

فطرة آدم

The Nature of Adam

State/ فطرة	Essence/ كيان	Form/ صورة	Composition/ اجتماع	
جاهلية Ignorant I	صدر Inception	بشر Carnal	جسد Body	A
عريفة Cognizant II, III, IV	قلب Conversion	انس Sensible	نفس Soul (Psyche)	B
اخلاقية Virtuous V, VI, VII	فؤاد Execution	رجل Capable	روح Spirit	C

المرء | ذكرا | غلام | شيخ
(man/male/youth/elder)

A

جسد - The Jasad is the corporeal body of the human being which is earthly and material.

According to the Qur'an 'Jasad' is the outer image or shell of a physical being or of an object.¹

بشر - The Bashar is the configuration peculiar to the human being and refers to the skin or epidermal layers; it also applies to touching, the senses, and sexual relations. According to the Qur'an 'Bashar' is made from dust (تراب), dry clay (صلصال), black mud (حماء), moist clay (طين), and water (ماء); requires food, drink, and sleep; has free will and is mortal, and therefore, should not be worshipped, though it is a vehicle for the Spirit.²

صدر - The Sadr is the bosom of Bashar which refers to the frontal part and alludes to the beginning of growth and commencement on the Path of Enlightenment. It has a sense of origination and dispatchment. In the Qur'an 'Sadr' refers to the foundation of the human being's condition, the covering and seat of the heart (Qalb), and the exterior surface which God must open up to inspire the soul. The ignorant human thinks it can conceal what is in it, but it is clearly revealed that God knows all that they try to conceal.³

جاهلية - Jahiliyah is the state of ignorance and it characterizes the human being that is in the condition of not knowing one's purpose or direction. The Bashar begins in this state and needs

¹ Qur'an 7:148; 20:88; 21:8; 38:34)

² Qur'an 3:79; 15:28 (cf 15:26); 19:17; 21:34; 23:33; 25:54; 30:20; 38:71; 64:6

³ Qur'an 3:119, 154; 6:125; 7:43; 10:57; 11:5, 12; 16:106; 22:46; 28:69; 39:22; 59:13

to be trained and guided along the Path by means of outer forces and influences. If the human being willfully refuses to depart from this condition, death is preferable. For the ignorant human being is naught but an empty shell (ie. already dead), and in such a state cannot but bring further harm to itself and others. God's mercy, however, has decreed a strictly defined period for this condition in which each human being has the opportunity to transcend. In the Qur'an 'Jahiliyah' is defined as the perpetuation of shameful acts, vain speech, refusal of guidance and incredulity, idolatry, and hypocritical behavior; though God accepts change from those who recognize their condition and amend their conduct.⁴

The Jasad, Bashar, Sadr, and Jahiliyah are aspects of the human being which are common to all; they also describe the vehicle that the human being utilizes throughout the Journey of Enlightenment.

B

نفس - The Nafs is the component of the human being which has individuality and refers to the self, soul, or psyche of the human being, without which there is nothing but a body. This individual essence of the human being is the element which embarks on the journey and is the controller of the Bashar. According to the Qur'an the 'Nafs' is the sentient and perceptive quality of the human being and is described as having numerous roles, conditions, and susceptibilities. There are far more references to the Nafs within the Qur'an than any other aspect of the human being, some of which include: being accountable for itself, getting paid what it earns, being confronted with its good and evil decisions, shall taste death, will return to God, God is over every soul and its earnings, shall be tested, has free will to choose its course, it has a compelling force driving it, has a protector, the Nas (Sensible Human Being) was created from one Nafs, is ignorant of its day to day earnings but awaits its rewards on the morrow, has been sufficiently warned, will have no power on the Day of Judgment, has been fashioned to perceive its right and wrong conduct, is eternal, its time on the earth has been determined by God, cannot have true faith without God's permission, has been created and will be resurrected individually, prone to passionate desires of an evil nature but can be controlled, capable of self-reproach, no burden is placed upon it which it cannot bear, its good is from God and its evil from its ownself, it is the seat of the remembrance of God, will be given a record of itself to read, whispers to itself, can benefit and injure itself, will be sorted out, can be swayed by greed, can be distressed, will be taken by God and returned to Him, will be delighted in the Garden and dwell there forevermore, and it shall bear witness against itself. The Nafs is a Divine Trust which has responsibilities and obligations to fulfill. When they are neglected, it suffers deeply. God has animated the material world through the Nafs of the human being and chosen it as the recipient of His Revelation through which the material world recognizes and praises its Creator and offers obeisance unto Him. The Nafs is the arena wherein the Divine Scheme is played out and there are particular and definite ordered stages to this Scheme which must be ascended properly in order for the Desired Goal to be attained, which is the Attainment to the Divine

⁴ Qur'an 2:273; 6:54, 111; 7:138, 194-206; 16:119; 27:55; 28:55; 33:33; 39:64; 48:26

Presence. Deep study and reflection of the Nafs is absolutely necessary for this process to be completed and the Journey to God concluded.⁵

انس - The Ins is the sensible and social human being which has fellowship with others and has an emotional response to sense perception. It has the ability to feel, recognize, and delight in the company of other human beings. This type of human being is an individual which has a peculiar and rational soul and is capable of making decisions for itself for which it is held accountable. The Qur'an indicates that the 'Ins' has a 'Nafs' which is brought forth through the Word of God and was created for the purpose of serving God. The Ins was created from similar substances as that of the Bash̄ar but is given further elements in its development. For instance, the Ins was created from dry clay (صلصال), black mud (حماء), and moist clay (طين) as the Bash̄ar, but the subsequent descriptions portray the process of the Ins as clay like pottery (صلصال كالْفَخَّار), then from sperm (نطفة), congealed blood (علقة), a lump (مضغة), and bones that are clothed with flesh (عظما بلحما). Afterwards the Ins is developed into another creation which reveals a further stage for the human being. When the Qur'an mentions the Ins or is addressing the Sensible Human Race (pl. انسان), it is appealing to the intellect. In connection with the Nafs the Ins is the most widely used term for the human being within the Qur'an. The source for the intellect (Nafs) and the vehicle for it (Ins) are, therefore, the primary elements in the human make-up and should be at the center of attention in Qur'anic exegesis. The Qur'an then appeals to the intellect more so than any other aspect of the human being. The Ins is also mentioned alongside the Jinn (جِنّ - hidden essence) in several places revealing a likeness between the two, yet it is unclear on the surface what that likeness is. The Ins is also the form of the human being which will be raised on the Day of Resurrection, though it is indicated that this form will be quite different than what was previously created*.⁶

قلب - The Qalb is the heart of the Ins which is the seat of the intellect for the Nafs and located within the Sadr of the Bash̄ar. The Qalb is the organ that the Nafs utilizes to ascend the stages of the Path and the point at which the Ins and the Bash̄ar meet to form the Rajul (رجل). It is the component of the human being that has the ability to alter, transform, and convert, making it the core or the choicest part of the human being. It is the heart, therefore, to which God directs His Word and to what the Qur'an is directed; it is the recipient of the Revelation and Inspiration of God. The Qalb is also that which turns towards God and offers supplication and adoration of God, and through which genuflections of the body are performed. When the Qur'an mentions the 'Qalb' there is always a decision to be made on behalf of the human being. Just as the Nafs and Ins are the most often components and forms mentioned in the Qur'an, so also is the heart the leading essence of the human being mentioned in the Qur'an. Within the Qur'an the Qalb is referred to on many levels and given many descriptions, some positive and some negative,

⁵ Qur'an 2:155, 286; 3:30, 145 (cf 63:11), 185; 4:1, 79, 110-112, 128; 5:105; 6:70, 98, 130, 158; 7:42, 205; 10:100; 12:53 (cf 5:30; 53:23); 13:33; 16:7; 17:14-15; 21:35; 23:62; 27:92; 29:57; 31:28, 34; 32:13, 17; 34:50; 35:2; 39:6, 42 (cf Angels 32:11 & Messengers 6:61), 53-59; 41:46; 43:61; 45:22; 50:16, 21 (cf 59:18); 59:18 (cf 50:21; 81:14; 82:5); 65:7; 75:2; 79:40; 81:7; 82:17-19; 89:27-30 (cf 2:207); 91:7-8

⁶ 2:60; 4:28; 6:112, 128, 130; 7:38, 82, 160, 179; 10:12; 11:9; 14:34; 15:26; 16:4; 17:11, 13, 53, 61, 67, 83, 88, 100; 18:54; 19:66-67; 21:37; 22:66; 23:12-14; 25:29, 49; 27:56; 29:8; 31:14; 32:7; 33:53, 72; 36:77; 39:8, 49; 41:25, 29, 49; 42:48; 43:15; 46:15, 18; 49:13; 50:16; 51:41, 56; 53:24; 55:3, 14, 39, 56, 74; *56:57-74; 59:16; 70:19; 72:5-6; 75:3, 5, 10, 13-14, 36; 76:1-2; 79:35; 80:17-42; 82:6-19; 84:6-25; 86:5-17; 89:15, 23; 90:4; 95:4; 96:2, 5-6; 99:3; 100:6; 103:2

depending upon the resolution of the Nafs of the human being. When the heart attains the State of Tranquility (مطمئن) the next suffusion of the human being is produced.⁷

عريفة - 'Arifah is the state of being aware and cognizant of the environment and course that needs to be taken for ascension on the Path of Enlightenment. All things work together for growth and development, and the state of cognizance is something that can only be attained by a human being with a conscientious soul. The components and faculties thus far described then work together to usher the material world forward and marshal the Nafs onward by harnessing the available forces and elements appropriately which can only be accomplished with proper knowledge. This can only be accomplished, the Qur'an explicitly mentions, through the Word of God transmitted by virtue of His Messenger. The Qur'an duly expresses that true life begins with 'Arifah so that the mercy and loving-kindness of God may gently bring the human being out of the state of ignorance toward the state of virtuousness.⁸

C

روح - The Ruh is the life-force of the human being which provides the influential and compelling force for all things, through it God inspires His creation. This component can never be withheld lest the entire universe collapse on itself. Within the human being this driving force is latent and waiting for the Nafs to become aware of it so that it may embolden and inspire the human being with the will of God. When the Nafs turns itself toward God, He sends His Spirit as a Messenger to cheer and strengthen the soul on its heaven-bound journey. In the Qur'an the 'Ruh' is the vehicle for God's Inspiration and Revelation, it has been sent in times before and will be sent again in times yet born. Very little is known or revealed about the Spirit and the Qur'an merely discloses that the Spirit is our connection with God and that whenever He wills He sends His Spirit to whomsoever He chooses in order to inspire them with His Divine Revelation. This process occurs in three manners, one of which the recipient does not know the source of this inspiration, another manner is direct and a third is by means of an intermediary, a Messenger*. One might say that the Spirit is God's best kept secret and will remain so for all eternity.⁹

رجل - The Rajul is the form of the human being that is travelling the Path and is capable of performing the actions and duties required for service in the Cause of God. In the Qur'an the 'Rajul' is the human being that has harnessed the powers of the Nafs, recognized the source of its inspiration, and is ascending the Path through spiritual practice. The forces at work in the human being have produced in the Rajul the spiritual values obtained from walking the Path of Enlightenment and will remain with the Nafs forever more. This establishes the Rajul as the final form of the human being until the Nafs returns to God and is formed again into a likeness which is unknown. The spiritual values obtained will be influential in the outcome of this new likeness,

⁷ Qur'an 2:6-10, 74, 88, 93, 97, 204, 225, 260, 283; 3:7, 103, 126, 151, 154, 167; 4:155; 5:41, 52; 6:25, 43, 46; 7:100-101, 179; 8:2, 10-12, 24, 63; 9:8, 14-15, 45, 60, 77, 109-110; 10:74; 13:28; 15:12; 16:22, 106, 108; 17:46; 18:14, 28, 57; 21:23; 22:34, 46, 53-54; 23:60, 63; 24:37; 26:89, 194, 200; 30:59; 33:4-5, 10, 32; 39:22-23, 45; 40:35; 42:24; 45:23; 47:24; 48:4, 26; 49:3, 7; 50:33, 37; 57:16, 27; 58:22; 61:5; 64:11; 74:31

⁸ 2:89, 146, 263, 273; 3:104, 110, 114; 5:83; 7:46, 48, 157, 199; 9:67, 71, 102, 112; 10:45; 16:83; 22:41, 72; 23:69; 24:53; 27:93; 31:15; 40:11; 47:6, 21, 30; 49:13; 55:41; 67:11; 83:24

⁹ 2:87, 253; 4:171; 5:110; 15:29; 16:2, 102; 17:85; 19:17 (cf Bashar); 21:91; 26:193; 32:9; 38:72; 39:9; 40:15; *42:51-53; 58:22; 66:12; 70:4; 78:38; 97:4

therefore, the purpose of the Nafs in traversing these various stages is for the human being to obtain these values and reach the state of virtuousness that the Capable Human Being, that is, the Rajul, is competent to attain. So it is in this final earthly form that the true test of the Nafs is executed. The Qur'an reveals the creation of the three forms of the human being distinctly and discloses the true and rational behavior for allowing the will of God to take effect in the life of the human being. The Bash̄ar, which was characteristically formed from dust (تراب), is the base form; the Ins was characterized as sharing some of the same elements with the Bash̄ar, but not dust; it also came into being from sperm (نطفة); the Rajul is the third form that the human being is fashioned into (سوًا) before its death, the form that is capable of executing the commands of God and following His will*. The Rajul is also the form that is said to have received its wages, been brought forth from the Nafs, and is aware of those who have the Mark of the Beast versus the Seal of God.¹⁰

فؤَاد - The Fu'ad is the heart of conceptualization and passionate devotion; it is the heart of hearts of the complete and capable human being. In the Qur'an the 'Fu'ad' is reflected as the seat of unlimited perfections that the human being is capable of possessing through faith and assurance in the harmony of the creation of God and in the ultimate scheme of redemption. The Fu'ad is that which is capable of beholding the Mystery of God and lighting the Path for the Rajul. The Qur'an mentions Fu'ad in connection with hearing (سمع) and seeing (ابصر) in several places in the order of hearing, seeing, and feeling (فؤَاد). The faculty of hearing refers to recognizing and reasoning¹¹, seeing refers to perceiving, and feeling refers to the rationality and demonstration of what was heard and seen. This demonstrably alludes to the faculties of the Bash̄ar (hearing), Ins (seeing/perceiving), and Rajul (demonstrating). Each of these also possess a passive and active instrument. In relation to hearing the ears are passive and the tongue active; for seeing the eyes are passive and the hands active; for feeling the nose is passive and the feet are active.¹² The process is as follows: what one hears, they reason then speak; what one witnesses, they perceive then act; what one feels, they rationalize then are motivated to accomplish.¹³

أَخْلَاقِيَّة - Akhlaqiyah is the state of being morally sound and virtuous according to the revealed will of God. This can only be accomplished through the recognition, acknowledgement, and obedience to the revealed Word of God. This is the supreme achievement for every human being and the desired goal of every Rajul. It is the expressed purpose of existence. Those who have attained this state are content and satiated in all places throughout all events and have entered the Garden of Repose in servitude to the mighty Threshold of God. In the Qur'an 'Akhlaqiyah' are of two varieties, khalq and khulq. Khalq refers to the creation and physical make-up of the creature, while khulq refers to the disposition and nature of the creature. Each khalq has a corresponding khulq, such as, hearing = recognizing, seeing = perceiving, and feeling = rationalizing. The human being was created to experience the full range and comprehend the full scope of creation and has, therefore, embodied both attractiveness and

¹⁰ Qur'an 4:1, 32; 5:23; 6:9; 7:46-48, 63, 69, 155; 9:108; 10:2; 11:78; 12:109; 16:43; *18:37-42; 21:7; 23:25; 24:37; 33:23; 34:7; 38:62; 39:29; 40:28; 43:31; 48:25; 76:2

¹¹ Qur'an 67:10

¹² Qur'an 24:24 (cf the states of death, life, and resurrection 25:3; and Jinn, Insan, and Taysr 27:17)

¹³ Qur'an 6:110; 11:120; 14:37, 42-43; 16:77-78; 17:36; 23:78; 25:32; 32:7-9; 46:26; 53:11; 67:22-24; 104:4-9

repulsiveness both in form (khalq) and quality (khulq) within. The purpose of creation is to purify the spiritual aspect of the physical being (Bashar) through the inspiration provided by the Ruh (Spirit) of Holiness from God in such wise that the body (Jasad) may reflect the Divine Will into the universe. This, as explained, occurs through the journey of the soul (Nafs) through the various and proscribed stages. The form (صورة) of the human being transforms as the soul makes this journey: Bashar, Ins, and Rajul. Though the outer form evolves on a limited basis, the inner form is boundless in the attractiveness or repulsiveness it can produce. All 'Akhlaq' are natural and mutual, but they are declared either praiseworthy or contemptible depending upon the utilization and application of the faculties employed by the Nafs.¹⁴

نسبة مع الله

Attainment unto the Presence of God is the object of the Soul's quest and is termed Husul ilal-lah.¹⁵ This is a co-operative venture between God and Adam (the human being) and this mutual arrangement is called the relationship with God.¹⁶ The relationship with God refers to the involvement of the human being with the will and good-pleasure of God and the non-participation in what is considered vile and reprehensible. That which conforms to the will and good-pleasure of God is considered praiseworthy¹⁷ and that which is vile and reprehensible is considered contemptible.¹⁸ All deeds performed by the human being fall into one of these two classes. Only those who perform praiseworthy deeds will ascend the Path and draw nearer to God, while those who perform contemptible deeds descend the Path and remove themselves further away from God. The Path is called Tariq, and the Tariqah is the means, procedure, or method of following the Path.¹⁹ The Tariqah includes exercises, both material and spiritual, termed Riyadat.²⁰ The object of the Riyadat is to gain mastery over the physical, affluent, egotistical, and mundane aspects of life and train the Jasad by means of the Nafs for communion with the Ruh. This results in an association of the human being with God and a mutual delight in existence, otherwise life is a living hell. When the soul recognizes its weakness and begins the process of purification the relationship with God begins and the Journey towards God²¹ commences. The Journey towards God constitutes the several stages and degrees the human being must traverse in order to attain the Presence of God. It also consists of the subordinate strengths and talents acquired through effective training called Mujahadah.²² The Mujahadah are the combative efforts used to challenge the Jahiliyah, the state of ignorance. The purpose of the Mujahadah is not to cause grief or suffering, but rather its purpose is to furnish

¹⁴ Qur'an 2:102, 200; 3:77; 9:69; 26:137; 30:20-30; 68:4

¹⁵ حصول الى الله

¹⁶ نسبة مع الله - Nisbatu ma'a'l-lah

¹⁷ حميد - Praiseworthy

¹⁸ رذيل - Contemptible

¹⁹ طريق - Path, way, road, or trail

طريقة - Manner, means, method; system, creed, faith or religion

²⁰ رياضات - Practices, exercises, devotions; sports

²¹ سري الى الله - Journey unto God

²² مجاهدة - struggle, fight, or battle

the soul with the capacity to serve God effectively. It is reported that Muhammad, the Messenger of God, said: "The Mujahid is the one who strives in the service of God."²³ Following the Journey toward God is the Journey in God.²⁴ The Journey in God is the highest level of spiritual awareness and development and is travelled by those who have effectively purified their souls through the Stages of Enlightenment. The soul that has completed this journey is united with God, His divine Names and Attributes, His Actions, and His Mysteries and Realities. This constitutes the return unto God.²⁵

سبعة مراتب الروحانية The Seven Stages of Enlightenment

I. النَّفْسُ الْاِمَّارَةُ - 'An-Nafsa'l-'Ammarah - The Ignoble Soul:

The Ignoble Soul is prone to the passions and desires of the temporal world.²⁶ It experiences little to no regret, remorse, or sorrow for its thoughts, feelings, or actions. At this stage the human being is compelled or influenced to act according to the desires and appetites required for survival and the lower instincts of hostile rivalry. The Path begins here for every human being, and it is from this stage that the Quest²⁷ through the Garden commences. The Garden represents the quest of the soul and its journey towards God. In the Garden there are seven levels the soul must transcend, for each level there is a Valley and a Peak. The first valley is the Valley of Intention also known as the Valley of Search. The journey begins here with a search for truth and ends with faith in what has been discovered, but faith is only the beginning. It's important to consider that the soul begins to discover all things according to this process, whether consciously or unconsciously.²⁸

II. النَّفْسُ لِلْوَامَةِ - 'An-Nafsa'l-Lawwamah - The Reproachful Soul:

The Reproachful Soul begins the examination of its conscience and starts to feel regret, remorse, and sorrow for committing atrocious deeds for the sake of self-reproach. At this stage the human being is aroused by the reflection of its existence and is gradually becoming aware of the inferior tendencies of a carnal appetite. Here the Path is extended and broadens as the Traveller of the Path enters the valley of Love within the Garden. The natural consequence of finding the object of a quest is attraction to the object.²⁹

III. النَّفْسُ الْمُلْهَمَةُ - 'An-Nafsa'l-Mulhamah - The Inspired Soul:

The Inspired Soul emanates after traversing the stages of perceiving inferior tendencies and feeling remorseful for its atrocious behavior, and is motivated to seek knowledge, guidance,

²³ Cf. Qur'an 29:69

²⁴ سِرِّي فِي اللَّهِ - Journey in/with God

²⁵ رَاجِعْ إِلَى اللَّهِ - the Return unto God

²⁶ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا - the life of the world (nearest world)

²⁷ مِنْهَاجٍ - Method, simple procedure, easy path, easy road, course

²⁸ Qur'an 12:53

²⁹ Qur'an 14:22; 68:30, 38; 75:2

and reconciliation. At this stage the human being becomes cognizant and learns to use available instruments to elevate itself through higher planes of existence. Here the Path becomes recognizable and a discernable arrangement is disclosed. The Wayfarer of the Path enters the Valley of Knowledge which is the final plane of limitation.³⁰ Once an attraction to an object is attained, it is certainly the most logical conclusion to learn as much about it as possible.³¹

IV. النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ - 'An-Nafsa'l-Mutma'inah - The Tranquil Soul:

The Tranquil Soul which, after having found direction and attained knowledge of the Divine Scheme, enters into a state of peace and tranquility. Life has become meaningful for the soul and virtuous living coupled with the accumulation of moral qualities has become animated within the soul. At this stage the human being is preparing to enter into the infinite and immeasurable states enjoyed by God's Chosen Ones. The Path is elevated and enhanced and the wayfarer venturing this Path gains admission into the Valley of Unity becoming one with Object of its search, whatever that may be. The Illustrious Imams of the Faith have transmitted that "The Tranquil Soul is the one that professes the Unity of God."³²

V. النَّفْسُ الرَّاضِيَةُ - 'An-Nafsa'r-Radiyah - The Contented Soul:

The Contented Soul is content and satisfied with the knowledge of the Divine Decree and the harmony latent behind creation. With contentment comes enjoyment of the mysteries of God and the satisfaction of fulfilling the Divine Decree in life. At this stage everything encountered brings a new joy to the human being and the soul enters into the Valley of Contentment.³³

VI. النَّفْسُ الْمَرْضِيَّةُ - 'An-Nafsa'l-Mardiyah - The Gratified Soul:

The Gratified Soul is satiated by virtue of the bounty of God through the Divine Order of creation. This is the soul that has completely lost itself in the good-pleasure of God and rewarded by God with His gifts according to the merit that is earned. The soul which has attained this stage is amazed by the wonders of God and stands aghast in awe at the remarkable benefits and blessings bestowed upon it by God. At this stage all that is provided or withheld is in accordance with the Divine Decree and the human being is satiated with either loss or gain and sees its determined award in all things. Nothing whatsoever can deter the soul from recognizing the will of God and it gains entry into the Valley of Wonderment.³⁴

VII. النَّفْسُ الْكَامِلَةُ - An'-Nafsa'l-Kamilah - The Perfected Soul:

The Perfected Soul is the soul that has attained full strength and maturity through the Divine Process and reached the state of perfection and mastery over its material, psychological, and spiritual well being. The end of the journey is, in reality, the beginning. Until the soul attains this stage its true life will not begin and the Path taken cannot be fully grasped. The human being

³⁰ The first three stages are common to all for all things, the subsequent four stages are unique and varied gauged according to the receptiveness of the soul and the object searched for.

³¹ Qur'an 91:8

³² Qur'an 2:260; 3:126; 4:103; 5:113; 8:10; 13:28; 16:106; 17:95 (cf 16:111-113); 89:27

³³ Qur'an 19:6; 20:130; 69:21; 88:9; 89:28; 101:7;

³⁴ Qur'an 2:207, 265; 4:114; 19:55; 57:20-24; 60:1; 89:28

at this stage is stripped of wealth and all material possessions for the sake of gaining the affluence and treasures of God Almighty. The wayfarer of this journey has reached its home at this stage and enters the final Valley, the Valley of True Poverty and Absolute Nothingness; then, the journey begins anew with novel and unpredictable developments on every summit as the soul traverses the innumerable realms of God.³⁵

The body (Jasad) is like an egg. The soul (Nafs) is like the yoke within the egg. The yoke must develop within the shell until it's ready to hatch. The Spirit (Ruh) is the unseen force which causes the yoke to grow and develop. When the soul has developed fully it will be released from the body and journey into the Outer Realm of God. Our duty as human beings is to develop properly so that the faculties that the soul will use in the Next World will be ready and functional at the time it is released from the body.

The faculties of the soul are spiritual in nature and immaterial. Just as all living beings are released from their respective eggs and do not return, neither will the soul return to the body. The body simply acts as the instrument which the soul utilizes to develop its spiritual faculties for use in the awaiting, unseen World. Once released the soul will continue to develop according to its predetermined disposition which was formed according to its development within the body. It is imperative for the human being, therefore, to focus its earthly existence in the cultivation of morals and values which are the spiritual faculties the soul needs in order to ascend the awaiting realms.

The Spirit of God is our Guide and Instructor in this world and the Catalyst for development. The first duty of the human being is to recognize the Spirit and second, to acquire its necessities from the Spirit for proper growth and development. Above all:

The Remembrance of God is greater than all things!³⁶

³⁵ 2:185; 5:3; 16:26

³⁶ Qur'an 29:45