction (*qabḍ*) or expansion (*bast*), without knowing the cause, must not be heeding his heart. For the two are never given without reason.” But God knows best!

PRINCIPLE [216]

The sign of life is an awareness of things, for the dead are aware of nothing. For a heart injured by a bad deed or made joyous by a good deed to the point that they are before its very eye, is so by virtue of examining the recompense and punishment for the deed, or by examining its servanthood through the deed, or for the sake of achieving perfection through the deed. If the state in which the heart finds itself moves one to action, it is healthy; otherwise, it is diseased and in need of attention either by fear, if it is receptive, or by joy, which stirs it, and this is preferred by God Most-High, or by a legacy of shame and awe of God,

and this is more perfect. When the heart is stirred, it is not satisfied with merely finding a shaykh or someone else, but it acts and seeks through exoteric knowledge that guidance which leads to the essence of things, the essence which the evident truth of exoterism leads to. Esoterism by itself is invalid and even what is legitimate thereof, which derives from Reality (*Ḥaqīqah*), is inoperative. The Messenger is the leader (peace and blessings be upon him!), and any shaykh who does not manifest the *Sunnah* should not be followed because his state has no realization in it, even though he is faultless and has performed a million miracles by his command. So, understand!

PRINCIPLE [217]

Glorification of what God has glorified is required, while denigration thereof may be blasphemous. It is not at all proper to understand the Ṣūfī saying: “We do not worship Him out of fear of His fire nor out of desire for His paradise,” as denigrating or ignoring the two, since God Most-High has glorified the two. So, it is not proper for a Muslim to denigrate them, nor can a believer dispense with the blessings of his Lord. Yes, they did not seek them through acts of worship, but they acted for God’s sake, not for any other reason. They asked Paradise of Him and salvation from Hell-fire not for any other reason; He Most-High attests to this: “We feed you only for the Face of God.”¹⁹⁸ He made the motive for action the desire to seek God. Afterwards they mentioned their fear and hope independently of that.

God Most-High revealed the following to Dāwūd (peace be upon him!): “Who is more infamous than he who worships Me out of fear of My fire and out of desire for My

paradise. Had I neither created a paradise nor a fire, would I not have been worthy to be obeyed?"

In the traditions there is this: "Let none of you be like the bad servant who does not act unless he is full of fear; nor like a bad hireling who does not work unless he is paid."

ʿUmar (may God be pleased with him!) said, "What a wonderful servant Ṣuhayb is! Had he not feared God, he would not have disobeyed Him," meaning that he neither feared nor disobeyed Him. For what caused him to abandon the state of disobedience was something other than fear or hope or love or shame or majesty or awe or anything else. But God knows best!

EPILOGUE

Our shaykh Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Haḍramī said, “Spiritual instruction has been elevated by the use of technical terms. Benefit is obtained through aspiration and spiritual state. So, you must follow the Book and the *Sunnah* without addition or neglect.” This applies with respect to the Truth (*Ḥaqq*), the ego (*nafs*), and people (*khalq*). As for the dealings with God, they are three: performing the obligatory acts, avoiding what is forbidden, and submitting to His decrees. As for the dealings with the ego, they are three: justly dealing with the Truth, abandoning self-justification, and being cautious of the danger in attractions and resistances, acceptances and refutations, and responsiveness and rejection. As for the dealings with people, they are also three: helping them to obtain their rights, restraining oneself from taking their possessions, and avoiding whatever causes a change in their hearts unless it is to perform an unavoidable obligation.

Lost without hope of salvation is any disciple (*murīd*) who is inclined toward the frivolity of horseback-riding, who prefers the general well-being, who is occupied with changing what is reprehensible in the public. And last is he who volunteers for the holy war (*jihād*) without possessing any other virtue, or who is in a disjointed state, or who desires to be totally virtuous without struggling for virtue. And last is he who finds fault with his brethren or others, or he who excuses himself by withdrawal from the world, or he who seeks the company of others, not for purposes of learning or teaching, but for the pleasure of fellowship, or he who seeks the company of the worldly for personal

gratification while claiming to do so only for religious purposes. Such a one seeks the subtleties of religion without first performing his religious duties and without discrimination. He begins to give instruction without the permission of a shaykh, a religious leader or a scholar. He constantly seeks circles of audition, mindlessly following anyone who speaks anything—truth or falsehood—without considering the needs of his spiritual state. Such a one denigrates even the saint because he doubts the sincerity of anyone who does not obviously exhibit his inner sanctity. He is one who relies on dispensations and special interpretations. One who exalts the esoteric above the exoteric, who is satisfied with the exoteric to the exclusion of the esoteric, or who extracts from the one what contradicts the other, is deceived. He is satisfied to possess knowledge without application, application without spirituality or knowledge, or spirituality to the exclusion of both. He is indeed lost, with no foundation to rely upon, who rejects the right principles regarding application, knowledge, spirituality, or religion mentioned in the books of Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh on the inner aspects of religion, particularly in the *Tanwīr*, and Ibn al-Ḥājj’s work, *al-Madkhal*, on the exoteric aspects, and the work of his shaykh, Ibn Abī Jamrah, and those who followed them among the saints (may God be pleased with them!). He who follows Ibn al-Ḥājj and Ibn Abī Jamrah is, God-willing, a saved, virtuous, and successful Muslim.

The Messenger of God (peace and blessings be upon him!) was once asked about God Most-High’s saying: “Look after your own souls.”¹⁹⁹ He explained, “If you see a miser being obeyed, a person with worldly desires being followed, or men admiring their own opinions, then tend to your own soul.” He (peace and blessings be upon him!)

also said, “In the revelations to Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him!) is found: The intelligent man should be conscious of how he spends his time. He should hold his tongue and be occupied with his own affairs. The intelligent man must set aside four separate hours: one in which he examines himself; one in which he converses with his Lord; one in which he spends time with his brothers who inform him of his faults and guide him to his Lord; and one in which he spends time with himself and his legitimate needs,” or words to that effect.

May God grant us this and aid us to achieve it. May he grant us success and well-being, for there is no dispensing with the well-being that is granted from Him. He is sufficient unto us, and how excellent a guardian is He!

May the blessings and peace of God be upon our master and lord Muḥammad, his family, and Companions.

ENDNOTES

¹ *Hilyat al-Awliyā' wa Ṭabaqāt al-Aṣfiyā'* by Abū Nu'aym al-Iṣfahānī, a ten-volume biographical work on various Ṣūfī men and women.

² Qur'an, 39:7.

³ Qur'an, 39:7.

⁴ Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīths* 63 and 64.

⁵ This is the name given to a group of *Muhājirūn* (that generation of Muslims that immigrated with the Prophet from Mecca to Medina), later joined by other Muslims, who settled in Medina after the *Hijrah* but had no dwelling place. So they were lodged in a corner of the mosque and were supported by public charity. They spent their time in performing various acts of worship.

⁶ Qur'an, 6:54.

⁷ Qur'an, 6:54.

⁸ *Kitāb al-Ḥikam* by Ibn 'Aṭā'Allāh al-Iskandarī, a collection of Ṣūfī aphorisms on which Zarrūq wrote numerous commentaries.

⁹ Qur'an, 22:52.

¹⁰ This is based on the *ḥadīth*: The most intensely tried are the Prophets, then the most pious, and then the less pious, and so on (al-Bukhārī, vol.7, p.374, *ḥadīth* 374).

¹¹ Qur'an, 22:38

¹² Qur'an, 65:3.

¹³ Qur'an, 2:60.

¹⁴ The full story is as follows: Once three persons were going to a certain place. At eventide they took shelter in a cave, and while they were asleep a rock fell from the mountain and blocked the mouth of the cave. They said to one another, "We shall never escape from here unless we make our disinterested actions plead for us before God." So one of them began: "I had a father and mother and I had no worldly goods except a goat, whose milk I used to give to them; and every day I used to gather a bundle of firewood and sell it and spend the money in providing food for them and myself. One night I came home rather late, and before I milked the goat and steeped their food in the milk they had fallen asleep. I kept the bowl in my hand and stood there without having eaten anything, until morning, when they awoke and ate; then I sat down. O Lord, if I speak the truth about this matter, send us deliverance and come to our aid!" Thereupon the rock moved a little and a crevice appeared. The next man said, "There was a beautiful blind girl, with whom I was deeply in love, but she would not listen to my suit. I managed to send to her a hundred and twenty dinars with a promise that she should keep the money if she would be mine for one night. When she came the fear of God seized my heart. I turned from her and let her keep the money. O God, if I speak the truth, deliver us!" Then the rock moved a little further and the crevice

widened, but they could not yet go forth. The third man said, “I had some labourers working for me. When the work was done they all received their wages except one, who disappeared. With his wages I bought a sheep. Next year there were two, and in the year after that there were four, and they soon became a large flock. After several years the labourer returned and asked me for his wages. I said to him, “Go and take all these sheep; they are your property.” He thought I must be mocking him, but I assured him that it was true, and he went off with the whole flock. O Lord, if I speak the truth, deliver us!” He had scarcely finished when the rock moved away from the mouth of the cave and let the three men come forth. (Quoted in *Kashf al-Mahjūb* by ‘Alī ibn ‘Uthmān al-Hujwiri, translated by R.A. Nicholson, pp.231-32).

¹⁵ This is in reference to *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, one of the major collections of the sayings of the Prophet (*ḥadīth*).

¹⁶ Qur’an, 76:9-10.

¹⁷ Author undetermined.

¹⁸ The two great traditionists Sufyān al-Thawrī and Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaynah. See Appendix A for their biographies.

¹⁹ Shaykh Abū al-Najīb al-Suhrawardī deals with the topic of dispensations at length in his work *Kitāb Ādāb al-Murīdīn*, pp.72-83 in an abridged translation by Menahem Milson.

²⁰ Qur’an, 12:108. ²¹ Qur’an, 6:153.

²² This prayer is a supererogatory prayer, that is, a nonobligatory prayer consisting of 4 *rak‘ahs* (cycles of prayer) in which the *tasbīḥ* (formula of glorification): “Glory be to God; praise be to God; there is no deity but God; and God is great” is recited 75 times in each *rak‘ah*. The Prophet recommended performing this prayer as often as once a day or as little as once in a lifetime. For the precise method of performing this prayer, see: al-Sayyid Sābiq, *Fiqh al-Sunnah*, vol. 1, p.212.

²³ This prayer is another non-obligatory prayer consisting of 2 *rak‘ahs*, followed by an expression of need. See: al-Sayyid Sābiq, *Fiqh al-Sunnah*, vol.1, p.213.

²⁴ The prayer of repentance consists of 2 *rak‘ahs*, performed with the intention of repenting from a sin, in which verses 135 and 136 of *Surat Āl ‘Imrān* (3) are recited.

²⁵ The Prophet used to pray most of the month of Sha‘bān.

²⁶ The Prophet used to spend the last 10 days of Ramadan praying in seclusion at the mosque. This type of *i’tikāf* seeking the pleasure and forgiveness of God is called *masnūn*. The second type, *wājib*, is in fulfillment of a vow made between the believer and God, for example, “If God heals my loved one from his illness, I will pray in seclusion for 3 days.” The latter can be carried out at any time. For more details on this matter, see: al-Sayyid Sābiq, *Fiqh al-Sunnah*, vol.1, pp.475-85.

²⁷ *Kitāb al-Qawā‘id* by Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad ibn Idrīs al-Qarāfi, the Mālikī jurist.

²⁸ This work is by the *qāḍī* of Seville, Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad ibn al-‘Arabī (468/1076-543/1148).

²⁹ This is a collection of letters dealing with various topics written by Ibn ‘Abbād al-Rundī.

³⁰ Qur’an, 33:33.

³¹ Qur’an, 62:23.

³² al-Bukhārī, vol. 5, p.75.

³³ Qur’an, 18:82.

³⁴ Qur’an, 33:30.

³⁵ Ibn Sa‘d, vol.4, p.83.

³⁶ Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīths* 63 and 64.

³⁷ Qur’an, 39:18.

³⁸ Qur’an, 39:18.

³⁹ His works include *al-Ri‘āyah li Ḥuqūq Allāh*, his most important, written “to enable the believers to find the way of life in which they could render to God what was due to Him;” *Kitāb al-Waṣāyā*; *Kitāb al-Ba‘th wa al-Nushūr*; and others. See: Margaret Smith, *An Early Mystic of Baghdad*.

⁴⁰ This work is on the application of the *Sharī‘ah* in everyday life, cautioning against the various innovations that were in practice in the author’s time which were thought to be within the *Sharī‘ah*. He also deals with matters pertaining to Sūfism, for example, *sama‘*.

⁴¹ *Minhāj al-‘Abidīn* by Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī discusses the obstacles that face the devotee in the performance of his duties, and how to overcome them.

⁴² A biographical work on the lives of Ṣūfī shaykhs and a discussion of Ṣūfī technical terms.

⁴³ *Qūt al-Qulūb* by Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī.

⁴⁴ *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*, Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī’s monumental work on Sūfism.

⁴⁵ These include the following works by Ibn ‘Arabī al-Ḥātimī: *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah*, *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, *al-Rasā’il*, and others.

⁴⁶ Ibn Sab‘īn has a number of works including his *Rasā’il* and *Aḥzāb* which are no longer extant.

⁴⁷ *Asrār al-Hurūf wa al-Kalimāt*.

⁴⁸ *al-Ri‘āyah li Ḥuqūq Allāh*.

⁴⁹ *Kitāb al-Naṣā’ih al-Dīniyyah* or *Kitāb al-Waṣāyā* which consists of a means of instruction to all novices.

⁵⁰ Qur’an, 7:199.

⁵¹ Qur’an, 25:63.

⁵² Qur’an, 61:34.

⁵³ Muslim, *ḥadīth* 2479.

⁵⁴ The *witr* (odd number) prayer usually consists of three *rak‘ahs* (cycles of prayer) performed after the night prayer and any other supererogatory (*nāfilah*) or *qada’* (missed prayer made up after its time zone) prayers.

⁵⁵ Qur’an, 29:49.

⁵⁶ Qur’an, 31:15.

⁵⁷ This work is by the *qāḍī* of Seville, Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad ibn al-‘Arabī.

⁵⁸ This special prayer is performed after fasting the first Thursday of the month

of Rajab, hence it is called “*ṣalāt Rajab*.” It is a worship of 12 cycles of prayer, with special invocations. The reward specified is forgiveness for all sins. For the method of performing this prayer see: al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*, vol.1, p.202.

⁵⁹ These are the special prayers that are repeated with the recurrence of the weeks. For details, see: al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*, vol.1, pp.197-200.

⁶⁰ These works include: *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyyah*, *‘Uyūb al-Nafs*, and *Kitāb al-Futuwwah*.

⁶¹ These are the various invocations made during each stage of the minor ablution. For example, an invocation is made when the hands are being washed, followed by a different invocation for when the mouth is rinsed, and so on. For details, see: al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*, vol.1, pp.133-34.

⁶² *Tāj al-‘Arūs* on the methods of educating the ego.

⁶³ Muslim, *ḥadīth* 1732.

⁶⁴ The works of Ibn ‘Aṭā’Allāh include: *al-Ḥikam*, *Latā’if al-Minan*, *al-Tanwīr fī Isqāt al-Tadbīr*, *Tāj al-‘Arūs*, *Miftah al-Falāḥ*, and *al-Qawl al-Mujarrad fī al-Isim al-Mufrad*. Those who follow his teachings are the Shādhili shaykhs.

⁶⁵ *al-Tanwīr fī Isqāt al-Tadbīr* by Ibn ‘Aṭā’Allāh on the elimination of self-direction in order to follow God’s direction.

⁶⁶ Qur’an, 16:125.

⁶⁷ Qur’an, 2:282.

⁶⁸ This term generally refers to the Ismā‘īlis, one of three Shī‘ite sects, also referred to as “Seveners”. Al-Ghazālī discusses and refutes their beliefs in his work, *Faḍā’ih al-Bāṭiniyyah*.

⁶⁹ Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* 3093.

⁷⁰ Qur’an, 84:8.

⁷¹ This work by Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī, on Mālikī jurisprudence, was his first work written at the age of seventeen.

⁷² Qur’an, 17:36.

⁷³ This refers to the story of Moses and “the young man” believed to be al-Khidr, mentioned in Qur’an, 18:60-82.

⁷⁴ Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* 2547.

⁷⁵ Qur’an, 24:2.

⁷⁶ This refers to Qur’an, 18:60-82.

⁷⁷ They are that group of the army of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib that broke away from him during the battle of Ṣiffin (37/657) as a result of the caliph’s having accepted arbitration with Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān.

⁷⁸ Qur’an, 25:16-17.

⁷⁹ “Bi ism Allāh al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm.”

⁸⁰ “Al-ḥamd li Allāh.”

⁸¹ Qur’an, 65:7.

⁸² Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* 3976.

⁸³ Ibn Ḥanbal, *ḥadīth* 4354.

⁸⁴ Qur’an, 25:67.

⁸⁵ Qur’an, 17:110.

⁸⁶ Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth*. 4354.

⁸⁷ The opening chapter of the Qur'an.

⁸⁸ These supererogatory prayers are also called *Sunnah* prayers. They consist generally of two *rak'ahs* before the obligatory morning prayer, four before the obligatory noon prayer and two after, four before the obligatory afternoon prayer, two after the obligatory sunset prayer, and four before the obligatory night prayer and two after.

⁸⁹ These include the various formulas such as: *subḥān Allāh*, *alḥamd li-Allāh*, and the like.

⁹⁰ The voluntary fasts (the fasting of the month of Ramadan being obligatory) include the recommended fasting of every Monday and Thursday, of three days of each month, of every other day, of six days in the month of Shawwāl, of the day of 'Arafah, of the ninth, tenth and eleventh days of the month of Muḥarram.

⁹¹ Abū Nu'aym al-Isfahānī, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā'*, vol 1, pp.271-72. The entire text of the *ḥadīth* is as follows: People would ask the Messenger of God about goodness, but I used to ask him about evil out of fear of being overcome by it. I said, "O Messenger of God, we were living in a period of ignorance and evil, but God brought us this goodness. After this goodness, will there be evil again?" "Yes," he replied.

⁹² Referring to Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh.

⁹³ Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth*, 4112.

⁹⁴ Qur'an, 2:574.

⁹⁵ Mālik ibn Anas's collection of *ḥadīth*.

⁹⁶ Al-Shādhili has many litanies such as: *Ḥizb al-Bahr*, *Ḥizb al-Laṭīf*, *Ḥizb al-Shakwā*, and others.

⁹⁷ This may be in reference to *al-Adhkār* by Abū Zakariyyah Yaḥyā ibn Sharaf al-Nawawī (d.776/1278).

⁹⁸ *Ḥizb al-Faḥḥ* and *al-Nūr* and *Ḥizb al-Faraj wa al-Istikhlās bi Sirr Taḥqīq Kalimat al-Iklās* which are no longer extant.

⁹⁹ 'Arīdāt al-Aḥwadhī fī Sharḥ al-Tirmidhī.

¹⁰⁰ Qur'an, 23:54.

¹⁰¹ Ibn Ḥanbal, *ḥadīth* 571.

¹⁰² Qur'an, 2:152.

¹⁰³ Qur'an, 30:41.

¹⁰⁴ Qur'an, 3:191.

¹⁰⁵ Qur'an, 2:200.

¹⁰⁶ Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* 3793.

¹⁰⁷ Ibn al-Sunnī, p.12, *ḥadīth* 4.

¹⁰⁸ Qur'an, 2:30.

¹⁰⁹ *Miftāḥ al-Falāḥ wa Misbāḥ al-Arwāḥ*, a work on the remembrance of God by Ibn 'Aṭā' Allāh al-Iskandarī.

¹¹⁰ Qur'an, 3:194.

¹¹¹ Qur'an, 2:286.

¹¹² Qur'an, 2:286.

¹¹³ Al-Dārimī, vol.2, p.441.

- ¹¹⁴ Muslim, *ḥadīth* 3598.
- ¹¹⁵ Qur'an, 2:200.
- ¹¹⁶ Al-Bukhārī, v.5, p.456, *ḥadīth* 516.
- ¹¹⁷ Al-Bukhārī, vol.5, p.295, *ḥadīth* 426.
- ¹¹⁸ Muslim, *ḥadīth* 2689.
- ¹¹⁹ Muslim, *ḥadīth* 2700.
- ¹²⁰ I have been unable to find a work of this title attributed to al-Tha'ālibī.
- ¹²¹ *Al-Targhīb wa al-Tarhīb min al-Ḥadīths al-Sharīf* by 'Abd al-'Azim ibn 'Abd al-Qawī al-Muhdhirī, a *ḥadīth* collection.
- ¹²² *Sūrah* 56 of the Qur'an.
- ¹²³ Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* 5088.
- ¹²⁴ Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* 3518.
- ¹²⁵ "subḥān Allāh."
- ¹²⁶ This is in reference to *al-Risālah* of Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī.
- ¹²⁷ It is a compendium of Mālikī law by the jurist Saḥnūn 'Abd al-Salām ibn Sa'īd al-Ḥimsī al-Tanūkhī (d. 240/845).
- ¹²⁸ Qur'an, 37:70.
- ¹²⁹ Qur'an, 6:138.
- ¹³⁰ Qur'an, 78:26.
- ¹³¹ Muslim, *ḥadīth* 2576.
- ¹³² Ibn Ḥanbal, *ḥadīth* 5114 and 5115.
- ¹³³ Qur'an, 48:29.
- ¹³⁴ Qur'an, 47:30.
- ¹³⁵ Muslim, *ḥadīth* 3546.
- ¹³⁶ Qur'an, 59:9.
- ¹³⁷ Dhū al-Qarnayn is mentioned in the Qur'an in *sūrah* 18, *al-Kahf*. Most Qur'anic commentators identify him as Alexander the Great.
- ¹³⁸ Qur'an, 18:86.
- ¹³⁹ Quran, 33:38.
- ¹⁴⁰ This refers to the story mentioned in Qur'an, 18:60-82, See note 73 above.
- ¹⁴¹ Qur'an, 43:3.
- ¹⁴² Qur'an, 43:32.
- ¹⁴³ Qur'an, 43:23.
- ¹⁴⁴ Qur'an, 43:24.
- ¹⁴⁵ Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* 3822.
- ¹⁴⁶ Ibn Ḥanbal, *ḥadīth* 5229, and Ibn al-Sunnī, p.148, *ḥadīth* 148, in a slightly different version where the Prophet said, "Do not forget us in your supplication, my brother."
- ¹⁴⁷ Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* 1571. The full text of the *ḥadīth* is as follows: "I had forbidden you to visit cemeteries, but do visit them. They belittle the world and remind us of the Hereafter."
- ¹⁴⁸ A section in *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*.
- ¹⁴⁹ Muslim, *ḥadīth* 1397.
- ¹⁵⁰ Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* 802.
- ¹⁵¹ Muslim, *ḥadīth* 150.

¹⁵² Muslim, *ḥadīth* 107 in a variant form: “There are three characteristics in the hypocrite: when he relays information from one person to another, he lies; when he gives his word, he breaks it; and when he is entrusted with something, he betrays that trust.”

¹⁵³ Cited as a *ḥadīth* in al-Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-Maḥjūb*, p.72.

¹⁵⁴ Muslim, *ḥadīth* 2912.

¹⁵⁵ Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* 4102.

¹⁵⁶ Muslim, *ḥadīth* 2637.

¹⁵⁷ Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* 4354.

¹⁵⁸ Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* 4100.

¹⁵⁹ *Maḥāsīn al-Majālis*.

¹⁶⁰ *Maqāmāt* of al-Anṣārī al-Harawī.

¹⁶¹ Qur’an, 24:37.

¹⁶² Qur’an, 4:5.

¹⁶³ Qur’an, 4:32.

¹⁶⁴ Qur’an, 4:32.

¹⁶⁵ Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* 4112. The full text is as follows: “The world is damned: what is in it is cursed except the remembrance of God and that which protects it.”

¹⁶⁶ Qur’an, 25:74.

¹⁶⁷ Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* 4102.

¹⁶⁸ The Prophet Joseph, son of Isaac.

¹⁶⁹ Qur’an, 12:55.

¹⁷⁰ Muslim, *ḥadīth* 1825 in a slightly different form.

¹⁷¹ Ibn Ḥanbal, *ḥadīth* 2097.

¹⁷² Muslim, *ḥadīth* 777.

¹⁷³ Qur’an, 41:34.

¹⁷⁴ Qur’an, 41:36.

¹⁷⁵ Qur’an, 7:199.

¹⁷⁶ Qur’an, 2:93.

¹⁷⁷ Qur’an, 42:39.

¹⁷⁸ Qur’an, 42:40.

¹⁷⁹ Ibn al-Sunnī, p.35, *ḥadīth* 64. The Companions asked, “Who is Abū Ḍamḍam?” The Prophet replied, “He is the man who upon awakening in the morning says, ‘O God, I place myself and my honor in your care.’ He does not curse those who curse him; he does not oppress those who oppress him; and he does not strike those who strike him.”

¹⁸⁰ Qur’an, 41:34.

¹⁸¹ Qur’an, 20:130.

¹⁸² Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* 3986.

¹⁸³ Al-Bukhārī, vol.7, p.374, *ḥadīth* 551. The full text of the *ḥadīth* is as follows: “The people most prone to trials are the Prophets, then the most pious, and then the less pious, and then so on.”

¹⁸⁴ Qur’an, 11:120.

¹⁸⁵ Qur’an, 4:59.

¹⁸⁶ *Talbīs Iblīs* on the erroneous ideas held by various groups of Muslims in-

cluding doctors of the Law and Şūfis. Ibn al-Jawzī spares no one.

¹⁸⁷ Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* 2544.

¹⁸⁸ Among his works are his *Rasā'il*.

¹⁸⁹ His *Dīwān* and his famous *Khamriyyah*.

¹⁹⁰ The poetry and prose works of Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Shushtarī.

¹⁹¹ A work on the ascent of the soul, the depth of faith, the characteristics of prophethood, and the meaning of death.

¹⁹² This work consists of the "Confessions" of al-Ghazālī.

¹⁹³ *Awārif al-Ma'ārif*.

¹⁹⁴ Qur'an, 33:38.

¹⁹⁵ Qur'an, 21:23.

¹⁹⁶ Qur'an, 2:245.

¹⁹⁷ Qur'an, 76:9.

¹⁹⁸ Qur'an, 5:105.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

The names are arranged alphabetically according to their appearance in the text, whether by first name, *kunyah*, or surname.

Al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, or Abū al-Faḍl, the uncle of the Prophet Muḥammad, was only two or three years older than the Prophet. He fought against the Muslims in the battle of Badr, where he was taken prisoner, and then declared his Islam at the conquest of Mecca. He died in Medina in 32/652-53 or 34/654-55. The ʿAbbāsīd caliphs are the descendants of his son ʿAbd Allāh.

ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿUmar, or Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, was the eldest son of ʿUmar ibn al-Khattāb. He had a vast knowledge of jurisprudence and Qurʾanic exegesis. He became the governor of al-Baṣrah under the caliph ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib and died in al-Ṭāʾif in the year 68/687-88.

Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Haḍramī, Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd al-Qādir ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿUmar ibn Aḥmad ibn ʿUqbah, Zarrūq’s shaykh on the Ṣūfī path, was born in Haḍramawt in 824/1421 and died in 895/1489-90. His role and influence on Zarrūq has been discussed in the introduction to this work.

Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Mursī, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Andalusī al-Anṣārī was a great Ṣūfī shaykh; the disciple of Abū

al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī and the teacher of Ibn ‘Aṭā’ Allāh. He was born in 616/1219-20 and died in 686/1287-88.

Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq was the first adult outside of the Prophet’s family to embrace Islam. Thus, he is one of his early Companions and is among those who were promised Paradise during the lifetime of the Prophet. Not only was he a close Companion of the Prophet, but as the father of ‘Ā’ishah, the Prophet’s wife, he was his father-in-law. Abū Bakr accompanied the Prophet on his flight from Mecca to Medina. During the Prophet’s final illness, it was he whom the Prophet designated to lead the community in their congregational prayers. Upon the Prophet’s death in 11/632 he became the first caliph of the first so-called Rightly Guided Caliphs (*al-Khulafā’ al-Rāshidūn*). He subdued various Arab tribes who revolted against him in what was to be called the *Riddah* wars (the wars of Apostasy). He died in 13/634.

Abū al-Dardā’ ‘Uwaymir ibn Mālīk (or ibn Zayd or ibn ‘Āmir) was a Companion of the Prophet and an expert on legal matters. He died in 31/651 or 32/652.

Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī, Jundub ibn Junādah ibn Sufyān ibn ‘Ubayd, a Companion of the Prophet and a transmitter of *ḥadīth*, is often cited as an example of the sincere devotee. He spent his time in the Syrian desert after the death of the Prophet and died near Medina in 32/652.

Abū al-Faḥḥ al-Bustī, was a man of letters of Persian origins. He was born in 361/971 and died in 401/1010.

Abū Ḥanīfah al-Nu‘mān ibn Thābit, the founder of the Ḥanafī school of jurisprudence, was born in al-Kūfah in 81/700 and died in 150/767.

Abū Hurayrah was a prominent Companion of the Prophet. He came to Medina in the year of the battle of Khaybar in 7/629. A transmitter of many *ḥadīth*, he died in 57/676 or 58/678.

Abū Iṣḥāq al-Shātībī, Ibrāhīm ibn Mūsā al-Gharnaṭī was an important theologian, jurist of the Mālikī school, Qur’anic commentator, and transmitter of *ḥadīth*. He was born in 677/1278 and died in 751/1350.

Abū Madyan Shu‘ayb ibn Ḥasan (or Ḥusayn) al-Tilimsānī al-Andalusī al-Bijā’ī was a great Ṣūfī shaykh, a man of knowledge, and a traditionalist. He made legal dispensations (*fatāwī*) according to the school of Mālik. Traveling to the East, he met many scholars, ascetics and Ṣūfī shaykhs, including ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī who initiated him into his order. He died in 594/1197-98. He is an important figure in the Shādhilī *silsilah*.

Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Qādir ibn Abī Sāliḥ al-Jīlānī was a preacher belonging to the Ḥanbalī school of jurisprudence and a great Ṣūfī shaykh, the founder of a major order named after him, the Qādiriyyah. He is the author of many books, among which are *al-Ghunyah li Ṭālibī Ṭarīq al-Ḥaqq*, *al-Fath al-Rabbānī*, and *Futūḥ al-Ghayb*. He was born in 470/1077-78 and died in 561/1166.

Abū Muṣ‘ab is perhaps Aḥmad ibn Abī Bakr Zarārah ibn

Muṣʿab ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf al-Zuhrī. He was among the leading men of knowledge of Medina and died in 242/1856-57 at the age of ninety.

Abū Nuʿaym Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Ishāq ibn Mūsā ibn Mihrān al-Isfahānī belonged to the Shāfiʿī school of jurisprudence, and is considered to be one of the best *ḥadīth* authorities. His scholar father had him taught by the distinguished Ṣūfī shaykhs Jaʿfar al-Khuldī and Ḥātim al-Aṣamm. His monumental work *Ḥilyat al-Awliyāʾ wa Ṭabaqāt al-Aṣfiyāʾ* is a biographical work of Ṣūfī shaykhs and pious men and women. He was probably born in 336/948 (alternatively, in 298/910-11, 330/941-42, or 334/945-46), He died in 430/1038.

Abū Saʿīd Aḥmad ibn ʿĪsā al-Kharrāz of Baghdad was a companion of Dhū al-Nūn al-Miṣrī, Sarī al-Saqāṭī, and Bishr al-Ḥārith. He was a great Ṣūfī shaykh who was also a traditionist. It is said that he was the first to speak of extinction (*fanāʾ*) and abiding in God (*baqāʾ*). He died in 277/890-91, or 279/892-93, or 286/899-900.

Abū Saʿīd Saʿd ibn Mālik ibn Sinān al-Khudrī al-Makhzūmī al-Anṣārī, like his father, was a Companion of the Prophet. He belonged to the *Ahl al-Ṣūffah* (contemplatives), and was among the most learned of the Companions on legal matters. Many of the Followers (*Tābiʿūn*) studied under him. He died in Medina.

Abū Sulaymān al-Dārānī, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmad al-Āṣī, was a Sūfī celebrated for his life of asceticism and mortification. He died in 205/820-21 or 215/830-31.

Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī, Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAṭīyyah al-Hārithī, an ascetic and preacher, authored the major Ṣūfī compendium *Qūt al-Qulūb* as well as a number of treatises on *tawḥīd*. He died in 386/996.

Abū Yaʿzā Yalannūr ibn Maymūn (or Sulaymān), a Mālikī, was a Moroccan Ṣūfī shaykh who was considered to be the greatest man of knowledge and perfection of his time. He was the student of Abū Shuʿayb al-Sāriyah and the master of Shaykh Abū Madyan. He died in 572/1177.

Aḥmad ibn ʿĀshir, or Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Andalusī, was a great Ṣūfī shaykh who studied under a number of notable shaykhs of the Path. His works include *Tuḥfat al-Zāʾir*. He was known for his piety, his knowledge, and his perfection, and died in 765/1363-64.

Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥanbal is the founder of the Ḥanbalī school of jurisprudence and the compiler of *al-Musnad*, one of the six major collections of *ḥadīth*. He was imprisoned and tortured during the reign of al-Maʾmūn for his opposition to Muʿtazilī doctrine. He was born in 164/780 and died in 241/855.

ʿĀʾishah bint Abī Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (see above), was born in Mecca eight or nine years before the *Hijrah* (613-14). The Prophet married her when she was six or seven years old, but the marriage was not consummated until after the *Hijrah*. She was the Prophet's favorite wife and he spent his final days in her company. At the time of his death she was 18 years old. During the caliphate of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib she joined the army led by Ṭalḥah ibn ʿUbayd Allāh and al-

Zubayr ibn al-ʿAwwām against the caliph in 36/565, in which the caliph's forces triumphed. The Imam ʿAlī treated her well, allowing her to return to Medina where she died in 58/678. She was a transmitter of *ḥadīth* and was often consulted on theological and juridical matters.

ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib was the cousin of the Prophet and, by his marriage to his daughter Fāṭimah, the father of the Prophet's grandsons, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn. It was ʿAlī who stayed in the Prophet's bed on the night when the Meccans intended to kill the Prophet, risking his own life while the Prophet left Mecca for Medina. He accompanied the Prophet in all the major battles and expeditions except for Tabūk. Upon the death of ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān in 35/656, ʿAlī became the fourth caliph. The period in which he ruled was burdened with rebellion and strife, and his eventual assassination in al-Kūfah in 40/661 paved the way for the foundation of the Umayyad dynasty in Damascus by Muʿāwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān.

Anas ibn Mālik was a Companion of the Prophet and a transmitter of *ḥadīth*. Abū Ḥanīfah refused to acknowledge his authority as a *muhaddith*, but Ibn Ḥanbal relied upon him.

Al-Aʿraj, Abū Dāwūd ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Hurmuz was a *mawlā* of Muḥammad ibn Rabīʿah ibn Ḥārith ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib. He transmitted many *ḥadīths* from ʿAbd Allāh ibn Buhaynah and Abū Hurayrah, and was considered to be a trustworthy source. He died in Alexandria in 117/735-36.

Bilāl ibn Rabī‘ah al-Ḥabashī the Ethiopian, was a Companion of the Prophet from the early days of Mecca, and the first *mu’adhdhin* of the Muslim community after the *Hijrah*. He died in either 20/641 or 21/642.

Al-Bilālī may be Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn Ja‘far al-‘Ajlūnī, a Ṣūfī shaykh who resided in Cairo. Born before 750/1349 and dying in 812/1409-10, he wrote a summary of al-Ghazālī’s *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*.

Bishr al-Ḥāfī, Abū Naṣr ibn al-Ḥārith as a young man studied *ḥadīth* under Mālīk ibn Anas, and later became an important companion of the Ṣūfī masters al-Fuḍayl ibn ‘Iyāḍ and Sarī al-Saqāṭī, and was greatly admired by Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal. He was born in either 150/767 or 152/769, and died in either 226/840 or 227/841-42.

Al-Bukharī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl al-Ju‘fī, who was born in 194/810 and died in 256/870, assembled one of the greatest collections of *ḥadīth* in his *al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*. His *ḥadīth* study commenced at the age of eleven and led him to the most famous *ḥadīth* teachers in Mecca and Medina, as well as to preserving of traditions throughout the Muslim world.

Fāṭimah, the daughter of the Prophet Muḥammad and Khadijah bint Khuwaylid, was the wife of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, and the mother of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn. She was born, probably in Mecca, most likely in 605 and died shortly after the death of the Prophet in 11/633.

Al-Būnī, Muḥyī al-Dīn Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī ibn Yūsuf al-Qurashī al-Ṣūfī wrote forty works on magic. His main work is *Kitāb Shams al-Ma‘ārif wa al-Laṭā’if al-‘Awārif*, dealing with the magical use of numbers and letters-squares, single Qur’anic verses, the names of God, and the like. Al-Būnī was a Mālikī. He died in 622/1225.

Al-Fuḍayl, Abū ‘Alī ibn ‘Iyāḍ ibn Mas‘ūd ibn Bishr al-Funḍīnī al-Tamīmī, a celebrated ascetic and Ṣūfī, commenced his life as a highway robber. He died in 178/803.

Al-Ghazālī, Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ṭūsī al-Shāfī‘ī called “the Proof of Islam,” was born in Ṭūs in 450/1058. He was educated in his birthplace and in Nīsābūr under Imām al-Ḥaramayn al-Juwaynī until the latter’s death in 478/1085. Proceeding to the court of Nizām al-Mulk, he was appointed to teach at the Nizāmiyyah School in Baghdad in 484/1091. By the time he began teaching at the Nizāmiyyah, he had become skeptical of religion. He left his post in 488/1095 and became an ascetic. Through Ṣūfism he regained his belief in religion, and eventually returned to a teaching post at the Nizāmiyyah School in Nīsābūr in 499/1105. He did not stay long in public life. He returned to Ṭūs and lived there in retirement with a few of his disciples till his death in 505/1111. He is the author of *al-Munqidh min al-Ḍalāl, Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn, Kīmīyā’ al-Sa‘ādah*, and a number of other famous works.

Al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf ibn al-Ḥakam al-Thaqafī born in 40/660 in al-Ṭā’if, was sent by the Umayyad caliph ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān to head the army that defeated ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr in Mecca. He was made governor of

Mecca, Medina, and al-Ṭā'if and later made governor of Iraq, where he built the city of Wāsiṭ. He was notorious for brutal persecutions. He died in Wāsiṭ in 95/714.

Ḥakīm ibn Ḥuzam ibn Khuwaylid ibn Asad ibn ʿAbd al-ʿUzzā was the nephew of Khadijah bint Khuwaylid, the wife of the Prophet Muḥammad. He was born in Mecca and embraced Islam at the time of the conquest of that city which the Prophet declared his house to be a sanctuary. He died in Medina in 45/674, reportedly at the age of 120.

Al-Ḥakīm al-Nīsābūrī, Abu ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad al-Ḍabbī al-Taḥmānī the magistrate of Nīsābūr, was the most eminent traditionist of his time. A Shāfiʿī, he devoted his time to collecting and studying Prophetic traditions and wrote a number of works on *ḥadīth*. He was born in 321/933 in Nīsābūr, where he died in 405/1014.

Al-Ḥallāj, Abū al-Mughīth al-Ḥusayn ibn Maṣṣūr, a Ṣūfī, was a disciple of al-Tustarī and al-Junayd al-Baghdādī. He was born in 244/858 and executed in 309/922 in Baghdad for heresy. His fate became a center of religious controversy. He is famous for his statement “I am the Truth.”

Ḥamzah ibn ʿUmar ibn ʿUwaymir ibn al-Ḥārith al-Aslamī was a Companion of the Prophet who took part in the conquest of Ifrīqiyyah with ʿAbd Allāh ibn Saʿd. He was a transmitter of *ḥadīth*. Born in 10/612, he died in 61/681.

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, born in 21/642, was one of the earliest Muslims specifically designated as a Ṣūfī. He was a great

ascetic preacher known for his strength of character, piety, learning, and eloquence. He courageously expressed open disapproval of the two caliphs Yazīd ibn Mu‘āwiyah and ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān, and al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī. He died in 110/728.

Al-Ḥātimī, Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Ṭā’ī al- Ḥātimī al-Mursī, Muḥyī al-Dīn Abū Bakr ibn ‘Arabī, born in 560/1165 in Murcia, is considered to be one of the greatest Ṣūfī theorists. He is referred to as “*al-shaykh al-akbar*” the Greatest Shaykh. His works number in the hundreds, and include *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, *Tarjumān al-Ashwāq*, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah*, and *al-Rasā’il*. He was the first public expounder of *wahdat al-wujūd*, unity of being. A member of the Zāhirī school of jurisprudence, he died in Damascus in 638/1240.

Hudhayfah ibn al-Yamān al-‘Absī was a Companion of the Prophet. He had the gift of being able to identify the “Hypocrites,” those who professed to be Muslims but were in reality enemies of the Prophet. During the caliphate of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb he became the governor of al-Madā’in, where he died in 36/565.

Ibn ‘Abbās, ‘Abd Allāh, the son of the uncle of the Prophet, was born three years before the *Hijrah* in 619 AD. He was considered the ablest interpreter of the Qur’an. Deeply learned and pious, he was knowledgeable in *ḥadīth*, law, poetry, and arithmetic, and regularly gave public discourses on these subjects. He became governor of al-Baṣrah during the caliphate of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and died in 68/687.

Ibn ʿAbd al-Salām, the Ṣūfī shaykh ʿIzz al-Dīn Abī Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Salām ibn Abī al-Qāsim ibn Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad al-Sulamī, was born in Damascus in either 577/1084-85 or 578/1085-86. After mastering the disciplines of theology, jurisprudence, and *ḥadīth*, he became a disciple of al-Shihāb al-Suhrawardī and attended the circle of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī. As a Shāfiʿī jurist he was widely sought after for his legal opinions. He produced a number of works, among which are *al-Fatāwī al-Mawṣiliyyah*, *Shajarat al-Maʿārif*, and *al-Qawāʿid al-Sughrā wa al-Kubrā*. He died in 660/1261-62.

Ibn Abī Jamrah, ʿAbd Allāh ibn Aḥmad al-Andalusī al-Mursī, was a Ṣūfī known for his asceticism and miracles. His many students included Ibn al-Ḥājj, the author of *al-Madkhal*, who like his master was a Mālikī. Ibn Abī Jamrah’s works include an abridged version of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī, and a commentary on *Bahjat al-Nufūs*, a work of *ḥadīth* by Abū al-Makārim al-Andalusī (d. 663/1267). He died in 699/1299-1300.

Ibn Abī Zayd, Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh, a traditionist, was the leading Mālikī jurist of his time. The best known of his many works is the first he produced *Kitāb al-Risālah*, a summary of Mālikī teachings written at the age of seventeen. He died in al-Qayrawān in 386/996.

Ibn al-ʿArabī, Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Aḥmad al-Muʿāfirī al-Andalusī al-Ishbīlī, a great man of knowledge in the religious sciences, was born in 468/1075-76. At the age of seventeen he travelled to Egypt, Syria, Baghdad, and Mecca to study under leading masters, of Qurʾan, jurisprudence, *ḥadīth*, and literature, and finally

returned to Seville, where he became a magistrate. He wrote a number of works including *Anwār al-Fajr fī Tafṣīr al-Qurʿan*. He died in 543/1148-49.

Ibn al-ʿArīf, Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Mūsā ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh al-Sanhajī was a Mālikī and a Ṣūfī shaykh, eminent for his sanctity and piety, and illustrious for his spiritual gifts. He wrote *Maḥāsīn al-Majālis* and other treatises. He was born in 481/1088 and died in 536/1141.

Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh, Tāj al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh, who died in 709/1309, was a Mālikī and an important Shādhilī shaykh. A disciple of Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Mursī, he wrote a number of works including *al-Ḥikam*, *Laṭāʾif al-Minan*, *Miftāh al-Falāḥ*, and *al-Tanwīr fī Isqāṭ al-Tadbīr*. It is through his writing that the lives and teachings of al-Shādhilī and al-Mursī became known.

Ibn al-Fākihānī, Abū Ḥafs Tāj al-Dīn ʿUmar ibn Abī al-Yumn ʿAlī ibn Abī al-Najā Salīm ibn Ṣadaqaḥ al-Lakhmī, composed a number of works including a commentary on the *Risālah* of Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī and the *Arbaʿūn* of al-Nawawī. Though a Mālikī, he also wrote a commentary on *al-ʿUmdah* by Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Shāshī al-Shāfiʿī on Shāfiʿī jurisprudence. He was born in 654/1256 and died in 734/1333-34.

Ibn al-Fāriḍ, Abū Ḥafs (also Abū al-Qāsim) ʿUmar ibn Abī al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Murshid ibn ʿAlī, a great Ṣūfī poet, was born in 576/1181 and died in Egypt in 632/1235. His best known work is his *Khamriyyah*.

Ibn Fūrak, Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan, was a noted dogmatic theologian, philologist, grammarian, and preacher. He was a native of Nīsābūr, where he taught jurisprudence. The number of his works on that topic, the tenets of religion, and the style of the Qur'an approached a hundred. He died in 406/1015-16.

Ibn Ḥabbān, Abū Ḥātim Muḥammad ibn Ḥabbān ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥabbān ibn Mu'ādh al-Tamimi. He was a traditionist and jurist who taught in Samarqand and produced a number of works including *al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, *al-Tārikh*, and *al-Du'afā'*. He died in 354/965.

Ibn al-Ḥājj, Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-ʿAbdurī al-Fāsī, a Mālikī and a Ṣūfī, was the disciple of Ibn Abī Jamrah. He is the author of *al-Madkhal*. He died in 737/1336-37.

Ibn al-Jallā', Abū ʿAbd Allāh Aḥmad ibn Yahyā who died in 306/918-19, was a Ṣūfī associate of al-Junayd al-Baghdādī, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Nūrī, and other great early shaykhs.

Ibn al-Jawzī, Abū al-Faraj ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad, was the author of *Talbīs Iblīs*, a famous indictment of Ṣūfī excesses. A Ḥanbalī traditionist, a celebrated preacher and a doctor of the law, he belonged to the tribe of Taym (a branch of Quraysh) and the descendants of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq. Consequently he was called al-Qurashī al-Taymī al-Bakrī. Among his other works are *Ṣifat al-Ṣafwah*, *Zād al-Masīr fī ʿilm al-Tafsīr*, and *al-Mawḍūʿāt*. A native of Baghdad, he was born in 508/1145 and died in 597/1200.

Ibn al-Madīnī, ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ja‘far al-Sa‘dī, was a Mālikī, and a transmitter of *ḥadīth* on whom many collectors of *ḥadīth* relied. He studied with Ibn Mahdī and died in 234/848-49.

Ibn Mahdī, Abū Sa‘īd ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī ibn Ḥassan al-Basīr al-Lu’lu’ī, was a traditionist who had studied with the great transmitters of *ḥadīth*, Mālik ibn Anas, Sufyān al-Thawrī and Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaynah. Those who relied upon him as a source of *ḥadīth* included Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, Ibn al-Madīnī, and al-Shāfi‘ī. He was born in 135/752-53 and died in al-Baṣrah in 198/813-14.

Ibn al-Musayyib, Abū Sa‘īd al-Qurashī, who was born in 15/636-37 and died in 91/709-10, was considered one of the seven great jurists of Medina. Though one of the succeeding generations of *Tāb‘īn* (Followers), his legal opinion was sought even while some members of the more distinguished generation of Companions were still alive. The student of Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ and Abū Hurayrah, he was known for his profound piety and contempt for worldly goods.

Ibn Mas‘ūd, ‘Abd Allāh, was a Companion of the Prophet and one of the ten who were promised Paradise. He was a traditionist and an authority on the Qur’an. He died in 32/652-53 or 33/654

Ibn Sab‘īn, Quṭb al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Naṣr ibn Muḥammad al-Mursī, was a Mālikī and a Ṣūfī shaykh, an ascetic and philosopher. He was born in 612/1215 and died in 667/1268-69. He was the author of a number of works including his *Rasā’il*.

Ibn Sīrīn, Abu Bakr Muḥammad, was a native of al-Baṣrah. His father was a slave of Anas ibn Mālik. He transmitted *ḥadīth* on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar, ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr, and Anas ibn Mālik and was one of the jurists by whose opinions the people of al-Baṣrah were guided. He died in 110/728-29.

Ibn ‘Umar, ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, was one of the leading Companions whose opinion on legal matters was sought. He died in Mecca in 72/691 or 73/692 or 74/693-94.

Ibrāhīm ibn Sa‘d ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf al-Zuhrī related *ḥadīth* on the authority of his father. He resided in Baghdad and died in 183/799 or 184/800 or 185/801.

Al-Junayd al-Baghdādī who died in 298/1910, was one of the most celebrated of Ṣūfī shaykhs. A member of the Thawrī legal school, he was the nephew and disciple of Sarī al-Saqāṭī. He laid the foundations on which most later systems of Ṣūfism were built. He is the author of *al-Rasā’il*.

Al-Jurayrī, Abū Muḥammad Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn, a Ḥanafī, was a pupil of Sahl al-Tustarī, and afterwards a disciple and then the successor of al-Junayd al-Baghdādī. At the time of al-Ḥallāj’s second trial, he was summoned as a witness for the defense, and according to al-Nasrābādī, consented to his execution. Other sources insist that al-Jurayrī did not want to condemn al-Ḥallāj. He died in 312/924-25.

Al-Khawwāṣ, Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm ibn Aḥmad ibn Ismāʿīl, a notable Ṣūfī shaykh, was one of the companions of al-Junayd al-Baghdādī and al-Nūrī. He died in 284/897.

Khayr al-Nassāj, Abū al-Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Sāmīrī was a former slave who became the shaykh of al-Shiblī and al-Khawwāṣ and was a friend of al-Nūrī. He died in 322/933-34.

Mālik ibn Anas was the founder of the school of jurisprudence that bears his name. He transmitted *ḥadīth* from Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq, and al-Shāfiʿī transmitted *ḥadīth* from him. He died in Medina in 179/795.

Al-Maqdisī, Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī al-Lakhmī, was an eminent doctor of the Mālikī school and a traditionist. Alexandria was the place of his residence; born there in 544/1150, he died in 611/1214.

Maʿrūf al-Karkhī, Abū Maḥfūz Maʿrūf ibn Fayrūz, was a Ṣūfī shaykh who was Sarī al-Saqatī's master. He died in 200/815-16.

Muʿādh, Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Muʿādh ibn Jabal al-Khazrajī, was a Companion of the Prophet who was knowledgeable in legal matters. He died in either 18/639 or 19/640.

Al-Muḥāsibī, Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥārith ibn Asad al-ʿAnazī, was a Shāfiʿī Ṣūfī shaykh, attacked by Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal for his use of rational rather than traditional arguments in defense of religion. The author of *al-Riʿāyah li Ḥuqūq Allāh* and a number of other works, he was born in 165/781 and died in 243/857.

Mujāhid, Abū al-Ḥajjāj Mujāhid ibn Jubayr al-Makkī al-Makhzūmī, born in 21/641-42 and dying around 100/718-15, was a member of the generation of the Followers.

Mūsā al-Kāẓim ibn Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿAbī Ṭālib, the seventh Shīʿā imām, was born in 128/745-46 and died in 163/779-80. He is buried in al-Kā'imayn in the outskirts of old Baghdad.

Al-Nawawī, Muḥyī al-Dīn Abū Zakariyyah ibn Sharaf ibn Mirā al-Ḥizāmī al-Ḥawrānī, a Shāfiʿī *muhaddith*, was born in 630/1232-33. His many works include *Riyāḍ al-Ṣālihīn* and *al-Adhkār*. He died in 776/1278.

Al-Nūrī, Abū al-Ḥasan Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, was a disciple of Sarī al-Saqāṭī and a companion of al-Junayd al-Baghdādī. He died in 295/907-08.

Al-Qarāfi, Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-Abbās Aḥmad ibn Idrīs al-Qarāfi al-Ṣanhajī al-Miṣrī, an eminent Mālikī jurist, wrote numerous works on jurisprudence including *al-Qawāʿid* and *al-Dhakhīrah*. He died in 684/1285.

Al-Qawrī, Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Qāsim Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Lakhmī al-Miknāsī al-Fāsī was one of the masters with whom Zarrūq studied. He died in 872/1467 in Fez.

Al-Qushayrī, Abū al-Qāsim ʿAbd al-Karīm ibn Hawāzin ibn Ṭalḥah ibn Muḥammad was a Shāfiʿī doctor of the law. He was one of the most learned of the age in the science of jurisprudence, Qurʾanic exegesis, *ḥadīth*, dogmatic theol-

ogy, belles-lettres, and poetry. He had a profound knowledge of Ṣūfism. Among his many are his *Risālah* on Ṣūfism, *al-Taysīr fī ʿIlm al-Tafsīr*, and *Kitāb al-Miʿrāj*. He was born in 376/986 and died in 465/1072.

Al-Sabtī, Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad ibn Jaʿfar al-Khazrajī, was a Mālikī Ṣūfī shaykh known for his spiritual gifts and piety. Born in 524/1129-30, he died in 601/1204-05.

Sahl ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Tustarī was a Mālikī Ṣūfī shaykh. He was born in 200/815-16 and died in either 283/896-97 or 293/905-06. He was the shaykh of al-Ḥallāj.

Saḥnūn, Abū Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Salām ibn Saʿīd al-Tanūkhī was born in 160/776-77. He was a Mālikī doctor of the law who became the chief imām in the Maghrib, where on points of doctrine, his opinions became the standard authority. He held the post of *qāḍī* at al-Qayrawān and is the author of *al-Mudawwanah* on Mālikī doctrine. He died in 240/854.

Saʿīd ibn Jubayr ibn Ḥishām al-Asdī was killed by al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī in 92/710-11.

Ṣāliḥ ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, Abū al-Faḍl, was the eldest son of the founder of the Ḥanbalī school of jurisprudence. He studied under his father and eventually became the magistrate of Ṭarṭūs. He was born in 230/844-45 and died in 266/879-80.

Sarī ibn al-Mughallis al-Saqatī, Abū al-Ḥasan, was a Ṣūfī shaykh, disciple of Maʿrūf al-Karkhī and master of al-Junayd al-Baghdādī. He died in 256/870.

Al-Shādhilī, Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbd al-Jabbār ibn Yūsuf, a descendant of al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, was the founder of the Ṣūfī order that bears his name. He was a student of Ibn Mashīsh (d. 625/1228) and the master of Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Mursī (d. 686/1288). Born in 573/1177, he died in 656/1258.

Al-Shāfiʿī, Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Idrīs ibn ʿUthmān al-Qurashī, was born in Ghazzah in 150 and died in 204/819-20. He studied with Mālik ibn Anas and Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah and is the founder of the school of jurisprudence that bears his name.

Al-Shiblī, Abū Bakr Dulaf ibn Jaḥdar ibn Jaʿfar ibn Yūnus, was a Mālikī and a Ṣūfī shaykh, a major disciple of al-Junayd al-Baghdādī. He renounced the world at Khayr al-Nassāj’s assembly. He was born in 247/861-62 and died in 334/945-46.

Al-Shushtarī, Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Nu-mayrī, jurist and Ṣūfī, was celebrated for his piety and acts of devotion. He committed the Qur’an to memory while a child, next turned to theology and jurisprudence, and was finally attracted to Ṣūfism. He is the author of many prose and poetical works. Born in 610/1212, he died in 668/1270.

Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah ibn ʿImrān, Abū Muḥammad al-Kūfī al-Makkī al-Hilālī was a “Follower of the Followers” (*min tābiʿī al-tābiʿīm*) and a man of great knowledge. He wrote an influential collection of *ḥadīth* and a commentary on the Qur’an. He was born in 107/725-26 and died in 198/813-14.

Al-Suhrawardī, Ḍiyā' al-Dīn Abū Najīb 'Abd al-Qāhir, was a Ṣūfī shaykh and master of his nephew Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Ḥafs 'Umar al-Suhrawardī. He was a disciple of Aḥmad al-Ghazālī and a Shāfi'ī. He was born in 490/1097 and died in 563/1168.

Al-Sulamī, Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Mūsā al-Nisābūrī, was born in 325/936-37 and died in 412/1021-22. A Ṣūfī, he authored many works, among which are *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyyah* and *Kitāb al-Futūwwah*.

Sulaymān ibn Yasār was a jurist of Medina known for his immense knowledge and piety, who died in 94/712-13 or 100/718-19 or 104/722-23 or 107/725-26.

Al-Ṭarṭūshī, Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn al-Walīd ibn Muḥammad ibn Khalaf ibn Sulaymān ibn Ayyūb al-Qura-shī al-Fihri al-Andalusī, generally known as Ibn Abī Randaqah, was a doctor of the Mālikī school of jurisprudence. He was a learned man, devout, pious, humble, practicing self-mortification, leading a life of poverty, and content with little. He was born in 451/1059-60 and died in 520/1126.

Ṭāwūs, Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān Ṭāwūs ibn Kaysān al-Khaw-lānī al-Ḥamdānī al-Yamānī, received traditions from Ibn 'Abbās and Abū Hurayrah. He died in Mecca in 106/725.

Al-Thawrī, Abū 'Abd Allāh Sufyān ibn Sa'īd ibn Masrūq ibn Ḥabīb, died in 161/778 in either al-Baṣrah or al-Kūfah. He was the master of the highest authority in *ḥadīth* and

other sciences. His piety, devotion, veracity, and contempt for worldly goods were universally acknowledged, and as an *imām* he is counted among the *mujtahids*. Al-Junayd was a follower of his teachings. He was born in 95/713 or 96/714-15 or 97/715-16.

Ubayy ibn Ka‘b ibn Qays, Abū al-Mundhir al-Anṣārī al-Khazrajī, was a Companion of the Prophet and a transmitter of *ḥadīth*. He died in either 22/642-43 or 30/650-51.

‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam, Umayyad caliph, was a man of great piety and justice, and the only ruler of his dynasty to be acclaimed as a religious model. He is considered to be a *muhaddith* and was well versed in matters of jurisprudence. He died in 111/729.

‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb was a father-in-law of the Prophet, and became the second caliph after Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq’s death. At the beginning of the Islamic mission ‘Umar, a man of great will and character, was an avowed enemy of Islam. When he became a Muslim (approximately four years before the *Hijrah*) the call to Islam, which had been clandestine, became public. Islam spread outside the Arabian Peninsula during his caliphate, and he is considered the founder of the Islamic empire. He was assassinated in 23/644.

‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān was a son-in-law of the Prophet, who became the third caliph after the death of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. He was a rich merchant in Mecca, but abandoned his riches when the *Hijrah* to Medina took place. His period of rule was marked by troubles which eventually led to his

being assassinated in 35/655 while reading the Qur'an. It was under his instructions that the entire Qur'an was recorded and official copies sent to various areas of the Islamic world.

Wahb, Abū 'Abd Allāh ibn Munabbih al-Yamānī al-San'ānī was born in 34/654-55. He was a man of great knowledge familiar with the books of the ancients. He transmitted *ḥadīth* from Abū Hurayrah, Mu'ādh ibn Jabal, Ṭawūs, and others. He died in 110/728-29.

Yūsuf ibn al-Ḥusayn, Abū Ya'qūb al-Rāzī was a transmitter of *ḥadīth* and a disciple of Dhū al-Nūn al-Miṣrī. He died in 340/1048-49.

APPENDIX B

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

°*Ābid*: devotee, one given over to devotions.

°*Ahd*: pledge of loyalty between the shaykh and the disciple.

Al-Ākhirah: the Hereafter, as opposed to this world.

°*Ālam al-Jabarūt*: the world of Almightyness, divine omnipotence, spiritual world.

°*Ālam al-Malakūt*: the world of dominion, of psychic realities.

°*Ālam al-Mulk*: the material world.

°*Amal*: practice; action.

°*Ārif*: gnostic; one who “knows” God directly.

Aṣl (pl. *uṣūl*): principle; origin. “*Uṣūl al-Dīn*” refers to the Qur’an and the *Sunnah*.

Āyah (pl. *āyāt*): sign; Qur’anic verse.

Bast: spiritual expansion which manifests itself by feelings of joy and happiness.

Bāṭin: esoteric, inner, hidden.

Bay‘ah: pledge; initiation.

Dhikr (*adhkār*): the remembrance or invocation of God.

Du‘ā’: personal prayer or supplication, as opposed to ritual prayer.

Dunyā: this world.

Faḍīlah (pl. *faḍā’il*): virtue, such as patience, sincerity, contentment, and vigilance.

Faqīh: doctor of the law, jurisconsult.

Faqīr (pl. *fuqarā’*): a member of a Ṣūfī order.

Far‘ (pl. *furū‘*): literally branch. In terms of “*furū‘ al-dīn*,”

this refers to the practical applications of the religion.

Hadīth (pl. *aḥādīth*): the sayings and deeds of the Prophet.

Hāl (pl. *aḥwāl*): spiritual state which may be temporary in contrast to a station (*maqām*).

Haqīqah: esoteric Truth; Reality; the inner truth.

Ḥaqq: the Truth, the Real, a term Ṣūfīs use when referring to God.

Haybah: reverential fear of God.

‘Ibādāt: religious devotions such as additional prayers and the like.

Iḥsān: spiritual virtue; “to worship God as if you see Him.”

Ijmā’^c: consensus. Islamic law is based on the Qur’an and the *Sunnah*. If a matter arises which neither the Qur’an nor the *Sunnah* addresses, then a consensus on the matter is sought.

Ijtihād: independent judgment.

‘Ilm: knowledge.

Īmān: the belief in God, His angels, His books, His messengers, in the Day of Judgment, in destiny whether good or evil, and in the resurrection after death.

Iqtidā’: emulation; imitation through knowledge and understanding.

al-‘iṣmah: infallibility.

Istiqāmah: righteousness.

I‘tikāf: seclusion in a mosque.

Janābah: ritual impurity requiring the person to make a full ablution (*ghusl*) in order to perform his religious obligations such as the prayer and the fast.

Jihād: holy war. According to the Prophet there are two types of *jihād*: *jihād akbar* (the greater war) and *jihād asghar* (the lesser war). The former is the war one wages

against one's ego, while the latter is against the enemies of Islam.

Karāmah (pl. *karāmāt*): miracles performed by saints.

Kashf: illumination.

Khalq: the creation; mankind.

Khalwah: spiritual retreat that the Ṣūfī undertakes in a *zāwiyah* upon the instruction of the shaykh.

Khashyah: the fear of God.

Khawātir: suggestive thoughts. There are four sources of thoughts: divine (*rabbānī*), angelic (*malakī*), psychical (*nafsānī*), and satanic (*shayṭānī*).

Khawf: the fear of God.

Khirqah: patched frock worn by the Ṣūfī.

Malāmātī: a Ṣūfī who through his actions brings blame upon himself.

Al-Maqsūd: the goal; usually refers to the Beloved.

Muḥibb: lover of God; one associated with an order without formally being initiated.

Mujāhadah (pl. *mujāhadāt*): spiritual combat against the ego.

Muʿjizah (pl. *muʿjizāt*): miracles performed by Prophets and Messengers.

Murāqabah: vigilance.

Murīd: an initiated novice on the Ṣūfī path.

Mushābakah: handclasp. The Shaykh clasps the hands of the disciple during the initiation.

Mushāhadah: contemplation of God.

Nāfilah: any supererogatory act of devotion.

Nafs: the ego; the lower self; the carnal soul.

Nusuk: piety.

Qabḍ: spiritual contraction which manifests itself by feelings of sadness and depression.

Rajā': hope for the mercy of God.

Riyā': ostentation.

Rukhṣah (pl. *rukhaṣ*): legal dispensation; concession.

Sadd al-dharī'ah (pl. *dharā'i*): blocking pretexts that may lead to wrongdoings, innovation, or heresy. This refers to certain acts that in themselves are not forbidden, but have become forbidden because they have led to wrong-doing. For example the Prophet permitted and even encouraged women to attend mosques. Even so, this practice was forbidden by the doctors of the law in North Africa because the women had complained that the men disturbed them during their acts of worship.

Ṣafī (pl. *aṣfiyā'*): purified one.

Ṣalāh: ritual prayer; one of the five pillars of Islam. There are five obligatory prayers: the dawn prayer, noon, afternoon, sunset, and night. Other non-obligatory prayers are called *nāfilah* (pl. *nawāfil*).

Samā'c: audition.

Sharī'ah: the religious law governing every aspect of the life of the Muslim.

Shatḥah (pl. *shataḥāt*): remark made while being in a state of ecstasy; which superficially may appear blasphemous, for example, al-Ḥallāj's utterance, "I am the Truth."

Shaykh: master; spiritual guide.

Shirk: associationism; ascribing partners to God.

Subḥah: prayer beads.

Sunnah: the actions and sayings of the Prophet.

Tabaṣṣur: discernment.

Tadhkīr: admonition.

Tanzīh: incomparability; transcendence.

Taqīd: blind conformism, imitation.

Tashbīh: comparability; anthropomorphic.

Taqwā: devoutness.

Tawakkul: absolute trust in God.

Ta'wīl: interpretation of a *ḥadīth* or Qur'anic verse.

Tayammum; ablution with sand in the absence of water.

◌*Umrah*: the lesser pilgrimage to Mecca. It involves the rituals of the *Ḥajj* but it is performed in the off-season.

Uns: intimacy with God; nearness.

Walī (pl. *awliyā'*): friend of God; saint.

Wari': a God-fearing man.

Wa'z: exhortation.

Wird: litany, composed of Qur'anic verses, prayers upon the Prophet (*salawāt*), and prayers uttered by the Prophet. It is normally recited at specific times of the day.

Wuḍū': ablution with water.

Yaqīn: certitude.

Zāhid: ascetic; one who has abandoned the world.

Zakāh: obligatory alms, one-fortieth of one's liquid assets to be distributed to needy and destitute Muslims; one of the five pillars of Islam.



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