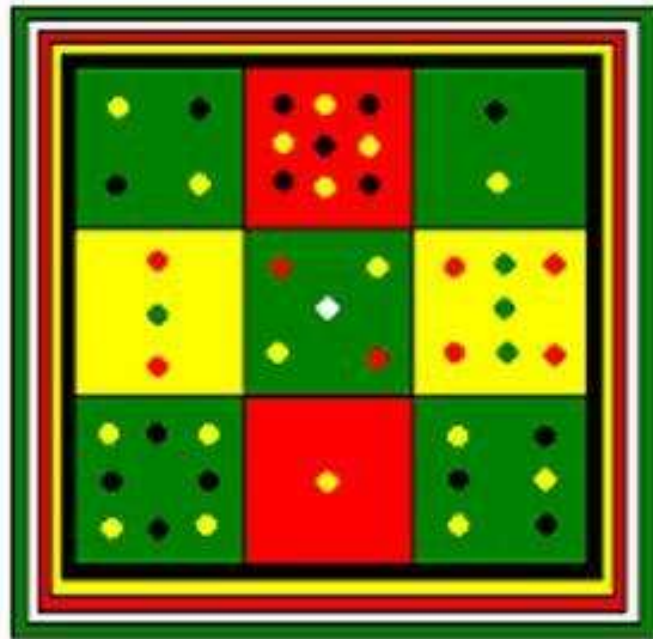


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Ma`rifaat'l-Haqq



Direct Knowledge of the Absolute Being

By

***Shaykh Abd'l-Qaadir ibn Mustafa ibn Muhammad
at-Turuudi***

Translated by

Shaykh Muhammad Shareef

Institute of Islamic - African Studies International

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Maiurno, Sennar, Sudan**

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي تَلَوْنَا الْقُرْآنَ وَمَكَرَ بَيْنَهُ
وَعِيَادَتُهُ وَمَرَّ عَلَيْهِمْ بِالْأَسْبَابِ الْمَوْجِلَةِ الرَّذَائِكِ بِمَحَرِّ وَقَلَهُ
وَعَنَابَتُهُ وَإِسْرَافَاتِكَ رَسَلَهُ الْكِرَامِ عِبَادَةَ كَتَبَهُ الْعَشْوَةُ بِنُورِهِ
وَهَدَايَتُهُ بِهَدْيِهِمْ أَمْرًا تَلَوْنَا مِنْ جِزْرِ كَلِمَةِ الْإِزْلِيمَةِ بِجُورِهِ وَسَكَدَتُهُ
وَصَدَفَتْ عَنْهَا مِنْهُمْ مَرَقَلَتُهُ رَقَبَتُهُ عَزْمَةُ هَدْيِهِ وَرِعَايَتُهُ
سَبْحَاتُهُ لَهْ الْعَمْدِ وَالْأَدَامِ وَالْإِفْرَةَ وَهُوَ الْعَكِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ الشَّهِيدُ
أَرَى إِلَهَ الْإِسْمِ وَالشَّهِيدَ مُحَمَّدَ عَبْدَهُ وَرَسُولَهُ الْمُبْعُوثَ إِلَى
كَافَّةِ التَّلَوْنَا مِنْ بَرِيَّتِهِ وَجَمَلِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَكُرْمِ وَشَرَفِ
وِبَارِكِ وَكَوَعَلِ الْمَوَاصِيحِ وَانْبِاعِهِ وَشَيْعَتِهِ أَمَا يَكْفِي قَوْلَ الْوَقْفِ
الْمَشْفُوعِ مِنْ خَيْبَتِهِ نَعْمَ وَذَنْبِهِ السَّلَامُ فِي بِمِيعِ الْأَحْوَالِ بِسَاحَةِ
عَبُورِهِ عَبْدَ الْقَادِرِ بِرِ الْمَصْلُوعِ بِرِ مُحَمَّدَ سَأَلَهُ اللَّهُ وَعَبِي
عَنْهُ لَمَّا كَانَتْ مَعْرِفَةُ الْعَوَاجِ الْمَعَارِفِ وَأَهْمَهَا وَجِيصِ
الْهَمِّ وَالرَّقَبَاتِ بِهَا وَالسَّعْيِ فِي تَعْمِيلِهَا بِالْقَدْرِ الْمَمْكُورِ لِكُلِّ أَحَدٍ
وَأَلْحَقْنَا بِمَحَرِّ وَقَلَهُ مَرَّ عَلَيْهِمْ بِالْأَسْبَابِ ~~مَعْرِفَتِهِ~~
الْهَادِيَةِ إِلَيْهَا نَبْغَلَامَتُهُ وَرَحْمَةُ بَلَهُ الْعَمْدِ عَلَى ذَلِكَ وَتِلْكَ
الْأَسْبَابُ كَثِيرَةٌ وَأَمَّا تَهْمَاتُ هَذِهِ الطَّرِيقِ الثَّمَانِيَةِ الْوَحْدَةِ
وَالْخَبَرِ وَالنَّظَرِ وَالْجَمَالِ وَالْفَرَارِ وَالْعَدِيثِ وَالْأَحْوَالِ الذَّوْقِيَّةِ
وَأَقْدُوقِيَّةِ

This is the second folio of the manuscript Ma`arifat'l-Haqq of Shaykh Abd'l-Qadir Dan Tafa

فيه وتبعه وجر غيره وهذا المقام هو مقام لم حاضرة
 لحدوث العبد فيه مولاة المقام الثاني مقام تجلي الاسماء
 وهو مقام تجلي فيه الاسماء الله على العبد تجليا اصطلاحيا
 فيه ظلم العبد في نور كل اسم تجلي عليه منها يتدفق بها
 اشراق واذة ودلالة وتغلقا وتميزا وطورا وهو السر كالمحفة
 من الصفات الالهية لا تتعذر على قدر القوا بل والاستعدادات
 والنسب المقاه الربية مقام تجلي الذات وهو اقدس الغايات
 واعلى التجليات ولا يمكن بعد ذلك الا بعد السعوى والمحو
 الذاتيين في عينه او لا عن تجسسه بظهوره ثم يبين ثانيا
 عن ربه بظهور سره ويبيته ثم يبينه الشاعر من صفات
 وجاته بمتخففات ذاته عند ذلك يجد المحو والجناء
 والانقطاع بحيث يجد المحو وهو غير اثبات حقيقى
 وحيث يجد الجناء وهو غير بقاء ديمومى وحيث يجد
 الانقطاع وهو غير انتمال اقدس انتهى وقد تم ارادنا
 رسمه من انواع المعارف على وجه الاختصار والايجاز
 ونتم المعاني والواقعة في الالوان الوجيهة والحمد لله رب
 العالمين والسلاة والسلام على سيد المرسلين وعلى آله
 وصحبه اجمعين وانتهى في الربيع الاخر من شهر رستة

This is the last folio of the manuscript Ma`arifat'l-Haqq of Shaykh Abd'l-Qadir Dan Tafa

Introduction

This concise text was composed by *Shaykh* Abd'l-Qaadir ibn Musfata on Monday, the 29th of *Rabi'l-Akhir* in the year 1243 A.H. (November 19th, 1827). He composed it at the age of 24 during the rule of *Sultan* Muhammad Bello. As the author stated in the beginning of the text, it was an explanation upon the *Fulde`* poem of his maternal grandfather, *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fuduye`, in which the *Shehu* delineated the eight gates to direct experiential knowledge of Allah ta`ala. It was a famous poem recited on the tongue of many of his disciples. It was not until some ten years after the death of the *Shehu* that this grandson composed a text explaining the meaning of this *Fulde`* poem. *Shaykh* Abd'l-Qaadir ibn Mustafa, was demonstrating his own level of achievements in the science of unveiling just nine months after the death of his chief spiritual guide *Shaykh* Muhammad Sanbu ibn *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fuduye` who died on Wednesday night the 25th of *Muharram* in the year 1242 A.H.

The title of the text is called *Ma`arifaat'l-Haqq* (Direct Knowledge of the Absolute Being). Here the author utilizes a technical term among the *mutasawwifteen* which is well known among them referring to knowledge and comprehension in all its facets. It is for this reason, the author used the plural form rather than the singular *ma`arifa*. The singular form when it is unqualified usually refers to knowledge which is the direct result of spiritual discipline and unveiling. However, *Shaykh* Abd'l-Qaadir delineates that the latter form of comprehension is not the only means to direct knowledge of Allah ta`ala. He gives eight gates to knowledge of Allah.

The first gate of knowledge is the gate which is open to the entire cosmos from man to every creature whether animate or inanimate. It is the original creational nature (*al-fitra*) upon which all things were created. The second gate of knowledge is the gate of information (*al-kabr*) which is the result of observation of the creational realities and comprehending the laws which bind the cosmos in a unified field. The third gate of knowledge is the gate of disciplined intellectual speculation (*an-nadhr*) utilizing the precise science developed by the scholastic theologians.

The fourth gate of direct experiential knowledge is the gate of experiential contemplation of beauty (*al-jamaal*) and its endless manifestations in the self and the surrounding universe. This knowledge is the result of being in a constant state of gratitude for the innumerable blessings of existence. The fifth gate of direct experiential knowledge is the gate of the experiential contemplation of majesty (*al-jalaal*) and its endless manifestations in the self and the surrounding universe. This knowledge is the result of being in a constant state of patience, contentment and yielding to the majesty of afflictions, hardships and constrictions which manifest in the self and outside the self.

The sixth gate of direct experiential knowledge, otherwise known as Gnosis is the gate of the Infallible *Qur'an*, which is the Uncreated Speech of the Absolute Being. Rahmatullah ibn Khalil 'r-Rahman al-Hindi said in his *Idh'haar'l-Haqq*: "It (*ma`arifa*) is an expression which refers to knowledge of His Essence, knowledge of the attributes of His majesty, knowledge of the attributes of His generosity and actions, knowledge of His judgment and knowledge of His Divine Names. The *Qur'an* encompasses all the evidences of these matters and explains these in detail unlike any other book. Rather no other explanation even approaches the explanation of the *Qur'an* in these matters." This means that in each *Qur'anic* chapter, each 30th (*juz*), in each 60th (*hizb*), in each *nusf*, *ruba`* or *thaamin* (1/2, 1/4th and 1/8th) there is specific direct knowledge of Allah ta`ala. In fact in each *ayat* (verse), *huruuf* (letter), *waqaf* (stopping) and even in the vowel sounds and silences, there is direct knowledge of Allah ta`ala. This is so because it is the Eternal Speech of Allah ta`ala which illuminates at every level of reading. Aisha Abdur Rahmaan at-Tarjumana, summed it up in her Subatomic World in the Quran,

"Creation is manifest through the names of Allah, and the names are comprised of the 29 letters of the Arabic alphabet...If you are looking for basic building blocks of matter, you will not find them in quarks or in the idea of the 'baseball' particle. You will find them in

the letters...The world is created by the letters.... The letters make up the names, and every reality has a name. All of these multi-relationships go back ultimately to the Names (of Allah), and the Names are all from One source, One reality. Such is the nature of existence."

The seventh gate of knowledge is the gate of the Living *Sunna* of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. I qualify, the *Sunna* with the term 'living', because it is through the revival and giving life to the *Sunna* that direct knowledge of Allah ta`ala ensues. In other words behind every act of the Messenger of Allah may Allah bless him and grant him peace, there is direct knowledge of Allah ta`ala which can be experienced and tasted. Even in the most mundane and insignificant acts, such as how to relieve oneself there is direct knowledge of Allah ta`ala when it is done in accordance with the Living *Sunna* with the intention of reviving it and giving it life. *Shaykh* Abd 'l-Qadir al-Jaylani, may Allah be merciful to him when he said in his *Fat'hu 'r-Rabbaani*, "The foundation of uprightness is following the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, in his words and deeds. The more the servant's heart is purified, the more he will see the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, in his sleep, commanding him to do something and forbidding him to do something else...He comes to be with the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, as far as his inner content is concerned. His heart then becomes trained and disciplined with the Prophet and in his presence, upon him be blessings and peace. His hands come to be in his hands. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, then becomes the one to be consulted concerning Allah, as the doorkeeper before Allah's presence." It is for this reason, the author placed these gates of direct experiential knowledge arrived at through the Book and the *Sunna* in the same category, because they both issue from a Single Source which is revelation whose source is the very Essence of the Absolute Being.

The eighth and final gate of direct knowledge of Allah is the gate of experiential tasting of certainty (*dhawq'l-yaqeen*). It is this knowledge which, as the author said, "is the path exclusive for the People of Allah because it concurs with the purification of the heart (*tasfiyyat 'l-qalb*), the disciplining of the character (*riyaadiyat'l-akhlaaq*) and spiritual struggle (*al-mujaahida*)." Some of the People of Allah equate direct Gnosis (*ma`arifa*) of Allah with spiritual arrival (*wusuul*) with Allah ta`ala. Ibn Ata'illah said: 'Your arrival at Allah is knowledge of Him, since our Lord is too majestic that anything can connect to Him or that He can connect to a thing.' An-Nuuri said: 'Spiritual arrival means the unveiling of the hearts, and having direct witnessing of Divine secrets in the station of perplexity.' Thus, Gnosis of Allah (*ma`arifat Allah*) must be experienced, tasted and arrived at, not simply intellectually understood and spoken about. It is the immediate result of surrendering to the commands and prohibitions of Allah ta`ala with absolute sincerity, being completely aware the impotence of the self, while being acutely attentive of the presence and actions of Allah ta`ala.

Imam al-Ghazali said: 'Realize that spiritual arrival and arriving, according to what the spiritual guides have indicated, refers to everyone who arrives at the purity of certainty, by way of experienced tasting and self discovery. This is one aspect of spiritual arrival. Then the People of Arrival are arranged in ranks. Among them are those who discover Allah by way of His Divine Actions. This is an aspect of Divine emanation and means that the person annihilates his own actions and the actions of other created beings by stopping with Allah ta`ala. Among them is the one who stops in the station of awe and intimacy by what Allah unveils to his heart from the appearances of majesty and beauty, which is the Divine emanations which emerge by way of Allah's Divine Attributes. This too is an aspect of spiritual arrival. Among them is the one who ascends to the station of annihilation, where his inward is completely filled with the lights of certainty and direct witnessing, who becomes completely absent from his own existence due to the immensity of his direct witnessing of Allah. This aspect of spiritual arrival is an example of the emanations of the Divine Essence to the elite among those who are

brought near to Allah. This too is an aspect of spiritual arrival; above which is the Truth of certainty, which in this world's life even the spiritually elite attain only mere glimpses. It is the flowing of the light of direct witnessing in the entire being of the servant until He draws him near by means of his spirit, his heart and his soul until he is completely transformed. This is the highest aspect of spiritual arrival."

Once the spiritual aspirant (*mureed*) has mastered the last level of knowledge then all the eight gates of direct knowledge of the Absolute Being are purified and he/she can "enter from whichever gate he/she chooses", because then the veils are lifted and behind every gate is pure direct crystalline knowledge of the Absolute Being. These eight realms of knowledge to the Absolute Being interact with and reinforce one another as if in a mystical square. Although each realm of knowledge is a specific gateway to knowledge of the Absolute Being, yet full knowledge of that specific level of knowledge cannot be grasped without understanding its opposite. The paired opposites interact and reinforce one another in an unending circuit or orbit. Allah ta'ala says:

﴿سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَزْوَاجَ كُلَّهَا مِمَّا تُنْبِتُ الْأَرْضُ وَمِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمِمَّا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

Thus, informational knowledge based upon the minute observation of the self and the universe (*khabr*) leads naturally to theoretical speculation (*nadhr*) about the principles of how the self and the universe functions and why. And this theoretical speculation of the self and universe then reinforces and improves the observer's ability to integrate and interact scientifically with the self and the universe. Similarly, the knowledge which comes from studying and experiencing spiritual expansion, ease, emancipation, political sovereignty and other manifestations of beauty cannot be truly understood except through studying and experiencing constrictions, hardship, disciplined servitude, oppression and other manifestations of majesty. Likewise, no understanding of the *Qur'an* can be had without a self annihilation into the Living *Sunna*, because the *Qur'an* was revealed to Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. If a person wants to experience the revelation as It came down to him, he must die to him/herself and become revived in the Self Form of the Living *Sunna*. Then the *Qur'an* will speak to him/her directly, and immediately as if It were being revealed to the heart of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.

Equally, knowledge of the original nature of existence (*fitra*) cannot be understood except through spiritual unveiling (*mukashif*); and this gnosis then in turn sees and comprehends the original nature of existence, as it is, with absolute certainty (*haqq'l-yaqeen*). It is for this reason that some spiritual masters experience hearing the unique glorifications of the Absolute Being from inanimate things and other creatures in the universe, because his unveiling is real and authentic. In this way the eight realms of knowledge interact with one another to reveal the knowledge of the Absolute Being. What really happens at this stage is that the observer is dislocated, dissipated and disappears, and what is observing and being observed and what is knowing and being known is in reality the Eternal Knowing and Awareness of the Absolute Being. *Shaykh* Abd'l-Qadir ibn Mustafa alluded to this when he said in the final chapter of this text:

"This experiential knowledge is the utmost limit and the most exalted form of Self-Manifestation. And there is no way for the servant to attain this level of knowledge except after the spiritual pulverization and the spiritual obliteration of all the essences. For the servant first becomes annihilated from himself by the Self-Manifestation of his Lord). Then secondly he becomes annihilated from his Lord by the Self-Manifestation of the secrets of His lordship. Then thirdly he becomes annihilated from the relationships and correlations of His Divine Attributes by means of the abundant realization of His Essence. At this point the servant experiences spiritual obliteration, annihilation and cutting off. For when he experiences spiritual obliteration, then this is the source of Real Establishment. And when he experiences spiritual annihilation, then this is the source of Eternal Continuity. And when he realizes spiritual cutting off, then this is the source of Sacred Arrival"

Thus, the eight realms of knowledge delineated here by the *Shaykh* are the eight realms through which the Absolute Being is known. These sciences revolve around knowledge of Allah in the same manner that the planets orbit the sun, or the pilgrim circumambulates the Sacred House. This spiritual interaction is one of the manifestations of the meaning of his words, may Allah bless him and grant him peace: “Whoever dies and has not associated anything with Allah, will have the gates of Paradise opened for him and he can enter in whichever one he wishes; and it has eight gates.” And his words: “Whoever dies and he has absolute certainty in Allah, then Paradise has eight gates which he can enter in whichever one he chooses.”

Thus, if the concept of the eight realms of direct knowledge can be depicted in an model it would take the form of eight ‘fields’ (*majaal*) revolving around a center (*qutb*) creating what Muslim sages call a *daa’ira* and what the Chinese sages developed into the *Ba Gua*, or the eight tri-gram system. It is not a coincidence that both the Chinese sages and the Muslim sages developed an illustration of these eight gates in what became known as the ‘mystical square’. In fact, *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fuduye` illustrated this concept in his *Kitaab Ism Allah ‘l-`Aadhem* (the Book of the Great Name of Allah). If we take the same principle and make the threefold square, where the eight realms of knowledge surround a center; it would resemble the following:

Qur'an	dhawq al-yaqeen	Summa
jamaal	ma`arifaat al-haqq	jalaal
khabr	fitra	nadhr

Daa`rat Ma`arifaat al-Haqq
The Sphere of Direct Knowledge of the Absolute Being

The bottom line is that the Ma`arifaat al-Haqq of *Shaykh* Abd'l-Qaadir ibn Mustafa, is a proof in defense of the words of one of my teachers, *Shaykh* Abd'l-Qaadir al-Murabit who used to often say that the People of Allah: “...are a People who have made science intoxicating and rendered intoxication into a science.” Ma`arifaat al-Haqq is a demonstration of the high level of discourse that the African Muslim sages achieved in knowledge of Allah ta`ala. The ease by which the *Shaykh* arranged and systematized these sciences speaks to the quality of the civilization which was created by the Sokoto Caliphate. Its not difficult to reflect on the potential excellence of the society, government, science and technology which would have developed had the ideas in this text been allowed to be further systematized and its spiritual concepts were further developed into scientific and social theories. The fact that the author composed the text at the comparatively young age of 24 in the year 1827 C.E., indicates the spiritual and intellectual potential of an individual and society dedicated to knowing and

worshipping Allah, the Absolute Being. This illuminated son of Africa composed this text less than 181 years ago.

If the Anglo Americans can look back 232 years to 1776 at the minds and ideas of their 'founding fathers' for inspiration and cultural renewal, then it is even more logical for Muslims in general and African Muslims in particular to also look back to a closer time into one of the minds and ideas of our African Muslim FOUNDING FATHERS for spiritual inspiration and cultural revival. It is significant that at the time of the composition of this text, the author's father, *Shaykh Malam* Mustafa ibn Muhammad ibn Ibrahim at-Turuudi was the governor of the state of Salame` in the northwestern region of the Sokoto Caliphate, and he was also the founder, rector and dean of a state sponsored university in its capital. When *Malam* Mustafa died in the year 1261 A.H. (1845 C.E.), his oldest son, the author of this text, *Shaykh Abd'l-Qaadi* ibn Mustafa was appointed to resume his fathers's post as governor of Salame` as well as dean of the university there. So, without further delay, here is the text, **Ma`arifaat'l-Haqq** of the learned and illuminated sage *Shaykh Abd'l-Qaadir* ibn Mustafa, may Allah be merciful to them, and us and provide us with their *baraka*.

Shaykh Muhammad Shareef bin Farid
20th Ramadan, 1429 (September 21st 2008)
YanQing, People's Republic of China

Institute of Islamic-African Studies International

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Ma`arifaat'l-Haqq
Direct Knowledge of the Absolute Being

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TRANSLATION

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. All praises are due to Allah who has created creation for the purpose of knowing Him directly (*li ma`arifathi*) and worshipping Him (*wa `ibaadatihi*), and who has favored them with the causative factors of entry (*bi`l-asbaabi`l-mawsula*) into this direct knowledge and worship, by means of His pure bounty and assistance. For this reason He has sent His noble messengers (*rusulihl`l-kiraam*), the companions of His Divinely Overflowing Books (*Kutubihl`l-Mashwati*) with His light and guidance (*bi nuurihi wa hidaayatihl*). And He guided by means of them creatures whom by means of His Divine success and joy (*bi fawzihi wa sa`adatihl*), entered under the judgment of His eternal word (*jarrat kalimat`l-azaliyati*). And He turned away from them those creatures that removed from their necks the protection of His guidance and responsibility.

Glory be to Him and to Him belongs the praise in the beginning and the end and He is the Wise the Aware. I bear witness that there is no deity except Him and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger, dispatched to all creatures in His creation. So, blessings of Allah, His peace, generosity, nobility and *Baraka* be upon him, his family, Companions, followers and group. To continue:

Says the needy one, anxious because of the ugliness of his actions and sins, the one seeking refuge in all his states and conditions underneath the courtyard of His Divine forgiveness – **Abd`l-Qaadir ibn Mustafa ibn Muhammad**, may Allah be compassionate to Him and pardon him. Since direct knowledge of the Lord of Truth (*ma`arifat`l-Haqqi*) is the *raison d`être* of knowledge (*ajalu`l-ma`arif*) and its most important factor (*wa ahimmuhaa*), it becomes incumbent upon everyone to extend his resolution to acquiring it (*surf`l-himma ila iqtinaa`ihaa*) and extending his endeavors to attaining it (*wa`s-sa`aya fee tahsseelihaa*), with whatever abilities that are possible. Verily the Lord of Truth ta`ala by means of His sheer bounty has favored us with the causative factors of guidance (*bi`l-asbaabi`l-hidaayat*) that has enabled us to attain this, as a favor and mercy from Himself, and to Him is the praise in that. These causative factors are many. Their fundamentals are achieved through eight paths; [1] natural disposition (*al-fitra*); [2] information attained by reported information (*al-khabr*); [3] reflection (*an-nadhar*); [4] through contemplation of majesty (*al-jalaal*); [5] through contemplation of beauty (*al-jamaal*); [6] the *Qur`an*; [7] the prophetic traditions (*al-hadeeth*); and experienced spiritual states (*al-ahwaal ad-dhawqiyya*).¹

I have come across a Fulfulde` poem written by our *shaykh*, *Shehu* Uthman Dan Fuduye` in which he gathered in it these eight paths. We thank Allah ta`ala for what Allah has favored us with by means of him from these sciences and for what we have learned of it from him. He said that he attained direct knowledge of Allah from all of these eight paths. Consequently, the purpose of this writing is to stipulate these paths (*tafsseelihaa*) and to explain by way of particularization the methodology of attaining this direct knowledge (*wa bayaan kayfiyat hussuul`l-ma`arifa bihaa*), for anyone who has the ability to experience it. I have placed each of these sciences within its threshold. Thus, this writing will be as a commentary upon the Fulbe poem of *Shehu* Uthman Dan Fuduye`. For this reason I have arranged this text into eight chapters in accordance with the above mentioned eight paths. I ask Allah for assistance in its completion and I ask His aid in making it beneficial. I pray that this text will be purely for His Generous sake, for verily He is in complete control of that and He alone has the power of that by His permission.

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¹ Here ends folio 2 after 17 lines of colophon.

Chapter One:

On Direct Knowledge (*al-ma`arifa*) of Allah Attained Through Upright Natural Disposition (*al-Fitra*)

I say and success is from Allah, realize that Allah ta`ala has favored us from the perspective of our natural disposition (*fitra*). Allah ta`ala says:

﴿فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ﴾

“Establish your face on the upright religion, the natural disposition of Allah upon which He originated mankind. Do not alter the creation of Allah.”² The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said:

((كُلُّ مَوْلُودٍ يُوَلَّدُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ فَأَبَوَاهُ يُهَوِّدَانِهِ أَوْ يُنَصِّرَانِهِ أَوْ يُمَجِّسَانِهِ))

“Every child born is born upon natural disposition (*al-fitra*). It is its parents that make it a Jew, a Christian or Magian.”³ This natural disposition is divided into two types. The first one is the natural disposition (*al-fitra*) whose component (*mudaat*) requires constant management (*al-yahtaaq ila al-mudabbir*). This type of natural disposition brings benefit through attaining direct knowledge of the Lords management of creation only. In attaining this direct knowledge, human beings share with the rest of the beast of burden, reptiles, and all other creatures; rather the entire creation. Sometimes the creature may be unaware of this direct knowledge based upon the absence of perfection (*adam`l-kamaal*) in its natural disposition and failure at uprightness (*al-istiqaama*). The second one is the natural disposition that has an instinctive aptitude (*qaabiliyya*) for a special direct knowledge (*ma`arifa khaasa*) of Allah ta`ala. This type of natural disposition is specific to human beings (*khaasa li`l-insaan*). It is about this that Allah ta`ala informed us when He says:

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ شَهِدْنَا﴾

“When Your Lord drew⁴ from the Children of Adam, from their loins – their descendents, and made them testify concerning themselves. ‘Am I not your Lord?’ They said: ‘Indeed! We have testified.’”⁵ When Allah ta`ala says: “When Your Lord drew from the Children of Adam, from their loins – their descendents is a direct expression of His assistance to them in this assembly of knowledge. “And made them testify concerning themselves. ‘Am I not your Lord?’ is a direct expression of His preparing them for this spiritual capacity. They said: ‘Indeed!’ is a direct expression of their acceptance of this capacity and knowledge.

Among the greatest blessings that Allah ta`ala has given to mankind is that He created them, first off, from one who was perfect, uprightly prepared for direct knowledge of Allah and fortunate. This person, was Adam, upon him be peace, and there then stemmed from him, the entire human species. By means of this, it is known that human beings are perfect in their essence because they only experience perfection, at the first hand. Thus, imperfections are anomalous to the human condition and are not something apart of their innate essence. Therefore, realize that. Realize also that this primordial wisdom (*al-hikma as-saabiq*) is not innate in the majority or most of human beings. Realize also that this innate knowledge (*al-ma`arifa l-fitriyya*) of Allah ta`ala benefits us in two ways. Firstly, it requires us to be in need of the One who is in complete management, however He is. I mean by that a need that is beyond choice, nature, or secondary cause. For every existing thing is innately aware in its

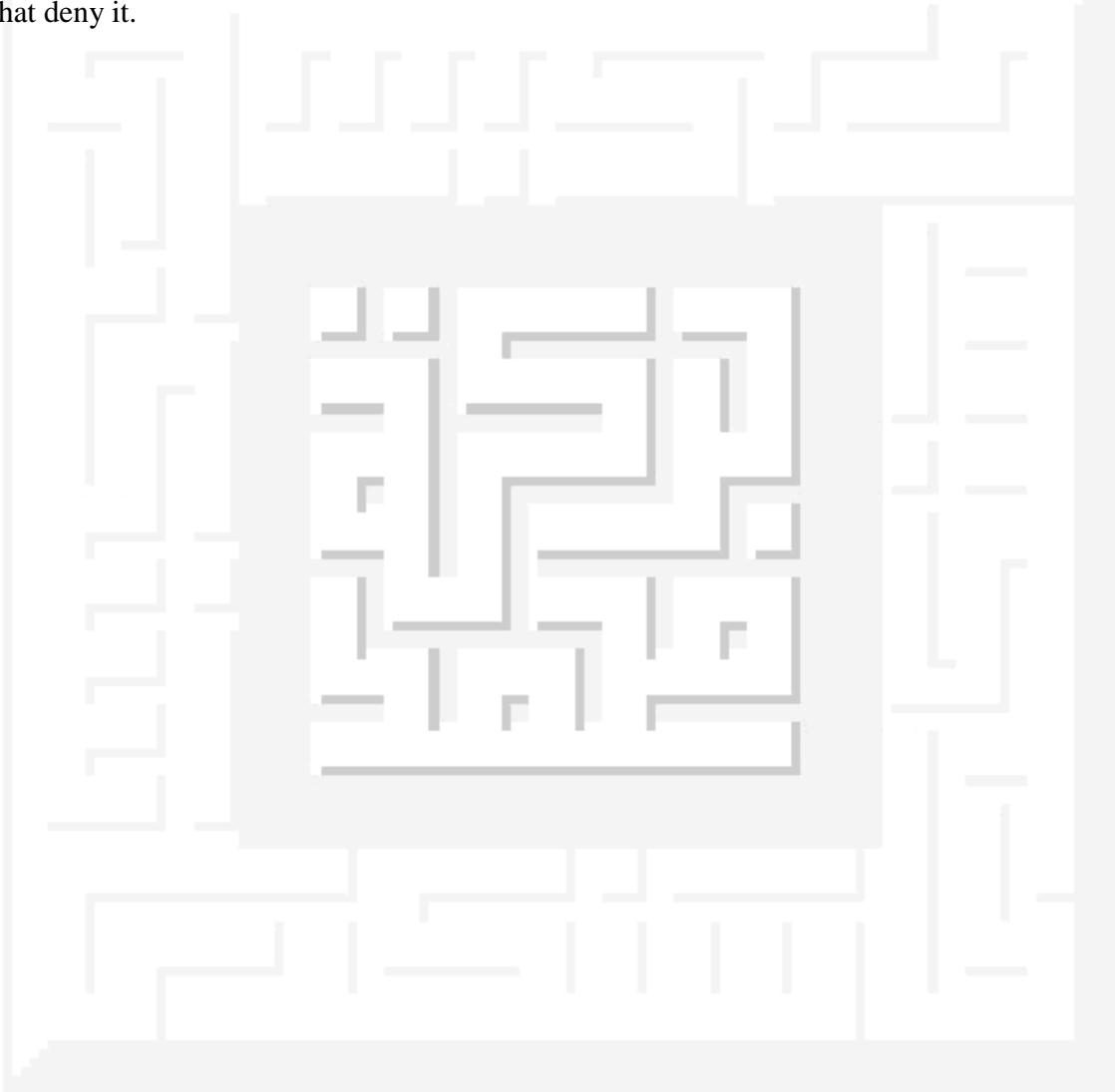
² *Qur'an* –10:64.

³ This prophetic tradition was related by Ahmad in his *Musnad*, Abu Ya`ala in his *Musnad*; at-Tabarani in his *al-Kabir*, al-Bayhaqi in his *Sunnan* on the authority of al-Aswad ibn Saree`; at-Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Hurayra; and al-Hakim on the authority of Anis ibn Malik.

⁴ Here ends folio 3 after 18 lines of colophon.

⁵ *Qur'an* – 7:172.

essence that it is in need of that which manages its affairs, due to the absence of its ability to exist by itself. Secondly, this innate knowledge benefits us by giving us an innate aptitude for sound knowledge of Allah ta`ala, when it arrives. This is because Eternal Happiness (*as-sa`aada*) is solely the result of sound knowledge (*al-ma`arifa as-saheeh*) of Allah, which is knowledge of the Divine Unity (*at-tawheed*) and belief (*al-imaan*). If the affair were not so, then every thing which has a natural disposition (*al-maftuur*) would attain Eternal Happiness from the beginning, due to the fact of its ability to comprehend Divine Unity and sound faith. This would make disbelief (*al-kufr*), apostasy (*al-ilhaad*) and denial of Divine Oneness (*jahadu'l-wahdaaniyya*), similar to it. However, there is no comparison or converging of the two. That which allows the acceptance of the Divine Unity is denial of ability of creation to cope (*jahadu'l-mudabbir*) and its denial of independence (*al-istiqlaal*). Thus, knowledge of Allah ta`ala can never be attained by both those that accept the Divine Unity and faith in Allah and those that deny it.



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Chapter Two: On Direct Knowledge (*al-ma`arifa*) of Allah Attained Through Information (*al-Khabr*)

Realize that the information (*al-khabr*) that is continual (*al-mutawaatir*) benefits by bringing about definitive knowledge (*al-`ilm al-qat`iy*) of the thing about which it is informing. It stands in the place of eye witnessing (*al-`ayaan*) and direct perceptibility (*al-mashaahida*). Direct knowledge of Allah ta`ala and the fact of His existence, who manages this creation, is recurrent throughout the rest of the entire cosmos. Existence demonstrates in an incessant pattern that He is the One who created the heavens, the earth, the air,⁶ the water, the wind, invisible creatures (*al-jinn*), human beings, and every thing else in creation. This knowledge occurs to everyone who has reason (*`aaqil*) who was brought up in the lands of Islam. This is the knowledge for mankind that originated from the time of Adam, upon him be peace, and thus it has become widespread throughout all the classes of humanity. This informational knowledge has occurred succinctly in the verses of the *Qur'an* when Allah ta`ala says:

﴿وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ﴾

“If you were to ask them: ‘Who created the heavens and the earth?’ They would say: ‘Allah.’”⁷ And other than these from the *Qur'anic* verses. The overall benefit of this type of knowledge is that it firmly establishes the existence of an Originator (*wujuud 'l-Baari*) and that He is the Creator and Provider. However, this knowledge does not help in attaining knowledge of the Divine Unity of the Supreme Deity (*ma`arifa 't-tawheed al-ilaahiy*). It is for this reason, the disbelievers express openly (*yuqaruun*) the existence of Allah and His creativity, and they believe in that. However, along with that they associate partners with Him in His divinity (*fii al-ilaahiyya*) and fail to unify Him (*laa yuwahiduunahu*). Allah ta`ala says:

﴿وَمَا يُؤْمِنُ أَكْثَرُهُمْ بِاللَّهِ إِلَّا وَهُمْ مُشْرِكُونَ﴾

“Most of them do not believe in Allah except that they associate partners with Him.”⁸ Therefore, knowledge attained through information has no influence in the Eternal Happiness for humanity. However, it is nobler, and more informed than the knowledge attained through natural disposition (*al-ma`arifa 'l-fitriyya*), due to the ability to deny divinity in the latter. On the contrary, in the former it is not permissible with the recurrence of information (*at-tawaatir 'l-khabr*) to deny Allah's existence, His divinity, lordship, and that He is the Creator and the Provider. While knowledge attained through natural disposition only benefits you in requiring you to recognize that you are in need of a manager, however He is. Your aptitude for sound direct knowledge, when it arrives, increases you in that for you and in addition, it firmly establishes that the Creator chooses and that He is your deity, your Creator and your Provider based upon the recurrent information in creation that has come to you from the time of your father, Adam to the present. Even though this knowledge has diffused and spread, some quarters among the lost have been completely oblivious of this knowledge due to the darkness of the natural creation and its laws. As a result, they refuse to believe that the cosmos has a Deity, or Creator⁹. They, out of their ignorance, attribute phenomenal events and laws to nature, the movement of the planets and stars. They are thus, drowning in the sea of the darkness of natural phenomenon, and they will evermore and forever be devoid of sincere understanding of Allah ta`ala. We seek refuge with Allah from ignorance and its causes, and may He guide us to the path of Divine Unity by means His Light and Guidance.

⁶ Here ends folio 4 after 19 lines of colophon.

⁷ *Qur'an* – 31:25.

⁸ *Qur'an* –12:106.

⁹ Here ends folio 5 after 18 lines of colophon.

Chapter Three: On Direct Knowledge (*al-ma`arifa*) of Allah Attained Through Intellectual Speculation (*an-Nadhar*)

Realize that the direct knowledge attained through intellectual speculation is one of the strongest paths in establishing the existence of Allah and His Oneness. This is evidenced (*al-mustanid*) by the proofs of reason (*dala'il'l-aql*). The objective of this knowledge, however, is not to arrive at particularizing the essence of the One worshipped (*bi'l-ifdaa ila ta'ayeen 'l-ma`abuud*). Rather, its concern is establishing, by means of the affirmations of reason (*bi'l-ijab'l-aqliy*) the existence of Allah and that the Attributes of Divinity are necessary for Him. Therefore, it is obligatory upon every responsible person (*mukallaf*) to acquire enough of this knowledge, which will make his beliefs (*`aqeeda*) sound, and to remove the judgment of blind following (*at-taqleed*) of information. This can be attained easily. Apart of this knowledge includes examining the creation and seeing that it is in need of an Omnipotent Creator. By means of this knowledge, the unifier (*al-muwahid*) is distinguished from the polytheist (*al-mushrik*). In short, the knowledge attained through intellectual speculation brings benefit in seven issues: [1] establishment of the existence of Allah; [2] His Oneness (*al-wahdaaniya*); [3] the establishment of His Attributes of Perfection (*as-sifaat'l-kamaal*); [4] His Life (*al-hayat*); [5] His Will (*al-iraada*); [6] His Knowledge (*al-ilm*); and [7] His Power (*al-qudra*). Since, by means of these He is able to perfect His formation of creation. This extent of knowledge is easy to acquire, by the praise of Allah, for anyone who has reason and has been raised up in the lands of Islam; because all of this, from the wonders of created things (*`ajaa'ib 'l-makhlugaat*) to the origin of all things (*badee' 'l-ashya*), gives irrefutable evidence of the existence of the Originator (*al-Baari*), His Divinity, His seclusion from creation (*infiraadihi bi'l-khalq*), and His management. This knowledge is sufficient for him without doubt and it will take him out of the dilemma of blind following (*warata't-taqleed*) in which there is disagreement¹⁰ among its rulings from its authors (*al-mukhtalif fii hukmi saahibihi*). The *Qur'anic* verses, which establish this knowledge of speculation, are innumerable. However, what I mentioned previously will suffice you in that. As for the intellectual speculation, which results from the path of the scholastic theologians (*bi tareeq'l-muttakallimeen*), from the establishment of the proceeding principles regarding Allah ta`ala, and then the emergence of the proofs (*intaaj'l-buraaheen*) from these principles by means of the path of technical terms (*al-mustalahat*) between them. There is no disagreement that this division of the science of theology is not obligatory (*mafruuda*) upon everyone. This science was only established to refute the deviant factions (*al-firqa ad-daala*) who defame the sublime beliefs (*at-taa'inat fii 'l-aqaa'id 's-saniyya*). For whoever declares another as disbeliever due to his failure to study these paths, then this accusation actually turns back on himself. What is obligatory to study is that which is easily understood for creatures to attain regarding the Creator. This understanding is attainable for anyone who has reason (*`aaqil*), even if he is completely ignorant of the paths of scholastic theologians (*al-mutakallimeen*) and have not come across their technical terminologies (*istilaahaatihim*). Therefore, realize that and know it with certainty. If this were not the case, then it would be invalid for people to follow in the footsteps of the righteous early community (*iqtida'a bi's-salaf 's-saalih*); due to the lack of their acquaintance with such technical terminologies (*li `idam ittlaa`ihim `ala tilka al-mustalahaat*) and their failure of being occupied with it before the appearance of these theological heresies and errors (*dhuuur 'l-bid'a wa' d-dalaala*). It was this that necessitated the development of this science and the causative factor behind its formation with the later generations.

¹⁰ Here ends folio 6 after 18 lines of colophon.

Chapter Four: On Direct Knowledge (*al-ma`arifa*) of Allah Attained Through the Contemplation of His Beauty (*al-Jamaal*)

Realize that direct experiential knowledge of Allah from the perspective of the contemplation of His Beauty is widespread regarding everyone who understands how His blessings (*ni`ama*), the perfection of His mercy (*kamaal rahmatih*), and the vastness of His bounty (*si`ata fadlihi*) resides in every existing thing. Every human being, when he examines himself, the composition of his skeletal structure (*wad`a haykal*), and what has been consigned to each part of his body from blessings (*an-ni`am*), minute particulars (*ad-daqa`iq*), subtleties (*al-altaaf*), outward wisdoms and hidden wonders (*al-hikam`d-dhaahir wa`l-khafiya*), then realizes, conclusively, that these realities issue from the Omnipotent Owner¹¹, the One Knowledgeable of interest, and the One Totally Aware of all good. What results from this is that the person naturally seeks to be guided to the ways to show gratitude and praises for Him by what is deserving of Him.

Thus, the greatest blessings that human beings have attained are the blessings of reason, Islam, Iman, Ihsan and all the noble characters and striking actions, which are too innumerable to know.

﴿وَإِنْ تَعَدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ﴾

“If you were to innumerate the blessings of Allah, you could not count them. Verily humanity are unjust deniers.”¹² Thus, everyone who applies his reflection and contemplation to the blessings of Allah upon him will attain a direct knowledge (*ma`arifa*), which exceeds the proceeding knowledge that comes by way of intellectual speculation. By means of the knowledge of the beauty of Allah ta`ala, one becomes aware of the greatness of his Master, who favored him with these magnificent blessings, and his knowledge eventually leads him to the perfection of His mercy and the vastness of His bounty. The *Qur`anic* verses that point to this manner of direct knowledge are innumerable. Among them is the saying of Allah ta`ala:

﴿فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ إِلَى طَعَامِهِ * أَنَا صَبَّبْنَا الْمَاءَ صَبًّا * ثُمَّ شَقَقْنَا الْأَرْضَ شَقًّا * فَأَنْبَتْنَا فِيهَا حَبًّا * وَعَنْبًا وَقَضْبًا * وَزَيْتُونًا وَتَخْلًّا * وَحَدَائِقَ غُلْبًا * وَفَاكِهَةً وَأَبًّا * مَتَاعًا لَكُمْ وَلِأَنْعَامِكُمْ﴾

“Then let humanity examine his food and how We provide it. For We pour forth water in abundance. And We split the earth in fragments. And produce therein grain, grapes, fresh vegetables, olives, dates, enclosed gardens dense with lofty trees, fruit and fodder – a provision for you and your cattle.”¹³ And by His words:

﴿وَنَزَّلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً مُبَارَكًا فَأَنْبَتْنَا بِهِ جَنَّاتٍ وَحَبَّ الْحَصِيدِ * وَالنَّخْلَ بَاسِقَاتٍ لَهَا طَلْعٌ نَضِيدٌ * رِزْقًا لِلْعِبَادِ﴾

“And We sent down from the heavens rain as a blessing and We produce therewith gardens, grains for harvests, tall stately palm-trees, with shoots of fruit-stalks, piled one over another, as sustenance for His servants.”¹⁴

Whoever examines these causative factors (*asbaab*) and progressively classifies them (*tadreejihaa*) will eventually discern the innate knowledge of Allah inherent in creation. All of that explains the benefits that humanity has from Allah ta`ala. For human beings are originally from the earth and since the earth is thick and compact (*katheef*), they cannot survive from it alone. Therefore,

¹¹ Here ends folio 7 after 18 lines of colophon.

¹² *Qur`an* –14:34.

¹³ *Qur`anic* – 80: 24-32.

¹⁴ *Qur`anic* – 50: 9-11.

Allah pours rain upon the earth and causes vegetation to grow from it as an advantage to humanity.¹⁵ He produces succulent and ripe fruit from the earth, making it suitable nourishment for mankind. Then the earth produces vegetation fit for the nourishment of livestock. These livestock take their sustenance from this and in turn humanity take their sustenance from these livestock. Thus, whoever examines these causative factors (*asbaab*) and the methodology of how these attain its physiognomy and condition (*hay'at*), will realize with certainty that all these things has a Wise Manager (*mudabbiran hakeeman*) that is in charge of the general welfare of all things. (*qaa'im bi'l-masaalih*). Not the slightest atoms weight in the heavens and the earth escapes His knowledge. This is with regard to the nourishment of humanity only. Then what about when we turn our examination to all the blessings that encompass him, (*an-ni'am 'l-muheetah*) which are under His management? Since, the human species was once an embryo (*janeen*) in the womb of his mother up until he was born (*mawluud*). Then he became a child (*sibyan*), then a young man (*shaab*), then a middle-aged man (*kahlan*), then an elderly gentleman (*shaykh*). As a consequence, in each development (*tuur*) his Lord supplied him with what was necessary for his well being for that time. Thus, during the time that he was a growing embryo, Allah supplied him with the blood of menstruation (*damm'l-muheed*), which was the most suitable thing for the fetus at that time, due to the strength of its affinity to this blood. The fetus was protected from the elements of cold, hot and airstreams in the mother's body by placing it in a membrane (*ghishaa'*) within the womb (*raham*) of the mother's stomach. At the time of birth there emerged for the newborn delicate milk (*labanan lateefan*) for its infantile nutrition. The mother then became attached to the new born to the extent that no time passed except that she was patient with it, nor was she ever heedless of its welfare and upbringing. (*maslihatihi wa ra`ayatihi*). Then at the time of infancy (*tufuuliya*) the child grew teeth that were required for chewing its nourishments on its own. Then at the time of its young childhood (*sabaahu*) the father became extremely attached to the child due to strength of the need that the child had for him at that time. Thus, the child was managed and directed in each level of its development with what would suffice it for that particular time. This was from the bounties (*fadlan*), mercy (*rahmatan*) and compassion (*ra'fatan*) of Allah ta`ala sub'haanahu. Therefore, you can see that through this form of contemplation one can attain a direct experiential knowledge about Allah, which reason itself cannot encompass.

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¹⁵ Here ends folio 8 after 19 lines of colophon.

Chapter¹⁶ Five:

On Direct Knowledge (*al-ma`arifa*) of Allah Attained Through the Contemplation of His Majesty (*al-Jalaal*)

The majesty of Allah describes His overpowering attributes (*sifaatuhu'l-qaahiriyya*) and its effect upon the entire cosmos. It comprises those events, which humanity does not have the ability (*laa taaqata*) in warding off or the capacity to deliver him or herself from. These events include sickness (*al-amraad*), afflictions (*al-masaa'ib*), anxiety (*al-humuum*), and despondency (*al-huzn*) resulting from poverty (*al-faqr*), degradation (*ad-dhillu*) or the like. It also includes the disappointment that Allah (*khudhlaan Allahi*) employs against those whom He wills from among His servants by making it easy for them to commit disobedience (*bi tayseerih li'l-ma`asi*), heretical innovation (*al-bid`a*) and denial of blessings (*al-kufr li'n-ni`am*), which results in what is unbearable from the varieties of punishment (*anwaa` 'l-`adhaab*) and the array of retributions (*duruub'l-intiqaamaat*) in the Abode of Anger and Abasement (*daar'l-ghadab wa'l-hawaan*). We seek refuge with Allah from that.

Thus, when humanity examines what befalls him from these conditions, hardships, and ordeals and his inability to ward them off, realizes with certainty that he has a Lord. He thus benefits by these hardships in attaining direct experiential knowledge of Allah from the perspective of His attributes of majesty (*sifaatihi al-jalaaliya*) in the same manner that others attain direct knowledge through His attributes of beauty (*sifaatihi al-jamaaliya*). He thus becomes aware through this of the greatness of his Master and Originator. Allah ta'ala says:

﴿وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ﴾

“And He is the Overwhelming over His servants.”¹⁷ So whoever examines this will have his heart filled with terror of Allah (*ruhbat Allah*) and His fear, which will result in his embarking upon worshipping his Lord, fearing the station of his Lord, and eventually prohibiting his own soul from its corrupt passions (*al-hawaa*).

All of these paths give benefit through reason. What this means is that the *shari`a* narrates it in its commands causing the reason to be guided to acquiring and earning it. So realize that.

¹⁶ Here ends folio 9 after 17 lines of colophon.

¹⁷ *Quran* – 6:18.

Chapter Six & Seven: On Direct Knowledge (*al-ma`arifa*) of Allah Attained Through¹⁸ the *Qur'an* and the *Sunna*

I have gathered these two chapters together in one place due to the oneness (*al-itihaad*) of its direct knowledge, because the direct knowledge attained through the *Qur'an* is the same as that attained through the *Sunna*. There is no distinction between them since their source is One, which is divine revelation (*al-wahyi*). All the previously mentioned paths of attaining knowledge of Allah have its source in intellect (*al-`aql*). Thus, whenever reasons coincide with the *Qur'an* and the *Sunna* we take hold of them all together. Whenever they contradict these two then we put forward the *shari`a* and discard our reason since Allah and His messenger knows best. It is for this reason that the school of thought of the early ancestors (*madh`hab as-salaf*) was to retain the allegorical verses and statements (*al-mutashaabihaat*) on their original meaning without interpolating them (*`idama ta`weeluhaa*) in accordance with what agrees with the inferences of reason (*al-`aql an-nadhari*).

Realize that direct knowledge attained from the *shari`a* is the most valuable form of direct knowledge (*anfas`l-ma`arif*) and is superior to knowledge attained through reason (*al-ma`arifa al-`aqliya*) because it is the source from which Allah ta`ala informs us regarding Himself. It brings benefit in three areas. The first is that it establishes the existence of the Creator (*as-Saani`*) and His Divine Attributes in the same manner that intellectual knowledge does. The second benefit is the additional attributes that impede the intellect from outwardly grasping their meanings although it has come down to us in revelation (*qad jaa bihaa `l-wahyi*). Our legal right in this issue is that we affirm it, believe in it and entrust its authenticity (*mufawwuda haqeeqatihaa*) to the One who said it (*qaa`ilihaa*). This refers to those verses and prophetic sayings in which references is made to the Hand of Allah, the two Hands, the Hands (plural), the Face of Allah, Allah's contentment, anger, intimate conservation, laughter, smiling and descending to the lower heavens and the like. It is obligatory upon us to have firm belief in these and affirm them because the revelation has come to us stating this even when reason finds it inconceivable. So understand! The third benefit is the methodology of worship (*kayfiyat `ibaada*)¹⁹ of Allah, the clarification of the Path by which the servant can attain His pleasure, and be saved from the terrors of the human After Life. This variety of knowledge is obligatory to believe in its outward meaning based upon what has come from the *shari`a*. It is not permissible to interpret it with any form of intellectual interpretation (*at-ta`weel `l-`aqliyya*). This is because it leads to denying the Lord of Truth in what His most truthful messenger informed us about Him. Thus, whoever inclines toward interpretation in this category, especially with regard to the Paradise, and the Fire, we declare him disbeliever by consensus (*kafarnaahu ijmaa`an*). If he inclines towards interpretation in the remainder of the matters of the After-Life like the questioning, the Scale, the Reckoning, the Pond, the Intercession, the Bridge and the like, we declare him a heretical innovator (*bada`anaahu*). This is the summation of the benefits from direct knowledge attained from the *Qur'an* and the *Sunna*. Whoever believes in it (*a`taqiduhaa*) based upon how it has come down to us has achieved Eternal Success (*faaza fawzu`l-abadiy*) and attained Everlasting Joy (*sa`ada sa`adat`l-abadiy*).

¹⁸ Here ends folio 10 after 18 lines of colophon.

¹⁹ Here ends folio 11 after 18 lines of colophon.

Chapter Eight:
On Direct Knowledge (*al-ma`arifa*) of Allah Attained Through the Experienced Spiritual Tasting
(*al-Ahwaal 'd-Dhawqiyya*)

This realm of experiential knowledge of Allah is the path exclusive for the People of Allah because it concurs with the purification of the heart (*tasfiyyat 'l-qalb*), the disciplining of the character (*riyaadiyat'l-akhlaaq*) and spiritual struggle (*al-mujaahida*). This is the path of the protected friends (*al-awliyya*) and the Gnostics (*al-'Aarifeen*). It is the path of the source of certainty (*ayn'l-yaqeen*), rather it is the very truth of certainty (*haqq'l-yaqeen*), rather it is the very reality of certainty (*haqeeqat'l-yaqeen*). This path is arranged into four stations (*arba` maqaamaat*).

The first station is the Self-Manifestation of Divine Actions (*tajalliy 'l-af`aal*), which is the station in which the servant witnesses that the emergence of all actions come from Allah with a witnessing that is through real unveiling and experienced tasting (*shuhuudaan dhawqiyaan kashafiyaan haqiqiyaan*). It means that every phenomenal action that one sees whether it be corporal action (*abdaaniyaan*), spiritually influenced action (*infa`iliyaan ruuhaaniyaan*) or innate natural action (*tabi`iyyaan*), that it is from the eternally pre-existent power of Allah (*qudrat Allah 'l-Qadeema*) which acts freely within all of that. Thus, the Doer²⁰ is innate in His own actions and the actions of others. This is the station of the assembly of the presence of the servant with his Master.

The second station is the station of the Self-Manifestation of the Divine Names (*tajalliy 'l-asmaa*). It is the station in which the Self-Manifestation of the Divine Names of Allah manifest to the servant with a self-manifestation which cuts him off and extirpates him (*tajaleeyan isstilaameeyan*). Thus the servant becomes cut off and extirpated (*fayasstallamu'l-'abdu*) in the lights and illumination of each Divine Name (*fee Nuur kulli Ismin*), to the extent that this Self-Manifestation, which emerges from each Divine Name, acquaints him with its reality and truth (*yatahaqqiqu bihaa*) and leaves upon him its traces (*atharan*), delight (*lidhatan*), spiritual states (*haalan*), character (*takhalluqan*), application (*tassarrifan*) and then finally carries him to the third station which is the Paths of Arrival at each Attribute from among the Divine Attributes (*turuqq'l-wusuul ila kulli Sifatin mina's-Sifaat'l-Ilaahiya*). These two stations or self-manifestations are not restricted by the extent of the servant's receptivity (*qudri'l-qawaabil*), spiritual preparedness (*al-isti`daadaat*) or affinity (*an-nasab*) for them.

The fourth station is the station of Self-Manifestation of the Divine Essence (*tajalli 'dh-Dhaat*). This experiential knowledge is the utmost limit and the most exalted form of Self-Manifestation (*aqsaal'l-ghaayaat wa `aalaat-tijalliyaat*). And there is no way for the servant to attain this level of knowledge except after the spiritual pulverization (*as-sahqi*) and the spiritual obliteration (*al-mahwi*) of all the essences. For the servant first becomes annihilated from himself (*fayanfaa awalan `an nafsihi*) by the Self-Manifestation of his Lord (*bi dhuhuur Rabbihi*). Then secondly he becomes annihilated from his Lord (*yanfaa thaaniyan `an Rabbihi*) by the Self-Manifestation of the secrets of His lordship (*bi dhuhuur sirri rubbuubiyatihi*). Then thirdly he becomes annihilated from the relationships and correlations of His Divine Attributes (*yanfaa thalithan `an muta`aliqaati Sifaathi*) by means of the abundant realization of His Essence (*bi dhuhuur bi mutahaqqiqaati Dhaatihi*).

At this point the servant experiences spiritual obliteration (*al-mahqi*), annihilation (*al-fana'*) and cutting off (*al-inqittaa`*). For when he experiences spiritual obliteration (*al-mahqi*), then this is the source of Real Establishment (*`ayn ithbaat haqeeqi*). And when he experiences spiritual annihilation (*al-fanaa'*), then this is the source of Eternal Continuity (*`ayn baqa' daymuumi*). And when he experiences spiritual cutting off (*al-inqittaa`*), then this is the source of Sacred Arrival (*`ayn ittissaal qudsiyyi*).

²⁰ Here ends folio 12 after 18 lines of colophon.

Here ends what we desired to compose regarding the varieties of direct experiential knowledge of Allah ta`ala, from the perspective of summarization (*`ala wajhi'l-ikhtissaari*) and conciseness (*wa'l-eejaazi*), coupled with the fusion of superabundant meanings (*wa ddammi'l-ma`ana 'l-waafira*) in a few succinct expressions (*fee'l-alfaadh 'l-wajeeza*).

All praises are due to Allah the Lord of the worlds and blessings and peace be upon the Master of the Messengers, his family and Companions all of them. This book was completed in the last of *Rabi`'l-Akhir* from the months of the year²¹ 1243 from the *hijra*,²² may blessings and peace be upon the one who made.²³



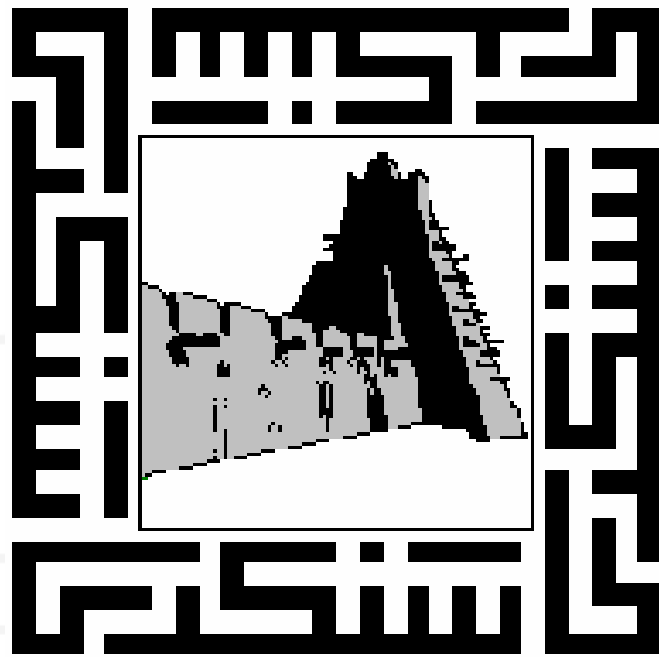
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²¹ Here ends folio13 after 18 lines of colophon.

²² *Shaykh* Abd'l-Qadir ibn Mustafa composed this text on a Monday, the 29th o *Rabi'l-Akhir* in the year 1243 (November 19th, 1827) at the age of 24 during the rule of *Sultan* Muhammad Bello.

²³ Here ends folio 14 after 2 lines of colophon.

SANKORE'



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