The Special Characteristics of Prophethood

by

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Provisional Translation by Brad Crawford

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Introduction to the Provisional English Translation

The Special Characteristics of Prophethood

In Isfahán in 1846, Manúchihr Khán, the Mu'tamídu'd-Dawlih, asked the Báb to explain the nature and establish the truth of Muḥammad's Prophethood. Nabíl places the encounter in the house of the Imám-Jum'ih, where the governor put the question in the presence of learned men and requested a written reply. The work that arose from that occasion is known as the *Tafsír-i-Nubúvvat-i-Khásṣih*. One manuscript calls it a treatise on establishing particular Prophethood through luminous reason. Its subject is the Prophethood of Muḥammad, the Messenger of God. Its argument reaches from the first origin of creation to the conditions under which a human being may recognize Him.[1]

In Nabíl's account, the Báb writes in the presence of the gathering. At the end, the governor speaks first of the conviction the treatise has given him concerning Islám, and then of the power he has witnessed in its author. The occasion thus anticipates a question the work will put to its readers. How does testimony concerning a former revelation become a means of recognizing what is before them?[1]

The governor's question seems to call for evidence drawn from the Prophet's life, His miracles, and the Book He revealed. The Báb considers them all. Yet He begins with the Point and the first movements of creation, and with the impossibility of attaining the Essence of God through any created faculty. This beginning determines the course of the work. If the Divine Essence lies beyond the reach of signs, what is encountered when the Prophet is recognized? The answer unfolds through the relation between the source of light, the form in which it appears, and the eye that receives it. The book is at once a defense of Muḥammad's mission and an inquiry into the possibility of recognizing a revelation while it is before one's eyes.

The Primal Will and the life of the Prophet

The treatise belongs to a world in which the Qur'án, the traditions of the Imáms, and the language of philosophical demonstration could be read together. The distinction between the universal station of Prophethood and the particular mission of a Prophet had a history in Islamic mystical thought. The Báb gives it a distinct form by following the descent of the Divine Will into the life of Muḥammad. Readers familiar with the Shaykhí tradition will recognize the attention given to the degrees of manifestation and to the capacity of each degree to bear what descends into it.[1]

The opening praises hold together two truths upon which the argument depends. God in His Essence transcends every name, attribute, likeness, and relation. Creation, in every degree, bears signs through which He has made Himself known. The Báb brings these truths together through the Divine Will. God originates the Will through itself, and through the Will the degrees of created existence come forth. An earlier tradition from Imám al-Ṣádiq gives this teaching in a single sentence. The Báb follows its consequences through an entire account of manifestation. The Divine Will can stand as the first sign of God precisely because the distinction between the Originator and what He originates is maintained throughout the descent.[2]

In this account the Prophethood of Muḥammad has both a universal station and a particular appearance. Universal Prophethood belongs to the order of the Primal Will and its outpouring. The Special Characteristics of Prophethood belong to its manifestation in the One who appeared in a determinate body, with a name, a lineage, a birthplace, and an appointed time. The distance between these stations gives the treatise much of its movement. The Báb follows the Will through Willpower, Determination, Decree, Permission, Appointed Term, and Book, then follows the Primal Remembrance until its descent reaches the station of the body. What was held in potency can now be seen, heard, and answered. The last degree of descent is the place where the question first becomes urgent for those who meet the Prophet.

This is why the work dwells on matters which a reader might pass over as incidental. The letters of Muḥammad's Name, the name of His father, the times of His birth and mission, His departure from Mecca and His arrival in Medina, the description of His body, and the account of His Ascension all enter the argument. The four letters Mím, Ḥá, Mím, and Dál are read through the four elements and the four causes. The days of the week are read in relation to the degrees of the creative Act. Traditional chronology becomes another field in which the Báb traces the passage from the unseen to the seen. These correspondences belong to a way of reading in which a name, a number, or a moment in time can disclose the order of the thing that has appeared.

The report of the covenant gives this descent its oldest horizon. When God asks, "*Am I not your Lord?*" Muḥammad is the first of the Prophets to answer. The Báb reads the historical appearance of the Messenger in the light of that first response. The One who came last among the Prophets named in the report is first in acknowledgment. The Ascension gives the movement its answering

image. The Messenger whose descent reaches dust is the One spoken of at the highest horizon, near the Lote-Tree of the Utmost Boundary. Beginning and end, priority and succession, nearness and distance, acquire their meaning in relation to the station from which they are seen.[3]

The sign and the light by which it is seen

The Báb makes use of the Qur'ánic distinction between the signs in the horizons and the signs within souls. In the horizons are the events, reports, and visible traces to which witnesses can testify. Within souls are the signs through which a person begins to discern what those outward traces signify. The two fields meet in a demanding proposition. A lower station apprehends a higher one through what the higher has made manifest within the lower's own reality. The seeker is therefore directed inward to signs that have their origin in the very Prophethood being sought. The movement inward depends upon a disclosure already made possible by the One whom the seeker desires to know.[4]

The long dialogue between al-Ṣádiq and Mufaḍḍal gives these distinctions a language of radiance, shadow, garment, and form. Mufaḍḍal asks how the hidden Meaning can appear in a form that the eye can behold. The Imám answers with the image of light proceeding without division, like the ray from the disc. The form makes the hidden known and gives each beholder a measure of what can be received. The same form can serve as a veil for the person who has yet to see what it discloses. When the Báb returns to this dialogue late in the treatise, He recalls the Imám's account of wisdom as bringing what lies within being into direct manifestation. A passage that first seems to concern the mystery of form then becomes a way of understanding proof itself.[5]

Among the signs of Muḥammad's Prophethood, the Qur'án occupies the highest place. Its letters are available to all, and their arrangement can be studied and imitated. The Báb places the decisive power of the Book in the utterance that comes through those letters. A single verse can awaken a recognition for which a multitude of outward reports has prepared the way. The Qur'án itself supplies the image of a mountain humbled and rent asunder by its descent. That image conveys the scale of the action the Báb attributes to the Word. Its force can be encountered in the present by a reader who stands centuries removed from the outward events of the Prophet's life.[6]

Even here the treatise makes a further distinction. A sign can establish the truth of a mission to the degree that its witness can receive it. The reality of Prophethood is known through Prophethood itself. The Báb makes this subtle point by asking whether redness can be known through whiteness. A proof borrowed from another thing yields knowledge of the thing from which it was borrowed. The problem grows sharper when the faculty that would pronounce upon Prophethood is itself among the effects of that Prophethood's outpouring. A mote in the air receives the sun in the measure of the ray that reaches it. Its very illumination bears witness to the sun, and the sun remains the source of the light by which it sees.

Wisdom, fair exhortation, and disputation in the fairest manner are the three ways of address named in the Qur'án and taken up in the closing argument. Each has its field of operation. Testimony, demonstration, and the patient examination of signs can steady the seeker. The proof of wisdom asks for the most intimate recognition, where the thing becomes known through its own self-disclosure. The Báb arrives at this point after reasoning at length, citing tradition, and examining the evidences of the senses. The limits of each mode become visible through its careful exercise.[7]

Guardianship, concealment, and return

The inquiry passes from the Messenger to those through whom His authority continues. In the Mufaḍḍal dialogue, the City of Knowledge is approached through its Gate, and the relation of Muḥammad and ʻAlí is shown in the joining of two fingers. Later, the Báb follows the seven stations of the creative Act into the account of seven in the unseen and fourteen in visible manifestation. The account reaches the four causes. The efficient cause concerns the act of origination. The material cause is associated with Universal Prophethood, the formal cause with the Guardianship of the thirteen Souls, and the final cause with the fourth letter through which the place of the followers is disclosed. The relation between the Prophet and those who bear His knowledge thus belongs to the same inquiry as the relation between the light and the form through which it becomes visible.

Two traditions give the last movement its particular depth. In the Tradition of the Name, God makes a Name of four parts, brings three into manifestation, and holds one in concealment. The Báb reads the three through Divine Unity, Prophethood, and Guardianship, and follows the hidden Name toward the mystery of the fourth Pillar. In the encounter between Imám al-Káẓim and a Christian monk, four of eight letters become manifest on earth, while four remain in the air until the Qá'im interprets them. The last of the earthly letters is itself a relation. The followers belong to the People of the House, the People of the House to

the Messenger, and the Messenger to God through a means. What is hidden becomes intelligible through the bonds by which the visible order already holds together.[8]

Read in this light, the Isfahán question reaches the Báb's own day. An inquiry into how Muḥammad is known becomes an inquiry into how the return of divine authority could be known when it appears. The words of the first covenant sound again when the Point of the Bayán speaks of being first to answer in the realm of particles. The treatise ends with Jábir's seven degrees of recognition and with the image of a sea that would be exhausted were it made ink for the words of the Lord. The Báb then stays the pen. The final restraint gives concrete form to the distinction between what has been disclosed and what a hearer is able to bear.[9]

About this edition

This provisional translation presents the complete treatise in continuous English. Verse references are keyed to the working Arabic–English edition, which takes INBA 40 as its provisional control witness and INBA 14 as its principal variant witness. The BKW Arabic edition, prepared principally from INBA 40, aids comparison and supplies source leads. Consequential variants and uncertain identifications belong in the accompanying apparatus. The English retains the original's recurring formulas, invocations, and long movements of argument wherever these can be carried intelligibly. Distinctions such as Divine Will and Divine Willpower, Prophethood and Guardianship, and sign and recognition are maintained because the argument repeatedly turns on them.[10]

The numbered edition begins with the Basmalah as verse 1 and comprises 361 verses, arranged in nineteen groups of nineteen. In the editorial reading developed through Abhá Math, these groups are gathered under the four words of the Basmalah in a proportion of three, four, six, and six. The resulting movements are **Áyát** (vv. 1–57), **Munáját** (vv. 58–133), **Tafsír** (vv. 134–247), and **'Ilmiyyah** (vv. 248–361). They offer a way to follow the opening praise and testimony, the turn toward inward recognition, the sustained exposition of signs and correspondences, and the concluding inquiry into proof and Guardianship.

Each group of nineteen is divided into four paragraphs, one in each register, giving seventy-six paragraphs in all. The first paragraph opens in the register of the larger movement to which the group belongs, and the other three follow in rotation. A group in Tafsír, for example, opens in Tafsír and proceeds through 'Ilmiyyah, Áyát, and Munáját. In this way each group gives place to all four voices, while its opening sets the tone of the movement as a whole. The numbering and paragraph arrangement are editorial, and the reading they propose remains open to examination against the Arabic and the witnesses.

Direct Qur'ánic quotations are marked in green italics. The Qur'án concordance lists them in order of appearance by printed page and SCP verse, and the ḥadíth concordance identifies the reports, supplications, and sermons on which the text draws. The latter distinguishes a located source from a parallel recension and records passages whose attribution remains open.

In the *Qayyúmu'l-Asmá*, the figure of Joseph carries the reader through concealment, estrangement, and recognition. In *The Special Characteristics of Prophethood*, the light by which Joseph might be recognized becomes itself the subject of inquiry. The Báb follows it into the Prophet's body, into the letters of His Book, into the hearts of those who hear Him, and into the mystery of those who bear His knowledge after Him. The question put to the Báb in Isfahán has become the question the work puts to its reader.

In the Name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

ALL PRAISE BELONGETH UNTO GOD, Who hath made the Ornament of the Tablets of the Book of Permission the Ornament of the Point—which was appointed after it had been willed, determined ere it was decreed, and permitted when its term was appointed, and it was made firm. Thus hath shone what shineth—the substantial realities of luminous beings within the realities of the denizens of *Láhút*—that all contingent beings may know, in the station of recognition of the Attributes and through that whereby God hath manifested Himself in the station of recognition of the manifestation of the Essence, that there is none other God except Him.

Throughout the eternity of eternities, naught hath been with Him save Himself. Nor can there be, within contingent existence, any mention of His own Self. For His essential reality is verily the unalloyed essential reality, which by its very being severeth beginnings from the station of recognition, with the pathways of the signs closed against the station of the Bayán. None knoweth its being as it is in itself, nor can any describe its Eternity or portray its Self-Sufficing Oneness. All else hath been brought into being within the contingent realm through His act of origination, and endowed with its essential reality within the worlds of creation through His act of invention. Glorified and exalted is He! His own Self hath ever been the Describer of His own Self, and His Essence the Affirmer of the Oneness of His own Self. None knoweth how He is save Himself—glorified and exalted is He above all that they describe!

ALL PRAISE BELONGETH UNTO GOD, Who hath originated all that He willed through His Command, and hath placed within the very being of the subtle realities of existent things a sign of His Eternity, a design from the station of His Willpower, and a token from the station of His Mercy. Thus may all things resound in the worlds of Names and Attributes through the reverberation of the manifestations of the traces of His Self-Subsistence in the world of *Jabarút*, and of the modes of the manifestations of Justice and Grace in the stations of *Mulk* and *Malakút*, that none, in any station, may remain veiled from the manifestation of the Presence of His Countenance, and that each may behold Him manifest and existent—that there is none other God except Him, the Ever-Living in the being of the Essence and the Self-Subsisting in the essential reality of the Attributes. Such is the loftiness of His Grandeur that the highest summits of subtle beings within the worlds of material things cannot ascend unto Him, nor can the birds of the hearts amongst the manifestations within the worlds of universals soar into the atmosphere of His Most Holy Sanctity. Glorified and exalted is He! Exalted and lofty is the Presence of His Self-Subsistence beyond the reach of any contingent hand, beyond any ability to know His Essence in any station or describe His own Self through any token. Glorified and exalted is He! Whosoever claimeth recognition of the inmost nature of His Essence hath trodden the path of impossibility. This cannot be attained even at the utmost heights of ascent, for recognition dependeth upon conjunction, and He—glorious is His mention—hath ever remained unconjoined with His creation. No expression describeth Him, nor is He characterized through the manifestation of His Origination. For such a manifestation, in itself, is bounded by the limits of createdness and characterized by the modes of Origination. In no respect doth it indicate aught save its own limitation, nor doth it recount, in any station, aught save its own incapacity. For the likeness within the beings of the manifestations of *Mulk* pointeth only to the severance of the path, while the manifestations within the essential realities of the material forms of *Malakút* recount only the withholding of proof. Glorified and exalted is He! Whosoever claimeth His Oneness hath numbered Him, whosoever hath numbered Him hath divided Him, and whosoever hath divided Him hath borne falsehood within their own self and untruth in the station of recognition of Him. For indications, in their reality, are withheld from approaching the court of His Holiness and bear witness to despair of recognizing His Self-Subsistence. All beings, within every world, return unto the station of His Origination. Verily, each created being, in itself, recounteth naught save the boundary of origination and the condition of establishment, after the rank of the nonexistent and before existence within the existent. Nor hath it any path unto recognition of the Essence of the Worshipped One—glorified and exalted is He above all that they associate with Him!

ALL PRAISE BELONGETH UNTO GOD, Who hath fashioned all created things for recognition of the manifestation of His Justice, that every atom of contingent existence—from the beginnings of causes unto the uttermost darkness, impenetrable, black, blind, and overwhelming—may bear witness as God hath borne witness unto Muḥammad, His Beloved, Whom He hath chosen in pre-existence, with knowledge from Himself, above all contingent beings. He hath chosen Him for the station of His Guardianship over all creation, elected Him to stand in the station of His own Self in fulfilment and Decree, from the beginnings of the world of Names and Attributes unto the rank of dust, and approved Him for the Mystery of His Mercy over all who have been brought into being in the beginnings and the endings. Wherefore, I bear witness that Muḥammad is His Devoted Servant, Whom He hath chosen for His own Self and appointed in the station of the Essence, peerless amongst His own kind, that all

contingent beings may shine with the radiance of the manifestations of recognition of Him within souls and horizons, until they recognize Him through that whereby God hath preferred Him above all, and through that which He hath bestowed upon Him in the Beginning and the Return. Sublime and resplendent is the mention of His existence! No eye hath beheld the like of Muḥammad, the Messenger of God, within contingent existence save according to the capacity of contingent existence. May God reward Him on behalf of all within the Kingdom of Command and creation, with whatsoever He hath willed and determined for Him in every station. Verily, He is the Bestower of all good things in the Beginning and the Return.

ALL PRAISE BELONGETH UNTO GOD, Who hath brought forth the hidden mysteries of the signs of the manifestations of His Holiness within the loftiest perceptions of subtle beings, that they may emerge within the manifestations of the hidden depths of the signs of *Láhút*, and within whatsoever God hath created in the Thicket of *Jabarút*, and within the Primal Reed from the Tree of *Mulk* and *Malakút*, and within whatsoever the knowledge of God hath encompassed in the earth of *Násút*, in praise of the Manifestations of His Power, the Pillars of His Oneness, the Signs of His Singleness, and the Tokens of His Sanctification.

His servants are they whom God hath appointed, in the stations of Command and creation, to stand in the station of His Beloved, that none in the heavens or on the earth may remain veiled from recognition of Their majesty, and that all created things may behold Them according to what God hath determined in the Book as the stations of Names and Attributes, recognizing that *They are honoured servants: They speak not before Him, and by His command do They act.*

ALL PRAISE BELONGETH UNTO GOD, Who accepteth from His servants, through His grace, whatsoever He willeth of their deeds, as He willeth, even after knowing that their very existence is a trespass before the city of the holiness of His All-Subduing Majesty. No mention of any amongst His creation befitteth the court of nearness to His Holiness, that all may know that His custom is beneficence, His wont is the Bayán, and His path is forgiveness and bounty. Naught is too great for Him in the Kingdom of Command and creation. Verily, there is none other God except Him, the Mighty, the Most Exalted. And thereafter, the light of the command shone forth from the court of the glory of that exalted presence, that well-pleasing and lofty personage, one brought nigh to the presence of the Kháqán and trusted by the State of the Sulṭán—may God perpetuate the shadow of his care over the heads of his subjects and cause him to attain the utmost of what he desireth concerning his beginning and his end—unto the servant dwelling beneath the darksome shadows of the mercy of God and His providence. The charge was that I should set forth the Bayán of the mystery of Divine Oneness in proof of the *Special Characteristics of Prophethood* of the Eternal Sign, the Lordly Mystery, the Divine Light, the Remembrance of the Most Gracious, and the Manifestation revealed in the Glorified Body, and the Universal Soul, the Primal Reed of Láhút, the manifest Mediating Mercy, the lofty, gleaming, radiant Countenance, the sanctified, shining Lordly Temple, and the rising, resplendent, manifest Garments which appeared in the Aḥmadan Mystery and the Muḥammadan Outward Manifestation—may the blessings of God rest upon Him and His Family—as the Sun of the Beginning rose through the beginning, and then as the Sun of the End set through the ending. Since his command is obeyed and his judgment decisive in the stations of inaccessibility, I have sought aid from God, followed his command, and place my trust in God to bring forth into the visible realm that which God hath placed in the realm of being through existence.

And it is this: God hath ever been apart from His creation, and His creation apart from Him. He hath ever been without the existence of aught beside Him, and shall ever remain as He hath been, without mention of aught in His rank. His essential reality hath ever indicated naught save His essential reality, and His being shall ever recount naught save His being. The Names and Attributes are severed from the court of nearness to His Grandeur, and the signs vanish upon ascending to the summit of the holiness of His Self-Sufficing Oneness. For He hath never had any description apart from His Essence or any attribute apart from His Presence. All that is other than Him, at the utmost stations of recognition and manifestations of the Bayán, shall apprehend naught save the portion of their own selves, nor know aught save the stations of their own selfhood. For no contingent being can attain recognition of the Essence save through that whereby He hath manifested Himself *unto each through each*, in the worlds of Names and Attributes. Since, then, it hath been established that recognition of the Eternal is impossible and unattainable, that change is impossible in the station of the Essence of Glory, and that creation, in every station, hath no path by which to attain the nearness of the Presence of the Most Exalted—and verily, it hath been established in Wisdom and confirmed in the Law that recognition of the Essence of the Eternal is impossible and unattainable—so doth the matter likewise proceed within creation: none can ascend unto the court of His Holiness. For the same ruling holdeth in ascent for whatsoever hath no mention in the account of the stations established in descent.

Verily, all the stations mentioned concerning the station of the Ultimate Truth, expounded in the indications of the Path, and established in the verses of the Law, bear witness to the hopelessness of attaining knowledge of that station which pointeth unto the Divine Essence through the Essence and for the Essence, and to the impossibility of ascending unto the summit of the Divine Attributes. Thus is the ruling concerning the Ultimate Reality established. Wherefore, when that Bayán hath been expounded, and the judgment of what is manifest established in the Balance, there can be no doubt that God originateth whatsoever He willeth, by whatsoever He willeth, through His command, and concerning His Cause there is no reversing His judgment.

For indeed, He hath originated the essential reality of the Divine Will for the station of His own Being, the manifestation of His Self-Subsistence, the sign of His Self-Sufficing Oneness, and the station of the dawning light of His Holiness. He hath originated it through itself, for itself, with no self preceding it, no mention equal to it, no attribute resembling it, and no description set against it. He hath made its essential reality identical with its being, and its selfhood identical with its individual reality. It is the Cause of causes in the beginnings of the Command and the utmost ends of the Seal. God hath appointed it, in the station of the Divine Will, to stand in the station of His own Self. As it is in itself, neither names nor attributes, neither indications nor glories, can be applied unto it. Whatsoever is mentioned in its rank is mentioned solely in the rank of an effect of that station. Unto it alludeth all that hath been sent down in the Book concerning the stations of the Command and the manifestations of the Seal, which are an effect of the manifestation of the Divine Will in the acts of Divine Willpower. And whatsoever cannot be applied unto it in its stations that point unto God, within the worlds of subtle beings, material things, semblances, and accidental qualities—and whatsoever lieth beyond these in all stations—all this belongeth unto the station of the manifestation of that Primal Rank. Through it all contingent beings turn unto God and find proof of His Eternity, His Power, His All-Subduing Majesty, His Grandeur, and His stations, which in their very essential reality point unto the Countenance of His Presence and the splendour of His Lordship.

Verily, when the Command descended from the beginnings of the Command, the utmost ends of the Seal, and the manifestations of Justice unto the rank of the effect, the Divine Willpower was brought into being through itself, from the causal power of the manifestation of the Divine Will. Through it were determinate things determined, and beings endowed with their essential reality. Through it God purposed to make manifest the identities proper to *beings*, to *essential realities*, to *individual realities*, and to *selfhoods*. Verily, what is intended by the signs of manifestations, the station of substantial realities, and whatsoever cometh to pass within the station of effulgences at that rank, is that these are but a sign and a semblance in relation to the rank of the Divine Will and the manifestation of the Divine Willpower. Through that rank are manifested the hidden things of the inmost realm of contingent existence and the manifestations of the degrees of existent things. Through it God—mighty and glorious is He—establisheth His proof against His servants on the Day of Resurrection, in the station of the manifestation of the Command within the determinate rank. This is the station of the recurrence of the Primal Remembrance within the rank of the manifestation of the Divine Will. For God—glorified is He—after the appearance of that rank, hath placed the station of the manifestation of the Divine Will within that station, and it is itself the station of the descent of the Divine Will. Then, after the appearance of that rank, God hath originated the essential reality of the fathomless Ocean of Determination. He hath placed it in the station of His own Self as a sign of the Divine Willpower, and in the station of His Essence as a sign of the Divine Will. For its being pointeth unto the Oneness of the manifestation of the Essence, and its selfhood speaketh through the signs delimited within the stations of the Attributes. Verily, that very station is the manifestation of the Divine Will itself. Thus, in the station of manifestation, the stations of the inward stand in the station of the outward aspect of the inward. Unto this did the Imám—peace be upon Him—allude, saying: "*Muḥammad is Our first, Muḥammad is Our middle, and Muḥammad is Our last.*" Verily, in the station of the Ultimate Truth, were the servant to gaze with the eye of innate perception, they would behold in the third station the very manifestation of the First. Nay, the same truth holdeth therein as in that station of which Imám Ṣádiq—peace be upon Him—spoke when mentioning the Glorified Body of His Forefather—upon Him be peace—in connection with the explicit declaration of the Divine Nature within the Temple of Guardianship: "*It is not He, nor is He other than it.*"

Likewise did the Command extend until it reached the rank of Decree, Permission, Appointed Term, and Book. Verily, all these are degrees of the manifestation of the Divine Will itself. Verily, the mention of these seven degrees—the degrees of the manifestation of the Divine Will, which is the Muḥammadan Reality, may the blessings of God rest upon Him—serveth but to establish *Absolute Prophethood*. Verily, these modes have been mentioned solely to establish knowledge of certain stations, in exposition of the proof of the *Special Characteristics of Prophethood* and the all-encompassing, luminous *Guardianship*. The proof of this matter, by the inward way, proceedeth through recognition of certain enumerated stations. Amongst these is the truth that no thing hath existence save through a Maker Who hath created it. He is not like His servants, nor hath He any attribute

resembling His creation. For were the condition of createdness established in Him, He would not be the Maker. He pointeth unto His own Self through His own Self alone. For, in the station of indication of the Essence, were it possible for any to be alongside Him, then it would be possible for another to point unto His Presence. And were there no creation with Him in a given station, none could recognize Him, nor would aught point unto His Essence, for indication holdeth true where the existence of a thing alongside Him hath been established. Were there neither existence nor mention of aught within the court of the holiness of His Grandeur, no indication could take place. Verily, amongst that which hath been revealed in the Traditions from the Suns of Majesty and the Lights are these words: "*O Thou Who hast pointed unto Thine Essence through Thine Essence!*" And these words: "*O my God, through Thee have I recognized Thee, and Thou hast guided me unto Thyself and called me unto Thee. Were it not for Thee, I should not have known what Thou art!*" And this saying—upon its Speaker be peace: "*Know God through God!*" Verily, in that station of indication, indication taketh place solely in the station of signs and hath no mention save in the station of tokens. Through recognition of this exposition, the paths of recognition are made easy for the servant within the station of the Bayán.

When the existence of the Divine Will upon this course is established by rational proof—that it hath a manifestation for all things within the worlds, and that it is verily the Universal Cause and the real Root—then, were God not to make it manifest, He would not manifest His Power in its rank. Were it not manifest, the judgment of Divine Unity concerning the Essence—exalted and glorified is He—would not be established. Thus is established that which I have purposed to expound. Since such a creation of the Divine Will is established as necessary by rational proof, none may say, "*Why*?" or "*Through what*?" For whoso saith this apprehendeth a mode whose essential reality was formed from an effect of the Divine Will. How, then, can the judgment concerning a thing's essence be established through its effect? This is manifest unto those endowed with understanding amongst the people of the Beginning and the Return. As the judgment concerning the existence of such a Divine Will hath been established—the Will which was the Source of the Special Characteristics of Prophethood, Absolute Guardianship, the Divine Light, the Lordly Mysteries, and the Sign of Self-Sufficing Oneness—so must it be recognized and its stations traversed. Since rational proof establisheth that the lower cannot apprehend the rank of the higher save through the manifestation of the lower's own individual reality, unto which the higher revealeth itself through that very reality, it followeth that none can attain knowledge of the true Special Characteristics of Prophethood until they can apprehend or establish what the higher hath made manifest within them. For whoso seeketh recognition of that station must contemplate the signs God hath originated within their own self from the effulgences of that Universal Prophethood, proceeding from the Aḥmadan Presence—may the blessings of God rest upon it so long as the Sun of the Beginning and the End shineth.

When that Balance is established in that station, the servant recognizeth that God hath created naught save for the manifestation of His Power. The outpouring is ever renewed from His Presence and descendeth from the court of His holiness, until it descendeth unto a station from which it cannot be removed. For the first outpouring that appeared from the Divine Will was the Divine Willpower itself. Thus do the judgments proceed unto the utmost stations of the ends and finalities. As it is in itself, God hath assuredly created it for perfection. Yet it cannot bear that which God hath purposed for it within the worlds of contingent existence save by descending therein and assuming the vesture of this world, that its people may recognize it. Verily, the Bearer of Universal Prophethood, which is the Divine Will, hath descended by the leave of God from the world of the Will's own essence until He reached the station of the body. Beyond that station the Will hath no further descent, for whatsoever lay within it in potentiality appeareth openly. Beyond this there is no descent in the human station. Thus rational proof establisheth that this Point descended until it reached a station beyond which no further rank is possible. This is a judgment binding upon the reason of all people, which none can deny in the station of recognition. For, when the existence of His Essence is established, the existence of His Universal Soul, which was the Source of causes, is likewise established. This Universal Soul establisheth the Bearer's descent unto the rank of the body, through the continuance of the outpouring and the body's capacity for the effulgences of His Self-Sufficing Oneness. The rank of the body, bearing the degrees of the Beginning, is assuredly the noblest of stations and loftiest of degrees. Nay, the Lord's outpouring cannot reach a soul in perfection save by entering the station of bodies, for whatsoever God hath placed therein in potentiality appeareth in actuality and openly. Recognition of these stations, before establishing the matter I desire to make manifest, is incumbent upon the seeker thereof. For knowledge of the beginnings of the Command and the utmost ends of the Seal bringeth repose unto the inmost heart in the station of recognizing its judgment. Thus likewise is the matter concerning those stations which God hath commanded and willed in the Book for those endowed with understanding amongst the people of the Beginnings and the Return.

When rational proofs, corresponding to the signs of the Dominion, the true indications of knowledge, and the hidden tokens of the mind, establish the necessary existence of that Light and this Universal Soul, the Special Characteristics of Prophethood are established in the bodily Temple of Muḥammad, the Messenger of God—may God bless Him and His Family—for none other is His like. Nor is it possible for the Primal Point to descend and enter the station of bodily existence save through that Temple which was born—may my spirit be His ransom. At His birth all witnessed signs belonging to His like alone and appearing through His condition alone. At the moment His Body appeared, the signs of Prophethood were inscribed upon His shoulder, such that this mighty matter could be possible for none beside Him. Since it hath been established, in the account of Absolute Universal Prophethood and Primal Eternal Guardianship, that descent from the beginnings of Action unto the utmost world of multiplicity—the world of bodies—can take place only through the Form of its being and the Temple of its essential reality, the beholder of His pure bodily Temple and His subtle element witnesseth that which God determined at the beginning of His existence. For the manifestation of the Divine Will cannot be realized in this world save through that Form in which Muḥammad, the Messenger of God, appeared. The Beginning appeareth only in the rank of the Seal. Reason beareth witness that the Source of the outpouring in the first rank cannot complete its manifestation save through a Seal after which there is none like unto it. Thus Muḥammad, the Messenger of God, was the Opener of whatsoever preceded, the Seal of whatsoever followed, and the Guardian over all of this. Reason cannot bear the recognition of Primal Absolute Prophethood. There is, then, no recourse upon the path save through recognition of the Special Characteristics of Prophethood concerning that Most Great Sign in the Aḥmadan Temple—may the blessings of God rest upon it so long as the Sun of Origination riseth through Origination and the Sun of Invention setteth through Invention. For the Primal Remembrance, whose existence reason establisheth, cannot appear in the world of bodies save in the likeness wherein He appeared, in the appointed year, day, and hour. Wisdom requireth, in accordance with the station of the Ultimate Truth and as established in the manifestation of the Law, that His father's name be 'Abdu'lláh ibn 'Abdu'l-Muṭṭalib ibn Háshim ibn 'Abd Manáf. For His manifestation—may God bless Him and His Family—from the beginnings of the Command was solely through the manifestation of His servitude unto God, glorified be He, in the worlds of Command and creation. Between names and meanings there is, as established in the Balance of the Ultimate Truth, an essential correspondence and a mystery of substantial being, whereby the servant establisheth all the degrees God hath created for them. Wisdom requireth His father's name to be the name of the manifestation of His rank ere the dawning of His mission. For the rank of servitude in His father was but an overflow of that servitude which God had placed within Him.

Thus His father's name was attributed unto God, although the Name of Majesty had not been sent down in the Book ere the Prophet's birth—peace be upon Him. God, through the subtlety of His handiwork and the greatness of His bounty, made His father's name related unto Himself, that it might indicate the mystery of the manifestation of the bearing of the Light of the Divine Will. Whoso hath had their hands opened by God in the stations of detachment and the manifestations of singleness can establish the Special Characteristics of Prophethood in whatsoever pertaineth unto Muḥammad, even in the blackness of His eyes. For the Light of Oneness appeared throughout His Body in equal measure, and indicateth all His aspects in every condition, even as it indicateth His Presence in the worlds of the unseen and the seen. This is plain unto the beholder acquainted with His attributes. None hath ever beheld the like of His bodily Form—may God bless Him and His Family—and His like is impossible within contingent existence. None can mistake the Special Characteristics of His Prophethood in His pure Body. Abú Ja'far—peace be upon Him—alluded to this when asked, "*Describe the Prophet of God.*" He said: "*The Prophet of God was fair, tinged with redness, with deeply black eyes, joined eyebrows, and firm extremities, as though gold had been poured upon His hands. The heads of His shoulder bones were large. When He turned, He turned with His whole Body, from His great ease with others. A line of hair ran from His upper chest unto His navel, as though amid refined silver. His neck unto His upper back was a silver ewer. When He drank, His nose almost reached the water. When He walked, He leaned forward, as though descending a slope. None like the Prophet of God—may God bless Him and His Family—was seen before Him or after Him—may God bless Him and His Family.*"

For, just as His Most Holy Essence was the Cause of existing things in the beginnings of Action—so is the judgment concerning His Body. For His Body is itself the descent of the Primal Remembrance for the manifestation of the Sign which God hath determined for it. Even so, on the Night of the Ascension there appeared from His noble Body that which wisdom requireth to belong to His reality, namely, that He—may my spirit be His ransom—was, as al-Ḥumayrá recounted, "*in His house*," and, as the Most Gracious and His angels bore witness, was throughout the kingdom of the heavens and the earth at one and the same time, with His Body, His corporeal frame, His raiment, and His sandals. For He Himself expresseth naught save the encompassing of

the Divine Will and the manifestation of Universal Prophethood. None may say, "*Perchance another might be like unto Him in this condition,*" for a leap in the order of existence is, in the judgment of all, vain and false.

Even as His uniqueness beyond those of like kind and resemblance, and His sanctity above resemblance and likeness, are established in the worlds of detachment, so must the judgment be in this world also. For none like unto Muḥammad, the Messenger of God, hath been born. For at His birth He manifested conditions whereby all may know that a likeness unto the Primal Remembrance is impossible. Were it possible, it must needs appear. None hath said concerning the station of any amongst creation the like of that which appeared for the manifestation of the Light of Oneness in the Muḥammadan Countenance and the Aḥmadan Temple. The blessings of God be upon Him so long as the Sun of Divine Identity riseth. Should any deny His Prophethood in the world of manifestation, rational proof bindeth them, through the signs within the self and the manifestations of Lordship that have appeared in the horizons, to acknowledge His appearance. For had He not appeared, there would not have appeared a Body whose like I have never found, nor a Name whose like none hath borne, nor a Trustee whose name was ʻAlí—peace be upon Him. Thus, in the station of proof, is Prophethood established in His Name. For the Divine Will in the first world came into being only through an element of Fire from His own self. That self is the efficient Cause and the pure, eternal Manifestation. This is the rank of Matter in the Primal Remembrance. When the Primal Remembrance came into being in the rank of Matter, the element of Air was necessary unto Him for the rank of His Form and the manifestation of the second Cause in His rank. When individual reality was realized, wisdom required a bond between Matter and Form, for the manifestation of the third Cause and the conditions necessary in this rank.

When the three were established, reason bore witness unto a comprehensive Form indicating the four. This is the station of the element of Dust and the final Cause, which is itself those same three manifestations. When it is realized in the path of Ultimate Truth that a thing cometh into being only through four ranks, all the ranks of the Divine Will appear in existence in the Name of the Bearer of the Special Characteristics of Prophethood. The blessings of God be upon Him so long as the Sun of Invention riseth through Invention, and then so long as the Sun of Bringing-forth setteth through Bringing-forth. For in the outward Name indicating His Body is established the reality of His station, which is nowhere inoperative. Whoso recognizeth Him knoweth God through Him in the station of manifestation, wherein there is no difference between Him and God, save that He is His Servant and His creation. For a likeness unto the Name Muḥammad—may God bless Him and His Family—is impossible in Origination, since the letter Mím is the first letter of the Divine Will. When this letter appeared in His Name, it indicated that, in the pillar of the element of Fire, He gathereth all stations, from the rank of receptivities unto things received. For the rank of recipients in His Name, when joined unto the rank of that which is received, hath the number forty. This is the completion of the ranks which God promised Moses at the first Mount, where God—exalted be His mention—said: "*We appointed for Moses thirty nights, and completed them with ten. Thus the appointed term of his Lord was fulfilled in forty nights.*" The verse hath borne witness from God concerning the first letter of His Name to the rank of completeness through the conjunction of receptivity and reception. When the beholder regardeth this letter in that station with the eye of the heart, they may know in its reality that, when this number is purified of the manifestation of multiplicity, only the letter of Divine Unity remaineth. For when the bounds of receptivity and reception are removed from Mím, there remain only four letters, indicating the ranks of Ultimate Truth without which it cannot be realized in existence. When this letter was repeated, the second letter of His noble Name appeared, for the number of Ḥá is eight. When that letter descended, it appeared in the likeness of the first letter. For those endowed with understanding know not what is there save through what is here. Verily, in the rank of the element of Fire it is true before God that there should be Mím, through the completeness of its manifestations. In the rank of the element of Air, wisdom requireth Ḥá. For when thou joinest it unto the mystery of the four and the first letter, its number correspondeth unto the number of the letters of the word Air. Therein are sacred allusions, indications of the Throne, signs of beginning, and tokens of ending, which thoughts cannot bear, nor can the loftiest bird of vision ascend unto them, save for whomsoever God willeth amongst the people of mysteries. After these letters, wisdom required, Ultimate Truth made firm, and the Law established that the last letter should be Dál, through the manifestation of the mystery of the letter of Fire in the rank of Dust, and the manifestations of Divine Unity in corporeal stations. For Dál is amongst the dark letters. It is the letter of individual reality and the sign of delimitation in the Muḥammadan rank, which indicateth His first station and expresseth the Self-Subsistence of His Essence and the manifestation of His being. In contingent existence there is no name whose final manifestation is like that to which He Himself beareth witness, save the Name Muḥammad—may God bless Him and His Family. For that dark letter appearing at the end of His noble Name is the pillar of Dust, that it may be higher than the luminous letters in another. Nay, through the effect of that letter, realized things have been

realized in the kingdom of Names and Attributes, and beings have been endowed with selfhood upon the Throne of Glory, until the outpouring reached, by the leave of God, the rank of Dust.

Thus is it established by the radiant proof of reason, which expresseth the signs shining in His Essence, that the servant may know that the Bearer of the Primal Remembrance, which is the Divine Will, could not appear in the station of bringing into being save with His Name being Muḥammad. For the letter of beginning, with the perfection of its ranks and completeness of its manifestations, when it descended unto the rank of Dust, indicated only the mystery of its reality. Thus appeared the letter Dál—the letters of the manifestation of the affirmation of Oneness in Essence, Attributes, Actions, and Worship. Exalted and sublime is the handiwork of God—glorified is He. The signs of His Power have appeared in all things, that those who seek proof may establish the manifestation of His Self-Subsistence in all things, that none may forget His remembrance in any condition, and that they may behold Him manifest and existent, as on the day when naught was mentioned beside Him. This is one of the ways of establishing the Special Characteristics of Prophethood in the Muḥammadan Temple and the Presence of Oneness shining in the Aḥmadan Form. Whatsoever is related unto the station of the Essence, veils conceal it not, indications equal it not, and the rule of Names and Attributes matcheth it not.

The Light of the affirmation of Oneness in the Essence hath appeared in His Body—may God bless Him and His Family—even as it appeared in the station of the Divine Will. Whoso is bound, through reason, to affirm Oneness in Essence, Attributes, Actions, and Worship is likewise bound to establish the Special Characteristics of Prophethood upon merely hearing His noble Name. For when the Primal Remembrance became individuated, the ranks of His existence appeared only in the last of His stations. God hath placed all the signs of the horizons within the selves. Had God not placed the signs of the horizons within the selves, the servant could not become acquainted with that which is in the horizons. When knowledge of the exposition of Prophethood is established through the signs within the self, knowledge of the signs of the horizons may be made easy. For reason, by establishing a Maker, indicateth that which God hath placed within the self. When one is certain of a Maker, one must establish the Bearer of Universal Prophethood, for the outpouring of Eternity hath ever been complete. When God willed to create the Divine Will, it came into being through itself in that very moment. God hath ever willed only through His Divine Will, for the Essence hath not become conjoined with His creation, nor doth He change in any condition through His act of creation.

When the universal outpouring of His act of creation is established within the selves, its like must exist in the horizons. When it is established that the signs of the horizons correspond unto the selves, it followeth that the Bearer of this Universal Prophethood in the horizons should bear the Name Muḥammad, for that which I have mentioned concerning the mystery of His Name, and His father ʻAbdu'lláh. Nay, were one to unfold the mystery of Ultimate Reality, the land of His birth, His age, and all His conditions would be established. Yet intellects apprehend not the reality of the matter, for reason, however delicate and subtle, apprehendeth a bounded thing. The establishment of these stations is difficult for whoso regardeth things with the eye of limit and measure. When the servant removeth the veils of the splendours of the Lights of Majesty from the court of the glory of nearness unto the first individuation in contingency and created existence, they may perceive the reality of the matter: at the moment when the Messenger of God appeared—may God bless Him and His Family—all the signs of the heavens and the earth were in equilibrium. He—may my spirit and all within the kingdom of Command and creation be His ransom—appeared at a time when creation stood in the station of that saying wherein God—exalted be His glory—said: "*Then We brought it forth as another creation. So blessed be God, the Best of Creators!*" On the first day of the wondrous origination of nature, the condition of humankind was that of the drop. All advanced upon the first summit through the ranks of the manifestations of the Prophets and Messengers, until the constitution of existence was made sound and the judgment of the Greater World came to maturity. God—glorified is He—willed to manifest a first Light from Himself, a Remembrance from His holiness, and a Sign from His Oneness, that all atoms might vibrate in the stations of manifestation with that which God intended of creation on the day of their full emergence in this world. Thus may all receive their portion of the knowledge of the Book, according to that which God hath determined in the judgment of the Beginning and the Return. That which I have detailed in these allusions concerning the establishment of the Special Characteristics of Prophethood pertaineth unto the outward station. As for the allusion unto the inward station, it hath indications and tokens whereby the servant may know and become acquainted with it at the Balance, if they regard the mystery of contingency and recognize the Power of the Most Gracious in the reality of the Bayán. It is this: the known day on which the Prophet appeared is the day of the manifestation of the last individuation of the Divine Will in the inward rank.

Even as reason indicateth the establishment of a simple, pure Essence in the station of the affirmation of Oneness in the Essence, so doth it indicate the establishment of that Light shining from the horizon of Radiance, at the moment when it arose and shone

forth. Concerning the question, "*Whereby wast Thou favoured above the people of creation?"* He said: *"I am the first who answered in the Primal Realm.*" This alludeth to the station of formation, and then to His answering God in inscription. For the day on which the Body of the Messenger of God appeared in the Second Realm in this world is the day on which the effect of the Divine Will appeared in the Primal Realm. Knowledge of this station is not made clear in truth save after knowledge of Pre-existence manifest in the rank of the Divine Will, knowledge of Eternity manifest in the rank of the Primal Remembrance, and knowledge of Perpetuity, then knowledge of Duration, then knowledge of Time. Therefore do I allude unto its exposition. The terms Pre-existence and Eternity are applied according to the diversity of stations, ranks, and conditions. When applied to knowledge of the Essence, they signify the Essence itself, without mention of Names and Attributes. When applied in the rank of Action, it is in reality Perpetuity, according to its name. Thus did ʻAlí—peace be upon Him—allude in the sermon of Friday and Ghadír: "*I bear witness that Muḥammad is His Servant and His Messenger, Whom God singled out in Pre-existence above all nations.*" He also said: "*I am the Master of the Second Eternity.*" At times, the term Pre-existence is applied unto the temporal things, as in His saying—exalted be His mention—"*like the old palm-stalk*." Let the Balance in this exposition be that which I have indicated: Pre-existence having neither beginning nor end is the Pre-existence applied unto the Manifestations of the signs of the Essence.

Likewise is the judgment concerning the term Eternity. It is the Essence itself, for the Essence, through the Essence. Perpetuity is the condition of Action, a condition having neither beginning in the knowledge of God nor end. For the outpouring ceaseth not from the Absolute Bestower. Should a discerning observer wish to apply unto the beginning the same judgment as unto the end, assigning to the Primal Remembrance no first save Himself, the judgment would be valid. Yet it is difficult for hearts to encompass it. As for Time, it is realized through the rising and setting of the spheres, and hath a beginning and an end. When one witnesseth the reality of this exposition, one may recognize, at the moment when the Body of Muḥammad appeared in the world of Time—may God bless Him and His Family—the manifestation of the Divine Will in the first creation.

After this exposition, the occurrence of the Prophet's appearance in the hundred and third year of the seventh millennium is established through the indications within the self, as is the necessity of His Name and His attributes, which God hath prescribed for Him and reserved unto Him apart from His creation—including the obligation of the Night Prayer, the ruling concerning nine women, and that which God hath reserved unto Him in the ordinances of His Prophethood and the conditions of His mission. These can be realized only in the station unto which God alluded in His Book—from revelation unto the station of Him concerning Whom God said: "*He was upon the highest horizon. Then He drew nigh and hung suspended, and was two bow-lengths away, or nearer. He revealed unto His Servant that which He revealed. The heart belied not what it saw. Will ye dispute with Him concerning what He seeth? Indeed, He saw Him at another descent, by the Lote-Tree of the Utmost Boundary, beside which is the Garden of Refuge, when there covered the Lote-Tree that which covered it. The sight swerved not, nor transgressed. Indeed, He saw of the greatest signs of His Lord.*" By rational proof, a leap is impossible after knowledge of His appearance in this world, for negation dependeth upon affirmation in this world.

Though knowledge of bounds and measures cannot encompass Him, beyond these allusions, were the servant to regard the station of Attributes and the manifestation of determined things, they could establish the matter by a path other than that which I have manifested in this exposition. All that I have detailed in expounding the establishment of Prophethood for the Aḥmadan Temple followeth the inward path. As for the exposition according to the outward aspect of the inward, it is that God, at every moment, assuredly knoweth all things and hath Power over all things. Since the Bearer of the Name Muḥammad claimed eternal Universal Prophethood, and none prevailed against Him in His proof, there is no doubt that God confirmed Him in His claim. Those endowed with understanding have no greater proof than this in the path of right judgment. For concerning a matter which God hath confirmed, none may say, "*Why*?" or "*Through what*?" even if they comprehend it not with their reason in the station of apprehension. This is evident unto all who regard, by the judgment of their reason, the signs of their own self and the signs of the horizons within their own self. Were the Bearer not Muḥammad—may God bless Him and His Family—it could be none other. For the primal, universal outpouring appeared in existence only in the likeness of that which appeared at the beginning of the matter. For the exposition of this question there is a mention in this discourse, which whoso manifesteth within their own self all that God hath placed in existence may apprehend. It is this: the first mention of contingency in the rank of concrete beings is the station of the Primal Adam.

Alif is an allusion unto the station of His first mention, which is the station of pure, unmixed Oneness, speaking from its Origin through itself unto itself. Dál in the midst of the name is an allusion unto the manifestation of the four Causes, without which naught can come into being. Mím is an allusion unto His clay having been kneaded from the manifestations of these Causes,

from the four elements. For a thing's manifestations are completed in no station save through the number forty. Thus is the manifestation of ten after thirty in the rank of union. Therefore did God make the name of the Primal Remembrance Adam, corresponding unto that which appeared in this world. Since a thing is completed only through the manifestation of its descent, its first descent was realized from its individual reality. From this God created Eve from the Primal Adam, for His repose. Thus the number of Her name was fifteen, according to the number of each side of the triangular figure in the number of Há. It is Divine Willpower in the beginnings of Action. Unto this is the allusion in the saying of Muḥammad, the Messenger of God: "*I and ʻAlí are the two fathers of this community.*" For after the descent of the Divine Will and the individuation of Divine Willpower, multiplicities came into being from the fathomless Ocean of Determination at the moment of conjunction. When these three descended, they became four. From this God created, after the triangular figure, the signs of the square. No number in existence can be more perfect and complete than this number seven. It is the number of the unseen Reeds in the Thicket of Divinity, whose names were *Muḥammad, ʻAlí, Ḥasan, Ḥusayn, Jaʻfar, Músá,* and *Fáṭimah*. The blessings of God be upon Them. When these seven descended from the unseen world unto the world of witness, the seven Reeds appeared in the world of witness. Their Origin is the first, eternal Pearl, the Bearer of the Special Characteristics of Prophethood and Universal Guardianship. Through it God originated the seven spheres: the Sun, the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn.

Corresponding unto these appeared the number of the week. Sunday is for the Divine Will, for the manifestation of Unity in all its stations. Monday is for Divine Willpower. The mention of two alludeth unto the existence of the pair and the individuation of the two Temples. Tuesday is for Determination, for it is in the station of conjunction and the triangular figure. Thus, in the science of talismans, the triangular figure is established for separations and the like, wherein is an aspect of division and suspension. Wednesday is for Decree. Thus, amongst the people of numbers, the square is established for the station of union and love. It is the day of Ḥusayn—peace be upon Him. For whoso regardeth therein the mysteries of Decree, it is blessed in the station of things brought into harmony and union, as the Imám expressly declared concerning Wednesday in answer unto one who said otherwise. Whoso regardeth therein the aspect of calamities descending upon the Suns of Grandeur ought not to perform the wondrous operations requiring knowledge of the hours and the judgment of approach and separation in the rank of manifestations. Thursday is for the station of Permission, whose Bearer was Jaʻfar ibn Muḥammad—peace be upon Them both. Friday is for the station of the Appointed Term, whose Bearer God made Músá ibn Jaʻfar. In this number the aspects of a thing are completed through the bounds of measures. Saturday is for the completion of the matter, its causes expounded and its reasons made clear. It is the day of Fáṭimah—peace be upon Her, and the blessings of God rest upon Her. From this exposition it appeareth that wisdom requireth the Bearer of the Primal Remembrance to appear from between the sixth and seventh thousands of years. For after the bounds of six, which is the perfect number, Divine Wisdom requireth the appearance of that shining Light which is the Origin in the manifestations of beginning and end, in stations having no limit save through it, of that which hath no end through it.

When it was established by rational proof that the Primal Remembrance, Who is the Primal Adam and the Wondrous One brought forth from the nature of the manifestation of Eternity, appeareth after the six stages of delimitation, which, in the station of limitation, are the sperm-drop, the clinging clot, the lump of flesh, the bones, the clothing thereof, and the other creation—"*Blessed, then, be God, the Best of Creators*"—then, when the stages of the Greater World were fulfilled, its constitution matured, its inward state was set aright, and its outward state purified, He, may My spirit be His ransom, appeared at the first equilibrium of the human station. Verily, before His appearance, God had made manifest one hundred and twenty-four thousand Prophets, apart from the Prophet Himself, that the lights of His sanctity might appear in the conditions of limitation, in the rank of Wáw and the station of Divine Unity, that the constitution of the Greater World might be made ready for the appearance of Há. Verily, all that the Prophets decreed, and the scrolls of ordinances which God sent down from heaven unto Them, belong to the station of limitation and, in relation to that Primal Tree, are but husk. Thus were the ordinances of the Prophets abrogated until the day when the station of the Greater World attained unto the station of human creation. When it attained unto the station of the first human Temple, the sign of Oneness appeared, and His Law endured unto the Day of Resurrection. He changed not His Law, nor doth He alter His ordinances, though there be differences in the degrees of appearance, as when He abrogated certain ordinances in the earliest days of His Mission.

It hath come down in the Traditions that the Proof of God appeareth with a new Book and new ordinances. This belongeth not to abrogation. Rather, what is intended resembleth the ordinance of Guardianship, which, before the Day of Ghadír, had not appeared in its reality. Thus is the ruling concerning all the differing things that were abrogated or shall yet appear. They are

manifestations of that Sacred Law, and of none other. Since it was established in truth, through the signs upon the horizons, the manifestations within souls, regal configurations, and temporal conjunctions, that the Primal Remembrance, the Bearer of the Universal Outpouring, appeared not in the Greater Worlds until after the six bounded stages, for these appeared only through the mystery of Divine Unity and the manifestation of detachment—ere the Greater World and its inhabitants attained unto fleshly corporeality, which is the first degree of humanity, He, may My spirit be His ransom, appeared not. Wisdom therefore requireth that His appearance, after the bounded stages had run their course, should be the first degree of the manifestations of Divine Unity, both in the inward world and in the outward world. Thus He, may My spirit be His ransom, appeared on Friday at noon, after twelve nights of the month of the first ʻAyn had passed. Every circumstance of His appearance establisheth His Prophethood, for Friday is the sixth day, and noon is the first settling of the Sun of Eternity upon Its centre. Thus have the astronomers described it, in correspondence with the higher world. That sun is a spherical body with parallel surfaces, whose centre is the centre of the world, corresponding to the zodiacal sphere in equator and poles. Within its thickness is another like it, eccentric, whose convex surface toucheth the convex surface of the first at the apogee, and whose concave surface toucheth it at the perigee. It separateth therefrom two complementary bodies, their thickness increasing by degrees to a maximum twice the distance between the two centres. The sun is fixed within the thickness of the eccentric, midway between its poles, touching its two surfaces at two points. And likewise the orbs of each of the superior planets and of Venus. His appearance in the month of the first ʻAyn belongeth to the perfection of the manifestation of the days' equilibrium, for the station of equilibrium is in spring. The twelve days that had passed of the month allude unto the Suns of Grandeur appointed to follow Him, the seats of His Cause and the mines of His judgment. None other could be born in like manner, through the appearance of those conjunctions of the Dominion, for every aspect of those degrees hath further aspects—and every aspect hath aspects without end through them.

For the likeness of the Lordly conditions and the Merciful manifestations is that of a mirror wherein an image is reflected, and that image hath an image, without end through them. In no wise is the outpouring of God exhausted. Wisdom required that His mother should conceive Him in the land of Makkah, which is the Sanctuary of God, during the days of Tashríq, at the Middle Jamrah. For the land of God's Sanctuary was created only for the settling of His Body, the Bearer of the Universal Outpouring. In the days of Tashríq is an allusion to what hath been mentioned in the ordinances of Miná, and at the Jamrah to the breaking of the middlemost signs of the mark of Sijjín in the rank of individuation. Likewise, wisdom requireth that His mother's name be Áminah bint Wahb ibn ʻAbd Manáf ibn Zuhrah ibn Kiláb ibn Murrah ibn Kaʻb. The reckoning of her name equalleth the Greatest Name of God, save that the reckoning of fourteen letters is subtracted therefrom, alluding unto her station, which accepted, in the stations of the affirmation of Oneness in Essence, Attributes, Actions, and Worship, Muḥammad the Messenger of God, His Trustees, and His Daughter. Likewise, wisdom required that His mother should give birth to Him in the quarter of Abú Ṭálib, in the house of Muḥammad ibn Yúsuf. His father, ʻAbd Alláh, died when He was two months old, and His mother died when He, may My spirit be His ransom, was four years old. For those endowed with understanding know what is there only through what is here. Those allusions possess stations which pens cannot number, nor scrolls and indications encompass. Were I to expound those allusions, the balance of the Bayán would emerge for whoso desireth to apprehend the reality of elucidation.

According to outward observation, Divine Wisdom, Lordly subtlety, and the mysteries of actuality require that the Bearer of that Primal Outpouring should manifest His Prophethood after forty years had passed. After His Mission He remained in Mecca only thirteen years, then migrated unto Madinah and remained there ten years. He remained in this world only sixty-three years, and was taken on Monday, after twelve nights of the month of the first ʻAyn had passed. Likewise, wisdom requireth that His wives should be nine and His children seven, three male and four female, and Fáṭimah, the blessings of God be upon Her, the last of them. For the cause of inscription is formation itself. Those endowed with understanding encompass no knowledge of aught in that station save what God hath determined in the higher world. For the appearance of His Prophethood in this world must come after forty, according to the reckoning of the letter Mím, inasmuch as the clay of the Primal Adam was ringing clay in the Palm of Power for forty mornings. Unto this pointeth the mention of Mím amongst the bounded degrees of His Self. For the Primal Remembrance came into being only through acceptance of the rank of receptivities and things received, in the station of His contingent existence. Thus the mystery of Eternity appeared not until that reckoning had run its course. In the world of Perpetuity this reckoning was nearer than a glance of the eye, but when it descended into the world of body and limitation it became forty years. Therein are many mysteries which I desire not to disclose, since their time hath not yet come. Whoso contemplateth the Axis of Attributes in the kingdom of names and essences shall witness that this Primal Light must occupy the station of the Axis in relation to the thirteen Reeds. Wisdom requireth that this Divine Axis appear when the sun declineth from its station. For His orb is Venus, and in astronomy there is no difference between the two save what its practitioners describe: it is

like the sun's orb, except that the equators of its eccentrics intersect the ecliptic at two diametrically opposed points. It hath epicycles fixed in its eccentrics, which are the deferents, as the sun is fixed, so that within them the surface of each toucheth the surface of its epicycle at its two points. Were the observers to will it, they could explain Universal Prophethood and its Special Characteristics, and the numbered Reeds manifested in the Temples of Guardianship, through the rising of the sun on the day of His birth, in correspondence with the higher world.

This is a mention drawn from the reckoning of the letter Mím concerning what passed before His Mission. After His Mission He abode in Makkah thirteen years, that the sacred Temples might appear from His own Self in the Sanctuary of God, and that all might know, through His abiding upon that land, the settling of the mystery of Eternity in the glittering, radiant, shining, sacred Temples. Therein are mysteries known to whoso contemplateth the simplicity of pure manifestation in every degree of the unseen and the seen. Were I to unfold every cause in every station, naught could encompass it. For the outpouring of God is continually renewed in the reality of the servant, and in no wise doth His outpouring cease. After His migration from the Sanctuary of God, which is the station of His Self in the rank of Divine Will, wisdom requireth that He alight upon a land whose name is Madinah and abide there ten years. For migration from the first station is the first journey from the True One unto creation. Therein the station of creation must possess ten degrees of manifestation. For the first station of individuation in the rank of creation is the Bayán, the effect of Action, then Meanings, Gates, and Leadership, then the Pillars in a station, then the Chiefs, then the Nobles in a station, then the Mineral, then the Vegetable, then the Inanimate.

This is the ruling concerning the universals of the worlds. Otherwise, were one to extend a hand in knowledge, one could set forth, for every cause of a thing, causes without end through it. Yet the foundation of those allusions is the light of the heart, the mystery of bringing into being, and the emergence of the signs of coming into being, in the stations of the Command and the manifestations of the consummation. Whoso contemplateth the station of the manifestation of the Essence, and attributeth unto His Self any attribute or description derived from aught else, hath indeed veered away from the light of the heart. The judgments of the Day of Return apply unto that person concerning accidental individual realities and substantial essentialities, whose reality none apprehendeth save through actual knowledge and the shining mystery. This concerneth the recognition of the origins through the light of contingent existence. Otherwise, in the station of concrete entities, each station hath its own ruling in those conditions. The mystery of those manifestations belongeth not to some knowledge peculiar to the people of the Bayán. Rather, a person unfoldeth the conditions of knowledge in the station of the Bayán according to what that person hath recognized of the judgments by direct observation.

Verily, manifestation hath its year, and the hour in which He, may My spirit be His ransom, was taken establisheth His Prophethood. For wisdom requireth that the Bearer of the Universal Outpouring appear through the manifestations of all the degrees. Verily, six hath been established as the perfect number, and ten is the completion of the station of receptivity. Thus the reckoning became sixty through the appearance of six degrees of Action within the ten degrees. Verily, the three alludeth unto the station of His own Self. For when He descended from the world of the Unseen unto the Seen, and conveyed unto all what God, the Adored One, commanded, the ruling of ascent appeareth—which is the third station amongst the inward degrees.

Thus wisdom required that He, may My spirit be His ransom, be taken on Monday. He was taken in the month wherein He had appeared, after the same reckoning of nights had passed. For the beginning resembleth the consummation, and it befitteth none other that the day of consummation should resemble the beginning proceeding from His own Self. I know not that God should manifest this for anyone, making the day of ascent resemble the descent. Glorified, then, be God, His Maker. Never hath an eye beheld the like of the Messenger of God, nor can His like exist in contingent being. Glorified be God, His Maker, above what they describe.

Since it was established in wisdom that every appearance manifested during the days of His Mission, indeed before it and whatsoever shall appear thereafter, possesseth tokens of His Universal Prophethood and signs of the manifestation of pure primal Simplicity—wisdom requireth that seven children appear from that Divine Tree, for Divine Will, when Its manifestation descendeth, becometh seven. Three thereof occupy the station of recounting Divine Will, and four thereof the station of recounting Divine Willpower. God took the six in this world, that all might know that, in the rank of descent, they were conjoined with naught, nor attached unto any condition. There remained thereof a blessed Leaf, all-embracing, recounting all Its degrees, which suffer no cessation in any station. Whoso recognizeth Her recognizeth Her through Herself. There is no

distinction between Her and It, save that She was constituted from It, indicated It, recounted It, and was Its honour and remembrance.

Wisdom requireth that Her name be Fáṭimah, the blessings of God be upon Her. Should one consider Her reckoning in letters, and add unto the letter of His Name, God bless Him and His Family, a reckoning of forty, which are the degrees of receptivity and reception, and a reckoning of three for the completion of Her recounting of the sign of Her Father, Her Husband, and Her Self, one shall behold the mystery of the Ultimate Reality. This possesseth subtleties amongst the people of the Ultimate Truth. Were these expressed, none would perceive a connection between the two in the station of appearance, although this very connection is the cause in the stations of the Unseen and the Inward. Through the name of Fáṭimah, the blessings of God be upon Her, are established the Primal Universal Guardianship of ʻAlí, peace be upon Him, and the Divine Absolute Prophethood of Her Father, peace be upon Him. For no eye hath beheld Her like in manifestation within contingent being. Had God not created ʻAlí, peace be upon Him, She would have no peer in contingent existence. Her blessed name indicateth the majesty of Her inwardness, the greatness of Her rank, and the loftiness of Her station. When the first letter, Alif, descendeth unto the station of ten and is multiplied by thirteen, the rank of the ten degrees, which are the Universal Reeds and the sacred manifestations, there remaineth only the letter Há, which is the last of Her noble name. This alludeth unto the degrees of Her affirmation of Oneness, and indicateth that Fáṭimah, the blessings of God be upon Her, hath borne, in the rank of the last letter of Her name, all that appeared in the Aḥmadan Countenance.

Thus were the realities of the Prophets and the Trustees brought into being from the overflow of Her Light. Thus do the realities of souls and horizons, although they are the effect of Her noble Body, indicate God, glorified be He. Had God not made Há the last letter of Her noble name, the realities of existing things would not have given utterance to the affirmation of Oneness in the Essence and to that which God determined in the station of Attributes. This is a proof of the mystery of the Ultimate Reality, for what those endowed with understanding have known there correspondeth to the judgment of reality only through what is here.

Unto whoso discerneth through the light of the Ultimate Truth it is disclosed that this reasoning proceedeth by the path of the Ultimate Reality and by knowledge of the beginnings of the Command in the furthest ends of the commands. Whoso possesseth not knowledge of the relation of the Ultimate Truth amongst the aspects of delimitation cannot behold those allusions, relations, and paths of conjunction and association in the proof of Universal Prophethood and its Special Characteristics. Wisdom hath required, and the Sacred Law hath firmly established, that the Bearer of that Most Great Light must possess an effect in the station of appearance, that it may recount all His stations in the inward rank. That effect must be an efficacious attribute, recounting the greatness of His station and the loftiness of His rank. Were the effect not to indicate its cause, the effect would not be an effect.

Since the mystery of the matter was established in wisdom, it is fitting that One such as Fáṭimah, the blessings of God be upon Her, should be an effect of that Universal Outpouring, through the appearance of the degrees of Divine Unity in Her name. Wisdom requireth that this effect be the cause of all causes amongst what God created beneath its rank, and that the last letter of its name be Há. For God created naught save for the affirmation of His Oneness, the manifestation of His Singleness, and the acknowledgment of the stations of His greatness and holiness. Divine Wisdom therefore requireth that all existing things be signs of the manifestation of that letter and tokens of that word. Through their existence are established the Special Characteristics of the Prophethood of Muḥammad. He, may My spirit be His ransom, hath a Name in the degrees of contingent being. Indeed, all names are a mark of His Name, indicating His Presence and recounting the court of His glory. Nay, the Prophets, the Messengers, and all good are manifestations of the stations of the sanctity of His Prophethood. When a person regardeth all the degrees of manifestation from the standpoint of limits, they are confined to eight stations. Amongst them is the world of the Bayán and the letter of the manifestation of Divine Unity in direct vision. It is the world of pure simplicity and indication in the station of contingent existence. Amongst them is the station of Meanings, which is the station of the first individuation of the Primal Remembrance in the first world. Amongst them is the human world, amongst them the world of the jinn, and amongst them the angelic world.

Amongst them is the mineral station, amongst them the station of plants, and amongst them the inanimate station. Every degree of every atom recounteth only the manifestation of His Prophethood in the kingdom of Names and Attributes. Should it occur to one endowed with understanding that those tokens of His Prophethood came after His appearance, dispel that person's doubt through the might and power of God, by explaining that rational proof established the existence of an Axis for the Greater World, and that this Axis attained the furthest station of God's outpouring in bodies only through Its descent from the beginning of the worlds unto the rank of corporeal things, and that this shining Light reached not the station of concrete entities in fewer than

seven thousand measures of Time. The completion of the reckoning is in a station wherein the Greater World recounteth the six bounded stages, which are the station of individuality. When it passed beyond them and attained unto the manifestation of the light of Divine Unity in His rank, God made Muḥammad manifest, and His Name in heaven is Aḥmad. This is indeed the mystery of the letter Mím. For were the station of receptivities and things received to reach its centre, naught would remain except the letter Alif.

This is the truth of the matter in the mystery of His Name. For whoso regardeth the manifestation of the Essence and Attributes with the eye of the beginning, His Name in the earthly station is the heavenly Name itself, save that the veils were more numerous through the appearance of degrees and conditions. All the proofs upon the horizons and within souls which I have unfolded in this Book concerning the Special Characteristics of Prophethood are degrees of the manifestations of a Point of Beginning, which was Divine Will Itself, and none other.

Yet whoso regardeth the station of the revelation of the Aḥmadan Essence hath no need to reason from signs indicating His Mission and the manifestation of His Power. For before God sent Him forth, the appearance of His individual reality was not manifest upon the horizons and within souls. Rather, when He appeared in this world, the signs of His revelation filled the existence of Origination and Invention. Let not the path of recognition prove difficult for the beholder. What is intended by Time and the mention of "before" concerneth the station of Duration and Perpetuity, rather than bounded Time. For at the very moment Muḥammad was sent forth with His Message, He filled all existence with the signs of His Prophethood, although ere His appearance the sign of His Mission was pre-existent within souls and upon the horizons. Its likeness is that of a servant who asked the Imám concerning the ruling on eating dates. He, may My spirit be His ransom, answered by setting forth alternatives: if the servant ate, that eating had been decreed in the knowledge of God, and if the servant ate not, it had been decreed in the knowledge of God that the servant ate not. Likewise was the ruling on the day of the Mission. When He was sent forth, it was decreed in the knowledge of God that His sign had lain concealed in the reality of souls and horizons. This belongeth to the mysteries of the Family of Muḥammad, as it is fully set forth in the Ḥadíth: "*Our Cause is the Mystery, the Mystery of mysteries, the Concealed Mystery, and the Mystery veiled in mystery.*"

Amongst the sacred allusions foundational to the recognition of Universal Prophethood is knowledge of the form of His Name in the fourfold station. For the appearance of the Bearer of the Primal Outpouring was complete only through four stations amongst the stations of the affirmation of His Oneness. Amongst them is the affirmation of Oneness in the Essence, in the very appearance of the Primal Remembrance. Amongst them is the affirmation of Oneness in the Attributes, in the very appearance of the mention of Divine Willpower. Amongst them is the affirmation of Oneness in Actions, in the very appearance of the mention of Determination. Amongst them is the affirmation of Oneness in Worship, in the very appearance of the mention of Decree. The four letters of His Name indicate those universal stations. The letter Mím is the manifestation of God's Name, the Withholder. Then the letter Ḥá is the manifestation of God's Name, the Living. Then the letter Mím is the manifestation of God's Name, the Giver of Life. Then the letter Dál is the manifestation of God's Name, the Bringer of Death. Thus three letters of His sacred Name belong to the letters of "*The Path of ʻAlí is Truth, unto it we hold fast,*" and one letter thereof belongeth to the dark letters. Were all to ascend unto the summit of realities, they could not recognize that dark letter. For it is a letter whose existence occupied the rank of that Name, indicating the station of His individual reality in the stations of the Dominion. In the station of individuality it was greater than the luminous letters amongst all substantial realities. In descent the fourfold Temple followeth the threefold form. Thus the first Name which God chose for Himself was the Most High, the Most Great. In ascent, however, the order is reversed.

The triangular form is the written form of the Guardian's Name, and it is the mystery of the Prophet's Name, as al-Ṣádiq indicated in His words unto Mufaḍḍal. Since this Tradition gathereth together the mysteries of Prophethood and Guardianship, I shall recount it here, that it may be an honour unto the beholders and a sign of truth unto those who recognize. Al-Mufaḍḍal ibn ʻUmar al-Juʻfí related this account. When I was alone with our Master al-Ṣádiq, peace be upon Him, Whose promise is mercy, and found the opportunity I had desired, I said unto Him, "*I ask Thee, O my Master, concerning what hath crossed my mind of the appearance of the Meaning as a countenance in an ordered form. Doth the Essence assume a form, become divided, become apportioned, or change from Its own being? Can It be conceived in minds through motion or rest? How doth the Unseen appear mingled with a weak creature? How can the creature endure to behold the Creator, given the weakness of created things?*" He, peace be upon Him, said, "*O Mufaḍḍal, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of night and day are signs for those endowed with understanding. O Mufaḍḍal, Our knowledge is difficult, exceedingly difficult, and Our mystery is rugged, far*

beyond the tongue's expression save by allusion. What Our followers know accordeth with their understanding of Us and their knowledge of Us. Away with whoso relateth what they comprehend not, and placeth faith in what hath no place in reason nor matureth in understanding. That is the faith of the tongue and the ruggedness of the senses, and therein is the argument against its bearer. For the Qur'án descended according to 'Thee do I mean, and hear thou, O neighbour!' Hearken, then, unto what is revealed unto thee. Look with the eye of thy reason, give heed through the light of thy understanding, hear and comprehend. Thou hast asked concerning mighty tidings and a truth of certainty. I therefore cast a question before thee, concerning that in whose recognition many creatures have gone astray, save those upon whom thy Lord hath mercy. He, verily, is the Forgiving, the Merciful. It is also that which al-Báqir made known unto Jábir concerning the rugged, most rugged matter, hidden from the rest of the world save the choicest of the specially chosen and the eloquent entrusted preservers, who were sincere and distinguished, bore witness unto truth through what they knew, and affirmed what they beheld. Thus is the saying of the Faithful Master mentioned in the Revelation, 'Save those who bear witness to the truth, and they know'—that it is the truth. The matter, O Mufaḍḍal, is subtle, and the mystery of this knowledge obscure. Know that the Essence, manifest beyond Names and Attributes, is an inaccessible Unseen. Naught withholdeth itself from Him in truth, nor is any hidden subtlety concealed from Him. Naught is greater than He. He is described through His qualification therewith, renowned through His signs, known through His manifestations. He was before 'before', and ere He constituted 'where', when there was no 'where' beside Him, and ere place, when there was no place save what He brought into being. Without end He changeth not His state, nor the being wherein He was. He needeth naught from which to seek aid, nor is He referred unto another that He might be known thereby. Rather, He is where He is and where He was, and there hath been none but He.

"Know, O Mufaḍḍal, that outwardness is the perfection of inwardness, and inwardness the perfection of silence. Outwardness, Power, and Might are the perfection of Action. Were the universals of wisdom incomplete in either their inwardness or their outwardness, wisdom would be deficient in the Wise One, even were He powerful, O Mufaḍḍal." I said, "*Increase me, O my Master, in explanation whereby those who have drawn nigh may live, and whereby those who walk in Thy Light and recognize Thee with true recognition may draw nearer.*" He, peace be upon Him, said, "*O Mufaḍḍal, the appearance of Eternity amongst His creation is wondrous. None knoweth this save one learned and informed. The Essence is not called Light, for It illuminateth every light. When He willed, without reflection or care, to manifest Divine Will and create Divine Will for the thing, these being Mím and Shín, there shone forth from His Essence a radiant Light, having no growth of lights unto It, unsevered from Him. Thus the Light caused the light of Radiance to be made manifest unto whoso discerned from It, and Radiance manifested a shadow. And He established the form of existence through the two selves of Radiance and Shadow. He made Light its inward aspect, and the Essence, from Him, its origin. Likewise the Name is not united with His Light. He beheld not His creation through His creation. When rendered inward, It is in His Essence and His Unseen, wherein naught is like unto Him as He is, save He. Exalted be God, the Most Great.*

"O Mufaḍḍal, thou hast asked concerning Divine Will, how Its Originator began It. Understand what I shall recount unto thee, O Mufaḍḍal, for thou hast asked concerning a mighty matter. My Master, the Pre-existent, Eternity Itself, exalted be His remembrance, originateth His Divine Will, of which He hath ever had knowledge. That was Divine Willpower, without exertion, without the arising of a thought, without transition from rest unto motion or from motion unto rest, for Power is His nature. For He manifesteth Divine Will, which is His Name, and through It indicateth His Essence, through no need of His for It and no deficiency in Him. Why, then, did It appear? The Name cometh into being at His willing through the nature of wisdom and through His knowledge that wisdom is His bringing what is in being into direct manifestation. Had He not manifested what He knew from the depths of His knowledge into the existence of its meanings, one unto another, He would have been deficient and wisdom incomplete. For the perfection of potency is Action, the perfection of knowledge the known, and the perfection of existence the thing brought into being. Open, O Mufaḍḍal, thy heart unto the speech of thy Lord. Know that Light was not inward within the Essence and then appeared from It, nor outward from It and then became inward. Rather, Light proceedeth from the Essence without division, is hidden in His hiddenness without illumination, and shineth from Him without separation, as the ray from the disc and light from the ray. Verily thy Master, O Mufaḍḍal, invented the Greatest Name and Divine Will, which brought things into being. In His invention of the Name, Light suffered neither increase nor diminution. The Name proceedeth from the Light of the Essence without division, and Its outward aspect is without partition. It summoneth unto Its Master and pointeth unto Its Meaning. This occurreth in the exposition of every cause, to establish the proof and manifest the summons, that the acknowledger's acknowledgment may be confirmed and the denier's denial turned back upon them. If the Master be hidden from the eyes of His creatures, it is they who are veiled by the hiddenness, tested through the Form, O Mufaḍḍal, wherein the Name appeared as the radiance of Its Light, the shadow of Its Radiance, whereby creation assumed individual form that they might behold It. It indicated unto them Its Originator, that ye might recognize Him through the Form, which is the attribute of the Self, while the Self is the attribute of the Essence. The Name is

invented from the very Self of the Essence, and thus was called a Self. For this reason hath He said, mighty and glorious is He, 'God warneth you of His Self.' He warned you against making Muḥammad a fashioned thing, for then the Essence would be originated and fashioned. This is manifest rejection of faith.

"*O Mufaḍḍal, between the Unique One and the One there is only what is between motion and rest, or between Káf and Nún, through Its connection with the Light of the Essence, subsisting through Its own Self. This is His saying, exalted be He, 'Hast thou not seen how thy Lord extendeth the shadow? Had He willed, He would have made it still. Then We made the sun its guide.' This meaneth what was therein of the Essence. The Glorified Body is Radiance and Shadow. It is that which is changed neither in the ancient ages of Duration nor in the times that arise. His outward aspect is the Glorified Body, and His inward aspect the reality of the Meaning. That Form is the Primal Matter of primal matters, the Agent of things acted upon, the foundation of motions, and the cause of every cause. Beyond It is no mystery, and none knoweth what It is save He. It must be known, O Mufaḍḍal, that the Glorified Body, of which He said, 'My outward aspect is Leadership and Trusteeship, and My inward aspect an inaccessible Unseen that cannot be apprehended,' is not the Allness of the Maker, nor is the Maker other than It. It is He in establishment, bringing into being, direct vision, certainty, and individuation. It is not He wholly, nor collectively, nor by enumeration, nor by encompassing.*" Al-Mufaḍḍal continued, "*O my Master, grant me a fuller explanation, for I have known of Thy bounty and favours what I fall short of describing.*" He, peace be upon Him, said, "*O Mufaḍḍal, ask whatsoever thou desirest.*" I said, "*O my Master, that Form which I saw upon the pulpits summoneth from Its own essence unto Its own essence through the reality of the Meaning, and openly declareth Divinity. Thou hast told me that It is not the Allness of the Maker, nor is the Maker other than It. How may we know the reality of this saying?*" He, peace be upon Him, said, "*O Mufaḍḍal, those are the houses of Light, the garments of manifestation, the tongues of expression, and the mine of allusion. Through them He veiled thee from Him, and from them is the indication unto Him. The Form is neither He, nor is He other than It. He is concealed through Light, manifest through revelation. Each beholdeth Him according to their recognition, and attaineth according to their capacity. Some behold Him near, and some behold Him far. O Mufaḍḍal, the Form is a radiant Light and the Power of the All-Powerful. The appearance of thy Master is a mercy unto whoso hath faith in Him and acknowledgeth Him*." I said, "*Is He Muḥammad?*" He said, "*He is the One. His appearance is a torment unto whoso denieth and rejecteth. Beyond Him is no further goal, nor hath He any end.*" I said, "*O my Master, then the One is He Who is Muḥammad?*" He said, *"The One when named, and Muḥammad when described.*" I said, "*O my Master, is 'Alí, then, a Mím distinct from the Meaning, a description of His Name?*" He, peace be upon Him, said, "*Hast thou not heard His saying, 'My outward aspect is Leadership and Trusteeship, and My inward aspect an inaccessible Unseen that cannot be apprehended'?*"

I said, "*O my Master, what is the inward aspect of Mím?*" He, peace be upon Him, said, "*The Light of the Essence. It is the first of existence, the Originator of creation, and the Fashioner of every creature, connected with Light and distinct that manifestation may be beheld. Though far, It is near, and though remote, It answereth. It is the One, the origin of numbers, and unto It is their return. It is the Concealed.*" I said, "*O my Master, the Master Mím saith, 'I am the City of Knowledge, and 'Alí is its Gate.'*" He, peace be upon Him, said, "*O Mufaḍḍal, He intended thereby the succession which He caused to flow from His Light. His saying, 'And 'Alí is its Gate,' meaneth that He is the highest of the degrees and a Gate for them, through Whom they enter the City. He is the Ensign of Knowledge. He is the Interpreter through what His Master imparteth unto Him of the knowledge of the Kingdom and the majesty of Divinity.*" I said, "*O my Master, the Master Mím saith, 'I and 'Alí are as these two. I know neither right nor left,' and He joined His two forefingers.*" He said, "*O Mufaḍḍal, none amongst the learned hath the power to separate the Name from the Meaning. Yet the Meaning is above It, for from the Light of the Essence He invented It. Between It and the Light there is neither distinction nor separation. For this reason He said, 'I and 'Alí are as these two,' indicating unto those who recognize that there is no separation there. Were there separation between Him and Him, He would be a person other than He. This is manifest rejection of faith. Hast thou not heard His saying, exalted be He, 'To make division between God and His Messengers,' and His saying, 'They sever what God commanded to be joined'? And therein is an allusion unto the Actions, that it be said, 'God, between Him and His Originator, is an intermediary.' For this reason He said, 'I and 'Alí are as these two,' for He is the beginning of Names and the first to be named. Whoso knoweth the allusion hath no need of expression, and whoso knoweth the places of the attribute hath attained the settled ground of recognition. Hast thou not heard the Name's indications unto Its Master, openly and without mere allusion, when He saith, 'Thou removest My sorrow. Thou relievest My distress. Thou dischargest My debt. Thou fulfillest My promise'? He discloseth His Name manifest amongst His creation—'Thou art 'Alí'—an indication from Him unto My Master. Thus the indication was unto His Gate, 'I am the City of Knowledge. 'Alí is its Gate. Whoso desireth the City, let that person seek the Gate.'*"

Since in the profound depths of those words the Special Characteristics of Prophethood were established in the station of the manifestation of signs in the kingdom of Names and Attributes, I shall recount proofs in the station of the Sacred Law, that whoso desireth to know may recognize the import of those allusions through these Traditions descended from the Suns of Grandeur and Majesty. Abú ʻAbd Alláh related that God, blessed and exalted be He, said, "*O Muḥammad, I created Thee and ʻAlí as one Light, meaning a spirit without a body, before I created My heavens, My earth, My Throne, and My Sea. Thou didst continually affirm My Oneness and magnify Me. Then I joined the Spirit of You both and made Them one, and It magnified Me, sanctified Me, and affirmed My Oneness. Then I divided It into two, and divided the two into two, so that They became four—Muḥammad one, ʻAlí one, and Ḥasan and Ḥusayn two.*" Then God created Fáṭimah from a Light, originating Her as a spirit without a body. Then He, glorified be He, anointed Us with His right hand, and His Light shone within Us. Abú Ḥamzah al-Thumálí related, "*I heard Abú Jaʻfar, peace be upon Him, say that God, glorified be He, revealed unto Muḥammad, 'O Muḥammad, I created Thee when Thou wert naught, and breathed into Thee of My Spirit as an honour from Me wherewith I honoured Thee, when I made obedience unto Thee incumbent upon all My creation. Whoso obeyeth Thee hath obeyed Me, and whoso disobeyeth Thee hath disobeyed Me. I made this incumbent concerning ʻAlí and, amongst His descendants, those whom I singled out for His own Self.'*"

It is related through a sound chain from Abú Jaʻfar, peace be upon Him, who said, "*God, blessed and exalted be He, hath ever been singular in Oneness. Then He created Muḥammad, ʻAlí, and Fáṭimah, and They abode for a thousand periods of Duration. Then He created all things, caused Them to witness their creation, made obedience unto Them incumbent upon them, and entrusted their affairs unto Them. They make lawful whatsoever They will and forbid whatsoever They will, and They shall will only as God willeth.*" Abú Jaʻfar then said, "*O Muḥammad, this is the religion. Whoso goeth ahead of it departeth from it, whoso falleth behind it is effaced, and whoso cleaveth unto it attaineth. Receive it, O Muḥammad.*" It is soundly related from Abú ʻAbd Alláh that the Messenger of God said, "*I am the first to have faith in My Lord and the first to answer when God, glorified be He, took the covenant of the Prophets and caused Them to bear witness concerning Themselves, 'Am I not your Lord?' They said, 'Yea.' I was the first Prophet to say 'Yea.'*" Thus He preceded Them in acknowledging God. Jábir related from Abú Jaʻfar, who said, "*O Jábir, the first that God created was Muḥammad and His Family, the Guides who are rightly guided. They were forms of Light before God.*" I said, "*What are the forms?*" He said, "*The shadow of Light, luminous bodies without spirits. Muḥammad was sustained by one Spirit, the Holy Spirit, through which He and His Family worshipped God. Thus He created Them forbearing, learned, righteous, and chosen. They worship God through prayer, fasting, prostration, glorification, and the affirmation of Oneness. They perform prayer, undertake pilgrimage, and fast.*" Since the outward in every world correspondeth to the inward, and the hidden mystery is the very outward manifestation, let the knower behold, through the manifestations of the origins in the exposition of those Traditions, the appearance of the rational proofs which I have recounted through the proof of wisdom in the stations of substantial realities, material things, accidental qualities, forms, and whatsoever God, exalted be His station, knoweth beyond those allusions. He is the Guardian in the beginning and the return. What I have indicated through the proofs of wisdom in those stations belongeth to the mysteries of the people of Grace and Justice in the kingdom of Names and Attributes. The proofs known to the people of exhortation and of disputation in the fairest manner belong to the paths of delimitation. The ways of reasoning differ according to the stations.

Whatever proof a person adduceth to establish the Prophethood of any of the Prophets, by that very proof is the Prophethood of Muḥammad established. For the proofs of humankind fall within two kinds. If the proof concerneth the station of souls, it consisteth of manifestations within the degrees of souls, amongst the tokens whereby the servant attaineth assurance and tranquillity. If it concerneth the station of horizons, it belongeth to the manifestations of miracles which filled the east and west of the earth, establishing Prophethood. There is no greater proof of Muḥammad's Prophethood than the Qur'án. Through it are established the Special Characteristics of His Prophethood and His General Prophethood, in every station of manifestation, unseen and seen. Today the miracle of the Qur'án is manifest. For God hath placed the letters in the hands of all, with none of the twenty-eight wanting. Yet were all to gather to compose words like a single utterance thereof, they would never possess the power, though all should assist one another.

This is no easy matter. Rather, it is greater than all His miracles manifested from the court of the glory of His sanctity. Today the existence of the Qur'án establisheth the Special Characteristics of Universal Prophethood for the Aḥmadan Countenance, the blessings of God be upon Him, so long as the sun of beginning riseth through beginning and the sun of ending then setteth through ending. Indeed, whoso contemplateth the stations of the seen could, were they so minded, demonstrate unto all existing

things the Special Characteristics of His Prophethood by means of any letter of the Qur'án. For God revealed the Qur'án in a manner whose like none hath the power to produce. What is intended by "*the like*" is the Divine potency, the Lordly Power, the sacred Words, and the subtle Meanings before which all in the heavens and the earth are powerless.

Were the outward forms of the letters what was intended, there is no doubt that the Bedouin Arabs brought words they had composed, and the Messenger of God accepted them not. Thus, when the verse "*The Hour hath drawn nigh, and the moon is cleft asunder*" descended, one of them said, "*The Hour hath approached, and the moon is cleft asunder.*" The Messenger of God said unto that person, "*May God shatter thy mouth!*" This proveth that the imitator shall never bring its like. For the condition of likeness is fulfilled only when what is brought resembleth it in every respect. Were the Wise One to command the bringing of its like, He would regard every station thereof, from the stations of its detachment unto the furthest degrees of its multiplication. Since He, exalted be His station, knew that creation could not contend in bringing all the degrees of His Book, which His knowledge encompassed, He challenged them in His Book through the outward forms, which were the lowest of its degrees. Even therein they could not bring an utterance like it. For the foundation of likeness is fulfilled where the utterer is truthful and speaketh from the origins of causes. If that person were not truthful, what they brought would belie them. For the proof is established when what is brought proceedeth from God. Were it not from Him, no such ruling would apply unto it.

Since it was established that the proof proceeded from God, neither incapacity nor departure from the Divine principles appeared therein. For God is Living and Powerful. None can render powerless whosoever speaketh from Him, nor can anyone bring the like of what that person uttereth. Thus is the authority of the Qur'án established over every degree of existence, jinn and humankind. Were all to gather to bring the like of an Alif of the Qur'án, they would have no power to bring it, nor would they bring it, though all should assist one another. For when God revealed that Alif, He conferred upon it the dominion of His appearance and dominion over all that is minute and great. Allusions veil the servant from drawing nigh unto the court of Sanctity and Attributes. Were it otherwise, the servant would behold that beneath that Alif of the Qur'án are mentioned all manifestations of the origins of Action and all manifestations of receptivity. Since the forms resemble one another, the servant cannot distinguish by its form the Alif that descended from God from the Alif of creation. Glorified be God! How mighty is the station of His Book, and how exalted the appearance of Its signs! Through those signs flow the manifestations of His transcendence, as though the Book were a thing whose like existeth not in His Dominion, nor hath It an equal in the reality of Its mystery. Thus was it ordained in the Sacred Law, in the mystery of Ultimate Truth, that none touch that Alif of the Qur'án save in purity. Were creatures to look, they would behold in actuality, in the greatness of a letter of the Qur'án, all manifestations of contingent being according to its measure. Were the Imám, peace be upon Him, or whoso is aided by God's bounty, to desire to draw forth the whole of religion from the meaning of the letter Alif, that could indeed be accomplished, for God's outpouring hath no end.

Just as the meaning of the Alif hath a meaning in the Book of God, even so doth the ruling extend without end through the meaning of that meaning. Every letter of the Qur'án possesseth from God a ruling as I have sprinkled forth concerning its Alif. Nay, were the whole sea ink for one letter thereof, the seas would perish before its meaning reached a limit in expression. Rather, therein runneth the saying of the Most Gracious, "*Neither fresh nor dry, save in a clear Book.*" Thus did 'Alí declare in the station of exaltation, "*I am the Point beneath Bá.*" From it came existing things into the rank of direct manifestation. Today the Special Characteristics of Prophethood are established through that Book, for the effect indicateth its cause. Just as the Prophet, may God bless Him and His Family, is the Bearer of the Universal Outpouring, before Whom names are cut off and traces vanish from His vicinity, so is the ruling concerning His Book. In the world of letters and meanings It standeth alone, beyond likenesses and equals, possessing dominion over all names and attributes. Whoso would examine the proof concerning the Special Characteristics of Prophethood, being formed from the clay of 'Illiyyín and having never before entered the religion of Islám, shall straightway have faith in the Qur'án upon hearing a verse thereof. For naught beside that Book summoneth, through its inward mystery, unto that Presence. In every letter thereof lieth treasured a sign of Power from the Mighty, the All-Forgiving.

It is as though that sign of Power were manifest in this blessed verse, "*Had We sent down this Qur'án upon a mountain, thou wouldst have seen it humbled, rent asunder through fear of God. These likenesses We set forth for humankind, that haply they may reflect.*" Today whoso desireth, with insight, to enter the religion of Muḥammad, the Messenger of God, and the Guardianship of His chosen Ones must enter through recognition of the Qur'án as a beloved Sign from the Most Gracious. No human being can bring its like. Though miracles are established through successive transmission, and His Prophethood through signs within souls and indications upon horizons, for anyone possessing a fragrance of the musk of fairness, yet the recognition to which all these

give rise goeth no further than recognition of the self and the self's acceptance. Through the Qur'án, however, the heart is confirmed, the spirit stilled, the soul assured, and the body refreshed. It possesseth an effect upon existence such as God hath assigned unto none other.

By consensus It is the greatest of the signs of God in the station of meanings and letters. No bodily miracle equalleth It, for naught in existence is nobler than speech. Thus God placed the Bayán between Himself and His chosen Ones. It hath ever accompanied whoso is an intermediary between the True One and creation. Thus is the Qur'án the greatest of signs, for in It all miracles are manifest. Beneath Its rank It must contain all that is fresh and dry. Yet the ruling of the Qur'án extendeth not to the other miracles, for utterance surpasseth in elucidation whatsoever is beneath it. In God is refuge concerning what the pen hath set forth in the Bayán.

Amongst the conditions indicating His Absolute Prophethood are the traces of His own Self, as Abú Ja'far indicated in His words, exalted be His remembrance. "*In the Messenger of God were three things found in none other. He had no equal. He passed not along a road but that whoso passed that way two or three days thereafter would know by the fragrance of His sweat that He had passed there. He passed no stone or tree but that it prostrated before Him.*" When the Being of the Divine Will descendeth into this world, none beneath It can possess those attributes. Through each of them is His Eternal Universal Prophethood established. I point unto the last of those statements, that all things prostrate unto Him, for unto the Divine Will all wills are submissive. Since it was established that the inanimate rank, the last of the degrees of outpouring, prostrateth before His Presence, this proveth that above the world of body all are humbled before Him. In relation to His Sign within souls, all the conditions of those souls prostrate themselves unto God. Likewise is the ruling upon the horizons, as the Imám indicated in His saying. This is supported by the Word of God in the station of the manifest inward, "*There is naught but glorifieth Him with praise, yet ye comprehend not their glorification.*" Since transmitted testimony indicateth the existence of the Special Characteristics of Prophethood in correspondence with reason's judgment, I indicate concealed proofs whose inmost reality none knoweth save God or whom He willeth. Moved by the favours I have witnessed from that honoured person, I do so in the sole hope that one may act thereby in the religion of God and convey its reward unto the one who commanded the composition of this Book. The very intellect which would recognize the import of the Special Characteristics of Prophethood and have faith therein is, beyond doubt, an aspect of the effects of that Universal Prophethood's outpouring. Were the atoms of air to desire to apprehend the ruling of the sun's garments, they could know naught thereof save what the sun, by its ray, manifested unto them and through them in the station of their individuality. Whoso recognizeth through direct vision the import of this exposition shall witness that the intellects of all can apprehend no more of His Prophethood than atoms of dust apprehend at the rising of sunlight. Whatsoever thou hast known of the appearance of the sun's garments is in truth recognition of the ray that reached those particles in their own rank. Beyond this naught is possible for them in any station.

Likewise is the ruling concerning intellects which seek, through proofs upon horizons and within souls, to recognize the Special Characteristics of Prophethood belonging to the Aḥmadan Temple, the Divine Garments, the Lordly Countenance, and the radiant, shining, Perpetual Being. For beyond this naught is possible in the station of recognition. In the primal reality, the Special Characteristics of His Prophethood can be established for none save in the rank of His own Self. This holdeth even in the stations wherein that Prophethood is manifest, though it have a sign therein. Yet this is the matter I have sent down in the depths of those allusions and unfolded within the hidden aspect of those expressions, for whoso distinguisheth separation from connection in the kingdom of Names and Attributes. When the intellect recognizeth that ruling, it shall testify before God and His chosen Ones that to attempt to establish the Special Characteristics of Prophethood for the Muḥammadan Temple through severed reflections is the greatest sin, equalled by no sin. For that which cannot be established within contingent existence as it truly is in its matter and judgment is too exalted and mighty for thee to establish through severed reflections, whose very being indicateth incapacity, attesteth exclusion, and pointeth unto separation. Glory be! How grave is the judgment concerning whoso desireth to act thus! I have found no path, nor do I behold a proof, whereby to recognize that glorious Axis.

God and His angels are witnesses over Me that, in all the signs I have unfolded for establishing the Special Characteristics of Prophethood and Absolute Guardianship, I intended solely to evince utter incapacity to set forth the proof and pure abasement before the recognition of the path. For beyond this naught is possible in any station of creation. Whoso claimeth to establish the Special Characteristics of Prophethood as they are in their own reality hath harboured falsehood within themselves, and the judgments of the limits of their receptivity apply unto them. Yet because the signs in some souls are subtler and finer than in others, I have unfolded such firmly established signs as may be expressed concerning the Special Characteristics of Prophethood,

even as the glass bespeaketh the wine. As the poet said, "*The glass grew subtle, and the wine grew subtle. The two appeared alike, and the matter became confounded. It was as though there were wine and no cup, as though there were a cup and no wine.*"

Another said concerning His station, "*Thy Attributes are Names, and Thine Essence is Substance, Its meanings free from the attributes of substance. It is exalted above accidents, 'how,' and 'when,' and too great to be likened unto the elements.*" This is the mystery of the matter in the exposition of Ultimate Reality. Today I know none who can establish the ruling of that Prophethood as I have unfolded it in this Book. For My knowledge of how to establish it cometh through the aid of the Lord of lords. As for any other who treadeth the paths of Ultimate Truth, I find in what they bring only testimonies from the Book and the Tradition. Well hath it been said in verse, "*Each claimeth union with Laylá, yet Laylá acknowledgeth this for none of them.*" "*When tears gush forth from my cheeks, those who weep are distinguished from those who feign weeping.*" Yet honour, in truth, consisteth not in knowing how to establish this obscure matter. Rather, honour lieth in the words of the poet whom the Messenger declared truthful. "*Lo, all things save God are vain, and every delight must surely pass away.*"

All the firmly established proofs I have unfolded in those allusions are the portion of the people of glories. The reality of knowing and establishing the Special Characteristics of Prophethood lieth in a station wherein knowledge is the known itself, and the proof is inwardness itself. Were it otherwise, the Primal Outpouring would not be established through another. To seek to establish a thing in its own reality through aught other than itself pertaineth to veils and coverings and lieth outside the path of recognition, as the Imám, peace be upon Him, indicated in the discourse already mentioned, wherein He said, "*For He knew that wisdom consisteth in bringing what is in being into direct manifestation. Had He not manifested what He knew from the depths of His knowledge into the existence of its meanings, one unto another, He would have been deficient and wisdom incomplete. For the perfection of potency is Action, the perfection of knowledge the known, and the perfection of existence the thing brought into being.*" In truth, recognition dependeth upon that very path. Were someone to seek to know redness through whiteness, or greenness through yellowness, they would not know its reality. For a thing is not known in its reality apart from the aspect of its own self. Whoso desireth to know the Special Characteristics of Prophethood in their reality can do so only through the Prophet's own Self. As the Imám, peace be upon Him, indicated concerning that station, "*Know God through God, and the Prophet through Prophethood.*" This is indeed the mystery in Ultimate Reality. Recognition possesseth two ranks amongst the people of the Heights. If it concerneth recognition of the Essence, it is recognition through reality and perfection, as the Imám indicated in many stations of recognition. Amongst these is the saying of ʻAlí, peace be upon Him, in the Dawn Prayer, "*O Thou Who hast pointed unto Thine Essence through Thine Essence.*" Amongst them is the saying of ʻAlí ibn al-Ḥusayn, peace be upon Him, in the supplication of Abú Ḥamzah al-Thumálí, "*Through Thee have I recognized Thee. Thou didst guide me unto Thee and summon me unto Thee. But for Thee I should not know what Thou art.*" Amongst them is what He said, exalted be His remembrance, in that which descended in the Gospel, "*Know thyself, and thou shalt know thy Lord. Thine outward is for passing away, and thine inward—I am.*" As for recognition through indication, wherein the effect indicateth its cause, this is the lowest station of recognition. Indeed, God accepteth not this recognition from the people of the Bayán, having made known unto them through His trusted Ones that God is too exalted to be known through His creation. Rather, His creatures know Him through Him.

Since recognition of a thing through its own essence was established in the station of the first revelation, likewise is the ruling in the manifestations of this revelation. None can establish the Special Characteristics of Muḥammad's Prophethood through the signs of souls and horizons by the path of Ultimate Truth. For what is beneath the Essence of the Bearer of those Special Characteristics is an effect in relation to that station. True recognition of a thing is not established through the effects of its manifestations. Rather, whoso desireth to establish the Special Characteristics of His Prophethood must appoint no proof for Him beneath His own Self, nor path unto Him beneath His own Essence. All things are cut off from Him through the loftiness of the splendour of His majesty in God's Dominion. Effects are debarred, even through their own effects, from recognizing His Presence, by reason of the loftiness of the praise of His splendour in the religion of God. Glorified be God! How exalted is the station of God's Prophet in contingent existence, and how mighty the praise of God's Messenger throughout created being! He standeth alone, beyond resemblance and equality in the worlds of concrete entities. "*O Substance, through Whom existence arose, and all people after Thee are accidents.*" Since it was established, in the station of recognizing the Essence, that such recognition, so far as it is possible in contingent being, is possible only through His Essence and for His Essence, likewise doth the ruling run in the Point of the existence of the Primal Universal Outpouring, which is the Primal Remembrance and Eternity manifest unto Him through Him. Since wisdom requireth that the descent of the Primal Remembrance unto the station of dust resemble the appearance of the beginning through Him, it is established that what is other than the Essence of the Bearer of Universal

Prophethood cannot appear in the world of the body save through the Temple of His beginning, through Whom all prostrate unto God. From this exposition a person knoweth that none other than the Point of the Bayán hath said, in the station of elucidation, "*I am the first who answered in the realm of particles.*" For none beneath Him hath the power to utter such words.

Just as His Essence knoweth His Essence, likewise is the ruling concerning His Prophethood. His Prophethood is known through Prophethood itself, and through naught beneath it. Whoso desireth to establish it through any other proof hath been veiled from beholding the stations of the recognition of essences and the manifestations of attributes. Its establishment through such a proof would be pure negation. For were I to establish His Prophethood through something beneath His Essence, only the existence of that lesser thing would truly be established, while Prophethood itself, for which the ink floweth, would remain unestablished.

This path for establishing Universal Prophethood is greater than all proofs and demonstrations. What is other than it belongeth to the station of semblances and accidents, wherein the servant, in the station of seeking, findeth rest through fair exhortation and disputation in the fairest manner. As for the proof of wisdom, which is the very reality of proof for the wayfarer upon the path of God, the Glorious, it cannot be attained by any other path. For all the greatness of its station, the loftiness of its rank, and the exaltation of its splendour above all manifestations of proofs, it is lighter than all proofs. For whenever multiplicity increaseth, the veils grow dense, and whenever the veils grow thin, the station becometh subtle. Thus the proof of wisdom, in its utmost subtlety, is remote from sight and difficult for thought to recognize. Thus the Tradition proclaimeth its ruling, "*Our Cause is difficult, exceedingly difficult. None beareth it save an angel brought nigh, a Prophet sent forth, or one whose heart God hath tested for faith.*"

Since the Special Characteristics of Prophethood were established through the proof of wisdom for whoso possesseth the faculty of the heart and the mystery of Ultimate Truth, I indicate through that proof the degrees of Guardianship and how they are established, since God joined the ruling of Guardianship unto Prophethood. The Primal Remembrance descendeth not in manifestation within the unseen world save through seven stations. For a thing hath an aspect toward its Lord and an aspect toward its own self. When those aspects are established, the ruling of connection is established, and thereby the three are established. When the three descended, they became four. Thus God made the reckoning of the stations of Action seven, for without them naught is possible in Origination. It is the perfect, complete number, than which the people of Ultimate Truth recognize none more perfect amongst numbers. When those degrees appeared in the unseen world, the selves of the Imáms were realized. Their reckoning is seven—*Muḥammad, ʻAlí, Fáṭimah, Ḥasan, Ḥusayn, Jaʻfar,* and *Músá,* the blessings of God be upon Them. When those seven descended from the unseen world unto the station of the seen, They appeared as fourteen Souls. For the outward manifestation of those Names in the degrees of bodies and utterances is ʻAlí, Muḥammad, ʻAlí, Muḥammad, ʻAlí, Ḥasan, and Mím–Ḥá–Mím–Dál, the blessings of God be upon Them. They indicate God in every world through an indication than which none higher is possible in contingent being, declaring that there is none other God except Him, in very truth, in the Eternity of eternities. He is free of the servants, and the servants are free of Him. Between them is neither a bond nor a separation of isolation. His relation to every atom is the same ere it cometh into existence and after it cometh into existence. None knoweth how He is save His own Self. Glorified and exalted is He above the partners they associate with Him.

Since it was established that, in the origins of causes, the Primal Remembrance appeareth solely through fourteen Reeds, knowledge of that station establisheth the Guardianship of the Imáms of religion through Their own Selves by the proof of wisdom, through Their manifestations by the proof of exhortation, and through Their names by the proof of disputation in the fairest manner. Were one who contemplateth the station of the Essence and journeyeth in the kingdom of Names and Attributes to behold the manifestations of Universal Guardianship, they could establish Their Absolute Guardianship over all existing things through every aspect ascribed unto Them. For through every proof establishing the affirmation of Oneness in the Essence are established the Absolute Prophethood of Muḥammad, the Messenger of God, and the Universal Guardianship of His Trustees, may the blessings of God be upon Them. For the pillars of Divine Unity are letters which in every respect indicate God alone. Thus the sign of Oneness in contingent manifestation is the very sign of Prophethood in formative manifestation.

Likewise is the ruling concerning the signs of Guardianship, which are the very sign of Prophethood in the inward and outward stations. Since the pen hath run in mentioning the pillars of Divine Unity, I shall indicate how the rank of the followers is established for whoso beareth that fourth letter. For in the world of origins and causes a thing can be created only through the Efficient Cause, the station wherein He originateth from naught the essence of whatsoever He willeth, that the affirmation of His Oneness may be made manifest.

Its creation proceedeth through the Material Cause, which is the station of Universal Prophethood, for the manifestation of the ruling of His Messenger, then through the Formal Cause, for the manifestation of the Guardianship of thirteen Souls, Who are the Reeds of Universality in the Thicket of Jabarút, the chosen Ones of God and the Trustees of His Messenger, and finally through the Final Cause, which is the fruit of those manifestations and the end of those conditions, for the appearance of the fourth letter, which God placed in the station of the light of His Absolute, Universal, and General Guardianship. Rational proof requireth in wisdom that the station of the Final Cause be the fourth rank in descent.

Thus al-Ṣádiq indicated in the Tradition concerning the Name, saying, exalted be His remembrance, "*God, blessed and exalted be He, created a Name, in letters yet unsounded, in utterance yet unspoken, in individuality yet unembodied, in similitude yet undescribed, in colour yet untinted. It is free of dimensions and far removed from limits, and the senses of all who would imagine It are veiled from It. It is concealed, yet not enshrined. He made It a complete Word of four parts together, none preceding another. He manifested three Names thereof because of the need of creation for Them, and concealed one, the hidden, treasured Name. These are the Names which appeared. The Manifest is God, blessed and exalted be He. He, glorified be He, appointed four pillars for each of these Names, making twelve pillars. Then for each of those pillars He created thirty Names, as an Action ascribed unto those pillars. He is the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, the King, the Holy, the Creator, the Originator, the Fashioner, the Living, the Self-Subsisting, Whom neither slumber nor sleep overtaketh, the All-Knowing, the All-Informed, the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing, the Wise, the Mighty, the Compelling, the Supremely Exalted, the Most High, the Most Great, the All-Powerful, the Powerful, the Peace, the Faithful, the All-Protecting, the Manifest, the Producer, the Wondrous, the Exalted, the Glorious, the Generous, the Provider, the Giver of Life, the Bringer of Death, the Raiser, the Inheritor. These Names, together with the other Most Beautiful Names that complete the number of three hundred and sixty, are related unto these three Names. These three Names are pillars, and through these three Names the one hidden, treasured Name was veiled. This is His saying, exalted be He, 'Say, call upon God or call upon the All-Merciful. Whichever ye call upon, His are the Most Beautiful Names.'*"

The three pillars which appeared in existence are the acknowledgment of Divine Unity, Prophethood, and Guardianship. The treasured Pillar, the Light of the Unseen, was veiled because creation could not bear It. It is manifest, more manifest than all things, yet veiled in manifestation alongside the three. It was the inward aspect of the Command in Its own station. It hath a day wherein God shall make It manifest, should He will. It is the Name that the Qá'im made manifest, whereupon the Chiefs turned away from the court of His nearness. Then, when they saw no escape, they return unto Him and have faith in Him through the ruling of that Name. It is the Greatest Name, the Most Ancient Mystery, the finely wrought symbol. No one's deed attaineth completion save through that Name and through receiving from His Presence. Thus one of the Christians asked our Master al-Káẓim concerning the Greatest Name. The Christian said, "*Tell me of eight letters which descended, four becoming manifest upon earth and four remaining in the air. Upon whom did those four in the air descend, and who shall interpret them?*" He said, "*That is Our Qá'im. God will send it down upon Him, and He will interpret it. There shall descend upon Him what descended not upon the truthful Ones, the Messengers, or the rightly guided.*" Then the monk said, *"Tell me of two of those four letters upon earth. What are they?"* He said, *"I shall tell thee of all four. The first is that there is none other God except God alone, without partner, ever abiding. The second is that Muḥammad is the Messenger of God, in sincerity. The third is that We are the People of the House. The fourth is that Our followers are of Us, that We are of the Messenger of God, and that the Messenger of God is of God through a means.*"

Through every proof establishing the three pillars, that Pillar is established in that letter. If the proof be wisdom, the path to recognition of that letter is its own self alone. If the proof be of another kind, none could lay claim to that station, as is established in the balance of Prophethood. If the proof concerneth the station of effects, there must be a Bearer of the effects of the three—the simplicity of Divine Unity in the station of detachment, the condition of Prophethood in the station of delimitation, and the indications of the effects of Guardianship in the station of praise.

Thus whoso claimeth that station is required to manifest those effects in a manner none other can accomplish. When He willeth to bring forth the words of the Proof, naught rendereth Him powerless. He speaketh and writeth as He willeth, whatsoever He willeth, without the pen coming to rest, without deliberation, and without taking forms from the letters of the Qur'án. Thereby is the mystery of Oneness in Prophethood established. This Power can be realized solely in the secondary Cause, which recounteth the First Cause and the fourth Cause, for the appearance of the all-embracing Word. Under the Book's judgment, what a person sayeth concerning Him out of their own surmise returneth with its like, letter for letter. When He willeth to manifest the effects of the revelation of Guardianship, He hath power to do so in a manner in which none hath preceded Him, nor can any endowed with thought and sight contend with Him. For the balance of the effects of Guardianship is established in supplications and

sermons for whoso recognizeth the places of judgment in the station of indications. Should He will, after those effects, to manifest His certitude in God's judgment, He can stand before God and utter what the Sacred Law containeth of the ordinances of mutual imprecation, as hath occurred before God, exalted be His remembrance.

Recognition of that station hath aspects none can number save God. The servant cannot speak all that they know. Were it not for the duty of concealment and for fear of what 'Alí ibn al-Ḥusayn, peace be upon Him, expressed in His words, exalted be His remembrance—"*Were I to divulge many a jewel of knowledge, they would say unto Me, 'Thou art of those who worship the idol'*"—I would have disclosed the mystery of Ultimate Reality in that station. Yet I indicate its station through the lengthy Ḥadíth concerning recognition, related from Jábir, wherein He said, exalted be His remembrance, "*O Jábir, dost thou know what recognition is? Recognition is the establishment of Divine Unity first, recognition of the Meanings second, recognition of the Gates third, recognition of the Imám fourth, recognition of the Pillars fifth, recognition of the Chiefs sixth, and recognition of the Nobles seventh. This is His saying, mighty and glorious is He, 'Say, were the sea ink for the words of My Lord, the sea would be exhausted before the words of My Lord were exhausted, though We brought its like as ink.'*" Whoso knoweth the allusions hath no need of expressions. Whoso knoweth the places of the attribute in those indications hath attained the settled ground of recognition in the profound depths of those stations. Unto Him return the judgments in the kingdom of Names and Attributes. I seek forgiveness from God, My Lord, for what the Book reckoneth. He is the Ever-Relenting, the Possessor of Bounty in the beginning and the return. At this station I have stayed the pen. I beseech God's pardon for what He hath brought down from being into direct manifestation. *Glorified be God, Lord of the Throne, above what they ascribe unto Him, and peace be upon the Messengers.*

ALL PRAISE BELONGETH UNTO GOD, the Lord of all the worlds.

References

References to the introduction

1. Nabíl-i-A‘ẓam, *The Dawn-Breakers*, trans. Shoghi Effendi, ch. 10, especially pp. 203–204. Stephen N. Lambden discusses the occasion and the earlier distinction between general and specific Prophethood. Nabíl’s account · Lambden’s introduction
2. *Special Characteristics of Prophethood*, opening movement, vv. 1–57. Al-Kulaynı́, *al-Káfí*, vol. 1, *Kitáb al-Tawḥíd*, ch. 14, ḥadíth 4. Al-Káfí
3. SCP vv. 76–79, 106–118, and 245. Qur’án 7:172 and 53:7–18. Al-Kulaynı́, *al-Káfí*, vol. 1, *Kitáb al-Ḥujjah*, “The Birth of the Prophet and His Death,” ḥadíth 6. Al-Káfí
4. SCP vv. 58–61 and 248–251. The signs in the horizons and within souls recall Qur’án 41:53.
5. SCP vv. 217–239 and 299–302. BKW nn. 3, 22, and 40 cite the Mufaḍḍal tradition. See the ḥadíth concordance for the scope of the comparison.
6. SCP vv. 248–279, especially v. 273, quoting Qur’án 59:21.
7. SCP vv. 284–317, especially vv. 299–306 and 311–317. Qur’án 16:125
8. SCP vv. 318–355, especially vv. 337–342 and 346–348. Al-Kulaynı́, *al-Káfí*, vol. 1, *Kitáb al-Tawḥíd*, “The Coming into Existence of the Names,” ḥadíth 1, and *Kitáb al-Ḥujjah*, “The Birth of Abú al-Ḥasan Músá ibn Ja‘far,” ḥadíth 5. Tradition of the Name · The eight letters
9. SCP vv. 309–313 and 356–361. The closing sea-of-ink image quotes Qur’án 18:109. The parallel wording of Jábir’s seven degrees is preserved in Shaykh Aḥmad al-Aḥsá’í, *Sharḥ al-Ziyárah al-Jámi‘ah al-Kabírah*, vol. 3. Shaykh Aḥmad’s commentary
10. *Tafsír-i-Nubúvvat-i-Khássih*, catalogue entry BB 00014. Arabic witnesses and publications

Qur’án references

Page #	SCP v.	Qur’án	Passage
2	26	**21:26–27**	*Honoured servants who act by His command.*
6	89	**7:142**	*Moses’ thirty nights completed with ten.*
7	103	**23:14**	*Another creation and the blessing of the Best of Creators.*
8	110	**36:39**	*The old palm-stalk.*
8	117–118	**53:7–18**	*The highest horizon, the Lote-Tree, and the greatest signs.*
9	134	**23:14**	*The blessing of the Best of Creators, quoted again.*
13	218	**3:190**	*Creation and the alternation of night and day.*
14	219	**11:119**	*Those upon whom thy Lord hath mercy.*
14	220	**43:86**	*Those who knowingly bear witness to the truth.*
15	228	**3:28/3:30**	*God warneth you of His Self. The clause occurs in both verses.*
15	229	**25:45**	*The extended shadow and the sun as its guide.*
15	238	**4:150**	*Making division between God and His Messengers.*
15	238	**2:27/13:25**	*Severing what God commanded to be joined. The clause occurs in both verses.*
16	245	**7:172**	*“Am I not your Lord?” and the first reply, “Yea.”*
17	257	**54:1**	*The Hour draws nigh and the moon is cleft.*
17	267	**6:59**	*Neither fresh nor dry save in a clear Book.*
17	273	**59:21**	*The Qur’án sent down upon a mountain.*
18	283	**17:44**	*All things glorify Him with praise.*
21	340	**2:255**	*The Living, the Self-Subsisting, whom neither slumber nor sleep overtaketh.*
21	342	**17:110**	*Calling upon God or the All-Merciful and the Most Beautiful Names.*

22	358	**18:109**	*The sea as ink for the words of the Lord.*
22	361	**21:22 + 37:181–182**	*Glory to God, Lord of the Throne, followed by peace upon the Messengers and praise to the Lord of all worlds.*

Ḥadíth concordance

Page # · V. #	Quotation or report	Source and status
3 · 50	*"Muḥammad is Our first, Muḥammad is Our middle, and Muḥammad is Our last."*	Rajab al-Bursí, *Mashāriq Anwār al-Yaqín*, section on recognizing the Imám through luminosity, p. 255 in BKW's edition, p. 256 in the online edition. The longer passage presents ʻAlí addressing Salmán. مكتبة الأربعة عشر إماماً
3 · 51	*"It is not He, nor is He other than it."*	Al-Khuṣaybí, *al-Hidáyah al-Kubrá*, p. 434, cited in BKW p. 7 n. 3. The Báb returns to the formula at v. 232 (p. 15), where the Form is compared to the One it makes manifest. Bab-BKW-20 almawaddah.be
4, 19 · 57, 303	*"O Thou Who hast pointed unto Thine Essence through Thine Essence."*	*Duʻá' al-Ṣabáḥ*, the Dawn Prayer attributed to ʻAlí. Al-Amín, *Miftáḥ al-Jannát*, vol. 1, p. 75, cited in BKW pp. 8 and 49, nn. 4 and 42. duas.org
4, 19 · 57, 303	*"Through Thee have I recognized Thee."*	*Duʻá' Abí Ḥamzah al-Thumálí*, attributed to ʻAlí ibn al-Ḥusayn. Al-Qummí, *Mafátíḥ al-Jinán*, Ramadan devotions, cited in BKW pp. 8 and 49, nn. 5 and 43. TheShia
4, 19 · 57, 302	*"Know God through God." Later, "and the Prophet through Prophethood."*	Al-Kulaynī, *al-Káfí*, vol. 1, *Kitáb al-Tawḥíd*, "That He is known only through Himself," ḥadíth 1. Al-Ṣádiq transmits the saying from ʻAlí. The collection reads **"the Messenger through Messengership"** where v. 302 reads **"the Prophet through Prophethood."** ويكي مصدر
5 · 76	*Abú Jaʻfar describes the Prophet's appearance, bearing, and gait.*	*Al-Káfí*, vol. 1, *Kitáb al-Ḥujjah*, "The Birth of the Prophet and His Death," ḥadíth **14**. Jábir reports from Abú Jaʻfar al-Báqir. Thaqalayn
5 · 79	*Al-Ḥumayrá's report that the Prophet was "in His house" during the Ascension.*	Ibn Hishám, *al-Sírah al-Nabawiyyah*, "The Night Journey and Ascension," vol. 1, p. 244 in BKW's cited edition. Ibn Isḥáq transmits ʻÁ'ishah's statement that the Prophet's body was present while God took His spirit on the journey. The Báb goes on to describe simultaneous bodily presence throughout the realms. Bab-BKW-20 ذكر الإسراء والمعراج- الجزء رقم1
6, 10, 12 · 90, 148, 186	*What is **there** is known through what is **here**.*	BKW p. 15 n. 10 cites al-Ṣadúq, *ʻUyún Akhbár al-Riḍá*, vol. 1, p. 175, attributing the maxim to Imám al-Riḍá. The Báb returns to the wording at v. 148 and recasts it at v. 186.
8 · 106	*Asked how He surpassed creation, the Prophet replies that He was first to answer in the Primal Realm.*	BKW p. 18 n. 12 cites *Biḥár al-Anwár*, vol. 15, chapter on the Prophet's creation, covenant, and light. *Al-Káfí*, "The Birth of the Prophet and His Death," ḥadíth **6**, preserves the fuller covenant report quoted at **v. 245**. Bab-BKW-20 Thaqalayn
8 · 110	*ʻAlí's Friday and Ghadír sermon. God chose Muḥammad in Pre-existence above all nations.*	Al-Ṭúsí, *Miṣbáḥ al-Mutahajjid*, Ghadír sermon, p. 523 in BKW's cited edition. The same line is also quoted in the Shaykhí literature. Bab-BKW-20 alabrar.info
8 · 110	*"I am the Master of the Second Eternity."*	**Parallel with a significant variant.** BKW p. 19 n. 14 points to al-Bursí's *Khuṭbat al-Ṭutunjiyyah* in *Mashāriq Anwār al-Yaqín*, where the cited wording has **First Eternity**. The note also points to Sayyid Káẓim al-Rashtí's commentary on the Lámiyyah for the language of **Second Eternity**. Bab-BKW-20

9 · 128	*"I and ʻAlí are the two fathers of this community."*	Al-Majlisí, *Biḥár al-Anwár*, vol. 36, p. 8, chapter on the two fathers being the Messenger of God and the Commander of the Faithful. شبكة السراج
9 · 132	The Imám's reply concerning Wednesday and its auspicious aspect.	**Open allusion.** The Báb refers to the Imám's answer without reproducing it as a separate quotation. The precise report remains unidentified. 01 The Special Characteristics …
9 · 140	The Proof of God appears with a new Book and new ordinances.	BKW p. 23 n. 18 cites al-Fayḍ al-Káshání, *Nawádir al-Akhbár*, chapter on the Qá'im's conduct when His Cause appears, no. 11, p. 311. A close parallel occurs in *Mukhtaṣar Baṣá'ir al-Daraját*, p. 212, with a new command, Book, practice, and judgment. Bab-BKW-20 lib.rafed.net
13 · 208	The Imám answers a question about eating dates by placing either outcome within God's prior knowledge.	BKW p. 32 n. 20 leaves the source unidentified. Bab-BKW-20
13 · 209	*"Our Cause is the Mystery, the Mystery of mysteries…"*	Al-Ṣaffár, *Baṣá'ir al-Daraját*, chapter on the concealed knowledge of the Family of Muḥammad, report **4** in the consulted edition. Murázim reports from al-Ṣádiq. BKW p. 32 n. 21 also cites al-Káshání, *Nawádir al-Akhbár*, p. 61 in its edition. Bab-BKW-20 Akhbariyyah
13–15, 19 · 217–239, 300	**The Mufaḍḍal dialogue.** Al-Ṣádiq speaks of the Form, the Name and the Meaning, and the passage from being into direct manifestation.	BKW cites al-Khuṣaybí, *al-Hidáyah al-Kubrá*, p. 434, and *Biḥár al-Anwár*, vol. 53, p. 2, at nn. 3, 22, and 40. The "houses of Light" passage has a close Arabic match. **V. 300 reprises the wisdom passage from v. 226.** almawaddah.be
15 · 230, 234, 236–237, 239	Sayings within the Mufaḍḍal dialogue. Outward Leadership and inward Unseen, the City of Knowledge and its Gate, and Muḥammad and ʻAlí as two joined fingers.	Cite the Mufaḍḍal dialogue for their wording in SCP. The **City of Knowledge** also has a separately transmitted parallel in al-Ḥákim, *al-Mustadrak*, vol. 3, pp. 126–127. nahj-alhaq.com
16 · 242	God created Muḥammad and ʻAlí as one Light before the heavens and earth.	**Ḥadíth qudsí.** *Al-Káfí*, "The Birth of the Prophet and His Death," **3**. Murázim transmits from Abú ʻAbd Alláh al-Ṣádiq. Thaqalayn
16 · 243	God breathed of His Spirit into Muḥammad and made obedience incumbent upon creation.	**Ḥadíth qudsí.** *Al-Káfí*, same chapter, **4**. Abú Ḥamzah al-Thumálí reports from Abú Jaʻfar al-Báqir. Thaqalayn
16 · 244	Muḥammad, ʻAlí, and Fáṭimah remain for a thousand periods of Duration and witness the creation of all things.	*Al-Káfí*, same chapter, **5**. The full report names **Abú Jaʻfar II, Muḥammad al-Jawád**, speaking to **Muḥammad ibn Sinán**. This identifies the person addressed in "O Muḥammad, this is the religion." Thaqalayn
16 · 245	The Prophet is first to have faith and first to answer at the covenant.	*Al-Káfí*, same chapter, **6**. Ṣáliḥ ibn Sahl transmits from al-Ṣádiq. The report contains the Qur'án **7:172** quotation already indexed in the Qur'án concordance. See also **v. 106**. Thaqalayn
16 · 246	Jábir asks about the forms of Light. The Prophet and His Family are sustained by the Holy Spirit.	*Al-Káfí*, same chapter, **10**. Jábir reports from Abú Jaʻfar al-Báqir. Thaqalayn

17 · 257	The Bedouin imitates Qur'án 54:1 and the Prophet replies, *"May God shatter thy mouth!"*	**Open anecdote.** BKW p. 41 n. 28 leaves the report's source open. Note 29 compares a poem attributed to Imru' al-Qays that contains the imitation's opening phrase. That comparison supplies a parallel for the phrase. Bab-BKW-20
17 · 268	'Alí says, *"I am the Point beneath Bá."*	**Attributed saying.** Ni'matu'lláh al-Jazá'irí, *al-Anwár al-Nu'mániyyah*, vol. 1, "Núr Murtaḍawí," p. 47, cited in BKW p. 43 n. 31. The saying circulates in several forms in the literature on the Point. Bab-BKW-20 hurqalya.ucmerced.edu
18 · 280	Three marks of the Prophet. His singularity, His lingering fragrance, and stones and trees prostrating before Him.	**Match with a substantive variant.** *Al-Káfí*, "The Birth of the Prophet and His Death," **11**, from Abú Ja'far al-Báqir. The collection gives **"He cast no shadow"** for the first mark. SCP gives **"He had no equal."** Bab-BKW-20 Thaqalayn
19 · 298	The Prophet declares Labíd's saying truthful. *"Lo, all things save God are vain…"*	*Ṣaḥíḥ Muslim* **2256a** attests the endorsement and the first half-line. BKW p. 48 n. 39 cites Ibn al-Athír, *al-Kámil fí al-Táríkh*, p. 446, for Labíd's verse. Bab-BKW-20 sunnah.com
19 · 304	God is too exalted to be known through His creation.	*Al-Káfí*, *Kitáb al-Tawḥíd*, "That He is known only through Himself," **3**, and *Kitáb al-Ḥujjah*, "The Necessity of the Proof," **2**. In both, Manṣúr ibn Ḥázim makes the statement before al-Ṣádiq, who approves it. In the Tawḥíd report, the second clause says that the servants are known through God. SCP reads, "Rather, His creatures know Him through Him." ويكي مصدر
20 · 317	*"Our Cause is difficult, exceedingly difficult,"* borne by an angel brought nigh, a Prophet sent forth, or one whose heart God hath tested for faith.	Al-Ṣaffár, *Baṣá'ir al-Daraját*, the Abú Ḥamzah report from al-Báqir. *Biḥár al-Anwár* collects several recensions, including a near-verbatim one from al-Báqir and another from al-Ṣádiq with **"Our ḥadíth"** in place of **"Our Cause."** BKW p. 51 n. 46 additionally cites *Biḥár*, vol. 35, p. 68. Bab-BKW-20 Akhbariyyah
21 · 337–342	**The Tradition of the Name.** God creates a Name with four parts, manifests three, and conceals one.	*Al-Káfí*, vol. 1, *Kitáb al-Tawḥíd*, "The Coming into Existence of the Names," **1**, from al-Ṣádiq. The Qur'án excerpts at **vv. 340 and 342** sit within this report. Thaqalayn
21 · 346–348	**The eight letters.** A Christian monk asks al-Káẓim about four letters manifest on earth and four remaining in the air.	*Al-Káfí*, vol. 1, *Kitáb al-Ḥujjah*, "The Birth of Abú al-Ḥasan Músá ibn Ja'far," **5**. The four earthly letters correspond to Divine Unity, Prophethood, the People of the House, and their followers. Thaqalayn
22 · 357–358	**Jábir and the seven degrees of recognition.** Divine Unity, Meanings, Gates, Imám, Pillars, Chiefs, and Nobles.	**Close wording match in Shaykh Aḥmad.** In *Sharḥ al-Ziyárah al-Jámi'ah al-Kabírah*, vol. 3, al-Aḥsá'í quotes all seven in order, citing *Anís al-Sumará' wa-Samír al-Julasá'* through Jábir ibn Yazíd al-Ju'fí from **'Alí ibn al-Ḥusayn**. BKW p. 56 n. 50 points to *Biḥár al-Anwár*, vol. 26, p. 8, for a related Jábir report. The sevenfold wording is most directly supported by the Shaykh Aḥmad citation. Bab-BKW-20 Shaykh Aḥmad's commentary

Items to cross-index separately

SCP v.	Classification
12	**Sermon echo.** The sequence of numbering and dividing God resembles the argument in *Nahj al-Balágẖah*, sermon 1. The Báb develops the sequence in His own wording. Bab-BKW-20 ablibrary.net
213	**Letter formula.** "The Path of ʻAlí is Truth, unto it we hold fast." Its function here is to supply letters for the argument. The source of the formula remains open. 01 The Special Characteristics …
303	**Saying attributed to the Gospel.** "Know thyself, and thou shalt know thy Lord…" BKW p. 49 n. 44 reports parallels in al-Bursí's *Masháriq* and al-Ḥurr al-ʻÁmilí's *al-Jawáhir al-Saniyyah*. The canonical Gospel reference remains unlocated. Bab-BKW-20
310	**Self-quotation by the Point of the Bayán.** "I am the first who answered in the realm of particles." Cross-reference the Prophetic parallels at **vv. 106 and 245**. Here the Báb expressly identifies the speaker as the Point of the Bayán. 01 The Special Characteristics …
356	**Poetry attributed to ʻAlí ibn al-Ḥusayn.** "Were I to divulge many a jewel of knowledge…" BKW p. 55 n. 49 cites al-Bursí's *Masháriq* and two further witnesses. Index alongside the other verse quotations at **vv. 294–295, 297–298, and 307**. Bab-BKW-20 مكتبة صحراء النجف

Biographical Register

This register follows the people through whom the treatise moves. It begins with Muḥammad and His family, then turns to the Imáms, transmitters, and literary figures who enter the Báb's argument. A separate section identifies the people connected with the work's composition in Isfahán and with its transmission and study. References marked **v.** or **vv.** follow the numbered English edition.

A name can enter this work as a person's name, as an inherited title, or as a letter in the account of the unseen and seen. The register indicates which of these is at issue. Dates for the earliest figures are approximate where the sources differ. Genealogies and reports are identified as such.

The Prophet and His family

Muḥammad ibn ʻAbd Alláh · c. 570–632

Born in Mecca into Banú Háshim of Quraysh, Muḥammad received the first Qur'ánic revelations around 610. His migration to Medina in 622 established the Muslim community there and became the epoch of the Islamic calendar. He died in Medina in 632. The treatise reads His Name, birth, body, mission, migration, Ascension, and Book as distinct places in which one Prophethood becomes visible. Its account of the primal covenant presents Him as the first to answer God, while its account of history places Him at the culmination of the prophetic succession.

The central figure throughout. See especially vv. 68–118, 145–160, 201, 242–280, and 299–313. **Aḥmad**, explicitly named as His Name in heaven at v. 201, belongs to this same entry. So do references to the Aḥmadan Temple and the Muḥammadan Countenance. Life of Muḥammad · Qur'án 61:6

ʻAbd Alláh ibn ʻAbdu'l-Muṭṭalib · sixth century

Muḥammad's father was a son of ʻAbdu'l-Muṭṭalib of Banú Háshim and the husband of Áminah. He died close to the time of Muḥammad's birth. The treatise places his death when the child was two months old, one of the chronologies transmitted concerning the Prophet's childhood. The Báb dwells on the meaning of his name, "servant of God," as a sign of the servitude that would be fully manifest in his Son. **Vv. 72–74, 148.** Life of Muḥammad · Genealogical traditions

Áminah bint Wahb · sixth century

Muḥammad's mother came from Banú Zuhrah, a clan of Quraysh. She died during His childhood, traditionally at al-Abwá' on the road between Medina and Mecca. The treatise gives His age as four at her death, while a widely transmitted biography gives six. The Báb sets her genealogy beside that of the Prophet's father and reads her own name in relation to the Greatest Name and the fourteen holy figures. **Vv. 146–148.** Life of Muḥammad · Genealogical traditions

ʻAbdu'l-Muṭṭalib ibn Háshim · sixth century

The Prophet's paternal grandfather, also known as Shaybah, was a leading man of Mecca and of Banú Háshim. Tradition associates him with the rediscovery of the well of Zamzam and with the care of his orphaned grandson. After his death, that responsibility passed to Abú Ṭálib. **V. 72.** Early life and family · Genealogical traditions

Háshim ibn ʻAbd Manáf · traditionally fifth to sixth century

The Prophet's paternal great-grandfather gave his name to Banú Háshim. Early Meccan tradition associates him with the provisioning of pilgrims and the trade of Quraysh. In the treatise he occurs in the line that leads from ʻAbd Manáf to the Prophet's father. **V. 72.** Genealogical traditions

Abú Ṭálib ibn ʻAbdu'l-Muṭṭalib · d. c. 619

Muḥammad's paternal uncle, guardian, and protector in Mecca was also the father of ʻAlí. His standing among Banú Háshim helped shield the Prophet during the early years of His preaching. The Báb places the Prophet's birth in the quarter associated with Abú Ṭálib. **V. 148.** ʻAlí and his family · Life of Muḥammad

Muḥammad ibn Yúsuf al-Thaqafí · active in the late seventh and early eighth centuries

An Umayyad official and brother of al-Ḥajjáj ibn Yúsuf, he is known here through a Meccan house associated with the Prophet's birth. Ibn Kathír likewise identifies the birthplace by the name of this later owner. The association is one of place and its later history. **V. 148.** Ibn Kathír, *The Life of the Prophet Muḥammad*, vol. 1, p. 143

The remaining names in the genealogies

The father's line is given at **v. 72**, and the mother's line at **v. 147**. The two men named ʻAbd Manáf occupy different branches. Early genealogical tradition is the principal evidence for the more remote figures. Genealogical traditions

Person	Place in the genealogy
ʻAbd Manáf ibn Quṣayy	Father of Háshim and an ancestor of several leading branches of Quraysh. He is the ʻAbd Manáf in the Prophet's paternal line.
Wahb ibn ʻAbd Manáf	Áminah's father, of Banú Zuhrah. The Báb begins her ancestral line with him.
ʻAbd Manáf ibn Zuhrah	Áminah's paternal grandfather in the genealogy cited by the Báb. His father was Zuhrah.
Zuhrah ibn Kiláb	The ancestor from whom Banú Zuhrah takes its name. His descendants include the Prophet's maternal family.
Kiláb ibn Murrah	Father of Zuhrah and, in traditional genealogy, of Quṣayy. The two branches of the Prophet's ancestry converge in him.
Murrah ibn Kaʻb	Father of Kiláb and an early Quraysh ancestor preserved in the maternal line.
Kaʻb ibn Luʼayy	Father of Murrah in the received genealogy. The Báb's enumeration of Áminah's ancestors reaches Kaʻb.

ʻÁʼishah bint Abí Bakr, called al-Ḥumayrá · d. 678

A wife of Muḥammad and daughter of Abú Bakr, ʻÁʼishah was a major transmitter of reports about the Prophet's life and household. She also became a public figure in the disputes that followed the killing of ʻUthmán. The Báb refers to her by the epithet **al-Ḥumayrá** when discussing the Ascension. Ibn Hishám preserves a report attributed to her through Ibn Isḥáq concerning the presence of the Prophet's body during the Night Journey. The Báb gives the report a distinctive reading, holding together His presence at home and His presence throughout the realms. **V. 79.** Biographical account · Ibn Hishám on the Night Journey

Fáṭimah al-Zahrá · d. c. 632

Daughter of Muḥammad and Khadíjah, wife of ʻAlí, and mother of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, Fáṭimah stands at the point where the Prophet's household and the line of the Imáms meet. The Báb gives her a sustained treatment of her own. He reads her Name, especially its final Há, in relation to the Prophethood of her Father, the Guardianship of her Husband, and her own singular station. She appears with Muḥammad and ʻAlí in the report of the thousand periods of Duration and is counted among the seven in the unseen. **Vv. 129, 132, 150, 173–193, 242–244, 321.** Encyclopaedia Iranica · Al-Káfí, report of the thousand periods

The Imáms and the Qá'im

The Báb gives seven names in the unseen and then names seven outward appearances at **vv. 321–322**. The repeated names in the second sequence are read below in the order of the Twelver succession. A name printed simply as **ʻAlí**, **Muḥammad**, or **Ḥasan** therefore has a different referent depending on its place in the sequence. The final name is spelled out as **Mím–Ḥá–Mím–Dál**. The Twelver succession and occultation

ʿAlí ibn Abí Ṭálib · c. 600–661
Cousin and son-in-law of Muḥammad, husband of Fáṭimah, and father of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, ʿAlí was the fourth caliph and is revered in Shiʿi Islam as the first Imám. The Ghadír sermon, the City of Knowledge and its Gate, the two joined fingers, and the Point beneath Bá all give him a place in the Báb's exposition. He appears as the Guardian through whom the knowledge of the Messenger is approached, and whose authority is considered in relation to the same Light. **Vv. 110, 128–129, 177–193, 213–239, 242–244, 268, 303, 321.** Encyclopaedia Iranica

Ḥasan ibn ʿAlí · c. 625–670
Elder son of ʿAlí and Fáṭimah, grandson of the Prophet, and second Imám in the Twelver succession. After his father's death he briefly held the caliphate before reaching an agreement with Muʿáwiyah and retiring from political rule. In the treatise he belongs to the seven in the unseen and to the fourfold unfolding of the original Light in the quoted report. **Vv. 129, 242, 321.** Encyclopaedia Iranica

Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlí · 626–680
Younger son of ʿAlí and Fáṭimah, grandson of Muḥammad, and third Imám. His death at Karbalá in 680 became central to Shiʿi remembrance of martyrdom and fidelity. In the Báb's reading of the week, Wednesday is associated with Ḥusayn and the station of Decree. He also belongs to the sevenfold order of the unseen and to the tradition of the original Light. **Vv. 129, 132, 242, 321.** Encyclopaedia Iranica

ʿAlí ibn al-Ḥusayn, Zaynu'l-ʿÁbidín and al-Sajjád · d. c. 713
Son of Ḥusayn and fourth Imám, he survived Karbalá and became especially associated with worship and supplication. The prayer transmitted under Abú Ḥamzah's name is quoted at **vv. 57 and 303**. At **v. 356** the Báb attributes to him the verse about a jewel of knowledge which, if disclosed, would expose its speaker to accusation. The parallel text of Jábir's seven degrees of recognition transmitted by Shaykh Aḥmad also names him as the speaker. He is the first ʿAlí of the outward sequence at **v. 321**. Encyclopaedia Iranica · Shaykh Aḥmad's parallel

Muḥammad ibn ʿAlí al-Báqir, Abú Jaʿfar · d. c. 732–735
Son of Zaynu'l-ʿÁbidín and fifth Imám, al-Báqir stands near the beginnings of the teaching tradition later elaborated by his son al-Ṣádiq. The Báb cites him on the Prophet's appearance, the divine charge to obey the Messenger, the luminous forms of His Family, and the three marks of His person. He is the first Muḥammad in the outward sequence. **Vv. 76, 220, 243, 246, 280, 321.** Encyclopaedia Iranica · Al-Káfí, reports on the Prophet

Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad al-Ṣádiq, Abú ʿAbd Alláh · d. 765
Son of al-Báqir and sixth Imám, al-Ṣádiq became a central authority in Imámí law, theology, and tradition. The long dialogue with Mufaḍḍal places him at the center of the treatise's account of the Name, the Meaning, light, and form. The Báb returns to that dialogue when asking how wisdom brings what lies in being into direct manifestation. Al-Ṣádiq is also the transmitter of the Tradition of the Name. **Vv. 51, 129, 132, 216–239, 242, 245, 300, 321, 337–342.** Encyclopaedia Iranica · Tradition of the Name

Músá ibn Jaʿfar al-Káẓim · d. 799
Son of al-Ṣádiq and seventh Imám in the Twelver succession. He died in Abbasid custody in Baghdád. The treatise associates him with Friday and the Appointed Term. In the dialogue with the Christian monk, he explains the four letters disclosed on earth and leaves the interpretation of the other four to the Qá'im. **Vv. 129, 132, 321, 346–348.** Al-Káfí, the report of the eight letters · Encyclopaedia Iranica, death and burial

ʿAlí ibn Músá al-Riḍá · d. 818
Son of al-Káẓim and eighth Imám, he was named heir to the Abbasid caliph al-Ma'mún and died near Ṭús, where his shrine became the center of Mashhad. He is the second ʿAlí in the outward sequence at **v. 321**. BKW also traces the maxim about knowing what is there through what is here to a saying attributed to him. **Compare vv. 90, 148, 186.** Encyclopaedia Iranica

Muḥammad ibn ʿAlí al-Jawád, Abú Jaʿfar II · 811–835
Son of al-Riḍá and ninth Imám, al-Jawád succeeded while still a child. In the full report underlying **v. 244**, he explains to **Muḥammad ibn Sinán** that Muḥammad, ʿAlí, and Fáṭimah witnessed the creation of all things. His address to "O Muḥammad" is directed to the transmitter in that setting. He is the second Muḥammad in the outward sequence at **v. 321**. Encyclopaedia Iranica · Al-Káfí, the full attribution

ʿAlí ibn Muḥammad al-Hádí · d. 868
Son of al-Jawád and tenth Imám, he spent his later years at the Abbasid garrison capital of Samarra. His place in the treatise is the third ʿAlí in the outward sequence at **v. 321**. Encyclopaedia Iranica

Ḥasan ibn ʿAlí al-ʿAskarí · d. 874
Son of al-Hádí and eleventh Imám, he lived in Samarra. In Twelver tradition his death marks the beginning of the occultation of his son, the expected Imám. He is the Ḥasan in the outward sequence at **v. 321**. Encyclopaedia Iranica

Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Mahdí and the title Qá'im
In Twelver tradition Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan is the twelfth Imám, believed to have entered occultation after the death of his father in 874. **Qá'im**, the One who rises, is among the titles of the awaited figure. The final name of the outward sequence at **v. 321** is spelled Mím–Ḥá–Mím–Dál. At **vv. 140 and 344–348** the emphasis falls on the office of the expected One, the new Book and ordinances, and the interpretation of the concealed letters. These passages also belong to the Báb's unfolding treatment of the recognition of return. Encyclopaedia Iranica, the Mahdí in Twelver Shiʿism

Scriptural, literary, and transmitted figures

Adam and the Primal Adam
Adam is the first human in the Qur'ánic account of creation and is addressed by God together with his spouse. The Báb speaks of the **Primal Adam** as the first mention of contingency in the rank of concrete beings. He reads the letters of Adam through unity, the four causes, and the elements, then connects the forty mornings of Adam's clay with the forty years preceding Muḥammad's mission. The register distinguishes the scriptural ancestor from the primordial station for which his name is used. **Vv. 124–128, 134, 150–151.** Qur'án 2:30–39

Eve, Ḥawwá
Adam's spouse in the scriptural account is called Eve in the English and Ḥawwá in Islamic tradition. In the treatise she appears in the descent from the Primal Adam. The Báb connects the numerical value of her name, fifteen, with the triangular figure and with Divine Willpower in the beginnings of Action. **V. 128.** Qur'án 2:35

Moses, Músá
The Prophet of the Torah and a central figure of Qur'ánic revelation, Moses receives an appointment at the Mount of thirty nights completed with ten. The Báb quotes this as a scriptural witness for the number forty in His reading of the first Mím of Muḥammad's Name. This is **Moses at the Mount**, distinct from Imám Músá al-Káẓim in the Friday correspondence and the dialogue of the eight letters. **V. 89.** Qur'án 7:142

Jesus, ʿÍsá
Jesus of Nazareth stands behind the designation **the Gospel** in the sequence of authorities on recognition. The Báb introduces the saying about knowing oneself and thereby knowing one's Lord as something revealed in the Gospel. The precise wording is attested in the Islamic mystical tradition cited by BKW. Its location in the canonical Gospels remains unestablished. **V. 303.** Qur'án 3:45 · BKW edition catalogue

Al-Mufaḍḍal ibn ʿUmar al-Juʿfí · eighth century
A Kufan transmitter associated with Jaʿfar al-Ṣádiq and with early esoteric traditions concerning the Imáms. The sources transmit varying assessments of his standing. In the treatise he is the questioner who presses the difficulty at the heart of the argument. How may the hidden Meaning be seen in a form? His questions draw out the distinctions between Name and

Meaning, radiance and shadow, disclosure and concealment. The Báb returns to the same dialogue near the end, when bringing the question of proof back to direct manifestation. **Vv. 216–239, 300.** Encyclopaedia Iranica

Jábir ibn Yazíd al-Juʿfí · d. c. 745–746
A Kufan transmitter and interpreter of the Qur'án associated especially with Imám al-Báqir. The treatise's allusion to al-Báqir's instruction to Jábir and the report in which Jábir asks about the forms of Light belong to this tradition. Shaykh Aḥmad's version of the closing seven degrees of recognition explicitly names Jábir ibn Yazíd al-Juʿfí as transmitter from ʿAlí ibn al-Ḥusayn. The Báb names him simply as Jábir in the closing passage. **Vv. 220, 246, 357–358.** Encyclopaedia Iranica · Shaykh Aḥmad's parallel

Abú Ḥamzah al-Thumálí, Thábit ibn Dínár · eighth century
A Kufan transmitter remembered for his association with the Imáms of the Prophet's family. The Ramadan supplication transmitted under his name is attributed to ʿAlí ibn al-Ḥusayn and supplies the language of knowing God through God at **vv. 57 and 303**. At **v. 243**, Abú Ḥamzah reports directly from al-Báqir the divine address to Muḥammad concerning creation, the Spirit, and obedience. His name also appears in a parallel chain for the saying on the difficulty of the Cause at **v. 317**. Al-Káfí, report 4 · Supplication of Abú Ḥamzah

Muḥammad ibn Sinán · active in the early ninth century
A transmitter whose name survives in the full chain behind the report of the thousand periods of Duration. He tells of bringing disagreements among the Shiʿah before Imám al-Jawád. His account identifies both the speaker and the hearer of the ensuing address. The Báb's excerpt begins with the Imám's teaching and leaves the original narrator implicit. **V. 244, source identification.** Al-Káfí, report 5

Other speakers and transmitters identified by the source reports

These entries record the transmitters or interlocutors who help locate the passages excerpted in the treatise. The full chains can be followed in the ḥadíth concordance and the cited collections.

Person	Connection with the work
Murázim ibn Ḥakím	Transmitter from al-Ṣádiq of the report in which Muḥammad and ʻAlí are created as one Light, **v. 242**. Another report through Murázim is a close source for the "Mystery of mysteries" at **v. 209**. Al-Káfí, report 3 · Baṣá'ir al-Daraját
Ṣáliḥ ibn Sahl	A transmitter from al-Ṣádiq in the report that presents Muḥammad as first to answer the covenant. The Báb gives a shorter form at **v. 106** and the fuller report at **v. 245**. Al-Káfí, report 6
Sálim ibn Abí Ḥafṣah al-ʻIjlí	The transmitter from al-Báqir at the end of the chain for the three marks of the Prophet, **v. 280**. His report in *al-Káfí* supplies the comparison for the differing first mark in SCP. Al-Káfí, report 11
Manṣúr ibn Ḥázim	A transmitter and disputant in the traditions of al-Ṣádiq. He articulates before the Imám the principle that God is too exalted to be known through His creatures. The Imám approves his statement in the parallel to **v. 304**. Al-Káfí, *Kitáb al-Ḥujjah*, report 2
Yaʻqúb ibn Jaʻfar	Narrates the meeting with the Christian visitors in the fuller report underlying **vv. 346–348**. He places himself in the presence of Músá al-Káẓim when they arrive. Al-Káfí, report of the eight letters
Al-Faḍl ibn Sawwár	In the same report, he requests admission for the Christian monk and his companion, a nun, and is charged with bringing them to the meeting. His role belongs to the fuller source account. Al-Káfí, report of the eight letters
Mutammim ibn Fírúz	The Persian devotee whom the monk says he sought in India. In the fuller report he directs the monk toward the Imám. The Báb takes up the subsequent question about the eight letters. Al-Káfí, report of the eight letters

The Christian monk from Najrán · eighth-century setting

The unnamed questioner in **vv. 346–348** asks Imám Músá al-Káẓim about eight letters, four manifest on earth and four remaining in the air. In the fuller report he is a monk from Najrán who comes with a nun and describes his earlier search for knowledge of the divine Names. The Báb draws out the exchange in which the Imám interprets the four earthly letters and assigns the remaining disclosure to the Qá'im. The monk's personal name remains unestablished. Al-Káfí, report of the eight letters

Labíd ibn Rabíʻah · late sixth to seventh century

A poet of Banú ʻÁmir who lived into the Islamic period. His verse on the transience of everything apart from God is quoted by the Báb at **v. 298**. The Prophetic endorsement is preserved in *Ṣaḥíḥ Muslim*, which names Labíd and quotes the first half-line. The treatise uses the verse to return the honor of the inquiry to what the Messenger affirmed. Biographical account · Ṣaḥíh Muslim 2256a

Laylá · literary figure

Laylá is the beloved in the verse at **v. 297**, where many claim union with her and she acknowledges none of those claims. The name carries the resonance of the Arabic Laylá and Majnún tradition, which later became a major theme of Persian poetry. In the Báb's argument the verse measures the distance between a claim of intimacy and the recognition that could warrant it. The passage gives Laylá a literary role and leaves her historical identity open. Encyclopaedia Iranica, *Leyli o Majnun*

The speakers whose names remain open

The unnamed Imám on Wednesday (**v. 132**), the Imám and questioner in the account of eating dates (**v. 208**), and the Bedouin who imitates the verse on the Hour (**v. 257**) are indexed by their roles. BKW compares the Bedouin's wording with a line attributed to Imru' al-Qays. The comparison supplies a literary parallel, while the identity of the speaker in the anecdote remains open. BKW edition catalogue

The Isfahán occasion

The Báb, Siyyid 'Alí-Muḥammad Shírází · 1819–1850

Born in Shíráz into a family of merchants and descendants of the Prophet, the Báb declared His mission in 1844. His earliest major writings include the *Qayyúmu'l-Asmá*. After leaving Shíráz in 1846, He was received in Isfahán, where Manúchihr Khán asked Him to demonstrate the truth of Muḥammad's particular Prophethood. The resulting Arabic treatise joins the historical life of the Messenger to an account of the Primal Will and the recognition of divine authority. At **v. 310**, the Báb names the Point of the Bayán as the One who again utters the words of the first response in the realm of particles. He later revealed the Persian and Arabic Bayáns during His confinement in Ádhirbáyján and was executed in Tabríz in 1850. Encyclopaedia Iranica · Stephen Lambden on the treatise

Manúchihr Khán, the Mu'tamídu'd-Dawlih · d. 1847

A Qájár governor of Georgian origin, Manúchihr Khán was the Báb's patron in Isfahán and the person who requested the treatise. Nabíl describes him asking for a written demonstration of Muḥammad's Prophethood in an assembly of divines. He records that, on hearing the answer, the governor spoke of his conviction concerning Islám and of the power he had witnessed in the Báb. As opposition grew, Manúchihr Khán gave the Báb protection in his own residence. The courtly honorifics at **vv. 29–31** and the acknowledgment of the person who ordered the work at **v. 284** belong to this relationship. Nabíl, *The Dawn-Breakers*, ch. 10 · Encyclopaedia Iranica, Qájár Isfahán

Mír Siyyid Muḥammad, the Sulṭánu'l-'Ulamá · active in 1846

The Imám-Jum'ih, or Friday prayer leader, of Isfahán received the Báb in his home at the governor's request. He was himself the occasion for the Báb's commentary on the Súrah of Va'l-'Aṣr. His house subsequently provided the setting in which Manúchihr Khán asked for the treatise on Prophethood. The note to Nabíl's account gives his personal name and title on the authority of Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl. Nabíl, *The Dawn-Breakers*, ch. 10 and n. 3

People in the immediate historical setting

Person	Biographical connection
Siyyid Káẓim-i-Zanjání	The companion who traveled with the Báb from Shíráz toward Isfahán in 1846. Nabíl says that he carried the Báb's letter to Manúchihr Khán. His role concerns the arrival that made the meeting possible. *The Dawn-Breakers*, ch. 10
Mír Muḥammad-Ḥusayn of Isfahán, later called Raqshá	Brother of the Imám-Jum'ih. The host sent him with companions to meet and escort the Báb at the approach to the city. His role in this episode is the reception preceding the Báb's stay. Nabíl's account · John Walbridge, *The Bahá'í Faith in Iran*
Mullá Muḥammad-Taqíy-i-Harátí	An Islamic jurist in the Isfahán circle who, in Nabíl's account, praised the Báb's rapid revelation of the commentary on Va'l-'Aṣr. That encounter supplies context for the reception of the Prophethood treatise. His presence at the specific commission remains unestablished. *The Dawn-Breakers*, ch. 10
Muḥammad Sháh Qájár (1808–1848)	Reigned from 1834 to 1848. His reign provides the court setting for the titles Kháqán and Sulṭán at **v. 29**. After the governor's death, his instructions governed the Báb's departure from Isfahán. Encyclopaedia Iranica · *The Dawn-Breakers*, ch. 10
Hájí Mírzá Áqásí (d. 1849)	Chief minister to Muḥammad Sháh. The prospect of the governor bringing the Báb before the sovereign sharpened his opposition. His role belongs to the political aftermath of the Isfahán encounter. Encyclopaedia Iranica
Gurgín Khán	Nephew and successor of Manúchihr Khán. After the governor's death he informed the court of the Báb's presence and arranged His departure under escort. Encyclopaedia Iranica, "Báb" · *The Dawn-Breakers*, ch. 10

Nabíl describes an assembly of divines when the governor requests the work. His narrative gives no roster for that assembly. The named guests of the later meeting at the governor's residence belong to a separate occasion. *The Dawn-Breakers*, ch. 10

The people behind the cited books

The following figures belong to the textual history of the quotations, or to the comparisons made in the notes and the present ḥadíth concordance. BKW edition and witness catalogue

Person	Life, work, and connection
Ibn Isḥáq (d. c. 767)	Medinan collector of traditions about the Prophet whose *Sírah* supplied a foundational narrative of His life. The report attributed to ʿÁ'ishah behind **v. 79** comes through him. Digital Sīra Project
Ibn Hishám (d. ninth century)	Arabic scholar whose recension of Ibn Isḥáq preserves much of the early *Sírah*. His chapter on the Night Journey is the cited home of the ʿÁ'ishah report. **BKW n. 8.** The Night Journey in Ibn Hishám
Muʿáwiyah ibn Abí Sufyán (d. 680)	Umayyad ruler and first caliph of that dynasty. BKW n. 8 gives a report attributed to him that describes the Night Journey as a true vision. It stands in the apparatus as a comparison beside ʿÁ'ishah's report. **V. 79.**
Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjáj (d. 875)	Hadith scholar from Nayshápúr and compiler of *Ṣaḥíḥ Muslim*. His collection identifies Labíd and transmits the Prophet's commendation of the opening half-line quoted at **v. 298**. Ṣaḥíḥ Muslim 2256a
Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Ṣaffár al-Qummí (d. 903)	Early Imámí traditionist of Qum and compiler of *Baṣá'ir al-Daraját*, a collection on the knowledge and stations of the Imáms. It supplies early parallels for **vv. 209 and 317**. Hurqalya Publications
Muḥammad ibn Yaʿqúb al-Kulaynī (d. 940 or 941)	Compiler of *al-Káfí*, the earliest of the four canonical Imámí collections. Its books on Divine Unity and the Proof preserve the principal identifiable sources for the cluster of reports at **vv. 242–246**, the three marks at **v. 280**, the Tradition of the Name at **vv. 337–342**, and the eight letters at **vv. 346–348**, among others. Encyclopaedia Iranica
Al-Ḥusayn ibn Ḥamdán al-Khuṣaybí (d. 969)	Iraqi religious teacher and early formative figure in the Nuṣayrí tradition. His *al-Hidáyah al-Kubrá* is cited by BKW for passages of the Mufaḍḍal dialogue, including the description of the Form as a dwelling of light. **Vv. 51, 217–239, 300.** Encyclopaedia Iranica
Ibn Bábawayh al-Qummí, Shaykh al-Ṣadúq (d. 991)	Imámí scholar and prolific compiler of traditions. His *ʿUyún Akhbár al-Riḍá* is cited by BKW n. 10 for the maxim that what is there is known through what is here. **Compare vv. 90, 148, 186.**
Al-Ḥákim al-Naysábúrí (d. 1014)	Sunni hadith critic and author of *al-Mustadrak*. His collection provides an independently transmitted form of the City of Knowledge saying that appears within the Mufaḍḍal dialogue at **vv. 236 and 239**.

Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Ṭúsí, Shaykh al-Ṭúsí (d. 1067) — Imámí jurist, theologian, and compiler. His devotional manual *Miṣbáḥ al-Mutahajjid* is the BKW source for the Ghadír sermon attributed to ʻAlí, including the choice of Muḥammad in Pre-existence. **V. 110, BKW n. 13.**

Abú Ḥámid al-Ghazálí (d. 1111) — Muslim theologian and writer on spiritual knowledge. BKW n. 35 cites *Mishkát al-Anwár* for the image of the glass and the wine at **v. 294**. The book is a witness to the verse's circulation.

ʻIzzu'd-Dín Ibn al-Athír (1160–1233) — Historian from the region of Mosul and author of *al-Kámil fí al-Táríkh*. BKW n. 39 cites his chronicle for Labíd's verse and the Prophet's commendation. **V. 298.** Introduction to Ibn al-Athír's chronicle

Ibn Abí al-Ḥadíd (d. 1258) — Muʻtazilí scholar, poet, and commentator on *Nahj al-Balághah*. BKW n. 36 points to a poem praising ʻAlí in connection with the lines on names, attributes, and substance at **v. 295**. Commentary on the ode

Rajab al-Bursí (active in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries) — Shiʻi mystical writer from Iraq. His *Masháriq Anwár al-Yaqín* preserves the saying about Muḥammad as first, middle, and last, material associated with the Sermon of the Gulf, and parallels to the saying attributed to the Gospel and the verse on concealed knowledge. **Vv. 50, 110, 303, 356.** Todd Lawson on Rajab al-Bursí

Fakhru'd-Dín al-Ṭurayḥí (d. 1674) — Shiʻi lexicographer and compiler associated with Najaf. His *al-Muntakhab*, a collection of sermons and elegies, contains the poetic parallel cited by BKW n. 45 for **v. 307**. TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi

Muḥsin al-Fayḍ al-Káshání (d. 1680) — Safavid philosopher, exegete, and compiler of traditions. His *Nawádir al-Akhbár* is cited for the Qá'im's new Book and for the concealed mystery of the Cause. **Vv. 140, 209, BKW nn. 18 and 21.** Encyclopaedia Iranica

Al-Ḥurr al-ʻÁmilí (d. 1693) — Hadith scholar from Jabal ʻÁmil who settled in Mashhad. BKW n. 44 cites his *al-Jawáhir al-Saniyyah* for a parallel to the saying attributed to the Gospel at **v. 303**. Encyclopaedia Iranica

Muḥammad-Báqir al-Majlisí (1627–1699 or 1700) — Safavid jurist and compiler in Isfahán. His *Biḥár al-Anwár* gathers reports used to compare the covenant, the Mufaḍḍal dialogue, the difficulty of the Cause, and the degrees of recognition. His *Mir'át al-ʻUqúl* records assessments of the chains behind **vv. 244–245**, alongside the Báb's own characterization of those reports. Encyclopaedia Iranica · Al-Káfí with chain assessments

Niʻmatu'lláh al-Jazá'irí (d. 1701) — Shiʻi scholar of the late Safavid period. BKW n. 31 cites the "Núr Murtaḍawí" section of his *al-Anwár al-Nuʻmániyyah* for ʻAlí's saying about the Point beneath Bá. **V. 268.** Stephen Lambden on the Point

Shaykh Aḥmad al-Aḥsá'í (1753–1826)	Shi'i theologian whose teachings gave rise to the Shaykhí school. His writings illuminate the distinction between knowledge by effects and recognition through the thing itself. His commentary on the Great Comprehensive Visitation Prayer also preserves the sevenfold report of Jábir in close agreement with **vv. 357–358**. Encyclopaedia Iranica, "Shaykhism" · Commentary
Siyyid Káẓim al-Rashtí (d. 1843)	Shaykh Aḥmad's successor in Karbalá. His commentaries supply parallels for the language of the Second Eternity and for the imagery of the Sermon of the Gulf. **Vv. 110, 307, BKW nn. 14 and 45.** His place here is that of an intellectual predecessor and source for comparison. Encyclopaedia Iranica, "Shaykhism"
Muḥsin al-Amín al-'Ámilí (1867–1952)	Shi'i scholar from Jabal 'Ámil, known for biographical and devotional compilations. BKW cites his *Miftáḥ al-Jannát* for the Dawn Prayer at **vv. 57 and 303**. Arabic Encyclopedia
'Abbás al-Qummí (d. 1941)	Iranian scholar and compiler of *Mafátíḥ al-Jinán*, a widely used collection of Shi'i devotions. BKW cites it for the Ramadan prayer transmitted by Abú Ḥamzah at **vv. 57 and 303**. The prayer in *Mafátíḥ al-Jinán*

Literary comparisons in the Arabic notes

Person	Connection with the work
Imru' al-Qays (sixth century)	Early Arabic poet and traditional author of a celebrated *Mu'allaqah*. BKW n. 29 cites a poem attributed to him for a parallel to the Bedouin's wording at **v. 257**.
Al-Ṣáḥib ibn 'Abbád (d. 995)	Buyid vizier and man of letters. BKW n. 35 reports one attribution of the glass-and-wine verses at **v. 294** to him.
Abú Nuwás (d. early ninth century)	Abbasid poet whose work is closely associated with the imagery of wine. BKW n. 35 records him as the other proposed author of the verses at **v. 294**. Wiley, biographical entry
Ibn Abí Ḥajalah (d. 1375)	Arabic man of letters and compiler of *Díwán al-Ṣabábah*, an anthology on love. BKW n. 37 cites it for the Laylá verse at **v. 297**.
Al-Qáḍí 'Alí ibn 'Abd al-'Azíz al-Jurjání (d. early eleventh century)	Judge and literary critic, author of *al-Wasáṭah bayna al-Mutanabbí wa-Khuṣúmih*. BKW n. 38 cites his book for the companion verse on the tears of those who weep and those who feign weeping at **v. 297**.
'Abdu'l-Báqí al-'Umarí (nineteenth century)	Iraqi poet whose Lámiyyah is the subject of a commentary by Siyyid Káẓim. BKW n. 14 cites that commentary for language related to the Second Eternity at **v. 110**.

Recording, preserving, and translating the treatise

Nabíl-i-Aʿẓam, Mullá Muḥammad-i-Zarandí · 1831–1892
A poet, teacher, and chronicler of Bábí history, Nabíl recorded the account of the Isfahán meeting through which the commission is most widely known in Bahá'í literature. His narrative gives the sequence from the Báb's arrival and reception to the governor's request for a written answer. It is a later historical account, with its own perspective on what the encounter meant. Encyclopaedia Iranica · *The Dawn-Breakers*, ch. 10

Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl Gulpáyigání · 1844–1914
A Bahá'í scholar and historian whose manuscript is cited in the annotation to Nabíl's narrative for the identity of the Imám-Jumʿih. This note connects the office under which the host appears in the narrative with the name **Mír Siyyid Muḥammad** and the title **Sulṭánu'l-ʿUlamá**. Encyclopaedia Iranica · *The Dawn-Breakers*, ch. 10 n. 3

Shoghi Effendi · 1897–1957
Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith and translator of Nabíl's narrative into English. His 1932 edition of *The Dawn-Breakers* made the account of the work's composition available to English readers. His role in this register is the transmission of the historical account. Bahá'í Reference Library, title page · Life and work

Ḥasan M. Balyuzi · 1908–1980
A Bahá'í historian from the Afnán family and author of *The Báb*. He is connected with the treatise through historical study and through preservation of the manuscript series. A photographic set of the Iranian National Bahá'í Archives volumes sent to him is now housed at the Afnan Library, which makes the series available to readers. Encyclopaedia Iranica · Afnan Library, INBA collection

Stephen N. Lambden
A scholar of Shaykhí, Bábí, and Bahá'í studies whose Hurqalya project makes available an introduction and partial annotated translation of the treatise. His study places the Isfahán occasion in its historical setting and discusses the distinction between universal and particular Prophethood. Academic profile · Study and partial translation

Steven Phelps
Compiler of *A Partial Inventory of the Works of the Central Figures of the Bahá'í Faith*. The identifier **BB 00014** in that inventory brings together references to the treatise's manuscripts, publications, and translations. The Ocean of Lights catalogue uses the identifier to connect these records. Partial Inventory · Catalogue entry BB 00014

Brad Crawford
Translator of the present provisional English edition. The work of this edition includes comparison of INBA 40 with INBA 14 and the BKW edition, preparation of the Arabic–English working text, and the arrangement of the verse sequence and concordances. The nineteen-by-nineteen arrangement belongs to the edition's Abhá Math reading.

The manuscript copyists and the BKW editor
The copyists of the INBA 40 and INBA 14 witnesses and the individual responsible for the BKW transcription remain unidentified in the project copies consulted. INBA 40 serves as the provisional control witness, INBA 14 as the principal variant witness, and BKW as the edition prepared principally from INBA 40 and consulted for its readings and notes. Arabic witness and publication catalogue