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Section Five: Brief Hints At The Objectives, Subjects And Contents Of The Glorious Divine Book

Know that the Glorious (Divine) Book, as it declares itself, is a book of guidance, showing the way to human conduct, to educate the souls, to cure the spiritual sicknesses and to throw light on the road to Allah.

Generally speaking, Allah, due to His All-Embracing mercy upon His servants, sent this Glorious Book from His Sacred state of proximity, down, in proportion to the descending worlds until it reached this world of darkness and prison of nature and was put in the dress of words and letters in order to release those imprisoned in this world's dark dungeon and to unite those chained by the fetters of hopes and desires, lifting them from the lowest level of shortcomings, weakness and animality to the peak of perfection, strength and humanity, taking them away from Satan's neighborhood to the company of heavenly people, and to lead them to the state of "proximity" so as to let them attain the stage of meeting Allah, which is the highest objective and the want of the people of Allah.

So, this is the Book of inviting to Allah and happiness, and explaining how to attain that stage. Its contents, generally, concern this same journey to Allah, or help the *sālik* and traveler to Allah. In short, one of its important objectives is to invite [mankind] to know Allah, and [another is] to explain divine knowledge concerning the affairs of the Essence, Names, Attributes and Acts. At the top of this is the Unity of Essence, Names and Acts, some of which are explicitly mentioned and some others are only hinted at.

It should be noted that this comprehensive Divine Book deals with the above-mentioned information, from knowing the Essence to knowing the Acts, in such a way that each class of the people comprehends of it according to its capacity. The noble *ṣayahs* on *tawhīd*, and on the Unity of Acts in

particular, are explained by the literalist scholars, the traditionalists and the *faqḥs* (may Allah be pleased with them) in such a way that their explanations are entirely contrary to the explanations of the people of knowledge and the scholars of the latent meaning of the Qur'an.

The writer believes that each of these explanations is correct in its own place, since the Qur'an cures the internal pains, and treats each patient in a certain way. See different noble *āyats*, such as:

“He is the First and the Last, and the Manifest and the Hidden,”¹

“Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth,”²

“And He it is who in the heaven and in the earth is God,”³

“And He is with you,”⁴

“Wherever you turn there is Allah's Face,”⁵

And many others on the Unity of Essence, and the last *āyats* of the *Sūrah* of *al-Hashr* and other ones on the Unity of Attributes, and the *āyats*:

“And you threw not when you did throw, but Allah threw,”⁶

“All praise is for Allah, the Lord of the worlds,”⁷

And

“All that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth glorify Allah,”⁸

Concerning the Unity of acts some of them strictly, and some others more strictly, have gnostic indications. For each class of the external and the internal scholars each of them is the remedy, in a way, for an illness. As, although it is said in the noble *al-Kūf* that the first *āyats* of *Sūrah al-Hadīd* and the blessed *Sūrah* of *Ikhḥs* [*Tawhīd*] were intended for the deep thinkers of the End of the Time,⁹ yet the people of literalism are also benefited by them all right a fact which proves the miraculousness and the comprehensiveness of this noble Book.

Of its other objectives and topics is its call for purifying the souls and purging the insides from the impurities of nature, and attaining happiness. Generally, it shows how to travel to Allah. This noble subject is divided into two important branches: One is *taqw* in all its stages, including beware of other than Allah, and complete negligence of all other than Him. The other is faith in all its stages and affairs, including devotion to Allah, and return and repentance to His Sacred Essence. These are of the important objectives of this noble Book as most of its subjects, directly or indirectly, connote them.

Another subject of this Divine Book is to relate the stories of the prophets, Allah's friends and the wise men, and how He educated them, and how they educated the people. These stories are of great advantages and cover many instructions. They include so many pieces of divine information, teachings

and divine educational instructions, either openly or allegorically that perplex the mind. Glorious is Allah and praise and gratitude are for Him.

Just take the story of the creation of Adam ('a), the angels' being ordered to bow down to him, the teaching of the names and the cases of *Iblis* and Adam ('a) which are repeatedly narrated in the Book of Allah. They offer so many teachings, educational instructions, knowledge and information for

“Him who has a heart or lends ear and he is a witness”¹⁰

That bewilders man. The stories of the Qur'an, such as the stories of Adam, Moses, Abraham and other prophets ('a) are repeatedly stated in order to show that this Book is neither a book of stories nor of history, but a book of journeying to Allah, a book of *tawhīd*, knowledge, admonitions and aphorisms.

In such matters repetition is required so as to fix them in the hard-hearted souls and to have effects as an admonition to them. In other words, whoever wants to educate, teach, warn and bring good tidings, has to express his intentions in different styles and diverse ways, such as narrations and tales, or historical stories, and sometimes in quite an explicit way, and sometimes by way of allusion and indirect hints, symbols and examples, so that different souls and scattered hearts can each be benefited by them.

As this noble Book is intended for the happiness of all classes and the human race, and as the human species differ in the condition of their hearts, in their customs, behaviors, time and place, they cannot be attracted in the same way. Many of them may not be prepared to accept the instructions and the original matter in a direct, clear and explicit language, or to be affected by it.

They are to be approached in accordance with the construction of their brains in order to make them comprehend what is intended. Some others are not interested in stories, tales and histories, as they are in quest of the cores of the matters and the real aims. They cannot be taken on the same basis with the former ones.

Many hearts are fit for being frightened and warned; other hearts are attracted by promises and hopes. Consequently, this noble Book uses different methods, styles and ways for its invitation of the people. Thus, such Book has inevitably to resort to repetition. Attracting and admonishing, without repetition, would be far from eloquence. The expected effect in the souls cannot be obtained without repetition.

Nevertheless, in this noble Book, the topics are so sweetly related that their repetition never bores the hearers. Furthermore, each repetition of a subject brings fresh details and features that have not formerly been mentioned, or rather in each repetition there is an additional important gnostic or ethical point around which the case revolves. In order to expand upon this, one has to carefully study the stories of the Qur'an, which cannot be contained within the summaries of these papers.

This weak person [the writer] has a fixed hope to write, with Allah's help, a book about the stories of the

Qur'an, deciphering their puzzles and explaining their teachings and educational qualities, as much as possible, though carrying out this task by somebody like the writer is but a raw desire, or a false fancy.

At any rate, relating the stories of the prophets ('a), describing their conducts and behaviors, how they educated the people, and remembering their advices, admonitions and good arguments are of the largest chapters of knowledge and philosophies, and of the loftiest passages to happiness and instructions which Allah, the Exalted and Most Glorified, opened to His servants.

Although the people of knowledge, *sulṭān* and austerity have their share plentifully, other people also have their boundless portion, as is stated in the noble *ḥ*yah:

“When the night over-shadowed him, he saw a star. He said: “This is my Lord.” But when it set, he said: “I do not love the setting (ones).”¹¹

The people of knowledge understand well the spiritual *sulṭān* and the conduct of Abraham ('a). They also learn how to travel to Allah, and perceive the truth of the self's spiritual journey from the farthest (deepest) darkness of nature, expressed in **“the night over-shadowed him,”** till absolutely casting down the egoism and egotism, leaving Oneness and self-worship, attaining the state of sanctity and joining the meeting of intimacy, which is expressed in: “I have turned my face toward Him who created the heavens and the earth...”¹²

Others learn from it the outer journey and how *Khalīl ar-Rahmān* (the intimate friend of the Beneficent) educated his people. Likewise, there are other stories and tales, such as the stories of Adam, Ibrāhīm (Abraham), Moses, Yūsuf (Joseph), 'īsā (Jesus) and the meeting between al-Khidr (Elias) and Moses, by which the people of knowledge, austerity and hardship, and others are benefited differently.

In this part included, or in a separate objective, are the aphorisms and the admonitions of His Sacred Essence, Who, on every suitable occasion, has invited the people, with His tongue of Power, to divine knowledge, *tawḥīd* and glorification, such as the blessed *Sūrah* of *Ikhḥās*, the last *ḥ*yahs of the *Sūrah* of *al-Hashr* and the early *ḥ*yahs of the *Sūrah* of *al-Hadīd* and other instances in the noble divine Book.

The people of heart and of good past enjoy a good share of it. For example, when the people of knowledge recite:

“And whoever leaves his house migrating to Allah and His Messenger, then death overtakes him, his reward is, indeed, with Allah...”¹³

They understand from it the proximity of the *nḥ*filah [supererogatory act] and *farḥ*dah [obligatory act], while, at the same time, others understand from it a bodily migration, say, to Mecca or to Medina, or they understand it to be an invitation to purifying the soul and internal austerity, as in the noble *ḥ*yah:

“He will, indeed, be successful who purifies it, and he will, indeed, be unsuccessful who seduces it,”¹⁴

And the like; or it is a call to good deed, as it is obvious; or it is a warning against anyone of these things. This part also includes the aphorisms of Luqmān and of other notables and believers that are sporadically mentioned in this divine Book, such as the case of the “Companions of the Cave.”

Another subject of this luminous Book concerns the states of the disbelievers, the deniers and the opposers of the truth and reality, and those who act obstinately towards the prophets and the Imāms (‘a). It explains their fates and how they were annihilated, such as the episodes of Pharaoh, Korah, Nimrod, Shaddād, the Companions of the Elephant, and other disbelievers and sinners, in all of which there are admonitions, aphorisms and even knowledge for those who deserve them.

This part includes the cases of the accursed *iblis*, as well as the expeditions of the Messenger of Allah (s), (or in a separate part) from which noble subjects are also learnt, such as how the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (s) used to fight in order to awaken the Muslims from the sleep of negligence, and to incite them to fight for the sake of Allah to uplift the word of truth and to abolish the *batil* (falsehood).

Another subject dealt with in the Glorious Qur'an is explaining the pure laws of the literal meaning of the *shar‘ah* and the disciplines and divine rules, which are stated in this luminous Book, in a general way, the most important of which is introducing the principal subjects and disciplines, such as the chapters of the *salat*, *zakat*, *khums*, *hajj*, *sawm*, *jihad*, marriage, inheritance, penalties, punishments, trading, and the like.

This section, which is the science of the appearance of the *shar‘ah*, is a public concern and is for all the classes, and it is intended to build up this world and the Hereafter. All the classes of people can benefit from it according to their individual capacities. This is frequently invited to in the Book of Allah, as well as in the *hadiths* and narratives, which freely expand upon the characteristics and details. The works and writings of the religious scholars on this section are more and higher than on other sections.

Another topic dealt with in the Glorious Qur'an is the conditions of the *ma‘ad* [Resurrection], arguments proving it, its torments, punishments and rewards, and the details of Paradise, Hell, punishing, and of putting in a state of comfort and ease.

This section handles matters such as the conditions of the people of happiness and their ranks, like the people of knowledge, the favorites, the people of austerity, the travelers to Allah, the devotees, and the ascetics, as well as the conditions and degrees of the people of wretchedness, such as the infidels, the veiled, the hypocrites, the deniers, the disobedient and the sinners. But that which has more advantages to the conditions of the common people is more expanded upon and is in a more explicit language, whereas that which is more advantageous to a particular class of people is referred to by way of allegories and allusions, such as:

“And an approval from Allah is far greater”¹⁵,

And other *ayahs* about meeting Allah, and such as:

“Nay, surely they shall on that day be veiled from their Lord,”¹⁶

In respect to another group. In this section, i.e. the section concerning details about the Resurrection and the Return to Allah, countless information and difficult secrets are stated, such that, without a demonstrative conduct [su/ḥk] or a gnostic light, their nature cannot be comprehended.

Another subject of this divine Book is the proofs and evidences which Allah, the Exalted, Himself presents to prove the truthful matters and divine knowledge, like the argument proving [the existence of] Allah and His Oneness, His transcendence, His Knowledge, His Power and His other attributes of perfection.

In this section one can sometimes find very refined proofs from which the people of knowledge derive complete benefit, such as:

“Allah bears witness that there is no god but He.”¹⁷

One also finds proofs which are used by the scholars and philosophers in one way, and by the people of formalism and the common people in another way, such as the ḥyah:

“Had there been in them any gods other than Allah, they both would have been corrupted,”¹⁸

And the ḥyah:

“...otherwise each god would have certainly taken away what he had created,”¹⁹

And like the first ḥyahs of the Sḥrah of al-Hadḥd and the blessed Sḥrah of at-Tawḥḥd and other ḥyahs. Also there are arguments proving the Resurrection and the return of the spirits and originating another creation, and the arguments proving the existence of Allah's angels and the great prophets, stated in many occasions in this Glorious Book.

These were the arguments of the Sacred Essence Himself, and there are the arguments and proofs of the prophets and wise men quoted by Allah to prove the divine knowledge, such as the arguments of Ibrḥḥm, the intimate Friend of Allah (‘a), and other arguments.

These were the important subjects of this Book, though there are many other different subjects, which require considerable time to count.

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1. Sḥrah al-Hadḥd 57:3
 2. Sḥrah an-Nḥr 24:35
 3. Sḥrah az-Zukhruf 43:84
 4. Sḥrah al-Hadḥd 57:4
 5. Sḥrah al-Baqarah 2: 115
 6. Sḥrah al-Anfal 8: 17

7. Sūrah al-F̣atihah 1:2
8. Sūrah al-Jumu'ah 62:1; Sūrah at-Tagḥībun 64:1
9. Uṣūl al-Ḳif̣ī, vol. 1, "Book of at-Tawḥīd," ch. on "Lineage," haḍīth 3, p. 123.
10. Sūrah Q̣if̣ 50:37
11. Sūrah al-An'ām 6:76
12. Ibid.: 79
13. Sūrah an-Niṣā' 4:100
14. Sūrah ash-Shams 91:9–10
15. Sūrah at-Tawbah 9:72
16. Sūrah al-Mutaffif̣īn 83:15
17. Sūrah al-Mutaffif̣īn 83:15
18. Sūrah al-Anbiỵā' 21:22.
19. Sūrah al-Mu'miṇīn 23:91

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