

Concerning the States of Those Who Attain Realization

This chapter consists of six sections:

Section one: on trust (*tawakkul*)

Section two: on resignation (*rida*)

Section three: on submission (*taslim*)

Section four: on *tawhid*

Section five: on *ittihad*

Section six: on *wahdah*.

Section One: On Tawakkul

God, the Glorious and the Exalted says:

وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَتَوَكَّلُوا إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ...

“Put you all your trust in God, if you are believers.” (5:23)

Tawakkul means to entrust someone with something. Here *tawakkul* on behalf of a servant means his entrusting his affairs to God, the Exalted, with the conviction that He has greater wisdom and power to determine them according to His providence, and to be happy and satisfied with that which He does and determines:

وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ ﴿٦٥﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَالِغُ أَمْرِهِ

“And whoever puts his trust in God, He shall suffice him. Indeed God attains His purpose.” (65:3)

Satisfaction with that which God does and causes to happen is attained by reflecting on one's past condition, when He brought one into existence when one knew nothing. Then He fashioned numerous signs of His wisdom in his creation, so much so that one would not be able to know one out of a thousand of them in a lifetime.

Then, without any prior request, He brought him up taking care of everything related to his inward and outward aspects, wherewith he can survive and grow from deficiency to perfection. [Were one to reflect upon these facts], he would know that whatever will happen in the future also will not be without His providence and will.

Thence he would trust Him, the Exalted, and would not worry regarding the remaining matters, being certain that that which has to be accomplished will be done by God, the Exalted, whether he feels agitated or not, because:

من انقطع إلى الله كفاه الله كل مؤنته ورزقه من حيث لا يحتسب.

When someone puts all his trust in God, God takes care of all his needs and provides him in a manner that he does not reckon. 1

Tawakkul does not imply refraining from making effort with the excuse that one has left the matter to God. Rather, it means that one should have the conviction that everything other than God is from God and that there are many things that happen in the world that occur in accordance with their conditions and causes.

That is because when the power and will of God, the Exalted, make one thing rather than some other happen, that is inevitably in accordance with the conditions and means associated with that which takes place.

Hence one should consider oneself, as well as one's knowledge, power and will—all of them—to be a part of the conditions and means associated with the occurrence of some matters that one attributes to oneself.

Hence one should devote greater effort to matters wherein one's will and effort form a part of the conditions and causes of their realization—like one through whom a work assigned to him by his Master, Creator and Beloved, is accomplished.

Such a view reconciles *jabr* (predestination) and *qadar* (total freedom), which are brought into harmony, for if that work be attributed to the Creator, it would entail *jabr* and if ascribed [exclusively] to its conditions and means that would imply *qadar*.

But if the matter is viewed correctly, it will be seen that neither *jabr* is absolute nor *qadar*, and one would discover the truth of this statement:

لا جبر ولا تفويض بال أمر بين الأمرين.

Neither predestination nor independence of causal efficiency, but a middle position between the two. 2

Thus one should consider oneself to be effective (*mutasarriif*) in actions attributed to oneself, with the efficiency of the means, not the efficiency of the agent in relation to the means. In fact, these two considerations—one of which is in relation to the agent and the other in relation to the means—come together [in a synthesis].

Thus everything derives from the agent without the means abandoning its mediating character. This point is extremely subtle and cannot be arrived at except with the exertion of the intellectual faculty.

Whoever arrives at this point will know for certain that the destiny (*muqaddar*) of all beings is one: that everything that happens comes into existence at a particular time through particular means and causes in particular conditions, and any haste in making it happen or an effort to delay it beyond its time is ineffectual.

He will know himself to be a part of the conditions and means [necessary for their occurrence], freeing himself from attachment to the matters of the world, to concentrate on that which relates specifically to himself rather than to something else. Thereat he would realize the real meaning of the statement:

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ

“Does not God suffice His servant?” (39:36)

And thereupon he would be one of the *mutawakkilun* (those who put their trust in God), and it is about him and the like of him that this verse has been revealed:

...فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ

“... and when thou art resolved, put thy trust in God; surely God loves those who put their trust [in Him].” (3: 159)

Section Two: On Rida

God, the Glorious and the Exalted, has said:

لِكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا آتَاكُمْ

“... That you may not grieve for what escapes you, nor rejoice in what has come to you . . .”
(57:23)

Rida is gratification and its fruit is love. It entails the absence of resentment, outward and inward, in the heart, in speech and action. Those who are preoccupied with the outward (*ahl-e zahir*) are eager that God, the Exalted, be pleased with them, that they may remain secure from His wrath and punishment.

The seekers of the Truth (*ahl-e haqiqat*) are eager that they may remain pleased with God, the Exalted, so that none of such various states as life and death, survival and annihilation, pain and comfort, felicity and wretchedness, prosperity and poverty be contrary to their desire, leading them to prefer one of them to the other, for their knowing that all of them are from the exalted Creator.

The love of God, the Exalted, is fixed in their nature, and hence they do not seek anything beyond what He wills and determines and are well-pleased with whatever befalls them.

It is related of one of the sages who possessed this station that in seventy years of a lifetime he never said when something happened “Had it not happened!” nor “Had it happened!” when something didn't.

And a sage when asked concerning the effect of *rida* he had found within himself answered, “I do not find any trace of *rida* within myself. Yet, if I were to be made into a bridge extending over the hell and all the creation, from the first to the last, were to pass over me into paradise and I alone were consigned to hell, it would never occur to me why I didn't receive what others did.”

And when the equality of the different aforementioned states becomes well-established in one's nature, that which happens accords with his real desire. Hence it has been said that ‘Everyone gets what he deserves and deserves what he gets.’ For one who has found the Truth, God's good-pleasure with a servant is realized when the servant's good pleasure with God is obtained:

رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ

“God being well-pleased with them and they well-pleased with Him ...” (5:119)

Hence whenever one has an objection concerning the occurrence of something, whatsoever that may be, or when there is a probability of its coming to one's mind, one would be devoid of the station of *rida*.

One who possesses the station of *rida is* always in a state of ease, for he has no preferences or reservations, or rather his preferences accord with all that happens and doesn't happen:

وَرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ

“. . . and God's good-pleasure is greater” (9:72)

That is why the angel who is the keeper of the paradise is called *Ridwan* and it has been said:

الرضا بالقضاء باب الله الأعظم

Satisfaction with fate is the greatest door to Allah, 3

for everyone who attains to *rida* reaches paradise and whatever he beholds is seen in the light of Divine mercy, and:

المؤمن ينظر بنور الله الأعظم

The believer sees with the greatest light of Allah.⁴

As God, the Exalted, is the creator of all existents, were He to dislike something it would be impossible for it to come into existence. And since He has not disliked anything, [the wayfarer] is well-pleased with everything [that comes into existence], not regretting anything that doesn't occur, nor feeling elated by that which does:

إِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ

“Surely that is true constancy.” (31:17)

Section Three: On Taslim

God, the Glorious and the Exalted, has said:

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ
حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

“But no, by thy Lord! they will not believe till they make thee the judge regarding the disagreements between them and then find in themselves no impediment touching thy verdict but surrender in full submission.” (4:65)

Taslim means submission, and here it means the wayfarer's surrendering to God everything that pertains to himself.

This station is higher than that of *tawakkul*, for in *tawakkul* the matter is entrusted to God in a manner something is entrusted to a trustee (*wakil*), a state wherein one still considers the matter as pertaining to oneself. In *taslim* this attachment is severed so that the wayfarer considers every matter related to himself as pertaining totally to Him.

This station is also above *rida*, for in *rida* everything that God does accords with one's inclination, whereas in this station one's inclination and that which agrees with it or is against it is surrendered in its totality to God, so that one has no more any inclination whatsoever for anything to agree with it or be against it.

(then find in themselves no impediment touching then verdict') this pertains to the station of *rida*, and as to *يسلموا تسليما* ('but surrender in full submission') that refers to a station higher than it.

And when the Truth-seeking wayfarer peers into himself with a truth-finding eye, he does not consider either *ride* or *taslim* as his (ultimate] limit, for in each of these two stations he has placed himself vis-a-vis God, the Exalted, with Whom he is well-pleased and Who is well-pleased with him, as if he were the giver and God the receiver. These distinctions disappear at the station of *tawhid*.

Section Four: On Tawhid

God, the Exalted and the Glorious, says:

وَلَا تَجْعَلْ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ

“And set not up with God another god” (17:22)

Tawhid means `to consider one' and `to make one.' In the first sense *tawhid* in the sense of affirming that God, the Exalted, is One—is a prerequisite of faith, the starting point of gnosis

...إِنَّمَا اللَّهُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ...

“God is only one god.” (4: 171)

In the second sense, it is the ultimate goal of gnosis, which is achieved subsequent to faith. That is, when one attains certainty that there is nothing except God, the Exalted, and His effusion in the realm of being, and that His effusion, too, has no independent being of itself, turning away from all plurality he considers all as one and sees all as one.

Thus making all one, he passes within his soul from the station of “He is One and there is none that may share with Him in divinity”) (وحدّه لا شريك له في الإلهية) to the station of “He is One and there is none that may share with Him in Being” (وحدّه لا شريك له في الوجود)

In this station, other than God becomes a veil for him, and attention to other than God is considered by him to be absolute *shirk*, and he proclaims with the tongue of his being:

إِنِّي وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ حَنِيفًا ۖ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

“Lo! I have turned my face towards Him Who created the heavens and the earth, as one of pure faith, and I am not of the idolaters.” (6:79)

Section Five: On Ittihad

God, the Exalted and the Glorious says:

وَلَا تَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ ۚ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ...

“Therefore, invoke not with God another god, there is no god except Him” (28:88)

Tawhid means `making one' and *ittihad* means `becoming one with.' There, it is “Set not up with God

another god,” and here, “Invoke not with God another god,” for there is a trace of constraint [in *tawhid*] which is absent in *ittihad*.

Hence when the unity becomes absolute and established within the inner self, so that there is no attention whatsoever to duality, one would attain to *ittihad*.

Ittihad is not what some shortsighted people imagine, that it is the becoming one of the creature with God, the Exalted **تعالى الله عن ذلك علوا كبيرا** `Greatly exalted is He above that!'

Rather, it means seeing all as Him, without being constrained to say that everything other than Him is from Him and so all are one.

Rather, his vision is so illumined with the light of His manifestation, Exalted is His station, that he does not see other than Him, there remaining no seer, seen, or sight, and all become one.

The prayer of Mansur, Husayn Hallaj:

بيني وبينك إني ينازعني فارفع بفضلك إني من البين

Between me and Thee, my `Inness' contends with me,
So, with Thy grace, remove my `Inness' from in between, 5

was granted and his egohood was removed from in between, until he could say:

أنا من أهوى ومن أهوى أنا

I am the One that I love and the One I love is Me.

At this stage, it is known that the one who declared (أنا الحق) “I am the Truth” and the one who said, “Glory be to Me, how great is My majesty,” did not claim divinity but negated his egohood and affirmed the ipseity of Someone other than himself, and this is the desired goal.

Section Six: On Wahdah

God, the Glorious, said:

لَمَنْ الْمُلْكُ الْيَوْمَ ؟ لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ

“Whose is the sovereignty this day? It is God’s, the One, the Omnipotent.” (40: 16)

Wahdah is unity, and this is above *ittihad*, for *ittihad* which means becoming one—smells of plurality, which is not there in *wahdah*. There, movement and rest, contemplation and remembrance, wayfaring and journey, deficiency and perfection, [the distinctions of] seeking, the seeker and the sought—all vanish, and:

إذا بلغ الكلام إلى الله فامسكوا

When the discourse reaches God, stop! 6

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1. Tafsir nur al-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 357.
 2. Bihar al-anwar, vol. 5, p. 17.
 3. Al-Barqi, Kitab al-mahasin, p. 131.
 4. Bihar al-anwar, vol. 67, p. 73.
 5. Sayyid Haydar al-Amuli, Jami' al-asrar, p. 364. The following version of the couplet is given by Mirsad al-'ibad (Tehran: Bungah-e Tarjume wa Nashr), p. 323:

بيني وبينك إني ينازعني فارفع بفضلك إني من البين

In Al-Khwarazmi's Sharh F usus al-hikam, p. 94, the following version appears:

6. Bihar al-anwar, vol 3, p. 259.

بيني وبينك اني ينازعني فارفع بلطف انني من البين

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