

THE ETHICAL PHILOSOPHY OF AL-GHAZZĀLĪ

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To
The Undying memory of my beloved daughter
KHALIDA

PREFACE

There is still a great demand for books on al-Ghazzālī, firstly, because his humanitarian and universal outlook on men and their affair makes an irresistible appeal to all, irrespective of caste, colour and creed. Secondly, because he was not exclusively of his time, but of all times. His ideas are always fresh and new. The study of his philosophy is the study of the fundamentals of human thought. We find anticipations in him of many modern philosophers, e.g., Descartes (*Method of Doubt*), Hume (*Law of Causation*), Kant (*Antinomies*), etc. Thirdly, his struggle to establish the validity of real and eternal values of life, of religion and of philosophy, and to expose the hollowness of false ones is a beacon light for seekers after the truth. Fourthly, his idealistic interpretation of the universe and his efforts in fathoming the mysteries of the mind to establish its supremacy over matter are greatly comforting to those who are in need of spiritual guidance. Fifthly, the study of al-Ghazzālī is helpful in understanding the culture and civilization of Islām, as he critically examined the tendencies, religious sects and philosophical systems of his time and left the definite stamp of his personality on subsequent thought. And, lastly, the study is in keeping with the spirit of the times. The Asiatic nations are pulsating with new hopes and aspirations which has necessitated the study of their own cultures and civilizations.

The title of the book, *The Ethical Philosophy* calls for explanation. The term Ethics ('*Ilm al-Mu'āmalā*'), 'Science of Practical Ethics' or *Akhlāq*, is used by al-Ghazzālī in his ethico-religious system in a much wider sense than is usually done by modern ethical writers. It includes all the activities of man, religious as well as social; consequently, there are many topics included in the present work which would have been omitted in a book dealing strictly with ethics. But such an omission would have presented a distorted picture of al-Ghazzālī's ethical theory.

My aim in this work is to present the basic principles and the practical implications of al-Ghazzālī's ethical theory, and

to reconstruct the whole system of his thought as presented in his works.

No systematic treatment of al-Ghazzālī's ethical philosophy has come to my knowledge. Dr. Zakī Mubārak's book, *Al-Akhlāq 'ind al-Ghazzālī*, so far as its title goes, may create the impression that it has the same scope as the present work. But, this book has an altogether different scope. The basis and the principles of al-Ghazzālī's ethical theory discussed in Parts II and III of my work do not find any place in Dr. Mubārak's book. Concerning other topics my point of view is quite different.

The presentation of the material in this book is based on al-Ghazzālī's original works in Arabic, particularly the *Ihyā'* and *Mizān al-'Amal*, and the important works by ancient and modern writers on the subject have been consulted. Of the two great Orientalists, Professors Macdonald and Asin, who devoted their lives to the study of al-Ghazzālī, the works of the former which are in English were accessible to me, while Professor Asin's works on al-Ghazzālī are in Spanish, and it was only through Dr. Krenkow's kindness that I became acquainted with the scope and the main trend of his thought. Concerning the patristic influences on the mind of al-Ghazzālī to which Professor Margoliouth and Dr. Guillaume drew my attention, Dr. Krenkow assured me that they had no bearing on my interpretation. The subject of religious sects and their philosophical basis in Islām is a very delicate one, and authors generally side with one or the other party or sect. In order to steer clear of sectarian controversies I have stuck to al-Ghazzālī's viewpoint and have supported it by frequent references to the works of the European Orientalists.

The present work was originally planned in 1927, when I was a Fellow of the Muslim University. Its first edition was brought out during the period 1949-51 in four separate volumes. In this second edition all the volumes have been consolidated into one, and the text has been thoroughly revised.

To ensure easier reading I have avoided the comparative studies of al-Ghazzālī's various original and illuminating ideas in the text. It has been done in footnotes which along with

the references have been placed in this edition at the end of the book.

My special thanks are due to Dr. Krenkow through whom I came to know something about Professor Asin's works. I am also grateful to all those writers whose works I have frequently consulted, and crave their indulgence if I have unwittingly used without acknowledgment any words, phrases, or sentences, which were assimilated in the course of my studies during the last 35 years and became an integral part of my vocabulary. I am also thankful to my revered teacher Professor Ḥabībūl Raḥmān, retired head of the Department of Education, Aligarh Muslim University, and to my disciples Mr. 'Abdul Ḥaq Anṣārī and Dr. Muḥammad Noor Nabī for their assistance and co-operation in bringing out this revised edition.

M. UMARUDDIN

Muslim University, Aligarh

March 1962

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Background of Al-Ghazzālī's Ethical Thought

CHAPTER I

AL-GHAZZĀLĪ'S TIMES : POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS

ALTHOUGH al-Ghazzālī was not only of his time but of all times, he stands out prominently as the most representative spirit of his era. Whatever he wrote bears the stamp of the age in which he lived. A knowledge of the spirit of his age will, therefore, give us a true and proper understanding of the philosophy of this remarkable man who, after assimilating whatever he took from the past and from his time, bequeathed to humanity a system of thought which bears so unique an impress of his own spiritual character that it will always remain a source of inspiration to those who yearn for communion with God. The works of al-Ghazzālī represent a very thoughtful exposition of Islām and at the same time a critique of the anti-Islāmic elements of his times, which had been gradually developing along with the political movements in the history of Islām. In order to appreciate al-Ghazzālī's writings we have to study the influences which were responsible for the various religious and philosophical systems in their historical perspective.

The religious and philosophical systems were closely associated with the political movements.¹ We will trace the origin and development of these movements from the Prophet's death to the time of al-Ghazzālī.

(a) The Immediate Successors of the Prophet (A.D. 632-661)

In the lifetime of the Prophet and his two immediate successors, Abū Bakr (A.D. 632-34) and 'Umar (A.D. 634-44), the solidarity of the Islāmic state remained intact. In the Caliphate of 'Uthmān (A.D. 644-56) a difference of opinion arose among the Muslims. This difference was bound to appear sooner or later in the large empire that the Caliphate had become, comprising a countless number of

1. Nicholson, R.A., *A Literary History of Arabs*, p. 217.

heterogeneous peoples and cultures. In the complexity of causes, the immediate cause which split the Muslim brotherhood into rival sects, was political. The movement led by 'Abd Allāh b. Sabā was responsible for the early civil and religious wars.² It was due to the shrewd activities of this man that Islāmic brotherhood came to be divided into three well-known sects, viz., the Sunni, the Shī'a and the Khawārij. He went from place to place to spread misconceptions about Islām.³ He defended his contentions by interpreting the verses of the Qur'ān as it suited his purpose. His doctrines were quite foreign to Islām. He formed secret societies. The first achievement of his party was the assassination of 'Uthmān, the Caliph. At the battles of the Camel (A.D. 656) and Šiffin (A.D. 657), the members of this party played a prominent part in splitting the Muslim brotherhood.⁴

Ibn Sabā is the founder and organiser of the Shī'ite sect. His doctrines gave a theological system to Shī'ism.⁵ He was the first (A.D. 653) to attribute divinity to 'Alī, for which the latter rebuked him.⁶ 'Alī, according to him, was a divinely appointed Caliph. Every prophet, he preached, had an executor (*waṣī*). 'Alī was to Muḥammad as Aaron was to Moses. The Imāmate, according to him, belonged to 'Alī by right.⁷ "As God had appointed Muḥammad as Prophet, so he had appointed 'Alī as his helper in life and his successor in death."⁸

2. Sabi was a native of Šan'ā and was of Jewish origin. He came to Hijāz during the Caliphate of 'Uthmān, and outwardly embraced Islām. (Muḥammad 'Alī, *Tārīkh Khilāfat-i-Rāshida*, p. 104). He established branches of his society first at Baṣra and Kūfa, where he laid the foundation of his malicious propaganda. Being detected in his nefarious activities, he fled from place to place, leaving the members of his party behind. Finally, he established himself in Egypt and directed his movement from there which had now penetrated all the territories and frontiers of the Caliphate.

3. Nicholson, op. cit., p. 25.

4. Muḥammad 'Alī, op. cit., pp. 104, 108-16, 121, 134 and 139.

5. Nicholson, op. cit., p. 217.

6. Browne, E.G. *A Literary History of Persia*, Vol. I, p. 220, Macdonald, D.B., *Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory*, p. 21; Sir William Muir, *The Caliphate, its Rise, Decline and Fall*, pp. 225-26.

7. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 9.

8. Ibid., p. 21.

The movement of Ibn Sabā proceeded triumphantly and succeeded in destroying the solidarity of Islām.

After the assassination of 'Uthmān, Ibn Sabā's party succeeded in electing 'Alī (A.D. 656-661) as Caliph. Mu'āwiya refused to submit to his Caliphate, hence there started a quarrel between 'Alī and Mu'āwiya.⁹ 'Alī marched on Syria to teach his rebellious governor a lesson in obedience but fate willed it otherwise.

'Alī's army comprised heterogeneous elements. It included personal friends, pious Muslims, political schemers, etc.¹⁰ After the fiasco of arbitration between 'Alī and Mu'āwiya, a group of 'Alī's followers came to him and asked him why he had accepted the arbitration of men, when the right of arbitration was vested only in God. 'Alī argued with them in vain that it was they who had compelled him to accept the arbitration.¹¹ They confessed their fault and acknowledged that they were in the wrong. They also told 'Alī that he too was in the wrong and demanded that he should confess his mistake and repent. Only on this condition, they said, would they follow him and fight with his and their own enemies.¹² On 'Alī's refusal to confess his fault, some twelve thousand of his followers deserted the main body, for which reason they were called Khawārij (the seceders).¹³ The people who remained with 'Alī were called the Shī'as, i.e., the partisans (of 'Alī). Henceforth, the Khawārij did not give any peace to 'Alī to administer the affairs of the empire. At last Ibn Muljim, one of the party, assassinated 'Alī and thus put an end to the True Caliphate.¹⁴

The Khawārij were a political party that gradually turned into a religious sect. They were fanatics in theology and wanted to enforce their doctrines on other Muslims at the

9. Dozy, *Spanish Islām*, p. 34.

10. Browne, op. cit., p. 219.

11. Dozy, op. cit., pp. 32 ff.

12. Browne, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 221-24.

13. Ibid., pp. 21-22; Muḥammad 'Alī, op. cit., pp. 132-41; Brunnow, *Die Charidschiten unter den ersten Omiyaden*, pp. 28-29; Von Kremer *Veschichte der herrschenden Ideen des Islām*, pp. 359-360; Nicholson, op. cit., pp. 208 ff; Macdonald, op. cit., p. 23.

14. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 27.

point of the sword. They admitted neither the claims of 'Alī nor of Mu'āwīya and declared "there is no rule but the rule of Allāh." They said that in Islām all were equal, and there was no submitting to the rule of man, for obedience was due to God alone. Hence, they could not conceive of an organised state and of responsible society¹⁵ and rebellion and anarchy became the keynote of their confounded philosophy. The Khawārijite ferment was thus one of the potent factors that dismembered the Islāmic Empire.¹⁶

(b) The Umayyad Period (A.D. 661—749)

After the death of 'Alī, the Caliphate passed to Mu'āwīya (A.D. 661) and Damascus became the centre of the Muslim Empire. Mu'āwīya converted the Caliphate into a dynastic rule, into a monarchy,¹⁷ and struck a death-blow to the Islāmic State founded by the Prophet and successfully maintained and enhanced by the True Caliphs. The Umayyads, with the solitary exception of 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz¹⁸ (A.D. 717-720) were Arabs first and Muslims afterwards.¹⁹ They cared little for Islām and only endeavoured to safeguard their own interests and those of their kinsmen.²⁰

After the death of Mu'āwīya (A.D. 680) a number of events happened which alienated the sympathies of all good Muslims. The tragedy of Karbalā (A.D. 680) was perpetrated in the first year of Yazīd's reign (A.D. 680-683). In the second year of his reign he sacked Madīna, where eighty companions of the Prophet and seven hundred ḥuffāz of the Qur'ān were slain. In the third year the Ka'ba was attacked.²¹ Again in the reign of 'Abd al-Malik (A.D. 685-705) Ka'ba was attacked, desecrated and burned by Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf.²² These misdeeds of the Umayyads led to open revolt against them. The insurgents divided themselves into four prominent groups as follows :

15. Ibid., p. 24.

16. Levy, R., *Sociology of Islām*, pp. 4 ff.

17. O'Leary, D.L., *Islām at the Crossroads*, pp. 6-10.

18. Dozy, op. cit., p. 119.

19. Nicholson, op. cit., p. xxiii.

20. Ibid., p. xxviii and p. 204 f.

21. Browne, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 226; Nicholson, op. cit., pp. 197-98.

22. Nicholson, op. cit., p. 201 f.

- (1) The true and righteous Muslims who could not find anything Islāmic in their rulers, to them, the Umayyads were ungodly creatures who indulged in all imaginable vices. The hostile feelings of this group were openly expressed in the rebellion of 'Abd Allāh b. Zubair (A.D. 683-692) who held the holy cities for full nine years.
- (2) The Khawārij²³ who militarily did more harm to Umayyads than anything else.
- (3) The Mawālī, i.e., the subject races who were Muslims but not Arabs. They opposed the Umayyads because they were not treated as equals as enjoined by Islām. Converts to Islām were compelled to pay the *jizya*, although according to Islām they ought to have been exempted. Only in the reign of 'Umar II ('Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz) did the subject races experience some relief.²⁴ They made common cause with the Shī'as.²⁵
- (4) The Shī'as²⁶ believed in the Divine Right of the Prophet's family to wield supreme authority in Islām, both temporal and spiritual. They were vehemently opposed to the Umayyads. These people upheld the claims of 'Alī, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, and were consequently called the 'Legitimists.' Their principal doctrine was that there is always a divinely appointed Imām who is infallible. It is the duty of every believer to find such an Imām.²⁷ The truth can be found only through him. He alone can interpret the Law. Before the tragic battle of Karbalā, they had no enthusiasm.²⁸ That lamentable tragedy galvanised the party into life and action.

23. Margoliouth, D.S., *Early Development of Muḥammadanism*, p. 58; Nicholson, op. cit., p. 211 f; the accounts of the Khārijite writers and names of their books are given in the *Fihrist* 5th Discourse, Section. IV.

24. Dozy, op. cit., p. 119. A Governor of Egypt wrote to him, "If things continue in Egypt as at present, the Christians will without exception, embrace Islām and the State will lose all its revenue." "I should regard it as a great blessing," replied 'Umar, "if all the Christians were converted, for God sent His Prophet to act as an apostle and not as a tax-collector?" (Browns, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 234).

25. Nicholson, op. cit., p. xxxviii.

26. Dozy, op. cit., p. 87.

27. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 29.

28. Nicholson, op. cit., p. 228.

The Persians also joined hands with them. The Umayyads were very imperious and arrogant and treated the aliens with contempt. The Persians had a glorious past. They claimed to have a superior civilization and on this account demanded complete equality with the Arabs. They condemned the first three Caliphs, especially 'Umar, because during his regime the Persian Empire had been overrun and annexed by the Muslims.²⁹

To avenge the tragedy of Karbalā (A.D. 680), Mukhtār³⁰ led the rebellion (A.D. 683-687) against the Umayyads. In the first century of Islām he was the only man who claimed to possess miraculous power and declared himself to be infallible.³¹ The tragedy of Karbalā was avenged by him in A.D. 686 by putting to death thousands of people who owed fealty to the Umayyads.³² Henceforward, the Persians took up the cause of the Prophet's family. Mukhtār was the first to take up the cause of the Persians and give them a higher status than he gave to the Arabs. His followers were mostly Persians.³³ The party believed in a line of divinely appointed Imāms, the first three being 'Alī, Ḥasan and Ḥusain.³⁴ After Ḥusain, his step-brother Muḥammad Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya was accepted as the Imām, and the rebellion of Mukhtār was fomented and enacted in his name. It is interesting to note that no distinction was made at this time between the descendants of 'Alī by Fāṭima, the daughter of the Prophet, and those by his other wives. After the death of Muḥammad Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya this distinction made its appearance, consequently the rebelling elements broke up into different factions and groups.³⁵ One group regarded Abū Hāshim, the son of Muḥammad Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya, as the divinely appointed Imām, while the other elevated to this office 'Alī', son of Ḥusain, known as Zain al-'Ābidīn (A.D. 718). The first group was called Hāshimiyya and the other Imāmiyya.

29. Browne, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 130.

30. Nicholson, op. cit., p. 218.

31. Margoliouth, op. cit., pp. 17-18.

32. Ibid., pp. 10 ff.

33. Nicholson, op. cit., pp. 219-220.

34. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 30.

35. Nicholson, op. cit., p. 218.

The Persians were not accustomed to a democratic form of government. They looked upon their kings as divine beings.³⁶ Nobody could rule in Persia without claiming divinity for himself. The doctrine of the Divine Right of kingship had struck deeper roots in Persia than anywhere else.³⁷ The Persians found in 'Alī', the son of Ḥusain by Shahr Bānū, (the daughter of Yazdigird III, the last of the Sāsānian kings), a legitimate person for the Imāmate, one who combined the spiritual hardship of Islām derived from the Prophet with the temporal power inherited from the kings of Persia.³⁸

Towards the close of the first century A.H., the people expected the appearance of the Mahdī who could deliver them from the tyrannies of the Umayyads. They started a triangular struggle against established authority. The faction known as Hāshimiyya was very strong. Abū Hāshim was the first to organise regular propaganda and claim for himself esoteric knowledge. While on his death-bed in A.D. 716, he bequeathed his rights to Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās, the uncle of the Prophet. Henceforth, all the votaries and propagandists of the Hāshimite cause became the spokesmen of the 'Abbāsids. The 'Abbāsids and the Hāshimite started the work in right earnest. The Imāmiyya were not in favour of the 'Abbāsids, but their support was secured by appealing to them in the name of Hāshim, the common ancestor of the 'Abbāsids and the 'Alids. Muḥammad b. 'Alī, the 'Abbāsīd (d. A.D. 734), nominated his three sons to succeed him, one after another. The first nominee, Ibrāhīm, was put to death by the Umayyads. The other two sons Abu'l-'Abbās 'Abd Allāh known as as-Saffāḥ, and Abū Ja'far Maṣṣūr, became the first and the second Caliphs, respectively of the Abbāsids. An open rebellion, headed by Abū Muslim³⁹ of Khurāsān, a man of rare genius, broke out in favour of Abu'l-'Abbās in A.D. 747. It spread like wild fire all over the Muslim Empire. In A.D. 749, Abu'l-'Abbās was proclaimed Caliph. When the 'Abbāsids

36. Browne, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 128; Macdonald, op. cit., p. 31.

37. Browne, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 129; Nicholson, op. cit., pp. 213-214.

38. Browne, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 130.

39. Ibid., pp. 226, 240 and 247.

came into power, they put to death every member of the Umayyad family. Abū Muslim, according to his own estimate, caused the death of 10,00,000 Muslims besides those killed in battles. Others limit the number to 600,000 killed. The 'Abbāsids put to death not only all the members of the Umayyad family but also all their supporters. They disillusioned the Shī'as by killing them wholesale. Even Abū Muslim who was solely responsible for the establishment of the 'Abbāsīd Empire was put to death in A.D. 755. Thus ended the Umayyad rule, and with it the period of Arab imperialism. Thereafter, Persian culture and civilization asserted itself⁴⁰ dominantly and triumphantly in the Muslim world.

But, while these political struggles were proceeding apace in the body politic of Islām, ground was being prepared for philosophical and religious sects. In fact, the beginnings of religious and philosophical sciences had already been made during the early years of the Umayyad period. Though Damascus, as the seat of the Caliphate, had attained great eminence in splendour and glory, Madīna, Kūfa and Baṣra surpassed all the other cities of the Empire in literary and scientific progress. From far and near people flocked thither to attend the lectures of the savants, Arabs, Persians, Magians, Jews, Christians, etc., and met here shoulder to shoulder. All the Muslim sciences took their birth here.⁴¹ Baṣra in particular was renowned as a seat of learning and as a centre of commerce.

At the end of the first century A.H., there lived at Baṣra an Imām, Ḥasan of Baṣra.⁴² He was a man of remarkable intellect and personality, and influenced almost all the movements of his age,⁴³ such as Ṣūfism, jurisprudence,

40. Ibid., p. 247.

41. Muḥammad Zarīf, *Islām and 'Aqlīyāt*, pp. 24-25.

42. His mother brought him to 'Umar, who seeing him beautiful named him Ḥasan, the handsome. His mother was the maid of Umm Salma, the wife of the Prophet. Ḥasan was handsome, pious and a great orator, and it is said that when Ḥasan was a child, Umm Salma fed him at her breast and it was due to this fact that he surpassed in everything. When 'Alī came to Baṣra, Ḥasan was of nineteen years. 'Alī forbade everyone to preach in the mosque, except Ḥasan. (Muḥammad, Zarīf, op. cit., pp. 25-26.)

43. Nicholson, op. cit., p. 223.

theology, rationalism, etc. Wāṣil b. 'Aṭā, the founder of I'tizāl, was his pupil.⁴⁴ His influence on succeeding generations was immense and many-sided. Al-Ghazzālī was much impressed by Ḥasan, and his works are full of citations from him. He and 'Umar II are models of conduct for al-Ghazzālī.

(c) The 'Abbāsīd Period (A.D. 750—1258)

This period falls into several divisions, each representing a clear-cut phase of the Islāmic civilization.

1. The 'Abbāsīds from their Accession to the Death of Wāthiq (A.D. 750—847)

During this period the Muslim Empire attained its greatest expansion and extended from the Atlantic to the Indus, and from the Caspian to the Cataracts of the Nile.⁴⁵ A number of claimants, mostly in the name of 'Alī, asserted their rights for the leadership of the Muslim world,⁴⁶ with the result that soon the whole of the Muslim Empire became a battle-field. The process of disintegration set in and province after province was lost by the central Caliphate.⁴⁷ The Umayyad dynasty had ruled over the entire Empire of Islam. But in the time of the 'Abbāsīds, independent and semi-independent states appeared in Spain, Persia, North Africa, etc.⁴⁸

44. Ibid., pp. 222-223.

45. Lane Poole, *Mohammadan Dynasties*, p. 6.

46. Margoliouth, E., op. cit., p. 51.

47. Arnold, T.W., *The Caliphate*, p. 51.

48. 'Abd ar-Rahmān, the only survivor of the Umayyad dynasty founded in A.D. 755, an independent Kingdom at Cordova (Dozy, op. cit., pp. 159-211; Lane-Poole, op. cit., pp. 6, 20). 'Abd ar-Rahmān III (A.D. 912-961) of his dynasty declared himself a rival Caliph in Spain (Dozy, op. cit., p. 423). But actual decline set in from the time when North Africa became independent. In A.D. 785 Idris, a great grandson of 'Alī, founded an independent 'Alid dynasty in Morocco (cf. Macdonald, *Development of Muslim Theology* p. 6). A little later, the Aghlabid dynasty (A.D. 800-909) was established at Qayrawān by a governor of Harun ar-Rashid (Lane-Poole, op. cit., p. 36). Tāhir, the governor of Khurāsān, was granted, in A.D. 820, a semi-independent State by Mā'mūn as a reward for the services he rendered to him to become Caliph (Lane-Poole, op. cit., pp. 7, 128).

The period is noted for religious toleration, free thought, scientific researches,⁴⁹ philosophical and cosmopolitan spirit and the Persian ascendancy.⁵⁰ The capital of the Empire was moved from Damascus to Baghdād⁵¹ which rapidly became the seat of learning and science. The first Caliphs were liberal and patronised learning. A critical investigation into every branch of knowledge was made. An academy of science was founded by Maṣṣūr (A.D. 754-775). Important translations from different languages into Arabic were quickly made. Free discussions between the followers of different religions were encouraged. The names of Hārūn al-Rashīd (A.D. 786-809) and Ma'mūn (A.D. 813-833) are sufficient to recall the splendour and glory of the period. Hārūn's love for justice and thirst for knowledge made Baghdād the centre of culture.⁵² People from different countries of the world came to his court in order to receive appropriate recognition of such talents as they could display. Ma'mūn had a zeal for the cultivation of free thought and for the spread of learning and science. It is mainly through his efforts that Greek science and philosophy were preserved and the West once again became aware of them. Under his patronage the Mu'tazilite speculation reached its climax.

The four great legists, viz., Abū Ḥanīfa (d. A.D. 767), Mālik b. Anas (d. A.D. 795), Shāfi'ī (d. A.D. 820) and Aḥmad b. Hanbal (d. A.D. 855) flourished in this period. The entire body of Islāmic law was systematised and codified by them.

Again this was the period of Persian Supremacy. The Persians elevated 'Abbāsids to the Caliphate,⁵³ and as a reward the Arabs were replaced by the Persians in the high offices of the state. The court became predominantly Persian and the Arabs were often publicly disgraced.⁵⁴ Persian ideas, manners and customs were revived, and with their revival was

ushered an era of moral licentiousness.⁵⁵ The rigid morality of the Arabs was replaced by polished and sophisticated manners even at the cost of truth. The Caliphs looked for models to the Sāsānian kings rather than to the Prophet and his immediate followers. The 'Abbāsids safeguarded the Persian civilization just as the Umayyads had upheld the claims of the Arab culture.

The Mawālī movement which was started to establish equality in the ranks of Islām took a serious turn. All the non-Arab nations united in the struggle to prove that the Syrians, the Egyptians, the Persians, etc., were superior to the Arabs, and the Persians were in the vanguard of this movement (the Shu'ūbiyyah). They wrote numerous books to show that the Persians were superior to the Arabs in all respects.⁵⁶ In establishing the claims of the Persians, the Bārmecides (A.D. 752-804) who professed to be Persian Shī'a but were Magian at heart, played a prominent part.⁵⁷ Shī'ism appealed to the Persians who further developed the Shī'ite doctrines of the Imāmate and evolved most of the transcendental theories about it. The two main sects of the Shī'as, viz., the sect of the Seven and the sect of the Twelve appeared during this period. The sixth Imām, Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (d. A.D. 765) disinherited his eldest son Ismā'il for he was found drunk, and nominated his younger son Mūsa al-Kāzim as his successor. The followers of Mūsa and his five successors (the last of whom is said to have disappeared strangely in A.D. 873) were called the Twelvists (Ithnā 'Ashariyya).⁵⁸ But those who followed Muḥammad, the son of Ismā'il as the seventh Imām were called Ismā'ilians or the Seventies (Sab'iyya). The main doctrine of this sect was Ta'wil,⁵⁹ i.e., an allegorical interpretation of the Qur'ān; and consequently, they were also known as Bātinities,⁶⁰ i.e., the adherents of the hidden meaning of the Qur'ān. They claimed Ismā'il's drunkenness to be a proof of his greater spirituality,⁶¹

49. William Muir, op. cit., p. 432.

50. Browne, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 210-252.

51. Lane-Poole, op. cit., p. 3.

52. Nicholson, op. cit., p. 261.

53. Ibid., p. 254.

54. Browne, op. cit., pp. 251-53; Nicholson, op. cit., p. 256.

55. Browne, op. cit., pp. 251-53; Nicholson, op. cit., p. 256.

56. Browne, op. cit., pp. 265-70.

57. Ibid., pp. 257-58.

58. Ibid., p. 296.

59. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 196.

60. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 393.

61. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 42.

and in order to defend him they invented the doctrine of the allegorical interpretation. He did not, they said, follow the outer husk of the law (*zāhir*, but believed in its kernel, in its hidden or inner meaning (*bāṭin*). This sect, in short, tried to discover a hidden meaning beneath the literal law of Islām. It is this sect which henceforth stood for the heretical doctrines of *hulūl* (incarnation), *tanāsukh* (metempsychosis), *raʿjal* (return), etc.⁶²

In this period many heresiarchs and false prophets appeared after the fashion of Abū Muslim Khurāsānī.⁶³ Bin Afrīdh, the false prophet, Sinbādh, the Magian (A.D. 756), Ibn al-Muqaffaʾ (d. A.D. 757), al-Muqannaʾ, the veiled prophet of Khurāsān (d. A.D. 786), Bābak (d. A.D. 838), etc., introduced into Islām many Magian, Mazdakite and other heretical doctrines such as sun-worship, return, incarnation, reincarnation, metempsychosis—doctrines which were opposed to the spirit of Islām and the Islāmic tradition.

With the spread of the knowledge of Greek-philosophy and sciences, the votaries of Greek culture appeared. The philosopher al-Kindī and his followers who founded a school of Greek philosophy in the heart of Islām began to exalt Hellenism over Arabicism. They placed the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle on equal footing with that of the Qurʾān. Again it is this period which is responsible for the orthodox reaction which followed. The Muʿtazilite thinkers persecuted their opponents. Maʾmūn enforced the Muʿtazilite doctrines at the point of the sword.⁶⁴ His persecution of non-Muʿtazilites offered great incentive to the orthodox party for vehement opposition. When the Muʿtazilite school fell, the theologians turned to combat the heretical theories of Greek-philosophy.

The legacy of this period to the later generations, then, is the cultivation of Greek philosophy and sciences, the adoption of the Persian ways of life, the colouring of the Islāmic faith and tradition with the Mazdakite and Magian doctrines, the growth of the Ismāʿīlian doctrine of allegorical

interpretation, etc., which never allowed Islām to develop independently. The real Islāmic spirit was smothered by the Persian and the Greek cultures. It is the heresies of this period and the obnoxious influences which philosophy had produced on the minds of the Muslims that al-Ghazzālī rose to combat.

II. The 'Abbāsids from the death of Wāthiq to the Rise of the Buwayhids in Persia (A.D. 847-932)

This was the period of Turkish tutelage. The Turkish influence began in the reign of Muʿtasim (A.D. 833-842). The Turks became the holders of high offices in the State. From our point of view this period began with the accession of Mutawakkil (A.D. 846-861) when orthodox reaction set in and the Muʿtazilites were persecuted and excluded from court favours. In course of time the Caliphs became mere puppets⁶⁵ in the hands of the Turkish guards, who could depose any Caliph who incurred their displeasure.⁶⁶ The central Caliphate disintegrated and many independent and semi-independent states cropped up to rule simultaneously. The most important of these were the Sāmānids in Bukhāra and the Fāṭimids in North Africa.⁶⁷ The great scientist-philosophers al-Fārābī, al-Bīrūnī and Ibn Sīna were trained in the atmosphere created by the patronage of the Sāmānids. When heretical speculations were suppressed in Baghdād by Mutawakkil and his successors, Greek philosophy and Persian heresies found a congenial environment under the Sāmānids in Bukhāra.

65. Nicholson, op. cit., p. xxii; Macdonald, op. cit., p. 51; Lane-Poole, op. cit., p. 7.

66. Nicholson, op. cit., p. 264.

67. The Umayyad dynasty of Spain continued to spread the light of Science and knowledge in Europe unhampered by the Greek culture and the Persian heresies (cf. Dozy, op. cit., pp. 445-46, 454-56). In Persia, there were the Tāhirids (A.D. 820-872), the Ṣaffārids (A.D. 868-903) Lane-Poole, (op. cit., pp. 129-30), the Sāmānids (A.D. 874-999), etc. All these states stood for Persian nationalism. The most powerful amongst them was the Sāmānids in Transoxiana with their seat at Bukhāra. It was founded by the descendants of Sāmān (Al-Bīrūnī, op. cit., p. 48; Lane-Poole, op. cit., p. 131), a Persian noble of Balkh who renounced Zoroastrianism and embraced Islām (Lane-Poole, op. cit., p. 131). The literary and scientific achievements of this dynasty are well known (Ibid., p. 131).

62. Ibid., p. 30.

63. Browne, op. cit., pp. 308-36; Ibn an-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, p. 344; Al-Bīrūnī, *Chronology of Ancient Nations*, tr. Sachau, pp. 193-94.

64. Macdonald, op. cit., pp. 154-57.

The Fātimid dynasty owed its existence to Persian machinations.⁶⁸ The propaganda of the Ismā'īlian sect resulted in the establishment of this dynasty. At this time there were two classes among the Persians, the Shī'as and the unbelievers.⁶⁹ Both were ever ready to help the cause of the Persians against the Arabs. The Ismā'īlians had no enthusiasm till a convert, 'Abd Allāh b. Maymūn al-Qaddāh, the oculist (d. A.D. 875) joined the sect.⁷⁰ He was the second founder and organiser of this sect.⁷¹ He had no religious scruples and would do anything to injure the interests of Islām. He devised a scheme to found an empire for his descendants and to overthrow Islām and the Arabs.⁷² He incorporated all sorts of heterogeneous elements into his system and organised a mission to propagate his doctrines. To the Persian, his movement was an anti-Arab movement, to the philosopher a licence for free thinking, to the Christian a Christian propaganda, and so on.⁷³ His missionaries would first create doubts in the minds of their listeners and excite the curiosity of the innocent Muslims to know the mysteries of the religious truth.⁷⁴ Then, an oath of secrecy and obedience was administered and the member was misled slowly and steadily

68. Sa'id b. Aḥmad 'Abd Allāh, Ibn Maymūn al-Qaddāh known as 'Ubayd Allāh al-Mahdī, (A.D. 934) claiming descent from 'Alī and Fātima through Muḥammad b. Ismā'il rallied people round him (Macdonald, op. cit., pp. 44-45; Dozy, op. cit., p. 407; Lane Poole, op. cit., p. 70). In A.D. 909, he founded the Fātimid Caliphate in North Africa. In A.D. 969, Egypt was annexed to it, and the capital transferred from Mahdiyya to Cairo (Lane-Poole, op. cit., p. 70). This dynasty reigned to North Africa, Egypt, Palestine, etc., from the 10th to the 12th century. The Fātimids were a source of fear and anxiety to the 'Abbasid Caliphs of Baghdād, the Umayyads of Spain and the Christian monarchs of Europe. They destroyed the Aghlabids in North Africa. The holy cities of Mecca and Madīna remained in their hands for sometimes. The name of Fātimid Caliph was mentioned in the Khuṭba even in Baghdād.

69. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 40.

70. Browne, op. cit., pp. 349-96; Ibn al-Nadīm, op. cit., p. 187; Nicholson, op. cit., p. 272; Macdonald, op. cit., p. 40.

71. Dozy, op. cit., pp. 403-404.

72. Nicholson, op. cit., pp. 271 f; Browne, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 395; Dozy, op. cit., pp. 403 ff.

73. Browne, op. cit., p. 395; Macdonald, op. cit., pp. 40-41.

74. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 41.

through various grades.⁷⁵ At the fourth stage, the member was led to renounce Islām. At the fifth stage, he was led to believe that Muḥammad b. Ismā'il was the last and the greatest prophet.⁷⁶ In the upper grades, prophets, religious and morals were set aside and replaced by a certain philosophy.

A sect of the Ismā'īlians, known as the Carmathian (Qarāmiṭa) appeared in Southern Mesopotamia, Arabia, etc. Its founder was Hamdān b. Ash'ath, nick-named Qarmat because of his short body and legs.⁷⁷ He was a disciple of 'Abd Allāh b. Maymūn. For about one hundred years (A.D. 890-1000), this sect spread terror through the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate. They frequently plundered pilgrims and slaughtered them whole-sale. In A.D. 930 they, to the horror of the Muslim world, carried away the Black Stone and kept it with them for over twenty years.

The main feature of this period is that Islām became stagnant.⁷⁸ The Mu'tazilites began to suffer in prestige and orthodox theology from now onward held the field. The causes responsible for the stagnancy of the Muslims were, firstly the attempts of Ma'mūn and the Mu'tazilites to enforce their own ideas and beliefs on others, and secondly, the reactionary influence of the Turks. Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. A.D. 855), who courageously faced the inquisition instituted by Ma'mūn refusing to accept his dictates concerning faith and its doctrine, emerged as the hero of both the orthodox theologians and the masses. Abu'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'ari (d. A.D. 935), the founder of the scholastic theology appeared in this period. He dealt a fatal blow to the Mu'tazilites and the philosophers. Al-Ash'ari's school of thought reached its climax in the person of al-Ghazzālī in later times.

The Muslim Empire was divided into various states which owed only nominal allegiance to the Caliph. Baghdād was still the centre of Muslim culture and learning. Arabic was the medium of all literary and scientific pursuits in the whole

75. Browne, op. cit., pp. 406-15, Cf. Nicholson, op. cit., pp. 272-74.

76. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 43.

77. Browne, op. cit., pp. 396-97; 401-405.

78. O'Leary, *Arabic Thought and its place in History*, p. 22.

Muslim world. This period was noted, besides being remarkable for other literary and scientific activities, for the codification of the Ḥadīth by the great traditionists, Bukhārī (d. A.D. 870), Muslim (d. A.D. 875), Tirmidhī (d. A.D. 892), Nasā'ī (d. A.D. 914), etc.⁷⁹

Further, two anti-Islāmic tendencies, viz., national sentiment and pantheistic Šūfism appeared in this period. The spirit of fraternity suffered a setback, Greek and Persian heresies now took a new turn and appeared under the garb of Šūfism. Bāyazīd Bisṭāmī of Baghdād (d. A.D. 874) and his pupil, Ḥusain b. Maṣṣūr al-Ḥallāj (d. A.D. 922), who were Persians, introduced pantheistic elements into Šūfism. Their doctrines of reincarnation, transcendental unity of God, etc., paved the way for certain un-Islāmic systems pantheistic Šūfism which arose in subsequent times.⁸⁰

III. The 'Abbāsids from the Rise of the Buwayhids to the Rise of the Seljūqs (A.D. 932-1055)

By the end of the 10th century A.D., the authority of the Caliphs had shrunk so much that it hardly extended beyond the precincts of Baghdād.⁸¹ The most powerful, independent and semi-independent states which had divided the Muslim Empire between themselves were the Buwayhids (A.D. 932-1055), the Sāmānids in Khurāsān (A.D. 874-969), Hamdānids in Syria (A.D. 924-1003), the Umayyads in Spain (A.D. 756-1030), the Fātimids in Egypt (A.D. 969-1171) and the Ghaznawids (A.D. 962-1187) in Afghānistān.⁸²

79. Some of the Great Muslim Historians like Ibn Qutayba (A.D. 889), Balādhuri (A.D. 892), Dinawari (A.D. 895), Ṭabarī (A.D. 932), etc., and physicians and scientists like Abū Bakr ar-Rāzī (A.D. 932), lived in this period (Cf. Nicholson, op. cit., p. 226). Rāzī worked under the patronage of the Sāmānids and dedicated his great book on medicine to Abū Šālīḥ of this dynasty (A.D. 932). He lived during the period generally regarded as unprogressive in Islāmic History.

80. For example, the doctrines of Ibn Al-'Arabī and Suhrawardi Maqtūl.

81. Arnold, op. cit., p. 57.

82. The power of the Sāmānid dynasty (A.D. 874-999) was weakened by the Buwayhids, and finally destroyed in A.D. 999 by Maḥmūd of Ghaznī. The Hamdānids (Lane-Poole, op. cit., pp. 111-12), who were Shi'ites were vassals of the Fātimids. After the death of Saifuddaulah, Egypt was conquered by the Fātimids and the Hamdānids paid homage

The Caliphate of Baghdād had fallen under the complete dominance of their Turkish guard. To escape from their tyranny, the Buwayhids were called for assistance.⁸³ Aḥmad, one of the Buwayhid brothers, entered Baghdād in A.D. 945 and after ousting the Turks, made himself supreme.⁸⁴ Henceforth, the Caliphs were puppets in the hands of the Buwayhids.⁸⁵ The Buwayhids, were Shi'as and treated the Sunnī Caliphs with little respect.⁸⁶ After the rise of the Buwayhids the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate assumed a new character. Henceforth, the Caliphate became subordinate to any independent dynasty that could assert its power by using the Caliph's prestige. The intellectual freedom and heresies which were stopped under the Turks were revived again.⁸⁷

The Fātimids grew formidable in this period. They undermined the authority of the 'Abbāsids. They established a great university at Cairo, where all sorts of heresies were taught. The Ismā'īlian propagandists who were the backbone of this dynasty disseminated anti-Islāmic doctrines all over the Muslim Empire and thousands of Muslims turned heretical and sceptic.

The Ghaznawids (A.D. 962-1186) were Turks and orthodox Sunnis. Maḥmūd (d. A.D. 1031) suppressed all free thought and burnt all the Ismā'īlian and philosophical books.⁸⁸ He encouraged in his dominions the Sunnī faith

to them (cf. Levy, *Sociology of Islām*, pp. 140 ff). Saifuddaulah (A.D. 944-67) was a great patron of learning. Under his patronage a galaxy of literary men, like Fārābī, Mutanabbī and Abū Firās assembled at Aleppo. 'Abd ar-Raḥmān III (A.D. 912-61), the Umayyad who had raised Spain to a more exalted position than it had ever enjoyed before, declared that the Caliph in Baghdād were not competent to hold the title (Arnold, op. cit., p. 58; Nicholson, op. cit., p. 256; Browne, op. cit., p. 365). His successors kept the torch of learning bright till the end of the dynasty in A.D. 1030. It was here in Spain, under the Umayyads that the Islāmic thought and culture developed independently of Persian heresies and Greek Philosophy.

83. Abū Shujā' Buwayh (Arnold, op. cit., p. 139) a chieftain of Daylam, served under the Sāmānids. His sons became very powerful and supreme in Irāq, Fāras, Kermān, etc.

84. Lane-Poole, op. cit., p. 139.

85. Ibid., p. 104; Macdonald, op. cit., p. 51.

86. Arnold, op. cit., pp. 62 ff; Lane-Poole, op. cit., pp. 140-49.

87. Nicholson, op. cit., p. 267; Browne, op. cit., p. 364.

88. Nicholson, op. cit., p. 268.

instead of Shi'ism.⁸⁹ The Caliph Qādir gave him the title of Yamīn ad-Dawla and Amīn al-Milla.⁹⁰ Maḥmūd freed Persian from the influence of Baghdād by the encouragement he gave to Persian literature. He replaced Arabic by Persian as the state language. He encouraged arts and literature in many ways, established an academy of literature and founded a university at Ghaznī. He made a permanent provision for the adequate payment of teachers and scholars out of the royal treasury.⁹¹ He was devoted to his religion and looked upon the Caliph as the Commander of the faithful. In spite, however, of the disgrace to which the Caliphs of Baghdād had been reduced the Muslim world still looked upon the Caliphate with reverence with the exception of the Umayyads of Spain and the Fāṭimids, every one who could carve an independent state for himself, would have his authority to rule over the Muslims, recognised by the Caliphs of Baghdād.

At this time, there appeared the tendency to compile epitomes and encyclopedias. Ibn Sīnā, one of the greatest Muslim philosophers and physicians, summed up the results of Greek philosophy and medicine; Ibn Miskawaih summarised the results of Ethics (A.D. 1029). In the treatises of Ikhwān-aṣ-Ṣafa, the Mafātiḥ al-'Ulūm of al-Kātib, etc., the learning of all the ages, both Islāmic and non-Islāmic, is epitomised.⁹² In the long run the tendency proved injurious to the development of original thought. This tendency also appeared amongst the Ṣūfī writers, but in a slightly different way. They endeavoured to reconcile the two contrary tendencies of asceticism and pantheism which had existed for a long time in Ṣūfism and also to assimilate Ṣūfism into Islām. The ascetics followed the formal disciplines prescribed by Islām, while the pantheistic writers believed that the disciplines were unnecessary. What was required, they said, was the purification of the heart. The reconcilers advocated that the disciplines were the necessary means to the purification of the heart. Al-Kalābadhi (d. A.D. 995), Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī (d. A.D. 996), al-Qushayrī (A.D. 1073), etc., who were thus

89. Browne, op. cit., p. 204.

90. Ibid., pp. 94, 105.

91. Ibid., pp. 90-164.

92. Ibid., pp. 378-87.

forerunners of al-Ghazzālī epitomised and expounded the principles of the moderate form of Ṣūfism.

IV. The 'Abbāsids from the Rise of the Seljūqs⁹³ to the death of al-Ghazzālī (A.D. 1055-1111)

The ascendancy which the Buwayhids had gained over the Caliphs came to an end⁹⁴ in A.D. 1055, when Tugril Beg, the Seljūq, after making himself master of 'Irāq and Persia, etc., entered Baghdād and freed the Caliph from the tyranny of the Buwayhids. The Caliph conferred on him the title of the 'King of the East and the West.'⁹⁵ He checked the power of the Fāṭimids from whom he recovered Aleppo and the holy cities of Mecca and Madīna. He ultimately succeeded in re-uniting the scattered fragments of the Empire of Islām once again.⁹⁶ After his death (A.D. 1063), his nephew Alp-Arslān succeeded him. Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine were conquered by him. Malik Shāh, his son, succeeded him in A.D. 1072 and ruled till A.D. 1092. Malik Shāh's Empire extended from the remotest corner of Transoxiana to the farthest boundaries of Syria.⁹⁷ The reign of Malik Shāh is considered to be the most glorious known to the Muslim world.⁹⁸ After the death of Malik Shāh civil wars again broke out and independent Seljūq kingdoms in Syria, Rūm, Kermān, etc., sprang up.⁹⁹ However, Baghdād continued to be the centre of the Muslim world till the hordes of Hulāgū in A.D. 1258 sacked it and put an end to the unity and solidarity of the Muslim people.¹⁰⁰

The Seljūqs were Sunnis; they wielded the secular authority which they had duly received from the Caliph. Next to the orthodox Caliphate they were the greatest and the most religious Muslim Monarchs.¹⁰¹ The services which they

93. Ar-Rāwandī, *Rāḥat uṣ-Ṣudūr*, described in J.R.A.S. of Great Britain and Ireland, 1902, pp. 567-610 and 849-87 by Browne.

94. Browne, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 169.

95. Ibid., p. 173.

96. Ibid., p. 173.

97. Ibid., pp. 171-81.

98. Nicholson, op. cit., p. 276; Browne, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 183-84.

99. Lane-Poole, op. cit., p. 152; Browne, op. cit., p. 168.

100. Lane-Poole, op. cit., p. 217.

101. *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society*, pt. I, (1902), p. 583.

rendered to Islām were very great. The era of unity and peace ushered in by the Seljūqs may fitly be called the golden age of Islām Education became universal. The cities of Asia were adorned with mosques, colleges, universities, hospitals and other charitable institutions. Nizām al-Mulk the talented minister brought their glory and splendour to zenith.¹⁰² For thirty years he controlled the affairs of the state. A statesman and administrator of the first rank that he was, he also patronized learning and the arts.¹⁰³ At the instance of Malik Shāh he wrote *Siyāsat Nāma*, a *Magnum opus* on the contemporary Islāmic politics. His court was a great centre of attraction for those who yearned for a recognition of their true merits. His name is immortalized by the foundation of the Nizāmiya universities in Baghdād, Nayshābūr, Isphahān and other prominent centres. Many scholars won their renown in these institutions. Al-Ghazzālī was closely associated with Nizām al-Mulk and the Nizāmiya universities of Nayshābūr and Baghdād, as we shall see later. In religion and science his word was next to the word of God. Himself a devout Sunni, he was fanatical towards the heretics, particularly the Ismā'ilians, and Shī'ites for their doctrines which were in his opinion derived from Mazdak and the Magians. His assassination in A.D. 1098 marked the decline of the glories of the Seljūqs.

The Ismā'ilians, also called Malāhida (heretics), Bāṭinis (esoterics), the Ta'līmites, (doctrinaires) etc., who were founders of the Fāṭimid Caliphate, and who had the secular power at their disposal, were spreading their anti-Islāmic doctrines in every part of the Muslim world.¹⁰⁴ They were a great danger to Islām, both in its religious as well as political aspects. They did not believe in the fundamentals of the faith. Their aim was to destroy the Caliphate of Baghdād in particular and Islām in general. All these activities were carried on in the name of the Prophet's family.¹⁰⁵ Before the establishment of the Nizāmiya universities, the Fāṭimids had founded a university, in the fourth century A.D. to teach and

102. Browne, op. cit., pp. 167, 168, 214, 185, 186.

103. Ibid., pp. 175, 184.

104. Ibid., pp. 168, 169.

105. Ibid. pp. 212-14.

expound the doctrines of Shī'ism, particularly those of the Ismā'ilians. The Seljūqs took energetic steps to curb their heretical and political activities.¹⁰⁶ Al-Ghazzālī wrote many books in refutation of these sects, one being written at the express request of the Caliph Mustazhir (A.D. 1095-1118) and named after him. In the *Munqidh*, al-Ghazzālī has explained at length the aims and objects of these heretics.¹⁰⁷ Nizām al-Mulk in his *Siyāsat Nāma*¹⁰⁸ made out a strong case against the Shī'ites in general and Ismā'ilians in particular. He exposed them as the greatest enemies of Islām. Their doctrines, he writes, were derived from Mazdak, and that they spared nothing to spread scepticism and mischief. The Ismā'ilians attributed divinity to 'Alī, and this doctrine made the greatest appeal to the Persian mind. At this time, there were in Persia two great Ismā'ilian personalities, Nāṣir Khusraw (d. A.D. 1074) and Ḥasan Ṣabbāḥ¹⁰⁹ (d. A.D. 1124) of rare genius. They were the agents of the Fāṭimid Empire. Both went to Egypt to pay homage to the head of their faith.¹¹⁰ After returning from Egypt, Ṣabbāḥ started a sect of his own, and founded the "New Propaganda."¹¹¹ He organised the notorious order of the Assassins.¹¹² Taking advantage of the weakness of the central Caliphate, Ṣabbāḥ took possession of Alamūt in the Elburz range in A.D. 1090, and soon afterwards annexed the surrounding districts. These fortresses became propaganda centres. Ḥasan finally broke off from the Fāṭimid dynasty and organised an order of which he was the grandmaster. There were various grades in the membership of this order¹¹³ such as *dā'is* or missionaries, and the *fidā'is* or devotees who would gladly lay down their lives in carrying out assassinations. They became the most dreaded sect in the East.¹¹⁴

106. Ibid., p. 168.

107. Al-Ghazzālī *Al-Munqidh min aḍ-Ḍalāl*, pp. 18-24.

108. Nizām al-Mulk has devoted seven chapters, i.e., 41-47, pp. 138, 205 to the aims and doctrines of the heretics.

109. Browne, op. cit., pp. 200 f.

110. Ibid., p. 204; cf. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 49.

111. Browne, op. cit., pp. 193, 194, 195, 196-211.

112. Ibid., pp. 204-205.

113. Ibid., pp. 208-10.

114. Ibid., pp. 207-209.

When the Fātimids were engaged in conducting their propaganda throughout the length and breadth of the Empire, it was the Murābit¹¹⁵ dynasty (A.D. 1056-1146) that ruled in Spain and North Africa. The fall of Umayyad dynasty of Spain in A.D. 1031, however, was followed by civil wars which led to the growth of a number of small principalities. This encouraged the Christians, and in A.D. 1085 Alfonso VI of Castile and Leon made encroachments on the Muslim territories.¹¹⁶ Yūsuf b. Tāshifin,¹¹⁷ a powerful king of the Murābit dynasty ruling in Morocco, was entreated by the princes and the people to come to the aid of the Muslims in Spain.¹¹⁸ He came to their help in A.D. 1086 and defeated the Christian forces in the Battle of Zallaka (A.D. 1086).¹¹⁹ After some time, he was once again entreated to come to the aid of the Muslims against the Christians, but this time he made himself master of Spain. Within a decade he regained all the territories from the Christians. His authority was recognised by the Caliph of Baghdād. Al-Ghazzālī, impressed with his fame for justice and righteousness, set off to see him but hearing of his death returned from Cairo. The Murābits were overthrown by the Mūwahid dynasty (A.D. 1130-1232) founded by Ibn Tūmart¹²⁰ (d. A.D. 1128), who had been a pupil of al-Ghazzālī at Baghdād.¹²¹

While internal dissensions were, thus, destroying the unity of Islām, external forces were gathering strength to destroy its outward form. Asia Minor, Syria and Palestine were conquered by the Seljūqs when al-Ghazzālī was eighteen years of age. In A.D. 1075, the Seljūqs increased the rate of the Christian pilgrim tax slightly, and this resulted in a dispute between the Christians and the Seljūqs. The Roman Emperor, an enemy of the Seljūqs, appealed to the Pope to help the

115. Lane-Poole, op. cit., pp. 41-43.

116. Dozy, op. cit., p. 690.

117. Ibid., pp. 649 ff; Lane-Poole, op. cit., p. 42.

118. Lane-Poole, Ibid., p. 42; Dozy, op. cit., p. 701; O'Leary, op. cit., pp. 235-36.

119. Dozy, op. cit., p. 692; Lane-Poole, op. cit. p. 27.

120. O'Leary, op. cit., pp. 246 ff.

121. Dozy, op. cit., p. 725; Lane-Poole, op. cit., pp. 40-45.

Eastern Christians. Peter (afterwards styled the Hermit) visited the leading countries in Europe to induce and exhort the people to fight the Muslims. He brought serious charges against the Seljūqs and appealed to the Pope and the principal powers of Europe for men and money. So the first crusade began in A.D. 1096. A large army under Godfrey of Bouillon and other conquered Antioch and Jerusalem (A.D. 1098) where they put 70,000 Muslims to the sword, besides slaughtering the Jews. When al-Ghazzālī was engaged in writing his *Ihyā* in Jerusalem, the city was ruled by Godfrey of Bouillon. The Muslims of Palestine and Syria appealed to the Caliph of Baghdād in vain, while the Christian powers were straining every nerve to regain the holy places. Al-Ghazzālī was then meditating and trying to discover the ways that would save mankind from the woes of this world.

The foregoing historical perspective will show how un-Islāmic elements came to be assimilated by the Muslims as a part of their ideology. It is a characteristic of the Muslims, as also of other peoples, that they vehemently oppose new ideas and movements in the beginning but with the passage of time they acquiesce in and even accept them. The main tendencies of al-Ghazzālī's times were the results of past events as is evident from his works. Again, another historical characteristic of the Muslim people is that whenever they have chosen to stick fast to the spirit of the Qur'ān and walked in the foot-steps of the Prophet, they have progressed, but whenever they have sought inspiration from outside, they have suffered enormously. The un-Islāmic elements which entered the traditions of Islām, greatly undermined the religious foundations of the Muslims. Greek philosophy and science intoxicated the later Mu'tazilites and the philosophers, and the Shī'as and the Sūfis were fascinated by the Persian subtleties. Thus, the seeds of disbelief and scepticism were sown through these agencies and in spite of the many efforts made to check the tide of un-Islāmic tendencies, they continued to work on the minds of the people with great vigour even in the time of al-Ghazzālī himself. The Mu'tazilites lost their political significance but were not

wholly extinct,¹²² and were still working with a view to rationalize the faith. The philosophers, too, were active in undermining the faith. In fact, it became a fashion to pose as a philosopher in order to have an excuse for neglecting religion.¹²³ Jurists, traditionists, Šūfis, scholastic theologians, etc., all threw their weight against the indifferent and ungodly attitude of the people, but could not stem the tide of disbelief. The Šūfis, to some extent, were successful in bringing people back to God. But what they preached was not in harmony with the real spirit of Islām. They laid undue emphasis on individual salvation at the expense of collective salvation. Very able men left society to find God in solitude. 'Alī Hujwiri, the author of *Kaṣḥf al-Maḥjūb*, says that in Khurāsān alone he met three hundred Šūfis, each of whom was unsurpassed in knowledge, piety and intellectual calibre.¹²⁴

The orthodox group accepted the Ash'arite theology against heresy and disbelief. The Seljūqs who were orthodox Sunnis helped the orthodox group. Nizām al-Mulk, the grand-vizier, was an Ash'arite and under his auspices Ash'arite theology flourished. The *alumni* of the institutions founded by him turned out to be jealous dialecticians and argumentators. The Ash'arites defeated the Mu'tazilites and then turned to give fight to the philosophers. And though these Ash'arites presented a system of metaphysical theology unparalleled in religious history, their movement could not very well succeed in re-invigorating the benumbed spirit of Islām.

Before al-Ghazzālī and even in his own days, the different sects of Islām often came to loggerheads among themselves and bitter fights were fought. The followers of one Imām would be deadly enemies of the followers of another. No group would tolerate the beliefs of other groups under any circumstances. Al-Ghazzālī himself was persecuted by such

122. Al-Kundari, the great Vizier of Tughril Beg was a Mu'tazilite. He decreed a public cursing of Ash'arites which was later stopped by Nizām al-Mulk (cf. J.R.A.S., p. 573).

123. Al-Ghazzālī, *Mizān al-'Amal*, pp. 5 ff; al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Munqidh min ad-Dalāl*, pp. 9 ff.

124. 'Alī Hujwiri, *Kaṣḥf al-Maḥjūb*, tr. by Nicholson, p. 174.

theologians, and even his books were burnt in Spain¹²⁵ because they preached freedom of thought.

A complete severance took place between religion and morality. Religion became merely a name for performing certain formal practices and rituals. Their ethical significance was ignored and belittled. The theologians who were the professional defenders of the faith, mostly proved to be hypocrites.¹²⁶ They acquired learning in order to secure wealth and position (*jāh*), and flocked to the courts of princes and flattered the rich in order to extract money and gain admiration both for their erudition and seeming piety. They vied with one another to gain the favour of men who flagrantly violated the ethical laws of religion and adhered only to its formal observance.¹²⁷ Al-Ghazzālī in his *Munqidh* says that he and his brother acquired learning in order to gain wealth and position, but God disposed it otherwise. The

125. Dozy, op. cit., p. 720. To give another example: when Chingiz appeared at the gate of Ray, the city was inhabited by the Ḥanafites and the Shāfi'ites. The Shāfi'ites secretly negotiated with Chingiz that they would open the gates to his army provided he was willing to annihilate the Ḥanafites. Chingiz agreed to the proposal and slew all the Ḥanafites when he entered the city. It is also significant to note that when the crusaders were conquering town after town in Syria and massacring the Muslims, the different sects were fighting amongst themselves their never-ending fights.

126. Nizām al-Mulk who patronised them was aware of their worldly ambitions and aspirations. Whenever Shaikh Abū 'Alī Fārmadī, the spiritual leader of al-Ghazzālī, come to him, he would vacate his seat for him and would sit beside him. But when the two great personalities of al-Ghazzālī's time, Imām al-Ḥarmayn, the teacher of Al-Ghazzālī and Abū Ishāq Shirāzī, President of the Nizāmiya at Baghdād, both great Ash'arite theologians would come to him, he would only stand up. Asked why he did vacate his seat in the case of one and only contented to stand up in the case of the others, he replied that the former would point out his defects while the latter flattered him of his qualities which he did not possess (cf. Ibn Athīr, death of Abū 'Alī Fārmadī).

127. Al-Bayhaqī in his history of Baghdād has drawn a vivid picture of a singing and drinking party of Sulṭān Mas'ūd (A.D. 1040). Many fell intoxicated and were packed to their homes. 'Abd al-Razzāq continued but he too left the cup lest he should forget, with further intoxication, the reverence for the Prophet: Mas'ūd took twenty seven cups. After this he sent for water and had his ablution and said his prayers so seriously as if he had never tasted a drop of wine.

education imparted in those days produced dialecticians whose highest ambition was to beat off or silence the adversaries. Al-Ghazzālī had to win his way to success in a debate held for the purpose at the court of Nizām al-Mulk.

Al-Ghazzālī found all the movements of his time to be extremely biased, uncompromising and exclusive in character.¹²⁸ People were branded as heretics on the ground of slight differences of opinion. Every sect claimed that it alone was in possession of the truth. Al-Ghazzālī analysed and reviewed their position and doctrines. In the *Tahāfut* he exposed the false pretensions of the philosophers. In the *Munqidh*, he assayed the position of the Bāṭinis, the theologians, the Ṣūfis and the different sects of the philosophers. In the *Tafriqa*, he made clear the distinction between a Muslim and a heretic. To appease the different sects he showed in *Ihyā* that each of the four great Imāms was a model of pious conduct.

Al-Ghazzālī was also in close touch with the Muslim kings of his times. He was respected both by the Caliphs and the Seljūqs kings. He wrote epistles to many of them¹²⁹ and while at Baghdād he even participated in political matters.

He wrote answers to the queries addressed to him about religion and other matters. He said that a great calamity had befallen Islām and lamented that the people were drifting away from Islām because of the scepticism of the age. Minds had fallen into the grip of scepticism and their was wavering and uncertainty all around concerning religion. Al-Ghazzālī was also aware of what was happening in Europe. Europe

128. *Al-Munqidh min ad-Ḍalāl*, pp. 7 ff.

129. The kings and the Caliphs in whose reign Al-Ghazzālī lived, besides those who have been mentioned above were Maḥmūd I (A.D. 1092-94), Barkiyarūq (A.D. 1094-1104), Malik Shāh II (A.D. 1104-1105), Muḥammad (A.D. 1104-1118).

The Caliphs in whose caliphate Al-Ghazzālī lived were Qā'im (A.D. 1031-1075), Muqtadir (A.D. 1075-1095), and Mustazhir (A.D. 1095-1108). The king of Khurāsān was Sanjir in whose court he was asked to appear when charged by his enemies with heresies. The last days of Al-Ghazzālī's life were spent in Khurāsān under Sanjir, whose reign made Khurāsān the centre of literature and science. In Syria where Al-Ghazzālī spent some year in retirement, Tutūsh, brother of Malik Shāh and his sons were the Kings (A.D. 1094-1113).

was connected with Asia through trade routes.¹³⁰ To understand his wide sympathies, we must make a note that he was Persian by race, Semitic by religion, and because of his great learning and varied experience he was a citizen of the world.

In the eleventh century, Western Europe was undergoing great changes. Western European nations were pulsating with new ideals and had begun to overhaul their civilization. The masses were still barbarians but the clergy and the aristocracy were showing signs of culture and civilization. But the Prussians were still heathens. The morality of the Christians was very low. They were blood-thirsty tyrants who lived the life of passions, plunder and pillage. Yet, with all this was combined religious fanaticism, which manifested itself in a zeal for the pilgrimage to the tomb of Jesus, and generated the ambition to possess the Holy Land. Thus, began the Crusades. The conditions were so similar that reformers with similar ideals appeared both in Europe and Western Asia like Abelard, St. Bernard and Anselm, and Al-Ghazzālī. There was remarkable similarity between the ideals of Anselm and al-Ghazzālī. Both retired from the world in order to seek peace and salvation. Both wrote apologies for their respective religions. Both were enemies of irreligion and philosophy. Both were mystics and great theologians. Both threatened the wicked with the dread of the hell fire and the Judgment Day. Both with the help of books and lectures made a deep impression on the minds of their co-religionists. What al-Ghazzālī did to revive Islāmic spirit through his *Ihyā*, Anselm did for Christianity through his *Cur Deus Homo*.

Among the Muslims, al-Ghazzālī had important contemporaries, e.g., Hujwīlī (d. 1062 A.D.), Shahrastāni (d. 1153 A.D.), Rāghib Isfahāni (d. 1108 A.D.), Ibn Tūmart (d. 1128 A.D.), Ḥasan Ṣabbāh (d. 1124 A.D.), 'Umar Khayyām (d. 1121 A.D.), Nizām al-Mulk (d. 1092 A.D.), Nāṣir Khusraw (d. 1088 A.D.), Ḥarirī (d. 1122 A.D.), etc. But in the midst of all the great men of his time al-Ghazzālī stands out as the most conspicuous.

130. Numerous Kūfi coins of the eleventh century are found in Scandinavia even today.

Al-Ghazzālī discussed threadbare, and effected a critical evaluation of an age characterized by religiosity combined with hypocrisy and a dire conflict between reason and faith. The real faith which ought to lead men to God was lacking altogether. There was universal misunderstanding regarding religion and real values, *e.g.*, knowledge, wisdom, good and justice; these things received very little notice and attention.¹³¹ He showed how the learned, the *Ṣūfis*, the devotees and the rich laboured under various delusions. Hypocrisy, search for power, position, wealth, etc., were the common faults of the age.¹³²

131. *Ihyā*, Vol. I, pp. 28, 34.

132. *Ibid*, pp. 334-56.

CHAPTER II

THEOLOGICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL MOVEMENTS

ISLAMIC thought, developing fast particularly under the impact of Greek philosophy, manifested itself in four main directions : Mu'tazilism, Philosophy, Scholastic Theology and Mysticism. Mu'tazilism and Philosophy claimed that reason was competent enough to solve all the problems concerning God, soul, etc. Scholastic Theology emerged as a counter-movement; it chiefly relied on revelation. Mysticism developed out of the yearning of the human soul for the direct apprehension of the Divine. The different schools, however, ultimately resolved themselves into two, one believing in reason as the only efficient instrument of knowledge, and the other relying on revelation coming directly, *viz.*, *ilhām*, or through the agency of Prophets, *viz.*, *wahy*.

Al-Ghazzālī surveyed all these lines of thought diligently. He made a critical study of intuition, reason and revelation which in the hands of others had proved to be only the sources of conflicting systems. He took them and reconciled them into a synthetic whole. In order to grasp the full significance of the different aspects of his thought, we must trace the development of the other contemporary systems too.

I. Mu'tazilism (Rationalism)

Though this school of thought was established towards the end of the first century of the Hijra, the germs of the tendency to rationalize the articles of faith were present even much earlier. In the lifetime of the Prophet, Islām was a simple religion.¹ All questions were referred to him. However, even then we find a tendency to rationalize. For, there were two types of men : those who accepted the truth of everything simply on the authority of the Prophet and others who too accepted what he said, yet bestowed on it a

1. Sir Sayed Ahmad Khān, "Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq", Vol. II, No. 4, p. 62.

good deal of deliberation and thinking.² After the death of the Prophet, differences arose on several points amongst his companions, but the Muslims were too much occupied with the dissemination of their faith and with conquests to quarrel about what faith exactly meant.³ Some of the companions were too much devoted to praying and fasting and took little interest in the wars and the conquests. They had plenty of time to deliberate on the verities of religion and discuss them. These doubts and discussions are the origin of later sects. They, for instance, enquired whether the *mi'rāj* (ascension) of the Prophet, was physical or spiritual. Some held that it was purely spiritual; other believed that it was physical.⁴ Such differences failed to cause any breach in the ranks of the faithful in the beginning.⁵ It was only after the battle of Suffin, in A.D. 657, that a group of people holding certain dissentient views was first given a distinctive name, viz., Khārijites.⁶ Later on, other groups made their appearance.⁷ These groups were the Shī'ites, who believed in the Imāmate as supplementary to the *Nubuwwat*; the Murji'ites who would suspend their judgment against the sinners and wait for the Day of Judgment;⁸ the Qadarites who held that a man possessed freedom of the will to have power (*qadr*) over his actions, etc. The Shī'ites and Khārijites were in open revolt against the Umayyads. They regarded them as unbelievers because of their misdeeds. The Murji'ites arose to defend the Umayyads.⁹ They argued that in spite of being a set of sinners the Umayyads were not polytheists since they believed in the Unity of God. Hence, none has the right, they said, to rebel against a ruler who is not a polytheist. As regards

2. Ibid., p. 63.

3. Ibid., p. 62.

4. Ibid., p. 62.

5. Ibid., p. 63.

6. Ibid., p. 63; Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed*, pp. 36 ff.

7. Browne, E.G., op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 274-80; Sir Sayed Ahmad Khān, op. cit., p. 61; Al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Munqidh min ad-Dalāl*, tr. Clasd Field, pp. 2-3.

8. Macdonald, D.B., op. cit., p. 123; Khudā Bakhsh, *Islāmic Civilization*, pp. 63-64.

9. Macdonald, op. cit., pp. 122-24; Wensinck, op. cit., p. 38.

other sins, they said, they should be left to God to be adjudged on the Day of Judgment.¹⁰ When the political necessity passed away, those who held this opinion established themselves as a theological sect.¹¹ The Khārijites held that a believer who commits a sin, however small (*ṣaghira*), and dies unrepentant is doomed to hell for ever. But the Murji'ites held that no believer who had committed a sin, be it small or great (*kabira*), would remain for ever in the Hell except the one who was guilty of the sin of polytheism.¹² One sect of the Murji'ites went so far as to believe that faith alone was sufficient to enable man to attain salvation.¹³ But, the moderate Murji'ites like Abū Ḥanīfa¹⁴ believed that faith and action were necessary for salvation.¹⁵ The Qadarite doctrines arose in this way : The Umayyads who wielded the political sceptre, were tyrants; they oppressed and beheaded their opponents indiscriminately and without mercy. When they were asked why they did so, they said that God made them do so and that He alone was responsible for their deeds. This insulted the religious consciousness of the Muslims. The Qadarites arose and proclaimed that man held power (*qadr*) over his action, and consequently, the Umayyads were responsible for their cruel and unjust deeds.¹⁶ Ma'bad al-Juhani (d. A.D. 699) was the first to discuss openly the problem of the freedom of will.¹⁷ He asked the opinion of Ḥasan of Baṣra (d. A.D. 728) about it, referring to the misdeeds of the Umayyads which they ascribed to God. To this Ḥasan replied, "The enemies of God lie."¹⁸ So, the first problem that served as the basis of *i'tizāl* was about the freedom of the will.¹⁹ This is why the Mu'tazilites are

10. Von Kremer, *Veschichie der herrschenden Ideen des Islām*, pp. 25-26.

11. Wensinck, op. cit., p. 37.

12. Nicholson, R.A., op. cit., p. 221.

13. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 126; Wensinck, op. cit., pp. 36 ff; Margoliouth, D.S., *Early Development of Muhammadanism*, p. 191.

14. Browne, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 280; Nicholson, op. cit., p. 22.

15. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 127.

16. Ibid., pp. 128-29; Moḥammad Zarīf, *Islam aur 'Aqliyyat*, pp. 27-28.

17. Wensinck, op. cit., p. 53.

18. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 129; cf. 'Ali Hujwiri, *Kashf al-Mahjūb* ed. Nicholson, G.M.S., p. 225.

19. Sir Sayed Ahmad Khān, op. cit., p. 63.

sometimes called Qadarites.²⁰ In a short time the movement won many followers who exercised great influence over contemporary thought.²¹ The term *i'tizāl* itself is of accidental origin. At this time, the doctrine of the Khārijites, that the perpetrator of a heinous sin (*kabīra*) was an 'unbeliever', held sway. Some one asked Ḥasan whether the perpetrator of a heinous was a 'believer' or an 'unbeliever'. Wāṣil b. 'Aṭā²² (d. A.D. 748), a pupil of Ḥasan, said before Ḥasan could answer, that such a person was neither a 'believer' nor an 'unbeliever'. For, he said, 'believer' is a term of praise which cannot be applied to a sinner.²³ Therefore, he is not a believer. He cannot be called an 'unbeliever', because he believes in the Unity of God and sometimes does good deeds as well.²⁴ On hearing this Ḥasan became angry.²⁵ Wāṣil left Ḥasan's circle and went with 'Amr b. 'Ubayd²⁶ (d. A.D. 761), a fellow student to the other corner of the Mosque and began to develop his own views. Ḥasan, seeing Wāṣil preaching in the other corner of the Mosque, said "*I'tazala 'anna*", i.e., 'he has seceded from us'. Hence, the name Mu'tazila. Wāṣil and 'Ubayd²⁷ were the greatest pillars of *i'tizāl*.²⁸ Wāṣil sent his pupils to all Islāmic countries to preach the doctrines of *i'tizāl*.²⁹ The doctrine of the Qadarites that man was free to act was accepted by Wāṣil's school.³⁰ He added new doctrines

20. Shahristānī, *Al-Mīlāl wan-Nihāl*, Vol. I, p. 30.

21. Wensinck, op. cit., pp. 37, 58 ff.

22. Sir Sayed Aḥmad Khān, op. cit., pp. 117-20.

23. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 130; Moḥammad Zarīf, op. cit., pp. 29-30.

24. Moḥammad Zarīf, op. cit., pp. 30-31.

25. Sir Sayed Aḥmad, Khān, op. cit., p. 65, also pp. 120-22.

26. Macdonald op. cit., p. 130; Browne, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 281-82; Al-Ghazzālī, op. cit., pp. 24 ff; Moḥammad Zarīf, op. cit., p. 32.

27. 'Amr b. 'Ubayd's personal influence helped *i'tizāl* to a very great extent. He was called the best. He was a staunch and devoted follower of truth, unmindful of worldly things. He was a friend and class-fellow of Caliph Manṣūr who held him in high esteem (Sir Sayed Aḥmad Khān, op. cit., p. 121). Because of his prestige, the Mu'tazilite doctrines were accepted by men holding eminent position in the state (Sir Sayed Aḥmad Khān, op. cit., p. 65).

28. Sir Sayed Aḥmad Khān, op. cit. p. 64.

29. Ibid.

30. Wāṣil was the founder of many new sciences and doctrines, e.g., '*Ibni al-Kalām*. It was he who first formulated four sources of fiqh, viz., Qur'ān, Hadāth Ijmā' and Qiyās (Sir Sayed Aḥmad Khān, op. cit., p. 14).

to the school.³¹ e.g., about the creation of the Qur'ān, the denial of the qualities of God as entities separate from Him.³²

Perhaps, the greatest impetus this movement received when Manṣūr directed his attention to the development of arts, sciences, learning, etc. At this time works of philosophy were translated from other languages into Arabic under the auspices of the state.³³ This helped *i'tizāl* because it stood for the rational interpretation of faith and spiritual truths.³⁴ The traditionists and the jurists were powerless to counteract the arguments advanced by philosophers and followers of other religions against Islām. Mu'tazilites came forward and met their arguments with arguments. On finding *i'tizāl* successful in defending Islām against foreign attacks, all learned and prominent people turned towards it.³⁵

Mahdī, who succeeded Manṣūr, banned religious freedom. But his son Hārūn though not a philosopher himself yet, being under the influence of Barmecides who were free-thinkers, helped this movement.³⁶ Mā'mūn made it a state religion.³⁷ His action and prejudices against those who were not Mu'tazilites brought about the downfall of the movement.³⁸ By invoking the power and influence of the state in the matter of intellectual and religious life, Mā'mūn gave cause to the conservative party to put up a strong opposition, which subsequently became so powerful that the movement could not stand it. Mā'mūn issued a decree that all the Muslims must believe in the doctrine of the creation of the Qur'ān. This brought forth unexpectedly vehement opposition from the orthodoxy. Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal and other pious people ultimately gave a death-blow to *i'tizāl*.³⁹ Mutawakkil had to recall the decree and to substitute in its place another

31. *Ibn Khallikān*, Vol. II, tr. De Slane, p. 642; Shahristānī, *al-Mīlāl wan-Nihāl*, Vol. I, pp. 53 ff.

32. Sir Sayed Aḥmad Khān, op. cit., p. 120.

33. Moḥammad Zarīf, op. cit., p. 55.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid., p. 65.

36. Ibid., p. 39; Sir Sayed Aḥmad, op. cit., p. 65.

37. Browne, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 883-86; Sir Sayed Aḥmad Khān, op. cit., p. 65; Moḥammad Zarīf, op. cit., pp. 39-41.

38. Moḥammad Zarīf, op. cit., pp. 67 ff.

39. Ibid., pp. 67-92.

which was consonant with the views of the orthodoxy.⁴⁰ 'Allāf⁴¹ (d. A.D. 840) and Nazzām (d. A.D. 845) who were the two most eminent exponents of the Mu'tazilite school, were Mā'mūn's teachers. So, they exercised influence over the whole empire.⁴² 'Allāf added many doctrines to the common stock of the Mu'tazilites.⁴³ One of the doctrines which estranged from the spirit of Islām was that the power of God was limited, that it was not in His power, for instance to create a new thing.⁴⁴

From Nazzām⁴⁵ onward *I'tizāl* tended to become more and more of a philosophy.⁴⁶ Besides being a physicist,⁴⁷ he was well-versed in Greek philosophy. He was the first to mingle philosophy and other heretical doctrines with *i'tizāl*,⁴⁸ e.g., the doctrine of metempsychosis. He advocated the view that God could do nothing for a creature; that in fact, He had no power to do any thing.⁴⁹ He held that the soul, the essence of man,⁵⁰ was nothing but a subtle material substance which permeates the body like the oil in a rose.

Jāhiz⁵¹ (d. A.D. 868) who was unrivalled in his time in literature, dialectics, jurisprudence, Hadīth, etc.,⁵² advocated many doctrines which were against Islām; e.g., that no material body perished,⁵³ that God did not will evil, and that He could not be seen in Paradise.⁵⁴

40. Ibid., pp. 92 ff.

41. Ibid., pp. 42-46; Shahrīstānī, op. cit., pp. 57 ff, DeBoer, *History of Philosophy in Islam*, pp. 49-50.

42. Sir Sayed Aḥmad Khān, op. cit., pp. 65-66.

43. Ibn an-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, p. 176; Shiblī, *Im al-Kalām*, p. 35.

44. Sir Sayed Aḥmad Khān, op. cit., p. 180.

45. Ibid., pp. 181-82.

46. Browne, op. cit., pp. 286-89.

47. An-Nazzām is the first Mu'tazilite who has shown that colour, smell, sound, taste, light, heat, etc., are materials of which matter is composed (Sir Sayed Aḥmad Khān, p. 181). Macdonald, *Development of Muslim Theology*, p. 140; Sir Sayed Aḥmad Khān, p. 181.

48. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 183.

49. Shahrīstānī, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 80.

50. Moḥammad Zarīf, op. cit., p. 49.

51. Sir Sayed Aḥmad Khān, op. cit., p. 182.

52. Ibid., p. 182.

53. Ibid., p. 181.

54. Ibid., p. 183.

Mutawakkil⁵⁵ suppressed all these heretical opinions.⁵⁶ Yet, in all the Islāmic countries *i'tizāl* had taken root, which it was not possible to exterminate. It continued a vigorous life till the 4th century A.H. But after Jubhā'ī (d. A.D. 915), the last great Imām of *i'tizāl*, decay set in and in a few generations the movement died out.⁵⁷ However, it left a permanent mark of its own on Islāmic theology. It is not too much to say that it caused a crisis among the Muslims.

The Mu'tazilite thought as it expanded developed many offshoots,⁵⁸ for every prominent Mu'tazilite laid the foundations of a separate sect.⁵⁹ However, the basic principles are common to almost all the Mu'tazilites.⁶⁰ It is a sect of people possessing rationalistic tendencies.⁶¹ They maintained that human reason was competent to know the verities of the universe and was completely free to go searching after the Truth.⁶² It was a common faith with the Muslims that truth could only be found through the prophets. The result of this belief was that the orthodox theologians and common people came to regard reason as an undesirable intruder into religion. The Mu'tazilites applied reason to all the truths contained in the Qur'ān and explained away those passages which they did not find conforming to their modes of reason.⁶³ They consequently made speculation one of the duties of a believer. Those incapable of knowing truth by reason, they held, would be doomed to the eternal fire of hell.⁶⁴

The Orthodox theologians held that the nature of good and evil was determined through the commandments of God; the source of truth lay only in revelation. Further, 'the orthodox believed that God could do everything, that He was

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid., p. 66; Browne, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 290-91.

58. Shahrīstānī, op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 281 ff.

59. Sir Sayed Aḥmad Khān, op. cit., p. 66.

60. Ibid., pp. 120, 122, 180, 181, 183.

61. Browne, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 386-87; Al-Ghazzālī, op. cit., p. 4; Wensinck, op. cit., pp. 58 ff.

62. O'Leary, *Arabic Thought and its Place in History*, p. 33; Shahrīstānī, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 164 ff.

63. O'Leary, op. cit., p. 127; Shahrīstānī, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 50.

64. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 138.

free to do good or evil, and that no necessity could be imposed on Him. He could forgive whom He would and punish whom He wanted'.⁶⁵

The Jabarites on the basis of the passages of the Qur'ān held that man's actions were determined and predestined by God.⁶⁶ Man had no will of his own; he could do nothing of his own choice; good and evil, all proceeded from God. But if it were so, why was man made responsible for the acts which were not his own. He could not be justly rewarded or punished for his acts unless he were free to do or not to do. In doing so, the theologians made God an unjust tyrant who would punish man for the sins which were not committed by him. The Mu'tazilites protested against this and said that God was just. He could not punish man for the sins over the avoidance of which he had no power; God had given man complete power over his actions. He was free to act any way he liked;⁶⁷ it was his freedom of choice between good and evil that made man responsible for his deeds. In this way they upheld the justice of God. If man's actions were predestined, said they, why should God exhort men in the Qur'ān to acquire virtue.⁶⁸ They explained away the passages bearing on the determinism of man's actions.⁶⁹

The other main doctrines of the Mu'tazilites were the denial of the qualities of God, and of the eternal validity of the Qur'ān and the impossibility of the vision of God in the next world.⁷⁰ The Qur'ān describes God as knowing, willing, etc. The Divine Attributes, the orthodox held, were real and separate from God.⁷¹ But the Mu'tazilites denied the

65. Ibid., p. 140.

66. There are numerous verses in the Qur'ān which make man's actions predestined by God, e.g., viii. 17; lxxvi. 30; ii. 49; liv. 49; xlviii. 12, etc.

67. Ibn Qutayba, *Kitāb al-Ma'ārif*, pp. 30 ff.

68. There are also many verses of the Qur'ān which imply moral responsibility of man for his actions, e.g., lxxiv. 38; xli. 46; ii. 27; liii. 40; lii. 21, etc.

69. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 48.

70. Moḥammad Zarīf, op. cit., pp. 32-33; Al-Ash'ari, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyin*, Vol. I, p. 356, and Vol. II, p. 483; O'Leary, op. cit., pp. 123-24.

71. Wensinck, op. cit., pp. 63 ff.

existence of God's qualities.⁷² They argued thus : Qualities are of two kinds, created (*ḥādith*) or eternal (*qadīm*). If qualities, are created, God, the creator of qualities, is also created; this, therefore, disproves the eternity of God. But if the qualities are taken to be eternal, it means that there are other eternal beings co-existing with God and this contradicts the Divine Unity.⁷³ For upholding God's Justice and Unity, they were called '*Ahl al-Tawḥīd wa'l 'Adl*'.⁷⁴ In '*Ālāf*', the doctrine of God's qualities takes a new form. Wāṣil said that the qualities were in His essence and in doing so, he made God a vague unity, a philosophical entity. '*Ālāf*' said that they were not in His essence;⁷⁵ rather, they were His very essence, for if they were in His essence, they would be apart from Him, which was unthinkable about God. God, he said, was omnipotent by His omnipotence.⁷⁶ He further said these qualities were mere negations or relations and nothing positive could be said about God, or else it would mean that there was a subject and a predicate which was impossible as God was the Absolute Unity.⁷⁷ Nazzām and others made the conception of God as an indefinable something like the absolute law of right in the universe.⁷⁸ Nothing could be applied to Him. They, like Hegel, cleared the conception of God from the antithesis of the Knower and the known.⁷⁹ They would not allow any anthropomorphic conception of God.

The doctrine of the creation of the Qur'ān is closely connected with the doctrine of the Unity of God. The orthodox held that wisdom was the attribute of God. This was expressed in the Qur'ān. It was eternal with him. The Qur'ān was uncreated and had been since eternity with God.⁸⁰ If this wisdom was, said the Mu'tazilites, eternal with God, it meant

72. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 136.

73. Ibid., p. 281.

74. Shahrastānī, *Milāl* (ed. Cureton), p. 296.

75. Sir Sayed Aḥmad Khān, op. cit., p. 180; O'Leary, op. cit., pp. 124-25.

76. Moḥammad Zarīf, op. cit., p. 42.

77. Macdonald, op. cit., pp. 136-46; Browne, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 287.

78. Moḥammad Zarīf, op. cit., p. 49.

79. Ibid., pp. 58-59.

80. O'Leary, op. cit., pp. 82 ff.

that there were two eternal principles. In other words, it postulated the existence of two gods. The same argument also held good against the conception of the other qualities of God.⁸¹

The orthodox Muslims believed that God would be seen in Paradise by some people at least and that this would be the greatest bliss. The Mu'tazilites explained away the relevant passages in the Qur'ān and said that God could not be seen in the Paradise because that presupposed the occupation of a place in space by Him.

The Mu'tazilites started in good faith to rationalize the tenets of Islām but unconsciously the faith of them was shaken as to the divine origin of the Qur'ān, consequently they were driven by their own arguments to reject many tenets of the faith, for instance, revelation, etc.⁸² The first Mu'tazilite thinkers were serious about their religion and wanted to rationalise it in order to make it conform to human reason. The Mu'tazilite school originated independently of any external influence.⁸³ But, when books of Greek philosophy were translated, the Mu'tazilites read them with great eagerness. The study of Greek philosophy forced new problems on their minds and their interest in religion for its own sake was pushed to the background. Al-Ghazzālī reacted against *i'tizāl*.

II. Philosophy

The later Mu'tazilites, e.g., Nazzām, Jaḥīz, however, developed a tendency towards philosophical subjects. From amongst these thinkers arose a series of philosophers who were called *falāsifa* (plural of *Falāsūf*) or *Hukamā*, (plural of *Hakīm*).⁸⁴ They were the students of the wisdom of the

81. Browne, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 369; O'Leary, op. cit., pp. 83-84.

82. Ibn Ḥazm, op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 146 ff.

83. Macdonald, op. cit., pp. 146-52; Browne, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 287; Steiner and Oberman prove that *i'tizāl* came into existence independently of any external influences. Mr. Muzaffaruddīn in his book, *Muslim Thought and its Source*, (pp. 55-64) also tries to prove that the source of Muslim doctrines is the Qur'ān and not Greek philosophy.

84. Shahrastānī, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 123; Qur'ān, ii. 269; lxii. 2.

Greeks.⁸⁵ Their studies comprised physics, mathematics, chemistry, astronomy and music. They studied the works of Euclid, Pythagoras, Galen etc. In metaphysics, they followed Plato and Aristotle whom they regarded as the expounders of the truth. Many of them limited their studies only to the Aristotelian school.⁸⁶ The systems of the Greek masters came to them, in the beginning, through translations and commentaries which were incorrect. Plato and Aristotle were rationalists who regarded reason as the only source of true knowledge. But, their interpreters gave a religious and mystical colour to their philosophy and the Muslims, being religious minded, accepted them as such. In this way, they caused a good deal of misunderstanding in the Muslim mind. Plato came to the Muslims in the form of neo-Platonism. A Christian named Naymah of Emessa translated the last three books of the *Enneads* of Plotinus into Arabic and named it, "The Theology of Aristotle." The Muslims took it for a genuine work of Aristotle. It was through this book that Aristotle was accepted by the Muslims as a religious man. Further, Porphyrius, a neo-Platonist, in his commentary on Plato proved that Plato was a mystic. Similarly, Plotinus, an other neo-Platonist, proved that, in the opinion of Aristotle, the human soul was incapable of knowing God through reason; He could only be known through ecstasy. When the Muslims read such mystical vies ascribed to Plato and Aristotle their rationalism became tinged with mysticism and it was through this mystical tendency that they were able to mingle the philosophies of Plato, Aristotle and Plotinus with the tenets of the Qur'ān.⁸⁷ The Muslim philosophers believed that God was one. Since from one many cannot proceed. He first created the Agent Intellect who, in turn, created the second Intellect and the first Heaven; and the second Intellect produced the third Intellect and the second Heaven and so on till the whole process of creation was completed. Man consisted of a body and a soul; the former was material and perishable while the latter was spiritual and immortal. The

85. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 161.

86. Qiftī, *Tārīkh al-Hukamā'* (ed. Cairo 1298), pp. 29, 116 ff.

87. For Ibn Sīnā's mystic thought see his two allegories Ḥayy b. Yaqzān, Salmān and Absāl, and his *qasida* on the human soul.

body belonged to the physical world (*khalq*),⁸⁸ while the soul belonged to the transcendental world (*Amr*).⁸⁹ It was a part of the Agent Intellect and yearned to return to it. The union of the two was made possible through contemplation. They further believed that the whole universe was connected through causes which were of various orders, higher and lower. The higher affected the lower. In the ascending order, the soul stood at the highest level. Above it were the angels, beyond whom there was God, the necessary existence. The human soul struggled to liberate itself from the limitations of matter in order to meet God from whom it emanated. But, the first condition of attaining nearness to Him was to know Him. The purpose of philosophy was to know the first Cause which was Divine.⁹⁰ In this way, knowledge became more important than action.⁹¹ But men differed in intellect, and only a few could attain to true philosophy; hence, the need of revelation. True religion and philosophy agreed and corroborated each other in all fundamental matters. Therefore, almost all the Muslim philosophers tried to reconcile philosophy with religion.

The Muslims came very early to believe that with the advent of Islām all previous systems of thought were abrogated. The Qur'ān was considered to be the only true guide to humanity that promised success in this world and the next. But, with the march of conquests and the expansion of the Empire there cropped up new problems which demanded rational solutions. To meet them, they took to the study of philosophy and consequently, works were translated into Arabic from the Greek and other languages. In these studies lay the roots of religious and moral crises in Islām, since the philosophers began to place a higher value on the Greek culture than on the religion of Islām.⁹²

Al-Kindī, (d. A.D. 873) was the first to take up a systematic study of Greek philosophy.⁹³ He started as a

88. Qur'ān, vii. 54.

89. Qur'ān, xvii. 85; for full discussion of *khalq* and *Amr* see *Kimiya-i-Sa'adat*, p. 7.

90. Arnold, *Legacy of Islām*, p. 284.

91. DeBoer, op. cit., p. 140.

92. Ibid., p. 98.

93. Qiftī, op. cit., pp. 366 ff.

Mu'tazilite but in his enthusiasm for philosophy he translated philosophical books from Greek into Arabic.⁹⁴ He corrected the translations which were already in existence. Some 266 titles of his books have come down to us.⁹⁵ He wrote both on theology and philosophy. Being a monotheist, he wrote a book in refutation of dualism. His main doctrines which he left, as a legacy to subsequent thinkers were the doctrine of the creation of the universe, the doctrine of the soul, the doctrine that reason and revelation were two separate sources of knowledge and the doctrine that the *summum bonum* was the knowledge of the primal cause.⁹⁶ His theory of creation was similar to that of Plotinus with the only difference that he expressed his ideas in the Qur'anic vocabulary, e.g., pen, tablet, angels, etc. His views of the soul were more or less parallel to the Aristotelian. Aristotle divided the soul into three parts, namely, nutritive, reproductive and the rational.⁹⁷ But Alexander of Aphrodisias in his commentary added Agent Intellect as a fourth part coming from God. Al-Kindī, following the commentator, divided the soul into four faculties, namely, Agent Intellect (*'aql ja'āl*) which came from above, that is, from God, the rational faculty (*'aql hayulānī*) which distinguished man from animals, the acquired intellect, (*'aql mustafād*) which was acquired by means of the rational faculty and the intellect in action (*'aql bi'l-fi'l*).⁹⁸ As to reason and revelation, he was under the influence both of Greek philosophy and Islām. Islām believed that the ultimate truth could be known only through revelation, while Greek philosophy relied on reason as the source of truth. Al-Kindī, following the Greek master, admitted the competence of reason as the source of all true knowledge and, at the same time, believed that revelation as well guided humanity to the same goal. The *summum bonum*, he advocated, was the knowledge of the first necessary existence, which he regarded as the end of philosophy.⁹⁹ Thus, the life of virtue was made

94. O'Leary, op. cit., p. 136; DeBoer, op. cit., p. 97.

95. Qiftī, op. cit., pp. 368 ff.

96. O'Leary, op. cit., p. 138.

97. Aristotle, *De Anima*, II; II; O'Leary, op. cit., p. 150.

98. O'Leary, op. cit., pp. 148 ff.

99. DeBoer, op. cit., p. 106; cf. Fārābī, *Mabādī'l Falsafā al-Qadima*, Al-Ghazzālī, *Arbā'in*, p. 7.

subordinate to the contemplative life. These views are found in almost all the philosophers that followed him.

Fārābī (d. A.D. 950), the greatest philosopher of Islām and a neo-Platonist¹⁰⁰ is considered the best interpreter of the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle.¹⁰¹ Fārābī accepted Greek philosophy as revealed truth. He understood Aristotle so perfectly and unravelled the mysteries of Greek philosophy so comprehensively that he was called the 'Second Teacher' by the Muslims, the first being Aristotle himself.¹⁰² Besides, his passion for Aristotle, he was enamoured of the neo-Platonic concepts concerning emanations.¹⁰³ Fārābī was one of the associates of the literary circle of Sayf ad-Dawla, the great Hamdānid at Aleppo.¹⁰⁴ The Muslims came very early to believe that Plato and Aristotle were two great masters who expounded the one and the same truth. Therefore, they laboured patiently to bring about an agreement between them. The pious amongst them further advocated that the Qur'ān expounded the same truth. They argued thus : The Qur'ān is truth and philosophy is truth; but truth can be one; therefore the Qur'ān and philosophy must be in agreement."¹⁰⁵ Fārābī strove to reconcile the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle with that of the Qur'ān.¹⁰⁶ He dealt with all the problems of religion such as prophecy, angels, resurrection, the pen, the tablet, etc., but in a neo-Platonic fashion; e.g., he believed that the universe had emanated from God in a descending order.¹⁰⁷ He denied the eternity of matter upheld by Aristotle.

Akin to the philosophers was a society known as the "Sincere Brethren of Baṣra (Ikhwān aṣ-Ṣafā)."¹⁰⁸ This society came into existence after the Buwayhids (A.D. 955) had

100. DeBoer, op. cit., p. 106; cf. Fārābī, *Mabādi'l Falsafā al-Qadima*, Al-Ghazzālī, *Arbā'in*, p. 7.

101. Qiftī, op. cit., pp. 227 ff; cf. Fārābī, *Mabādi'l-Falsafā*.

102. Arnold, *Legacy of Islām*, p. 256.

103. Arnold, *Legacy of Islām*, p. 256.

104. Cf. Fārābī, *Mabādi'l-Falsafā al-Qadima*.

105. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 162.

106. O'Leary, op. cit., p. 146.

107. DeBoer, op. cit., p. 114.

108. Qiftī, op. cit., pp. 82-83.

captured Baghdād and allowed all sorts of heresies to be practised in the name of free thought. Their aim was similar to that of the Mu'tazilites. i.e., to find rational grounds for religious tenets. They said that their society aimed at making the knowledge of all the sciences accessible to all people. The knowledge of philosophy was not expounded in a simple form, intelligible to the common people, while the religious dogmas were too formal to appeal to the people of intellect; therefore, they set out to popularize the knowledge of all sciences.¹⁰⁹ They summed up the philosophical and scientific learning of the time in fifty-one tracts (*Rasā'il*). Their knowledge was encyclopedic. They believed that perfection could only be achieved by a fusion of Greek philosophy with the Arabian religion.¹¹⁰ The aim of philosophy, according to them, was the emancipation of the soul from matter. The soul thus, liberated would dissolve itself into the universal soul. The world emanated from the primal cause through agencies.¹¹¹ They believed in the unity of religions and tried to reconcile philosophical and scientific truths,¹¹² with religion.¹¹³ The system of the Brethren was eclectic, comprising the ideas of Plato, the neo-Platonists, Aristotle, the Pythagorians, the Mu'tazilites, the Ismā'īlians, etc.¹¹⁴ A study of their epistles betrays deep-rooted contempt for Islām. They came after al-Kindi and al-Fārābī and preceded Ibn Sīnā.

Ibn Sīnā¹¹⁵ (d. A.D. 1036) was encyclopedic in learning, an accomplished physician and a great philosopher. His philosophy adopts Aristotle's principles with a little tinge of neo-Platonism. Fārābī effected an alliance between theology and philosophy. But, in Ibn Sīnā, a complete separation between theology and philosophy took place.¹¹⁶ He dealt with

109. Brethren of Purity, "*Rasā'il*", Vol. II, p. 329.

110. *Ibn Khallikān*, Vol. I (tr. DeSlane), pp. 440-46; Shahristānī, op. cit., (ed. Cureton), pp. 348-49; Browne, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 278-81; Qiftī, op. cit., p. 84.

111. Macdonald, op. cit., pp. 90-92.

112. Browne, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 293.

113. Brethren of Purity, "*Rasā'il*", Vol. II, p. 329.

114. O'Leary, op. cit., pp. 164-66; DeBoer, op. cit., pp. 84-85.

115. Qiftī, op. cit., pp. 410-26.

116. O'Leary, op. cit., p. 171.

the problems of philosophy as well as those of religion, but kept each in its own domain. In philosophy he dealt with such problems as the origin of knowledge, induction and deduction, matter and force, the relation of cause and effect, universals and particulars, the relation of the human soul to the primal cause and the active intellect,¹¹⁷ etc. In his 'Shifā' he took up the religious problems, e.g., of evil, of the necessity and efficacy of prayers, and of miracles, and proved them philosophically.¹¹⁸

Ibn Miskawaih (d. A.D. 1030), a contemporary of Ibn Sinā has left us besides his other works, a well-known book, *al-Fauz al-Aṣghar*. In this book he discusses the tenets of Islām philosophically, e.g., existence and unity of God,¹¹⁹ the nature of prophecy,¹²⁰ and the essence, destiny and happiness of the soul.¹²¹ He has demonstrated that creation is out of nothing, and that it is in time. He has also give a very clear account of the evolution of man.

These great thinkers had hosts of contemporaries and successors. They were all metaphysicians and believed Plato and Aristotle to be infallible. They tried to reconcile faith with philosophy.¹²² Besides, there were great scientist philosophers whose methods, in comprehensiveness and rigour, do not compare infavourably with the methods of modern science, e.g., al-Bīrūnī, Ibn Haitham, etc. They despised metaphysics and did not waste their energies in reconciling faith with reason, but directed their attention to the concrete world. The Muslim thinkers started with religion, from religion they went on to philosophy and from philosophy to science. The study of science led them to scepticism. It is for this reason that we hear in this age the names of great sceptics like Abu'l-'Alā' al-Ma'arri and 'Umar Khayyām.

Al-Ghazzālī was not against philosophy or science as such. He was against the spirit of scepticism which they brought in

117. Shahristānī, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 18 ff.

118. Shibli, *Ilm al-Kalām*, pp. 124 ff.

119. Ibn Miskawaih, *al-Fauz al-Aṣghar*, pp. 7, 37.

120. Ibid., pp. 88-124.

121. Ibid., pp. 37-38; Dr. Iqbal in his *Development of Metaphysics in Persia* (pp. 27 ff.) has given an admirable summary of Miskawaih's metaphysical views.

122. Shibli, *Ilm al-Kalām*, p. 121.

their train. It is this evil that al-Ghazzālī rose to combat. The philosophical doctrines in themselves were not so dangerous as the corollaries and inferences which began to be drawn from them by the Muslim thinkers of the day. Even the ignorant who knew Plato and Aristotle only by name, neglected their religious duties and justified their actions by saying that those philosophers did not follow any religion. Al-Ghazzālī himself says that these were the so-called philosophers who thought that they were above religion. They asserted that they were the followers of Aristotle and Plato, etc., but actually they were not. They were being led astray by their own erudition. They did study philosophy, but not that of Aristotle and Plato.¹²³ However, whatever philosophy, worth the name, they studied, it first urged them to simple heresies and in the end led to scepticism and unbelief. Fārābī and Ibn Sinā had been the two great masters of Greek philosophy before him, therefore, al-Ghazzālī turned against their systems in particular. He himself first studied philosophy and meditated on it for a long while. Then, he summed up the main problems of Greek philosophy, especially of Aristotle as interpreted by Fārābī and Ibn Sinā, in his *Maqāsid al-Falāsifa*, (The Aims of the Philosophers). In this book he dealt with logic, physics and metaphysics in a very systematic and comprehensive manner. He wrote another book, *Tahāfut al-Falāsifa* (The Collapse of the Philosophers), in which he refuted irreligious doctrines. But, before refuting their doctrines he tried to discover in their philosophy the elements which engendered religious indifference and heretical and atheistic tendencies.¹²⁴ He divided the philosophers, on the basis of their beliefs, into three schools:¹²⁵ (1) materialists, (2) deists or naturalists and (3) theists. The materialists who rejected an intelligent creator and believed that the world is eternal, were unbelievers.¹²⁶ The deists who apprehended a law and a purpose in the universe and who were struck by the wonders of creation, admitted the existence of a creator. But, they

123. Al-Ghazzālī, *Tahāfut al-Falāsifa*, pp. 4-5; Al-Ghazzālī, *Mizān al-'Amal*, pp. 8-9.

124. Al-Ghazzālī, op. cit., p. 10.

125. Ibid., pp. 9-13.

126. Ibid., p. 10.

believed that the soul was mortal; it was a part of the body and would perish with it. They also denied the existence of Hell, Heaven, reward, punishment, etc.¹²⁷ They, too, were unbelievers. Al-Ghazzālī, then, turned to the theists and discussed their theories in detail. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, were all theists. He examined the doctrines of Aristotle as a test case for he was the greatest of the Greek philosophers. He found that his views were suffused with heresy and unbelief. And because Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā believed in Aristotle, they too were unbelievers like their master. He considered Fārābī to be the best interpreter of Aristotle and therefore, examined Greek thought on that basis. He classified the knowledge as disseminated by Aristotle and his followers into impious, heretical and atheistic.¹²⁸ He divided the sciences into mathematics, logic, physics, metaphysics, political economy and discussed all of them in detail in order to see if they really contained anything false and unworthy. But, he was strictly scientific in his enquiry and did not declare anything as heresy or unbelief without sufficient reason. He accepted all the truths of mathematics, logic and physics as truths because they could be intellectually rejected. The sciences did not in any way contradict religion. The discursive treatment applied to these exact sciences led up to undeniable conclusions. But, al-Ghazzālī warned the mathematician and the legician against the serious error of their utilising the fruits of their researches for the examination and evaluation of metaphysical and religious data. The damnable errors of the theists, he says, are solely grounded in their metaphysical views.¹²⁹ Al-Ghazzālī wrote the "Collapse of the Philosophers" to refute their arguments. He, too, made a searching examination of views and treated them summarily under the following heads

- (1) The refutation of their doctrine that the universe was eternal.
- (2) The refutation of their doctrine that the universe was everlasting.

127. Ibid.

128. Ibid., p. 11.

129. Ibid., p. 14.

- (3) The exposure of their disonest statement that God was the creator of the universe.
- (4) The philosophers' inability to affirm the Creator.
- (5) Their inability to bring forward arguments against the impossibility of two Gods.
- (6) The refutation of their doctrine that God had no attributes.
- (7) The refutation of their doctrine that the First Being could be divided into genus and differentia.
- (8) The refutation of the doctrine that the First was a simple essence.
- (9) Their inability to prove that God was not body.
- (10) The explanation of their beliefs in Time and denial of the existence of the Creator.
- (11) Their inability to prove that God could know other than Himself.
- (12) Their inability to prove that He knew Himself.
- (13) The refutation of their doctrine that God did not know the particulars.
- (14) The refutation of their belief that the Heaven was an animate being which moved with its own motive power.
- (15) The refutation of the motive power which they ascribe to Heaven.
- (16) The refutation of their doctrine that the souls of the heavens knew all the particulars.
- (17) The refutation of their doctrine that the laws of nature are inviolable.
- (18) The refutation of their belief that the human soul is a self-existing substance and which is neither body nor an accident.
- (19) The discussion of their belief in the impossibility of annihilation of the human soul.
- (20) The refutation of their denial of the resurrection of bodies and of the possibility of their having an experience of physical pleasure and pain in Paradise or Hell.¹³⁰

130. Al-Ghazzālī, op. cit., pp. 18-20.

Three of these propositions were in his opinion against the doctrines of Islām and those who believe in them were unbelievers. These three doctrines were : (1) that the world existed from eternity,¹³¹ (2) that God knew only the universal and not the particulars and (3) that there would be no resurrection of the physical body.¹³² The other propositions were either heretical or born of religious indifference. Al-Ghazzālī called them in question and debated only to challenge the philosophers. They were advanced against them to cut the ground from under their feet. It was to establish the incompetence of logical reason that al-Ghazzālī challenged the rationalists to prove them. According to him logical reason, when applied to metaphysics, led nowhere, rather it got involved in contradictions.

III. Theology

The Qur'ān laid down specific and well defined injunctions for the regulation of human life in all its aspects in this world,¹³³ and set forth Islām as the true religion of man, at once simple and natural.¹³⁴ Islām as such was practised for some time after the death of the Prophet, but

131. Ibn Sinā believed in the eternity of the world and at the same time held that it was created by God. He proves this by arguing that cause does not always precede the effect, e.g., turning of the key and opening of the lock are simultaneous operations. Similarly, the world is created by God and yet is eternal with Him.

132. Al-Ghazzālī says that Ibn Sinā rejects the physical resurrection of the dead and believes only in the spiritual resurrection. But, he has erroneously charged him with this rejection. In fact Ibn Sinā believed in it. In his *Shifā'* he says :

وقد بسطت الشريعة الحق التي آتانا نبينا وسيدنا و مولانا صلى الله عليه وآله حال السعادة والشقاوة التي تجب البدن . ١٣٤

Further he advances convincing proofs in favour of the doctrines (cf. Shahristāni, op. cit., Vol. IV, pp. 56 ff.).

133. "Verily God enjoineeth justice and the doing of good (on others)" (Qur'ān, xvi. 90); "(who) enjoines them good and forbids them evil, and makes unlawful to them impure things." (Qur'ān, vii. 157).

134. E.G. "God desires ease for you, and He does not desire for you difficulty." (Qur'ān, ii. 185), "God desires that He should make light your burdens and man is created weak" (Qur'ān, iv. 28).

soon after political parties made their appearance and changed the simple faith into a complicated one to suit their own political ends.

In the life-time of the Prophet no need was felt for an organized theological code for the guidance of the Muslims. All new situations and problems were either met by fresh revelation or solved by the Prophet himself. "More than any man that has ever lived, Muḥammad shaped the destinies of his people; ...they...(always) looked back to him for guidance and authority at each step."¹³⁵ Gradually the need for a theological code became apparent when the Prophet was no longer in their midst.

Even as late as in the first period of the Caliphate (632-660 A.D.), the law was not formulated and codified into a system. The Orthodox Caliphs and the other Companions of the Prophet sought guidance direct from the Qur'ān and the oral traditions of the Prophet,¹³⁶ and when these two sources were found silent on a point at issue they depended on *ijmā'* and sometimes on their own judgment (*rā'y*).¹³⁷ They were perfectly imbued with the spirit of Islām and the ideals of the Prophet. So, whatever they said or did in the new situations that arose in their day was in complete accord with the spirit and demand of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah.¹³⁸ But, later on political controversies gave rise to different sects which helped the growth of systematic theology.¹³⁹

The accession of Mu'āwiya (A.D. 660) marked the beginning of a new era which extended to the beginning of the 2nd century A.H. This period was responsible for the rise of various sects and systems.¹⁴⁰ The early Companions tried to be scrupulously exact in narrating the traditions but superfluous and false matter crept into them unrecognised through mere human failings. But, now the narration of

135. Browne, op. cit., p. 179.

136. Khudrī, *Tārīkh al-Tashrī'* (tr. Abdus Salām), pp. 168 ff.

137. Ibid., pp. 171-72.

138. O'Leary, op. cit., p. 72.

139. Khudrī, op. cit., p. 165.

140. Ibid., p. 139 f; cf. on the classification of Muslim sects, Cureton, Arabic Text, p. 4.

Ḥadīth was adopted as a profession from political, sectarian, selfish or other motives, and consequently it became popular.¹⁴¹ In this period the traditions began to be committed to writing.¹⁴² But, Prof. Morgoliouth very erroneously held that traditions in written form appeared only after the foundation of Baghdād.¹⁴³ The sayings and doings of the Prophet were in the first instance jotted down by the Companions of the Prophet as memoranda and for their personal needs. The Ḥadīth remained for a pretty long time in a fragmentary form in private possession. But, in the early 'Abbāsid period public editions of them were issued. During this period, two schools of theologians emerged: one laying emphasis on the Ḥadīth, and the other on personal judgment and deduction which was frequently resorted to by the jurists.¹⁴⁴

The next period extends to the middle of the 4th century. It is well marked for the complete codification and systematization of theology, the high development of jurisprudence and the scientific and critical compilation of the Ḥadīth. The orthodoxy first developed *fiqh* (lit., knowledge)¹⁴⁵ which, in the beginning, included not only jurisprudence, to which it devoted itself exclusively in later times, but also theology, social law, civil law, that is to say, the Islamic law in general.¹⁴⁶ It contained details of everything that a man ought to do to himself, to others and to God.¹⁴⁷ The *faqīh* combined in him all that was required in a teacher and guide of Islām. Above all, he was a pious man.¹⁴⁸ The *fiqh* was meant to be a pattern of ideal conduct. In jurisprudence, the Muslims borrowed little or nothing from the Romans or other sources.¹⁴⁹ They were the originators and founders of his science.

141. Khudrī, op. cit., pp. 198.

142. Ibid., p. 214.

143. Margoliouth, op. cit., p. 89.

144. Khudrī, op. cit., p. 206.

145. Al-Ghazzālī, *Ihyā al-'Ulūm*, Vol. I, pp. 26-28.

146. Margoliouth, op. cit., pp. 32-72.

147. O'Leary, op. cit., p. 70; Macdonald, op. cit., p. 66.

148. Margoliouth, op. cit., p. 73.

149. Ibid., pp. 173-74.

Imām Shāfi'ī and his followers were the first to lay down the rules of jurisprudence and write treatises on it, as yet these rules having existed only in the hearts of the people.¹⁵⁰ In this period lived the four renowned Imāms of jurisprudence, viz., Abū Ḥanīfa (d. A.D. 767), ash-Shāfi'ī (d. A.D. 820), Mālik Ibn Anas (d. A.D. 796) and Aḥmad Ibn Hanbal (d. A.D. 855) and the great traditionists, Bukhārī (d. A.D. 870), Muslim (d. A.D. 874), at-Tirmidhī (d. A.D. 892) and an-Nasā'ī (d. A.D. 915), etc.

The Orthodox Caliphs depended freely on their own opinions (*rā'y*). In the Umayyad period too the jurists used their opinions to supplement the law. The addition of this new element, that is, personal judgment did not intrude into the Shari'at as foreign matter, it was in fact strictly derived from and based on the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. In the 'Abbāsid period, the jurists began to assign limitations to free judgement. Abū Ḥanīfa by adopting the method of *Qiyās* (analogy) placed a definite limitation on free judgment. Conclusions could only be formed on the basis of similar cases cited in the Qur'ān and the Tradition. In order to meet new situations, however, and to enlarge the elasticity of the Shari'at law, he propounded the doctrine of *Istihsān*¹⁵¹ or equity, i.e., what seems right and just should be adopted even though it could not be deduced from the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. Mālik b. Anas was deadly opposed to *Rā'y* and *Istihsān*, but in order to allow a little free choice, he advocated another method called *Istislāh* i.e., public expediency.¹⁵² Analogy was to be set aside only when it was against public interest. He added the doctrine of *ijmā'* (the consensus of opinion) but it was only limited to the people of Medina. He laid great emphasis on Tradition. Ash-Shāfi'ī widened the scope of *ijmā'* to the entire body of the Muslims.¹⁵³ Aḥmad b. Hanbal was an extremist who would not allow the least digression from the words of the Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth. Further, the systematization of Ḥadīth curtailed the scope of free enquiry

150. Ibid., p. 49; Al-Ghazzālī, op. cit., p. 66.

151. Macdonald, op. cit., pp. 95-96; O'Leary, op. cit., p. 74.

152. Ibid., pp. 100-101, O'Leary, op. cit., p. 76.

153. O'Leary, op. cit., p. 76.

to narrower limits. Ready-made answers were proposed and the Muslims were exhorted to follow them in order to attain ideal conduct.¹⁵⁴

In the middle of the 4th century there began a new era. The different schools attained full vigour and power and became mutually so exclusive that each established itself as a permanent sect. Even the least difference of opinion was not tolerated, consequently the persecution of sects by one another began with great vehemence. No scope remained for the exercise of reason. The opinions of the founders of the sects became inexorable laws for their followers. The spirit of *taqlid* got to the fore-front. Al-Ghazzālī undertook to discuss and criticise the evils resulting from such fanaticism and obstinate adherence to certain opinions and systems.

Because of the necessary conditions prevailing in this age, the science and art of disputation and argumentation (*munāzara*) was developed to perfection. The purpose originally was to sift the truth from falsehood; but later it was used to silence opposition by all means, fair or foul. It was also used to test the ability of the learned. Al-Ghazzālī has discussed in his *Ihyā*, the advantages and disadvantages of the prevailing practice and has stated the rules that should regulate the conduct of disputations.¹⁵⁵

The orthodox theologians believed in the words of the Qur'ān and the Hadīth literally. They defended anthropomorphic ideas about God. They did not allow any discussions concerning things sacred. Later, however, they invented '*kalām*' (dialectics) after the fashion of the Mu'tazilites to strengthen their arguments; and themselves came to be known as '*Mutakallimūn*'.¹⁵⁶ The difference between the Mu'tazilite *Kalām* and the Ash'arite *Kalām*¹⁵⁷ is that the one believed in the sufficiency of reason, and the other believed in the complete dependence on revelation in religious and moral matters. Consequently, the former in

154. Ibid., pp. 74-77.

155. Al-Ghazzālī, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 37 ff.

156. DeBoer, op. cit., p. 42; Macdonald, op. cit., p. 136.

157. Shahrīstānī, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 97 ff.

course of time come to refute and explain away all the tenets of faith that did not, in their opinion, correspond to reason. The latter defended and proved all at them. The result was that scholastic theology came into being. But, they knew no philosophy and, hence, were unable to withstand the Mu'tazilites. After the accession of Mutawakkil to the Caliphate, free thought was suppressed and the Mu'tazilites were punished. This helped the spread of orthodoxy.¹⁵⁸ The Mu'tazilites, however, were still the matters of science and argumentation¹⁵⁹ and tried to defend and explain religion on rationalistic lines. But, rationalism made people sceptical and indifferent to religion. Heresies and unbelief were rampant and, indeed, a master-mind was needed to save the people from this scourge.

Towering personalities, like those of Ibn Ḥazm (d. A.D. 1064) the Zāhirite (formalists) in Spain, Abu'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī in Mesopotamia (d. A.D. 932), and Abū Maṣṣūr al-Māturidī (d. A.D. 934) in Samarqand emerged in this period, to defend the faith against the attacks of the Mu'tazilites.¹⁶⁰ Each one of them exerted immense influence on the minds of their followers and they created powerful systems of theology. But, in course of time the system of al-Ash'arī eclipsed at other systems. Also, at this very time the various Shī'ite sects like the Qarmathians, and the Zaydites, etc., were busy undermining the religion and social basis of Islāmic society. Al-Ash'arī was the only person who could silence the Mu'tazilites as well as the other heretical sects by the mastery of the science of disputation.¹⁶¹ Al-Ash'arī was a Mu'tazilite till his 40th year. In a dream the Prophet is said to have exhorted him to follow the Qur'ān and the Hadīth. He resolved to do so and to fight the Mu'tazilites tooth and nail. He met his teacher al-Jubbā'ī (d. A.D. 915), the last great Imām of the Mu'tazilites, in public discussion and defeated him. He wrote more than a hundred

158. Browne, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 290.

159. Ibid., p. 291.

160. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 187.

161. DeBoer, op. cit., pp. 191-92.

books in refutation of *i'tizāl*.¹⁶² ¹⁶³ He did not recognize any knowledge of the Divine things that was independent of revelation. He maintained that theology could not be built on a purely rational basis. Faith in the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of the Prophet was necessary. But, the anthropomorphic statements in the Qur'ān about God, e.g., His hands, face, etc., which the literalists believed to be true were explained by him allegorically. He rejected the doctrine of the Mu'tazilites that God had no qualities. He believed that God had qualities, e.g., Knowledge, Will, etc., but they were not to be understood in the sense in which they were predicated of human beings.¹⁶⁴ As to the creation of the Qur'ān, he maintained that it was eternal Word of God.

With regard to the freedom of the will, he held that man could not create anything, God was the only Creator. God created in man the faculties of choice and power. Then he created the actions which corresponded to choice and power. Initiation belonged only to God; that which lay in the power of man was simply *Kasb* (acquisition) which meant that his actions corresponded to the power and choice which God had created in him already. Man was the locus (*maḥall*) of his actions.¹⁶⁵ The Mu'tazilites held that God being just could not do evil to His creatures. God made man free in his actions. So, it was not God but man himself who was the author of both good and evil. Repudiating this view al-Ash'arī maintained that there was no limitation on God. He could do both good and evil to any of His creatures He liked.

162. Browne, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 291.

163. See "A short Creed" by al-Ash'arī, tr., by Macdonald in his *Theology* (pp. 293-99). This creed forms the first action of the second book of al-Ghazzālī's *Ihyā*, Vol. I, pp. 79 ff; O'Leary, op. cit., pp. 214 f. For the relation which the Ash'arite doctrines bear with the other creeds, see (tr.) "Fiqh Akbar I" and the "Fiqh Akbar II", etc., in "Muslim Creed" by Wensinck, pp. 102-275.

164. For detailed discussion, see *Aspects of Islām*, Macdonald, pp. 115-144.

165. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 192. Commenting on his position Macdonald says, "The closeness with which al-Ash'arī in this comes to the pre-established harmony of Leibnitz and to the Kantian conception of existence show how high a rank he must take as an original thinker."

And as to the vision of God in the next world, he defended it staunchly in his own way. Differing at once both from the orthodox and the Mu'tazilites, he maintained that physically it was impossible, as it involved place and direction. But, he maintained that vision could be possible without the aid of the physical eyes.¹⁶⁶

In fact the great original mind of al-Ash'arī built up a powerful system of metaphysical theology,¹⁶⁷ and laid the scientific foundation of scholastic *kalām*. The orthodox theologians accepted al-Ash'arī's teachings as a great blessing from God. His books were circulated throughout the Muslim countries and found great favour everywhere. After al-Ash'arī, came Qāḍī Abū Bakr Bāqillānī (d. A.D. 1012) who perfected the Ash'arite theology.¹⁶⁸

In the 5th century of the Hijra, there arose a number of great theologians like Imām al-Ḥaramayn¹⁶⁹ (d. A.D. 1085) and al-Ghazzālī who contributed to the glorious development of Ash'arite theology. At this time, the Seljūqs ruled in Baghdād. They were orthodox Muslims. They stopped all free thinking in matters religious. The Ash'arite school of theology was fortunate in having among its defenders personalities like Baqillānī, Imām al-Ḥaramayn, etc., yet the Ash'arites could not escape persecution. They had many enemies, for instance, the Hanbalites, Mu'tazilites, the philosophers, etc. Indeed, the Ash'arite movement was opposed vigorously and had to pass through many vicissitudes and tribulations before it could triumph over all.

166. See his views on the creation of the Qur'ān, Will, Vision, conception of God in his short creed (tr.) by Macdonald, in his *Theology*, pp. 291 ff. For detailed discussion of Ash'arite doctrines, see, O'Leary, pp. 96-ff; Shibli, *Ilm al-Kalām*, pp. 56 ff, and 86-90; *The Muslim Thought and its Source*, pp. 64-99; *Tabyin Kidhb al-Mufarī* by Ibn Asākir. What al-Ash'arī expressed in *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, *Kutāb al-Idāna*, etc., are founding *Qawā'id al-'Aqā'id* of al-Ghazzālī (*Ihyā*), Vol. I, pp. 79 ff.)

167. Macdonald, op. cit., pp. 191-204.

168. Ibid., pp. 201-202.

169. Imām al-Ḥaramayn, the teacher of al-Ghazzālī, incurred the displeasure of Tughril Beg whose grand Vazier was a Mu'tazilite. He fled to the holy places and remained there till the death of Tughril Beg.

In the last instance, its progress was accelerated still further by the successors of Ṭughril Beg. Ṭughril Beg conquered Baghdād (A.D. 1055) and delivered the Caliph from the Shi'ite control. His successors, Alp Arsalān and Alp-Arsalān's great Vazier, Nizām al-Mulk founded the renowned colleges of Nayshābur and Baghdād to spread Ash'arite doctrine. This marks the turning point in the Ash'arite bid for final victory. It was, however, mainly through al-Ghazzālī that the Ash'arite system became the most popular system in the Islāmic countries. Al-Ghazzālī crushed all opposition completely. The Ash'arite doctrines as modified by him were established finally in the whole Islāmic world. In Syria and Egypt, Sultān Ṣalāḥ ad-Din (d. A.D. 1089) and in North Africa and Spain al-Ghazzālī pupil, Ibn Tūmart¹⁷⁰ helped the Ash'arites to gain complete victory.

IV. Ṣūfism

Ṣūfism¹⁷¹ held that Islām had two aspects, from (*Zāhir*) and spirit (*Bātin*). The former, representing the external aspect, was embodied in the Shari'at while the later, representing the inner aspect, constituted the *Ṭariqat*. The Ṣūfis followed the *Ṭariqat* for the salvation of the soul. Ṣūfism started as a reaction against the formalism of the theologians and the masses, the intellectualism of the rationalists and the philosophers, the ungodly ways of the ruling classes. The theologians, jurists and traditionalists adhered to the letter of the law. Detailed formulas were put forward to be followed by every Muslim in his daily life, which reduced Islām to a set of rituals and ceremonies. The rationalists adhered to the cult of reason and regarded it as the source of truth. The philosophers followed the rationalists

170. When al-Ghazzālī was a professor at Baghdād and at the height of his fame, one Muḥammad Ibn Tūmart came from Morocco to attend his lectures. He learned from him the Ash'arite faith. After his return, he laid the foundation of an empire, (the Muwahhids). The Muwahhids made the Ash'arite system the state religion but the doctrines were accepted after a good deal of struggle (Macdonald, op. cit., p. 245).

171. There are many speculations as to the source of Ṣūfism, viz., whether it is of a Qur'ānic origin, or of a Neo-Platonic origin, or of an independent origin, or it is an Aryan reaction to a Semitic religion, etc.

and believed in the infallibility of Plato and Aristotle. The 'Abbāsīd dynasty had pushed the Arab culture into the background and adopted the Persian ways and manners which encouraged laxity in morals. The pious had to discover a way of life by which they could find God. The result was the development of Ṣūfism. The doctrines of Ṣūfism and its rules of conduct were based on the Qur'ān and the lives of the Prophet and his Companions.

THE Qur'ān was interpreted mystically and allegorically. The *Muqatt'āt*, i.e., the letters which occur in the beginning of certain chapters of the Qur'ān and have no apparent meaning, such as 'Alif Lām Mīm, and *Hā Mīm*', helped the growth of mystical interpretations since they must have some meaning. Their famous doctrine of the Unity of Existence (*Waḥdat-al-Wajūd*) is based on their interpretation of the Qur'ān. According to it all is a reflection or adumbration of God. He is the Visible and the Invisible. His hand is above men's hands.¹⁷² He shoots their arrow when they shoot¹⁷³ and wishes their thoughts when they wish.¹⁷⁴ He loves them when they love him.¹⁷⁵ He is ever in a new manifestation.¹⁷⁶ He is the real being and object of love.

Ṣūfis regard the Prophet as the Superman (Al-Insān al-Kamīl). His traditions and doings played a great part in the development of Ṣūfism. Its cosmological view is based on the tradition : "I was a hidden treasure and desired to be known and, therefore, I made the Creation that I might be known." Their philosophy of the Ego is based on the tradition : "Whoever knoweth his self knoweth his Lord." The Ṣūfis endeavoured to emulate each and every aspect of the Prophet's life. The retirement of the Prophet to the cave of the Hīrā for meditation for a certain period of time every year, set an example to the Ṣūfis to retire from society. The practice of ecstasy and self-annihilation was founded on the Prophet's habit of absorption in prayers. The ascetic aspects of Ṣūfism are based on the simplicity of the life followed by

172. Qur'ān, xlviii. 10.

173. Ibid., viii. 17.

174. Ibid., lxxx. 20.

175. Ibid., iii. 30.

176. Ibid., iv. 29.

the Prophet. The Prophet for instance, would give away what had come into his possession before going to sleep. He washed his clothes, repaired his shoes, milked his goats, and never on any occasion did he take his fill.¹⁷⁷

The Ṣūfis also endeavoured to emulate the simple lives of the Prophet's Companions, particularly that of 'Alī, who is regarded at the head of almost all the Ṣūfī sects. Various rules were derived from the incidents in the life of 'Alī. A mother brought her son to 'Alī and requested him to forbid the boy not to eat too much sugar. 'Alī asked the boy to come to him a few days after. On the next occasion, Alī gave the advice to the boy. The mother asked Alī why did he not offer the advice on the first occasion. He replied that he had to break the habit himself before he could advise others to give it up. This incident underlies the practice of purifying one's heart first and then bidding others to do the same. Another incident is the basis of the doctrine of ecstasy and total absorption in God. 'Alī was struck with an arrow which could not be extracted as the operation was very painful. But, Alī was not disturbed by pain when the arrow was pulled out while he was absorbed in prayers.

Salmān Fārsī, Uways Qarnī and other saints led the Ṣūfis to asceticism.¹⁷⁸ The Ismā'īlians whose cult was to adhere to the inner meaning of the Qur'ān also contributed to the ideology of Ṣūfism, e.g., the doctrine of the infallibility of the Imām.

Before al-Ghazzālī, Ṣūfism passed through three main stages of development : At the first stage, the Ṣūfis were ascetics and quietists. They laboured under a terrible consciousness of sin. This world seemed to them fleeting and deceitful, seducing men away from heavenly bliss. They were terribly afraid of the world to come. The verses of the Qur'ān such as "Those who commit sin will get terrible chastisement"¹⁷⁹ and "On wrong-doers befalls terrible vengeance,"¹⁸⁰ goaded the Ṣūfis to run away from the

177. Al-Ghazzālī, *Kīmīyā-i-Sa'ādāt*, p. 280.

178. Nicholson, op. cit., p. 292; Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddima* (Beyrut, 880), p. 473.

179. Qur'ān, xlviii. 4 ff.

180. Ibid., xlviii. 20 ff; xiv. 33.

temptations of the transitory world in order to avoid the wrath in the world to come. They devoted their lives to prayers, both incumbent and supererogatory. They retired from society and avoided every form of luxury and ostentation. Their object was the avoidance of every indulgence which entangled the soul and prevented its development. Ḥasan of Baṣra (d. A.D. 728), Ibrāhīm Ibn Adham (d. A.D. 777), Abū Ḥāshim (d. A.D. 777) and Rābi'a Baṣrī (d. A.D. 776) belonged to this quietist stage. The gloomiest view was taken by Ḥasan. He influenced the life of his time and subsequent generations. He was a great friend of the Caliph 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul 'Azīz. Al-Ghazzālī took him for a model of conduct.

At the second stage of development which is known as the theosophical stage, the doctrines of Ṣūfism began to take a definite shape. Mu'rūf of Karkh (d. A.D. 815) introduced the doctrines of total forgetfulness and emotional elements. Sarī-Saqāṭī (d. A.D. 870) initiated the doctrine of *Tauḥīd*, which became the central idea of the later Ṣūfī philosophy. Tawwāb bin Ibrāhīm Dhu'n-Nūn Miṣrī (d. A.D. 859) who was the first to found a Ṣūfī sect in Egypt formulated the doctrines of *ḥāl* (state) and *maqām* (stage) and ecstasy. He wrote treatises, wherein he expounded mystical doctrines. Bāyazīd of Bisṭām (d. A.D. 876) forms a link between theosophical stage and the pantheistic stage.

At the third stage, pantheism came to the forefront. Bāyazīd is well known for his utterance, "Beneath my cloak there is none but God." He elaborated the doctrine of self-effacement and self-annihilation. The Ṣūfī doctrines were systematized and unified by Junayd of Baghdād (d. A.D. 900) and preached by Shibli (d. A.D. 945). It is the doctrine of absorption and self-effacement which led to pantheism. Pantheism obliterates the distinction between the Creator and the creature and contends that there is only one existence, all else being an illusion. Maṣṣūr-al-Ḥallāj (d. A.D. 921) also betrays pantheistic tendencies. He is an enigma. Some consider him a hoax while others a saint. He was executed for exclaiming, "*Ana'l-Ḥaq*" (I am the Truth). According to the Ṣūfis, the utterance was due to a state of exaltation in which Maṣṣūr-al-Ḥallāj was lost in raptures at the Beatific

Vision and had lost touch with the phenomenal reality. The early historians regarded him as an imposter. He introduced un-Islāmic doctrines into Ṣūfism such as *Hulūl* (Fusion), *Itihād* (Union), *Tanāsuhk* (Transmigration), *Raj'at* (Return), etc. Al-Ghazzālī in his defence says that his only fault was to have divulged the secret which he ought not to have done.¹⁸¹

The breach between Ṣūfism and orthodox Islām took place gradually. At its first stage of development, Ṣūfism was not very different from Islām. In their doctrines the Ṣūfis emphasized some truths of Islām at the cost of others. In their conduct they cut themselves off from society and devoted themselves exclusively to religious exercises. At the second stage, novel methods of the purification of the heart were devised. At the third stage, pantheistic tendencies became evident. In Niffarī, there appears a distinction between Ṣūfism and Islām. The external side of Islām was lost sight of. Prayers, fasts, etc., were given up, and *dhikr* and other innovations were adopted for the purification of the heart. The authority of the Shaykh was added to the authority of the Qur'ān and the Prophet. Now the breach between the orthodox Islām and Ṣūfism had become complete. The theologians adhered to the letter of the law and the Ṣūfis sought the spirit.

It led a group of thinkers to reconcile the views of the theologians and the Ṣūfis, i.e., the *Shari'at* and the *Tariqat*. They pointed out that both the letter and the spirit were necessary. Junayd of Baghdād was the first celebrated Ṣūfi who advocated that the external path (*Shari'at*) and the internal meaning (*Haqiqat*) were the two aspects of religion which supplemented each other. He was followed by al-Qushayrī (d. A.D. 1074) who tried to bridge the gulf in his treatise, *al-Risāla al-Qushayriya*. Abū Tālib al-Makkī continued the task. Al-Muḥāsibī is the real representative of the school and the true forerunner of al-Ghazzālī. But, the gulf between Ṣūfism and Islām continued to remain wide till al-Ghazzālī reconciled the two. Al-Ghazzālī is responsible for weaving the Ṣūfi doctrines into the texture of Islāmic thought and literature. He rejected all sects and systems and adopted

the Ṣūfi literature thoroughly. Then, he began practising Ṣūfism and in this he followed Fārmadī. He retired from society to practise it. After wandering for eleven years, he resorted to public teaching for a while but again retired to a monastery and *madrassa* (school) to teach the Ṣūfi doctrines. There he spent his days till death.

181. Al-Ghazzālī, *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, p. 108.

ISLĀMIC ETHICS BEFORE AL-GHAZZĀLĪ

VIRTUE in pre-Islāmic Arabia mainly consisted in courage, in defending the honour of the tribe. Generosity was another well-known aspect of the Arab character. They were a hardy and virile race and possessed all the virtues and vices of a primitive and unsophisticated people. Being predominantly a bedouin nation, they had neither developed any refined culture nor any moral order worth that name. Economic insufficiency and an almost constant state of famine generally governed their rules of conduct. They also loved women, wine and music, and their view of life was hedonistic. The Qur'ān changed their whole outlook. They forthwith became otherworldly and dedicated themselves to God, in whose name they prayed, fasted, and renounced all their pleasures. They took the Qur'ān as an infallible guide and sought its guidance in all their needs.

Ethics, like other Islāmic sciences, takes its origin from the Qur'ān. Nay, it is wholly based on it. The Qur'ān lays down the foundation of a religious system on purely ethical principles, hence there is not much to distinguish between Islām as such and Islāmic Ethics. The moral, civil, canonical and criminal laws¹ of Islām are not rigidly separated from one another and cannot be identified as isolated systems or sciences.

The Muslims started the study of Ethics along with the study of the Qur'ān. It was their peculiar characteristic that they took their stand on the Qur'ān and founded and developed their sciences on original and independent lines.² Professor Margoliouth is of the opinion that the Qur'ān encouraged only two qualities, i.e., courage and discipline in the Muslims.³ But it is a half-truth, for the Qur'ān inspired

1. Macdonald, D.B., *Aspects of Islām*, p. 70.

2. Margoliouth, D.S., *Early Development of Mohammedanism*, p. 74.

3. Ibid., p. 55.

in them the best and the noblest that is conceivable and achievable in this life. History has borne ample testimony to these facts.

The ethical character of the Qur'ān is shown by the following passages of the Qur'ān, chosen at random. "Shall the reward of good be aught but good?"⁴ "And be good to the parents and to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the neighbour, and the companions in a journey and the wayfarer and the slave-maids in your possession."⁵ "And they who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor parsimonious, and (keep) between the just means."⁶ "Verily, God enjoineth justice and the doing of good and giving of gifts to kindred, and He forbiddeth wickedness, wrong and oppression."⁷ "Who give alms alike in prosperity and in success and who master anger, and forgive others; God loveth the doers of good."⁸ "And who control their desires.... But whoever indulge in their desire beyond this are transgressors."⁹ "And enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, and be patient under whatever shall be betide thee : for this is a bounden duty."¹⁰ "Speak unto the believers that they restrain their eyes and observe continence."¹¹ "And let not ill-will towards any induce you not to act uprightly. Act uprightly,"¹² "And eat ye and drink; but exceed not, for He loveth not those who exceed."¹³ "The believers are brethren, therefore make peace between your brethren."¹⁴ "And if two parties of the believers quarrel make peace between them."¹⁵ "And give to the near of kin his due and (to) the needy and the wayfarer theirs, and do not squander wastefully. The squanderers are indeed the brethren of devils,... And do not let thy hand be

4. Qur'ān, iv. 60.

5. Ibid., iv. 36.

6. Ibid., xxv. 67.

7. Ibid., xvi. 90.

8. Ibid., iii. 134.

9. Ibid., lxx. 31.

10. Ibid., xxxi. 17.

11. Ibid., xxiv. 30.

12. Ibid., v. 82.

13. Ibid., vii. 31.

14. Ibid., xlix. 10.

15. Ibid., xlix. 9.

chained to thy neck nor stretch it forth to the utmost (limit) of its stretching forth (be neither niggardly nor too much of a prodigal)."¹⁶ "Verily the most honourable of you in the sight of God is the most pious of you."¹⁷ The whole of the Qur'ān is full of such injunctions. Kindness in parents, kindred¹⁸ etc., forgiveness to those who err,¹⁹ piety,²⁰ equity, just dealing,²¹ compassion,²² restraint of lust,²³ true nobility, modesty, etc., all find appropriate mention in the Qur'ān.

Ethics in Islām is nothing but the body of injunctions laid down in the Qur'ān for the practical conduct of life and fully exemplified in the practice of the Holy Prophet throughout his life. The Qur'ān addresses the Prophet, "Thou has been created with an excellent character."²⁴ The Prophet himself says, "I have been sent to perfect morals."²⁵ Some one asked the Prophet, "What is religion?" "Good character," was the reply.²⁶ Al-Ghazzālī considered the Prophet as the ideally perfect man, par excellence, in all aspects of life.²⁷ The Qur'ān exhorts the believers to follow the rightly guided, particularly the Prophet, "It is the desire of every pious Muslim to model his life in every possible particular upon that of the Prophet."²⁸ Every Muslim endeavours to reach "the unapproachable perfection of the Prophet's character."²⁹ The immediate followers of the Prophet who followed in his footsteps are also regarded as patterns of good conduct.³⁰ They possessed all the good qualities, e.g., knowledge, understanding, piety, patience, gratitude, etc.

16. Ibid., xvii. 26-29.

17. Ibid., xlix. 13.

18. Ibid., xvii. 24; xxi. 73.

19. Ibid., vii. 199.

20. Ibid., ii. 278; iv. 1, 131; vi. 112.

21. Ibid., v. 8.

22. Ibid., cvii. 1-3.

23. Ibid., lxx. 29 ff; lxxix. 40.

24. Ibid., lxxviii 4; Al-Ghazzālī, *Ihyā*, Vol. III, p. 43.

25. Cf. Al-Ghazzālī, *Ihyā*, Vol. III, p. 43.

26. Ibid., p. 43.

27. Ibid., p. 48.

28. Macdonald, D.B., *Aspects of Islām*, p. 103.

29. Margoliouth, op. cit., p. 239.

30. Ibid., p. 239.

Al-Ghazzālī has drawn a pen-picture of the Prophet's character as revealed in the Ḥadith. I give below a sketch of the same.³¹ "The apostle of God always prayed in all humility to Allāh to bestow on him the highest moral qualities and a generous character. He was of exceeding humility and the greatest, the bravest, the justest and the most pious of men. He claimed that he was sent by God to set up the best standards of moral conduct as he himself demonstrated in by his own practice. He exhorts his followers to be just and compassionate, to fear God, to be truthful, to fulfil their covenants, to avoid breach of trust, in return a trust duly, to be merciful to orphans, to be afraid of the Day of Judgment when everyone shall have to render full account of his actions, to do good acts and avoid bad ones, to treat one's neighbours well, to lead the power, to be kindly and generous in the daily intercourse of life and in carrying the mission of peace to mankind, to follow the just and the truthful, etc.

"He led an absolutely frugal and temperate life, subsisting on the simplest fare, consisting mainly of dates and barley. He patched his own sandals and repaired his own clothes. He meted out equal treatment to all, free or slave. He gracefully bore with anything that annoyed him. He had unbounded faith in Allāh and never compromised with anything which he considered to be untrue, cunning or mean. No Muslim, says the Prophet, is a believer unless he desires for his brethren what he desires for himself. This injunction is one of the corner-stones of the moral order of Islām. He visited and comforted the sick and the afflicted. He was dignified in manner and in speech, and always the first to offer greetings, he readily forgave people and endeavoured to bring about peace between men. He accepted invitations from the poor and the rich alike and had always a smiling look. Pride and vanity did not touch him. The high standard which the Prophet set in moral behaviour as a citizen, free or persecuted, as husband, as a chief, as a conqueror, was never reached by any individual before or since. He was meek and tolerant while he was at the zenith of his power and treated

31. Al-Ghazzālī, *Ihyā*, Vol. II, pp. 210 ff.

his enemies and persecutors with compassion when they were laid low at his feet. In short, the Prophet was morally a perfect man. This practical code of life established by the Prophet exercised a great influence on the society of his day and later it transformed the whole social structure of human society when the message of Islām penetrated the remotest corner of the world."

Though the fundamental principles of Ethics were present in the Qur'ān, ethics as a science did not take shape till the influence of Greek thought asserted itself on the Muslim mind. Even in al-Ghazzālī's time, it was not included as a subject in the university curricula. It existed since the early inception of Islām in the form of aphoristic wisdom. When the Muslims took to the study or philosophy they mainly devoted themselves to metaphysics, logic and physical sciences, etc. Ethics was studied only as a part of politics. In Greek thought, Ethics was considered to be a branch of politics.³² So did the Muslims consider it. Periphery's commentary on Aristotle's two ethical works and his work on the Excellences of the Soul as well as Galen's ethical works were early translated into Arabic, but no attempt was made to write a systematic treatise on Ethics before Ibn Miskawaih.³³

Al-Kindī (d. A.D. 873) did not pay much heed to the science of Ethics. The human soul, according to him, is of a double origin. It partly develops along with the body and partly comes from God. In so far as it is correlated with the body it is bound with the chain of casuality, and hence, is not wholly free. And in so far as it partakes of the spiritual world, it possesses the character of freedom and immortality, and is free as are things belonging to the spiritual world. It is through piety and knowledge that the human soul can emancipate itself from physical relations and enter into the spiritual world. In his system knowing takes precedence over doing.³⁴

Al-Fārābī (d. A.D. 950) following Plato, adhered to the Greek view of Ethics.³⁵ The philosophers alone, in his

opinion, should be the leaders of the people, for only they can properly guide the destiny of the nation. They know the nature of the first principle and the emanation that proceeds from it. They can lead man correctly in their struggle to return to the first cause from where he has sprung.³⁶ The universe is an organic entity under the direct rule of God. Similarly, the human body is an organic whole over which the heart presides. Likewise, the state is an organized whole governed and controlled by a leader gifted with high intelligence, loftiness of soul, love of justice, etc.³⁷ Al-Fārābī wrote a book : "The Ideal City" (*Ārā' Ahl al-Madīnat al-Fādila*), in which he has discussed the theory of his ideal state. He recognizes two forces in man, the animal and the rational, both endowed with the power of selection. The rational power distinguishes the good from the evil.³⁸ It further enables man to know the true nature of things wherein consists the highest virtue. Knowledge according to Al-Fārābī has higher value than a moral act.³⁹ Man possesses freedom but it is not altogether absolute. The soul because of its association with matter cannot exercise its will fully. It cannot become perfect unless it is liberated from matter, and, when it is set free, it can attain its highest happiness which is the greatest good.⁴⁰ In this ideal republic, the leaders of the state are endowed with wisdom and character, a combination of a philosopher and a saint, perhaps Plato and 'Alī. Probably, he has in mind the picture of a Shī'ite Imām who is imagined as infallible. The state is a necessary instrument for the perfection of the moral order; therefore, its guardians should be men who may lead the community to its natural destiny, otherwise they would be consigned to the eternal Hell-fire. In his state, the community of saints is governed by sages.

Ibn Sīnā (d. A.D. 1036) also expressed his views on ethical problems in *Kitāb as-Siyāsa* (book of politics) and *al-Birr, ma'l āthām* and holds the opinion that man has got

32. Aristotle, *Politics*, part I, II. 9.

33. Cf. Ibn Miskawaih, *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq*.

34. DeBoer, op. cit., p. 140.

35. Arnold, T.W., *The Caliphate*, p. 122.

36. Arnold, T.W., *The Caliphate*, p. 122.

37. Ibid.

38. Levy, R., *Sociology of Islām*, Vol. II, p. 144.

39. DeBoer, op. cit., p. 122.

40. Ibid.

the power of discriminating good from evil.⁴¹ But, he does not recommend any general code of action. He advocates the view that people at large must follow the morality receiving the sanction of the community. But, for those who possess the high qualities of intellect and character he has a different thing to tell. The universe is governed by the force of love which pervades it all along. This love force is inclined to the first beloved, the perfect Beauty.⁴² But, man is chained to the material world and cannot reach his destiny except after a hard struggle. The multitude cannot do so. But, those who have attained wisdom can come in touch with the world-spirit which leads them to the perfect Beauty.

The Epistles of the Brethren of Purity also deal with ethical problems but their doctrines are expressed in a more or less mystical sense. They do not propose any new science of Ethics. Their Ethics is eclectic⁴³ and is the summary of the ethical views expressed in different religious systems. Briefly, they argue as follows : The human soul is of divine origin. It is an emanation from the primal cause. The union of the soul with matter is temporary. Through wisdom and faith, it endeavours to set itself free from the chains of matter, and then proceeds to its origin. The aim of life is the emancipation of the mind from matter, so when the mind has got its freedom it endeavours to reabsorb itself in the primal cause. This ethical system of the Brethren is in its main outline ascetic and spiritual in character. Man's actions are praiseworthy only when he follows his own nature. Rational considerations should govern all action. Man has a natural longing for God, so this innate feeling should be aroused and developed. The highest virtue is love, for it is through love that one strives for union with God.⁴⁴ But, pure love can only be attained through the renunciation of the world and the doing of good.

The great Nizām al-Mulk (d. A.D. 1092), the patron of al-Ghazzālī too, wrote a book called *Siyāsat Nāma* in which he gave practical advice to kings and administrators.

41. Levy, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 114.

42. Iqbāl, op. cit., pp. 38 off.

43. DeBoer, op. cit., pp. 94-95.

44. Ibid., p. 87.

But the first systematic attempt in the field of Ethics was that of Ibn Miskawaih (d. A.D. 1030) who wrote a book called *Tahdhīb al-Akhlaq*. Philosophic and systematic, it is the first treatise of its kind embodying the ethical views and opinions of the Greeks and the ethical system of Islām. It begins with a consideration of the spiritual nature of the soul. The soul is a simple, conscious substance, conscious of its existence and destiny. In essence it is spiritual. Its inquiries range from the sensible to the conceptual and from the conceptual to the knowledge of the ultimate.⁴⁵ It possesses an inherent rational knowledge which enables it to distinguish the true from the false. This faculty of rational reflection is directed to the attainment of the good; it helps the soul to raise and perfect itself.⁴⁶ But, all rational beings cannot attain to perfection as men are born with different capacities. There are some men who are born good and there are others who are born bad. And there is a third group born neither good nor bad. They can be changed by upbringing in good or bad traditions.⁴⁷ Of the several types of good, the highest is the absolute Good which is identical with the highest Being and the highest knowledge. All other goods are means to this good. One can only be happy if he acts as a rational being. This can only be done in a society. In a society the individual can attain to his perfection.⁴⁸ Like Socrates, one should make knowledge the basis of good character. The root of all virtue is knowledge. The acquisition of knowledge is the distinguishing feature of man. In its attainment lies human perfection.⁴⁹ It is also the foundation of good character.⁵⁰ Man is equipped to receive this knowledge; the various activities of the soul are directed to this end, but the physical senses act as a veil between him and his goal.⁵¹ He also possesses the faculty of volition which distinguishes good from bad. This faculty helps him in removing the veil.⁵² Further,

45. Iqbāl, op. cit., p. 29 ff.

46. DeBoer, op. cit., p. 129.

47. Ibid., pp. 129-30.

48. Ibn Miskawaih, op. cit., p. 23.

49. Levy, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 115.

50. Ibn Miskawaih, op. cit., p. 6.

51. Ibid., p. 6.

52. Ibid., p. 27.

man has three powers, appetite, anger and intellect. These powers derive their origin from three elements in human nature : the beastly, the ferocious and the rational.⁵³ An equable distribution of these elements, well tempered by justice, produces a perfect character which manifests itself in the form of the four cardinal virtues : courage, emperance, wisdom and justice.⁵⁴ The power of the intellect has two aspects, the theoretical and the practical. The function of the practical faculty is the perfection of character. It regulates man's power in order to improve human conduct. Through it man acquires good qualities and avoids bad ones. Man attains his highest perfection when he has perfected these two faculties. In their perfection lies the highest happiness.⁵⁵

The other notable books written before al-Ghazzālī on similar subjects were : *Qūt al-Qulūb* by Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī, the *al-Risāla al-Qushayriya* of al-Qushayrī, *Makārim al-Sharī'a* by Rāghib al-Isfahānī, etc. In these books every topic begins with quotations from the Qur'ān followed by quotations from the Ḥadīth, and the sayings of other pious and notable people. The method of treatment and the subject-matter in al-Ghazzālī's books are exactly similar to that we witness in the writings of Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī. In the *Qūt al-Qulūb*, all the topics are found. But, it is a book of general discourses. In the *Makārim*, we find a mere philosophical tinge, no topic being discussed systematically and thoroughly. Al-Ghazzālī follows the Qur'ān in spirit and keeps the Prophet before him as the embodiment of the Qur'ānic teachings. He himself tells us about sources of his doctrines.

Al-Ghazzālī has dealt with *Akhlāq* in a number of books, particularly the *Ihyā'* and the *Mizān*. In *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq*⁵⁶ which is a part of *Ihyā'*, he deals with the principles of Ethics. The doctrines which he has formulated in it seems to be the same as those given in Ibn Miskawaih's Ethics, e.g., the nature of character, the division of human powers into appetite, anger and knowledge, the perfection of character,

53. Ibid., p. 10.

54. Ibid., pp. 23, 24.

55. Al-Ghazzālī, *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, Book II.

56. Al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Munqidh min aḍ-Ḍalāl*, p. 102.

(i.e., the moderation of the above mentioned powers); the four cardinal virtues (courage, temperance, wisdom and justice), the ways of finding one's faults, the methods of building character, the education of children, the possibility of improving character, the theoretical and the practical reasons, etc. After discussing the virtues and vices in his *Mizān*, he says that all the virtues and vices that he has discussed are either mentioned in the Qur'ān or in the Ḥadīth or in *Akhhbār*. He exhorts people to follow the virtues mentioned above and warns and threatens them with punishment if they prefer to pursue the vices.⁵⁷

In the *Munqidh*, he writes, "some of the maxims found in works treating the mysteries of religion have met objectors of an inferior rank in science, whose intellectual penetration is insufficient to fathom such depths. They assert that these maxims are borrowed from the ancient philosophers, whereas the truth is that they are the product of my own meditations, but as the proverb says, 'Sandal follows the impress of sandal', some of them are found in our books of religious law, but for the greater part they are derived from the writings of the Sūfis." He further says, "but even if they were borrowed exclusively from the doctrines of the philosophers, is it right to reject an opinion when it is reasonable in itself, supported by solid evidence, and contradicting neither the Qur'ān nor the traditions? If we adopt this method and reject every truth which happens to be proclaimed by an imposter, how many truths shall we have to reject?" Al-Ghazzālī borrowed from all sources, Greek, Christian, Islāmic, etc., and the problems which he discusses were discussed by his predecessors. Yet, his position remains as unique as that of Shakespeare who borrowed most of his plots from Plutarch, but presented them in new forms and gave them the stamp of his own genius and personality, so uniquely that nobody can say that they are not his, and nobody can question his unrivalled brilliance and his unattainable majesty. Herein lies the greatest contribution of Al-Ghazzālī to ethical thought.

57. Ibid., tr. Claud Field, p. 37.

AL-GHAZZĀLĪ INNER DEVELOPMENT

AL-GHAZZĀLĪ'S life and work are so intimately interwoven that it is difficult to understand fully the one without the other. "Everything that he thought and wrote came with the weight and reality of his personal experience."¹ Fortunately, al-Ghazzālī has incidentally revealed his mind in a book called "*Al-Munqidh min ad-Ḍalāl*" (The Deliverer from Error). It is a work of philosophical confessions and an account of the voyage to truth across the difficult rocks of the philosophical and religious systems of his time.²

Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad al-Ghazzālī, surnamed Ḥujjat al-Islām, i.e., "the argument³ of Islām", was born in 1058 A.D. at Ṭūs in Khurāsān. "His father was," to quote al-Subkī, "a pious dervish who did not eat but what he earned with his

1. Macdonald, D.B., op. cit., p. 216.

2. Macdonald says, "It is an autobiography which is unique in Arabic for the keenness and the fullness of its Self-revelations. Unfortunately, he was beset with the utilitarianism of Islām, and so could not be content to let his book stand for itself as a human document nor even as *apologia pro vita sua*. He must need make out of it a manual of apologetics suited to his time, and thus, undoubtedly has dulled the personal touch" (Macdonald, *Religious Attitude and Life in Islām*, p. 174). This book has been compared by others with the Confession of St. Augustine and Newman's "Grammar of Assent" in intellectual subtlety and with Bunyan's Abounding in its puritanical sense.

The purpose of the book was in fact not autobiographical but it was an effort to expose the errors of the prevailing religious and philosophical doctrines and printing out the right path. The autobiographical element is accidental. He relates how he struggled through a bewildering confusion of creeds and sects and arrived at the truth. We have to be thankful to him that he gave a personal significance to what would have otherwise been a dry philosophical treatise. Al-Ghazzālī reveals as a matter of course his inner history faithfully and truthfully which is very refreshing and precious, coming as it does from such an earnest and profound seeker of truth.

3. This word Ḥujjat is often associated with the names of great reformers and intellectual leaders of Islām, whose very personalities are in themselves a complete proof for the truth and righteousness of their mission.

own hands. He very often visited and sat in the company of the *fuqahā*, And when he listened to their sermons, he wept and prayed to God to grant him a son who would be a *faqīh*." "God granted," adds al-Subkī, "the prayer of his father and al-Ghazzālī was born who became the most learned of all the *fuqahā* and rose to the eminence of becoming the Imām of his age."⁴ Naturally, the life and tenets of his father must have exerted a wholesome influence on the mind of the child. The first teacher to whom his early education was entrusted was a pious Ṣūfī.⁵ After having been for some time with him and then at a school in his native town, the boy went to Jurhān to study with Abū Naṣr al-Ismā'īlī. Then, he went to Nayshābūr to study under the well-known divine Imām al-Haramayn in the Nizāmiyya Academy. He soon became the most distinguished of his pupils, and was called by him a 'plentious ocean.' He soon began to serve under his master as an assistant teacher with whom he remained till the latter's death in 1085 A.D. His studies covered an extensive range of subjects, in particular, theology, *fiqh*, science, philosophy, apologetics, logic and mysticism. Already during the life-time of Imām al-Haramayn, al-Ghazzālī had become famous for his learning. When he left Nayshabūr at the age of 20, he had no equal among the learned in the Muslim world. He went to the court of the great patron of learning, the famous Nizām al-Mulk Ṭūsī, who appointed him the president of the Nizāmiyya Academy of Baghdād, the most coveted of all honours in the Muslim world and one which had not previously been conferred on any one at so early an age. He had great success as a teacher; three hundred students would assemble in his lectures. After al-Ghazzālī had attained all that a scholar could aspire to in the matter of worldly success and wielded an influence in no way less than that of the highest official to the State, his advice being sought on religious and political matters equally, and had thoroughly established his position, he suddenly turned a new leaf in his life. He fell into the turmoils of spiritual unrest, so much so

4. Al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt ash-Shāfa'iyya*, p. 102.

5. Ibid., 102.

that he ruined his health, lost all appetite and could not teach or even utter a word on account of his deep mental anguish.

Al-Ghazzālī was inherently very inquisitive, and filled with an intense earnestness for truth. "Very early he broke away from *Taqīd*—simple acceptance of religious truths on authority."⁶ The chaotic multiplicity of creeds and sects, beliefs and opinions disturbed him profoundly. "They are like a deep ocean strewn with ship-wrecks, each sect believing itself in possession of the truth and of salvation."⁷ His desire, therefore, was not to leave the beliefs of the sects unexplored. He exposed the fallacies of the doctrine and beliefs of the *Ta'limites*, the literalists, the philosophers, the scholastic theologians, the mystics, the devotees and the heretics. He wished to investigate the nature of the inborn disposition in man about which the Prophet had said, "Every child is born on *fiṭra* (i.e., Islām); it is his parents who make him a Christian, or a Jew, or a Magian,"⁸ and the nature of the beliefs, habits, etc., that are engrafted upon the empty mind of children by their parents.⁹ As beliefs were the reflections of teachings in early life, this led him to an enquiry into the reality of things and to a search after knowledge which is true and certain. This knowledge, he says, is attained when the thing known becomes clear in such a way that there remains no doubt about it and the possibility of error is completely precluded. Knowledge which does not bring certainty and precision with it, is not certain knowledge and cannot be relied upon. "Struck with contradictions," he remarks, "which I encountered in endeavouring to disentangle the truth and falsehood of these opinions, I was led to make the following reflections. The search after truth being the aim I set before myself, I ought to ascertain, in the first instance, the foundations of certitude. In the next place, I recognised that certitude was the clear and complete knowledge of things, such knowledge as left no room for doubt and no possibility of error and mere conjecture, so that there remained no

6. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 217.

7. Al-Ghazzālī, *Munqidh min-aḍ-Ḍalāl*, tr. Claud Field, p. 18.

8. Ibid., p. 3.

9. Ibid.

scope in the mind through which falsehood might find an entrance."¹⁰

He examined the sum-total of knowledge that he possessed and discovered that in no department of it, except in that of sense-perception and in the common faculty of grasping those rational principles which are more or less self-evident could he witness that degree of certitude which he sought. On further reflection, his confidence in the infallibility of sense-perceptions was also shaken.

"I then sadly reflected as follows," he goes on, "we cannot hope to find truth except in matters which carry their evidence in themselves, that is to say, in sense perceptions and necessary principles; we must therefore, establish these on a firm basis. Is my absolute confidence in sense perceptions and in the infallibility of necessary principles analogous to the confidence which I formerly possessed in things in which I believed on the authority of others?...I then set myself earnestly to examine the notions we derive from the evidence of the senses and from that of the sight in order to see if they could be called in question. The result of a careful examination was that my confidence in them was shaken."

"Then I said unto myself, 'Since I cannot trust to the evidence of my senses, I must rely only on intellectual conceptions based on fundamental principles.'"¹¹

But, here again scepticism appeared. The notions derived from reason might be real in relation to the thinker's present state. But, it was possible that he might enter upon another state of existence which bore the same relation to his present state as the present state did to his condition when asleep. In that new sphere he would perhaps realize that the conclusions of reason arrived at formerly were only delusions.¹² The ecstasy of the Ṣūfīs, Al-Ghazzālī says, may furnish an inkling of reality.

10. Ibid., pp. 3-4; and Field's translation, pp. 14-15.

11. Ibid., tr. Claud Field, pp. 14-15.

12. Cf. Qur'ān, 1. 22, "We have uncovered from thee thy veil and thy sight today is piercing."

These were not mere stray thoughts; they were serious misgivings. Al-Ghazzālī fell into a state of utter doubt. During this period, he remained an absolute and thorough-going sceptic. He doubted the very basis of knowledge. The whole world may be but a dream, and man may wake up to the consciousness of reality only after death. It seemed as if all the ground had been cut from under his feet.

Now, when al-Ghazzālī found himself at the edge of a precipice, with no certitude and no knowledge, it was not to reason or argument, or logical proofs that he owed his deliverance. It was a light which, he believed, entered his heart by the grace of God. It brought him peace and reassurance from within that life was not a dream but a reality and the light of reason was not to be dismissed as possibly a mere hallucination.¹³

Al-Ghazzālī tells us that when he emerged from this state of doubt he knew that he could not return to *Taqīd* even if he were assured that it would offer him real peace of mind, for now it had dawned on him positively that *Taqīd* would not lead him to the convincing ground of truth. So, he settled down to make a deep and thorough study of all the prevailing beliefs and creeds, and practise their precepts in order to discover for himself where the truth actually lay.

He divided those who were engaged in the search after truth into four groups: the Scholastic Theologians, the Philosophers, the Ta'limites, and the Šūfis. He proceeded to explore them one by one resolutely and with great thoroughness. As he says himself, he dived into the deep sea of religions and philosophies, fearlessly sounded their depths, penetrated their darkneses and dared their dangers and abysses.¹⁴

13. Descartes too, like al-Ghazzālī, started with doubt disbelieving his senses, distrusting the knowledge gained through experience, but he stopped at reason, finding certainty in the proposition, "*Cogito ergo sum*," and made this proposition the basis of his whole system of philosophy. Al-Ghazzālī went farther. He founded certainty only in the will to believe, inspired by the Divine Will, i.e., in the proposition "*Volo ergo sum*."

14. Cf. Al-Ghazzālī, op. cit., p. 13.

The Scholastic Theologian claimed that they were the masters of theory and speculation, that is, the people who were guided by judgment and discussion. "I began the study of this science," he says, "and fully mastered it, by studying the books of the early authorities, and myself writing books on it. I found that this science fulfilled its object, but it was insufficient for my purpose. It could not be of much help to one who did not believe in anything except in the necessary principles of reason as was the case with me,"¹⁵ Continuing he says, "Grant the theologians their premises and they could argue, deny them these and there was no common-ground on which to meet."¹⁶

Then he devoted three years to the study of philosophy (from the beginning of 484 A.H., to the beginning of 487 A.H.). Two years he gave to reflection. The result of this study and reflection he gives in his famous *Tahāfut al-Falāsifa*, 'The Undoing of Philosophers'. In the preface to it, al-Ghazzālī gives the motive which actuated him to write it. It was to shatter the hold which Greek Philosophy had obtained over the minds of the Muslims.¹⁷

15. Ibid., pp. 7-8.

16. Macdonald, op. cit., pp. 219-20.

17. There had arisen thinkers who had discarded all religious observances for the simple reason that the wise Greek philosophers like Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle do not follow any religion. His aim was to point out the good and the bad in philosophy, and the dangers and pitfalls of it. The materialists believed in the eternity of matter and denied the existence of an intelligent Creator. The naturalists or the deists believed in the Creator but not in life after death, so that they denied Resurrection, Punishment and Rewards, Heaven, etc. The teaching of the theists came down to him through Ibn Sīnā and Fārābī, whom he regarded as the best exponents of Greek philosophy particularly Aristotelian philosophy. He divided their philosophy into six branches: Mathematics, Logic, Physics, Politics, Ethics, and Metaphysics. With regard to Politics and Ethics he thought that the philosophers had derived these sciences from religious books and the traditions of the prophets, saints, etc. There was nothing in them against religion. Further, he found that Mathematics, Logic and Physics had nothing to do with religion; the study of them was desirable and innocent so long as they confined themselves to their own domains.

It is remarkable that "throughout, he is very cautious to make nothing as unbelief that is not really so; to admit always those truths of mathematics, logic, and physics that cannot be intellectually rejected; and only to warn against an attitude of intellectualism and a

When he had finished with philosophy, he turned his attention to the third group, the Ta'limites,¹⁸ who had captured the minds of the people with their doctrine of "The infallible Teacher." They held that such a teacher existed. Al-Ghazzālī thoroughly discussed their doctrines and proved that they were of little or no consequence, and it was only the ignorant defenders of Islām that had made so much of them.¹⁹

belief that mathematicians, with their success in their own department, are to be followed in other departments, or that all subjects are susceptible of the exactness and certainty of a syllogism in logic. The damnable errors of the theists are almost entirely in their metaphysical views. (Macdonald, op. cit., p. 222).

Al-Ghazzālī's views about the nature of Mathematics, Logic, etc., were exactly the same as those of Descartes, Spinoza, etc., with the difference that they believed that the method of Mathematics could be applied to Metaphysical problems with the same certainty as it could be applied to the exact sciences. Desecrates says, "I was specially delighted with Mathematics on account of the certitude and evidence of their reasons.... I was astonished that foundations so strong and solid, should have had no loftier super-structure reared on them." (*Discourse on Method*, 14 Ed. John Weiltch, Vol. I, p. 8). He did build a system of philosophy on this foundation. He further says, "The long chains of simple and easy reasonings by means of which Geometers accustomed to reach the conclusion, of their most difficult demonstrations, had led me to imagine that all things, to the knowledge of which man is competent, are naturally connected in the same way, and there is nothing removed from us as to be beyond our reach" (*Discourse on Method*, Vol. II, p. 19). Al-Ghazzālī, like Kant, clearly perceived that the mathematical method although sound in the domain of exact science was useless in the domain of metaphysics. He definitely anticipated Kant in that the science of metaphysics is impossible.

As regards metaphysics he found that it was full of misleading doctrines. He summed them up in twenty propositions in the *Tahāfut* and refuted them one by one. In refuting the arguments and in pointing out the contradictions he demonstrates that the philosophers cannot prove even the existence of God or His unity, Al-Ghazzālī again anticipated Kant and showed that intelligence cannot find the ultimate solution of metaphysical problems.

18. Al-Ghazzālī, op. cit., pp. 18-24. The Ta'limites were also called the Bāḥinīs, the Esoterics.

19. He studied them thoroughly and explained their doctrines clearly. He writes in the "Munqidh"; "With strong and sound arguments, I would expose the emptiness, and falsehood of their doubts, and would prove that their opinions were futile and worthless. Had Islām not been injured by its ignorant though honest well-wishers, and had they not

Then, he turned to Šūfism. In the course of his study of rational and religious sciences, and through causes which he could not analyse, al-Ghazzālī found that the belief in God, Revelation and Resurrection had become firmly implanted in his heart. He began with a thorough study of the works of all the eminent Šūfis, like the *Qūt al-Qulūb* by Abū Ṭālib al-Makki (d. 386 A.H.). The books of Hārith al-Muḥāsibī (d. 335 A.H.), and the fragments and traditions of Junayd (d. 338 A.H.), Shiblī (d. 334 A.H.), and Abū Yazid al-Bisṭāmī (d. 261 A.H.). He soon acquired a thorough mastery of the theory of Šūfism. But, since the basis of Šūfism was not theoretical knowledge but rather experience (*dhawq*) and state (*hāl*) which could not be attained without the purification of the heart and the transformation of character, al-Ghazzālī devoted himself exclusively to the ways of the Šūfis, which demanded a complete renunciation of this material world and a sole-hearted attention and devotion to God alone.

Consequently, he sacrificed honours and riches and severed all worldly ties. For a long while he was torn between the opposite forces of earthly passions and religious yearning. "I probed," he says, "the motives of my work as teacher, and found that, in place of being sincerely consecrated to God, I was only actuated by a vain desire for honour and fame. I perceived that I was on the edge of an abyss, and that without immediate conversion I should be doomed to eternal fire...Still a prey to uncertainty, one day I decided to leave Baghdād and to give up everything; the next day I gave up my resolution. I advanced one step and immediately retraced it."²⁰ In the morning, I was sincerely resolved only to occupy myself with the future; in the evening a crowd of carnal thoughts assailed me and dispersed my resolve. On the one hand, the world kept me bound to my post in the chains of covetousness; and on the other the voice of religion cried to me, 'Up! Up! Thy life is nearing its end

given impossible and ridiculous answers to the objections of the Ta'limites, this innovation of theirs, with all its inherent defects would never have succeeded to this extent," (pp. 19-20). Most of their teaching were based on the corrupted philosophy of Pythagoras.

20. A departure has been made from the original.

and thou hast a long journey to make. All thy pretended knowledge is bought but falsehood and fantasy. It thou dost not think now of thy salvation, when wilt thou think of it."²¹

"Thus I remained, torn as under by the opposite forces of earthly passions and religious aspirations, for about six months.... At the close of them I lost my will and I gave myself up to destiny. Then, God Himself caused an impediment. He chained my tongue and prevented me from lecturing. Vainly I desired in the interest of my pupils to go on with my teaching, but my mouth became dumb. The silence to which I was condemned cast me into a violent despair.... I lost all appetite, I could neither swallow a morsel of bread, nor drink a drop of water."²²

"Finally, conscious of my weakness and of the prostration of my soul, I took refuge in God like one who has exhausted himself and is denied all means. 'He who hears the wretched when they cry,'²³ deigned to hear me. He made easy for me to sacrifice honours, wealth and family."²⁴ "At last, I left Baghdād, having given away all my fortune. But, as lands and property in 'Iraq can afford an endowment for pious purposes, I obtained a legal authorisation to preserve only as much as was necessary for my support and that of my children; for there is surely nothing more lawful in the world than that a learned man should provide sufficiently for the support of his family."²⁵

Al-Ghazzālī then spent ten years in roaming about in Syria, the Hījāz, and other places visiting holy shrines and mosques, wandering into deserts and undergoing religious exercises, and so on.

During this period of meditation, says al-Ghazzālī there were shown to him things which could be better experienced than described. However, he came to know that the Ṣūfīs were most truly godly, their life most beautiful, their rules of

conduct most perfect, and their morality the purest. They were the illumined,—“Illumined with the light which proceeds from the Central Radiance of Inspiration.”²⁶ The spiritual condition of the Ṣūfī, “advances from witnessing of forms and similitudes to stages where the power of language fails and no rendering in words is possible....”²⁷

These transcendental experiences made him realize not only the possibility but the actuality of receiving knowledge that was beyond the scope of intelligence. Thus, was revealed to him the possibility and in part the nature of Revelation. Once it had been ascertained, the field of al-Ghazzālī's investigation was complete. He returned to *taqlīd*. To Revelation we must surrender ourselves entirely and obey the religious intelligence, for the source thereof was transcendental.

At the end of ten years²⁸ of seclusion, when he looked around that philosophy had taken hold of the people's minds, and that the spread of irreligious doctrines and the increasing indifference of the masses to religion had shaken the very foundations of faith. He was filled with profound grief. The learned who were to guide mankind were themselves victims of the same diseases, and the world was heading towards destruction. He felt great misgivings. “I argued with myself, ‘How wilt thou in these times of mischief and slackness in religion, remain firm and persist in removing the evil, and dispelling the darkness. If thou wilt invite men, call them to truth and the way of God, the world will turn thine enemy.

26. Ibid., p. 47.

27. Al-Ghazzālī, op. cit., p. 29; thought Macdonald, *Religious Attitude in Islām*, pp. 186-187.

28. Al-Ghazzālī, spent ten years in seclusion. It was during this period that the “Revival of Religious Sciences” was written, about which the verdict of the Muslim world was that if all the books on Islām were destroyed, it would be but a slight loss provided al-Ghazzālī's *Ihyā* were preserved. From another point of view, an European writer (Lewes) says of the *Ihyā*, in his *History of Philosophy*; “This work probably owing to its originality, was never translated into Latin during the Middle Ages and remained a closed book to all but Arabian Scholars. It bears so remarkable a resemblance to the *Discourse on Method of Descartes* that had any translation of it existed in the days of Descartes, every one would have cried out against the Plagiarism.” (*Biographical History of Philosophy*, Part II, Henry Lewes, p. 49).

21. Al-Ghazzālī, op. cit., pp. 43-44.

22. Ibid., p. 44. A departure has been made from the original.

23. Qur'ān, xxvii, 6.

24. Al-Ghazzālī, op. cit., pp. 25-26; and Claud Field's Translation, pp. 43-45.

25. Cf. *Munqidh*, tr. Claud Field, pp. 46-47.

How wilt thou single-handed struggle against them all, and endure the hardships? This could have been possible under the reign of a Pious king determined to assist and promote religion. So, I expressed before God my helplessness, my inability to reveal the truth by argument and disputation, and decided to spend my life in seclusion."²⁹ Then, the king himself travelled to Nayshābūr and importuned him to give up his seclusion, and he importuned so earnestly that al-Ghazzālī felt it would be sheer obstinacy to resist him further. At this juncture he writes, "Then I said to myself, 'one of the reasons for your resolve is gone. It cannot be right now to remain in seclusion for fear of dishonour, personal discomfort, or hardships at the hand of the people.' Has not God said : Do the people think that they will simply say 'We believe' and they will be let off and will not be tried in their faith, and indeed we have tried those that have gone before them."³⁰

Al-Ghazzālī thought that it was the will of God to try him now with hardships in this world. He sought the advice of the enlightened, and they too hinted that the source of this move was God and its object—the revivification of faith. So, after eleven years al-Ghazzālī renounced his seclusion in 499 A.H., and travelled towards Nayshābūr to teach. He could never have dreamed of this return to his early occupation. But it was not, he says, a return, for "before this I taught knowledge which was calculated to bring honour, wealth and position, and by my word and acts I led men in this direction; but now I went to teach men the knowledge that helps to renounce wealth and position, and God knows well that this is now my intention; and my one desire is that my present efforts should lead to the purification of my soul and the souls of the people."³¹ After teaching at the Nizāmiyya Academy of Nayshābūr for some time, Al-Ghazzālī retired to Tūs. At the instance of the learned and the common people of Baghdād, the Caliph sent him a request to take over the charge of the Nizāmiyya Academy at Baghdād once more,

29. Al-Ghazzālī, op. cit., p. 36.

30. Ibid., p. 37; Qur'ān, xxix, 2-3.

31. Al-Ghazzālī, op. cit., pp. 36-38.

but al-Ghazzālī chose to remain at Tūs, and founded a *Madrassah* at which he taught both *fiqh* and *taṣawwuf* till his death in 1111 A.D. His death was remarkable for its calm serenity which was in striking contrast with the tumults of the soul through which he had passed. His brother Aḥmad records, "When it was Monday my brother performed the ablution, and said his prayers. Then he said 'Fetch me my grave clothes'. He took them and kissed them, and laid them on his eyes and said 'I hear and obey the command to go unto the Master.' Then he stretched out his feet and turned to the Qibla, and passed away—" ³² gone to meet Him, being taken by the grace of the Most High.

32. As-Subkī, op. cit., p. 106.

PART TWO

**Al-Ghazzālī's theory of Ethics :
Its Basis**

CHAPTER V

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL NATURE OF MAN

NO sound ethical system is possible without a firm psychological foundation. Codes of morality like those of the Stoics and the ascetics failed because they were based on erroneous concepts about human psychology, e.g., on the assumption that man was essentially a rational being and had nothing of the animal in him. On the other hand, schools like those of the Epicureans, failed because they recognised only man's animal nature and ignored that he was also a rational being.

Al-Ghazzālī, as a true thinker, sets out to examine the psychological nature of Man, and discovers that all psychological phenomena originate in the Self. What is the nature of the Self? What is the ultimate purpose of it? Wherein lie its misery and happiness? Such were the problems he was called upon to solve.

The Self or *Qalb*, as al-Ghazzālī calls it, is the essence of man.¹ It is the spiritual entity which abides in his physical body and controls his organic and psychical functions. It is called *Qalb* (heart), because it is connected with the physical heart, though the connection is merely transcendental. The spiritual heart is the substance and the physical only an accident of it. According to al-Ghazzālī, the concept of the self is expressed in Arabic by four terms, viz., *Qalb* (heart), *Rūh* (soul), *Nafs* (desire-nature) and *'Aql* (intellect, reason).² Each of these terms signifies a spiritual entity. Al-Ghazzālī prefers to use *Qalb* for the self in all his writings. The knowledge of this entity is essential to the knowledge of the ultimate reality.

1. Al-Ghazzālī *Ihyā*, Vol. III, p. 3 :

وهو المترك العالم العارف من الانسان وهو المخاطب و المعائب
و المعائب و الطالب -

2. Ibid., pp. 3-4.

The Self has an inherent yearning for an ideal which it strives to realize. In the embodied condition, the Self has been endowed with qualities that help it, on the one hand, to provide for the bodily needs and, on the other, to qualify for the ideal.

The Self fulfils the bodily needs through the motor (*Muḥarrika*) and sensory (*Mudrika*) powers. The motor power comprises propensities (*Bā'itha li'l-ḥaraka*)³ and impulses (*Mubāshira li'l-ḥaraka* or *qudra*).⁴ The two special types of propensities are appetite (*al-Quwwat ash-Shahwāniyya*) and anger (*al-Quwwat al-Ghaḍabiyya*). The former urges the body to strive for and obtain what is good for it. It includes hunger, thirst, sexual craving, etc. The latter urges the body to avoid or repel what is harmful to it. Anger takes various forms like rage, indignation, revenge, etc. Impulse is the power resident in muscles, nerves and other tissues, that moves the organs at the behest of appetite and anger.

The sensory power (*Mudrika*) is the power of apprehension which perceives and takes cognizance of what is harmful and what is good for the body.⁵ Without it, the propensities would flounder blindly. Al-Ghazzālī described these powers and instincts, in the *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, Books 3, 4 and 5. It is interesting to note that his analysis of them agrees with some of the modern theories about instinct, like that of William Macdougall.⁶ As analysed by him, they are inherent qualities of the mind for the use of the body, i.e., psychophysically inherited dispositions enabling the organism to perceive and know the objects of their desire, etc., exciting it with regard to these objects and finally, acting as moving forces in them.

3. Ibid., p. 4; *Mizān al-'Amal*, pp. 23-24.

4. In *Mizān al-'Amal*, Al-Ghazzālī calls this power 'Mubāshira li'l-Ḥaraka', and in *Ihyā'*, he calls it 'Qudra'.

5. Al-Ghazzālī, *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, p. 3.

6. Cf. Macdougall's definition of instinct; "An inherited or innate psycho-physical disposition which determines its possessor to perceive, and to pay attention to, objects of a certain class, to experience an external excitement of a particular quality upon perceiving such an object, and to act in regard to it in a particular manner, at least, to experience an impulse to such action."

(*Introduction to Social Psychology*, p. 29).

Apprehension includes, firstly, the outer senses, viz., sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch, with their special sense organs; and secondly, the inner senses, viz., Commonsense (*ḥiss Mushtarik*), Imagination (*Takhayyul*), Reflection (*Tafakkur*), Recollection (*Tadhakkur*) and Memory (*Ḥāfiza*).

In *Mizān al-'Amal*⁷ and *Kimiyā-i-Sa'adat*, al-Ghazzālī makes the division of the internal senses slightly different. *Ḥiss Mushtarik* is treated as a part of *Quwwat al-Khayāl*. To make the number of the internal senses five, he has included another sense which he calls *Quwwat al-Wahm*. Its business is to apprehend in parts the intangible meanings of sensible objects.

Further, in the *Ihyā'*⁸ he asserts emphatically that animals share all the five internal senses with man. In *Mizān al-'Amal* which is a later work, he says that animals do not possess a well-developed reflective power. This power in animals, he says, might be called *Quwwat al-Mutakhayyila*. This faculty cannot be the same as the one he has described above. Probably, al-Ghazzālī means that animals think mostly in terms of pictorial ideas in a simple way and are incapable of complex association and dissociation of abstract ideas involved in reflection.

Takhayyul is that sense which enables a being to retain the image of any sensible object after it has been once experienced, for example, a thing whose image has been seen remains in the mind after the eye has been closed.

Tafakkur is the power which brings together relevant thoughts and associates or dissociates them as it considers fit. It has no power to create anything new which is not already present in the mind. But, since it is active in associating or dissociating thoughts, al-Ghazzālī says that it would more fittingly be included amongst the motor powers and not amongst the sensory powers as was usually done. The impressions which are received through the senses are stored by Memory (*Ḥāfiza*).

7. Al-Ghazzālī, *Mizān al-'Amal*, pp. 25-26.

8. Al-Ghazzālī, *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, p. 5.

Just as memory remembers the outer forms of objects, *Tadhakkur* recollects the meaning which is palpable.

Hiss Mushtarik, described by al-Ghazzālī, is a special faculty which by synthesising the sensuous impressions carried to the brain, gives a meaning to them.

Unlike the five special senses, the inner senses have no special organs but are located in the regions in the brain.⁹ Al-Ghazzālī, like some of the modern psychologists, believes in the 'Localisation of Functions', i.e., every mental faculty has a corresponding seat in a region of the brain. For instance,¹⁰ he says that memory is located in the hinder lobe of the brain,¹¹ the power of imagination located in the frontal lobe of the brain,¹² and the power of reflection is located in the middle folds of the brain.¹³ While the five outer senses equip the organism to act in the present situations, the five inner senses help it to learn from the past experiences and foresee future situations.

All these powers control and regulate the body, and the *Qalb* controls and rules over them.¹⁴ Thus, al-Ghazzālī holds that mind has supremacy over matter. Mind is the source of all activities. It is the dynamic force which fashions matter according to its own needs. Even the growth of the bodily organs is due to the inward yearning of the soul.

Appetite, anger and apprehension are common to man and animals. The Self of man possesses two additional qualities which distinguish him from animals, and enable him to attain spiritual perfection. They are 'Aql (intellect) and *Irāda* (will). Intellect is the fundamental rational faculty in

9. Ibid., p. 5.

10. Ibid., p. 8.

11. ٩٢ — والقوة التي مسكنها موخر الدماغ
القوة الخيالية المودعة في مقدم الدماغ

12. Ibid., p. 8.

13. Al-Ghazzālī, *Mizān al-'Amal*, p. 25.

14. Al-Ghazzālī, *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, pp. 4-5.

٩٣ — فانهم مجبولون على الطاعة لا يستطيعون له خلافا

man which enables him to generalize and form concepts.¹⁵ Intellect is the basis of 'Ilm (knowledge). 'Ilm includes the knowledge of the affairs of this world and the next¹⁶ and the knowledge of rational principles.¹⁷ It also includes the knowledge of self-evident truths.¹⁸ 'Ilm can be acquired not through the senses,¹⁹ but only through the intellect. When a man understands the full significance of an object and the desirability of seeking it, a yearning is aroused in him to achieve that object by adopting appropriate means. This yearning is *Irāda*.²⁰ The will in man is different from the will in animals. The former is conditioned by the development of knowledge through intellect while the latter is a quality of anger as well as of appetite.²¹

15. 'Aql' is distinct from 'Ilm in as much as the former is the source of, or basic force, underlying the latter, but sometimes it is identified with the latter when it has developed to certain extent. It is in this sense that 'Ilm, too, is sometimes called the distinguishing feature of man and one of the forces in him. At first 'Aql is only an undeveloped, inborn rational faculty to develop and expand (*Ihyā'*, Vol. I, p. 67); and 'Ilm is but another name for its development and extension, for 'Aql develops and expands in proportion to the knowledge, that is acquired knowledge, and that it makes possible the realization of the ideal (*Ihyā'*, Vol. I, p. 14). It is because of the intimate connection between the two that sometimes the one is identified with the other (*Ihyā'*, Vol. I, pp. 71-77).

16. *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, p. 7.

17. اما العلم فهو العلم بالامور الدلوية والاخرية الحقائق العقلية -

18. العلوم الكلية الضرورية -

19. *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, p. 7.

20. Ibid., p. 7.

اما الارادة فانه اذا ادرك بالعقل عاقبة الامور وطريق الصلاح
فيه البعث من ذاته شوق الى جهة المصلحة والى تملطي اسبابها

21. Ibid., p. 5. Al-Ghazzālī calls these basic forces, *Irāda*, since as motive forces they impel the organism to action; the *Irāda* is not an opposing force to 'Aql. It is subservient to it. The relation of *Irāda* to 'Aql, according to Al-Ghazzālī, is that the latter determines the end while the yearning to achieve that end is supplied to it by the former. 'Aql acts as a guiding principle and prescribes to the will that which is to be achieved whereas the will acts as a moving force to achieve the end. (*Ihyā'*, Vol. III, P. 7.)

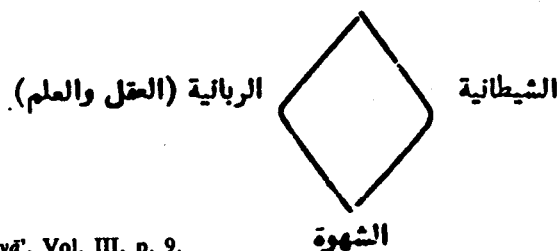
There are then six powers included in the Self of man, viz., appetite, anger, impulse, apprehension, intellect and will. Impulse, apprehension and will cannot take place unless there is the activity of appetite, anger and intellect, and whenever there is activity of the latter, the former must occur. Appetite, anger and intellect are basic to all other powers of the self. These basic powers have their origin in certain principles in the nature of man. Appetite is derived from the beastly (*al-Bahimīyya*), anger from the ferocious²² (*as-Ṣab'iyya*), and intellect from the divine (*ar-Rabbāniyya*). The last mentioned power is contra-distinguished from that which rebels against the intellect, i.e., the Satanic, (*ash-Shayṭāniyya*).²³ Thus, there are four elements in the nature of man: the sage, the pig, the dog, and the devil. The sage in him is the 'Aql²⁴ the pig is *ash-Shahwa* (or his lust and gluttony), the dog is *al-Ghaḍab* (or anger and ferocity), the devil is the brute which incites these two animals to rebel against 'Aql.²⁵ Individuals possess these powers in different proportions.

'Aql and *Shayṭāniyya* are contrary forces in the human self that work through the *Shahwa* and the *Ghaḍab* for construction and destruction, respectively. The animal forces, instigated by *Shayṭāniyya*, revolt against 'Aql and try to

22. Adjective Noun from السبع wild animal, like the lion, etc.

23. *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, pp. 9-10.

24. This is عقل See the diagram : الغضب



25. *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, p. 9.

كل انسان فيه شوب من هذه الاصول الاربعة اعنى الربانية
'الشیطانية والسبعية و البهيمية و كل ذلك مجموع في القلب و كان
المجموع في اهاب الانسان خنزير و كلب و شيطان و حكيم -

overcome it. 'Aql, because of the divine element in it, fights these forces and tries to control and divert them into its right channels in order to make them useful to the self. If it succeeds in making them completely submissive to itself, the devil in him is weakened and rendered ineffective and a harmony conducive to the realization of the ideal is born. When 'Aql has checked the evil tendency and subdued and harmonized the animal forces, its struggles ceases and the self is enabled to pursue its progress unimpeded towards its goal. It is this state of the Self, when struggle in it ceases and harmony prevails, which is described by the Qur'ānic phrase *ān-Nafs al-Muṭma'inna* (the tranquil soul). But if these forces, instigated by *Shayṭāniyya*, rebel against 'Aql and overcome it, the evil tendency gets strong and gains complete ascendancy over them, while the divine element becomes weaker till it is almost completely smothered. All the other faculties then become subservient to the devil and even reason becomes the slave of the passions; anger and lust; it is so subdued that it takes up the new duty of making plans and schemes for their gratification. The evil tendency becomes stronger and stronger, continually inciting them to gratify themselves even at the expense of the good of the Self.²⁶ It is the evil tendency at its strongest, instigating the animal forces to revolt, which is the active principle in *an-Nafs al-Ammāra* (the instigating soul). The divine element, however, fights and struggles with these forces, and it is seldom that it is completely subdued and its struggle ceases. It is this condition of the human Self, that is, when the divine element is continually struggling with the human evil tendency, which is denoted by the Qur'ānic expression *an-Nafs al-Lawwāma* (the admonishing soul). The relation of these forces with one another and their respective functions have been described allegorically by al-Ghazzālī. The soul of man in his body is compared to a king in his kingdom. The members of his body

26. *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, pp. 6, 9, 10. Cf. Hume: *A Treatise on Human Nature*, Book I, p. 127, "Reason is, and ought only to be, the slave of the passions and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them." Al-Ghazzālī on the contrary holds that, though reason can, when degraded, be the slave of the passions, yet its function is to rule and control them.

and faculties are like artisans and workers, and his intelligent reflective power is like a sincere and wise vizier; while his desire is like a wicked servant who brings provisions to the city, and his anger and indignation are like the police. The servant is a liar, a trickster who pretends to be sincere but under his pretended sincerity are concealed frightful mischief and deadly poison. His custom is to dispute opinions and measures adopted by the sincere vizier at every moment. If the king avails himself of his vizier in his administration, seeks his advice and turns away from the counsel of the wicked servant and keeps the servant and the police in their proper places, sometimes seeking the assistance of the one against the other by playing them off against one another, then the affairs of the state are set right and justice established. Similarly, the powers of the soul become balanced if it keeps anger under control, makes the intellect dominate desire and sometimes even curb and subdue it by making anger predominate even it.²⁷

It is the equilibrium between the three parts of the soul that produces results that conduce to the realization of the ideal. For instance, if *Shahwa* is controlled and kept in moderation, qualities such as chastity ('*ifā*'), contentment (*qana'a*), tranquillity (*hadw*), piety (*wara'*), cheerfulness (*inbisāf*) and modesty (*hayā*), etc., result; if *Ghaḍab* is controlled, qualities such as courage (*Shajā'a*), generosity (*karam*), fortitude (*sabr*), endurance (*iḥtimāl*), forgiveness ('*afw*'), etc., result; if both *Shahwa* and *Ghaḍab* are subordinated to the divine element, qualities such as knowledge ('*ilm*'), wisdom (*hikma*), faith (*yaqīn*) etc., result. But the domination of one over the other produces qualities which impede the progress of the self towards its goal. For instance, *Shahwa* predominates, bestial characteristics such as gluttony (*sharah*), great (*hirs*), wickedness (*khubth*), hypocrisy (*riyā'*), jealously (*hasad*) etc., result; if *Ghaḍab* becomes predominant, characteristics of ferocious animals such as enmity ('*adāwa*'), hatred (*baghdā'*), contempt (*istikhsāl*), pride (*takabbur*), love of aggrandisement (*shahwat az-zulm*) etc., manifest themselves; if both *Shahwa* and *Ghaḍab* become

27. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. III, p. 6.

predominant, devilish characteristics such as treachery (*makr*), deceit (*khud'ā*) cunning (*hīla*) exciting enmity (*taḍrib*) etc., appear; and if the divine element transcends its bounds, qualities such as over-lordship (*rubūbiyya*), despotism (*istibdād bi'l-umūr kullihā*), appropriation or claim to special privilege (*takhaṣṣuṣ*), etc. follow.²⁸

Man occupies a position midway between animals and angels; and his distinguishing quality is knowledge. He can either rise to the level of the angels with the help of knowledge, or fall to the level of animals by letting his anger and lust dominate him. It is, therefore, knowledge which helps the growth of the divine element in him and makes possible the realization of the ideal.

From the foregoing psychological analysis of human nature, it is clear that according to al-Ghazzālī all bodily organs and mental faculties have been created to help man to realize the ideal but it is knowledge which makes possible the right use of all these qualities in him and enables him to realize it.

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

CHAPTER VI

KNOWLEDGE AND MORALITY

KNOWLEDGE is one of the corner-stones of al-Ghazzālī's ethical system. Morality and good conduct are not possible without it. Knowledge results from the functioning of intellect or reason ('*ʿaql*) which is the innate rational faculty of man, the faculty which distinguishes him from animals, because it is the source¹ of the kind of knowledge of which animals are incapable. Al-Ghazzālī sometimes uses *Qalb* for '*Aql*'; both are used by him for the percipient mind. *Qalb* for him is a transcendental entity that perceives and knows.² *Qalb* has a wider connotation; it stands for the whole mental life of man and comprises both the lower and the higher faculties. In this wider sense of the *Qalb*, '*Aql*' become a part. It nevertheless is the highest faculty of the *Qalb*; its relation to the *Qalb* is one of light to the sun, or of vision to the eye.³ Knowledge has two aspects, formal and existential. The former is the knowledge of the form in which the various objects of experience and intuition are apprehended. It is the knowledge of self-evident principles. Such knowledge, though it begins with experience, is more than what is actually contained in experience and as such is not based on experience; it is *a priori*.⁴ For in such propositions as, "A person cannot be in two places at the same time," we make a statement which is true for all time, though our observation is limited to the present time.

1. Al-Ghazzālī, *Ihyā'*, Vol. I, p. 76 :

فالأول هو الالاس والسنخ والمنبع -

that is, the first is the foundation, origin and source. Al-Muḥāsibī's definition is as follows :

أله غريزة يتهيا بها ادراك العلوم النظرية و كأنه نور يقذف في القلب به يستعد لادراك الاشياء -

2. Al-Ghazzālī, *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, pp. 3-4.

3. Ibid., p. 14.

4. Ibid., p. 14; Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 76-78.

Existential knowledge is the knowledge of objects and events attained through experience and intuition. It comprises the content of knowledge in contradistinction to its form. Existential knowledge, again, is of two kinds, viz., phenomenal and spiritual. The former is the knowledge of the material world, while the latter is of spiritual realities, e.g., God, soul, etc. Knowledge of the spiritual realities is the highest form of knowledge. It depends on intuition (*Mukāshafa*) but comes differently to different people. To some, it comes slowly through a good deal of self-cultivation (*Mujāhada*), while to a few it is revealed directly.

Initially, intellect is a potentiality for the development of knowledge. This potentiality cannot be converted into actuality except under two conditions. Firstly, the development of intellect is dependent upon bodily growth,⁵ and secondly, there must be some external cause to excite it to action,⁶ just as there must be something to be seen if the eye is to see.⁷ Al-Ghazzālī concludes that all sciences are potentially in the intellect and do not come from without, what comes from without is the occasion that brings them into actuality.⁸

Intellect and knowledge develop with age. Through experience and intuition, the intellect leads to the growth of knowledge. Formal knowledge is innate while existential knowledge is acquired, but both occur together. In the young child formal knowledge is implicit. As experience accumulates⁹ it becomes explicit. Existential knowledge, to begin with, is very meagre and primarily concerned with the material objects and events which are immediately present in

5. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 14.

6. Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 76, 77.

وهذه العلوم كأنها مضمنة تلك الغريزة بالفطرة ولكن تظهر في الوجود إذا أجرى سبب يخرجها إلى الوجود كان هذه العلوم ليست بشئ وارد عليها من خارج و كأنها كالت مستكنة فيها فظهرت -

7. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 14.

8. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 77.

9. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 7 :

ان نتحصل له العلوم المكتسبة بالتجارب والفكر -

experiences. This knowledge once acquired is stored in the form of dispositions to be revived and used whenever needed. The next stage is marked by foresight; man is able to foresee the consequences of events and to act according to them, and not according to the impulses of the moment. The highest development of the intellect is reached when it understands the true nature of things, from the simplest objects of sense to the ultimate spiritual realities like God, soul, etc. There is, therefore, no separate faculty in man for knowing spiritual truths.

Theoretically, there is no limit to the possibilities of the development of intellect and knowledge.¹⁰ The grades of actual development, however, vary from the experience of an ordinary man to the direct spiritual vision of saints and the divine revelation of prophets. The development of the heart may be arrested on account of the following causes.¹¹ (1) It may be undeveloped, e.g., the heart of the child. (2) Sins may have rendered it dark. (3) The heart may be occupied solely with its own purification so that it does not strive towards the objects. (4) Some prejudices may stand between the heart and the object; e.g., sectarian beliefs. (5) A man may be ignorant as to how the truth is to be sought.

Knowledge serves a two-fold purpose.¹² It is, firstly, an apprehension of objects and their significance; and secondly, a guide to conduct. Accordingly, intellect or reason is considered to have two aspects, viz., theoretical and practical.

Theoretical reason (*al-'Aql an-Nazārī*) is concerned with the understanding of the phenomenal and the spiritual realities. It apprehends, generalizes and forms concepts. It

10. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 14 :

اعلم ان القلب بفريزته مستعدة لقبول حقائق المعلومات -

Al-Ghazzālī does not believe that the various species belong to discrete forms in the absolute sense, but sees a continuity in life, which the evolutionists have done recently (*Iḥyā'*, Vol. III, p. 8) and, though he regards man to be the highest of creations, he believes in the possibility of further progress by him to an infinite degree (*Iḥyā'*, Vol. III, p. 7).

11. Al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā'*, Vol. III, p. 8 :

اذ خبت وكدورة و شغل من جهة القلوب

12. Al-Ghazzālī, *Mizān al-'Amal*, pp. 83-85.

goes from the concrete to the abstract, from the particular to the general, from diversity to unity, embracing wider and still wider fields under one principle as it advances. It is this theoretical reason that looks towards the transcendental world and receives knowledge from it—knowledge of God, His attributes, His actions, His angels, the mysteries of creation, etc. Intuition is nothing but theoretical reason working at a higher plane. The mode of its operation, however, seem to be different in the region of the transcendental world. Theoretical reason has given us various systems of knowledge called sciences.

Practical reason (*al-'Aql al-'Amalī*) is the handmaid of theoretical reason. It receives from theoretical reason its ennobling influence. But, its active function lies in the domain of human conduct. It gives direction to voluntary individual acts. An individual act of a saint or patriot is directed by practical reason, but the whole life of the saint, patriot, or artist is guided by ideals conceived by theoretical reason which influences the practical reason in most of its decisions in individual acts. Moreover, in opposition to reason which works for construction there is in the Self a Satanic element which works for destruction. It is, therefore, essential that all human faculties should remain under the absolute sway of practical reason, for if it loses its supremacy over him, character is wrecked.

The ethical nature of various systems of knowledge depends upon their ethical utility. Sciences (*'ulūm*) are of two kinds, *Shar'iyya* (religious) and *'Aqliyya* (intellectual). A science derives its value from its relation to the goal. It is good if it helps towards the realization of this goal and is bad if it hinders it.¹³ Of the sciences which are good, there are some whose acquisition is *fard kifāya* (i.e., obligatory on some but not on all the members of the society), for instance,

13. Al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā'*, Vol. I, p. 26 :

لعلك تقول العلم هو معرفة الشئ على ما هو به و هو من صفات الله تعالى فكيف يكون الشئ علما ويكون مع كونه علما مذموما -

medicine, and others whose acquisition is *farḍ 'ayn* (obligatory).¹⁴ Al-Ghazzālī maintains that the acquisition of religious sciences (*'ulūm Shar'iyya*) is *farḍ kifāya*. They are the means to the purification of the Self, which is further a means to the realization of the ultimate end. When the individual begins to see in their laws not only the commands of God but also the true ways to the attainment of eternal happiness, they become *farḍ 'ayn*.¹⁵ What is reality binding on man is the knowledge of the method of achieving eternal happiness.¹⁶ It consists of *'ilm al-Mu'āmalā*, which comprises both knowledge and conduct¹⁷ and *'ilm al-Mukāshafa*, i.e., pure knowledge.¹⁸ Man can acquire both but very few are able to attain the latter. So ethically speaking, *'ilm al-Mu'āmalā* is the only science which is *farḍ 'ayn*.

It (*'ilm al-Mu'āmalā*) includes the knowledge of *'ibādāt* (man's relation to God), *ādāt* (man's relation to man), and the knowledge of the good and bad qualities of the soul. In reality, the knowledge of these qualities alone is *farḍ 'ayn* *'ibādāt* and *ādāt* being only means to these qualities. The knowledge of these qualities is necessary for leading one to the ultimate goal. This knowledge alone is *'ilm al-Mu'āmalā*. It is the science of the various good qualities of the Self, like patience (*ṣabr*), thankfulness (*shukr*), fear (*khawf*), hope (*rajā*), abstention (*zuhd*), as well as of bad qualities like jealousy (*ḥasad*), pride (*kibr*), self-esteem (*'ujb*), etc. It discusses the real nature and limits of these qualities, the means of acquiring and avoiding them together with their symptoms thereof and training required for them. *'Ilm al-Mukāshafa* is the end¹⁹ and culmination of *'ilm al-Mu'āmalā*. It is the highest end of man in this world. Ethical and practical sciences are not concerned with it for it does not

14. Cf., Al-Ghazzālī, *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, pp. 12, 14, 15; Vol. I, pp. 15-19 *farḍ 'ayn* is what is obligatory on every Muslim (*Ihyā'*, Vol. I, pp. 13 ff.), whereas *farḍ kifāya* is what is not binding on every Muslim, if there are sufficient people versed in it to satisfy the needs of the community (*Ihyā'*, Vol. I, pp. 15 ff.).

15. Al-Ghazzālī, *Ihyā'*, Vol. I, p. 17.

16. Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 18-19.

17. مركب من العلم والعمل

18. علم مجرد

19. وهو علم الباطن و ذلك غاية العلوم

deal with conduct. It comes at the stage when man is wholly absorbed in God after purifying the heart. It is a light which reveals itself in the heart of man. From this light many things that were vague or were only heresay become real and living. Through it is given to man the knowledge of all spiritual realities such as God, His attributes, His actions, prophethood, revelation, heaven, hell, etc. By it the curtain of doubt is removed, the truth becomes absolutely manifest, and all spiritual realities are apprehended as clearly as with one's own eyes.

THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL

THE problem of the freedom of the will, because of its great ethical significance, received the close attention of al-Ghazzālī. There are three aspects of this problem. Al-Ghazzālī believes that the efficacy of will in changing and improving character is a necessary postulate of ethics. Secondly, he considers that will is determined by knowledge. This he tries to prove by a penetrating analysis of human actions. Freedom, he thinks, consists in the acceptance or rejection by Reason of one or the other alternatives that are presented to it. But this acceptance or rejection is not wholly undetermined. On the contrary it is caused by the Divine Will. Thus man's freedom is determined. This rather complicated view, we shall now explain in detail.

Al-Ghazzālī holds that the fact that human character can be changed and improved certainly implies that man possesses some degree of free will.¹ Some people deny that human character is capable of improvement. They argue that *Khulq* is an expression which stands for the inner form of man, just as *Khalq* is an expression which stands for the outer form. Neither can be changed. But al-Ghazzālī adduces the experience of practical life in refutation of this. If the claim, he says, of the impossibility of improvement of character were accepted, all moral imperatives would cease to have any meaning, and all instruction, exhortation, education and self-discipline would be of no avail at all.

Al-Ghazzālī admits the limits beyond which human effort cannot change a person's character. For instance, man only regulates and disciplines his passions, but cannot root them out, nor, of course, is it desirable that he should do so, for without them life would be not only imperfect but also impossible. Now, there are two things that stand oddly in the

way of the remoulding of character : (a) the greater inherent strength of the passions in certain individuals; and (b) the greater habitual gratification of the passions in the past. Taking proper account of these two things, he divides mankind into four classes and deals with each separately² as follows :

(1) There are some persons whose character is yet unformed, who are lacking in the ability to distinguish between good and evil, between right and wrong. They are ignorant, lacking in reflection and self-consciousness, possessing no moral character, no will, and no belief. They have yet not wholly become slaves to the pleasures of the senses. The character of such men can be improved easily. They need only a guide, a determination and a motive to help them follow the right path. All men, when born, potentially possess all these. Their parents mislead them and excite their worldly desires, making them greedy and uncontrolled.

(2) Some persons in spite of being addicted to the indulgence of the lower appetites are, nevertheless, alive to their evil effects. They can discriminate between good and evil. Their consciousness if fully developed and they realize that the rational self is the only true self. Yet, they succumb to the demands of their lower selves because they are not practised in subjecting their actions to the power of their will. They have knowledge. They can be reformed, firstly, by abandoning their habits, and secondly, by cultivating virtuous habits. Such men are amenable to good influence, if they have the will to improve their character.

(3) Some persons are not only addicted to evil ways but also believe that those ways are good and to follow them is necessary. With regard to such people it can be said that the real nature of things has become obscured in their minds; consequently, the gratification of the lower self appears to them as the sole end of human life. They have been brought up in ignorance. Their animal self has grown at the expense of their rational self. It has completely suppressed it and rendered it ineffective. To reform them is almost impossible.

1. Al-Ghazzālī, *Ihyā', al-'Ulūm ad-Dīn*, Vol. III, pp. 48-50; Al-Ghazzālī, *Mizān al-'Amal*, pp. 68-70.

2. Ibid., pp. 49; *Mizān al-'Amal*, pp. 68-70.

(4) There are some who, in having been brought up in the way mentioned above, are proud of doing evil and of leading others astray. They take pride in doing so. The improvement of such men is the hardest of all. Only a conversion through Divine power can bring about a radical change in their case.

It is about the third and the fourth types of men that the Holy Qur'ān says,³ "God has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing, and over their eyes is a covering, and there is a great chastisement for them." The first are ignorant, the second ignorant and misguided, the third ignorant, misguided and wicked, and the fourth ignorant, misguided, wicked and devilish.

Viewing it in the light of the Qur'ān al-Ghazzālī classifies human character as below.⁴

(1) That which is wholly evil. It is overpowered by passions and obeys their dictates gladly. It tries to find the ways and means of gratifying them. The light of reason is almost denied to it. It makes no distinction between the higher and the lower self, for the lower self has become the ideal self to it. This attitude of the human soul is designated by the Qur'ān⁵ as *an-Nafs al-Ammāra*, the insinuating self.

(2) That which cannot decide and remains wavering in making the choice between good and evil and is constantly subjected to an inner struggle on this account. Sometimes, it is under the sway of the one and sometimes of the other. It is capable of doing both good and evil. It feels the clear distinction between the lower and the higher self, but finds itself totally unable to overcome the powerful impulses of the baser self which burst forth occasionally. This attitude is named by the Qur'ān⁶ as *an-Nafs al-Lawwāma*, the reproaching self.

(3) The fixedly good and illumined consciousness. It has received the Light and therefore, always acts according to the

3. Cf., Qur'ān, ii, 7.

4. *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, pp. 39-41.

5. Qur'ān, xii, 53.

6. Qur'ān, lxxv, 2.

dictates of reason. The evil element has been rendered ineffective and now there is scope for the development of constructive qualities alone. This is the stage where the distinction between the two selves fades away, for the higher self which is the true self, has now become the master. Man has achieved perfect freedom. This rational self is called by the Qur'ān⁷ as *an-Nafs al-Muṭma'inna*, the self at peace.

The progress that man makes from the state of *an-Nafs al-Ammāra* to the state of *an-Nafs al-Muṭma'inna* through ordeals and pains clearly indicate that he is free in his will. This freedom is not absolute, yet it is of paramount importance, for it is sufficient to effect the necessary change in human character.

II

A close study of '*Ālam al-Jabrūt*, the world of Mind (Reason, Will and Power) which is the bridge between '*Ālam al-Mulk* and '*Ālam al-Malakūt* reveals how far man is free. Al-Ghazzālī analyses the processes in the human mind leading to action, and points out the limits of human freedom and determinism.⁸

Impressions and ideas which enter unceasingly through the internal and external senses affect the human heart. Even if the senses are damped, imagination and ideas which are already in the heart affect it. Imagination, through these ideas, shifts from one object to the other. The heart does not remain continuously in the same state.

Now, impressions which assail the heart are called *al-Khawāṭir*, i.e., ideas which consist of thoughts and recollections, that is, knowledge apprehended by the heart. Whatever the heart intends, resolves, etc., must first come to it as ideas. These ideas are the fountain-heads of human action. They first excite *ar-Raghba*, i.e., inclination or impulse. This inclination must, if an action is to take place, be followed by a process of the intellect leading to *al-I'tiqād*, i.e., conviction or permission of reason. Conviction is followed by *al-Irādah*, i.e., will. When will is formed it excites power, and the

7. Qur'ān, lxxix, 27.

8. *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, pp. 23-27, 35-38.

excitement of power result in action. Of those, idea and inclination are not under the complete control of man.

The ideas which lead to the operation of the will are of two kinds.⁹ They either lead to good action or to evil action. Those belonging to the first series are known as *Ilhām* or inspiration, while those belonging to the second are known as *Waswas*, (whisperings of the Satan) i.e., seductions. These two types of ideas are due to different elements in the nature of man, known as *ar-Rabbāniya*, the Divine and *ash-Shaitāniya*, the Satanic.

These elements in the nature of man are subject to the direct influence of force in the commons, known as the angelic and the satanic forces which are created to help or hinder the workings of the universe. The divine influence which enables the heart to receive the good ideals is called *al-Tawfiq*, the divine aid. But, if the heart operates in the contrary direction, it receives the impact of the other force known as *al-Khidhlān*, the forsaking. In this way, the heart of men is between the pulls of the angelic and the satanic influences.¹⁰ By nature, however, the heart is equally susceptible to both the influences.¹¹ The divine element is guided by *al-'Aql*, i.e., reason, and the satanic element is led by *ash-Shahwah*, i.e., appetite and *al-Ghaḍab*, i.e., self-assertion (lit. anger). Appetite and self-assertion permeate into the flesh and blood of man and it is through them that evil rules and the heart becomes the abode of Satan. But, if appetite and hunger are controlled and kept under the rule of reason, the heart becomes the resting place of angels. The devil can use many gates for entering the heart, but the angels have only one, i.e., reason.¹² The avenues of the devil's approach to the heart are appetite and self-assertion and their innumerable offshoots, for example, envy, greed, malice, etc.¹³

9. Ibid., p. 23.

10. Ibid., p. 23.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid., p. 27.

13. Ibid., pp. 27-31.

The passage of ideas through the mind cannot be completely controlled. Good and bad ideas will flit across the mind of the saint or the moral wreck in spite of himself. The mind must be concentrated on God and spiritual things. But, concentration of mind on one idea is only of a short duration. Good and bad ideas come into the mind in quick succession. A man in deep meditation remains unaffected by every other thing. But, the succession of ideas is so quick that the distinction cannot be marked. The heart is susceptible to both good and bad ideas. However, concentration of mind on God and spiritual things will greatly promote good ideas and check bad ones.¹⁴ Idea is naturally and necessarily followed by inclination. Man cannot intervene.

Leaving the intermediate stage of conviction (knowledge, or permission of reason) and will, al-Ghazzālī discusses three types of human action.¹⁵

(1) Natural action (*a-l fi'l al-Tabi'i*). For instance, this displacement of water as a man swims, is a natural action and is obviously unaffected by human will.

(2) Intentional action (*al-fi'l al-Irādī*). If a drawn sword is moved towards one's head, one's hands will be raised in self-protection. This is an example of an intentional action. Intentional actions are due to the consciousness of the evils to be avoided. When the evil is perceived it gives rise to volition which move the eye and the hand without the least delay. Intentional actions are not blind responses but deliberate processes. When a sword is drawn, its perception comes to the mind and the premonition of the dangers to be avoided is experienced at once. This gives rise to volition which gives rise to protective movements.

The natural as well as the intentional actions are both involuntary and necessary. The difference between the two is that the intentional action is preceded by perception and knowledge, while in the natural action perception of the object is not present.

14. Ibid., pp. 38-39.

15. Ibid., IV, pp. 219 ff.

(3) Voluntary action (*al-fi'l al-ikhtiyārī*). All actions in which an alternative is possible and reason makes a choice are voluntary actions, for example, committing suicide, and most of our actions in our daily practical life. In this respect we can say that things presented to the mind are of two types:¹⁶ (i) Those which our introspection or observation shows without deliberation to be agreeable, or disagreeable. (ii) Those about which our reason hesitates to pronounce such a judgment. Here, alternatives are presented to the mind and it has to make a selection. An example of the first is that of the movement of a needle towards our eyes. Here, we know that the averting of the danger is advantageous and, therefore, we immediately make the protective movements. On account of this knowledge, our will is at once stirred into action in order to avoid the needle. The eye-lids are at once closed. Such actions are done intentionally without hesitation or deliberation. Such actions which involve a choice, are voluntary actions. In them reason hesitates and judgment is withheld until we know whether the action to be performed will have pleasant or unpleasant consequences, and we need to deliberate until the intellect decides in favour of the acceptance or rejection of an alternative.

This, however, is a complex process during which the Satanic element in man tries to repel its influence. The inherent strength of the instincts of appetite and self-assertion, and tendencies formed by previous acts are factors which often disturb the balance in such a conflict. But, when the intellect decides finally it is necessarily followed by the will which executes the action, and it does so unless there are any hindrances in the way, e.g., sometimes the source of the will is too weak to shake off our inertia. Yet, if the idea is attractive to the heart, the will becomes strong enough to execute the act. Even then, sometimes, something still more powerful suddenly occupies attention and one forgets all about the former.¹⁷

In voluntary action too, will is produced by knowledge, as it is produced in the intentional actions. Will produced by

deliberation to execute that which reason has accepted as good constitutes *Ikhtiyār*. The word '*al-Ikhtiyār*' is derived from '*khair*' which means good. So '*al-Ikhtiyār*' means the choice of an idea or an object appearing good to reason. Therefore, when a decision is made by the intellect, that is, when it accepts something as good, one is impelled to act accordingly;¹⁸ will is completely determined by the decision of reason.

From this discourse we understand that so far as natural or intentional actions are concerned human will is not free.¹⁹ In voluntary actions, however, man is free to choose; that is, it is up to his reason to accept something as good. This is his *Ikhtiyār*. But, al-Ghazzālī further says that even in this *Ikhtiyār* man's behaviour is determined. He is merely the locus of his *Ikhtiyār*; the real cause lies in the will of God.²⁰ To understand this peculiar view, it is necessary to have a clear idea of his theory of causation and Divine will.

III

Al-Ghazzālī, on the one hand, maintains that man can make or mar himself, he is free to choose; but on the other hand, he believes that God disposes or determines what shall happen. Nothing happens without His will. Whom He wills, He guides aright and whom He wills, He leads astray. He wishes and decides what He chooses. All that happens in heaven and earth proceeds from Him.²¹

To understand this apparent dualism in al-Ghazzālī with regard to freedom and determinism, that is, the responsibility of actions attributed to God and man simultaneously, we now turn to another aspect of the problem.

To maintain God's omnipotence, al-Ghazzālī considers it necessary to reject the efficiency theory of causation. Like Hume who came seven hundred years after, al-Ghazzālī

18. Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 219.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., Vol. III, pp. 41-42; Vol. IV, pp. 11, 223; Cf. Qur'an, vi, 126, xxi, 23.

21. Ibid., Vol. III, pp. 41-42; Vol. IV, pp. 11, 223; Cf. Qur'an, vi, 126, xxi, 23.

16. Ibid., p. 219.

17. Ibid., Vol. III, pp. 35-37.

upholds the sequence theory of Causation.²² He denies that there is power in a cause to produce a specific effect. There is no causal connection between things. They are not connected but conjoined. We see one thing preceding the other over and over again, and through habit begin to think that they are connected as cause and effect. The real fact is that antecedents have consequents.²³

"God alone is the efficient cause, but the ignorant have misunderstood and misapplied the word power."²⁴

"As to the orderly succession, let it be understood that the two events are conjoined like the 'condition' and the 'conditioned.' Now, certain conditions are very apparent and can be known easily even by men of little understanding. But, there are conditions which are understood only by those who see through the light of intuition. Hence, the common error of miscalculating the uniformity of events."²⁵

There is a divine purpose linking the antecedents to the consequents and manifesting itself in the existing orderly succession of events without the least breach or irregularity.²⁶

22. (a) For a full discussion of this theory see al-Ghazzālī's, *Tahāfat*, pp. 277-296; *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 220-223; also Obermann, *Der Philosophische und Religiöse Subjectivismus Ghazzālī's* (Leipzig, 1920), pp. 68-85. (b) D. Macdonald (Journal of American Oriental Society for 1899, XX, part I, p. 103) says, "In the *Tahāfat* he had smitten the philosophership and thigh; he had turned as in earlier times al-Ash'arī their own weapons against them, and had shown that with their premises and method no certainty could be reached. In that book, he goes to the extreme of intellectual scepticism, and seven hundred years before Hume, he cuts the bond of causality with the edge of his dialectic and proclaims that we know nothing of cause or effect, but simply that one thing follows another." Renan says (Averroes, p. 74) "Hume Na rein dit de plus." Munk in his book "Melange" (p. 379) had admirably summarised the arguments of al-Ghazzālī against causality.

23. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 220.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 220.

25. *Ibid.*

26. *Ibid.*

ولكن بعض المقبولات ترتب على البعض في الحدوث مترتب
المشروط على الشرط . . . الخ -

Some events succeed others in orderly succession, as the conditioned follows the condition in occurrence. We cannot say that life has been caused by the body, though body is the condition of life. In the same way, we must imagine the orderly successions of events in the universe. Whatever happens in the heavens or on the earth, happens in accordance with an inevitable order. As they occur, so much they occur for ever.²⁷

"Verily," says the Qur'ān, "We did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them in sport. We did not create them but with truth. But most of them do not know."²⁸

On the one hand, God created life, knowledge, will and action, and, on the other, He created an order (a system) as external to these things. He imposed the order upon the items. These items must conform to the order which is external to them, yet imposed upon them. This order of succession is inevitable and necessary and is the result of divine planning (*al-hikmat al-azaliya*).²⁹

Al-Ghazzālī, as we have seen, denies cause in the sense of a power or an efficient force when applied to things other than God. The efficient cause is only one. According to him, there is only one eternal power (*al-qudrat al-azaliya*) which is the cause of all created things.

27. *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, p. 220 :

والا فلا يتقدم متقدم ولا يتأخر متأخر الا بالحق والزوم -

Al-Ghazzālī, like Leibniz believes that the order of things in which they occur is the only true order and it is according to the preordained plan of the creator who knew everything by fore-knowledge. No other order than the one in which the things happen can be conceived. This is the perfect and the most complete of the possible arrangements. And if there was a better arrangement and God could make it and He did not make it, shows a kind of niggardliness on the part of God. This is against His goodness and, therefore, impossible. And if God was unable to make it better, it is against His power and wisdom. But, He is all-powerful and all-wise. Therefore, it is unthinkable. So, whatever is, is for the best and there is everywhere great harmony, order and beauty. (*Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 220-221).

28. Cf., Qur'ān, xlv, 38-39.

29. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 222.

From one point of view, man himself is the author of his actions, from another it is God. On the one hand, we see that the relation of man's actions to his power and will is like the connection of the conditioned with the condition; and on the other, we observe that the relation of man's actions to the divine power is like the connection of the effect with its cause. But, by common usage anything which is visibly connected with power, though it be only the abode or channel (*Maḥall*) of that power, is regarded as 'cause. God as a creative power is the real cause of man's actions. But, man is the apparent cause of actions, for it is through him that the manifestation of uniform succession of events takes place. Only he who attributes all his actions to God has found the truth and has reached the real source.

Thus, we have the apparent paradox that man is determined in his freedom.³⁰ The *Ash'arites* use for this kind of determined freedom the word '*Kasb*'.

When fire burns, it burns because of necessity (*jabr*). It is completely determined. God on the contrary is wholly free. Man's position lies midway between these two. He is not determined as fire, nor as free as God. '*Kasb*' (acquisitions) is neither contrary to freedom nor opposed to determinism. For those who have insight, it is the combination of the two. God's action is *Ikhtiyār*, but the action of man is not like that of God, because man's will is formed after hesitation and deliberation, which is impossible in the case of God. Deliberation is due to lack of knowledge. God's knowledge is perfect. He needs no deliberation for His *Ikhtiyār*, i.e., choice.³¹

30. Ibid., p. 220 :

فإذا مجبوراً على الاختيار

31. Cf. W.R. Sorely : *Moral Values and the Idea of God*, Cambridge, 1918, pp. 446-47 "If we form a conception of a perfect or infinite mind, it is in this sense that we must speak of such a mind as free. To speak of choice between alternatives is to suggest that other than the best might be chosen and this would be inconsistent with the idea of perfection. "A finite mind, limited in knowledge and power and distracted by desires other than the will of goodness, may yet have a partial measure of self-determination, which is complete only in the infinite. It is incompletely determined by forces external to itself. And

The word cause is used in the Qur'ān in different senses : "The angel of death who is given charge of you shall cause you to die; then to your Lord you shall be brought back."³² "Allah takes their souls when they die."³³ "We pour down the water in abundant showers. Then we cause grain to grow there."³⁴ "Fight them, Allah shall chastise them at your hands and will bring them to disgrace."³⁵ "So you did not slay them, it was Allah who slew them, and thou didst not smite when thou didst smite but it was Allah who smote, that He might confer upon the believers a good gift from Himself."³⁶ "Whatever good befalleth thee (O man!) it is from Allah and whatever of ill befalleth thee it is from thyself."³⁷

Al-Ghazzālī points out that in these passages negation and affirmation for one and the same action throw new light on the nature of causation. Negation affirms God as the real and efficient cause. Affirmation establishes man's free will faithfully executing the divine order.³⁸

The above passages show that the word 'cause' signifies creative power, and must be applied to God alone. But, as man's power is the image of God's power to him the word has been applied only in its secondary sense. God alone is the real efficient cause, and the word must be applied to Him in its root meaning of power. Is not everything delusive except God? A thing which cannot exist without the help of

if it stands as it does stand between the realm of nature and the realm of goodness, conscious of the good and yet beset by many temptations to fall to a lower level, then the relative independence or partial spontaneity of such a mind may be exhibited in the power to direct its own path towards the goal of goodness or to allow it to lapse into evil. Its freedom will be neither complete agreement with the ideal of goodness but it will exclude total subordination to the forces beyond itself, and it will give opportunity for choosing and serving the good. In spite of its restrictions, human activity will be recognised as possessing a core of spontaneity."

32. Qur'ān, xxxii, 11.

33. Qur'ān, xxxix, 42.

34. Qur'ān, lxxx, 25-27.

35. Qur'ān, ix 14.

36. Qur'ān, viii, 17.

37. Qur'ān, iv, 79.

38. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 201.

another thing is not real but delusive. There is only one thing which exists by itself, it is God. The existence of all other things depends upon Him. Everything is in His grip. He is the eternal and the everlasting. He is the manifest and the hidden. He is the first and the last. He is eternal, the first and the last. All created things have emanated from Him, one after another in an orderly succession. He is the last from the viewpoint of the seeker. In the spiritual progress of man, He is the last stage to be reached. So, He is the first in existence and the last in experience. Similarly, He is hidden to those who want to see Him in this world through their senses, and He is manifest to those who see Him through the eye of reason and to whom the mysteries of the supersensuous world have been unfolded.

This is the doctrine of '*Tawhīd*' (Unity of Existence) which means that every cause, nay, all activity mental or material, begins and terminates in Him, who is the First Cause, the Mover and the Fashioner of the universe.

Al-Ghazzālī uses an allegory to illustrate his views as to how far will is determined and how far it is free.³⁹

A devotee saw a paper with a spot of ink on it. He asked the paper why it had blackened its face. The paper said that the ink was responsible for it. The ink being asked, laid the charge against the pen, saying, that it was living in an inkpot quite innocently when the pen disturbed it in its comfort. The pen tried to prove its innocence; it related its life history and described the cruelty of the hand in depriving it of its home and removing its covering and shaping it with a sharp knife and then putting it into the inkpot and removing the ink from it and letting it fall on the paper. The pen argued that it had no power and the hand alone was responsible for the spot of ink. The hand explained its inability to do anything of its own accord. It was moved only by power without which it was no better than a dead mass of matter. The devotee then asked the power which answered thus : "I am not to blame. I was latent in the hand long before it moved. I was absolutely inactive. I was neither in motion nor had I the ability to

39. Ibid., pp. 215-18.

impart motion of my own accord. A certain agent came, shook me and obliged me to work. I had no power to resist its orders. This agent is 'Will.' I know it only by name." When the Will was asked, it answered : "The mind sent an agent named 'Knowledge' who delivered his message to me through Reason to put power into action and I was simply compelled to obey, though I do not know the reason for my obedience. By nature, I am inactive and I remain so as long as my master hesitates and deliberates. As soon as he decides, I accept his orders without questions. So, please do not rebuke me but ask Knowledge." The devotee then turned to the Mind, Knowledge and Reason for an explanation. The Reason said that it was a lamp which was not self-illuminated and did not know who lighted it. The Mind replied that it was a mere *tabula rasa* which had been spread by some one other than himself. The Knowledge excused itself by saying that it was a mere inscription made on a tablet; it became visible only after the lamp of Reason had become luminous, it was not the author of the inscription. "You had better ask the Pen."⁴⁰ said the Knowledge, "as there can be no inscription without the Pen."

When the devotee heard from the Knowledge about the Pen, the Lamp, the Tablet, the inscription, etc. He was perplexed that he was being driven from one thing to another without getting a satisfactory reply. Hitherto, he had been receiving some concrete answers, but the answers given by the Knowledge cut the ground from under his feet and he knew not where to go next. The Ink, the Reed, the Pen, the Hand, etc., could be seen. But, this Tablet other than that of wood or metal, this Lamp other than those lighted with oil and fire, this Writing other than that written with ordinary pen on ordinary paper or a tablet were wholly incomprehensible to him. He was, therefore, completely at a loss what to do.

The Knowledge, hearing the complaints of the devotee, answered that he (the devotee) was right, for he was not in a position to continue his journey, not having the equipment necessary to pursue the path successfully and reach the

40. i.e., the celestial Pen.

destination. But, if he was still determined to attain his goal, he must listen to it most attentively. Seeing that the devotee was determined, the Knowledge proceeded as follows :

"Your journey consists of three stages : (1) The Terrestrial World (*'Ālam al-Mulk*), the objects of which can be perceived with the physical senses. This region you have left behind. (2) The Celestial World (*'Ālam al-Malakūt*) which lies beyond the physical senses. The Pen which writes on the heart belongs to this world; you should know that you have entered this world when you have seen this Pen. This world is full of dangers and I do not know whether you will be able to overcome them. (3) The Intermediate World (*'Ālam al-Jabrūt*) or the world of power which lies between the first two and serves as a link between them. You have travelled three stages of this, viz., Power, Will and Knowledge.

"The celestial world begins when the Pen which records knowledge on the heart becomes visible and man begins to feel that he has acquired unshakable faith in the reality of the unseen world. If you cannot see the Pen, you had better discontinue your journey."

The devotee who had until now seen only a material Pen opened his eyes wide to see the celestial Pen. His mind was accustomed to experience only the things of the physical world. He failed to see the celestial Pen. The Knowledge again helped him by giving him further hints to have a conception of the celestial world which was free from physical determinations and limits, and proceeded to explain in this way : "The furniture of the house is according to the status of the dweller. Now, God does not resemble anything. So, his attributes are also transcendental. He is beyond space and time. His Hand, Pen, Writing, Speaking, etc., are unlike the things we experience in this world. Only that person who has the right conception of Him can apprehend Him and His attributes. You do not seem to have the right conception of Him. Then listen. There are three categories of men as regards their apprehension of Him : (1) Those who conceive Him as transcendental and believe Him to be not only above all material limitations but also above metaphorical

limitations. (2) Those who conceive Him to be an anthropomorphic being. (3) Those believe Him to be neither of the two and yet both. They hold a middle position. It seems that you belong to this position. You believe that He is immaterial and you cannot have a transcendental conception of His Hand, Pen and Tablet."

As the devotee heard this learned of discourse of the Knowledge, he realized his shortcomings. The realization was the starting point of his ascent. The consciousness of his ignorance regarding the nature and essence of the reality of things aroused in him a sense of shame and self-reproach which tore away the curtain which was hindering him from seeing the reality. The light of Knowledge dawned upon his heart and the curtain from before his eyes fell. He witnessed the spiritual realities as they were. The devotee then thanked the Knowledge for its invaluable help and proceeded on his journey further. Now, he asked the invisible Pen as to why it writes Knowledge on the heart of men, which produces Will, and which in its turn moves the power whereby voluntary actions result. The invisible Pen told him to address the inquiry to the Head which was the cause of its activities. The Hand to him to direct his inquiries to the Power. The devotee then asked the Power and received the answer : "I am merely a quality, you had better ask the possessor of the quality." The devotee was about to ask the Omnipotent, when he heard a voice from on high, saying : "He cannot be asked about what He does, and they shall be asked."⁴¹ The devotee was over-awed and became unconscious, in which state he remained for a long time. When he came to his senses, he began to speak forth his heart in silence : "Thou art divine and beneficent. I shall fear no mortal. Thy forgiveness is my solace. Thy mercy is my refuge. O God! open my heart so that I may know Thee. Unite the knot of my tongue." A voice came from behind the curtain, "stop, do not transcend the limits of the prophets. Return and follow them in everything. Take what they give you and do what they ask you to do. All that you can have from the Divine favour is

41. Qur'ān, xxi, 23.

that you have known the great fact that you cannot know Him, His Beauty and Grandeur.⁴²

When the devotee heard the Voice, he realized his limits. He returned to the World of Power (*'Ālam al-Jabrūt*) and accepted the excuses of the Knowledge, the Reason, the Will, the Power, the hand, the Pen, the Ink and the Paper because he had now realized that God was the only cause (*fā'il*). The other substances spoken of as causes were such merely in a metaphorical sense. Everything proceeds from Him and returns to Him. He is the First and the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden, the Architect of the universe.

It is not correct to think that al-Ghazzālī derived his doctrine of God as the only cause from his sequence theory of causation. On the contrary, he derived his sequence theory from his realization of God as the sole cause and the moving force in the universe.

The common people believe in the doctrine of the one Doer as an article of faith or on the basis of philosophy. But, the 'illuminated' who have had a vision of the spiritual Reality, realize that He is all in all, the only Doer, the only Mover. This experience, in rare cases, is a permanent state. Upon other minds, however, it dawns occasionally like a flash of lightning. But to the illumined the evidence of this experience is more real than that of the physical senses. Al-Ghazzālī was not only a great philosopher but a great mystic too. His position with regard to the freedom of man is based upon his study and experience of the phenomenal and the transcendental worlds (*Ālam al-Mulk*, *'Ālam al-Jabrūt* and *'Ālam al-Malakūt*). This is what explains his apparently paradoxical position, that man is determined, yet free.

PART THREE

Al-Ghazzālī's Theory of Ethics : (contd.)

Its Principles

42. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 217.

CHAPTER VIII

THE END

ALL human activity is directed towards some end. Philosophers and divines, at all places and in all ages, have been striving their utmost to discover and determine some end or ends that will insure the achievement of the greatest happiness.¹ This cherished end must be ultimate, beyond which nothing can be desired. It should define and orientate the quality and character of man's behaviour endeavouring to attain it.

Al-Ghazzālī call this end *as-Sa'āda* (blessedness). He, however, uses the term for the end as well as for the means, because, unlike some other writers on ethics, he considers the end and the means that lead to it as one entity. In his view, anything which promotes the realization of the ultimate end becomes part of that end. However, to help his readers to distinguish between the two he calls the ultimate end *as-Sa'āda al-Ukhrawiyya* or *as-Sa'āda al-Hāqiqiyya*.² And any means to the attainment of the ultimate end or *as-Sa'āda al-Hāqiqiyya* is also termed *Sa'āda*.³

Means are classified into different grades. Their relative values are to be ascertained by taking into consideration the following factors :⁴

I. Whether they are : (a) useful in both the worlds, for example, knowledge; or (b) useful only in the next world and painful in this world, for example, adversity or the pains one takes in subjugating the lower self; or (c) harmful in the next world and useful in this world, for instance, excessive wealth; (d) harmful in both the worlds, like ignorance and slavery to passions.

1. Al-Ghazzālī, *Mizān al-'Amal*, p. 2.

2. Al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā' 'ulūm ad-Dīn*, Vol. IV, p. 86; *Mizān*, pp. 109, 117.

3. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 86; *Mizān*, p. 117.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 86-89; *Mizān*, pp. 117-22.

II. Whether they are : (a) pure good, that is, always useful, pleasing and beautiful, for example knowledge; or (b) mixed with evil; for instance, something that is useful, but painful or useful but ugly; or (c) pure evil, namely, useless, painful and ugly, for instance, slavery to passions. In the second category we should further investigate, whether : (1) their good predominates over their evil, for example, just enough wealth; or (2) their good and evil balance each other, for instance, equal distribution of wealth; or (3) their evil predominates over their good, for example, excessive wealth.

III. Whether they are : (a) related to the higher faculties, or (b) related to the lower faculties.

Confining the inquiry to the last two points, we may seek to clarify whether an end is an end in itself, the natural effect of a cause or constitute the *Sa'āda* of our faculties, higher or lower. Al-Ghazzālī holds that the *Sa'āda* of everything consists in the realization of perfection peculiar to the nature of that particular thing. Food and drink are *Sa'āda* of the animal nature whereas the apprehending of the essence of things is a *Sa'āda* characteristic of man alone. The perfection peculiar to man consists in his developing the higher faculties and apprehending truths by means of pure reason without the aid of sense-perception.⁵ Knowledge is the distinctive feature of man. The delights of reason lie in the pleasures which knowledge and wisdom bring in their train. They are higher because they are the peculiar privileges of the human soul. They never diminish and never entail any painful consequence, rather they always stand as fountains of pleasure, being useful and beautiful to the highest degree. The fact why some people do not always get delight from knowledge is explained by the fact that the faculty which enables one to reap the fruits of knowledge is not properly developed in them, and by the fact that servile surrender to their passions makes their souls morbid and mars or rather extinguishes the very light of reason which might have guided them in the right direction and thereby given them the consciousness of the pleasure of truth.

5. *Mizān*, p. 19.

The ultimate end is called *summum bonum* by philosophers. Al-Ghazzālī calls it *as-Sa'āda al-Haqiqiya* (the real blessedness).⁶ The *summum bonum* according to al-Ghazzālī is the realization of the Vision of God in the next world. This consists of seven elements : life without death, pleasure without pain, wealth without poverty, perfection without defect, joy without sorrow, honour without disrespect, and knowledge without ignorance—all these will be eternal and will never diminish. This everlasting bliss, the complete end or ideal, will be achieved through one's love for God as demonstrated by one's conduct in this world. But, the intensity of love towards God is conditioned by one's knowledge of God. Thus, it follows that knowledge is the highest *Sa'ādā*, the supreme end in this world, for it leads to perfect love. Knowledge may be sought either as an end in itself or as a means to some end. When it is sought as an end in itself, it is absolutely good, but when it is sought as a means, it is absolutely good, but when it is sought as a means, it may be good or bad. It is bad when it is harmful to society or to the individual. It is good if it is conducive to the welfare of society and to the welfare of the individual in this world as well as in the next. The more it is conducive to the ultimate end the better it is, and it becomes absolutely good only when it becomes absolutely conducive to it. Knowledge which is absolutely conducive to the end is the apprehension of the nature of things and herein lies the object of man's creation. Knowledge is of two kinds :⁷ *'Ilm al-Mu'āmala* and *'Ilm al-Mukāshafa*, *'Ilm al-Mu'āmala* consists in the knowledge and cultivation of outer and inner virtues, and in the eradication of outer and inner vices. There is no limit to the development of virtues in us. *'Ilm al-Mukāshafa* (intuitive knowledge) is the outcome of *'Ilm al-Mu'āmala*. It is the ultimate end in this world leading to perfect love of God here and to the realization of His Vision in the next. One who possesses the strongest love will be the most successful in the next world,⁸ and the intensity of the love which depends on the knowledge of God. But, knowledge of God can only enter a pure heart,

6. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 89 ff; *Mizān*, pp. 109 ff.

7. *Ihyā'*, Vol. I, pp. 18-19.

8. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 271.

that is a heart which after being purged of the vices, has adorned itself with good qualities, in other words, which has completely emancipated itself from the love of this world. It is then good conduct (*al 'Amal al-Ṣāliḥ*) which leads to the knowledge of God and is subservient to it.⁹ Thus, knowledge is a means as well as an end in itself.

Types of ends (*Sa'ādāt*) and their Significance in Relation to the Ultimate End

All other ends are necessarily means to the achievement of the knowledge of God. In as much as they are ends and yield satisfaction they are called *Sa'ādāt*. They are of four kinds ; (1) *Faḍā'il al-Tawfiqiya* (excellences ingrained in human nature); (2) *Faḍā'il al-Mutifiya* (excellences born of environment); *Faḍā'il al-Badaniya* (excellences of the body); and (4) *Faḍā'il al-Nafsiya* (excellences of the soul).¹⁰ Each of the above mentioned types of excellences is helpful in the realization of the ideal. But, all of them are not directly connected with human volition.

The Excellences ingrained in Human Nature¹¹ play a very important part in the ethico-religious system of al-Ghazzālī, so much so that when he mentions the bounties of God, which man owes to Him, he changes the terms *Sa'ādāt* and *Khairāt* into *Ni'ma*, that is, gifts received from God as a favour.¹²

Man cannot take a single step without the help of God. He is guided by spiritual forces. These forces influence man through his reason. These forces and their influence which help man to walk along the Path laid down by Allah are called *Tawfiq*, the Gift of God. *Tawfiq* manifests itself in different forms. The first form is *Hidāya* (guidance of God). No virtue is possible without *Hidāya*. This is the source and

9. Ibid., p. 272.

10. Ibid., pp. 89 ff; *Mizān*, pp. 109 ff. The excellences of the soul depend upon the excellences of the body. These again depend on the excellences of environment. All these excellences in their turn depend on the excellences of Grace, i.e., the blessing of God.

11. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 93-94; *Mizān*, pp. 114-117.

12. Ibid., pp. 86 ff.

fountain of all virtues. One may have the desire to do good in order to realize eternal bliss. But, it will be of no avail unless he knows what is good and what is bad. *Hidāya* points out clearly what to do and what not to do. "And it may be that you dislike a thing, while it is good for you, and it may be that you love a thing while it is evil for you, and God knows, while you do not know."¹³ "And it may be that you dislike a thing while God has placed abundant good in it."¹⁴ And who is more erring than they who follow their desires without any guidance from God."¹⁵

(1) *Hidāya* has three stages : (a) The first stage is attained when the distinction between good and evil becomes clear. "And We pointed out to him two distinct paths."¹⁶ To some this distinction is made clear by means of reason and to others it is elucidated by the prophets. "And certainly the guidance has come to them from their Lord."¹⁷ If one does not follow it, it is one's own fault. The pursuit of appetites and passions blinds a man to the sight of the right path. (b) The second stage is attained when man is constantly helped by God. This is achieved by hard work for the pleasure of Allah, by good conduct, piety and knowledge. "And those who follow the right direction, He shall increase them in guidance and give them piety."¹⁸ (c) The third stage of guidance is that of prophethood. This is the highest stage when the meaning of spiritual truths becomes as clear as day. This is absolute guidance. (2) *Rushd* (the Direction) is that blessing of God (*'Anāya al-Ḥaqqiyyā*) which helps man to realize his end. If the end is good it strengthens him according to his capacities, if it is bad, it weakens him. The help or desertion comes from within. "We gave to Abraham his direction before, and We know him fully."¹⁹ A man may know how to keep his property safe and how to increase it but he may not be able to practise what he knows. This is

13. Qur'ān, ii, 216.

14. Qur'ān, iv, 19.

15. Qur'ān, xxvii, pp. 50.

16. Qur'ān, xc, 10.

17. Qur'ān, iii, 23.

18. Qur'ān, xxi, 51.

19. Qur'ān, xxi, 51.

not *Rushd*. Similarly, if a man voluntarily follows evil ways, it may be said that he has *Hidāya* but not *Rushd*. For action *Rushd* is more important than *Hidāya*. (3) *Taṣdīd* (the setting aright) is guidance which makes the body obey the will in order to realize the end (4) *Tā'id* (confirmation) makes internal and external circumstances accord with the will, it helps man in his acts internally through his insight and externally by providing suitable conditions in which he may achieve the desired end with the means at his disposal. "When I strengthened thee with the Holy Spirit,"²⁰ indicates that there descends something from God into the heart of man, which urges him to do good and abstain from evil. There is something inside man which checks him without being felt.

In this classification, al-Ghazzālī has mentioned only four forms of grace, the forms which elucidate the conception of the end and create a genuine urge for its realization. But, his writing bear evidence of yet another form of grace, which is of vital importance for the realization of the end. The ultimate end on this earth, namely, the goal of human efforts; is God's knowledge through '*Ilm al-Mukāshafa*'. While '*Ilm al-Mu'āmala*' is connected directly with human effort, and cannot be realized without *Hidāya*, the realization of '*Ilm al-Mukāshafa*' depends upon another special form of grace to which '*Ilm al-Mu'āmala*' is but a preliminary. A man ought to set his mind upon '*Ilm al-Mukāshafa*' as the final stage of knowledge, go on toiling in the way of '*Ilm al-Mu'āmala*', and then hope and wait. The special grace of God shall come to him in due course of time and he will attain the highest felicity of the knowledge of God through '*Ilm al-Mukāshafa*' more or less according to his capacity and merit, for God is just and merciful. Let man do his part and rest content that God will do His.²¹ The questions of grace in the philosophy

20. Qur'ān, v, 110.

21. Spiritual influences which help man to work in the path of Allāh are *Tawfiq*, the Grace of God. *Tawfiq* is the agreement between the will of God and the will of man (*Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 93). This agreement may be found in the faculty of good and evil both; but technically it is used with respect to good alone.

of al-Ghazzālī is irrevocably bound up with human effort. Nothing, however trifling, can be acquired without definite human volition. God favours those who strive after His way.

The Excellences of Environment are external to the body such as wealth, position, family, pedigree, friends and social status.²² Excessive wealth is fraught with dangers to the soul, while wealth that is just enough for the simple needs of a man journeying along the way presented by God is a *Sa'āda*, because it eliminates the cares associated with physical existence and allows one to concentrate one's mind and energy on the attainment of the highest virtues.²³ *Al-Jāh* (position) which is the possession of, and dominance over, the hearts of men, enables a person to subjugate enemies and surmount all hindrances.²⁴ Virtuous men who follow the truth have often many enemies. The sight of injustice, injury and cruelty does not often allow them to follow the path of truth in peace and undisturbed. But, if they have influence over people they may be allowed to devote themselves to virtue exclusively, *Al-Ahl*, family and friends share or take upon themselves many duties and cares of the worldly life. The help which a good wife, children, relatives and friends render a man is invaluable to him in his march on the way pointed out by God.²⁵ *Karm al-'Ashira*, noble pedigree is a blessing.²⁶ To have a noble descent, to belong to a great tribe or community is also a virtue, though it is weak in comparison with personal goodness. But, relationship with the learned and the pious is better than relationship with unjust and tyrannical kings and ungodly persons.

The excellences of the body such as health, strength, long life, and beauty, help in the realization of spiritual perfection and are desirable as ends and means both. *Ṣiḥat* or health, saves one from depression and despair, and helps one to devote oneself to God with zest and energy. *Quwwah*,

22. *Mizān*, pp. 110-113.

23. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 90-91; *Mizān*, p. 111.

24. *Mizān*, p. 112. For full discussion on 'Jāh' 'see *Ihyā'*. Chapter on 'Jāh', Vol. III, pp. 238-53.

25. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 90; Vol. II, pp. 19-55; *Mizān*, p. 111.

26. *Mizān*, pp. 112-113.

strength, helps man to toil more strenuously for the realization of his ends. *Tūl al-Umar*, long life, affords greater opportunities for acts of worship and devotion for the perfection of the soul. Very often, lovers of God do not wish to die, for they think they are not quite prepared to meet the beloved. *Jamāl*, beauty,²⁷ both internal and external, makes one more acceptable to others. Beauty pertaining to concepts is more sublime and complete than that pertaining to precepts. Both these kinds of beauty are sought, for their own sake. In fact all bodily excellences are sought, firstly as means and secondly, as ends in themselves, for instance, health, and knowledge. One may desire health in order to be able to do things which may bring one nearer to God, or one may want it to serve as a means to the full enjoyment of worldly pleasures. Health is also desired for its own sake, not as a means to anything else, for instance, a man who is not in need of walking still wants the safety of his feet, though the purpose of the feet is to enable to man to walk.

The Excellency of the Soul (*Faḍā'il al-Nafsiya*) constitute the crown of human efforts. They represent the moral end. The elucidation of these excellences will reveal the principles of al-Ghazzālī's Ethics. The highest excellence of the soul of man is knowledge which is his distinctive feature. It is the highest *Sa'āda*. Al-Ghazzālī writes, "The *Sa'āda* of man consists in the apprehension of the true nature of intellectual truths, free from senseless imaginings²⁸ and sense-perceptions which man shares with animals.... When man subjugates flesh, thus delivering reason from its bondage, and begins to study not only the heavens and earth with careful reflection and deep observations, but also his own soul and the wonders created therein and thereby reaches the perfection peculiar to him, he has achieved *Sa'āda*, for *Sa'āda* only means the achievement by the soul of perfection that is possible to it. The grenades of perfection are innumerable; but as long as man is in this world he cannot attain to the highest

27. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 91-92; for fuller discussion, see pp. 256-58; *Mizān*, pp. 113-14.

28. Al-Ghazzālī uses the word *Tawhhūmāt*, which may also be taken to mean 'Knowledge, relating to the instinct.

perfection."²⁹ Again, "The body is the vehicle of the soul, the soul is the abode of knowledge, and knowledge is the end of man, the purpose for which he has been created."³⁰ Further, he makes the nature of this knowledge quite clear: "Verily the characteristic of man is knowledge and wisdom." The highest kind of knowledge is knowledge of God, of His attributes and actions. Herein lies the goal of man's perfection and this very perfection is his *Sa'āda* which makes him able to attain proximity to the Almighty and the All-Perfect.³¹

Human conduct is indissolubly bound up with knowledge.³² But by means of '*Amal* (action) the heart is purified and cleansed to receive the reflection of the true knowledge of God and the higher truths.

Thus, there are two types of knowledge: first, knowledge which is the condition of action. It relates to the scheme of conduct. This is inferior to '*Amal*. The acquisition of the former kind of knowledge is only a part of '*Amal*, secondly,

29. *Mizān*, pp. 19-20:

ان سعادة كل شيء ولذته راحتته في وصوله الى كماله الخاص به ان الكمال الخاص بالانسان هو ادراك حقيقة المخلوقات على ما هي عليه دون المتوهجات والحسيات التي يشاركها الحيوانات فيها ان النفس بالذات متمسكة اليه وبالفطرة مستعدة له.

30. *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, p. 8:

قالبن مركب للنفس والنفس على العلم والعلم هو مقصود الانسان و خاصيته التي لاجله خلق.

31. *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, p. 8:

ان خاصية الانسان العلم والحكمة واشرف انواع العلم هو العلم بالله وصفاته و افعاله فيه كمال الانسان و في كماله سعادته و صلاحه لجوار حضرة الجلال والكمال.

Al-Ghazzālī, at another place, (*Ihyā'*, Vol. I, pp. 73-74) quotes verses from the Qur'ān to indicate that whenever God talks of light. He means by it knowledge. "God is the light of the Heavens and the Earth." To gain knowledge, is to know God.

32. *Mizān*, pp. 13, 39-40.

knowledge to which 'Amal is a preliminary condition, for instance, knowledge of God.³³ The latter kind of knowledge is superior to 'Amal. It is the highest excellence and the ultimate end of man in this world.³⁴

Knowledge is divisible into two parts, 'Ilm al-Mu'āmala or the science of conduct, and 'Ilm al-Mukāshafa or the 'intuitive knowledge of God.' 'Ilm al-Mu'āmala is the end of 'Ilm al-Mu'āmala which is only a means. 'Ilm al-Mu'āmala includes both theory and practice.³⁵ 'Ilm al-Mu'āmala is

33. "Those who toil for our sake will be guided by us along our way" (Qur'ān, xxix, 69).

34. For the relation of 'Ilm and 'Amal see *Mizān*, pp. 3, 14, 15, 17, 18, 39 and 40.

35. It may be interesting to discuss here the relative importance attached by Ṣūfis and 'Ulamā or men of learning and piety, to 'Amal or practice on the one hand, and a thorough knowledge of the Science of conduct on the other, for the realization of higher knowledge, 'Ilm al-Mukāshafa, which is the end sought on this earth. (*Iḥyā'*, Vol. I, pp. 18-19). The Ṣūfis generally do not lay great stress on knowledge acquired by hearing and through books. They believe that by eradicating vices, and renouncing the worldly connections and then by turning towards God, one can strive to reach Him. This isolation and exclusive attention to God will please Him greatly and He will pour down on the devotee His grace and mercy in abundance and reveal to him the secrets and the essences of Divine things. The Ṣūfis argue that the cause of the illumination of their hearts and the revelation of all truths to the saints and the prophets was not knowledge obtained through books or lectures, but was their renunciation of the love of the world and all its relations, and their turning towards God with full energy. "He who is for God, God is for him."

All this is true, but, says al-Ghazzālī, the way of the Ṣūfis, which has innumerable stages, is very hard and difficult. To reach the end by this path is almost impossible. Very often during the long struggle and fight of the self against the evil, health is lost, reason weakened and one becomes insane. Because the self has not trained itself by means of some exact and evident systems, it is sometimes in such a stage that it begins to mistake purely mental experiences for spiritual truths, and falls away from Truth. Therefore, one must acquire standards of knowledge and general arguments of the religious sciences before one devotes oneself exclusively to the realization of God in the way of the Ṣūfis. So, it is incumbent that one should, by means of discussion and insight, acquire true knowledge about the self as much as possible. The difference between the methods (*Iḥyā'*, Vol. III, pp. 16-22; *Mizān*, pp. 43-52) of Ṣūfis, on the one hand, and the learned on the other, is vital. It is not, however, easy to generalise and say that one is better than the other for all individuals under all circumstances.

either 'Ilm az-Zāhir, or 'Ilm al-Bāṭin. The former has to do with outward forms, 'Ādāt or 'modes' or 'Ibādāt or 'worships,' the latter with morals—virtues and vices. The end of 'Ilm āz-Zāhir is 'Ilm al-Bāṭin.

The acquisition of 'Ilm al-Bāṭin is *Farq' ayn*, which is incumbent on every individual. It discusses the real nature, the distinguishing feature, and the limits of the virtues and vices of the soul, as also the means for acquiring virtues and avoiding vices. The immediate objects of moral is the cleansing and purification of the heart. Al-Ghazzālī calls it *Tazkiya an-Nafs*, (purification of the self), *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq*, (purification of morals) *Taṭhīr al-Qulb*, (making the heart sensitive) *Tasfiya an-Nafs* (cleansing of the self), 'Aml (action), etc. These various expressions which means much the same thing are very expressive. *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq* means cleansing, pruning and publishing of character.

The 'Arabic word 'Hedhab' means : cut off, lopped, pruned, cleansed, reformed, polished, trained, educated. Here again, we have the concept of something capable of being reformed and improved by being lopped and pruned, educated and polished. This is the building of character, the cultivation of morals.³⁶

The world *Tazkiya* means purifying, cleansing, stimulating growth, making pious, and reforming. All these have practically the same meaning. They imply that the self requires cleansing.

The method may differ with each individual and even with the same individual under different circumstances. For the 'Sālik' (the pilgrim on the way to God) it is better to adopt the method of the Ṣūfis, i.e., he ought to renounce the love of the world and turn his attention to prayers and devotions because it is very difficult to learn the sciences to a degree that will give a sure insight into the nature of the self. Acquiring knowledge in old age is very difficult. The number of sciences is very great. On account of these reasons, it is better that one begins by attending to 'amal. This is the preferable way for common people. But for a man gifted with intelligence, if he finds circumstances favourable, the right way is to acquire all such exact and sure sciences as can be acquired by means of human understanding. He may devote himself sincerely and wholly to God. He can then wait for the grace and blessing of God.

36. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. III, p. 25; *Mizān*, p. 70.

'*Amal* is another word, which al-Ghazzālī uses very frequently. Literally, it means action, but in its wider connotation it means the subjugation of the appetites and impulses in such a way that the self, turning away from them, is attracted only towards God, so that it is purged of all evil and low associations. When this is achieved, the self is occupied with the sight of God and then the blessings of God begin to pour on him as they pour on the saints, the prophets and the sincere ones.³⁷ One effect of '*Amal* is the banishment of undesirable things,³⁸ of vices which hinder man in his progress. '*Amal* is in fact the direction of the appetites along their right paths, and the controlling of passions, in order to bring the lower nature of man under the subjection of reason. That man alone who has truly subjugated his appetites and passions is free in the real sense. *Mujāhada* (struggle against vice) is like the medical treatment of the self for purging it of impurities.³⁹ "True knowledge is achieved by means of the struggling of the self."⁴⁰ "You shall reach your aim by means of *Mujāhada an-Nafs*."⁴¹ "When God opens the doors of His mercy, none can close them. This is only a gift and grant out of the generosity of God. None has any say in it. But, in order to deserve this gift one has to make oneself capable of receiving it by cleansing the self and making it free from uncleanness and contamination."⁴² Al-Ghazzālī frequently uses the terms, *Takiya an-Nafs* and *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq*. The root meanings of both these expressions signify that there is something which in its growth has run wild; parasites have covered it, which after the pruning and removal of its harmful parts, can be made to grow in purity and strength as its true nature demands. When the simile is applied to man, it means that the self of man needs lopping and pruning or cleansing, since, by implication, the lower nature of man, his appetites and passions have acquired mastery of his higher nature. It is now necessary that this lower nature be controlled and brought under the subjugation of the higher nature viz.,

37. *Mizān*, pp. 40-41.

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 39-43.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

40. *Ibid.*

41. *Ibid.*

42. *Ibid.*, pp. 30-31.

reason, by removing the vices. The lower nature must not be wholly annihilated. It must be pruned in such a way that it ceases to be harmful. It must be made subservient to reason.

The nature and significance of these expressions explain clearly the aim of morality. Firstly, good conduct is not something which can be superimposed from outside. It is an inner development of the self. The self, therefore, can develop to its full height and attain its natural beauty only if allowed to grow unhampered and unsmothered by the temptations of the flesh. The Qur'ānic verse, "He will indeed be successful who purifies it (the self), and he will fail who corrupts it,"⁴³ emphatically supports al-Ghazzālī's view-point. Secondly, good character does not demand the total destruction of natural propensities. They are necessary for the body. Only they should remain under the complete control of reason and should work in harmony with it.

Tazkiya al-Nafs is realized through '*Amal* and through *Mujāhada*.⁴⁴ Al-Ghazzālī says, "Verily the aim of all struggle and training by means of good actions is the perfection of the self, purification and cleansing in order to polish character."⁴⁵ So, there are two elements in the human self, one negative, the other positive. The negative is the determining condition of the positive. Something is to be removed from the heart and something else is to be put in its place.⁴⁶ That which is to be removed is variously named e.g., *Sū' al-Khulq*⁴⁷ (evil character), *aş-Şifāt ar-Radliya* (the bad, the undesired qualities), *Khubth al-Bāṭin* (the evil of the within), '*Amal al-Mashaqq*a (the action which brings misery).⁴⁸ "There is a mirror, whose polish and reflecting power have been marred by dirt and impurities. The perfection of a mirror is to reflect a face in true form and colour, which the mirror in its present condition cannot do. Dirt and impurities must be

43. Qur'ān, xci, 9-10.

44. *Mizān*, pp. 40-41, 39, 43, 15-16, 70, 22, 20, 30, 31.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 70.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

47. *Ihyā*, Vol. III, p. 46.

48. *Mizān*, p. 2, *al-Sayyiat* (the evils); *al-akhlāq al-radiya* (bad or fallen character); *al-Khubth* (wickedness) *al-kadura* (corruption); *al-Akhlāq al-Sayyia* (the evil character); *al-Akhlāq al-madhmun* (the depraved character); *al-haiyat al-khabitha* (the corrupt formation), etc.

removed. The self has the capability of acting like a mirror, when it is held before the truth. It can see its own image in the light of the truth and the end, and can modify and rectify itself accordingly. The attainment of this stage is the perfection of the human self. It is this special characteristic that distinguishes man from lower animals. The angels possess this power of self-reflection since eternity, in them it is everlasting. In man it is "potential" not "actual." But man can acquire it and even reach the level of angels provided he fights evil tooth and nail and purges his self of it altogether. If he shrinks from this fight he will be listed in the rank of lower animals, and will go tumbling from one precipice to another, till he is hurled in to the lowest abyss where he will stay, deprived of his perfection and happiness for ever.⁴⁹

When evil qualities are eradicated from the heart, good qualities must be established in their place. If one is satisfied simply with the removal of undesirable qualities, he is like a farmer who after ploughing the field and clearing it of the weeds, sits down in expectation of the harvest without having sown anything in the field at all. These good qualities are called *'Amal aṣ-Ṣāliḥ*,⁵⁰ *al-'Amal al-Mas'ūd* (the good action), *Akhlāq al-Maḥmūda*,⁵¹ (the praiseworthy character), *Haiyāt al-Ḥasna*, (the good formation), *Akhlāq al-Mardīa* (pleasing character), *Ḥusn al-Khulq*,⁵² (good character), or *Munjiyāt*,⁵³ (the redeeming deeds).

Thus, as man advances in *'Ilm al-Mu'āmala*, he prepares the ground for *'Ilm al-Mukāshafa* which he receives from above.

49. *Mizān*, pp. 39-40.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

51. *Ihyā'*, Vol. I, p. 4.

52. *Mizān*, p. 74; *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, p. 50, etc.

53. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 3.

CHAPTER IX

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

THE object of man's creation is the acquisition of the knowledge of God.¹ Man's love for God, which is the supreme end in this life and the vision of God which is the complete end or the *summum bonum* in the next, are direct consequences of the knowledge of God. Now, this knowledge is achieved through the purification of the heart, which breeds love, which in its turn leads to the complete vision. Knowledge of God includes the knowledge of the Creator and the creation comprising the universe, the soul, the circumstances attending after death, and so on.² And knowledge of these things constitutes the essence of Islām.³ Thus, it is all comprehending, for, every science is a religious science, if it promotes the realization of perfection. No science is bad in itself, because every science is simply knowledge of the facts as they are, and this cannot be bad in itself.⁴

Knowledge can be acquired through *Taqlid* (e.g., tradition, revelation), observation, logical reasoning, contemplation and intuition. That which is gained through *Taqlid* has to be verified by intuition. Logical reasoning cannot create

1. Ma'rifa (gnosis), in the terminology of the Sūfis, is cognition gained through intuition and ecstasy. But, al-Ghazzālī uses the term also for 'Ilm which is knowledge gained through observation, contemplation and discursive reason. 'Ilm al-Mukāshafa is his system is Ma'rifa in the Sūfi sense.

2. Al-Ghazzālī, *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, p. 353 :

المعرفة واعنى بالمعرفة ان يعرف اربعة امور يعرف نفسه و يعرف
ربه و يعرف الدنيا و يعرف اخرلاة -

3. Cf. Al-Ghazzālī, *Kimiyā-i-Sa'ādat*, Preface.

4. *Ihyā'*, Vol. I, p. 26.

ملك تقول العلم معرفة الشئ على ما هو به وهو من صفات
الله تعالى فكيف يكون الشئ علما و يكون مع كونه علما مذموما -

the feeling of certainty, when applied to supersensory realities, e.g., God.

Al-Ghazzālī uses logical arguments to refute the heresies of the philosophers, but his own conviction is that logical reason cannot prove or disprove the existence of God, soul, and similar entities. He relies mainly on observation, contemplation and intuition. Observation and contemplation result in intuition, which is the most reliable source of knowledge. It is the immediate apprehension of realities. But, what is apprehended cannot be expressed in language.

In this chapter, only the contents of knowledge gained through observation and contemplation will be considered. The conditions of intuitive experience will be discussed in the next chapter. The former is the theoretical aspect of *'Ilm al-Mu'āmalā*, while the latter is the form of *'Ilm al-Mukāshafa*. In the system of al-Ghazzālī, *'Ilm al-Mukāshafa* is used for what the Sūfis call *Ma'rifa*, i.e., intuition or direct apprehension of supersensory realities.

The achievement of the knowledge of God and of his works brings about human perfection.⁵ But, this state can be reached only when the barriers in the heart precluding such achievement are removed. It, therefore, implies that the human-self is capable of infinite spiritual development, the only hindrance for man being the darkness of his own heart acting as a veil between him and the truth.⁶ It is, however, only through knowledge that he can dispel this darkness from his heart and approach reality. But, man can never have perfect knowledge of God; there would, consequently, always remain a yearning for God, even after God has revealed Himself to man in the next world. His sight will give satisfaction and pleasure, but the steady increase of knowledge about Him, will constantly give new satisfaction and create further yearning. Since His attribute, His wisdom, His actions can never be known to man as they are known to God Himself, the more man will know Him, the more will he yearn for Him.

5. *Ihya'*, Vol. I, p. 8.

6. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 8.

This yearning for knowledge is not a superimposed task on the self, but it originates in man from the divine element (*Rabbāniya*), which enables the human soul to partake in things Divine. Now, this element, which is incorporated into the nature of man yearns to be perfect. But, the perfection which it approaches may be either false or true. When man seeks perfection in the things of the world his perfection is false. His true perfection lies in the knowledge of truth and of God, and in freedom from the appetites of the body. The ignorant seek power, not knowledge and freedom, whereas the heart of man by nature loves the perfection of knowledge and power and this desire continues even after the urgent needs of the body have been satisfied. Sometimes, man seeks knowledge which is not a means to an immediate end. At other times, one is so occupied in achieving the knowledge of the abstract and the abstruse that he abandons the idea of satisfying his appetites. This is because knowledge of a thing gives power and control over that things which is in itself a kind of perfection and is one of the Divine qualities.

Perfect knowledge is possessed only by God, so the more one's knowledge is true and complete, the more one approaches God. Knowledge may be either changing or eternal. The Knowledge of circumstances change. But the eternal knowledge is knowledge of essential truths, that is of the qualities and actions of God.⁷ It is this knowledge which constitutes real perfection. Whoever acquires this knowledge gets nearer to God and the perfection achieved in this way continues to grow even after death. Happiness, too, is an outcome of this knowledge. Again, knowledge may be further classified as being wholly useless, e.g., knowledge of poetry or of the ancestry of the Arabs, or being auxiliary to the knowledge of God, as Arabic philology, *Tafsir* (science of Qur'ānic commentary), *Fiqh* (jurisprudence) and *Hadith* (science of tradition). The knowledge of creation considered as an act of God can serve as a useful means to the attainment of perfect knowledge.

Again, *Ma'rifa* (gnosis) relating to the soul, the universe and conditions after death, all of which involve the

7. Al-Ghazzālī, here has in view the empirical and rational knowledge.

knowledge of the works of God, is a means to much knowledge. God can be apprehended either through His works, i.e., empirically, or through *Ilm al-Mukāshafa*, but the latter method is very subtle and defies easy acquisition. Al-Ghazzālī, consequently, recommends empirical approach.

(1) The knowledge of the things of the world is an essential step towards the knowledge of God for two reasons.⁸ People are convinced, in the first place, by the wisdom of the wonderful design of the world, of the existence of a Creator Who is All-Powerful, Wise and Merciful, etc., secondly, they are able to understand the value and significance of the world in relation to themselves.

If one ponders over the expanse and scheme of creation one will find a purpose underlying everything. Everything reveals a design which testifies to its Creator. Thus, a true seeker can understand supersensory realities and know God and acquired love of God through the study of His creation.

This study impresses us that this world should be regarded as a preparatory ground for the next. The soul has come to stay here for a while in order to gain knowledge and love of God. But, the world can be known through the physical senses, so the body and soul of man require to be kept in the proper state in order to receive and assimilate essential knowledge. The needs of the body are simple and can be easily satisfied. It is endowed with the power to accept what is good for it and reject what is harmful. But in their endeavour to meet the requirement of the body, these powers very frequently overstep their limits and mistake the means for the end. Their excessive attachment to the things of the world creates a passion for the world; with the result that appetites and desires, which were meant to obey and serve reason, begin to rebel against its authority, which leads to the wreck of the aspirations of the soul, whose need is the knowledge and love of God. Love of the world incapacitates the inner eye of man and he forgets his real destiny. Such lovers of the world are in the beginning illusioned by its apparent charm and loveliness but in the end, they find that

8. Al-Ghazzālī, *Kūmiyā-i-Sa'adat*, pp. 35 ff.

they are betrayed and fall into despair. Thus, it is obvious that is no greater obstacle than a mistaken concept of this world.

(2) Knowledge of the conditions after death such as the existence of the next world, punishment after death, the Hell, rewards for virtuous deeds in Heaven, and immortality of the soul.⁹ Al-Ghazzālī's belief in the world to come is based on intuitive knowledge and practical experience. He also presents and examines the logical arguments that can be adduced but considers such arguments futile. He makes use of them only to please those who are impressed by them. Continuing his exposition, he observes that it is under the sway of passions, that people deny the truth of life after death. He gives numerous instances to show how people, for the sake of little gains, run great risks, e.g., how a merchant stakes his whole wealth in the hope of making a profit in future, and how a student takes pains to secure fame and reputation. If people can spend money and energy in the hope of future worldly gains, cannot they undergo sufferings in this world to achieve everlasting happiness in the world to come? Their failure to undergo sufferings in this world clearly points to the weakness of their faith in the life after death. And such lack of faith is occasioned by their indifference and apathy to the prospects in the life after death.

Different thinkers hold different beliefs regarding the life after death. These may be classified as follows:¹⁰ (1) Those who believe in the Day of Judgment, Paradise, Hell, etc. Besides, the belief in sensuous pains and pleasures they believe in such pleasures and pains as have not been experienced in this world. These pleasures and pains, they say, will be everlasting. This class of thinkers is found equally among Muslims, Jews and Christians. (2) Those who believe that the pleasures and pains of the next world will be only intellectual experiences and hold that sensuous pleasures, and pains do not exist outside our bodies. They rule out sensuous pleasures because they think that sense perceptions and images require the body as their medium and that when a man dies his body perishes and the soul is separated from it.

9. Ibid., pp. 39 ff.

10. Al-Ghazzālī, *Mizān al-'Amal*, pp. 11 ff.

When the body, which is the instrument of all sensuous pleasures is separated from the soul, the material self will never be resuscitated and the soul will become permanently free. After death one can only experience intellectual pleasures such as the pleasure one feels after winning a game. The sensuous pleasures of this world have no affinity at all with the pleasures of the next world. Religion has held out to the common man the hope of such pleasures as delicious foods, etc., in the next world just as a boy is promised the reward of a toy, so that he may go on working hard to achieve success. Most of the Sūfis and some of the Muslim philosophers hold this belief. (3) Those who do not believe in the life after death, say that just as man was non-existent before his birth he will be non-existent after his death. It is this group of people whom al-Ghazzālī tries to disillusion. He brings the whole weight of his erudition to convince them of the falsity of their beliefs. As regards the other groups, he ignores them as long as they believe in any form of life after death.

Those who do not believe in life after death may be grouped under the heads:¹¹ (1) Those who are totally incapable of believing that there can be any life after death. (2) Those for whom the possibility of believing is greater than the possibility of disbelieving; and (3) Those for whom the possibility of disbelieving is greater than the possibility of believing. Of these three groups, the case of those who are convinced of their disbelief in the next world is hopeless; no logical arguments can convince them. The only remedy for them is that they should be asked to reflect. To those who have doubts about the existence of life after death he gives practical and pragmatistical arguments.¹² He says to them, "The benefit of doubt should be on the side of belief rather than disbelief because on belief hang tremendous issues. Suppose, a person has a delicious dish before him and some one comes and warns him not to take it because there is poison in it, he will refrain from eating it. The man who tells you that there is poison in the food might be joking with you, still

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 8 ff.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

you will give him the benefit of doubt and not take it. When one can believe ordinary people who do not offer any proof for what they say or claim, why should one not believe the prophets? Can we not trust and respect those who have been informing us about the future life? Our ordinary reason forewarns us that we should avoid the dangers that lie ahead; therefore, if these prophets reveal to us the nature of these dangers, tell us how to avoid them or face them with safety, commonsense demands that we should pay heed to them and feel grateful to them. Once a person argued with Caliph 'Alī, and expressed his doubts concerning the life after death. 'Alī said, "If you are right, then both of us will escape punishment; but if I am right, then I shall be saved but you will have to suffer."¹³ As this world is the only place which provides an opportunity to man to equip himself for the next, he should not, because of his doubts, waste this great opportunity. Even if one has doubts about the future existence, reason demands that one should make allowance for the possibility that there may be a world after this.

Suffering in the next world will be experienced by the person who has excessive love for this world. He will experience peace of mind if he has loved God. The more one's attachment to this world, the greater will be one's suffering. Also, the unsatisfied desires of man will augment his pains and increase his wretchedness.

The threat held out by religion that serpents and scorpions will torment the sinner in his grave only refers to human traits and attributes in a symbolic form. The sufferings in Hell will be felt like the bite of a serpent. The delights of Heaven will give the same comfort as shady and fruitful trees, revulets, fair maidens, etc. These are symbolical expressions of the volitional nature of man. Snakes, etc., have their abode in human nature. They were there in man before his death through he was not aware of them. They are symbolised evils of our own nature, such as malice, hypocrisy, pride, avarice, etc. They are the direct outcome of our love of the world. If the pains were due to external causes, one might get rid of them. But, being integral parts of the nature

13. *Mizān al-'Amal*, pp. 8-10.

of man, they will never leave him. Spiritual pains will be more tormenting than physical ones because physical sufferings are felt only when they affect the soul, but when they arise in the soul itself they must be more painful than those experienced by the body.¹⁴

Al-Ghazzālī believes that heaven and Hell are spiritual in nature. Spiritual hells are of many kinds.¹⁵ Hell may be the forceful separation of the soul from the objects of one's desires. It may be the experience of shame and disgrace. After death one's eyes will be opened and one will see the true nature of one's actions done here, e.g., if one has slandered anyone, will find himself eating the dead body of one's brother. This will create a sense of grief and horror in him. Further, spiritual hell may spring from disappointment and failure in securing the object of one's existence. The object of the soul is to gain the knowledge of God. But, if the soul remains ignorant of Him because of its excessive attachment to this world, it will fail to achieve the real purpose of its existence and will, therefore, undergo immense pain.

The human soul is capable of attaining perfection, but to attain it has to pass through many stages of development,¹⁶ viz., sensuous (*Maḥsūsāt*), imaginative (*Mutakhayyilāt*), instinctive (*Muhumāt*), rational (*Ma'qūlāt*) and the Divine. In the first place, man is like a moth which has no memory and beats again and again against the candle. In the second stage, man is like a lower animal which, once beaten, runs away when he sees a stick. In the third stage, he resembles a higher animals, e.g., a horse who instinctively avoids a danger and flees from a lion who is its natural enemy, but is not afraid of a camel. In the fourth stage, he transcends this limit also. He apprehends objects which are beyond the scope of his senses and can form general concepts underlying particular objects. In the fifth stage, he is able to apprehend the reality of spiritual things. This stage is reached only by prophets and saints. At this stage, the reality of the soul and the significance of other spiritual things are revealed to man.

14. *Kimiyā-i-Sa'ādāt*, pp. 47 ff.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 49 ff.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 45 ff.

Man is equipped by nature to pass through all these stages successfully; it is for this reason that he is held accountable for his actions. He can sink lower than animals and can rise above angels. This is because he possesses two souls, an animal soul and a spiritual soul. The animal soul perishes with the body. It is a vapour-like substance which permeates all parts of the body in order to provide energy for the motor and sensory organs. The spiritual soul survives after the death of the body, but it cannot achieve anything after it is separated from the body. The animal soul is the vehicle for acquiring the knowledge of God.

Human qualities like hunger, thirst, etc., are connected with the body and, consequently, perish with it. But, qualities like the knowledge and the love of God are quite independent of the body, and being the essence of man will and persist after the death of the body. Similarly, the quality of being ignorant of the knowledge of God will persist after the body has ceased to exist.

The human soul persists¹⁷ after the death of the body. It is distinct from the body and its parts. Part by part, the whole human body may be destroyed but the individuality of the soul remains intact. We can have a glimpse of the reality of this soul by shutting our eyes and forgetting all and concentrating our attention on it alone. It is possible to divest oneself of the consciousness of other existences, but it is not possible to deny the individuality of the human soul, for it is so clear and evident that one is inevitably conscious of it. The body that one possesses now, is not the same as the one that he possessed in the past. Therefore, it is easy to conceive that the soul can survive at a separate entity even after the body has perished. Human reason intuitively perceives that death cannot put an end to the essential individuality of the soul. The soul loves to return to God from whom it emanated.

(3) It is the knowledge of the above mentioned spiritual entity which al-Ghazzālī lays down as the key to the knowledge of God.¹⁸ It can master all arts and sciences and

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 1 ff.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 6 ff.

can know the mysteries of the things that lie between the heaven and the earth. It works in two ways, in relation to the spiritual world and in relation to the physical world.

The human soul pertains to the spiritual world, but belongs to the physical world as well. The nature of the soul can be better apprehended by a study of *Al-khlaq wa'l-Amr* as given by the Qur'ān.¹⁹ The world of quantity, space, and time is called the physical world. *Khalq* is derived from a root which signifies quantity, and measurement; but as the soul cannot be measured it is not of the physical world. And, although it transcends space, time and measurement, it still remains one of the created things because *Khalq* also means to create something. It also belongs to the transcendental world (*Ālam al-Amr*) which means that it is immeasurable and indivisible. Those who say that the soul is from eternity are in the wrong because the soul is created and hence an accident, and since an accident cannot exist in its own right, it must depend on another thing. But, the soul of man is the essence of man. It is not a body as it cannot be divided.

The happiness of this soul depends on the knowledge of God, which further depends on the contemplation of the divine works which can only be known through the senses. The five senses are the doors opening on the external world. In addition to them, there is a sixth sense in the heart which opens on the spiritual realities.

The senses illumine reason by giving it knowledge of the external world. Reason illumines the soul and the illumined soul yearns for union with God, which is its *summum bonum*. Knowledge comes to the human soul in two ways. Firstly, it comes through study and deduction. it can be acquired by everybody and is called reflection and meditation. It can also be acquired through the senses, and comprises all the sciences and arts. It corresponds to the four kinds of existences,²⁰ namely, material (*Jismānī*), factual (*Ḥaqiqī*), ideational (*Khayālī*) and intellectual (*ʿAqlī*). Our ordinary knowledge of the external world is related to these four kinds of existences. Secondly, knowledge comes through intuition and revelation.

19. Ibid., pp. 7 ff.

20. *Kimiyā-i-Sa'adat*, pp. 12 ff.

This knowledge is certain. It is the knowledge of the supersensuous world. It comes through the sixth sense which apprehends spiritual realities. Al-Ghazzālī establishes the existence of the sixth sense on the basis of the phenomenon of dreams. In sleep, when the external senses cease to function this sense begins functioning. The realities of the supersensuous world (*Al-malakūt*) are seen in their nakedness and future events are apprehended either directly or symbolically. The soul is like a mirror equipped to reflect the real nature of things recorded on the 'guarded tablet.' When the soul is emptied of sense-knowledge, it reacts to the images on the guarded tablet (*Al-Lawḥ al-Mahfūz*) and receives direct impressions from it.²¹ After death, all thoughts will cease and the realities will be seen in their true perspective. "We stripped the evil from off thee and thy sight to-day is keen."²² Sometimes, this knowledge comes in a sudden flash, at other times it takes time. Its occurrence, however, is due to the grace of God. What man can do is only to purify his heart to receive it. This knowledge is of two kinds, *Wahy* and *Ilhām*.²³ In *Wahy* the angel who brings the message to the Prophet is visible. The Prophet is entrusted with the guidance of humanity and is provided a law for promulgation. In *Ilhām* (intuition) there is no messenger and there is no such communication of law. Everybody occasionally receives knowledge through intuition. But, it is difficult to know where the knowledge comes from. The degree of success in achieving *Ilhām* or intuition is conditioned by self-discipline, moral purity, and divine grace, but the conferment of *Wahy* is only a gift of God and rests entirely on His will.

One does not experience spiritual realities only in sleep or after death. One can also see them in the waking state, and also when one concentrates wholly on God and supersensuous entities. In the state of complete absorption, when the functioning of the senses is stopped and nothing enters the heart from outside, one perceives the indescribable

21. *Kimiyā-i-Sa'adat*, pp. 12 ff.

22. Qur'ān, I, 21.

23. *Kimiyā-i-Sa'adat*, pp. 14 ff.

phenomena of transcendental regions. By its inherent nature the soul is capable of such development.

Besides, the knowledge aspect of the soul, there is a will aspect which is an angelic function. The angels guide the world in accordance with Divine Will, e.g., they bring rain when people need it, shape an embryo, and so on. Similarly, man too is endowed with the power of guiding the world to a limited extent, e.g., his own body. A highly developed soul may influence other bodies as will, e.g., can tame a lion or cure a disease. If this will power is used to benefit others, it elevates a man to the level of a saint or a prophet but if it is used to harm others, it degrades him to the level of a magician or a devil.

Prophethood and sainthood are stages in the development of the human soul along the path to God. Prophets and saints can be distinguished from the common people by the following certain marks. They see in the waking state what others see in dreams. Ordinary persons can influence their bodies by means of their will, but saints and prophets can influence bodies other than their own. Knowledge which the common people acquire through study, and observation, prophets and saints acquire through intuition. The common man cannot fully understand the greatness of a prophet. As in our daily life, we find it impossible to explain the cadence of a poem to one who has no ears for it, or to help a colour-blind person to perceive a colour, similarly ordinary mortals cannot fully appraise a prophet because they are not properly equipped to do so.

The greatest hindrance to such understanding and appraisal is due to the fact that the ordinary person acquires all knowledge through the senses. This dependence on the senses militates against the acquisition of the illumination that can be attained through the exercise and discipline of the soul. In the following two paragraphs, al-Ghazzālī elucidates the difference between objective study through sense experience and the method of intuition.

The heart may be compared to a pond into which five streams are continually falling. To find out the real content of the heart, these channels must be stopped for a time so

that the refuse they have brought in may be cleared off. If you wish to get pure water from the bottom of the pond, you should drain out the entire quantity of the water supplied from without, close the inlet, and dig the bed deep so that the purer water may come out from the bed spontaneously. Similarly, pure knowledge can only be acquired from the bottom of the heart only when it is emptied of the knowledge gained through the senses.

Once the people of China and the people of Byzantium held a contest in the art of decorating. The king in whose presence the contest was held gave one part of the room to the Chinese and the opposite part to the Byzantines and hung a curtain between them so that they might not see each other's plans. The Byzantines painted the wall with all sorts of pigments, etc. But, the Chinese went on polishing the wall. When the curtain was removed the beautiful art of the Byzantines was reflected on the Chinese side. This is the method of the saints, who purify their hearts so that spiritual realities may be reflected in them. The knowledge which comes through the sixth sense, inspiration, is nobler and purer than the knowledge gained through the senses. The acquisition of such proficiency is the highest level which the soul can reach. But, all cannot reach this height though every human soul is capable of communing directly with the supernatural world. The prophets stand highest in this respect. The difference between the prophets and other people who have developed this faculty, is one of degree and not of kind. It may, however, be remarked that this difference cannot be removed by mere human endeavour and will power, it must remain as a dispensation of God. Al-Ghazzālī proves the reality of spiritual inspiration on the basis of the specific functions of the human soul.

At the time of birth, a man has no knowledge of the worlds which God has created. It is through the senses that he gains knowledge during the course of his development.²⁴

24. "One is really startling anticipation of Wordsworth's 'Eternal deep, haunted for ever by the eternal mind' and of the still more recent conception of subliminal consciousness in direct touch with the infinite" (Macdonald, D.B., *Religious Attitude and Life in Islām*, p. 246).

Every sense has a separate function. The first sense which manifests itself is touch. Through this sense one perceives qualities like heat, cold, dryness, etc. This sense does not help a person to perceive any other quality, for instance, colours and forms. Next comes the sense of sight, which gives us knowledge of the world of colours and forms. Then come the senses of hearing, smell, and taste, etc. At the age of seven another sense appears which apprehends what is beyond the scope of the general senses. This is discrimination. In the next phase, there appears reason through which are apprehended things which are necessary, possible, and impossible. It is through reason that man learns all sciences and arts, etc. Now, in order to comprehend things which reason cannot make comprehensible, he is endowed with insight, which reveals invisible things, happenings of the future and all the concepts which lie beyond the pale of discrimination. There are people who only accept knowledge gained through the senses and reject all other forms of knowledge. Similarly, there are people who rely only on reason and reject ideas gained through inspiration. Their denial of the role of inspiration is like that of a blind man who rejects the information available through sight about colour and form. Al-Ghazzālī proves the existence of inspiration from experience. Reason represents a phase in the development of man by means of which he gains the knowledge of abstract truths unattainable through the senses. Similarly, inspiration is a higher faculty which enables man to see with the inner eye things that lie outside the purview of reason. It is a kind of intuitive knowledge which cannot be gained through reason.

(4) Knowledge of God ²⁵ helps man to perfect himself. It exalts him over all other created things and confers upon him sublime glory, immortal existence, unlimited power, undying joy, unfailing and penetrating vision. The conviction that the greatest happiness of man consists in the knowledge of God is easily borne out by a study of the respective functions of each faculty with which man is endowed. All pleasures depend on perception and knowledge, and every faculty which

is given to man is assigned a particular kind of duty whose fulfilment gives him pleasure in that special sphere; so the sum total of the collective functioning of all the faculties constitutes the sum total of happiness. The eye delights in witnessing beautiful forms, the ear in listening to sweet melodies. Similarly, there is a faculty of the heart about which God has said, "When God opened the heart of man he lived in the light of his Lord." This faculty is called by various names, *i.e.*, reason, insight, the light of faith, etc. Al-Ghazzālī calls it the faculty of reason (*'Aql*). But he does not use it in the sense in which it is used by scholastic theologians, who identify it with the logical reason concerned with disputations and argumentations, but in the special sense, it is the capacity which helps man to understand metaphysical truths, *i.e.*, God, soul, etc. This faculty is beyond the reach of external and internal senses. The pleasure derived from knowledge varies according to the nature of the object known, the nobler the objects the higher the knowledge, and the greater the pleasure. God being superior to all, knowledge must be the noblest and the most gratifying, and His Vision the most delightful. The soul has been created for achieving this knowledge, and has a natural inclination towards it. A soul devoid of such an inclination is deceased. Knowledge which gives the greatest pleasure is the knowledge of God, His qualities, His actions, His disposition of affairs which take place in the heaven and on the earth.

Pleasures are of two kinds, external and internal. The former are experienced through the senses and the latter through *'Aql*. The internal pleasures are stronger in proportion to the strength of one's *'Aql*. Non-Intellectual people prefer the pleasures of the senses to the inner pleasures. Human development at its different stages brings different degrees of delight to the individual; at one time, he loves play, at another he loves marriage, or runs after honour or reputation, finally there are people who feel pleasure in the love of God alone.

Al-Ghazzālī maintains that the knowledge of the soul is the key to the knowledge of God. "He who knows his self knows God," is a well-known tradition from the Prophet,

25. *Kimiyā-i-Sa'ādāt*, pp. 22 ff.

which means that he who understands his self will arrive at the knowledge of God. There are two methods of arriving at this knowledge, namely, transcendental, rational and empirical. Al-Ghazzālī follows the empirical method. By contemplating on one's own existence and attributes, one achieves the knowledge of Divine Existence and His attributes. Al-Ghazzālī proceeds with his arguments thus : There was a time when man did not exist. Then, he came into existence. He was a drop of water with no organs and no senses. Gradually, he developed into a grown-up person. Who created all these stages of development? Are they the work of some intelligent Being or just an accidental growth? If a person thinks about the parts of the body and the function which each part performs, he will surely be convinced that they are so made and so adjusted only by the All-Powerful and Omniscient Creator. Such a line of thought, al-Ghazzālī says, may lead one from the knowledge of one's own existence to that of Divine existence. The contemplation of the functions of the various parts of the body and of the mental qualities point to the perfect wisdom of God. And the contemplation of how the various needs of man are satisfied convinces us of His love etc. But, the knowledge of the spiritual aspect of the soul helps us still further to know God. The soul of man is unfettered. It transcends the limits of time and space. It is invisible, indivisible, and is beyond the categories of quality and quantity. No qualities like shape, size, colour, etc., can be attributed to it. So, is God. Both are concepts and not precepts, and are consequently outside the scope of the senses. If one is convinced of one's own "unconditionedness", by referring this conception to a higher power he may realize the "unconditionedness" of God. Just as the soul rules over all the parts of the body without having any spatial relationship with any, similarly God rules over the whole universe, without being spatially limited to any place. It is in this sense that the Prophet said, "God created man in his own likeness." So, man arrives at the knowledge of the essential nature and attributes of God by first understanding the essential nature and attributes of his own soul.

Now, we consider the method of God's working, His administration, and the delegation of His powers to the

entities called angels, etc. In this inquiry we have to acquire, first of all, the knowledge of the divine nature of God and his attributes. This knowledge will reveal to us how He conducts the affairs of the universe. Here, too, the understanding of how the human soul governs the body, helps us to arrive at the knowledge of God. So, let us see how the soul works and how its various activities are conducted. If you want to write the word 'God' on a piece of paper, first, a desire is aroused in the heart then it is carried by the sensory nerves to the brain, then the image or the form of the word becomes imprinted on the cerebrum, then, the motor nerves connected with the fingers are affected, finally the fingers set the pen in motion, and the word appears on the paper. Similarly, God rules the universe. The Divine will first affects the ninth heaven (*Al-'Arsh*, the Throne). Then, a subtle Divine Essence passes from the ninth to the eighth heaven called *Al-Kursī*, the Chair,—as the image of 'God'. Then, the images of all future objects in the universe, first appear in the guarded tablet (*Al-lawḥ al-Mahfūz*). The spiritual beings called angels stationed on the ninth and eighth heavens set in motion the skies and the planets and operate upon the elements through the meteors and the rays. They shape the animals, the vegetables and other forms; and in doing so they are aided by other angels. The material forms are in accordance with the images in the Guarded Tablet. So, all the cosmic activities originate in the ninth heaven.

Now, we come to God's Providence. The physicist attributes what happens in the universe to the laws of nature. The astronomer has a wider vision and attributes it to the heavenly bodies, etc. But, the laws of nature are themselves governed by a higher power.

The seekers after the truth, like the physicist and the astronomer, trace the law to the apparent source of its origin. So, most of them trace to the immediate causes what should be traced to the First cause. We realize that there is only one cause and the whole universe is the manifestation of it. This highest cause is God. He is superior to all things, and too elevated to be known by conjecture. He cannot be measured by human reason. His unconditionedness, Will and Wisdom can by no means be likened to the similar functions

of the human soul which is only an image of Him. We can have only an imperfect and dim idea of Him. In short, our knowledge about God must necessarily be very much limited, for He is far beyond the domain of human understanding and physical investigation.

Now, al-Ghazzālī comes to the central point of his ethical system. It is the doctrine of *Tawhīd*, which means that there is only one cause, which is the Cause of all causes. According to al-Ghazzālī *Tawhīd* has four grades :

(1) Mere profession of belief in God : When one says, "There is no God other than one God," one's heart may not be affected and there may not arise any emotion in the heart. (2) Both the tongue and the heart agree and one believes in the truth of the phrase, "There is no God other than one God." (3) One apprehends the truth of the above phrase by the inner light, or by intuition. At this stage, the reality of the many is quite distinct from the reality of the One, all being the product of the one. One sees only one Cause as the final cause, "He whose heart Allāh has made receptive to Islām walks in His light." Man at this stage comes to realize one efficient Final Cause, which is the Cause of all causes. This *Tawhīd* is the basis of practical and ethical philosophy. We shall describe its nature briefly here. Man should realize that the cause of everything is God. Whatever happens, happens because He wills it. Life, death, disease, etc., are caused by Him. He alone is to be feared. There is nothing in the universe which is not under His control. All this knowledge comes through intuition and there is no other way of obtaining it.

There are of course immediate causes but they are not independent. In fact, all things, e.g., the sun, the moon, the stars, the clouds, are in the hand of God. In this third stage, the mind of man reaches the point where every item in the universe becomes a tongue and reveals to him the unfathomable mysteries of the divine knowledge. (4) Then there is a fourth stage of *Tawhīd*. It is connected with the practical side of human conduct. At this stage, the seeker after truth sees only one Reality. From this vision, every thing else is effaced, only the All-Comprehending and the

All-Absorbing One remains. The individuality of one's own self is altogether forgotten. This stage is called by the Sūfis *fanā* i.e., one's own personality is lost in the unity of God. In the third stage, the seeker recognises only one cause but the recognition of a cause implies duality between the cause and the effect. It may be objected how we can overlook the diversities existing in the universe and how can we reduce the many into one. The correct answer to this is that things may be observed from different points of view. A man, e.g., viewed from the point of view of the whole presents a picture in which one sees only one reality and the differences between many are lost sight of. This is what al-Ghazzālī tells us explicitly. Further, he thinks that enquiries about spiritual realities like God, soul, etc., are forbidden by the law. Therefore, he does not enter into the discussion of such problems. He has revealed certain things in some books which he wrote for a few of his chosen followers and which he kept concealed from the ordinary people. He knows about the actual realities, God, Soul, Angels, Heaven, Hell, etc., through intuition, which defy description, because intuition is immediate apprehension and cannot be expressed in words.

INTUITIVE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

THERE are various grades of the knowledge of God. The lowest grade is the faith of the common people based on authority and tradition. A higher grade is the knowledge of the learned based on deduction and reflection. But, the highest knowledge is gained through *Mukāshafa*.¹ *ʿIlm al-Mukāshafa* is a certitude which is the result of the light that God instils into the heart when it is purged of vices and filled with virtues through *ʿIlm al-Muʾāmala*. It is knowledge which comes to those who have intimacy with God (*siddiqūn*)² and which relates to God and the unseen. Its basis is direct vision or experience. One realizes with certainty through personal experience the truths which

1. *Ihyāʾ*, Vol. III, p. 14; Vol. I, pp. 18-19.

2. Writers on *Sūfism* are agreed that forms of visionary experience are common to men, irrespective of what religion they belong to. Mujaḥiddi Aḥmad Sirhindī points out (Epistle No. 293) that there are two forms of *ʿIlm al-Mukāshafa*. One relates to the knowledge of God, His attributes, and His acts; this is the peculiar privilege of those who are near unto Allāh. The second consists in bits of information relating to the unseen in this world of men and their affairs. This latter can be acquired by self-discipline and freedom from dominance of the senses even by those who do not seek God. Those who are filled with the love of God and are always occupied with His remembrance pay no heed to this world and are often deficient in this type of *ʿIlm al-Mukāshafa*, and are, therefore, not recognised by the common people. They are occupied with that which relates to God and His acts, in which kind of knowledge the common people are not interested. Although al-Ghazzālī did not make this distinction clearly, he however, pointed out that *ʿIlm al-Mukāshafa*, relates to the knowledge of God, the essence of things, and that it cannot be attained without acquiring *ʿIlm al-Muʾāmala* of which the love of God and thirst for the knowledge of reality is the most important aspect. He has unambiguously pointed out (*Ihyāʾ*, Vol. III, p. 12) that if a man occupies himself with the purification of the heart and does not seek God he will not attain the knowledge of God. Whatever then he attains will not be *ʿIlm al-Mukāshafa*. Even Mujaḥiddi Aḥmad Sirhindī arrives exactly at the same conclusion. Moreover, Allāh does not look upon this effort and this kind of knowledge with favour for it keeps man occupied with else than God.

formerly one accepted on the evidence of authority or deduction. Believers hold different views about the nature of God, Angels, Heaven, Hell, prophethood, revelation, and the essence of things. But, through *ʿIlm al-Mukāshafa* all doubts are removed and realities are revealed, sometimes in their nakedness, though often symbolically. *ʿIlm al-Mukāshafa* is acquired gradually as one's heart becomes more purified. Some times, in rare cases, it comes at a single leap. Another factor that determines *ʿIlm al-Mukāshafa* is Divine Grace. But, God promises His grace to those who toil in His way. However, the mysteries that are not revealed in this world will be revealed in the next.³

So, he who seeks God sets before himself *ʿIlm al-Mukāshafa* as his goal. He starts with *taqlīd* and knowledge by contemplation and meditation, but seeks to know God and the essence of things directly.

Al-Ghazzālī conceives the world as having two aspects,⁴ naming them differently as the material world (*ʿĀlam al-Maḥṣūs* or *Mushāhada* or *Mulk*) and the celestial world (*ʿĀlam al-Malakūt*) or the world of senses (*ʿĀlam al-Hissī*) and the world of intelligence (*ʿĀlam al-Aqlī*) or the higher world (*ʿĀlam al-Alawī*) and the lower world (*ʿĀlam al-Saflī*). The transcendental world is beyond the ken of sense and imagination. The physical world is a direct consequence, a manifestation, a symbol of the transcendental world, "The seen world is to the world celestial as the rind is to the kernel, as the form to the spirit, as darkness to light, as lowness to loftiness." He who never yearns for the knowledge of the Spiritual world and remains occupied wholly with the seen world is a brute, nay worse than that, for the brutes are

3. Visionary experiences and knowledge of mysteries of God are no certain criterion for determining the nearness unto Allāh, *ʿIlm al-Mukāshafa* brings a certitude of knowledge. There are often true ones (*Siddiqūn*) of God who are often granted this certitude without visionary experiences or other forms of *ʿIlm al-Mukāshafa*. But, al-Ghazzālī would regard this certitude installed in the heart of the friend (Walī) of God as a form of *Ilhām* dropped in the heart without the friend's consciousness of its source or its manner of coming to him, and in his opinion this would constitute one of the real forms of *ʿIlm al-Mukāshafa*.

4. Al-Ghazzālī, *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, p. 28.

not furnished with wings for flight to the unseen world as man is.

It is only through the physical world that one can rise to the spiritual world, for they are integrally related to each other. The world that is beyond the apprehension of sense and imagination may, from the view point of the pilgrim to God, be called the Fold of the Divine, the Holiness. There are folds within folds and no man shall attain unto *Allāh* until he was traversed the highest. Thus, there are grades of ascension in the spiritual world, and the pilgrim's progress along the 'Straight Path'⁵ is his progress through these folds.⁶ The lowest heaven of the pilgrim is that of the earth from which his bodily movement proceeds, his sensation proceeds from the next heaven above, and his reason from the next still higher. From here the soul spreads wings for its upward flight to what seems unity with Pure Deity, a Seven Fold way.⁷

Man is endowed with the power to apprehend the spiritual world. It is a power in the heart of man which is termed variously as the transcendental prophetic spirit,⁸ the spirit, the human soul,⁹ the Devine light within, the hidden light, the light of faith, insight, reason,¹⁰ etc. The man who knows, says al-Ghazzālī, this multiplicity of terms identifies them with only one idea.¹¹ He prefers to call it reason. This is the power to which God has referred in the Qur'ān, "And thus did We inspire thee with a spirit from Our power. Thou didst not know what the book was, nor (what) the faith was but we made it a light guiding thereby whom we please of our servants."¹²

Reason is as free to move in the world of dominance as sense is in the physical world.¹³ In itself its proper sphere is

5. Qur'ān, i, 5.

6. *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, pp. 28-29.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

10. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 25.

11. *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, p. 6.

12. Qur'ān, xlii, 52.

13. *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, p. 7.

the Realm Celestial. But, for the perception and knowledge of the world of dominance and sense it is equipped with external and internal senses. But this equipment, while it is essential for the existence of this spiritual entity in the physical world, becomes a veil between reason and the unseen world and a source of error in the apprehension of that world.¹⁴ This veil of the senses will be cast off after death and, then, man will witness the unseen realities, as if with his physical eyes. God will say unto man, "We have stripped thee of the veil that covered thee, and thy vision this day is sharp."¹⁵ Al-Ghazzālī makes use of the word *Kashafa* (stripped off) that occurs in this verse, in developing his theory that '*Ilm al-Mukāshafa*' is the direct intuition of reality when the veil of the senses has been lifted.

Sometimes, the authority of the senses is suppressed even when we are alive as in sleep. It so happens also while we are awake. If the light of reason is pure and clear and one is absorbed in the remembrance of God,¹⁶ one will perceive unseen Realities directly in a way that can be best expressed by the word 'intuitive'. But this veil of 'sense and imagination', though gross, may also be cleansed and refined by freeing life from the dominance of the senses so that the light of reality may filter through. In the case of the prophets, this veil becomes like transparent glass and they can see God in the physical world which becomes a 'Niche' for His Light.

Dr. Iqbāl has charged al-Ghazzālī with the failure 'to see that thought and intuition are organically related and that thought must necessarily stimulate finitude and inconclusiveness because of its alliance with serial time'.¹⁷ With regard to the right relationship between thought and intuition in another passage of the same book, Iqbāl observes, "They spring up from the same root and complement each other. The one grasps reality piecemeal, the other in its wholeness. The one fixes its gaze on the eternal, the other on the temporal aspect of reality. The one is present enjoyment of

14. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

15. Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

16. *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, pp. 17-18.

17. Dr. M. Iqbāl, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islām*, p. 5.

the whole of reality; the other aims at traversing the whole by slowly specifying and closing up the various regions of the whole for exclusive observation. Both are in need of each other for mutual rejuvenation. Both seek visions of the same reality which reveals itself to them in accordance with their function in life. In fact, intuition, as Bergson rightly says is only a higher kind of intellect."¹⁸

Dr. Iqbal's charge is not true. Al-Ghazzālī holds almost the same view of thought and intuition which he himself holds. As shown above, according to Al-Ghazzālī, the proper activity of reason is intuition. Thought is a form of activity imposed upon reason by the necessity of the senses, in a world of time and space, and the finite and temporal nature of thought is conditioned by these limitations. Thus, thought and intuition, according to al-Ghazzālī also, have the same roots and they are organically interrelated. Intuition, al-Ghazzālī like Bergson would say, is the higher form of intellect, when the intellect is freed from the limitations of the senses.¹⁹

Al-Ghazzālī does not deny thought as a means of reaching the Infinite, "These gnostics of God after their descent from the heaven of Reality are agreed that they saw nothing existent but One Being. But, of these some have reached this stage by thought while others have reached it by ecstasy and experience."²⁰

Again, "The knowledge of the reality of the world that is in the heart sometimes comes through the senses (thoughts directed to the world of senses), and sometimes from the preserved Tablet itself, even as the form of the sun is perceived by the eye some times by looking at it directly, and sometimes by looking at its reflection through water, and this reflection does not differ in its form from the original."²¹ There is no difference between intuitive knowledge (*Ilhām*) and knowledge acquired by reflection with regard to their respective nature, seats and sources except in so far as they

are different forms of activity. Intuition according to al-Ghazzālī, depends on Divine grace as well. The introduction of the religious element cannot make his theory unacceptable until the unknown factor in intuition is determined.²² We might say in the words of Iqbal that the one (intuition) fixes its gaze on the eternal, and other (thought) on the temporal aspect of Reality. Both seek visions of Reality which reveal itself to them in accordance with their function in life.

Thought and intuition complement each other. The learned in their search after God insist more on thought and contemplation while the Sūfis emphasize more the purification of the heart, to prepare it for direct intuitive experience, yet contemplation is as essential part of the discipline of the Sūfis, and it is often during contemplation that intuitive experience comes as a climax as if sense and imagination suddenly become like a transparent glass. The learned who seek Reality through thought are greatly rejuvenated by intuitive experience, for with this experience they become established in knowledge.²³

Al-Ghazzālī, denies thought as a means to the knowledge of God, when it is scrupulously divorced from non-conceptual modes of approaching Reality, and based entirely upon logic. To take an illustration from the life of al-Ghazzālī himself, when at the age of twenty-eight he set his mind on the search for truth, and began to examine the foundations of certitude he found that he could not trust the evidence of his senses. But, logically, he could not trust the evidence of his intellect either, for all this life might be like a dream and we might find all knowledge attained here vain and unreal when we wake up in another life. Al-Ghazzālī, was, thus led into perfect scepticism and for about two months, he almost felt paralysed. Then, came the light not from argument and logic but from within the heart with the reassurance that the light of reason was not a mere hallucination. Al-Ghazzālī trusted this light and proceeded on this journey, sifting truth from falsehood by arrangement and logic till he found that truth

18. Ibid., pp. 2-3.

19. *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, p. 37.

20. Ibid., p. 19.

21. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. III, p. 18.

22. Ibid., pp. 16 and 18.

23. Qur'ān, iii, 7.

lay with the Sūfis. Al-Ghazzālī distrusts thought, as an instrument for attaining the knowledge of God when it is completely severed from intuition. To know Reality, Thought and Intuition should work as allies complementing and rejuvenating each other.

Dr. Iqbāl says further : "Both Kant and Ghazzālī failed to see that thought, in the very act of knowledge, passes beyond its own finitude. The finitudes of Nature, are reciprocally exclusive. Not so the finitudes of thought which is, in its essential nature, incapable of limitation and cannot remain imprisoned in the narrow circuit of its own individuality. In the wide world beyond itself nothing is alien to it. It is its progressive participation in the life of the apparently alien that thought demolishes the walls of its finitude and enjoys its potential infinitude. Its movement becomes possible only because of the implicit presence in its finite individuality of the infinite, which keeps alive within it the flame of aspiration and sustains it in its endless pursuit. It is a mistake to regard thought as inconclusive, for it too, in its own way, is a greeting of the finite with the infinite."²⁴

Again : "In its essential nature, the, thought is not static; it is dynamic and unfolds its internal infinitude in time like the seed which, from the very beginning, carries within itself the organic unity of the tree as a present fact. Thought is, therefore, the whole in its dynamic self-expression, appearing to the temporal vision as a series of definite specifications which cannot be understood except by a reciprocal reference. Their meaning lies not in their self-identity, but in the larger whole of which they are the specific aspects. This larger whole is, to use a Qur'ānic metaphor, a kind of 'Preserved Tablet.' Which holds up the entire undetermined possibilities of knowledge as a present reality, revealing itself in serial time as a succession of finite concepts appearing to reach a unity which is already present in them."²⁵

The following will throw light on the dynamic nature of thought and its internal infinitude which Dr. Iqbāl has pointed out.

24. Dr. M. Iqbāl, op. cit., p. 6.

25. Ibid., p. 6.

Al-Ghazzālī pointed out²⁶ that no knowledge through thought can be attained without previous knowledge. There take place analyses, syntheses and various dispositions of the known and we advance towards the unknown. Thus, the parent thought always has in it the germs of all the knowledge that follows, and it is in a way a self-unfoldment of the same seed with nourishment and engrafting from observation, experience, and reflection. To illustrate by means of an analogy, the germ plasma of the first parent of humanity has not yet died out. It is living on from man to man and generation to generation and still unfolding itself in the germplasm of the new births.

While explaining the Light Verse²⁷ in the Qur'ān he says that the light of thought is symbolized in the Qur'ān by "a Blessed Olive tree which is neither of the East nor of the West." From the trunk of parent proposition we advance towards a complete tree of knowledge, the ramifications of which are unending and ever-progressing, "each conclusion becoming a seed for further conclusions." The Tree is not to be symbolized by a quince or apple or pomegranate tree, but by an olive tree because the fruit of the olive tree yields the lightest and the brightest of all oils and so does the fruit of thought yield bright light. Since the fruit of thought is unlimited it is to be symbolized by an olive tree that is blessed. Since thought does not exist in space and recognizes no direction nor nearness nor distance, it is said that this tree is neither from the East nor from the West.²⁸ The above is only a prosaic way of saying what Dr. Iqbāl has expressed in a terse and definite language, "Thought in the very act of knowledge passes beyond its finitude, etc."

Again, in *Mishkāt* contrasting the light of reason with the eye he points out that reason apprehends concepts and concepts cannot be conceived as finite. The knowledge-content presented to the mind or present in it at any one moment is finite but potentially it is cognitive of the infinite; for example, reason apprehends the series of integers which

26. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. III, p. 22 (Urdū).

27. *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, pp. 24-25.

28. Ibid., p. 41.

are infinite; again, reason knows that it possesses the knowledge of the knowledge of things and so on *ad-infinitum*.

From this, it seems that al-Ghazzālī was conscious of the infinite reaches of thought and of the fact that thought is potentially a microcosm containing infinity within it as the seed has the tree. The progress of thought is a process of self-unravelling for as thought is progressing from concept to concept, each time it is materialising and presenting the potentialities within a larger concept.

All forms of *'Ilm al-Mukāshafa*, or knowledge from the higher world, are conveyed to man by agents of that world known as angels.²⁹ The highest form of *'Ilm al-Mukāshafa* or intuitive experience is *wahy*, which is the privilege of the prophets, and in which the messenger angel assumes a visible form before the prophet. All other forms of intuitive experience are *ilhām*. The commonest forms of intuition is the reception by the mind of knowledge or an idea, whose, whence, why or how we do not know and cannot understand. Other forms in which intuitive knowledge comes to man are dreams or walking visions.³⁰

In sleep the senses cease to function and the soul is left free from preoccupation with the world of senses. Then often enough from the souls of the virtuous the veil from the unseen world is withdrawn, and a person receives knowledge from that world, of things distant in space and time, especially of things that are yet in the womb of the future, and ideas or impressions imprinted and preserved in *al-Lawḥ al-Mahfūz* are conveyed to him in advance. All objects and all acts, all that exists in this world, or has existed since its creation or will exist till the day of resurrection, already exist, imprinted in the spiritual world on the *al-lawḥ al-Muhfūz* or the Preserved Tablet. Only for a time does it assume a physical garb and then doffs it. Just as the imagination clothes in words, ideas that come to the mind, similarly in that state of sleep, imagination clothes in words, the ideas and impressions conveyed to it from the unseen world, in familiar forms stored in memory, which are either a direct

29. Ibid.

30. *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, p. 16.

representation of the idea or are symbolic of it.³¹ We never see in dreams God or the prophets themselves but the idea of them clothed in form and colour. This idea or image is made a vehicle of knowledge by God. Only this symbol or image will have some correspondence with the quality of the imagined or the symbolized, e.g., the image of God must be usually light, or some such beautiful form as befits the beauty and greatness of God. An enemy may be symbolized by a snake, a voluptuary by a pig, the devil by a toad, similarly God may be visualized by the symbols of beauty, grandeur and majesty.

Preoccupation with passions and appetites acts as a veil between the mind and the spiritual world. The soul is not drawn towards the spiritual world but towards its dominant interests and so dreams are a fulfilment of the secret desires of man.³²

What is possible in sleep is possible in the waking state. An illustration³³ of a vision in the waking state has been cited by al-Ghazzālī. The Prophet said that he saw 'Abdur Raḥmān b. 'Awf enter paradise crawling. The Prophet saw this while awake. The soul got the intuition of the idea, and directly the internal senses clothed the idea in a form analogous to the idea. The riches of 'Abdur Raḥmān dragged him down to the world, so much so that his strong faith and great piety could with difficulty work his salvation. The difficulty of entering heaven due to the downward pull of excessive worldly possessions was symbolized by the imagination in the shape of crawling. The Prophet saw the image with his own eyes. It was a truth that he saw, but it was not the person of 'Abdul Raḥmān but the personified idea. It was a universal truth perceived intuitively in the person of 'Abdul Raḥmān. Thus, can be explained all the waking visions of the Prophet relating to the dead or the living as visions of spiritual ideas clothed in analogous images.

31. *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, pp. 5, and 38.

32. *Ihyā'*, Vol. VI, pp. 154-55.

33. *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, pp. 37-39.

This phenomenon of intuitive experience by means of symbols could be explained by assuming that the heart has two windows³⁴ contiguous to each other, one opening on the world of sense, and the other on the realm celestial forming the opening for the entrance of *'ilhām* and *wahy*. This latter window opens for those who are not under the dominance of the senses. Whatever knowledge or light comes to the heart from the realm celestial casts its reflection on both these aspects of the heart. Whatever is perceived by this celestial aspect of the heart is perceived by means of images, directly drawn from the great store-house of images from the celestial world itself and corresponding to the impression created by the senses. In the world of sense, where we perceive first the image and then the idea, there is always room for discrepancy between the form and the spirit, for in the case of those whose sense and imagination have remained gross on account of slavery to the senses the light of reality will not filter through, therefore, in the resultant darkness there will always be found room for mistake.³⁵ But, in the case of knowledge from the celestial world the idea is perceived first and then directly given a suitable form. Hence, there is a certain correspondence between the form and the spirit.³⁶ In the case of spiritual adepts, this window is almost constantly open so that the spiritual perception is not interrupted even during waking hours.³⁷

In purging the heart of vices, and adorning it with virtues, as indicated above, lies the principle of general self-discipline which prepares the heart for the intuitive knowledge of God. *Murāqaba* or contemplation is a particular practice which prepares the heart for immediate intuitive experience, provided the heart is already sufficiently purified. It consists of complete mental detachment from all environment and concentration upon the physical heart, and then as it were waiting for the light to enter the heart. This is how knowledge from God is often directly flashed upon the heart.

34. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. III, pp. 34-35.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

36. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. III, pp. 34-35.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

This method of achieving knowledge from the depths of the heart by closing completely the paths of the senses may be likened to the digging at the bottom of a pond, and obtaining purer and fresher water from beneath, after the inlets pouring in water from outside have been closed.³⁸ About the explanation, already given in this section, of the source and manner of the intuitive knowledge that comes to man, Macdonald says, "It is a startling anticipation of Wordsworth's eternal deep, haunted for ever by the eternal mind and of a still more recent conception of a sub-liminal self in direct touch with the Infinite."³⁹

Sometimes, one sees reality not in symbols but in physical nakedness. The Prophet usually saw the messenger angel in the form of Daḥya-Kalby who possessed an extremely beautiful person. Twice, however, he saw the angel in his real form. And, once he saw him on the night of his ascent at *Sidra al-Muntaha*, and once, on another occasion, when at the request of the Prophet the angel appeared at the top of *Koh-i Hira*, and filled the whole earth from East to West.⁴⁰

Such a vision may usually take the form of a sudden flash which might overwhelm the soul. It may be of a short or long duration, and may occur at short or long intervals.⁴¹ This shedding off of the veil of senses might be something analogous to the experience of Wordsworth, frequent in childhood, though rare in advanced age :

Those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishing;
Blank misgiving of a Creature
Moving about in worlds not realized.
High instinct before which our mortal nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised.⁴²

The infinite marvels of the universe are an overwhelming evidence of the living, infinitely wise and powerful God. Yet, the common people often do not realize it. One of the

38. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

39. Macdonald, D.B., *Religious Attitude and Life in Islām*, pp. 263-64.

40. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 34-35.

41. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 16.

42. Ode to 'Intimations', etc.

reasons is that man comes into contact with the wonders and mysteries of his heavens and the earth, and what is between them almost from the beginnings of life when his reasoning faculties have not yet developed. When he becomes mature the objects have become too familiar, and seem commonplace : moreover now he falls a victim to his appetites and passions which act as a veil shutting off the truth. Men are familiar with such an infinite variety of forms of life and beauty, that a sudden revelation of something new may not move them to wonder and yet it is often on such occasions that men cry out, spontaneously, in praise and admiration of their Creator, "The hand that made us is Divine." If a wise man, blind from birth, were suddenly to possess sight and stand in the midst of the wonderful panorama of form and colour and witness the mysterious forces and the stupendous powers and magnitudes of the universe, he would be simply filled with awe and ecstasy, rather the probability is that he would be overpowered and bewildered, and even lose his reason.⁴³

"God is the Light of the Heaven and the Earth,"⁴⁴ but only to those who know that there is nothing so utterly manifest as Allāh; and yet it is by this very fact that He is hidden from the sight of the common people. When we see the various colours, the red, the blue, and the green during the day time, we may deny that there exists light, alongside the blue and the red and the green. We see the colours and think that they exist by themselves. Were there eternal sunlight of unchanging shade, only the wisest few would believe that colours owed their manifestation or even existence to being inseparably blended in the sunlight, although that being is the most manifest of all things and through it alone all things become manifest. The truth of this phenomenon, though difficult to conceive, becomes evident when night follows day. The method of contraries, however, cannot be applied to God. Allāh is obscure to the common people because He is too obvious. He is concealed in the excessive effulgence of his own glory.⁴⁵

43. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 276.

44. *Qur'ān*, xxiv, 35.

45. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 275-76; *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, pp. 24-27.

But Allāh's gnostics (*Ārifeen*) know as if they witness, with their own eyes, not only that Allāh alone is the Real Light, but also He alone is the real Being; not only that there is no Deity but He; but also that, "There is no He but He." "None but He possesses selfhood and identity, all other individualities are referred to only in a figurative sense, that is their existence is, only a reflection of the actual and they are only an image of the real."⁴⁶ Nothing exists by itself; everything exist only in its God-aspect, for, from Him alone it derives its being. Thus, man reaches the highest point of ascent, in the realization of God; namely, the kingdom of pure and absolute One-and-Onliness. Plurality vanishes into totality; and there remains no room for further progress.

It is most tempting to examine these mystical and ecstatic out-pouring of al-Ghazzālī for any lurking pantheism in them. They will certainly not bear the close scrutiny of an orthodox theologian. "Allāh's gnostics, when they reached the ultimate point of the ascent to Reality, witnessed, as if with their physical eyes, that there exists nothing save Allāh alone."⁴⁷ We could easily argue from this that "Allāh is all and all is Allāh." Yet, in the same breath al-Ghazzālī tell us that "Allāh's gnostics witness that everything else is perishing except His countenance, and not that it is perishing at any point of time but is perishing from eternity to eternity."⁴⁸ Here is something beside Allāh that is perishing. Again, "All existence is exclusively His Aspect. Now it is impossible that He should be greater than His own Aspect. The meaning is that He is too Great to be called Greater, or Most Great, by way of relation or comparison."⁴⁹

Allāh cannot be greater than His Aspect nor lesser, therefore must be one with it. Yet, thought things are not self-subsistent and exist only in their God-aspect, they have a real being.

There is no doubt that in isolated sentences we will get reflections of pantheism. But, if we remember al-Ghazzālī's

46. *Mishkāt al-Anwār* (tr. Gairdner), p. 22.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

48. *Ibid.*

49. *Ibid.*, (tr. Gairdner), p. 19.

rational and practical attitude as a whole, we are forced to the conclusion that we cannot associate him with pantheism in any form. He himself would have vehemently denied it. He had great respect for mystics like *Hallāj*. His seemingly blasphemous utterances were not to be taken account of because they were made in a state of inebriation. If they would perceive nought but God and lost consciousness of their own selves it was because they were so overwhelmed that they lost all capacity for thought of naught else. "But the one grace of God that created balance in the life on this earth," says al-Ghazzālī is 'reason'.⁵⁰

His position is between the orthodox theologian, who would divide God and his creation into two entities and that of the pantheist who would deny the existence of everything except God. The universe has a being but only in relation to God. This is the meaning of the Qur'ānic verse, "Everything perisheth except His countenance His Aspects"⁵¹. It is difficult to determine exactly what al-Ghazzālī means by 'aspect'. In any case it does away with pantheism and yet retains the mystical verity of the One-and-Onliness of God.

This truth is revealed either to the learned through study and contemplation or to the saints and saint friends of God through ecstasy. These latter sometimes in the state of transport are so overwhelmed by the experience that they lose their reason for the moment, lose consciousness of everything, even of their own selves and become, as it were, identified (*muttaḥid*) with Allāh. This is the stage of *Fanā fi'l-Fanā*. Some of them in that state have cried out "I am the One Real"⁵² or "Glory be to me;" or "How great is my glory."⁵³ But, when they returned to themselves they realized that it was not actual Union with Allāh, not *ittiḥād* (identification or merging) but *Tawḥīd*, that is perception of the Unity of Allāh.

There is no point of ascent beyond the unitary experience, and though the mystic would fain remain there,

50. Ibid., p. 20.

51. Qur'ān, xxviii, 88.

52. Al-Hallāj.

53. Abū Yazid al-Bisṭāmī.

this is not the goal of goals. The next stage in his progress, is his descent to the lowest heaven the physical world of sense and reason bringing along with him the light he has received. Al-Ghazzālī says, "This is the goal of goals, and the highest of object of spiritual quest, but only the gnostics can fully understand it."⁵⁴

"It is no wonder," he says, "that the learned liken this descent towards the heaven of this earth, to the descent of the angel. But some gnostics have gone further. Being immersed in the One-and-Onliness of God they have declared that this descent is the descent of God to use physical parts and senses."⁵⁵ This descent, therefore, is into the life of mankind spiritually rejuvenated with the unitary experience. What would be the nature of the activity of the saint-friend after his descent is not made clear by al-Ghazzālī. He cannot mean by this descent merely a return to the normal self, for this return is inevitable and cannot therefore, be called goal of the goals. He merely says that this is what only the gnostics can understand.

54. Mujaddid Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindī has said at numerous occasions that the ascent is the first part of sainthood and the descent is the next. The descent is one of the characteristics of prophetic sainthood. Then, man not only 'goes' but also 'carries' (Epistle, 34, 302, etc.). The following from Iqbal is illuminating :

"Muḥammad of Arabia ascended the highest Heaven and returned. I swear by God that if I had reached that point, I should never have returned." These are the words of a great Muslim saint, 'Abdul Quddūs of Gangoh. In the whole range of Sūfī literature it will be probably difficult to find words which, in a single sentence, disclose such an acute perception of the psychological difference between prophetic and the mystic types of consciousness. The mystic does not wish to return from the repose of unitary experience' and even when he does return, as he must, his return does not mean much for mankind at large. The prophetic return is creative. He returns to insert himself into the sweep of time with a view to control the forces of history, and thereby to create afresh world of ideals. For the mystic, the repose of unitary experience is something final; for the prophet it is the awakening within him of world-shaking psychological forces, calculated to completely transform the human world. The desire to see his religious experience transformed into a living world-force is supreme in the prophet.' (*Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islām*, p. 118).

55. *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, p. 24.

That this activity consists in not cutting oneself away from mankind but *Da'wa al-Haq* can be inferred from his writings, e.g., here is a definite statement :

"The most beautiful qualities in the Saint-friend of God which draw the human heart towards them lie in three directions : firstly, in their knowledge of God, His angels. His books, His prophets and their teachings; secondly, in the power they possess of reforming their own souls and the souls of their fellow men, this latter fact they accomplish by *Irshād* and *Siyasa* (by direction and administration); and, lastly, in their purity from all that is base and evil, and their purity from the dominating passions that lead astray from God and backon towards evil."⁵⁶

Here is a tradition of the Prophet, it runs; "Allāh hath seventy thousand veils of light and darkness; were He to withdraw them, the splendour of His Aspect would surely consume any one who apprehended Him with his sight."⁵⁷

Allāh is pure and glorious Light, therefore, the veils must relate to those from whom Allāh is veiled Al-Ghazzālī makes an attempt to give a classification of the veiled among mankind, which incidentally brings into prominence many baffling conceptions of the veiled nature of God Mankind is divided into four classes; those who are veiled by pure darkness, those veiled by mixed light and darkness, those veiled by pure Light, and lastly those who attain unto Allāh.⁵⁸

The most startling casts of this scheme are the *Muṭ'ā*, or the Vicegerent and the theory that the knowledge of the Movement of the Heavens is the sole basis for the gradations of nearness to Allāh. But inspite of the fantastic schemes like that of *Muṭ'ā* in *Mishkat*, his position is quite clear :

(1) That God can be apprehended, through *'Ilm al-Mukāshafa*. The attainment of the knowledge of God is the highest perfection of man on this earth. That the highest knowledge of God should consist in knowledge that He is absolutely unknowable has been rejected, among other

56. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 261.

57. *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, p. 47 (tr. Gairdner); *Ihyā'*, Vol. I, p. 40.

58. *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, pp. 33-34.

opinions, by al-Ghazzālī himself in *Ihyā'*, in his remarks regarding *'Ilm al-Mukāshafa*, as the opinion of people who do not know. (2) That there is a certain symbolic correspondence between man and God in outward form as also there is certain affinity in spirit. "There is an affinity between man and God not in outward form but in spirit. Of this affinity, a part can be put on paper, and a part, it is impossible to lay down in clear terms and it is right to hold our tongue with regard to it so that the wayfarers to God might discover it for themselves when they have reached their destination. That which can be put down is that man should be near unto Allāh in those of His attributes which we are commanded to cultivate in ourselves, e.g., knowledge, love, charity, etc. The affinity which cannot be elaborated in writing and speech is an exclusive characteristic of man and is hinted at in the *Qur'ānic* verse, 'And they ask you about the soul; say the soul is a divine affair;⁵⁹ and further in the verse, 'When I made him and breathed into him of my soul',⁶⁰ and again in the verse, 'We have made thee a successor on the earth.'⁶¹ etc."

The problems of the Vicegerent and the movement of Heavens do not play any part in the religious philosophy of al-Ghazzālī. The highest point of ascent in the knowledge of God lies in unitary experience and the goal of goals is descent therefrom to life in the midst of men, trailing clouds of glory."

59. *Qur'ān*, xvii, 85.

60. *Qur'ān*, xv, 29.

61. *Qur'ān*, xxxviii, 27; Cf. *Ihyā'*, Vol. I, p. 263.

CHAPTER XI

LOVE OF GOD

LOVE of God is the essence of Islām. Al-Ghazzālī makes it the supreme end of man, in this world.¹ Some theologians have doubted the possibility of man's love for God. They argue that love can exist only between members of the same species, and since man and God are not homogeneous, no love can exist between them. Love, in its reference to God means nothing else than obedience to Him.² Al-Ghazzālī in reply elucidates the meaning of love between man and God and shows its possibility and supreme value on the basis of the Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth, e.g., "God loves them and they love God."³ "No one will be truly faithful till God is dearer to him than all else."⁴

Knowledge of God is related to love of God.⁵ Love is a natural inclination towards objects that give pleasure. Hate,

1. *Ṣabr* (patience), *Zuhd* (abstinence), etc., which in themselves are virtues of very high order, are merely subservient to the Love of God; and the virtues like *Shawq* (yearning), *Uns* (affability), *Ridā* (satisfaction) etc., are the more advanced aspects of this love. (*Iḥyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 252) :

فإن المحبة لله هي غاية القصى من المقامات الذروة العلى من
الدرجات فما بعد ادراك المحبة مقام الاوهو ثمرة من ثمارها و تابع من
توابعها كالشوق والانس والرضا و اخواتها ولا قبل المحبة مقام الاوهو
مقدمة من مقدماتها كالنوبة والصبر والزهد وغيرها -

2. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 252-53.
3. Qur'ān, v, 55; Cf. Qur'ān, ii, 165.
4. Cf. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 253.
5. Shahabuddin Suhrawardī Maqtūl, the greatest philosopher of the 6th century, A.H., who was under the definite influence of al-Ghazzālī has very clearly pointed out the relation of love with knowledge. In his *Mūnis al-Ushshāq* (Lover's Friend) ed. and tr. by O. Spies, pp. 24-25 (he says, "When affection reaches the utmost extremity it is called 'love.' Love is excessive affection. Love is more particular than affection because all love is affection but all affection is not love. And affection is more particular than 'knowledge' because all affection is knowledge but all knowledge is not affection, and two opposite things

on the contrary, is natural repulsion to objects that give pain. Both love and hate imply knowledge of objects that give pleasure or pain. Unless objects become known, there can be no occasion for either inclination to or repulsion from them. Knowledge of objects may give pleasure or pain to a person or leave him indifferent. In the case of pleasure, the person is drawn to objects but in other cases he is repelled by them. Similarly, knowledge of God may or may not give pleasure to a person. A person who is habituated to the temptations of the flesh and whose heart is thereby burdened with hindrances will not feel pleasure in the knowledge of God. A person who knows God and loves Him is at a higher plane of spiritual development than one who knows God without loving Him. Al-Ghazzālī holds knowledge of God as a condition to the perfection of man because without it love of God is not possible. But, knowledge of God does not mean love of God in all instances. Hence, love of God is a higher ideal than more knowledge.

Further, in the process of attainment of the knowledge of God there are various stages and the highest stage is related to the highest form of love. Knowledge may be perceptual or super-perceptual.⁶ The former is apprehension of objects through the senses. Perceptual knowledge of objects and their love is common to man and animals. God cannot be known immediately through perceptual knowledge; consequently, He cannot be an object of love determined by such knowledge. Knowledge of God is super-perceptual. Man alone is capable

come out of knowledge, which are called 'friendship' and 'enmity'. Because knowledge pertains either to a thing which is agreeable and suitable to the body or the spirit which is called 'pure good' and 'absolute affection'; and the human soul seeks it, and desires to be taken itself to that, and attain perfection, or it pertains to a thing which is not suitable and not agreeable to the body and the spirit which is called 'pure evil' and absolute defect; and the human soul always flies from that and has a natural aversion towards that. From the first comes 'friendship' and from the second 'enmity'. So, the first round is knowledge, the second round is affection, and third round is love. And one cannot reach the world of love which is the highest of all, unless he makes two rounds of the stair from knowledge and affection."

6. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 155.

of such a knowledge. This knowledge comes through faith, reflection, reasoning and intuition (*ʿilm al-Mukāshafa*), the enumeration being in the ascending order or spiritual development. Love of God is associated, in the heart of the seeker, with every type of super-perceptual knowledge of God. But, the highest and the most complete love is associated with intuition, the highest type of knowledge.

Why should a person feel pleasure in the knowledge of God and direct his love to Him? Al-Ghazzālī answers this question by explaining that God is the supreme object of love because He is the ultimate and absolute source of all the causes which lie behind the objects of our love.

The impulsion to love may be broadly attributed to four causes : (1) Love of the self :⁷ Every living individual is impelled to struggle for its own preservation. At the perceptual level, man strives for his existence not because of his fear of death or of Divine retribution after death but simply because he loves to exist. He loves not only his self as such but also its perfection. He dislikes his imperfections because every imperfection implies a defect of some good quality of the self. Next to the self and its perfection, a person loves that on which all this depends, e.g., his limbs, strength, wealth, progeny, family, friends, tribes, etc.⁸ (2) Love of a benefactor for the benefits received from him : A man's love for his benefactor⁹ is nothing but a desire for the preservation of those who minister to his desire for self-preservation. It is a form of self-love. The benefactor is not love for his own sake as the self is. This love may cease when the benefits cease, even if the benefactor be still alive. It is more or less directly proportional to the urgency of the gifts received. (3) Love of beauty : Beauty is loved for its own sake irrespective of any benefit or gain. Its apprehension

7. Ibid., p. 255.

8. Ibid. His love in al-Ghazzālī's opinion for his son appears to be unselfish, but a close inspection will reveal that he loves him, because he finds in him his own preservation and perfection. In the same way in the preservation of the tribe he sees his own preservation. His son represents him even after his death. Thus, he lives further on in his son who is his own flesh and blood.

9. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 255-56.

gives rise to pleasant aesthetic feelings¹⁰ which constitute and end in themselves. The quality of beauty resides in the harmony and perfection of objects. Beautiful objects include not only perceptible bodies like the human limbs, but also conceptual forms, e.g., character, virtue, knowledge.¹¹ We often love those who have gone before us and whose excellent qualities of heart, we have never directly observed. If some persons, for example, love Abū Bakr and 'Umar, it is because they represented in their persons and conduct the highest expressions of some of the noblest qualities of the heart such as knowledge, power, devotion, love, courage, piety, etc., which enabled them to control and curb their baser nature and develop their nobler and higher self. These qualities did not die with them, after their bones and flesh had decomposed and disappeared.¹² (4) Love based on affinity between two souls : Good souls are naturally attracted to each other.

Al-Ghazzālī explains how God holds all the causes that inspire man to love. Therefore, He alone is worthy of love. Love for the Prophet is also excellent since it leads to love of God. Those who love objects other than God, do not have real knowledge of God. Real knowledge of God is the source of love of God.

Since man loves the self he must love God who is his Creator and also the Creator of what he desires for his preservation and perfection. Man cannot achieve anything without His grace and blessing.

The second cause, too, must lead man to love God Who is the ultimate Benefactor. All the benefits are received from Him alone. The philanthropist is only the instrument of the Divine Benefactor. The beneficence of man is born of his selfish motives. He expects and longs for something better

10. Ibid., p. 256.

11. Ibid.

12. How a man has come to appreciate these qualities is well known. He has been hearing all his life the stories of their valour, their self-sacrifice their charity, etc., which have made lasting impression on him, without himself being the recipient of favours, etc. There is beauty in their actions, which is capable of making a stirring appeal to his inner self.

than what he sacrifices. For instance, he hopes to receive in return popularity, influence, or gratification of some of his desires.¹³ God does not expect anything from His creatures and has no selfish end in view.

The third cause of love is also present in God. He possesses the qualities of power, knowledge and beauty to an absolutely supreme degree. These qualities as man discerns them in himself are the gifts of God. As compared with God in respect of these qualities, man is a non-entity. God's knowledge is boundless, His power absolute and His beauty perfect. Therefore, God alone deserves complete and exclusive love.

Further, man possesses a certain affinity or likeness to Allāh.¹⁴ It is evident from the Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth Man is enjoined to adorn himself with the virtues of Allāh. "Characterize yourself," said the Prophet, "with the virtues of Allāh,"¹⁵ e.g., knowledge, love, charity, etc. But there is also a deeper correspondence and affinity between man and God which is hinted at in various verses of the Qur'ān, e.g., "And they ask thee about the soul, say that the soul is an affair of God."¹⁶ "When I made him and breathed into him of My soul."¹⁷ "We have made thee a Vicegerent on the earth."¹⁸ But this deeper affinity, al-Ghazzālī says, is impossible to express in words. It can only be experienced and realized by those who enjoy intimacy with God.

The realization that God possesses all the four factors which condition love to an infinite and perfect degree, and that He and none else deserves our love and adoration comes to man by hear-say, by thought and reflection, or by direct intuitive knowledge of God. When love of everything except God is entirely obliterated from the heart so that man lives, breathes and acts in and for God, and finds no joy, or peace

13. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 257. Al-Ghazzālī would have been counted as a gross hedonist had he not mentioned also the fourth cause of love.

14. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 263.

15. Cf. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 263.

16. Qur'ān, xvii, 85.

17. Qur'ān, xv, 29.

18. Qur'ān, xxxviii, 27; Cf. also the Ḥadīth: 'God created man in His own image' (*Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 263).

except in that which relates to Him, when he has wholly purified himself through *'Ilm al-Mu'āmalā* and has attained to *'Ilm al-Mukāshafa* then alone he reaches the stage of complete love.

That God also loves man is proved by a number of verses in the Qur'ān, such as, "He loves them and they love Him; Verily Allāh loves the repentant and those who purify themselves," etc.¹⁹ Now, love means an inclination towards an agreeable object. This inclination is the impulse to satisfy a need. Need implies a defect, want of something, an urge towards the perfection of what is an imperfection. It is self-evident that such an inclination in God towards anything is impossible. God has no need, no defect and imperfection. Therefore, the word love when used for God cannot have the same meaning as when it is used for man. Similarly, all other words when used for God have a divine connotation.²⁰ God is the embodiment of perfection. No change can affect Him. So His love is quite different from man's love. Then what is His love like? When God loved His creatures, He loved them, not as separate beings from Himself, for affection to anything other than Himself will employ an imperfection or need in Him. It may be said that God's love for men is like His love for His own works, which means that He alone exists.

Further, God's love for man means that He removes the veil from the heart of man or draws him nearer, or that God had so ordained since the beginning that man should be able to approach Him. Now, if love is attributed to the eternal will of God, through which man has become able to approach Him, God's love for man will be eternal.²¹ But, if God's love for man is attributed to His removal of veil from the heart of man, it will become Ḥādīth (created, new), because of the newness of the cause. This is impossible. In fact all that happens, is due to the purification of the heart, which also must be in consonance with the will of God. Purification of the heart has its natural consequences. Again, nearness to

19. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 280 ff; Qur'ān, v, 55 and ii, 222.

20. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 281.

21. Ibid.

God does not mean that any change can take place in God, for God is unchangeable. So whatever happens, happens to man. Man becomes nearer to God not in space and time but in good qualities, by controlling his appetites, anger, etc. In this way the position of man is elevated without any difference occurring in God's position. In short, God's love for man means that after man has purified his heart, God admits him to His proximity and removes the veil from his heart in order to enable him to observe Him with his heart's eye.

Love expresses itself in the conduct of man. The tongue, the eyes, the lips and all the bodily organs express it. The man who loves God is desirous of union with God. Therefore, a lover of God loves death, for it is a means of achieving the cherished end. Only in one case he may not desire to die for the time being, namely when he is not quite prepared to meet his beloved. In such circumstances he wants to prepare himself better by means of more worship and more acts of piety.

He who loves God is wholly under the care of God.²² God looks after all his deeds and thoughts. He is his adviser, the cleanser of his heart and the mover of his limbs for good actions. He makes him concentrate all his thoughts on one object, i.e., Him-self. He removes the veil that lies between Himself and the creature. The will of such a man tends to become the will of God.

One who loves God loves all His creatures, even sinners.²³ He loves sinners for they are God's creatures though he hates their sins. He does not love anything which is against God. But his actions are based on equity and justice, not on prejudice, "They are hard upon the unbelievers and merciful to one another."²⁴

Other signs of man's love for God are that he likes to be alone, to sing hymns to God, to find consolation and comfort in being obedient to God. One who loves God, also stands

22. Ibid., pp. 282.

23. Ibid., p. 286.

24. Qur'ān, xlix, 29.

in awe of Him. Just as the knowledge of His beauty begets love, so the knowledge of His Sublime Majesty begets awe.

In short, love is the essence of religion. All the highest social and moral virtues are borne of man's love for God. All that is not the fruit of this love is to be considered as the result of pursuit of appetites and passions. And whatever is the result of appetites and passions is a vice.

Besides the above-mentioned signs of love, there are some specific virtues, which follow from it. In fact, they are the higher aspects of love itself. They are *shawq* (yearning) *unr* (affability) and *ridā* (resignation).

When the lover casts his eyes upon the all-perfect Beauty there arises in his heart a restlessness and found yearning (*shawq*)²⁵ to reach Him.

When the lover is overwhelmed with the joy of *unr* (nearness) to Allāh, the experience of the Divine Presence through *'Ilm al-mukāshafa* is dominant, and his eye is set only upon that which has been revealed to him and is present to his inner perception, and not upon that which is still veiled.²⁶

When the lover arrives at this stage and happens to think of the majesty and the absolute self-sufficiency of the Beloved, and the possibility of his falling away from Him, he begins to experience trepidation (*khauf*).²⁷

To be always resigned to God's (*ridā*) is a state that emerges from man's love for God as also from the virtue which the soul achieves when it reaches closest to Allāh. The seeming contradictions and doubts accompanying these experiences cannot be completely resolved till one becomes gifted with the knowledge of God.²⁸

When man is given a vision of Allāh in the Heaven, he will be permitted to ask for whatever he desires. He will then ask for what he desires, but those in the highest stages of the Heaven will ask only for the *Ridā* of the Beloved. God will

25. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 291.

26. Ibid., p. 291.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid., pp. 294 ff.

be pleased with them. This supreme blessing of the pleasure of Allāh will be granted only to those who are ever pleased with Him. "O soul that art at rest! Return to thy Lord, well-pleased (with Him), well pleasing (Him), so enter into the fold of My servants, and enter into My garden."²⁹

Some people, who believe that in suffering and in things against one's will only patience is possible and *riḍā* is unimaginable, deny the fact of love altogether. Anyone engaged in doing any serious work does not often notice any noise, or other distraction. One engaged in fighting does not often know that he is wounded and does not feel pain until afterwards when he sees the blood flowing. Then again, often it so happens that one indulges in the love of certain things which entail hardship and one is conscious of it, yet instead of being sorry he is pleased with it, because of the achievement of his aim in the end. For instance, the hardships of travel may be cheerfully accepted because of the prospect of reaching the destination. Now, when the pains from other sources can be pleasant, how much more pleasing would be the pains coming from the beloved. An instance is furnished by the affairs of mankind, in their mutual relationships, namely that of a beloved seen with the bodily eye, about which one is always conscious that his origin lies only in a dirty water, and even now he carries within his body nothing else besides filth. Consider then the position in which God stands as the beloved, whose beauty which is perfect, is seen with the heart's eye. How grand, how majestic, how full of splendour should it be?

There are several problems involved in *riḍā*. The first is the possibility of *riḍā* in the most acute or prolonged suffering.³⁰ There is overwhelming evidence of innumerable causes of men and women who suffered death and the most cruel tortures and pains cheerfully because they were convinced that it was the will and pleasure of Allāh. There are grades of cheerful submission to the will of Allāh. The first is the hope of a reward in the next world. The next is the feeling that whatever is befalling him is due to the will

29. Qur'ān, lxxxix, 27, 30.

30. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 297 ff.

of his Beloved, hence he must bear it cheerfully, though apart from the Divine will he may have his own will, too. The highest stage is reached when the desire of the lover becomes identified with the will of his Beloved and then it gives the highest pleasure. Such instances are met with in life amongst the lovers of mortals. No wonder that this love should be found even to a higher degree in those who have realized the infinite and eternal beauty and goodness of Allāh.³¹

The second problem involved in the conception of *riḍā* is this: As God is the source of all good and of all evil, should a man, who is ever pleased with Allāh, welcome sin and evil in himself as in others? According to al-Ghazzālī though evil may ultimately be traced to God, He is neither pleased with it nor with evil doer through whose actions (*hasb*) the evil has materialized. God's lover does not ask the why. He hates evil, and is opposed to it, yet remains reconciled to the fact that it exists in the universe because it is not independent of the will of God.³²

It may be asserted that according to the Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth one must be satisfied with what is decreed by God. It is impossible to conceive that sin is not decreed by God for, then it must be caused by some one else and this would contradict the Unity of God. If it is decreed by God, to regard it evil and be angry at it is to regard what is decreed by God as an evil. How can these contradictions be reconciled? How can *riḍā* and dissatisfaction be referred to the same thing at the same time? Only people weak in understanding and ignorant of the secrets of knowledge doubt the matter and regard silence over forbidden things as the stage of satisfaction (*Riḍā*) and call it good character. *Riḍā* and dissatisfaction are mutually exclusive and contradictory when both are referred to the same object at the same time from the same point of view. But, if dissatisfaction is from one point of view and *Riḍā* from another they cannot be regarded as contradicting each other. Even sin can be considered from two points of view. It may be considered

31. *Ibid.*, p. 300.

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 302-303.

firstly, with reference to God because it happened as an act of God, by His power and in accordance with his intention. From this point of view, satisfaction may be expressed with sin. He is the absolute Master and has right to do as He likes. The other consideration is from the point of view of man. The sin resulting from action is a quality of his conduct and it indicates that he has incurred the anger of God and that God has brought about the causes of anger and disgrace in him. From this point of view sin is bad and must be despised. But, the complete understanding of this problem involves the problem of predestination and relates to the *ʿIlm al-Mukāshafa*.

Lastly, *Riḍā* may be said to entail rejection of prayer on the part of the lover whose pleasure is the will of the beloved. Seeking through prayer forgiveness, safety from sins and all forms of evil, and all that is good, is enjoyed by the Qurʾān as a form of worship. This was the constant practice of the Prophet. Praying to God for forgiveness is not against the pleasure of God. We must let our souls rise in prayers to God, for such is the will of God. Prayer induces a state of humility and meekness towards God, purges and cleanses the heart, opens the breast, and makes one more susceptible to Divine influence and knowledge.³³

To flee from a place stricken with sin or plague is, again, not contrary to *Riḍā*. The Prophet forbade fleeing from a plague-stricken place not because it was against *Riḍā*, but because if all healthy persons deserted the place there would be none left to look after the sick and the dead. The Prophet compared it to flight from the fighting line.³⁴

Al-Ghazzālī cites numerous traditions about the lovers of God showing how they were pleased with God and how life too was pleased with them.³⁵ This is indeed the attainment of the highest spiritual progress on earth. Man's highest pleasure lies in the purest thought and words and in the noblest conduct, for such is always the will of God.

33. Ibid., pp. 302-303.

34. Ibid., p. 303.

35. Ibid., pp. 304 ff.

But, people differ in the intensity and purity of their love for God,³⁶ because the grades of the love of this world and the knowledge of God are different with different persons. There are three such grades : (1) Those who have heard the qualities and names of God and have simply learned them and know nothing more. Sometimes, they fail to understand the meanings of these things properly, yet they accept them and believe in them, worshipping God without entering into discussion about Him and His qualities. These men are called the men who are in the right.³⁷ (2) Those who have false knowledge and are misguided. (3) Those who have true knowledge. These are the intimate³⁸ and are nearest to God. As has been said, man's love for God increases with his knowledge of God. The whole universe is His work. The more one knows of His work, the more one knows of Him. The grades of knowledge of His work and of the knowledge of the universe, are innumerable. That is why different individual's love for God differs so much in degree. By increasing our knowledge about the creation which is the act of God, our knowledge of God is increased. Increase in this knowledge is accompanied by a corresponding increase in their love for God which is the source of eternal joy and bliss.

36. Ibid., pp. 284-85.

37. *Aṣḥāḥ al-Yamin*, lit., people of the right-hand side.

38. *Ṣiddiqūn*, the most truthful.

CHAPTER XII

THE VISION OF GOD

AL-Ghazzālī upheld the view that in accordance with Islāmic principles the ultimate end of a man's endeavour in this world is the vision of God which will become possible in the life hereafter. The Qur'ān declares the sight of God or his countenance to be the highest felicity of man. "And the good that ye shall give in alms shall redound unto yourself : and ye shall not give but as seeking the face of God."¹ "And who, from desire to see the face of their Lord, are constant amid trials, and observe prayer and give alms in secret and openly, out of what we have bestowed upon them, and turn aside evil by good : for these is the recompense of that abode."² "And who offereth not favours to any one for the sake of recompense, but only as seeking the face of his Lord, the most High."³ "And thrust not thou away those who cry to their Lord, at morn and evening, craving to behold His face."⁴ "Be patient with those who call upon their Lord at morn and evening, seeking his face."⁵ "Whatever ye put out at usury to increase it with the substance of others shall have no increase from God : but whatever ye shall give in alms, as seeking the face of God, shall be doubled to you."⁶

The phrase 'the face of Allāh' which occurs frequently in the Qur'ān was interpreted by the early theologians as the sight or vision of God. And it was considered by them the highest end of man. They held out hopes that at least some of the believers will be able to see God.⁷ They "agreed that in the next world God, the Almighty, will create in man a perception in the sense of vision, to see God without

1. Qur'ān, ii, 272.

2. Qur'ān, xiii, 22.

3. Qur'ān, xcii, 19-20.

4. Qur'ān, vi, 52.

5. Qur'ān, xviii, 29.

6. Qur'ān, xxx, 39.

7. Macdonald, D.B., *Aspects of Islām*, pp. 186-87.

mediation."⁸ The Mu'tazilites, on the contrary, regarded the vision of God as an impossibility, because it involved a directing of the eyes by the seer, and a position of the seen.⁹ They argued that God being beyond space, can never be delimited and assigned a particular place and direction. Consistent with their position they tried to explain away the passages of the Qur'ān bearing on the subject. To meet their objections al-Ghazzālī argued that this vision had no special claim to the eye or any other sense organ. It was a complete knowledge when God could create in man without the mediation of the senses. Just as the conception of God as we have it here, was free from the implications of spatial and temporal characteristics, similarly the immediate knowledge of God, i.e., the special perception or the vision of Him, in the next world would be from such limitations."¹⁰

Al-Ghazzālī explains the nature of the vision of God as the perfect and direct knowledge of God which will constitute the highest bliss for the percipient.

In this world the believer has the indirect, inferential knowledge of God. In the next world, the direct knowledge of God will become possible. It will be both direct and perfect.¹¹ The conception of God and the vision of God differ in this respect that the latter is by far a more vivid, more complete and more direct experience than the former. To use an analogy from the present life, this difference may be compared to the perceptual knowledge of a physical object which is distinctly more comprehensive and direct than the mere idea or image of it.¹²

The knowledge of God acquired through the vision is expressed by such terms as *Rū'yā* (vision), *Liqā'* (meeting), *Mashāhada* (seeing), *Wajh* (face), *Nāzar* (look).¹³ It is the actual seeing of God. One can think of God here on earth

8. Shahābuddin Suhrawardī Maqtūl : *Three treatises on Mysticism*, (Ed. and Tr. by O. Spies); *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 264.

9. Macdonald, *Development of Muslim Theology*, p. 145.

10. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 268.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid., p. 267.

13. Ibid., pp. 264, 265, 268; *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, p. 2.

and have some knowledge about Him but cannot see Him.¹⁴ The highest knowledge of God on earth is not, then, direct or complete knowledge. On this earth Moses was told, "Thou cannot see me,"¹⁵ nor could Muḥammad, the Prophet have a vision of God here except through a veil interposed between.¹⁶ "Eyes apprehend Him not,"¹⁷ is the verdict of the Qur'ān. True knowledge cannot come until we have "shuffled off this mortal coil." It is after death that God will say to man, "We have stripped off thy veil from thee so thy sight today is keen."¹⁸

The percipient will experience the highest bliss in his vision of God.¹⁹ This happiness is due to his love for God. Of all the pleasures that a man can experience, the pleasure of the vision of God is the highest in value, perfection and permanence. It has been shown before that the pleasures of the intellect are superior to the pleasures of the senses. But, among intellectual pleasures, the pleasure which is derived from knowledge of God is the highest pleasure, but the pleasure of the knowledge is inferior to the pleasure one will derive from the vision of God.²⁰ This vision will involve pleasure without pain, wealth without poverty, perfection without defect, joy without sorrow, glory without disgrace, and knowledge without ignorance.²¹

There are two conditions which a man must fulfil in order to qualify himself for having God's vision, viz., knowledge and love of God. Knowledge of God in this world is conceptual. It will lead to the vision of God, i.e., to the direct, immediate and complete knowledge of God in the next. But, the love that the believer has in this world will lead to his appreciation of, and joy in, the vision.

The conceptual knowledge of God that one possesses in this world will reach culmination in the vision of God in the

14. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 268.

15. Qur'ān vii, 153; *Iḥyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 268.

16. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 268.

17. Qur'ān, vi, 104.

18. Qur'ān, ix, 22.

19. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 268, 270.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 270.

21. *Mizān al-'Amal*, p. 3.

life hereafter.²² Man will rise after death with the same faculties and ideals which he had when he died. He who has no knowledge of God, will not have His vision. The fullness of this vision will be in direct proportion to the comprehensiveness of his knowledge. God is one, but different persons will see Him differently, according to the different degrees of knowledge they possess of Him.

No believer is without some knowledge of God. This knowledge and freedom from the love of this world will pass on to the life after death. But, no heart will pass on to the next world absolutely pure. It will consequently be purged by God by punishment or grace before it becomes worthy of the vision of God.

So, the vision of God will be determined by the knowledge of God one possesses in this world; and the joy of it will be proportionate to the love of God one has in this world. The joy which the Prophet will derive out of his vision of God will be quite different from the joy of the learned, and that of the learned will be different from that of the gnostic (*'Ārif*) whose heart is dominated by the love of God. The heart which is dominated with the love of God in this world will find more pleasure from the sight of God than the one which is full of the love of the world. If persons with equal faculty of vision, gaze on the same beautiful face, the person who has love for the face will get more pleasure than the other who has no love for it.

But, the love of God can only enter a pure heart which is free from the love of this world. On the contrary, if man's heart is full of the love of this world, he will find the next world quite strange to him and the vision which will give joy to other will cause misery to him, since in the next life he will miss the filth of this world. Spiritual pleasure will increase his misery as he has no affinity with spiritual things. One should, therefore, seek affinity with God by loving him. This love can be acquired through the purification of the heart, for sins form barrier between man and God. Therefore, the Qur'ān says, "And undone is he who hath corrupted it (soul)."²³

22. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 268-69.

23. Qur'ān, xci, 10.

The case of a person who desires to know God but who is immersed in desires for material things can be compared to that of a lover who tries to see his sweet-heart's face in the darkness while he is being constantly tormented by snakes and scorpions. It is evident that such a person cannot enjoy the sight of his sweet heart in the presence of such hindrances. Now suppose, he sees his sweet heart's beautiful face in broad daylight after the troublesome snakes and scorpions have left him, his joy will be unmixed. Similarly, God's lover, being released from worldly desires, will have nothing to mar his happiness when he comes face to face with God.

Deeds done on earth will be evaluated in the world to come and places in Heaven and Hell will be allotted according to each person's deserts. No heart will depart from the world free from some impurity. Hence, no one will escape punishment, even though it be nothing more than pain in the grave.²⁴ There will be different grades of Heaven and Hell for men according to the worth, from the religious point of view, of the deeds done by them here. He divides men according to their spiritual grades into four main classes, viz., the doomed (*Hālikūn*), the redeemed (*Mu'adhdhabūn*) the saved (*Najūm*), and the meritorious (*Fāizūn*).²⁵ The doomed will be those who do not believe in God. They will be condemned to eternal Hell-fire. The redeemed will be those who in spite of their faith in the oneness of God, have sinned in this world. After appropriate punishment they will be set free. The third group will consist of those who will have no meritorious deeds to their credit but will be just set free. The people of the last group will be those who have won rewards. The most exalted in rank among this group will be privileged to see God face to face.

Knowledge, love and the consequent vision of God are all relative in the sense that no man can achieve perfection in them. Each man possesses them to certain degree with the unlimited possibility of advancing further. A man can never achieve perfect knowledge of God, i.e., knowledge which

24. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 268.

25. *Ibid.*, pp. 21 ff.

God has Himself. There will always remain in him a yearning for God even after He has revealed Himself to him in the next world. His vision will give satisfaction and joy, but the yearning to know more of Him will remain, it will cause continual increase in knowledge, and give rise to new satisfaction and new joy, to ever increasing bliss.

PART FOUR

Al-Ghazzālī's Theory of Ethics : (*Concl'd.*)

Its Practical Aspects

CHAPTER XIII

VIRTUES AND VICES PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS

I

EVERYTHING in the world, says al-Ghazzālī, has been created with a purpose. Man, being the most exalted of all creation, has a supreme purpose which is to realize the moral and through the proper exercise of the qualities inherent in him. He has to develop those qualities which facilitate his moral progress and subjugate those which hinder it.¹ The former are called by al-Ghazzālī *al-Munijyāt* (the redeeming qualities) or *al-Faḍai'l* (virtues), and the latter are termed *al-Muhlikāt* (the destructive qualities) or *ar-Radhā'il* (vices). In order to achieve the moral end, one has to build a good character which comprises all the virtues, the most important of which is love of God. The actual worth of a virtue is essentially determined by the part it plays in helping man to achieve perfection whereby he attains nearness to God.

Man can attain perfection only by acquiring qualities which are akin to those of angels who are devoid of passions. He ought to subjugate the life of passions to the life of reason.² When he attains the life of reason he begins to see his ideal vividly, consequently he gives himself over to God, lives in Him breathes in Him. Al-Ghazzālī gives an exposition of the qualities, *i.e.*, of virtues and vices which make or mar character. He says that man has two forms, *Khalq* (the physical form) and *Khulq* (the spiritual form).³ "*Khulq* (character) is the spiritual constitution of man, his natural self from which actions proceed spontaneously and easily, without much deliberation, hesitation or restraint on his

1. The orthodox theologians characterise action, and not qualities, as good, bad or indifferent.

2. *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, p. 46.

3. *Ibid.*

part."⁴ It involves : (a) the ability to perform actions both good and bad, (b) control over action, i.e., actions are voluntary, (c) the knowledge of actions, and (d) a state of the self which is inclined towards both good and bad.⁵

Character is not to be identified with an action, or a faculty or knowledge⁶ because none of these are in themselves good or bad except in relation to character. But action, faculty and knowledge are essential to the functioning of character. Character does not always express itself in action, for many men who possess a generous character may be prevented by poverty from exercising the virtue of generosity, others who are really avaricious, may spend money hypocritically. A faculty is not character, it is amoral. It is related to both generosity and avarice, and a man has the option and the power to choose between them. Knowledge too is not character as it pertains to both good and bad. Character is inherent in the self; it is permanent and not incidental or momentary. A man, who gives away a large sum of money on the spur of the moment under the influence of some passing emotion, is not really generous. He will be of generous character only when the giving of money becomes a permanent and natural mode of his behaviour. Again, he cannot be considered generous if he hesitates and thinks of the *pros* and *cons* before giving away his wealth. Similarly, if one overcomes his anger by a special effort of the will, after a good deal of internal conflict, his character does not possess forbearance. Good character is, in truth, the beauty of the soul, and like the beauty of the body it depends on the harmonious and proportionate development of all its elements.⁷

4. Ibid.

فالخلق عبادة عن هيئة في النفس راسخة عنها تصدر الانفعال بسهولة

ويسر من سير حاجة الى فكر وروية -

5. Ibid., p. 46.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid., al-Ghazzālī calls the actions *Jamīl* and *Qabīḥ*, (Beautiful and ugly). He does not make any difference between good and beautiful or between bad and ugly. In connection with *Ḥasn al-Khulq* and *Su'al-Khulq* he frequently uses the words *Jamīl* and *Qabīḥ*, the one for morally good and the other for the morally bad.

The fundamental elements of the inner constitution of man are reason or wisdom ('*Aql* or *Hikma*), self-assertion (*Ghaḍab*), and appetite (*Shahwa*).⁸ To form a beautiful character these elements must work together in harmony, observing the golden mean, each being in the correct proportion.⁹ Further, justice ('*Adl*) is the power which directs these elements to achieve the golden mean and to preserve their harmony.¹⁰ When self assertion and appetite develop in excess and get out of control, knowledge is easily exploited by them. The best development of self-assertion and appetite consists in their subservience to wisdom, that is, in their activity according to the dictates of reason and the religious law.¹¹ Their right development produces qualities which are conducive to the spiritual progress of the *self*; while their excess or deficiency produces traits which hinder and frustrate its growth. The inter-action of intellect, self-assertion and appetite¹² produces virtues and vices of the following kinds :

I. Wisdom. (a) When knowledge or reason is rightly developed and becomes perfect, it is wisdom (*Hikma*).¹³ Knowledge has two aspects : theoretical and practical.¹⁴ Theoretical knowledge constitutes real wisdom (*Hikma al-Haqiqiyya*) because it operates in higher regions. It can distinguish the true from the false in judgments, the right from the wrong in beliefs and the good from the evil in actions.¹⁵ It grasps all abstract and universal truths and acquires exact knowledge which holds good for all times, places and conditions, like the knowledge of God, of His attributes, of the mysteries of the earth, of the Heaven, and so on. Practical reason (*Hikma al-'Amaliyya*), on the other hand, functions in lower regions. It controls appetite, self-assertion and their numerous offshoots, and helps to form all personal and social virtues. If it fails to control them,

8. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. III, p. 47; *Mizān al-'Amal*, p. 43.

9. Ibid., *Mizān al-'Amal*, pp. 43-44.

10. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. III, p. 47.

11. Ibid.

12. *Mizān al-'Amal*, p. 71; *Iḥyā'*, Vol. III, p. 47; pp. 9-10.

13. Qur'ān, ii, 269, "He who is given wisdom is given much good."

14. *Mizān al-'Amal*, p. 65.

15. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. III, p. 47.

corresponding vices result. Its commands are not absolute and eternal. On a particular occasion it may prescribe that money ought to be spent. On another occasion, it may forbid its expenditure. The injunctions of practical reason are relative to particular situations. Different kinds of advice may be given on different occasions to different persons. It is not an absolutely true wisdom, but a hand-maid to it.

Wisdom is manifested in the following virtues :¹⁶

- (i) *Husn at-Tadbīr* (administrative ability). This ability enables one to find quickly the best ways of achieving a great good for oneself or for others, e.g., in the administration of the state or family, or in overcoming enemies or evils. This virtue is exercised particularly in momentous affairs. When wisdom is exercised in matters of little significance, it is distinguished from *Husn at-Tadbīr* and is called *Kais* (tact).
- (ii) *Fawdat adh-Dhihan* (acute-mindedness) is the ability which helps in arriving at the correct decision when opinions are divided.
- (iii) *Naqāyat ar-Rā'e* (clearness of vision) is the insight which helps one to adopt the right means for achieving the best results in a given problem.
- (iv) *Ṣawāb az-Zann* (shrewdness) is the ability to discover the subtle points in thought or action and to accept truths straight away on the evidence of experience without getting into fallacious arguments about it.

(b) If the development of knowledge follows the wrong lines, it gives rise to cunning (*Khubth*). Such wrong development manifests itself in the following vices :¹⁷

Dahā' (craftiness) lies in selecting means which are not straight-forward, and are only seemingly but not really good for realizing one's motives. A low and unfair motive is *jarbaza* (deceitfulness).

(c) If knowledge is deficient in quantity in comparison with courage and temperance, its deficiency manifests itself in foolishness (*Bulha*) and generates the following vices :¹⁸

16. *Mizān al-'Amal*, p. 71, Cf. *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, p. 47, pp. 9-10.

17. *Mizān al-'Amal*, p. 71; Cf. *Ibid*.

18. *Mizān al-'Amal*, p. 72.

- (i) *Ghamārah* (inexperience) is sound perceptual ability but lack of the wisdom that comes with sufficient experience.
- (ii) *Humq* (stupidity) is the adoption of wrong methods for the realization of one's ends.
- (iii) *Junūn* (mania) or derangement of the power of imagination. A *majnūn* always pursues a preposterous end, wandering away from what is natural and reasonable. *Humq* consists in committing errors in the choice of means, but *junūn* means pursuit of an abnormal end.

II. (a) Self-Assertion is courage (*Shajā'a*) functioning under the proper control of reason. It begets the following virtues :¹⁹

- (i) *Karam* (generosity) is the mean between *badhakh* (extravagance) and *badhala* (miserliness). It manifests itself in spending with pleasure for high and noble objects.
- (ii) *Najdah* (bravery) is the opposite of cowardice, and expresses itself in fearlessly facing death, when the dictates of reason make it necessary.
- (iii) *Kibr an-Nafs* (self-respect). It is the mean between pride and self-abasement, which helps man to make the right valuation of events. One remains so composed and dignified that unexpected joys and sorrows do not elate or depress him.
- (iv) *Ihtimāl* (endurance). It is the mean between rashness and cowardice, enables a person to remain calm in difficult and painful circumstances.
- (v) *Hilm* (forbearance). It is the mean between cruel and heartless revenge on the one hand, and lack of self-respect on the other. It makes a man dignified.
- (vi) *Thabāt* (firmness) is the quality of staunch-heartedness and unflinchingness.
- (vii) *Shahāma* (gravity) implies keen and persistent devotion to good acts for the realization of goodness and beauty.
- (viii) *Nail* (dignity) is the ability to find pleasure in deeds and enterprises of high character.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 72 ff, *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, p. 47, pp. 9-10.

(ix) *Waqār* (weightness). It is the mean between pride and humility and helps one to bear oneself with propriety and good demeanour.

(b) Self-Assertion, if developed in excess of reason and appetite, becomes rashness (*Tahawwūr*) and is manifested in the following vices :²⁰

(i) *Badhakha* (lavishness) is spending on vanities like self-adornment, ostentation, self-glorification, or boasting.

(ii) *Jasārat* (audaciousness) is being fool-hardy, courting danger and death unnecessarily.

(iii) *Tabajjuh* (boasting) is considering oneself more exalted than one is.

(iv) *'Ujb* (self-love) is produced by pride, which implies over-estimation of one's real worth.

(c) If self-assertion is deficient, it becomes cowardice (*Jubn*) which begets the following vices :²¹

(i) *Badhāla* (meanness) is unwillingness to spend money even when it is one's moral duty to do so, yet to boast of one's large-heartedness.

(ii) *Nukūl* (shirking); Shirking from death on account of fear at a moment when one ought to face death willingly.

(iii) *Ṣighr an-Nafs* (self-abasement) is sense of inferiority and incapacity to assert oneself.

(iv) *Hala'* (terror-stricken) is chicken-heartedness.

(v) *Infirāk* (shamelessness) is complete absence of self-respect, and remaining unprovoked by the grossest insult.

(vi) *Takhā'sus* (abasement) is the sense of being too low and mean, etc.

III. (a) If appetite exists in right relationship with reason and courage, it is *'Iffah* (chastity, or temperance), which begets the following virtues :²²

(i) *Ḥayā'* (modesty) and *Khajal* (shyness). They represent the mean between licentiousness and prudery. Some maintain that modesty is produced in the presence of others when one's humility is aroused by the consciousness of one's defects. Others hold that it is a feeling of consciousness of one's inferiority in the presence of a superior person. Still others think that it is the pain that is reflected in facial expression when one encounters some vice or indecorum. One feels uneasy when one encounters what one considers low and undesirable. This consciousness acts as a protection for the soul and deters one from evil.

(ii) *Musāmaḥa* (forgiveness) is foregoing certain rights willingly in favour of others. It is the mean between complete renunciation and overinsistence on one's rights.

(iii) *Ṣabr* (patience) is the struggle of the self against passions and appetite, and keeping oneself away from low and unlawful pleasures.

(iv) *Sakhā'* (munificence). It is the mean between extravagance and extreme miserliness. It implies spending with pleasure where it is good to do so, but avoiding expenditure on luxuries.

(v) *Ḥusn at-taqdīr*. Ability to estimate correctly.

(vi) *Inbisāt* (cheerfulness).

(vii) *Damātha* is gentleness of deposition.

(viii) *Ḥusn al-Haiyat* (pleasing appearance) is the desire for good appearance with adornment which is reasonable and modest and has no element of vanity in it.

(ix) *Qanā'a* (contentment). It consists in devising means of honest livelihood, preferring poverty to dishonest means.

(x) *Hudūw* (tranquillity) is remaining gratified with what one gets of higher and nobler pleasures.

(xi) *Ṭalāqa* (geniality) is acquisition of a temperament free from vulgarity and falsehood.

(xii) *Wara'* (piety) is the mean between hypocrisy and rudeness (depravity of character), that is, living a virtuous life for the elevation of character and nearness to God without any element of hypocrisy in it.

20. *Mizān al-'Amal*, pp. 73 ff; Cf. *Ihyā'*. Vol. III, p. 47; Vol. IV, pp. 9-10.

21. *Ibid.*

22. *Mizān al-'Amal*, pp. 75 ff.

- (xiii) *Zarf* (gracefulness and wit) is the mean between moroseness and vulgar and indiscriminate fun. Its possessor talks charmingly with due regard to the status and culture of the persons around and the fitness of the occasion, without descending to vulgarity.
- (xiv) *Musā'da* (helping others) is the mean between cringing and turning one's back upon every body. It means absence of opposition and refusal, and sacrifice of one's interests in helping others.
- (xv) *Tasakhuf* (displeasure) is sorrow at the failure or difficulties experienced by deserving people, and displeasure at the success of the undeserving. It is the opposite of envy and jealousy and of rejoicing over another's misfortunes.
- (b) If appetite is developed in excess of reason and self-assertion, the following vices are produced.²³
- (i) *Waqāha* (shamelessness) is shameless and open indulgence in vice without experiencing any fear of disgrace or dishonour.
- (ii) *Tabdhir* (extravagance) is wasting wealth by spending it blindly and lavishly.
- (iii) *Riyā'* (hypocrisy) is to hanker undeservedly after securing the praise respect of people.
- (iv) *Kazāza* (dryness) is seriousness carried to excess.
- (v) *Majāna* (wantonness or obscenity) is being witty beyond the limits of propriety.
- (vi) *Shakāsa* (barbarity) is sullenness and remorselessness in dealing with men and behaving repulsively towards them.
- (vii) *Tahāshi* (lamentation) is giving vent to one's grief loudly in public.
- (viii) *Hāsad* (envy) is felling unhappy at the success and happiness of deserving people and desiring their downfall.
- (c) Deficiency of appetite produces the following vices :²⁴
- (i) *Takhannuth* (effeminacy) is excess of shyness and constraint inhabiting free talk and action.

23. Ibid., pp. 76 ff.

24. Ibid., pp. 77 ff; *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, p. 47; Vol. IV, pp. 2-10.

- (ii) *Taqīr* (stinginess) is unwillingness to spend where one ought to. This is due to certain delusions : (a) *Bukhl* (miserliness) is parsimony in spending for fear least one should be reduced to poverty and should have to starve and be disgraced by one's enemies. These are only imaginary fears, and are the result of low ideas. (b) *Shuhh* is imaginary fear of poverty and enemies. The prosperous condition of others does not please a man possessed of this vice, since he desires that others should be from him so that he may feel great. This vice is caused by foolishness and ignorance (c) *Lu'm* consists of all the above mentioned vices *La'im* is not ashamed of low actions.
- (iii) *Hatka* (disgracefulness) is indulgence in vices and indifference to self-elevation through virtue.
- (iv) *Malaq* (flattery) is to humble oneself unduly and to flatter people, thus betraying lack of self-respect.
- (v) *Shamātah* (wicked glee at another's misfortune) is feeling happy at the failures and difficulties of people, and blaming them for their faults.

Thus, knowledge, appetite, and self-assertion in right proportions produce perfect and complete character.²⁵ Only the Prophet had them all in perfect proportions. Others possess them in different proportions.²⁶ God's immediate aim in sending prophets was to make the character of their followers perfect, by leading them to the knowledge of God and ultimately to the *summum bonum*.

IV. Justice (*ʿAdl*) is the virtue of keeping to the golden mean between the extremes of knowledge, appetite and self-assertion, and of maintaining a balance between them.²⁷ Its opposite is tyranny (*zulm*), that is, going beyond the prescribed limits. It is the mean between *Ghaban* (misappropriation) and *Taghābun* (losing without any return). Justice requires that one should fulfil one's duties. Justice in

25. *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, p. 47. It will be noticed in the definitions given above that there is overlapping in the conception of the various virtues and vices. Al-Ghazzālī classifies them to bring out general differences to indicate outstanding tendencies.

26. *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, p. 48.

27. *Mizān al-ʿAmal*, pp. 78 ff; *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, p. 47.

politics, for instance, means that different groups in the city be organized with proper attention and with due allowance for the different elements and varying sections of the populations so that it may begin to function as a social unity. Everything should be placed in its proper place, i.e., inhabitants divided into grades or classes, each with definite duties assigned to it.

Thus the four cardinal virtues according to al-Ghazzālī are wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice,²⁸ and the rest follow from them. They are the fundamentals to good character.²⁹

II

Progress in the development of character depends on inherent tendencies, unconscious imitation, and the voluntary efforts of the will.³⁰ Some persons are born with a mental faculty which can help them to acquire complete control over their instincts. In others, the instincts and appetites are

28. Al-Ghazzālī seems to have gone out of his way to create justice as a separate basis of character. In fact, he followed Plato closely. Al-Ghazzālī has pointed out that in all voluntary actions it is the function of reason to direct, to hold the balance between appetition and self-assertion and keep them under its way. Justice is, therefore, implied in reason. The social and political virtues and vices are the outcomes of the proper or improper working of reason, appetition, and self assertion. So the creation of justice as a separate power on this basis is unnecessary. Al-Ghazzālī has mentioned (*Ihyā'*, Vol. III, pp. 9-10) four elements, viz., *Shahwa*, *ghaḍab*, *'aql* and *shatāniya* as constituting human nature. All the qualities of character, he says, proceed from these four elements. *Shatāniya* works through *shahwa* and *ghaḍab*. It appears in the human self only when man is under the sway of these two. When these forces are controlled the satanic element becomes ineffective, which means that it has no direct function to perform. The control of this element does not produce any qualities of character. This element has not been further developed by Al-Ghazzālī in his system of philosophy. When al-Ghazzālī has stated and explained it as one of the four elements of human nature he has finished with this element. He mentions it only to emphasize the wickedness of man. Al-Ghazzālī has probably introduced this element in order to find out a basis either to tackle the problem of evil or to have a ready made agent in the self to act under the influence of the satanic forces in the universe.

29. *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, p. 47.

30. Ibid., pp. 50-52.

inherently strong. Character is affected through the unconscious imitation of those with whom one often associates. The Prophet referred to this unconscious imitation of the habits of others on the part of the child when he said, 'Every child is born in the *'fitra*' it is his parents who make of him a Jew or a Christian, or a Magian."³¹ Good character can also be acquired by a specific effort of the will. It is this effort of the will which determines the moral worth of one's actions. In the beginning such effort would involve great will-power and determination, and would therefore, be necessarily accompanied by pain, but by repetition it may become a habit, and then one would begin to find pleasure in its performance. Perfection of character is attained when one begins to feel pleasure in performing good actions, and pain in doing bad ones.

Al-Ghazzālī believes that man can acquire love for the knowledge of the true nature of things. If no such love exists in the heart, then it is diseased.³² Al-Ghazzālī believes in interaction between the body and the mind and lays great stress on the fact that the habits of the one affect the other. The mental state of a man, whatever it be, affects the internal processes of his body and *vice versa*. Therefore, while discussing the formation of habits, al-Ghazzālī advises that in the beginning outward actions for cultivating desirable habits should be performed even if they are not accompanied by the states of mind which they mean to express. Such actions will induce the desired states of mind and gradually become spontaneous.³³ Man cannot become moral in a day. The significance of single acts lies in the impressions which they leave behind. These impressions, when they become

31. Tradition of the Prophet. (Note : *Fitra* means original purity of design. The meaning of this famous saying of the Prophet is that when a child is born, it is like a blank page capable of receiving any print which is given to it. That is, the child is neither virtuous nor vicious, it takes colour and denomination after it had lived for some time in the society of this world.)

32. Qur'ān, ii, 10 : *فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ*

33. *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, p. 51. Although his view of the relation of the body and the mind is that of the interactionists, according to him the mind is an active force and exerts greater influence.

numerous and repeated, create a new attitude of the mind, and ultimately become the motive power for those very actions which gave them birth.

In short, one who is fortunate in his birth and education and indulges unceasingly in personal effort and retrospection stands a fair chance of achieving an exalted character. But, this can be expected only when one knows the ways of discovering one's faults.³⁴ In order to know his faults, a person should seek a teacher who may know and point them out. He can also ask a sincere, religious and wise friend to watch his states and actions and to inform him as to what is displeasing in his inner and outer character. Further, his enemies are the best means of revealing his faults. The opinions of the enemies may be false because of envy, yet the wise man gets a great deal of benefit from them. And lastly, we can correct ourselves by avoiding what we find displeasing in others, because the evil qualities that others possess may be present in us also. This demands constant watch over one's own actions and diligent self-study through introspection.

The nature and temperament of the individual, his spiritual condition and material circumstances are all, factors which the teacher or guide must take into consideration. For example, to a beginner who is ignorant of religious law, the teacher ought to teach, first of all, the laws of cleanliness, prayer and outer forms of worship. After the outside of the pupil has been well-equipped with external practices and forms of worship, attention should be directed to the cure of his inner vices, which should receive treatment one by one according to the state of the soul. And, when one has come to know one's faults, the best way to get rid of them is to apply the method of administering opposites. For example, a man, who has more property than he needs, should be urged to spend the surplus in the name of God. And so a man with pride ought to be sent to the market to beg, because his vain glory and his empty boastings, the prominent evils of pride, cannot be done away with except by subjecting him to

34. *Iḥyāʾ*, Vol. III, pp. 55-56.

self-humiliation, and there can be no greater self-humiliation than that caused by begging. Other diseases of the soul may be treated in the same manner.

If treatment by the method of opposites is too severe for the pupil the teacher should try to cure an evil by means of a lesser evil, and this lesser evil by means of a still lesser evil, and so on till at the end the smallest evil may be easily cured. The child, for instance, may be drawn towards reading and learning through the attraction of play. As he grows up, the incentives of fine clothes, honour and position, may be used to help him learn bigger and more important things, and finally he may be urged to undertake higher and more serious duties. But, by the time he has learnt to engage in the pursuit of the higher ideals he will have already acquired a taste for higher virtues; this will change his way of thinking and he will easily realize the vanity of clothes, position, worldly honour, and so on. When he has attained this attitude of mind he may be taught to concentrate on virtues for the pleasure of God alone.

But, how is one to know that one is doing everything for the pleasure of God. There are signs by which such a man may be recognized. Every part of the body has a special function of its own. If a part is not able to perform its function, or performs it with difficulty, it is not healthy but diseased. The function of the hand is to grasp, of the eye to see but if the hand cannot grasp and the eye cannot see, or sees with difficulty, they are diseased. The special function of the heart is to acquire knowledge and wisdom, and to worship and love God. It finds pleasure only in the remembrance of God, and prefers this pleasure to all other pleasures; and demands from all parts of the body the realization of this end. Inability or any disability in performing this function will necessarily be due to some disease of the heart. Now, these activities distinguish man from animals. In his habits of eating, drinking, and procreating, man does not differ from animals. The distinctive characteristic of man is his ability to know the nature of things and his acquisition of the knowledge that God is the Creator of all. If one knows

everything and does not know his Creator, he does not know anything. Recognition of God is symbolized by man's love for Him. He who knows Him forgets himself in His love. The criterion of man's love for him is to prefer Him to the world and what it contains. The subsidiary signs of good character are modesty, desire to reform one's self, speaking the truth, doing good, acquiring the qualities of harmlessness, sympathy, kindness, thankfulness, dignity, patience, resignation, humility, piety, silence, cheerfulness avoiding nonsense, etc.³⁵

Al-Ghazzālī's principles of character building are fully illustrated by a study of his views on the education and instruction of children and disciples (*Mridīn*). The education of children is an important duty. A child is a trust in the hands of the parents.³⁶ His heart is like a fine and clean precious stone, without any engraving and writing on it. It is capable of every sort of development. If he is educated in the traditions of goodness, he will surely follow the truth when grown up, and will attain happiness in both the worlds, which will be shared by his parents and teachers also. Lack of proper education ruins the child. In his sins his parents as well as his teachers will have a share.³⁷ Parents should train their children in good conduct, and keep them away from bad company. In the beginning, they should teach them to despise self-adornment, pleasure, comfort, etc.³⁸

The care of the child must commence from the very beginning. First of all, he must be suckled by a virtuous woman. For the milk becomes a part of the child's system, nourishes the body and builds up the mind and influences it for better or for worse.³⁹

When the child has learned to distinguish things still greater care is to be taken. The appearance of the sense of shame marks the beginning of discrimination between good and evil, and the dawn of reason.⁴⁰

35. Ibid., pp. 59-62.

36. Ibid., p. 62.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

The child's first desire is for food.⁴¹ He ought to be taught table manners. He must begin in the name of Allāh, use his right hand, eat what is near him, not look greedily at any one who is eating, avoid haste in eating, chew his food well, not take it in morsels in quick succession, not smear his hand and clothes and not overeat. Some times, he should eat coarse bread in order to get used to it.⁴² Those who eat moderately must be praised before him. He should be taught to give away food to others and become self-sacrificing.

The boy should be taught to prefer plain clothes to coloured or silk dresses. Those dressed in silk and in gaudy colours should be despised before him. He should not be allowed to mix with them.⁴³

Then, he ought to be sent to school and taught the Qur'ān, Ḥadīth, and the stories of the pious people, so that the love of these things may take root in his heart. He must not be allowed to read love poetry and to meet persons who consider it a vehicle of cleverness and wit. Such poetry can only sow the seed of evil in him.⁴⁴

Reward the boy if he does something good, and praise him before the people for it. He will be pleased and encouraged.⁴⁵ Overlook his undesirable acts when they are first committed. Do not let out his secrets. Do not scold him frequently.⁴⁶ If he gets accustomed to scolding he would become insensitive to it, would stick to his fault and acquire evil ways. The father ought to talk to him considerately and seldom scold him. The mother also ought to stop him from evil things. She ought to remind him of his father's warnings.

He must not be given the chance of forming the habit of sleeping in the day-time as it causes laziness. But, he must not be stopped from sleeping in the night except on soft beds.⁴⁷ In short, the lust for comfort in the matter of bed, dressing and food must not be allowed to develop.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid., p. 62 ff.

45. Ibid., p. 63.

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid.

A child must not be allowed to do anything in secret for one does in secret only what one considers evil. If he has the habit of doing everything openly, he will not do anything bad.⁴⁸

He must have a regular walk every day to avoid becoming lazy.⁴⁹ He should be taught to avoid yawning.

He must not boast among his companions of his father's possessions, nor should he be vain of what he eats, wears or possesses. On the contrary, he must behave towards those whom he meets with gentleness and humility.⁵⁰

He ought not to accept things from others. If he is rich, he should be advised to spend on others. If he is poor, he should be told that to accept things from others is a mark of greed and humiliation. Love and greed for gold and silver must be checked in boys.⁵¹

He must be taught how to sit properly, and speak little. Taking oaths, whether true or false ought to be avoided. He should not be the first to speak, he should only answer when he is questioned. He should show respect to his elders and make room for them.⁵²

He must be prevented from saying what is nonsense, obscene and indiscreet. He must not be allowed to associate with them who have such bad habits, for bad habits are easily contracted in bad company.⁵³ In educating body the fundamental thing is to shield them from the society of evil men.

If the teacher beats a boy, the boy must not make much fuss over it nor seek anybody's intervention but be patient. He must be told that to bear punishment and pain with patience is an act of bravery; it is only women and slaves who weep and cry.⁵⁴

After returning from school he must be allowed to play. If a boy is not allowed to play his heart is depressed and his

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid.

54. Ibid.

intellect is dulled. His life becomes bitter and he begins to find excuses for not learning at all.⁵⁵

He must be taught to obey his parents, teachers, instructors and everyone who is older than himself. He must behave towards them with respect and stop playing before them.⁵⁶

When he reaches the age of '*tamīz*' or discretion, he should be taught cleanliness and prayer.⁵⁷ In *Ramādān* he should be induced to fast on certain days. He must be taught religious laws according to his requirements. His training should create in him a horror of theft, misappropriation, lying, and obscenity,⁵⁸ and similar vices.

After having been educated on the above lines he must, during adolescence, be initiated into the significance of these things, and of the deeper spirit and meaning of religion.⁵⁹ The futility and the transitory nature of the worldly joys should be impressed upon him. The pleasure of God and the world to come should always regulate his desires and motivate him.

About the education of the disciple (*murīd*) Al-Ghazzālī says, there are four veils that block the view of the seeker of God, namely, property, position, sectarianism and sin. The first duty of the seeker is to remove these veils.⁶⁰ The evil of property is removed by distributing property after retaining what is necessary, for as long as a single *dirham* remains with him, his heart will remain attached to it and block his vision of God. The veil of '*jāh*', can be removed by living in a place where there can be no chance of acquiring position, by adopting the qualities of silence and humility and by doing things which would make him unpopular with man. The veil of '*Taqīd*', blind submission to authority, is removed by giving up sectarian prejudices. If bigotry dominates the disciple, there will be no place in his heart except for the

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid.

58. Ibid.

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid., p. 65.

conviction gained through, '*Taqlīd*', He will remain entangled in it. The veil of sin may be removed only by sincere repentance and purging of the soul of the past sins. If somebody does not shun the habit of committing the major sins and wishes to know the secrets of religion by means of '*Mukāshafa*' (transcendental experiences), he is like a man who does not learn Arabic and wishes to know the meaning and secrets of the Qur'ān. The first thing, therefore, is to observe the laws of *Shari'at* with meticulous attention to every detail and then advance gradually to the understanding of the secrets and truths of religion.

In short, after fulfilling the above four conditions first, and abandoning property and position, he will become like one who after ablution and purification has made himself ready for prayers, and is now only waiting for the *Imām*. Similarly, the disciple needs a teacher and leader to show him the right path.⁶¹ When such a teacher has been found the disciple has to put full confidence in him, and surrender himself completely to his will. He should be taught to think that even if the teacher makes a mistake the disciple will be benefitted by it.

The *guide* ought to put his disciple into a sort of fortress where the highwaymen and robbers may be unable to harm him. Four things constitute such a fortress, namely, solitude, silence, awakefulness and hunger.⁶² *Hunger* reduces the blood and softens the heart. This is the key to *Mukāshafa*. Silence strengthens reason and leads to continence and fear of God. When the doors of the senses are closed the heart becomes wide open for the light of God to enter it. This effort can be made only by retiring into solitude in a dark place. If a dark place is not to be found one must cover one's face with a piece of cloth. In that state, then, the voice from the other world may be heard and the glory of God may be perceived.

When the disciple has been protected against the evil effects of the appetites, or when appetites have been weakened and there remains no preoccupation for the heart, the teacher (guide) ought to pay special attention to him and

61. Ibid.

62. Ibid.

constantly look after his heart. The outward forms of worship should be reduced to the minimum *i.e.*, to what religion makes obligatory. All energy, and attention should now be directed to the remembrance of the names of God, which is the living element, the core of all recitations (*adkhār*).

When the disciple has reached this stage, he should sit alone in some corner,⁶³ devote his heart and tongue exclusively to the remembrance of God by repeating a certain recitation, such as '*Allāh, Allāh*' or '*Subhān Allāh*' or other words which the teacher thinks proper. He ought to repeat continuously the name of God in the form recommended by the teacher till the movement of the tongue become unnecessary and the said words flow to it without its motion. This must be continued till the effect of it on the tongue is lost and an impression of the form of the words is fixed on the heart. The process must continue further till even the impression of the form is lost and only the meaning of the words remains in the heart and is fixed in the heart so deeply that it is never absent from there and the heart becomes purged of all other things. At this moment, it is necessary to guard the heart against all the thoughts of all worldly things, so that everything relating to the self or to others is forgotten. The slightest attention of the heart towards anything else will make it bereft of the remembrance of God, and evil thoughts will be put into it by devil. But, if one does not give attention to such evil thoughts and is prepared to drive them out if they come, one would be immune from the insinuation of the devils.

The end of religious exercises is to have God in one's heart continually, and this is impossible if the heart is not free from everything other than God, and it is impossible to free the heart from everything other than God without '*Mujāhadah*' (constant hard endeavour).⁶⁴

When the discipline finds that his heart has become full of the love of God, he will witness the Glory of the Lord of all creation and see the ultimate truth in its nakedness. God will reveal to him his great secrets and his marvels. One of

63. Ibid., p. 66.

64. Ibid., p. 67.

the great pitfalls in this path to see oneself up as a preacher and reformer.

The Satan begins to tempt him by saying that "thy knowledge is only for instructing the ignorant, for thyself there is neither benefit nor pleasure in it." Whether these thoughts are from the devil or from God, can be known only when another person like him comes out in the market and starts preaching, and when people attend to him, learn from him, and praise him. If the disciple is not pleased with this, then he realizes that his desire for preaching was from the Satan but if he is really pleased and welcomes his so-called rival as his comrade, then these thoughts may not be from the Satan. But, many have followed the wrong path after reaching this stage.⁶⁵

III (a)

Al-Ghazzālī in his discussion of character seems to have been definitely influenced by Greek philosophy. His classification of the cardinal virtues sounds very much like that of Plato, and his conception of virtue as the relative mean is not unlike that of Aristotle, who defined virtue as "The habit of choosing the relative mean, as it is determined by reason *i.e.*, as the man of practical wisdom would determine it." But as regards the second view concerning the conception of virtue as the relative mean, it may be pointed out that Al-Ghazzālī takes his stand upon the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth*. He quotes, "The virtue of all things lies in their mean." Again, he quotes from the Qur'ān : "Eat and drink and be not extravagant;"⁶⁶ and again, "O you who believe do not forbid to yourself the good (pure) things which Allāh has made lawful for you but do not exceed the limit."⁶⁷ These are virtues of character. The acts of man are only outward expressions of the body, while that which really matters is their inner spiritual basis. This basis is entirely foreign to the Greek conceptions of virtue and voice. For Al-Ghazzālī, the consideration of the inner basis is of prime importance. He

65. Ibid.

66. Qur'ān, vii, 31.

67. Qur'ān, v, 87-88.

argues emphatically that the virtues which lead to salvation and faith, thankful praise (*Shukr*) hope, love and fear of God, and trust in Him, these are in fact, all the *munjīyāt* or the inner virtues which one must cultivate to achieve perfection. In fact, these virtues are a part of *ḥikma al-ḥaqīqiya* the true wisdom which apprehends God, and His attribute and acts. They are attitudes of the soul and not physical acts, but they influence the conduct of man deeply and give it their peculiar significance. In the *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, in the introduction to every inner virtues of the soul, al-Ghazzālī maintains that there are three stages that complete a virtue, namely, knowledge, attitude of the soul (*ḥāl*), and action. Al-Ghazzālī supports this view by quoting from the Qur'ān : "Of men, only those are afraid of God who possess knowledge." Fear of God is a certain attitude of the soul which is created by knowledge and which inspires acts of wisdom, courage, temperance and justice. Similarly, the other inner virtues are the attitudes of the soul which form the inner basis of human conduct. Acts of courage, temperance and justice acquire a meaning as the means of salvation only in so far as they are inspired by faith, love of God and fear of God. The spirit of al-Ghazzālī's ethics is consequently quite different from that of the Greeks. It is Islāmic through and through.

III (b)

The General Principles of Vices and Virtues

The two aspects of al-Ghazzālī's Ethics

The negative as well as the positive.

Since the aim of al-Ghazzālī's ethics is to know the exact nature of vices and virtues and the ways and means of avoiding the former and acquiring the latter, we shall, first, discuss the nature of some of the vices which al-Ghazzālī considers important, and secondly, the nature of virtues which, in his opinion, constitute human perfection.

Al-Ghazzālī has made various divisions of virtues and vices. Broadly speaking, they seem to rest on two bases : firstly, virtues and vices relating to actions and classified not on a religious but on a psychological basis; and secondly

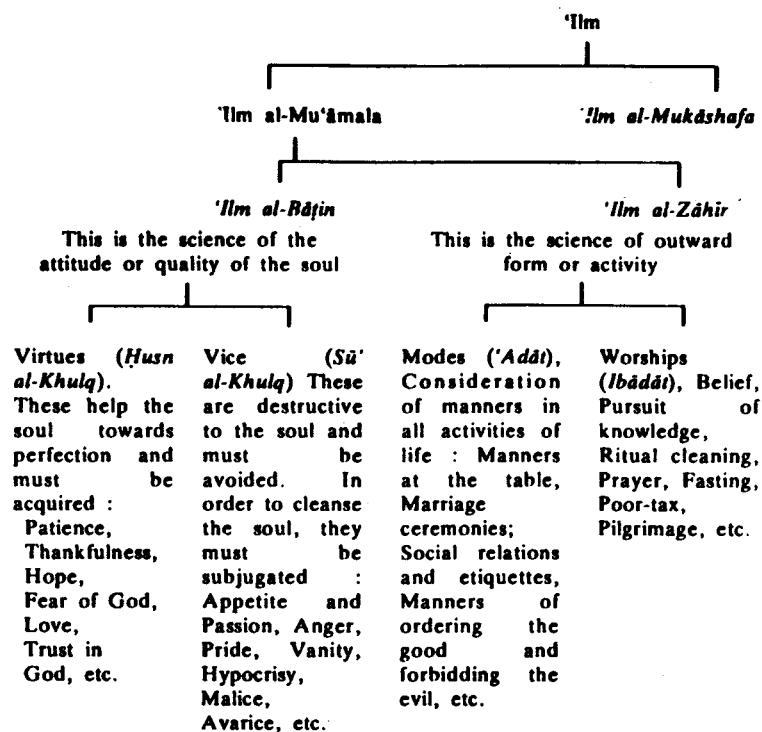
virtues and vices relating to the heart and determined by the attitude of the soul towards God. The love of this world or of the self, and absence of love and fear of God are the roots of all the vices of the heart, and the vices of the heart are the inner bases of all the vices in conduct. Love or fear of God, and absence of the love of self or of this world are the sources of all virtues. God is the motive force in al-Ghazzālī's entire system of morality. But this motive force, according to al-Ghazzālī, not only leads the individual to eternal salvation but also yields the best crop of the loftiest social and moral virtues.

The godly man is wise, courageous and temperate in the nobles sense of the words, and in the highest degree. He engaged in worship, prayers, fasting, alms-giving, and similar acts, but his duties to God do not exclude his duties to family, relatives, friends, neighbours, slaves, subjects and society as a whole. He must earn his livelihood by strictly honest means. He must cultivate the best manners for all occasions, namely, he should know how to carry himself best at the table, in society, while travelling, and at the gathering of godly people and avoid causing the slightest pain to his fellow men on any account. The Prophet should be his ideal and his inspiration all through his life. Lastly, his duty is not only to reform and perfect all the aspects of his life but to reform his fellow men as well. And, the motive force behind a perfect life is nothing other than the love and fear of God.

I. (a) The division of virtues and vices that occurs in *Ihyā'* (Revival of Religious Sciences)⁶⁸ is given in the following diagram :

68. *Ihyā'*, Vol. I, pp. 19-20, *Mizān al-'Amal*, p. 21; *Ihyā'*, Vol. I, pp. 48, 70, 74 :

In *Kimiyā-i-Sa'ādat* (p. 20) he divides them under the general heading of *M'arifa* which is of four kinds, i.e., (a) Knowledge of God, (b) Knowledge of Soul, (c) Knowledge of this world and (d) Knowledge of after-death conditions and recognition of four dealings which he names as pillars (*Arkān*). Under the latter he discusses the above list of virtues and vices, i.e., whole *'Ilm al-Mu'āmalah*, namely *'Ilm al-Zāhir*. And *Bāṭin*, i.e., worships, habits, virtues and vices. In *Ihyā'*, (IV, p. 89), and *Kimiyā-i-Sa'ādat* (p. 664) he has divided the excellences of the soul into *Imān* and *Husn al-Khulq*, and sub-divided *Imān* into *'Ilm al-Mukāshafa* and *'Ilm al-Mu'āmalah*, and subdivided *Husn al-Khulq* into *'Iffah* and *'Adl*.



Al-Ghazzālī discusses each virtues and vices in the following order :

He proves the *Faḍīlat* (goodness) of a virtue or the *Radhālat* (badness) of a vice from the Qur'ān and the *Ḥadīth*,

Again he has said that *Husn al-Khulq* consists of four cardinal virtues *Ummahāl al-Fadā'il*, *Hikma*, *'Iffah*, *Shajā'a* and *'Adl* (wisdom, chastity, bravery and justice).

Ihyā', (III, pp. 46-48), in *Kimiyā-i-Sa'ādat* (387-97), *Mizān al-'Amal* (pp. 83-103 and p. 109), he says that the cardinal virtues are four in number : *Shajā'a*, *Hikma*, *'Iffah*, and *'Adl*. These four virtues constitute *Husn al-Khulq* and lead to the realization of *Sa'ādat*. But the theologians offer a different division of virtues and vices which is as follows : *Fard* or *Wājib* (necessary), is a duty, the violation of which is punished, and the performance rewarded. *Mustahabb* (Recommended) is that action the doing of which is rewarded and the violation overlooked. *Jā'iz* or *Mubāḥ* (permitted) is permissible. *Makrūh* (disliked) is disapproved by the law and is not followed by punishment. *Ḥarām* (forbidden) is punished by law.

and then from the sayings and stories of the companions of the Prophet, of former prophets and saints and of holy Muslims of noted piety, and establishes a very strong case on the basis of authority and tradition. He has no scruples in citing traditions and stories whose authenticity has not been ascertained. But, he himself says that when these traditions, and other sources are in conformity with the Qur'ān and *Ḥadīth*, we ought to let them stand for they have an edifying effect on the heart. This method was followed by Abū Ṭālib al-Makki in his *Qūt al-Qulūb*, but al-Ghazzālī appears to be indefatigable and overwhelming in its use.

In the next place, al-Ghazzālī describes the nature, the causes and the effects of a vice or a virtue with a full discussion of all the possible circumstances associated with it. He reveals a marvellous knowledge of human nature and of the various states and heights and depths of the human heart. Nothing escapes his searching and thorough treatment. While tracing the source of virtues and vices he rarely, if at all, makes any reference to the fundamental psychological factors of appetite, self-assertion, and reason. Human nature is far too complex for all the good and evil in it to be traced back to the harmony or disharmony of these three definite factors. If he had made this attempt it would not have been in harmony with the religious and practical nature of his treatment of the subject. He traces virtues and vices back to the common instincts, desires and aspirations of man, and the attitudes of his soul.

His next step is to suggest ways and means of eradicating the vices and cultivating the virtues. Here too, he is equally penetrating. This treatment consists of two parts. The first part consists of introspection and impressing upon the mind argument which plead strongly for the virtues and quite as strongly condemn the vices. The arguments are propounded in full, and are most convincing. They fully correspond to the requirements of the mental and spiritual states of the individuals. He proves not only the spiritual and lasting benefits or harms of each virtue and vice but also the worldly gains or handicaps which follow from them. The most effective knowledge, however, in his opinion, is the knowledge of the realization of God, the soul, the present

world and the next. One must realize that the greatest happiness of man on this earth lies in the knowledge and love of God through the purification of the heart of all vices and its adornment with virtues. To achieve this highest happiness, he suggests practical remedies usually of a drastic type, for he believes in the method of opposites.

Al-Ghazzālī's treatment of the subject is inspiring and invariably creates a profound impression. He exemplifies the ideals which he expounds. The minutest ramifications of the subject are treated with an intimacy of knowledge that is astounding. Endless words of wisdom and inspiring traditions accompany a most illuminating intellectual treatment of the subject. Philosophy, religion, wisdom of the ages and unique common senses are all fused together and presented so that they may be relished by almost all grades of intelligence from the highest to the lowest. Everything finds its confirmation and illustration in practical life.

He is most penetrating in his study; he makes the subtlest distinctions between virtues and vices conspicuously clear by abundant illustrations and examples. For instance, he says that many people are extravagant and think they are generous, are miserly and think they are thrifty, are unenterprising and think they are contented, are proud and think they are self respecting. He is most relentless in analysing and exposing the most hidden self-deceptions, conscious or unconscious, practised by people. This is evident from every page of his book, but his classification in the chapters on hypocrisy and pride of the *'Ulamā* (learned) the religious devotees and the *Ṣūfis*, on 'the basis of the types of hypocrisy and self-deceptions they practise in the name of religion, is starting for its penetration. As he goes on relentlessly from one type to another we get at every step a shock of surprise and experience almost wicked delight and satisfaction at the exposure of the hypocrites.

To illustrate al-Ghazzālī's method of treatment, we analyse and schedule below the contents of the chapter on self-assertion (*Ghoḍab*) :

A. Self-Assertion

As a virtue and as an evil : excessive self-assertion, its forms.

B. Anger, Malice, Envy, Emulation, and the (opposite) virtues of Forbearance, Forgiveness and Mildness :

- I. Anger.
- II. Malice.
- III. Envy and Emulation.
- IV. Forbearance, Forgiving and Mildness..

C. Pride, Vanity and the (opposite) virtue of Humility :

- I. Pride and Vanity.
- II. Humility.

D. Religious training of excessive Self-Assertion :

- I. Understanding of the evil.
- II. Eradication of the cause.
- III. Knowledge and practice, the two main factors in the eradication of the evil :
 - (i) Knowledge
 - (a) of God and of His powers.
 - (b) of the significance of present world for the next.
 - (c) of the consequences of the conduct.
 - (ii) Practice.

There are innumerable facts packed in each chapter. I have analysed and tabulated all the details of this chapter in order to show how many difficulties confront one at each step :

- (i) Occasionally some distinction is observed between (a) malice and envy, (b) envy and emulation and (c) pride and vanity. But, when these topics are discussed in detail, as is done in the different places, on such distinction is kept either on the basis of their causes or their analysis. Rather, these concepts appear to be quite interchangeable and this causes confusion. My summary of the vices and the virtues is confined, simply to emphasizing distinctions and part played by each virtue or vice.
- (ii) The details of religious training as described above constitute so many discreet and independent instructions rather than a set of governing principles. There are

very few principles which I have made use of in studying the rules of religious training.

The rules as I have discussed in detail are neither philosophical nor scientific but simply tentative.

The other general feature of al-Ghazzālī's teaching is the ascetic tendency found in his works. Al-Ghazzālī does not treat in detail heroic virtues like courage, firmness, etc. and there seems in *Ihyā'* a decided tendency towards asceticism.⁶⁹

On the whole, this book seems to be written as a course prescribed for the devotee who seeks to know God, and lays much emphasis on the purification of the heart by severing all the ties with the world at least in spirit. It is written with a set purpose with the purpose of effecting radical reform in contemporary life which had been assailed and overwhelmed by formidable un-Islāmic and satanic forces from all directions. Luxury, vice, and irreligious philosophy regained supreme. It was to counteract these tendencies that he wrote the book in order to bring the people to moderation which was his own ideal he altogether condemned this world and its love. He says : "The experienced guide and teacher should insist on the disciple that he should root out anger, keep on wealth He should dilate before him on the evils of anger and acquisition, so that extreme counteracted with extreme will result in moderation. Otherwise, if he gets the slightest hint that both wealth and self-assertion are good and necessary in a certain measure he will find an excuse for avarice and self-assertion, and to whatever limits he goes, he will imagine, that he is permitted as far as that. So, he ought to be told to root out these instincts. This secret (of the ethical good lying in moderation) should not be divulged to him, for the ignorant fall into error and begin to imagine that avarice and anger do not deserve to be condemned."⁷⁰

Al-Ghazzālī was the teacher of his time and acted on his own initiative. The movement of asceticism was a potent force in his day and al-Ghazzālī is affected by it no doubt, but that he actually does not wish men to become ascetics

69. There is no asceticism in Islām, Ḥadīth, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, Vol. IV, p. 226.

70. *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, p. 50.

lacking in manliness and courage is clear from his chapters on *Mu'āmalāt* where he points out in detail and with great emphasis, all our duties and obligations to individuals, institutions and society as a whole. In the chapter on 'Renunciation of the world', he has pointed out the evils of renunciation and said that to renounce the world is a grievous sin if a man has dependents who need his support. Renunciation is good for a certain type of people only, and only under certain conditions. The whole of this ethical system can be followed by any man engaged in the ordinary business of life. Only, let all his efforts and strivings be in the name of Allāh and whose remembrance should not disappear from the heart.

He has not mentioned *Jihād* (Religious war) as an item of 'Ibādāt yet throughout references are made to it as a necessary obligation of a high order, even prayers have to be sacrificed, if need be, during a war. In his instructions for the bringing up of children, he emphasises the development in the children of a spirit of courage and manliness. "When he gets a beating from the teacher he should not raise any hue and cry, nor seek an inter-mediary but bear it patiently and calmly, and he should be told that the bearing of pain in this manner is the way of manly and brave people and indulging in weeping is the way of women and slaves."⁷¹ Children ought to be encouraged to take exercises which keep them healthy and fit, for all work, and no play, says al-Ghazzālī, makes Jack a dull boy. Again, in reply to those who are against music he says, "Gaiety and sport refresh and cheer the heart and bring relief to the tired mind....rest prepares a man for work, and sport and gaiety for grave and serious pursuits."⁷²

Again, in the list of his virtues⁷³ we find *Damātha* which he defines as the just presence of a pleasing element of animal spirits in one's desires; *husn al-haiyat* which is the desire for good appearance with adornment that is reasonable and modest and has no element of vanity in it; *zarf* which is the mean between moroseness and vulgar fun, and consists in

71. Ibid., p. 63.

72. Cf. *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, Chap. on music.

73. *Mizān al-'Amal*, pp. 64-79.

discreet and pleasing humour, and *najad* which is dauntlessly facing death when it is in accordance with the dictates of reason. Similarly, *Kibr al-nafs*, self-respect and *waqār* or dignity are included among the virtues. Throughout his writings, it seems as if he takes the heroic virtues for granted, e.g., man must forgive his enemies and not take revenge; he should feel sorry for the misguided thief who steals his property and must take up arms in self-defence against an enemy; this would be in keeping with *tawakkul*. Renunciation of the world and humanity has been deliberately over-emphasized by al-Ghazzālī to counteract the tendencies to vice, luxury and pride, the all-pervading and reigning evils of his time.

VICES

VICES are unethical forms of the natural propensities of man. Propensities become harmful when they engender love for the world at the expense of spiritual development. The love of this world is the root of all vices.¹ If the self is to attain perfection, these propensities must obey the dictates of reason. But, it often happens that they disobey reason, transgress their proper limits and subject the self to humiliation and gradual decay. It is this transgression which takes the shape and colour of so many vices. Vices, then, are the wrong developments of human propensities which act as curtains between man and his goal.

Vices are of various kinds : (1) Those which are gross in nature and are connected with the physical organs of the body, *e.g.*, stomach, sex, tongue. (2) Those which are gross but not connected with particular parts of the body, *e.g.*, anger, (*ghaḍab*), malice, (*hiqd*), envy (*ḥasad*). (3) Those which are distinctly human and are practised by man deliberately, *e.g.*, pride (*kibr*), vanity (*ʿujb*), love of wealth (*ḥubb al-māl*), and love of position (*ḥubb al-jāh*). (4) Those which may be consciously committed, but of whose existence one is unconscious at higher spiritual levels, *e.g.*, hypocrisy (*riyāʿ*), wilful deception (*qhurār*), etc.

The propensity of hunger is of paramount importance to the living organism.² The self is endowed with it in order to provide it with food. It is good as such. But, when it exceeds its limits and becomes gluttony, it becomes the source of countless vices.³ The opposite of gluttony is abstinence, which is the source of many virtues. The purpose of abstinence is not self-annihilation, but the toning down of the propensity of hunger in order to keep it within proper limits and save the soul from transgression.⁴ The advantage of hunger are many. It sharpens the intellect and purifies the heart, its

1. *Iḥyāʿ*, Vol. III, pp. 118-90; Ibid., pp. 68-69.

2. Ibid., pp. 69 ff.

3. Ibid., pp. 68 ff.

4. Ibid., p. 72.

excessive practice dulls the intellect and weakens the memory. The light of wisdom is dimmed, and one becomes unable to distinguish between good and evil.⁵ Abstinence makes the heart docile and receptive and capable of enjoying the contemplation of God. When the stomach is full, the mind may be concentrated on Him but the devotee does not experience pleasure.⁶ But, an empty stomach begets humility and kills arrogance and false sense of happiness which are the outcome of hard-heartedness and transgression.⁷ Abstinence reminds one of the sufferings of others and consequently generates sympathy for them. It also reminds one of the sufferings in the next world. Gluttony makes people cruel and unsympathetic to the poor and the needy.⁸ Abstinence enables one to control one's desires, and this is the key to happiness in the next world. The animal nature can be controlled through control over eating which causes most of the diseases of the heart.⁹ A full stomach causes much sleep which is the cause of many evils. Too much sleep, besides being a waste of time, dulls the mind.¹⁰ Abstinence saves time which is necessary for acquiring knowledge and good conduct which are the means of eternal bliss. One who eats much wastes much of his time over eating, drinking, and working in order to make provision for these needs. Abstinence assures good health; one who keeps his stomach empty saves himself from various diseases and their consequences.¹¹ It reduces expenditure and thus lessens the need for money. One who consumes much food is driven to obtain it by fair or foul means. And pecuniary cares breed all sorts of vices and mental afflictions.¹² The money which is saved by practising abstinence can be used for charitable purposes.¹³

The seeker after truth should eat bread that is earned honestly by lawful means.¹⁴ He should eat just enough to

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid., p. 73.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., p. 74.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid., pp. 74-75.

12. Ibid., p. 75.

13. Ibid., p. 66.

14. Ibid., p. 78 ff.

help him to sustain himself and discharge his duties both towards his fellowmen and towards God.¹⁵ But, he should never gratify himself to the maximum.¹⁶ The food must be simple. Since the appetites and passions are the natural propensities of our nature, they cannot be uprooted; but the seeker after truth should, in the beginning, attempt to do so, so that he may come to achieve moderation.¹⁷ The secret of abstinence lies in gaining mastery over nature; when this is attained, further restraint is superfluous.¹⁸ That is why sometimes teacher directs his pupils to fast, but he does not himself fast as he has achieved the balance. Overloading the stomach and starvation are equally undesirable, for both are distracting.¹⁹ But, the attainment of a balance between extreme abstinence and gluttony is impossible, unless it is forcibly imposed upon the animal nature in the beginning.²⁰

The Sexual Appetite

Man has been endowed with the sexual instinct for the propagation and preservation of his race.²¹ The sexual appetite is the strongest of all the appetites and passions.²² Here too, the two extremes are blameworthy, because deficiency fails to achieve the required purpose,²³ and excess leads to all sorts of vices.

The sex-appetite must always remain under the strict command²⁴ of reason. The disciple should not marry while he is in the earlier stages of his search after the truth, as his love for his wife may distract him from God. At this stage, celibacy is recommended provided the devotee can acquire control over his appetite. If he cannot do so normally, he should subdue his appetite by means of prolonged fasts and deliberate restraints over the eye and the mind. If these

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 77.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 77 ff.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 82.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*

21. *Ibid.*, p. 85.

22. *Ibid.*

23. *Ibid.*, p. 87.

24. *Ibid.*

means fails, he should marry so that he may not waste his powers in controlling the appetite. After he has married, he should do all that is necessary to give all sorts of comfort and peace to the wife.²⁵

Control over the sexual appetite may be due to various reasons : modesty, fear of society, economy and fear of loss or prestige. All the motives are good because they save one from the heinous sins. But, real virtue lies in abstaining from indulgence in order to please God, even if one has the appetite and the means to satisfy it.²⁶

The lustful glance is the roots of the evil.²⁷ One should not let his eye wander. Free intermingling of the sexes is dangerous. Appreciation of beauty is not a sin. It is lust, the sexual passion that accompanies seeing, that is sinful. Pure and unmixed appreciation of beauty is harmless.²⁸

The Vices of the Tongue

The uncontrolled use of the tongue engenders numerous gross vices which impede the progress of the self towards its goal, and these vices do not belong to a particular organ of the body, *i.e.*, the stomach, the ear or the eye. The sway of the tongue includes everything existing actually or potentially.²⁹ It translates into words, inner thoughts, fancies and emotions.³⁰ The functions of other senses are limited, but the function of the tongue is all-embracing, like that of the mind. It is influenced by the mind; and in turn the mind is affected by it. The words and expressions uttered by the tongue give rise to corresponding emotions in the mind and leave definite impressions upon it. Indecent and false speech induces dreams of a similar nature. The evils of speech are many and it is an arduous task to guard against them all. So, silence or keeping speech limited to bare necessity is a golden rule.³¹

25. *Ibid.*, pp. 87 ff.

26. *Ibid.*, pp. 90 ff.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 87.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 92 ff.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 92.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 96.

Some of the vices pertaining to speech are as follows :³² one should not waste his life in useless speech. Every moment of one's life should be given to contemplations or devotion. The physical cure for talkativeness consists in checking it by retiring into loneliness or by putting small pebbles in the mouth. Talking of immoral things, uttering indecent words, ridiculing joking, abusing, cursing and similar vices should be avoided.³³ Contradiction, disputation, and quarrelling should not be resorted to.³⁴ One should not endeavour to pry into the secrets of others.³⁵ One should not make false promises since this deforms and darkens the soul.³⁶ Falsehood in speech is a heinous sin.³⁷ But, it is permissible in an emergency when the end in view is good e.g., the protection of a Muslim refugee against a tyrant,³⁸ the restoration of happy relations between wife and husband, or reconciliation between two Muslims. In all other circumstances, lying is strictly forbidden. In cases where truth and falsehood appear to have equal claims, the former must be adopted. Except in a serious emergency, falsehood is immoral and truthfulness imperative.³⁹

Slandering (*ghiba*) consists in speaking about a person in such a manner that if he heard it his feelings would be injured.⁴⁰ It is worse than adultery.⁴¹ He who commits it feeds on the dead body of his brother.⁴² A statement may be true, nevertheless it may be slanderous. The various forms of slander are : talking of others' physical defects, low birth, bad character, evil habits, etc.⁴³ Slandering is not only done with tongue, but also by means of gestures and writing.

32. Ibid., pp. 96 ff.

33. Ibid., pp. 104 ff; pp. 110 ff.

34. Ibid., pp. 100 ff.

35. Ibid., p. 114.

36. Ibid., pp. 114 ff.

37. Ibid., pp. 116 ff.

38. Ibid., p. 119.

39. Ibid., pp. 120 ff.

40. Ibid., p. 125.

41. Ibid., p. 123.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid., p. 115.

Suspicion is also a form of slander, for thinking ill of a person is not lawful. Any thought about a person which tends to lower him and is actually not based on positive proofs must be taken as satanic. The causes of slander are many but a few of them are mentioned below⁴⁴ (1) Anger, (2) Seeking the pleasure of others, (3) Self-defence or self-justification, i.e., when a person charged with a crime attempts to exonerate himself by imputing the crime to someone else, (4) Self glorification. Sometimes, one finds fault with another person in order to praise oneself by implication, e.g., one may charge a person with ignorance in order to advertise one's own knowledge, (5) Envy, (6) Feeling of pleasure at another's misfortune, (7) Carelessly giving out the name of a person who has committed a fault, (8) Anger for the pleasure of God. One may express his anger at another's transgression, and may mention his name while expressing his anger. This kind of indignation should be expressed without naming the person, else it would amount to slander. But, there are certain exceptional cases when slandering is allowed. Such cases of emergency are noted below⁴⁵ (1) One can slander the wrongdoer for one's own safety and the safety of the public before a lawful authority, i.e., the king or the judge. (2) One can disclose the faults of another in order to prevent him from following evil path. (3) The oppressed can ascertain the opinion of a lawyer against a wrong-doer.

Tale-bearing⁴⁶ is the communication of a person's words to another through words, gestures, writing and action in a manner harmful to the former. Flattery⁴⁷ or exaggerating the merits of a person produces six evils, four in the flatterer and two in the flattered. The flatterer is generally prone to the evils of talkativeness, falsehood, hypocrisy, and pleasing a tyrant; the flattered becomes proud and neglects to improve himself. Self-praise is bad, therefore, it is prohibited. But a teacher may describe his own virtues so that his pupils and disciples may be encouraged to follow them.

44. Ibid., p. 127.

45. Ibid., pp. 132-33.

46. Ibid., pp. 134-35.

47. Ibid., pp. 138 ff.

Vices Pertaining to Ghadab (Aggressive Self-Assertion)

God has provided man with the instinct of self-assertion to preserve him against conditions, internal and external, which tend to destroy him.⁴⁸ This equipment is essential for man. But, it ought to be controlled by religion and guided by the intellect into moderation in order to become a virtue. Lack or excess of self-assertion makes it an evil. A person without self-assertion has no self-respect. But the high and the low despise him. An excessively self-assertive man, however, loses self-control and is, therefore, unable to discriminate between good and evil.⁴⁹

Excessive self-assertion may degenerate into anger, malice, envy, emulation, pride or vanity. Man is aroused to anger against the person who threatens to deprive him of the object of his desires. The angry man wishes to destroy the opposition and to take his revenge.⁵⁰ The objects, whose deprivation arouses anger, are : (i) necessities, e.g., food, abode, etc.; (ii) luxuries, i.e., things desired on account of habit, e.g., wealth; and (iii) special requirements which are necessary for some persons and not necessary for others. Anger associated with comforts and special requirements

48. Ibid., pp. 144 ff. The expressions of anger are as follows : When one is thwarted in his desires, or some one attempts to seize an object wanted by him, or his pride is injured, a fire begins to burn in his heart and his blood rises from the heart and rushes to the extremities of the body. One's eyes and face become red. But, this happens when one is angry at a person inferior to him. When one is angry at a person who is superior to him, the blood goes towards the heart and one feels grief and becomes pale. Anger against the equal makes the face red and pale at quick successions. Anger sometimes causes death burning the vital humours. One's condition in an angry mood can be compared to a boat in a storm sea. Excessive anger causes external and internal changes in man. The shape and the colour of the body are changed. There is a trembling of limbs, and reddening of eye balls, etc. Similarly, the inner organs of the body are deformed and injured. A glance at the masterly analysis by al-Ghazzālī of the expressions of anger will show how is sharp intellect and keen observation would lay bare the inner and outer changes caused by anger. His analysis is most modern (Cf. Darwins' *Expressions of Emotions in Men and Animals*).

49. *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, pp. 145-46.

50. Ibid., pp. 146-47.

ought to be eradicated. With regard to the necessities, it can only be brought into moderation.⁵¹

Returning evil with evil is not allowed under any circumstances. The oppressed, of course, is allowed to retaliate provided the injury inflicted by him does not exceed the injury received. But, forgiveness is better than retaliation because it is not humanly possible to adjust absolutely accurately the injury inflicted to the injury received.⁵²

When one is unable to ventilate one's anger, it turns into malice (*hīqd*) against the other person.⁵³ The lowest grade of malice shows itself in not being pleased with the other man, not praying with him and not guiding him along the right path. All this degrades the malicious man in the eyes of God, though he is actually not a sinner. Therefore, a person should not express one's aversion to, or try to shrink from one whose behaviour is objectionable. Rather, he should be more decent in his dealings with the man whom he wishes to reform.

The worse grade of malice is envy. If a man does not possess something desirable which is possessed by others, he experiences either envy (*hasad*) or emulation.⁵⁴ (*qhibta*). In the former case, it is unpleasant to him that a desirable object or quality is possessed by another man, and he wishes that the possessor may lose it. In the latter case, the possession of such a thing by another person is neither unpleasant to him nor does he wish that he may lose it. He only wishes to possess it himself.

Control of self-assertion leads to virtues like forbearance, forgiveness, mildness, etc. Forbearance is developed by suppressings,⁵⁵ anger. It is advisable to forbear so long as there is no opportunity for revenge and to forgive when such an opportunity exists. Forgiveness (*'afw*) is very praiseworthy.⁵⁶ If one foregoes of one's right to please God, one will gain

51. Ibid., pp. 146 ff.

52. Ibid., pp. 155 ff.

53. Ibid., p. 157.

54. Ibid., pp. 164 ff.

55. Ibid., pp. 153 ff.

56. Ibid., pp. 157 ff.

in one's honour on the day of Judgment. Mildness (*rifq*) is opposed to severity.⁵⁷ Severity is necessary in extreme circumstances but as human nature is liable to excesses one is advised to act with mildness.

Al-Ghazzālī has formulated a system of religious training to curb excessive self-assertion in accordance with ethical principles.⁵⁸ Try to know evil exactly as it is. Realize, for instance, that it is incorrect to regard anger as valour. Look for its cause and remove it. Anger is due to the loss of the desired object. Such a loss of the object was, however, ordained by God. Anger is temptation caused by Devil. Therefore, one must not love any object so much that its deprivation may cause anger. And since it is God who has ordained the loss of the object who could be angry with Him? Since the temptation was caused by the devil, it must be suppressed. To subdue one's anger one should lie down calmly. Knowledge and practice will eradicate the evil. Realize that God does not like anger, since all is from God, against whom should there be anger? Think of the divine punishment when you are angry. The power of God over man is much greater than that of man over man.⁵⁹ God may forgive you, if you forgive others. Think of what God and His prophets have said against anger. Is it not foolish to give your wish precedence over the wish of God?

The final abode of man is the pit of the grave. The present world is only a passage. From this world one must take with him only what is necessary for the next. Unnecessary things will be a burden to him. Renounce them and anger will not be aroused at their loss. Think of the consequences of your anger to all those who are connected with you. Again, think of the troubles and difficulties you will create in the world by your anger. The object of your anger will become your enemy. Think of the unpleasant expression on the face of the opponent and realize that, when angry, you too look as ugly as he. Try to imagine the look on the faces of the learned men, wise men, and the prophets.

57. Ibid., pp. 161 ff.

58. Ibid., pp. 149 ff.

59. Ibid., pp. 150-51.

Think of the excellent consequences of pardoning and forbearing.

As regards envy, try to realize that it is injurious to you, both here and hereafter.⁶⁰ The spiritual injury caused to the envious is that he is displeased with God for what he has given to the other person. The worldly injury is that he knows no rest. On the contrary, the envied is benefited doubly.

To avoid ridiculing other think that it is not good and that you yourself are liable to be ridiculed. To avoid greed for wealth try to be contented with what is necessary for you so as to acquire freedom from humiliation for being in need. The best course for getting free from the evils enumerated above is to begin to practise the virtues which are the opposite of these evils. Forbearance, mildness, forgiveness and humility will overcome the different evil forms of self-assertion. Engage in religious practices and observances so that no time is left for the commission of evil deeds.

Pride, Vanity, Love of Wealth and Love of Position

Anger, malice envy and emulation are aroused when man is not in possession of the object of his desire. Pride and vanity on the other hand, occur when he has secured such object. Pride is feeling of superiority over others, vanity is admiration of the self.⁶¹

Pride may be subjective or objective.⁶² Subjective pride is a habit of the self and objective pride is the action resulting from this habit. By considering oneself superior to others, one feels gratified and is prone to be proud. Even learned men, worshippers and devotees are seldom free from it. There are two evil consequences of pride, the refusal to accept the truth and contempt of fellowship. The worst form of pride is that which does not allow one to acquire knowledge and to accept the truth. There have been proud men like *Pharaoh* and *Namrood* who challenged God and refused to recognise prophets.⁶³ Their pride was due to

60. Ibid., pp. 170 ff.

61. Ibid., pp. 297 ff.

62. Ibid., p. 211.

63. Ibid., pp. 298 ff.

ignorance and insurgence. Because of sheer vanity, one disobeys the commandments of God, for when a proud man hears a truth from another man, he does not accept it because of his pride and begins to challenge it. Usually the proud man thinks himself superior to others and looks down upon them. This kind of pride is, in any case, very bad. Real pride, greatness, and honour belong only to God; by appropriating them to himself a man tries to make himself equal to God and thus offends Him.

Only that man thinks himself superior who believes that he has some qualities of perfection.⁶⁴ Perfection may be religious or worldly. A learned man is very prone to feeling proud. He despises others and expects honour from every one. Worshippers and devotees usually create an impression on the minds of the people. They expect to be honoured. They regard themselves as saved and others as lost. Pride destroys fear of God in them and makes their actions futile. Pride is manifested in their words and acts, sometimes in acts only. Worldly perfections, whose possession causes pride, are of five kinds : pedigree, beauty, strength, wealth and number of relatives and friends.

There are three causes of pride.⁶⁵ One cause is in the man who is proud. The other cause is in the attitude towards the person in relation to whom one is proud. The third cause is related to some third object outside the other two. The cause which is in the proud man is vanity or self-admiration. When one admires oneself because of his learning, one regards oneself superior to others. The cause which resides in a person's attitude to the other supposedly inferior person is rancour and envy. The cause which is outside these two is hypocrisy. So, in fact there are four causes : Vanity, rancour, envy and hypocrisy.

Pride is shown in the attitudes, expressions and activities of man. One may show it by his face, by looking through the corners of his eyes, by his voice, the manner of his walking, sitting or talking.⁶⁶ Some people exhibit their pride in all

64. *Ibid.*, pp. 300 ff.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 304.

66. *Ibid.*, pp. 305 ff.

these ways, others in a few ways. Still others exhibit their pride in some ways and humility in others. Thus, there are people possessing diverse habits. Some like other people to stand before them and wait in service. Some do not like to go to meet others, though they could teach some good things to them. Some do not like others to sit near them. Some do not like to do even the most trifling things with their own hands. Pride and humility can also be shown in dress. It is humiliating to bear reproaches and injuries from others. The life of the Prophet is a model of humility. It must be imitated.

The cure for pride lies in knowing God and one's own self fully.⁶⁷ This will show that man is a helpless creature and that pride befits God alone. One shall contemplate about the origin of man. When one knows fully the nature of one's self, one must continue to do acts which are the reverse of those which cause pride till one gets used to humility. The qualities possessed by a person's forefathers must not make him proud if he himself is devoid of them. Let him consider the origin and the odd of his forefathers as well. If he is proud of his beauty, let him think how full of filth his inside is. Beauty is transient. A donkey, an ox or an elephant is stronger than man. Even a minor sickness robs man of strength. Strength, therefore, is not a thing to be proud of. Wealth and friendship and number of helpers are also unstable. They are lost easily. Wealth may be stolen. The friendship of powerful men cannot be depended upon. A king may be pleased with a bad thing and become angry at a good thing. Knowledge has been praised by God. But the responsibilities it entails are great. A man who knows and then commits a sin receives greater punishment than an ignorant man. Therefore, a learned man ought to fear God and ought not to be proud of his learning.

Though self-knowledge is not enough to cure pride, yet it is necessary to be conscious of being proud, for without such awareness one will not try to cure it. There are several tests for detecting pride in oneself.⁶⁸ If a person quarrels with

67. *Ibid.*, pp. 308 ff.

68. *Ibid.*, pp. 316-17.

another and later discovers the opponent to be on the right, but finds it difficult and unpleasant to acknowledge the truth and to apologise to the opponent, then surely, there is pride in him. The remedy is to acknowledge the truth publicly and to apologise to the opponent. If a man finds himself with his equals in a gathering, and feels it unpleasant to give them preference over himself, he suffers from pride. The remedy is to sit with them with humility. If one finds it unpleasant to accept an invitation from a poor man or to go to the market for his poor companion, or to bring things for his household and for his friends from the market, he is proud. Humility is the mean between pride and dishonour. God loves moderation in actions.⁶⁹

Vanity implies the regarding of one's possessions great and having no fear of losing them, forgetting them to be a gift from God.⁷⁰ If to this is added the conviction that he has a right on God, and thereby hopes to be rewarded in this very world, it is called *Idlāl*. It implies the wrong notion that he can oblige God by his actions. Vanity and *Idlāl* both are the precursors and causes of pride.

Vanity differs from pride. Pride is the sense of superiority over others. Vanity is the sense of self-admiration, self-elation. Vanity or self-admiration generates many evils.⁷¹ It is one of the causes of pride. But the evils generated by it in the sphere of religion are all the more terrifying. If one is vain about his acts of worship, he becomes careless about them. He does not consider his sins to be sins. He hopes to be excused by God for his smaller sins. He is not afraid of God.

If one is vain of the correctness of his opinion, his acts, his intellect or wisdom, one ceases to make progress in knowledge. One does not ask anybody about anything.

The cause of vanity is ignorance;⁷² the cure for it is knowledge. Vanity is manifested either : (i) in such acts as are in the power of man, as charity, or (ii) in such things as

are beyond his power, like beauty, strength, pedigree, etc. Often there is more vanity in the first case than in the second. The worshipper's vanity of his worship, learned man's vanity of his knowledge, the beautiful man's vanity of his beauty are all hollow, since all these qualities are God's gifts.

Vices Pertaining to Love of Wealth (*Māl*)

The evils of this world are many, but the greatest of them all is the love of wealth (*Māl*).⁷³ This love is often accompanied by suffering and misery. Its lack may lead to despair and disbelief and its possession to revolt and rebellion. Wealth, however, has its benefits which may lead to salvation. It is praised in the Qur'ān and in the *Ḥadīth*.

The religious benefits of wealth are obvious.⁷⁴ One may spend it on personal, social, or religious welfare. The religious disadvantages of wealth are of three kinds : it may lead directly to sin; it may give power to commit sins and may supply the means for it; and from what is allowed and necessary one is led to luxuries and then by degrees one is carried to what is forbidden. Loving and caring for wealth often leads one to forget God. The cure for this is spend all one's wealth except what is essential for supporting life and for peace of mind.

Miserliness means failure or reluctance⁷⁵ to spend on items that constitute duties, refusing to spend on other people and subjecting them to suffering by not spending petty sums of money on them. Several factors determine the limits of man's duties, e.g., the status of the man himself, the persons he is dealing with, e.g., relatives, neighbours or friends, the occasion, and so on. But in all these cases the ultimate arbiter is one's reason. When a man spends on items that constitute his duties he is not miserly. He is generous when he spends beyond the limits of duty quite cheerfully, and without the idea of expecting a return from any man in any form. The highest form of generosity involves varying degrees of self-sacrifice.⁷⁶ The worst form of avarice implies failure

69. Ibid., pp. 317 ff.

70. Ibid., pp. 319-20.

71. Ibid., p. 319.

72. Ibid., pp. 320 ff.

73. Ibid., p. 202.

74. Ibid., pp. 204-205.

75. Ibid., pp. 224 ff.

76. Ibid., pp. 222-23.

to spend even on oneself in spite of the most pressing needs because one is unwilling to part with money.

Constant mediation upon the purposes of wealth, upon death, and upon the sufficiency of God for one's self, and one's children, hastening to spend any money when occasions arise, and banishing all evil thoughts and reluctance are the remedies for avarice and miserliness.⁷⁷

Learned men differ as to whether the rank of a wealthy man who is thankful to God is higher or that of a poor man who is contented and patient.⁷⁸ In general, poverty is better than wealth, yet it is true that certain companions of the Prophet were wealthy. They possessed wealth so that they might not have to beg and might spend it for the pleasure of Allāh. They had earned it lawfully. They had not usurped the rights of others. They were not miserly but spend most or all of their wealth in the way ordained by Allāh. In spite of this, it is said about 'Abd ar-Rahmān b. 'Auf, one of the most generous of the companions, that he shall enter paradise with the poor and on his knees. Therefore, in wealth there are great dangers.

The Vices Pertaining to *Jāh*

Jāh means winning and dominating the hearts of others.⁷⁹ It is gained by creating in others a conviction about the perfection of certain qualities in oneself which people consider good, e.g., learning, piety, ancestry, beauty and strength. In this way, all those persons whose hearts one wins are always ready to render homage and service voluntarily. Wealth can buy slaves whose homage and services one can command by force. Both *Jāh* and *Wealth* are, thus, the means of commanding the respect and services of others, in one case forced, in the other voluntary.⁸⁰

The love of *Jāh* can be attributed to two causes.⁸¹ One of these is the attainment of material freedom. A man seeks

Jāh as a prudential measure for future security. The second is founded on the divine quality of man. The heart of man inclines towards qualities of three kinds according to the three fundamental elements in his nature, namely, the divine, the beastly and the ferocious. The divine quality predisposes one to be without a rival in perfection. None can be unparalleled in perfection, nevertheless the desire for it is always present. If it is impossible to be unrivalled in perfection, the next best course is to be a master of others. Therefore, the desire for having power over others naturally dominates man.

But, the heart of men can be dominated only by creating in them the conviction about the perfection of qualities in oneself. The achievement of perfection has its limits. One always falls short of the ideals. Hence, the inordinate lover of *Jāh* lapses into hypocrisy, and tries to deceive the people that he is greater than he actually is.⁸² Perfection lies in knowledge and freedom. Knowledge means the knowledge of the truth and of God, while freedom means freedom from the appetites of the body and the love of the world. The ignorant seek power, but not knowledge and freedom.⁸³

Just as the desire for wealth, which is essential for the fulfilment of one's basic needs, is right, so is the desire for *Jāh* that is necessary for following the path prescribed by Allāh.⁸⁴ One may win the hearts of those whose help is necessary for him in his journey to God. Wealth and *Jāh* are desirable only as means and not as ends. But, if a man desires them as ends there is no harm as long as he does not deceive others in achieving them. It is permissible to desire the position for which one is qualified. We are permitted not to proclaim our faults to avoid losing the respect of others. But, we are prohibited from creating upon others the impression that we possess qualities which we do not possess.

Love of *Jāh* proves fatal morally and spiritually.⁸⁵ Therefore, it is necessary to be cured of it. There are two

77. Ibid., pp. 226 ff.

78. Ibid., pp. 299 ff.

79. Ibid., pp. 241-42.

80. Ibid., p. 241.

81. Ibid., pp. 242-44.

82. Ibid., pp. 243-44.

83. Ibid., pp. 244 ff.

84. Ibid., pp. 246-47.

85. Ibid., pp. 248 ff.

ways in which it can be cured : (1) One must acquire the firm belief that *Jāh* is not lasting. It ends with death. This will help only a far-sighted man. Most men think only of the present or of the near future. They must know that every man possessing *Jāh* is envied, and before long will make enemies. (2) The practical way is to make people lose respect for oneself. This, however, should not be done by committing sins. One must investigate the causes which give pleasure on being praised and remedy them.⁸⁶ (1) Praise is either true or false. If it is true, it relates either to qualities of perfection in knowledge and piety or to one's worldly goods. A wise man will not get pleasure from hearing the praises of his worldly goods for they are not lasting nor do they reflect any virtue in him. As for the qualities of knowledge and piety, their possession, and not other's praise of them, must give him pleasure. He must be thankful to God for their possession. There is always likelihood of many enemies pretending to be admirers (2) Praise increases prestige. The knowledge that God alone is powerful, will cure a person of his love of praise.

At the lowest level of the love of *Jāh*, a person is pleased when he is praised and pained when he is censured.⁸⁷ He hates and becomes vindictive towards the man who speaks ill of him. At the highest level in the conquest of this desire, a person does not merely become indifferent to pain and pleasure, but is pained when he is praised and is pleased when he is censured. This is the stage of perfection, and it cannot be reached without very intense and persistent effort.⁸⁸

Riyā'

Riyā' (hypocrisy) is manifested in the intention to win people by acts of piety.⁸⁹⁻⁹⁰ The love of wealth and of dominance over the hearts of men (*Jāh*) is the root of all *Riyā'*. If, however, *Jāh* comes without a person's desiring or

86. Ibid., pp. 248-50.

87. Ibid., pp. 251 ff.

88. Ibid., pp. 251 ff.

89. Ibid., p. 257.

90. Ibid.

seeking it, there is no harm in it. The Prophet and the early Caliphs had it.

Hypocrisy may betray its presence in innumerable ways, e.g., in a thin, lean and neglected body, neglect of dress, virtuous and pious talk, long prayers, ostentatious charity and a meek deportment. All kinds of hypocrisy in worship are the objects of God's wrath.⁹¹

There are two kinds of hypocrisy : manifest and concealed.⁹² Manifest hypocrisy is the obvious cause of an action. It is manifest because it is known to the hypocrite and can be easily understood by others. Concealed hypocrisy by itself is not the cause of action, yet the action which is seemingly done for its own sake is often encouraged by this concealed hypocrisy. In some cases, concealed hypocrisy is neither the cause of action, nor does it make the action easier, and yet it is hidden in the heart. As it has no influence on actions, it is difficult to detect it in the absence of its symptoms. The most evident symptom of this is a sort of pleasure on knowing that the people know of one's worship. A still more concealed by hypocrisy is that in which there is neither a wish to know that the people know of one's worship, nor any pleasure in the publicity of one's worship, and yet one finds it agreeable when the people greet him first, or they are friendly to him or make concessions to him in dealing with him and one feels a little pain if such treatment is not accorded to him. This shows that the worship was not wholly sincere but that there was subtly concealed hypocrisy behind it.

The kinds and divisions of concealed hypocrisy are innumerable. As long as one finds a difference between men and animals with regard to their knowledge about one's worship, there remains an admixture of concealed hypocrisy in the sincerity of one's actions. If one is sincere in one's actions, one is concerned with the knowledge of God alone.

The remedies for hypocrisy are stringent and unpalatable and its cure difficult, but hypocrisy is a deadly disease, and

91. Ibid., pp. 257 ff.

92. Ibid., pp. 263-64.

must be cured.⁹³ The chief cause of hypocrisy is the love of *Jāh* which has three forms : (a) love of the pleasure of praise; (b) dislike of the pain of censure, and (c) greed and the desire for the possession of things belonging to others. The greed for the possession of things belonging to others may be cured by acquiring the deep conviction that the real giver of things is God and that greed leads to humiliation and pain very often in this world, and invariably in the next. The knowledge of the dangers and harms of hypocrisy is the only way of curing it. There are also practical remedies.⁹⁴ One must make it a rule to perform acts of worship in secret, except when he participates in congregational prayers. Though we cannot quite control the entry of harmful ideas into our hearts, we must learn to hate such ideas, and nip them in the bud. Constant vigilance and great solicitude for the purity of one's actions is necessary.

The most successful way of combating hypocrisy is not only to keep fighting it down inwardly, nor merely to dislike or hate it, but to concentrate on its opposite, and to strive all the more along the way leading to God.

Ghurūr

Ghurūr is a kind of wilful self-deception.⁹⁵ Most men deceive themselves by thinking themselves worthy and good, although they are actually not so. But, there are grades of self-deception and of its expression. The worst form is that of the unbelievers.⁹⁶ They are deceived by thinking that this world is certainty and the next one only a possibility, or that a bird in hand is worth two in the bush. Of the believers, four classes of people suffer from *Ghurūr* i.e., the learned, the religious devotees, the *Ṣūfis*, and the rich.⁹⁷

There are different classes of learned men : (i) Some have wide knowledge. But their knowledge has led them to presume that they themselves are exempt from acting

93. Ibid., p. 269.

94. Ibid., pp. 269 ff.

95. Ibid., pp. 326-27.

96. Ibid., p. 327.

97. Ibid., pp. 334 ff.

according to the knowledge they have acquired believing that the possession of knowledge itself is sufficient for them to receive eternal happiness. (ii) Some have knowledge and also act according to it.⁹⁸ But, their actions are insincere. They act only for show in order to receive the homage and respect of the people. (iii) Some have knowledge and act in the light of it, but their actions are not performed sincerely for the pleasure of God.⁹⁹ They put on fine dress, seek conspicuous seats, live a life of magnificence, and deceive themselves by thinking that all this is necessary to maintain the honour of Islām, of learning and of the learned, and to overawe the unbelievers. They oppose, dispute and run down their opponents and believe they are upholding the truth. They make a display of their religiosity and think that they must set an example of good acts for the people to follow. They visit and do homage to tyrant kings and think that for doing good to the people it is essential to associate with kings, since they have the good of thousands of their subjects in their hands.¹⁰⁰ But, are these learned men pleased if another learned man wins the favour of a king, or comes to the same city and becomes popular and people become his followers? (iv) Some of the learned men possess knowledge, act according to it, regard mere show as a sin and try to cleanse their hearts.¹⁰¹ But, they are not thorough in their endeavours. They are like those who grow wheat plants in a field in which there are also weeds. They remove the weeds here and there, but in some corners of the field the weeds still remain. They think that it does not matter much. (v) Some are engaged in the pursuit of branches of learning which are not of primary importance and yet they are under the self-deception that without those sciences the way to God cannot be found.¹⁰² Among them are : (1) the *Faqīhs*, (2) Dialecticians, (3) Linguists, (4) Preachers, and (5) those who attend the lectures of savants. *Faqīhs* think that *Fiqh* is the science of religion *par excellence*.¹⁰³ They presume that

98. Ibid., p. 335.

99. Ibid., p. 336.

100. Ibid.

101. Ibid., p. 337.

102. Ibid., p. 338.

103. Ibid.

without *Fiqh*, one cannot know what is allowed and what is forbidden, what is clean and what is unclean. The *Mutakallimūn* (dialecticians or logicians) think that their science is the most important.¹⁰⁴ How, according to them, can one be religious if one cannot prove the existence of God? To them discussions and disputes about the existence of God and other such problems are of highest importance. The grammarians and the philologists say that without their science the Book of Allāh and the word of the Prophet cannot be understood; therefore, their activity is the most praiseworthy activity along the way to Allāh.¹⁰⁵ In both cases, they are under self-deception.¹⁰⁶ Instead of doing what may bring them the happiness of the hereafter, they engage in trivialities. They teach others but do not try to save their own souls. They do not act upon what they teach. Lastly, there are some who attend the lectures of great learned men in order to be able to say that they have heard the lectures on *Hadīth* from such and such a savant. They believe that this fact in itself is a pious act. These too, are under a self-deception.¹⁰⁷

Such learned men as master what is most important to set them on the path to Allāh and thus bring them eternal happiness are indeed seen very rarely.

The same troubles beset the *ʿĀbids*, the religious devotees.¹⁰⁸ They are subject to self-deception of one kind or another. The majority of them abandon the obligatory religious services and occupy themselves with religious services of secondary importance. They do not have the right scale of 'values'. They often prefer the less important to the more important. They have not arranged the different kinds of religious services on a scale of values. For instance, they attach greater importance to the correct pronunciation of the words of the Qur'ān than to the understanding of its true meaning.¹⁰⁹ Some try to read the whole Qur'ān in a day and

104. Ibid., p. 339.

105. Ibid., p. 343.

106. Ibid., p. 340.

107. Ibid., p. 341.

108. Ibid., p. 345.

109. Ibid.

think they have done an act greatly praiseworthy in the eye of God.¹¹⁰ Instead of helping a hungry neighbour some make a pilgrimage to the Mecca.¹¹¹ Some command others to do this and not to do that instead of themselves acting in the manner they preach.¹¹² Some leave their own countries and settle either at Mecca or Madina and think it an act of great piety without reforming themselves.¹¹³ Some dress themselves poorly, yet are always in search of a position and rank.¹¹⁴ Some undergo great sufferings and forego the good things of the earth to draw the attention of others to their piety.¹¹⁵ All are under a self-deception because they do not try to distinguish what is more important from the less important. It is the purity of heart that paves the path to Allāh and to eternal bliss.

The *Ṣūfis* also labour under the same kind of self-deception.¹¹⁶ Some think that if they dress like great *Ṣūfis*, and imitate them in externals, they will themselves become great *Ṣūfis*.¹¹⁷ Some wear patched dresses but of valuable clothes.¹¹⁸ Some learn only the terminology of real *Ṣūfis*, and think they are likewise able to see God.¹¹⁹ Some regard themselves above *Shara'* and consequently give up¹²⁰ the observance of obligatory religious duties. They think that Allāh is not in need of their worship and their services.¹²¹ Some try to cleanse the heart, do good acts and seek what is permitted (*halāl*), but they wrongly presume that they have passed through most of the stages of *Ṣūfism* and regard themselves as true lovers of God.¹²² They often do what their own selves prompt them to do, and this is often most

110. Ibid.

111. Ibid., p. 346.

112. Ibid.

113. Ibid.

114. Ibid.

115. Ibid., p. 347.

116. Ibid., pp. 346 ff.

117. Ibid., p. 348.

118. Ibid.

119. Ibid.

120. Ibid.

121. Ibid.

122. Ibid., pp. 348-49.

disagreeable to Allāh. For some the only thing is the search for the permitted food.¹²³ For some, the only important things are politeness, humility and generosity.¹²⁴ The real aim of all of them, however, is only to acquire reputation. Some have the mania of setting up a standard of morality.¹²⁵ They are always finding fault and spotting defects in every act done by others and in everything, but themselves do not follow the injunctions they preach. Some are always wondering about the power and majesty of Allāh and do nothing more.¹²⁶ There are some, though very few, who have passed nearly all the stages of Ṣūfism but have stopped short of the last stage, under the delusion that they have reached the final goal.¹²⁷ Such are most of the mystics. Nearly are all under some kind of self-deception.

Lastly, there are the rich who too are busy performing religious acts, agreeable to Allah in their opinion.¹²⁸ Some spend their money on the construction of mosques, schools, inns, wells, bridges, and other buildings of public utility, thinking that thereby they can please Allāh and secure for themselves eternal happiness.¹²⁹ But, either their money has been earned by unlawful means or they do these things to earn a name. Some give money to the poor openly in order only to gain fame; or they give it to such persons who may serve them in some way; or they give it to those who spread their fame.¹³⁰ Some rich men are very pious.¹³¹ They spend their time in religious service which does not cost money. It would have been better for them to contribute money to charitable works than to perform only religious services. There are many men among the rich who think that attendance at religious sermons alone is a complete act of piety without practising what is taught therein.¹³²

123. *Ibid.*, p. 349.

124. *Ibid.*

125. *Ibid.*

126. *Ibid.*, pp. 349 ff.

127. *Ibid.*, p. 350.

128. *Ibid.*, pp. 350 ff.

129. *Ibid.*, p. 351.

130. *Ibid.*, p. 352.

131. *Ibid.*

132. *Ibid.*

The remedy lies in a sincere, strong and increasing desire to know one's fault, and to reform one's self. One must meditate upon God, upon one's own soul, upon life in this world and in the next. One must understand one's end on this earth and realize that the true salvation lies not in this world but in the next, and in the love of God.

CHAPTER XV

VIRTUES

THE discussion of virtues brings us to the positive side of al-Ghazzālī's ethics. The virtuous life is characterised by the supremacy of the rational self. All the activities of man are adjusted to that unseen order which is the source of all spiritual aspirations. One completely surrenders his will to the will of God and does everything to please Him and to be near Him. In this attitude of mind inhere the virtues, the qualities of the self which constitute human perfection. The value of each virtue is relative to the effect it produces on the human heart to enable it to achieve perfection. Virtues are of two kinds : (i) Those which are means, e.g., repentance fear, piety, meditation, sincerity, truthfulness, and (ii) those which are both means and ends, e.g., absolute reliance on God (*tawakkul*) and thankful praise (*shukr*) to Him.¹

Each virtue passes through three phases in its progress, viz., knowledge, state and action.² Knowledge produces a consciousness of the realities and engenders fear of God; fear gives rise to piety, patience and repentance, which conduce to concentration on God. When a person is thus occupied with God, it produces in him sincerity and truthfulness which lead him on to the intimate spiritual knowledge of God, and this enables him to love Him. Thus is the climax of this perfection.³ The Sūfis characterize virtues either as states (*ahwāl*) or as stages (*muqāmāt*). Al-Ghazzālī distinguishes between the higher and the lower virtues and regards the difference between a stage and a state to be one of degree and not of kind.⁴ When any quality in the self becomes

1. *Kimiyā-i-Sa'adat*, p. 421.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 422, Cf. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 3-4, 55, 187, etc.

3. *Kimiyā-i-Sa'adat*, p. 448.

4. R.A. Nicholson quoting from *Kitāb al-Luma'* (pp. 28-29), says that a distinction should be made between *Ahwāl* and *Muqāmāt*, the former being the psychological aspects of the mind and the latter the ethical disciplines. Repentance, abstinence, renunciation, poverty, patience, 'trust in God and satisfaction are the stages, while meditation, nearness to God, love, hope, longing, intimacy, tranquillity and contemplation are the states of Mind.

permanent and persists in it; it is *Muqām* (stage), if, on the other hand, it is accidental and exists only for a short period, it is *hāl* (stage).⁵

From the point of view of function, virtues are classified into five groups : (i) virtues connected with worldly things, e.g., repentance, abstinence, poverty, patience; (ii) virtues; related to the present state of the working of the heart, e.g., *Murāqaba*, *Muhāsaba*, *Fikr*, etc.; (iii) virtues connected with singleness of purpose, e.g., *Niyya*, *Ikhlas* and *Ṣidq* (intention, sincerity and truthfulness); (iv) virtues concerning the future relations of man with God, e.g., *Khawf* and *Rajā'*, and (v) the highest virtues such as *Shukr*, *Tawakkul*, etc., which foster to love of God.⁶

Virtues Connected with Worldly Things

The human soul yearns for perfection. But, there are obstacles which hinder its attainment of the goal. These obstacles are due to the fact that the soul is housed in a body whose needs and limitations obscure the direct vision of the good which it wants to pursue. When man struggles to rise above the life of sin and imperfection, he finds the world and its entanglements as so many hurdles in the way of his self-realization. Repentance, abstinence, poverty and patience, are the steps to be taken in order to atone for past sins and protect oneself from the allurements of the world.

Repentance (*Tawba*) is the first essential step towards spiritual progress.⁷ In fact, it is the sole basis of virtuous life, and is a spiritual conversion.⁸ It is an awakening of the self to the implications and results of a sinful act already committed and implies the determination to make continued efforts to the consequences of the awful act and to pursue the right path in future. It involves a complete transformation of the self. The sense of sin overpowers the convert who is convinced of the unreality of this world, and who awakens to

5. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 123.

6. *Kimiyā-i-Sa'adat*, p. 421.

7. Cf. *Kashf al-Mahjūb*, Al-Hujwiri, p. 249; Cf. *An Early Mystic of Baghdad*, Margaret Smith, p. 151; al-Ghazzālī and al-Muhāsibī use similar words.

8. Cf. *The varieties of Religious Experience*, William James, pp. 189 ff.

the appreciation of spiritual realities, Spiritual motives inspire and guide him. He surrenders himself to the will of God. Repentance, then, is instantaneous rescue from sin. The penitent is spiritual a new man.

Repentance has three aspects, viz., knowledge, state and action. The first conditions the second, which, in turn, leads to the third.⁹ The knowledge aspect of repentance consists in the realization of the dangers of sin. Man becomes convinced that sins lead him astray from God. He is grieved at his transgressions and is pained by them. This is called *nadāma* (contrition), the 'state' aspect of repentance.¹⁰ The sins which one has been addicted should now be renounced at once and should not be repeated in future. Moreover, one's conduct after penitence is, in one way, linked with the past as well. One must make the necessary compensations for the injuries one has done to others. Further, knowledge generates *īmān* or *yaqīn*, i.e., unshakable conviction which makes the heart firm and steadfast in the pursuit of right action. When the light of this faith fills the heart, a feeling of shame is aroused in man that makes the heart grieve because he begins to see that he has been separated from God because of his sins.¹¹

Al-Ghazzālī regards repentance as an essential (*wājib*) and indispensable means to the achievement of the highest end.¹² It is binding in all circumstances on all individuals.¹³ It is also essential that one must repent immediately after one has committed a sin. The more the repentance is delayed the more will the darkness of sin grow till it becomes impossible to save the soul. To repent means to cleanse and purify the heart so that it may become the abode of God.¹⁴ 'O you who believe! Take to God a sincere turning; may be your Lord will purge you of evil.'¹⁵ 'Turn to God (repent) all of you, O believers! so that you may be successful.'¹⁶ 'One who turns

9. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 3.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

11. Cf. *An Early Mystic of Baghdad*, Margaret Smith, pp. 151-52.

12. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 4.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 11 ff.

15. Qur'ān, lxvi, 8.

16. Qur'ān, xxiv, 31.

away from sin is like the person who has committed no sin,'¹⁷ said the Prophet. Repentance is accepted only after certain necessary conditions have been fulfilled. A person must weep over his sins constantly; grief must fill the heart.¹⁸ He should not only abandon sinning but should also positively hate it.¹⁹ All the sins one has committed in the past should be recalled to mind and one should reflect upon them one by one, year by year, day by day and minute by minute. After recalling them, one should discard each and every one of them, else one's repentance will not be perfect. If one has neglected any religious duty, one should discharge it. For those sins which concern God, one should repent, grieve and seek pardon from Him. With regard to the sins concerning one's fellow-beings one should atone for them all. If one has injured anybody, one should repent and comfort him; if one has deprived any one of his wealth, one should restore it to him.²⁰

The penitent, after abandoning the life of sin, becomes immune from the temptations of the world and turns to what is more desirable.²¹ This state of turning from one thing to another is called abstinence (*Zuhd*²²), but the desired thing ought to be better than the thing renounced.²³ *Zuhd* consists in giving up a thing altogether, so that even the desire for it disappears from the heart, and filling the heart with love of God in place of what is renounced. Merely giving up this world be equal to giving away a thing without receiving anything as its price.²⁴ A person will not attain *Zuhd*, if in renouncing this world and its pleasures he has any aim other than the pleasure of God and of well-being in the next world.²⁵ Giving up the pleasures of this world alone may constitute an expression of good character but it does not make one a *Zāhid*.²⁶

17. Cf. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 4.

18. Cf. *An Early Mystic of Baghdad*, Margaret Smith, pp. 151-52.

19. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 30 ff.

20. Cf. *An Early Mystic of Baghdad*, Margaret Smith, pp. 153-54.

21. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 187.

22. *Ibid.*

23. *Ibid.*

24. *Ibid.*, p. 187.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 188.

26. *Ibid.* |

The knowledge that the pleasure of God and of the next world is invaluable, durable and real, while the pleasures of this life are only transitory and illusory, constitutes the essential condition of *Zuhd*.²⁷

The motives for *Zuhd*²⁸ are of three grades. The first is love of God, the second hope of reward, and third fear of punishment. Renunciation of everything including even the desire for paradise, with the object of achieving God's love is the highest grade of *Zuhd* and is called *Zuhd al-Muṭlaq* (absolute abstinence).²⁹ People who rise to this height are the true '*Muwahhīdūn*' (believers in the unity of God), for they seek God alone, seeking anything other than God being polytheism (*Shirk*) in disguise.³⁰ The next grade of *Zuhd* is that in which the person gives up all the pleasures of this world but not the rewards of the next world. The third grade is that of partial *Zuhd* in which one may give up only some of the pleasures of this world. Such partial *Zuhd* is also acceptable as repentance for some sins. Repentance is turning away from a thing which is forbidden; *Zuhd* is giving up a thing which is allowed.³¹

In the process of renouncing the world, one may be dragged towards it in spite of his strenuous endeavour to curb his strong impulse for possessing it.³² Man is constantly in danger, for sometimes the evil self is victorious, and appetites pull him back towards the world. One reaches a higher level of *Zuhd* when one recognizes this world to be insignificant in comparison with the next.³³ The most advanced *Zāhid* practices abstemiousness of his own free-will, so much so that he does not become conscious of renouncing anything at all. In this consists the perfection of *Zuhd*. Such a *Zāhid* is same from all danger.³⁴

27. Ibid., pp. 187-88.

28. Ibid., p. 185.

29. Ibid., p. 187.

30. Ibid., p. 196.

31. Ibid., p. 187.

32. Ibid., p. 195.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid., p. 195.

Salvation can only be achieved by turning away from the world.³⁵ This may happen in two ways. One is the way of poverty when the world turns away from a man, the other is that of abstinence when a man turns away from the world.³⁶

In one sense, poverty (*faqr*) means lack of what is needed. In another sense everything other than God is considered poor because it is in need of the Grace of God for its very existence. This is called absolute poverty. Here we are concerned not with absolute poverty but with relative poverty, i.e., poverty with regard to worldly possessions.³⁷ The state of poverty is higher than the state of prosperity when (a) the existence or non-existence of property make no difference, or (b) when the property is restricted to the essential minimum.³⁸

The poor are of several types,³⁹ viz., the *Zāhid* (abstinent) who is displeased and pained when he comes by any possessions, the *Rāḍī* (satisfied with God) who is indifferent to worldly possessions, who is not pleased when he receives them, nor grieved when he loses them; the *Qānī* (contented) who desires to have worldly possessions, but who is not actuated by the desires to engage in their acquisition; the *Harīṣ* (greedy) who cannot acquire property on account of some disability, but whose desire for its acquisition is so strong that if he could find a way, he would go to any length for obtaining it, and the *Muḍṭar* (constrained) who is in a state of dire need such as starvation.

The state of *Zuhd* is the highest of all the types of poverty and the highest stage of *Zuhd* is the state of being a *Mustaghni*⁴⁰ (indifferent). The *Mustaghni* is indifferent to all worldly possessions. He is neither pleased at the gain of material things, nor pained at their loss. He is nearer to God in this quality, because God Himself is *Ghanī*, i.e., above the limitations imposed by desire. Though a man may be *Mustaghni* of worldly possessions, yet he has wants. The

35. Ibid., p. 164.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid., p. 165.

38. Ibid., p. 177.

39. Ibid., p. 165.

40. Ibid.

active hatred of a man for the world which he regards as evil also means being occupied with something other than God, and is enough to place a curtain between him and God. The perfection of the heart lies in not attending to anything other than God, be it in friendliness or in enmity.⁴¹ However, it must not be imagined that the enmity of the world is not a thing desirable in itself. Unless, however, a person rises above it so that he becomes altogether indifferent to the world, he will stop short of reaching God. The pious acts of the good (*Abrār*) are evils for the intimate (*Muqarrabūn*⁴²), i.e., what is permissible to or even essential for the former places a hindrance in the way of the latter in rising to their higher state. The enmity of the world, therefore, is essential only as a stage and must be left behind when the seeker becomes altogether detached from, and indifferent to, the world. To reach God is impossible without overcoming this hindrance.

Man cannot remain steadfast in repentance, abstinence, poverty, etc., without patience (*ṣabr*), i.e., without endurance of suffering.⁴³ God speaks of patience more than seventy times in the Qur'ān in which He exalts those who are patient.

Angels who are without passion, are not in need of patience, while animals who do not possess reason and cannot discriminate between good and evil, do not need to exercise patience. But man, who possesses both reason and passion, needs to cultivate patience which consists in his exercise of reason against passion, so that he may ultimately follow the dictates of the divine nature in him. Thus, patience implies the persistence of the divine motives as against the lower motives.⁴⁴ When after prolonged practice it becomes easy to exercise patience, when all passions are subdued and the

41. Ibid., pp. 165 ff.

42. Ibid., p. 165 :

إذا حدثت الأبرار سينات المفربين :

43. Ibid., p. 53. إذا الصبر عبارة من ثبات جند في مقابلة جند . . . فالصبر

44. Ibid., p. 55 :

عبارة عن ثبات باعث الدين في مقابلة باعث الشهوة

religious motive reigns supreme, the stage of *Radā'* (satisfaction) is reached.

The three state of the soul, viz., *Nafs-Mutma'inna*, *Nafs-Ammāra*, and *Nafs-Lawwāma*, result from the varying degrees of control exercised over passion by patience.⁴⁵

Patience implies endurance of bodily hardships and pains either actively, e.g., in performing a difficult task involving devotion; or passively, e.g., in enduring corporal punishment, or in steadfastly resisting one's own passions.⁴⁶ There are three grades of patience; firstly, subduing passions which is the stage reached by those who repent; secondly, satisfaction with one's lot which represents the patience of the ascetic, and lastly, loving those things which please God, which is the stage reached by the *Ṣiddīqūn*, (the most truthful ones).

Man requires patience at every step in his life, e.g., in want, affection, loss of life, property, health, in fact, for checking every ignoble impulse in the heart, all in the service of God.⁴⁷ But, patience which takes the form of tolerating things which are prohibited by religion is forbidden. If somebody makes an attack on your life, and you bear it patiently, you are not on the right path, since patience of this sort is undesirable.⁴⁸

Ṣabr (patience and self-control) is called by different names according to the circumstances in which it is manifested; patience in misfortune is *Ṣabr* itself and its opposite is *Jaza'* or *Hala'* (violent outburst of passion or fretfulness). When one struggles against the demands of the stomach and the sex, it is *'Iffa* (chastity); bearing oneself well when one is rich, is *Ḍabṭ an-Nafs* (self-control), while its opposite is *Baṭar* (arrogance, boastfulness); patience on the battle-field is *Shajā'a* (courage), while its opposite is *Fubn* (cowardice) : patience in anger is *Hilm* (endurance) and its opposite is *Tadhammur* (rage); patience in hardships is *Sa'atas-ṣadr* (broad-mindedness), and its opposite is *Ḍajar* (narrow-mindedness); patience exercised in the face of the

45. Ibid., pp. 59 ff.

46. Ibid., pp. 58-59.

47. Ibid., pp. 60 ff.

48. Ibid.

desires for luxuries is *Zuhd* (abstinence), and its opposite is *Hirṣ* (avarice); and patience with the little that one had got is *Qanā'a* (contentment), and its opposite is *Tama'* (greed).

Virtues Related to the Present State of the Working of the Heart

Repenting of sin and renunciation of the world and its temptations enable the seeker to direct his attention to the self with the object of making it submissive and obedient to the Will of God. But, the struggle against the self and mastery over it is an arduous task. Therefore, the *Ṣūfis* call it as *al-Jihād al-Akbar* (greater *Jihād*) as distinguished from the *Jihād* against the enemies of Islām which they call as *al-Jihād al-Asghar*.⁴⁹ In order to gain self-mastery, one has to resort to *Murāqaba* (meditation) and *Muḥāsaba* (self-examination) which involve watching over and stock-taking of one's self. It is imperative that one should keep a constant watch over his self and take account of every occurrence in the heart.⁵⁰ These process involve several well-defined steps, viz., assigning the task to the self (*Mushārata*).⁵¹ Watching over the self (*Murāqaba*), critical stock-taking of the self (*Muḥāsaba*), punishing the self (*Mu'āqaba*), mortifying the self (*Mujāhada*) and upbraiding the self (*Mu'ā'taba*).⁵² The basis of all these stages lies in *Muḥāsaba* or self-examination which depends on the preassigned task.

First, certain conditions are imposed on the self⁵³ in order to cleanse and purify it because man's success depends on its purity. 'And who acts aiming at purification,⁵⁴ and He will

49. *Mizān al-'Amal*, p. 61 : رجعتنا من الجهاد الأصغر إلى الجهاد الأكبر

فسنومجاهدة الكفار بالسيف الجهاد الأصغر
قدر جعتنا من جهاد الأصغر بما نبي أندر جهاد

Cf. *Mathnawī*, Part I :

الأكبر

Cf. *Kashf al-Mahjūb*, Ali Hujwiri, p. 200; Also see *Al-Fuṣūḥāt al-Makkiya* on al-Mujāhada.

50. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 336.

51. Lit., setting a condition to.

52. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 336. ff.

53. *Ibid.*, pp. 336-38.

54. *Qur'ān*, xxiii, 4.

indeed be successful who purifies it and he will fail who corrupts it.⁵⁵ The cleansing and purifying of the heart is effected through good actions. Task must be set to the self to be fulfilled properly. Every part of the body must have tasks assigned it, e.g., the tongue must be guarded against back biting, lying, and foolish talk. The self must be shown the way to success and urged to follow it. It is essential to exercise every care in taking account of the self at every step and in keeping watch over its movements and thoughts. One must constantly examine it to see if it has fulfilled the conditions. Every breath (moment) must be spent on doing good. Literary, *Murāqaba* means watching each other,⁵⁶ but in the discipline of the self it means being alive to the conviction that God sees man and man sees God. One must have the conviction that God knows everything that lurks in the heart of man and keeps a constant eye on the actions he does. When this conviction is absolutely undoubted, it creates in the heart an all-pervading reverence for God.⁵⁷ Acts of worship are to be performed as if you see Him and He sees you.

'*Murāqaba*' in its higher aspects is of two kinds.⁵⁸ The higher form of *Murāqaba* is of *Muqarrabūn* who do it singly to exalt the supreme majesty and glory of God. The heart quails at the sight of His glory and shudders in awe of Him. In this state, man is fully absorbed in God and becomes altogether oblivious of everything else. The lower form of *Murāqaba* is associated with the people on the "right-hand side" (*ashāb al-yamin*). They are fully conscious that God knows them well, both their inside and outside. However, they are not completely lost in His glory. A man who is at that stage, must pay attention to all his movement, thoughts and powers.

After an act is over one must view it in retrospect to find out how far it has fulfilled in accordance with the conditions imposed on the self.⁵⁹ If a person finds the self guilty, he

55. *Qur'ān*, xci, 9-10.

56. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 338 ff.

57. *Ibid.*, pp. 340-44.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 340.

59. *Ibid.*, p. 345.

should not be lax in chastising it, otherwise it will become easier for it to transgress next time. Therefore, punishment should immediately follow the transgression which the self has committed.⁶⁰ It should suit the occasion and the crime.

*Mujāhada*⁶¹ (mortification or self-cultivation) must be resorted to in order to renounce worldly things. *Mujāhada* against the self is extremely difficult, nevertheless it is most indispensable means to spiritual progress. The evil propensities of the self, e.g., hypocrisy and envy, are very stubborn. But if, in spite of all endeavours, the lower self transgresses its limits, it should be upbraided and chastised for its sins.⁶²

The essential condition of all such contemplation is *Fikr* (reasoning), or reflection and meditation. It gives rise to the various states of the self on the one hand, and to systems of knowledge, i.e., sciences, on the other. Because of its importance the Prophet said, 'An hour's meditation is better than a year's worship'.⁶³ In so far as it is concerned with

60. Ibid., pp. 346 ff.

61. Ibid., pp. 349 ff.

62. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 355 ff.

63. Cf. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 361; *Fikr*, reasoning, means bringing two cognitions (i.e., concepts together in order to arrive at the third, i.e., concept or proposition) *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 363 f.) The words *Taammul*, *Tadabbur* and *Tafakkur* though different in meaning are used in the same sense. Again, we find that the meaning of the words *Tadhakkur*, *I'tibār* and *Nazr* are different, though the real purpose is the same. In bringing together two cognitions, the word *I'tibār* is used because we pass over from the two to the third. If from the two judgments one cannot pass to the third, it is called *Tadhakkur*. It is called *Nazr* and *Tafakkur* only when a third cognition is sought after. By means of *Tadhakkur*, the cognition is repeatedly impressed on the heart, whereas by *Tafakkur*, the knowledge is increased and new cognition is acquired. This is the difference between *Tafakkur* and *Tadhakkur* (*Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 363).

When cognitions are arranged in a special way, a new cognition is the result. This new cognition joins with one of the cognitions, and gives rise to a still new cognition. Thus the number of cognitions goes on increasing and knowledge is vastly increased and *Tafakkur* make a tremendous advance (*Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 358-64). Also, it sometimes so happens that a man has a number of cognitions but he is not able to put them together in order to get a new cognition. Further, the fruits of *Fikr* (reasoning) may be science, states and

religion,⁶⁴ e.g., spiritual relation of man to God.⁶⁵ *Fikr* may be either (1) about man, his qualities and states; or (2) about God, His attributes and actions.⁶⁶ *Fikr* about one's self is directed to acts of obedience (*Ṭa'āt*), acts of disobedience (*Ma'āsī*), qualities that lead to salvation (*Munjiyāt*) and qualities that lead to destruction (*Muhlikāt*). Among acts of obedience one must include all duties, both incumbent and supererogatory. One must examine each function of the body to set it on the right path. He must look into the secrets of the heaven and the earth with the attitude of a student in order to maintain his ability to continue in the worship of God. He has also to guard himself against sins and to atone for those that he has committed. The qualities of salvation must be critically considered in order to find out which one is necessary to bring him nearer to God. The qualities of salvation are repentance, patience, willing resignation, gratitude for divine blessing, moderation in hope and fear, abstinence from the world, sincerity in action, good dealings with other people, love of God, and self-humiliation before God. The qualities of destruction include the predominance of appetites, anger, avarice, pride, self-conceit, hypocrisy, envy, greed, love of property, love of position, misunderstanding of others, self deception, etc. One must contemplate upon the ways these qualities can be controlled and try to find out every possible means of checking them.⁶⁷

In reasoning about God⁶⁸ one has to understand the nature (essence), qualities and creations of God. But the intellect of man (with the exception of the *Ṣiddiqūn*) is so

actions. But, its special and particular fruit is knowledge. With knowledge the state of the heart changes, and accordingly, there is a change in the actions of the person. Therefore, reasoning is the root and source of all good. There are five stages of reasoning, viz., (1) *Tadhakkur*, i.e., bringing together two cognitions (2) *Tafakkur*, seeking the desired cognition out of the two cognitions; (3) acquirement of the desired cognition; (4) a change in the heart due to knowledge; and (5) a corresponding change in the external actions of the body (*Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 394).

64. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 364 ff.

65. Ibid., p. 365.

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid., p. 366.

68. Ibid., p. 370.

limited that it cannot grasp the nature of God directly. Therefore, one must reflect about His mysterious and wonderful actions as manifested in His creations because all these show His Glory, Purity, Knowledge, Wisdom and Will. All that exists is created by God. The existence of all depends on Him, but He exists of His own accord.⁶⁹ Most of His creations are mysterious and beyond human comprehension, e.g., angels, genii and Satan, but there are also things which can be apprehended by man. These include objects that exist between heaven and earth, such as clouds, lightning, shooting stars, wind, snow, mountains, mines, rivers, animals, and plants. In man himself, there are untold wonders. He can be studied in great detail. After discovering the method of reflecting on himself, the disciple ought to look at the earth and the skies and reflect on what they contain.

Virtues Connected with Singleness of Purpose

When the heart is purified and mastery over the self gained, the forces of the self are unified and concentrated on a single purpose. The struggle between the lower and the higher self ceases. Nothing remains in the heart except the desire for communion with God. All activities are concentrated on Him.

When an action is motivated by one force alone, the state of the self is called *Ikhlās*⁷⁰ (single-mindedness in purpose). But in religious terminology the word *Ikhlās* is used only when the motive force is the desire for nearness to God unadulterated by any worldly or selfish motive. *Ṣidq* is the culmination of *Ikhlās*.⁷¹ *Ikhlās* must be consciously determined by the individual himself. Conscious self-determination, technically called *niyya* (intention), depends upon knowledge and desire and results in action. It is intention which has moral value and with reference to which the moral value of actions is determined.⁷²

69. Ibid., p. 371.

70. Ibid., p. 324.

71. 'Arba'in, al-Ghazzālī, p. 261.

72. The word *Niyya*, *Qaṣd* and *Irādā* are synonymous and connote an aspect or quality of the human mind (*Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, p. 312).

Al-Ghazzālī interprets the saying of the Prophet. 'The intention of the believer is better than his action.' Thus,⁷³ 'Intention, without action is superior to action without intention, since action without intention is not worship, though intention without action is worship. Bodily acts of worship are meant to bring about a change in the quality of the heart, whereas intention directly proceeds from the heart; therefore, of the two, the one connected with the heart, viz., intention, is better.'

The Prophet said, 'Actions are to be judged only by intentions.'⁷⁴ He also said that if two persons were to assault each other with swords and one of them died of injuries, both the slayer and the slain would be doomed, because both were motivated by the same evil intention. Similarly, if a man intended to do a sinful act, but for want of means could not do it, his guilt was proved.

Intention plays different roles in the three kinds of actions, *Ma'āsī* (acts of disobedience), *Mubāḥāt* (permissible deeds), and *Tā'āt* (acts of obedience). In *Ma'āsī*, intention does not make any difference. Good intentions cannot make a bad action good. *Mubāḥāt* and *Tā'āt* are good or bad according to good or bad intentions. The Prophet's saying, 'Actions are according to intentions,' has sometimes been misunderstood to mean that foul means are permissible for achieving fair ends. This is wrong. The doer of a foul act is a sinner (*Fāsiq*) and if he considers it to be a virtuous act, he is a greater sinner. Intention is doubly effective in *Tā'āt*.⁷⁵ Rewards will be in proportion to the intensity of one's intentions. *Mubāḥāt*,⁷⁶ e.g., eating, drinking, etc., are good or bad according to the intention behind them.

Ṣidq means truthfulness in world, intention, resolution ('*Azm*), execution of resolution, action and the various attitudes of the souls toward Allāh.⁷⁷

73. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, pp. 31 ff. نية المؤمن خير من عمله

74. Ibid., pp. 315-17. إنما الأعمال بالنيات Cf. Bakhārī. He opens his book with this tradition.

75. *Ihyā'*, Vol. IV, 316.

76. Ibid., p. 217.

77. Ibid., p. 331.

Truthfulness in words consist in making a statement which is not only true but is also unequivocal, so that the person who hears it cannot interpret it in a different way. It is permissible to depart from the truth provided such a departure is made in the service of God or of humanity and there are no ulterior motives behind it. Occasions when one is allowed to compromise with untruth are, e.g., war tactics restoration of happy relations between husband and wife, and amity between the Muslims, but as far as possible one should not deviate much from the truth. Al-Ghazzālī emphasizes the point that truth is not an end in itself but a means to an end.⁷⁸ It is an attribute which leads one to attain the ultimate reality.

Truthfulness in intention⁷⁹ is also indispensable. The next form is truthfulness in resolution; it is resolution formed to accomplish a high object conditional upon circumstances which do not exist at the time; e.g., to resolve that if an occasion arose, I would gladly lay down my life in the service of God,' or that 'If I rise to a high office, I would never swerve from the ideals of truth and justice.'⁸⁰ Truthfulness is also required in the execution of a resolution, for, howsoever genuine it might be when it was made, there is always a chance of wavering at the moment of the supreme trial. Only a few come out successful in a severe test.⁸¹

Truthfulness in action lies in the perfection correspondence of the inward state of the person with his outward action without the slightest taint of hypocrisy.⁸² The highest truthfulness which is at the same time the most difficult to attain is the full and complete realization of the perfection of various attitudes of the soul towards Allāh, e.g., fear, love, reliance, etc.⁸³ There is no limit to this realization. Perfection in these attitudes is impossible in this life. There may be people who may achieve the perfection possible in this life in different types of truthfulness. The

78. Ibid.

79. Ibid., p. 332.

80. Ibid., pp. 332-33.

81. Ibid., p. 333.

82. Ibid., p. 334.

83. Ibid., pp. 334-35.

highest embodiments of truthfulness are the *Ṣiddiqūn* who approach perfection in this virtue in all its forms. They have great strength and capacity for these, and nearly attain perfection, though they themselves never realize that they have done so.

Virtues Concerning the Future Relation of Man with God

The excellent of *Ikhlās* (singleness of purpose) frees man from the thralldom of passions, and there remains only one purpose, i.e., God. The motive forces are fear (*Khawf*) and hope (*Raja'*) which properly realized, lead the seeker after God to higher levels of development.⁸⁴ These qualities reveal the imperfection of man. His perfection consists in achieving a state where he is above fear and hope for he is absolved of the guilt of his past deeds, grows indifferent to the consequences of his efforts in the future, and becomes totally absorbed in love for his Lord.

Fear, his three aspects : knowledge, state and action. Knowledge of imminent danger in the initial aspect of fear.⁸⁵ It may be the knowledge of what is inherently fearful, e.g., fear of beasts of prey. The same is the case with the fear of God which is aroused by his awe-inspiring attributes. But, sometimes fear may be produced in man by the consciousness of his guilt and the apprehension of Divine displeasure. The nobler kind of fear is one which is aroused by the idea of the separation of the self from God. Such fear is entertained by the *Ṣiddiqūn* alone.

Fear of God is in proportion to one's knowledge of God. The more one is afraid of Him the stronger will be the states of fear produced. It may so completely annihilate his passions and appetites, that he does not commit sins and gives up all unlawful, doubtful and even lawful pleasures, and is occupied with God alone. In some states a man becomes insane and unconscious. Fear is undesirable when it paralyzes action. It is not an end in itself by a means to making efforts to reach a higher spiritual level of nearness to God.

84. Ibid., p. 123.

85. Ibid., p. 135.

In hope, which is a pleasant state of the mind, man expects an agreeable thing, after he has done all that lies in his power to realize it with the grace of God.⁸⁶ A farmer, for instance, can hope for a good crop after he has chosen a good soil, tilled it properly, sown good seeds and watered it regularly.⁸⁷ Similarly a man can have real hope, when he sows the seed of faith in his heart, waters it with obedience, clear it of the weeds of bad conduct and expects, by the grace of God, a good harvest in the next world. The entertainment of hope will enable him to get absorbed in God and that nothing given him greater pleasure than contemplation of Him.

Two kinds of men are in need of *Rajā'*: Firstly, those who, in despair of the mercy of God, have ceased worshipping Him, Secondly, those who, being overpowered by the fear of God, spend all their time in prayers, to the neglect of their duties towards their wives, children, friends and others.

Now the question arises, which should dominate the heart,⁸⁸ fear or hope? Both are remedies for the removal of the imperfections of the heart. Their value is measured by the effects they produce on the heart in the achievement of self-realization. Fear is to be preferred for the heart which lacks it. If the heart, on other hand, has become despondent, hope is desirable. However, if we compare fear and hope from an absolute point of view, the latter is superior because it is inspired by the grace of God, where as the former is inspired by the wrath of God. Indeed, a man whose acts are inspired by love is superior to one whose conduct is actuated by fear. Since hope strengthens love and enables man to realize God, it is superior to fear.⁸⁹ He who loves God, hopes for his indulgence, and this will determine his happiness in the next world.

The Highest Virtues

These are *Tawakkul* (reliance) and *Shukr* (gratitude), the attainment of which brings harmony and peace to the self.

86. Ibid., pp. 123-24.

87. Ibid., p. 124.

88. Ibid., p. 143.

89. Ibid.

The knowledge upon which *Tawakkul* is based is *Tawhīd* or the realization of the Unity of God. This knowledge relates to '*Ilm al-Mukāshafa*', but we are concerned only with those of its aspects which are related to '*Ilm al-Mu'āmalā*'.⁹⁰ Those who profess belief in the unity of God are of four grades.⁹¹ Those who profess the unity of God with their lips but do not believe in the heart; those who believe on the basis of authority and tradition; those who believe God to be the only cause of all that exists on the evidence of discursive thought and *Mukāshafa* (intuition); lastly, those who have risen to the realization that nothing exists except God. Their hearts are filled with Allāh and even their consciousness of the self is lost. Of these four types of believers the last grade is the highest. In the first or the lowest grade the believer will pass for a Muslim Faith of the second grade cannot produce the state of *Tawakkul*. *Tawakkul* which is an attitude of the soul is produced by the third type of belief in the unity of God. This state of the soul is realized by thought, intuition and experience. Its knowledge is embodied in the conviction that there is no God but Allāh, without a rival, for He alone has dominance, for Him is all praise, and He is the Master of all, He knows everything relating to the individual and is sufficient for him, His mercy is perfect and all-embracing and reaches every individual, and none is His equal.' This knowledge, when firmly established, produces the state of *Tawakkul*, provided man not only possesses knowledge with certitude, but for whom His knowledge is a perfect source of satisfaction.

There are three grades of *Tawakkul*:⁹² The first is conscious and deliberate, and comes by cultivation. The second is based on love, and is spontaneous and unconscious. In the last grade faith and trust are so complete that love for God becomes independent of everything, even of prayer for help. Such a person is conscious of the love and mercy of God with a certainty beyond any shadow of doubt, regards himself as a mere corpse and would not even move a limb

90. Ibid., pp. 211-12 ff.

91. Ibid., pp. 212 ff.

92. Ibid.

without the will of God. This stage is not often found even amongst the rarest of the rare. It is also never more than momentary. It is like the momentary withdrawal at blood from the cheeks on account of a sudden shock. Spiritual realization comes like a flash, and the soul withdraws from the world of cause and effect. The second grade is rare and short lived but lasts more than the last grade. The first grade may be permanent.

The various states of *Tawakkul* ought to issue in corresponding actions. The problem is, how far are personal thought and effort consistent with *Tawakkul* and *Tawhīd*?⁹³ In the last grade of *Tawakkul* this question does not arise because here man is like a lump of flesh in the hand of God. In the second, which is also a temporary phase, man does nothing more than pray. The *Tawakkul* of the first grade is analogous to the entrusting of one's business to a plenipotentiary, for execution. He must satisfy the demands of the plenipotentiary namely, he should submit all business papers to him, or should present himself at the court of a certain time, if he wishes the latter to act on his behalf. Now, this activity of his will not be inconsistent with his implicit faith and trust in the plenipotentiary. Distrust will be implied when one seeks the aid of another lawyer but does not put the whole case in his hands.

People who imagine that *Tawakkul* means abandonment of thought and action are seriously mistaken.⁹⁴ The various types of action in relation to *Tawakkul* may be divided into four classes : action to secure the possession of what is desired ; actions to take care of what is already possessed; actions to guard against the evil that has not yet befallen; and action against present evils.

The means by which a man secures the possession of a good thing always function in accordance with laws ordained by God, e.g., in order to eat, food must be carried to the mouth and masticated, seeds must be sown in order to reap a crop. Not to use one's hands and teeth in eating and not to

93. Ibid., pp. 225 ff.

94. Ibid., pp. 228 ff.

sow the seed for getting a crop will contravene such laws. Again, the means may not be governed by laws but may be reasonably necessary, e.g., carrying provisions when one is travelling through a region where no provisions are available. Unless one has accustomed oneself to do without them it will be unlawful to travel without them, for this is against the law of God. The law of God is that a man should provide means, as far as it lies in his power, but should put his trust not in the means but in God. Thus, to earn one's livelihood strictly honestly by means of one's strength, talent and ability is not against *Tawakkul*, provided that faith is placed not in the means but in Allāh. The test of a man's trust in Allāh is that the loss of a possession or some means should not fill him with despair. Lastly, the means of acquiring good things may be only games of chance like gambling, or they may be far-fetched schemes whose result is uncertain and which absorb his whole thought and divert his attention from God. The pursuit of such means goes against *Tawakkul*.

The man who has dependents is forbidden to retire into solitude, for, though he can compel himself to suffer the hardships and agonies of starvation, he is not permitted to force his dependents into such a life.

The second kind of actions, namely, those connected with preserving what is possessed, are not against *Tawakkul* upto a certain limit.⁹⁵ The principle is that one should depend not upon the thing preserved but upon Allāh, only he should not expect Allāh to violate His own law and to perform miracles for him. He who stores provisions for one year or more falls from the state of *Tawakkul*; but if he has dependents, one year's provision will not violate the principle of *Tawakkul*. The intimate (*Muqarrabūn* of God) should not store for more than forty days, while the *Ṣiddiqūn* do not bother to provide for more than twenty four hours.

The third type of actions involving protection from evils, are not against *Tawakkul*,⁹⁶ provided one adopts means which are natural or reasonably necessary, e.g., putting on clothes to protect oneself from cold and heat, or living in a house to

95. Ibid., p. 230.

96. Ibid., pp. 251 ff.

protect oneself from thieves, or to take up arms in self-defence. But to make unnecessarily elaborate plans for safeguarding oneself against all kinds of possible risks, and to give them too much thought and attention is against the spirit of *Tawakkul*. Forgiving a person instead of wreaking vengeance upon him manifests the spirit of *Tawakkul*. But one should take precaution against snakes, scorpions and beasts, and fight them.

A man who is in the state of *Tawakkul* must bear six things in mind with regard to theft. He should not be excessively anxious to make sure, by ascertaining several times, whether the door has been locked properly, nor should he suspect his neighbours. He should not keep such precious things in the house as will tempt some one to commit the sin of theft. When leaving the house he should decide that if the property is stolen, he will forgive the thief, for he may be poor and in want or that, thus the property of another brother whom the thief might otherwise rob will be saved. But, if after he has made this resolution and the theft is committed, he investigates or claims his property back he will be acting against the principle of *Tawakkul*, though he will not thereby forfeit his right to the property. He should not curse the thief for this implies regret at the loss. Lastly, he should feel sorry for the misguided thief, and should be happy that the loss has not been spiritual but material.

As regards combating evils, natural and reasonably necessary means are in keeping with *Tawakkul*. To undergo treatment for disease is not against *Tawakkul*; the Prophet himself did it. If some saints did not do it, they might have been actuated by different motives, e.g., they might have come to know by '*Ilm al-Mukāshafa*, that their death was approaching, or they might have been occupied with God, had no time to spare for treatment, or the disease might have become chronic and the treatment futile, or they might not have wished to get rid of the disease in order to try their strength and accustom themselves to patience, or they regarded the disease as atonement for their sins, or they did not pay too much attention to it lest they should forget God and become proud of being in health.

Thus, we see that actions which are in consonance with divine laws are in keeping with *Tawakkul*. Failure to perform them implies ignorance of the ways of God. But the essential condition is that one should always put one's faith in Allāh alone and never in the means.

The knowledge that all that man enjoys is ultimately from Allāh is the root of *Shukr*.⁹⁷ The realization of or belief in, this truth is in itself *Shukr*. The state of mind which is produced is that of being pleased with the Bestower of bounties.

If one is pleased with the gift only without reference to the Giver it is not *Shukr*.⁹⁸ If one is pleased with the Giver because it is a sign of His pleasure, it is *Shukr*, but of a lower grade than the *Shukr* which pleases him because he will use the gifts to win His pleasure all the more and to attain nearness to Him.⁹⁹ The former implies unalloyed love of God. This is the highest state of *Shukr*.¹⁰⁰

The conduct in which *Shukr* is expressed consists in always doing by word, thought and deed only what is pleasing to the Benefactor.¹⁰¹ Complaint made to mortals may be in some cases justified but when undertaken by clamity one should address oneself to God. With words one should glorify and praise God; in thought one should always intend to do good and to serve his fellowmen.

God Himself does not stand in need of thankfulness in any form, nor can it do Him any good, for He is self-sufficient.¹⁰² Like every thing else our thankfulness proceeds from Him. We thank Him for His gifts and He awards us another gift in return.¹⁰³ Al-Ghazzālī says that this points to the realization by '*Ilm al-Mukāshafa* of the oneness of God. The Giver and the thanks-giver are one, for nothing exists

97. Ibid., p. 71.

98. Ibid., p. 72.

99. Ibid., pp. 72-73.

100. Ibid., p. 72.

101. Ibid.

102. Ibid., p. 74.

103. Ibid., p. 75.

but God and His aspect. Everything exists as a God-aspect. Man is the thanks-giver only because he is the *Mahall* of the act of God, i.e., the medium through which the act of God manifests itself. Before man reaches this stage, the giver, the thanks-giver and thanks-giving seem to be different to him. At this stage, the conception of thanksgiving with reference to God can be made clear by an illustration.¹⁰⁴ Suppose, a king sends a horse to a vassal with all the necessary equipment for travel in a distant place, to enable the vassal to journey to his court, not because the king needs this vassal or his services but in order that he may be exalted by nearness to him. If the vassal sends word of thanks-giving to the king for his gifts and does not use them to ingratiate himself with the king, his thanks-giving has no meaning. He fails in his duty and is deprived of the pleasure of the sight of, and nearness to, the king. If he sends no word of thanks to the king but uses the same means for going in another direction at his own pleasure, the wrath of the king will descend upon him. Genuine thanks-giving demanded the understanding of the purpose for which all those gifts had been sent to him and using them in journeying towards the king.

Just as man has been created, similarly everything has been created with a purpose.¹⁰⁵ *Shukr* consequently means that a thing should be used for the purpose for which it has been created. To use a thing for a purpose other than that for which it is meant implies violation of *Shukr*. The real purpose of *Shukr* is fulfilled only through the use of the gifts of God, namely the attainment of nearness to the Giver and in consequence eternal felicity.¹⁰⁶ Thus, all that man possesses, life, passions, reason, senses, strength, beauty, wealth, knowledge, and other things, must be cultivated and

104. Ibid., p. 76.

105. *Kimiya-i-Sa'adat*, p. 426. Often good Muslims think that everything has been created for their sake. Man being the most perfect creation can sacrifice the lower existences for his own existence and perfection. This is what has caused the misunderstanding that these things have no purpose of their own.

106. *Ihya'*, Vol. IV, p. 76; *Kimiya-i-Sa'adat*, p. 424.

used for the realization of the highest ideal of nearness to God.¹⁰⁷

107. Nothing has been created, the purpose of whose existence is to take man away from God. Those who are gifted with knowledge know the purpose of things by intuition, and they know only that which concerns them, but they do not know all, for the universe is infinite. If a man cannot understand the purpose of the existence of the things around him, he should not imagine that they have no purpose. A fly which finds food at butcher's shop might as well imagine that the butcher was created for it, while the existence of a jeweller is futile without any place in the scheme of things. An ant must often be wondering at the purpose of the existence of the nuisance called man who ruthlessly tramples her under his feet (*Ihya'*, Vol. IV, p. 78). But, it is a law of Allāh that the less perfect shall be sacrificed for the sake of the more perfect (*Kimiya-i-Sa'adat*, p. 427). It will be interesting to study the history of mankind from this point of view. Thus to kill a goat or sheep without purpose is a grievous sin. It would be *'Adl* and *Shukr* to kill it for food. To pluck an unripe fruit or break a branch in a thoughtless manner would be the opposite of *Shukr* for they have a purpose of their existence independent of us. Yet, it would be *'Adl* and *Shukr* to eat the fruit or to feed the sheep with the twigs.

The world with all the good things of God in it is like a table on which dishes are spread. Man is like a guest. Every guest ought to have just as much as he requires. He has no right to collect things for himself. But, if there is a good dish before one guest the other has no right to grudge him or to snatch it away from him. To try to possess other than what one needs is against *shukr*.

CHAPTER XVI

SOCIAL VIRTUES

VIRTUES are conceived in relation to (1) Society and (2) God. The former class embraces habits ('*Ādāt*) and the latter different forms of worship ('*Ibādāt*). Habits from the subject matter of this chapter and worship of the next.

The sole aim of man on this earth is to intensify his love for God. He must realize that this world is only a stage where he has to make the necessary preparation for this journey to the next world. From this world only as much should be taken as is indispensable for cultivating the love of God through good conduct.

The value of any form of conduct is determined by the intentions governing it. Conduct understood in this sense is divided into three categories :¹ (1) Conduct which continues in the next world and the rewards for which are known after death. Such conduct takes the form of (a) knowledge, *i.e.*, knowledge of God's essence, His qualities, angels, prophets, and the secrets of Heaven and Hell and (b) deeds, such as worship of God for the pleasure of God. (2) Conduct which governs the enjoyment of the pleasures which have their use only in this world and as such are evil, *e.g.*, pleasures given by wealth (gold, silver, slaves, clothes, food and the like) (3) Conduct which is associated with pleasures that resemble the second kind but are essential as means to the experiencing of the pleasures of the next world.

Only those actions, which are done with no other purpose than that of acquiring love of God, are virtuous and will be useful hereafter. If, on the other hand, there is some other purpose that motivates these actions they should be deemed as directed to securing the ends of this world and not to the fostering of the love of God. Again, no intention, however, good it may be, can justify actions which are forbidden by God.

1. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. III, pp. 192 ff.

Various institutions and professions of man either help him in, or hinder him from attaining a virtuous life.

In order that man may realize his perfection, the world should exist in an organized state.² The organization of the world depends on various occupations, and professions.³ Of all the professions and occupations the most important is politics (*as-Siyāsa*), for it reforms mankind and guides it along the right path to happiness in this world and the next. There are four kinds of government.⁴ (a) The government of the prophets, which exercises the highest authority in this world over both men's thoughts and actions. (b) The government of the kings and caliphs whose authority is exercised only over men's actions but not over their thoughts. (c) The authority of the learned,⁵ which governs the thoughts only of the chosen few, partly because ever for all those who can understand them their authority has no sanction behind it. (d) The authority of the preachers, which dominates the thoughts only of the common people. The noblest of these four grades of government, with the exception of the government of the prophets, is the third one, *i.e.*, of the learned, because in it true knowledge is spread and the minds of people are cultivated and enlightened. The learned men teach them the higher values of life, guide them to lofty morals, and lead them to happiness.

The nobility of a profession depends on three factors⁶ (a) The faculty by means of which that profession is maintained. For example, rational sciences are superior to philology because the former are acquired by the exercise of reason, the latter by listening, and reason is superior to listening. (b) The universality and the generality of the benefits which accrue from the profession. (c) The kind of material which the profession employs, *e.g.*, teaching is superior to tannery because the teacher works on the human mind while the tanner operates upon the hide of animals.

2. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. I, p. 12.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

4. *Ibid.*

5. According to al-Ghazzālī's conception of knowledge, learning and piety go hand in hand.

6. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. I, p. 12.

Religious sciences which give man the knowledge of the ways and means of achieving his perfection and happiness in the next world are the noblest of all. They are acquired by the exercise of the highest faculty of man, i.e., reason. The benefits accruing from religious sciences are, therefore, the most universal, the material on which these sciences operate is the human mind. The noblest creation of God on the earth is man whose noblest occupation is the pursuit of religious sciences and these are acquired by the exercise of his noblest faculty, reason.

Every science is religious, if it helps man to achieve his perfection. No science can be bad in itself because every science consists simply in knowledge of the facts as they are, and the acquisition of such knowledge cannot be bad in itself.⁷ To be engaged in a noble pursuit as a profession is *Sa'āda* which is helpful in the realization of the ultimate end.

Some of the important practices and duties of man, described by al-Ghazzālī, include table manner, marriage ceremonies, laws regarding *Kasb* (earning), *Halāl* (the lawful) and *Harām* (the unlawful), those concerning obligations to friends, Muslims, neighbours, near relatives, duties of kings, and duty to order good and forbid evil (*al-amr bi'l-ma'rūf wan nahi 'ani'l-munkar*) and those pertaining to music ecstasy, seclusion and travel.⁸ They embrace comprehensively al-Ghazzālī's views on social morality.

(1) Al-Ghazzālī has given thorough and detailed instructions about *Eating and Table manner*. Man needs strength to tread the path which leads to God, and food is the pre-requisite for this strength.⁹ The body remains healthy only as long as it gets proper nourishment.

Eating being essential for all human beings, al-Ghazzālī lays down important rules concerning it for their guidance. In his view that good alone is worth eating which has been obtained by honest and legitimate means that are sanctioned

7. Ibid., p. 26.

8. Ibid., p. 3; Cf. The detailed list of topics at the end of Vol. II, of *Ihyā'*. al-Ghazzālī has discussed 'Adāt in the whole of the second volume of his *Ihyā'*.

9. *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, p. 2.

by religion.¹⁰ The earning of lawful and honest living, says al-Ghazzālī, is emphasized in the Qur'ān more than the prohibition of murder and suicide.¹¹ It makes no difference how a person takes his food—by squatting on the ground and spreading before him a table-cloth or by sitting on a raised platform, provided that none of these arrangements is intended only for show.¹² The quantity of food that he eats should be just sufficient to satisfy his hunger. If he eats more than that, torpor and lassitude will result which are bound to interfere with his duties.¹³ He holds that only one-third of the stomach should be filled with food and the remaining two-thirds kept empty for water and air.¹⁴

Nobody should take his food alone. In the absence of any other companion he should take it with his wife and children.¹⁵ About table etiquette, al-Ghazzālī gives elaborate instructions which make eating a pleasure and cover all the necessary points which arise in connection with private and public feasts. It is not possible to improve upon the instructions he gives regarding invitations, service, menu, table talk and the after-dinner manners to be observed by guests and hosts.¹⁶ He wants that the seats should be allotted¹⁷ to guests beforehand. They should start eating after the most distinguished guest has arrived and taken his seat. The chief guest is reminded that he must not keep others waiting by coming late.¹⁸ The guests are told to bear in mind the needs of those who are taking food from a common dish, and to observe strictly the rules of decency and decorum which characterize a man of culture and good breeding.¹⁹

10. Ibid., p. 4.

11. Ibid., p. 3. "O believers! devour not each other's substance in mutual frivolities, unless there be trafficking among you by your own consent and commit not suicide: of a truth God is merciful to you." (Qur'ān, iv, 32).

12. *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, p. 3.

13. Ibid., p. 4; Vol. III, p. 74.

14. *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, p. 75.

15. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 4.

16. Ibid., pp. 6-17.

17. Ibid., p. 5.

18. Ibid., p. 6.

19. Ibid., pp. 6-8.

Feasts are the best means of fostering brotherly feelings and intimate human relationships.²⁰

Relatives and pious people, poor and rich alike, should be invited to feasts,²¹ but one must not run into debt in arranging them. The host is warned against extravagance²² and asked to remember that dinners and feasts should only be arranged for the glorification of God and for winning the pleasure, esteem and affection of one's friends and associates.²³

Invitations coming from the rich and the poor alike must be accepted even though these people may be living at great distances,²⁴ provided the former have not amassed their wealth by dishonest means.²⁵ These invitations should be accepted with the motive of pleasing God.²⁶ After the feast is over, the host should see his guests off at his gate.²⁷ The guest should go in a happy mood even though he may not have been fully satisfied. This is demanded by good manners and breeding.²⁸ One should not leave the house of the host without his permission.²⁹

The time devoted to entertaining guests, feeding the poor and the relatives is indeed spent in so many acts of piety. Al-Ghazzālī is against formality in eating and table manners which defeat the real object of such dinners.

(2) *The marriage practices* : The Prophet said, "Marriage is my practice."³⁰ It behoves all the true Muslims to emulate the Prophet in everything. However, Muslim divines hold different views about the imperative need of marriage for a man and a woman. Some are of the opinion that marriage is more conducive to worship than celibacy, while others hold

20. Ibid., pp. 8, 12.

21. Ibid., p. 12.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid., pp. 12-13.

25. Ibid., p. 13.

26. Ibid., pp. 13-14.

27. Ibid., pp. 16-18.

28. Ibid., p. 17.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid., Hadīth from Ibn 'Abbās; Cf. *Ihyā'*, Vol. III, p. 20.

the contrary view on the assumption that one can conquer and control the inherent sexual urges.³¹ Al-Ghazzālī takes the view that marriage is an important means to an end, namely, the perpetuation of the human race.³²

The benefits which marriage confers are numerous.³³ It is a means of propagating the human race, consequently by contracting it one acts in accordance with the will and the pre-ordained plan of the Creator.³⁴ Furthermore, it provides a means for the satisfaction of sexual desires. Sitting with one's wife and being amicable to her after having been occupied with religious duties, affords relaxation to the mind and vivifies it to return to such duties with renewed zest. It enables one to avoid those pitfalls which lead men to the dissipation of life and to the commission of acts which sap the foundations of society. It is a great aid to division of labour and to the right organization of household duties and functions in a way that makes for the maintenance of a happy and contented family life and permits one to attain higher and noble aims. A good wife is a blessing of God.³⁵

Another advantage of marriage is that one has to put up with the peculiarities of women and has to endure many hardships and troubles for the sake of one's family. One has to provide the needs of one's wife and children and to lead them to the right path. In short, it affords a good deal of discipline and self-control. All that a man does for his family is a part of worship which will be incomplete if he is self-centred and deprived of the joys and sorrows of married life, and of the rearing of a noble and cultured family.

But, married life has certain drawbacks also.³⁶ If a man who is incapable of making an honest livelihood marries, he will have to feed at least two instead of one and is likely to go astray and ruin himself and others who depend on him. Here, al-Ghazzālī maintains that people who inherit sufficient

31. *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, p. 20.

32. Ibid., p. 19.

33. Ibid., pp. 22-30.

34. Ibid., p. 22.

35. Ibid., p. 28.

36. Ibid., pp. 30-33.

property obtained by honest means, or are manual labourers who pursue honest trades and professions unconnected with the state, are safe from the pitfalls which beset the paths of others.

To one who is not prepared to fulfil the duties which devolve upon him as a result of marriage, and is not capable of tolerating and disciplining the members of his family, marriage will not prove a blessing. The involvements of married life may keep a man from performing his essential duties and may render him liable to incur the wrath of God. Further, it is emphatically enjoined that one must understand the seriousness and sanctity of the conjugal tie, respect the rights of women and treat them kindly.³⁷ One who neglects his duties to his wife and children is answerable to God, and his prayers and fasts shall not be acceptable to Him.

Another disadvantage of marriage is that the family's demands on the purse, energy and time of a person may leave him little time for religious and spiritual needs, and he may be totally engrossed with and submerged in the affairs of this world at the expense and sacrifice of his higher and nobler pursuits. Marriage, therefore, is not an unmixed blessing; it has its advantages as well as disadvantages. Al-Ghazzālī formulates the rules of marriage with due regard to the individual's needs and capabilities. Only those people should marry who are wealthy, possess good morals, are steadfast in religion, and above all, are youthful. Again, they must be able to control their passions and temptations and keep within the limits of moderation and decorum. Further, the wife must be expected to look after the home and the hearth, and to bear children who seek and love the truth. Children who tread the path of righteousness are a blessing. If these conditions are not fulfilled, one should not marry but remain a celibate. If, on the other hand, both positive and negative conditions exist, one should examine the whole situation calmly, and dispassionately and marry only when

37. "And they have similar claims against them (men) in a just manner...", Qur'ān, ii, 28), i.e., 'the rights of women over men are precisely the same as the rights of men over women. 'Translations from the Alchemy of Happiness, Claud Field, p. 92); Cf. Qur'ān, iv, 19.

limitations in a particular case do not outnumber the advantages.

An honest description of the bridegroom should be given in details to the future bride. This would promote feelings of affectionate expectation and adaptability. The bridegroom should be given an opportunity of seeing the girl he wishes to marry, because this will contribute to a happy union.³⁸

Only such women ought to be allowed to marry as are not forbidden by law, are qualified to prove good life-partners and are capable of discharging the duties of domestic life.³⁹ The factors which disqualify a woman for marriage are listed below : (1) She should not be an idolatress⁴⁰ (2) She should not be an apostate, i.e., one who has renounced Islām and gone out of its fold by confessing her sin. (3) She should not be a margin. (4) She should not be a heretic or profess a religion which declares lawful things which are enjoined by Islām to be unlawful. (5) She should not belong to those Christian or Jewish families which embraced Judaism and Christianity after the advent of the Prophet Muhammad. (6) She should not be an Israelite, and so on. On the contrary, she should be endowed with the following qualities and accomplishments :⁴¹ (1) Piety, chastity, and a religious bent of mind.⁴² These qualities help one to lead a religious and good life unsullied by worldly cares. Chastity in particular is the most important of all the qualities. An unchaste wife is a bane. She will disgrace her husband. If he keeps silent over her conduct, he will be humiliated in the eyes of the people; if on the other hand, he checks her from evil ways, his life will be embittered. If the wife is beautiful but unchaste, it is a great calamity, for if he does not divorce her, he remains in torment, and if he divorces her, he will have to bear the pangs of separation. (2) Good disposition. (3) Beauty combined with good morals. A good wife being a blessing, al-Ghazzālī holds the view that seeing a woman

38. *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, p. 33.

39. *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34.

40. Cf. Qur'ān, xxiv, 3; ii, 221.

41. *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, pp. 34-38.

42. Qur'ān', xxiii, 3.

before marriage is necessary.⁴³ Those who are temperamentally disposed to the vigorous enjoyment of sexual life and have developed a healthy aesthetic taste have every right to have a beautiful wife, otherwise unsatisfied sexual urge will lure them into paths which lead to Hell. The religious life of a man can be complete and wholesome only when he has a good, handsome and fair complexioned wife who is dearly and passionately attached to him. Although beauty is desirable, but without chastity and religious mindedness it is harmful. Further, the wife should not be barren, and she should be a maiden from a good stock, preferably not a near relation of the husband.⁴⁴ In al-Ghazzālī's opinion a wife, who is a near relation, will not engender vigorous emotional reactions and consequently will bring forth weak children. A woman to be married must belong to a good family on the father's as well as the mother's side. Good qualities like integrity and godliness enable a woman to bring up her children properly. Those who are not themselves cultured and well bred are the least fitted to rear cultured and well-bred children.

The considerations which are to be borne in view when suitable husbands are chosen by the fathers or guardians of girls are as follows :⁴⁵ They should not give their daughters or girls in marriage to men who suffer from physical deformity or impotency, or are deficient in good moral character. Those who are either weak in religious faith or are of unequal status should not be married. People are specially warned against giving their daughters in marriage to unworthy persons, tyrants, wicked men or drunkards. If they neglect this warning, they will be answerable to God.⁴⁶

Marriage is a religious institution. Its duties and obligations, therefore, should be performed with religious solemnity, otherwise the union of man and woman will be not better than the mating of brutes. The husband should observe and abide by all that devolves upon him.⁴⁷ There should be

43. *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, p. 35.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 38.

45. *Ibid.*

46. *Cf. Qur'ān'*, xxiv, 3; ii, 221.

47. *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, pp. 38-52.

a feast after marriage. The marriage should be accompanied by music and the beating of drums. The husband must be of good disposition, and remain with the wife on good terms. He should always put up patiently and cheerfully with the troubles emanating from her. He should adapt himself to his wife's amusements and recreations. Al-Ghazzālī strongly emphasizes that women should be shown special consideration and politeness, because they are the weaker sex, and even injury emanating from them should be tolerated. Man must scrupulously respect the right of women. He quotes the Prophet's saying, "The belief of a Muslim is complete to the extent that he has cultivated good habits, and exhibits toleration to his wife."⁴⁸

The husband must remember that he is to be moderate in humour and considerate in paying regard to, and acting according to, the wishes of his wife, otherwise he may ruffle her temper. He should, however, never compromise with evil tendencies in her and must prevent her from going astray.

Justice being one of the most prominent features of the ideology of Islām, it is imperative that women should be treated with equity and favour whether they conform to our wishes or not. In our dealings with them, we should follow the truth; this will save us from being tempted and ensnared by them. It should also be borne in mind that women are prone to mischief and are weak by nature. Their mischief can be met by diplomacy and sternness, and their weakness can be set right by good disposition and kind treatment.

A person must avoid excessive jealousy in guarding his wife's chastity. He should beware of the ways which ultimately lead to disunion. He should not nurse grievances and suspicions and should not overshoot the mark while keeping a watchful eye over her. There is a tradition of the Holy Prophet, "Woman was formed of a crooked rib; if you bend her, you will break her; if you leave her alone, she will grow more and more crooked; therefore, treat her tenderly."⁴⁹

48. *Ḥadīth, Cf. Ihyā'*, Vol. II, p. 41.

49. *Ḥadīth, Cf. Ihyā'*, Vol. II, p. 42. (This passage is translated by Claud Field : *The Alchemy of Happiness*, p. 96).

One should refrain from unearthing women's secrets. Jealousy is disliked by God. Women should not leave their homes unless forced by exigencies. To leave the house for shows and unnecessary pursuits is undignified. The seeing of a woman's face by a man is prohibited but the seeing of a man's face by a woman is not prohibited. It is prohibited only when mischief is likely to result; therefore, where no such danger exists, there is no prohibition.⁵⁰

In making provision for his wife, one must keep to the golden mean. She should not be made to live the life of penury or extravagance. God says in the holy Qur'ān, "And eat and drink and be not extravagant."⁵¹ "Only that man is better than others who treats his wife well."⁵² "If you have four *Dinārs* and you spend one on a holy war waged in self-defence, contribute the second towards setting a slave free, give the third to an orphan, and the fourth to your wife, the last will earn you the greatest reward in the eye of Allah."⁵³ A man should instruct his wife concerning all religious observances. The husband ought to save his wife from the fire of Hell by teaching her the ways of the pious and the good and warning her against the ways leading to hell.

It is also necessary to know how to restore happy relations when the husband and the wife have quarrelled. If they cannot make up their differences, they should submit their case to an arbitrator and should abide by his decision. If they are sincere, God will help them to receive good relations with each other. If the wife does not say her prayers, the husband is authorised to use force after using other persuasive methods not involving physical force. But, the use of physical force should not cause bleeding or fractures of bones, and he must not on any account strike here on the face. This is strongly prohibited.

A Muslim ought to welcome the birth of a son or daughter with equal pleasure. If he reflects on this, he will find that daughters are better than sons.⁵⁴

50. *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, p. 43.

51. Qur'ān, vii, 31.

52. Ḥadīth, Cf. *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, p. 44.

53. Ḥadīth, Cf. *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, p. 44.

54. *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, p. 49.

Divorce is permissible, but in the eyes of Allāh this is the worst of all permissible things, and should be resorted to only when it is not intended to injure others. It is permitted only when the woman is blame-worthy, but prohibited by God if she is obedient. If injury emanates from the husband, she ought to separate herself from him by paying some money which must not be more than what she receives. It more is demanded of her, that will be an oppression on her which Islām prohibits emphatically.

When one is forced to divorce one's wife, one must do it with all possible decorum without bringing in any bitterness and hatred, on the contrary, one should give her presents and new dressed to mitigate her grief. He should, on no account, divulge her secrets, neither in divorce nor in marriage. The Prophet has specially prohibited this.

Hitherto, we have discussed the rights of women over men, but men have also their rights over women. Women's duties are the following:⁵⁵ Marriage is a form of bondage and a woman who marries becomes a sort of slave and must of necessity obey her husbands in those things which are not sinful.⁵⁶ The most important duties which women owe to their husbands are : firstly, they should be chaste, and, secondly, they should not make on their husbands such heavy monetary demands as they cannot meet. A father should teach his daughters how to behave towards other people and how to live with their husbands.

Asmā' bint Kharrja al-Ghazzani addresses her daughter at the time of her marriage thus:⁵⁷ "You are leaving the house where you first came and going to lie on a strange bed, and proceeding to live with a person for whom you did not bear any love. My darling, serve him and he will serve you. But his earth so that he may become your sky. But his mind and he will be your slave. Do not go near him to the extent that he may begin to hate you. Do not be too far from him lest

55. Ibid., p. 52.

56. Ḥadīth. The Prophet said, "If it were right to worship any one except God, it would be right for wives to worship their husbands." (Cf. *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, p. 53).

57. *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, p. 54.

he should forget you. If he comes near you, try to go nearer to him. If he is further away from you try to be distinct from him. Respect his nose, ears and eyes in such a way that he receives nothing but a good smell from you, hears nothing but good about you or from you and sees only pleasant things of you." A daughter ought to pass most of her time in her own house. She should avoid going upstairs (in the open). She should talk less with her neighbours, and unless urgent necessities compel her, she should not go to other's houses. She should respect her husband and talk well of him in his presence or absence and try to please him in all possible ways. In her person and his property she should prove true and faithful to him. Without her husband's permission she should not leave his house. When she leaves the house at all she should avoid the crowded parts of the thoroughfare and avoid her body being seen or her voice being recognized by strangers. She should never become familiar with her husband's friends in any way.

If any friend of her husband's calls at his house in his absence, she should not talk to him. He should be satisfied with what God has given her. She should consider his needs above her own and over her relative's needs. She should keep herself neat and tidy and be ready to carry out her husband's behests at all times. She should love her children and should not divulge their secrets. She should not talk ill of them nor of her husband. She should not be vain of her beauty and comeliness, and should not look down upon her husband if he has ugly looks. She should feel sad when her husband is away and show her happiness when he is present. On no account should she tease her husband. The marriage tie demands that the husband's death should be mourned by his widow for four months and that she should avoid the use of scents and ornaments during that period.

(3) *Laws regarding Kasb and Mā'āsh* (earning and Economic activities). Al-Ghazzālī considers man's brief stay in this world and the occupations he adopts in it for making a living as of paramount importance in so far as they enable him to strive after the attainment of a higher ideal. Man has got to secure the satisfaction of his countless material needs in order to live a decent life; consequently, he must budget

his time in a balanced manner to satisfy his immediate and ultimate needs. The life he leads must be conducive to the attainment of his real goal.⁵⁸ In his occupations for earning his livelihood he must bear in mind the following principles of conduct which are of fundamental importance, viz.,⁵⁹ (1) fair dealing, (2) justice and (3) beneficence.

To achieve success in life, men and women must acquire knowledge in order to discriminate between fair and unfair dealings.⁶⁰ It was with this object in view that the Prophet laid down the rule that to obtain knowledge was the religious duty of every Muslim.⁶¹ Similarly, in order to understand what is meant by justice in dealings with our fellow beings, it is equally imperative that we must have full knowledge of the complexities of the problems connected with different occupations, so that we may not ruin our future lives by resorting to practices not sanctioned by Islām.⁶² Justice demands that a person should not act against the interests of a fellow Muslim. In other words, he should wish for others what he wishes for himself.⁶³ Al-Ghazzālī makes out a case for the protection of the rights of the people as opposed to the interest of the individual in the very day transitions of commerce and trade. To be more correct, Islām maintains the most equitable balance between the good of the community and the good of the individual. It is opposed to the gain of the few at the expense of the many. It ordains that the only justification for making a livelihood consists in earning money necessary for bare existence, and if one makes a fortune it is justifiable only when it helps his fellow creatures to realize the aims of religion. The Prophet enjoined on his followers not to accumulate food stuffs with a view to selling them later when they become dear.⁶⁴ Such practices are considered unjust by Islām, and are, consequently, prohibited. In the same way the use and circulation of counterfeit coins⁶⁵ is

58. Ibid., pp. 56-59.

59. Ibid., p. 57.

60. Ibid., p. 59.

61. Ḥadīth, Cf. *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, p. 59.

62. *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, p. 66.

63. Ibid., pp. 66-67.

64. Ibid., p. 68.

65. Ibid., pp. 67-68.

prohibited by Islām. The most important part of the teachings of the Prophet, in so far as they bear upon the principles of trade, barter and production of wealth, he emphasizes the pervading spirit and guiding principles of equality and justice. It is sinful to corner any food-stuff merely for personal gain, for this means oppression of, and tyranny over, the common people.⁶⁶ In business matters and economic relations, honesty and just dealings are emphatically enjoined.

God enjoins upon people to practice justice and equity (*ʿAdl*) as well as benevolence (*Ihsān*).⁶⁷ Justice is necessary for redemption, and benevolence for the success and realization of the ultimate aims.⁶⁸ A person should not only aim at contenting himself with just and fair dealings but also act benevolently towards others. This alone can help him to reach a higher stage of spiritual development.⁶⁹ Al-Ghazzālī defines benevolence as an act which benefits persons other than those from whom the act proceeds without any obligation.⁷⁰ There are six kinds of benevolence :⁷¹ (1) If a person needs a thing one should give it to him, making as little profit as possible. If the giver forgoes the profit it will be better for him. (2) If a man purchases anything from a poor person it will be more graceful on his part to suffer a little loss by paying him more than what he considers to be the proper price. Such an act must produce an ennobling effect, and a contrary act the reverse effect. It is not praiseworthy to pay a rich man more than his due when he is notorious for charging high rates of profit. (3) In realizing one's dues and loans one must act benevolently by giving the debtors more time to pay than is due and, if necessary, one should make reductions in loans to provide relief to the debtors. (4) It is only proper that people who want to return the goods they have purchased should be permitted to do so as a matter of benevolence. (5) It is a graceful act on the part of a debtor if he pays his debts without being asked to

66. Ibid., pp. 67 ff.

67. Qur'ān', xvi, 92.

68. *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, p. 72.

69. Ibid., p. 72.

70. Ibid.

71. Ibid., pp. 72 ff.

do so, if possible long before they are due. (6) When selling things on credit one should be generous enough not to press of payment when people are not able to pay on the stipulated terms.

Trades and manufacturers of merchandise are forbidden to indulge in profiteering. They are asked to discharge the duties they owe to themselves, their fellow beings, their religion and their God. What they store for the next world is better than what they store for this short worldly existence.⁷² They should bear in mind the following considerations :⁷³ (1) Trade and occupations will enable a person to make a decent living without forcing him to ask for alms; he will discharge his duties towards his wife and children in a suitable manner. He will be able to give his money to those who are conducting holy wards and thus become *Mujāhids*. He will be a source of strength of Mussalmans if he spends his money for the welfare of those who are needy and destitute. (2) His participation in the production of wealth should be actuated by a desire to provide occupation to people who would otherwise starve. Regardless of what trade he follows he should make sure that it helps to keep him firmly attached to his religion. Also, he should avoid a trade which merely caters for luxuries. He should not accept wages for *'Ibādāt*. (3) His worldly commitments and business pre-occupations should not make him forget his God. (4) When engaged in business he must constantly remember God. (5) He should not be over-greedy in trade by going to the market very early in the morning and leaving it late. (6) He should keep a vigilant eye not only over his interests but also over the propriety or impropriety of his transactions lest they should involve him in unlawful (*Ḥarām*) acts.

Those who observe and practise justice and fair mindedness in their dealings belong to the group of *aṣ-Ṣāliḥūn* (the righteous ones). In addition to this, if they practise benevolence they will be *Muqarrabūn* (the near ones to God), and if they attend to their religious duties in addition to the above they will be the truthful ones (*Aṣ-Ṣiddiqūn*).⁷⁴

72. Ibid., p. 75.

73. Ibid., pp. 75 ff.

74. Ibid., p. 79.

(4) *Rules for the Ḥalāl (lawful) and the Ḥarām (unlawful)* : Wealth or property is deemed Ḥarām either on account of its inherent defect or because of the means by which it has been acquired.⁷⁵ The first category includes things which are used as foodstuffs and obtained from (1) minerals, (2) vegetables and (3) animals.⁷⁶ Those obtained from mines are Ḥarām only when they injure those who eat them because of their poisonous ingredients. Those things which are obtained from the vegetable kingdom are Ḥarām when they produce injurious effects on senses or on health, e.g., liquors, which produce intoxication or other injurious effects. In the case of all the above mentioned articles, it is their potency for causing injury that makes them Ḥarām. They cease to be Ḥarām if the poisonous ingredients which destroy life are taken out of them and if they become wholesome for human consumption. They can be taken in small quantities either alone or in combination with other substances which remove their deleterious effects. Some animals are fit for human food while others are not. The latter are only those which are repulsive to man, and whose flesh is consequently, forbidden as food.⁷⁷ What is the *cause causinus* of the Ḥalāl and the Ḥarām will be clear from an example. If a small quantity of human flesh gets into anything permitted as proper human food, the food will become Ḥarām, not because it has been polluted but because of reverence which is due to the human body.

A property is Ḥalāl when it has been properly and lawfully acquired in accordance with the laws of the *Shari'at*.⁷⁸ Abstinence even from Ḥalāl has three grades.⁷⁹ (1) *War'al-Adūl*. Avoidance by the ministers of justice of things which are declared by the jurists to be Ḥarām. (2) *War'aṣ-Salihūn*. Abstinence from things which are neither known to be wholly Ḥarām nor wholly Ḥalāl. (3) *War'al-Muttaqin*. Abstinence from things which are Ḥalāl but indulgence in which may lead to Ḥarām. (3) *War'aṣ-Siddiqūn*.

75. Ibid., p. 83.

76. Ibid., p. 84.

77. Ibid., p. 83.

78. Ibid., p. 84.

79. Ibid., p. 85.

Abstention from things which are intrinsically Ḥalāl but are to be avoided from the pleasure of God.

Islām prohibits every Muslim all evil things.⁸⁰ Permissible things or practices may lead one astray. If an unmarried person indulges in the use of scents or is extravagant in food, he would, more often than not, have his sexual appetite excited which may lead him into paths of sin. Similarly, seeing the magnificent houses of the rich and the wealthy is permitted, but a moment's reflection should connive one that the sight of such things may excite jealousy which is an evil. The human mind which is attracted to *Mubāḥ* (permitted) may gradually gravitate towards indulgence in the Ḥarām, piety, therefore, demands that one must be circumspect in all one's actions relating to food and similar things. Those things the use of which does not entail such fears are known as *Ḥalāl aṣ-Ṣiddiqūn*. Only such things fall in this category as have been acquired carefully, without any taint of sin, unassociated with any questionable means and meant solely for the satisfaction of an immediate or future need for the sake of God and His worship. In all contingencies, a Mussalman must move carefully and cautiously to avoid the pitfalls which lie in his way if he is to attain perfection.⁸¹

(5) *Right and Duties* : This world is a preparatory ground for the next; and it is here that one has to attain his perfection in order to realize the mission of his existence; but he cannot achieve perfection except through his interaction with society, i.e., by living with other human beings. He cannot discharge his duties towards others properly in the absence of mutual love and regard and the desire to be serviceable to others. In all matters of social relationship and obligations one should adhere primarily to the principle of duty for duty's sake.⁸² This cardinal principle should guide man in both friendship and enmity. He should love or hate others only for the pleasure of God.⁸³ If any selfish motive vitiates his dealings he is sure to recede from God. We give

80. Ibid., pp. 85 ff.

81. Ibid., pp. 89 ff.

82. Ibid., p. 138.

83. Ibid., pp. 141 ff. 145 ff.

below some of the duties and obligations that are binding on an individual.

Duties towards a friend take precedence over other social duties, mutual love and friendship for the pleasure of God being one of the highest virtues. But, friendship or brotherhood is not to be understood in the ordinary sense.⁸⁴ Here, it means a friendship formed for the sake of truth. This kind of friendship constitutes a higher form of *'Ibāda*. Men imbued with the principles of truth and thought of God cannot meet without benefiting each other. If one helps a fellow Muslim who is on the way to truth, he will be rewarded with a position in Heaven which cannot be achieved through any other deed done on earth. A true friend is one who reminds his friend of God when he has forgotten Him, and helps him onward when he remembers Him. That person is the best friend who loves his friend not for the sake of gain, nor because of blood relationship, nor to repay any good done to him but for the pleasure of God alone.⁸⁵ He is the best of all believers. Love engendered by acquaintance, e.g., between classmates, fellow-travellers, neighbours, or by beautiful objects and sweet voices, is not true love. True love is based on faith in the unity of God and is not possible without it. It is of two kinds, the lower and the higher.⁸⁶ The first is based on religious motives, e.g., those operating between a student and the teacher who perform their duties for the sake of God, or between a poor devotee and a wealthy man who helps him. The higher is purely for the pleasure of God without any selfish motives, e.g., teaching, helping others. It is evinced in all beings but it finds its highest manifestation only in prophets and saints because of their excellences. Intensity of love increases with increase in faith. But, one who loves for the pleasure of God must also hate for the pleasure of God.⁸⁷ One who loves seekers after the truth must hate unbelievers, heretics, and sinners, because of their sinful deeds, i.e., oppressing, slandering, and

84. Ibid., p. 141.

85. Ibid., p. 142.

86. Ibid., p. 142.

87. Ibid., pp. 146 ff.

reproaching Muslims.⁸⁸ The intemperate too should be hated,⁸⁹ but they should not be hated only because their activities are obnoxious to others, in which case they should be treated kindly so that they may improve. The activities of the heretics should be checked in order to save people from their heresies. The sinners should be dealt with severely.⁹⁰ One can forgive personal injury but not sins committed against God.

Some say that one should hate for the pleasure of God to strengthen Islām and maintain religious discipline. Others recommend compassion for all.⁹¹ But, compassion is better than hostility for the pleasure of God. And, this is a very high stage of spiritual development. Only the few who have full realized the nature of the Divine Unity can act upto it. They have acquired this capacity only because they have progressed to a stage where they have lost sight of the 'many' to them only the 'One' remains visible. A person who has reached this stage always feels compassion and never gets angry even if he is beaten, humiliated or abused. But, those who have not reached this stage try to please all and think that they have reached the highest stage. They are mistaken in their views because they consider that the personality of the sinner should be hated and think of bettering his lot by compassion and affectionate exhortation. Besides, the general requirement of loving and hating for the pleasure of God, there are other qualifications also which together constitute true friendship; those endowed with these qualities should be accepted as friends:⁹² Persons worthy of friendship should possess intelligence (*'Aql*), good moral character (*Husn al-Khulq*) and should not be evil doers (*Fāsiq*), or innovators nor should they be avaricious (*Ḥarīṣ*). The friendship of an ignorant man is of no use. It must end in grief. Such a man is liable to injure you in spite of his good intentions. An ignorant man is one who does not understand the true nature of things. He

88. Ibid., pp. 148-50.

89. Ibid., pp. 149 ff.

90. Ibid., pp. 148-50.

91. Ibid., pp. 141-50.

92. Ibid., pp. 150 ff.

cannot go beyond the knowledge derived through the senses to grasp the nature of the verities of the Universe. The friendship of a man of bad character is to be avoided as his bad habits are bound to affect others. One who has resigned himself to the will of God should be taken as a friend. One who does not fear God and commits sins is not to be trusted as a friend. But, the above qualities are rarely found in one individual; therefore, the selection of an associate should be according to the object in view. If one wants company one should select a friend who has an excellent moral character. If one wants to improve his knowledge and help him further to allegiance to God. If one aims at worldly gain one should look for the comradeship of a generous and bounteous persons. One's associates are of three kinds.⁹³ (1) Those who are as indispensable as food; (2) those who are occasionally required as medicine; (3) those who should be avoided as a disease.

Now, brotherhood or friendship or fellowship brings specific reciprocal obligations.⁹⁴ The Prophet said, "The two brothers are like two hands which was each other."⁹⁵

The following are the duties one owes to a friend or brother.⁹⁶ The needs of a friend or brother should be preferred over one's own needs.⁹⁷ This is the highest form of sympathy. The next lower stage is that one should attend to the needs of one's friend as much as to one's own needs, as sharing one's wealth with one's friend's. The lowest stage of friendship is that one should satisfy the needs of a friend unasked, after one has satisfied one's own needs. But, if one serves one's friend's needs after being requested to do so, it shows that one has totally failed in friendship. One should cheerfully help a friend in all ways without being requested and shall share all his reverses.⁹⁸

A friend can be served by speaking of him as well as by keeping silent about him. One should always speak well of a

friend. His faults and secrets should not be disclosed. He should be defended when slandered. He should be listened to acrimonious discussions should be avoided. He, his wife, children, and friends should not be slandered. It should not be reported that he is being blamed by others. One should not complain against one's friend. Personal grievance should not be nursed. The friend should be given the necessary religious instructions. One should be grateful to him for his exhortations. One should always share the joys and sorrows of one's friends but should not try to discover what one's friend does not wish to communicate. He should be warned of his faults, privately and gently. One should turn one's eyes from the faults of one's friend. One should never suspect and think ill of friend. One should pray for the good of one's friend, dead or alive, and for one's friend's wife and children.⁹⁹ One should always be faithful to one's friend in all circumstances.¹⁰⁰ There should be no formality, between friends. A person should be humble in the presence of his friends and consider himself inferior in comparison.¹⁰¹ He should expect nothing from them, but guard their rights.

Authorities differ as to whether a friend who persists in wrong ways in spite of the efforts to save him should be retained or abandoned.¹⁰² Some hold that as the friendship was contracted for God's pleasure, it should be discontinued for the same reason when the friend persists in sin. Others are against separation and hold that once a person is bound in the tie of friendship the tie should not be broken. Al-Ghazzālī takes the latter attitude. A person once admitted into confidence and intimacy must be trusted all along even when he has gone astray, although separation is most expedient but, retention is more rational and godly. It is godly because it involves compassion and may turn a man from sin to purity. It is rational because a friendship once contracted brings with it obligations which cannot be neglected, and one of these obligations is that one should not

93. Ibid., p. 150.

94. Ibid., p. 152.

95. Ḥadīth : Cf. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. II, pp. 152-54.

96. Ibid., pp. 153 ff.

97. Ibid., pp. 154-55.

98. Ibid., pp. 155-59, and 159-61.

99. Ibid., p. 164.

100. Ibid.

101. Ibid., p. 166.

102. Ibid., pp. 161 ff.

desert a friend in need. Since a transgressor stands more in need of spiritual redemption than physical satisfactions, he should not be abandoned in such a crisis.

(6) *Duties to the entire Muslim Community* : The rights and duties of a person depend upon the degree of human relationship he bears with his fellowmen and other persons. The best relationship is that of a friend or a brother for the pleasure of God. Muslims have rights which may be recounted briefly as follows : (1) Do not wish to do unto a Muslim brother what you do not wish to be done unto yourself.¹⁰³ All believers are like the limbs of a body, if one is injured, all will feel the pain felt by it. (2) A Muslim brother should not be hurt by an unkind word or an unbecoming deed.¹⁰⁴ (3) One should not behave towards other Muslims arrogantly.¹⁰⁵ (4) One should not lend one's ears to tale-bearers against a Muslim.¹⁰⁶ (5) If one is angry with a Muslim, one should not prolong one's anger, for more than three days.¹⁰⁷ (6) One should do good to all and repay evil with good.¹⁰⁸ (7) While meeting others one should be cheerful and wear a smiling countenance.¹⁰⁹ (8) Respect the aged and love children.¹¹⁰ (9) One should abide by one's contracts.¹¹¹ (10) One should treat each according to his position. One who is respected by the people should be respected accordingly.¹¹² (11) One should reconcile two Muslims not on good terms.¹¹³ (12) One should not disclose the defects and secrets of other Muslims.¹¹⁴ (13) One should lead an unblemished life so that other Muslims should be saved from suspicion and slander.¹¹⁵ (14) If one is a man of

position one should spare no efforts to intercede for the good of others.¹¹⁶ One should defend an absent Muslim behind his back and protect his property against slander and encroachment by another.¹¹⁷ (15) If any one has fallen into bad company he should be treated with kindness till he gives it up. Hard words should not be uttered before him.¹¹⁸ (16) One should seek the acquaintance of the pious and avoid the company of the wealthy.¹¹⁹ (17) One should be good and wish well to a Muslim and serve his needs.¹²⁰ (18) When one visits others one should greet them first and shake hands with them before talking.¹²¹ (19) One should visit one's acquaintances when they are sick, should not murmur and cry, should not sit too long by them and should not ask them many questions¹²² or look on the walls or into the corner. (20) One should not enter any house, without permission, should knock at the door gently and wait for the answer. (21) One should attend burials,¹²³ (22) Visit tombs to get lesson from them, and pray for the good of the departed souls. etc.¹²⁴

(7) *Duties to the Neighbour* : Duties to neighbours are over and above those which we have given above.¹²⁵ There are three kinds of neighbours.¹²⁶ (1) The unbeliever who has only one right ; (2) the Mussalman who has two rights ; and (3) the relative who has three rights. One should not only abstain from annoying a neighbour, but should do good to him. "A man whose neighbour is not secure against his misdeeds cannot be said to have faith," observes the Prophet.¹²⁷ One should help one's neighbour with loans whenever he requires. If he is poor, assist him with money. If he is sick,

103. Ibid., p. 171.

104. Ibid., p. 171.

105. Ibid., p. 172.

106. Ibid.

107. Ibid., p. 172.

108. Ibid.

109. Ibid., p. 174.

110. Ibid., p. 173.

111. Ibid., p. 174.

112. Ibid., p. 175.

113. Ibid.

114. Ibid., p. 176.

115. Ibid., p. 175.

116. Ibid., p. 178.

117. Ibid., p. 182.

118. Ibid., p. 184.

119. Ibid.

120. Ibid.

121. Ibid., p. 179.

122. Ibid., p. 185.

123. Ibid., p. 187.

124. Ibid.

125. Ibid., pp. 188 ff.

126. Ibid., pp. 188.

127. Hadīth : Bukhārī; Cf. *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, p. 189.

pay visits to him frequently. If he dies, attend his burial with particular care and attention. Try to share his sorrows and increase his joys. Out of regard for him do not build high walls to prevent fresh air from entering his house. Send some fruits to your neighbour whenever you happen to have them in order to lessen the disappointment of his children.¹²⁸ The smoke from your kitchen should not disturb your neighbour's house. Send some cooked food to him. If the neighbour throws dust and rubbish before your door you should not mind it. If you come to know anything scandalous about the woman folk in your neighbourhood, you should not tell it to others. These rights are over and above the rights to which a Muslim is generally entitled.

(8) *Duties to Relatives* : As for the rights of kinsmen, the Prophet says, "God says, He is merciful and kinship is compassion. He unites him with Himself who unites himself with his kinsmen. He separates him from Himself who detaches himself from them." The highest merit consists in seeking union with him who separates himself from thee, doing good to him who neglects thee and forgiving him who injures thee.¹²⁹ There is no virtue greater than the help which one renders to one's relatives specially to those who hate you.¹³⁰

(9) *Duties to Parents and Children* : Serving, parents, declares the Prophet, is superior to prayer, fasting and pilgrimage.¹³¹ Parents are entitled to the greatest service because they are the nearest relation. The Prophet said that their rights are so numerous and extensive that it is difficult to do full justice to them. The right of the mother is double that of the father. One who disobeys and displeases his parents should be debarred from Paradise. But, if the duties of children to parents are so important and onerous it is also incumbent on parents to give their children proper training to enable them to follow the path of truth.¹³²

128. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. II, p. 189.

129. *Ibid.*, p. 191.

130. *Ibid.*, p. 192.

131. *Ibid.*

132. *Ibid.*, pp. 193-96.

(10) *Duties to Servants* : A servant should be given the same food and clothes as are used by the master. They should not be given hard task. Their self-respect must always be preserved. They should not be insulted. Their faults should be patiently borne.¹³³

(11) *Duties of a Ruler* : The office of a ruler is very high and responsible, it requires primarily the full display of the traits of justice and mercy. It is the vicegerency of God on earth.¹³⁴ No worship is greater in the eyes of God than the justice of a king. A rule without justice and mercy is the vicegerency of Satan, since no evil can do more mischief than the misgovernment and oppression of a rule. He should clearly understand the import and purpose of life on earth, and believe that earthly life is only a temporary phase of one's existence.

During the transaction of state business, a ruler should always keep in mind the following considerations :¹³⁵ (1) He should imagine himself to be in the position of the ruled and his subjects in his position, so that he may not do unto others, what he does not wish to be done unto himself. If he does not act upto this maxim his kingdom will soon be shattered. (2) He should not take it ill if the needy come to his door. To help a Muslim is better than to be engaged in supererogatory prayers. (3) He should discipline himself to lead a life of temperance and self-denial. (4) He should strive to do his work gently without any tinge of severity. (5) He should endeavour to satisfy one and all, if that be possible without violating Divine commands. (6) He should not try to please any one at the sacrifice of the laws of religion. (7) He should realize the great responsibility of his office. There is no good greater than the power to help others and he who does not do his duty towards the people is a wretch. (8) There is no sin greater than this except apostasy. Therefore, he should always love to be in the company of pious scholars, listen to their instructions and avoid impious scholars. (9) He should not only control himself, but also his

133. *Ibid.*, pp. 195-96.

134. *Kimiyā-i-Sa'adat* (Urdu) pp. 260 ff.

135. *Ibid.*, pp. 261 ff.

subordinates and never tolerate their imperious behaviour. Justice means acting in accordance with the dictates of reason, and not of passions. He should curb his anger. (10) He should penetrate to the essence of things, instead of looking merely at their form, since justice is rooted in wisdom.

The practical models of conduct which al-Ghazzālī keeps before himself are the Prophet, his immediate companions, especially 'Umar, the pious caliph, 'Umar b. 'Abdu'l 'Aziz and those kings and caliphs who ruled over the Muslims and always bore in mind the spirit of Islām.

(12) *Duty to enjoin what is right and to prevent what is wrong* (al-Amr Bi'l-Ma'rūf, wannahī 'anil-Munnkar) : To order people to do what is good and avoid what is evil is one of the foundations of religion.¹³⁶ In fact, all the prophets were sent by God to fulfil this purpose.¹³⁷ Many verses of the Holy Qur'ān and the traditions of the Holy Prophet point to this obligatory duty. But it is *Fard-al Kafāya*, i.e., if a number of persons are observing this duty others are absolved of it, but if none observes it, everyone will be guilty of not performing it. There are several traditions which show that Divine wrath falls on both the evil doers and those who witness evil being perpetrated and do not stop it through it is in their power to do so.

But, there are certain conditions of *Ihtisāb* (censorship).¹³⁸

(1) The censor (*Muhtasib*) should be a Muslim as this is a duty enjoined upon Muslims alone. Some theologians hold that a censor (*Muhtasib*) should be just and pious also. But, Al-Ghazzālī and others hold that this condition will make censorship an impossibility. He, however, adds that if one preaches a thing and acts contrary to it, he brings religion to disgrace. Such a censorship is not desirable and the censor shall be punished for it. But, if one does some evil himself and it is in his power to stop other from doing that evil he deserves a reward for it, because abstaining from evil and checking others from it are two separate duties. If one fails

136. *Iḥyā'*, Vol. II, p. 269.

137. *Ibid.*

138. *Ibid.*, pp. 274 ff.

in one of them, one should not fail in the other. (2) Some say that the office of censorship should be instituted by the state, but it is not necessary in Al-Ghazzālī's view, for censorship (*Ihtisāb*) is a duty enjoined on every Muslim. The king cannot exempt anybody from this duty. On the other hand, even if the king does some wrong, it is the highest virtue to prevent him from doing it. But, censorship must be introduced by stages. Advice, persuasion and appeal to the fear of God should be the first step. This should be followed by harsh words and severe rebuke, if necessary. If the evil doer does not come to his senses, force should be used. But, censorship should take into consideration the people to be censored, e.g., a son in his behaviour towards his father, a slave in his behaviour towards his master and a wife towards her husband should use mild and soft words. They should not resort to beating or severe rebukes. (3) All acts which are sins, big or small, should be censored.¹³⁹ The censorship should relate to actual deeds and not to past deeds and take cognizance of what falls within the purview of the state.

The following conditions should be observed in dealing with people who are censored :¹⁴⁰ (1) The person who is censored should be a responsible person (*Mukallaḥ*). (2) The person should not be one, respect towards whom interferes with censorship, e.g., father. (3) If one fears that the persons against whom censorship is directed will be angry and will retaliate, one must observe the following : (i) If one feels that the censored would injure him and would not give up his sinful conduct censorship is not obligatory but commendable. (ii) If one can prevent sin and has no fears from the censored, it becomes obligatory on one to prevent the sin. (iii) If people do not stop sinning and at the same time not try to injure the censor, even then censorship is obligatory for maintaining the dignity of religion. (iv) Further, one can stop sinning, e.g., by breaking the wine jar, but if one feels that people would beat him one may avoid doing so, for in this case censorship is not compulsory but commendable.

139. *Ibid.*, pp. 285 ff.

140. *Ibid.*, pp. 287 ff.

As a matter of principle, censorship should be considered obligatory when it is probable that the censor would not be hurt or put to unbearable hardship. But, when such consequences are not probable, i.e., when the reaction of the censored is likely to be only in the shape of practical antagonism, censorship does not become obligatory. If a man apprehends the loss of some future gain he is not absolved of the duty of censorship. But, if he fears the loss of some present benefit or favour and this loss is of a serious nature, he may be exempted from it, that is, if he apprehends some serious damage to his person or property or honour he may consider himself absolved of censorship. But, the fear only of loss of prestige or of rebuke, will not justify avoidance of censorship. Further, if a man apprehends some injury or loss to his friends, he ought to abstain from censorship.

(4) The censorship procedure has eight stages :¹⁴¹

- (i) Ascertainment of facts.
- (ii) Warning to the sinner about his sin because it is just possible that he may be ignorant of its evil character.
- (iii) Offering advice and persuasion.
- (iv) Using of harsh words.
- (v) Interference by means of physical force for the prevention of sinning.
- (vi) Threat of injury.
- (vii) Beating.
- (viii) Raising arms and mustering help to fight the sinner.

(13) *Music (Samā')* and *Ecstasy (Wajd)* : Formalists hold that music is absolutely prohibited.¹⁴² They believe it either to be a useless pastime or to be connected with secular love. In either case it is forbidden by religion. But Al-Ghazzālī's views on music are as follows :¹⁴³

Music does not create any thing new in our hearts ; it strengthens and excites that which is already in the heart.¹⁴⁴

141. Ibid., pp. 287 ff.

142. Ibid., pp. 237 ff, and 251 ff.

143. Ibid., pp. 238 ff.

144. Ibid., p. 243.

Accordingly, music may be divided into three categories :¹⁴⁵

(1) If there is something in the listener which is desirable in the eyes of religion and music strengthens it, then such music is desirable and the listener deserves a reward. (2) If there is something in the listener which is undesirable in the eyes of religion, and music strengthens it, then such music is undesirable and the listener deserves punishment. For example, a man loves a bad woman and music excites his passion. How can this music be permissible which fans the fire of passions which religion enjoins should be suppressed. (3) But, if the heart of the listener is not prone to receive any impression or inducement, good or bad, music is permissible. Some say that music should not be permitted even as a harmless pastime because it is a source of pleasure : but this assertion does not hold ground because pleasure in itself is not prohibited. It is prohibited only when it is followed by some harmful and undesirable consequences. Many pleasures of the eye, ear, smell and taste are not forbidden, why then should music be taboo ?

Music which is desirable and worthy of reward is of many kinds :¹⁴⁶ (1) Music or singing of verses which re-enforces some desirable sentiment, e.g., a pilgrim's yearning for Ka'ba or for *Jihād* is desirable. But, if a person goes on to pilgrimage against the will of his parents or despite the fact that his stay at his home is urgently required, he is not allowed to listen to music on his way. Similarly, if a war is fought for some unrighteous cause music cannot be allowed to enkindle the passions or the zeal of the soldiers. (2) Mourning music which augments grief and brings tears to one's eyes is also permitted. If the grief is for one's sins, or because of the weakening of one's faith or loss of Divine favours, music which augments it is desirable. But, if music intensifies undesirable emotion, e.g., a grief in the heart against some disposition of God, it is not permissible. (3) If one indulges in music to augment his pleasure and if the object of the pleasure is not something undesirable, e.g.,

145. Ibid.

146. Ibid., pp. 243 ff.

music in marriage, or in a dinner party to please friends, it is permissible.¹⁴⁷

There are five conditions governing the permissibility of music :¹⁴⁸

- (i) The musician should not be a woman or a boy who may arouse base passions in the listener.
- (ii) The music should not be attended with *Rabel*, etc., because they are expressly forbidden.
- (iii) The verses sung should not contain anything obscene, or derogatory to or against religion, etc.
- (iv) The listener should not be a young man dominated by passions and unacquainted with the love of God.
- (v) It should not become a frequent habit or profession because many things which are ordinarily permissible become forbidden when indulged in excessible.

The highest kind of music is that which intensifies the love of God, and what augments the love of God deserves the highest reward.¹⁴⁹ It is this music, in which true Ṣūfis indulge in and it is not only permissible but rather necessary for them and perhaps more useful than many formal virtues. There is a Divine element hidden in the human heart just as fire is hidden in iron or stone. And just as the clash of iron and stone produces fire, similarly sweet and harmonious sounds move the heart of man and brings out the sparks of Divine secrets.¹⁵⁰

The essence of man has a connection with the higher world or the world of spirit. This world is the world of beauty. The essence of beauty is harmony. What is harmonious and beautiful in this world of the senses is the manifestation or outcome of the beauties of that higher world.¹⁵¹ A beautiful and harmonious voice, too, has some affinity with the wonders of that higher world which creates an awakening in the heart and kindles the spark of love and yearning. For some Ṣūfis music is the source of revelations.

147. Ibid., p. 244.

148. Ibid., p. 248-50.

149. Ibid., pp. 146 ff.

150. *Kimiyā-i-Sa'adat* (Urdu), p. 233.

151. Ibid., p. 232.

The subtle experiences of the hidden world which music makes possible for a Ṣūfi, constitute *Wajd* or ecstasy. Music which produces this state of ecstasy washes away all the impurities of the heart, just as fire removes all the trash from silver.¹⁵²

The human soul has an affinity with the world of spirit.¹⁵³ Music enhances that affinity till it wholly detaches the soul from this world and the Ṣūfi becomes unconscious of it. Often his limbs lose all their strength and he falls down and faints.

But, it is only for the ripe and experienced spiritual leader to decide whether music would be appropriate in a particular case or not. Sometime, it does immense harm to a novice. A disciple should, therefore, consider himself eligible for profiting by music only when he has consulted his spiritual teacher. Shaikh 'Abdul Qāsim Gurgānī allowed one of his disciples to listen to music only if after three days' starvation he would prefer it to dainty dishes.

But, to a disciple whose heart has not become sensitive to the wonders of the higher world and whose desires (passions) have not been completely subdued, music may do immense harm.

Effects of Music : These effects occur in three stages.¹⁵⁴ The first stage is that of the understanding of music. Here again, it may be remarked that the effects of music would be different on an advanced Ṣūfi from those on a beginner. The disciple may interpret symbolic verses literally and apply them to his own case or to the nature of God, and may consequently indulge in many unwholesome thoughts. The advanced Ṣūfi who has reached the stage of self-annihilation in relation to everything other than God and the unity of God, does not pay attention to the meaning of the verses. On hearing music, negation and oneness dominate him, and he loses sight of himself and becomes unconscious of this world. Only the remembrance of God remains. This is what is meant by union with God.

152. *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, p. 146.

153. *Kimiyā-i-Sa'adat* (walī), p. 233.

154. *Ihyā'*, Vol. II, pp. 253 ff, p. 197.

The next stage of the effect of music is *Wajd* (ecstasy). *Wajd* means to obtain, i.e., to have access to a state which was not present before. *Wajd* is of two kinds : (i) States, i.e., some state of yearning, craving, love, or fear, etc., dominate the listener who feels intoxicated. When this fire is kindled in the heart, something like a smoke rises to the mind and paralyses the senses of hearing and sight so that one either does not hear nor see anything at all or hears or sees dimly as if he were in sleep. (ii) The second kind of *Wajd* is *Mukāshafa*. In this state, the Ṣūfī begins to see strange things, some in their symbolic, and others in their real form. This can be explained by regarding the heart as a mirror covered with dust ; music removes dust off it so that it may reflect forms. It is foolish on the part of a layman to deny the existence of the experience of the Ṣūfī because of his inability to understand them. A man who has not reached this stage of spiritual purification cannot understand such experience, for they can be expressed only vaguely by means of language, because the medium of language does not represent the reality, it can only make use of analogies and symbols.

The third stage of the effect of music is movement, dance, and tearing off one's clothes. But, a Ṣūfī who is more developed abstains from these and controls himself because it is a weakness to allow his body to betray the inner experiences. But, such power is very rare.

Dance in itself is not prohibited because the Holy Prophet witnessed the dance of the Abyssinian and showed it to his wife, Ā'isha. But, it is forbidden if one indulges in it deliberately to pose as a real Ṣūfī. If a man dances to increase his ecstasy it is desirable. But, one should not tear off one's clothes voluntarily because it is wasteful. If, however, one does it involuntarily it is permissible.

There are three things to be observed in listening to music : time, place and the audience. Music is not permitted at the time of prayers or dinner. The place where music is played should not be a thoroughfare or the dark house of a tyrant. Those present should not be vain or worldly people having no faith in music. It should not be a mixed gathering of young men and women. All the persons should sit attentively and respectfully.

(14) Rules regarding Seclusion and Association

Al-Ghazzālī recommends seclusion (*'Uzla*) for some persons and association (*Mukhālata*) for others.¹⁵⁵ The value of seclusion differs with different persons according to their circumstances.

Seclusion¹⁵⁶ affords an opportunity for worship and religious contemplation, and is essential for those who are too weak to feel the divine presence in the hum-drum life of this world. Evils like envy and slander which cannot be easily avoided in society and in association with the people do not exist in seclusion. Seclusion also absolves a person of his obligations towards others. Constant exposure to evils in society makes a person liable to succumb to them. Good company is better than seclusion, but it is rare. In society, a person gets involved in the affairs of others and frequently becomes an object of suspicion and mischief. Freedom from the worries and troubles of worldly life and immunity from the evils of society can be obtained only in seclusion, which is greatly conducive to contemplation. But, seclusion has its disadvantages.¹⁵⁷ The acquisition of knowledge being obligatory on every Muslim, male and female, a person who seeks solitude deprives himself of the most important means of acquiring knowledge. Another duty incumbent upon him is the imparting to other the knowledge he has gained. Solitude denies him this opportunity and subjects him to great loss. Further, he owes a duty to those who depend upon him for their livelihood, as well as to those who are needy. But, solitude makes him neglect this duty and deprive him of the opportunity of giving or receiving benefits from others. Another advantage of society is that it offers a fine training for bearing the injury received from others calmly and patiently and accustoming oneself to self-discipline by putting up with the ways of men. A pure and sterling character possessing grace and large-heartedness can be developed and formed only in society, and this is achieved by tolerating the follies of others without annoyance. Another disadvantage of

155. Ibid., pp. 197 ff.

156. Ibid., pp. 201 ff.

157. Ibid., pp. 210 ff.

seclusion is that it tends to produce a morbid and diseased mentality, which causes a person to succumb to evil influences. Again, in seclusion one is deprived of the great relief one receives from speaking to another friend of the ills and misfortunes of this life, for complete peace and spiritual satisfaction is not granted to any man on this earth.

(15) *Rules Regarding Travel* : In al-Ghazzālī's time, travel was essential for the acquisition of knowledge. He, therefore, lays down elaborate rules for the guidance of travellers.¹⁵⁸ He considers it a virtue for those who can make the right use of it. A journey may be undertaken for acquiring knowledge and purification of the heart ; for seeing the wonders of God's creations for religious purposes, religious wars, pilgrimage, for gaining wealth and position, for pleasure and enjoyment, for purposes of trade, and similar other objects. All these journeys are permitted if they do not stand between a person and God. But, the traveller must pay off his debts, fulfil his obligations and provide for those who depend on him before he starts on a journey. The money he requires for his travelling expenses should have been lawfully earned. He should choose a wise and worthy companion. If there are more than three persons, they must choose from among themselves a leader who has the loftiest character. They should follow entrusts his dependents, whom he leaves behind, to God. He should treat the animal he rides very kindly by not burdening it with more than it can carry. He should not undertake a journey which may, in any way, undermine the religious spirit. He should not stay as a guest with any person for more than three days. One should travel for visiting the sick but should not stay with them for more than a night.

158. Ibid., pp. 217-236.

CHAPTER XVII

RELIGIOUS DUTIES AND THEIR ETHICAL SIGNIFICANCE

ISLĀM is an ethical religion. All its laws and injunctions are based on the most equitable and solid moral foundation. It places before us an ideal that has an irresistible force and demands from its votaries conduct which has been clearly indicated and explained in the Qur'ān, on which, al-Ghazzālī's Ethics is built. Islām is not a religion in the usual sense of the word. The view that religion has to do only with the inner conscience of man, or externally is at the most concerned simply with certain rites and practices, with no logical relation with social conduct, is completely foreign, rather abhorrent to Islām. Islām is not concerned with only one of the many departments of human life, it covers all the departments ; it covers life as a whole lived according to the will of God. It is an all embracing system, a complete code of life, bearing on and including every phase of human activity and every aspect of human conduct. All its laws, social, political, and other, are religious laws.¹ They all tend to realization of the one and same ideal, viz., obedience to God, and to His laws.

With the march of time, Islām became in practice a system of rigid ceremonial. The theologians of Islām instead of bringing men to God, scared them away from Him. Religion was losing its hold. There was a sort of religious anarchy

1. Macdonald, D.B., *Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory*, pp. 3-4 : "In Europe, the State may rule the Church, or the Church may rule the State, or they may stand side by side in somewhat dubious amity, supposedly taking no account each of the other. But in Muslim countries, Church and State are one indissolubly, and until the very essence of Islām passes away, that unity cannot be relaxed. The law of the land, too, is, in theory, the law of the Church. In the earlier days at least, canon and civil laws were one. Thus, we can never say in Islām, "he is a great lawyer; he, a great theologian; he, a great statesman." One man may be all three, almost he must be all three, if he is to be any one."

all-round. It appeared necessary to rediscover the true fundamentals of Islām to satisfy the yearnings of the mind, which had been caused by the philosophical and sceptical mood of the age. It was at this juncture that al-Ghazzālī came forward to interpret the true principles of Islām and to re-establish the religious spirit in the hearts of the people. His exposition of religious principles is only an aspect of his ethical system. As a matter of fact, his ethical, social and religious philosophy throughout aims at one and the same end. According to him, faith, knowledge and action are the fundamentals of religion. For the salvation of man, his action must accord with both his faith and knowledge.² That "knowledge is the basis of virtuous life." is al-Ghazzālī's contention. In fact, no spiritual and moral progress is possible without knowledge. But, all knowledge is not virtue. Sometimes, knowledge leads one to vice as well. The Prophet said, "Acquisition of knowledge is a duty incumbent upon every Muslim." Now, the knowledge that is a duty relates both to action and to heart.

(1) The knowledge that relates to action is twofold :

- (a) Knowledge of positive duties, i.e., religious duties which are binding upon every Muslim, and also in the business that one is engaged in, so that there may remain no danger of one's committing any act of inequity and sin.
- (b) Knowledge of duties concerning prohibited acts, i.e., acts which are absolutely forbidden, and those which are relative to the varying circumstances of human life, e.g., if a man is living in the midst of a non-Muslim people, he must know which of their acts are forbidden to him.

(2) Knowledge that relates to the heart is also twofold :

- (a) Knowledge of the articles of faith.
- (b) Knowledge of the nature of the vices and virtues of the heart, of the causes of their existences and of the ways of eradicating vices and cultivating virtues.

2. *Ihyā'*, Vol. I, pp. 79 ff.

Ignorance of this knowledge is no excuse for negligence of duty. Accordingly, one who renounces the world to devote himself exclusively to religious life without acquiring knowledge, or at least not acquiring as much of it as is within his power, is a grievous sinner for he will always be in danger of going astray.

In other words, acquiring knowledge is an act of worship. One should curtail one's relations with the world to devote oneself to the attainment of knowledge with undivided attention, and apply oneself diligently to the purification of one's heart. One should not leave any branch of desirable sciences unstudied, for all of them are related and auxiliary to one another. But, one should be clear on the point that the end of *'Ilm al-Mu'āmalā* is *Ilm al-Mukāshafa*. Since one cannot master the whole of every subject, one should acquire that part of a subject which helps in the realization of the ideal. One should at least know the reason why one science is superior to the other.³

The immediate aim of a man should be to enrich his mind and to achieve nobility of character, while his ultimate aim should be to seek nearness to God.⁴ There are three grades of knowledge related to the ultimate object of man.

(1) Knowledge of sciences like law, medicine, sociology, etc. These sciences are concerned with the physical and social well-being of man, without which his moral and spiritual well-being cannot be realised. (2) The science of the attitude and inner activity of the soul. This knowledge helps man to purify his heart. (3) *'Ilm al-Mukāshafa*, i.e., knowledge of

3. There are two standards of judging this, viz., (a) by considering its ultimate aim, and (b) by the strength and exactness of the arguments it brings in support of its theories. Religious sciences, for instance are to prior physical ones because the aim of the former is eternal happiness of the soul and that of the latter the happiness of this life. Mathematics is superior to astrology, because the reasoning in the first is more exact than in the latter. (*Ihyā'*, Vol. I, pp. 12-13).

4. He should not look down upon the sciences which he has not undertaken to study. No knowledge is to be looked down upon. Secular knowledge may not be as religious knowledge, yet it is useful in its own way, provided the scholar does not seek only his worldly interests through it. One should view all sciences only in the order of their importance to the realization of the ultimate goal.

God by direct intuition of the ultimate end and happiness on earth. It is a light which comes from above as a result of the purification of the heart.⁵

There are a number of religious duties, e.g., *Tahārat* (purification of the body), *Ṣalāt* (ritual of prayer), *Ṣayām* (fasting), *Zakāt* (charity-tax), *Hajj* (pilgrimage), *Tilāwat* (reading of the Qur'ān), *Dhikr* (remembering God), etc. Prayer, fasting, charity-tax, pilgrimage are incumbent (*fard*), while purification of the body, reading of the Qur'ān, remembering God, etc., are supererogatory (*Nafl*) duties.

Physical purification is the essential condition of all worship (*'Ibāda*). It is performed by the Muslims before every religious act. Technically, it means the cleansing of the body, clothes, etc., of all external impurities by washing them in a formal manner. It contributes to and symbolises the purification of the heart. The degrees of purification in the order of increasing value, are the cleansing of the body and garments which produces a whole-some effect upon the heart, purification of the heart from sins of the senses and vices of the heart, and lastly, purging the heart of the love of all that is not Divine.⁶

(1) The ritual of prayer, washes away sins just as water washes away dirt from the body.⁷ The Prophet said, "He whom this prayer does not save from what is obscene and evil, will recede from God."⁸ *Ṣalāt* is communion with God, therefore, it cannot be performed if one is occupied with other things.⁹ Its purport is to realize the presence of God.¹⁰ The object of *Ṣalāt* is to humble oneself before God and concentrate on Him. The injunction of the Qur'ān,¹¹ "Do not go near prayer when you are intoxicated until you know (well) what you say," is as significant as it is binding. The word "intoxicated" means not only intoxication of the senses

5. *Ihyā'*, Vol. I, pp. 43-49.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 111-12.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 130-31.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 134.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 134.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 142.

11. Qur'ān, iv, 43.

with wine but also the state of being distracted by the thoughts and temptations of the world, so as to be oblivious of one's duties towards God. One may be unconscious of what he is uttering even without being intoxicated with wine. The Prophet has said that the *'Ibādāt* have been ordained only for achieving the remembrance of God, and if this object is not realized, there is no value in *Ṣalāt*.¹²

If one's heart is unable to concentrate on God, one can never attain one's goal. Still, it is better to perform *Ṣalāt* than not to perform it at all, for in the latter case one has, at least made an effort to simulate or imitate its form.¹³

One will be greatly helped in attending solely to the words and meanings of what one recites and in realizing the spirit of prayers if one feels the reverence born of the consciousness of standing before the Divine Being, feeling of awe produced by the realization of his Divine Majesty and grandeur,¹⁴ and the hope and regret generated by one's shortcoming.¹⁵ If when a man says, "God is great," and if there is in his heart the belief that there can be anything greater than God, he is his a liar. If in his heart there is love or fear of anything but God and if he looks to that object for the fulfilment of his needs, his faith is not perfect. Mere wagging of the tongue, mere repetition of certain words will not suffice. The tongue, and the heart should be in complete accord and be supported by consistent action. If a man repeats the expression, "I take refuge in God from the accursed," without trying to restrain his heart from following evil desires, in spite of his ability to do so, he cannot be saved from the machinations of the Satan. If he is true to his words, he ought to move towards God for refuge¹⁶ and renounce all other interests.

(2) Fasting has to do much with Faith ; according to the Prophet, it is half the patience, and the patience is half the

12. *Ihyā'*, Vol. I, p. 142.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 144.

14. *Ibid.*

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 142-63.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 14-150.

Faith.¹⁷ There are three grades of fasting,¹⁸ viz., (i) abstinence from the satisfaction of hunger and thirst, of which the common people are capable, (ii) abstinence from sins associated with the ear, eye, tongue, hand, which a few are capable of and (iii) abstinence from the sins of the heart and mind. This last condition is fulfilled only by the most pious of godly men. All worldly thoughts are to be banished. Only the thought of God should remain. The object of fasting is to achieve mastery over desires and to attain spiritual kinship with the nearness of God.¹⁹

(3) The importance of *Zakāt* is evident from the fact that it is almost always mentioned along with *Ṣalāt* in the Qur'ān. The sentence "And keep praying and pay the poor-rate" occurs again and again in the Book.²⁰ *Zakāt* is reckoned as one of the pillars of Islam.²¹ Recalcitrants have been warned: "But to those who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not for the pleasure of God, announced tidings of grievous torment."²²

In view of the fact that wealth is a means of enjoying the pleasure of the world and that people find it most difficult to part with money,²³ *Zakāt* is one of the most crucial tests of a man's real love of God. It serves the two-fold purpose of purifying one's own heart and helping the needy.

(4) Pilgrimage (*Hajj*) is the greatest proof of one's devotion to and love of God, if it is performed in the right spirit. One severs for the time being all his connections with the world, settles all his worldly affairs, pays all his debts, makes full provision for his family, and purges heart and mind completely of everything but God. The money used for the journey must have been lawfully earned. One concentrates wholly on God. Passions and pleasures are all sacrificed for His sake. Only what is indispensable and necessary, e.g., food and clothes, is chosen from amongst worldly things. The

17. Ibid., p. 237.

18. Ibid., pp. 204-12.

19. Ibid., p. 212.

20. Qur'ān, ii, 43.

21. *Ihyā'*, Vol. I, p. 187.

22. Qur'ān, ii, 34.

23. *Ihyā'*, Vol. I, p. 192.

procedure and the rites of the pilgrimage are so established as to cleanse the heart completely and make it the abode of God alone.²⁴

(5) The reading of the Qur'ān though not incumbent, is nevertheless, the source of religious inspiration in every way and is the basis of all religious sciences.²⁵ Therefore, people regard the mere reading of it as a religious act²⁶ and read the whole Qur'ān even without acting upon its injunctions. Al-Ghazzālī considers the reading of the Qur'ān one of the best forms of worship, provided one studies it in order to understand and act upon what is enjoined by it. The Prophet said, "Read the Qur'ān if it prevents you from doing evil; if it does not prevent you, do not read it."²⁷ If one reads the Qur'ān from beginning to end and does not act upon what it says, he is like a servant who receives a letter from his master, containing certain orders for him, but who instead of carrying out the orders, sits down and reads the letter several times very carefully in a sweet tone pronouncing every word with the greatest care. Such a servant deserves only punishment, since the purpose for which the letter was written is not served.

There are certain outer and inner conditions to be satisfied in reading the Qur'ān.²⁸ One ought to understand the general nature of the Qur'ān and the guidance contained in it, realize that it is the word of God, attend to its meanings with all his heart and mind, and deliberate and reflect upon it. One must be fully receptive to the influence of what one is reading so that the words that one utters and the state of one's mind may be in unison. While reading the Book, let him be conscious of the presence of God and in his highest stage of complete absorption he will feel as if the words are coming from God Himself. These are helps to induce the right state of mind.²⁹

24. Ibid., pp. 235-44.

25. Ibid., p. 244.

26. Ibid., p. 247.

27. Cf. *Ihyā'*, Vol. I, p. 247.

28. Ibid., pp. 252-53.

29. Ibid., p. 252.

The removal of the hindrances to understanding is another condition. Too much attention to the correct pronunciation of the words naturally hinders the mind from attending to meaning. Excessive attention paid to the interpretations given in commentaries prejudices the mind against the truth. Finally, persistence,³⁰ in sin and the pursuit of passions also act as a barrier.³¹

(6) There are other supererogatory acts of worship (*Nawāfil*)³² as well. But, these additional acts are not meant for men engaged in the business of every day life ; they had better engage in their vocational duties, when they have already performed their obligatory religious duties, for all the activities of a true Muslim, including his eating, drinking, sleeping, are so many acts of worship, provided they are pursued in a religious spirit, and the idea of Allah is never removed from the mind.³³ People who serve God by serving their fellowmen may be superior to the devotee who works exclusively for the welfare of his own soul.³⁴

(7) For the devotee, al-Ghazzālī mentions a variety of numerous supererogatory acts of worship, such as constant prayer, fasting, meditation, supplication, and remembrance of God (*Dhikr*). Remembrance of God is the most important form of worship, the cream of all worship (*Ibādāt*). The lips and the heart must be in agreement.³⁵ But, gradually this remembrance should become rooted in the heart so that worldly and sinful thoughts may not find entrance into it and assemble there. Ultimately, it should pervade the whole mind of the devotee, so that everything except God, even the self, is forgotten. When the seeker has attained this state, he is said to have entered the initial stage on the path of God.

The first stage, in the Sūfī terminology, is called *Fanā*, the passing away of the self, the effacement of one's

30. Ibid., p. 255.

31. Ibid., pp. 256-59.

32. They are mostly recommended by the Prophet himself but the term *Nafl* came into use with the coming of the jurists, and the list of the *Nwāfil* was enlarged enormously by the scrupulous Sūfīs of later day.

33. *Ihyā'*, Vol. I, p. 311.

34. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 271.

35. Ibid., p. 271.

personality. When one advances further, he becomes aware of the mysteries or the verities of the universe. The curtains that exist between him and the truth are gradually lifted. He can then perceive the supersensory regions. From multiplicity he advances to unity. This is the first stage of *Tawhīd*. But, sometimes a man may constantly practise contemplation and realize the Divine presence, but the mysteries of the unseen world may remain sealed to him. He, however, should not lose heart, because when the soul is illumined by Divine light, it will soon begin to have glimpses of the mysteries and to understand them when it enters its second stage of life in the world hereafter.³⁶

36. *Kimiyā-i-Sa'ādāt*, pp. 114-16.

APPENDIX

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD : INTUITIVE KNOWLEDGE

Synopsis

- (1) The three grades of the knowledge of God, *Taqlid* (imitation), deduction and intuition, (*'Ilm al-Mukāshafa*).
- (2) (i) What is *'Ilm al-Mukāshafa* ?
(ii) *'Ilm al-Mukāshafa* of non-seeker's of God.
(iii) Saints without *'Ilm al-Mukāshafa*.
(iv) The roots of *'Ilm al-Mukāshafa* in love of God and yearning for Him.
- (3) (i) The two world—sensual and spiritual, one the shadow, the effect, or the symbol of the other.
(ii) Man must naturally yearn for the knowledge of the spiritual world.
(iii) Physical world—Spiritual world.
- (4) (i) Man is endowed with the power to apprehend in the spiritual world—Reason.
(ii) Reason, a spiritual essence, equipped with the senses essential for existence in this world of time and space. This equipment is a veil which might, through purification, be made into a transparent glass as it were. The veil will be dropped temporarily during this life as well if the light of reason is pure and uncorrupted and there is a desire, for the knowledge of God.
- (5) Al-Ghazzālī has been charged by Dr. Sir Muḥammad Iqbāl with the ignorance of the following :
(i) That thought and intuition are organically related.
(ii) That the finitude of thought is imposed upon it by its very nature.
(iii) That thought and intuition complement and rejuvenate each other.

- (iv) That intuition is only a higher form of intellect. But al-Ghazzālī exactly holds the views with the ignorance of which he has been charged.

Al-Ghazzālī does not deny thought as means of reaching the infinite. In what sense he believes it and in what sense he denies it.

Again, Dr. Iqbāl charges al-Ghazzālī with the ignorance of the dynamic nature and the internal infinitude of thought. Al-Ghazzālī's conception of the infinitude of thought and process of knowledge.

- (6) Forms of intuitive experience *Ilhām-Wahy* :

- (i) *Ilhām*, dropping of an idea in the mind, the "whence" and "how" of which are not understood. Example from al-Ghazzālī's life.
- (ii) In sleep.
- (iii) While awake—intuition of an idea clothed in familiar form. In *Murāqaba*, sudden dropping of the veil of the senses.

Intuition may be symbolic-idea or impression from unseen world clothed directly in images from the store-house of memory within the range of experience.

- (7) Reality seen face to face. Example :

Inherent difficulties in acquiring the knowledge of God.

- (i) Mysteries and wonders of the world, an evidence of God, but we come in contact with them when *'Aql* is immature; later on they appear as commonplace; the veil of dominance of passions and appetites.
- (ii) God's Light by which everything manifests itself and even exists, like the light which manifests colour. He is too obvious to be observed. Method of contraries inapplicable. Were God to be withdrawn the universe would collapse simultaneously.
- (8) *'Ilm al-Mukāshafa* at its highest reveals not only that God is the only Light but also the only Being. Everything exists in its God aspect. Nothing, but God exists by itself. This is called realizing One-and Oneliness

of God—Unitarian experience, misunderstood as *Ittiḥād*, highest point of ascent. Next stage in progress : Descent—Goal of goals, what next ?

- (i) Examination of al-Ghazzālī's conception of God, repanteism. Writer's opinion of al-Ghazzālī's position.
 - (ii) Brief view of Mujaddid Aḥmad Sirhindī about descent ; quotation from Dr. Iqbāl to the same effect.
- (9) The veils to the knowledge of God. Al-Ghazzālī's classification of man and creeds ; men who have the veils of pure darkness, mixed light and darkness, pure light, and men who are unveiled. The unveiled find God absolutely unpredictable. Various beliefs relating to the relation of God to the movement of the heaven made the differential for various grades of the gnostics of Allāh. The problem of *Muṭā'*, the Obeyed One.

Gairdner's opinion that this scheme embodies the innermost thoughts of al-Ghazzālī. Writer's opinion that the scheme is stupendous but insufficiently thought out—Why ? Al-Ghazzālī's attitude as revealed in his life work.

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