

BREEZES FROM THE HEART
(VII)

**"İSLÂM
İMÂN
İHSÂN
İKÂN"**

**TASAWWUF
NECDET ARDIÇ**

**NECDET ARDIÇ SERIES
(93=7)**

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(VII)**

"'ISLĀM

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'IKĀN"

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The only way to salvation is '**Islām**,
Brought by the noble 'alayhi as-salām,
Its observers find peace was-salām,
With '**Islām** manifests muḥabbatullah (the love of Allāh).

If you wish uplifting, the path is '**Imān** (disambiguation, faith),
Restrain your soul, it is your enemy,
Wa nafakhtu ("I (ALLĀH) breathed into him") is life in your existence,
With '**Imān** you can pass ṣirāṭullāh (the path of (to) ALLĀH).

From the Real (al-Ḥaqq) comes a noble '**Iḥsān**,
Whoever understands this goes into ecstasy,
When you eliminate all other than the Real,
With '**Iḥsān** appears ru'yatullāh (theophany, appearance of Allāh).

When '**Ikān** manifests in you,
It is what burns your entire being,
He is the One who looks at the world with your two eyes,
With '**Ikān** one can find mā'rifatullāh (true knowledge of Allāh).

FOREWORD

My esteemed reader,

This booklet came into existence many years ago in response to some questions about '**Imān**. It has recently been translated from English to Turkish by our son Cem Demiroğlu in his limited time. I thank him and pray for his success in matters of this world and the next. May his hands, arms, and heart be in good health.

I earnestly wish that people who read this booklet will benefit from it. Salām (Peace) and Love for everyone... May the Real give everyone the desires of their hearts. 'Āmīn.

**TERZİ BABA NECDET ARDIÇ
TEKİRDAĞ**

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FOREWORD (for the original text)

My esteemed reader,

This short book is prepared in response to some questions about **'Imān**.

There are several stages of **'Imān** and the final stage is called **'Ikān**. As muslims, before everything else, we must understand the subject of **'Imān** very well. Unfortunately however, our **'Imān** is generally based on habit and imitation and we do not pay attention to its true meaning.

There exists a primordial unity between Allāh and human beings that is veiled in the inward dimension (or the invisible realm). This unity starts to appear with **'Islām**; with **'Imān** it becomes stronger; with **'Iḥsān** it is witnessed; and finally with **'Ikān** unity and oneness re-appear.

The purpose of **'Imān** is not to live in duality (as believer and deity) or in separation from the Real. Instead, the purpose is to reach unity through the path of **'Imān**.

I pray to the Real to provide all of us the intelligence and vastness of heart to understand our true religion. (**Rabbi zidni ilma (20/114)**: My Lord, increase my knowledge).

Dear Lord, I dedicate all of the spiritual benefits from this book to our mother Halvai Baci, esteemed wife of our Pir Hasan Hüsammeddin Uşşaki, and to the spirits of all the ladies who served in the shrine (dargah) during her time.

My dear reader. Remember with respect the people who worked on writing, arranging, and publishing this book. Pray for their ancestors. May Allāh open doors of inspiration in your heart.

**NECDET ARDIÇ UŞŞAKÎ
TEKİRDAĞ**

**ABOUT
'ISLĀM 'IMĀN 'IḤSĀN 'IKĀN**

**A`ūdhu billāhi min ash-shaitāni r-rajīmi
bismi-llāhi r-raḥmāni r-raḥīm**

**al-ḥamdu li-llāhi rabbi l-`ālamīn
esselatu vesselamu `ala Sayyidina Muḥammad
wa `ala alihi wa ashabihi ajma`in**

My esteemed reader, to begin with, I pray the Real (al-Haqq) to provide all of us wisdom ('irfān), knowledge ('ilm), intelligence ('aql), and vastness of heart (qalb).

Our topic is **“'Islām, 'Imān, 'Iḥsān and 'Ikān”**.

In explaining these thought provoking concepts, we will use a ḥadīth narrated by Yahya bin Ya'mur, the first five verses in the second surah (Sūrat al-Baqarah) of our Noble Book, and some other verses.

The concept that we will particularly focus on is **“'IḤSĀN”**.

Yahya bin Ya'mur narrates from Abdullah Ibn Umar, and he narrates from his father Umar Ibn al-Khattab (see Jami` at-Tirmidhi - Book 40, Ḥadīth 5):

My father told me:

“One day we were sitting in the company of Allāh's Messenger (ṣalla Allāhu `alay-hi wa-sallam (saw): may Allāh honor him and grant him peace) when a man with extremely white garments, and extremely black hair came. He had no visible marks of traveling on him, yet none of us recognized him. He came until he reached the Prophet. He put his knees up against his knees, and then said:

- **“Oh Muḥammad! Inform me about 'Imān!”**

The Prophet (saw) explained:

- **'Islām is testifying to Lā ilāha illā-llāh and that Muḥammad is His servant and Messenger, establishing the Salat, giving the Zakat, performing Hajj to the House, and fasting (in the month of) Ramadan.**

The man confirmed:

- **You have told the truth!**

Then he asked again:

- **Inform me about 'Imān!”**

The Prophet (saw) explained:

- **'Imān is to believe in Allāh, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Day of Judgement, and Al-Qadar (fate, predestination, that the good and bad are both from Allāh)**

The man confirmed again:

- **You have told the truth!**

And he asked again:

- **Inform me about 'Iḥsān!**

The Prophet (saw) explained:

- **'Iḥsān is to worship Allāh as if you see Him. Even if you do not see Him, He certainly sees you.**

The man asked again:

- **Tell me, when is the Hour (the day of judgment)?**

This time, the Prophet (saw) said:

- **The one being asked knows no more than the questioner.**

The man:

- **Then what are the signs of the Hour?**

The Prophet (saw) explained:

- **That the slave woman gives birth to her master, and that the barefooted, naked, and poor shepherds rival each other in building tall buildings.**

After this, the man left. The Prophet (saw) asked:

- **Oh Umar! Do you know who this man was?**

Umar responded:

- **Allāh and His Messenger know better.**

The Prophet (saw) said:

- **It was Jibril. He came to teach you about the matters of your religion.**

This ḥadīth carries a great and subtle meaning and is often referred to as the "*Jibril ḥadīth*".

My beloved brothers and sisters. The word "**'Iḥsān**" mentioned in this ḥadīth is to worship ('Ibādah) Allāh as if you are seeing Him with your two eyes. Even if you don't see Him (for now) He sees you. We must reach this level of consciousness.

In knowing and witnessing, there are three important stages.

The first of these is to know Allāh, in other words, to know that *Allāh exists*.

The second is to understand more extensively *what type of existence* Allāh is, and *to have faith* ('Imān) in Him.

The third is to know the opening of the path to witnessing Allāh. This way, witnessing leads to testifying that finds its meaning in the word "*ashadu*".

If we wanted to examine the “’Iḥsān” question in the Jibril ḥadīth more extensively, we can add the following:

The word “’Iḥsān” has two meanings, one in the physical realm and one in the spiritual realm. Those meanings are: lesson and gnosis (’irfān).

The **outward** meaning of ’Iḥsān in the physical realm is to give, grant, and help others with what you have (’ikrām).

The **inward** meaning of ’Iḥsān in the spiritual realm is, despite not being able to see Allāh, knowing that He sees you.

Whoever understands this difference, finds the starting point of the path to Allāh. This matter is emphasized in the Jibril ḥadīth and explained to us clearly.

Now, let’s think about a person who sees Allāh or is seen by Him when praying.

In general, when a person sees another person or a thing, it means that the person has a target object. If so, then the person or the thing that is seen (the object) should also see him. Or put this more cautiously, here there is a principle: the possibility of being seen by the object of our gaze. However, even if this is generally so, for various reasons the targets might not interlock. Possible reasons are:

- a) the glasses that the person wear lead to blurry vision,
- b) there is cataract, myopia, hyperopia, or astigmatism in the person’s eye,
- c) it might be dark or foggy,
- d) his eyelids may be closed,
- e) he may be blind etc.

Many other possible reasons may be added to this list. However, there is one reality that cannot be denied: Allāh always sees us; in fact he sees everything. As explained above, since we are the target of Allāh’s gaze, we should be able to see Him due to the principle of the possibility of being seen.

Seeing Allāh is the premordial wish of human beings. The door to the secret of seeing Allāh is opened partway by the hidden meaning in the word ’Iḥsān. If we cannot enter from this door to see Him, it means we are disabled by one of the states listed (or not listed) above.

Since the beginning, we are asking: What is “’Iḥsān”? What does it mean? I guess the importance of this question is better understood by now.

We will continue to explain “’Iḥsān” later, but now let’s turn to the first few verses of Sūrat al-Bakarah.

As is known, Sūrat al-Baqarah is the second surah (chapter) of the Noble Qur’an. In this surah, there is a story about Moses and a cow. That’s why the sūrat is named al-Baqarah or The Cow.

If we break the Turkish translation of al-Baqarah as **Bak-ara** (Look-search) we come face to face with a new reality. It is a warning to the reader to look at the Qur'an from the beginning to the end and to search for meanings. Otherwise, we are not asked to put the Qur'an in a fancy bag and hang it on our wall. If the idea is to look and search, we need to open it first.

Indeed the first sūrat, Al-Fātiḥah means opening. This cannot be a coincidence. After remembering this, let's turn to the first few verses of Sūrat al-Baqarah.

Sūrat al-Baqarah (2), verse 1: 'Alif-Lām-Mīm

These letters are referred to as *hurūf-u muqattā* (discrete letters). We cannot explain them with today's knowledge. They are the names of *al-insān al-kāmil* (Perfect Man).

'Alif → *Aḥadiyyat* (Unity) level,
Lām → *Lahut* (*Ulūhiyya*, Divinity) level,
Mīm → *Maqām al-Muhammadiyya* (Station of Muḥammad).

In addition, from a different perspective, they denote the coordinates of the earth.

Alif consists of **12** points, the first **7** points represent the seven stages of the soul referred to as **Ettur-u Seb'a** (Seven Rounds), the remaining **5** points represent the Five Ḥaḍrah stages.

After Allāh manifests with *Alif* or *Aḥadiyyat*, He forms the world of *Lahut* (Divinity) also referred to as the world of oneness or world of attributes, and the world of attributes forms the other worlds. This way **Haqiqat al-Muhammadiyya** (The Reality of Muḥammad or Muhammadan Reality) manifests with all its levels.

In this respect, each one of the letters "**Alif-Lām-Mīm**" are separate books. The Noble Qur'an itself is a book, and even the Perfect Man is a book.

Sūrat al-Baqarah (2), verse 2: Dhālika al-kitābu lā rayba fīhi hudāan lilmuttaqīna This is the Book, whereof there is no doubt, a guidance to those who are Al-Muttaqun

Here, the inward (spiritual) meaning of the word "ittiqā" is abstaining from forgetting that the reality of your existence is the reality of the Real, abstaining from heedlessness and being defeated by your soul, and recognizing that your existence is the existence of the Real per se and living your life accordingly.

Sūrat al-Baqarah (2), verse 2: Al-ladhīna yu'uminūna bil-ghaybi wa yuqīmūna as-salāata wa mimmā razaqnāhum yunfiqūna

Let's first look at the translations of this verse and then denote an important problem with those translations.

In general, this verse is translated as follows: **Al-Muttaqun are those who believe in the Unseen (the Ghayb), establish the prayer, and spend in the way of Allāh out of what We have provided to them.** After reading it once, we tend to think we understand what this verse means. In fact, a prefix shifts the meaning of the verse to an entirely different level.

In particular, in Arabic, the prefix **"bil"** means with or together.

Thus, **"bil ghaybi"** means "they believe with their Ghayb". However, it is generally translated as "they believe in the Unseen (the Ghayb)" because translators think the latter translation is more plausible in meaning and/or grammatically more accurate.

However, if the intention were to say "they believe in the Unseen" then instead of **yu'uminūna bil-ghaybi** the text would be **yu'uminūn al-ghayb.**

Apparently, here ALLĀH does not only wish to emphasize "faith in the Unseen"; this verse is about believing with your own Ghayb and attesting the truth of the Ghayb.

The translations mentioned above are accurate for people who believe that ALLĀH is in the Ghayb. But... Is ALLĀH really only in the Ghayb?

Sūrat an-Nūr (24), verse 35:
Al-lahu nūru as-samāwāti wa al-'arḍi
Allāh is the Light of the heavens and the earth.

Sūrat al-Baqarah (2), verse 115:
Wa lillahi al-mashriqu wa al-maghribu
fa'aynamā tuwallū fathamma wajhu Al-lahi
'inna Al-laha wāsi`un `alimun
And to Allāh belongs the east and the west.
So wherever you [might] turn, there is the Face of Allāh.
Indeed, Allāh is all-Encompassing and Knowing.

These and many other verses in the Noble Qur'an clearly show that ALLĀH is not only in the Ghayb.

Sūrat al-Hashr (59), verse 22:
Huwa Al-Lahu ...`Ālimu al-ghaybi wa ash-shahādati
He is Allāh ... the Knower of the invisible (Ghayb) and the visible
(Witnessed or Shada).

This verse teaches us that there are two types of worlds; one is the Unseen or Invisible World (or Ghayb), the other is the Seen or Visible or Witnessed world.

If something is unseen (invisible) or cannot be seen, then we can talk about faith in it (in its presence). However, if it is seen (visible) we no longer have faith in it, instead we witness it.

We can talk about having faith in heaven, hell, fate, angels, the throne, the day of testimony etc. However, we witness physical beings.

So, what happens when we say **"Ašhadu an lā 'ilāha 'illā-llāh"**?

When we say **"I witness that there is no God but Allāh"**, we testify as if we see it. If we believed Allāh is only in the Ghayb, we would say "I believe" instead of "I witness".

Just as there are Visible and Invisible worlds in the universe, there are also Visible and Invisible worlds in human beings. Our flesh, bones, skin, hair are our outward or visible worlds, and our spiritual state, intellect, soul, and heart are our inward or invisible worlds.

Under all conditions, the reality is that the visible world (including the visible world of human beings) is finite, the invisible world (again including the invisible world of human beings) is infinite.

If we summarize all of these with one sentence, we can say: Faith is to the Invisible, *there is no need to have faith in the Visible*. Therefore, if we witness the existence of the Real in this world we do not need faith, faith becomes void, faith completes its mission and is transformed into witnessing.

If we still cannot witness the Real after performing spiritual practices and abstaining from the joys of the physical world and continue to try approaching ALLĀH with faith, it means we are quite far away from Him.

When someone is ready, he no longer needs faith. However, if we say "Ašhadu" although we do not witness Allāh, excuse me, but doesn't this make us dishonest and ignorant people?...

We came to this world to witness ALLĀH and learn about ALLĀH. Otherwise, the Real would leave us in the world of imagination. In other words, He would leave us in the spiritual world. From there, we would be sent to heaven or hell.

This means we witness the corporeal (visible) world with our physical body (outward being) and in the corporeal (visible) world we witness our Lord. And with our inward being (Ghayb) we witness the existence of the Real in the inward dimension (invisible realm). As a result, the one who succeeds or fails in witnessing is the person himself.

In other words, the one who knows himself knows his soul, also knows his Lord. As the Messenger of Allāh stated: **"Men 'arefe nafsehū fe kad 'arefe Rabbehū."** **"Whoever knows his soul is the only one who knows his Lord."**

After explaining the difference between “believing in the Ghayb (invisible world)” and “believing with one’s ghayb” in the verse, let’s now examine the phrase “(they) establish the prayer”. This also has both an outward and an inward meaning.

The outward meaning is to abide by the rules of prayer (for example, doing the physical movements of the prayer properly). While this is important, at least as important, and perhaps more important, is to have proper inner thoughts or perspective in the prayer.

In fact, even if we properly follow the physical rules of the prayer, can we be confident about the soundness of our prayer if our attention and thoughts are on things other than the prayer?

The verse continues as follows: **and (they) spend in the way of Allāh out of what We have provided to them.**

This means, a wealthy muslim must share a portion of his wealth with people in need. This wealth may be material or immaterial (information on self-knowledge or Mā’rifatullāh (knowledge of Allāh)). The latter is the subsistence of the soul and it is eternal. A person who fills his stomach with food naturally becomes hungry again in a few hours. But, Mā’rifatullāh knowledge that is given or acquired is eternal.

Sūrat al-Baqarah (2), verse 4:

wa al-ladhīna yu’uminūna bimā ‘unzila ‘ilayka

wa mā ‘unzila min qablika

wa bil-‘ākhirati hum yūqinūn

**And who believe in what has been revealed to you,
and what was revealed before you,
and of the Hereafter they are certain [in faith].”**

It will be useful to explain the word “**Imān**” in this verse:

Iman has three stages: **Taqlīd** ‘Imān (imitative faith), **Tahqīq** ‘Imān (verified faith), and **‘Ikān**.

- The first of these three stages, imitative faith, is learned generally at childhood from the family, friends, and at school etc.
- As a result, the person starts to become conscious of the existence of ALLĀH. As the person grows older, and as his mental capacity and consciousness increase, he starts contemplating about the things around him. He recognizes their existence, how they live and mature, and how they change form after a while. He starts to identify causal connections. Finding the source of all those existences or creations further improves his consciousness of ALLĀH. All of these steps constitute the verification stage.
- As the person proceeds further from here he reaches a stage referred to as “‘Ikān” or “Yaqīn” (certainty) and he understands the reality of existence.

We witness the things that we see (in the visible realm), and have faith (’Imān) in the things that we do not see (things in the invisible realm or in the Ghayb).

We can formalize the three stages of ’Imān using the verses in the Noble Qur’an;

- the person in the first stage of ’Imān (imitative faith) says **“Yes! This is the Noble Qur’an”** He kisses the book, puts it on his forehead, respects it, then puts it aside.

- the person in the second stage of ’Imān (verified faith) takes the Noble Qur’an, opens it, reads it, and does his best (and struggles considerably) to comply with the its provisions.

- the person in the third stage of ’Imān (“’Ikān” or “Yaqīn”): This is in fact not a stage ’Imān but a stage above ’Imān. This happens when the reality of the following ḥadīth manifests **“al-insān u wal qur’an u tawamānu” (“Human beings and Qur’an are like twins born in the same womb”)**.

Of course, here, for human beings and the visible world the word **bāṭin** refers to the womb of the mother, and for the Qur’an and invisible world it refers to the Rahim (womb) of ar-Raḥmān in “Bismi-llāhi r-raḥmāni r-raḥīmi” (in other words, it is **“Divinity”**).

Human beings and the Qur’an are twins as they both were born in (manifested from) the essence of the Real. While the Holy Qur’an is referred to as *“Kalāmullah”* (the word of ALLĀH), human beings are referred to as *“Habībullah”* (the lover of Allāh) or “Qur’an al-nātiq” (speaking Qur’an).

**Fear not and call him Qur’an al-nātiq,
Enter the Kaaba of heart and be in agreement (mutābiq),
Walk around that Kaaba,
A day comes when they transfer the sun of your essence**

These two self-disclosures of the Essence in the corporeal world approach each other by way of ’Imān and understand their realities. This way, “liqā” (meeting) and “yaqīn” (certainty) occur.

At the stage of Yaqīn, ’Imān does not exist, because ’Imān requires duality (a believer and an object of belief).

Since *“Tawḥīd”* (unity) is a pillar of tasawwuf, how will the dervish reduce duality to unity?

An important thinker once made the following deep and concise statement about this issue: **“(When) you get yourself out of the way, what remains is the Creator”**.

In other words, in way of self-knowledge, the servant has to get himself out of the way. If the servant manages to get the existence that he thought he had (his relative or ego-centric existence) out of the way, what will remain is the *“divine existence”*.

Therefore, after reaching the real tawhīd (unity) 'Imān becomes void. If the person tries to act by 'Imān, this means he still lives his life under the influence of duality. However, it should be emphasized here that the person should know his spiritual state and avoid acting in a manner that is above his level. For the way is slippery, and one should not start the journey without a guide.

These matters should be understood well and acted upon in the right place. At Sharī'ah and Tarī'qah stages, there is definitely 'Imān. At Haqī'qah and Mārī'fah stages, however, 'Ikān arises and 'Imān automatically transforms into witnessing.

Let's continue... **"wa bil-'āakhirati hum yūqinūn"**

We can translate this last part of the verse as **"(they) believe in the after life with certainty"**. Put differently, they approach with certainty and witness accordingly. In other words, they witness the realities of the afterlife, as described in the Qur'an and by the Messenger in various ḥadīth, with certainty as if they see it.

It is important to emphasize that any kind of knowledge other than knowledge based on Yaqīn is narrated. We can call certainty based on narrated knowledge *'ilm al Yaqīn*. There are three more advanced grades of knowledge that are *'ilm al Yaqīn*, *'ayn al Yaqīn*, and *haqq al Yaqīn*. Among these, *'ilm al Yaqīn* is to understand the essence of the matter with intellect, knowledge, and spirit. In short, it is approaching with knowledge. *'Ayn al Yaqīn* is approaching with vision. *Haqq al Yaqīn* is to become the owner of the knowledge, to be the knowledge.

If we use sugar as an example; the first is to describe sugar, the second is to taste sugar (to eat it), and the third is to be sugar.

The word "*Yaqīn*" in the verse, is not the same as "yakīn" (close) in Turkish. The real Yaqīn is to understand that "*Your reality is nothing other than His reality*".

When people asked a gnostic "What is Yaqīn?"

He responded: **"al-Yaqīnu huwe al-Haqq"** that means **"Yaqīn is the Real"**.

This way, he lives the afterlife with Yaqīn and he lives as if he can die any moment. People who live their lives based on this system, or al-Yaqīn, are people of witnessing and they evaluate everything from that level.

Sūrat al-Baqarah (2), verse 5:

'Ūlā'ika `alá Hudáan min Rabbihim wa 'Ūlā'ika humu al-mufliḥūna

They are on (true) guidance from their Lord, and they are the successful...

The general (outward) meaning of the verse is; by establishing the prayer, escaping from evil and increasing good deeds, they become successful in the way of being good servants for ALLĀH.

The inward meaning of finding salvation however is to free oneself from the attacks of the soul, lower self (or ego), self-assertion, and relative self and replace these with the presence of the Real. In other words, salvation is escaping from the lower self (or human nature) and ascending to your Divinity and finding peace there.

Remember how our Lord called upon Hadrat al-Ibrahīm, whose real name is "Ebrahem" or "father of the people" but referred to as "Abraham" by Western people:

Sūrat al-Baqarah (2), verse 131:
'Idh qāla lahu Rabbuhu 'aslim qāla
'aslantu li Rabbi al-`Ālamīna

When his Lord said onto him: Surrender!
He said: "I have surrendered to the Lord of the Worlds.

Here Hadrat al-Ibrahīm is ordered "Surrender to your Lord". More clearly, "surrender to me with all your existence, accept me as your representative (waqīl) and I will be sufficient for you." He immediately responds: "'aslantu li Rabbi al-`Ālamīna". This means "I have surrendered to the Lord of the worlds".

However, this surrendering has a very important feature.

Namely; **Sūrat al-An'am (6), verse 79:**
'Innī wajjahtu wajhiya lilladhī faṭara as-samāwāti wa al-'arḍa
Ĥanīfāan
wa mā 'anā mina al-mushrikīna
I have turned my face toward Him Who created the heavens and
the earth, as one by nature upright,
and I am not of the idolaters.

Here idolaters are mentioned probably because his father Azar used to make idols.

Shirk (idolatry), if translated roughly, constitutes worshipping idols, stone, the sun, animals etc. However, there is also hidden shirk as mentioned in a ḥadīth of the Messenger of Allāh: "What I fear for you the most is hidden shirk".

Hidden shirk is perceiving or thinking of things in the skies and on earth as separate beings. If the person separates the Real and other beings in his mind, this implies that he accepts the presence of beings other than the Real. This is the hidden shirk that the Messenger of ALLĀH fears and this is what weakens people's 'Imān. In other words, hidden shirk is accepting that there are beings other than ALLĀH.

According to **Sūrat al-Ĥadīd (57), verse 3:**
Huwa al-'awwalu wa al-'Ākhiru wa aẓ-Ẓāhiru wa al-Bāṭinu
wa Huwa bikulli shay'in `Alīmun
He is the First and the Last, and the Outward and the Inward;
and He is Knower of all things

If ALLĀH is both the First and the Last, both the Outward and the Inward, and the Knower of all things, then is it possible to talk about the presence of any being other than the Real?

The first person to understand this reality is Hadrat al-Ibrahīm (Abraham). He is "hanif" (a person who turns away from idolatry) and "a person of tawhīd (unity)". For the first time in human history, "tawhīd al-ef'al" (the unity of acts) was recognized by him and the clause "la faile illallah" (all acts belong to Allāh) found its source in him.

In further stages of the "Maqam (Station) of Abraham", the Real addresses his servants as follows:

Sūrat al-Baqarah (2), verse 112:
Balá man 'aslama wajhahu lillahi wa huwa muhsinun
falahu 'ajruhu `inda Rabbihi
... whoever submits His Face to Allāh and is a doer of
good,
He will get his reward with his Lord

Here if we interpret the word "wajh" as face, forehead, eyebrow, or eyes, the interpretation would be too shallow. However, the word "wajh" has many other meanings. In other words, the person should turn to the Real not only with his body or his physical parts, but also with his mind, spirit, essence, and soul and surrender his entire being to Him. The person who does this is referred to as "muhsin" or the "receiver of 'Ihsān (reward)".

At the beginning of the book, we mentioned four concepts regarding faith: 'Islām, 'Imān, 'Ihsān and 'Ikān... 'Ihsān is the essence of "Mā'rifatullāh" (Knowledge of Allāh) and *Haqiqat al-Muḥammadiyya* (The Reality of Muḥammad or Muhammeden Reality).

Since the person who surrenders his face to the Real is referred to as "muhsin", this means he receives 'Ihsān. Conversely, if a person is not "muhsin" or in other words if he has not received 'Ihsān, this means he has not surrendered his face to the Real.

Here, it is important to emphasize an important feature of 'Ihsān. As long as the face is surrendered to the Real, 'Ihsān from the Essence continues to increase. This is because the capacity of the person who receives 'Ihsān continually increases. This giving and receiving continues to grow.

We also become muhsin when we receive millions or billions (of liras) of allowance from our father, mother, grandfather, but these rewards end when their lives end.

The person continues to enrich his life with acts of worship, sohbas, and dhikr, and this time hears:

Sūrat al- 'A`rāf (7), verse 56:
'inna rahmata Al-Lahi qaribun mina al-muhsinina
The mercy of Allah comes from muhsinīn

Notice that this verse clearly shows where the mercy of ALLĀH comes from (muḥsinīn). Of course, in a general sense, the mercy of ALLĀH comes from the skies, from the left and the right, from our teachers, scholars, artists, the manifestations that we call the nature, from everywhere. However, mercy as mentioned in this verse is from the Essence of the Divine, and this only and only comes (in the shortest route) from the hearts of muḥsin people to the hearts of people who aspire.

We see another verse about 'Iḥsān in

Sūrat ar- Ar-Raḥmān, verse 60:
Hal jazā'u al-'Iḥsāni 'Illā al-'Iḥsānu
Isn't the reward for 'Iḥsān only 'Iḥsān?

The word "jazā" in this verse is also used in Turkish and it means punishment. However, in Arabic "jazā" means equivalent or return in equivalent.

Sūrat al-Bayyinah (98), verse 8:
Jazā'uuhum `inda Rabbihim
jannātu `adnin tajrī min taḥtiḥā al-'anhāru khālidīna fihā
'abadān
Their reward [jazā] is with their Lord:
Gardens of Eden underneath which rivers flow, wherein they
 dwell for ever

or like in "... [they] will be rewarded by hell"

In this verse also, it is mentioned that the reward [jazā] of "'Iḥsān" will be "'Iḥsān". When a "muḥsin" starts giving after he becomes "muḥsin" his life turns into 'Iḥsān, he becomes the possessor of 'Iḥsān. He gives as much as he can, and in response he receives, and this giving and receiving continues.

When the person living this life says "aḥadu `an lā 'ilāha 'illā-llāh" he becomes a real witness and he no longer needs 'Imān:

A person who still lives in the 'Imān stage in fact lives in the world of manyness. This is because, as mentioned above, 'Imān requires two beings, one who believes and the object of belief.

A person who recites "aḥadu `an lā 'ilāha 'illā-llāh wa aḥadu `anna muḥammadun rasūlu-llāh" conscious of its real meaning has passed the 'Imān stage, left behind heedlessness, escaped from manyness, found unity, and become witness.

And in a different verse,

Sūrat al- 'A`rāf (7), verse 172:
Wa 'ash/hadahum `alā 'anfusiḥim
And they witnessed on their own souls

Note that the verse does not say “they believe”, it says “they witness”. If it said “they have faith on their own soul,” this would be like starting all over again from the first level after many stages of progress. But, as stated above, ‘Iḥsān – muḥsin relationship constitutes a capacity increase eternally.

The following verse summarizes nicely all that is discussed above and the culmination point of the state of witnessing.

Sūrat ‘Āli ‘Imrān (3), verse 18:
Shahida Al-Lahu ‘Annahu lā ‘ilāha ‘illā Huwa
Allāh (Himself) is Witness that there is no Allāh save Him.

Before we end, I think it may be useful to explain the word “‘Islām” in the Jibril ḥadīth.

The root of the word ‘**Islām**, is salām (peace) and taslīm (to surrender). ‘Islām is to believe in the oneness of ALLĀH and not attributing a partner to Him.

The outward of the religion of ‘Islām is “*Sharī‘ah al-Muḥammadiyya*”; and the inward is “*Haqīqat al-Muḥammadiyya*” (*The Reality of Muḥammad or Muḥammaden Reality*). Perfection is to implement both.

‘Islām is also the name of a celestial system from Adam to Muḥammad (pbuh). The Real has not formed separate religions such as Abrahamism, Judaism, Christianity, or Muhammadanism.

Sūrat ‘Āli ‘Imrān (3), verse 19:
‘Inna ad-dīna ‘inda Al-Lahi al-‘Islāmu
Indeed, the religion in the sight of (with) Allāh is ‘Islām

While religion in the sight of (or with) Allāh is ‘Islām, what is the religion in the sight of the servant?

Religions such as Judaism and Christianity appear here. This is because the servant finds it easier to embrace outward states and therefore attributes a religion to each messenger with a book.

People named the “tawḥīd al-ef‘al” (the unity of acts) principle brought by Abraham as Abrahamism, the “tanzih” (transedence) principle brought by Moses as Judaism, the “tashbih” (closeness) principle brought by Jesus as Christianity, and “tawḥīd” (oneness) and “wahdat” (unity) principals brought by Muḥammad as Muhammadanism, giving rise to religions in the sight of servants. However, ALLĀH is one and as explained in the verse the religion in his sight (with Him) is also one, and that is “‘Islām”.

The phenomenon of finding and knowing Allāh started with Adam and reached perfection with Muḥammad (saw); this is why he is the last prophet. He revealed all divine secrets (with him all divine secrets manifested). All we need is to calibrate our ears, eyes, and heart. Without calibration, these will not reflect the truth (or the realities).

The stories of the prophets in the Holy Qur'an clearly show how the traveler of the Real should do his spiritual journey ("seyr-u sulūk"). Under the supervision of a gnostic, this journey generally takes 10 to 20 years, although in exceptional cases the journey may take longer or shorter.

To summarize; the person who repents for his ignorance and starts to become conscious at the stage of Adam with "**wa nafakhtu fihi min rūfī**" (15/29), starts cleaning (disciplining) his soul and understanding himself, and concludes that he has no other remedy other than surrendering to the Real. He surrenders entirely (taslīm al-kullī), then surrenders his entire existence to the Real. This is referred to as "*Ihsān*".

This phenomenon is expressed spectacularly in the Jibril ḥadīth. This is a stage during which the veil of ego starts lifting and the person starts witnessing the divine essence.

At the stage of Abraham, he reaches the real Tawḥīd and becomes a Wali (Friend) of Allāh

At the stage of Moses, he passes the Eyman Valley and reaches "tanzih" (transedence)

At the stage of Jesus, he receives support from the Holy Spirit

At the stage of Muhammad, he reaches the culmination point of his journey and does mi'raj

This way he witnesses himself ("*the great sign*") and his Lord and reaches "*ru'yatullah*" (seeing Allāh) in this life. Thus, 'Islām is the name of the system that takes the person from the first level in the way of ALLĀH and takes him to the culmination point that is the Essence of ALLĀH. These phenomena are arranged in all human beings to witness ALLĀH.

ALLĀH wanted to be known and He formed a caliph human being who could know Him and He self-manifested in him in the most extensive way.

The person who knows these realities becomes ayn (the same), the one who doesn't know them becomes ghayr (the other).

The one who knows opened his face, the object of knowledge veiled or covered it.

Whenever we remove these veils, only then we will understand how valuable our life is in this world.

Because all realities are presented by Hadrat al-Muḥammad (saw) and the Holy Qur'an, another prophet and book cannot come. If such things are claimed, they are lies and deception. The Holy Qur'an is the Essence, there is no other thing to add to it. We need to think deeply about and understand this.

This is an infinite ocean (of knowledge). Our goal is to get a handful of water from this ocean and wash our faces and eyes with the hand of the Real. May ALLĀH take zealous from looking (basar) to clairvoyance.

Someone asked a friend of ALLĀH: "Is it possible to see ALLĀH?" and he responded: "Is it possible not to see ALLĀH?"

In the future, Inšā'Allāh (if Allah wills), we may be able to prepare a more in-depth text about this issue. Those who want more information can look at the mi'raj section of our book entitled "Mübarek Geceler" (Sacred Nights).

This short book is written to answer questions from people who indicated doubts about the realities of faith ('Imān). Zeal is from us and success is from ALLĀH.

My esteemed reader, if you managed to read this short book until the end with patience, please be open-minded, try to understand to broaden your horizons and heart and get used to looking at life from different perspectives.

I pray our Lord to give all of us abundance in (His) knowledge. Good bye.

6 September 1996 Friday
El-fakir
NECDET ARDIÇ UŞŞAKÎ
TERZÎ BABA
TEKİRDAĞ

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— THE AUTHOR OF THE BOOK —

He was born in 1938 at Tekirdağ, Turkey as the second child of a farmer family with three children.

After graduating from elementary school, he started working as a tailor. Meanwhile, he tried to continue his education by taking private courses.

He took courses in Qur'an and tajwīd (elocution, rules governing pronunciation during recitation of the Qur'an) from Honorable Hafiz Behçet Toy Hocaefendi who was a mosque imam back then.

In about the same years, he started taking courses in Arabic and tafsīr (interpretation of the Qur'an) from Honorable Ahmet Elitaş Hocaefendi who was the imam of the Çiftlikönü Mosque in Tekirdağ.

At the age of 18, he started feeling a strong desire in his heart to learn "**Mā'rifatullāh**" (true knowledge of ALLĀH).

Meanwhile, he continued to search for a teacher. He started going to the lectures of Honorable Mehmet Hazmi Tura Efendi, one of the great scholars and sufi masters of his time. Hazmi Tura Efendi was the principle of Süleymaniye Library and he used to teach Masnawi at the Beyazıt Mosque. He benefited greatly from the knowledge he received from Hazmi Tura Efendi.

After Hazmi Tura Efendi passed away his caliph Mehmet Nusret Tura Efendi took his place. Our author took hand from Nusret Tura Efendi and for many years studied tasawwuf with him.

Mehmet Nusret Efendi was one of the greatest sufi scholars of his time and a lover of the Real and the Prophet. In 1977 he transferred the relics (material and spiritual) under his custody and his duties to the author of this book. Shortly thereafter, he passed away. May ALLĀH have mercy on his soul...

In addition, he met with many gnostics and perfect men.

He was married in 1964 and he has two boys. He retired from tailoring several years ago but he continues to deal with tasawwuf.

His books are published under the title "*Breezes from the Heart*". He is preparing many other books for publication.

May ALLĀH give all of us ease in matters of this world and the next.

There are 4 principals in the way of reaching ALLĀH:

- 1 - To be **'Islām**, and to understand that this is the only way to salvation.
- 2 - To have **'Imān**, and to view the rules of 'Islām from the perspective of **'Imān**.
- 3 - Starting to witness the Real with the secret of **'Iḥsān**.
- 4 - To form the real "tawḥīd" (Unity) with **'Ikān**.

We need to be mu'min (believer) and muwaḥḥid (one who unites or forms tawḥīd) not just in form or emotion, but also in intellect and heart.

The more we expand our contemplation, the more we raise 'Islām.

The real objective of 'Islām is "**ru'yetullāh**" (to see ALLĀH) and this is only possible by reaching "**al-'aql al-kull**" (the universal intellect).