“The intellect is the essence of the human”—The Arabic Poem of the Intellect (Qaṣīdat al-ʿAql) by the Indian Fatimid-Ṭayyibī Dāʾī l-Muṭṭaq Sayyidna Taher Saifuddin (1888-1965)

Tahera Qutbuddin and Aziz Qutbuddin

The Poem of the Intellect (Qaṣīdat al-ʿAql) composed by the Indian Fatimid-Ṭayyibī Dāʾī l-Muṭṭaq Sayyidna Taher Saifuddin (d. 1965) delineates a holistic Islamic philosophy of the intellect. Opening with the line, “The intellect is the essence of the human” (al-ʿaqlu fi l-insāni aʿlā l-jawharī), the 177-verse Arabic poem goes on to speak of the Primordial Intellect’s origin in the realm of God’s first creation, and – after its Fall to corporeality – its realisation as Sound Intellect (ʿaql salīm) in the nether world through the guidance of God’s chosen messenger, the Prophet, his Legatee, and the living Imam of each age in their line, each of whom is himself pure intellect. The poem goes on to chart the way of the Pure Life (ḥayāt ṭayyiba, v. 14) - a Qur’anic term\(^1\) - taught to humans in this world by the Imam. Pure Life, according to Saifuddin, is manifest in true belief, right approach, virtuous character, and good action, and it ultimately leads humans back to their original home, the realm of first creation, the realm of pure intellect.

The Fatimid-Ṭayyibī heritage offers many expositions of high philosophy and numerous discourses of counsel, both in prose and in poetry, but they usually focus on one or the other. Within this rich theological and preaching tradition, Saifuddin’s Poem of the Intellect is exceptional in its detailed application of high philosophy to lived human experience. It is also unique in its creative amalgamation of the genres of qaṣida (formal Arabic poem), risāla

\(^{1}\) Reference to Qur’an Nahl 16:97: (جْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا وَلَنَمَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً يَعْمَلُونَ (Any man or woman who performs good deeds, if they are believers, we shall grant them a Pure Life and reward them in accord with their best deeds.)
(theological treatise), and waṣiyya (formal testament) within contemporary Arabic literature, in India and elsewhere.

Saifuddin composed the Intellect Poem during the celebrations of his Golden Jubilee (al-ʿId al-dhahabī) commemorating fifty years of his tenure as Dāʿī in 1382/1962, two years before his death. At that time, the poem was published through chapbooks and public recitations in the community, and it has continued since then to be studied in their seminaries, recited in their assemblies, and cited in their lectures. The poem is published for the first time here in an academic venue, alongside a full English translation, an analysis of its core message and literary-philosophical aspects, and a summary distillation of, and commentary on, its contents. But first, an introduction to the poet, Sayyidna Taher Saifuddin, and his Fatimid-Ṭayyibī tradition:

1 THE TRADITION: THE FATIMID-ṬAYYIBĪS AND THEIR PHILOSOPHY OF THE INTELLECT

The Ṭayyibīs are a community of Shiʿi Muslims based in India belonging to the Mustaʿlī-Ṭayyibī branch of the Fatimid-Ismāʿīlīs.² They profess allegiance to the son of the Fatimid Imam-Caliph Āmir (r. 1101–1130), Imam Īyib (b. 1130), who they believe has gone into physical concealment, and to the concealed Imam in his line, whom they know by the name of his forebear as the Ṭayyib of the Age. The ancestors of the Indian Ṭayyibīs converted to Islam at the hand of missionaries sent from Cairo to India by the Fatimid Imam-Caliph Mustanṣir (r. 1036–1094) in the eleventh century. Like that of the Fatimids, their religious institution is termed Daʿwa, from the Qurʾanic verse, “The true Daʿwa (call) belongs to God.”³ Their leader is believed to be Ṣayyib Imam’s spiritually-guided vicegerent, and he holds the rank of Dāʿī (one who calls to God); the full title is al-Dāʿī l-Muṭlaq (Dāʿī with full authority). In India, the

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² For an overview of the history and doctrines of the Ṭayyibī Daʿūdī Bohra, see T. Qutbuddin (2011 and 2013, with a fuller set of primary and secondary source references); S. Qutbuddin (2011); Blank (2001).
³ Qur’ān Raʾd 13:14: (لَهُ دَعْوَةُ الْحَقَّ).
community is often called Bohra, meaning “honest merchant,” presumably referring to the profession of the earliest Hindu converts. They speak the Indo-European language Gujarati, infused with an Arabic and Persian lexicon, called *Lisān al-Daʿwa* or *Daʿwat nī zabān* (language of the *Daʿwa*). Their language of scholarship has remained focused on Arabic. Over the centuries, several Ṭayyibī denominations have branched out based on their belief in different lines of Dāʿīs. Our poet was Dāʿī of the majority Ṭayyibī Bohra denomination called the Daʿūdī Bohra, and Ṭayyibī in the present publication refers to them. Today, they reside mostly in India and Pakistan, with a small indigenous community in Yemen and growing diaspora communities worldwide.

The Ṭayyibīs have inherited a strong philosophical tradition that speaks of the original creation in the world of intellect and light, the fall into corporality, and then, for those who answer God’s call, the return to the realm of first creation. They trace these doctrines to the teachings of Prophet Muḥammad and the expositions of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, whom they believe to be his Legatee and appointed successor. They continue to trace these doctrines through the 10th century *Treatises of the Pure Brethren* (*Rasāʿil Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʿ*), which they believe were authored by the progenitor of the Fatimid Imam-Caliphs, Imam Aḥmad al-Mastūr. The Dāʿīs of the Fatimid Imams recorded these doctrines in texts of higher metaphysics using cryptic language, and the Ṭayyibī Dāʿīs transcribed them in more detail after Imam Ṭayyib’s concealment.4

The current Dāʿī – grandson of Sayyidna Taher Saifuddin and his namesake, Sayyidna Taher Fakhruddin – expounds these doctrines to non-specialists in *Lisān al-Daʿwa*, Arabic, and

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4 For an overview of the literature of the Ṭayyibī Daʿūdī Bohra, including the metaphysical literature, see T. Qutbuddin (2011: 338-45). For lists of books and authors of Ismāʿīlī literature more generally, see biobibliographical works by Majdūʿ (1966 ed), Ivanow (1963), and Poonawala (1977). For an overview of Arabic language and literature in India, see T. Qutbuddin (2007: 315-38).
English, in a public online forum. Following Fatimid-Ṭayyibī practice, his discourses are titled *Majalis al-Hikma* (Assemblies of Wisdom). In Majlis no. 4, titled “What is the origin of the Intellect?”⁵ in Majlis no. 5, “What is the philosophy of Dawatul Haqq?”⁶ and Majlis no. 2, “Do we have free will?”⁷ Fakhruddin draws on the Fatimid-Ṭayyibī heritage, and explicitly on Sayyidna Taher Saifuddin’s Intellect Poem, to discuss the intellect’s origin and nature, and the rationality of faith. Since Saifuddin’s Intellect Poem focuses on divine guidance and the importance of virtue, Fakhruddin’s Majlis no. 9, “Why do humans need a divine guide?”,⁸ and Majlis no. 19, “Why is virtue compulsory?”⁹ are also directly relevant to our topic and connect with Saifuddin’s allusions to these doctrines in the Poem of the Intellect.

Scholars often characterise Fatimid-Ismāʿīlī philosophy as Neoplatonic, referring to the aforementioned *Treatises of the Pure Brethren* and the works of Fatimid Dāʾīs Abū Yaʿqūb al-Sijistānī (d. after 971) and Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī (d. after 1020).¹⁰ It is correct that the Fatimid philosophy of the intellect has many echoes of this ancient Greek tradition. The Fatimid-Ṭayyibīs themselves do not deny the affiliation. But they turn it on its head. They claim that their philosophy is the one true philosophy brought by the earliest Prophets and Imams and continuing through time, that this ancient philosophy is the source of the Greek tradition, and it also is the source of their own Islamic-Qur’anic exposition. Verse 114 of Saifuddin’s Intellect Poem refers to this tenet, “Every religion contains at least one word from the people of truth carried over from ancient times.” As mentioned at the outset, Fatimid-Ṭayyibī philosophy focuses on the intellect as the original creation of the Creator, explaining the evolution of the Sound Intellect in

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⁵ Fakhruddin (2020b).
⁶ Fakhruddin (2020c).
⁷ Fakhruddin (2020a).
⁸ Fakhruddin (2020d).
⁹ Fakhruddin (2020g).
¹⁰ For a discussion of the thought of the Pure Brethren, see, for e.g., Netton (1991); for Sijistānī and Kirmānī, see Walker (1993, 1999).
this world, and its return to its original realm. This doctrine – termed in their works as the
doctrine of the Origin and the Return (al-mabda’ wa-l-ma‘ād) – entirely underpins Sayyidna
Taher Saifuddin’s poem.

2 THE POET: SAYYIDNA TAHER SAIFUDDIN (1888–1965)

Sayyidna Taher Saifuddin was the fifty-first Dā‘ī l-Muṭlaq of the Ṭayyibī Dā‘ūdī Bohra
community. He was born in Surat in 1888, became Dā‘ī l-Muṭlaq in 1915, moved to Mumbai in
1932, and died there in 1965. His magnificent shrine in Mumbai, Rawḍat Ṭāhira, its pure white
marble walls inscribed in gold with the entire Qur’an, is now also the final resting place of his
successor, and it is visited daily by thousands of devotees. Son of the forty-ninth Dā‘ī, Saifuddin
came from a long line of Dā‘īs and savants descended from Rājā Tārmal, vizier of the Rajput
ruler of Gujarat, Siddharāja Jayasimha (r. 1094–1143). Tārmal, along with his brother Rājā
Bhārmal and Siddharāja himself, was among the first converts to Fatimid Shi‘i Islam in the
Indian subcontinent in the eleventh century. Tārmal’s son and Saifuddin’s forebear, Sayyidī
Fakhr al-Dīn al-Shahīd (fl. twelfth century), was among the earliest local missionaries appointed
by the Fatimid Imam-Caliph Mustanṣir in India.

Sayyidna Taher Saifuddin held the post of Dā‘ī for half a century from 1915 until his
death in 1965, and his tenure saw great advancements in social welfare and the education of men
and women in the Ṭayyibī Bohra community. Well-known in India and Pakistan as a scholar,
visionary, and creator of harmony among religious and denominational groups, he served five
consecutive terms as the unanimously elected Chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University until his
demise. On his first visit to Aligarh in 1953, Dr. Zakir Husain – then Vice Chancellor of Aligarh
University and later the third President of India – said in his welcome speech that earlier

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Chancellors had been rulers with sikka (coin) struck in their names, while this Chancellor, who ruled no worldly territory, possessed “a sikka stamped on the hearts of the Muslims of India.”

Saifuddin was a prolific author and poet.\textsuperscript{12} He wrote more than forty Arabic books, the series titled \textit{Rasāʾil} (sing. \textit{Risāla}) \textit{Ramaḍāniyya} (Ramaḍān treatises), one every year between 1335/1917 and 1384/1964. They range from about one hundred pages in the earliest tracts to six hundred in the later ones. He also composed more than ten thousand verses of Arabic religious poetry, and a handful of poems in \textit{Lisān al-Daʾwa}.\textsuperscript{13} The vast collection of his transcribed \textit{Lisān al-Daʾwa} sermons through his fifty-plus years of preaching are also preserved in Daʾwa archives, as are transcripts of some Urdu speeches given to various Muslim communities. In his prose works, Saifuddin incorporated a large portion of the Ṭayyibī prose and poetic heritage, presenting excerpts prefaced with literary introductions in rhymed prose. In both prose and poetry, he elucidated doctrine, history, and law, offered counsel for living a godly life and preparing for the hereafter, and praised the Prophet Muḥammad, ‘Alī, Fāṭima, the Imams, the Dāʾīs, and other spiritual savants. His \textit{Dīwān} also contains elegies for Imam Ḥusayn and for Saifuddin’s predecessors, as well as three very long poems, one that is autobiographical and describes the milestones of his tenure as Dāʾī, another that praises the Imams and offers counsel, and the poem at hand, the Intellect Poem.\textsuperscript{14}


\textsuperscript{13} Published earlier in the \textit{Risāla Ramaḍāniyya} of their year of composition, Saifuddin’s Arabic poems were posthumously collected in his \textit{Dīwān} under the title \textit{Jawāhir al-balāgha} (Saifuddin 1993 ed). Texts, translations, and audio links of some of Saifuddin’s poems are published online at the community’s “Fatemi Dawat” website, \url{LINK} (cf. “Qaṣīdas,” “Nohas” and “Munajaats”). A detailed study of one poem is T. Qutbuddin (forthcoming 2021b).

Published earlier as individual chapbooks, Saifuddin’s \textit{Lisān al-Daʾwa} poems are anthologised in \textit{Dhikrā shahādat al-Ḥusayn} (1984: 64–70, 81–114, 186–96).


Sayyidna Taher Saifuddin was greatly influenced in his thought and writing by al-Muʿayyad al-Shīrāzī (d. 1078), Chief Dāʿī of the Fatimid Imam-Caliph Mustanṣir, and this influence is clearly manifest in the Poem of the Intellect as we shall see shortly. Muʿayyad’s *Majālis Muʿayyadiyya*, a set of eight hundred assemblies that he wrote and read out weekly to Fatimid devotees in Cairo, contain detailed expositions of Fatimid philosophical doctrines. Saifuddin himself explicated the entire corpus to Ṭayyibī audiences in weekly sessions, twice-over. The scholars in the community hailed Saifuddin as the second Muʿayyad, in homage to his erudition, and in recognition of his continuity from the original Muʿayyad.

Sayyidna Taher Saifuddin’s life spanned a period of enormous social change in India – colonialism, modernism, the struggle for independence, and the partitioning of the country into India and Pakistan – with its attendant upheavals in lifestyle and thinking. In verse 51 of the Intellect Poem, he exhorts “do not tyrannise (or: subjugate, or: colonise),” using a verbal form of *istiʿmār*, a word referring in modern standard Arabic to colonialism. The appeal to the intellect, followed by the remarkable catalogue of virtues in this poem may be read as an attempt to reassert time-honoured values in the face of the onslaught of modernity and change. Indeed, it forms a continuous aspect of Saifuddin’s philosophy, one that stayed with him during the course of his tenure as Dāʿī – the Dāʿī being seen in Ṭayyibī doctrine as one who safeguards the faith –


16 We thank Stefan Sperl for this observation.
from the beginning to the end of his stewardship. Two reports, one a verbal answer, and another a line of poetry, illustrate this point. In 1917, just a year and a half into his tenure, Saifuddin paid a lengthy five-month visit – by train, bullock cart, and horseback – to various towns and villages in the Saurashtra region of Gujarat. The Nawab of Bhavnagar’s Dīwān (a title similar to vizier), considered an astute and worldly-wise man, paid the young 28-year old Sayyidna a visit, and thought to guide him, saying, “We should keep our religion in step with our times.” Sayyidna spontaneously answered, “No! We should keep our times in step with our religion.” The Dīwān remarked to the Sayyidna’s followers as he left, “I had come to give a gift of counsel, instead I leave having received a gift of counsel.”

This approach characterized Saifuddin’s entire tenure as Dā‘ī. Toward the end of his life – in 1961, a year before he composed the Intellect Poem – Saifuddin declared the following, in a similar vein, in one of his Supplication Poems (Munājāt).

\[\text{يقولون لي بديل وستنست مبدلًا * فإني بما عاهدت ربى عامل} \]

They say to me, change! But I am not one who will ever make changes.

I shall persevere in safeguarding what I have pledged to my lord to safeguard.

In the Intellect Poem, Saifuddin refers to the “high waves of the storm of deviation, like mountains” (v. 169) which he resisted and fought back. Perhaps the poem aims to instill in its listeners that same confidence, that same fortitude, in the face of such waves. Like the other modern “Neoplatonic” poems in the present volume, this poem also reacts to a sense of rupture or crisis brought about by the modern age.

But this point needs nuancing. Saifuddin is not advocating a total rejection of modernism, of changes in terms of social empowerment and equity. In fact, during his era, great

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17 From a verbal account in a 2005 teaching session by Sayyidna Khuzaima Qutbuddin, noted by Aziz Qutbuddin.
advancements were made in many aspects of the community’s social life, including his strong push for education, especially the education of girls and women, at a time when this was far from the norm in India. He also harnessed the use of modern technology, for example, the use of the microphone to amplify his sermons, which, though it may seem mundane to us now, was new at the time and not always considered acceptable.\(^{19}\) Hailed by many as a forward-looking visionary, he moved the community’s headquarters from Surat, which had earlier been an important metropolis but was becoming more of a backwater in his time, to Mumbai (then called Bombay), which was the up-and-coming financial hub of India, thus forcefully turning the trajectory of the community toward constructive and open engagement with modernity. All in all, the poem is not proposing a dogmatic clinging to an outdated way of life. Rather, it advocates the safeguarding of the immutable principles and values of Islam, while embracing positive aspects of modernism that are compatible with those principles and values. As Saifuddin says in verse 49, “Use the world’s services, do not become the world’s servant.”

3 \textbf{THE POEM OF THE INTELLECT: CORE MESSAGE AND LITERARY-PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECTS}

Let us now turn to Syedna Taher Saifuddin’s Poem of the Intellect, first, with an analysis of its core message and its literary-philosophical aspects.

3.1 \textbf{Core Message}

“Intellect” (\textit{\textsuperscript{a}ql}) – a key term in Neoplatonic thinking – has many layers of meaning in Fatimid-Ṭayyibī metaphysical tradition. The word is used 28 times through the 177 lines of Sayyidna Taher Saifuddin’s Intellect Poem, often occupying the position of first – and thus accentuated - word in a line. In the poem, it refers initially to the primordial intellect, and through the bulk of

\(^{19}\) On the community leadership’s continuing embrace of modern technology in the era of Saifuddin’s successor, see Blank (2001: passim).
the poem to the human intellect. In some places, it refers to both or either, emphasizing the fact that the human intellect is a trace of the primordial intellect. If we parse the uses of the word, the poem’s core philosophy reveals itself: The primordial intellect is pure and self-aware, perfect, complete, and divine (vv. 2-3, 27). The human intellect – while currently far below the station of the primordial intellect – has the potential to achieve full realization and eternal bliss (vv. 136-37). If sound, it is itself the highest essence (v. 1), an elixir that has the potential to transform a human intellect’s copper base into red gold and enable its return to original perfection (vv. 6). All this is achieved through the Imam’s guidance (v. 7), which teaches it to lead a Pure Life (vv. 10, 14), comprehend the meaning of religion, train it through knowledge, and safeguard its essence (vv. 133-35). (It is interesting to note that 28 – the number of times the word 'aql is used in the poem – is the same number of letters in the Islamic creed of faith, Lā ilāha illā llāh, “There is no god but God”. In the Fatimid-Ṭayyibī tradition, these denote the 28 rank-holders who guide humans to God.) But the human intellect could also go the opposite way, to perdition. It could, for example, be numbed by alcohol (v. 108), an enemy of rationality, and a serious impediment to the human intellect’s movement from potentiality to actuality. It is susceptible to blights of arrogance, coercion, and tyranny (v. 13). If base desires take over, they drive the intellect toward a watering-hole where all things perish (v. 11).

In light of this parsing of the uses of the poem’s core word, “intellect,” we can paraphrase Sayyidna Taher Saifuddin’s central message in his Poem of the Intellect, as follows: You, O human, have the potential to rehabilitate your human intellect and return to the realm of the primordial intellect, which is your original home. If you cultivate Sound Intellect by following the guidance of the divinely guided Imam, himself a pure intellect, if you lead the Pure Life he

20 See Mu’ayyad (1975 ed: 1:38-42, Majlis 10). Rather, it may have happened naturally, as result of poetic inspiration combined with long experience and profound knowledge of his tradition. If so, it offers meaning all the more.
teaches you to live with the right approach and actions, by cultivating virtues and rejecting vices, if you do this, as I have taught you to do in this poem, you will earn salvation.

As we have seen, Saifuddin’s Poem of the Intellect refers to some of the higher mysteries of Fatimid-Ṭayyibī metaphysics. Its framing and much of its philosophical content echoes the Fatimid Chief Dâ‘î Mu‘ayyad’s Majâlis: for example, several verses echo Mu‘ayyad’s assertions about the creation of the first intellect.21 However, being a public exposition rather than a closely guarded text of the higher truths (ḥaqāʾiq), the poem refers to these mysteries briefly in veiled, mystical language, while focusing more explicitly and lengthily on the practical application of the Imam’s divine guidance, and of the human intellect’s realisation of its potential of good through that guidance. Thus, the larger part of the poem – frequently citing the Qur’an, the hadith of the Prophet Muḥammad, and the sayings of Imam ‘Alī – is devoted to counsel about how to lead a Pure Life.

To turn this last point around, however, the Pure Life that Saifuddin advocates, the practical application of the Imam’s guidance that he emphasizes, is grounded in the vital role ascribed to the human intellect. As he says in verse 135, “The Sharia is based on the rational intellect. Learn this from the most knowledgeable philosopher.” The larger part of the poem may be devoted to practical applications, but it directly follows from the philosophical framing. It is important to note the absolute primacy of reason in Saifuddin’s philosophy. This may be obvious from even a cursory look at the poem, from the opening line itself, but it is essential to mark the stark difference between this philosophy and between the approaches of many other Muslim denominations through the centuries that subtly sideline or even explicitly de-emphasize reason. For Saifuddin, intellectualism is not an elitist enterprise. Rather, it is the life force for all humans.

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21 Intellect Poem, vv. 2, 3 and 27. Mu‘ayyad (Majâlis, 1975-ed: 1-4, Majlis 1; vol. 6, MS: Majlis 503). Other verses (vv. 4, 5 and 135) echo Mu‘ayyad’s (1975 ed: 1:1-9, Majlis 1 and 2) assertions that religion is grounded in reason.
For him, it is not separate from action and belief. Rather, it is the driving force for all action and belief. In the Fatimid-Ṭayyibī view expounded by this poem, the whole point of human existence is to get back to the realm of pure intellect, and the way to do that is to develop Sound Intellect through the guidance of the Imam, who is himself pure intellect.

With the goal of rehabilitation and return for all God’s creation, the poem overall takes a positive and broadminded attitude toward human life, and indeed, for all of creation, animate and inanimate. Saifuddin, following Imam ʿAlī’s famous sermon (v. 39 ff., details follow in section 5.2.2), praises the world as “an abode of truth” (v. 40), as the place where humans are given a chance to earn eternal life. Presenting religion and worldly life as twins (v. 35), he declares that for those who live a Pure Life on this earth, the earth turns into Jupiter (v. 36), the star of auspiciousness in the astrological system of the Fatimid Ṭayyibīs. Saifuddin promotes harmony between all people on earth, tranquility in one’s life, cheerfulness and positivity, and an atmosphere of love and caring. It is significant to observe that Saifuddin is reiterating these timeless Islamic and humanitarian values in the wake of the oppression of colonialism, and the ravages of World War II. His poem attempts to show the way to an uplifting mode of life for his Muslim community, and for humanity as a whole.

3.2 Literary-Philosophical Aspects

The Intellect Poem is a hybrid text, showcasing a unique adaptation of three well-known genres, the qaṣīda poem, the formal testament (waṣiyya) and literary treatise (risāla). In terms of formal literary features, it is a standard two-hemistich qaṣīda poem with monorhyme and monometer, in the traditional and common Arabic kāmil meter: mutafaʿ ilun mutafaʿ ilun

This hybridity extends to another of Saifuddin’s poems, also composed in 1962, that creatively combines and adapts the features of qaṣīda with autobiography (sīra). See details in Aziz Qutbuddin (2005: 12-29).
mutafāʿilun, with an R rhyme. But it is not simply a discourse versified in metre and rhyme, such as Ibn Mālik’s medieval grammar text, the thousand-verse Alfiyya. Rather, it imaginatively combines core features of these three genres to produce a unique literary work that is recited and performed in community gatherings, studied and cited in academies of learning, and implemented in action on the ground (complete audio recitation: LINK). The Intellect Poem, together with Saifuddin’s experimentations with hybrid Arabic and Indian metrical forms, showcases his mastery of, and originality in, the Arabic literary tradition.

In the context of the risāla or treatise tradition, the Intellect Poem offers a clear thesis and persuades its audience to pursue a Pure Life. It establishes the foundation of this life in the author’s philosophy of the intellect, and the origins and purpose of creation. Towards the conclusion, the poet presents this way of life as the path to salvation (vv. 175-76). The poem is thus a concise repository of a metaphysical theory of creation, existence, and purpose, and it is a practical, persuasive manual for leading a moral and purposeful life.

In the context of the waṣiyya or testament tradition, the Intellect Poem draws on the Qur’an, hadith of the Prophet, and sayings of the Imams, and counsels the reader to inculcate virtues and reject vices; it catalogues a detailed list which we have compiled in the Summary Distillation that follows shortly. In this context too, the Saifuddin brings in an expression of self as a sincere and experienced guide, and, in his role as the Imam’s appointed representative, as the manifestation of God’s rope among the people in the present day. As he says in verse 172, “This poem contains compelling insights, arising from the experiences of one who was given command, and a long life, through a long age.”

23 In the terminology of the Western Classical tradition, the metrical feet may be expressed in the following sequence of long (×) and short (-) syllables: < - × - × / - - × - × / - - × - × >.
25 For details of the risāla’s thesis delineation and goal of persuasion, see Aziz Qutbuddin (2009: 59).
In the context of the qaṣīda or formal poetry tradition, in addition to maintaining its formal features, the Intellect Poem harnesses three of the qaṣīda tradition’s major conventions to its philosophical and homiletic aims: metaphorical language, remembrance of the beloved (dhikr al-habīb), and a journey (raḥil). Harnessing the qaṣīda tradition’s emphasis on metaphorical language, the Intellect Poem evokes the higher mysteries of Fatimid-Ṭayyibī metaphysics through allusion (kināya), metaphor (istiʿāra), and simile (tashbīh), which are important characteristics of the qaṣīda; here, they are meant to be understood fully only by the initiated. Harnessing the qaṣīda tradition’s remembrance of the beloved, the Intellect Poem urges the reader to remember the Creator, to ponder His words which themselves constitute the Wise Remembrance (al-Dhikr al-Ḥakīm), and to seek their meaning from God’s chosen saints, the Imams who are the “family of the Remembrance” (vv. 139-49). Harnessing the qaṣīda tradition’s theme of journey, the Intellect Poem charts a journey – with the Imam as guide – from this world, where the intellect has fallen, back to its original home in the primordial realm, where it was first created. Framed by the allusion to the creation of the primordial intellect, we see the poem moving to the flowering of the human intellect in this world. Here, through right approach, right action, and the guidance of the divine guide, the human intellect – a trace from the primordial intellect – evolves into a Sound Intellect, leads a Pure Life, and comes full circle to achieve salvation and reintegrate into the world of the primordial intellect. This transformative rehabilitation is expressed in many verses, perhaps in none so clearly as in the following two: “If the intellect adheres to the conditions that have been placed on the essence of its origin, it becomes true essence. Man’s intellect is in a state of potentiality. If it trains with knowledge, it emerges into actuality” (vv. 136-37). These two verses echo and amplify the poem’s opening line, “The intellect is the loftiest essence of the human—it gleams in his soul like the moon.”

4 CONTENTS: SUMMARY DISTILLATION AND COMMENTARY
Sayyidna Taher Saifuddin’s Poem of the Intellect may be divided into the following sections:

- The first, framing section provides a philosophical foundation for the poem (vv. 1-14).
- This is followed by three broad thematic sections describing fundamentals of a Pure Life: abstract principles of true belief and right approach (vv. 15-50), specific points of virtuous character and good actions (vv. 51-147), and the grounding of both the abstract and the specific in love for the Imams and Dā‘īs who are the divine guides and the “rope of God” (vv. 148-64).
- The poem ends with a concluding section in which the poet provides an expression of self and a declaration that leading a Pure Life, as he has outlined -- with virtues, good deeds, and love and allegiance for the Imams and Dā‘īs -- will lead to salvation (vv. 165-77, end).

In the following pages, we extract and annotate the main points of Saifuddin’s Intellect Poem.

4.1 Framing Section (vv. 1-14): The Sound Human Intellect and its Divine Guide

The opening line of Sayyidna Taher Saifuddin’s Intellect Poem – “The intellect is the essence of the human” (v. 1) – signals the humanistic focus of a text grounded in metaphysics. In Saifuddin’s philosophy, the intellect is “the first entity in creation” (v. 2). The human intellect – in the words of the Fatimid Dā‘ī Mu‘ayyad, “a small trace from the world of first creation”26 – is a powerful instrument that, for all its potency, is dependent in order to function on illumination from the Imam, the divinely guided guide, who is “the luminous station (al-maqām al-azhar)” (v. 7) and “the sun of revelation (shams al-walīy)” (v. 9). Also echoing Mu‘ayyad’s exposition, Saifuddin uses the analogy of the eye, which, even if perfect in ocular physiology, still needs

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light from the outside to see (v. 8). In a dark room, a person with perfect eyesight and a blind person are equal in their inability to see. To see, you need both healthy eyes and outside light. Similarly, for your intellect to function, you need both a healthy intellect and illumination from outside.

Moreover, the intellect is the best of creation only if it is sound (‘aql salīm—the actual term is used and explained later in v. 72 and v. 133). An intellect is sound when it remains in its pure form, the form in which God created it, without being corrupted by injustice and malice (v. 10). These impure drivers are equated in the next verse with animalistic passions, which, if given the reins, lead it to its death (v. 11). Saifuddin presents the example of impure light which corrupts perception – in blue light, all objects appear blue (v. 12). Moreover, he says the intellect can also be corrupted by blights such as arrogance, coercion, and tyranny (v. 13). For a human to live a Pure Life – mentioned explicitly in the verse -- it is necessary for his Sound Intellect, guided by the Imam, to be in the seat of control (v. 14).

4.2 Body of the Poem: Components of a Pure Life (Ḥayāt Ṭayyiba) (vv. 15-165)

Echoing the Qur’anic expression, Saifuddin uses the term, a Pure Life (ḥayāt ṭayyiba), to encompass the life governed by Sound Intellect (‘aql salīm) (v. 14). As mentioned just now, he characterises it as one that (1) encompasses true belief and right approach, (2) as well as virtuous character and good actions, and, (3) most importantly, it stems from a human’s love and obedience for the Imams and Dā‘īs. The body of the Intellect Poem explains details of these three aspects.

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28 Qur’an, Naḥl 16:97.
4.2.1 True Belief and Right Approach (vv. 15-50)

According to Saifuddin, the basis of a Pure Life is belief in the Creator. Several verses are devoted to addressing aspects of this fundamental doctrine, which may be listed as follows (vv. 15-29):

- If you know yourself, you will know your Lord, who is beyond comprehension (v. 15), echoing a hadith of the Prophet Muḥammad, cited often by Muʿayyad.²⁹
- If you have the capacity to achieve what humans before you were not able to achieve, then acknowledge the greatness of the one who gave you this ability (vv. 16-17).
- God’s creation is God’s sign—ponder creation and you will recognise the Creator (vv. 17-25).
- Illumine your soul with the light of knowledge, go deep in your search for the Higher Truths (v. 26).
- Know that even the intact intellect is perplexed by the Creator’s grandeur (v. 27).
- Know the value of your own intellect and cultivate your soul (vv. 28-29).

The establishment of the monotheistic creed, and the injunction to seek knowledge about the Creator, segues into the next section on the right approach to leading a Pure Life, characterised by five broad points (vv. 30-50).

- Express gratitude for the Creator who gave you human form, showered you with blessings, whose sun continues to give forth its lifegiving rays to the physical world, and whose grace (fayḍ) continues to flow to the spiritual world (vv. 30-32). Heading this segment, the injunction to ḥamd -- praise and gratitude for God -- is a common starting point for Islamic addresses, written and verbal, following the example of the opening line

²⁹ Muʿayyad (1975- ed: 1:394, Majlis 81), and cited with explanation in ibid., 3: 99-100, Majlis 23.)
of the Qur’an, “Praise be to God, lord of all the worlds (al-hamdu lillāhi rabbi l-‘ālamīn).”

- Follow the “natural way” (fiṭra) of creation, i.e., human instincts to eat, drink, have sex, and live joyfully, in accordance with the Shari’a. The system that follows this natural way will work smoothly, while the one that goes against it will fail (vv. 33-34). Saifuddin encourages the reader to understand that this world that we live in is part of God’s plan, and that religion and worldly life are “like twins” (v. 35). When your natural instincts are governed by God’s Law, when you live your life according to the precepts of God’s religion, when you follow the guidance of God’s vicegerent, your life will be “as radiant as Jupiter” (an auspicious planet in the Fatimid-Ṭayyibī system of belief). You will be happy and content and fulfilled (vv. 36-38).

- Practice “harmony” (wiʾām, v. 38) with your fellow humans—living amicably and affectionately with others, family, community, brethren in faith, fellow citizens, and all the world.

- View your life in this world as an opportunity to gain eternal life. This set of lines (vv. 39-44) explicitly paraphrases a famous sermon by ʿAlī, which praises the world as “an abode of truth … and well-being” for the truthful and discerning, “a mosque for God’s loved ones,” “a place of prayer for … the angels,” “a place where [God’s] revelation…descends,” and “a place where God’s elect transact … and profit.”

- Strive with enthusiasm for advancement in both realms (v. 45) through godfearing piety (v. 46), by viewing faith as the spirit energizing your worldly life (v. 47), by taking

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31 On Saifuddin’s relations with Muslim and Hindu leaders in India and his teachings of communal harmony, see Abde-Ali Qutbuddin (2020).
control and choosing to live a noble life (v. 48), by “using the world’s services and not becoming its servant” (v. 49), and by “cultivating the prosperity of this world and the hereafter” (v. 50).

These injunctions toward the right approach transitions into the next section, which contains specifics of how one should lead one’s life.

4.2.2 Virtuous Character and Good Actions (vv. 51-147)

This is the largest segment of the poem and it contains a wide range of counsels for inculcating virtue and doing good, grounded in the Fatimid-Ṭayyibī vision of Islam. As mentioned before, these counsels draw deeply on the Qur’an, as well as on the hadith of the Prophet, and the teachings of Imam ’Alī. They also combine injunctions to religious piety with directions to humanitarian virtue. In essence, and following the approach taken by its guiding sources, piety and virtue are seen as two sides of the same coin. Among these counsels, some are larger, framing guidelines, and others are smaller, specific instructions, and they encompass a list of virtues, behaviors, and insights that altogether guide the human to lead a Pure Life.

The last few verses in this segment—on Islam, the Shariʿa, the Qur’an, and giving praise to God—transition into the final segment that comes full circle to reiterate the importance of the divine guide in actualizing the human intellect to its heavenly potential.

4.2.3 Love for the Imams and Dāʿīs: The Rope of God (vv. 148-164)

In this 29-verse concluding segment of the Intellect Poem, Saifuddin expounds the Fatimid-Ṭayyibī theory of divine guidance for humankind through the person of a divinely-guided guide in every age. Beginning with the Qur’an’s injunction to “hold fast to God’s rope” (v. 148), he

33 For a summary exposition with synthesis of these sources, see Fakhruddin (2020g). On ’Alī’s view of piety and virtue being intrinsically linked, see T. Qutbuddin (2018).
34 For a summary exposition with synthesis of these sources, see Fakhruddin (2020d and e).
builds on that to explain the true meaning of God’s rope, in the unbroken chain of divine
guides. In the prophetic cycle of the sixth major Prophet, Muḥammad, this rope begins with
him (vv. 149-151). He is the “city of knowledge” whose “gate” is the Conqueror of Khaybar,
ʿAlī (vv. 152-153), citing Muḥammad’s hadith). God’s rope then continues in the descendants
of Muḥammad, ʿAlī, and Fāṭima, Imams who are the “People of the Cloak” of Purity (vv. 154-
155, citing the Qurʾan), who have “sucked the milk of revelation” (v. 156), who are truthful
and pure (v. 157), who narrate the Prophet’s hadith on the authority of Imam Muḥammad al-
Bāqir (d.ca. 732) and Imam Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (d. 765) (v. 158), who are “arks of salvation” (v.
159), noble “Fatimids” who made rivers of knowledge flow (v. 160), each Imam “a guide for the
people after the Warner,” Muḥammad (v. 161), citing the Qurʾan.

During the Imam’s concealment, God’s rope continues unbroken through the Imam’s
Dāʿīs, who, given the Imam’s full authority and knowledge, fulfill his function of guidance (vv.
162-164).

4.3 Concluding Section (vv. 165-77, end): Expression of Self and Promise of Salvation

The concluding section of the poem brings the poet directly into the frame of reference. God’s
rope is manifest in the present day, says Sayyidna Taher Saifuddin, through his own person. In
the next several verses, he speaks of his service for the Imam and his guidance for the flock. He
describes himself as the Dāʿī (caller) – naming himself, “I am Taher Saifuddin” – who “calls
God’s creatures toward abundant good, toward comprehensive security in the cradle of
wellbeing, and toward a fruitful life” (vv. 165-67). He declares that he has “tested the conditions
of the age, experiencing them through time with deliberation and patience” (v. 168). He asserts

35 Qurʾan Āl ʿImrān 3:103. On the unbroken chain of the Imamate, and the Imam’s necessary presence in the
world, see T. Qutbuddin’s remarks on Muʾayyad’s poetry (2005: 149-72).
37 Qurʾan Aḥzāb 33:33.
38 Qurʾan Raʾd 13:7.
that “High waves of the storm of deviation clashed and billowed like mountains” but he was not perplexed (v. 169). He has conviction that he will be victorious (v. 170). He iterates his sincere service for the Prophet’s descendants (v. 171). He segues into a characterisation of the poem as containing “compelling insights,” from long experience, the “fruit of [rightly-guided] knowledge” and “good words that will benefit people,” and enjoins his followers to “speak them or write them down” (vv. 172-174).

In the penultimate two lines (vv. 175-176), the poet reiterates his injunction to love the Prophet and his descendants, and to perform good deeds, and this – the actuality of the Pure Life – he declares, will earn you Paradise.

The final verse brings formal closure with blessings invoked on the Prophet and his family (v. 177).

5 TEXT AND TRANSLATION

The following is the text and translation of Syedna Taher Saifuddin’s Poem of the Intellect:

5.2 The Text

1 العقل في الإنسان أعلى الجوهر مثاليًا في نفسه كالزهر
2 العقل أول كل شيء كائن وهو المليء بأمر أقيل أثير
3 العقل عاقل ذاته من ذاته في البذء زاكي الأصل صافي العصر
4 العقل حقًا جوهر ذرّاك كيف من شيء ومكون ومصير
5 فيه يرى الإنسان كل حقيقة في كل شيء رؤية المستنصر
6 العقل في الإنسان كالإمسر يجد مسأة مثل الصحار الأحمر
7 العقل في الإنسان يحتاج إلى نور ينير من المقام الأثر

39 The text of the poem is inscribed from Saifuddin (1993 ed: 1:400-12).
كالعين ما لم يقترنها النور من ضوء يتورط ظلمة لم تبصر

9 بضياء شمس الوحي أشـرق نورها عفلا ملائما من عواض تعتر

10 العقل أفضل كل شيء إن يكن عفلا هواء في مورد أو مصدرالوـن كل ملون للنور

11 إن يغلب العقل الهواء قاد الهواء عفلا وهذا في أمورك أجر

12 كالثور إن شاب الحياة تغيرت البطن عفلا قل تفكر وتجتر وننظر

13 للعقل أفائت كثيرة كمثل فسليم عفلك في أمورك أجر

14 إن شنت أن تخلى خيوا طيبت فسليم عفلك في أمورك أجر

15 وإذا عرفت النفس تعرف ربي علـى كل جل عن TODO إن كثر

16 ولن قدرت على الذي لم يقدر الإنسان فاتلك فاتلك قدر ثان المقدر

17 إن طرت في الدنيا بعلتك فانثى وأجرت خلال مفتري ومنبت

18 إن أنت تتسر في الخلق تعرف البطن عفلا مزته بأعلى المنظر

19 إن تفكرو في قوة ذاتية بالعقل تعرف قدرة لمفتر

20 وإذا عرفت فاتلك لفترة ربي الأعلى مقرا وابعد عن علـى

21 سبحان خالق كل شيء لم يكن شيئا فذرت فا لا تستذكر

22 سبحان رب واهب لك مثل هذـا العقل فأعرفه إذا لا تذكر

23 وجعلك المهوب والمكنوب في المخلوق باستدلاله فاستظهر

24 وأعلم بأن مكر قدرة خالق الإنسان فيها كلها كالخور

25 أمعن وأقنع في غجاب سرها لا تضطرب لا تظلم لا تضجر

26 نور بثور العلم نفسك وأنبت وعن الحقائق في الخلق فاويغ

27 وأجرت بأن الله عقل الكائن في عظومته ولها حليق تحتير

28 وجعلك المهوب فأعفل إياها الإنسان إتقانا لنفسك فأنظر

29 هناك أمور لم يعرف القرـد الذي يخوـيه فهو فقطره لم يقدر

30 فاتحـد الهلك إياها الإنسان إذ سواك إنسانًا نصيًا وأشكر

31 وكم وكم نعم وآلاء له أعطاك فاشكرها جميعا وأشكر
لا يُقْتَدَأ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ طَوْلَ الأمُرِّ، وَكَيْلُهُ وَجُرَاهُ ﺔُرْوَاءُ، هُمَا كَالْكَيْدُ الْفَيْضُ جَارٍ دَائِمًا، وَكَذَٰلِكُ الْعُلَوِّيَّةُ الْمُفْتَرِىَّةُ.

إِنَّ النَّظَامَ إِذَا يُطَابِقُ فِطْرَةَ وَإِذَا يُكَوْنُ مُنَافِيًا لِلْفِطْرَةِ اَلدِيْنُ وَالدُّنْيَا هُمَا كَالتَّوْمَيْـلَةُ، شُجُّ عَلَى الأَعْلَى الشَّهِيدَ بِحِبْنَاءٍ ردَّهَا عَلَى الْوَرٰىٰ، ذُكَّرَتْ مَبَانِيْهِ رِيَاحُ تَفَطُّر، إِذَا نَظَرْتَهُمَا بِعَيْنِ تَبَصُّرُ، بِمَثَالَةِ الدُّنْيَا زُدْهَتْ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْعَيْشِ المُرَفَّهِ اُحْضَرِ، لِمَن شَكَّ عَلَى الْمُكْتَبِ، لَوْ كَانَتِ الْوَرٰى أَسْتَخْدِمَتْ الدُّنْيَا، وَلَّا تَعِيْشُ فَآتِهَا، كَذَٰلِكُ الْمُكْتَبَ.

يَسْرِيْ شُعَاعُ الشَّمْسِ طَوْلَ الأَعْصَرِ، إِنَّ النَّظَامَ إِذَا يُطَابِقُ فِطْرَةَ وَإِذَا يُكَوْنُ مُنَافِيًا لِلْفِطْرَةِ، أَغْرَرَتْ مِبانيهِ رَيْخَ قُطْرُ، إِنْ تَطَاشُ ثَمَرَهُمَا بِعَيْنَ تَبَصُّرُ، بِمَثَالَةِ الدُّنْيَا أَرْهَتْ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْعَيْشِ المُرَفَّهِ اُحْضَرِ، لِمَن شَكَّ عَلَى الْمُكْتَبِ، وَإِنَّ النَّظَامَ إِذَا يُطَابِقُ فِطْرَةَ وَإِذَا يُكَوْنُ مُنَافِيًا لِلْفِطْرَةِ، أَغْرَرَتْ مِبانيهِ رَيْخَ قُطْرُ إِنْ تَطَاشُ ثَمَرَهُمَا بِعَيْنَ تَبَصُّرُ، بِمَثَالَةِ الدُّنْيَا أَرْهَتْ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْعَيْشِ المُرَفَّهِ اُحْضَرِ، لِمَن شَكَّ عَلَى الْمُكْتَبِ.
لن جايبًا كَن صابيًا آبٌ نائبًا
کنُ بَاسِمًا كَنْ بِصُورَةٍ أَوْقَرًا
بالبشر لاق الناس كلهم نعشي فيهم معيشة متكررة ومؤقتة
خلق العظيم والمؤملة فاطمًا
زن منزولا فق منزولًا خز مفحرا
افتح قواما قدماً ومدراً لا مثل مره مصرف أو مقرر
ذا اللب خسن الذكر منهل تصرح
إلى لا تظن ولا تستكر
أصنع بوضعك سؤل كل مؤمل
واعت صريخ المستضام المغبر
分娩 العطاء بطيب نبيك مفصلا
وصانع المعروف والفصل أصطنع للناس أجمع كل خير أضمر
إن يستفسك بك مستفسخت فاحمه
إن يعتز من ذي خطا فاعده
وإذا حلمت فكن كطود راسخ وإذا وهبت فكن كفيض مطر
لا تخطئ لا تخشئ لا تغشئ لا تغدر
لا الحد لا تعتنين والباب لا تنسور
وعلى الصرير المستقيم تثبتة وتعدا من زلة القدر آخر
واسوا عباد الله وأسوا جرحهم في الله قاوموا كل صحب مغر
بالحلم والعمل استنادوا راحة العقل السليم العارف المتصرص
 فمن يؤول المخلوق يؤول فاخش من إيلام مخلوق بشيء وأخذ
أما إذا ما سائل يأتي فهده ما ميسر بلما لا تزهر
أما بنغمة ذي الجلال فحدثن أما البيتيم فيثمة لا تزهر
أسطور الإيمان علمًا نافعاً والعلم بالحلم العظيم آستور
وعلم العلم الذي هرب نافع يتكدر وتدثر وتصمر
أثل العلم فاستلمه أتقن حفظته وأجعل به إذا الجحي ثم الحشر
من ظلمة الجهل أبتعد مرتى وبلور على نافع فثبتور

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وعلى المخاصِرِ والرذِّى لا تُجْسَر
ولا مُخَصِّصٍ من العصْيَانِ لا تُتَصَغر
وَلَنْ يَكُنْ خَيْرٌ فَلا تُتَقَمَّمَ
يا طالِبًا للخَيْرِ أَقْبِلْ نَاصِيًا
سَتُصَرَّ وَأَفَضِلَ كَنْ شَيْءٍ فَأْحِلْ
وَتَرَفَّقَنَّ وَتَرَأَّفَنَّ وَتَلَطَّفَنَّ
وَتَخَلَّقَنَّ خُلُقًا عَظِيمًا نَشْرُه
بِعَبِيْرِ أَخْلَقٍ زَكَتْ فَتَضَمَّنَّ
وَتَوَاضَعَ فَلا تَشْمَخَنْ يَوْمًا وَلا
فَاللهُ رَافِعُ قَدْرَ مَنْ يَتَوَاضَعُوُوْ
لا تَكْسِرَنْ قَلْبَ ٱمْرِءٍ لَكَ صَاحِبٍ
لا تُخْلِفِ الْمِيْعَادَ إِنْ وَقَّتَّه
لا تَلْهُ بِالْبُطْلَنِ يَا خِدْنَ النُّهٰى
أَنْهِ الْوَرٰی يَا ذَا الْحِجٰى عَنْ مُنْكَرٍ
وَٱنْطِقْ بِكِلْمَةِ كُلِّ خَيْرٍ نَافِعٍ
وَعَنِ الْمَاٰثِمِ كُلِّهَا فَتَنَزَّهَنْ
وَعَلىٰ تَوَالِيْ أَنْعُمِ الَّهِ ٱشْكُرَنْ
أَلرَّبْعُ إِمَّا عَامِرٌ أَوْ غَامِرٌ
إِنْ جَالَدَ الْمَرْءُ الْمُحِقُّ مُوَفَّقًا
إِنْ أَنْتَ يَا إِنْسَانُ كُنْتَ مُصَوَّرًا
بَا يِعْهُ نفْسَكَ ثُمَّ مَالَكَ أَيُّهَا الْـ
يَا أَيُّهَا الإِنْسَانُ عَهْدَكَ أَوْفِه
مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَّاصَفَى وَزَکىٰ فَخُذْ
وَعَلَى الْمَخَازِي وَالرَّدٰى لاَ تَجْسُر
عَمَالٌ مِنَ الْخَيْرَاتِ لاَ تُسَتَّكِر
وَلَنْ يَكُنْ قَرْرٌ فَلا تَتَقَمَّمَ
يا طالِبًا للخَيْرِ أَقْبِلْ نَاصِيًا
سَتُصَرَّ وَأَفَضِلَ كَنْ شَيْءٍ فَأْحِلْ
يَا طَالِبًا لِلشَّرِّ أَدْبِرْ أُقْصُر
طَلَبَ الْمَعَالِيْ فِي اللَّيَالِيْ يَسْهَر
أَنْهِ الْوَرٰی يَا ذَا الْحِجٰى عَنْ مُنْكَرٍ
وَٱنْطِقْ بِكِلْمَةِ كُلِّ خَيْرٍ نَافِعٍ
وَعَنِ الْمَاٰثِمِ كُلِّهَا فَتَنَزَّهَنْ
وَعَلىٰ تَوَالِيْ أَنْعُمِ الَّهِ ٱشْكُرَنْ
أَلرَّبْعُ إِمَّا عَامِرٌ أَوْ غَامِرٌ
إِنْ جَالَدَ الْمَرْءُ الْمُحِقُّ مُوَفَّقًا
إِنْ أَنْتَ يَا إِنْسَانُ كُنْتَ مُصَوَّرًا
بَا يِعْهُ نفْسَكَ ثُمَّ مَالَكَ أَيُّهَا الْـ
يَا أَيُّهَا الإِنْسَانُ عَهْدَكَ أَوْفِه
مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَّاصَفَى وَزَکىٰ فَخُذْ
بِاللهِ ثِقْ وَبِهِ ٱسْتَغِثْ وَبِهِ ٱسْتَجِرْ

اَلْمَرْءُ فِيْ دُنْيَاهُ مَجْبُوْرٌ عَلَّى لٰكِنَّمَا فِي الدُّيْنِ ذَاكَ مُخَيَّر

يَا أَيُّهَا الإِنسَانُ مَا ذَا غَرَّكَ اَلسُّكْرُ يُذْهِلُ عَقْلَ ذِيْ عَقْلٍ فَلَوَلَّا تُرِدْ يَا ذَا النُّهَى طُوْلَ الْمَدٰى لاَ تَتَّجِرْ إِلاَّ حَلَلاً طَيِّبًا وَلَئِنْ أَخَذْتَ الشَّيْءَ مِنْ طُرُقٍ لَهُ وَلَئِنْ أَخَذْتَ الشَّيْءَ لاَ مِنْ طُرْقِه وَإِذَا يَفُوْتُكَ مَا تُرَجِيْهُ فَلَمَّا مِلَّةٌ إِلاَّ وَفِيْهَا كِلْمَةٌ مَنْ يَطْلُبِ الْحَقَّ الْمُبِيْنَ بِنِيَّةٍ اللهُ يَأْمُرُ عَبْدَه بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْاَللهُ جَلَّ جَلَلُه يَنْهَى عَن إِنَّ الزَّمَانَ بِه فَسَادٌ هٰكَذَلٰكِنَّ أَحْوَالَ الزَّمَانِ تَغَيَّرَتْ قُلْ قَوْلَ حَقٍ قَوْلَ صِدْقٍ لاَ تَخَفْ وَٱعْمَلْ بِمَا يُرْضِيِ الإِلٰهَ وَيَنْفَعُ إِنْ كُنْتَ ذَا عِلْمٍ وَحِلْفَ بَلَغَةٍ کُنْ وَاحِدًا فِي السِّرِ وَالإِِعْلَانِ إِنْ كُنْ بَاسِلً بَطَلً كَمِيًّا كَامِلً ثِرْ عَلَى النَّفْسِ الَْْنَامَ وَلَوْ بَيْنَ حَقَّهُنَّ وَلاَ تَكُنْ أَوْفِ الْفَرَائِضَ حَقَّهُنَّ وَلاَ تَكُنْ فِي أَمْرٍا مَفْصَلً أو مُفْصِر

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أَقِمِ الصَّلْوَاتِ وَمَنْ أَرَادَ إِقَامَةَ الصَّلُوَاتِ لِلرَّحْمَنِ فَأَقِمِ

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167 الفائدة في علم وسياسة عظيم مفكر.
168 عرجت أحوال الزمان ممارساً طول المدى بنيت وتصرب.
169 أمور طوفان الفساد تلامس مثل الجبال طمت فلم آتيب.
170 لكن فيقع على يقين كامل بالنصر من على الله الأكبر.
171 أثبت كل نصيحة مؤجوبة لبني نبي جاء خير فشيء.
172 هذين فوانى تخرجت أحكمت لمؤمر طول الزمان معظم.
173 ونتائج العلم الذي أُنهِز فقير مستعمر من فرض يتبعه الهدى المتنصر.
174 كلمات خير نافعات للأولى فطلقها إن تستطع أو فاستمر.
175 حب النبي وليه الغر الزنكي للتين والثني والثقي وعذب أنهر.
5.3 The Translation

1. The intellect is the loftiest essence of the human—it gleams in his soul like the moon.

2. The intellect is the first entity in creation—it is the addressee of God’s command: “Come forward,” “Go back.”

3. The intellect comprehended itself, by itself, in the first beginning—its origin is virtuous, its source pure.

4. The intellect is an essence that comprehends all generated things, all created beings, and all crafted forms.

5. Using his intellect, the human can see the reality in all things with full perception.

6. The intellect is an elixir inside the human that transforms his copper base into red gold.

7. The intellect in the human needs the light that shines forth from the luminous station.

8. Just like the eye which cannot see unless light aids it and dispels darkness.

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40 Hadith reference, Mu’ayyad (1975-ed: 1:4, Majlis 1): “The first entity God created was the intellect. He said to it ‘Come forward!’ and it came forward. He said to it ‘Go back!’ and it went back. Then he said, ‘I swear upon my might and my grandeur, I have not created any creature grander than you. Through you, I reward. Through you, I punish.’”

41 This verse and the next two echo Mu’ayyad (1975-ed: 1:101, Majlis 23).
9. With the radiance of the sun of revelation—may its light keep shining!—illuminise your intellect, O human.

10. The intellect is the best of everything when it is free of injustice and hostility.

11. But if desire takes over, it drives the intellect toward a watering-hole where all things perish, either in their coming or their going.

12. Like colour: in blue light, coloured objects appear blue to the eye.

13. The intellect can be beset by so many blights—arrogance, coercion, and tyranny.

14. If you wish to live a Pure Life, make your intellect commander of your affairs.

15. If you recognise your soul, you will recognise your Lord, the one beyond the reach of all thinkers.

16. If you gain power over something humans before you did not control, know the majesty of the one who gave you that power.

17. If you soar through the world with your intellect, recognise the splendour of the one who made the world, who runs the world.

18. If you contemplate creation, you will recognise the Creator, the lofty one ensconced in the highest gallery.

19. If you meditate upon the power of the atom, you will learn the power of the one who gave it that power.

20. If you recognise this, then acknowledge the power of your highest lord, and distance yourself from those who deny him.

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21. Glory to the Creator of all things, who is not himself a thing! Do not ever deny his power.

22. Glory to the lord who granted you this marvellous intellect! Recognise him, do not ever deny him.

23. Gain strength through the intellect he has bestowed on you, and with the intellectual strength earned by his creatures through their realisation of his existence.

24. Know that the power of the Creator of all things is the fulcrum of existence for all things.

25. Reflect upon their mystery and master their wonders. Do not be shaken, do not lose interest, do not become impatient.

26. Illumine your soul with the light of knowledge. Seek it assiduously. Cut open the truths of creation and examine them.

27. Know that even the intact intellect is perplexed by the Creator’s grandeur.

28. Understand the value of the intellect bestowed on you, O human. Direct your deepest care toward your soul.

29. The man who does not recognise his worth perishes. He has failed to appreciate his potential.

30. Praise your Creator, O human, and thank him, for he has shaped you as an upright human.

31. How many blessings and favours has he granted you! Thank him and remember.

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43 Reference to ‘Ali’s aphorism, Raḍī (forthcoming ed 2022: no. 3.135): “The man who does not recognise his own worth will perish” (أمرؤ لم يعرف قدره هلك).
44 Reference to Qur’an Infiṭār 82:7.
45 Reference to Qur’an A’rāf 7:69.
32. His grace flows continuously, just as the sun’s rays flow through the ages.
33. If a system follows the system of God’s creation, it will stay on the smooth path.
34. If a system goes against the system of God’s creation, its foundations will be assaulted by destructive winds.
35. Religious life and worldly life are twins, if you would but view them with a perceptive eye.
36. If you conduct your worldly affairs in accord with God’s religion, they will become radiant as Jupiter.
37. God’s servants will then enjoy a good life, in which their world would bloom like a verdant garden.
38. If harmony prevails in the world, all lives will be pure and happy.
39. The Commander of the Faithful ʿAlī, famously known as Ḥaydar, said the following about the world:\[46\]
40. It is an abode of truth for those who are truthful. It is an abode of well-being for those who discern.
41. It is a mosque for God’s loved ones, those who are pious, who prostrate before him and praise him constantly.
42. It is a place of prayer for the noble, pure angels, who possess a splendid stature.
43. It is the place where revelation from the lord of the high heavens, lord of the earth and seas, descends.

\[46\] Vv. 40-44 paraphrase ʿAlī’s sermon. See references in note no. 24.
44. For God’s elect, it has become a place to transact and earn the abode of bliss.

45. O human, stand up, exert effort, be energetic, and tighten your drawstring for both transactions.

46. Don the robes of God’s religion. Wear the mantle of God-consciousness.

47. Religion in this world is like the soul in the body. Understand this well, test it and scrutinise.

48. The world is your home. You live here. Bring to it the honour of the highest station, for a home’s honour derives from the one who resides therein.

49. Use the world’s services, do not become the world’s servant, and you will receive respect and esteem among people.

50. Following the religion of right guidance means cultivating the prosperity of this world and the hereafter. Stand up and cultivate both!

51. If you are a leader, cultivate God’s lands for God’s servants. Do not tyrannise.

52. Fear only God, who is great of majesty, both in your private and public actions.

53. Wear the robe of high virtue. Don the cloak of lofty character.

54. Walk with dignity and calm. Do not swagger in arrogance.

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47 Reference to Qur’an Muzzammil 73:1.
48 Reference to Qur’an Muddaththir 74:1.
49 Or: subjugate, or: colonise (Arabic: wa-lā tasta’mir).
50 Raḍī (forthcoming 2022 ed: no. 3.120).
51 Reference to Qur’an Luqmān 31:19.
55. Be modest in your walk and lower your voice. Preserve the face of your dignity, and do not grovel in front of people with your cheek in the mud.

56. Be gentle, practice sound judgment, return to God in repentance, and always smile—but with dignity.

57. Greet everyone with a happy face, and they will appreciate and respect you.

58. Sow seeds of love in people’s hearts with virtue and affection.


Adorn the pulpit. Be an expert merchant.

60. Spend your wealth wisely, with economy and planning. Do not be a wasteful spendthrift, nor a tight-fisted miser.

61. Spend your wealth to help people, and you will purchase their approval and gratitude.

62. Give gifts with an open, happy heart, all for the sake of God’s pleasure. Do not seek gain through your gifts.

63. Give to whoever asks, as much as you are able. Answer the cries of the destitute and the helpless.

64. Foster charity and kindness. Intend good for all.

65. If any ask for protection, protect them. If any ask for help, help them.

66. If someone who has wronged you acknowledges his fault, forgive him. If someone who has made a mistake offers an excuse, excuse him.

67. In your mature behaviour, be like a deeply entrenched mountain. In your giving gifts, be like a pouring raincloud.

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52 Reference to Qur’an Isrā’17:37.
53 Reference to Qur’an Muddaththir 74:6.
68. Do not lie. Do not perjure. Do not break an oath. Do not betray. Do not cheat. Do not deceive.

69. Do not transgress limits. Do not break through doors. Do not climb over walls.

70. Traverse the straight path with steady deliberation. Ask God to protect your feet from slipping.

71. Soothe people with soft words and apply balm to their wounds. Face bitter hardships bravely for the sake of God.

72. With knowledge and good deeds, procure the comfort of a Sound Intellect, one that possesses comprehension and discernment.

73. Whoever harms another incurs harm. Beware of hurting God’s creatures.

74. If a mendicant comes to you, give him something with a smile, and do not repulse.

75. As for the favours of the Almighty, speak of them. As for the orphan, do not treat him with harshness.

76. Make beneficial knowledge the vizier of your belief. Make mature behaviour the vizier of your knowledge.

77. With deep thought, reflection, and vision, acquire knowledge that benefits.

78. Acquire knowledge with thoroughness, learn it assiduously, act upon it, and then disseminate it.

54 Reference to Kirmānī’s book, Rāḥat al-ʿaql (Comfort for the Intellect).
55 The term used, “creatures” (makhlūq) is very broad, going beyond just humans to all of God’s creation, including, presumably animals, plants, and the environment.
56 Reference to Qurʾan Dūḥā 93: 9, 11.
57 Reference to Hadith, Nuʿmān (1991a ed: 1:79): “Four things are mandatory for every person who possesses thought and intellect from my community—listening to knowledge, remembering it, acting upon it, and disseminating it.”
79. Distance yourself from black ignorance. Do not let its filth touch you. Illumine yourself with the light of beneficial knowledge.

80. Be bold in acquiring virtues and lofty characteristics. Hold back from vices and places of perishing.

81. Do not deem any deed you perform to be great. Do not deem any sin you incur a trifle.

82. If an evil is in front, do not go forward. If a good is in front, do not hold back.

83. O seeker of good, come forward with eagerness. O seeker of evil, go back and desist.58

84. Wake up and earn noble traits. Seekers of elevation keep vigil in the nights.59

85. Wish for others what you wish for yourself. Choose the path of virtue in all that you do.60

86. Be gentle, compassionate, and kind to all living beings. Never turn into a raging tiger.

87. Acquire virtues, excellent virtues, whose fragrance wafts through the world like redolent musk.

88. Perfume yourself with the fragrance of a pure character. Anoint yourself with a bouquet of lofty qualities.

89. Be humble, never haughty, or arrogant, or proud.

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58 Reference to words by Imam Bāqir and Imam Ṣādiq, Nuʿmān (1991a ed: 1:180): (.)

59 Reference to verse of poetry by Shāfiʿī (1995 ed: 97): “According to your efforts, you will earn high qualities. Whoever seeks elevation keeps vigil in the nights.”

60 Reference to ʿAlī’s aphorism, Quḍāʾ (2013 ed: no. 4.1.10): “Wish for others what you would wish for yourself, and dislike for them what you dislike for yourself” (أَحِبَّ لِثُلُبِكَ ما تحب لنفسك وأكره له ما تكره لها).
90. God raises the station of those who humble themselves. He lowers all those who are proud and overbearing.⁶¹

91. Do not break the heart of a friend, a companion. Accompany him, associate with him, be one who proves worthy when tested.

92. Do not delay in fulfilling a pledge when you have set a day.⁶² Do not break a guarantee of security you have sworn to uphold.

93. Do not frolic in fruitless pursuits, O lover of wisdom. Do not turn away from truth for it shines as bright as day.

94. Forbid people from wrongdoing, O possessor of discernment. Command good always.⁶³

95. Speak words that are sound and salutary. Do not mock, or ridicule, or prattle.

96. Disdain crime, all types of it. Purify yourself of sin, all kinds of it.

97. Give thanks for God’s continuous gifts. Endure any hardships that befall you.

98. A dwelling is either prosperous or a wasteland. Cause it to prosper, then, by careful planning and execution.

99. If a righteous man wields a sword, his fighting will waft ambergris.

100. O human, if you are someone who shapes things, then believe in the best shaper of all.⁶⁴

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⁶¹ Reference to Hadith, Quḍāʿī (2016 ed: no. 2.2): “God exalts those who are humble before him, and he humbles those who are arrogant.” (من تواضع الله رفعه الله ومن تكبر وضعه الله).
⁶² Reference to Qur’an Āl ʿImrān 3:9.
⁶³ Reference to Qur’an Luqmān 3:17.
⁶⁴ Reference to Qur’an Taghābun 64:3; Ghāfir :64.
101. Sell him your life and your property O human, and buy from him the everlasting garden.\textsuperscript{65}

102. O human, fulfil your vow.\textsuperscript{66} Purify your robe.\textsuperscript{67} Glorify your Lord.\textsuperscript{68}

103. From all things, take what is pure and good. Leave off what is turbid.

104. Trust in God, seek his aid, request his protection, take refuge in him, solicit his succour, and ask him for victory.

105. Man is compelled in every situation he faces in this world, all the while wearing the garment of one who is free to choose.

106. In religion, however, he is indeed free to choose. Choose for your soul what is good for it.\textsuperscript{69}

107. O human, whenever Satan tries to seduce you, seek God’s protection, and refuse to be seduced.\textsuperscript{70}

108. Drunkenness numbs the intelligent person’s intellect. O intelligent one, do not approach an intoxicating drink.

109. O insightful one, if you wish to live long in ease and plenty, do not gamble.

110. Do not transact except in things that are lawful and pure. Do not cheat, do not hoard, and do not speculate.

111. If you seek a thing using its travelled paths, you will obtain it with ease.

112. If you seek a thing without following its beaten paths, you will find it difficult to obtain.

\textsuperscript{65} Reference to Qur’an Tawba 9:111.
\textsuperscript{66} Reference to Qur’an Baqara 2:40.
\textsuperscript{67} Reference to Qur’an Muddaththur 74:4.
\textsuperscript{68} Reference to Qur’an Muddaththur 74:3.
\textsuperscript{69} Cf. Fakhruddin (2020a) Majlis 2, “Do we have free will?”
\textsuperscript{70} Qur’an Nahj 16:98.
113. If something you wish for eludes you, do not grieve, do not be distressed.

114. Every religion contains at least one word from the people of truth, carried over from ancient times.

115. Whoever seeks clear truth with pure intent and strives for it, finds it, and finds success.

116. God commands his servant to be just, kind, and generous to deserving relatives.\textsuperscript{71}

117. God forbids lewdness, treachery, and abominations.\textsuperscript{72}

118. The age is corrupt, or so they say. In fact, if you test this thesis, it is not correct.

119. Rather, the condition of the age has changed due to the tyranny and changing condition of its people.

120. Speak right, speak true, and do not fear the censurer. Do not lie, do not make up stories.

121. Act in a way that will please God and benefit humans. Be energetic, not lazy.

122. If you possess knowledge and eloquence, and if your people wish it, then climb atop the pulpit.

123. Reiterate for them words of pure counsel. Persuade their souls to implement them.

124. Behave in one way both in private and in public. What you conceal should be what you manifest.

\textsuperscript{71} Reference to Qur’an Nahl 16:90.
\textsuperscript{72} Reference to the next phrase in Qur’an Nahl 16:90.
125. Be brave and heroic, valiant and faultless. Do not oppress, do not be cowardly, do not rush headlong into danger.

126. Give preference to others over yourself, even if you are in a state of poverty. Do not misappropriate everything to your benefit.

127. Give the mandatory rites their full due. Do not be remiss or fall short.

128. Pray the ritual prayer; whoever wishes to pray the ritual prayer for the Merciful Lord must also perform ablutions.

129. O human, believe in God with sincerity. Before this, reject the false Tāghūt.  

130. As for God, fear him. As for his creatures, benefit them. As for your soul, shape its form with the declaration of God’s unity.

131. In God’s eyes, Islam is the true faith. He gave it the most suitable name.

132. For if one truly ponders its essence, it encompasses peace, commitment, and submission.  

133. The foundation of faith’s pillars is in the Sound Intellect—master their knowledge, learn them well.

134. Islam’s beauties are manifest throughout the world. When the sun appears, it cannot be concealed.

135. The Sharia is based on the rational intellect. Learn this from the most knowledgeable philosopher.

136. If the intellect adheres to the conditions that have been placed on the essence of its origin, it becomes true essence.

73 Reference to Qur’an Baqara 2:256.
74 Reference to Qur’an A’l Īmān 3:19.
75 The three-letter root from which all three words derive — silm (peace), islām (commitment), and taslīm (submission) — is the same: SLM.
76 Reference to al-Mu’ayyad al-Shīrāzī, and his exposition in Mu’ayyad (1975- ed: 1:1-9, Majlis 1-2, and passim).
137. Man’s intellect is in a state of potentiality. If it trains with knowledge, it emerges into actuality.

138. O human, safeguard the essence that your great lord has gifted you.

139. Remember the Creator of all the worlds - blessed be his names! - and remain rapt in his remembrance.

140. Praise him, thank him, chant the litany of his highest name77 - lofty be its greatness! - and ask for forgiveness.

141. The Qurʾan contains true knowledge, a treasure of priceless jewels.

142. God - lofty be his greatness! - has made the Qurʾan simple to grasp for one who would take heed.78

143. There is nothing wet and nothing dry except that it is contained in the luminous Book.79

144. If you wish to learn the meaning of a revealed verse from the Remembrance, then seek the children of the Remembrance, and ask for its meaning.80

145. Do not scatter pearls of knowledge before people who do not acknowledge their splendour.

146. Whoever engages in a transaction urged by the Remembrance, will always earn a profit, and never incur loss.

147. Always thank God for his favours, and you will gain more and more of his bounties.

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77 Reference to Qurʾan Aʿlā 87:1.
78 Reference to Qurʾan Dukhān 44:58.
79 Reference to Qurʾan An ām 6:59.
80 Reference to Qurʾan Nahl 16:43. The “Remembrance” (al-Dhikr) is one of the names of the Qurʾan. The next few verses of the poem, esp. v. 75, also refer to this Qurʾanic verse.
148. O my people, hold fast to God’s rope and do not disperse, and you shall win resounding victory.

149. The Remembrance is linked with the “family of the Remembrance”—descendants of the pure messenger from Baṭḥāʾ. 81

150. They are stars in the sky of Mukhtār’s prophecy, 82 bright star rising after bright star.

151. Prophet Ṣāḥīb Muṣṭafā is the best of people. The lord of the throne has gifted him the pool of Kawthar. 83

152. Muṣṭafā is the city of knowledge. Its gate is the master of the world, conqueror of Khaybar. 84

153. Medina’s honour is lofty because [it is the resting place] of that city (medina). The gate’s grave has bestowed honour to the earth of Gharī. 85

154. Their sons, sons of Fāṭima al-Batūl, are Imams whose virtues cannot be counted.

155. They are the people of the robe, the robe of purity. 86 Whoever supports them is purified from all forms of filth.

156. They are Imams who have suckled the milk of revelation. Trustees of the lord of the throne. Intercessors on the day of resurrection.

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81 Baṭḥāʾ -- lit. large area of flat land -- is another name for Mecca.

82 Reference to the Prophet Muḥammad. Mukhtār (lit. the chosen one) is one of his names.

83 Reference to Qur’an Kawthar 108:1. Tāhā (Qur’an Tāhā 20:1) and Muṣṭafā are two additional names of the Prophet Muḥammad. In Ṭayyibī doctrine, Kawthar is an esoteric reference to Muḥammad’s Legatee, ‘Alī. This verse paraphrases the opening line of Saifuddin’s (1993 ed: 347) own earlier well-known poem in praise of the Prophet, (طه النبي  المصطفى خير الورى – أعطاه ذو العرش العظيم الكوثرا): “Prophet Ṣāḥīb Muṣṭafā is the best of creation. The lord of the throne has gifted him Kawthar”.

84 Reference to Hadith, Nu’mān (1991b ed: 1:89): “I am the city of knowledge and ‘Alī is its gateway.” (أنا مدينة العلم وعلي بابها). The hadith is also cited by several canonical Sunni sources, including Tirmidhī (1937 ed: no. 3720).

85 Gharī is another name for the city of Najaf, home to ‘Alī’s shrine.

157. They are the truthful ones (ṣādiqūn) whose truthfulness is attested by all the people. Their purity (ṣafā) symbolises [the Ḥajj rites of] Ṣafā and Mash’ar.

158. People call the Prophet Muṣṭafā’s hadith “elevated” when they narrate it on the authority of [Muḥammad] al-Bāqir or Jaʿfar [al-Ṣādiq].

159. They are the arks of salvation. Whoever embarks upon them is saved from the raging, stormy sea of primordial matter.87

160. They are the Fatimids, magnanimous chieftains. How many rivers of beneficial knowledge did they make flow!

161. Each Imam is a guide for the people in his age, following on from the Hāshimite Prophet, the Warner.88

162. The Imams have appointed Dāʿīs with full authority, who are overflowing, unending seas of true knowledge.

163. Each Dāʿī is a philosopher skilled in running the Daʿwa, his virtue is great.

164. He is an exemplar for the learned and the choicest among them. He is the most honourable manifestation for the radiance of the light of knowledge.

165. I am the Imams’ Dāʿī who walks their rightly guided, luminous, and well-trodden path.

166. I am Taher Saifuddin, who calls (dāʿī) God’s creatures toward abundant good.

167. And toward comprehensive security in the cradle of wellbeing, and toward a fruitful life.

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87 Reference to Hadith, Quḍāʿī (2016 ed: no. 11.1). “My kin are like Noah’s Ark—those who climb aboard are saved, those who waver are drowned” (مَثَلُ أهل بيتي مِثْلُ سفينة نوح من ركب فيها نجى ومن تخل ف عنها غرق).

88 Reference to Qur’an Raʿd 13:7.
168. I have tested the conditions of the age, experiencing them through time with deliberation and patience.

169. High waves of the storm of deviation clashed and billowed like mountains, yet I was not perplexed.

170. Rather, I remained firm in my perfect conviction of victory from the Great God.

171. I have offered sincere service to the descendants of the Prophet who is the best giver of glad tidings.

172. This poem contains compelling insights, arising from the experiences of one who was given command, and a long life, through a long age.

173. It is the fruit of knowledge whose rivers flow amply from the spring of right guidance.

174. It contains good words that will benefit people. Speak them if you can, or write them down.

175. Store treasures of love of the prophet and his radiant, well-content descendants, for your religion, your worldly life, and your afterlife.

176. Perform good deeds as much as you can, and you will be given the gardens of paradise and beautiful, coloured carpets.\textsuperscript{89}

177. May God shower blessings on the Prophet and his pure descendants, the people of the house, the most honourable assembly.

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