The majority of the issues in this field concern recognizing the causes requiring getting married and leaving a marriage, the proper way to marry, the qualities of the husband and wife, the responsibilities of the husband in dealing kindly with his wife and protecting the wife from dishonor and vices, the extent of the wife’s duties of chastity, obedience to the husband, and exerting her capacity in household matters; the way to resolve cases of spousal mistreatment, the method of divorce, the mourning period of the woman who has lost her husband, the bringing up of the children, honoring the parents, the way of managing slaves and treating them kindly, the way for slaves to serve their masters, the way to manumit slaves, how to behave with relatives and neighbors, how to give charity to the poor of the locality and cooperate in alleviating the calamities which assault them, the proper behavior of the leader of the group and how he should monitor their condition, how to divide the legacy among the heirs, and how to preserve the lineages and the lines of descent.

Therefore you will not find any nation among humanity which does not have convictions about the principles of these topics and which does not strive to establish them, despite their varying religions and the distance between their countries, and God knows better.

CHAPTER 22

The Art of Economic Transactions (Mu'amalat)

This is the science examining the manner of establishing exchanges, cooperation, and means of earning, at the second stage of the supports of civilization. The basis of this is that when needs become numerous and excellence is sought in them, and these (needs) are aesthetic and emotional, it becomes impractical for everyone to undertake them. Some found food in excess of their needs but did not find water, and others had extra water but no food. Thus each desired what another had, so exchanging appeared to be the only solution. Thus this exchange arose due to necessity, so that they were forced to agree among themselves that each one would accept to take care of one need, and achieve mastery in it and make efforts to attain proficiency in the use of its tools, and to make it a means for achieving further needs through the medium of exchange, and this became a practice on which they agreed.

Since many people would desire a certain thing or dislike a certain thing, and could not find anyone to trade in it in that case, they were forced to provide a way to commission things and have them prepared in advance and they were forced to agree to set the convention of mineral substances which would last a long time as a means of exchange among them. The most suitable among these were gold and silver due to their small bulk, their homogeneity, their greatly beneficial effect on the human body, and since they could be used for adornment, so these two became the natural currency while other things were given conventional monetary values.

The foundations of the professions are agriculture, herding, and the gathering of permitted goods from land, sea, mines, plants, and animals; and industries such as carpentry, iron-smithing, weaving, and so on, which involve working with natural substances, in order that the desired level of societal development in achieved through them. Then trade also became a profession, and running the affairs of the city became a profession, and then engaging in all the things which people need became professions.
The more people became refined and devoted to pleasure and luxury, the more the branches of the professions became diversified. Each man would specialize in a profession for one of two reasons. Firstly, that it was appropriate to his strengths, such as the brave man finds military raiding appropriate, and the clever man with a good memory finds accounting suitable, and the very strong person would carry heavy burdens and perform difficult tasks. (The second reason) was due to coincidental circumstances, as the art of smithing seems easier for the son or neighbor of the smith than any other profession does to him, and easier for him than for another person. The resident of the seashore takes to catching fish as no other person does, and more than to any other profession. There remain those who are incapable of doing things in a sound way, and they stoop to occupations harmful to the city such as robbery, gambling, and begging.

Exchange is either property for property, which is barter; or property in exchange for usufruct, which is hire and lease. Since the organization of the city could not be accomplished except through good will and love among people, and good will often leads to giving without a return, or delaying payment, therefore gifts and loans evolved. This good will is also only accomplished through sympathy for the poor; and thus charity evolved. Material circumstances required that there be among them fools, competent ones, impoverished ones, and wealthy ones, those who disdained low-status work and those who did not, those whose needs were pressing and those who were free from need. Thus, no one’s livelihood could be achieved without the cooperation of another, and there could be no cooperation except through contracts, (setting) conditions, and conventions according to a customary practice. In this way the branches of share-cropping, limited partnership (muṣārābāh), hire and lease, partnership, and power of attorney came into being. Needs arose which led to borrowing and keeping in trust; then some attempted deception, lying and delaying of payments; so they were forced to institute witnessing, writing up documents, mortgaging, guarantee and bills of exchange.

The more their level of comfort increased, the more the types of cooperation diversified, and no community of people exists which does not practice these transactions and recognize justice from injustice, and God knows better.

CHAPTER 23

The Governing of the City-State (the Third Irīfāq)

This is the science examining the manner of maintaining the bond existing among the people of the city.1 By the city I mean a group living in close proximity to one another who have dealings with one another and who dwell in separate houses. The basic principle of this is that the city is a single individual in the sense of this bond composed of many parts and a collective attitude. Every composite thing may be afflicted by disorders in its material or its form, and it may be struck by a “sickness,” that is, a state which is less suitable for it than another with respect to its species; while “health” would refer to a state which would improve and embellish it.

Since the city comprises a great assembly (of people), it is not possible that all their views will all agree on preserving the just practice, and certain of them will not be able to rebuke others unless they are distinguished by rank, for this would lead to excessive fighting and killing. The city’s affairs will not be put in order unless the majority of the influential people agree to obey a person who has his own supporters and might, and whoever is more greedy, violent, and prone to killing and anger, needs to be regulated more than others.

Among disorders (which may strike a city) are:

1) That a group of wicked people who have vigor and power may join together to follow their own desires and throw off the just practice, either out of desire for the wealth of people, such as highwaymen; or in order to do harm to people out of hostility, malice or a desire to dominate. In this instance people have to gather forces together and prepare to fight.

2) That an offender may kill, wound or strike a man, or harm his family, by molesting his wife or desiring his daughters or sisters...

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1 "Madina", which could also be appropriately taken as “state” rather than city, arising from the usage of the term in the Islamic intellectual traditions influenced by Plato’s Republic which dealt with the ideal “city-state” of his time.
are digging wells, discovering springs and docking provisioned boats at the shores of the river. Among them are extending friendliness and kindness to the merchants of provisions and advising the people of the city to deal well with outsiders, for this will provide access to their coming often. The farmers should be admonished not to leave any land uncultivated, and the craftsmen to improve their work and to be proficient in it. The people of the city should be encouraged to acquire superior graces such as calligraphy, arithmetic, history, medicine and the proper methods of advancing knowledge.

Among protective measures is being aware of the news of the city, so as to recognize the immoral one from the moral, to know who is in need in order to help him, and to know the best workman in order to seek his services.

In this time there are two principle causes for the deterioration of cities. One of them is the depletion of the treasury, due to the fact that people have made a habit of earning a living by taking from it on the basis that they are soldiers or ulema who have a right to it, or that the kings have customarily given gifts to some persons, such as ascetics or poets; or through some other forms of parasitism. Thus, the main goal among them has become gaining a livelihood without doing any worthwhile work, and one group succeeds another in making unpleasant the lives of others and have become a burden on the city.

The second is the levying of heavy taxes on farmers, merchants and professional people and raising them until this leads to the obedient ones being ruined and destroyed, and the ones with enough strength rejecting this and rebelling.

Certainly the city is improved through collecting small taxes, and establishing defense to the necessary extent. The people of this era should remain aware of this, and God knows better.
CHAPTER 24

The Conduct of Kings

The king must be characterized by praiseworthy virtues, otherwise he becomes a burden upon the city. If he is not courageous and is weak in opposing the ones fighting to overthrow him, his subjects will only regard him with contempt. If he is not forbearing he will nearly destroy them through his strength, and if he is not wise he will not discover the beneficial way to manage things. He must be in full possession of his mental faculties, of mature age, free, male, having his senses of sight, hearing, and speech intact. The people must agree on his nobleness and the nobility of his ancestors, they must have seen praiseworthy feats done by him and his ancestors, and they must know that he will not spare any effort in putting the realm in order.

This is all corroborated by reason and the people of all nations have concurred in this, despite their far-flung locations and variations in their religions, for they perceive that the benefit intended in appointing a king is only achieved through these things. If they see him overlooking any of this then they will think that he is not what is needed and they will despise him, and if they remain silent, they are harboring latent anger.

The king must establish a place of honor for himself in the hearts of his subjects and preserve it, and he must see that his good reputation is perpetuated through appropriate means. The one who seeks a high position must be endowed with superior leadership qualities, such as courage, wisdom, generosity, forgiveness for the wrong-doer, and the desire to promote the common good. He must deal with the people as the hunter deals with the wild beast. For the hunter goes to the forest, then studies the gazelle and contemplates the attitude appropriate for its characteristics and habits and adapts himself to that attitude. Therefore he shows himself to it from afar, and he focuses his glance on its eyes and ears so that when he knows that it is being watchful he stays in his place as motionless as a rock. When he sees that it is not paying attention he stealthily crawls toward it. Sometimes he charms it with music and throws to it fine tidbits which it craves to eat, as if he were generous by nature and does not wish to ensnare it by means of this. Favors result in the love of the recipient and bonds of love are stronger than bonds of iron. Likewise the man who wishes to be outstanding among people should display the attitude which they like in clothing, speech, and manners. Then he should approach them humbly and should offer them advice and affection in a fashion which is not frivolous; while not displaying any evidence that this is done in order to ensnare them. He teaches them that no one else would be able to equal him in their regard, until he perceives that their hearts have become convinced of his superiority and pre-eminence, that their breasts are filled with loving and respecting him, and that their limbs are pervaded by humility and submissiveness; and he must maintain them in that state, and do nothing to turn them against him. If anything like that should happen he must make amends with kindness and favor, demonstrating that the common good required him to do what he did, and that he is working for them, not against them. In spite of this, the king must compel obedience to himself by taking vengeance on the one who rebels against him. Whenever he notices that some man is capable in war or collecting taxes or management then he should multiply his reward and raise his rank to display his favor to him. Whenever the king perceives treachery, opposition and disobedience from some man, his pay should be lowered, his rank reduced and he should shun him.

The king requires a more comfortable life than that of the people, yet he should not be too strict in assigning them tasks such as trying to cultivate wasteland, or protecting a very remote district, and so on. He should not punish anyone until it is confirmed by men of authority that this person deserves it and that the general good requires this.

The king must be intuitive about human nature so that he knows what is secreted in people’s hearts, and he must be sagacious, thinking a thought simultaneously with you as if he saw it and heard it. He must not procrastinate, delaying what must be done until tomorrow, nor must he hesitate if he detects animosity from someone, to destroy his position and weaken his strength, and God knows better.

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1 As stipulated in manuals of Islamic political theory regarding rulership such as al-Māwardi’s (d. 1058) Ḥikam al-Sulamiyya.
It is not desirable that every person and property be taxed, and the kings of the nations of the East and West have agreed that taxes should be levied on the people of abundant wealth and amassed riches, and on wealth multiplying from productive property such as breeding animals, agriculture, and commercial activity; and if more than this is required, then on the tradesmen.

The king must have a policy toward his army, and the method of management here is like that of the skilled riding master with his horse, in that he knows the types of gaits; whether trotting, running, galloping, and others, and the bad habits such as obstinacy, and so on, and the things which train the horse by making a profound impression such as the goad, the crop, and the whip. Thus he observes the horse and whenever it does what displeases him or stops doing what he wants, he warns it through what its nature obeys, and through this he tames its impetuousness. He doesn't intend by this that its mind should become confused, nor that it should not understand why he strikes it, but rather he wants the image of what he is teaching it to be represented in its mind and fixed in its heart, and that the fear of punishment will become established in its mind. Once the desired action is achieved and the reprehensible one is avoided, he should not abandon the training until he sees that the desired pattern of behavior has become second nature and habitual for it, so that even without the whip, the horse will not be disposed to things which conflict with the desired goal. Likewise it is necessary for the trainer of the army that he know the desired method in taking action and refraining, and the things which will serve as a warning to them, and he must never be neglectful of any of these things.

The number of assistants is not limited but is proportional to the needs of the city. Sometimes two assistants will be required for a task while sometimes one assistant will suffice for two tasks. However there are five principal helpers:

1) The judge (qādī), who must be a free person, male, mature, possessing his mental faculties intact, capable, knowing the practice of transactions and the artifices of the disputants in their litigation. He must be strict and forbearing, combining both at the same time. He must consider two aspects. One of them is knowing the true status of the case whether it is a contract, misdeed, or a matter contested between them. The second (aspect is) what each one of the claimants wants from the other, and which of the two

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1 The land taxes levied on various types of terrain. The kharāj is a land tax levied on non-Muslim subjects while the ‘ushr is levied for public assistance on Muslim-held land.
claims is more sound and preferable. He must also consider the way of examining information, for there may be evidence about which people have no doubt that demands an unequivocal judgment, and there may be evidence which is not so clear, requiring a judgment short of the former one.

2) The second is the commander of the warriors who must know all about war materiel and how to mold champions and heroes. He must recognize the potential usefulness of every man, the manner of preparing and training the army, the deployment of spies, and how to get information about the strategies of the opponents.

3) The third is the manager (chief of police) of the city, who must be experienced, having recognized the means to the good and the bad for the city. He must be both strict and forbearing and be one of those people who does not remain silent when he sees something which displeases him. He must select a deputy from each group who knows about its affairs, so that through him they can be regulated, and who will be held accountable for their situation.

4) The fourth is the revenue collector (āmil) who must know the means of taxing wealth and distributing it to the ones entitled to it.

5) The fifth is the chamberlain (wakil) who is responsible for the well-being of the king. For the king, with all of his other duties, is not given the opportunity to pay attention to the proper ordering of his own daily life.

CHAPTER 26

The Fourth Irifāq (the Caliphate)

This is the science investigating the political strategy (siyāsa) of the rulers of the cities and their kings, and the way of preserving the bonds existing among the people of the regions. That is, when each king is independently selected in his city, property is collected as taxes for him and brave people gather around him. The fact that their (the kings') temperaments will vary and their capacities are different necessitates that injustice and the abandonment of the rightly guided custom will arise among them. Certain ones will desire to take over another's state and they will envy and fight with one another for petty reasons like the desire for wealth or land, or due to envy or malice. When this spreads and increases among kings they are forced to appoint a Caliph. The Caliph is a person who has an army and equipment which make it clearly impossible for someone else to usurp his domain. This could only be imaginable after a general calamity, great strife, many gatherings, and the expenditure of huge sums of money which people would fall short of attaining, and which ordinarily are impossible.

Once the Caliph is established and the quality of life in his realm improves, and the haughty submit to him and the kings obey him, the blessing of God is accomplished and the land and the people become content. The Caliph must undertake combat to prevent harm befalling them from savage people who plunder their property, imprison their sons, and dishonor their wives.

This is the need which prompted the Children of Israel to say to one of their prophets, "Send us a king so that we may fight in the path of God."3

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1 Ārā' juz'īyya—literally, partial outlooks. The opposite of the comprehensive outlook (al-ra'y al-kullī).
2 i.e., Samuel.
3 Qur'an 2:246.
In the beginning when persons of lustful or savage conduct turned to evil in their way of life and sowed corruption on the earth; God, may He be Exalted, inspired the prophets, either directly or through an intermediary, that He would take away their power and that He would kill those who could not ultimately be reformed, for they, in relation to the human species, are like a limb afflicted by gangrene. This is the thing indicated in His, may He be Exalted, saying, “Had God not driven back some people by means of others, hermits’ cells and churches, oratories and mosques wherein the name of Allah is often mentioned, would have been pulled down,” and His saying, “Fight against them until there is no more persecution.” The Caliph can not conceivably fight against tyrannical kings and eradicate their power except by means of monetary resources and raising forces. In order to do this he must know the required principles of each one of the following: war, truce, and imposing land and poll taxes.

First he must well consider what is the goal of the fighting, whether the prevention of wrongdoing, the destruction of savage, foul people whom there is no hope of reforming, crushing people whose evil is of a somewhat lower order by wiping out their power, or crushing a group corrupting the earth through killing or imprisoning the leaders who were organizing them or by confiscating their wealth and land, or by getting the subjects to desist from supporting them. The Caliph should not rush into trying to accomplish a goal greater than his capacity, nor should he wish to acquire wealth through annihilating a righteous body of his supporters. He must win over the hearts of the people and understand the potential benefit in each one, and not depend on any person beyond his capacity. He must elevate and respect the leading class and the resourceful people. In goading them to battle he must both incite and intimidate, but first he must give attention to dividing the union of his opponents, blunting their strength, and striking fear in their hearts, so that under his power they appear to be helpless. When he triumphs in this, he should implement the intention concerning them which he had planned before the war.

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4 Qur'an 22:40. This is a verse giving permission to those who fight because they were wronged.
3 Qur'an 2:193.
9 The kharaj is the land tax paid by non-Muslim subjects while the jizya is a head or poll tax levied on non-Muslims living in Muslim territories.
CHAPTER 27

The Agreement of People on the Principles of the Irtifāqāt

You should know that no city in the inhabited climes and no people of the nations of balanced temperaments and virtuous morals is devoid of the supports of civilization, from the time of Adam, may peace be upon him, until Judgment Day. Their principles are agreed upon by all, century after century, and generation after generation. People will always severely repudiate anyone who disobeys them, and they consider them to be self-evident due to their great repute. Do not be dissuaded from what we have mentioned because of people’s variations in the patterns and ramifications of the Irtifāqāt. Thus they agree, for example, on preventing the stench of the dead and concealing their private parts, but they differ in the forms. Some of them choose burial in the earth and some of them cremation. They agree on publicizing marriage and openly distinguishing it from fornication in the presence of witnesses but they differ in the forms. Thus, some choose witnessing, acceptance, and feasts, while others choose drumming and singing, and put on magnificent clothes which are only donned for important banquets. Likewise they agree on the punishment of adulterers and thieves, but differ in that some choose stoning and cutting off a hand while others choose severe beating, painful confinement, and crushing fines.

Don’t let yourself be led to reject our view due to its being contradicted by two groups. One of them are the foolish who are like animals; the multitude has no doubt that their character is deficient and that their minds are defective. They can deduce the stupidity of these people from their failure to bind themselves by these restrictions.

The second group are the profligates. If what is in their hearts were carefully examined, it would become apparent that they believe in the Irtifāqāt; however, their passions have overcome them and they disobey the laws, testifying to their own profligacy. They fornicate with the daughters and sisters of the people, but if some-
CHAPTER 28

The Conventions Current Among People

You should know that in relationship to the supports of civilization conventions (al-rusim) are analogous to the heart in the human body. The divine laws primarily and essentially consider these conventions, and they are what is discussed and referred to in the heavenly injunctions. There are causes due to which they arise, such as their being discovered by wise men, and such as the inspiration of God, may He be Exalted, which is sent into the hearts of those supported by the angelic light. There are reasons why these conventions become disseminated among mankind; for example their being the practice of a great king before whom people submit, or they may be an elaboration of what people find in their hearts, so that they accept them on the basis of their inner testimony. There are reasons why people cling firmly to them such as their having experienced a punishment from the unseen world when they were neglected, or the occurrence of evil when they were ignored, or that the people of rightly-guided opinions condemn abandoning them, and so on. The insightful man may be able to verify this according to the vitality of practices or their dying out in many countries, in correspondence to what we have mentioned.

The current practices, if they are true in their basic premise, will preserve the sound supports of civilization and lead individuals to their theoretical and practical perfection. If it were not for these, most people would be like animals. How many men conduct marriage and other transactions in the desired manner, and if they were asked the reason for abiding by these conditions they would not find any answer other than its having been agreed upon by the people. At the very most a person might possess a general knowledge which he cannot articulate, let alone being able to give a preliminary explanation of its social function (irtifaq). Thus such a person, if he did not follow customary practice, would almost be like the animals. However, these customary practices may also come to include invalid elements and people may come to be deceived in this regard. This occurs when a group takes charge who are dominated by limited perspectives rather than (considering) the comprehensive beneficial purposes. Thus they perform predatory acts such as highway robbery and extortion, and lustful acts such as homosexuality and men behaving effeminately women, or they take up harmful professions such as usury and giving short measure and weight. Or they may become accustomed to stylish clothing and feasting which tend towards extravagance and require extreme preoccupation with earning money. Alternatively, they may become involved in amusements which lead to the neglect of their present livelihood and of the next life, such as musical instruments, chess, hunting, acquiring pigeons and so on. They may impose crushing taxes on travelers, or a land tax which ruins their subjects, or they may be miserly and quarrelsome in their dealings amongst themselves. They approve of doing such things to the people, but do not like it done to be done to themselves, and no one can criticize them because of their power and their despotic authority. Then the sinful members of the community arise to follow in their footsteps and help them, making efforts to spread these things. A group of people then comes forth, in whose hearts no strong inclination to righteous acts has been created but who are neither inclined to their opposite, and they are led to adhere to such actions by what they see their leaders doing; and perhaps the righteous procedures may be unknown to them. There remains among the rest of the people a group whose original nature is sound and who do not mix with them, and they conceal their wrath, so that an evil practice becomes established and reinforced (due to their silence).

It is incumbent on people of comprehensive outlooks that they expend efforts in spreading the right, and in suppressing and obstructing the wrong. Sometimes this is only possible through disputations or fights; and all of this is counted among the best of pious actions.

Once a rightly-guided practice is established the people assent to it age after age, and live and die according to it, and their souls and sciences become engrained in it so that they consider it inseparable from the principles, present and absent. No one would want to deviate from it or rebel against it except a person whose soul was loathsome, whose reason was confused, whose lust had gained...
ascendancy and who was controlled by passion. Then, if he carries out this deviation a testimony to his depravity is secreted in his heart, and a veil is lowered between him and the universal beneficial interest. If his act is completed this veil becomes an illustration of his psychological sickness, and this will be an impediment in his religion.

When this rightly-guided practice is clearly established the Highest Council raise prayers for those who conform to it and against those who oppose it, and satisfaction is established in the Holy Enclave for the person who follows this practice, and wrath upon him opposes it. When the customary practices are of this type, they are counted as being part of “the original nature (fitra) according to which God, may He be Exalted, created human beings,” and God knows better.

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2 Qur'an 30:30.
CHAPTER 29

Concerning the True Nature of Felicity

You should know that the human being has a perfection required by the specific form, and perfection required by the position of the human species, in terms of the proximate and remote genus. The (ultimate) felicity, the lack of which is detrimental to humans, and which people of sound reason surely strive for, is the first of these two perfections.

This is because a person may customarily be praised for attributes which he shares with mineral bodies, such as length and great height, and if “felicity” (sa'āda) were these, then the mountains would be more complete in well-being. Or a person may be praised for properties which he shares with the plants, such as growing properly and emerging with beautiful designs and radiant forms, so that if well-being consisted of these, then the red anemone and the rose would have more complete perfection. Or a person may be praised for properties which he shares with the animals like great strength, loudness of voice, being very lustful, eating and drinking plentifully, and having abundant anger and envy; and if this were felicity, then the donkey would have more complete felicity.

Characteristics which are particular to humans, such as cultivated virtues, sound supports for civilization (irtifaqát), elevated crafts, and high position—it immediately appears that these are the ultimate felicity of humans. Thus you see that in every nation of mankind those who have greater discernment and a more sound opinion desire their acquisition; and that they consider things other than

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1 The animal is the proximate genus and the inanimate the remote one.
2 Felicity or happiness—"sa'āda"—is a term used in the tradition of philosophical ethics (akhlâq). Plato's theory of virtue and Aristotelian ethical theory had a strong influence on the Islamic tradition once these Greek works were translated into Arabic. The use of the term "felicity" or "well-being" here, and elsewhere in this text, should therefore be understood as the ultimate felicity which arises through the acquisition of virtues and the refinement of the soul. Islamic thinkers such as al-Ghazzâlî and Shâh Wâli Allâh understood this as being consistent with the Qur'anic concept of human nature and the effect of actions on it in this life and the next.
these not to be praiseworthy attributes. However, the matter has still not been precisely stated, because the basis of these (praiseworthy attributes) is found among individual animals. Thus courage is based on anger, the love of revenge, being steadfast in adversity, and advancing into dangerous situations, and all of these are abundantly found in male beasts. However, it is not called “courage” until after the emanation of the rational soul refines these so that they become guided by the universal beneficial purpose and arise due to a reasoned motivation. Likewise the basis of the crafts is found among animals such as the sparrow, which builds nests. Indeed, many things that animals naturally make, man could not make even with great difficulty. However, on the contrary, the truth is that this felicity is incidental, and the true felicity is the guiding of the animalistic by the rational soul, the compliance of the passions with reason, the rational soul’s vanquishing the animalistic, and reason being dominant over the passions. All of the other characteristics are negligible.

You should know that the matters involved in true felicity are of two categories.

1) One category comes under the topic of the emergence of the rational soul’s emanation in daily life through the decree of innate disposition (jabbila). It is not possible to acquire the desired virtue through this category, but rather sometimes a dipping into these acts may take place due to their attractiveness, especially through a fragmentary concept, as is the case of the deficient person; in contrast to the desired perfection. An example would be the person who wants to acquire courage through provoking anger, conflict, and so on; or the one who wants to acquire eloquence through knowing Arabic poetry and oratory. Virtues (akhlāq) only emerge through contact with other members of the species, and the supports of civilization are only devised in response to coincidental needs, and the crafts are only accomplished through tools and material; and all of these things come to an end with the passing away of the life of this world. Thus, if the deficient person dies in this condition, and he was loathsome, he remains devoid of perfection. If the images of these (worldly) connections cling to his soul, then the harm to him is greater than the benefit.

2) The second category has as its spirit the attitude of submission on the part of the animalistic to the angelic force, so that the former comports itself according to the inspiration of the angelic and is colored by its hue, while the angelic prevents it from taking on the colors of the world, and from having its base imprints stamped on it like the imprinting of the sealing ring on the wax. There is no way for this to occur except that the angelic (force) requires something through its essential nature and sends an inspiration about it to the animalistic, and suggests this to it, so that (in turn) the animalistic obeys it and does not rebel or withhold itself from it. Thus, it (the angelic) keeps on ordering and the animalistic obeying, and things continue in this way until the animalistic force becomes accustomed to this and is trained. Those things which the angelic decrees through its essential nature, and which the animalistic is compelled to do despite its reluctance are of the sort that make the former happy and the latter depressed, such as the imitation of Malakūt and the striving for Jabarūt, for they are a particularity of the angelic, and the animalistic is at the utmost distance from them. Or (this continues until) whatever the animalistic decrees, takes pleasure in, and craves for in its excesses, is abandoned.

This second category is called acts of worship and religious exercises, and these participate in the acquisition of the desired virtues which are missing. The investigation of this point goes back to the fact that true felicity is not ensnared except through acts of worship. Therefore the universal beneficial purpose calls to human individuals from the apertures of the specific form and insistently orders them to carry out the improvement of the attributes which are a second perfection for it, to the extent which they are needed. It also commands people to make the ultimate goal of their concentrated attention and the target of their sights the refinement of the soul, and its adornment with attitudes which make it resemble what is above it among the Highest Council, and to prepare it for the revelation of the realities of Jabarūt and Malakūt. (It commands them) to make the animalistic submissive to the angelic and obedient to it, and to make it a showcase for the manifestation of its commands.

When human individuals are sound according to their species, and their matter is capable of manifesting the properties of the species, completely and abundantly, they yearn for this (ultimate)
felicity and are attracted to it as iron is attracted to a magnet. This is the innate character (khalq) according to which God, may He be Exalted, created man, and the original nature, according to which God, may He be Exalted, constituted human beings. Therefore there has been no nation possessing balanced temperaments among humankind which does not have among it a group of great people who give importance to the perfection of this innate character and consider it to be the ultimate felicity. The kings and wise men, and those beneath them, see them as attaining what is exalted above all the felicities of this world, and as being joined to the angels and affiliated with their circle so that they (these people) seek their blessing and kiss their hands and feet. Thus how can it be that the Arabs and the non-Arabs, despite the differences of their customs and religions and the distances between their cities and countries, agree on one thing with a unity of species—except due to the affinity of the original nature? How could this not be so, once you have recognized that the angelic force is present in the basic human original nature, and once you have recognized the superior and greatest people among them, and God knows better.

CHAPTER 30

The Differences among People in Felicity

You should know that courage and the rest of the virtues are found in varying degrees in human individuals.

Among them there is the person who is totally lacking in it, whose attainment of it is forever hopeless because of the establishment of the contrary form at the base of his nature. Examples are the effeminate one or the weak-hearted person with respect to courage.

Among them is the person deficient in courage, in whom it may be hopefully (be developed) after his practicing actions, sayings, and attitudes appropriate for it, learning such things from courageous people, and remembering the stories of those most perfect in it, i.e. what happened to them in the past, for they remained firm in adversities and confronted dangerous situations.

Among them is the person having the basis of the virtue created in his nature but who is constantly prone to errors, so that if he is ordered to restrain himself from them, this is very oppressive for him and he becomes silent in anger. If he is ordered to do something compatible with his nature it would be like sulfur to which fire is set, for its combustion would not be delayed.

Among them is the person in whom the virtue is created completely and abundantly. He will necessarily rush to accomplish its requirements, and if he is most strongly induced to be cowardly, for example, still he will not accede. Bringing forth acts consistent with this virtue and attitudes suitable to it will be easy for him by nature, without any convention or inducement. This person is the leader in this virtue and needs no teacher at all, and those who are inferior to him in this virtue should follow his example and firmly grasp his ways. They must hold themselves to the imitation of his attitudes and bear in mind his experiences in order that they may bring forth the perfection of this virtue anticipated in them according to that which has been decreed in their case.

Likewise human beings differ with respect to the virtue upon which their felicity depends.
Among them is the person totally deprived of it whose becoming righteous cannot be hoped for, like the one whom Khidr1 killed, who was by nature an unbeliever. This is what is indicated in God’s, may He be Exalted, saying, “Blind, deaf and dumb, they will not repent.”

Among them is the deficient one in whom this (virtue) may be anticipated after arduous exercises and protracted actions which punish his lower soul. Such a person needs the incitement of the call of the prophets and the customary practices handed down from them, and these ones are the majority of the people. It is for them that the sending of prophets is primarily and essentially intended.

Among them is person in whom the virtue was placed in a general sense but who also makes mistakes. Thus, he must have an exemplar in most cases in order to elaborate and set out the attitudes which are appropriate for the virtue. Concerning these ones God, may He be exalted, says “Whose oil would almost glow forth (of itself) though no fire touched it.” These people are called the “Ones who excel.”

Among types of people are the prophets who were able without a previous exemplar or inducement to bring forth the perfection of this virtue and choose the attitudes suitable for it and the means for making the one lacking it acquire it, to make it persist in someone in whom it is already present, and to perfect the person who is deficient in it. Thus while following the requirements of their natural disposition, they systematized the codes of behavior, which people bear in mind and take up as a statute. Indeed, when ironworking, trade and their like are not grasped by most people except through practices transmitted from their forefathers; what is one to think about these noble pursuits to which only those given success by God are guided? Under this topic it is necessary to realize the compelling need for the prophets, and the need to follow their practices and to study their reports (ahadith), and God knows better.

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1 Qur’ān 18:75ff. Khidr is alluded to in the Qur’ānic account of Moses where he appears as his mysterious teacher. Part of Moses’ training was not to question Khidr’s actions which include killing a young man. Later it is disclosed that the man was by nature an unbeliever who would have committed very evil actions. This is elaborated in hadith reports, see for example, Mishkat, p. 1222. Bukhari Anbiya’ 23, Khan trans. IV:485.

2 Qur’ān 2:18.

3 Qur’ān 24:35.

4 “Al-Sabigu’un” are “those who excel in good deeds” mentioned in Qur’ān 56:10. In Shāh Wali Allāh’s terminology these are people whose angelic side is strongest. See Chapter 69 of the present work.

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CHAPTER 31

The Divisions among People in their Manner of Obtaining This Felicity

You should know that this (highest) felicity is obtained in two ways.

1) One of them resembles sloughing off the animalistic nature, and this is done by adhering to stratagems which bring about a suspension of the rules of nature, a quenching of its heat, an extinguishing of the flame of its sciences and conditions. This is effected by turning with complete attention to what lies beyond Jâbarīt, by the soul accepting knowledge completely divorced from space and time and pleasure different from the familiar pleasures in every way, until he no longer mixes with other people, nor desires what they desire, nor fears what they fear, for he is in a distant region and a place far removed from them.

This is the felicity which the Theosophs1 among the philosophers and the Majdiyās2 among the Sufis crave. A very few of them attain the utmost peak of its summit and the rest remain ardentely longing for it with their sights set on it, their glances aspiring to it, holding themselves to the formal imitation of its attitudes.

2) The second (of these ways to obtain felicity) is in the line of reforming the animalistic side and correcting its deviation while retaining the connection to its essential nature. This is effected when one tries to have the animalistic imitate the acts, attitudes, memories, and so on, of the rational soul. For example, as the mute tries to convey the speech of people by his gestures, and the one who is portraying psychological states of fear and shame (imitates) by using visible attitudes associated with these states; and as the woman who has lost a child expresses grief with words and laments which

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1 “Muta‘allīkān” — those philosophers such as the Ishraqīs who follow the illuminationist philosophy of Shihābuddin Suhrawardi (d. 1191) or the Wajīdīs who follow Ibn al-‘Arabī’s (d. 1240) doctrine of the Unity of Being.

2 Majdīyās are the Sufis who are uncontrollably “drawn or attracted” toward the Divine presence.
no one can hear without becoming sorrowful and having the image of grief arise in him.

Since the divine management in the world is based on the choice of what is ever more proximate and ever more simple, and the concern is for the betterment of those following the same course as the generality of the individuals of the species rather than the exceptional and extraordinary ones, and the best interests of the two worlds are regulated so as not to disturb the order of anything in them; the grace and mercy of God required that He send the prophets in the first place and essentially to establish the second way; to summon to it and urge people on in it. The first way is indicated through entailed allusions and implied intimations and nothing else, and "God has the convincing argument."3

The elaboration of this is that the first way of attaining felicity only arises among people having a strong contention of the two sides (taqādāh)4 and they are few; and through performing severe religious exercises and having a strong detachment (from the world), and very few do this. Their models are a group who neglect their own livelihood and for whom the world does not matter. This first way is only achieved through the advance preparations of a righteous group from the second (path).5 This group (of mutually conflicting sides) cannot avoid neglecting one of the two felicities; either bettering the supports of civilization in this world or reforming the lower soul for the next life. Thus, if most people took up the first way, the world would go to ruin, and if it were imposed on them it would be the imposition of an impossible thing, since the supports of civilization have become second nature to people.

The models of the second way are the people who are instructed (muṣfahamān)6 and they are the reformers who take on the governing of religion and the world at the same time. Their summons is accepted and their precedents are followed, and encompassed within them is the perfection of those who were equipped with inner integration (al-muṣtalihān) among "the Ones who Excel in good works" (sabīqūn), and the People of the Right Side (ashāb al-yāmin), and these are the majority of people.7 The intelligent, the foolish, the busy or the idle person is capable of following this second way, and there is no hardship in this. This way suffices the servant of God in straightening out his lower soul and preventing its deviation, and in protecting him from the dreaded torments of the Next World, since every soul has angelic actions whose presence makes it happy, or by whose absence it is pained. As for the principle of stripping away (the animalistic side), the regenerations of the grave and the resurrection will happen to the soul in such a way that the person does not understand their nature, even after some time. Poem:

Time will reveal to you that of which you were ignorant,
and someone will bring you news, whom you had not commissioned
to do so.8

In sum, comprehending and deeply penetrating the aspects of the good is at the level of something impossible for most people, and simple ignorance is not harmful, and God knows better.

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3 Qur'ān 6:149.
4 That is, a pulling in opposite directions of the angelic and the animalistic sides.
5 That is, the prophets preceded the ascetics.
6 They are instructed by God and the angels, for further details of this concept refer to Chapter 55.
7 According to Shāh Wali Allāh the ones of the right side (ashāb al-yāmin), Qur'ān 56:27, are people who receive the forms but not the spirits of things, since both their angelic and animalistic sides are weak. These types of persons are discussed in Chapter 69 of the present work.
8 Lines by the pre-Islamic poet, Tarafah ibn al-'Abd, d. c. 564 C.E. Author of a Mu‘alqā of which these lines are the last verses. Sharḥ Diwān Tarafah ibn al-'Abd (Beirut: Dār Maktaba al-Hayāt, 1983), 28.