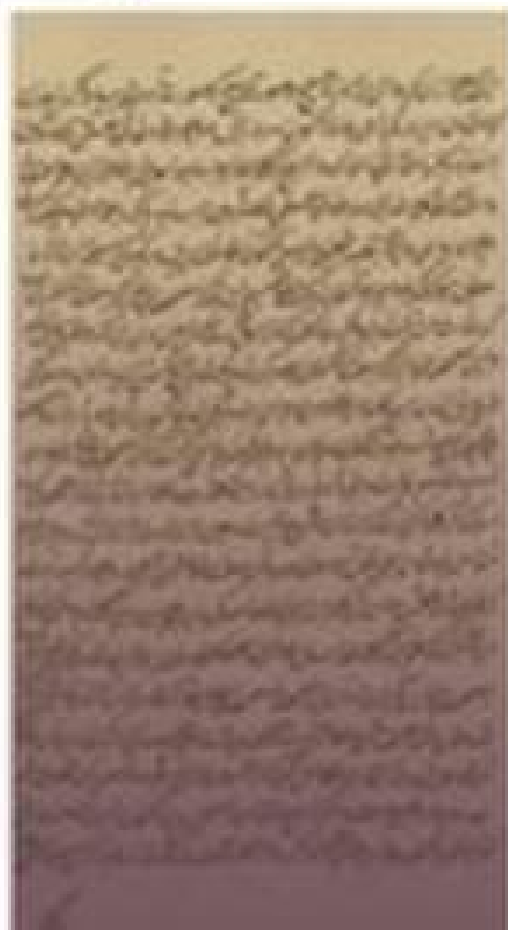


Christian Apocalyptic Texts in Islamic Messianic Discourse

*The 'Christian Chapter' of
the Jāvidān-nāma-yi kabīr by
Fadl Allāh Astarābādī (d. 796/1394)*

Orkhan Mir-Kasimov



BRILL

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Preface and Acknowledgements

I said to that Christian who was sitting at my right: ‘The first thing that emanated from God was the Word, and God was with that Word. Is this Word mentioned [in the Gospel] the same [as the words] we are using now speaking [to each other], or is it something different?’ Thus asked I, and he replied: ‘The [divine] bounty (*faḍl*)¹ is a light which, on the day of Resurrection, will come down upon the pedestal of [divine] grandeur’. And I knew that I would explain about 12 times who that person is [that represents the divine] bounty. I [also] knew that the light [mentioned by the Christian] is that Word that fills every feature of the [human] face.²



Faḍl Allāh Astarābādī (d. 796/1394) was the founder of a mystical and messianic movement that came to be known under the name of Ḥurūfiyya and flourished mainly in Iran, Anatolia and the Balkans.³ According to the accounts of his followers, Faḍl Allāh’s spiritual quest culminated with a supernatural initiation into the knowledge of hermeneutics of the divine Word and, therefore, the knowledge of the innermost meanings of all prophetic revelations. The *Jāvidān-nāma-yi kabīr*, or the ‘Great Book of Eternity’, the magnum opus of Faḍl Allāh, contains some examples of an original and, at least at first glance, an unusual approach by a Muslim author to Jewish and Christian scriptural material. Going well beyond the conventions of the classical Islamic apologetic and polemical genres, Faḍl Allāh deftly incorporates Jewish and Christian material into the fabric of his doctrinal discourse, sometimes in the form of direct

1 This is possibly an allusion to Faḍl Allāh’s name, which means ‘divine bounty’.

2 Faḍl Allāh Astarābādī, *Dream Diary*, ms. British Library Or. 5957, fol. 410a–b, original text and French translation in Orkhan Mir-Kasimov, ‘Le “journal des rêves” de Faḍlullāh Astarābādī: édition et traduction annotée’, *Studia Iranica* 38 (2009), pp. 249–304, in particular pp. 275 and 293.

3 On Faḍl Allāh, his doctrine, works and followers, see Mir-Kasimov, *Words of Power: Ḥurūfī Teachings between Shi‘ism and Sufism in Medieval Islam. The Original Doctrine of Faḍl Allāh Astarābādī*, London, 2015, (hereafter *Words of Power*) and references there.

quotations or close paraphrases from canonical biblical texts and apocrypha, and interweaves it with Islamic scriptural sources, that is, citations from the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth*.

But is Faḍl Allāh's approach to the pre-Islamic scriptures that unusual? Or can his approach be understood as an extension of the traditional practices, developed in Islamic polemical and apologetic literature, of what can be called a Muslim exegesis of Jewish and Christian texts? By way of reflection on this question, the first chapter of the Introduction contains a short assessment of Muslim attitudes to pre-Qur'ānic scriptural material and the ways in which exegetical practice was applied to this material in different branches of Islam, such as Sunnī, Twelver Shī'ī and Ismā'īlī.

The next chapter discusses the exegetical theory of Faḍl Allāh as it appears in his *Jāvidān-nāma*, in particular the features that make this theory applicable to extra-Islamic scriptures. Faḍl Allāh's conception of inspired hermeneutics is assessed against the historical background outlined in the previous chapter.

The Christian Chapter is an example of the application of Faḍl Allāh's theory of inspired hermeneutics (*ta'wīl*) to the Christian texts.⁴ This brings us to Chapter Three where the Christian Chapter of the *Jāvidān-nāma*, its structure, purpose and sources are discussed. From what appears to be an apologetic perspective, the Christian Chapter interprets the Gospels and Christian apocalyptic texts, such as the *Revelation* of John and fragments of the pseudo-Clementine writings, together with Muslim scriptural sources, in order to address the secret teachings of Jesus, the full revelation of which awaits the return of Jesus as the eschatological Saviour. The central idea underlying the apologetic tonality of the Christian Chapter is that the innermost truth concerning the nature of Jesus and his message was not accessible to Christians at the time of Jesus' historical mission. It will be made available only after the completion of prophetic revelations by the Prophet Muḥammad, through the *ta'wīl* into which Faḍl Allāh apparently claimed to be initiated and which he deployed in his *Jāvidān-nāma*.

The *Jāvidān-nāma*'s style of composition is a free associative flow, in which passages often follow each other without being organised as a structured narrative. This style makes the *Jāvidān-nāma* a particularly demanding text to read, and lays it open to the criticism of repetition as the author returns several times to the same set of ideas in order to discuss their various aspects, instead of providing a full presentation of a given topic in one place and then moving on to

4 For definition of *ta'wīl*, in the context of Faḍl Allāh's thought, as 'inspired hermeneutics', or 'ontological hermeneutics', see Chapter Two below.

another.⁵ Therefore, it seemed useful to me to include a précis of the Christian Chapter as the last section of the Introduction. The purpose of this précis is to present the main ideas of the Christian Chapter in an orderly and logically coherent way. The summary thus complements the critical edition and translation of the original text, where the presentation of the material is much more detailed but where the author's argumentation might otherwise be sometimes difficult to follow.

The idea of this book crystallised, and the material was prepared and partly edited, during 2009 and 2010 with the help of research fellowships awarded by the Nantes Institute for Advanced Study and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in Germany, where I benefited from the highly stimulating atmosphere at the Institute of Islamic Studies at the Free University of Berlin. I am most grateful for these prestigious awards. The book took its final form when I was working on my monograph on Ḥurūfī thought at the Institute of Ismaili Studies in London. I would like to thank the Institute for allowing me to work on a flexible schedule and to complete this project alongside my main duties. My special thanks to Kutub Kassam and Russell Harris for their help with proof-reading the draft versions of this book. Discussions with colleagues and visiting scholars at the Institute were instrumental in the maturation process of this book, and my indebtedness to a larger circle of colleagues who have studied the Muslim reception of Jewish and Christian texts is reflected in this work's footnotes and bibliography. Of course, I alone bear responsibility for any mistakes or shortcomings in this book.

I was lucky to have thorough and precise peer-reviewers whose critiques and suggestions helped me to improve both the analytical part of the book and the translation. I am grateful to David Thomas, Jon Hoover, Sandra Toenies Keating, Tarif Khalidi, Suleiman Mourad, Gabriel Said Reynolds and Mark Swanson for accepting this volume in the *History of Christian-Muslim Relations* series at Brill Academic Publishers; and to Franca de Kort at Brill for her assistance through the publishing process.

5 On the composition of the *Jāvidān-nāma*, see *Words of Power*, pp. 31–43.

Conventions and Abbreviations

Unless otherwise stated, all references to the manuscript folios of the *Jāvidān-nāma-yi kabīr* of Faḍl Allāh Astarābādī correspond to British Library manuscript Or. 5957.

AP stands for Alphonse Mingana's translation of the Arabic *Apocalypse of Peter*, Woodbrooke Studies (Cambridge, 1931), vol. 3, pp. 93–450.

E12 stands for *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Edition, Leiden, Brill, 1960–2004, 12 vols.

E13 stands for *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Third Edition, Brill Online, ongoing.

Q before the number of the verse in square brackets, for example [Q 2:31], stands for 'Qur'ān'.

The transliteration of Arabic and Persian in this book follows the rules of the *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*, with the addition of the four letters specific to the Persian: پ transliterated as *p*; چ transliterated as *ch*; ژ transliterated as *zh*; and گ transliterated as *g*. The letter و is transliterated as *w* or *u* for Arabic and as *v* or *u* for Persian.

Dates are indicated by the Hijri year followed by the Common Era equivalent.

Introduction



Muslim Approaches to the Exegesis of Jewish and Christian Texts

Even though Muslims recognise the divine origin of the Jewish and Christian scriptures, their reception of the actual texts is marked by the Qur'ānic notion of falsification.¹ Since it was generally believed that the Jews and Christians tampered with their scriptures in one way or another, only the material compatible with the Qur'ānic narrative and Muslim beliefs could be safely used in Islamic religious discourse. Therefore, the Jewish and Christian material was incorporated in Islamic literature not so much in the form of direct translations, but essentially through the process of retelling or 'recalling' based on oral transmission and not on a first-hand knowledge of the texts.² The most obvious initial purpose of the retelling was to provide a wider context for the Qur'ānic references to the biblical prophets and their books. This retelling entailed an 'islamicisation' of the relevant material, a process in which the relevant biblical narratives underwent selection and modification in order to be brought into agreement with the Qur'ānic discourse.³ It is in this islamicised form that

-
- 1 For an excellent overview of the ways of the reception of biblical material in Islam, accompanied by extensive bibliographical references, see Sabine Schmidtke, *Die Bibel in den Augen muslimischer Gelehrter*, Berlin, 2013. On the concept of falsification in Islam, see Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, 'Taḥrīf', *EI2*; Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Words: Medieval Islam and Bible Criticism*, Princeton, N.-J., 1992, pp. 3–49; Camilla Adang, *Muslim Writers on Judaism and the Hebrew Bible: From Ibn Rabban to Ibn Hazm*, Leiden, New York and Cologne, 1996, pp. 223–248; Jean-Marie Gaudeul and Robert Caspar, 'Textes de la tradition musulmane concernant le taḥrīf (falsification) des écritures', *Islamochristiana* 6 (1980), pp. 61–104; Gordon Nickel, 'Early Muslim Accusations of Taḥrīf: Muqātil Ibn Sulaymān's Commentary on Key Qur'ānic Verses', in David Thomas (ed.), *The Bible in Arab Christianity*, Leiden and Boston, 2007, pp. 207–223; Walid A. Saleh, 'A Fifteenth-Century Muslim Hebraist: Al-Biqā'ī and His Defence of Using the Bible to Interpret the Qur'ān', *Speculum* 83/3, pp. 629–654, in particular pp. 631–634.
 - 2 Cf. Sidney H. Griffith, *The Bible in Arabic: The Scriptures of the "People of the Book" in the Language of Islam*, Princeton and Oxford, 2013, p. 71.
 - 3 This process included also some cases when the 'true' biblical text was extrapolated and 'reconstructed' on the basis of the Islamic sources only, without any corresponding evidence in the Jewish or Christian literature. For the Muslim reconstructions of the 'true Bible' see Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds*, pp. 22–23.

Jewish and Christian lore, stemming from various sources including canonical biblical texts and extra-biblical material, circulated in the Islamic world under the names of 'Stories of the prophets' (*qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*) or *Isrā'īliyyāt*,⁴ and was incorporated into such genres of Muslim literature as collections of traditions (*ḥadīth*), exegetical (*tafsīr*) and historical (*ta'rikh*) works.⁵ The direct citation of Jewish and Christian sources is rather unusual in these genres of Muslim literature.⁶

4 For the kinds of stories covered by the term *Isrā'īliyyāt*, see Georges Vajda, 'Isrā'īliyyāt', *EI2*.

5 On the *Qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* and *Isrā'īliyyāt*, see S. Schmidtke, *Die Bibel*, pp. 17–18 and references cited there. The well-known collections of Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Kisā'ī and Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Tha'labī are available in English translation: al-Kisā'ī, *Qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, trans. as *Tales of the prophets*, Wheeler M. Thackston, Boston, 1978; *Tales of the prophets. 'Arā'is al-majālis fī qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*, or "Lives of the prophets" as recounted by Abū Ishāq Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Tha'labī, trans. and annotated by W.M. Brinner, Leiden, Boston and Cologne 2002. A central role in spreading this material was played by Jews and Christians living in the lands which became part of the Muslim empire, especially members of those communities who converted to Islam. Cf. Meir J. Kister, 'Haddathū 'an banī isrā'īla wa-lā ḥaraja: A Study of an Early Tradition', *Israel Oriental Studies* 2 (1972), pp. 215–239, in particular p. 238. Although both terms, *Qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* and *Isrā'īliyyāt*, designated this extra-Qur'anic Jewish and Christian material circulating in Islam, mostly to complete the fragmentary Qur'anic stories concerning prophetic history and biblical figures, the term *Isrā'īliyyāt* had a somewhat negative connotation of restricted reliability compared to the *ḥadīth*. See Roberto Tottoli, 'Origin and Use of the Term Isrā'īliyyat in Muslim Literature', *Arabica* 46/2 (1999), pp. 193–210; Kister, 'Haddathū'; Jane Dammen McAuliffe, 'Assessing the *Isrā'īliyyāt*. An Exegetical Conundrum', in *Story-telling in the Framework of Non-Fictional Arabic Literature*, ed. S. Leder, Wiesbaden, 1998. For a discussion of relationship between the *Qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* and *Isrā'īliyyāt* in modern scholarship, see Adang, *Muslim Writers*, pp. 8–10, and references cited there.

6 On the main literary genres conveying biblical lore see Adang, *Muslim Writers*, pp. 8–16. The *ḥadīth*, *tafsīr* and historiographical literature certainly contain examples of quite accurate or at least clearly recognisable citations from Jewish and Christian texts. For an overview of this literature, see Haim Schwarzbaum, *Biblical and Extra-Biblical Legends in Islamic Folk-Literature*, Walldorf, 1982. But these examples are scarce compared to the mass of Jewish and Christian material retold with a much looser relationship to its true or alleged sources. Cf. Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds*, pp. 47–49; McAuliffe, 'The Abrogation of Judaism and Christianity in Islam: A Christian Perspective', *Concilium* (1994/3), pp. 109–130, p. 128. Even the works of such authors as 'Abd Allāh Ibn Qutayba (d. 276/889) and Aḥmad al-Ya'qūbī (d. 284/897), whose works are above average in the afore-mentioned literary genres in terms of their consistency and accuracy in citations from Jewish and Christian sources, combine accurate translations with less authentic material. On their use of the biblical and

Together with this incorporation of the Jewish and Christian lore, there also developed Muslim biblical scholarship, which addressed Jewish and Christian texts in their translations and paraphrases close to the original as well as in islamified 'retellings' and 'reconstructions', for their own sake and not just as auxiliary sources of information. Muslim biblical scholarship developed along two closely interrelated lines, namely polemical and apologetic.⁷ The authors of the polemical works focused on the thesis that Jews and Christians had falsified their scriptures, either textually (*taḥrīf al-naṣṣ* or *taḥrīf al-laḥẓ*) or through wrong interpretations (*taḥrīf al-ma'nā*), and scrutinised their texts in order to show their inconsistencies.⁸ On the other hand, apologetic writings aimed at finding in the previous scriptures the predictions concerning the Prophet

apocryphal material, see Schmidtke, *Die Bibel*, p. 23, and references cited there; Schmidtke, 'The Muslim Reception of Biblical Materials: Ibn Qutayba and his *A'lām al-nubuwwa*', *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, 22/3 (2011), pp. 249–274; Adang, *Muslim Writers*; Griffith, *The Bible in Arabic*, p. 184 ff.; Griffith, 'The Gospel, the Qur'an, and the Presentation of Jesus in al-Ya'qūbī's *Ta'rikh*', in *Bible and Qur'an: Essays in Scriptural Intertextuality*, ed. John C. Reeves, Atlanta, 2003, pp. 133–160; André Ferré, 'L'historien al-Ya'qūbī et les évangiles', *Islamochristiana* 3 (1977), pp. 65–83. In varying proportions, this combination of direct citations with islamified retelling characterises most of Muslim religious literature. Ibrāhīm b. 'Umar al-Biqā'ī (d. 885/1480), the Muslim author who extensively and consistently used authentic biblical material in his *tafsīr*, is a rare exception to this rule. On him, see Walid A. Saleh, 'A Fifteenth-Century Muslim Hebraist', and Saleh, *In Defence of the Bible: A Critical Edition and an Introduction to al-Biqā'ī's Bible Treatise*, Leiden and Boston, 2008. On an interpretation of the Bible as an authentic uncorrupted text by a nineteenth century Muslim reformer see Christian W. Troll, *Sayyid Ahmad Khan: A Reinterpretation of Muslim Theology*, New Delhi, 1978, in particular pp. 58–99.

- 7 According to Lazarus-Yafeh, Abū Muḥammad 'Alī b. Aḥmad Ibn Ḥazm (d. 456/1064) was the first Muslim author who consistently used biblical texts in his anti-Jewish and anti-Christian polemics. See Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds*, pp. 26 and 135–136. One of the most accomplished works of the Muslim polemical literature, from the point of view of its biblical erudition, is Najm al-Dīn al-Ṭūfī's (d. 716/1316) critical commentary on the biblical books, *al-Ta'līq 'alā al-Anā'il al-arba'a wa-l-ta'līq 'alā al-Tawrā wa 'alā ghayrihā min kutub al-anbiyā'*. On this work, see Lejla Demiri, *Muslim Exegesis of the Bible in Medieval Cairo: Najm al-Dīn al-Ṭūfī's (d. 716/1316) Commentary on the Christian Scriptures*, Leiden and Boston, 2013. Classical Muslim apologetic literature includes the *dalā'il al-nubuwwa* genre as well as apologetic sections in historiographical, geographical, doxographical (*milal wa niḥal*) works and Qur'anic commentaries. For the examples of interpretation of biblical material in these works, see Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds*, pp. 83–110.
- 8 On *taḥrīf al-naṣṣ* and *taḥrīf al-ma'nā* see Lazarus-Yafeh, 'Taḥrīf', *EI2*; Schmidtke, *Die Bibel*, pp. 15–16; and Gaudeul, 'Textes de la tradition musulmane', pp. 79–96.

Muḥammad, the rise of Islam and Muslim rituals.⁹ Both attitudes were warranted by different sets of Qur'ānic verses.¹⁰

The concerns of falsification and the absence of reliable transmission together with the thesis of abrogation (*naskh*) of the Bible by the Qur'ān effectively limited the direct use of Jewish and Christian texts in Muslim literature, including polemical and apologetic works.¹¹ But this limitation did not mean the total exclusion of the original, non-islamised Jewish and Christian material from Islamic religious discourse. Even the most radical of the approaches, namely the thesis of textual alteration, was rarely extended to include the totality of the biblical texts. The discussion roused by al-Biqā'ī's use of the Bible to interpret the Qur'ān shows that there were no absolute rules about the permissibility of such a use even in *tafsīr*, which is one of the central genres of Islamic religious discourse.¹² The polemical and apologetic writings provided a still more favourable context for a closer study of the Jewish and Christian sources. They contain some remarkable examples of Muslim scholarship based on direct knowledge of canonical biblical texts as well as some of the Jewish and Christian apocrypha, examples of these being the works of Ibn Ḥazm or al-Ṭūfī mentioned above, or the *A'lām al-nubuwwa* of the Ismā'īlī *dā'ī* Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī (d. 322/933–934).¹³

What is more, both the polemical and apologetic approaches contained the germs of what can be called Muslim exegesis of the biblical and extra-biblical texts.¹⁴ This exegesis followed two divergent lines: i) a 'negative' exegesis, associated with the polemical anti-Jewish and anti-Christian stance with its thesis of falsification and misinterpretation, and ii) a 'positive'¹⁵ exegesis, linked to the apologetic approach based on the admittance of the authenticity of some

9 On the apparent contradiction between the thesis of corruption on the one hand, and the predictive use of the biblical texts on the other, see McAuliffe, 'Qur'ānic Context of Muslim Biblical Scholarship', *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, 7/2 (1996), pp. 141–158.

10 For the Qur'ānic verses used as scriptural basis for the polemic and apologetic approaches to the Jewish and Christian texts, see McAuliffe, 'Qur'ānic Context', pp. 144–145 and 148–149.

11 On the factors that determined Muslim approaches to the Jewish and Christian scriptures, see Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds*, p. 19 and ff.

12 One of al-Biqā'ī's central arguments was that Muslims are allowed to use the Torah if they are able to distinguish the corrupted sections from the uncorrupted ones on the basis of the Qur'ān. See Saleh, 'A Fifteenth-Century Muslim Hebraist', p. 646.

13 Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *A'lām al-nubuwwa*, ed. and trans. by Tarif Khalidi as *The Proofs of Prophecy*, Provo (UT), 2011.

14 Cf. Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds*, pp. 75–110.

15 McAuliffe's term is "affirmative" Muslim biblical exegesis', in 'Qur'ānic Context', p. 148.

portions of the Jewish and Christian scriptures.¹⁶ It is on this 'positive' exegesis that I will focus in the remaining part of this chapter, because it seems relevant to what we find in the Christian Chapter of the *Jāvidān-nāma*.

The Qur'ānic verses that mandate the positive Muslim exegesis of the past prophetic books are quite allusive, but were usually understood by commentators as an indication of the predictions concerning the coming of the Prophet Muḥammad and the rise of Islam contained in Jewish and Christian scriptures. The 'positive biblical exegesis' mostly focused on searching the Bible for verses that could be interpreted as predictions of these and related events, including the historical developments and geographical references concerning the Muslim community and Muslim rituals such as prayer or pilgrimage.¹⁷

The scope of this positive exegetical approach to Jewish and Christian lore was amplified on the side of Shī'ī Islam, especially in its Twelver and Ismā'īlī branches, due to their specific doctrinal positions. The accounts of the ancient monotheistic religions acquired a particular importance in Shī'ī circles because the latter maintained that their beliefs represented the eternal 'true religion'. The external expression (*ẓāhir*) of the religion could change from one prophet to another, and could be subject to falsification and corruption. But its innermost truth (*bāṭin*, *ḥaqīqa*) remained the same, and was preserved by the legates (sing. *waṣī*) or Imāms who accompanied and succeeded every Prophet. Therefore, Shī'ī literature attempted to demonstrate that the main figures and doctrinal points of their doctrine had clear parallels in previous religions. These attempts can arguably be seen as an extension of the Qur'ānic mandate concerning the biblical predictions of Muḥammad's prophethood and rise of Islam to include not only the Prophet himself but also the Imāms from the Prophet's family who, according to the basic tenets of the predominant Shī'ī branches, preserved and transmitted the spirit of the revelation after the Prophet's death. Jewish and Christian stories and symbols were also used to support the specifically Shī'ī views of history and doctrinal positions of various Shī'ī branches.¹⁸

16 Cf. McAuliffe, 'Qur'ānic Context', p. 144: 'One line of exegetical analysis has occupied itself principally with scorning the Jewish and Christian scriptures, while the other set about searching them. One sought to demonstrate the textual and exegetical corruption of the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. The other combed those same sources for probative evidence of Muḥammad's prophethood and the triumph of Islam'.

17 For a discussion and examples of this approach see Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds*, pp. 79–81 and 83–110.

18 For a discussion of examples of the interpretation of the biblical stories and prophetic figures in Twelver Shī'ī religious literature and references, see Etan Kohlberg, 'Some Shī'ī Views of the Antediluvian World', *Studia Islamica* 52 (1980), pp. 41–66.

Another doctrinal position specific to the Shīʿī vision of Islam, relevant to the extension of the scope of the biblical exegesis beyond the limits of conventional apologetic literature based on the Qurʾānic mandate only, is the particular status of the Shīʿī Imām as the bearer of the power of authoritative hermeneutics, *taʾwīl*, which enables him to access the ultimate meanings of divine revelation expressed in any prophetic book.¹⁹ The Shīʿī Imāms were also presumed to actually possess the complete and unaltered copies of all prophetic books.²⁰ Therefore, the Imām was regarded as the highest exegetical authority not only with regard to the Qurʾān, but also with regard to all previous scriptures.²¹

This hermeneutical function was particularly emphasised with regard to the last in the line of the Imāms, often identified, in both Twelver and Ismāʿīlī traditions, with the eschatological Saviour, the *Mahdī* or *Qāʾim*. The final *taʾwīl*, that is, the revelation to mankind of the ultimate meaning of all prophetic revelations, is among the main tasks ascribed to the last Imām.²² It can therefore

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- 19 On the exceptional hermeneutical authority ascribed to the Imām in Twelver and Ismāʿīlī branches of Shīʿism, see Meir M. Bar-Asher, *Scripture and Exegesis in Early Imāmi Shiism*, Leiden, Boston, Cologne and Jerusalem, 1999, pp. 93–101; Bar-Asher, ‘Outlines of Early Ismāʿīlī-Fāṭimid Qurʾān Exegesis’, *Journal Asiatique* 296.2 (2008), pp. 257–295; Bar-Asher, ‘The Authority to Interpret the Qurʾān’, in Farhad Daftary and Gurdofarid Miskinzoda (eds.), *The Study of Shīʿī Islam: History, Theology and Law*, London, 2014, pp. 149–162; Mahmoud Ayoub, ‘The Speaking Qurʾān and the Silent Qurʾān: A Study of the Principles and Development of Imāmi Shīʿī *tafsīr*’, in *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qurʾān*, ed. Andrew Rippin, Oxford, 1988, pp. 177–198, in particular pp. 178–183; Ayoub, *Redemptive Suffering in Islām: A Study of the Devotional Aspects of ʿAshūrāʾ in Twelver Shīʿism*, The Hague, Paris and New York, 1978, p. 62; Ayoub, ‘Towards an Islamic Christology: An Image of Jesus in early Shia Muslim Literature’, *Muslim World* 66 (1976), pp. 163–188; and Ismail K. Poonawala, ‘Ismāʿīlī *taʾwīl* of the Qurʾān’, in *Approaches*, ed. Rippin, pp. 199–222.
- 20 See Ayoub, *Redemptive Suffering*, p. 63; Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi, *Le guide divin dans le shīʿisme originel: aux sources de l’ésotérisme en Islam*, Lagrasse, 1992, pp. 185–189; and Poonawala, ‘The Imām’s Authority During the Pre-Ghaybah Period: Theoretical and Practical Considerations’, in *Shīʿite Heritage: Essays on Classical and Modern Traditions*, ed. L. Clarke, Binghamton (NY), 2001, pp. 103–122, in particular p. 107.
- 21 On the Shīʿī belief that the Imāms are bearers of the universal prophetic knowledge, transmitted by Muḥammad to ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, the Prophet’s cousin and son-in-law and the first in the line of the Imāms, see Uri Rubin, ‘Prophets and Progenitors in the Early Shīʿa Tradition’, *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 1 (1979), pp. 41–65, especially p. 45 ff.
- 22 For this belief and relevant traditions, see Amir-Moezzi, ‘Fin du Temps et Retour à l’Origine (Aspects de l’imamologie duodécimaine v1)’, in *Mahdisme et millénarisme en Islam*, ed. Mercedes García-Arenal, *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la méditerranée*, 91/4

be expected that, in anticipation of this task, the highest degree of freedom in interpretation of the Jewish and Christian texts would be attained in a branch of Shī'ism permeated by messianic ideas.

Among the major Shī'ī branches, the Ismā'īlīs arguably entertained the highest level of messianic aspirations throughout their history. In Twelver Shī'ism, the 12th and last Imām went into occultation (*ghayba*) in 260/874 and, over time, his return was relegated into the indefinite future. It is true that this belief did not prevent messianic manifestations in the Twelver branch, based either on a messianic leader's claim to be the hidden Imām or to have a privileged relationship with the latter. The rise of the Safavids in the 9th/15th and 10th/16th centuries and the Bābī movement in the 13th/19th century are salient examples of the continuous messianic current within Twelver Shī'ism.²³ However, the messianic tendency has been more consistently present in Ismā'īlī history. The Fāṭimid caliphate (297/909–567/1171) was conceived of as the empire of the *Mahdī*, where the caliphs were regarded as representatives of the *Qā'im*.²⁴ At the turn of the 5th/11th century the Druze movement emerged with its strong messianic dimension and regarded the ruling Caliph al-Ḥākim (r. 386–411/996–1021) as a manifestation of divinity.²⁵ In 559/1164, the leader of the Nizārī Ismā'īlīs, Ḥasan II (Ḥasan *ʿAlā Dhikrihi al-Salām*), proclaimed the advent of the era of Resurrection (*qiyāma*) on behalf of the hidden Imām.²⁶ The doctrine of the *qiyāma*, developed by Ismā'īlī scholars and reflected in such works as *Haft Bāb* by Ḥasan-i Maḥmūd and *Rawḍā-yi taslīm* by Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī,

(2000), pp. 53–72, in particular pp. 68 and 163–164; Abdulaziz Abdulhussein Sachedina, *Islamic Messianism: The Idea of Mahdi in Twelver Shi'ism*, Albany, 1981, pp. 163–164. For similar beliefs related to the *Qā'im* within the framework of Ismā'īlī prophethood, see Wilferd Madelung, 'Das Imamāt in der frühen ismailitischen Lehre', *Der Islam* 37 (1961), pp. 43–135, in particular pp. 53–54; Heinz Halm, *Kosmologie und Heilslehre der frühen Ismā'īliya: Eine Studie zur islamischen Gnosis*, Wiesbaden, 1978, p. 25; Farhad Daftary, *The Ismā'īlīs, Their History and Doctrines*, Cambridge 1990 (2nd edition 2007), pp. 139–140; David Hollenberg, 'Interpretation after the End of Days: the Fāṭimid-Ismā'īlī Ta'wīl (Interpretation) of Ja'far ibn Manṣūr al-Yaman (d. ca. 960)' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 2006), p. 8.

23 On them, see respectively Michel Mazzaoui, *The Origins of the Ṣafawids: Ṣūfism, Ṣūfism and the Ḡulāt*, Wiesbaden, 1972; and Denis M. MacEoin, *The Messiah of Shiraz*, Leiden and Boston, 2009.

24 See Daftary, *The Ismā'īlīs*, pp. 177–178.

25 On the Druzes, see Daniel De Smet, *Les Épîtres sacrées des druzes, Rasā'il al-ḥikma: Introduction, édition critique et traduction annotée des traités attribués à Ḥamza b. ʿAlī et Ismā'īl at-Tamīmī*, Leuven, 2007.

26 On this episode, see Daftary, *The Ismā'īlīs*, pp. 386 ff.

is arguably the most advanced messianic doctrine of that time.²⁷ The *qiyāma* doctrine may have influenced the rise of messianic movements in the Islamic East in the 8th/14th and 9th/15th centuries, including the Ḥurūfīs.²⁸

Significantly, it is also in the works of the Ismāʿīlī authors that the Shīʿī extension of the exegesis of the Jewish and Christian scriptures attained its most accomplished form. Of course, both Twelver and Ismāʿīlī authors of exegetical works had, at least in theory, to show how their interpretations were linked to the knowledge of the Imām, who possessed exclusive authority concerning the *taʾwīl*.²⁹ But in the Ismāʿīlī branch, we have examples of actual interpretation of the Jewish and Christian stories placed under the authority of the *Qāʾim*. The *Sarārʾir al-nuṭaqaʾ*, ascribed to the Fāṭimid dāʾī Jaʿfar b. Maṣṣūr al-Yaman (fl. mid 4th/10th century), contains ample interpretations of Jewish and Christian material apparently warranted by the exegetical authority of the *Qāʾim* and the belief that at the end of time the *Qāʾim* will reveal the hidden meanings of all previous prophetic revelations.³⁰ Other examples of Ismāʿīlī *taʾwīl* of Jewish and Christian sources range from subtle allusions and parallels to Ismāʿīlī

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- 27 For the Nizārī Ismāʿīlī doctrine of the *qiyāma* and its main extant works, see Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *The Order of Assassins: The Struggle of the Early Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs Against the Islamic World*, The Hague, 1955 (which contains a translation of the *Haft Bāb*, pp. 279–324); S. Jalal Badakhchani's edition and translation of Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī's *Rawḍā-yi taslīm: Paradise of Submission, A Medieval Treatise on Ismaili Thought*, London and New York, 2005; Daftary, *The Ismāʿīlīs*, p. 386 ff.; Christian Jambet, *La Grande Résurrection d'Alamūt: les formes de la liberté dans le shīʿisme ismaélien*, Lagrasse, 1990, and his *La Convocation d'Alamūt: Somme de philosophie ismaélienne*, Paris and Lagrasse, 1996 (which contains the French translation of the *Rawḍā-yi taslīm*, pp. 123–374); and Delia Cortese, 'Eschatology and Power in Medieval Persian Ismailism', Ph.D. dissertation, SOAS (London, 1993), in particular pp. 133–134 and 170–171; S.J. Badakhchani is currently finalising for publication a new edition of the *Haft Bāb*.
- 28 For the parallels between the Ismāʿīlī doctrine of *qiyāma* and the *Jāvidān-nāma* of Faḍl Allāh Astarābādī, see *Words of Power*, pp. 406–413.
- 29 For the historical evolution of the Twelver Shīʿī exegetical tradition after the occultation of the 12th Imām see Bar-Asher, 'The Authority to Interpret the Qurʾān'. The Fāṭimid Ismāʿīlī exegetical material, included in the *daʿwā* literature, was written under the auspices of the Fāṭimid Imām-caliphs. For the Ismāʿīlī exegetical corpus and the question of exegetical authority, see Bar-Asher, 'Outlines of Early Ismāʿīlī-Fāṭimid Qurʾān Exegesis', especially pp. 261–268 and 272–275; and Poonawala, 'Ismāʿīlī *taʾwīl*'.
- 30 Jaʿfar b. Maṣṣūr al-Yaman wrote on behalf of the Fāṭimid caliph al-Muʿizz li-dīn Allāh (d. 365/975), who was regarded as the representative of the *Qāʾim*. For the interpretation of biblical texts in the works of Jaʿfar, see Hollenberg, 'Interpretation after the End of Days', in particular p. 299 ff., and his 'Disrobing judges with veiled truths: an early Ismāʿīlī Torah Interpretation (*taʾwīl*) in service of the Fāṭimid mission', *Religion* 33 (2003), pp. 127–145.

concepts and doctrines based on impressive first-hand biblical erudition, as in the *A'lām al-nubuwwa* of Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī, to more direct interpretations, usually focused on such topoi as biblical references to the Ismā'īlī Imāms and the hierarchy of the *da'wā*, as in the *Kitāb al-yanābī'* of Abū Ya'qūb al-Sijistānī, the *Kitāb al-maṣābīḥ fī ithbāt al-imāma* of Ḥamid al-Dīn al-Kirmānī, and the *Khwān al-ikhwān* of Nāṣir-i Khusraw.³¹

The Ismā'īlī *ta'wīl* of Jewish and Christian texts has often been characterised as exceptional in Muslim religious literature. However, our discussion above raises the question of to what extent the Ismā'īlī approach to the interpretation of the pre-Islamic religious literature can be regarded as a continuation, a kind of generalisation and extension, of mainstream 'positive' apologetic biblical exegesis. Despite a significant difference in the scope of the topics covered, it can be argued that the Ismā'īlī *ta'wīl* applied to Jewish and Christian texts is similar in nature to what can be found in Sunnī apologetic literature. Both Sunnī apologetic literature and Ismā'īlī *ta'wīl* interpret the pre-Islamic scriptures as supporting their respective understanding of the sacred history of mankind and their specific doctrinal views.³² It is true that, in the Shī'ī case, the Qur'ānic mandate supporting the 'positive' mainstream exegesis of Jewish and Christian scriptures is extended by the exceptional interpretative authority attributed to the Imāms. But if we remember that, according to Shī'ī beliefs, the Imām is a living embodiment of the Qur'ān, the 'speaking Qur'ān', this extension does not appear as a radically foreign addition to, but as a generalisation of, the Qur'ānic warrant accepted by the Sunnī scholars.³³ Viewed from this perspective, the Shī'ī doctrine of the exegetical authority of the Imām—who, guided by divine inspiration, is enabled to recognise the authentic parts of

31 Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *A'lām al-nubuwwa*; Ḥamid al-Dīn Aḥmad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Kirmānī, *al-Maṣābīḥ fī ithbāt al-imāma*, ed. and tr. Paul E. Walker as *The Master of the Age: An Islamic Treatise on the Necessity of the Imamate*, London—New York, 2007, especially pp. 24–26 and 96–97; D. De Smet and J.M.F. Van Reeth, 'Les citations bibliques dans l'oeuvre du dā'ī ismaélien Ḥamid ad-Dīn al-Kirmānī', in *Law, Christianity and Modernism in Islamic Society*. Proceedings of the Eighteenth Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants, eds. U. Vermeulen and J.M.F. Van Reeth, Louvain, 1998, pp. 147–160. For the interpretations of the Gospels and Christian symbolism in Abū Ya'qūb al-Sijistānī's *Kitāb al-Yanābī'* and their extensive incorporation in Nāṣir-i Khusraw's *Khwān al-ikhwān* see Walker, *The Wellsprings of Wisdom*, Salt Lake City (UT), 1994, in particular pp. 93–95, 105, 177–179, 185, and Henry Corbin, *Trilogie ismaélienne*, Tehran—Paris, 1961, p. 112, n. 235; pp. 114–116, n. 238; pp. 116–117, and p. 117, n. 240.

32 The Shī'ī *ta'wīl* of the pre-Islamic scriptures also includes elements of anti-Sunnī polemics, while intra-Islamic polemics is less visible in the analogous Sunnī literature.

33 For the Imām as speaking Qur'ān, see Ayoub, 'The Speaking Qur'ān', pp. 178–183.

the Jewish and Christian scriptures and to reveal their innermost meaning—echoes the position of the original Sunnī thinker al-Biqāʿī who implied that any Muslim scholar with a thorough knowledge of the Qurʾān can discern the authentic parts of the Bible, thus making the thesis of its falsification irrelevant.³⁴

The *Epistles of the Brethren of Purity* (*Rasāʾil Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʾ*), a text closely associated with the Ismāʿīlī tradition, also contains a significant amount of Jewish and Christian material used together with Islamic scriptural sources apparently without much concern about the argument of falsification.³⁵ However, the use of this material in the *Epistles* seems to be closer to the narratives of the *Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ* than to a full-fledged work of *taʾwīl*.³⁶

The *Jāvidān-nāma* of Faḍl Allāh Astarābādī combines both ‘negative’ and ‘positive’, polemical and apologetic kinds of exegesis applied to the Jewish and Christian material. However, as we shall observe in the example of the Christian Chapter on which the remaining part of this book will be focused, the ‘positive’ exegesis clearly predominates in this work. The *Jāvidān-nāma*’s conception of inspired *taʾwīl* as the only source of authoritative hermeneutics is close to the Shīʿī view, but it is embedded into the *Jāvidān-nāma*’s doctrinal discourse without direct references to Shīʿī tenets. In combination with the strongly developed messianic dimension, this conception brings the *Jāvidān-nāma* close to the Ismāʿīlī *taʾwīl*, to which its high degree of liberty in the interpretation of the Jewish and Christian material can also be compared. But the framework of this interpretation in the *Jāvidān-nāma*, its topoi and also sometimes the choice of source texts, are quite original. At this point, it will be useful to discuss in more detail the *Jāvidān-nāma*’s theory of *taʾwīl*.

34 See Saleh, ‘A Fifteenth-Century Muslim Hebraist’, p. 646.

35 On the *Epistles* and their possible doctrinal affiliations, see Godefroid DeCallataÿ, ‘Brethren of Purity (Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʾ)’, *EI3*. On the use of the Jewish and Christian material in the *Epistles*, see Yves Marquet, ‘Les Iḥwān al-Ṣafāʾ et le Christianisme’, *Islamochristiana* 8 (1982), pp. 129–158; and Omar Alī-de-Unzaga, ‘Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʾ’, in *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History*, eds. David Thomas et al., vol. 2 (900–1050), Leiden, 2010, pp. 306–311.

36 Cf. the note of Marquet, ‘Les Iḥwān al-Ṣafāʾ et le Christianisme’ p. 155: ‘De multiples versets bibliques pouvaient se prêter à leur interprétation: leur ont-ils eux-mêmes appliqué le procédé du *taʾwīl*? Pour vraisemblable que ce soit, nous n’en avons aucune trace’.

The *Jāvidān-nāma* of Faḍl Allāh Astarābādī and Its Hermeneutical Theory

In the second half of the 8th/14th century, an Iranian mystic named Faḍl Allāh Astarābādī experienced a series of strange dreams and visions. According to the records left by his followers,¹ we can conclude that in these visions, he progressively received some special knowledge and unusual powers, and eventually reached the decisive enlightenment from which he emerged as the Master of Hermeneutics (*ṣāhib-i ta'wīl*).² The theory of what can be called 'ontological hermeneutics' became the cornerstone of Faḍl Allāh's original mystical and messianic doctrine developed in his works, especially, in his magnum opus, the *Jāvidān-nāma-yi kabīr* (the Great Book of Eternity), which was considered by his followers as the sum of Faḍl Allāh's divinely inspired knowledge.³ Before discussing the hermeneutical theory of Faḍl Allāh, which

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- 1 Faḍl Allāh and his followers, who split up into several groups after his death, were described in Muslim historical and heresiographical works as Ḥurūfīs, that is, 'letterists', from the Arabic *ḥarf* (pl. *ḥurūf*) meaning 'letter'. Even though there is no evidence that Faḍl Allāh or his followers applied this name to themselves, the term reflects the prominent role of the 'science of letters' (*ilm al-ḥurūf*) in Faḍl Allāh's works. On Faḍl Allāh and his followers see Shahzad Bashir, *Fazlallah Astarabadi and the Hurufis*, Oxford, 2005, and Mir-Kasimov, *Words of Power*, pp. 1–23, and references cited there.
 - 2 In two unpublished works, both entitled *Kitāb-i khwāb-nāma* (the 'Book of Dreams'), Faḍl Allāh's initiatory experience is described by his followers 'Alī Nafajī and Sayyid Ishāq Astarābādī. For a more detailed discussion of Faḍl Allāh's initiation, citations from the sources and further references see *Words of Power*, p. 8ff. The title *Ṣāhib al-ta'wīl* is a standard title of Shī'ī Imāms (see Amir-Moezzi, 'The *Tafsīr* of al-Ḥibārī (d. 286/899): Qur'ānic Exegesis and Early Shī'ī Esotericism', in *The Study of Shī'ī Islam*, eds. Daftary and Miskinzoda, pp. 113–134, especially p. 131). Faḍl Allāh's focus on the knowledge of the *ta'wīl* brings him close to Shī'ī, and probably more specifically to Ismā'īlī tenets. However, there is no evidence that he explicitly claimed to have associations with any Shī'ī group. On the contextualisation of Faḍl Allāh's doctrine, see *Words of Power*, pp. 387–435.
 - 3 On Faḍl Allāh's works, mostly unpublished and only available in manuscripts, see *Words of Power*, pp. 4–5. More particularly, on the *Jāvidān-nāma*, its structure, manuscripts and contents, see idem, pp. 31–45; and Mir-Kasimov, 'Jāvdān-nāma', *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, vol. 14/6 (2008), pp. 603–605. All references to the folio pages of the *Jāvidān-nāma* in this introductory part correspond to ms. British Library Or. 5957.

pertains directly to his specific approach to Jewish and Christian texts, it may be helpful to provide a few words to situate his thought in the general intellectual landscape of his time.

The Mongol era and the two centuries between the end of Mongol rule in Iran in the first half of the 8th/14th century and the rise of the Safavid dynasty at the beginning of the 10th/16th century are characterised by a strong cross-fertilisation between Sufism and Shī'ism, when Sufism was permeated by 'Alid sympathies and Shī'is were well versed in Sufi doctrines.⁴ This propinquity between Sufism and the Shī'ī mystical currents at this time produced a new, eclectic kind of mysticism, strongly permeated by a messianic ethos, for which the old distinction between Sufism and Shī'ism was hardly relevant.

The works of Ibn 'Arabī, which strongly influenced Sufi and Shī'ī thinkers alike, provided a powerful incentive for this new development. On the other hand, early Shī'ī esoteric thought was also available as integral part of Shī'ī *ḥadīth* collections, and probably provided an independent input into this synthetic form of mysticism. The Ismā'īlīs, in particular the Iranian Nizārīs who merged with the Sufi and Twelver Shī'ī communities after the destruction of their strongholds in northern Iran by the Mongols in the middle of the 7th/13th century, may constitute the main channel through which early Shī'ī lore—including cosmogonical and anthropogonical myths and doctrines such as the idea of human being as the most perfect locus of manifestation of the divine attributes, or the conception of authoritative universal hermeneutics (*ta'wīl*) associated with the ontological dimension ascribed to the letters and sounds of the alphabet—was transmitted and reached the mystical circles in the 8th/14th century. The Nizārī doctrine of Resurrection (*qiyāma*), elaborated in the period following its actual proclamation in 559/1164, is characterised by the resurgence of early Shī'ī mystical ideas incorporated into a messianic context.⁵

This new form of mysticism emerged in the context of an active search for a new formulation of legitimate religious and political authority and, to some extent, it can be seen as a spontaneous reaction of the complex intellectual and socio-political fabric of the Muslim community to the lasting crisis of authority dramatically intensified by the Mongol invasions and the subsequent period of turbulence. Be that as it may, the fact is that this eclectic esoteric milieu actually provided options for the solution of the crisis.

4 Among the Twelver Shī'īs, the most salient figures of the revival of the early Shī'ī mysticism and the incorporation of the Sufi doctrines, in particular those of Ibn 'Arabī, at that period are thinkers such as Ḥaydar Amulī (d. after 787/1385) and Rajab Bursī (d. 843/1411).

5 On the doctrine of *qiyāma* see Chapter One, n. 27.

One of the options was the model of a universal institutionalised mystical brotherhood modelled on a Sufi order or a *futuwwa* group with a structured hierarchy subordinate to an initiated leader who combined political and religious authority and derived his or her authority from the founding figures of Islam. This option had historical precedents⁶ and was supported in the Mongol and post-Mongol periods by the growing power of the Sufi brotherhoods such as Kubrawiyya, Naqshbandiyya and Ni‘matullāhiyya, and the increasing authority of the Sufi shaykhs.⁷

Another option, which from the early times exploited the messianic dimension present in Islamic mysticism, and especially in its Shī‘ī forms, was to promote the idea of a divinely-inspired messianic leader, endowed with quasi-unlimited authority, whose mission was to unify under his rule all the factions of the Muslim community by revealing the innermost truth of Islam as a universal religion. Faḍl Allāh Astarābādī, together with such figures as Muḥammad b. Falāḥ al-Musha‘sha‘ (d. 866/1461) and Muḥammad Nūrbakhsh (d. 869/1464), who are the eponyms of the Musha‘sha‘ and Nūrbakhshī movements respectively, were the most outstanding representatives of this trend in the post-Mongol Islamic East.⁸

Arguably, the combination of these two options, that is, the ideal of a messianic leader and the socio-political structure of the Ismā‘īlī *da‘wa* or a Sufi order with its hierarchy of initiates gradually evolved toward the idea of mes-

6 The Abbasid caliph al-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allāh (r. 575–622/1180–1225) conceived the project of the creation of an institutionalised universal *futuwwa*, which was represented at that time by social groups of artisans and craftsmen more or less influenced by Sufism. Al-Nāṣir assumed the supreme position of spiritual and political leader of this *futuwwa*, a position he legitimised by an initiatory chain going back to ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. He then enrolled the local rulers into this spiritual hierarchy as his subordinates, thus reasserting his authority and increasing their dependence on him. Al-Nāṣir’s spiritual advisor, the prominent Sufi shaykh Abū Ḥafs ‘Umar al-Suhrawardī (d. 632/1234), envisioned the masters of *futuwwa* as possessing extended authority in legal matters similar to that held by the official judges and jurists. Significantly, al-Suhrawardī was himself a founder and eponym of an influential Sufi order. See Lloyd Ridgeon, ‘Futuwwa (in Šūfism)’, *EI3*; Angelika Hartmann, ‘al-Nāṣir Li-Dīn Allāh’, *EI2*, and Eric Ohlander, *Sufism in an Age of Transition: ‘Umar al-Suhrawardī and the Rise of the Islamic Mystical Brotherhoods*, Leiden and Boston, 2008, pp. 271ff.

7 The eponyms of these influential brotherhoods were Najm al-Dīn Kubrā (d. 617/1220), Bahā’ al-Dīn Naqshband (d. 791/1389), and Shāh Ni‘mat Allāh Walī (d. 834/1430–1431).

8 On them, see Bashir, *Messianic Hopes*; Mazzaoui, *The Origins of the Safawids*, and his ‘Musha‘sha‘iyyān: A Fifteenth Century Shī‘ī Movement in Khūzistān and Southern Iraq’, *Folia Orientalia*, 22 (1981–1984), pp. 139–162; and Mir-Kasimov, ‘Astarābādī, Faḍl Allāh’, *EI3*, Leiden, fascicle 2015/1, pp. 35–43.

sianic king and eventually provided a solution to the crisis of religious authority in the eastern part of the Islamic world. The figure of messianic king is most visible in the example of Safavids, but similar mechanisms can be discerned, albeit functioning in different ways, in the structures of power in the Ottoman and Mughal empires.⁹

Faḍl Allāh's hermeneutical theory should be thus understood in this context, that is the background of the Islamic messianism of his time, with his theory combining Shī'ī and Sufi doctrines and focusing on the figure of eschatological Saviour and the revelation of the true, universal dimension of Islam which was addressed not only to the Muslim community but to the whole of mankind. Faḍl Allāh's initiation into the knowledge of the 'ontological hermeneutics', or the *ta'wīl*, mentioned above, was apparently regarded, by him and by his followers, as a prefiguration of such a universal revelation.

Faḍl Allāh's understanding of the *ta'wīl* requires some explanation. In the field of scriptural exegesis, the term *ta'wīl* generally means 'interpretation', 'commentary', and is often synonymous to *tafsīr*, designating works of Qur'ānic exegesis. From the etymological point of view, the Arabic root 'w-l invokes the idea of return to the starting point, origin, beginning (*awwal*). This specific meaning of the word *ta'wīl* was emphasised in some, mostly Shī'ī, currents of Islam, where it referred to a particular kind of hermeneutics applied to the sacred texts, namely a procedure intended to disclose the deepest meanings of the scriptures by tracing them to their metaphysical source within the divine Word.¹⁰ Such a hermeneutics was obviously beyond the scope of traditional exegesis, and could only be practiced on the basis of an inspired knowledge that surpassed ordinary human understanding. In Shī'ī Islam, knowledge of *ta'wīl* was the prerogative of the Imāms, by virtue of their particular status

9 On the role of mystical and messianic ideas in the consolidation of Ottoman power, see Cornell H. Fleischer, 'Mahdi and Millenium: Messianic Dimensions in the Development of Ottoman Imperial Ideology', in *The Great Ottoman-Turkish Civilisation*, ed. Kemal Çiçek, 4 vols., Ankara, 2000, vol. 3, pp. 42–54; and Colin Imber, 'The Ottoman Dynastic Myth', *Turcica* xix (1987), pp. 7–27. On the Mughal context, see A. Azfar Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign: Sacred Kingship and Sainthood in Islam*, New York, 2014; and Abbas Amanat, 'Persian Nuqtawīs and the Shaping of the Doctrine of "Universal Conciliation" (*ṣulḥ-i kull*) in Mughal India', in *Unity in Diversity: Mysticism, Messianism and the Construction of Religious Authority in Islam*, ed. Mir-Kasimov, Boston—Leiden, 2013, pp. 367–391.

10 For the general discussion of various meanings of this term see Edward William Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, Beirut, 1968, vol. 1, p. 126. On the meanings of the term *ta'wīl* in various currents of Islam and in particular Twelver and Ismā'īlī Shiism see Hollenberg, 'Disrobing Judges', pp. 129–130.

of 'proximity' to God (*walāya*).¹¹ In this particular sense, *ta'wīl* is no more a synonym, but rather an antonym of *tafsīr*. While *tafsīr* designates an ordinary commentary written in accordance with established rules and methodology, necessarily relative because it remains at the level of the human understanding of the divine Word, *ta'wīl* is believed to be based on the direct divine inspiration and guidance that leads to the absolute truth of the original Word from which all prophetic books are derived. Since the divine Word was at the origin of creation, and represents the ontological basis of the universe, *ta'wīl* in the sense specified above realises the passage from the discursive and relative level of human languages to the ontological and universal language of the divine Word, the language of creation. For this reason, I translate *ta'wīl* in this specific sense as 'ontological hermeneutics'.

FaḌl Allāh's enlightenment, as described in the works of his followers, appears as his progressive initiation into the knowledge of ontological hermeneutics. One of the crucial points of this initiation is marked by a dream vision in which FaḌl Allāh obtained an understanding of the metaphysical meaning of visible forms, and consequently the power of dream interpretation.¹² At the final stage of his enlightenment, he received knowledge concerning the most basic, simple elements of form, the primary ontological 'letters' (*hurūf*) of which every visible form is composed, just as written words are composed of the letters of the alphabet.¹³

11 On the *walāya* of the Shī'ī Imāms, see Amir-Moezzi, 'Notes à propos de la *walāya* imamate (aspects de l'imamologie duodécimaine, x)', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 122/4 (2002), pp. 722–741. On the link between this specific status of the Shī'ī Imāms and their knowledge of the *ta'wīl* see Poonawala, 'The Imām's Authority During the Pre-Ghaybah Period', p. 107 ff.

12 FaḌl Allāh apparently used his skills at dream interpretation to establish political relationships. See Bashir, *Faḏlallāh Astarabadi*, pp. 8–18.

13 For a more detailed discussion of these two stages of FaḌl Allāh's enlightenment and corresponding initiatory experiences, see *Words of Power*, pp. 8–13. The stages of FaḌl Allāh's enlightenment have biblical parallels in his *Jāvidān-nāma*. The *ta'wīl* of compound entities, such as visible images or compound lexical units, is exemplified by the Qur'ānic story of Joseph who received from God the power of dream interpretation (*ta'wīl al-aḥādīth*, Q. 12:6, 21, 101). The *ta'wīl* of the simple entities, such as letters, is associated with the non-Qur'ānic episode of the broken tablets of Moses (*Exodus* 32:19) (*Words of Power*, p. 12). Similarly, in the Shī'ī *ḥadīth* literature, the Imāms receive the knowledge of the 72 letters of the Supreme Name of God, associated with miraculous powers. While the previous prophets received only a few letters each, Muḥammad received the maximal number of 72 letters and transmitted them to his Imāms. See Ayoub, *Redemptive Suffering*, pp. 62–63.

The nature of Faḍl Allāh's enlightenment is better understood in the light of his theory of ontological hermeneutics as it appears in the *Jāvidān-nāma*. This theory postulates that the divine Word which emanated from the unfathomable Essence contained a limited number of simple units named 'words' (*kalima* pl. *kalimāt*).¹⁴ The number of primary 'words' is represented in the *Jāvidān-nāma* by two numerals, 28 and 32. Depending on the context, the fullness of the original Word is expressed either by the sum of two series, i.e. the number 60 which corresponds to the divisions of time and space,¹⁵ or as the completion of the most fundamental series of 28 by the four 'words' produced by the action of the line of Balance (*khaṭṭ-i istiṭwā*). In the original condition of divine Unity, all 'words' are unified within the single Word, and can be thought of as facets or aspects of the latter. After differentiation which initiates creation, the 28/32 'words' appear as separate sounds, each of which expresses a fundamental ontological meaning (*ma'nā* pl. *ma'ānī*) or truth (*ḥaqīqa* pl. *ḥaqā'iq*) of the divine Word.¹⁶

At the next stage of creation, every 'word' receives a simple element of form as a counterpart. These elements of form are the primary letters (*ḥarf* pl. *ḥurūf*). The line of Balance mentioned above ensures that there is an essential correspondence between the 'words' and the letters, so that every letter is the perfect locus of manifestation (*maẓhar*, pl. *maẓāhir*) of an invisible 'word'. From this point on, the creation of the universe unfolds as ontological speech and writing. The combinations of the 'words' create the ontological names of things, associated with their metaphysical meanings, while the corresponding combinations of the primary letters realise the manifestation of these names as visible bodies. From this perspective, everything is speech and writing. As with any language and writing, the writing contained in the visible forms of the universe can be read, and the language of creation, which expresses the ultimate metaphysical truths of the divine Word, can be understood. But reading and understanding this universal ontological language requires some special knowledge.

14 Because *kalimāt* are not real words, but a technical term designating metaphysical simple elements, or 'atoms' of the divine Word, 'words' as the translation of *kalimāt* will be consistently written between single quotation marks, in order to distinguish the technical sense of this term from its ordinary sense, i.e., from words understood as compound lexical units.

15 Like 60 minutes of an hour or in a degree of a heavenly sphere.

16 The account on the Faḍl Allāh's doctrinal views in this and following paragraphs is based on his *Jāvidān-nāma-yi kabīr*, and summarises a more detailed study contained in *Words of Power*.

This knowledge was incorporated into the body of Adam and transmitted down the line of the prophets. The biblical statement about man being created in the image of God, echoed in the *ḥadīth* literature means, according to the *Jāvidān-nāma*, that the human body was created as the locus of manifestation of the complete divine Word.¹⁷ All the 28/32 primary letters are written into the lines of the human body and especially into the features of the human face.¹⁸ Like the universe, the human body is therefore a complete Book of God. But the human being is not only a Book, he/she is also provided with the knowledge necessary to read this book. This knowledge was originally given to Adam when, according to the Qur'ānic verse 2:31, God taught him the names of all things. These names are identified in the *Jāvidān-nāma* with the 28/32 original 'words'.

However, following the temptation of Satan, Adam and Eve lost the knowledge of the divine Word and, therefore, the knowledge of the innermost meaning of their own bodies.¹⁹ Therefore, their descendants did not receive this knowledge from them as naturally as they received the form of their physical bodies. For this reason, the knowledge of the divine Word had to be progressively revealed, or rather reiterated, to mankind. This remembrancing of the Word is organised as a cycle which eventually brings mankind to its original condition, that is, the condition of Adam and Eve before their fall from Paradise. The cycle is composed of descending and ascending phases. The role of the descending phase (*tanzīl*) is to realise the revelation of the full set of the 28/32 primary letters, and to incorporate them into human languages. This is achieved through successive prophetic missions. At the end of the descending phase, the complete set of the 28/32 primary letters is revealed. This provides the necessary basis for the ascending phase (*ta'wīl*), which can now operate

17 The *Jāvidān-nāma* cites both the passage from the *Genesis* 1:26 ("Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness") and the well-known *ḥadīth* probably inspired by this passage: 'God the Most High created Adam in His form' (*khalāqa Allāh ta'ālā Adama 'alā ṣūratihī*). On this *ḥadīth*, see Daniel Gimaret, *Dieu à l'image de l'homme: les anthropomorphismes de la sunna et leur interprétation par les théologiens*, Paris, 1997, pp. 123–142.

18 The *Jāvidān-nāma* distinguishes seven fundamental lines on the human face, indicated by the hairline, two eyebrows and four eyelashes. These are 'maternal' lines, which constitute the most basic divine writing on the human face. Multiplied by four natural elements (earth, water, air and fire), they produce 28 lines. The 32 'paternal' lines are obtained similarly by adding the line of balance (*khaṭṭ-i istivā*) to the seven 'maternal' lines, and then multiplying the eight lines by four.

19 For the *Jāvidān-nāma*'s interpretation of the fall from Paradise, see *Words of Power*, pp. 322–324.

with the full range of original ‘words’ and, consequently, provide access to the ultimate knowledge of the metaphysical meanings contained in the divine Word.²⁰

According to the *Jāvidān-nāma*, the phases of *tanzīl* and *ta’wīl* are not strictly separated from each other. They overlap so that the last prophetic missions already contain the germs of the ontological hermeneutics. Therefore, the last prophets are also the first in the line of saints responsible for the realisation of the *ta’wīl*. This line is characterised in the *Jāvidān-nāma* as ‘maternal’ (*ummī*), because the Mother symbolises the most fundamental elements of the ontological writing without knowledge of which the *ta’wīl* is impossible.²¹

Since the Christian Chapter contains many references and allusions to the concepts related to the ‘maternal’ knowledge, it seems useful to summarise at this point the relevant doctrinal positions of the *Jāvidān-nāma*.²² As mentioned, the *Jāvidān-nāma* regards the human bodily form (*ṣūra*) and facial features as the locus of manifestation (*maẓhar*) of the complete set of the 28/32 original ‘words’, that is, as a perfect embodiment of the original Word. The Word is the first manifestation of the divine Essence, as well the means by which the universe was created. It therefore contains all knowledge of God available in the created world. All this knowledge is written in the lines and facial features of the human body, which is the greatest Book of God. This Book was originally exemplified by the form of Adam’s body, whom God created ‘in His likeness’,²³ and to whom He taught the supreme meanings of the primary ‘words’ inscribed in his body.²⁴

20 Although the individual prophets, such as Abraham, Joseph and Moses, could have had the knowledge of the full set of primary letters and individually practised the *ta’wīl*, this dimension of their knowledge was not part of their prophetic mission addressed to mankind. The textual evidence from the *Jāvidān-nāma* suggests that general revelation of the ontological hermeneutics is possible only after the full set of the primary letters has been ‘descended’ and made known to mankind through the prophetic missions of Jesus and Muḥammad.

21 See Mir-Kasimov, ‘Les dérivés de la racine RḤM: Homme, Femme et Connaissance dans le *Jāvdān-nāme* de Faḍlallāh Astarābādī’, *Journal Asiatique* 2007/1, pp. 9–33; and *ibid.*, ‘Ummīs versus Imāms in Ḥurūfī Prophetology: An Attempt at a Sunni/Shī‘ī Synthesis?’, in *Unity in Diversity*, ed. Mir-Kasimov, pp. 221–246; and *Words of Power*, pp. 273–317.

22 For a more detailed discussion of this topic, see *Words of Power*, pp. 273–303.

23 See n. 17 above.

24 Such is the *Jāvidān-nāma*’s interpretation of the Qur’ānic episode 2:31: ‘And He taught Adam the names—all of them’.

But the inscription upon Adam's body was too complicated to be grasped directly by human intellect. Therefore, Eve was created in order to make accessible the knowledge of the divine Word contained in the form of Adam. Female facial features and bodily lines, originally represented by Eve, represent the most basic, fundamental elements of the divine ontological writing, without which the complete divine book of Adam's form could not be deciphered. These fundamental lines, symbolised by the hairline, two eyebrows and four eyelashes, represented by the seven verses of the opening sura of the Qur'ān, al-Fātiḥa, and alluded to by the Qur'ānic expressions 'Mother of the Book' (*umm al-kitāb*) and 'Seven Twofold' (*sab' al-mathānī*), are called 'maternal' (*ummī*) lines in the *Jāvidān-nāma*.²⁵ These seven 'maternal' lines are twofold, because every line of hair is counted with the facial line where it is located. The female face thus contains 14 fundamental lines corresponding to the 'disjointed letters' (*al-ḥurūf al-muqaṭṭa'a*) appearing at the beginning of some Qur'ānic suras. These 14 lines make it possible to discern the complete set of 28/32 lines written onto the male bodily form.²⁶

In other words, the basic elements of the divine Word revealed in the female bodily form and facial features, originally exemplified by Eve, are the key to deciphering the complete divine ontological writing contained in the form of Adam. Eve represents the part of the human being most closely related to the idea of form and visible manifestation. Indeed, the sperm issued from the loins of Adam is formed in the womb of Eve. Men and women both receive their bodily forms from their mothers. Until they attain maturity, young women and young men both have the 'maternal' form, corresponding to the manifestation of the most fundamental lines of the divine ontological writing. Therefore, the 'return' to the ontological meanings of the divine Word expressed in the human form, that is, the ontological hermeneutics (*ta'wīl*) of the most perfect divine Book, begins necessarily by going back to the mothers, to the 'maternal' knowledge of the fundamental divine writing contained in this form and revealed

25 Additional 'paternal' lines (symbolised by the seven lines of the beard and moustache) appear only later on the faces of adult men.

26 Another reasoning, applied in some fragments of the *Jāvidān-nāma*, suggests that the ontological writing on the male bodily form has only one line added to the seven fundamental 'maternal' lines, namely the line of balance. The seven and eight lines are then multiplied by the number of four natural elements, which gives 28 and 32 lines, for female and male bodily forms respectively. Thus the dichotomy of genders is an additional aspect of the duality represented by the series of the 28 and 32.

in the missions of the 'maternal' prophets and saints.²⁷ The realisation of this knowledge leads to the condition of Paradise.

This brings us to the point of crucial importance for our topic. The *Jāvidān-nāma* states that the first 'maternal' prophet, who inaugurates the revelation of the ontological hermeneutics, was Jesus.²⁸ The coming of Jesus was indeed an extraordinary event in the course of prophecy because, unlike any other prophet, Jesus represents the divine Word directly communicated to Mary and consequently manifested in the human bodily form without the participation of a physical father.²⁹ Since his physical body was not conditioned by hereditary transmission from a physical father, but resulted directly from the divine Word which took human shape in the womb of Mary, the coming of Jesus demonstrates that the human bodily form is essentially the locus of manifestation of the Word, in accordance with its original purpose at the time when God created the body of Adam.

Of course, since Jesus represents the manifestation of the divine Word, like Adam, he has a full knowledge of the complete set of the 28/32 ontological letters and corresponding 'words' with their metaphysical meanings. But he could not disclose the totality of his knowledge during his historical mission, because at that time the degree of knowledge transmitted to mankind through prophetic revelations was insufficient. The languages of peoples to whom Jesus was sent as a prophet contained an incomplete number of letters (22 for Hebrew and 24 for Greek). Therefore, Jesus had to conceal part of his

27 According to the *Jāvidān-nāma*, the well-known *ḥadīth* describing the appearance of God, in the form of a beardless youth, to the Prophet Muḥammad refers to these fundamental lines and signifies the revelation to Muḥammad of the 'mother of the Book'. The noblest way of *ta'wīl* is the way of love, when two lovers discern the knowledge of the divine Word in the beauty of the beloved. In this case, the union of two lovers, each of whom represents the 'Seven Twofold' inherent to the facial features and bodily form of youth, brings together the two halves of the original divine Word and leads to the realisation of the complete set of the 28/32 ontological 'words'. See *Words of Power*, pp. 111–139.

28 According to the Qur'ānic description (Q. 7:157–158), *ummī* is the epithet of the Prophet Muḥammad, though several other verses mention the *ummīs* (*ummīyūn*). On the various meanings of this term in Islam, see Sebastian Günther, 'Ummī', *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*. The *Jāvidān-nāma* establishes Jesus as the first *ummī* prophet before Muḥammad.

29 The main source for the relevant passages of the *Jāvidān-nāma* is the Qur'ānic verse 4:171. The insistence on the absence of a physical father has also a Christian flavour in the *Jāvidān-nāma*. The predominance of the 'maternal' function in the conception of Jesus is one of the arguments cited in the *Jāvidān-nāma* to explain his 'maternal' status. See *Words of Power*, pp. 273–285.

teachings behind metaphors and parables, promising to his followers to disclose their meanings during his second coming.³⁰ However, in his quality as the first ‘maternal’ prophet, Jesus laid the foundations of ontological hermeneutics by manifesting, both in his physical appearance and in his words, the most fundamental, ‘maternal’ elements of ontological writing corresponding to the facial features of Mary.³¹ Several passages of the *Jāvidān-nāma* suggest that this ‘maternal’ knowledge constituted the esoteric dimension of Jesus’ message.

Before Jesus’ message could be received in its authentic form, the revelation of the 28/32 primary ‘words’ had to be completed. This role was fulfilled by the Prophet Muḥammad who, according to the *Jāvidān-nāma*, was the second *ummī* prophet, and by the revelation of the Qur’ān composed with the 28 letters of the Arabic alphabet. The four additional letters are also represented in the Qur’ān by the ligature *lām-alif*, with the individual letters (*lām*, *alif*, *mīm*, and *fā’*) being counted without repetitions.³² The mission of the Prophet Muḥammad thus closes the phase of *tanzīl* and provides the complete set of primary letters necessary for the subsequent *ta’wīl*. The latter is announced both in the Qur’ān and in the extra-Qur’ānic experience of the Prophet. In the Qur’ān, combinations of letters (*al-ḥurūf al-muqatta’ā*) placed at the beginning of some suras initiate the revelation of the ‘Mother of the Book’ (*umm al-kitāb*), i.e. of the most fundamental elements of the ontological writing identical with the facial lines of Mary.³³ The heavenly ascension (*mī’rāj*) of Muḥammad anticipates and summarises the ascending phase of ontological hermeneutics (*ta’wīl*), leading to the direct communication of the divine Word.

30 The *Jāvidān-nāma* suggests that the second coming of Jesus is also mentioned in the Qur’ān. Cf. the following statement from the fol. 88a: ‘In the Qur’ān, [the word] ‘festival’ (*ʿīd*) is mentioned only one time, with reference to Jesus. This word is derived [from the root] ‘*wd* [meaning ‘return’]. It will be recalled that, unless otherwise stated, all folio numbers in the Introduction refer to the *Jāvidān-nāma* manuscript British Library Or. 5957.

31 On the ‘maternal’ lines see n. 18 above. Because Jesus was the Word of God, the words articulated by his tongue were identical with his bodily lines and facial features.

32 The full number of the 28/32 primary letters is also incorporated into the structure of the Muslim prayer: 17 postures (sing. *rak’ā*) of the standard prayer cycle added to the 15 *rak’as* of the Friday prayer produce the number 32, while added to the 11 *rak’as* required in travel they add up to 28. See *Words of Power*, p. 299. In some passages, the four additional letters are identified with the four letters added to the Arabic alphabet to express sounds specific to Persian: *pe*, *che*, *zhe*, and *gāf*.

33 This is one of the reasons that explain the *ummī* quality of Muḥammad in the *Jāvidān-nāma*.

As in the case of Jesus, the *ta'wīl* constitutes the esoteric dimension of Muḥammad's prophetic mission.³⁴

In the post-Muḥammadan period, the ontological hermeneutics becomes the only spiritual mission that determines the historical evolution of mankind. Like prophecy (*tanzīl*), the ontological hermeneutics (*ta'wīl*) requires divine inspiration and guidance, but the knowledge conveyed through this inspiration does not take the form of a new prophetic book and does not reveal new ontological letters.³⁵ It concerns essentially the revelation of an ontological link between the letters revealed in all prophetic books and their metaphysical counterparts, the 28/32 divine 'words'. The knowledge of this link will enable mankind to transcend the relative and conventional meanings that the divine 'words' receive in human languages, and to access their ultimate metaphysical meanings such as they exist in the universal and creative divine speech. The divine Word 'descended' through the prophetic missions will thus be brought back to its original source, the cycle will be completed and the history of mankind and the universe will come to an end, which coincides with its starting point, that is, the original and timeless Unity of the divine Word.

The persons charged with guiding mankind through the period of the *ta'wīl* are similar to the prophets, but instead of bringing the divine Word 'down' to mankind, they lead mankind 'up' to the realisation of the ultimate meaning of the Word. These saint guides are designated in the *Jāvidān-nāma* by the term *ummī* (pl. *ummiyūn*), meaning the 'maternal ones', in the sense specified above. They continue the line initiated by the 'maternal' part of Jesus' and Muḥammad's missions, and prepare the second coming of Jesus in his role of eschatological Saviour. The function of the *ummiyūn* in the *Jāvidān-nāma* is essentially the same as that of the Imāms in Shī'ī propheticology, and both words, *ummī* and *imām* are derived from the same Arabic root 'mm. However, while the chain of the Shī'ī Imāms starts with 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib after the descending part of the revelation is closed by the Prophet Muḥammad, and ends with the *Qā'im*, the line of the *ummiyūn* starts and ends with Jesus, and apparently includes Muḥammād and the 12 Imāms.³⁶ Faḍl Allāh most probably saw himself as

34 See a more detailed account on the *Jāvidān-nāma*'s interpretation of the mission of Muḥammad in *Words of Power*, pp. 285–303.

35 For the comparison of epistemological and sacral values attributed in the Islamic culture to the texts of *tanzīl* and *ta'wīl*, see Mir-Kasimov, 'The Word of Descent and the Word of Ascent: Canonical and Extra-Canonical Texts in the Spectrum of the Sacred in Islam', in *Controverses sur les écritures canoniques de l'islam*, eds. De Smet and Amir-Moezzi, Paris, 2014, pp. 297–336.

36 For the possible link between the *Jāvidān-nāma*'s *ummiyūn* and the traditional Shī'ī

one of the *ummiyūn*, and his *Jāvidān-nāma* might have been perceived by his followers as a sacred book of *ta'wīl*.³⁷

The era of *ta'wīl* will culminate with the second coming of Jesus in his role of eschatological Saviour. At that time, since all the primary 'letters' were revealed by the previous prophets and their *ta'wīl* prepared by the *ummiyūn*, Jesus will be able to manifest the fullness of his ontological condition and of his knowledge, that is, he will be able to reveal the original divine Word directly, without use of parables. According to the *Jāvidān-nāma*, this final revelation is symbolised by the opening of the apocalyptic Book sealed with seven seals described in the *Revelation* of John. At that time all 28/32 primary elements of the divine Speech and Writing will be revealed in their original form, which has manifold consequences. First, the ultimate meaning of all previous prophetic books, composed of these primary elements but hitherto concealed behind the conventions proper to various human languages, will be clearly manifested. Second, since all human languages are shadows and reflections of the original universal language of the divine Unity, the differences between human languages will be removed, and mankind will speak one universal language and be united within one religion of directly perceptible divine truth.³⁸ The knowledge of the divine Word originally incorporated into human body will be recognised again and the human body will be restored in its quality as the original and most perfect Book of God.³⁹

concept of the Imām as a divine guide continuing and completing the prophetic revelation (in the sense of symmetry between *tanzīl* and *ta'wīl*), see Mir-Kasimov, 'Ummīs versus Imāms'. The *Jāvidān-nāma* mentions the names of three Imāms of the Twelver line: the first, 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, the third, al-Ḥusayn (d. 61/680) (fol. 42a, 194a and 220a), and the eleventh, Ḥasan al-'Askarī (d. 260/874) (fol. 246a). The names of the Imāms of the Twelvers, from the first to eleventh, can be found in a work by one of the closest followers of Faḍl Allāh, the *Maḥram-nāma* by Sayyid Ishāq Astarābādī (Clément Huart, *Textes persans relatifs à la secte des Houroûfis*, Leiden and London, 1909, p. 21 of the Persian text). It must be noted that several passages in the *Jāvidān-nāma* establish a parallelism between Jesus and 'Alī (fol. 91a–b, 189a–b, 221b–222a, citation of sayings usually attributed to 'Alī and Jesus as coming from an Imām), and between Jesus and an Imām (fol. 177a, Qur'ān = Word, Word = Imām, Word = Jesus).

37 For a more detailed discussion of this topic, see Mir-Kasimov, 'The Word of Descent'.

38 For a more detailed account on the relationship between the universal divine language and conventional human languages in the *Jāvidān-nāma*, see *Words of Power*, pp. 237–258.

39 In the text of the Christian Chapter below we will see that the seven seals of the apocalyptic Book mentioned in the *Revelation* of John are identified in the *Jāvidān-nāma* with the seven facial features of Mary. Opening the seven seals of the apocalyptic book is thus identified with the revelation of the original divine writing on the human face.

Faḍl Allāh's theory of ontological exegesis explains his approach to the Jewish and Christian scriptural sources, and in particular his extensive use of Christian apocalyptic texts, which will be examined closer in the following chapters. Since all prophetic books are regarded as manifestations of the same ontological letters, the ontological hermeneutics can be applied not only to the Qur'ān, which represents the last and most complete revelation of the ontological alphabet, but also to any previous prophetic book. A messianic outlook focused on the ongoing revelation of *ta'wīl*, which is expected to culminate during the second coming of Jesus, is an additional factor which fosters this extension of the hermeneutics to the extra-Islamic sources. As previously noted, the idea of inspired authoritative exegesis, combined with and strengthened by messianic orientation, has close parallels in the Ismā'īlī theory and practice of *ta'wīl*.

The second coming of Jesus is one of the central themes of the Christian Chapter edited and translated below, which contains some of the most characteristic examples of Faḍl Allāh's interpretation of Christian apocalyptic texts. The next chapter will deal with the definition of the Christian Chapter and its sources.

The 'Christian Chapter' of the *Jāvidān-nāma* and Its Sources

The general discourse of the *Jāvidān-nāma* concerning Jesus is articulated around ideas largely accepted in Islam, and is mostly based on interpretations of the relevant material from the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth*, which is occasionally compared and complemented with biblical texts.¹ But there is a group of passages that stands out in this discourse, and these are mainly focused on the second coming of Jesus in his role of eschatological Saviour and as the manifestation of the primordial divine Word. Many of the passages belonging to this group are composed in the form of a dialogue with Christians and they have a distinctively apologetic tone. In line with this, there is in these passages significantly more extensive than average use of Christian scriptural material, including the Gospels, the *Revelation* of John and the apocryphal *Book of the Rolls*, including the Syriac *Cave of Treasures* and the pseudo-Clementine *Arabic Apocalypse of Peter*.² These passages also attract attention in the overall random composition of the *Jāvidān-nāma* and, while those relevant to most of the topics are scattered throughout the book, many passages belonging to this particular group are arranged in a compact way and often form a long continuous narrative extending over several folios.³ Based on their thematic and structural homogeneity, and despite the fact that the *Jāvidān-nāma* has originally no thematic divisions of any kind and no 'chapters', I call these passages the 'Christian Chapter' of the *Jāvidān-nāma*.

As in most passages of the *Jāvidān-nāma* where Jewish and Christian material is used, the discussion of Jesus' nature and his second coming is woven into the interpretative tissue of the Christian Chapter together with citations from the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth*, without concern for any textual corruption in the Jewish and Christian scriptures.⁴ Examples of the interrelation between the Christian sources, the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth* in the doctrinal developments of the Christian Chapter are given at the end of the next chapter.

1 For a comprehensive discussion of the central ideas associated with the figure of Jesus in the *Jāvidān-nāma*, see *Words of Power*, pp. 273–285.

2 These texts will be discussed in more detail below.

3 On the fragmented, random composition of the *Jāvidān-nāma*, see *Words of Power*, pp. 31–43.

4 On the thesis of textual corruption (*tahrīf al-naṣṣ*), see Chapter One, n. 8.

Consistent with the Qur'ānic outlook, Jesus is essentially regarded as being the Word of God.⁵ Therefore, the *Jāvidān-nāma* argues that only Jesus can realise the ultimate revelation of the divine Word at the end of time. A significant part of the Christian Chapter is addressed to the Christians, and conveys the following views. During Jesus' historical mission, mankind was unprepared for the full revelation of the divine Word.⁶ Therefore, Jesus had to conceal a part of his teachings with parables and metaphors, and the Christians received only an incomplete knowledge of Jesus' true nature and message. Most importantly, they ignore how the divine Word will be revealed in the person of Jesus at the end of time in its most perfect locus of manifestation, which is the form of the human body.⁷ This final revelation, which constitutes the innermost truth of Christianity, will only be possible after the completion of the prophetic cycle by the Prophet Muḥammad, and after the work of *ta'wīl* accomplished in the line of the *ummī* saints. Therefore, what the Christian Chapter seems to suggest, in particular in the passages explicitly addressed to the Christians, is that true Christianity can only be discovered through Islam. It consists of the full revelation of the primordial divine Word realised by Jesus, who is himself the pure manifestation of this Word. That final revelation will be the ultimate fulfilment of Islam,⁸ Christianity and all other religions. For this reason, the Christians are called to recognise the eminence of Muḥammad as a prophet able to realise the perfection of their own faith.⁹

5 As it can be expected, one of the most cited Qur'ānic verses in the *Jāvidān-nāma*'s passages related to Jesus is 4:171: 'The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only the Messenger of God, and His Word that He committed to Mary, and a Spirit from Him'.

6 See Chapter Two.

7 On the *Jāvidān-nāma*'s idea of human form as the most perfect form of manifestation of the divine Word, see Chapter Two and *Words of Power*, pp. 95–139. According to the *Jāvidān-nāma*, the virgin birth of Jesus already alluded to his eschatological role, because Jesus is the pure divine Word which spontaneously, i.e., without the mediation of a physical father, took the form of its most perfect locus of manifestation, which is the human form, in the womb of Mary.

8 Cf. fol. 176a, paragraph 14, which suggests that the second coming of Jesus will be the revelation of the secret of Muḥammad's heavenly ascension (*mi'rāj*).

9 Shī'ī *ḥadīth* literature contains accounts that can be interpreted in the sense that Islam encompasses the esoteric meanings of the Christian scriptures and rites. These meanings, ignored by the Christians, are known to the Imāms who are initiated into the innermost significations of the Islamic revelation. Cf. Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, Beirut, 1403/1983, 110 vols., vol. 2, pp. 321–322, where 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib explains the esoteric meaning of the church bell to his companion al-Ḥārith al-A'war. When al-Ḥārith transmits 'Alī's words to the Christian monk who was ringing the bell, the latter immediately recognises their truth and becomes a Muslim.

As in the rest of the *Jāvidān-nāma*, the Christian Chapter contains citations or close paraphrases from the Gospels. With only a few exceptions, the citations from the Gospels and from other biblical books are rendered into Persian and not Arabic.¹⁰ The Gospels were widely known to Muslim authors by the time of Faḍl Allāh, and Arabic translations had been available from the first centuries of Islam. A few citations from the Gospels in Arabic found in the Christian Chapter¹¹ might suggest that Faḍl Allāh used an easily available Arabic translation but quoted it in Persian, leaving only a couple of citations in original Arabic.¹² However, it cannot be excluded that Faḍl Allāh consulted one of the few Persian translations of the Gospels that were available in his time, either in the form of the harmony of the Gospels (Diatessaron), or four separate Gospels.¹³ It should be noted that, even if he used the Diatessaron, Faḍl Allāh was aware of the existence of different Gospels.¹⁴

The most central Gospel in the Christian Chapter (and in the *Jāvidān-nāma* as a whole) is the Gospel of John. Most prominently, the paraphrase of the beginning of the Gospel of John is included in many passages of the Christian Chapter dealing with the concept of the original divine Word represented by Jesus. As can be seen from the footnotes to the translation and the Index of Christian citations at the end of this book, the only other Gospel cited in the Christian Chapter is that of Matthew. In some occasions, the text of the Gospels is cited almost verbatim, in others it is paraphrased more or less closely. This amalgam of accurate citations and more or less recognisable paraphrases of the Jewish and Christian texts is typical of the *Jāvidān-nāma* as a whole, and raises the question of whether the author had a translation

10 Whereas the texts of the Qur'ān and the *ḥadīth* are generally in original Arabic and only occasionally translated in Persian.

11 See, for example, fol. 387b, paragraph 87, citation from John 3:3 concerning the second birth.

12 On the Arabic translations of the Gospels, see Griffith, *The Bible in Arabic*, and *Translating the Bible into Arabic: Historical, Text-Critical and Literary Aspects*, eds. S. Binay and S. Leder, Beirut, 2012.

13 On the Persian translations of the Gospels and Diatessaron available in 7th/13th and 8th/14th centuries, see Walter J. Fischel, 'The Bible in Persian Translation: A Contribution to the History of Bible Translations in Persia and India', *The Harvard Theological Review*, vol. 45/1 (1952), pp. 3–45; Roberto Gulbenkian, *The Translation of the Four Gospels into Persian*, Uznach, Switzerland, 1981, and Anton Dmitrievich Pritula, 'Khristianstvo i persidskaja knizhnost' XIII–XVII vv.', *Pravoslavnyj Palestinskij Sbornik* 101 (2004), pp. 3–164, in particular pp. 3–35.

14 See, for example, fol. 396a, paragraph 106: 'what Jesus said in the beginning of *one of the Gospels*'.

at his disposal, based himself on oral information, or used both oral and written sources.

While the Gospels were commonly referred to and quoted by Muslim authors, more intriguing is the use and interpretation in the Christian Chapter of fragments from two Christian apocalyptic texts, namely the canonical *Revelation* of John and the apocryphal *Book of the Rolls*. The material from both texts is interpreted in line with the Christian Chapter's messianic and eschatological orientation, together with relevant Muslim scriptural sources. The Christian Chapter is probably one of the very few texts where Christian apocalyptic material and its symbolism are so intimately incorporated into an Islamic eschatological narrative.

The *Revelation* of John was apparently virtually unknown to Muslim scholars at the time of Faḍl Allāh. This author has found only faint echoes of the *Revelation* in the *ḥadīth* literature, mostly focused on the creatures surrounding the divine Throne (*Revelation* 4:7).¹⁵ This is not surprising given that the *Revelation* was not much in circulation among the eastern Christian communities, and therefore the means for its transmission to the Muslim audience were limited. However, Arabic translations of the *Revelation* were apparently available in 7th/13th and 8th/14th centuries,¹⁶ and two Arabic commentaries on the *Revelation* were written by Coptic Christian authors, Būlus al-Būshī and Ibn Kātib Qayṣar in 7th/13th century Egypt.¹⁷ Henry Corbin describes interpretations of the 12th chapter of the *Revelation* by two Twelver Shī'ī authors of the 19th and 20th centuries, 'Alī Yazdī Ḥa'irī (d. 1324/1906) in *Ilzām al-nāṣib fī ithbāt ḥujjat al-ghā'ib*, and 'Alī Akbar Nahāvandī Mashhadī (d. 1369/1950), in *al-Kitāb al-'abqarī al-ḥussān fī aḥwāl mawlānā ṣāḥib al-zamān*.¹⁸ Of course, by that time there existed Persian and Arabic translations of the entire canonical Bible including the *Revelation*. The interpretations of Ḥa'irī and Nahāvandī deal mainly with the Shī'ī doctrine of the imamate, and the occultation and manifestation of the

15 See examples and references in Stephen R. Burge, *Angels in Islam: Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī's al-Ḥabā'ik fī akhbār al-malā'ik*, London, 2012, Index, *Revelation*.

16 Georg Graf, *Geschichte der Christlichen arabischen Literatur*, Vatican City, 1944, vol. 1, pp. 182–185.

17 On these two authors, see Shawqī Talia, 'Bulus al-Bushi's Arabic Commentary on the Apocalypse of St. John: An English Translation and Commentary', (Ph.D. dissertation, The Catholic University of America, 1987), and Stephen J. Davis, 'Introducing and Arabic Commentary on the Apocalypse: Ibn Kātib Qayṣar on Revelation', *The Harvard Theological Review*, 101/1 (2008), pp. 77–96.

18 Corbin, 'L'idée du Paraclet en philosophie iranienne', in *Face de Dieu, face de l'homme: herméneutique et soufisme*, Paris, 1983, pp. 311–358, in particular pp. 317–327.

12th Imām. They do not bear any similarity to the interpretations found in the Christian Chapter of the *Jāvidān-nāma*, nor do they include the same material from the *Revelation*. The fact that Faḍl Allāh never mentions the name of John, and consistently ascribes the citations or paraphrases of the text of the *Revelation* to Simon Peter suggests that the copy of the *Book of the Rolls* consulted by him included some fragments similar to the canonical *Revelation*.¹⁹ It is also possible that Faḍl Allāh's citations are based on an oral source, and that the two texts, the *Revelation* and the *Book of the Rolls*, were amalgamated in the process of oral transmission.²⁰

The Arabic pseudo-Clementine compilation, known variously under the names of *Book of the Rolls* (*Kitāb al-majāll*), *Revelations of Peter to Clement*, *Arabic Apocalypse of Peter* (*Jalayān Buṭrus*), or *Apocalypse of Simon* (*Iktishāf Sham'un*), was probably better known to Muslim authors than the *Revelation* of John.²¹ At least, this holds true for one important text included in the Arabic

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- 19 The known versions of the *Arabic Apocalypse of Peter* contain some parallels to the *Revelation* of John (cf. Alphonse Mingana, *Apocalypse of Peter*, *Woodbrooke Studies*, Cambridge, 1931, vol. 3, p. 100), but I have been unable to identify the passages from the fifth chapter of the *Revelation* cited in the Christian Chapter of the *Jāvidān-nāma* in any of the versions I was able to consult.
- 20 Simon Peter has a prominent place in the Shī'ī tradition. See Ayoub, *Redemptive Suffering*, pp. 203–204; and, more particularly, for the Ismā'īlī view, Halm, *Kosmologie* p. 35. In the *Sarā'ir al-nuṭaqā'* attributed to the Fāṭimid *dā'ī* Ja'far b. Maṣṣūr al-Yaman, Simon Peter is described as the keeper of the true knowledge of Jesus, which he transmitted to Clement, while the Gospels were written by Jesus' followers and do not contain authentic prophetic knowledge. See Hollenberg, *Beyond the Quran: Early Ismaili Ta'wil and the Secrets of the Prophets*, Columbia, forthcoming in 2016 (my thanks to the author for sharing with me the draft of this book).
- 21 The Arabic *Book of the Rolls* is a huge compilation of Christian pseudepigrapha. Some manuscripts are divided into eight books, including the *Cave of Treasures* and several other books, which propose a specific outlook on sacred history, include exegetical and apologetic traditions and legends, and address such topics as the Trinity, the hierarchy of angels, descriptions of Paradise and the apocalyptic vision of kings and kingdoms. According to August Dillmann, 'Bericht über das äthiopische Buch Clementinischer Schriften', *Nachrichten von der G.A. Universität und der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen*, 17–19 (1858), pp. 185–226, in particular 201ff., the work was composed in Arabic in the middle of the eighth century. I am not aware of any comprehensive study of the Arabic pseudo-Clementine tradition, but many works on the Syriac *Cave of Treasures* contain a more or less detailed discussion of the Arabic *Book of the Rolls*. For a well documented overview, see Clemens Leonhard, 'Observations on the Date of the Syriac *Cave of Treasures*', in *The World of the Aramaeans 111: Studies in Language and Literature in Honour of Paul-Eugène Dion*, eds. P.M. Michèle Daviau, John W. Wevers and Michael

Clementines, the *Cave of Treasures*, even though its original relationship with the pseudo-Clementine literature is not direct.²² Starting from the early years of Islam, the *Cave of Treasures* significantly influenced Muslim religious literature, including such genres as *qīṣaṣ al-anbiyāʾ*, *ḥadīth*, *tafsīr*, historical works, and could even have affected the Qurʾānic retelling of biblical stories.²³ Explicit traces of the *Cave of Treasures* can be discerned in the work of such eminent Islamic scholars as al-Yaʿqūbī.²⁴ Even though it apparently left fewer traces in Islamic literature, it can be reasonably supposed that the remaining part of the *Book of the Rolls* which, as mentioned, is included as an extension of the *Cave of Treasures* in a number of Arabic manuscripts, and translated by Mingana under the title of '*Arabic Apocalypse of Peter*', was available to the Muslim authors as well.²⁵

Weigl (eds.), Sheffield, 2011, pp. 255–293. The most extensive study on this topic to date is probably Andreas Su-Min Ri's *Commentaire sur la Caverne des Trésors: étude sur l'histoire du texte et de ses sources*, Louvain, 2000, which contains a section on the Arabic recension and its versions, pp. 63–66; see also Gabriel Said Reynolds, *The Qurʾān and its Biblical Subtext*, London, 2012, n. 61 pp. 49–50. Georg Graf, *Geschichte* vol. 1, pp. 289–291, lists about 50 manuscripts of the Arabic *Book of the Rolls*. The Arabic text of the *Cave of Treasures* was edited by Carl Bezold, *Die Schatzhöhle*, Leipzig, 1888, and Margaret Dunlop Gibson, under the title 'Kitāb al-Mağāll, or the Book of the Rolls', in *Studia Sinaitica*; 8 (1901), Arabic text pp. 1–57, English translation pp. 1–59. Bezold and Gibson also provided respectively German and English translations of this text. Antonio Battista and Bellarmino Bagatti, *La Caverna dei Tesori: Testo arabo con traduzione italiana e commento*, Jerusalem 1979, reprinted the Arabic texts of Bezold and Gibson with an Italian translation. Alphonse Mingana edited and translated the remaining part of the *Book of the Rolls* from a Karshuni manuscript, *Apocalypse of Peter*, in *Woodbrooke Studies*, Cambridge, 1931, vol. 3 (hereafter *AP*), pp. 93–450.

- 22 Concerning the relationship between the *Cave of Treasures* and the pseudo-Clementine tradition, see Albrecht Götze, 'Die Schatzhöhle, Überlieferung und Quellen', *Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse*, 1922, 4. Abhandlung, pp. 60–66.
- 23 See Götze, 'Die Nachwirkung der Schatzhöhle', *Zeitschrift für Semitistik* 2 (1923), pp. 51–94, and 3 (1924), pp. 53–71, 153–177 (Muslim authors are mentioned in the second part of the article published in 1924); Adang, *Muslim Writers*, p. 16; Griffith, *The Bible in Arabic*, pp. 92–93.
- 24 See Götze, 'Die Nachwirkung', 3 (1924), pp. 60–71; traces of the *Cave of Treasures* in the works of al-Ṭabarī and al-Masʿūdī are discussed on pp. 153–155 and 169; Adang, *Muslim Writers*, p. 38; Griffith, *The Bible in Arabic*, 184 ff.; and Griffith, 'The Gospel, the Qurʾān, and the Presentation of Jesus in al-Yaʿqūbī's *Taʾrīkh*', pp. 133–160.
- 25 In the following text, '*Book of the Rolls*' refers to the Arabic pseudo-Clementines as a whole, including the *Cave of Treasures* and the following text, while '*Arabic Apocalypse of Peter*' designates the text following the *Cave of Treasures*. For a broader reflection on possible parallels between the pseudo-Clementine literature and Islamic, and more

The *Jāvidān-nāma* of Faḍl Allāh Astarābādī confirms this supposition. In particular, its Christian Chapter contains some fragments from the part of the *Book of the Rolls* which follows the *Cave of Treasures*. These fragments are indicated in the footnotes to the Summary and translation below. As can be seen from the following text, the citations from the *Book of the Rolls* are closely integrated into original doctrinal developments of the Christian Chapter. Moreover, well beyond the passages included in the Christian Chapter, concepts of the *Book of the Rolls* such as divine manifestation in the form of Jesus, and its particular interpretations of the Trinity, where the Father is identified with the Power without beginning, the Holy Spirit with His Voice, and Jesus with His Speech, deeply influenced the central doctrinal topics of the *Jāvidān-nāma*, such as its doctrine of the human being as the locus of divine manifestation and manifestation of the primordial Word from the eternal divine Essence. The description of the members of the Trinity from the *Book of the Rolls* as being 'with everything and without everything', and having 'no length, breadth or depth', is applied verbatim in the *Jāvidān-nāma* to express the transcendent character of the 28/32 primary 'words'.²⁶ We will now have a closer look at the contents of the Christian Chapter.

particularly Shī'ī, doctrines, see Alain Le Boulluec, 'La doctrine du vrai Prophète dans les écrits pseudo-clémentins', in *Shī'ī Esotericism: Roots and Developments*, eds. Amir-Moezzi, De Cillis, De Smet, Mir-Kasimov, Turnhout, forthcoming.

- 26 On the cosmogonical and anthropogonical myths in early Shī'ī literature, where the cosmic Imām is described as the locus of the manifestation of God, see Amir-Moezzi, *Le guide divin*, pp. 73–154. An extensive comparative analysis of the *Book of the Rolls* and *Jāvidān-nāma* is beyond the scope of this study, but I will occasionally indicate some parallels and examples of possible influence in the translation. It is remarkable that, instead of just borrowing these cosmo- and anthropogonic theories from Shī'ī sources, and in particular from the early Shī'ī *ḥadīth* literature which he could hardly ignore, Faḍl Allāh chooses to combine allusions to Shī'ī traditions with explicit or implicit references to the Christian apocalyptic texts in his theoretical constructions. In a sense, this choice revives the question of the influence of Christian literature in the formative period of Shī'ism: as, in the 8th/14th century, a Muslim author used the Christian canonical texts and pseudepigrapha to reproduce some of the most fundamental doctrinal positions of early Shī'ī literature, could not the early Shī'ī authors then also have been inspired by the same Christian texts? On the basis of his impressive study of Shī'ī traditions, Kohlberg argues that the biblical material is mostly incorporated there from the already islamised *qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* literature and not from a direct study of Jewish and Christian texts. However, he notes some parallels with the *Book of the Rolls*. See Kohlberg, 'Some Shī'ī views on the Antediluvian World', pp. 41–66, in particular n. 4 p. 58 and n. 5. p. 59. Some early Shī'ī scholars, such as al-Ya'qūbī, knew and extensively used the *Cave of Treasures* which, as mentioned, is associated with the *Book of the Rolls* in several Arabic manuscripts, especially in relationship with the Shī'ī concept of spiritual designation (*waṣīyya*). See Adang, *Muslim Writers*, p. 38.

Summary of the ‘Christian Chapter’

The text of the *Jāvidān-nāma* in general, and of its Christian Chapter in particular, is not organised as a structured narrative. Faḍl Allāh's style is rather that of a free flow of associations, in which most ideas are discussed repeatedly in various contexts and with various connections. Therefore, before delving into the text itself, it will be useful to provide a brief summary of the central topics of the Christian Chapter. The references to folio numbers in footnotes refer to the British Library manuscript Oc. Or. 5957 of the *Jāvidān-nāma-yi kabīr*, and can be easily identified in the following edition and translation. In some instances, when a particular topic is not fully represented in the Christian Chapter, the Summary presented below also provides some explanatory notes based on the material from other passages of the *Jāvidān-nāma*. Another purpose of the Summary is to emphasise how interpretations of the Christian material are incorporated into the development of the *Jāvidān-nāma*'s doctrinal discourse and how they interact with Islamic scriptural sources.

Three manifestations of Jesus can be distinguished in the *Jāvidān-nāma*. The first manifestation is as the personification of the primordial Word of God such as it existed before the creation, independent of matter and form. The second is the manifestation of Jesus during his historical mission, as the first *ummī* prophet preceding Muḥammad. The third is the appearance of Jesus as the eschatological Saviour at the end of time. Although the text focuses mainly on the eschatological role of Jesus, all three manifestations are discussed in the Christian Chapter.

As previously noted, Jesus originally represents the pre-eternal divine Word, the first emanation of the divine Essence and the Imperative by which the universe was created. He is the primordial Voice and Speech by means of which the Word and its 28/32 components, that is, the primary ‘words’ or sounds, were originally expressed. The scriptural proof texts that the *Jāvidān-nāma* cites to support these statements include a passage that echoes the prologue of the Gospel of John (‘The first thing that came from heaven was the Word, and God was with that Word, and I was that Word’); and close paraphrases of passages from the *Arabic Apocalypse of Peter*.¹

1 Fol. 56b, 177a–b, 197b, 321a–327b, 386b, 395b, 396a, 396b, 397a, 397b, 421a, 421b, 422b, 423a–b, 425a–426a, 427a–b.

The following passages from the *Arabic Apocalypse of Peter* are included in the Christian Chapter with reference to the primordial manifestation of Jesus as the Word of God. When Jesus was asked 'where were you before the heavens were created?' he replied: 'I was in the Father and the Father was in me'.² This means that Jesus is the Word and Speech of God rooted in His Essence. As such, Jesus represents the principle of divine manifestation, because God cannot be manifested and therefore known without the Word and Speech which 'convey the information concerning the existence of God and His discourse'. Jesus' saying: 'I am with everything and without everything. Length, width, depth [and colour], which are corporeal [characteristics] have no access to me' means, according to the Christian Chapter, that Jesus is the pure Word of God and therefore beyond the dimensions and characteristics proper to the material world. This is also the original condition of the 28/32 primary 'words' before they become associated with the visible forms of their loci of manifestation, or letters.³ Another passage which is an almost verbatim citation from the *Arabic Apocalypse of Peter* attributes to Jesus the following words: 'The Father is Power without beginning, I am His Speech, and the Holy Spirit is His Voice, and all three are one'.⁴ This conception of the Trinity from the *Arabic Apocalypse of Peter* deeply influenced not only the christological discourse of the *Jāvidān-nāma* as reflected in its Christian Chapter, but also one of the *Jāvidān-nāma*'s most fundamental concepts, that of the original divine Word and its emanations. In several passages of the *Jāvidān-nāma*, the original divine Word is described as 'Power without beginning', while the 28/32 primary sounds in their undifferentiated condition constitute the primordial Voice.⁵

The link between Jesus and the Spirit is made with reference to the Qur'ānic verse 4:171: 'The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only the Messenger of God, and His Word that He committed to Mary, and a Spirit from Him'. Several passages emphasise that Jesus is identical with the Spirit, and therefore represents both the undifferentiated (Voice) and differentiated (Speech) conditions of the original Word. The Voice and Speech are the first emanation of the divine

2 Fol. 425a. *AP*, p. 105: 'Before you created heaven, earth, angels and men, where was your abode? ... My abode was in my Father before the created beings were created ... The Father was in me, glorifying me, and I in the Father ...'.

3 Fol. 322a, 323a, 422b, 423b. *AP* p. 106: 'And we have neither length nor breadth ... We have no depth ...'.

4 Fol. 155a, 244b, 326b, 396a, 422b, 470b–471a. *AP* p. 107: 'My Father is Mind, I am its Word and the Spirit is its Voice'.

5 Cf. *Words of Power*, p. 62 ff.

Essence. Therefore, Jesus is inseparable from the Essence. This transcendental dimension of Jesus is said to be beyond the grasp of human intellect or imagination.⁶

It will be recalled that, according to the *Jāvidān-nāma*, the forms of the objects and beings inhabiting the universe are the loci of manifestations of various combinations of the primary 'words' from among the 28/32 'words' of the original divine Word. These combinations of the 'words' constitute the ontological principles of everything existent. From this perspective, the fact that Jesus is characterised as both the Voice and Speech of God also means that he represents every primary 'word' as an individual transcendental entity detached from any possible relation with other entities, as a pure sound of the divine Word (Voice), as well as the combinations of the 'words', i.e., the ontological Speech inherent in every object and being.

This brings us to the notion of the omnipresence of Jesus as expressed in several passages of the 'Christian Chapter', where the reader is insistently called to discern and observe Jesus in every existing thing.⁷ In this regard, some passages cite another excerpt from the *Arabic Apocalypse of Peter*: 'We are with everything and we are without everything; nothing encompasses us but we encompass everything'.⁸ Jesus is the existence-giving Spirit breathed into everything existent, be it a physical object or being or a mental image. At this point, the Christian Chapter alludes to Jesus' power to give life to inanimate objects and resurrect the dead as mentioned in the Gospels, in the Islamic 'stories of the prophets' literature and in the Qur'ān.⁹ All sounds produced by inanimate objects, by animals and humans, whatever language they speak, are ultimately part of the 28/32 primary 'words' of the ontological Speech represented by Jesus. One of the scriptural texts often cited in the *Jāvidān-nāma* to support these statements is the Qur'ānic verse 41:21, where the skins of the damned bear witness against their owners saying: 'God gave us speech, as He gave everything speech'.¹⁰ Through these sounds inhabiting the things and inscribed in their visible forms, the seeker initiated in the secrets of spiritual

6 Fol. 197b, 395b, 396b, 422b, 424a, 425a–b, 472b–473a.

7 Fol. 322a–b, 323a–b, 324a, 327a–b, 333b, 395a, 395b, 396b, 397b, 419b, 424a–b, 425a–426a, 469b.

8 Fol. 422b, 425b, 426a. *AP* p. 106, 107, 121: 'We contain everything and nothing contains us ... No heaven contains us, and no earth encompasses us'; 'We are inside all created things and outside them'; 'We are in all places, and no place is deprived of us, and we are not that place'.

9 Fol. 193a, 323b, 422b, 424a, 473a.

10 Fol. 56b, 323a, 334a, 420a.

hermeneutics (*ta'wīl*), which is the central topic of the *Jāvidān-nāma* as a whole and of its Christian Chapter in particular, can grasp the divine Speech and therefore recognise Jesus.

One particular entity animated by the breath of the Spirit/Word represented by Jesus is Adam. In the *Jāvidān-nāma*, Adam is essentially the locus of manifestation of the complete divine Word. Not only was the form of Adam's body created to express perfectly the full set of the 28/32 primary 'words', but these 'words' of the divine Speech were also taught to Adam when God 'taught Adam the names, all of them' (Q. 2:31). Since Jesus represents the Word with its 28/32 constituents, Adam is, in a sense, the form of Jesus.¹¹ For this reason, during his historical mission, Jesus appears in the form of Adam. Jesus is also the Speech and the Word of God which Adam was first to receive and which constitutes the essence of the prophecy.¹² According to one of the *Jāvidān-nāma's* interpretations the Qur'ānic verse 2:33, when Adam taught the angels the names received from God, and they bowed down before him, they were in fact submitting to the divine Word represented by Jesus. The knowledge of the divine Word, taught by God to Adam and transmitted by Adam to the angels was afterwards preserved and progressively revealed to mankind by the prophets. Unlike any other prophet, Jesus in his metaphysical dimension occupies an intermediary position between God and all other prophets.¹³

The second manifestation of Jesus is his historical mission. As can be expected given the exceptional ontological status ascribed to Jesus in the *Jāvidān-nāma*, this historical mission has several features that make it an extraordinary event in the record of prophetic revelations. Unlike other prophets, and, in fact, unlike ordinary humans, the physical manifestation of Jesus resulted from the direct embodiment of the pure divine Word and Spirit in the womb of Virgin Mary. As Jesus was conceived without a physical father, he is beyond the ordinary laws of human heredity. His physical manifestation is intended to

11 The idea that Jesus and Adam are the manifestations of the same divine entity and therefore identical with each other could be one of the ideas implicitly inspired by the *Book of the Rolls*. Cf. Gibson, *Kitāb al-Maǧāll*, pp. 15–16 of the English translation [God describes to Adam the coming of Jesus]: 'O Adam, grieve not, for thou art a god, as thou thoughtest to become by thy transgression of my commandment, and I will make thee a god, not at this time, but after the lapse of years ... I will come down to thee, and in thy house will I dwell and with thy body will I be clothed ...'.

12 Fol. 56b, 197b, 321a–b, 322a, 323a, 324a–b, 325a–b, 326a, 395b, 396b, 421b, 422a–b, 423a–b, 426a, 427a.

13 Fol. 322b, 396a.

remind mankind that the human bodily form is not just a product of natural reproduction, but was originally created as the perfect locus of manifestation of the divine Word.¹⁴

Although he has no physical father, Jesus has a heavenly one.¹⁵ The Christian Chapter refers at this point to the text of the Gospel of John, where Jesus declares: 'I go unto my Father'.¹⁶ Several passages of the Christian Chapter identify Adam as the Father of the Christian Trinity, as Jesus states in the *Arabic Apocalypse of Peter*: 'The Father is Power without beginning, I am His Speech, and the Holy Spirit is His Voice, and all three are one'. At first sight, this statement seems to contradict the fact that Jesus, in his metaphysical dimension, was the first emanation of the divine Essence and preceded the creation of Adam. However, the identification with the Power without beginning—and, in other passages, with the Lord (*rabb*) with whom the prototypes of Adam's children concluded the primordial Covenant (Q. 7:172)—suggests that Adam existed before the creation of his physical body.¹⁷ This supposition is confirmed by the passages which state that the anthropomorphic vocabulary from some Qur'ānic descriptions of God refers in fact to Adam, who is nothing other than the visible form of God.¹⁸ Therefore, it is most probably this metaphysical Adam before his actual embodiment that is referred to as the heavenly Father of Jesus.

14 This idea also has a clear parallel in the *Book of the Rolls*: 'The affairs remained in this state until the God-Word became flesh, and this happened on the day on which the angel of secret came down and spoke to a pure Lady, and a pious gem, Mary, the mother of life and mercy, and announced my message to her. In that hour I poured out my eternal light which was with me, in me and on me, and I filled with it the body of that treasure-keeper and devout woman. And I fashioned it in her womb into the figure of a man. I, the speaker, did not make that light for the human race, and I dwelt in it, as I was always dwelling before, and by my power showed it to all the created things', *AP*, pp. 111–112.

15 In addition to his human embodiment, Adam in the *Jāvidān-nāma* also has a cosmic, or heavenly aspect, in which he is identical with the heavenly sphere. This identity is based on the fundamental numbers of 28 and 32 'words' of the original divine Word. Just as the human form of Adam's body was created as the locus of manifestation of the complete set of 28 and 32, the 360 degrees of the heavenly sphere can be divided into six times 60, i.e., six times 28 plus six times 32 degrees. Since the form of Adam expresses the total number of the primary 'words', no form in the universe can be more expressive. The form of Adam is therefore a limit form; it is the Qur'ānic 'Lote-tree of the Boundary' (Q. 53:14) situated in the sphere of constellations. For a more detailed discussion of this topic, see *Words of Power*, pp. 95–110.

16 Fol. 395b, 396b, 426a, 427a, 427b; John 14:12, 28; 16:16, 28; 20:17.

17 Fol. 470a.

18 See *Words of Power*, p. 98ff. In the Christian Chapter, the idea that Adam is the original

Be that as it may, there is no doubt that, according to the *Jāvidān-nāma*, Adam represented the first physical manifestation of the divine Word, combined with the knowledge of its metaphysical meanings. Jesus, identified with the Word and Spirit, possessed no form at all in his metaphysical dimension. This is expressed in the above-mentioned passages of the Christian Chapter which cite Jesus' saying from the *Apocalypse of Peter*: 'I am with everything and without everything. Length, width, depth [and colour], which are corporeal [characteristics], have no access to me'. During his historical manifestation, Jesus took the form of Adam, which is the original form of the divine Word, in the womb of Mary. He also received from Adam the knowledge of the metaphysical meanings of the Word, the knowledge that was taught to Adam by God. Jesus and Adam are thus very closely interrelated: Jesus reproduces the form of Adam, i.e. the human bodily form as the direct and perfect locus of manifestation of the original divine Word; and at the same time, he *is* that original Word identified with the Holy Spirit that breathed life into Adam's body at the time when Adam was created. Like Adam, Jesus is aware of the ultimate metaphysical meanings of the 'words' that constitute his body. The ontological 'words' that constitute his body are articulated by his tongue,¹⁹ exactly as in the case of Adam when he taught the angels the 'names' of which his body was made the locus of manifestation.

As mentioned, Jesus' prophetic mission introduces a radical change in the course of the prophecy, ushering in a new era of the 'maternal' (*ummi*) prophets and saints, which includes the completion of the revelation of the divine Word through the prophetic missions and the subsequent ontological hermeneutics (*ta'wīl*) of the Word, culminating with the second coming of Jesus as the eschatological Saviour at the end of time. It will be recalled that the main distinctive feature of the 'maternal' prophets is the revelation of the 'maternal' knowledge, that is, the most basic elements of the divine Word, which constitute the foundation of the ontological hermeneutics. The main goal of such hermeneutics is the 'return' (*ta'wīl*) from the visible manifestations of the divine Word, such as they appear in the physical universe and prophetic books, to their original metaphysical meanings.

form of God is expressed in interpretations of *Genesis* 1:26: "Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness"" (fol. 325b, 397a, 422a, 423a). Although this passage is always cited with reference to the Torah in the *Jāvidān-nāma*, it is worth noting that it can also be found in the *Book of the Rolls*. See Gibson, 'Kitāb al-Mağall', p. 5 of the English translation.

19 Fol. 326b.

Jesus was the first in the line of prophets to begin the revelation of the 'maternal' knowledge, symbolised in the *Jāvidān-nāma* by the virginity of Mary. It is at this point that the Christian Chapter establishes a parallel between Mary and the houris, the virgins of the Qur'ānic description of Paradise: 'Houris, cloistered in cool pavilions ... untouched before them by any man or jinn' (Q. 55:72–74).²⁰ The virginity of Mary and the houris means that nobody ever reached the knowledge of their original nature, i.e., the knowledge of the foundations of the divine Word. The birth of Jesus marks the beginning of the self-disclosure of this knowledge. Jesus represents the manifestation of the divine Word from the virginity of Mary. Jesus came to reveal the knowledge represented by his mother, because his original nature entirely corresponded to hers, without being shared with a physical father. The figure of Mary is an extremely powerful symbol in the *Jāvidān-nāma*'s epistemology. The true nature of Jesus cannot be grasped without the knowledge represented by Mary. This knowledge is reflected in the number of the 12 apostles which, with Jesus and Mary, corresponds to the 14 basic, 'maternal' elements of the original Word written in the facial features of Mary, represented by the hairline, two eyebrows, four eyelashes, and seven corresponding locations on the face. Mary is also identified with the apocalyptic Book sealed with seven seals from the *Revelation* of John that Christ will open at the end of time, in order to complete the revelation of the divine Word.²¹

Although during his historical mission Jesus, like Adam, was a perfect manifestation of the original divine Word and possessed the full knowledge of the metaphysical meanings of its 28/32 constituent 'words', he was not able to fully express his knowledge at that time. That is because all of these 'words' had not yet been revealed to mankind by the time of Jesus' historical mission, and his means of expression were therefore limited.²² Unable to convey his message by adequate means, Jesus spoke in allusions and parables. When he was approaching the end of his historical mission, Jesus promised his followers that he would return at some point in the future in order to explain the true meaning of his allusions and parables.²³ Consequently the apostles, and the Christian community as a whole, did not receive the full message of Jesus. This full revelation was yet to be brought about by the mission of the Prophet Muḥammad and the 'maternal' (*ummi*) saints who followed Muḥammad.

20 Fol. 420b.

21 Fol. 155a, 243a, 321b–322b, 323b, 325a, 325b, 326b, 327a, 345a at the margin, 394b, 395a–b, 396a, 396b, 397a–b, 420a–b, 421b, 422a, 423a, 424b, 425a.

22 Fol. 427b.

23 Fol. 151a, 155a, 325a, 421a, 426a.

Christianity and Islam are therefore situated as consecutive stages in the unfolding of the same 'maternal' knowledge of the original divine Word, without any contradiction or competition between them. From the point of view of the Christian Chapter, Jesus and Muḥammad, the two 'maternal' prophets, follow each other in the line of revelation of the 'maternal' knowledge inaugurated by Jesus. The main objective of Islam, including Muḥammad's prophetic mission, the revelation of the Qur'ān and the subsequent period of ontological hermeneutics (*ta'wīl*), is to complete the revelation of the full set of the 28/32 'words', so that mankind can be ready to receive the full revelation of the original Word when Jesus returns as the eschatological Saviour. In other words, Islam goes one step further than historical Christianity in understanding the true meaning of Jesus' prophetic message as recorded in the Gospels. The mission of Muḥammad is a necessary stage in the line of prophetic revelations because it prepares the way for the manifestation of the innermost truth of Jesus, that is, of the original divine Word, at the end of time. In this sense, Islam is presented in the *Jāvidān-nāma* as true Christianity. When Jesus returns, he will call mankind to the one universal religion which is Islam.²⁴

Therefore, the Christian Chapter calls upon the Christians to recognise the mission of Prophet Muḥammad *in order to access the true message of Jesus*. Muḥammad was aware of the true nature of Jesus and predicted his second coming as the Word of God.²⁵ During his heavenly ascension, Muḥammad discovered the innermost truth of the divine Word, which is identical with Jesus. For this reason, at the time of his second coming, Jesus will come from heaven.²⁶ The 28 'words' revealed in the Qur'ān in the form of the 28 Arabic letters are identical with the complete divine Word represented by Jesus; and to the extent that both the Qur'ān and Jesus represent the divine Word, they are identical with each other.²⁷ The true nature of Jesus is attested in the Qur'ān, in particular in verse 4:171: 'The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only the Messenger of God, and His Word that He committed to Mary, and a Spirit from Him'. Therefore, whoever denies Muḥammad denies Jesus.²⁸

The 28/32 primary 'words' manifested on the face of Jesus and in the Qur'ān received by Muḥammad were first made visible when Moses broke the tablets written by God's own Hand.²⁹ The tablets given by God to Moses represent,

24 Fol. 420a.

25 Fol. 322b.

26 Fol. 176a.

27 Fol. 177a–b and 323a.

28 Fol. 395b.

29 Exodus 32:16 and 19, mentioned also by al-Tha'labī, *Arā'is*, p. 348.

in the *Jāvidān-nāma*, the archetype of any prophetic book. They are identical with the divine ontological writing on the face of Adam. By breaking the tablets Moses revealed the distinctive signs of the 28/32 primary 'words'.³⁰ The same signs were visible on the face of Jesus, who was the pure spirit which became flesh.³¹ This analogy between Muḥammad, Jesus and Moses establishes a link between the Christian Chapter and the fragments of the *Jāvidān-nāma* which contain a thorough discussion and interpretation of Moses' mission and its central symbols, such as the broken tablets, the Tent of Meeting, Moses' staff, the burning bush.³²

The third manifestation of Jesus, and the one most discussed in the Christian Chapter, is his expected return as the eschatological Saviour. Because he promises the apostles that he will return at the end of his historical mission; because the accomplishment of this mission involves Mary, and because no one else can disclose either the original nature of Jesus who is the Word of God or the meaning of his parables that remained veiled in the Gospels, only Jesus can fulfil this role.³³ The passages of the Christian Chapter relevant to the eschatological mission of Jesus make extensive use of the text and symbolism of the *Revelation* of John.

The main task of Jesus during his eschatological mission will be the direct revelation of his original nature, which is nothing else than the divine Word itself. This task, which could not be carried out during his historical mission, will be made possible at the end of time, after the 'descent' (*tanzīl*) of the basic elements of the divine Word has been completed by Prophet Muḥammad and their hermeneutical 'ascension' (*ta'wīl*) has been well advanced in the line of the 'maternal' saints. Because it is situated at the end of the 'ascending' phase of the *ta'wīl*, which completes the 'descent' of the divine Word realised by the

30 The interpretation according to which the breaking of the tablets liberated the divine writing contained in them, which tended to fly up (cf. the *ta'wīl* as an *upward* movement, as opposed to the *tanzīl*) exists in Jewish religious literature. See *The Talmud of the Land of Israel. A Preliminary Translation and Explanation*, 35 vols., trans. by Jacob Neusner, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1987, vol. 18, *Besah and Taanit*, Yerushalmi Taanit 4:5, p. 267: 'The tablets were a burden weighing forty *seahs*, and the writing was holding them up. When the writing flew off, the tablets became heavy on the hands of Moses, and the tablets fell and were broken'.

31 Fol. 323a, 326a–b, 327b.

32 On the *Jāvidān-nāma*'s interpretation of the broken tablets and other symbols related to Moses, see Mir-Kasimov, 'Some Specific Features of the Ḥurūfī Interpretation of the Qur'anic and Biblical Episodes Related to Moses', *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, 10/1 (2008), pp. 21–49; and *Words of Power*, pp. 263–267.

33 Fol. 56b–57a. 420a.

prophets, the eschatological mission of Jesus is to complete, not to abrogate, the previous prophetic missions, including his own historical mission.³⁴ In fact, the eschatological mission of Jesus is nothing other than the culmination and completion of the *ta'wīl*, at which time the metaphysical truth of the divine Word and its 28/32 constituents will be disclosed to mankind without any intermediary, such as the forms of physical objects or the metaphorical discourse of the prophetic books.³⁵

The opening of the sealed Book in the *Revelation* of John is interpreted in the Christian Chapter as an act of ultimate and universal hermeneutics, the definitive *ta'wīl*.³⁶ The seven seals of the apocalyptic Book correspond to the seven 'maternal' facial features of Mary (the hairline, two eyebrows and four eyelashes). The opening of the seals means the revelation of the innermost meaning of the most foundational, 'maternal' elements of the original Word. The knowledge of these 'maternal' elements gives access to the knowledge of the full set of the 28/32 primary 'words' which constitute the original nature of the human face and bodily form, ultimately represented by the face and body of Adam. Since Adam was the first and the most complete Book of God, the perfect locus of manifestation of the original divine Word, the ontological hermeneutics of the bodily form and facial features of Adam realised by the opening of the apocalyptic Book will disclose the metaphysical truths contained in all prophetic books.³⁷

34 Fol. 322a, 396a, 397b, 426a. For the relationship between the *tanzīl* and *ta'wīl* see Mir-Kasimov, 'The Word of Descent'.

35 It will be recalled that, according to the *Jāvidān-nāma*, the forms of the visible objects and beings are the loci of manifestation of the invisible ontological 'words'. The discourse of the prophetic books is necessarily metaphorical, because the direct expression of the metaphysical truths in human languages is impossible. On the *Jāvidān-nāma*'s theories concerning the relationships between the divine and human languages, see *Words of Power*, pp. 237–258.

36 The passages cited in the Christian Chapter mostly correspond to the fifth chapter of the *Revelation* of John. However, the name of John is not mentioned in the Christian Chapter nor in the rest of the *Jāvidān-nāma*, and the source of the citations is consistently indicated as the 'Book of Peter'. As mentioned, the *Arabic Apocalypse of Peter* does contain some elements of the *Revelation*, including the vision of the heavenly throne and the book of life (see *AP*, p. 145). But I have not been able to find the entire episode of the opening of the book and sacrifice of the Lamb in any version of the *Arabic Apocalypse of Peter* that I consulted.

37 Fol. 177a–b, 323b–324a, 326b, 334a, 395a, 397b, 422b. Some passages suggest that the seven lines on the Mary's face, multiplied by the number of four natural elements (fire, air, water and earth) are identical with the 28 'words' of the Qur'ānic revelation (fol. 397b).

The opening of the apocalyptic Book will reveal that the human form is the perfect locus of manifestation of the original divine Word, and hence everyone will be able to contemplate God and His Word directly in the human body and face. Mankind will be thus united in one religion, and delivered from the diversity of languages, because the divine Word is the source of all human languages. Everyone will speak the universal ontological language and be able to hear this ontological language of the divine Word, represented by Jesus, coming from every object and being.³⁸ Jesus will lead people to perfection and teach them the *ta'wīl*.³⁹

The opening of the apocalyptic Book and the direct revelation of the divine Word in human form will mark the return of mankind to the condition of Paradise, which was the original condition of Adam and Eve. Several passages of the *Jāvidān-nāma* emphasise that Adam cannot return to Paradise until Jesus has returned and sacrificed himself.⁴⁰ This idea could have been inspired by the pseudo-Clementine literature.⁴¹ This sacrifice of Jesus refers here to the sacrifice of the Lamb described in the *Revelation* of John and cited in several other passages of the Christian Chapter.

In light of the preceding, it is not surprising that the Christian Chapter claims to provide the key to the understanding of the deepest level of Jesus' prophetic message and his second coming. This understanding remains inaccessible to Christians insofar as they do not integrate the revelation that followed the historical mission of Jesus, that is, the manifestation of the divine Word in the Qur'ān and its ontological hermeneutics (*ta'wīl*) carried out by the 'maternal' saints after the death of the Prophet Muḥammad. Many passages of the Christian Chapter address the Christians, calling upon them to accept the theories advocated by the author and thus understand the true nature of Jesus, the meaning of his facial features and bodily form, his situation with regard to Mary and Adam. The realisation of this understanding enables the

In this case, the opening of the apocalyptic Book from the *Revelation* of John could also be interpreted as, more specifically, the ultimate hermeneutics of the Qur'ān.

38 This is consistent with the first, cosmic or metaphysical manifestation of Jesus as the divine Word inherent in every atom of the creation.

39 Fol. 155a, 322a, 324a, 327a, 395a, 397b, 421b, 426a.

40 Fol. 56b, 425b.

41 Cf. Gibson, 'Kitāb al-Mağāll', pp. 15–16, still more explicitly stated in the Ethiopic version, which is partly derived from the Arabic. See S. Grébaut, 'Littérature éthiopienne pseudo-Clémentine', *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien*, 16 (1911), p. 169, and 17 (1912), p. 341. On the relationship between the Arabic and Ethiopic versions, see Ri, *Commentaire sur la Caverne des Trésors*, p. 66.

reader to contemplate Jesus as the divine Word present in everything, and to develop a true belief in Jesus' return based upon personal spiritual awareness.⁴²

The Christian Chapter insists that the understanding of the true nature of Jesus must be reached by personal spiritual experience, not by discursive reasoning or imitation and repetition of established ideas.⁴³ One passage suggests that Jesus is identical with the Explainer, that is, with an inner voice that may be heard if the seeker stops his/her associative thinking produced by the ego and concentrates on the recitation of the Qur'ān. This transpersonal inner voice conveys the ontological knowledge of the 28/32 constituent elements of the divine Word.⁴⁴ Since the main goal of Jesus' incarnation was to manifest the divine Word in the human bodily form, whoever reaches the understanding of the true nature of Jesus reaches thereby the understanding that his/her own bodily form is also the perfect locus of manifestation of the divine Word. Such a person attains Jesus who is the Word and Speech of God, and shares his condition characterised by the knowledge of the divine Word in its fullness, including the knowledge of the innermost meaning of all prophetic books. He/she also reaches the level of the ontological universal language which is the origin of all human languages.⁴⁵

In the Christian Chapter I also have included a long passage on the Spirit (*rūh*).⁴⁶ This passage, located at the end of the *Jāvidān-nāma*, appears only in two of the four manuscripts used for this edition, which raises the question of whether it is part of the *Jāvidān-nāma* or one of the short notes that are annexed to each manuscript of this work.⁴⁷ Whatever the answer to this question, I thought it useful to include this passage for the following reasons. Although this passage is not entirely focused on the figure of Jesus, we are reminded that the word 'Spirit' is used as a synonym for Jesus.⁴⁸ Another argument that justifies its place within the Christian Chapter is that this passage contains clear references to the *Arabic Apocalypse of Peter*, in particular, its formulation of the Trinity ascribed to Jesus, where the Father is identified with

42 Fol. 321b–322b, 323b, 324b–325b, 327b, 395a–397b, 421b, 427a.

43 Fol. 325a.

44 Fol. 419a–b.

45 Fol. 151a, 394b, 397a.

46 Fol. 467b–474a.

47 For more detailed information on the manuscripts used for this edition and the location of the passage on the Spirit, see the notes on the critical edition that introduce the second part of this book.

48 Fol. 472b–473a.

the Power without beginning, the Holy Spirit with His voice, and Jesus with His Word, and therefore is in conformity with other passages where the same conception of the Trinity is discussed. The main purpose of this last passage is the definition of the Spirit in the context of the *Jāvidān-nāma*'s basic conception of the original divine Word with its 28/32 constituent 'words'. This is followed by a discussion, in the form of questions and answers, of the primordial Covenant when the prototypes of mankind were extracted from the loins of Adam and recognised their Lord. The passage ends with the description of the condition of a mystic who has reached the knowledge of the Covenant, which is the knowledge of his/her own true self, and thus attained the supreme enlightenment.

The interaction between Christian and Islamic scriptural material can be observed throughout the 'Christian Chapter', even if, due to the nature of the selected passages, the Christian sources clearly predominate in most of them. To conclude this Summary, I would like to focus on few cases of such interaction.

The Qur'ānic verse 4:171, 'The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only the Messenger of God, and His Word that He committed to Mary, and a Spirit from Him', is probably the most frequently cited verse in the *Jāvidān-nāma*'s passages related to Jesus. In several passages this verse is contextually linked to the beginning of the Gospel of John (in a form slightly different from the canonical text) and to the saying attributed to Jesus in the *Arabic Apocalypse of Peter*.⁴⁹ The verse Q. 41:21, 'God gave us speech, as He gave everything speech', is linked to Jesus' saying 'I am His [i.e., the Father's] Speech' from the *Arabic Apocalypse of Peter*;⁵⁰ and is also used as text proving Jesus' omnipresence, together with another citation from the *Arabic Apocalypse of Peter* and Faḍl Allāh's reading of the first verses from the Gospel of John.⁵¹ Together with some other Qur'ānic verses (6:38, 13:39 and 23:62), verse 41:21 is associated with the opening of the apocalyptic Book from the *Revelation* of John.⁵² The Qur'ānic verses 4:171, 41:21, 9:33 and *ḥadīth* material are used to contextualise the beginning of the Gospel of John.⁵³ The verse 28:88, 'All things perish, except His Face' is interpreted, together with the opening of the apocalyptic Book from the *Revelation* of John, as an indication of the divine ontological writing which

49 Fol. 56b, 321a, 325a, 327a, 470b.

50 Fol. 56b.

51 Fol. 323a.

52 Fol. 334a.

53 Fol. 420a.

can be discerned on the female face.⁵⁴ A passage in fol. 176a establishes a link between the heavenly ascension of the Prophet Muḥammad and Jesus' return as the Word of God coming from the heaven, in a formulation which echoes the beginning of the Gospel of John. The Qur'ānic verse 20:108, 'Voices will be hushed to the All-merciful' is linked to the saying attributed to Jesus in the *Arabic Apocalypse of Peter* which mentions the Holy Spirit as the Voice of the heavenly Father.

The description of Jesus as the Word of God, mostly with reference to the beginning of the Gospel of John, is consistently matched by the Qur'ānic episode where God teaches names to Adam (Q. 2:31), in order to maintain that these names are identical with the divine Word who is Jesus.⁵⁵ Jesus' birth from the Virgin Mary, mentioned with reference to Matthew 1:23, is associated with the virginity of the houris in Paradise, with reference to Q. 55:72–74.⁵⁶ The Qur'ānic verse 7:172, usually described in Muslim religious literature as an account of the primordial Covenant when the prototypes of future mankind were extracted from the loins of Adam and witnessed their Lord, is interpreted in the Christian Chapter with reference to the specific conception of the Trinity (the Father is the Power without beginning, the Holy Spirit is His voice, and Jesus is His speech) found in the *Arabic Apocalypse of Peter*.⁵⁷

54 Fol. 57a.

55 Fol. 321b, 423a.

56 Fol. 420a.

57 Fol. 470b.

Conclusion

The Christian Chapter of the *Jāvidān-nāma-yi kabīr* of Faḍl Allāh Allāh Astarābādī is a significant piece of biblical interpretation by a medieval Muslim author. It is largely focused on a number of Christian texts, including the canonical New Testament and apocryphal *Book of the Rolls*, containing the *Cave of Treasures* and the Arabic pseudo-Clementine *Apocalypse of Peter*. The influence of the latter can be clearly seen not only in the direct citations, but also in the most fundamental doctrinal developments of the Christian Chapter as well as of the *Jāvidān-nāma* as a whole, such as its theory of the divine Word, anthropology and eschatology. The Christian Chapter also contains citations and substantial interpretations of passages from the *Revelation* of John, which seems exceptional in Muslim literature of the 8th/14th century.

The extension of the exegetical field to include not only Islamic scriptural sources, but also Jewish and Christian material relies on Faḍl Allāh's theory of universal *ta'wīl*, founded on the concept of 28/32 primary 'words' constituting the original divine Word, and corresponding primary 'letters'. The universal *ta'wīl* will be possible only after the total number of these primary 'words' and 'letters' has been revealed by the Prophet Muḥammad. According to the works of his followers, Faḍl Allāh received his initiation into the knowledge of the universal *ta'wīl* in a series of visions.

This focus on the universal *ta'wīl*, which reveals the innermost truth of not only Islamic, but also of all previous prophetic books, together with the link between such a *ta'wīl* and the figure of the eschatological Saviour (Jesus in the *Jāvidān-nāma*), to whom the authority of the ultimate *ta'wīl* belongs, brings the Christian Chapter close to the exegetical approach developed in Ismā'īlī literature with reference to the last in the series of the Ismā'īlī Imāms, the *Qā'im*. The Christian Chapter contains several passages where the Jewish or Christian texts are cited in combination with Qur'ānic verses and *ḥadīths*, and woven into the exegetical discourse as parts of the same scripture, without any concern for the claim of the falsification of biblical texts which played an important role in mainstream Muslim biblical scholarship.

Although certainly not widespread, this non-polemical approach to the Jewish and Christian sources arguably does not constitute a decisive rupture with the tendencies developed within the mainstream Islamic tradition of biblical scholarship. Indeed, the latter was not confined to the polemical line founded on the thesis of the outright textual falsification (*tahrīf al-naṣṣ*) of the Jewish and Christian scriptures which would deny them any credit. The Qur'ān also mandates the view that the books of the previous prophets were

sound, at least partially, in their text, but that their original meanings have been obscured by the wrong interpretations (*taḥrīf al-maʿnā*), and even encourages Muslims to seek in these books the proofs of Muḥammad's prophethood, a notion out of conformity with the idea that their contents have been corrupted. This more tolerant outlook towards the Jewish and Christian texts fostered the development of what can be called a 'positive' or 'affirmative' Muslim exegesis of the Bible, including the Muslim apologetic literature. On the Sunnī side, this line was expressed most saliently by Ibrāhīm al-Biqāʾī.¹

With regard to Shīʿīs, the 'positive' exegesis was further strengthened by some specific doctrinal positions, including the knowledge of the innermost truth of all prophetic books possessed by the Shīʿī Imāms. This supreme knowledge of hermeneutics (*taʾwīl*) was expected to be revealed to mankind by the last in the line of the Imāms, the *Qā'im*, during his manifestation at the end of time. The Ismāʿīlīs, the Shīʿī branch with a strongly marked messianic component, significantly developed the positive exegesis of the Jewish and Christian sources in direct relationship with the eschatological knowledge ascribed to the *Qā'im*. The approach to the Jewish and Christian texts in the Christian Chapter, as well as in the *Jāvidān-nāma* as a whole—even if it neither uses specific Ismāʿīlī terminology nor is focused on the topoi typical of Ismāʿīlī interpretations—seems to have its closest analogues in Ismāʿīlī literature.

A significant part of the Christian Chapter is composed in the form of a speech addressed to Christians, and aims at convincing them that the full message of Jesus was not revealed during his historical mission, and can only be realised through Islam. The mission of the Prophet Muḥammad and of the 'maternal' saints following him consists exactly of readying of mankind for the second coming of Jesus, in order to make possible the ultimate revelation of the original divine Word. This revelation will disclose the innermost truth, or esoteric dimension, not only of Islam and Christianity, but also of all previous prophetic books, including the Qurʾān, the Old and New Testaments. Christ returned as the Saviour will open the apocalyptic Book mentioned in the canonical *Revelation*, which symbolises the ultimate knowledge contained in the form of the human body, and he will unify mankind into one religion of universal truth.

It is in this apologetic context that the passages from the Christian texts are cited in the Christian Chapter. The Christian Chapter suggests that, beyond his intention to alleviate the points of disagreement between the various Muslim factions and communities, such as the issue of the imamate, or the legit-

1 On him, see Chapter One, n. 6.

imate leadership of the Muslim community, visible elsewhere in the *Jāvidān-nāma*, Faḍl Allāh also wanted to make his interpretation of Islam attractive for Jews and Christians. His messianic doctrine, centred on the idea of inspired hermeneutics (*ta'wīl*) leading to the universal truths transcending any religious and linguistic divisions, was a natural support for developing such an ecumenical outlook.

Several conceptions, such as idea that the human bodily form is the locus of manifestation of the divine Word, or the beliefs related to the eschatological role of the Saviour and the ultimate *ta'wīl* realised by him at the end of time, could have been expressed perfectly with reference to the Islamic sources, in particular to Shī'ī *ḥadīth* literature and works of the Muslim mystics, for example Ibn al-'Arabī. However, in the Christian Chapter, these conceptions are formulated as interpretations of the Christian material, or of a combination of the Islamic and Christian scriptural sources. On the one hand, this is in line with the general tendency to minimise direct references to Shī'ī sources, something that can be observed throughout the *Jāvidān-nāma*. The Shī'ī doctrinal points, controversial from the Sunnī point of view, are thus presented in a Christian garb, which could be an expression of *taqiyya*, that is, the tactical dissimulation practised in Shī'ī circles.²

On the other hand, the parallel use of Muslim and Christian scriptures in the Christian Chapter conveys the idea that these scriptures express the same truth. This also revives the question of influence of the Christian sources—especially texts such as the *Cave of Treasures* and *Arabic Apocalypse of Peter* which were available in Arabic from the early centuries of Islam and relatively well known to Muslim authors—on the formation of Islamic mystical and messianic doctrines.

2 On this practice see Amir-Moezzi, 'Dissimulation', in *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*.

Critical Edition and Translation



Notes on the Critical Edition, Manuscripts and Translation

The present critical edition results from the collation of four manuscripts of the *Jāvidān-nāma-yi kabīr*:

1. British Library Or 5957 (BL), copied by 'Isā b. Kamāl al-Dīn, and completed on 18 Dhū-l-Qa'da 1196/ 25 October 1782 (fol. 481a–b).
2. Istanbul Millet Library, Ali Emiri Farsi 920 (AEF), copied by 'Alī b. Muḥammad Ḥusaynī (fol. 423b) on 17 of Ramaḍān 992/ 22 September 1584 (fol. 423b).¹
3. Cambridge University Library Ee. 1.27 (C), which is not dated and does not contain a mention of the copyist. On the basis of its writing, Browne estimated that this manuscript could have been copied as early as the 9th/15th century.²
4. Basel University Library M v1 72 (B), copied by Sayyid Walī, not dated.³

There exist several other manuscripts of the *Jāvidān-nāma-yi kabīr* which I was unable to consult while preparing this edition.⁴

All passages included in the Christian Chapter of the *Jāvidān-nāma*, with the exception of the last section on Spirit, are found and collated in all four manuscripts. The section on Spirit is found only in two manuscripts, BL fol. 467b–474a, and AEF fol. 424b–430b. It is difficult to say whether this section belongs to the original text of the *Jāvidān-nāma*, or whether it is part of the miscellaneous notes added at the end of each manuscript. Both BL and AEF

1 For a more detailed description of this manuscript, see Abdūlbâki Gölpınarlı, *Hurūfîlik metinleri kataloğu*, Ankara 1973 (repr. 1989), pp. 56–59.

2 Edward G. Browne, *A Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the Library of the University of Cambridge*, Cambridge, 1896, notice pp. 69–86, date pp. 70–71.

3 The colophon (fol. 339a) contains the letters *mīm*, *rā'*, *zayn*, *'ayn*, *ghayn*, the numeric values of which add up to 1317. If this corresponds to a Hijri date, this manuscript should have been copied in 1899–1900. However, this looks highly improbable.

4 According to the catalogue descriptions, there should be at least four or five manuscripts of the *Jāvidān-nāma-yi kabīr* in libraries in Cairo, Istanbul and Leiden. However, since several works attributed to Faḍl Allāh circulated under the title *Jāvidān*, it is necessary to check if those manuscripts contain the *Jāvidān-nāma-yi kabīr*, and whether they are complete or partial copies.

have two colophons, BL fol. 466b and 481a, and AEF 423b and 437a, and the passage on Spirit is located between these colophons.

The collation demonstrated a consistent difference in variant readings between the BL, on the one side, and the three other manuscripts, on the other. Therefore, for the sake of simplicity, the final text of this edition consistently includes only the variants from the BL and AEF. The AEF is chosen because it is one of the oldest among the extant manuscripts of the *Jāvidān-nāma*, and also because, unlike B and C, it is clearly dated and, like the BL, contains the section on Spirit. Among the manuscripts used for the present work, the AEF is thus the only one that can be collated with the BL for all passages included in the Christian Chapter. Variants from the B and C manuscripts are mentioned only occasionally, mostly when they are absent from both BL and AEF and contain a confirmation of a significant variant or a substantial addition.

All folio references in the main text are made to the BL manuscript. However, when the AEF, B or C manuscripts contain, in my opinion, a better variant reading than the BL, or a significant addition missing in the latter, this reading or addition is placed in the main text, while the less probable or erroneous BL variant is indicated in the footnotes. The text in the footnotes is understood as a substitute for the main text in the indicated manuscript if the main text is between square brackets, or as an addition after the corresponding word of the main text if there are no square brackets.

The final *hamzas* in the Arabic words are not marked, and either the full *tā'* (ت) or *hā'* (ه) is substituted for *tā' marbūṭa* (ة), in accordance with standard Persian spelling. The line differentiating the *gāf* (گ) from the *kāf* (ک), and three diacritical dots of the Persian letters *pe* (پ), *che* (چ), and *zhe* (ژ) are added consistently in cases when the copyist used only one dot. The Qur'ānic citations are vocalised and when necessary tacitly corrected. The references to the verse numbers are consistently indicated in the text of the translation, and can also be found in the Index of Qur'ānic citations. The Arabic text of the *ḥadīths* is reproduced without vocalisation and enclosed in quotation marks. The abbreviations and special symbols often used in the early Ḥurūfī texts, such as *کی* for *کلمه*, *ع* for *ساعت* etc. are tacitly developed.

In the text of the Christian Chapter, Jesus is referred to by two names: 'Isā and *Masīh*. 'Isā is consistently translated as 'Jesus'; *Masīh* is mostly translated etymologically as 'Christ', but sometimes also as 'Messiah' or 'Saviour', depending on the context. The English text of the biblical verses follows the King James Version. Unless otherwise indicated, the English translation of the Qur'ānic verses is that of Arthur John Arberry's *The Koran Interpreted*.

The references to the biblical text and to the *Book of the Rolls* are indicated in translation at the first occurrence. They are not repeated at the subsequent

occurrences, but can be found in the Index of citations from the Bible and the *Book of the Rolls*. All references to *ḥadīths* are indicated at the first occurrence in the text. Since the use of *ḥadīths* in the Christian Chapter is much less extensive than the use of the Qurʾān or Christian sources, the references to the *ḥadīths* cited are not collated in a separate index.

The text of the Christian Chapter contains a certain number of passages in the Astarābādī dialect. These passages, as well as dialectal words and phrases inserted in the passages in standard Persian are not translated in the text, in order to preserve its original condition. In the first paragraphs, the underline translation of the C manuscript is preserved in the footnotes as a first orientation for the reader. The Astarābādī vocabulary included after the Persian text contains the standard Persian equivalents of all dialectal words used in the Christian Chapter. An interested reader can find a much more extensive vocabulary, with examples from the *Jāvidān-nāma-yi kabīr*, in Šādiq Kiyā's *Vāzha-nāma-yi Gurgānī* (Tehran, 1330 Sh./1952).

All citations from the Qurʾān, *ḥadīths*, biblical and apocryphal texts, as well as paraphrases of identified scriptural sources, are italicised in translation, in order to make the scriptural material used in the Christian Chapter clearly visible.

As mentioned at the beginning of the Chapter Four, the text of the *Jāvidān-nāma* does not have any thematic structure, and consists of passages of variable lengths which follow each other often without any logical continuity. On the other hand, the same topics are often discussed in several separate passages, sometimes in a very similar context, which creates the impression of repetition. On some occasions, when the iteration did not contain any significant new elements, I have omitted translating the entire passage and only provided a short summary between square brackets. However, in most cases, what at a first glance looks like a repetition of an already familiar idea does contain a piece of new information, and cannot be omitted without altering or impoverishing the general picture. Fragmentation and repetition are the inherent characteristics of the *Jāvidān-nāma* as a text, and they do make the reading of this text a particularly demanding task. In order to facilitate this task, in addition to the summary provided in the Chapter Four, I have divided the text into short numbered paragraphs, mostly in agreement with the divisions found in the manuscripts. Each paragraph is a logically coherent unit of the text, and numbering makes it easy to compare the translation with the original text.

The Text of the 'Christian Chapter' and Its Translation

- 1 بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ¹ عیسی در انجیل واتی که "اول چیزی که از آسمان آهی² سخن بی و من⁵⁶ ظ
 3³ سخن بن⁴ همازن⁵ که [جائی دیر]⁶ واتی که "انا نطقه" و کلام الله بیان هکره⁷ که ﴿كَلِمَتُهُ
 أَلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ﴾.
- 2 آنکه هوا⁸ که "از خدا اول چیزی که آهی⁹ سخن بی و من آ سخن بن¹⁰" یعنی [که]¹¹ آ سخن که
 بآدم آهی¹² و بهمه انبیا من آ سخن و راستی¹³ ﴿فَتَلَقَى آدَمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ﴾ عیسی واتی¹⁴ که
 "تا من خوشتنه¹⁵ فدا [نکین]¹⁶ آدم به بهشت [دنشوی]¹⁷".
- 3 و از اشراط الساعه یکی آمدن اوست چنانکه در قرآن آمده است [که]¹⁸ ﴿وَأَنَّهُ لَعَلُّهُ لِّلسَّاعَةِ﴾
 تا [خوه]¹⁹ نبیاسه²⁰ قیامت نبو²¹ و خو واتی²² که "انا نطقه" و خدا واتی²³ ﴿أَنطَقْنَا اللَّهُ الَّذِي
 أَنطَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ﴾ کلیات فی²⁴ نزول عیسی.
- 4 بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ
 مِنْهُ﴾ الی آخره و جائی [دیگر]²⁵ آمده است که ﴿إِنَّهُ﴾ ای عیسی ﴿لَعَلُّهُ لِّلسَّاعَةِ﴾ همچنانکه²⁶
 در اشراط الساعه [آمده]²⁷ است [که آمدن عیسی از اشراط الساعه است]²⁸ همچون دخان

آن; 3 C 45b, underline translation: آمد. 2 C 45b underline translation: حضرت. 1 B 39a: آن.
 همچنان. 5 C 45b, underline translation: بود. 4 C 45b, underline translation: آن. B 39a: آن.
 7 C 45b, BL 56b دیر is absent. 6 AEF 51a, added overline: دیر; C 45b: جایی; B 39a: جاء دیر; 3 C 45b, underline translation: میکند.
 9 C 45b, underline translation: گفت. 8 C 45b, underline translation: بودم. 10 C 45b, underline translation: آمد.
 12 C 45b, 11 C 45b: که is absent. 13 C 45b, underline translation: آمد. 14 C 45b, underline translation: و راست است.
 16 C 45b, underline translation: خود را. 15 C 45b, underline translation: گفت. 17 C 45b, underline translation: نشود; B 39a: نشوی.
 18 B 39a: نشوی. 19 AEF 51a: خو. 20 C 45b, underline translation: نمایند. 21 C 45b, underline translation: نباشد.
 23 C 45b, underline translation: گفت. 22 C 45b, underline translation: نباشد. 24 AEF 51a: deleted; C 45b; B 39a: فی is absent. 25 B 39a: دیر.
 26 AEF 51a; C 45b: همچنانکه; B 39a: آ. 27 AEF 51a; C 45b: الساعه آمده. 28 AEF 51a; C 45b: که آمدن عیسی از اشراط الساعه است.
 29 AEF 51a; C 45b: همچون دخان.

- 1 *In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.* Jesus said in the Gospel: *'The first thing that came from heaven was the Word, and I was that Word.'*¹ Elsewhere, he said: *'I am His Speech.'*² [Jesus] thus explained the divine Word, for [he was] *'His Word that He committed to Mary, and a Spirit from Him'* [Q 4:171].
- 2 As to his saying: *'The first thing that came from God was the Word, and I was that Word'*, this means that *'I was the Word'* received by Adam and all [other] prophets, and this is true: *'Adam received certain words from his Lord'* [Q 2:37]. Jesus [also] said: *'Adam will not enter Paradise until I sacrifice myself.'*³
- 3 One of the signs of the Hour is the [second] coming [of Jesus], for it is said in the Qur'ān [in relation with Jesus]: *'he is knowledge of the Hour'* [Q 43:61]. The Resurrection will not take place before he comes. [Jesus] said: *'I am His Speech'*, and God said: *'God gave us speech, as He gave everything speech'* [Q 41:21]. This is all concerning the descent of Jesus.
- 4 *In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.* *'The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only the Messenger of God, and His Word that He committed to Mary, and a Spirit from Him'* [Q 4:171], and so on. Elsewhere, it is said that *'he'*, i.e., Jesus, *'is knowledge of the Hour'* [Q 43:61], because the [second] coming of Jesus is one of the signs of the Hour, like [the manifestation] of the smoke and of the beast of the earth, in accordance with what God said: *'We shall bring*

1 This and similar sayings attributed to Jesus in the *Jāvidān-nāma* are apparently the author's paraphrase of John 1:1, which is confirmed in fol. 396a and 420a.

2 This is an excerpt from a longer formulation of the Trinity cited elsewhere in the Christian Chapter and similar to that found in the *Book of the Rolls*. See AP, p. 107.

3 The redemptive role of Jesus is mentioned in both the Arabic and Ethiopic versions of the pseudo-Clementines. See Chapter Four, n. 41.

و دَابَّةُ الارضِ که حقّ تعالی گفت ﴿أَخْرَجْنَا لَهُمْ دَابَّةً مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ تُكَلِّمُهُمْ﴾ و دَجَّال که مکتوب بین عینیه "ک ف ر" و طلوع شمس¹ از مغرب و [خسوف و کسوف]².

- 5 اگر سائل سؤال کره که چونی³ که از میان انبیا عیسی [بینکوا هین]⁴ یک | جواب اوی⁵ که خو⁶ خدا کلمه الله خواندی و روح خویشتن خواندی اگر [هیتن واژه]⁷ که آدمه⁸ هم واتی⁹ که روح منه بحکم ﴿وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُّوحِي﴾ جواب [آوی]¹⁰ که [عیسی]¹¹ اول کلمه خواندی و بعد ازان روح منه واتی اگر عیسی را کلمه الله نمی خواندی معلوم [نمی شدی]¹² که روح کلمه است.

- 6 و¹³ وجه دوم [اوی که]¹⁴ خدا از کلمه الله که عیسی بونفی اب که پدری¹⁵ بکی که از ﴿كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ﴾ کتابت خدائی را از وجه ام معلوم توان کین و توان خواندن نه از وجه اب که اگر خلقت وجه ام نبندی¹⁶ از وجه [آدم]¹⁷ کتابت کتابت خدائی و خواندن مصحف حیات که فطروس در کشف دیه بی که بهفت انگشتی مهر داره امکان خواندن نبندی¹⁸ و ظهور کلمه نبندی و این در خلقت آفرینش معلوم ببو که ابن مریم را بینکوا هین

- 7 بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ای ا کسی که خدا واتی ﴿وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ﴾ اگر سائل سؤال و⁸³ کره که ا که مخبر صادق واتی که چون عیسی پیاسه همه یک دین و یک مذهب بند و همه اهل کتَاب بخوایمان پیارند عبارت از اهل کتَاب همه کس بند که بکتَاب آسمانی و کتب سماوی

¹ AEF 51a: الشمس. ² AEF 51a: و کسوف added at the margin; B 39a: و کسوف; absent in the BL. ³ C 45b, underline translation: چونس. ⁴ C 45b, underline translation: باید آمدن; B 39a: آهن. ⁵ C 45b, underline translation: آنست. ⁶ C 46a, underline translation: او را. ⁷ C 46a, underline translation: سائل گوید. ⁸ B 39a: آدم. ⁹ C 46a, underline translation: پدری. ¹⁰ AEF 51a: یی is deleted; C 46a; B 39a: آ. ¹¹ BL: آ عیسی. ¹² AEF 51a: یی is deleted; C 46a; B 39a: آ. ¹³ C 46a; B 39a: و is absent. ¹⁴ AEF 51a: که; C 46a; B 39a: که. ¹⁵ AEF 51a: پدری. ¹⁶ C 46a; B 39a: نبودی. ¹⁷ B 39a: آدم; absent in the BL. ¹⁸ C 46a, underline translation: نبودی.

forth for them out of the earth a beast that shall speak unto them [Q 27:82], [like the manifestation] of the Antichrist with [the letters] *kāf, fā, rā* written between his eyes, and the sun rising from the west, and the eclipse of the moon and of the sun.⁴

- 5 If someone asks why it is Jesus, and not another Prophet, who will come [at the end of time], one [possible] | answer is that God named him the 'Word of God', and His spirit. If someone says that [God] also named Adam His Spirit, in accordance with *I breathed My spirit into him* [Q 15:29 and 38:72], the answer is that Jesus was named first the 'Word', and then 'Spirit'. If [God] had not named Jesus the 'Word of God', it would not be clear that the Spirit is the Word. 57a

- 6 Another argument is that God did not give a father to the Word of God who is Jesus. *'All things perish, except His Face* [Q 28:88]: the divine writing can be perceived and read on the face of the mother, not on the face of the father.⁵ If the original nature of the face of the mother did not exist, it would be impossible to read the divine writing on the face of Adam, as well as to read the Book of Life sealed with the seven seals from the vision of Peter.⁶ The manifestation of the Word would not take place then. Thus, the necessity of [the second] coming of the Son of Mary clearly follows from the original nature of the Creation.

- 7 *In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.* O you, about who God said *'the one who possesses the knowledge of the Book* [Q 13:43]. Supposing that someone says that, according to a trustworthy source, when Jesus comes, all [mankind] will be [unified within] one religion and one creed, and all [those belonging to] the people of the Book will believe in him. The people of the Book are all those who have faith in the celestial book and the 83a

4 This is an allusion to the events which, according to Muslim tradition, will take place at the end of time.

5 This is an allusion to the 'maternal' knowledge written into the bodily form and facial features of Eve, which was discussed in the Introduction, Chapter Two.

6 This is an allusion to the apocalyptic Book with seven seals described in the *Revelation* of John. For the apparent confusion between the *Apocalypse* of Peter and *Revelation* of John in the *Jāvidān-nāma* see above, Chapter Three, n. 19.

اعتقاد دارند کما قال الله تعالى ﴿وَإِنْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لِيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا﴾¹ این چون توان بود و این اختلاف در توحید و معرفت الله و خلقت اشیا چگونه مرتفع تواند بود و از کجا این میسر شود و از کدام در دکوآهین تا این حال مرتفع بیو؟

8 جواب آوی که از خلقت آدم که [خلق الله تعالى آدم علی صورته و علی صورة الرحمان]² که

همه فرزندان آدم اند و بر خلقت آدم اند | و [بر]³ بزرگی و دین و ملت آدم همه قائلند و بر خلافت⁸³ او و مسجود بودن او همه بنی آدم قائل اند [وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا]⁴ و خلقت حوّا که امّ است همه قائلند و خو و عادت و صورت و معاش و ملبوسات و مأکولات و خواصّ وضع⁵ شکل همه بر شکل و صورت آدم است و اصل لغات همه باتفاق لغت آدم است و هر کس که در بهشت درآید بقول مخبر صادق بر صورت آدم و حوّا باشد "طوله ستون ذراعا فی السماء" چرا "ستون ذراعا" واتی در سما از براء سیصد و شصت درجه.

¹ AEF 76a: separation mark. ² Written in full in AEF 76a; BL uses the conventional abbreviation: "نحصة" و "عصن". ³ AEF 76a, added over the line: بر; absent in the BL. ⁴ Written in full in AEF 76a; BL uses the conventional abbreviation: "علها". ⁵ BL: آدم; absent in the AEF 76b.

heavenly books.⁷ As God the Most High says: '*There is not one of the People of the Book but will assuredly believe in him [in Jesus] before his death, and on the Resurrection Day he will be a witness against them*' [Q 4:159]. How is this possible? How can the divergence on the issue of divine unity and on knowledge concerning God and original nature of things be removed? How can this be facilitated? Who can provide an explanation which would remove this condition?

- 8 The answer is in the original nature of Adam, because '*God the Most High created Adam in His form*' and '*in the form of the All-Merciful*'.⁸ All [humans are] children of Adam, they are [made] in accordance with Adam's original nature. | Their speech is [an expression of] the grandeur, religion and nation of Adam. The speech of all descendants of Adam is [an expression of Adam's dignity as] vicegerent [of God], before whom [all the angels] bowed down.⁹ Their speech is [derived from the names taught by God to Adam] in accordance with '*He taught Adam the names, all of them*' [Q 2:31], and [from] the original nature of Eve who is Mother. [All humans share] a customary practice, form, livelihood, way of clothing and nourishing themselves and [other] features of Adam's condition. All [humans] are shaped in accordance with Adam's bodily form. The source of all languages is the language of Adam. According to a trustworthy source, whosoever enters Paradise enters there in the form of Adam and Eve.¹⁰ '*His height in heaven is 60 cubits*'. Why it is said '60 cubits in heaven'? Because [the heavenly sphere contains] 360 degrees.¹¹

83b

7 Given the following discourse, 'the celestial book' (*kitāb-i āsmānī*) should be probably understood here as an allusion to Jesus, the Word of God according to the Qur'ān, and 'the first thing that came from heaven' according to the *Jāvidān-nāma*'s reading of John 1:1. Jesus and Adam share the same original nature, they are the most direct and the most perfect manifestations of the original divine writing. The original divine writing containing the full number of the 28/32 primary 'words' is also visible in the highest heavenly sphere, and reflected in its division into six times 28 and six times 32 degrees. 'Heavenly books' (*kutub-i samāwī*) is most probably a reference to the prophetic books.

8 On these *ḥadīths*, see Gimaret, *Dieu à l'image de l'homme*, pp. 123–142.

9 Allusion to Q 2:34.

10 Possessing the form of Adam and Eve means, in the *Jāvidān-nāma*, not only possession of the physical form of the human body, but also of the knowledge of its innermost meaning as the locus of manifestation of the divine Word.

11 For the references of this *ḥadīth*, see Gimaret, *Dieu à l'image de l'homme*, p. 123; and Kister, 'Adam: a Study of Some Legends in Tafsīr and Ḥadīth Literature', *Israel Oriental Studies* 13 (1993), pp. 113–174, in particular pp. 137–140. According to the *Jāvidān-nāma*, the cosmic Adam is identical with the heavenly sphere, because both reflect the total number of the 28 plus 32 primordial 'words', which add up to 60. This is expressed in the 60 cubits of Adam's height mentioned in the *ḥadīth*, and in the fact that the heavenly sphere can be divided in six times 60 degrees.

- 9 ¹حقیقت کفار و فجّار و انبیا و اولیا و جن و انس و ملائکه و هر چه بود و هست و باشد بخانند ¹⁵⁰ظ هرگاه که 32 و حقیقت آن 32 که [سر]² از مظهر شخصی معین و رآرد حقیقت همه سر از وجود ا کس برآوی بو خو اشرار را دره مظهر محو بکیه بو ابرار مانده بند مقام ﴿لَمَنِ الْمُلْكُ﴾ بو خو رسه که واژه که من مجموع همه حقیقتن [و]³ هرگاه که خو بیان حقیقت و هستی 32 کلمه بکره همان بو که بیان همه [کتب]⁴ آسمانی بکی بو و حقیقت همه هستی خو بو.
- 10 اگر هیتن اژترسا سؤال کره که سبب چه [بی]⁵ که عیسی واتی که با شمه هر چه واتن باشارت ¹⁵¹و واتن و بتأویل انبار بیاسان تا همه ظاهر بکران و اسا ظاهر نیکران براء ا که آ وقت ظاهر نیشین کین که همه کلمه 32 بی و خو مظهر همه دره وقت نبی زانی که در وقتی که در مظهری ظاهر بیو که بهمه تلفظ بکره و بتامی خلقت آفرینش کلمه در خو ظاهر بیو اسا ظاهر بشیه کین و اگر نه بیان خلقت که در مقابله کلمه کیتی چون کلمه بر زبان خوروان نیو چون ظاهر بکره.
- 11 باب مسیح ا که هویند که عیسی از مریم بکر گوشتمند بی بینکو زانان که چه معنی دارد ¹⁵⁵و مثلاً خدا در قرآن هوا که عیسی رسول بی و کلمه بی و روح بی و خو که مسیحی هوا که

¹This text is framed as a separate page, and inserted at the beginning of the f. 150b, the direction of the lines is at 90 degrees to the main text (from the bottom to the top of the folio). The text is in smaller writing, surrounded by the 32 letters of the Arabo-Persian alphabet. The same layout is found in AEF fol. 140a. ²BL: سر; absent in AEF 140a. ³BL: و; absent in AEF 140a. ⁴AEF 140a: کتّاب; BL: کتب. ⁵AEF 140b: چی; BL: بی.

- 9 [The 32 ontological 'words' and letters] constitute the innermost truth of disbelievers and sinners as well as of prophets, saints, genii, humans and angels, of everything past, present and future. When these 32 and their innermost truth become discernible in the locus of manifestation of a certain person, [the innermost truth of] everything finds itself manifested in the body of this person. Vices are eliminated from such a locus of manifestation, and only the virtues remain. [Such a condition] is the spiritual station [corresponding to the verse]: '*Whose is the Kingdom [today]?*' [Q 40:16]. Whosoever reaches [this station], can say: 'I am the sum of all truth'. When such a person explains the truth and ontological reality of the 32 'words', all prophetic books find themselves explained.¹² Such a person is the ontological truth [that sustains] everything existing. 150b
- 10 Supposing that someone from among the Christians asks why Jesus said: '*Everything I told you was told by allusions. I will come another time in order to provide their interpretation and to make all [their meanings] apparent, for I cannot make them apparent now?*'¹³ He could not make them apparent during [his historical mission], because the total number of the [ontological] 'words' is 32 and, at that time, he was not the locus of manifestation of all of them. But he knew that he would appear in a locus of manifestation allowing him to articulate the totality [of the 32 'words'], and then the Word encompassing the totality of the Creation will be manifested in him. Then he will be able to manifest [the true meaning of his words]. But how could the explanation of Creation, which is the counterpart to the [total] Word, be manifested before [all the 32 'words' of this] Word were included in his language?¹⁴ 151a
- 11 Chapter on Christ. It is necessary to know the true meaning of the statement that Jesus received [his body of] flesh from the Virgin Mary. For example, in the Qur'ān, God said that Jesus was a Messenger, and a Word, and a Spirit.¹⁵ Jesus said himself: '*The Father is Power without beginning, and I am* 155a

12 According to the *Jāvidān-nāma*, the letters of the human alphabets with which the prophetic books are composed are an expression of the 28/32 primary ontological 'words'. Therefore, the knowledge of the latter entails the knowledge of the innermost meanings contained in all prophetic books.

13 Probably a paraphrase of John 16:25.

14 According to the *Jāvidān-nāma*, the language spoken by Jesus during his historical mission did not include all 28/32 elements which are necessary for the full manifestation of the divine Word. During his historical mission, Jesus spoke either Hebrew, which contains 22 letters, or Greek, which contains 24.

15 Allusion to Q 4:171.

"الاب [القوة]¹ الازلیة وانا نطقه" پس هنکو که بقول عیسی پیش نصاری عیسی نطق خدا بو و دره وقت که از مریم بقول خنان گوشتمند بی خو 32 کلمه تام نی.

12 32 کلمه تام که عیسی و همه انبیا و کافر و مسلمان بآ خلقت و بآ اندازه صورت و پیکر و هیات بکیته اند علامت آهینی خو آوی که مصحف حیوته که بهفت انگشتی امهر دگیره و پیش هر دو دست پدر قربان بو در صورت هفت شاخ بره و همه ملائکه خو سجده بکرنند و مردم را بملکوت آسمان برسنه و از زبانها و لغتها مختلف بیرهنه ازن آهی در کشف کتاب شمعون.

13 باب آهین عیسی که مسیحی چرا واتی که عیسی از آسمان کامه آهین² براء واتی که [عیسی کامه آهین که عیسی واتی که]³ خو کلمه الله هستی و حقیقت کلمه کامه بین که بیاسه پس عیسی بیاسه.

14 آ که واتی از آسمان بیاسه چون بیان کلمه بواسطه رسیدن بسر معراج ظاهر کامه بین و سر معراج دره شوبی که رسول با آسمان بشوی و صریف الاقلام اشنوی پس هرگاه که آسر بیاسه آ کس که آوه بیان کره از آسمان آهی بو.

15 انک واتی باز که "القرآن امامی" ﴿وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ فِي إِمَامٍ مُبِينٍ﴾ قرآن کلمه و کلمه امامی¹⁷⁷ و عیسی کلمه.

16 مصحف حیوات که در کتاب شمعون آهی بچه معنی خو مصحف حیوات واتی و بهفت انگشتی مهربکی براء آ که مراد اژه مصحف خلقت وجود و دیم آدمی هستی که قائم مقام

¹ AEF 144b: القوة; BL: قوّة. ² BL: که; absent in the AEF 163a. ³ This passage is absent in the AEF 163a.

His Speech.¹⁶ From this saying of Jesus, it can be concluded that, for Christians, Jesus was the Speech of God. But at the time when he, as they [the Christians] say, was incarnated from Mary, he did not [possess the means for the manifestation of] all the 32 'words'.

- 12 [However], Jesus and all [other] prophets, as well as unbelievers and Muslims, all have a [bodily] form shaped in accordance with the original nature and measure of the full set of 32 [ontological] 'words'.¹⁷ The distinctive marks of [Jesus' second] coming are mentioned in the revelation of the book of [Peter] Simon: *the Book of Life sealed by the seven seals, and the sacrifice [of Jesus] in the form of a lamb with seven horns before the Father, when all the angels bow down before him, and he brings people into the kingdom of heaven and delivers them from the diversity of languages*.¹⁸
- 13 Concerning the [second] coming of Jesus as Saviour: why it is said that Jesus will come back from heaven? Because Jesus said that he is the Word of God, and he will be the innermost truth of this Word to come. Therefore, Jesus will come [back]. 176a
- 14 As to his coming [back] from *heaven*, since the explanation of the Word is manifested by attaining the secret of the heavenly ascension [of the Prophet Muḥammad], and this secret [was disclosed] the night when the Messenger went to the heaven and heard the creaking of the pens,¹⁹ any person who brings the explanation of this secret comes [necessarily] from *heaven*.
- 15 It is said '*the Qur'ān is my Imām*',²⁰ and '*everything We have numbered in a clear Imām*' [Q 36:12].²¹ The Qur'ān is the Word and the Word is the Imām, and Jesus is the Word. 177a-b
- 16 In what sense is the Book of Life mentioned in the book of [Peter] Simon named the 'Book of Life', and [why is it] sealed with seven seals? Because it refers to the book of the original nature of Adam's body and face, which are

16 This is a truncated version of the formula expressing the idea of Trinity, cited in full elsewhere in the Christian Chapter. Very similar formulas are contained in *AP*, p. 107.

17 It will be recalled that, according to the *Jāvidān-nāma*, the human bodily form is the locus of manifestation of the total set of the 28/32 'words' of the primordial divine Word.

18 This description seems close to Chapter 5 of the *Revelation* of John.

19 The 'creaking of the pens' is a detail common to most accounts on the heavenly journey (*mi'rāj*) of the Prophet Muḥammad.

20 For this saying, see Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 110 vols., Beirut, 1404/1983–1984, vol. 6, p. 237.

21 The word "*imam*" in this verse is usually translated as "book", "register". I left it without translation because, in this context, it could allude to the specific Shī'ī conception of Imam as a divinely inspired guide.

کلمه هستند و امصحف خداوند حیاتی آوجهی دیری که هر که خوبخوانه حیات وادی کره
و امصحف عیسی بوشا که کلمه الله هستی.

- 17 همه انبیا و خدا شناسان همانز که چیزی که واقع بکامه بین از امور دین و دینی در کشف
[هدیند]¹ و مردمه [خبرهای]² که واقع بکامه بین هویند همه انبیا مفتح کتاب حیات بدیند
که کئی و [چونی و چه]³ و بچه نشانی.
- 18 آ که واتی ﴿وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي﴾ مراد کلمه بی همه که ﴿وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا﴾⁴ بآ
دلیل که واتی ﴿رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ أُلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ﴾ در باب عیسی واتی که روح بی
و کلمه بی و واتی ﴿فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهِ﴾⁵ مِنْ رُوحِنَا و مراد از روح کلمه بی و روح.
- 19 مسیح از دختر بکر عذرا بزائی بجهت آنکه ام است و عذرا [باین]⁶ معنی که کسی باو و خلقت²⁴³
او نرسیده است یعنی کلمه که مسیح است⁷ از انجا ظاهر شود.
- 20 همه چیزها بیکار خدین گابند و خدین خطند و علم خدین گابند و همانز که کلمه جدا جدا²⁴⁴ ظ
ظاهری همه جوا جوا هستند و همه عین قوت اند بدلیل ﴿يَحْوِ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُثَبِّتُ﴾ بعضی محو
بی بند و بعضی⁸ نبیند که ﴿وَعِنْدَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ﴾.
- 21 عیسی چون کلمه بی واتی که پیر قوت ازلی و من نطق خو و روح القدس صوت خو و اما هر²⁴⁴ ظ
سه یکی هستند پس پیش خو کلمه و صوت یکی بو اصل پیر هستی.

¹ AEF 178b: هدیند = میگویند; BL: هدیند = میدیدند; ² AEF 178b: خبرهای; BL: خبرهای; ³ AEF 178b: چی; ⁴ BL: abbreviated as علما; ⁵ AEF 182b: فیها. Both variants are Qur'anic. ⁶ AEF 224a: بآن; ⁷ BL: که; absent in AEF 224a. ⁸ BL: ثابت; apparently removed from AEF 225a.

the locum tenens of the Word, and this Book is the Master of Life. On the other hand, all that he [Jesus] read manifested life, and it is Jesus, who is the Word of God, who opens the Book [of Life].²²

- 17 All the prophets and those possessing the knowledge of God were able to foresee future events, those concerning religious or worldly matters, in a state of spiritual disclosure, and they informed people about what will happen. All the prophets saw the person who will open the Book of Life, [they knew] who and how he is, and what his distinctive mark will be. 193b
- 18 The expression '*breathed My spirit into him*' [Q 15:29 and 38:72] refers to all the 'words' [taught by God to Adam] in accordance with '*He taught Adam the names, all of them*' [Q 2:31], because it is said [that Jesus] was '*the Messenger of God, and His Word that He committed to Mary, and a Spirit from Him*' [Q 4:171]. Concerning Jesus, it is said that he was the Spirit and the Word, and it is said: '*We breathed into her of Our Spirit*' [Q 66:12]. 'Spirit' refers to 'Word'. 197b
- 19 Christ was born to a virgin. [Mary] was the mother and she was a virgin, in the sense that nobody had reached her and her original nature. The Word, which is Christ, was manifested from that place [i.e., from the virginity of Mary]. 243a
- 20 All things together constitute the book and the writing of God, and the knowledge²³ of the divine book. Similarly to words, which manifest themselves separately [one after another, all the objects] appear as separate [entities], but they are all identical with the Power [without beginning]. In accordance with [the verse]: '*God blots out, and He establishes whatsoever He will*' [Q 13:39] some [of these objects] are blotted out, and some of them are not, for '*with Him is the Mother of the Book*'.²⁴ 244b
- 21 Because Jesus was the Word, he said: '*The Father is Power without beginning, I am His Speech, and the Holy Spirit is His Voice, but all three are one*'.²⁵ This means that, according to him, the Word and the Voice are one, and the Father is [their] foundation. 244b

22 This would seem to be another allusion to Chapter 5 of the *Revelation*.

23 According to the *Jāvidān-nāma*, any visible form represents the 'knowledge' (*'ilm*) of the corresponding metaphysical truth, because the form indicates the truth which otherwise would remain inaccessible.

24 This phrase is the continuation of the same verse Q. 13:39.

25 This is the full version of the formula expressing the idea of Trinity apparently borrowed from the *Book of the Rolls*. See n. 2 above. Cf. *AP*, p. 106: 'The Father is majesty and eternal power, I am His word and the Spirit is action and procession', and p. 107: 'My Father is mind, I am its Word and the Spirit is its voice'.

- 22 ﴿وَخَشَعَتِ الْأَصْوَاتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ﴾¹ کلمه [اژه]² کو که ظاهر هیوآ خوین ذاتی و خو صفاتی و عین خوی و آنچه متشابهاتی بحکم کلمه اژه ذات [وریره]³ و مثل و مانند آ کلمه هستی پس اوی عین خان بو.
- 23 وَا [ذات]⁴ که عبارتی از همه اشیا براء آ همه اشیا⁵ بشکل⁶ علم کلمه برآوی و لوح محفوظ که خو عین کلمه هستی.
- 24 ای طالب بهترین کلمات که در وجود آدمی موحد مرگب هبوا ترکیبی که در اشیا نظر عالی²⁴⁶ و هرکه و هیوینه که 32 کلمه مفرده چون محیط بر همه اشیا هستی و عین همه اشیا هستی و همه اشیا قوت ازلی هستی.
- 25 و لطف و قهر از قوت ازلی ظاهر بیبو و همه یکند که اگر قوت ازلی بدر بشو بتصور کلمه و صوت موجود نی و اگر کلمه و صوت بدر شو قوت ازلی موجود نی و در ذات خود همه یکند.
- 26 و نظر که همه اشیا ظاهر و باطن قوت ازلی وینه [و کتابت خدایی وینه]⁷ و کتابت عین خودانه و هر شی که ترکیب است عکس آنی اثر را واتی که گوینده کلمه توحید نکشند.
- 27 بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ عیسی واتی که اول چیزی که از آسمان آهی سخن بی [و خدا بآن سخن³²¹ بی و من آن سخن بن]⁸ اول سخن از بشر معین [که]⁹ بآدم آمد که خدای تعالی آدم را تعلیم کرد.

¹ AEF 225a: separation mark. ² AEF 225a: اژه. ³ AEF 225a: وریره. ⁴ AEF 225b: ذات; BL: ذاتی. ⁵ BL: أ; absent in AEF 225b. ⁶ BL: و; removed in AEF 225b. ⁷ AEF 226b, added at the margin: و کتابت عین خدایی وینه; BL: و کتابت خدایی وینه. ⁸ AEF 294b; B 220b: و خدا بآن سخن بی و من آن سخن بن. ⁹ B 220b: که.

- 22 [Similarly, the Qur'ānic verse mentions] '*Voices will be hushed to the All-Merciful*' [Q 20:108]. It is from that place that the Word is manifested. There is its essence, and it [the Word] is its attribute, being identical with it. What is called 'ambiguous' [verses and expressions of the Qur'ān] arises, by virtue of the Word, from that essence, and is in the likeness and similitude of this Word. They [the Word with all attributes it generates?] are identical with it [the essence?].
- 23 Since this essence consists of all things, all things are shaped in accordance with the knowledge of the Word [derived from the essence], [and contained in] the well-preserved Tablet, which is identical with the Word.
- 24 O seeker of the best 'words' which were brought together to compose the body of Adam! When you have a supreme vision of things, you can see that they are [all] encompassed by the 32 separate 'words', which are identical with all things, and all things are the Power without beginning.²⁶ 246a
- 25 Grace and Rigour manifest themselves from the Power without beginning. All [three] are one. Supposing there is no Power without beginning, there would be no Word and no Voice. And if the Word and the Voice did not exist, there would be no Power without beginning. In their essence, they are one and the same.
- 26 Look and see that all things, external and internal, are the Power without beginning and divine [ontological] writing. Know that [the visible ontological] writing is identical with Him, and is reflected in every compound entity. This is why it is said that whosoever utters the formula of divine unity should not be killed.²⁷
- 27 *In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.* Jesus said: '*The first thing that came from heaven was the Word, and God was with that Word, and I am that Word*'. It is well known that, among humans, Adam was the first to receive the Word. God [Himself] taught this Word to Adam.²⁸ 321a

26 The formula 'Power without beginning' is almost certainly inspired by the descriptions of the Trinity in the *Book of the Rolls*. Cf. 'We are the beginning and we have no end. We are above the beginning and above time ... our glorification and magnification are ... without beginning and without end' (AP, p. 107); 'Nous n'avons pas de commencement, ni de fin' (Grébaut, 'Littérature éthiopienne pseudo-Clémentine', 17 (1912), pp. 246, 247).

27 It will be recalled that, in the *Jāvidān-nāma*, all created things are essentially compounds composed of the primordial 'words' and letters. Realisation of this fact leads to the genuine perception of the divine unity, which is the condition of true faith.

28 This is an allusion to Q 2:31: 'And He taught Adam the names, all of them'.

- 28 معنی سخن عیسی که آ سخن که قائم بذات خدا و خدا بآن سخن و آ آدم سخن گفت "من [آن]¹ سخنم و من آن سخنم" که خدا و همه انبیا واتی² ﴿إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ﴾ مطلقا عیسی کلمه خدا بی.
- 29 و در انجیل آمده است که جان پاک و روح پاک در شکم مریم بکر گوشتند شد [و]³ آمد و بیان کرد که "من روح [خدا ام]⁴ [و سخن خدا ام و کلمه خدا ام]⁵ هر کس که در من نظر کرد در پدر من نظر کرد و من و پدر⁶ هر دو [هیسان]⁷ بند" اثر را که کلمه عین ذات خوبو.
- 30 آن⁸ زمان ای ترسا بزبان که چرا مسیح [که]⁹ جان پاک بی¹⁰ گوشتند بی اثر را که در توریت آمده است که حق تعالی گفت "میخواستم که شخصی بیافرینم بشکل ما و صورت [ما]¹¹ و هیئات ما که پادشاه مرغان هوا و ماهیان دریا باشد آدم را [بیافریدم]¹²" و همه اسما که تمام سخن است تعلیم او کرد [که]¹³ مسیح گفت "من آن سخنم".
- 31 و وجه آدم را چون بر خط استواء او بگذری³² خط ظاهر شود و فرق مو و دوا برو و چهار مره و دو مو که بر دو موضع بینی¹⁴ رسته است که در توریت آمده است [که]¹⁵ روح آدم [از]¹⁶ انجا دمیده است و آن دو خط بنسبت خطهای دیگر مخفیست اول ابتداء روح [و]¹⁷ جان پاک از انجا یکی و دو¹⁸ عارض و دو¹⁹ مو بر لب بالا و یک خط [بر]²⁰ لب زیر که شانزده خط باشد بر شانزده موضع که³² خط باشد.

خدا ام: BL; 4 AEF 294b: خدا ام. 3 AEF 294b: و. 2 AEF 294b: که. 1 AEF 294b: آن.

هیسان: 7 AEF 294b: من. 6 B 221a: absent in the BL. و سخن خدا ام و کلمه خدا ام: 5 AEF 294b:

و. 11 AEF 294b: و. 10 AEF 294b: is absent; BL: که. 9 AEF 294b: این. 8 AEF 294b: هیسا: BL:

BL: 14 AEF 294b: است. 13 AEF 294b: بیافرید: BL; 12 AEF 294b: ما. 11 AEF 294b:

خط: 18 AEF 294b: و. 17 AEF 294b: را. 16 AEF 294b: از. 15 AEF 294b: که. 14 AEF 294b: است.

خط دو: 19 AEF 294b: موی. 20 AEF 294b:

- 28 The meaning of Jesus' saying concerning the Word rooted in the divine essence, and God [being] with that Word, [and its link with] that Word [received by] Adam [is Jesus' statement] *'I am that Word', 'I am the Word spoken by God to all the prophets', for 'The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, | was only the Messenger of God, and His Word that He committed to Mary'* [Q 4:171]. 321b
Necessarily, Jesus was the Word of God.
- 29 In the Gospel, it is said that pure soul and pure spirit became flesh in the womb of Virgin Mary and [Jesus] came and explained: *'I am the Spirit of God, I am the Speech and the Word of God. Whosoever looks at me, looks at my Father.'*²⁹ *I and my Father are one and the same person'*, because the Word is identical with its essence.³⁰
- 30 O Christian, know for what reason Christ, who was pure soul became flesh. This is because, as mentioned in the Torah, God the Most High said: *'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air ... So God created Adam.'*³¹ And He taught him [i.e., Adam] all the names, which constitute the fullness of the Word,³² [the Word concerning which] Christ said 'I am that Word'.
- 31 When the face of Adam is divided by its line of balance,³³ 32 lines become visible: the parting of the hair, two eyebrows, four eyelashes, and two [lines] of hair within the nostrils through which, according to the Torah,³⁴ the spirit of Adam was blown into him. Unlike all other lines, the two latter lines are hidden. They [mark] the original [entrance point of] the pure spirit and soul. Two lines [of hair] on the cheeks, a line over the upper lip and a line under the lower lip bring the number of lines to 16. Counted with corresponding locations [on the face], they make 32 lines.

29 John 14:9: 'he that hath seen me hath seen the Father'.

30 The Word is the first emanation of the Essence identical with it.

31 Genesis 1:26–27, also cited in the *Book of the Rolls*. See Gibson, *Kitāb al-Mağāll*, p. 5; S. Grébaut, 'Littérature éthiopienne pseudo-Clémentine', 16 (1911), p. 82.

32 According to the *Jāvidān-nāma*, the Qur'ānic verse 2:31 where God teaches Adam 'all the names' reflects the divine transmission to Adam of the knowledge of the 28/32 primary 'words' and 'letters'. These primary 'words' constitute the 'fullness of [the original divine] Word'.

33 The main function of the 'line of balance' (*khatt-i istivā'*) in the *Jāvidān-nāma* is differentiation. The differentiation is closely related to discernment and perception: what is not differentiated cannot be perceived. Therefore, the line of balance is the principle of manifestation.

34 Genesis 2:7.

- 32 و آن 32 خط هر خطی چهار خط است [خاک و آب و باد و آتش]¹ پس 32 خط خاک باشد در [مقابله]² 32 کلمه آلهی³ و 32 خط آب باشد در مقابله 32 کلمه آلهی و 32 خط باد باشد در مقابله 32 کلمه آلهی و 32 خط آتش باشد در مقابله 32 کلمه آلهی آن [32]⁵ کلمه [که]⁶ حضرت احدیت بآدم باین 32 کلمه سخن گفت و مسیح گفت "من آن سخن بودم و خدا بآن سخن بود" از براء آنکه آن 32 کلمه که خدا [بآن]⁷ بآدم و انبیا سخن گفت ازلی [و]⁸ ابدی است و قائم بذات حقست و عین ذات حقست.⁹
- 33 و آنکه عیسی [عم]¹⁰ گفت و رسول که "من¹¹ مسیحم خواهم آمدن" | او کلمه آلهی بود و سخن 32 و آلهی بود در صورت مریم در آمد و گوشتند شد و علم آن 32 کلمه و 28 کلمه پدر که آدم است حاصل کرد از مریم که آن 32 [علم]¹² صورت¹³ آن 32 [کلمه]¹⁴ [آلهی]¹⁵ است که مسیح گفت [که]¹⁶ "من آن سخنم که از آسمان [آمدم]¹⁷ و خدا بآن سخن بود و من آن سخن بودم".
- 34 [چون]¹⁸ آن نوبت اول که بیاهی [بو]¹⁹ تمام آن 32 سخن بر زبان خویشوی واتی "[آن]²⁰ بار بیاسان و هر چه برمز و اشارت [واتین]²¹ باشما ای حواریون بیان [آن]²² بکاران" و واتی که "من نیامدم [که]²³ دین انبیا را ناقص کنم بلکه آمدم [که]²⁴ تمام دین انبیا".
- 35 خلقت و صورت و سخن است که حق تعالی بآدم داد و مسیح آن سخن بود و [کامه]²⁵ آهین تا در همه اشیا 32 کلمه [خداوه]²⁶ همانز که وجه [او]²⁷ و دندان او 32 یا 28 است بنماید.
- 36 در همه اشیا هرگاه که خو کلمه آلهی بو و در همه اشیا ظاهر بو در آسمانها و زمینها و در هر ذره از ذرات ظاهر بو و معلوم بو که 32 کلمه در ذات خود یک کلمه است ناچار همه مردم هی

و سخن آلهی: AEF 294b: 3. مقابل: BL; مقابله: AEF 294b: 2. خاک و باد و آب و آتش: B 221a: 1.

که: AEF 295a: 7. بآن: AEF 295a: 7. باشد: BL: 4.

عم: AEF 295a: 10. و: AEF 295a: 8. و: AEF 295a: 9. no separation mark: AEF 295a: 9.

علم: BL; کلمه: AEF 295a: 14. علم: B 221a: 13. کلمه: BL; علم: AEF 295a: 12. که: AEF 295a: 11.

آمدم: AEF 295a: 17. که: AEF 295a: 16. آلهی is absent: B 221a: 15.

واتن: BL; واتین: B 221a: 21. إن: AEF 295a: 20. بی: AEF 295a: 19. چون: B 221a: 18.

کامه: BL; کامه: AEF 295a: 25. که: AEF 295a: 24. تا: BL; که: AEF 295a: 23. ا:

خنان: BL; خداوه: AEF 295a: 26. او: AEF 295a: 27. absent in the BL.

- 32 Every line can be divided into four, [with reference to four natural elements]: earth, water, air and fire.³⁵ There are therefore 32 lines of earth as a counterpart to the 32 divine 'words', [and the same with the 32 lines of water, air and fire]. These are 32 'words', by means of which God spoke to Adam, and Christ said: *I was that Word and God was with that Word*, because those 32 'words' by means of which God spoke to Adam and to [all other] prophets, are without beginning and without end. They are rooted in the essence of God the Real, and they are identical with the essence of the Real.
- 33 As to what Jesus, peace be upon him, said that *I am the Saviour, and I will come [back]*, [which was confirmed by] the Messenger [i.e., Muḥammad],³⁶ | 322a [this is because] he [i.e., Jesus] was the Word of God that came into the bodily form of Mary and became flesh, and [thus] made visible, coming from Mary, the knowledge of those 32 and 28 'words' of the Father who is Adam. For these 32 [that became visible in the bodily form of Jesus] constitute the knowledge of the form of those 32 divine 'words' concerning which Christ said: *I am the Word that came from heaven, and God was with that Word and I was that Word*.
- 34 When he came for the first time, all of these 32 'words' were not yet available in his language. Therefore, he said: *I will come another time and I will explain to you, O Apostles, all that I said by symbols and allusions*.³⁷ He also said: *I do not come to show the deficiency of the religion [established by previous] prophets, but I come to complete the religion of the prophets*.³⁸
- 35 God the Most High gave to Adam an original nature, bodily form and the Word, and this Word was Christ.³⁹ He will return in order to make visible in everything the 32 divine 'words' [reflected in the features of] his face and in [the number] of his teeth, which are 32 or 28.
- 36 He is the divine Word manifested in everything, including the heavens, earth and every atom [of the universe]. And it is now established that the 32 'words' are one Word in their essence. Necessarily, all peoples will be

35 It should be noted that the idea of creation of Adam from four natural elements is also emphasised in the *Book of the Rolls*. Cf. Gibson, 'Kitāb al-Mağall', pp. 5–6; Grébaut, 'Littérature éthiopienne pseudo-Clémentine', 17 (1912), p. 341.

36 This is an allusion to the common Muslim belief in the return of Jesus at the end of time.

37 Cf. John 16:25.

38 Cf. Matt. 5:17.

39 The idea that Jesus is incarnate in Adam is suggested in the *Book of the Rolls*. Cf. Gibson, 'Kitāb al-Mağall', p. 15, and, more explicitly, Grébaut, 'Littérature éthiopienne pseudo-Clémentine', 16 (1911), p. 174; 17 (1912), pp. 250, 341.

دین و هی اعتقاد داشته بند و [بکردند آنست]¹ که انبیا گفته بودند که وقتی که مسیح بیاید شرک برخیزد و مردم همه خداشناس شوند.

37 چون در عالم ظاهر و باطن و خواب و [خیال]² و [در]³ مظهر خیر و شر همه کلمه آلهی و مسیح ظاهر بیو شرک و کفر در مذهب ثماند همه از زبانها مختلف [و دینها مختلف]⁴ برهند و بلغتهاء غریب و عجیب سخن گویند چنانکه [آن]⁵ بحث در کتاب فطروس آمده است که مسیح گفت "من با همه اشیا هستم و بی همه اشیا هستم طول و عرض و عمق [و لون]⁶ که جسمانی است در من ره ندارد" یعنی "سخن خدام و خدا ازینها منزّه است".

38 اگر کسی گوید که مسیح تنها چرا کلمه آلهی باشد و موسی و [هارون]⁷ و انبیا دیگر [نباشد]⁸ چون همه کلمه اند جواب آنست که این سر [ازو]⁹ و این قسم که "من کلمه آلهی [ام] و سخن خدام¹⁰ [11]" ازو ظاهر شد و او خود را در عالم کشف چنین یافته است لا جرم او گوید "من کلمه [آلهی]¹² ام" و پیش عیسی علیه السلام [آن]¹³ بود که "من"¹⁴ مطابق کلمه ام" در هر جا که [هست و]¹⁵ بود و باشد.

39 ﴿وَإِنْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لِيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ﴾ چون او کلمه [آلهی]¹⁶ است همه را باو ایمان [می باید]¹⁷ آورد و در وقت ظهور او همه¹⁸ دران¹⁹ بینند که او چون کلمه آلهی بود حاصل اوی که 32 کلمه و 28 کلمه [که]²⁰ ایشانرا طول نیست [و عرض نیست]²¹ و عمق نیست چنانکه مسیح گفت "22 با همه اشیا و بی همه اشیا"²³.

40 مسیح آن کلمه است و آن کلمه [مثلا]²⁴ آ [و]²⁵ ب [و]²⁶ ت صورت انسان است [و کتابت انسانست]²⁷ و خطّ وجه 28 و 32 نشان و علم ایشان است و خطّ خداست که بروجه آدم نوشته

¹ B 221b: بکر و ندانست. ² AEF 295a: خیال; BL: خیلی. ³ AEF 295a: در; absent in the

BL. ⁴ AEF 295a at the margin; B 221b: و دینها مختلف. ⁵ AEF 295a:

absent in the BL. ⁶ AEF 295a: absent. ⁷ AEF 295b: هرون. ⁸ AEF 295b: نباشند. ⁹ AEF 295b:

این. ¹⁰ AEF 295b: خدا ام; BL: خدایم. ¹¹ B 221b: و سخن خدا ام. ¹² B 221b: آلهی is absent.

¹³ AEF 295b; deleted. ¹⁴ AEF 295b: ان. ¹⁵ AEF 295b: هست و; absent in the BL. ¹⁶ B 221b:

is absent. ¹⁷ AEF 295b: می باید; absent in the BL. ¹⁸ AEF 295b: را deleted; B 221b: را is

absent; BL: را. ¹⁹ B 221b: به. ²⁰ AEF 295b: که; absent in the BL. ²¹ AEF 295b: عرض و

absent in the BL. ²² B 221b: و. ²³ B 221b: هستم. ²⁴ AEF 295b: مثلا; absent in the

BL. ²⁵ AEF 295b: و; absent in the BL. ²⁶ AEF 295b: و; absent in the BL. ²⁷ AEF 295b: و

کتابه انسانست; absent in the BL.

[unified within] one religion and one confession [...]. This is the condition mentioned by the prophets when they said that when the Saviour comes he will remove idolatry, and everyone will be endowed with [an authentic] knowledge of God.

- 37 The divine 'words' and the Saviour will be visible in the apparent and hidden worlds, in dreams and imagination, and in every locus of manifestation, good or evil. Therefore, there will remain no idolatry or disbelief in religion. *Mankind will be delivered from the diversity of languages and creeds,*⁴⁰ *and will speak strange and wonderful languages.*⁴¹ It is indeed mentioned in the book of Peter that Christ said: *I am with everything and without everything. Length, width, depth [and colour], which are corporeal [characteristics], have no access to me,*⁴² which means *I am the Word of God, and God is free of these [dimensions]*.
- 38 If someone asks why only Christ is the Word of God, and not Moses, Aaron or other prophets: are not all of them the Words of God? The answer is that this is because it was [Jesus] who said: *I am the Word of God*. | [This Word] became visible in him; this is how he perceived himself in the world of spiritual disclosure. Necessarily, he said: *I am the Word of God*. In the case of Jesus, peace be upon him, this means *I am the absolute Word*, at any point in the past, present or future.
- 39 *'There is not one of the People of the Book but will assuredly believe in him [i.e., in Jesus] before his death'* [Q 4:159]. Since he is the divine Word, everyone must believe in him. When he manifests himself, everyone will see that, being the Word of God, he realises [the condition] of 32 and 28 'words' without length, breadth or depth. Christ said: *'[I am] with everything and without everything'*.
- 40 Christ is that Word, represented by [the phonemes] like *a*, *b* or *t*, and the form of the human [body] is its [most perfect form of manifestation]. [This Word] is written in [the form of the human body] and in the lines of the [human] face with its 32 and 28 distinctive marks and corresponding elements of knowledge. This is the divine writing written on the face of Adam.⁴³ It is

322b

40 Cf. Revelation 5:9.

41 Cf. al-Tha'labī, Abū Ishāq Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, *Arā'is*, p. 168: 'The Prophet said, "Mankind will be assembled on the Day of Resurrection—barefoot, naked, uncircumcised, speakers of strange tongues."'

42 Cf. *AP* pp. 106, 107, 121.

43 This is an allusion to the lines of the human face specified elsewhere in the *Jāvidān-nāma*. See Chapter Two, n. 18.

است و آن [32]¹ نطق [که]² قائم بذات خداست و ازلی [و]³ ابدی است مسیح هوا که "من اُون".

41 و محمد علیه السلام گواهی برین وجه بدی پس ای ترسان محمد را بحق بدان که خو مسیح را ازن زانابی و واتی که مسیح [که]⁴ کلمه [الله]⁵ بو کامه آهین.

42 [و]⁶ مسیح از روی لفظ مسح کننده است و سوده شده [بر ذات]⁷ حق و کشنده دجال.

43 خطّ وجه مریم هفت است یکی موی سر و [دو]⁸ ابرو و چهار مرثه که هفت باشد بر هفت موضع که [چهارده]⁹ باشد حواریون دوازده و مسیح و مریم دو تا چهارده باشد یعنی "هر کس که مرا کلمه آلهی داند و روح خدا داند [او]¹⁰ مرا بمثبت خطّ وجه مریم است که یکی مریم [است]¹¹ و یکی من [و]¹² دوازده حواریون که چهارده باشد و چون [ایشان]¹³ مرا کلمه آلهی]¹⁴ داند [آن]¹⁵ زمان ایشان همه کلمه آلهی]¹⁶ باشند و آن زمان من باشم دران صورت تجلی کرده [و]¹⁷ ظاهر شده [ام]¹⁸ آن هفت خطّست که ازان سر و ازان دو ابرو و ازان چهار مرثه که عبارت است از هفت انگشتی و آن هفت [که]¹⁹ موضع [آن]²⁰ هفت است.²¹

44 ﴿وَوَاعَدْنَا مُوسَى ثَلَاثِينَ لَيْلَةً﴾²² [و]²³ نمرت طینه آدم پیدی اربعین | "صباحا" هر شبانروزی و323 [را]²⁴ بیست و چهار ساعت [قسمت]²⁵ میکن تا بدانی که چند 28 کلمه است و ساعت و²⁶ 32 و 28 ساعت قسمت میکن]²⁷ که این هفت [مو]²⁸ مهر آن هفت شده است ان هفت خطّ هر خطی [چهار]²⁹ خطّ باشد خاک و آب و باد و آتش 28 باشد در مقابله 28 کلمه عرب

¹ AEF 295b: 32; absent in the BL. ² AEF 295b: که; BL: خدا. ³ AEF 295b: و; absent in the BL.

⁴ AEF 295b: که; absent in the BL. ⁵ AEF 295b: الله; absent in the BL. ⁶ AEF 295b: و; absent in the BL. ⁷ AEF 295b: بذات. ⁸ AEF 295b: دو; absent in the BL. ⁹ AEF 295b: چهارده;

BL: چهار. ¹⁰ AEF 295b: او; BL: و. ¹¹ AEF 295b: است is absent. ¹² AEF 295b: و is absent.

¹³ AEF 295b: ایشان; absent in the BL. ¹⁴ B 222a: آلهی is absent. ¹⁵ AEF 295b: آن. ¹⁶ B 222a:

آلهی is absent. ¹⁷ AEF 295b: و. ¹⁸ AEF 295b: ام deleted; B 222a: ام is absent. ¹⁹ AEF 295b:

که is absent. ²⁰ AEF 295b: این. ²¹ BL; AEF 295b: که; B 221b at the margin: که is absent. ²² B

﴿وَوَاعَدْنَا مُوسَى ثَلَاثِينَ لَيْلَةً﴾ (2:51 instead of 7:142). (221b at the margin) cites a similar verse

²³ AEF 295b: و, absent in the BL. ²⁴ AEF 296a: را; absent in the BL. ²⁵ AEF 296a: قسمه,

absent in the BL. ²⁶ AEF 296a: و; ساعة; absent in the BL; B 221b margin: ساعة ته. ²⁷ B 221b:

this passage appears at the margin and it is not clear whether and where it should be inserted

in the text. ²⁸ AEF 296a: مو; absent in the BL. ²⁹ AEF 296a: چهار; absent in the BL.

with reference to these 32 [elements] without beginning and without end, representing the divine speech rooted in the divine essence that Christ said: *I am that [Word]*.

- 41 [The Prophet] Muḥammad, peace be upon him, bore witness to this. O Christian, recognise Muḥammad truly, for he was aware [of the true nature] of Christ, and he said that Christ, who is the Word of God, will come [a second time].
- 42 Etymologically, Christ (*masīḥ*) is the one who anoints (*maṣḥ kunanda*). He has been anointed by the divine essence, and [he is the one who will] kill the Antichrist.
- 43 There are seven lines on the face of Mary: a hairline, two brows and four eyelashes. These seven lines are located on seven parts [of the face], which makes 14 in sum. Also, there were 12 Apostles. With Christ and Mary, they were 14. This is to say: 'Whosoever recognises me as the divine Word and Spirit [does so] by means of the lines of Mary's face. One [of these lines represents] Mary, another represents myself, [and the remaining] 12 represent the Apostles, which sums up to 14. When they recognise me as the Word of God, they become divine Word themselves. At that time, I manifest myself and become visible in [human?] form [of the second coming? Of the person who recognised Jesus as the Word of God?]. The seven lines represented by the hairline, two eyebrows and four eyelashes, with their respective locations, correspond to the seven seals [of the apocalyptic Book].
- 44 '*And We appointed with Moses thirty nights [and We completed them with ten, so the appointed time of his Lord was forty nights]*' [Q 7:142], and '*I kneaded the clay of Adam with My two hands during forty | days*'.⁴⁴ Divide every day into 24 hours, so that you may know that it contains as much [times] 28 and 32 'words'.⁴⁵ The seven [lines] of hair [on the human face]⁴⁶ are the seal of those seven which, multiplied by four [in accordance with the number of

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44 On this divine saying, see Ibn Abī Jumhūr al-Aḥsā'ī, *Awālī al-La'ālī*, Qom, 1405/ 1984–1985, vol. 4, p. 98.

45 According to the *Jāvidān-nāma*, the division of every hour into sixty minutes reflects its identity with the 28 and 32 'words' (28 + 32 = 60).

46 This is an allusion to the hairline, two eyebrows and four eyelashes.

[که]¹ بر رسول علیه السلام آمده که مسیح گفت "من [آن سختم و]² آن سخن بودم" و چون بر خط استواء آن هفت خط بگذری موی سر شکافته شود هشت خط ظاهر شود هر خط چهار خط خاک و آب و باد و آتش 32 خط آلهی باشد که موسی گفت خدا بدست خود بر الواح نوشت.

45 در مقابله 32 [خط کلمه آلهی]³ که بآدم آمده [است که]⁴ مجموع کتب انبیا و زبان بنی آدم از آن 32 بیرون نیست [و]⁵ مسیح گفت "من آن سختم که اول چیزی که از آسمان آمد سخن بود".

46 بآدم آن سخن آمد 28 که لفظ عربی است و چهار که در توریت و انجیل و صحف باشد [پاژا چاگا]⁶ 32 کلمه [آلهی باشد]⁷ اگر مرغان آواز میکنند ازین 32 [کلمه]⁸ بیرون نیستند [و]⁹ اگر دو چیز را بر هم زنی صوتی که ازیشان بیرون آید از 32 کلمه بیرون نیست و اگر بر هم زنی در ایشان مخفی است.

47 ازینجا مسیح گفت "من [کلمه]¹⁰ ام و با همه اشیا و بی [همه]¹¹ اشیا هستم" از هر موضع که کلمه ظاهر شود یا درو مخفی است آن کلمه [آلهی]¹² است و مسیح گفت "من آن [سختم]¹³".

48 چنانکه در قرآن آمده است ﴿وَقَالُوا لَجُلُودِهِمْ لَمْ يَشْهَدْتُمْ عَلَيْنَا قَالُوا أَنْطَقَنَا اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنْطَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ﴾ چون جلود بعدد سیصد و شصت پاره استخوان است و سیصد و شصت پاره [استخوان]¹⁴ شش [بار]¹⁵ شصت باشد هر شصتی 28 و 32 پس مجموع جلود در مقابله کلمه آلهی باشد و جمیع اشیا [در قیامت چون]¹⁶ ناطق باشد [و]¹⁷ سخن گو باشد و چون سخن گوید مسیح می گوید "من آن سختم" پس در همه اشیا مسیح است و با همه اشیا مسیح است و این مسیح 32 کلمه [آلهی]¹⁸ بی هم | 32 کلمه که مسیح بی بیاهی و بیان 32 کلمه [آلهی]¹⁹ خود یکی.

ظ³²³

است: AEF 296a: ⁴ . کلمه: B 222a: ³ . AEF 296a: deleted; B 222a: ² . که: AEF 296a: ¹ .
 پا و چا و ژا و گا: AEF 296a: ⁶ . deleted; B 222a: ⁵ . AEF 296a: ⁷ . چا و ژا و گا و پا: B 222a: ⁸ .
 کلمه: AEF 296a: ⁸ . absent in the BL. ⁷ AEF 296a: ⁹ . کلام آلهی: AEF 296a: ¹⁰ .
 B 222a: ¹¹ . absent. ¹² B 222a: ¹³ . کلمه: AEF 296a: ¹³ .
 AEF 296a: ¹⁴ . deleted; B 222a: ¹⁵ . AEF 296a: ¹⁶ .
 AEF 296a: ¹⁷ . absent in the BL. ¹⁸ B 222a: ¹⁹ . AEF 296b: ¹⁹ .
 absent.

natural elements] earth, water, air and fire, are established as counterpart to the 28 Arabic 'words' given to the Messenger, peace be upon him, and with regard to which Christ said: *I am that Word, and I was that Word*. When the line of Balance is drawn through these seven lines, the hairline is divided, which makes appear an eighth line. [Multiplied by four as in the previous example, this division produces] 32 divine lines. Moses said that God wrote [these 32 lines] with His own hand on the tablets.

45 [These lines are] the counterpart to the 32 lines of the divine Word that were given to Adam. All prophetic books and all languages of the descendants of Adam do not exceed these 32.⁴⁷ And Christ said: *I am that Word, the first thing that came from heaven was the Word*.

46 Adam received that Word with its 28 [elements] corresponding to the Arabic phonemes, and four [others], i.e., *pā, zhā, chā* and *gā*, contained in the Torah, in the Gospel and in the scrolls (*ṣuḥūf*).⁴⁸ [These are] the 32 divine 'words'. Sounds produced by birds are not outside of these 32 'words', and if [two objects] are struck against each other, [they produce some of these 'words' which are otherwise] hidden in them.

47 This is why Christ said: *I am the Word, I am with everything and without everything*. This divine Word is everywhere, in any location where any 'words' are produced or hidden, and Christ said *I am that Word*.

48 Also, it is said in the Qur'ān: *'And they will say to their skins, "Why bore you witness against us?" They shall say, "God gave us speech, as He gave everything speech"'* [Q 41:21]. Because the skins are [made] in correspondence with the number of 360 bones,⁴⁹ and this is six times 60, and 60 is a sum of 28 and 32, the skins are the counterpart to the divine Word. And since everything will be speaking and articulating words on the Day of Resurrection, Christ said: *I am that Word*. Christ is thus in everything, he is with everything, and this Christ consists of the 32 divine 'words'. | [This means] that the 32 'words' represented by Christ came and provided their own explanation.

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47 That is, all languages are composed of the same elements, sounds and letters, the total number of which does not exceed 32.

48 It is noteworthy that this passage mentions the four letters added to the Arabic alphabet to reflect the Persian spelling without any explicit reference to the Persian. Instead, the Torah, Gospel and Scrolls (most probably referring here to the apocalyptic book from the Revelation of John) are indicated as the source of the four additional letters.

49 An allusion to a *ḥadīth* according to which the body of Adam was composed of 360 parts of skin, fat, bones etc. For the references see Arent Jan Wensinck, et al., *Concordance et indices de la tradition musulmane*, 8 vols., Leiden, 1936–1979, vol. 2, p. 410.

- 49 اکنون ای ترسا اگر تو این مسیحه ازن [که]¹ واتن بزنان [ره]² بمسیح و صورت مسیح که صورت آدم بی بیبا [و]³ اگر نه همانن که امتان دیر در گمراهی بماند اکنون سر و ریش [و]⁴ وجود تو و همه اشیا⁵ از مسیح که کلمه خدا بو[سا] جدا⁶ [جدا]⁷ هویی بیشتر ازین علم اعتقاد داشت [که]⁸ [که]⁷ خو کلمه خدا بی و باهمه اشیا هستی و کامه آهین [سا] بدیا⁸ [که] باهمه اشیا چگونه هست و چون بیاهی و ایمان بتقلید [و]⁹ بتحقیق برسی اکنون خوشتنه دریاب.
- 50 اکنون یک نشان مسیح [آن]¹⁰ بی که مصحف حیات را که بهفت انگشتی مهر کرده است من بکشایم و کیست گفت [که]¹¹ از اهل آسمان و زمین دلیری کند و قدم پیش [نهادن]¹² و [آن]¹³ مصحف حیات را که بهفت انگشتی مهر کرده ام بکشاید هیچکس از انبیا و اولیا و ملائکه قدم پیش [نهادند]¹⁴ مسیح گفت "ای فطروس هر چه [من]¹⁵ ببندم من بکشایم."
- 51 اکنون آن مهر را بدان [و]¹⁶ مصحف حیات چون مسیح آمده بود که گفت "هر چه من ببندم من بکشایم" معنی آنست که آن مصحف حیات که خط وجه آدم و حوا و مریم است و بنی آدم است آن در ازاء کلمه [آلی]¹⁷ است و کلمه [ازلی و ابدی]¹⁸ آنرا مخلوق کرده است که آن کلمه "کن" است که از ذات آلی جدا نیست و عین ذات اوست اثر را واتی [که]¹⁹ "هر چه من ببندم ان من بوشان".
- 52 یعنی خلقت آن هفت مهر و آن هفت خط آلی اثر کلمه در وجود آمده است که قائم بذات حق است و "من آن کلمه بان پس ا خط و [ا]²⁰ مهر کیبا پس من²¹ بیایم که کلمه ام و من بکشایم و بیان بکران که [علم]²² مئی که کلمه خدا هستن و مهر مئی و 32 کلمه خوشتنه بر همه اشیا ظاهر بکران و مردم مرده بمصحف حیات زنده بکران".

¹ AEF 296b: که; absent in the BL. ² Absent in the BL; AEF 296b: بزانا ره; B 222b: بزانا ره.

³ Absent in the BL; AEF 296b: و. ⁴ Absent in the BL; AEF 296b: و. ⁵ AEF 296b at the margin:

جدا; AEF 296b at the margin: ⁶ هستی و کامه آهین [سا] بدیا که باهمه اشیا ای ترسا; B 222b: ای ترسا

⁷ AEF 296b: جدا; BL: جدا; B 222b: چرا. ⁸ AEF 296b: که; BL: اگر. ⁹ AEF 296b: absent.

¹⁰ B 222b: این. ¹¹ Absent in the BL; AEF 296b: که. ¹² AEF 296b: نه. ¹³ AEF 296b: این.

¹⁴ AEF 296b: نه. ¹⁵ AEF 296b: من. ¹⁶ B 222b: و. ¹⁷ AEF 296b: deleted; B 222b: absent.

¹⁸ B 222b: ابدی ازلی. ¹⁹ Absent in the BL; B 222b: که. ²⁰ AEF 296b: ا; absent in the BL.

²¹ AEF 296b over the line; B 222b: من; BL: هم. ²² Absent in the BL; AEF 296b: علم.

- 49 O Christian, if you did understand [the true nature of Jesus] from what has been said, you will attain [the knowledge] of Christ and of his [bodily] form, which is the form of Adam. If you did not, you will be among other nations that went astray. Your head, beard and body, as well as everything else, [come] from Christ who is the divine Word. Now that you see it distinctively, you can put more confidence in the information that he was the Word of God, and that he is with everything, and that he will come [a second time]. You can observe how he is with everything, and when he will return, and you will have reached the belief [in him] both by imitation and by spiritual realisation. Find this by yourself.
- 50 One of the specific marks of Christ [in his second coming] is that: *'I will open the Book of Life sealed with seven seals'*. [*The inhabitants of heaven and earth were asked*]: *'Who is bold enough to step forward and to open this Book of Life, that I have sealed with seven seals?'*. *Nobody of the prophets, saints and angels did step forward.*⁵⁰ [*Then*] Christ said: *'O Peter, all that I closed, I will open'*.⁵¹
- 51 Learn now [what are] this seal and the Book of Life. The [second coming of] Christ [is suggested by] his saying: *'All that I closed, I will open'*. This means that this Book of Life, corresponding to the facial lines of Adam, Eve, Mary, and [all] the descendants of Adam, is a counterpart to the divine Word. They are created by the Word without beginning and without end, which is the Imperative *Be!* The latter is inseparable from the divine essence and identical with it. This is why [Jesus] said: *'All that I closed, I will open'*.
- 52 This means that the original nature of those seven seals and those seven lines of divine [writing on human face] stems from the Word rooted in the essence of the Real. And [Jesus said]: 'I was that Word, I produced those lines and seals [of the Book of Life], and therefore I will come [a second time] because I am the Word, and I will open [the seals] and explain [them for they represent the] knowledge of myself, who am the divine Word, they are my seals. I will manifest my 32 [ontological] 'words' in everything, and I will bring the dead back to life by the Book of Life'.

50 Cf. Revelation 5:2–3.

51 Cf. Revelation 3:7.

53 براء [اَآن]¹ مصحف [را]² مصحف حیات | مینخواند که ظاهرا بنسبت کاتبه انجیل که نوشته شد و تورات آن مصحف آلهی و خط آلهی [است]³ و مصحف حیات است و حیات جاودانی از کشادن آن و خواندن آن ظاهر میشود و از انجا برسر³² سخن آلهی که از آسمان اول بآدم آمد و آدم بآن مخلوق شد بعدد وجه او و جمیع اعضاء او که مسیح واتی "من [آن] سخن"⁴ [بان]⁵.

54 اکنون آن بره هفت شاخ که آن کتا برا کشود [چون]⁶ خود پیش پدر فدا کرد و از لغت مختلف بندگان خدا را رهانید آن مسیح بود و مسیح بود که کلمه آلهی بود که در آدم تجلی کرده بود که مسیح واتی [که]⁷ "اول چیزی که از آسمان آمد سخن بود و من آن سخن بودم و خدا بآن سخن بود در آخر زمان [بیایم]"⁸ بیان خلقت وجه آدم که علم 32 کلمه خدائی [دارد]⁹ ظاهر بی مسیح بیاهی و گواهی بر [صدق همه]¹⁰ انبیا بداد و انبیا خبر از آمدن مسیح دادند.

55 [اسا]¹¹ این 32 کلمه آدم که سخن خداست [که]¹² اب ت ث ج ح خ د ذ ر ز س ش ص ض ط ظ ع غ ف ق ک ل م ن و ه ی [پا چا ژا گا]¹³ باشد چون شکل و صورت ازیشان برداری چنانکه مسیح [گفت]¹⁴ "ما را طول نیست و عرض¹⁵ و عمق نیست" یعنی درازی و پهنای و بستری نیست که اینها ازیشان جسم است پس آنچه در تلفظ¹⁶ آید سخن¹⁷ است نه این دوده و سیاهی ناقص که طول و عرض و عمق دارد [و]¹⁸ جسم است مسیح ذات آن نطق است که در تلفظ می آید که گفتی مسیح مه و سه و ی و حه.

56 ایشانرا در ذات [خود]¹⁹ شکل نیست و صورت نیست²⁰ و در همه اشیا محیط است و هر صفت که در ذات ا موجودست که در تلفظ می آید در ذات ب همان موجودست در 32 همه همچنین پس 32 سخن در ذات خود یک سخن باشد²¹ قائم | بذات حق ازانست که از زبان بنی آدم و یا در خاطر بنی آدم آن زمان که میگوئی مسیح [اول مه آمد زبانرا و درون را آن]²²

¹ AEF 296b: آ. آن این ² Absent in the BL; AEF 296b over the line; B 222b: را. ³ AEF 296b:

و. خون ⁴ AEF 297a: سخن. ⁵ B 222b: بان. ⁶ AEF 297a: سخن. ⁷ AEF 297a: absent.

⁸ AEF 297a: بیامد. ⁹ AEF 297a: بو. ¹⁰ AEF 297a: همه. ¹¹ AEF 297a: اکنون. ¹² AEF 297a: که. ¹³ AEF 297a: گا. ¹⁴ AEF 297a: چا و ژا و پا و گا.

¹⁵ AEF 297a added over the line; B 223a: نیست. ¹⁶ AEF 297a: گفت. ¹⁷ AEF 297a: آن. ¹⁸ AEF 297a: و; absent in the BL. ¹⁹ AEF 297a: deleted; B 223a:

absent. ²⁰ AEF 297a: و. پیکر نیست. ²¹ AEF 297a added at the margin; B 223a: باشد. ²² AEF 297a: اول مه آمد زبانرا و درون را آن.

- 53 That book is called the 'Book of Life' | because, unlike the books of the Gospel and the Torah, which are written down [by human scribes], it is a divine book in divine script. It is [literally] the Book of Life, because opening and reading it produces eternal life. It gives access to the secret of the 32 divine 'words', which first came from heaven to Adam, by means of which Adam was created, and the number of which is [reflected in proportions] of his face and of all members of his body. Christ said: 'I was that Word'. 324a
- 54 *That lamb with seven horns, which opened the Book [of Life] and sacrificed itself before the Father, thus delivering servants of God of divergence of languages, was Christ.* The divine Word manifested in Adam was also Christ,⁵² for Christ said that *'The first thing that came from heaven was the Word, and I was that Word, and God was with that Word. I will come [back] at the end of time'*. Then the original nature of the Adam's face, on which the knowledge of the 32 divine 'words' is manifested, will be explained. Christ will come and testify to the truthfulness of all the prophets. And all the prophets mentioned the [future] coming of Christ.
- 55 These 32 'words' of Adam, which constitute the divine speech, are *alif, bā, tā* ... [here follows the full list of 28 letters of the Arabic alphabet plus four letters (*pe, che, zhe, gāf*) specific to the Persian]. When considered separately from their external forms [i.e., as pure sounds], they are similar to Christ who said: *'We do not have length, breadth or depth'*,⁵³ which are [the dimensions] proper to bodies. Articulated words, which form speech, are not this imperfect soot and blackness [of the ink with which the letters are written]. The latter possess length, breadth and depth and therefore are bodies. Christ is the essence of that articulated speech, like the [spelled] letters *m, s, y* and *h* of the word *masīh* (Christ).
- 56 They [the ontological 'words', as simple sounds] do not possess any form or shape in their essence. They encompass everything. Every quality contained in the essence of articulated [sound] *a* is also contained in the essence of *b*, and of all the 32 [ontological] 'words'. Therefore, all the 32 'words' are, in their essence, one and the same Word rooted | in the essence of the 324b

52 See Chapter Four, n. 11 and n. 39 above.

53 *AP*, p. 106.

مه داشت چون مه گذشت سه آمد باز زبان را و اندرون را آن سه داشت بعد ازان ی آمد زبان را و اندرون آن [ی داشت بعد ازان هه آمد زبان را و اندرون]¹ هه داشت پس دیدی [که همیشه]² وجود ترا و زبان ترا و درون ترا یک کلمه داشته باشد [که]³ مسیح آن یک کلمه است و السلام.

57 بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ای ترسا ایمان داری بتوریت و در توریت آمده است که حقّ تعالی گفت که "میخواستم که شخصی بیافرینم بشکل خود و صورت خود و هیئات خود که پادشاه مرغان هوا و ماهیان دریا باشد آدم را بیافریدم" و مجموع نامها از آدم ظاهر [گردانید]⁴ و هر سخنی که از زبان بدرآمده است 32 باشد یعنی 32 سخن باشد [که]⁵ هر چیزی که در دینی و [در]⁶ آخرت و در خیال و خواب و بیداری خواهی که نام آن چیزی بیری ازین 32 [سخن]⁷ بیرون نیست.

58 این را از ترسا که بزبان عرب رسد سؤال کنید 28 لغت عرب و چهار غیر عرب [پا چا ژا گا]⁸ همه 32 سخن باشد زبان آدم این و ازان حوا [و]⁹ از مشرق تا [بمغرب]¹⁰ هر کس که صورت آدم و حوا دارد زبان او ازین 32 بیرون نیست بعضی 28 دارند [و]¹¹ بعضی بیست و دو دارند [و]¹² بعضی بیست و چهار دارند بعضی چون مغولی شانزده دارند صورت آدم و حوا همه دارند اما آن 32 [سخن]¹³ همه ندارند هرگاه که بسر و حقیقت آن 32 سخن آدم برسند چنانکه صورت آدم دارند معنی آدم داشته باشند.

که همیشه 2 AEF 297b: ; absent in the BL. 1 AEF 297b: ی داشت بعد ازان هه آمد زبان را و اندرون; absent in the BL. 3 AEF 297b: که; absent in the BL. 4 AEF 297b: گردانیدم. 5 AEF 297b: . 6 B 223a: absent. 7 AEF 297b: سخن; absent in the BL. 8 AEF 297b: که; absent in the BL. 9 AEF 297b: و; absent in the BL. 10 B 223b: مغرب. 11 AEF 297b deleted; B 223b: absent. 12 AEF 297b deleted; B 223b: absent. 13 AEF 297b (added over the line); B 223b: سخن; absent in the BL.

Real. Whosoever pronounces the word *masīḥ*, either aloud or in his head, begins with the [sound] *mah*, and the [consonant] *m* is contained within this sound. [The same holds true for the sounds *sah*, *yah*, and *ḥah* of the word *masīḥ*]. Similarly, your body, your tongue and your interior contain a word, and this word is 'Christ'.

- 57 *In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.* O Christian, you believe in the Torah. It is mentioned in the Torah that God the Most High said: '*Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air ... So God created Adam*'.⁵⁴ And He produced all the names from Adam. Every word articulated by the tongue is composed of [sounds from among] the 32 [primary simple sounds or 'words']. The names of everything that can be seen in the physical world as well as in the hereafter, in the imagination, in dream or wakefulness, cannot be outside these 32 [primary] 'words'.
- 58 Ask this from a Christian who has achieved [knowledge] of Arabic.⁵⁵ The 28 [primary 'words' represented by the 28 letters] of the Arabic, and four non-Arabic, namely *pe*, *chīm*, *zhe* and *gāf*,⁵⁶ sum up to 32 'words', which constituted the language of Adam, from which Eve was [derived].⁵⁷ From the east to the west, whosoever has the external shape of Adam and Eve speaks a language that cannot exceed these 32. Some [human languages] contain 28, some of them 22, 24 or, like the Mongolian, 16 ['words' out of the complete set of 32]. Even though all humans possess the external form of Adam and Eve, not all of them [use] the [full] set of the 32 ['words', of which the human form is the perfect locus of manifestation, in their languages]. When they reach the secret and the truth of those 32 'words' of Adam, they will possess not only the exterior form of Adam, but also the knowledge of Adam's innermost meaning.

54 See n. 31 above.

55 This reference to a Christian who has a command of Arabic is not explained by the context. Does the author address here a Persian-speaking Christian asking him to check the number of letters used in the Arabic script with his Arabic speaking co-religionist? Or is it a fleeting reference to the Christian Arab informants of Faḍl Allāh?

56 Here again (cf. n. 48 above) the author mentions the four Persian letters without explicitly naming the Persian language. He prefers 'non-Arabic' to 'Persian'.

57 As mentioned, according to the *Jāvidān-nāma*, Adam is the perfect locus of manifestation of the complete set of the 28/32 primary 'words'. Eve represents the most fundamental part of this set. In this sense, she is 'derived' from Adam. See Chapter Two.

- 59 ای ترسا حقّ تعالی بآدم سخن گفت 32 سخن [که] ¹عیسی [که] ²روح الله است گفته است [که] ³“اول چیزی که از آسمان آمد سخن بود و خدا بآن سخن بود و من آن سخن بودم” اکنون بسخن مسیح سخن خداست و اول چیزی که بآدم آمد سخن بود معنی سخن مسیح آنست که سخن [که] ⁴خدا بآدم گفت “من آن سختم”.
- 60 [سخن] ⁵مسیح است که “من هر چه باشما گفته ام برمز و اشارت گفته ام این کُرت پیام و بیان آن بکنم” یعنی مرا بآن بیان بشناسید و در قرآن حق تعالی او را [هم] ⁶کلمه خواند و هم روح الله خواند—اکنون بشنوای ترسا بزرگی مسیح را بتحقیق نه بشنیدن مادر و پدر.
- 61 روح پاک در شکم مریم بکر گوشتند شد در انجیل چنین است اکنون باید دانست که آن روح پاک [چرا گوشتند شد چه احتیاج داشت می خواست که صورت و معنی پدر باشد آن روح پاک] ⁷که مسیح است صورت کُشت و پوست از مریم بکر بستد که مریم از آدم و حوا بسته بود پس مسیح که سخن خدا [است] ⁸صورت او صورت آدم [باشد] ⁹البته او گفته است که “اول چیزی که از آسمان آمد سخن بود [و خدا با آن سخن بود] ¹⁰و من آن سخن بودم”.
- 62 پس اول بآدم بقول مسیح سخن آمده باشد [و مسیح آن سخن بوده باشد که با آدم آمده باشد] ¹¹بقول مسیح و آن سخن 32 [سخن] ¹²بود پس مسیح آن 32 سخن [خدا باشد که بآدم آمد و آن 32 سخن] ¹³از خدا جدا [نیبو] ¹⁴قائم است بذات حق چون تری بآب و چون حرارت بآتش و روشنی بآفتاب آسمانها و زمینها نبود که کلام خدا و سخن بود و آن [32] ¹⁵سخن که بآدم آمد ازلی و ابدی و جاودانی هست چون گفت مسیح که “از آسمان اول سخن آمد [و] ¹⁶من آن سخن

که: ¹AEF 297b deleted; B 223b: absent. ²AEF 297b: که; absent in the BL. ³AEF 297b: که; absent in the BL. ⁴AEF 297b: که; absent in the BL. ⁵AEF 297b (added at the margin); B 223b: سخن; absent in the BL. ⁶AEF 297b (added under the line); B 223b: هم; absent in the BL. ⁷AEF 298a; B 223b: پدر و معنی پدر که صورت و معنی پدر; absent in the BL. ⁸AEF 298a: است; absent in the BL. ⁹AEF 298a: باشد; absent in the BL. ¹⁰AEF 298a (added at the margin); B 223b: و خدا با آن سخن بود; absent in the BL. ¹¹AEF 298a; B 223b: باشد که با آدم آمده باشد; absent in the BL. ¹²AEF 298a (added over the line); B 223b: سخن; absent in the BL. ¹³AEF 298a; B 223b: خدا نبود. ¹⁴AEF 298a: نیبو. ¹⁵AEF 298a: باشد که بآدم آمد و آن 32 سخن 32; absent in the BL. ¹⁶AEF 298a: و; absent in the BL.

- 59 O Christian, the Word that God the Most High spoke to Adam [consisted of the] 32 'words'. And Christ, who is the Spirit of God, said: *'The first thing that came from heaven was Word, and God was with that Word, and I was that Word'*. Therefore, according to Christ's own saying, Christ is the Word of God, and the first thing that | Adam received was the Word. The meaning of Christ's saying is that the Word spoken by God to Adam was Christ: 'I am that Word'. 325a
- 60 Christ said: *'All that I said to you, I said by symbols and parables. I will come another time in order to explain them'*, which means 'you will recognise me by this explanation'. In the Qur'ān, God the Most High also calls him the 'Word', as well as the 'Spirit' of God. Now listen, O Christian, the eminence of Christ [can only be known] through spiritual realisation, not from what one [might] hear from [his/her] mother and father.⁵⁸
- 61 In the Gospel, it is said that the pure spirit became flesh in the belly of the Virgin Mary. It should be known why that pure spirit became flesh, why it was necessary. He [i.e., spirit or Jesus] wanted to become the form and the inner meaning of the Father. That pure Spirit, who is Christ, acquired his physical form from Mary the Virgin, and Mary acquired it from Adam and Eve. Therefore the external form of Christ, who is the Word of God, is the form of Adam. For this reason, he said: *'The first thing that came from heaven was Word, and God was with that Word, and I was that Word'*.
- 62 Thus, according to what Christ said, the Word first reached Adam, and Christ was that Word received by Adam. That Word consisted of the 32 'words'. Christ was those 32 divine 'words' received by Adam. Those 32 'words' cannot be separated from God, they are rooted in the essence of the Real like humidity in water, heat in fire, or brightness in the sun. The heavens and earth did not yet exist, but the Speech and the Word of God existed.⁵⁹ Those 32 'words' received by Adam are without beginning and without end, they are eternal. Since Christ said: *'The first [thing] that came from heaven was the Word, and I was that Word, and God was with that Word'*. According to [this]

58 The opposition between the primordial language of the reality founded on the ontological meanings of the divine Word, and the conventional human languages where the meanings are arbitrarily attributed to words, is one of the central topics of the *Jāvidān-nāma*. For a more detailed discussion, see *Words of Power*, pp. 237–258.

59 Cf. Matthew 24:35, Mark 13:31, Luke 21:33: 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away'.

بودم و خدا [با آن]¹ سخن بود“ پس آن سخن [که]² بآدم آمد بقول مسیح مسیح آن سخن بوده باشد و آن 32 است چنانکه دندان [که]³ مخرج سخن است یا 28 [است]⁴ یا 32.

63 اکنون بقول مسیح چون او سخن خداست که بآدم آمد و بآدم 32 سخن آمد [پس]⁵ مسیح آن 32 سخن باشد که بآدم آمده باشد [که]⁶ مجموع نامهای موجودات ازان 32 سخن بیرون نیست [و هیچ گلاب آسمانی ازان 32 سخن بیرون نیست]⁷ و هر آوازی که از سنگ و کلوخ و برگ درختان بیرون می آید در خواب و بیداری ازان 32 سخن بیرون نیست.

64 پس مسیح آن 32 سخن خداست که در آدم تجلی کرد و ظاهر شد که در تورات گفته است 325ظ که “میخواستم که شخصی بیافرینم بشکل ما و هیئات ما و صورت ما انسان را که آدم است بیافریدم“ پس آدم 32 سخن خدا را یافت و مسیح گفت “من آن سخنم“ [که]⁸ در بطن مریم⁹ گوشتمند [شد]¹⁰ [و]¹¹ آن کلمه تا [در]¹² صورت خدائی که آدم داشت ظاهرا او را باشد و [بیافرید]¹³ و 32 کلمه [که آدم]¹⁴ را بود و در آدم تجلی کرده بود و ظاهر شده خود را ظاهر کند که “[من]¹⁵ بودم که در آدم آمده بودم“ [که]¹⁶ “اول چیزی که از آسمان آمد سخن بود و خدا با آن سخن بود و من آن سخن بودم“.

65 چرا آن نوبت که [آمد]¹⁷ خود را تمام ظاهر نکرد بجهت آنکه 32 کلمه آدم درو مخفی و پوشیده بود این بار ظاهر میکند.

66 اکنون چه معنی دارد که در تورات گفته [است]¹⁸ که “شخصی بیافرینم بشکل ما و صورت ما و هیئات ما پس آدم را [آفریدم]¹⁹“ پس صورترا اعتبار تمام تمام تمام است که صورت آلهی است [براء آن صورت آلهی است]²⁰ که 32 کلمه²¹ که خدا ازان جدا نیست و مسیح گفت

¹ AEF 298a: با آن; BL دران. ² AEF 298a: که; absent in the BL. ³ AEF 298a: که; absent in the BL. ⁴ AEF 298a added over the line: است; absent in the BL. ⁵ B 224a: absent. ⁶ AEF 298a: absent; و هیچ گلاب آسمانی ازان 32 سخن بیرون نیست. ⁷ AEF 298a; B 224a: absent in the BL. ⁸ AEF 298a: absent. ⁹ AEF 298a under the line: بکر. ¹⁰ AEF 298a: شد; absent in the BL. ¹¹ AEF 298a: absent. ¹² AEF 298a: absent. ¹³ AEF 298b: are deleted of فر; بیافرید. ¹⁴ AEF 298b: که آدم; absent in the BL. ¹⁵ AEF 298b: من; absent in the BL. ¹⁶ AEF 298b: که; absent in the BL. ¹⁷ AEF 298b added over the line; B 224a: آمد; absent in the BL. ¹⁸ AEF 298b: است; absent in the BL. ¹⁹ B 224a: بیافریدم. ²⁰ AEF 298b: آلهی; B 224a at the margin: آلهی است. ²¹ AEF 298b under the line: آلهی; absent in the BL. براء آن صورت آلهی است.

saying of Christ, the Word received by Adam was Christ. It consisted of 32 ['words'] similar to teeth, which are points where the 'words' are emitted, and which are either 28 or 32.

- 63 Since, according to what Christ said, he was the divine Word received by Adam, and Adam received 32 'words', Christ was those 32 divine 'words' received by Adam, of which the names of all existing beings and objects, including the prophetic books, are composed. No sound emitted by stone, clay or leave on a tree and nothing of what can be seen in dream or wakefulness exceeds those 32 'words'.
- 64 And Christ consists of those 32 divine 'words' manifested in Adam, | concerning which it is said in the Torah: *'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness ... So God created Adam'*. Adam thus found the 32 divine 'words'. Christ said: *'I am that Word'* that became flesh in the womb of Mary, in order to manifest, in the divine bodily form [identical with the bodily form] that Adam possessed, the 32 'words' by which Adam was created and which were manifested in Adam. *'I came into Adam'*,⁶⁰ because *'The first thing that came from heaven was Word, and God was with that Word, and I was that Word'*. 325b
- 65 For which reason did [Jesus] not manifest himself [in the fullness of his ontological status] during his first coming? Because the 32 'words' of Adam were hidden in him [at that time], but this time [during his second coming] he will manifest them.
- 66 What is the meaning of this passage from the Torah: *'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness ... So God created Adam'*?⁶¹ [This] image represents the fullness. It is the form of God, because it was created and is the counterpart to the 32 'words' which are inseparable from God, about which

60 Cf. Gibson, 'Kitāb al-Mağall', p. 15: 'O Adam ... I will come down to thee ...'.

61 See n. 31 above.

”من آن سختم“ [آن]¹ صورت در [مقابله]² آن 32 سخن آفریده شده است و نشان 32 سخن خداست که مصحف حیات خواهد بود مسیح بجهت آن گوشتمند شد که روح پاک بود تا آن صورت خدائی حاصل کرده خود را که سخن خداست در همه موجودات ظاهر گرداند [و بنماید]³ که ”من چون سخن [خدا]⁴ باشم و با همه موجودات چگونه باشم و بی همه چون باشم“.

- 67 پس ای ترسا این صورت مسیح [که]⁵ جان پاکست از آدم و حواست ما لا کلام و آدم خداوند 32 سخن خدا بود اکنون مسیح موی سر و دوا برو و چهار مژه هفت خط خداست و [هفت دیگر دو بر دو طرف عارض و در بینی دو]⁶ که در تورایت آمده است که روح آدم از بینی دمیده شد و موی دولب بالا و یک لب زیر این | هفت دیگر بآن هفت چهارده باشند این 32 و چهارده خط مو بر چهارده موضع است که رستگاه موس است چنانکه صورت مسیح کشیده [شده]⁷ است چهارده بر چهارده 28 باشد و چون بخط [استوا]⁸ راست موی سر را بشکافی آن یک [خط]⁹ سر دو نیم شود [و دو]¹⁰ خط ظاهر شود یک خط [مو]¹¹ و یک [خط]¹² موضع آن مو و چون بر خط راست لب زیر یعنی موی لب زیر که بر میان مخلوق شده است شکافته شود از نیمه آن دو خط دیگر ظاهر شود یک خط مو [یک]¹³ موضع مو پس [بر]¹⁴ خط راست وجه مسیح که بگذری و موی سر و موی لب زیر بشکافته شود شانزده [خط مو]¹⁵ باشد بر شانزده موضع که مو بر آنجا رسته است دو شانزده 32 باشد [نشان]¹⁶ [و]¹⁷ علم [و]¹⁸ خط آلهی در مقابله آن 32 سخن ازلی ابدی که آدم را خدا تعلیم کرد و مسیح گفت ”من آن سخن بودم“.
- 68 باین معنی در توریت گفت ”شخصی بیافرینم بشکل ما و صورت ما و هیئات ما“ چون صورت آدم در مقابل آن 32 کلمه ازلی [ابدی]¹⁹ جاودانی [و]²⁰ خدائی آفریده شده است آن صورت را خدا صورت ما و هیئات ما و شکل خود خواند که آن 32 کلمه ازان خط آلهی ظاهر [میشود]²¹.

¹ AEF 298b: این. ² AEF 298b: مقابله; BL: مقابل. ³ AEF 298b: و بنماید; B 224a: بنماید. ⁴ AEF 298b: added over the line; B 224a: خدا; absent in the BL. ⁵ AEF 298b: که; absent in the BL.

⁶ AEF 298b: خط دیگر دوا برو و عارض و دو در بینی; BL: هفت دیگر دو بر دو طرف عارض و در بینی دو.

⁷ AEF 298b: شده; absent in the BL. ⁸ B 224a: absent. ⁹ AEF 298b: موی. ¹⁰ AEF 298b: دو; BL: و.

¹¹ AEF 298b: مو; absent in the BL. ¹² AEF 298b: خط; absent in the BL. ¹³ AEF 298b: نشان و.

¹⁴ AEF 298b: بر; absent in the BL. ¹⁵ AEF 298b: خط مو. ¹⁶ AEF 298b: نشان و.

¹⁷ Absent in the BL. ¹⁸ AEF 299a: و. ¹⁹ AEF 299a: ابدی. ²⁰ BL: و. ²¹ AEF 299a: میشود;

BL شود.

Christ said: *'I am that Word'*. The Book of Life will bear the distinctive marks of those 32 divine 'words'. Christ, who was a pure spirit, became flesh in order to produce that divine form. He thus produced and manifested himself, who is the divine Word, in all existing objects and beings, for *'I am the Word of God, I am with all that exists, and I am without all that exists'*.

- 67 O Christian, the bodily form of Christ, who is the pure soul, comes from Adam and Eve, and Adam was the master of the 32 divine 'words'. [here follows a detailed description of the facial lines | in order to show that the face of Christ contained the marks of the 28 and 32 'words'] which are marks, knowledge and divine writing established as counterpart to the 32 'words' without beginning and without end taught by God to Adam, [with reference to which] Christ said: *'I was that Word'*. 326a
- 68 [God] says in the Torah: *'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness'*. This means that, since the external form of Adam is created as a counterpart to those 32 divine eternal 'words' without beginning and without end, and since those 32 'words' are manifested by means of the line of divine [writing in the bodily form and facial features of Adam], God named this form *'our image and our likeness'*, [He named it] His own shape.

69 و آنکه در توریت [آمده]¹ است که موسی [لوح را که خدا]² بدست خود نوشته بود بشکست بجهت آنست³ آن شکست که روی آدم که لوح خدائی است تا بر خط استواء او که موی فرق دو [نشود]⁴ و فرق همچون موی⁵ دو قسم و زنج و لب زیر که بر خط استوا منشق و پاره نشود شانزده خط بر شانزده خط که 32 خط آهی باشد در مقابله آن 32 سخن که از زبان آدم بیرون [می آید]⁶ و خدا بآدم گفت و مسیح گفت "آن سخن بودم" ظاهر نمیشود پس شکستن الواح موسی را از کمال بوده باشد تا نشان 32 [کلمه]⁷ بر لوح ظاهر شود.

70 پس مسیح بجهت آن گوشتند شد که جان پاک بود | تا بعدد و شمار 32 کلمه صورت خود را [خط خدا]⁸ که 32 است باز نماید.

71 و گفت مسیح که "مصحف حیات که بهفت انگشتی مهر کرده شده است آن مهر را من بردارم [و]⁹ من بخوانم که هرچه من ببندم من بکشایم و هرچه من بکشایم¹⁰ کسی نتواند بستن" اکنون آن مصحف حیات وجه مریم است که هفت خط آهی دارد یک خط موی سر و دو خط آبرو و چهار مره [که]¹¹ هر یک خط [یک]¹² مهر است بران هفت موضع مو که آن موضع مو هفت خط خدایست هر خط چهار خط خاک و [آب و باد]¹³ و آتش هفت چهار برین تقدیر 28 باشد در مقابله 28 سخن عرب که مسیح گفت "من آن سخن بودم" و چون بر خط استواء فرق بگذاری موی فرق بدو پاره شود [فرق]¹⁴ که هفت سطر بود [و]¹⁵ هفت مهر از هفت مو داشت هشت خط شود هر خطی چهار خط خاک و آب و باد و آتش هشت خط 32 خط آهی باشد که بآدم آمده است و همه فرزندان آدم و وحوش و طیور آواز [که]¹⁶ میکنند از ایشان بیرون نیست و مسیح گفت "من آن سخن بودم" پس مصحف حیات کشودن عبارت ازینست.

¹ BL: لوح خدا را; AEF 299a: آمده. ² BL: لوح را که خدا; AEF 299a: آمده. ³ BL: بجهت آنست; AEF 299a: موی of ی. ⁴ B 224b: بشود. ⁵ AEF 299a: دو قسم. ⁶ AEF 299a: آمد before می; AEF 299a: آمد. ⁷ AEF 299a: سخن. ⁸ AEF 299a: خط خدا. ⁹ AEF 299a: و; AEF 299a: و. ¹⁰ B 224b: هر. ¹¹ AEF 299a: که; AEF 299a: چه من کشایم. ¹² AEF 299a: یک; AEF 299a: که. ¹³ AEF 299a: باد و آب. ¹⁴ B 224b: absent. ¹⁵ AEF 299a: و; AEF 299a: و. ¹⁶ B 224b: که.

- 69 *It is also mentioned in the Torah that Moses broke the Tablet written by God's own hand.*⁶² This breaking refers to the fact that the face of Adam, which is the Tablet of God, does not reveal the 32 divine lines [written in the features of Adam's face] before it is divided by the line of balance [...] [Those 32 facial lines] are the counterpart to the 32 'words' [i.e. sounds] of the language spoken by Adam, by which God spoke to Adam, and with reference to which Christ said: *I am that Word*. The breaking of the Tablet by Moses is thus a perfect [action], which revealed the distinctive signs of the 32 'words' on this Tablet.
- 70 [Similarly] Christ, who was a pure soul, became flesh | in order to manifest once again the lines of divine [writing], which are 32, in accordance with the number of the 32 [ontological] 'words' that constituted his own bodily form. 326b
- 71 Christ said: *I will remove the seals of the Book of Life sealed with seven seals, and I will read it, because whatever I have closed, I will open, and whatever I have opened, nobody is able to close*. This Book of Life is the face of Mary with its seven lines of divine [writing]: the hairline, two lines of eyebrows, and four eyelashes. Each line corresponds to a seal. These seven lines are located on seven parts of the face. Multiplied by the number of elements, that is, earth, water, air and fire [which constitute each line], seven lines become 28, as counterpart to the 28 'words' [i.e. consonants] of Arabic. [It is with reference to these lines and 'words' that] Christ said: *I am that Word*. Divided by the line of balance of the hair parting which separates hair in two parts, the seven seals corresponding to the seven lines of hair become eight. Multiplied by the number of natural elements—earth, water, air and fire—these eight lines become 32 lines of divine [writing] which were given to Adam. The sounds produced by all children of Adam, as well as by animals and birds, cannot exceed these [32 primary sounds, with reference to which] Christ said: *I was that Word*. This is the meaning of the opening of the Book of Life.

62 See Chapter Four, n. 29.

- 72 و آن برّه هفت شاخ که بیامد و آن مصحف [حیات را]¹ فرو برد مسیح که از مریم بزاید آن هفت خطّ خدا برو داشت و سربیک خطّ موبرسر [و]² دو خطّ ابرو و چهار مژه که هر خطّ چهار خطّ است خاک و آب و باد و آتش و چون لوح موسی بشکافد هشت خطّ شود چهار پاره شود تا 32 خطّ خدائی باشد که گفت "شکل ما و صورت ما" تا نشان آن 32 کلمه [آهی]³ باشد که بآدم [آمد]⁴ مسیح گفت "من [آن]⁵ سخن بودم که پدر [من]⁶ قوت ازلیست و من نطق اویم و روح [القدوس]⁷ صوت اوست".
- 73 نطق سخن است و آن 32 | سخن از خدا جدا نیست دندان آدم [نیز 32 یا 28 است]⁸ که مسیح³²⁷ گوشتند شد از مریم کسب کرد یا 28 [کلمه]⁹ همچو [28 کلمه]¹⁰ عرب که در قرآن [بآن]¹¹ ناطق است و کلمه است.
- 74 ﴿إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ﴾¹² عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ یعنی مسیح رسول خدا بود [و روح خدا بود و کلمه خدا بود]¹³ و 32 دندان بعدد آن 32 سخن که بآدم آمد.
- 75 و دست خدا که در انجیل آمده است 28 بند انگشت هر دو دست [است]¹⁴ در مقابله [28]¹⁵ کلمه عرب که مسیح گفت [که]¹⁶ "من [کلام]¹⁷ و سخنم".
- 76 و پای خدا [که]¹⁸ در انجیل آمده است هم 28 بند انگشت [است]¹⁹ بعدد 28 کلمه عرب که مسیح گفت "من [آن]²⁰ کلمه ام".
- 77 و چون برّه آن مصحف را فرو برد و پیش پدر کشته شد ملائکه و انبیا سجده کردند و گفتند²¹ "تو ما را از لغتهای مختلف برهانیدی و بملکوت سموات و زمین رسانیدی" ظاهر و باطن آسمانها و زمین سخن خداست و ایشان قائم بسخن اند و مسیح گفت "من آن سخن بودم".

¹ AEF 299b: حیات را; B 224b: حیات; absent in the BL. ² AEF 299b: و; absent in the BL.

³ B 225a: absent. ⁴ AEF 299b: آمد; absent in the BL. ⁵ AEF 299b: آن; absent in the BL.

⁶ AEF 299b: deleted; B 225a: absent. ⁷ AEF 299ba: قدس. ⁸ AEF 299b: deleted; B 225a: absent.

⁹ B 225a: کلمه; absent in the AEF and BL. ¹⁰ B 225a: absent. ¹¹ AEF 299b: بآن; BL: زبان.

¹² AEF 299b: إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ; absent in the BL. ¹³ AEF 299b (at the margin); B 225a: و

روح خدا بود و کلمه خدا بود; absent in the BL. ¹⁴ AEF 299b: انگشت; B 225a: است; BL: انگشت.

¹⁵ AEF 299b: 28; absent in the BL. ¹⁶ AEF 299b: absent. ¹⁷ B 225a: آن

راست. ¹⁸ AEF 299b: که; BL: هم. ¹⁹ AEF 299b: است; BL: است. ²⁰ B 225a: آن; absent in the BL.

²¹ BL: تا; absent in AEF 299b.

- 72 *The lamb with seven horns who came and brought down that Book of Life* [was] Christ, who possessed those seven lines of the divine [writing] from the time he was given birth by Mary. [Here follows the enumeration of the seven facial lines and four natural elements already mentioned above]. When Moses broke the tablets, [these seven lines] became eight. [Multiplied by] four, they produced 32 lines of the divine [writing] referred to [by God in the Torah as]: '*Our image and Our likeness*'. They are marks of the 32 divine 'words' given to Adam, concerning which Christ said: *I was that Word, my Father is Power without beginning, I am His Speech, and the Holy Spirit is His Voice*.
- 73 Speech is word, and those 32 | [ontological] 'words' are inseparable from God. Adam's teeth also are either 32 or 28 [in number]. Christ acquired his [body] of flesh [created as locus of manifestation of the 32 and 28 ontological 'words'] from Mary. Similarly, the 'words' of Arabic [i.e., the consonants of the Arabic alphabet], by means of which [Jesus] speaks in the Qur'ān, are 28, and he is the Word. 327a
- 74 '*The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only the Messenger of God, and His Word that He committed to Mary, and a Spirit from Him*' [Q 4:171]. Christ was the Messenger of God, a Spirit from God, and the Word of God. [He had] 32 teeth in accordance with the number of the 32 [ontological] 'words' given to Adam.
- 75 The hand of God mentioned in the Gospel has 28 joints. [Indeed, the fingers of] two hands [have 28 joints], corresponding to the 28 'words' of Arabic, [with reference to which] Christ said: *I am the Speech and the Word*.
- 76 Also, the foot of God mentioned in the Gospel refers to the 28 joints of the toes [of two feet], in accordance with the number of 28 'words' of the Arabic [alphabet], about which Christ said: *I am that Word*.
- 77 *When the Lamb brought the Book [of Life] and was sacrificed before the Father, angels and prophets bowed down and said: 'You have delivered us from the divergence of languages and brought us into the kingdom of heaven and earth'*.⁶³ Outside and inside heavens and earth is the Word of God; the Word is foundation of their existence. And Christ said: *I was that Word*.

63 A possible paraphrase of *Revelation* 5:7–9.

- 78 اینست که [آمده است که]¹ بلغتهاء دودو در بیت المقدس سخن گویند که تا بر 32 سخن آدم میباید زبان و خلقت وجه او [را]² دانستن و روی خدا عبارت ازان 28 کلمه و 32 کلمه است [که]³ 28 خطّ رو و 32 خطّ استوا در مقابل آنست و بیان خلقت [وجه]⁴ و کیفیت آن در جای دیگر گفته شده است بتمام آنجا طلب باید کرد.
- 79 اکنون صورت مسیح که جان پاکست گوشتند شد آن 32 خطّ [خدا]⁵ که صورت آلهی بود از مریم و [از]⁶ آدم کسب کرد و در صورت گوشت و پوست کلمه درآمد و جان پاک تا خود را بیان کند.
- 80 اکنون پیش ازان که اسمان نبود و زمین [نبود]⁷ ذات خدا بود و کلمه او آسمان و زمین از میان [برود و کلمه باشد]⁸ و ذات.
- 81 اکنون در آسمان و زمین و هر چه دریشان [است]⁹ نام ایشان از 32 [کلمه]¹⁰ بیرون نیست مسیح گفت "من آن سختم" و هر چیزی [که]¹¹ از او آواز [بیرون]¹² آید از 32 کلمه [آن آواز]¹³ بیرون نیست مسیح گفت | "من آن سختم" [و هر چیز را که بر هم زنی از او آواز بیرون آید از 32³²⁷ کلمه بیرون نیست مسیح گفت "من آن کلمه ام"]¹⁴ پس ظاهر اشیا و باطن اشیا و خواب و بیداری و تصوّر و تخیّل مجموع موجودات از 32 کلمه که وجه مریم و مسیح و خلقت ایشان بر عدد آن کلمه مخلوقست بیرون نیست مسیح گفت "من آن کلمه"¹⁵ و آن سختم" اکنون مسیح را در همه موجودات و خواب و بیداری نظر کن و بیاب.
- 82 بیت المقدس¹⁶ مقام ظهر¹⁷ و سینه آدم است که مقام علم سینه است و ظهر مقام نطفه همه انبیا از نبیّهت آنرا موسی بامر حضرت عزّت در آنجا خیمه میعاد ساخت و آن الواح که عشر آیات

¹ AEF 299b: که ; absent in the BL. ² AEF 299b: را. ³ AEF 299b: آمده است و B 225a: آمده است که. ⁴ AEF 300a: absent. ⁵ AEF 300a: خدا; BL: تا. ⁶ AEF 300a: absent. ⁷ AEF 300a: نبود; absent in the BL. ⁸ AEF 300a: باشد و کلمه و برود و کلمه; BL: برود و کلمه. ⁹ AEF 300a: است; absent in the BL. ¹⁰ AEF 300a: سخن. ¹¹ AEF 300a: که ; BL: را که بر هم زنی. ¹² AEF 300a: بدر. ¹³ AEF 300a: و آن آواز; absent in the BL. ¹⁴ AEF 300a: بر هم زنی از او آواز بیرون. ¹⁵ B 225a: آید از 32 کلمه بیرون نیست مسیح گفت «من آن کلمه ام» و هر چه را بر هم زنی از او آوازی. ¹⁶ B 225b: بدر آید از 32 کلمه بیرون نیست مسیح گفت «من آن کلمه ام». ¹⁷ AEF 300a: آدم. ¹⁸ B 225b: که.

- 78 This is why it is said that [*strange*] *languages will be spoken in Jerusalem*.⁶⁴ The language and the original nature of Adam's face should be known by means of Adam's 32 [ontological] 'words'. The Face of God is constituted by these 28 and 32 'words', corresponding to the 28 facial lines, which become 32 with the line of balance. The full explanation concerning the original nature of [the human] face and its properties has been given elsewhere.
- 79 Christ, who is pure soul, acquired [human] bodily form becoming flesh, with the 32 lines of the divine [ontological writing which] constitute the form of God, from Mary and from Adam. [With him], the Word and the pure soul came into a bodily form of flesh in order to make themselves known.
- 80 The essence of God existed before [the creation] of the heaven and earth. [At the end of time,] His Word will withdraw itself from the heaven and earth, and [return to its original condition of] Word and essence.⁶⁵
- 81 The names of everything contained in the heavens and earth cannot exceed the [number of] the 32 [primary] 'words',⁶⁶ and Christ said: *I am that Word*. Sounds and voices emitted by any object or being cannot exceed the 32 [primary] 'words'. And Christ said: | *I am that Word*. The sounds produced by objects when they are struck against each other do not exceed the 32 [primary] 'words', and Christ said *I am that Word*. Outside and inside things, [anything that can be seen in] dream, in the state of wakefulness, mental representations or imaginings of any possible being, cannot exceed the 32 [primary] 'words', in accordance with the number of which the faces and original natures of Mary and Christ were created. Christ said: *I am that Word*. Find and observe Christ in every existing being, in dream and in wakefulness.
- 82 Jerusalem is the location of Adam's back and breast. Breast is the place of knowledge, and back is the place of sperm [containing the seeds] of all prophets.⁶⁷ For this reason Moses, following the divine command, built the

327b

64 See n. 41 above.

65 Since every existing form is the locus of manifestation of the divine Word and its 28/32 'words', when these 'words' leave their loci of manifestation and return into their original metaphysical condition, there remains nothing of material forms. The material universe dissolves and disappears.

66 That is, the number of sounds of which the names are composed cannot exceed the 32 primary 'words'.

67 This is an allusion to a *ḥadīth* according to which God collected clay for the body of Adam from different places of the earth's surface: 'God the Most High created the head of Adam and his forehead from the clay of the Ka'ba, his chest and his back from [the clay of] Jerusalem ... his right hand from the earth of the East, and his left hand from the earth of the West'. For the references of this *ḥadīth*, see Kister, 'Adam', pp. 133–135. It is interesting that the same idea is found in the *Book of the Rolls*. Cf. Gibson, 'Kitāb al-Mağāll', pp. 5–6.

بر آنجا بود [و]¹ شکست و توریت² در آنجا نهاد و قبله خود ساخت و خود آنرا خیمه میعاد نام کرد که وعده چند از آنجا ظاهر میشود و چون آن خیمه خراب شد بداؤد علیه السلام وحی کرد تا بیت المقدس را در آنجا [بنیاد]³ کرد و گفت در وقت بنا کردن باید که چنان سنگ بر سنگ نهند که صوت ظاهر نشود بجهت آنکه در مقام ظهر آدم است و آنجا آدم و آدمی زاد را خدا که خلقت می کند هیچ آوازی از آنجا بیرون نمی آید تا مثال آن باشد.

83 اکنون بیان مسیح [هم مسیح]⁴ تواند کرد و بس اکنون [ای]⁵ مسیحی صورت مسیح [صورت]⁶ آدم است و 32 [خط]⁷ آدم بر وجه مسیح بر خط استوا همچنین لوح موسی بشکن و 32 خط بخوان در مقابله 32 سخن که بآدم آمد و مسیح گفت "من آن سخنم" پس مسیح را درین کسوت در جمیع اشیا طلب کن بدان که مسیح چرا چهار مره داشت [چرا]⁸ موی سر داشت [چرا دو ابرو داشت]⁹ که هفت باشد چرا دو خط موی بینی داشت چرا دو خط¹⁰ عارض داشت چرا دو [خط]¹¹ مو بر دلب بالا داشت چرا یک خط مو بر لب [زیر]¹² داشت که هفت دیگر باشد [که چهارده باشد]¹³ و چهارده بر چهارده 28 باشد و بر خط استوا و شکافتن لوح که بگذری 32 خط باشد ازان خدا در مقابل آن 32 سخن | که بآدم آمد و مسیح گفت "من 328 و آن سخن بودم" و 32 دندان و 28 دندان مسیح را محمد علیه السلام بیان مسیح از خدا [خبر]¹⁴ چنین کرد که روح خدا بود و سخن خدا بود و خواهد آمدن.

84 ﴿وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَمٌ أَمْثَلُكُمْ مَا فَرَّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُونَ﴾ شامل حیات داران است [و]¹⁵ درین چه حیات دار و چه غیر حیات دار ﴿قَالُوا أَنْطَقَنَا اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنْطَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ﴾ آنکه واتی ﴿مَا فَرَّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ﴾ ام

¹ AEF 300a: absent. ² BL: را. ³ AEF 300a: بنا. ⁴ AEF 300a: هم مسیح; absent in the BL.

⁵ AEF 300a: ای; absent in the BL. ⁶ AEF 300a: صورت; absent in the BL. ⁷ AEF 300a: کلمه.

⁸ B 225b: absent. ⁹ AEF 300b (added over the line); B 225b: چرا دو ابرو داشت; absent in the BL. ¹⁰ AEF 300b: بر. ¹¹ B 225b: خط. ¹² BL: راست زیرین; AEF 300b: راست and زیرین deleted to leave زیر. ¹³ AEF 300b (added at the margin); B 225b: که چهارده باشد.

¹⁴ AEF 300b: deleted; B 225b: absent. ¹⁵ AEF 306a, added over the line: و; absent in the BL.

Tent of Meeting in that place. It was there that he deposited the tablets containing ten verses, which he broke, as well as the Torah, and he made [that place] his spiritual orientation (*qibla*). He named it the 'Tent of Meeting' because some promises [or appointed times, *va'da*] were manifested in that place. When the Tent was destroyed, David, peace be upon him, received the revelation concerning the Temple of Jerusalem, which he built in that place. During the construction, he ordered the stones to be put on each other in such a way that no sound be produced from them, because [the Temple was being built] on the location of Adam's back. [That is,] it is in this place that God created Adam and his children in such a way that no sound was produced [during this creation, and David wanted to make the construction of the Temple] similar [to the divine creation].

- 83 [Only] Christ can explain Christ. O Christian, the external form of Christ is that of Adam. Like Moses who broke his tablets, break the 32 lines of [ontological writing first written on the face of] Adam, [which appear] on the face of Christ, by the line of balance, and read them as a counterpart to the 32 'words' given to Adam, with regard to which Christ said: *I am that Word*. Seek this appearance of Christ [in the form of lines of writing] in every existing thing, and discover the reason for which Christ has four eyelashes, a hairline and two eyebrows, which add up to seven [lines], and for which reason he has two lines of hair in his nostrils, two other lines on his cheeks, two more lines on his upper lip and one line under his lower lip, which add up to another seven lines. [Together, these two heptads] make 14 [lines], or 28 [if counted with the] 14 [parts of the face where they are located]. The line of balance, or the break-up of the [Moses'] tablets,⁶⁸ transform them into 32 lines, which God established as counterpart to those 32 'words' | that He gave to Adam, and [with reference to which] Christ said: *I was that Word*. The 28 and 32 teeth of Christ refer [to the same fact]. Muḥammad, peace be upon him, following divine revelation, described Christ as a Spirit and a Word of God, which will come. 328a
- 84 *No creature is there crawling on the earth, no bird flying with its wings, but they are nations like unto yourselves. We have neglected nothing in the Book; then to their Lord they shall be mustered* [Q 6:38]. [This verse] applies to the animate [creatures] (*ḥayāt-dār*). In what concerns [both] animate [beings] and inanimate [objects, it is said]: *'God gave us speech, as He gave everything speech'* [Q 41:21]. The phrase *'We have neglected nothing in the Book'* [refers 334a

68 It will be recalled that the break-up of the tablets by Moses is interpreted in the *Jāvidān-nāma* as drawing of the line of balance which reveals the 28/32 primary divine 'words'.

الکتابی که واتى ﴿وَعِنْدَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ﴾ ﴿وَلَدَيْنَا كِتَابٌ يَنْطِقُ بِالْحَقِّ﴾ [...] چون کتاب حیات را بکشایند همه ناطق [بیند]¹ و از کتاب حیات و [از کشودن آن]² کشودن جمیع کتاب که عبارتی از جماد و حیوان از روی علمیت کلمه کشاده بیند.

85 آ که واتى انجیلده که عیسی در شکم [مریم]³ عذرا در آهی و گوشتند بی کلمه خدایی که عبارتی از کلمه الله که 32 تا هستی در مظهر انسانی علم وادی کی از گوشت 32 پاره گوشت تا علم 32 کلمه بو پس کلمه گوشتند بی بو.

86 مثلاً تو هیتن آواز هکری که زید خو جواب هوا براء آ که خو مبعوثی و مخلوقی براء علمیت اوقتی 368ظ که بر خط استوا بشی 32 آوازی که بالفعل و بالقوة از هر چه موجودی [آوازه]⁴ کلمه همیاسه براء آ که خنان مظهر کلمه [هستند]⁵ "الاب قوة الازلیة" مسیح براء آ هوا که "انا نطقه" که

¹ AEF 306a: شوند; BL: بیند. ² AEF 306a, added at the margin: آن کشودن; absent in the BL.

³ AEF 316a: مریم deleted. ⁴ AEF 336a: آواژ. ⁵ AEF 336a: هستند, followed by a separation mark; BL: هستی.

to the] Mother of the Book (*umm al-kitāb*), for it is said: '*with Him is the Mother of the Book*' [Q 13:39], and '*with Us is a Book speaking truth*' [Q 23:62]. When the Book of Life is opened, everything will speak. The Book of Life and its opening means the opening of all [other Books], including those of minerals and animals, which will be opened to reveal the knowledge of the Word (334a).⁶⁹

- 85 It is said in the Gospel that Jesus came into the belly of the Virgin Mary, where he acquired a body of flesh. [This means that] the divine Word, which consists of 32 [ontological 'words'] produced knowledge in the human locus of manifestation. The flesh [produced] 32 parts of flesh so that the knowledge of the 32 'words' [could be discerned], and thus the Word became flesh.⁷⁰ 345a note at the margin
- 86 When you call someone by his name, for example Zayd, he answers, because he is created and brought [into this world] as the knowledge of this name. When the line of Balance is drawn, the 32 voices [that is, primary 'words'] contained, in actuality or in potentiality, in everything, become perceptible as [ontological] 'words', because [all things] are loci of manifestation of these 'words'.⁷¹ '*The Father is the Power without beginning*'. Christ said, '*I am His Speech*', because he is Speech in his external form and in his knowledge.⁷² 368b

69 The author combines here the Qur'ānic concepts of the all-comprehensive divine register and the archetypal Mother of the Book with the Book of Life from the Revelation of John, alluding to the episode of its opening at the end of time (Revelation 5:8–9). Since, according to the *Jāvidān-nāma*, the complete Book of God is identical with the human bodily form, which contains the complete set of the 28/32 primary 'letters', the 'opening' of that Book will automatically lead to the revelation of the innermost ontological meanings contained in the lower forms of life, such as minerals and animals, which contain only partial combinations of the primary 'letters'.

70 This passage refers to the idea that the human form is created in accordance with the numbers of the primordial 'words'. The ḥadīth describing the division of the human body into 360 joints, 360 bones, and 360 parts of flesh, fat and skin is cited elsewhere in the *Jāvidān-nāma* in a similar context, the number 360 being consistently interpreted in the *Jāvidān-nāma* as six times 28 plus six times 32.

71 For the line of balance as principle of manifestation, see n. 33 above.

72 According to the *Jāvidān-nāma*, Adam was created as the perfect form of manifestation of the 28/32 primary 'words' composing the primordial ontological divine Speech; and he was also taught the innermost meaning of his own bodily form, that is to say, he was aware that the form of his body represents the complete divine Word. In the following generations, this knowledge was lost, and humans received their bodily form at their birth without the corresponding knowledge. With the coming of Jesus, the fullness of the human being, combining the possession of a human bodily form and the knowledge of its true meaning will be restored.

[خوبه‌یثات و]¹علیت نطقی که راست بی در خلقت آنکه ﴿تَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِي وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ﴾.

87 تا دوبار نژاد یکی از شکل و صورت [ظاهر و یکی از شکل و صورتی که خویشتن در خواو³⁸⁷ظ هوینه یعنی بی شکل و صورت]² [یبیو]³ در ملکوت آسمان که کلمه و کلامی دانشوی همانن که مسیح واتی "من لم یولد مرتین" و براء ا[آن]⁴ کس خویشتن دره کو که هوینه بی شکل و صورت و خلع بدن صورت و معنی که در خواو هوینه براء ا که ظاهرا و باطنا بیرهان و حجج نیره بسر خلقت صورت و معنی که در خواو هوینه برسی براء ا هوینه که ظاهرا بیرهان خلع بدن صورت و معنی بکی.

88 خدا قوت ازلی هستی و متکلم بکلام ازلی و ابدی که صفت خو بو که "انا نطقه الاب القوه³⁸⁸و الازلیة و انا نطقه" اب [تقدیم ذاتی]⁵ داره بر ابن اما خو وقتی اسم ابوت رسه که ابی بو.

89 ا که عیسی واتی در کتاب فطروس که مصحف حیات را خدا بر کرسی بزرگواری نهاده بود³⁹⁴ظ و بهفت انگشتی مهر کرده مصحف حیات خطّ وجه مریم بو که هفت انگشتی عبارت از هفت سطر خدائی [بو و]⁶ چهار مرثه خو و دو | ابرویک موی سر که بر هفت موضع اوست³⁹⁵و که هریک [مرتب از]⁷ چهار سطر باشد خاک و باد و آب و آتش چنانکه هفت مهر 28 باشد و بخطّ استواء او و موی فرق بگدیری هشت سطر شود 32 سطر ظاهر شود در مقابله 32 سخن ابدی ازلی که خدا بآدم فرستاد که در توریت و قرآن آمده است که حقّ تعالی جمیع نامها تعلیم آدم [کرده]⁸ و جمیع نامها ازین 32 بیرون نیست و از خدا جدا نیست.

90 و چون کلام خداست و روح و کلمه خداست آنرا عیسی گفت [که]⁹ "من بکشایم" با فطروس بره هفت شاخ آمد و آنرا فرو برد هفت شاخ همان 28 خواهد بود که هریک شاخ

تقدیم: AEF 353b: 5. إن: AEF 353a: 4. نبیو: AEF 353a: 3. 2 AEF 353a. خوشتن بر: AEF 336a: 1

تقدّم ذات: BL; ذاتی: AEF 359b: 6. بو و: absent in the BL. 7 AEF 359b: deleted. 8 AEF 359b:

کرد. 9 AEF 359b: deleted.

Christ's saying, '*Thou knowest what is within my soul, and I know not what is within Thy soul*' [Q 5:116] describes correctly the condition of the creation.

- 87 Whoever is not born two times—one time with a visible bodily form, and 387b
 a second time with the form in which one is seen in dream, that is, without [a physical] form—cannot enter the kingdom of heaven which is the [invisible] Word. For Christ said: '*Except a man be born again [he cannot see the kingdom of God]*'.⁷³ The reason for which one contemplates oneself in that place, that is, in dream, without any visible form, being exempt from both external shape and inner reality corresponding to one's body, is because he/she has reached, exteriorly and interiorly, by luminous demonstration and proof, the secret of the original nature of the forms seen in dreams and [corresponding metaphysical] realities. This [realisation] is expressed as seeing oneself exempt from external shape and inner reality [corresponding to] one's body.
- 88 God is the Power without beginning, He speaks a Word without beginning 388a
 and without end, which is His attribute, [referred to by Jesus when he said] '*I am his Speech*'. [He said:] '*The Father is the Power without beginning, and I am his Speech*'. Father is essentially precedent to Son but, in his quality of son, he [Jesus] reached the name of paternity.
- 89 In the Book of Peter, *Jesus said that God put the Book of Life on a high pedestal 394b*
*and sealed it with seven seals.*⁷⁴ The Book of Life is [represented by the] lines of the face of Mary. The seven seals correspond to the seven divine lines [on her face]: four eyelashes, two | eyebrows and the hair of the head, situated on the [corresponding] parts [of the face]. Every line is composed of four lines [corresponding to the natural elements], earth, air, water and fire. In this way, the seven seals become 28. With the line of balance [represented by the] parting of the hair, this makes eight lines [which, multiplied by the number of four elements] produce 32 lines, as counterpart to the 32 [primordial] 'words' [of the divine Word], without beginning and without end, that God sent to Adam. For it is said in the Torah and in the Qur'ān that God the Most High taught all the names to Adam,⁷⁵ and all these names are not outside these 32 [primordial 'words', which] are inseparable from God.
- 90 Since Jesus is the Speech of God, the Spirit and Word of God, he said to Peter: '*I will open [the seals of the Book of Life]*'. *The Lamb with seven horns came and brought down [the Book of Life from the pedestal]*.⁷⁶ The seven horns

73 John 3:3.

74 Allusion to *Revelation* 5:1.

75 Allusion to Q 2:31.

76 Cf. *Revelation* 5:5 and 7.

چهار خط است و پیش حضرت عزّت آن بر¹ کشته شد همه فرشتگان آسمان و زمین و انبیا سجده کردند و گفتند "تو ما را بآن که خود را پیش پدر آسمانی فدا کردی از زبانها مختلف و لغتهاء مختلف برهانیدی".

91 اکنون ای مسیحی مسیح نطق خدا بو و وجه خو علم 32 کلمه [خدا]² بو که در همه اشیا 32 کلمه موجود بو و از خدا جدا نبواکنون در جمیع [مظاهر]³ مسیح را بطلب.

92 مسیح مصحف حیاترا بکشاد و [مفتح]⁴ بخواند و مسیح چنین گفته بود⁵ چنانکه خط وجه مریم هفت بر هفت چهار مره دوا برو و موی سر هفت بر هفت چهارده باشد اثر را حواریون مسیح دوازده بو قائم مقام کی⁶ عیسی و مریم چهارده.

93 یعنی آ دوازده که اعتقاد مسیح دارند و مریم خنان همان مسیح اند و مریم چون مسیح خوشته کلمه خدا هزاره هر کس که خو کلمه زانه بتحقیق خو هم مسیح آلی بو و مسیح در خو تجلی کیبو.

94 رو در بیت المقدس براء [آن]⁷ کند که بقول رسول علیه السلام موضع سینه آدم و ظهر آدم که [همه]⁸ انبیا و⁹ اولیا از انجا مخلوق شده اند باین معنی زمین حشر است "علیکم بالشام" ازین است.¹⁰

1 BL: deleted. 2 AEF 360a: خدائی. 3 AEF 360a: مظاهر; BL: مظهر.

4 AEF 360a: مفتّح; BL: فتح. 5 AEF 360a: separation mark. 6 AEF 360a: ل. 7 AEF 360a: آن; BL: ا. 8 AEF 360a: همه; absent in the BL. 9 BL: همه; absent in the AEF 360a. 10 AEF 360a: separation mark.

[represent] 28 [lines of the divine writing], since every horn corresponds to four lines. [*The Lamb*] was sacrificed before God, and all the angels of the heaven and earth, and the prophets, prostrated themselves and said: 'By your sacrifice before the heavenly Father, you delivered us from the divergence of languages'.⁷⁷

- 91 O Christian, Christ was the Word of God, and his face represented the knowledge of the 32 divine 'words'. These 32 'words' are in everything, and they are inseparable from God. Seek Christ in all loci of manifestation.⁷⁸
- 92 Christ will open the Book of Life and read it. He said it himself. The facial features of Mary, including the hairline, two eyebrows and four eyelashes, with corresponding locations of the face, were 14. For this reason, Christ had 12 Apostles. With Jesus and Mary, they were 14 [persons], the *locum tenens* of [the 14 features of Mary's face].
- 93 This means that these 12 [Apostles] who believed in Christ and in Mary, [share the condition of] Christ and Mary. Since Christ recognised himself as being the Word of God, whosoever recognises Christ as the Word through his/her personal spiritual realisation shares Christ's condition before God,⁷⁹ and Christ manifests himself in such a person.
- 94 [The prayers] turn their faces towards Jerusalem because, in accordance with the prophetic tradition, it is the location of Adam's breast and back [i.e., loins] from which emerged all the prophets and saints. For this reason, [Jerusalem] is the place of the last Gathering, and it is said '*Go to Syria*'.⁸⁰

77 Cf. *Revelation* 5:8–9.

78 That is, in all visible forms of objects and beings.

79 Or 'becomes anointed by God', *masīḥ-i ilāhī būd*.

80 This is an allusion to the series of *ḥadīths* dealing with the merits of the area of Greater Syria (*faḍā'il al-Shām*) which, in early Islamic perspective, included all or part of modern Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, Palestine and Turkey. Hence the mention of Jerusalem as part of Syria in this passage. More precisely, the expression 'Go to Syria' is found in the *ḥadīths*, most of which seem to be transmitted from 'Abd Allāh ibn Ḥawāla al-Azdī (d. 58/677–678), where the Prophet Muḥammad advises his follower or followers to go to Syria (references to some *ḥadīths* of this group can be found in Wensinck, *Concordance*, vol., 3, p. 54). During the lifetime of the Prophet, Syria was not yet part of the Muslim empire, therefore one of the reasons given to this prophetic incentive was to spread the message of Islam in then Byzantine province, the 'land of Christians' as it is put in the beginning of the next paragraph.

- 95 Go there, in that land of Christians, and tell there [the truth concerning] the original nature | of Christ and Mary. Tell also that he, who was the Word of God, incarnated in a body of flesh in order to manifest himself [i.e., the divine Word]. Because the total number of names rooted in the divine Essence that God taught to Adam⁸¹ was 32, he [Jesus] was incarnated in [a physical form made] in accordance with the number of these 32 'words'.⁸² 395b
- 96 These 32 'words' are not created. If they were created and produced Adam, either Adam would have been another [created person], or they would have produced someone else [than Adam]. But it is true that [the body of] Jesus, who is the Word of God, was created.
- 97 It is mentioned in the Book of Peter that [people] *will speak strange languages in Jerusalem*.⁸³ Concerning the 32 names [corresponding to the physical incarnation] of Christ, they are the same as the 32 'words' received by Adam. [Jesus] said: *'The first thing that came from heaven was the Word, and God was with that Word, and I am that Word'*. He represents the 32 divine 'words' without beginning and without end, he is with everything and in all loci of manifestation. When [these 'words'] are in a disjointed condition, they are like Jesus in his transcendent aspect [of the divine Word].
- 98 And when they [come together to] form compounds, it is he [Jesus] who explains his essence and attributes, as well as his divine dimension [through them]. He thus manifests himself in any object or being brought into existence by these [combinations of the ontological 'words']. Recognise him at that time and place.
- 99 O Christian, recognise [the Prophet] Muḥammad, peace be upon him, as the Word of God the Real, because the divine Word was manifested through his being. Concerning the true [nature] of Christ and his coming he [Muḥammad said]: *'[The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only the Messenger of God, and] His Word that He committed to Mary, and a Spirit from Him'* [Q 4:171]; *'Those who [disbelieve in God and His Messengers and] desire to make division between God and His Messengers [and say, We believe in part, and disbelieve in part, desiring to take between this and that a way] those in truth are the unbelievers'* [Q 4:150–151]. So know that if you deny Muḥammad, you deny Christ [as well].

81 Allusion to the Q 2:31.

82 In other words, Jesus, as Adam, represents the spontaneous actualisation of the original divine Word in human form, which is its perfect locus of manifestation.

83 See n. 41 above.

- 100 بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ در انجیل آمده است [که]¹ "ای حواریون هر سخن که من باشما گفته ام برمز و اشارت گفته ام این بار [که]² بیایم و معنی آنرا آشکار کنم"³ و آنکه گفت "[من]⁴ پیش پدر آسمانی میروم" [این]⁵ معنی باشد/⁶ و آنکه گفت "هر که بمن نظر کرد پدرم نظر [کرده]"⁷ و "من و پدر هر دو یکسانیم"⁸ و آنکه گفت "اول چیزی که از آسمان آمد سخن بود و خدا [بان]⁹ سخن بود و من آن سخن بودم" و آنکه مریم باو گفت که "بحقّ انجیل خدا"¹⁰ یعنی³⁹⁶ "بحقّ تو که انجیل سخن خداست".
- 101 که "پیش از آنکه آسمان و زمین [را]¹¹ بیافریدی کجا بودی؟" گفت "من در پدر [و]¹² پدر در من [و]¹³ پدر قوّت ازلی است و من نطق اویم و روح [القدوس]¹⁴ صوت اوست".
- 102 اکنون ای ترسا بزبان که انبیا آمدند پیش از ظهور مسیح و واتند که دختری پوری [بزایه]¹⁵ که نام او خدا با ما بوقتی که او بیاسه شرک از دنیا برود¹⁶ دین و ملّت و مذهب یک [بیو]¹⁷ مجموع آدمی زاد خدا شناس بنبد یهود هوا مسیح که ترسایان او را میدانند این نیست که انبیا وعده کیند براء [آنکه]¹⁸ دین و ملّت و مذهب همه [یک]¹⁹ نشدند و همه خلق خدا شناس نشدند.
- 103 جواب او ای که مسیح واتی "ای حواریون من باشما سخن برمز و اشارت و کثایت گفته ام این بار بیایم و معنی آنرا بیان کنم" و گفت [که "من"]²⁰ [نیامدم]²¹ که دین انبیا را ناقص گردانم بلکه [آمدم]²² تمام گردانم.

¹ AEF 36ob, added over the line: که; absent in the BL. ² AEF 36ob, added over the line: که; absent in the BL. ³ AEF 36ob: no separation mark. ⁴ AEF 36ob: من; BL: که. ⁵ AEF 36ob: ان; BL: این. ⁶ AEF 36ob: no separation mark. ⁷ AEF 36ob (ه deleted): کرد. ⁸ AEF 36ob: no separation mark. ⁹ AEF 36ob: بدان. ¹⁰ AEF 36ob: که deleted; BL: که. ¹¹ AEF 36ob: را; absent in the BL. ¹² AEF 36ob, added over the line: و; absent in the BL. ¹³ AEF 36ob, added over the line: و; absent in the BL. ¹⁴ AEF 36ob: قدس. ¹⁵ AEF 36ob: بزایه (یه added under the line); BL: برا. ¹⁶ BL: مرتفع شود; absent in the AEF 36ob. ¹⁷ AEF 36ob: بنبد. ¹⁸ AEF 36ob: آنکه; BL: ا. ¹⁹ AEF 36ob: یکی. ²⁰ absent in the AEF 36ob. ²¹ AEF 36ob: نیامده ام. ²² AEF 36ob: آمده ام.

- 100 *In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.* [Jesus] says in the Gospel: 'O Apostles! Everything that I told you, I told by symbols and allusions. I will come another time and disclose their [true] meaning'.⁸⁴ His words: 'I go unto my heavenly Father'⁸⁵ [allude] to the same meaning.⁸⁶ He also said: 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father',⁸⁷ and 'I and my Father are one'.⁸⁸ He also said: 'The first thing that came from heaven was the Word, and God was with that Word, and I was that | Word'. And Mary said to him: 'By the innermost truth of the divine Gospel', that is, 'By your innermost truth, [for] you are the Gospel of the divine Word'.⁸⁹ 396a
- 101 'Where was [Jesus] before the creation of the heavens and earth? He said, "I [was] in the Father and the Father [was] in me. The Father is the Power without beginning, I am His Speech, and the Holy Spirit is His Voice."'⁹⁰
- 102 O Christian, know that prophets who came before Christ foretold that *he will be given birth by a pure woman, and will be named 'God with us'*.⁹¹ When he comes, idolatry will be removed from this world. [All mankind will be united within] one nation and one religion, and everyone will have [direct] knowledge of God. The Jews say that the Christ of Christians was not that person promised by the prophets, because [his coming] did not unite mankind within one nation and one religion, and the knowledge of God is not [given] to everyone.
- 103 [It could be] answered that Christ said: 'O Apostles! I have spoken to you by symbols, signs and allusions. I will come again and explain their meaning'. He also said: 'I will not come to make the religions of the [previous] prophets defective, but I will come to complete them'.⁹²

84 Cf. John 16:25.

85 Cf. John 14:12, 28; 16:16, 28; 20:17.

86 Apparently, to the promised return.

87 John 14:9.

88 John 10:30.

89 That is, both Jesus and Gospel are the Word of God; in this sense they are identical with each other.

90 Cf. *AP*, pp. 105–1006: 'Before you created heaven, earth, angels and men where was your abode? ...—My abode was in my Father before the created beings were created ... The Father was in me, glorifying me, and I in the Father, glorifying the Spirit ... The Father is majesty and eternal power, I am His word and the Spirit is action and procession'.

91 A paraphrase of Matthew 1:23: 'The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Emmanuel'. The name 'Emmanuel', which means 'God with us', is cited explicitly in other passages.

92 A paraphrase of Matthew 5:17.

- 104 پیغمبر [ما]¹ علیه السّلام گواهی بدی که خوبو آ که انبیا خبر داده بودند آمد و برفت و او کلمه خدا [بود و روح خدا بود و]² باز خواهد آمدن و نشان قیامت یکی آمدن اوست.³
- 105 اکنون بقول مسیح ای ترسا آن سخن که مسیح گفت "من هرچه با شما گفته ام برمز و اشارت گفته ام باز خواهیم آمدن تا آنرا [آشکاره]⁴ کنم" پس بقول مسیح شما سخنها و اورتا او بیان نکند فهم نخواهد کرد [و پس].⁵
- 106 بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ اکنون آنکه مسیح در اوّل یک انجیل آورده است [که]⁶ "اوّل چیزی که از آسمان اهی سخن بی و خدا بآن سخن بی و من آ سخن بن" معنی اوی که هر سخن که خدای تعالی بوحی یا بخود گفت همچنانکه با موسی علیه السّلام در آن وقت و در آن زمان میان ایشان سخن من بن پس هر کس که خدا سخن گفته باشد از انبیا و ملائکه "من آن سخن بودم" [و]⁷ آن سخن از ذات خدا جدا نیست.
- 107 و خدای تعالی موجوداته که بیافری بسخن آفری که واتی کن یعنی بباش بهر زبان که امر کی که فلان چیز بباش بی پس همه اشیا بنطق موجود بیبوعیسی علیه السّلام هوا که "من آن سخن خدا ام" لا جرم چون سخن خدا و روح خدا بواژ خدا جدا نبو و خدا از خو جدا نبو.
- 108 آنکه واتی که "پیش پدر میروم" بوجهی اوی که همچنانکه وجود پسر قائم پیدرست وجود نطق [هم]⁸ قائم بذات خداست و ذات و صفات هر دو عین [هم]⁹ اند دو نمیباید دانست چون خدا بر همه اشیا محیط است و عیسی علیه السّلام کلام [خدا]¹⁰ و سخن [خداست]¹¹ میباید که از خدا جدا نباشد و بر همه اشیا محیط باشد هر شی از اشیا که تو نام میبری از سخن بیرون نیست و هر دوشی از اشیا که بر هم می زنی از او آوازی بدر آید و آن از سخن بیرون [نیست]¹² پس مسیح سخن باشد و سخن از همه اشیا ظاهر میشود پس مسیح با حق در همه اشیا بو چه در خواب و چه در بیداری.
- 109 ای ترسا بزآن که اوّل مسیح آهی چرا سرّ اشیا و موجوداته بیان نکی و چه چی مانع [آ]¹³ حال بی که واتی "بپاسان و بیان بکران" انشاء الله گفته شود.

¹ AEF 360b: ما; absent in the BL. ² AEF 360b: بود و روح خدا بود و; absent in the BL.

³ AEF 360b: no separation mark. ⁴ AEF 360b: آشکارا. ⁵ AEF 360b: و پس; BL: پس.

⁶ AEF 361a, added over the line: که; absent in the BL. ⁷ AEF 361a, added over the line: و;

absent in the BL. ⁸ absent in the AEF 361a. ⁹ AEF 361a: هم; BL: هم. ¹⁰ AEF 361a: خدا;

absent in the BL. ¹¹ AEF 361a: خداست; absent in the BL. ¹² AEF 361a: نیست; absent in the

BL. ¹³ AEF 361a: آن.

- 104 Our Messenger, peace be upon him, testified that he [i.e., Jesus] was [the person] foretold by the [previous] prophets. He came and he is gone, but he was the divine Word and the Spirit of God which will return.⁹³ His [second] coming is one of the signs of the Resurrection.⁹⁴
- 105 O Christian, according to Christ, when he said: *'All that I have told you, I told by symbols and signs, and I will come again in order to clarify them'*, they [Apostles? Christians?] are not able to [fully] understand his words before he [returns and] explains them.
- 106 *In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.* At the beginning of one of the Gospels,⁹⁵ Christ said: *'The first thing that came from heaven was the Word, and God was with that Word, and I am that Word'*. This means that every word that God the Most High [addresses to humans], either by inspiration or directly as, for example, [His speech] to Moses, at any moment *'I am'* that word between them. *'I was that Word'* that God addressed to the prophets and angels. That Word cannot be separated from the divine Essence.
- 107 God the Most High created all that which He created by the Word [of the command] *'Be'*. In any language that He addressed a thing ordering it to be it was. Everything obtained its existence by speech. Jesus, peace be upon him, said: *'I am that Word of God'*. Necessarily, since he was the Word and the Spirit of God, he cannot be separated from God, and God cannot be separated from him. 396b
- 108 [Jesus] said: *'I go unto my Father'*. One of the meanings of this is that, just as the existence of the Son depends on the Father, the existence of the Speech depends on the divine Essence. The Essence and the attributes are one and the same thing; they should not be regarded as two different things. Since God encompasses everything, and Jesus, peace be upon him, is the Word and the Speech of God, he should be not separated God, and he encompasses everything. Anything that you can name is not outside speech. If you strike two objects against each other, they will emit a voice, which is not outside speech. Christ is the Speech, and the Speech is produced by everything. Christ is therefore really in everything, in dream as well as in wakefulness.
- 109 O Christian, know why Christ did not disclose the secret of things and beings during his first coming, and what prevented him from doing this, so that he said: *'I will come again and explain'*. God willing, this matter has been discussed.

93 This is an allusion to Q 4:171 cited above.

94 According to Muslim tradition, the return of Jesus will be one of the signs of the last Hour.

95 This phrase confirms that Faḍl Allāh was aware of the existence of several Gospels.

- 110 اکنون ای ترسا باتفاق جمیع ترسایان روح خدا و سخن خدا که مسیح [بی]¹ در صورت مریم در آهی و گوشتند بی یعنی بصورت [بشر]² و آدم بر آهی درین شکی نی.
- 111 آمدیم باصورت مریم مریم آن صورت را از آدم و حوّا یافته بود و درین هیچ شکی و تردّی شما را نیست پس چون روح پاک در رحم مریم پاک گوشتند شد صورت آدم حاصل کی و بیرون آهی³ و در سخن آهی بآن مردم بلغت و سخن ایشان تا ایشان فهم سخن او توانند کرد.⁴
- 112 اکنون ای ترسا پیش تو هستی که آن صورت [که]⁵ مریم داشتی صورت آدم و حوّا بی یا نه بضرورت میباید گفتن بی پس [صورتی که]⁶ روح گوشتند بی و صورت حاصل | کی آن صورت آدم بی البتّه.
- 113 و در تورات و کتاب انبیا آهی که آدم علیه السّلام [را]⁷ حقّ تعالی نام مجموع موجودات آموخته بود و لغت مختلف که فرزندان آدم داشته [و]⁸ دارند همچنین صورت آدم از آدم یافته اند و در تورات آمده است که "من که خدا ام میخواستم [که]⁹ چیزی بیافرینم بشکل خود و هیئات خود و صورت خود که [پادشاه]¹⁰ مرغان هوا و ماهیان دریا باشد آدم را بیافریدم".¹¹
- 114 اکنون مسیح را صورت [که]¹² صورت آدم است [بی خلاف]¹³ بیاید دانست که آدم علیه السّلام چون بشکل خدا و صورت خدا و هیئات خدا برآمده است اکنون [بدان]¹⁴ که شکل و [صورت]¹⁵ ازان صورت است هرگاه که صورت آدم را ره [دانسته باشی]¹⁶ بخدا برده باشی و جمیع انبیا را¹⁷ بدان که ره بسخن خدا و نطق خدا که مسیح گفت "من نطق خدا [و سخن خدا]¹⁸ ام" برده باشی.¹⁹
- 115 اکنون ای ترسا [چون]²⁰ بحکم تورات صورت آدم صورت خدا باشد پس [صورتی که]²¹ مسیح در شکم مریم گوشتند شده بود و صورت²² حاصل کرده هم صورت خدا باشد اول

¹ AEF 361a: added over the line; absent in the BL. ² AEF 361a: بشر; absent in the BL. ³ BL:

بآن. ⁴ AEF 361a: no separation mark. ⁵ AEF 361b: که; absent in the BL. ⁶ AEF 361b:

و; ⁷ AEF 361b: را; absent in the BL. ⁸ AEF 361b, added over the line: و; absent in the BL.

⁹ AEF 361b, added over the line: و; absent in the BL. ¹⁰ AEF 361b: پادشاه.

¹¹ AEF 361b: no separation mark. ¹² AEF 361b: که deleted. ¹³ AEF 361b: بی خلاف; BL:

بخلاف. ¹⁴ AEF 361b: بزآن. ¹⁵ AEF 361b: صورت is apparently deleted and replaced by

بدانی. ¹⁶ AEF 361b: دانسته. ¹⁷ BL: دانسته. ¹⁸ AEF 361b: و سخن خدا; absent in the BL.

¹⁹ AEF 361b: no separation mark. ²⁰ AEF 361b: چون; absent in the BL. ²¹ AEF 361b: صورتی

آدم. ²² AEF 361b, added over the line: صورت. BL: که.

- 110 O Christian, all Christians recognise that the Spirit of God and the Word of God, which is Christ, came into the physical form of Mary and thus was incarnated, that is to say, took a human form, that of Adam. There is no doubt in this.
- 111 As to the physical form of Mary, she obtained it from Adam and Eve. You do not have any doubt or hesitation concerning this issue. When the pure Spirit was incarnated in the womb of Mary the Pure, it produced a form of Adam. [The Spirit] thus manifested itself and addressed the people in their language and idiom, so that they were able to understand its Speech.
- 112 O Christian, according to you, is this physical form produced by Mary [identical] with the form of Adam and Eve or not? Certainly, it is. The form produced by the incarnated Spirit | is, of course, the form of Adam.
- 113 In the Torah and books of the prophets it is said that *God the Most High taught the names of all existents to Adam, peace be upon him*.⁹⁶ And the descendants of Adam, who spoke and still speak different languages, [all] obtained the form of Adam⁹⁷ from Adam. God said in the Torah: *'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air ... So God created man [Adam]'*.
- 114 Christ has the physical form of Adam.⁹⁸ It should be admitted without controversy that Adam, peace be upon him, was shaped in accord with the form of God. Therefore, whosoever reaches [the knowledge of the innermost meaning] of the form of Adam, attains [the knowledge] of God and of all prophetic [revelations]. He/she attains the Word and the Speech of God, concerning which Christ said: *'I am the Speech and the Word of God'*.
- 115 O Christian, according to the Torah, the form of Adam is the form of God.⁹⁹ The form of Christ, produced when he acquired a body of flesh in the womb

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96 This is an allusion to Q 2:31 and probably to Genesis 2:19–20.

97 That is, the human bodily form.

98 That is, human bodily form.

99 It is remarkable that this doctrine of human form as the perfect locus of manifestation of the divinity, which has a long history in Islamic religious literature starting with the doctrines ascribed to the first 'exaggerators' (*ghulāt*) and early Shī'ī *ḥadīth* collections, is formulated here with reference to the Torah. The author refers of course to *Genesis* 1:26–27 cited a few lines above. It must be noted that the idea of divine manifestation in the human form of Jesus is central in the *Book of the Rolls* which, as mentioned, cites the same verse from *Genesis* concerning the creation of Adam in divine likeness (Gibson, 'Kitāb al-Mağāll', p. 5). Jesus is 'God-Word [which] became flesh', the divine eternal light 'fashioned ... into the figure of a man' in the womb of Mary. See *AP*, p. 111. This makes it very probable that the *Book of the Rolls* was the main source for Faḍl Allāh's reformulation of the doctrine of the divine human.

[بزآنکه]¹ چرا مسیح گوشتند بی و [به]² صورت آدم [برآهی]³ تا او که مسیح [بو]⁴ و کلمه خدا [بو]⁵ ظاهر بو که "من کلمه خدا ام که آمده ام بزبان".

116 ای ترسا که وجه آدم که مسیح آن وجه و صورت ازویافت چون از مریم بزاید همچو مریم هفت خطّ خدایی بر روی داشت یکی موی سر و دو ابرو و چهار مره و هفت دیگر ازان آدم بر روی داشت دو موی عارض و دو موی بینی و دو بر لب بالا و یکی بر لب زیرین چهارده خطّ خدایی است.

117 آن چهارده خطّ وجه مسیح بر چهارده موضع است که 28 باشد منازل قمر بر فلک [بروج]⁶ 28 است و هر فلکی که زیر و بالا فلک [بروج]⁷ است و خاک و آب و باد و آتش از 28 منزل قمر به 28 قسمت میشود⁸ در مقابل قسمت وجه مسیح از براء آنکه عیسی [علیه السلام]⁹ کلمه خداست و همه اشیا از کلمه بیرون نیست [تا]¹⁰ بغایتی که دو چیز را بر هم زنی ازو [آوازی]¹¹ بیرون آید که از 32 کلمه آدم بیرون | نباشد.

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118 و چون مسیح گفت [که]¹² من [آن]¹³ کلمه خدا ام او کلمه باشد و آواز باشد ازان میگوید که پدر قوت ازلیست و من نطق اویم و روح [القدوس]¹⁴ صوت اوست بی صوت کلمه ظاهر نمیشود.

119 اکنون ای مسیحی بزبان که مسیح [گفت]¹⁵ که "من نطق [خدا ام]¹⁶ و آسختن [که]¹⁷ از زبان مسیح بیرون می آید آن نطق خدا بود [و]¹⁸ دران وقت که او آمده بود بر [زبان]¹⁹ او 32 نطق که خدای تعالی [بآدم]²⁰ آموخته بود در مقابله آن 32 خطّ بر روی او نوشته که آن 32 خطّ بر وجه مسیح بود در مقابله 32 نطق آدم که در دو جهان بظاهر و باطن هرچه هست ازیشان بیرون نیست [آن]²¹ 32 نطق بر زبان مسیح گذر نمیکرد از براء آن گفت "بروم و بیایم تا دین انبیا را تمام کنم" [که]²² "براء اتمام کردن آمده ام نه²³ براء نقصان".

¹ AEF 361b: بزانی. ² AEF 361b: به; absent in the BL. ³ AEF 361b: وراهی. ⁴ AEF 361b:

و. BL: ⁵ AEF 361b: deleted. ⁶ AEF 361b: البروج. ⁷ AEF 361b: deleted. ⁸ BL: ⁹ AEF 361b:

added over the line: "عم"; absent in the BL. ¹⁰ AEF 361b: تا; BL: ¹¹ AEF 361b:

آواز; added over the line; BL: ¹² AEF 361b: deleted. ¹³ AEF 361b: آن; absent

in the BL. ¹⁴ AEF 362a: القدس. ¹⁵ AEF 362a: واتی. ¹⁶ AEF 362a: خدا ام; BL: خدام.

¹⁷ AEF 362a: که; absent in the BL. ¹⁸ AEF 362a: و; absent in the BL. ¹⁹ BL: زوان; AEF 362a:

آن; absent ²⁰ AEF 362a: آدم را. ²¹ AEF 362a, added over the line: ب; ²² AEF 362a:

in the BL. ²³ BL: از; deleted in AEF 362a.

of Mary, is also the form of God. Learn the reason for which Christ was incarnated and took the form of Adam: he did it in order to make visible himself, who is the Messiah and the Word of God. *'I am the Word of God that came [to be expressed] on tongue'*.

116 O Christian, Christ acquired the human face and physical form from [Adam]. Because he was given birth by Mary, like Mary, he had seven divine lines on his face, [represented by] the hairline, two eyebrows and four eyelashes. From Adam, he had seven additional lines on his face, [represented] by [the hair] on his cheeks, nostrils, over the upper lip and under the lower lip. [Together,] they are 14 lines of the divine writing, [which became also visible] on the face of Christ [at his adulthood].

117 Counted with the corresponding locations of the face, they are 28 [lines], as the stations of the moon in the heaven of constellations. The 28 stations of the moon introduce the division into 28 parts into all heavenly spheres under and above of the sphere of constellations, as well as into the [spheres of elements] earth, water, air and fire.¹⁰⁰ [This division] reflects the division of Christ's face [with its 28 lines], because Jesus, peace be upon him, is the Word of God, and nothing is outside the Word. Any two objects, when struck against each other, produce a voice which is not outside the 32 'words' [given] to Adam.

118 Since Christ said: *'I am that Word of God'*, he is the Word and the Voice. It is for this reason that he said: *'The Father is the Power without beginning, I am His speech, and the Holy Spirit is His voice'*. The Word cannot be manifested without voice. 397b

119 Learn, O Christian that, since Christ said: *'I am the Speech of God'*, the speech produced by the tongue of Christ was the Speech of God. When he came [in his historical mission], the 32 'words' taught by God to Adam as the counterpart to the 32 lines [of the ontological writing written] on his face, and [reproduced] on the face of Christ as the counterpart to the 32 'words' of Adam, encompassing everything, visible and invisible, existing in the two worlds, these 32 original 'words' were then not yet [fully] manifested in the tongue of Christ. This is why he said: *'I go, but I will come back and complete the religion of the prophets. I come to complete, not to abrogate'*.

100 This division makes the heavenly spheres commensurable with the divine Word and its 28/32 primary 'words'.

- 120 [آنکه]¹ گفت مصحف حیوت بر کرسی بزرگواری نهاده است به هفت انگشتی مهر کرده [که]² هیچ ملک و نبی آنرا باز نمی تواند کردن من باز کنم آن هفت خطّ مریم است چهار مره و دوا بروویک موی فرق که هریک چهار خطّ خدایی است خاک و آب و باد و آتش در مقابله²⁸ سخن خدا که از زبان رسول خدای تعالی و عرب ظاهر شد.
- 121 و چون موی فرق براء خطّ استوا شکافته شود هفت خطّ هشت خطّ گردد هر خطّی چهار خطّ باشد از خاک و باد و آب و آتش تا 32 خطّ گردد که لغت آدم و کلام خدایی 32 است و مسیح بر وجه دارد و آن بره هفت شاخ که آنرا فرو برد یعنی مصحف حیواترا آنست که بسر آن رسید از براء آن ملائکه و انبیا سجده او کردند و گفتند "مارا از زبانها مختلف و لغتها مختلف برهانیدی".³
- 122 و آنکه گفته اند که در بیت المقدّس بلغتها غریب و عجیب دو دو سخن گویند همین حال است چون بسر لغت آدم رسیدند از همه لغات رستند [که]⁴ 28 عرب و چهار دیگر پا چاژا گا. 398 و
- 123 بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿وَإِذَا قُرِئَ الْقُرْآنُ فَاسْتَمِعُوا لَهُ وَأَنْصِتُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ﴾ بجهت آن فرمود حقّ تعالی [که]⁵ وقتی که قرآن خوانند خموش⁶ شوید آنرا بشنوید تا مگر رحمت کرده شوید فائده [خموش]⁷ شدن و شنیدن آن چیست فائده آنست که آن زمان که خواننده قرآن [قرآن]⁸ میخواند [تو]⁹ از نطق خود [خموش]¹⁰ شوی [و]¹¹ آن زمان [که]¹² آن قرآنرا می شنوی ملک وجود ترا آن قرآن فرو گرفته است و در وجود [تو]¹³ ازان قرآن درآمده است و [ادرا کاترا]¹⁴ [ازانجا]¹⁵ بیرون کرده [است]¹⁶ آن زمان ملک وجود تو ملک کلام خدا شده دران زمان ملک وجود ترا غیر از خدا و کلام خدا کسی دیگر ندارد.

¹ AEF 362a: آنکه; BL: اکنون. ² AEF 362a: که; absent in the BL. ³ AEF 362a: no separation mark. ⁴ AEF 362a: که deleted. ⁵ AEF 381a, added over the line: که; absent in the BL. ⁶ AEF 381a: خاموش. ⁷ AEF 381a, added over the line: قرآن; absent in the BL. ⁸ AEF 381a: تو; absent in the BL. ⁹ AEF 381a: خاموش. ¹⁰ AEF 381a: و; absent in the BL. ¹¹ AEF 381a: که; absent in the BL. ¹² AEF 381a, added over the line: تو; absent in the BL. ¹³ AEF 381a, added over the line: ادرا کات غیر را; initial را is deleted and غیر را added over the line. ¹⁴ AEF 381a: از اینجا. ¹⁵ AEF 381a, added under the line: است; absent in the BL.

- 120 It is said that the Book of Life is placed on a high pedestal and sealed with the seven seals. No angel or prophet can open them, [and Jesus said:] *I will open them*.¹⁰¹ These [seals symbolise] the seven lines [of the divine writing] on the face of Mary: four eyelashes, two eyebrows and the line of the [hair] parting. Each of those contains four divine lines, [one of] earth, [one of] water, [one of] air and [one of] fire. [Multiplied by four natural elements, the seven lines of Mary's face] are the counterpart to the 28 divine 'words' manifested in the language of the Messenger of God the Most High in Arabic.
- 121 The line of the [hair] parting, which represents the line of balance, transforms the seven lines into eight [which, multiplied by the number of natural elements] produce 32 lines, because the language of Adam and the Speech of God [consist of the] 32 ['words'].¹⁰² Christ had [these 32 lines] on his face. *And the Lamb which brought the Book of Life down [from the pedestal] reached the secret [of those 32 lines which are the manifestation of the universal ontological language]. It is for this reason that the angels and prophets bowed down to [the Lamb] and said, 'You delivered us from the divergence of languages'.*
- 122 It is said that *strange and wonderful languages will be spoken in Jerusalem*. This is [an allusion] to the same condition. When they reach the secret | of [the primordial] language of Adam, they will be liberated from all [the diversity of human] languages. [The total number of phonemes in the language of Adam] is 28 [as in] Arabic, plus four others [represented by the Persian letters] *p*, *ch*, *zh* and *g*.¹⁰³ 398a
- 123 *In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. 'And when the Qur'ān is recited, give you ear to it and be silent; haply so you will find mercy'* [Q 7:204, followed by Persian translation]. What is the purpose of being silent and listening? The purpose is to be silent to your [inner] speech for the period of time during which the reader recites the Qur'ān. While you are listening to the Qur'ān, the angel of your being brings its words down into your being and drives out perceptions [related to the physical world and associative thinking?]. At that time, the angel of your being is the angel of the divine speech. At that moment, the angel of your being is not influenced by anything other than God and His speech. 419a

101 Another paraphrase of the Revelation 5:1, 3 and 5.

102 Once again Persian, with its 32 letters, is alluded to in this and the next paragraphs, but not named explicitly.

103 According to the *jāvidān-nāma*, this original language was taught to Adam by God, it is therefore the language of communication with God and the origin of all human languages.

- 124 پس ای عزیز من هرگاه که بیان کننده⁶ 32 کلمه بیان¹ کلمه آلی میکند [که]² چگونه آن 32⁴¹⁹ ظ
کلمه آلی ازلی و ابدی است و چگونه قائم [بذات]³ حقست و بر اشیا چگونه محیط است و
چگونه از [شکل و]⁴ صورت و هیئات و [پیکر]⁵ بریست او که بیان کننده است عین آن کلمه
است.
- 125 و در هر وجود که آن بیان⁶ درآمد و آن وجود را فرو گرفت⁷ آن وجود را آن بیان کننده است
که آمده است و فرو گرفته [است]⁸ و ملک [ملک]⁹ او شده صاحب وجود باید که تصوّر
نکند که من آن کسم [که]¹⁰ آن کس بحقیقت آن کس است که¹¹ بیان [آن 32]¹² کلمه کرده
است که [مثال]¹³ آنکس [که]¹⁴ دانست که چرا رو بطرف کعبه باید کرد و چرا طواف آن
بعدد 28 کلمه باید کرد.
- 126 چون آن ادراک بیان کننده سر از [مظهر]¹⁵ دیگر بر آورد آن ادراک ادراک بیان کننده
خواهد بود و آن ملک وجود [او را]¹⁶ خواهد گرفت چون حقیقت همه اشیا از مبین کلام
ظاهر شود در هر مظهر که آن بیان درآید دانه که آن بیان کننده خواهد بود بحقیقت.
- 127 درین باب بحث بسیارست مسیح چون کلمه خدا بود گفت "من خواهم آمدن و در اشیا ظاهر
خواهم شدن و هیچ اشیا [بسر]¹⁷ موی [من]¹⁸ از من جدا نیست و نخواهد بود" والسلام.
- 128 بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ
مِنْهُ﴾ بدرستی که مسیح مریم رسول خدا بود [و سخن خدا بود]¹⁹ بر مریم و روح خدا بود [و
ظاهر]²⁰ گفت آن سخن لا جرم [و]²¹ حضرت رسالت در مصابیح فرموده است که مسیح
کلمه الله [است]²² و سخن خداست خواهد آمدن و مجموع خلائق را بر دین²³ اسلام یک دین
خواهد خواندن و یک دین شوند²⁴ ﴿لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ﴾.

¹ AEF 381a, added over the line: 32. ² AEF 381a: که; absent in the BL. ³ AEF 381a: بذات; absent in the BL. ⁴ AEF 381a: شکل و; absent in the BL. ⁵ Absent in AEF 381a. ⁶ BL: کننده; deleted in AEF 381a. ⁷ BL: و; deleted in AEF 381a. ⁸ AEF 381a, added over the line: است; absent in the BL. ⁹ AEF 381a, added at the margin: ملک; absent in the BL. ¹⁰ BL: که; deleted in AEF 381a. ¹¹ BL: آن; deleted in AEF 381a. ¹² AEF 381a, added at the margin: آن 32. ¹³ AEF 381a: مثلاً. ¹⁴ AEF 381a: که; absent in the BL. ¹⁵ AEF 381a: مظهر. ¹⁶ AEF 381a: و سخن خدا بود. ¹⁷ AEF 381b: بر سر; BL: سر. ¹⁸ AEF 381b: من deleted. ¹⁹ AEF 381b: و سخن خدا بود. ²⁰ AEF 381b: و ظاهر; C 362a; B 299b: ظاهر. ²¹ AEF 381b: و. ²² C 362a; B 299b: است is absent. ²³ AEF 382a; B 299b: و is absent, دین اسلام; BL: و. ²⁴ AEF 382a: که is absent; BL: که.

- 124 O my friend, every time that the Explainer in charge of explanation of the 32 'words' explains the divine Word, namely, how its 32 divine 'words' have neither beginning nor end, how they are rooted in the Essence of the Real, how they encompass everything, and how they are exempt of any shape or form, [at that time] he/she, that is, the Explainer, is identical with the Word [which he/she explains]. 419b
- 125 Every being in which such an explanation was produced, [that is,] 'brought down', becomes [identical with the] 'Explainer', who came and brought the explanation down, thus becoming the angel of his/her physical presence. The concerned person should not imagine that he/she is truly himself/herself the person that realised the explanation of those 32 'words'. This is like someone who knows for what reason it is necessary to turn one's face towards the Ka'ba [during prayer], and to circumambulate it in accordance with the number of the 28 [primordial] 'words'.
- 126 When this understanding proper to the Explainer is manifested in a different locus of manifestation [that is, in a different person?], [it is clear that it] will be proper to the Explainer [and not to any particular person in which it is manifested]. It [i.e., this understanding?] occupies his physical presence. Since the innermost reality of everything becomes apparent through the Explainer of the [ontological] speech, know that the Explainer is truly in every locus of manifestation where such an explanation is realised.
- 127 Much has been said on this topic. Since Christ is the Word of God, he said: *I will come and appear in everything. There is no existing thing that would ever be separated from me even by the width of a hair*.
- 128 *In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. 'The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only the Messenger of God, and His Word that He committed to Mary, and a Spirit from Him'* [Q 4:171, followed by Persian translation]. Necessarily, he also expressed this Word. According to the *Maṣābīḥ*,¹⁰⁴ the Messenger [Muḥammad] said that Christ is the Word of God; he will come and call all created beings to one universal religion which is Islam. All mankind thus will be united in one religion, *'that He may uplift it above every religion'*¹⁰⁵ [Q 9:33]. 420a

104 Many *ḥadīth* materials are cited in the *Jāvidān-nāma* with reference to the *Maṣābīḥ*. This could be the *Maṣābīḥ al-Sunna* of Abū Muḥammad al-Baghawī (d. 516/1122), but the *Jāvidān-nāma* mentions neither the author nor the full title of this work.

105 The full text of this verse is: 'It is He who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth, that He may uplift it above every religion, though the unbelievers be averse'.

129 و حضرت رسالت فرمود که مناره باشد در [شرق دمشق]¹ از انجا از [آسمان]² فرود آید [که]³ زمین شام است و زمین انبیاست و مقام بیت المقدس دران مقام [است]⁴ که زمین حشر خواهد بود.

130 و در میان انبیا نسبت باشد بمریم.

131 که حضرت رسالت [علیه السلام]⁵ فرمود [و مسیح علیه السلام فرمود و خدا]⁶ که عیسی [علیه السلام]⁷ خواهد آمد و بس نه نبی دیگر چون در آخر زمان ظهور کلمه و سخن آلهی بحکم ﴿أَنْطَقْنَا اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنْطَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ﴾ خواهد [شد]⁸ و در میان انبیا او خود را در انجیل از قبل خدا سخن و کلمه خدا خواند [و]⁹ خود را در عالم کشف کلمه آلهی و سخن خدایی دید و ظهور او خواهد بود و ظهور کلمه و کلام گفت مسیح خواهد [آمدن]¹⁰ نه غیر او.

132 [و]¹¹ نسبت بآدم [دارد]¹² که خلقت مریم را او بیان کند و از دختر بکر بزاید یعنی از خلقت مریم خلقت او ظاهر شود یعنی خطوط آلهی بوجه [او]¹³ بکر [باین]¹⁴ معنی است.¹⁵

133 از وجهی دیگر که بیان خلقت آن بکر کسی [بیان]¹⁶ نکرده است [این]¹⁷ مسیح مریم که کلمه آلهیست از آن مریم بکر مزاید که دست هیچ مخلوق بآن بکر نرسیده است و ره بخلفت [آن]¹⁸ مریم بکر کسی [دیگر]¹⁹ نبرده است و همین [معنی]²⁰ است ﴿حُورٌ مَّقْصُورَاتٌ فِي الْغِيَامِ﴾ [...] لَمْ يَطْمِئِنَّ أَنْسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌّ یعنی حوریان و پریان سیاه چشم باشند [در خیمهها]²¹ که دست مردان بایشان نرسیده باشد یعنی بخلفت ایشان.

134 "بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ" بیان انجیل ای صاحب انجیل بدانکه عیسی مجرّد [آن]²² کلمه است 421 و [در انجیل]²³ [که]²⁴ گفته است "ای حواریون من [هر]²⁵ [سخنی]²⁶ که با شما گفته ام بر من

¹ AEF 382a, C 362a; B 299b: دمشق; BL: شرق دمشق. ² AEF 382a, C 362a; B 299b: آسمان; BL:

is absent. ³ C 362a: که is absent. ⁴ C 362a: است is absent. ⁵ C 362a: علیه السلام is absent.

علیه السلام: ⁷ C 362a: و مسیح "عم" فرمود و خدا. ⁶ AEF 382a, at the margin; C 362a; B 299b:

خواهد بودن. ⁹ AEF 382a: خواهد شد; B 299b: خواهد شدن; C 362a: خواهد شد. ⁸ AEF 382a:

نسبت: ¹² AEF 382a; C 362a: دارد. ¹⁰ AEF 382a; B 299b: آمد. ¹¹ AEF 382a: و. ¹⁰ AEF 382a; BL: آمدن:

ازین. ¹⁵ AEF 382a: باین; BL: باین. ¹⁴ AEF 382a: او is absent. ¹³ C 362a: داد. ¹³ C 362a: بآدم دارد

بیان. ¹⁶ AEF 382a: بیان is deleted; C 362a; B 299b: بیان is absent; BL: no separation mark.

همین معنی: ²⁰ AEF 382a: دیگر. ¹⁹ C 362a: این is absent. ¹⁸ C 362a: ان is absent. ¹⁷ C 362a:

معنیست. ²¹ C 362a: دخترها. ²² C 363a: از. ²³ C 363a: دران که. ²⁴ AEF 382b; B 299b:

سخن. ²⁶ AEF 382b: سخن; BL: سخن. ²⁵ C 363a; B 300b: هر is absent. ²⁶ AEF 382b: که گفته

- 129 The Messenger also said that *there is a minaret in the east of Damascus upon which [Jesus] will descend from the heaven*.¹⁰⁶ [Damascus is located] in Syria, which is the land of prophets. Jerusalem is also situated there, and [Jerusalem] will be the land of the last gathering.
- 130 [The specific feature of Jesus], with regard to other prophets, is his relationship to Mary.
- 131 The Messenger [Muḥammad], peace be upon him, Christ, peace be upon him, and God [Himself] said that it is Jesus, peace be upon him, who will return, and not another prophet. Since, at the end of time, the Word and Speech of God will be manifested, in accordance with '*God gave us speech, as He gave everything speech*' [Q 41:21], and since, among all [other] prophets it is he [Jesus] who, in the Gospel, called himself the Speech coming from God and divine Word, and who has seen himself as the divine Word and Speech in the world of spiritual disclosure, [it is Jesus] who will appear [at the end of time] as the Word and Speech. It is said that Christ will come [at the end of time], not another prophet.
- 132 He had a [special function] with regard to [his] mother, because it was he who explained the original nature of Mary. He was born from a virgin.¹⁰⁷ This means that his original nature, that is, the lines of the divine [ontological writing] on his face, were produced by the original nature of Mary [without the intervention of a father]. This is the meaning of virginity.
- 133 Another aspect [of this question] is that nobody ever explained the original nature of this virginity. Therefore, Christ [son of] Mary, who is the Word of God, was given birth by Virgin Mary, whose virginity was untouched by any being. Nobody else [than Jesus] ever reached [the understanding of the real meaning of] the original nature of the Virgin Mary. This interpretation is [also referred to by the Qur'ānic verse]: '*Houris, cloistered in cool pavilions ... untouched before them by any man or jinn*' [Q 55:72, 74, followed by a Persian translation], that is, nobody ever reached [the knowledge of] their original nature.
- 134 *In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate*. [Concerning the] explanation of the Gospel. Learn, O follower of the Gospel, that Christ, in his detached condition, is that Word to which [he] refers in the Gospel by saying:

421a

106 On this tradition, see David Cook, *Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic*, Princeton, 2002, pp. 173–174.

107 An allusion to Matthew 1:23, which is more recognisable in the passage in the next folio.

و اشارت و کثایت گفته ام میروم باز [خواهم آمدن]¹ تا آنچه برمز و اشارت و کثایت گفته ام [بیان کنم آنرا با شما]².”

135 ازین سخن مسیح معلوم شد که شما و حواریون که مقربان اویند [بسرّ سخن مسیح] نرسیده باشد [که]³ اگر [رسیده]⁴ باشند و بیان کرده آن مسیح ایشان باشند اکنون شناخت مسیح آن خواهد بود که [بیاید]⁵ و بیان ذات و صفات و مکرمت خود [کند]⁶ او را بآن توان شناخت و بس.

136 “بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ” مسیح در اوّل انجیل فرموده است “اوّل [چیزی]⁷ که از آسمان آمد سخن بود [و خدا با آن سخن بود]⁸ [و]⁹ من آن سخن بودم” اکنون [ازین جایگاه]¹⁰ معلوم کنند که مسیح چگونه سخن خداست معنی سخن مسیح آنست [که]¹¹ “اوّل چیزی که از آسمان آمد سخن بود [و خدا با آن سخن بود]¹² و من آن سخن بودم” معنی سخن او آنست | که آن سخن که حضرت عزّت بآدم و انبیا گفت “من آن سخن بودم” در میان خدا و انبیا بین که این چه مقام است و توازین مقام بی خبری.

137 اکنون در انجیل آمده است که کلمه آلی [که]¹³ مسیح است و سخن خداست در بطن [و]¹⁴ شکم مریم بکر در آمد [و]¹⁵ گوشتمند شد یعنی صورت آدم گرفت بی پدر.

138 اکنون ای ترسا با خود تعقل کن که سبب آمدن روح پاک و سخن پاک در لباس آدم و گوشتمند شدن فایده چه بود و چرا آمد و باز چرا رفت و باز چرا خواهد آمدن.

139 [اولاً]¹⁶ [یهودی]¹⁷ میگوید [که]¹⁸ آن مسیح که انبیا وعده کرده بودند که دختر بکر بزاید و پسری بیآورد که نام او عثانویل باشد [که بمعنی]¹⁹ “خدا با ما” باشد و چون او بیاید در جهان دین و مذهب و اعتقاد یکی شود و همه خلائق و اهل کتاب یکی [شوند]²⁰ و اختلاف کتاب برخیزد و پیچه در کھواره خداشناس شود [و]²¹ بعد ازان بتعلیم احتیاج نباشد.

1 AEF 382b: خواهد آمدن; BL: خواهم آمدن. 2 AEF 383a: بیان آن با شما کنم; C 363a; B 300b: بیان آن با شما بکنم. 3 AEF 383a: مقربان اویند بسرّ سخن مسیح نرسیده باشد که اگر. 4 AEF 383a: و خدا. 5 AEF 383a at the margin: چیز. 6 C 363a: بکند. 7 C 363a: بیان. 8 AEF 383a: رسیده. 9 C 363a; B 300b: و is absent. 10 C 363a: خدا با آن سخن بود; C 363a; B 300b: یا آن سخن بود. 11 AEF 383a: ازینجا. 12 AEF 383a; C 363a; B 300b: که. 13 AEF 383a: اوّل اوّل. 14 AEF 383a: اوّل اوّل. 15 AEF 383a: و. 16 C 363b; B 300b: اوّل اوّل. 17 AEF 383a: که. 18 AEF 383a: deleted; C 363b; B 300b: که is absent. 19 AEF 383a; C 363b; BL: یهود. 20 AEF 383a; B 300b: شوند. 21 AEF 383a: و. 22 AEF 383a; B 300b: که بمعنی instead of یعنی.

'O Apostles! Every word that I told you was told by symbols, [indirect] indications and parables. I am now going away, but I will return in order to explain you these symbols, indications and parables'.

- 135 From these words of Christ it can be concluded that the Apostles, who were his close followers, were not initiated in the [innermost] secret of Christ's discourse. If they were initiated, and [if this secret] was explained to them, they would fulfil [the role] of an eschatological Saviour [themselves, and there would be no need for Jesus to return]. [During his second] coming, Christ will be recognised by the explanation [he will provide] concerning his essence, attributes and glory.
- 136 In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. In the beginning of the Gospel, Christ says: *'The first thing that came from heaven was the Word, and God was with that Word, and I was that Word'*. From this passage, it is clear in what sense Christ is the Word of God. The meaning of Christ's words [repeated] is | that he was the Word that God spoke to Adam and the prophets. Be aware of his rank between God and the prophets, of this rank [of Jesus] that you know nothing about. 421b
- 137 It is said in the Gospel that Christ, who is the divine Word and Speech, came into the belly of the Virgin Mary and acquired a body of flesh. This means that [the Word] acquired the physical form of Adam without [the participation of a] father.
- 138 O Christian, think now for yourself: what was the benefit for the pure Spirit and pure Speech in clothing [the garments] of Adam's [body and thus] becoming incarnate? Why did [Jesus] come, why has he gone away, and why he will return?
- 139 The Jews say that the Messiah [whose coming] is promised by the prophets, will be *born from a virgin, and the boy will be named 'Emmanuel', which means 'God with us'*.¹⁰⁸ When he comes, all religions, confessions and beliefs will be unified all over the world. All the created beings and the people of the Book will be unified. The divergences between the scriptures [of the different religions] will be levelled, and babies in their cradles will have [a perfect] knowledge of God. After [the coming of the Messiah] there will be no need of education.¹⁰⁹

108 This is a closer paraphrase of Matthew 1:23 alluded to in the previous folio.

109 *Ta'lim*, 'education', has a specific meaning in the Shī'ī and especially Nizārī Ismā'īlī context, where it designates the authoritative teaching of the divinely appointed guide, or Imām (see Daftary, *The Ismā'īlīs*, pp. 369–371). The statement that the direct manifestation of the divine truths makes *ta'lim* irrelevant was formulated in the framework of the Nizārī theory of the Resurrection (*qiyāma*). See Cortese, 'Eschatology and Power', p. 167. This suggests that the mention of the *ta'lim* could be another trace of Ismā'īlī influence in the *Jāvidān-nāma*.

140 اکنون آن مسیح که آمده است یهودان میگویند¹ که آن نیست [بجهت انکه]² اختلاف میان خلائق باقی است ترسا بدوازده شقه اند و [یهودان]³ بهفتاد و دو و "محمّدی" بهفتاد و سه و محوسی بهفتاد علی هذا پس آن مسیح که انبیا وعده کرده اند⁴ نیامده باشد.

141 الجواب مسیح آنست [ترسا]⁵ میگوید که انبیا وعده کرده بودند که⁶ آمد [و]⁷ بعضی از علوم الهی [را]⁸ رسانید [آن بار]⁹ خواهد آمدن تا تمامی شرک مرتفع شود و آدمی زاد همه خداشناس شوند چنانکه وعده انبیا بود و محمّد علیه السلام برین نیز گواهی چنین¹⁰ داده است.¹¹

142 بدان¹² ای طالب سرّ مسیح این صورت که مسیح دارد که نوشته [بر جای نقش]¹³ کرده از مریم دارد و [از]¹⁴ آدم و حوّا دارد در تورات که متقدّم است آمده است¹⁵ | حقّ تعالی گفته 422 و است که "میں خواستم که شخصی بیافرینم بشکل ما و [صورت ما و هیئات ما]¹⁶ که پادشاه مرغان هوا¹⁷ و ماهیان دریا باشد آدم را بیافریدم" اکنون [آن]¹⁸ آدم صورت الهی دارد و مسیح این صورت را از او کسب کرده.

143 اگرچه کلمه الهی است بقول [تو]¹⁹ که کلمه [الهی]²⁰ در شکم مریم عذرا گوشتند شد اکنون بدان که صورت آدم که صورت آلهیست چرا [بدین]²¹ وضع و پیکرو [صورت]²² مخلوق شده است و مسیح این شکل ازان مریم²³ گرفته است [آن]²⁴ صورت که مسیح دارد [و مریم دارد]²⁵ و هر بنی [آدم]²⁶ که دارند از آدم و حوّا گرفته اند بی تردّد.

¹ AEF 383a; C 363b; B 300b: یهودی میگوید. ² AEF 383a: آنک with an illegible word or phrase under the line (جبر است آنک؟); C 363b; B 300b: بجهت انکه. ³ AEF 383a; C 363b; B 300b: مسیح آنست که ترا اسا میگوید instead of BL: مسیح آنست ترسا میگوید so. ⁴ B 300b: کرده بودند. ⁵ AEF 383a: and | of ترا and the first | of اسا are deleted, ⁶ AEF 383a: deleted; C 363b; B 301a: absent. ⁷ AEF 383a: و. ⁸ AEF 383a: این بار. ⁹ AEF 383a; C 363b, B 301a: is deleted; C 363b, B 301a: is absent; BL: فصل instead of two parallel lines. ¹⁰ AEF 383b; C 363b, B 301a: بر جاء یا نقش. ¹¹ AEF 383b; C 363b, B 301a: بدانکه; BL: بدان. ¹² AEF 383b; C 363b: is absent. ¹³ AEF 383b; C 363b: هیئات ما و صورت ما. ¹⁴ AEF 383b; C 363b: باشد. ¹⁵ C 363b; B 301a: آلی. ¹⁶ AEF 383b; C 363b: تو is absent. ¹⁷ C 363b; B 301a: آلی. ¹⁸ AEF 383b; C 363b: مریم. ¹⁹ AEF 383b; C 363b: این. ²⁰ AEF 383b; C 363b: مریم. ²¹ AEF 383b; C 363b: مریم. ²² AEF 383b; C 363b: مریم. ²³ AEF 383b; C 363b: مریم. ²⁴ AEF 383b; C 363b: مریم. ²⁵ AEF 383b; C 363b: مریم. ²⁶ AEF 383b; C 363b: مریم.

- 140 But the Jews say that Christ [lit. the 'Messiah', *masīḥ*] who came [in the past] was not [the promised one], since divergences between created beings persist. [Indeed], there are 12 sects among the Christians, 72 among the Jews, 73 [in the community of] Muḥammad, 70 among the Zoroastrians (*majūsī*), and so on. This proves that the Messiah promised by the prophets has not yet come.
- 141 The Christians answer by saying that the Messiah [i.e., Jesus] promised by the prophets did come and brought [the revelation] of some of the divine knowledge.¹¹⁰ But he will come again in order fully to eradicate polytheism. In that era, all humans will be initiated into the knowledge of God, as promised by the prophets and confirmed by Muḥammad, peace be upon him.
- 142 Know, O seeker of Christ's secret, that the form [of the body] that Christ possessed, [the form] that [expressed the divine ontological] writing engraved in it, was obtained by him from Mary and, [ultimately] from Adam and Eve. In the Torah, which is an ancient [scripture], it is mentioned | that God the Most High said: *'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air ... So God created man [Adam]'*. This Adam had the form of God, and Christ acquired this form from him. 422a
- 143 According to what you [the Christian] say [yourself], [Jesus] is the Word of God that was incarnated in the belly of Virgin Mary. Learn now the reason for which the [physical] form of Adam, which is the form of God, was created in this [precise] shape. Christ received this shape from Mary. Christ, Mary, and all [other] human beings [ultimately obtain] the [physical] form [of their bodies] from Adam and Eve; there is no doubt in this.

110 That is, ontological letters, each of which is the 'knowledge' of corresponding phonemes or 'words'.

- 144 [و] ¹مسیح گفت "اول چیزی که از آسمان آمد سخن [بود]" ²آدم را [حضرت عزّت] ³چنانکه آن صورت ظاهر [داد] ⁴نام جمیع اشیا او را تعلیم کرد ⁵/ اکنون بدانکه آن [سخن] ⁶که اول از آسمان بآدم آمد چند سخن بود که مسیح گفت "من آن سخن بودم [و خدا با آن سخن بود]" ⁷.
- 145 [بدانکه ایطالب که] ⁸مجموع کلام که بآدم آمد ³²کلمه بوده است و ³²سخن است بلا زیاده و نقصان [که کسی از ترسا که در عرب] ⁹بوده باشد و کتب انبیا ما تقدّم خوانده باشد این را معلوم کند ²⁸آست که در زبان عربست که اهل عرب [بدان] ¹⁰متکلم اند که قرآن از آن مرگبست و چهار دیگر در صحف آدم و [در] ¹¹انجیل و توریت طلب باید کردن که ["گاف" ¹²] و "چیم" و "ژی" و "پی" خواهد بود.
- 146 کلام آهی که بآدم [علیه السلام] ¹³آمد ازین بیرون نیست و [اول] ¹⁴بآدم و انبیا آمده است [آدم را] ¹⁵که خدای تعالی بیافرید بر وجه آدم ²⁸خطّ نوشت که مسیح آن ²⁸خطّ بر وجه دارد در مقابله ²⁸کلمه و سخن که در زبان عربست یک خطّ موی سر و دو ابرو و چهار مژه و دو خطّ موی بینی و دو خطّ موی عارض از دو طرف و دو [خطّ] ¹⁶موی لب بالا و یک خطّ موی لب زیر بر خطّ استوا چنانکه چهارده [خطّ] ¹⁷باشد بر چهارده موضع که [آن] ¹⁸همه گابت آهلیست.
- 147 بر خطّ استوا آن خطوط | [بگذری] ¹⁹آن خطوط منشق شود شازده خطّ [شود] ²⁰[بر شازده ⁴²²ظ خطّ] ²¹باشد که ³²خطّ باشد علم آن ³²کلمه [که] ²²بآدم علیه اسلام آمده است. ²³
- 148 اکنون مسیح [که] ²⁴بآن ³²ناطق است که بآدم آمده است بآن دلیل که گفت [که] ²⁵"اول چیزی که از آسمان آمد سخن بود و خدا بآن سخن بود و من آن سخن بودم" و آن [32] ²⁶سخن ³²کلمه بود که بآدم [علیه اسلام] ²⁷آمده بود و مسیح گفت "من آن سختم".

حضرت: ³ AEF 383b; C 364a; B 301a. بود آن: ² AEF 383b; C 364a; B 301a. و: ¹ AEF 383b.
 سخن is absent: ⁶ C 364a. دارند: ⁴ C 364a. احدیت: ⁵ AEF 383b; no separation mark.
 بدان: ⁸ AEF 383b; C 364a; B 301a. و خدا با آن سخن بود: ⁷ AEF 383b, at the margin; C 364a; B 301a.
 کسی که از ترسا در: ⁹ BL; که کسی از ترسا که در عرب: ⁸ AEF 383b; C 364a; B 301a. ای طالب که:
 عم: ¹³ AEF 383b. گاف: ¹² B 301a; C 364a. در: ¹¹ C 364a. بآن: ¹⁰ B 301a. عرب:
 B 301b: ¹⁸ خطّ. ¹⁷ خطّ: ¹⁶ AEF 383b. خطّ: ¹⁵ AEF 383b. آدم را: ¹⁴ AEF 383b. اول: ¹⁴ AEF 383b.
 شود: ²⁰ AEF 384a. بگذر: ¹⁹ C 364a; B 301b. آن: ²¹ B 301b; this phrase is at the margin.
 که is absent: ²⁴ C 364a. ²³ AEF 384a: no separation mark. ²² AEF 384a:
 عم: ²⁷ C 364a; B 301b: 32 is absent. ²⁶ C 364a; B 301b: 32 is absent. ²⁵ AEF 384a:
 deleted; C 364a; B 301b: 32 is absent.

- 144 Christ said: *'The first thing that came from heaven was the Word'*. When God bestowed this visible form on Adam, He [also] taught [Adam] the names of all things.¹¹¹ Learn that that Word, which first came from heaven to Adam, [consisted of] several 'words', concerning which Christ said: *'I was that Word, and God was with that Word'*.
- 145 Learn, O seeker, that the totality of the 'words' received by Adam was 32 ['words'], no more and no less. The Arab Christians,¹¹² who read the books of our prophets of the past, can observe that there are 28 ['words' = consonants] in Arabic, which is spoken by Arabs. The Qur'ān is also composed of these 28 [consonants]. The four other ['words'] are to be found in the scrolls of Adam, in the Gospel and Torah. Those are *gāf*, *chīm*, *zhe* and *pe*.¹¹³
- 146 The divine discourse that reached Adam, peace be upon him, did not exceed these [32 'words']. They were [revealed] first to Adam and the prophets. When God created Adam, He wrote 28 lines on his face, the same lines that Christ had on his face, too. These [lines] correspond to the 28 'words' of Arabic, [and they are represented by] the hairline, two eyebrows, four eyelashes, two lines of the nasal hair, and two lines [of the beard] on both sides of the face, two lines of [the moustache on] the upper lip and one line under the lower lip [...] Counted with [the corresponding] 14 locations on the face they become 28, which express the divine [ontological] writing [on the human face].
- 147 The line of balance¹¹⁴ splits these lines | and produces 16 lines which [with the corresponding locations of the face] add up to 32 lines. These 32 lines [on the human face] represent the knowledge of those 32 'words' received by Adam, peace be upon him. 422b
- 148 Now, Christ was speaking by means of the 32 [original 'words' or phonemes] that were given to Adam. This is suggested by his words, [when he said:] *'The first thing that came from heaven was the Word, and God was with that Word, and I was that Word'*. The 32 [primordial elements of] speech were the 32 'words' that were given to Adam, and to which Christ referred when he said: 'I am that Word'.

111 That is, Adam was not only created with a bodily form as the full expression of the original divine Word, he was also taught the innermost meaning of that form, i.e., the Word itself.

112 Cf. paragraph 58 and n. 55.

113 These are the four letters added to the Arabic alphabet in order to express the sounds specific to Persian. As in previous occurrences, Persian is not named explicitly here.

114 See n. 33 above.

149 و آن خط بروجه آدم 32 خط است بعدد آن 32 کله که در تلفظ می آید که قائم بذات حقست ازلی [و] ابدی و از ذات حق جدا نیست [چون ذات تو]² از همه [اصلی]³ ازین معنی مسیح گفت "پدر [من]⁴ قوت ازلیست و من نطق اویم و من و او هر دو یکسانیم و [با ما]⁵ همه اشیا هستیم [و خارج اشیا هستیم]⁶ و طول و عرض و [عمق]⁷ را در ما راه نیست."⁸

150 این کلمات را [از]⁹ کتاب فطروس طلب کن که "شی در خواب دیدم که مصحف حیات را بهفت انگشتی مهر کرده [است]¹⁰ بر کرسی بزرگواری نهاده و همه [ملائکه آسمان را و انبیا را می دیدم حاضر ملکی از]¹¹ ملائکه آواز میکرد که کیست [که]¹² از اهل آسمان و زمین که دلیری کند و قدم پیش نهد و مهر این مصحف حیات را بردارد و بخواند هیچکس از انبیا و ملائکه پیش نیامدند و جواب ندادند مسیح را دیدم گفت [که]¹³ ای فطروس هر [چه]¹⁴ من بیندم من بکشایم یعنی کشایند [آن]¹⁵ مصحف حیات که بهفت انگشتی مهر [کرده ام]¹⁶ آنرا من خواهم کشودن ناگاه بره دیدم خداوند هفت شاخ که حاضر آمد و آن مصحف حیوت را فرو برد و خود را [در]¹⁷ پیش حق تعالی قربان کرد بیچار ملائکه و انبیا بنجده آن بره کردند و گفتند که چون خود را پیش حق تعالی قربان کردی و ما را از دودمانه دیر و مختلف برهانیدی و بعالم ملکوت برسانیدی و بحیوت [جاودانی]¹⁸ [ره]¹⁹ دادی."

151 اکنون ای طالب حقیقی بشناس که آن مصحف حیات [چه است]²⁰ که [هفت]²¹ مهر دارد و423 که بره هفت [شاخ]²² آنرا فرو برد / ای طالب بدانکه هفت کتابت است که بروجه مریم بکر است یک خط موی سر است و دو ابرو و چهار مره که بر هفت موضع است که مقام آن هفت موسست که کتابت خدائی است هفت مهر اول هر یک چهار خطند از خاک و آب و باد و آتش که چون بر خط استواء ایشان بگذری هشت خط [ظاهر]²³ [شوند]²⁴ چهار دیگر

¹ AEF 384a: و. ² AEF 384a: چون تو ذات adjusted at the margin: اصلی. BL: چون ذات تو از همه اصلی. ³ BL: اصل. ⁴ AEF 384a: من. ⁵ AEF 384a: ما با. BL: ما با. ⁶ AEF 384a; C 364b; B 301b: و خارج اشیا هستیم. ⁷ C 364b: عمق is absent. ⁸ B 301b: و. ⁹ AEF 384a; C 364b; B 301b: از. BL: ملائکه آسمان را و انبیا. ¹⁰ AEF 384a; C 364b; B 301b: است. ¹¹ AEF 384a; C 364b; B 301b: را می دیدم حاضر ملکی از. ¹² B 301b: که is absent. ¹³ AEF 384a: که is absent. ¹⁴ AEF 384a: در. ¹⁵ C 364b; B 301b: کردند. ¹⁶ AEF 384a: کرده ام. BL: کشیدند. ¹⁷ C 364b; B 301b: چیزی که. ¹⁸ AEF 384a: جاویدانی. ¹⁹ B 301b: راه. ²⁰ AEF 384a: چیست. ²¹ C 364b; B 301b: بهفت; is absent. ²² AEF 384a; C 364b; B 301b: شاخ. BL: شاخی. ²³ C 364b: ظاهر is absent. ²⁴ AEF 384b: شوند. BL: شود.

- 149 The 32 lines on the face of Adam correspond to the 32 'words' [i.e., phonemes] articulated [in human speech]. They are rooted in the essence of the [supreme] reality; they do not have either beginning or end, they cannot be separated from the essence of [divine] reality, just as your essence is the foundation of all [your being?]. It is in this sense that Christ said: *'My Father is the Power without beginning and I am His Speech. I and He, we are one and the same. We are with everything and without everything. We do not have length, width or depth.'*¹¹⁵
- 150 Seek the following narrative in the Book of Peter: *'One night, I saw in dream the Book of Life sealed with seven seals and placed on a high pedestal. I saw [there] all angels of the heaven and prophets. An angel spoke and asked: "Who, from among the inhabitants of the heaven and earth, is brave enough to step forward, open the seals of this Book of Life and read it?" Nobody from the prophets and angels stepped forward or answered the question. I have seen Christ who said [to me]: "O Peter, what I have closed, I will open."¹¹⁶ [He] meant: "I am the person who will open the Book of Life, which I sealed with seven seals." All of the sudden, I saw a Lamb with seven horns. It came and brought down the Book of Life [from its pedestal], and then sacrificed itself before God the Most High. All together, the angels and prophets prostrated themselves before this Lamb and said: "By your sacrifice before God the Most High, you delivered us from ancient and varied generations,¹¹⁷ brought us into the kingdom of heaven and opened to us the way to eternal life."¹¹⁸*
- 151 Hear now, O true seeker, what is the 'Book of Life' sealed with the seven seals and brought down by the Lamb with seven horns. O seeker, learn that the face of the Virgin Mary bears seven [lines of the divine ontological] writing: the hairline, two eyebrows and four eyelashes, located on the seven parts [of the face]. This divine writing constitutes the first seven seals [follows a passage similar to fol. 321b, describing how seven lines, together with the

423a

115 See n. 42 above.

116 Cf. Revelation 3:7.

117 For some reason, *dūdman*, 'tribe, generation' is used here instead of usual *lughat-hā*, 'languages'.

118 This is the longest paraphrase of *Revelation* 5:1–9. The fact that a fragment from the 3rd chapter of *Revelation* is also included in the narrative, along with the approximate character of the paraphrase, suggests that Faḍl Allāh drew not upon the canonical text, but used some different source for his citations.

[که]¹ زیاده شود خاک و آب و باد و آتش [که]² 32 خط باشد در [مقابلۀ]³ 32 کلمۀ آلهی و سخن خدا که حقّ تعالی آدم را مظهر آن 32 سخن گردانید که ملائکه از آدم تعلیم یافتند و بآن⁴ سجده آدم کردند که مسیح گفت⁵ "اول چیزی که از آسمان آمد سخن بود و خدا بآن سخن بود و من [که]⁶ مسیح⁷ آن سخن بودم".

152 اکنون ای طالب بدانکه خلقت وجه آدم که خدا گفت [که]⁸ "انسانی"⁹ بیافرینم بشکل ما و هیئات ما و [صورت ما]¹⁰ که پادشاه مرغان هوا باشد و ماهیان دریا آدم را بیافریدم پس آدم بصورت حضرت عزّت [باشد و]¹¹ مسیح آن صورت¹² از آدم کسب کرده است پس بر صورت آدم باشد و مسیح گفته است [که]¹³ "من آن سخن خدا ام و از خدا جدا نیستم اول چیزی که از آسمان آمد سخن بود و خدا بآن سخن بود و من آن سخن بودم".

153 اکنون مسیح [که]¹⁴ سخن خداست و از خدا جدا نیست و آدم براء آن صورت خدائی دارد که آن نطق که از زبان مسیح بدر می آمد نطق [خدائی]¹⁵ بود که از آدم چنانکه آن صورت آلهی بمسیح رسیده بود آن نطق خدائی نیز از آدم بمسیح رسید.

154 اکنون چون آدم صورت خدائی دارد بدانکه [دندان آدم که نطق خدائی از]¹⁶ ظاهر میشود یا 28 است بعدد 28 کلمۀ آلهی که در زبان عرب است یا 32 باشد دندان [آدم]¹⁷ بعدد 32 | 423ظ کلمه که بر زبان آدم است.

155 اکنون ای طالب حقیقت مسیح [بر خطّ وجه مسیح چرا]¹⁸ همچو¹⁹ آدم چهارده موضع خطّ آلهی آورده است بر چهارده موضع که آن [هم]²⁰ خطّ آلهی است که بر خطّ استوا او چون بگذری 32 خطّ ظاهر شود شانزده بر شانزده موضع چرا آن خلقت [است ازان]²¹ مسیح آن بجهت²² آنست که در مقابلۀ 32 کلمۀ آلهی است که بآدم آمده است که زبان جمیع آدمی زاد

¹ C 364b: is absent. ² AEF 384b: . ³ AEF 384b: مقابلۀ; BL: مقابل. ⁴ AEF 384b:

. ⁵ C 364b; B 302a: که. ⁶ AEF 384b: که; BL: آن. ⁷ AEF 384b: is absent; BL: که.

⁸ AEF 384b: که. ⁹ C 365a: انسان. ¹⁰ C 365a: this passage is absent; B 302a: صورة and هیئات

inversed. ¹¹ AEF 384b: باشد و. ¹² B 302a: را. ¹³ C 365a: که is absent. ¹⁴ AEF 384b:

آدمی; BL: آدم. ¹⁵ C 365a: خدا. ¹⁶ C 365a: نطق خدائی که از آدم. ¹⁷ C 365a: is absent.

¹⁸ AEF 384b: چرا بر وجه مسیح. ¹⁹ C 365a: همچون. ²⁰ AEF 384b: هم; BL: همه. ²¹ AEF 384b:

آن. ²² BL: ازان. C 365a: آن.

line of balance, and multiplied by four natural elements, produce 32 lines]. [These 32 lines] are the counterpart to the 32 divine 'words', and Adam was created by God as their locus of manifestation. For this reason, the angels received their instruction from Adam.¹¹⁹ They prostrated themselves before Adam because Christ said, *'The first thing that came from heaven was the Word, and God was with that Word and I, Christ, was that Word.'*¹²⁰

152 O seeker, learn now that God said concerning the original nature of Adam's face: *'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air ... So God created Adam.'* Therefore, Adam was created in the form of God, and Christ acquired this form [of his body] from Adam. He thus had the [bodily] form of Adam, and he said: *'I am this Word of God, I am inseparable from God. The first thing that came from heaven was the Word, and God was with that Word, and I was that Word.'*

153 Now, Christ is the Word of God, and he is inseparable from God. The reason for bestowing the divine form upon Adam was to ensure that the speech emitted by the tongue of Christ should be divine Speech. For, just as the divine form reached Christ from Adam, the divine Speech also reached Christ from Adam.¹²¹

154 Since Adam possesses the divine form, learn that his teeth, from which the divine Speech is emitted, are either 28, in accordance with the number of the 28 divine 'words' contained in the Arabic language,¹²² or 32, in accordance with the number | of the 32 'words' contained in the language of Adam.¹²³

423b

155 O seeker of the real [dimension] of Christ, for which reason does the face of Christ, as the face of Adam, contain 14 lines of the divine [ontological] writing, located on the 14 [parts of the face] which are the divine lines too, and which produce the 32 lines, 16 and 16, when the line of balance is drawn? For which reason was the original nature of Christ [made in this way]? Because [Christ] is the counterpart to the 32 divine 'words' [initially] given to Adam which include all the languages spoken by Adam's descendants.

119 Allusion to Q 2:33.

120 This suggests that the angels prostrated themselves before Christ because Christ was the Word taught by God to Adam and then taught by Adam to the angels.

121 This passage apparently emphasises the fact that the speech of Jesus is identical with the ontological names taught by God to Adam.

122 I.e., the 28 consonants of the Arabic alphabet.

123 Once again, the Persian language with its alphabet composed of the 32 letters is suggested but not named.

ازان 32 بیرون نیست و آن 32 خط بر روی مسیح علم و نشانه آن 32 کلمه آلیست که بآدم [آمده]¹ که مسیح گفت که "اول چیزی که از آسمان آمد سخن بود و خدا بآن سخن بود و من آن سخن بودم".²

156 دران وقت بجهت آن مسیح اظهار [خود]³ نکرد که علم 32 کلمه آلی بر وجه داشت و 28 دندان و 32 دندان که علم 32 کلمه آلی بود داشت اما بر زبان او 32 کلمه⁴ که وجه او بران خلقت بود روان نبود گفت "خواهم آمدن و بیان خود کردن".

157 اکنون آن 32 خط وجه او در مقابل 32 خط خداست که آن [32]⁵ سخن حقیقت مسیح است و قائم بذات حقست و از حق جدا نیست و صفت قدیم آلیست که هر شیء [که]⁶ در موجودات و خواب و بیداری بهر زبان که خواهی [که]⁷ نام آن شیء [بری]⁸ ازین 32 کلمه آلی خالی نیست و هر آوازی و صدای که از جای بر می آید ازین 32 کلمه [آلی]⁹ خالی نیست که اگر دو سنگ بر هم [میزی]¹⁰ ازو کلمه بیرون خواهد آمدن آن کلمه ازین 32 سخن آلی که مسیح میگوید [که]¹¹ "من [آن]¹² سخن خدا [ام]¹³ خالی و جدا نیست بجهت آن فرمود که "من]¹⁴ سخن خدا ام و با همه اشیا [ام]¹⁵ و بی همه اشیا و طول و عرض و عمق [ولون]¹⁶ را در من راه نیست".

158 اکنون نظر کن [که]¹⁷ آن کلمه که در نطقی [می آمد که]¹⁸ میگوئی مسیح آن [چهار]¹⁹ کلمه که دوده و سیاهی علم اوست در هر شیء | که در تلفظ می آید که ذات "مه" و "سه" و "ی" و "ح" اسم مسیح است ذات آن [چهار کلمه]²⁰ از شکل و صورت منزّه است در تخیل و تصور و تعقل نمی آید و قسمت پذیر نیست [و]²¹ جمیع 32 کلمه اینچنین است و قائم بذات حقست و از هیچ شیء از اشیا جدا نیست سر موی ازو خالی نیست قائم [به ذات حق]²² است و غیر مرئی است و دیدنی نیست که اگر دو سنگ بر هم [میزی]²³ ازو کلمه بیرون می

¹ C 365a; B 302b: آمد. ² AEF 385a: separation mark. ³ C 365a: خود is absent. ⁴ B 302b:

بری: ⁵ C 365b: 32 is absent. ⁶ AEF 385a: که deleted. ⁷ AEF 385a: که. ⁸ B 302b:

⁹ C 365b: آلی is absent. ¹⁰ B 302b: زنی. ¹¹ C 365b; B 302b: که is absent. ¹² C 365b; B 302b:

آن. ¹³ C 365b: خدایم. ¹⁴ B 302b: من. ¹⁵ C 365b; B 302b: ام. ¹⁶ AEF 385a; C 365b; B 302b:

this word is absent. ¹⁷ B 302b: که is absent. ¹⁸ AEF 385a; C 365b: که. ¹⁹ B 302b: می آمد که.

²⁰ AEF 385a; C 365b: چهارده: BL: چهار: C 365b; B 302b: چهار: BL: چهار کلمه.

²¹ AEF 385a: و is absent. ²² AEF 385a; C 365b; B 302b: به.

²³ AEF 385a; C 365b; B 302b: میزی: BL: زنی. BL: بحق: ذات حق.

These 32 lines on the face of Christ are the knowledge and the mark of the 32 divine 'words' received by Adam, concerning which Christ said: *'The first thing that came from heaven was the Word, and God was with that Word, and I was that Word'*.

156 At that time [i.e., during his first coming], Christ did not [fully] manifest his [real nature] because, although he possessed the knowledge of the 32 divine 'words' [in the lines of] his face, as well as the 28 and 32 teeth which represent the knowledge of the 32 divine 'words', [all] the 32 'words' in accordance with which his face was created were [still] not articulated by his tongue. [Therefore], he said: *'I will come [again] and explain myself'*.

157 These 32 lines of his face are the counterpart to the 32 divine lines which constitute the innermost reality of Christ. They are rooted in the Essence of the [divine] Reality, and inseparable from it. They are the pre-existent attribute of God. In whatever language, any name of anything existent, whether in the physical world or in [that of] dreams, is not outside these 32 divine 'words'.¹²⁴ Any sound, wherever it is produced, is not outside these 32 divine 'words'. If two stones are struck against each other they produce a 'word' which is not outside and cannot be separated from these 32 divine 'words' about which Christ said: *'I am that Word of God'*. It is for this reason that he [also] said: *'I am the Word of God, I am with everything and without everything. I transcend length, width, depth and colour'*.

158 Observe now that when you pronounce the word 'Christ' (*masīḥ*) the essence of its four 'words' [i.e., consonants], the knowledge of which is [represented by] the soot and blackness [of the ink by means of which the corresponding letters are written] | namely *m*, *s*, *y* and *ḥ*, the articulation of which [composes] the name of Christ, is free of any form or shape. [This metaphysical essence] cannot be grasped by the imagination, mental representations or the intellect. It cannot be divided. All 32 'words' are like these [four]. They are rooted in the Essence of the divine reality, and [at the same time they are] absolutely inseparable from things. They are rooted in the Essence of the divine reality, and they are invisible. If you strike two stones against each

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124 Every name is composed of some of the phonemes from among the 32 primary phonemes.

آید که از 32 سخن خدائی خارج نخواهد بود اگر خواهی که این کلمه [را]¹ بوهم و تصوّر ازان سنگ درکشی [توانی]² کشیدن و اگر [بتصوّر]³ خواهی که درکشی هیچ چیزی موجود نماند.

159 ابطال چون میگویی [که]⁴ مسیح سخن خداست و مسیح چنین گفت و خدا از اشیا جدا نیست پس باید که تو مسیح را که سخن خداست در همه اشیا و موجودات و ذرات کائنات بیانی و به بینی تا مسیح را با خدا در همه اشیا یافته باشی و آلا در باب مسیح خوانده باشی و [بآواز]⁵ شنیده باشی که مسیح سخن خداست و با خدا [است و خدا]⁶ در همه جاست.

160 تا مادامکه چنین [نباشی]⁷ ره بمسیح و سخن خدا و ذات خدا و بودن خدا و سخن [خدا]⁸ با همه اشیا نبرده باشی از در خلقت وجه آدم و [خطّ وجه و]⁹ دندان.

161 و نطق آدم که 32 کلمه آهلیست [در او این]¹⁰ معنی است که سیصد و شصت [پاره استخوان داشت]¹¹ آدم و مسیح همچنین شش بار شصت هر شصتی 28 و 32 [و]¹² شش بار شصت]¹³ شش بار 28 و شش بار 32.

162 و بجخت آنکه مسیح و فرزند آدم ششجهت [دارند]¹⁴ هر جهت او را 28 کلمه آلی و 32 کلمه آلی دارد فلک [البروج]¹⁵ دوازده برجست [و]¹⁶ حواریون دوازده و آن دوازده بروج فلک البروج سیصد و شصت درجه است شش بار شصت هر شصتی 28 و 32 و هر درجه شصت دقیقه [و هر دقیقه]¹⁷ 28 دقیقه و 32 دقیقه [و]¹⁸ هر دقیقه شصت ثانیه و هر [ثانیه 28 ثانیه و 424ظ 32 ثانیه همچنین تا عاشره می رو.

163 اکنون چنانکه علم وجه مسیح 32 است در مقابله 32 کلمه آلی که بآدم آمد آسمانها همچنین منقسم شد بعدد 28 کلمه آلی [و 32 کلمه آلی]¹⁹ که مسیح گفت "من کلمه [آلی]²⁰ ام" بجخت این [معنی]²¹ که 32 کلمه آلی بود.

¹ B 302b: را is absent. ² B 302b: نتوان; BL: نتوانی. ³ AEF 385a: تصوّر; BL: بتصوّر. ⁴ AEF 385a:

deleted; B 302b: که is absent. ⁵ AEF 385b; C 365b; B 302b: بآواز. ⁶ C 365b: absent.

⁷ AEF 385b: باشی. ⁸ AEF 385b: خدا partly deleted; C 365b; B 303a: خدا. ⁹ C 365b: absent.

¹⁰ B 303a: درآوین. ¹¹ B 303a: داشت; BL: داشته. ¹² AEF 385b: و. ¹³ C 365b: this passage is

absent. ¹⁴ AEF 385b: دارد. ¹⁵ AEF 385b; C 366a: بروج. ¹⁶ AEF 385b: و. ¹⁷ C 366a: this

fragment is absent. ¹⁸ C 366a; B 303a: is absent. ¹⁹ AEF 385b; C 366a; B 303a: کلمه

و 32 کلمه. ²⁰ C 366a; B 303a: آلی. ²¹ C 366a: معنی is absent.

other, they will produce a 'word' which cannot be outside the 32 [primary] divine 'words'. If you wish to extract this 'word' from the stone, either in the imagination or by mental representation, it will be impossible. And supposing that you extracted it, there would remain nothing.

159 O seeker, you say that Christ is the Word of God, and Christ said so himself. God is inseparable from things. Therefore, you must find and observe Christ, who is the Word of God, in every object and being, in every atom of the creation, so that you can find him with God in everything. You should have read or heard that Christ is the Word of God, that he is with God, and that God is everywhere.

160 Otherwise, you cannot access either Christ, or the divine Word, the divine Essence and Being. [You cannot access the knowledge of] every created thing through the Word of God and the gate of the original nature of Adam's face, its lines and teeth [where the Word becomes visible and audible].

161 The speech of Adam [consisted] of the 32 divine 'words', which constitute the ontological meaning of his [bodily constitution with its] 360 articulations. Adam and Christ had the same [constitution], which is six times 60 [articulations], every 60 [being composed of] the 28 and 32 [articulations]. Six times 60 is, therefore, six times 28 and six times 32.

162 Since [the bodies of] Christ and the descendants of Adam have six spatial directions,¹²⁵ every direction thus possesses 28 and 32 divine 'words'. The heaven of constellations contains 12 constellations, and the Apostles were 12. These 12 constellations cover 360 degrees, [which are made up of] six times 60, and every 60 contains 28 and 32 [degrees]. And every degree contains 60 minutes, [that is,] 28 and 32 minutes. And every minute contains 60 seconds, | [that is,] 28 and 32 seconds, and so on until the tenth [fraction] of a degree.

424b

163 Knowledge of the face of Christ [consists of] the 32 [lines], which are the counterpart to the 32 divine 'words' received by Adam. Similarly, all heavens are divided in accordance with the numbers of the 28 and 32 divine 'words'. And Christ said: *I am the Word*, because he was [identical with] the 32 divine 'words'.

125 That is, nadir, zenith, and four cardinal points.

164 گفت [که]¹ "بآسمان میروم" و از آسمان [خواهد]² آمدن که [آسمان]³ منقسم [است]⁴ بعدد 28 کلمه [آلهی]⁵ و 32 کلمه [آلهی]⁶ چون فلک البروج منقسم شد بعدد سیصد و شصت درجه هر فلک که در زیر و بالا این سیصد و شصت درجه باشد همان سیصد و شصت قسمت شود با خاک و آب و باد و آتش همه منقسم شده باشد بعدد 28 سخن خدا و 32 سخن خدا که مسیح گفت [که]⁷ "من"⁸ آن سخن خدا ام.

165 پس همه موجودات منقسم شد بعدد 28 کلمه آلهی و 32 کلمه آلهی که وجه مسیح بران عدد مخلوق شده است [و]⁹ بران صورت برآمد [و]¹⁰ ازینجهت گوسهند شد در شکم مریم غذا را تا علم 32 بروجه او ظاهر شود و 32 کلمه آلهی را که قائم بذات حق است و از خدا جدا نیست در اشیا ظاهر کند.

166 اکنون مسیح [که]¹¹ 32 کلمه خداست همچنین که 32 [خط]¹² بروجه دارد [و]¹³ 28 دندان و 32 دندان دارد.

167 اکنون ای شناسنده مسیح اگر نه از در این خلقت درآیی و این کلمه را دریابی ره بمسیح که کلمه آلهیست نخواهی برد و مسیح را با ذات حق در همه اشیا خواهی یافت.

168 هفت سطر موی سر و دوا برو و چهار مژه ازان مریم که هریک چهار طبایع [خاک و باد و آب و آتش]¹⁴ 28 خط خدا باشد چون بر خط استوا صورت بدو پاره شود هشت خط باشد هر خط چهار [خط]¹⁵ 32 خط باشد در [مقابله]¹⁶ آن 32 نطق که بآدم علیه السلام آمد که بروجه مسیح است.¹⁷

169 مسیح فرمود [که]¹⁸ "پدر [من]¹⁹ قوت ازلیست و من نطق اویم و روح [القدوس]²⁰ صوت اوست" | اکنون هر صوتی که هست از موجودات [که]²¹ از [32]²² کلمه خالی نیست مسیح

و 425

¹ AEF 385b: که is absent. ² AEF 385b; C 366a; B 303a: خواهم. ³ AEF 385b: آسمان.

⁴ AEF 385b: است. ⁵ AEF 385b: آلهی. ⁶ AEF 385b: آلهی. ⁷ B 303a: که is absent.

⁸ AEF 385b: من deleted; C 366a: من absent. ⁹ AEF 385b: و. ¹⁰ AEF 385b: و. ¹¹ AEF 385b:

که deleted; C 366a; B 303a: که is absent. ¹² AEF 385b: خط. ¹³ AEF 385b: و. ¹⁴ C 366a:

مقابله. ¹⁵ C 366a: خط is absent. ¹⁶ BL: مقابل; C 366a: مقابله. ¹⁷ AEF 385b: و

¹⁸ AEF 386a; C 366a; B 303b: separation mark. ¹⁹ C 366a: که is absent. ²⁰ AEF 386a: من

deleted; C 366a; B 303b: من is absent. ²¹ B 303b: که

is absent. ²² C 366b: 32 is absent.

- 164 He said: *I go to heaven*,¹²⁶ and from heaven he will return, because heaven is divided in accordance with the numbers of 28 and 32 divine 'words'. Since the heavenly sphere of constellations is divided into 360 degrees, every heaven under and above it is divided in the same way. Including [the spheres of] the earth, water, air and fire, all [spheres] are divided in accordance with the numbers of the 28 and 32 divine 'words', concerning which Christ said *I am that divine Word*.
- 165 All existents are divided in accordance with the 28 and 32 divine 'words'. The face of Christ was also created in accordance with these numbers. He acquired [the human bodily] form, by being incarnated in the belly of Virgin Mary, in order to produce a visible manifestation of the knowledge of the 32 [divine 'words'] on his face. He produced the manifestation of the 32 divine 'words', which are rooted in the essence of the divine reality and inseparable from God, in everything.
- 166 Christ is [identical] with the 32 divine 'words'. At the same time, he possesses the 32 lines [corresponding to these 'words'] on his face, as well as the 28 and 32 teeth.
- 167 O seeker of Christ, if you do not come through this gate of original nature [of Christ],¹²⁷ and thus do not find this Word [identical with Christ], you will never discover Christ who is the Word of God. You will never find that Christ accompanies the essential reality of everything.
- 168 Seven lines on the face of Mary, including the hairline, two eyebrows and four eyelashes, each of which contains four natural elements, namely earth, air, water and fire, produce the 28 divine lines. When the [bodily] form is divided into two halves by the line of balance, the eighth line appears. Being multiplied by the number of natural elements, the eight lines produce the 32 lines, as the counterpart to the 32 [primary] 'words' received by Adam, peace be upon him, and [inscribed] on the face of Christ.
- 169 Christ said: *My Father is the Power without beginning, I am His Speech, and the Holy Spirit is His Voice*. | No voice [produced] by [any] existent [object or being] is outside the 32 [primary] 'words'. Christ is that [comprehensive]

425a

126 Most probably a paraphrase for 'I go unto my Father'. See n. 85 above.

127 I.e., the body of Christ as being structured in accordance with the numbers of the primary 'words'.

- آن کلمه است و آن سخن است و خدا بآن سخن است و آن سخن صفت قدیم آلهی است بطلب مسیح را در همه اشیا در سنگ و کلوخ و موجودات و خواب و بیداری بین.¹
- 170 یکی از حواریون سؤال کرد از مسیح که بحق انجیل خدا که تو [پیش]² از آنکه آسمانها [را]³ بیافرینی کجا بودی چون او کلمه آلهی بود و حضرت عزّت همه چیزها [را]⁴ بکلمه [”کن“]⁵ آفریده است و بسخن و او گفت ”من سخن خدا ام“ این سؤال ازان واقع شد مسیح [گفت]⁶ ”سؤال بزرگ کردی من در پدر بدم و پدر در من [بود]⁷ یعنی ”من کلمه آلهی ام و سخن خدا ام [و]⁸ قائم بذات اویم پس من پیش پدر بوده باشم و پدر پیش من“.
- 171 چون ظهور حضرت احدیت بی کلمه نیست کلمه و سخن خبر [میدهد]⁹ که خدا هست که خدا چنین و چنین میگوید پس ظهور خدا از کلام و [از]¹⁰ سخن [باشد]¹¹ و قیام¹² هر سخن بذات او.
- 172 فصل مسیح گفت ”من مرده [را]¹³ زنده میکنم“ چون معلوم شد که مجموع موجودات مظهر سخن خدا اند و از کلمه خدا خالی نیستند و اگر صوتی و آوازی از هر شیء که بیرون می آید خارج کلمه آلهی نیست و مسیح میگوید [که]¹⁴ ”من [آن]¹⁵ کلمه آلهی ام“ پس همه اشیا زنده باشند و مظهر کلمه باشند از مسیح حضرت عزّت مجموع اشیا را از کلمه و سخن آفرید و مسیح میگوید ”من [کلمه و سخن]¹⁶ خدا ام“ پس حیات همه وجود ازو باشد.
- 173 زنهمارا اگر میخواهی که ره بمسیح بری و او را کلام خدا و سخن خدا بحقیقت بدانی باید که بدانی که آن سخن خدا در شکم مریم درآمد و گوشتند شد و باین شکل و صورت [آدم]¹⁷ برآمد که 32 دندان و 32 خطّ بروجه داشته [باشد]¹⁸ و بر خطّ غیر استوا 28 داشته باشد.
- 174 که اگر ره باین نبردی ره بصورت آدم که [بصورت]¹⁹ خداست | نخواهی برد و نشان 32 کلمه⁴²⁵ آدم بروجه مسیح نخواهی یافت و او را در همه اشیا نخواهی دید.²⁰

را. 3 B 303b: پیشتر. 2 B 303b: is absent; BL: که. 1 AEF 386a: deleted; C 366b; B 303b: که.

4 C 366b: ra is absent. 5 C 366b: کن is absent. 6 AEF 386a: deleted and replaced

by فرمود; C 366b; B 303b: فرمود. 7 AEF 386a; C 366b; B 303b: بود. 8 AEF 386a; B 303b:

absent; سخن و. 12 BL: باشد. 11 AEF 386a: از is absent. 10 C 366b: دهد. 9 AEF 386a: و.

in the AEF 386a. 13 AEF 386a: ra is absent. 14 B 303b: که. 15 AEF 386a: آن; absent in

the BL. 16 C 366b: آن سخن. 17 C 366b: آدم is absent. 18 AEF 386b; C 366b; B 303b: باشد;

BL: باشند. 19 AEF 386b; C 366b; B 303b: بصورت; BL: صورت. 20 AEF 386b: no separation;

C 366b; B 303b: no separation and no و.

Word and that Speech, and God is with that Speech, which is a pre-eternal divine attribute. Seek and observe Christ in everything, including stone, clay, existents, in dreams and in wakefulness.

- 170 One of Apostles asked Christ: *'By the Gospel of God, where were you before the heavens were created?'* This question was posed because he [Christ] is the Word of God, and God created everything by the Word [of the Imperative] 'Be!'] (*Kun*) and by the Speech, and he (Jesus) said: *'I am the Word of God'*. Christ answered: *'This is an important question. I was in the Father, and the Father was in me'*,¹²⁸ that is to say: 'I am the Word of God and Speech of God, I am rooted in His Essence, thus I was before the Father and the Father was before me'.
- 171 This is because the manifestation of God is impossible without the Word. The Word and Speech convey the information concerning the existence of God and His discourse. The manifestation of God is produced by words and speech, and every 'word' is rooted in His Essence.
- 172 Christ said: *'I bring the dead to life'*.¹²⁹ It was explained that all existents are loci of manifestation of the divine [ontological] 'words'; they are all contained in the [all-comprehensive] divine Word. Since all voices and sounds produced by objects and beings are contained in the divine Word, and Christ said: *'I am that divine Word'*, everything is living, everything is a locus of manifestation of [some ontological] 'words' coming from Christ [who is the comprehensive divine Word]. God created everything from the Word and Speech, and Christ said: *'I am the Word and the Speech of God'*. Therefore, the life of every existing thing is derived from him.
- 173 If you want to access [the knowledge of] Christ, and to recognise him [in his] real [dimension] as the Word and Speech of God, you must learn that this Word of God came into the belly of Mary and was incarnated there, taking thus the form and appearance of Adam, with the 32 teeth and 32 facial lines, which are 28 [counted] without the line of balance.
- 174 If you do not acquire this [understanding], you will never reach [the knowledge] of the [bodily] form of Adam, who [was created] in the form of God. | You will never find the marks of the 32 'words' of Adam on the face of Christ, and you will not be able to observe him in everything.

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¹²⁸ See n. 90.

¹²⁹ An allusion to Q 3:49.

175 و در انجیل آمده است که حقّ تعالی اهل بهشت را در صورت برّه کوسفند بر طرف دست راست خود بدارد و اهل دوزخ را در صورت بزغاله بر طرف دست چپ خود بدارد که بزغاله اکثر اوقات نفس او پوشیده نیست و بی ستر خود را میدارد و آن برّه بجهت آن اهل بهشت [بر صورت او بند]¹ که [آن]² برّه هفت شاخ فهم [مصحف]³ حیوت کرد و خود را پیش حقّ تعالی فدا کرد.

176 مسیحی میگوید [که]⁴ تا مسیح نیامد آدم ازان سوزمانی خلاص نیافت و توبه قبول نشد چون مسیح کلمه آلهی است تا کلمه انابت بآدم نیامد توبه قبول نشد.

177 عیسی مجرد بمعنی همین است که برک روزه نداشت [یا]⁵ تعلق دینی نداشت معنی [ورا ازین]⁶ چیست و آن کدام است [و]⁷ آن 32 کلمه آلهی که مجرد باشد و مرکب نشده باشد که در ترکیب عرض هست و کثرتست [که]⁸ او آن کلمه مجرد آلهی است که عبارت است از [مه و سه]⁹ و ی و ح [که]¹⁰ مسیح شده است که آن چهار کلمه و آن 28 کلمه 32 [کلمه]¹¹ باشد همچنین مجرد که بآدم آمد.

178 مجرد او آن کلمه مجرد [است]¹² که در ذات¹³ آن 32 کلمه مجرد را شکل نیست و صورت نیست [و]¹⁴ قسمت پذیر نیست و در تصور¹⁵ تخیل نیامد و طول و عرض و عمق را باوراه نیست [با همه شیء باشد و بی همه شیء باشد چنانکه در کتاب فطروس آمده است که]¹⁶ "با [همه شیء]¹⁷ ماییم [و بی همه شیء ماییم]¹⁸ [و]¹⁹ کسی بر ما محیط نشود و بر همه شیء محیط باشیم" ازلی [و]²⁰ ابدی غیر مرئی.

179 مسیح را در همه اشیا اینچنین مجرد بیاب در وقتی که این 32 کلمه مجرد است نه ماضی و نه حال و نه استقبال و نه امر و [نه]²¹ نهی در ذات او [نه]²² | با کسی [باشد و]²³ نه باو کسی [باشد]²⁴ مسیح مجرد آن کلمه است.

¹ AEF 386b: بران صورة اند. ² AEF 386b; C 367a; B 304a: آن. ³ AEF 386b; C 367a; B 304a:

AEF 386b; C 367a: deleted; C 367a; B 304a: که is absent. ⁴ AEF 386b; C 367a;

is و: AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ⁵ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ⁶ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ⁷ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ⁸ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ⁹ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁰ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹¹ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹² AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹³ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁴ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁵ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁶ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁷ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁸ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁹ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²⁰ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²¹ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²² AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²³ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²⁴ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین.

is و: AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ⁷ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ⁸ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ⁹ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁰ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹¹ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹² AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹³ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁴ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁵ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁶ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁷ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁸ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁹ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²⁰ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²¹ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²² AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²³ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²⁴ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین.

خود: C 367a; B 304a: خود. ¹³ C 367a; B 304a: خود. ¹⁴ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁵ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁶ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁷ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁸ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁹ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²⁰ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²¹ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²² AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²³ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²⁴ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین.

is و: AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁴ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁵ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁶ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁷ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁸ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁹ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²⁰ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²¹ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²² AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²³ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²⁴ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین.

ما همه: BL; همه شیء: C 367a; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁸ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ¹⁹ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²⁰ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²¹ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²² AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²³ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²⁴ AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین.

و: C 367a; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²⁰ C 367a; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²¹ C 367a; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²² AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²³ C 367a: these words are absent. ²⁴ C 367a: باشد is absent.

و: C 367a; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²⁰ C 367a; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²¹ C 367a; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²² AEF 386b; B 304a: ورازاین; C 367a: ورازاین. ²³ C 367a: these words are absent. ²⁴ C 367a: باشد is absent.

- 175 It is mentioned in the Gospel that God the Most High has the inhabitants of Paradise, in the form of lambs, on His right side, and the inhabitants of Hell, in the form of calves, on His left side. A calf is mostly uncovered [with wool], it has no [outer] cover. As to the lamb, the inhabitants of Paradise have its form because that *Lamb with seven horns reached the knowledge of the Book of Life and sacrificed itself before God the Most High*.¹³⁰
- 176 Christians say that, as long as Christ does not come, Adam will not be delivered from fire and his repentance will not be accepted. Since Christ is the Word of God, as long as the Word of repentance does not come to Adam, [his] repentance will not be accepted.¹³¹
- 177 Christ is detached in the sense that he did not care about the daily provision or the worldly affairs. What is the meaning beyond that? And who is he [in his innermost reality]? These 32 divine 'words' are detached [in their original condition], they are not part of compounds. Compounds belong [to the domain of] manifestation and multitude. He [Jesus] is this detached divine Word, which consists of [four consonants] *m*, *s*, *y* and *h* of the word *masih*, ('Messiah', 'Christ'). Together with the 28 [primary] 'words', these four 'words' constitute the 32 detached 'words', the same as those received by Adam.
- 178 The 'detached' condition of Christ is the consequence of the detached condition of these 32 [primary] 'words' which, in their essence, have no shape and no form, which cannot be divided, cannot be grasped either by intellect or imagination, and do not possess length, width or depth. [This Word] is with everything and without everything, as it is said in the Book of Peter: *'We are with everything and we are without everything; nothing encompasses us but we encompass everything. [We are] without beginning and without end, [we are] invisible'*.¹³²
- 179 Discover Christ in his detached condition in everything. While these 32 'words' are in detached condition, their essence conveys no [tense, whether] past, present or future, [and expresses] neither order nor prohibition. It is not | with someone and no one is with it. The detached [condition] of Christ is identical with these 'words'.

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130 An allusion to Chapter 5 of *Revelation*.

131 See n. 3 above.

132 Cf. *AP*, p. 106.

180 وقتی که مرگب شد اسم "عیسی"¹ میشود آسمان و زمین و بهشت از همان [کلهه]² [مجرد است که]³ مرگب شده است و اسامی اشیا شده است ازان وجه که میگوید "من با همه شیء⁴ هستم" اصل ترکیب اوست.

181 مسیح گفت " [من]⁵ میروم پیش پدر آسمانی تا [بفرستم]⁶ بشما کامل [و مکمل]⁷ آن واسطه را یعنی [که]⁸ مردم را بکمال برساند و تعلیم تأویل بیاید و شما را همه [چیزها]⁹ تعلیم کند که همه موجودات از کلام و سخن در وجود آمد که همه مظهر کلام [و]¹⁰ سخن خدا اند و مسیح گفت "من سخن خدا ام" بسخن مسیح هر جا که صوتی و آوازی و [سخنی]¹¹ می آید مسیح است¹² مسیح را پس [تا]¹³ از سر موی خالی¹⁴ نیایی و السلام.

182 مسیح گفت [که]¹⁵ "نیامده ام که دین انبیا [را]¹⁶ [نقصان]¹⁷ کنم بدان آمده ام که تمام کنم" چون گفت "سخن خدا ام اول چیزی که از اسمان آمد سخن بود و خدا بآن سخن بود و من آن سخن بودم".

183 پس برین تقدیر بآدم و آدمی زاد 32 سخن آمده است چنانکه صورت آدم و آدمی زاد علم 32 سخن است و مسیح گفت "من آن سختم" پس مسیح خواهد آمدن تا آن سخن را که بآدم [علیه السلام]¹⁸ آمده است که 32 است و بهر نبی ازان چند کلهه آمده است فرمود که "خواهم آمدن که آنرا تمام کنم و سر تمامی آنرا آشکار کنم و [نیامده ام]¹⁹ که نقصان آن کنم" پس مسیح چون سخن خداست میباید که اظهار کند که سخن خدا چند است و چند کلهه است و باشیا وجود خود را بنسبت چگونه آمده باشد که گفت "من خواهم آمدن که بیان کنم آنچه برمز و اشارت گفته ام"²⁰.

184 بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ای مسیحی با خود تصور کن که [این]²¹ نطق [که]²² از زبان مسیح⁴²⁷ بدر می آید که میگفت "من سخن خدا ام" آن سخن [را]²³ که از زبان او بدر می آید تو آن سخن

مجردات: BL; مجرد است که: AEF 386b: 3. کلهه: AEF 386b: 2. C 367a: an illegible word. 1

بکمال: C 367a: 7. فرستم: BL; بفرستم: C 367a: 6. من: C 367a: 5. اشیا: B 304a: 4.

سخن: BL; سخنی: AEF 387a: 11. و: C 367a: 10. خبرها: C 367a: 9. که: C 367a: 8. AEF 387a:

که is absent: C 367b: 15. ازو: B 304a: 14. تا: C 367b: 12. absent: C 367b: 13. تا: C 367b: 12.

عم: C 367b: 18. ناقص: B 304a: 17. را: C 367b: 16. AEF 387a: C 367b: 19.

نیامدم: BL; نیامده ام: B 304b: 20. آن: AEF 388a: 21. separation mark: B 304b: 20.

را: AEF 388a: 23. که:

- 180 When they [i.e., these simple primary ontological 'words' or phonemes, come together and] compose the compound [names], they produce the name 'Jesus'. Heavens, earth and Paradise are composed of these [simple] detached 'words' which, [when combined in various compound units] became names of [all] things. He [Christ] said: '*We are with everything*', [because] he is the foundation of any compound.
- 181 Christ said: '*I go unto my heavenly Father in order to bring you perfection*'.¹³³ This means that he will lead people to perfection, and teach them the *ta'wil*.¹³⁴ [He will also teach] that all existing objects and beings were brought into existence by the [ontological] Word and Speech, and that they are all loci of manifestation of the divine Word. And Christ said: '*I am the Word of God*'. According to Christ, he is in every voice, sound and speech. Do not think that Christ is absent even from a tiniest atom.
- 182 Christ said: '*I come not to diminish the religion of the prophets, I come to complete it*'. He [also] said: '[*I am*] the Word of God. The first thing that came from heaven was the Word, and God was with that Word, and I was that Word'.
- 183 Similarly, Adam and his children received the 32 [primordial] 'words', while the external form of Adam and his children represents the knowledge of these 32 'words'.¹³⁵ And Christ said: '*I am that Word*'. Therefore, Christ will come [back] in order [to complete and reveal] the 32 'words' given to Adam, peace be upon him, from which every prophet received a certain number, in accordance with his [Christ's] utterance: '*I will come in order to complete them and to reveal the secret of their completeness, I come not to diminish them*'. Since Christ is the Word of God, he must reveal the number of the divine 'words', and how he is related to things [as their ontological principle]. He said [indeed]: '*I will come in order to explain all that I previously said by means of parables and allusions*'.
- 184 *In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.* O Christian, think for yourself, this speech emitted by the tongue of Christ, concerning which he said: '*I am the Speech of God*', do you recognise that this Speech, when it is

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133 This could be a paraphrase of John 14:12, 28; 16:16, 28; or 20:17.

134 The perfect knowledge is the knowledge of the original divine Word, attained through *ta'wil*, the ontological hermeneutics revealed by the Saviour.

135 That is, the human body is the perfect locus of manifestation where the 28/32 primary 'words' become visible and therefore knowable.

- را وقتی که مفرد باشد [که مفرد]¹ آنست]² تو آن سخن را سخن خدا میدانی یا [نه]³ که مسیح میگوید "من [آن]⁴ سخن خدا ام" و از خدا بغیر از سخن بآدم و انبیا نیامد.
- 185 میگوید "من آن سخن بودم" پس مسیح [سخن خداست] این]⁵ نطق که از زبان او بدر می آمد [او]⁶ آن سخن بود و آن سخن]⁷ که از خدا بآدم آمد بیرون ازین 32 کلمه نیست پس مسیح آن 32 کلمه خدا باشد که از خدا جدا نیست که علم آن 32 کلمه آن 32 خط | وجه اوست بجهت 427ظ آن [ا]⁸ 32 خط | بر وجه او و آدم نوشته است.
- 186 و آن خط را بجهت آن در توریت گفت "انسانی بیافرینم بشکل خود و صورت خود" [که]⁹ آن صورت 32 خط وجه آدم است و مسیح [که]¹⁰ علم و نشانه آن 32 کلمه است [که]¹¹ از زبان آدم و مسیح و انبیا و همه اشیا ظاهرست و بالقوت [موجودست]¹² و سر موی از اشیا¹³ آن کلمه خالی [و خارج نیست]¹⁴ و خدا را صفات قدیم [و]¹⁵ ازلی و ابدیست.
- 187 آنکه مسیح گفت "پیش پدر میروم" [یک]¹⁶ وجه آنست که او کسب صورت از آدم کرده است و آدم علم 32 کلمه الهی بر وجه دارد پس بعدد 32 کلمه آدم که¹⁷ زبان همه فرزندان آدم از آن 32 کلمه باشد.
- 188 و مسیح گفت "پیش پدر میروم" که صورت او [که]¹⁸ علم 32 کلمه است از آدم [و حوا]¹⁹ که پدر [و]²⁰ مادر اوست کسب کرده است پیش آدم میرفت تا باز بیاید و 32 کلمه آدم که حقیقت مسیح است و مسیح [بران]²¹ خلقت است ظاهر گرداند.
- 189 و پدر آسمانی بجهت آن گفت که آسمانها که سیصد و شصت درجه است منقسم به 28 و 32 و 28 و 32 است که در مقابله 28 کلمه و 32 کلمه آدم آسمانها منقسم است و طبایع همچنان در [مقابله آن]²² منقسم است.

¹ AEF 388a: مفرد; B 305a: مفرد. ² AEF 388a; C 368b; B 305a: آنست; BL: است. ³ AEF 388a; C 368b; B 305a: نه; BL: نی. ⁴ AEF 388a; C 368b; B 305a: آن is absent. ⁵ AEF 388a; B 305b: او; BL: و. ⁶ AEF 388a; B 305b: ازین; BL: این. ⁷ C 368b: this passage is absent. ⁸ AEF 388a: آن; C 368b; B 305b: second آن is absent. ⁹ AEF 388a: که. ¹⁰ AEF 388a; B 305b: که. ¹¹ AEF 388a: و. ¹² AEF 388a; C 368b: موجودست; BL: موجودات. ¹³ AEF 388a: از. ¹⁴ AEF 388a; B 305b: و خارج نیست; C 368b: و خارج; BL: نی. ¹⁵ AEF 388a; C 368b; B 305b: is absent. ¹⁶ B 305b: بیک. ¹⁷ AEF 388b: از; BL: از. ¹⁸ AEF 388b: که. ¹⁹ AEF 388b: بدان. ²⁰ C 368b; B 305b: و is absent. ²¹ AEF 388b: بران; BL: بران. ²² C 368b; B 305b: مقابل این.

[disassembled] into its [most] simple [components] which constitute its detached [condition], is the Speech of God? Christ said, *I am that Speech of God*, and the Speech was the only divine [thing] that reached Adam and the prophets.

185 [Since Christ] said: *I was that Speech*, he is the Speech of God. He was [also] identical with the speech produced by his [own] tongue. The Speech bestowed by God upon Adam did not exceed these 32 [primary] 'words', therefore, Christ is identical with these 32 divine 'words' which are inseparable from God. The knowledge of these 'words' is [represented by] the 32 lines | of his face; this is the reason for which these 32 lines are written on his face and on the face of Adam.

427b

186 The [divine] saying [mentioned] in the Torah—*Let us make man in our image, after our likeness*—refers to the image constituted by the 32 lines of the faces of Adam and Christ, which represent the knowledge and are the marks of those 32 [primary] 'words' which are expressed by the tongues of Adam, Christ, the prophets and [produced] by all existing things, and [also] potentially contained [in them]. [On the one hand], these [primary ontological] 'words' cannot be extracted or separated from things, [on the other], they are pre-existent attributes of God, without beginning and without end.

187 Christ said: *I go unto my Father*. One meaning of this [statement is related to the fact] that he acquired his bodily form from Adam, and Adam possessed the knowledge of the 32 divine 'words' on this face. [The body of Christ was therefore constituted] in accordance with the number of the 32 'words' of Adam, which also constitute all languages spoken by the children of Adam.¹³⁶

188 Since Christ acquired his bodily form, which represents the knowledge of the 32 [primary] 'words', from Adam and Eve, who are his Father and Mother, his [statement], *I go unto my Father*, means that he went to Adam, so that when he returns, he will be able to produce the 32 'words' of Adam that constitute the innermost reality of Christ and according to which he [i.e., Christ] was created.

189 And he mentioned the 'heavenly Father' because the heavenly [spheres] contain 360 degrees, divided into 28 and 32. That is to say, the heavenly [spheres] are divided [into six times 28 and 32 degrees], as counterpart to the 28 and 32 'words' of Adam. And the elementary [spheres] are divided similarly.¹³⁷

136 That is, every human language contains a number of phonemes inferior or equal to the 32 primary phonemes or 'words' received by Adam.

137 The heavenly and elementary spheres are thus identical with Adam, who is the Father.

- 190 اکنون مسیح را کلمه خدا و سخن خدا دان مسیح آن سخن است که از زبان او بدر می آید اگرچه در وقت [خلقت]¹ در [عقب]² خلق بود علم 32 کلمه آدم بر وجه داشت.
- 191 اما آن 32 نطق که بر زبان آدم [بود بر زبان او]³ جاری نبود [و ظاهر نبود]⁴ و با قوم خود بآن تکلم نمیکرد [بآن کلمه تکلم]⁵ میکرد که در میان آن قوم بآن نسبت برآمده بود.
- 192 اکنون ای مسیحی دندان آدم چرا [دران]⁶ وقت [که]⁷ منتها [که]⁸ دارد از 32 زیاده نیست بجهت آنکه مخرج کلام و سخن الهی که از دهن بیرون می آید 32 پیش نیست و مسیح گفت "من آن سختم" پس دندان مسیح چرا 32 باشد بجهت آنکه [کلام که]⁹ بآدم آمد 32 [کلمه]¹⁰ بود و مسیح آن کلام و مظهر آن سخن بود لاجرم علم آن کلام باشد.
- 193 هیچ مسئله در دین انبیا واجبتر و لازم تراز [شناختن]¹¹ روح نیست چرا بجهت آنکه اگر روح را بدانستی مبدا و میعاد خود را بدانستی و آمر و ناهئ خود را بدانستی که تو در امر و نهی کیستی و مالک ملک وجود خود را بدانستی و چون [مالک ملک وجود خود را بدانستی]¹² مالک الملک جمیع موجودات را بدانستی "ما کان و ما یکون" را بدانستی بجهت آنکه ای طالب که تو هئیات جمیع موجوداتی ما کان و ما یکون در تو مندرجست و چون روح را بدانستی خود را بدانستی و عارف نفس خود شدی [و]¹³ چون عارف نفس خود شدی پروردگار خود را بدانستی بحکم این حدیث که "من عرف نفسه فقد عرف ربه" اینجا نفس میگوید و مراد روح است چرا که [جمیع]¹⁴ خطاب و عتاب با روح انسان است نه بغیر روح انسانی پس دانستن روح واجب باشد.¹⁵
- 194 اکنون اگر سائل سؤال کند که روح چه چیزست که چندین شناخت موقوف [شناخت اوست]¹⁶ جواب از ﴿مَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ﴾ آست [که]¹⁷ ای طالب اسرار آهی که اگر

¹ AEF 388b: درجه C 368b: illegible word; B 305b: درجه بوجه. ² C 368b: عقر. ³ AEF

و ظاهر نبود: AEF 388b; B 305b: آدم instead of او; C 368b: بود بر زبان او; B 305b: 388b;

⁴ AEF 388b; B 305b: در. ⁵ AEF 388b; B 305b: تکلم بآن کلمه. ⁶ C 369a; B 305b: 369a; B 305b: 369a;

⁷ B 305b: که is absent. ⁸ C 369a: کلمه. ⁹ AEF 388b; C 369a; B 305b: کلام که. ¹⁰ AEF 388b; C 369a; B 305b: که is absent.

¹¹ AEF 424b: شناخت. ¹² AEF 424b: absent. ¹³ AEF 424b: absent. ¹⁴ AEF 425a: جمیع is added at the margin.

¹⁵ AEF 425a: no separation mark. ¹⁶ AEF 425a: باوست. ¹⁷ AEF 425a: که; absent in the BL.

- 190 Recognise now Christ as the Word and Speech of God. Christ is [identical with] the speech emitted by his tongue. Although he came at a later stage in [the history of] the created universe, he possessed [complete] knowledge of the 32 'words' of Adam [inscribed in the lines of his] face.
- 191 But all of these 32 phonemes of the language of Adam were not integrated and did not appear in his language [during his historical mission]. Therefore, he did not address his people [using a language containing the full number of the 32 primary 'words']. He addressed them using the language that this people spoke fluently.
- 192 O Christian, why is the [number of] teeth of Adam limited to 32, and no more? Because the points of emission of the divine Speech in the mouth cannot be more than 32. And Christ said: *'I am that Word'*. For which reason Christ had 32 teeth? Because the [divine] Speech that reached Adam was [constituted of] the 32 'words', and Christ was that Speech and its locus of manifestation. | Necessarily, the knowledge of this Speech is [represented by his] 32 [teeth]. 428a
- 193 No matter in the prophetic religion is more important and necessary than knowledge concerning the spirit. Because if you know the spirit, you know your own source and point of return. You also know who sets orders and prohibitions for you, [that is to say], the orders and prohibitions of him whom you obey. You know the king of the kingdom of your being and, therefore, you know the king of the kingdom of all beings. You know the past and present because, O seeker, all beings of the past and present are summarised in your own [bodily] shape. If you know the spirit, you know yourself, you are fully aware of your own self. And when you are fully aware of your own self, you are aware of your Creator, in virtue of this *ḥadīth*: *'Whosoever knows himself, knows his Lord'*.¹³⁸ The word 'self' designates here the spirit, because any discourse or admonition is addressed to the human spirit, not to any other [faculty]. For [all these reasons], the knowledge of the spirit is necessary. 467b
- 194 Now, if someone asks: what is the spirit, what sort of knowledge depends on its knowledge? The answer from *'those who have knowledge of the Book'*¹³⁹ is that, O seeker of the divine secrets, if we explain the word 'spirit'¹⁴⁰ such as

138 al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, vol. 2, p. 32; vol. 57, p. 324; vol. 58, p. 90.

139 An expression from Q 13:43, applied here apparently to Faḍl Allāh.

140 This probably means explaining the properties and metaphysical meanings of the letters composing the word 'spirit' (*rūḥ*).

چنانچه بیان لفظ روح می‌کند تو که طالبی هیچ فهم نتوانی کردن و [راه]¹ بحقیقت روح نمیتوانی
 برد و شناخت روح حاصل نمیتوانی | کرد.²

و468

195 اکنون ای طالب بیان از بطن ثانی کرده شود تا طالبان حضرت احدیت و سالکان طریق
 سرمدیت بمطلوب رسند انشاء الله تعالی / اکنون بدان ای طالب اسرار الهی که سؤال میکنی
 که روح چیست جواب آنست که روح مدرک است و مدرک و روح هر دو یکیست سؤال
 [همچنین]³ باقی مانده است.

196 اکنون اگر سائل سؤال کند [که مسلم که روح و مدرک هر دو یکیست]⁴ مدرک چیست
 جواب از ﴿وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ﴾ آنست ای طالب که مدرک مرگبست که تا مرگب
 نیست مدرک [ادراک]⁵ هیچ چیز نمیتواند کرد و عاجز و عاطل مانده است چنانچه جماد که
 مدرک نیست بجهت آنکه درو هیچ [چیز]⁶ مرگب نمیشود و چون درو هیچ چیز مرگب نمیشود
 مدرکش نمیتوان گفت.

197 اکنون اگر سائل سؤال کند که مرگب چیست که تا [او]⁷ مرگب نمیشود انسان مثل جماد
 است و کلوخ [و مدرک نیست و عاجز و عاطل مثل سنگ و کلوخ]⁸ و غیره از [ادراک]⁹
 باز مانده است جواب از ﴿وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ﴾ آنست ای طالب که مرگب کلمه چند
 مفرده است که مرگب میشود که تا آن کلمه چند مفرده مرگب نمیشود مدرک ادراک هیچ
 چیزی [نمیتواند]¹⁰ کرد و مدرک نیست و از مقصود هیچ فائده حاصل نمیشود.

198 اکنون این معنی را روشن مشاهده کن و بین که تا این کلمه چند مفرده مرگب نمیشود تو هیچ
 [چیز]¹¹ ادراک [توانی]¹² کرد یا نه / اکنون چون معلوم کردی ای طالب که تو بی آن [که
 این]¹³ کلمه چند مرگب [شود]¹⁴ تو فهم و ادراک هیچ [چیزی]¹⁵ نمیتوانی کرد.

¹ AEF 425a: راه; BL: ره. ² AEF 425a: no separation mark. ³ AEF 425a: همچنان. ⁴ AEF 425a: روح; (second part of this phrase, after روح, is apparently a correction or addition of the previous text, which is deleted); BL: روح مررک است.

⁵ AEF 425a: او; absent in the BL. ⁶ AEF 425a: چیزی; BL: چیزی. ⁷ AEF 425a: ادراک; BL: ادراک. ⁸ AEF 425a: و عاجز و عاطل مثل سنگ و کلوخ; absent in the BL.

⁹ AEF 425a: ادراک; BL: ادراک. ¹⁰ AEF 425a: نمیتواند; BL: نمیتوان. ¹¹ AEF 425b, added over the line: چیزی; absent in the BL. ¹² AEF 425b: میتوانی. ¹³ AEF 425b: که این; absent in the BL.

¹⁴ AEF 425b: نشود. ¹⁵ AEF 425b in the margin: چیزی; absent in the BL.

it is, you, the seeker, will be unable to understand [such an explanation] and to reach the innermost reality of the spirit; you will be unable to realise any knowledge concerning | the spirit.

468a

195 Now, O seeker, an explanation from the second depth¹⁴¹ will be produced so that, God willing, the seekers of divine Unity and travellers on the path of [divine] eternity could reach their goal. Learn, O seeker of the divine secrets that, when you ask what is the spirit, the answer is that the spirit is he who comprehends: the spirit and he who comprehends are one and the same thing. But the question still remains [unanswered].

196 If the questioner [continues his inquiry and] says: Well, let us admit that the spirit and he who comprehends are one and the same thing. But what is he who comprehends then? The answer from '*those who have knowledge of the Book*' is, O seeker, that he who comprehends is compound, because if he is not compound, he who comprehends cannot comprehend anything; he is impotent and useless, like a mineral, which is not compound, because it [the mineral] has no components that would combine in its [constitution]. Since it contains no composition of any sort, it cannot be described as compound.

197 If the questioner asks what this [condition of] compound is, without which a human is like a mineral or clay, unable to comprehend, impotent and useless as a stone or clay and other [similar objects], and deprived of the faculty of comprehension, the answer from '*those who have knowledge of the Book*' is, O seeker, that the [condition of] compound [is realised] by some simple [primary] 'words' which combine [among themselves]. Until these simple 'words' combine among themselves [to produce a compound unit], he who comprehends cannot comprehend anything and, therefore, he cannot comprehend or attain any goal.

198 Observe and understand clearly whether you can comprehend anything without some of these simple 'words' combining among themselves [and producing a compound unit]. Now you can see that you are unable to understand or comprehend anything without these 'words' combining to compose [compound units].¹⁴²

141 That is, more accessible than that based on the properties of the letters composing the word 'spirit' itself.

142 Repeated in 471b.

- 199 اکنون فهم کن ای طالب که تو چه باشی و مفرد و مرگب چه باشی و حرکت و سکونت تو از چه باشد [و چه ذات باشد]¹ و فهم و ادراک تو چه باشد و تو در امر و نهی کیستی و آمر و ناهئ تو کیست و مدرک و مدرک تو کیست.
- 200 و درین مقام ای طالب | مدرک و مدرک یکبست بجهت آنکه تو درین [حالتی]² که ادراک هر شیء که میکنی تو آن شیء و غیر آن ادراک تو چیزی دیگر دران حال و دران زمان نیستی و تو عین آن ادراکی بجهت آنکه میان مدرک و مدرک هیچ فرق نیست بتحقیق که تو ادراک هر چیز که میکنی تو آن چیزی بی شک و بی تردّد.
- 201 اکنون ای طالب اگر سائل سؤال کند که آن کلمه چند مفرد که تا او نمی آید و مرگب نمیشود مدرک ادراک هیچ چیز نمیتواند کردن آن کلمه چند چه چیز است و مبدا و منشا [او]³ بجاست و او چه ذاتیست و او را چگونه توان دانست و راه بآن کلمه چند چگونه توان برد؟
- 202 جواب از ﴿وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ﴾ آنست ای طالب که آن کلمه چند که می آید و مرگب میشود [و آن کلمه چند]⁴ ازین 32 کلمه است و این 32 کلمه قدیم ازلی و ابدی است بلا شکل و صورت و پیکر و هیئات و بلا عمق و لون و طول و عرض و این 32 کلمه از صوت بظهور می آید و صوت از قوّت ازلی [ظاهر میشود]⁵ و قوّت ازلی ای طالب آن ذاتست که کلّ موجودات باو موجود شده است و اشیا بقوّت ازلی قائم است و قوّت ازلی بذات خود قائم است بلا شک.
- 203 اکنون اگر سائل سؤال کند که تو میگوئی که [ازین]⁶ 32 کلمه قدیم ازلی ابدی بلا شکل و صورت و پیکر و هیئات و طول و عرض و عمق و لون کلمه چند است که می آید و درین مظهر مرگب میشود و ادراک که مقصود است میکند و دران حال و دران زمان مدرک ادراک [هر]⁷ شیء که میکند آن مدرک عین آن شیء است و مدرک [غیر که]⁸ عین آن شیء که درک کرده است [و]⁹ چیزی دیگر نیست الا آن شیء که درک [کرده است]¹⁰ و درین |⁴⁶⁹ حال مدرک و مدرک یکبست راستست و درین [هیچ]¹¹ شک نیست¹² چرا که دلیل واضح
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- ¹ AEF 425b in the margin: باشد ذات باشد; absent in the BL. ² AEF 425b: حالتی; BL: حالت.
- ³ AEF 425b: او; BL: آن. ⁴ AEF 425b: و آن کلمه چند; absent in the BL. ⁵ AEF 425b in the margin: ظاهر میشود; absent in the BL. ⁶ AEF 425b: ازین; BL: این. ⁷ AEF 425b, added under the line: هر; absent in the BL. ⁸ AEF 425b, added under the line: غیر followed by an illegible sign; absent in the BL. ⁹ AEF 425b: و deleted. ¹⁰ AEF 426a: میکند. ¹¹ AEF 426a: هیچ; absent in the BL. ¹² BL: که; deleted in the AEF 426a.

- 199 Understand now, O seeker, who you are, what the simple and the compound are, what the reason and essence of your movement and your rest is, what your understanding and your comprehension are, the orders and prohibitions of who you obey, and who is issuing these orders and prohibitions, who that person is whom you comprehend and by whom you are comprehended.
- 200 At that station, O seeker, | he who comprehends and the comprehended are one and the same thing, because in that spiritual state you are [identical] with anything that you comprehend. Your comprehensive faculty is not [focused on] anything else in that place and time, and you are identical with this act of comprehension, because there is no difference between him who comprehends and the comprehended. By your own spiritual realisation, [you can verify] that you are identical with the object of your comprehension. There is no doubt and no uncertainty about that. 468b
- 201 Now, O seeker, if the questioner asks: What are these simple [primary] 'words', without whose advent and combination he who comprehends cannot comprehend anything? Where do they come from, what is their essence, how they can be reached and known?
- 202 The answer from *'those who have knowledge of the Book'* is, O seeker, that these 'words' that come and constitute the compounds are from the 32 [primary] 'words'. *The 32 [primary] 'words' are pre-existent, they are without beginning and without end, without any shape, form or image, without depth, colour, length or width. They are manifested by means of voice, while the voice is manifested by the Power without beginning.*¹⁴³ O Seeker, the Power without beginning is that Essence by which every existent is existing. Things are rooted in the Power without beginning, and the Power without beginning is rooted in its own essence, there is no doubt about this.
- 203 If the questioner now says: According to you, some 'words' from among these 32 pre-existent [primary] 'words' *without beginning and without end, without any shape, form or image, without length, width, depth or colour*, come and combine [producing] a locus of manifestation and thus realise the corresponding comprehension. In such a state and at that moment, he who comprehends is identical with the object of his comprehension, he is not anything else. In such | a spiritual state he who comprehends is identical with the object of his comprehension. That is correct and there is no doubt about that, since it has been demonstrated clearly. But why is it [always] 469a

143 Summary of statements contained in the *Arabic Apocalypse of Peter*, Mingana's translation, pp. 106–107.

است فاما چرا کلمه چندست از 32 کلمه و 32 کلمه تا نیست چنانکه 32 کلمه در یک ادراک در آید و مرگب شود و بیان مقصودی که دارد بکند [چنانکه]¹ کلمه چند است ازین 32 کلمه که می آید و بیان میکند؟

204 جواب آنست که ای طالب اسرار آهی که حضرت عزّت جلّ [عزّه]² در کلام مجید با حضرت رساله علیه افضل الصلوات و اکمل التحیات خطاب میکند که ﴿وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي﴾ [و آن]³ من من تبعیض است یعنی سؤال [کنند]⁴ از روح بگوای محمد که روح بعض از امر پروردگار من است.

205 اکنون چون حضرت عزّت جلّ عزّه [چنین]⁵ میفرماید که [روح]⁶ بعض از امر منست و حضرت رسالت چنین می‌رساند که بعض از امر پروردگار منست چون خلاف [آن]⁷ قول باشد و چون تواند بود ای طالب هر چند که در ذات خود این کلمه چند همان 32 کلمه است و 32 [کلمه همان]⁸ کلمه چند است⁹ که آمده است و مرگب شده است فاما اینجا اظهار کمال و عظمت خود میکند یعنی [آن]¹⁰ عظمت و جلالت و امر و نبی و صفاتی که در 32 [کلمه]¹¹ تاّم است درین یک کلمه [و]¹² دو کلمه [و]¹³ سه کلمه بلا تعیین موجود است و این 32 کلمه در جمیع صفات علی السویه اند و در ذات خود تقدّم و تأخّر بر یکدیگر ندارند و [مقصود آهی]¹⁴ از کلمه چند که مرگب میشود حاصل است چه حاجتست که 32 کلمه در یک ادراک در آید [و بیان کند]¹⁵ این سؤال وقتی وارد بودی که این کلمه چند که آید و مرگب میشود مقصود حاصل نمیشدی و چون مقصود حاصل میشود سؤال عبث باشد.

¹ AEF 426a: چنانکه; BL: چندین که. ² AEF 426a: جلاله. ³ AEF 426a: و آن; absent in the BL.

⁴ AEF 426a: میکند. ⁵ AEF 426a, added over the line: چنین; absent in the BL. ⁶ AEF 426a,

added over the line: روح; absent in the BL. ⁷ AEF 426a: این. ⁸ AEF 426a, added over the

line: کلمه همان; absent in the BL. ⁹ BL: همان; deleted in AEF 426a. ¹⁰ AEF 426a: آن; absent

in the BL. ¹¹ AEF 426a, added over the line: کلمه; absent in the BL. ¹² AEF 426a, added

over the line: و; absent in the BL. ¹³ AEF 426a: و; absent in the BL. ¹⁴ AEF 426a, this text

is deleted and overwritten as: مقصودی که هست البته. ¹⁵ AEF 426a, added at the margin: و

و بیان کند; absent in the BL.

some 'words' from among the 32, why can *all* the 32 [primary] 'words' not come together and combine in one act of comprehension, thus producing the explanation of their [total] signification, similar to the explanation produced by their partial combinations?

204 The answer, O seeker of divine secrets, is that God, exalted is His Glory, said in His noble speech to the Messenger, upon him be the best of the prayers and most perfect of greetings: *'They will question thee concerning the Spirit. Say: "The Spirit is by command of my Lord."*' [Q 17:85]. [The preposition] 'of' [in this verse] indicates dividing into portions. That is to say: *'They will question thee concerning the Spirit. Say, o Muḥammad, that the Spirit is a portion of the command of my Lord.'*¹⁴⁴

205 Since God, exalted be His glory, stated that 'the Spirit is a portion of My command', and the Messenger received [this statement] as '*the Spirit* is a portion of the command of my Lord', how can it be contradicted? O seeker, in their essence, some 'words' [from among the 32 primary 'words'] are identical with all the 32, and all the 32 are identical with some 'words' from their number that came and combined [among themselves to produce compounds]. [Every 'word'] expresses here [in its essence] its perfection and grandeur. This means that the grandeur and glory, order and prohibition, and [all other] attributes contained in the full set of the 32 [primary] 'words' also exist, though in an undifferentiated condition, within one, two or three 'words'. [With regard] to the totality of their attributes, all the 32 'words' are equal. In their essence, there are no anterior or posterior among them. The divine purpose [can thus be perfectly] produced by some of these 'words' that combine together in compounds, without the necessity for all the 32 'words' to come together in a single act of comprehension in order to produce an explanation [of this divine purpose]. This question would make sense if the compounds produced by the partial combinations of the 'words' did not express any purpose. But since the purpose is expressed, the question is vain.

144 A Persian paraphrase of the Qur'ānic verse previously cited in original Arabic.

- 206 و دیگر آنکه اگر این 32 کلمه در یک ادراک درآمدی و بیان [مقصودی]¹ کردی نقصان لازم آمدی چرا که فائده از معاد نبودی | و باز گشتن نبودی و "کلّ شیء یرجع الی اصله" نبودی امید براحه و مغفرت و الم و لذّت و عذاب و راحت نبودی و فساد لازم آمدی [و]² نعوذ بالله که چنین باشد.
- 207 و دیگر آنکه اگر این 32 کلمه در یک ادراک درآمدی و بیان یک مقصود کردی درین حال و درین زمان این 32 کلمه اینجا بیان کردی [و]³ دیگر جایها که بودی [و عالم خالی بودی]⁴ و ﴿إِنَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾ چگونه واقع بودی و درین حال که این 32 کلمه اینجا در یک مظهر درآمدی و ادراک [مقصود]⁵ کردی درین [یک]⁶ حال او را بر کلّ اشیا چگونه مشاهده [خواهی]⁷ کرد و او خود را در یک زمان [بر کلّ اشیا چگونه مشاهده کردی و در یک زمان]⁸ که در یک مظهر درآمدی بودی و اینجا ادراک مقصودی کردی بر سموات و ارض و بین و یسار و فوق و تحت و جهات اشیا چگونه محیط بودی امکان احاطت نبودی و حاشا که چنین باشد که فساد و نقصان در مملکت او روا باشد.
- 208 و دیگر آنکه آن شیء که تو او را [ذات]⁹ میخوانی و قوّت ازلی ابدی میخوانی که اشیا باو موجود و قائم است آن قوّت ازلی را بجز این 32 کلمه هیچ صفتی دیگر و اسبابی دیگر نیست و این 32 کلمه ازان ذات جدا نیست و عین آن ذات [است]¹⁰ هرگاه که این 32 کلمه بر سبیل فرض در یک مظهر درآمدی و ادراک یک مقصود کردی لازم بودی که آن ذات که قوّت ازلیست مطلق بتام و کمال دران یک مظهر که 32 کلمه درآمدی است درآمدی بودی [چرا که ثابت شده است]¹¹ که [آن ذات]¹² بجز این 32 کلمه هیچ صفتی و صورتی و اسبابی نه ذهنی و نه خیالی و [نه]¹³ صوری و معنوی و ظاهری و باطنی و حقیقی و مجازی بهیچ وجه از وجوه ندارد پس برین معنی هر جا که 32 کلمه تامّ باشد قوّت | ازلی تامّ دران یک مظهر باشد و جای دیگر نباشد و جائز نباشد.

¹ BL: added under the line in AEF 426a. ² AEF 426a, added over the line: و; absent in the BL. ³ AEF 426b, added over the line: و; absent in the BL. ⁴ AEF 426b: عالم خالی بودی; absent in the BL. ⁵ BL: مقصود; added under the line in AEF 426b. ⁶ AEF 426b, added over the line: یک; absent in the BL. ⁷ AEF 426b, this text is deleted and overwritten as: شایستی. ⁸ AEF 426b: در یک زمان; absent in the BL. ⁹ AEF 426b: ذات; absent in the BL. ¹⁰ AEF 426b, added over the line: است; absent in the BL. ¹¹ BL: آن که ثابت شده است; this text is deleted in AEF 426b, at the margin. ¹² AEF 426b: آن ذات; BL: ذاتا. ¹³ absent in AEF 426b.

- 206 On the other hand, if all these 32 [primary] 'words' came together within one single act of comprehension in order to express one single purpose, it would entail a deficiency. There would then be no benefit in return | and resurrection, [the condition of] '*everything returns to its origin*'¹⁴⁵ would not be realised, there would be no hope for comfort and forgiveness, pain and pleasure, punishment and ease. This would necessarily entail corruption, may God preserve us from such a condition. 469b
- 207 Another argument is that if all these 32 [primary] 'words' came together within one single act of comprehension in order to express one single purpose, they would express it in one specific place and time, which means that they would be absent from all other places, from the rest of the world. How can [the condition of] '*surely He is powerful over everything*' [Q 41:39] be realised then? If all the 32 [primary] 'words' were [concentrated] within a single locus of manifestation, producing comprehension of a purpose limited to that specific moment, how can He be observed in everything in this single moment? If His [Word] was concentrated in a single moment in a specific locus of manifestation, in an act of comprehension of a single specific purpose, how would He comprehend the heavens and earth, right and left, top and bottom, and [other] sides of the things? [The condition of divine] all-comprehensiveness would be disrupted. God forbid this from happening, because it would introduce corruption and deficiency into His kingdom.
- 208 Another argument is that this entity that you call 'essence', or '*Power without beginning and without end*', which is the ontological principle and foundation of everything, this Power without beginning has no attributes and means other than these 32 [primary] 'words'. The 32 'words' cannot be separated from that essence, they are identical with it. If we suppose that all these 32 'words' come together within one locus of manifestation, producing the comprehension of one specific purpose, it follows necessarily that the essence, which is the Power without beginning, comes entirely and perfectly into the same locus of manifestation because, as mentioned, this essence has no attributes, forms or means, either mental or imaginary, formal or [related to the ontological] meanings, apparent or hidden, true or metaphorical, nothing at all other than the 32 [primary] 'words'. Therefore, wherever all the 32 'words' are concentrated, the power | without beginning must be fully concentrated in the same locus of manifestation, not anywhere else, for that is impossible. 470a

145 al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, vol. 64, p. 106.

209 اگر بر سبیل فرض [چنین باشد]¹ اشیا بچه موجود باشد و بچه قائم باشد و چون قوّت [ازلی]² نباشد صوت نیز نخواهد بود و چون قوّت و صوت نخواهد بود کلام و کلمه و کلام نخواهد بود و چون قوّت و صوت و کلمه و کلام [در اشیا نباشد]³ [پس]⁴ اشیا بچه قائم باشد و بچه موجود باشد و اشیا را بچه مشاهده توان کرد و صانع چه چیز باشد چون اشیا نباشد [و]⁵ این هزار صفت که انبیا ازان ذات گفته اند بچه ثابت شود و چون تواند بود و حاشا که چنین باشد چرا که نقصان کلی لازم می آید و روا نباشد.

210 و دیگر چنین بدان ابطال که قوّت ازلی را و صوت را و نطق [را]⁶ و کلام را از اشیا جدا نمیتوان کرد چرا که ملک اوست [و]⁷ ملک را از مالک جدا نتوان کرد [و]⁸ اگر بر سبیل فرض جدا کنی اشیا را وجود نماند و چون اشیا را وجود نماند نقصان در صفاتی که انبیا گفته اند پیدا شده باشد و حاشا که نقصان در قول انبیا [پیدا]⁹ شده باشد و روا نباشد هیچ وجه از وجوه و هیچ سبب از اسباب و الله اعلم و احکم [این مسئله اینجا]¹⁰ تمام شد.

211 بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ اگر سائل سؤال کند که حضرت عزّت جلّ عزّه میفرماید که ﴿أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكَ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ﴾ و حضرت صاحب کمال میفرماید که ارواح بنی آدم [علیه السلام]¹¹ را از پشت آدم علیه السلام بیرون آورد و از ایشان این سؤال کرد که "نیستم من پروردگار شما" باتفاق [میگفتند]¹² که ﴿بَلَىٰ﴾ یعنی "تو هستی"¹³ پروردگار ما و باز اعاده کرد با پشت پدر یعنی باز گردانید بمركز اصلی خود [و ایشان باز]¹⁴ بسبب خطاب ﴿ارْجِعْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ﴾ باز [گردیدند]¹⁵ و بمركز اصل خویش قرار گرفتند این چه معنی دارد و [این]¹⁶ چگونه تواند بود و بسر این آیت و این حدیث چگونه توان رسید و از پیش ﴿وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ﴾ جواب این سؤال چه باشد و چه تواند بود | چرا که این سؤال غریب و عجیب است و بیان این

¹ AEF 426b: چنین باشد; absent in the BL. ² AEF 426b, added over the line: ازلی; absent in the

BL. ³ AEF 426b: در اشیا نباشد; BL: نباشد در اشیا. ⁴ absent in AEF 426b. ⁵ AEF 426b:

و; absent in the BL. ⁶ AEF 427a, added over the line: را; absent in the BL. ⁷ AEF 427a,

added under the line: و; absent in the BL. ⁸ AEF 427a: و; absent in the BL. ⁹ AEF 427a:

بگفتند. ¹⁰ AEF 427a: مسئله اینجا. ¹¹ AEF 427a: عم. ¹² AEF 427a: میگفتند. ¹³ AEF 427a:

هستی تو; BL: تو هستی. ¹⁴ AEF 427a: ایشان باز; absent in the BL. ¹⁵ AEF 427a:

گردیدند; BL: گردیدند. ¹⁶ AEF 427a: این; absent in the BL.

- 209 If we suppose that such a condition [were realised], upon what would the existence of the things be based, where would they be rooted? If the *Power without beginning* was absent [from everywhere with the exception of a single locus of manifestation], there would be no voice, either. Without power and voice, there would be neither word nor speech.¹⁴⁶ If the things remained without power, voice, word and speech, what would be the principle of their existence? By what means could the things be seen, and what would [the role of the] Artisan be in the absence of the things? By what means could thousand attributes of essence mentioned by the prophets be expressed? How is it possible? God forbid this from happening, because such a condition would entail a universal deficiency.
- 210 Another argument is that, O seeker, you must know that the Power without beginning, voice, speech and word cannot be separated from the things because they are their properties, and a property cannot be separated from its possessor. If you do separate them from each other by the way of supposition, the things would be deprived of their existence. This would produce a deficiency in the attributes proclaimed by the prophets. God forbid, by all means, any deficiency in the prophetic words from happening. [Such a condition] is absolutely impossible, there is no way and no reason [that could make it happen]. And God knows best, He is the Most Wise. This discussion ends here.
- 211 *In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.* Supposing that someone says that God, exalted be His glory, asked [the prototypes of Adam's children at the time of the primordial Covenant], '*Am I not your Lord?*' [Q 7:172] and the master of perfection [the Prophet] said that the spirits of the children of Adam, peace be upon him, were extracted from the back of Adam before they were asked this question. As one, they answered, '*Yes!*', that is, '*You are our Lord*', and then returned into the back of their Father [Adam]. This means that they returned to their original centre, in accordance with the call: '*Return unto thy Lord*' [Q 12:50]. They returned and dwelled in the centre of their origin. What does this mean, and how could this happen, and how can we reach the secret of this Qur'ānic verse and this *ḥadīth*? How will '*those who have knowledge of the Book*' answer this question? | This is an

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146 This is obviously a reference to the formulation of the Trinity from the *Book of the Rolls*, which was cited in previous passages.

[مسئله]¹ بر نهجی میباید کرد که موافق قرآن و حدیث باشد و [باقوال]² انبیا موافق باشد [تا]³ عند الله راست باشد.

212 اول سؤال اینست که حضرت عزّت جلّ عزّه ارواح بنی آدم را از پشت آدم بیرون آورد در حالتی که صورت آدم و اسم آدم و رسم آدم در حیز وجود نیامده بود و چون آدم بظهور نیامده باشد ارواح را از پشت او [چگونه]⁴ آورده باشد باز با پشت پدر چگونه ردّ کرده باشد این چه رمزست و این چه نکایتست و چگونه بسرّ این جقیقت توان رسیدن اینجا پدر بجاست [و ارواح بجاست و پشت بجاست]⁵ و پشت چراست که جای دیگر نیست و موضع دیگر نیست که پشت میگوید در اینجا چه حکمت میباید که حکمت [آلهی]⁶ در ضمن این آیت و این حدیث باشد و سؤال اینست که سؤال میکند که "نیستم من ربّ شما" جواب گفتند [که]⁷ "بلی تو هستی پروردگار ما" اینجا سائل کیست و مسؤل [کیست]⁸ و این چه سرّ است؟

213 جواب از ﴿وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ﴾ آنست که ای طالب چون تو معلوم کردی و بحقیقت این معنی رسیدی که ربّ و اب و آدم و قوّت همه یکیست و مفهوم یک حقیقتست چنانکه خواه ربّ بگو و خواه اب بگو و خواه آدم بگو و خواه پشت بگو و خواه قوّت بگو این همه یک معنی است و این⁹ قوّت ازلیست چرا که حضرت عیسی علیه السلام در انجیل آورده است که "الاب قوّة الازلیة و روح القدس صوته و انا نطقه".

214 و ثابت شده است بدلیل قرآن که عیسی روح الله [است]¹⁰ و کلمه الله است برین دلیل معلوم شد که اب قوّت است و ربّ از روی لغت پروردگار خواهد بود و پروردگار پدر را نیز میگویند [و آدم را نیز پدر میگویند]¹¹ و پشت که میگویند هم بمعنی قوّت است انشاء الله گفته شود چگونه قوّت باشد | تا طالبان بمقصود رسند.

¹ AEF 427a, added over the line: مسئله; absent in the BL. ² AEF 427a: باقول. ³ AEF 427a:

چون. ⁴ 920, 427a: چگونه deleted and replaced by تا; BL: که. ⁵ AEF 427a: کلى; BL: آلهی.

⁶ AEF 427a: کلى; BL: آلهی. ⁷ AEF 427b: اب; absent in BL. ⁸ AEF 427b: کیست; BL: که. ⁹ AEF 427b: که; absent in the BL.

¹⁰ AEF 427b: است; absent in the BL. ¹¹ AEF 427b, added at the margin: و

و. ¹² AEF 427b, added at the margin: و. ¹³ AEF 427b, added at the margin: و.

و. ¹⁴ AEF 427b, added at the margin: و. ¹⁵ AEF 427b, added at the margin: و.

و. ¹⁶ AEF 427b, added at the margin: و. ¹⁷ AEF 427b, added at the margin: و.

و. ¹⁸ AEF 427b, added at the margin: و. ¹⁹ AEF 427b, added at the margin: و.

و. ²⁰ AEF 427b, added at the margin: و. ²¹ AEF 427b, added at the margin: و.

و. ²² AEF 427b, added at the margin: و. ²³ AEF 427b, added at the margin: و.

و. ²⁴ AEF 427b, added at the margin: و. ²⁵ AEF 427b, added at the margin: و.

extraordinary question, and its explanation must be in accordance with the Qur'ān, *ḥadīth* and words of the prophets so that it be correct before God.

212 The first [aspect of this] question is that God, exalted be His glory, extracted the spirits of the children of Adam from the back of Adam at a time when neither the form of Adam, nor his name or shape existed. Since Adam was not manifest at that time, how could the spirits be extracted from his back? How could they return into the back of their Father? What does this symbol mean, what does it allude to, and how is it possible to discover the secret of such a reality? Where is the Father, and where are the spirits and back? And why it is the back [that is mentioned] and not another location? What is the divine wisdom contained in this Qur'ānic verse and this *ḥadīth*? Who asks '*Am I not your Lord?*' and who answers '*Yes! You are our Lord?*' What is the secret [hidden] in this [story]?

213 The answer from '*those who have knowledge of the Book*' is, O seeker, that when you realise this meaning and reach its innermost reality, [you understand] that the Lord, Father, Adam and Power are one and the same thing, they are concepts related to the same reality. Therefore, whether you say 'Lord', 'Father', 'Adam', 'Back' or 'Power', all these [words] designate the same meaning, which is the Power without beginning, because Christ, peace be upon him, stated in the Gospel: '*The Father is Power without beginning, the Holy Spirit is His Voice, and I am His Speech*'.¹⁴⁷

214 In accordance with the Qur'ānic evidence, it is established that Christ is the Spirit of God and the Word of God.¹⁴⁸ It can be thus concluded that the Father is Power. From the linguistic point of view, 'lord' means 'educator, protector, provider of food',¹⁴⁹ which can also be applied to 'father'. Adam is also called 'father'. And 'back' is also used in the sense of 'power'. God willing, it is said what is the Power, | so that the seekers could reach their goal.

471a

147 This is the only instance in the Christian Chapter where this phrase from the *Book of the Rolls* is cited in original Arabic.

148 An allusion to Q. 4:171.

149 Arabic *rabb* is rendered by Persian *parwardigār*.

- 215 پس هرگاه که بدین دلیل ای طالب معلوم کردی و بدانستی که رب پروردگارست و پروردگار
 پدر است [و پدر آدم است و آدم اب است]¹ و اب قوت ازلیست پس بدین معنی [همه]² قوت
 ازلی باشد و پشت که میگویم هم قوت خواهد بود بدین معنی که شخصی میگوید که تو آنچه
 میکنی به پشت که میکنی یعنی بقوت که میکنی و ثابت شده است که قوت دیگر بجز قوت
 ازلی نیست بدین دلیل که میفرماید [که]³ "لا حول ولا قوة الا بالله العلیّ العظیم".
- 216 پس بدین وجه قوت جمیع موجودات یک قوت باشد و آن قوت [قوت]⁴ ازلیست که مبدا
 موجودات است و معاد است و رجوع [باز]⁵ باوست که اصل است و همه را رجوع باصل
 خواهد بود بحکم حدیث نبوی که "کلّ شیء یرجع الی أصله" و بحکم این آیت که ﴿كُلُّ شَيْءٍ
 وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ﴾.
- 217 اکنون اگر سائل سؤال کند که برین حجت و دلیل قطعی که بیان کرده شد روشن شد که رب
 و اب و آدم و پشت قوت ازلیست و قوت ازلی اصلست و همه را رجوع باوست و حقیقت
 اشیا اوست و همه را رجوع بحقیقت راست است و درین بیان که کرده شد بحثی و شکی نیست
 فاما اینجا [با روح خطاب]⁶ کرد این رب که ﴿أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ﴾ این خطاب چگونه کرد
 این رب و این روح [چگونه شنید و چگونه جواب داد که بلی یعنی "هستی پروردگار ما که
 روحیم" و این روح]⁷ چیست و او را چون توان دانست و معرفت او چون توان حاصل کرد
 که این روح را مشاهده توان کرد و این سؤال و جواب ﴿قَالُوا بَلَىٰ﴾ را ازو مشاهده توان کرد
 بچشم ظاهر و باطن؟
- 218 جواب از ﴿وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ﴾ آنست [که]⁸ ای طالب اسرار الهی که بکرات و مرّات در
 چندین مواضع بیان واضح کرده [شده]⁹ است که روح چیست و او را چگونه میباید شناخت
 چنانکه باز درین موضع گفت میشود.

¹ AEF 427b: then added at the margin: و پدر آدم است و آدم اب است; absent in the BL.

² AEF 427b: همه; absent in the BL. ³ AEF 427b: که; absent in the BL. ⁴ AEF 427b, added over the line: قوت; absent in the BL. ⁵ AEF 427b, added over the line: باز; absent in the BL.

⁶ AEF 427b: خطاب با روح. ⁷ AEF 428a: که بلی یعنی. ⁸ AEF 428a: که; absent in the BL. ⁹ AEF 428a, added over the line: شده; absent in the BL.

- 215 When, following this indication you clearly understand and know, O seeker, that the Lord is educator, and the educator is father, and the father is Adam, and Adam is the Father, and the Father is Power without beginning, [you realise] that, in this sense, everything is Power without beginning. The back also designates power, because when we say that someone accomplished such a thing 'by [the strength of] his back', it means 'by his power'. And it is firmly established that there is no power other than the Power without beginning, in virtue of *'There is no might nor power except in God the Exalted, the Great'*.¹⁵⁰
- 216 Therefore, the power of all existents is the same, and this power is the Power without beginning, which is the starting point and the point of return of everything existent, that is, the origin. [Everything] will return to the origin, by virtue of the prophetic *ḥadīth*, *'everything returns to its origin'*, and the Qur'ānic verse, *'[So glory be to Him, in whose hand is the dominion of] everything, and unto whom you shall be returned'* [Q 36:83].
- 217 If the questioner says that the [mentioned] indications and evidence clearly explain and firmly establish that the Lord, Father, Adam and Back [all refer to] the Power without beginning, and this Power without beginning is the origin to which everything returns, it constitutes the innermost truth of all things, and everything returns to its innermost truth. All this is true, and there is no need to further discuss the explanation provided above or to doubt it. But when the Lord addressed the spirits [asking] *'Am I not your Lord? And they answered "Yes!"'*, how did the Lord utter this question, and how did the spirits hear it and answer *'Yes!'*, that is to say, you are our educator, of us who are spirits? And what is this spirit, how can it be known through contemplation? How can this question and its answer *'Yes!'* be contemplated by the physical and inner eyes?
- 218 The answer from *'those who have knowledge of the Book'* is, O seeker of the divine secrets, that it has been repeatedly and clearly explained in many places what the spirit is and how it can be known. However, we return to this topic again.

150 This is a formula widely used by Muslims, in everyday life when faced with a difficult situation, as well as in prayers. See Wensinck, *Concordance*, vol. 1, p. 532.

219 فهم کن و بدان ای طالب | که روح مدرکست و مدرک مرگبست [که تا]¹ مرگب نیست⁴⁷¹ ظ
مدرک هیچ چیز [را]² ادراک [نمیتواند]³ کرد و عاجز و عاطل مانده است مثل سنگ و
جماد که مدرک نیست بجهت آنکه درو هیچ چیز مرگب نمیشود و چون درو هیچ چیز مرگب
نمیشود مدرکش نمی توان گفت / اکنون اگر سائل سؤال کند که مرگب چیست که تا
[او]⁴ مرگب نمیشود انسان مثل جمادست و مدرک نیست و عاجز و عاطل مثل سنگ است
و کلوخ و [غیر]⁵ از ادراک باز مانده است جواب از ﴿وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ﴾ آتست ای
طالب اسرار آلی که مرگب کلمه چند مفرده است که مرگب میشود که تا آن کلمه مفرده
چند مرگب نمیشود و مدرک ادراک هیچ چیز نمیتواند کرد و مدرک نیست و از مقصود
باز مانده [هیچ]⁶ فائده حاصل نمیشود / اکنون این معنی را روشن مشاهده کن و بین که تا
این کلمه چند مفرده مرگب نمیشود تو هیچ چیز را ادراک میتوان کرد یا نه / اکنون چون
معلوم کردی ای طالب که بی آنکه این کلمه چند مفرده مرگب [شود]⁷ تو فهم و ادراک
[هیچ چیز]⁸ [نمیتوانی]⁹ کرد / اکنون فهم کن ای طالب که روح چه باشد و چه تواند بود
[و]¹⁰ بیان روح این بود که کرده شد اگر چنانکه روشنتر ازین باید که معلوم کند [در]¹¹
آنجا که سؤال از روح کرده است تفحص کند و نیکوتر فهم کند که اینجا پیش ازین مجال
نیست.

220 و دیگر آنکه سؤال میکنی که دران زمان [که]¹² این خطاب ﴿أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ﴾ با روح¹³ کرد
چگونه کرد ایتالاب چرا دور افتاده دور مباش دور مباش که همچنانکه این زمان خطاب با
روح است نه با غیر روح آن زمان که تو میگوئی نیز همچنین [خطاب کرده]¹⁴ است که این
زمان میکند ایتالاب اینجا ازل و ابد یکیست و بعد از زمان نیست نیکو فهم کن.

و⁴⁷²

¹ BL: . که تا AEF 428a: some text is deleted before /; اکنون آگ

² absent in AEF 428a. / او; AEF 428a, added under the line: نمیتوان BL: نمیتواند

³ AEF 428a: غیره. ⁴ AEF 428a, added at the margin: هیچ; absent in the BL. ⁵ AEF 428a:

نمیتوانی: AEF 428a, added at the margin: هیچ چیز; absent in the BL. ⁶ AEF 428a: نشود

⁷ AEF 428a, added over the line: در; absent in the BL. ⁸ AEF 428a, added over the line: و; absent in the BL. ⁹ AEF 428a, added over the line: توانی

¹⁰ AEF 428b: که added over the line. ¹¹ AEF 428b: these words are added at the margin.

¹² BL: . که تا AEF 428a: some text is deleted before /; اکنون آگ

- 219 Understand, O seeker, what the spirit is and what it can become. The explanation concerning the spirit has already been provided [above]. If a clearer understanding is required, study the questions about the spirit [answered above] in order to reach a better knowledge. There is no space [to repeat this discussion] at the present point. 471b
passage
repeated
from fol.
468a,
para-
graphs
196–198
- 220 You also asked how the question '*Am I not your Lord*' has been addressed to the spirit. O seeker, do not be wide of the mark. At the time that [the question] was addressed to the spirit, not to anything else, [it was done] in the same way as it is when you articulate [the same question]. O seeker, at that point, the pre- and post-eternity are one and the same thing; there is no 'after' | in time. Understand this well. 472a

221 و دیگر سؤال میکنی که روح¹ این خطاب ﴿أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ﴾ از رب چگونه شنید و چگونه جواب داد [که]² ﴿بَلَى﴾ یعنی تو هستی پروردگار ما جواب آنست [ای طالب اسرار آلهی]³ که همچنان که این زمان مدرک سمیع و بصیر می بیند و میشنود و ادراک میکند و جواب شافی میدهد آن زمان نیز که تو میگوئی همچنین بیننده و شنونده بصیر و سمیع میدید و می شنید و جواب شافی میداد که این زمان میدهد پیش بیننده و شنونده مدرک عارف این زمان و آن زمان هر دو یکیست و دو نیست.

222 ای طالب نیکو فهم کن که این مقام آن مقام نیست که اینجا این زمان و آن زمان [نباشد]⁴ و ابتدا و انتها و ماضی و مستقبل [وازل و ابد]⁵ و حال یکیست و دو نیست ای طالب نیکو فهم کن که این مقام آن مقام نیست که اینجا آن زمان و این زمان و ابتدا و انتها و ماضی و مستقبل و ازل و ابد خلاف یکدیگر باشد و بعد زمانی باشد همه حال است این مقام آن مقام است.

223 ای طالب که در حدیث قدسی میفرماید "لا صباح عندی ولا مساء" هرگاه که ای طالب [که]⁶ صباح و مساء نباشد این زمان و آن زمان و ابتدا و انتها و ماضی و مستقبل و ازل و ابد و بعد زمان [نباشد]⁷ چگونه تواند بود؟

224 نیکو نیکو فهم کن ای طالب که این مقام مقام عجیبست که درین مقام گوینده و شنونده یکیست و دو نیست و [این]⁸ مقام [مقام]⁹ وحدت است و مقام کثرت نیست و محو کثرات است و درین حال بیننده او غیر او نیست و سائل و مسئول غیر او نیست زینهار [که]¹⁰ نیکو ضبط کن و بین که ذات قدیم است که تجلی میکند و بیان خود میکند.

these words are added at the margin, the last word is illegible. ¹ AEF 428b: ... زمان و آن زمان
absent in the BL. ² AEF 428b: که

absent in the BL. ³ AEF 428b: these words are added at the margin. ⁴ AEF 428b, added over the line: نباشد;
absent in the BL. ⁵ AEF 428b: these words are added at the margin. ⁶ AEF 428b: که;

absent in the BL. ⁷ AEF 428b, added over the line: نباشد; absent in the BL. ⁸ AEF 428b:

absent in the BL. ⁹ AEF 428b, added over the line: مقام; absent in the BL. ¹⁰ AEF 428b:

که; absent in the BL.

- 221 You also asked how the spirit could hear the question '*Am I not your Lord*' from the Lord, and how it could answer '*Yes!*' i.e., 'You are our educator'? The answer, O seeker of the divine secrets, is that just as he who comprehends hears, sees and comprehends is able to give a clear answer at the present moment, at that time [about which] you speak, he [i.e., the spirit] was seeing, hearing and able to give a clear answer. For he who sees, hears, comprehends and knows, this moment and that moment are one and the same, not two [distinct moments].
- 222 O seeker, understand well that this is a stage where this moment and that moment do not exist, where beginning and end, past, future and present refer to one and the same thing, and not to two different things. O seeker, understand well that this is not the stage where that moment and this moment, beginning and end, past and future, pre- and post-eternity are distinct from each other, and where there is a temporal succession of any sort. This is the stage where everything is in present.
- 223 O seeker, this is the stage mentioned in the *ḥadīth qudsī*: '*With Me there is neither morning nor evening*'.¹⁵¹ Since there is no morning nor evening, there is no this moment or that moment, beginning or end, past or future, pre- or post-eternity, or [any other] temporal succession. How is [such a condition] possible?
- 224 Understand well, O seeker, that this is a remarkable stage where speaker and listener are one and the same [person], not two. This is the stage of unity, not that of plurality. [At that stage] any kind of plurality disappears. In this [eternal] present, there is nobody who sees Him except Himself; there is neither questioner nor questioned except Him. Realise well and see that it is the pre-existent Essence that manifests and explains itself.

151 For this *ḥadīth*, see Ḥaydar Āmulī, *Tafsīr al-muḥīt. al-a'ẓam wa-l-baḥr al-khiḍamm*, 4 vols., Tehran, 1422/2001–2002, vol. 3, p. 334.

225 این [جا]¹ مدرک و مدرک شیء واحد است و غیر او کلام او را نتوان شنید و بیان او غیر او [نتوان]² | کرد بدین مقام غیر او چگونه توان رسید و این مقام آن [مقام]³ نیست که کسی بوهم و تصوّر و خیال بدینجا [تواند]⁴ رسید نیکو تأمل کن که غیر را اینجا هیچ مجال نیست والله اعلم و احکم.

226 اکنون اگر سائل سؤال کند که ثابت شد که ربّ چیست و روح چیست و ربّ خطاب چگونه کرد و روح چگونه شنید و جواب بلی چگونه داد و ابد و ازل و ماضی و مستقبل و حال یکپست درین بیان شکی و تردّدی عارف را نیست بهیچ وجه از وجوه فاما از پشت آدم بیرون آوردن و باز با پشت پدر ردّ کردن چگونه باشد؟

227 جواب از ﴿وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ﴾ آنست ای طالب که چون معلوم کردی که ربّ و اب و آدم و پشت قوّت ازلیّت و روح نطق است و نطق کلمه است که مرگب میشود و ادراک خود میکند و در چندین مواضع ذکر رفته است که صوت و حرف و مفرد و مرگب از قوّت ازلی ظاهر میشود و بقوّت ازلی قائمند و باز همه را رجوع باوست از صوت و حرف و نطق و مفرد و مرگب از اراض و سما [و]⁵ ما کان و مایکون همه را باز گشت باوست چنانکه از اشیا بالفرض اگر صوت و حرف را بیرون آورد اشیا موجود نمائند بجهت آنکه وجود اشیا صوت و حرف است و اشیا از صوت و حرف موجود شده اند و صوت و حرف از قوّت ازلی ظاهر شده اند و وجود یافته اند [و]⁶ ایشانرا که صوت و حرف اند باز رجوع و قرار بقوّت است چنانکه یک کلمه را [اگر]⁷ هزار بار بگویی که "الف" باز هم توان گفت که "الف" و اگر صد هزار بار بگویی که "الف" باز هم توان گفت که "الف" بجهت [آنکه]⁸ قرارگاه و مبداء همه قوّت است و

¹ AEF 428b, added over the line: جا; absent in the BL. ² AEF 429a: نتواند. ³ AEF 429a: مقام; absent in the BL. ⁴ AEF 429a: توان; BL: تواند. ⁵ AEF 429a: و; absent in the BL. ⁶ AEF 429a: و; absent in the BL. ⁷ AEF 429a, added over the line: اگر; absent in the BL. ⁸ AEF 429a: آن; BL: آنکه.

- 225 In that place, he who understands is the same as the object of his understanding. Nobody except Him can hear His speech; nobody except Him can explain Him. | How could anyone other than Him reach that stage? This is not a stage that can be reached by means of imagination or mental representations. Meditate thoroughly on [the fact] that there is no place for anyone else [than Him] at that [stage]. And God is the Most Knowing, Most Wise. 472b
- 226 Now, a questioner might say that it has been established who is the Lord and Spirit, and how the Lord addressed [the Spirit], and how the Spirit heard [the Lord's question] and answered 'Yes!', and that the pre- and post-eternity, past, future and present are one and the same, there is absolutely no doubt or hesitation for a man of knowledge concerning the explanation [of these matters provided above]. But how were [the spirits of Adam's descendants] extracted from his back, and how did they return into the back of [their] father?
- 227 The answer from '*those who have knowledge of the Book*' is, O seeker, that it has been demonstrated that the Lord, Father, Adam and Back [designate] the Power without beginning. The spirit is speech, and the speech is word. [The words] can compose compound units and [therefore be able] to comprehend themselves.¹⁵² As mentioned in several passages, voice, letter, detached and compound¹⁵³ are [all] produced by the Power without beginning, rooted in it and returning to it. The voice and letter, detached and compound, earth and heaven, past and future, [everything] returns to it. Supposing that the voice and letter were extracted from the things, the things would be deprived of their existence, because the voice and letter constitute the existence of [all] things. The things are brought into existence by the voice and letter, while the voice and letter are produced and brought into existence by the Power without beginning. They, that is, the voice and letter, will return to the power and dwell therein. You can utter a thousand times [the letter] *alif* and still be able to utter it again; you can utter it a hundred thousand times and still be able to utter it again, because the power is

152 'Words' apparently refer here to the simple primary phonemes, which can combine in various groups and produce the ontological names. These names are compound units able to realise an act of comprehension, as stated in the previous folios.

153 Voice and letter are ontological principles, related respectively to the ontological meaning and form of all existing objects and beings. The translation of *mufrad* as 'detached' may sound awkward here. It is maintained for the sake of consistency, because in some of the previous passages the same word characterised the 'detached' condition of Christ.

صوت و حرف بقوّت | قائمند و قوّت ازلی بذات خود قائمست و پشت نیز همان قوّت است
 473 و پس بدین دلیل صوت و حرف و مفرد و مرکّب [که]¹ روح انسان است و از قوّت بدرآمده
 [باشد]² و باز گشت هم بقوّت باشد بیشک و بی تردّد.

228 و دیگر آنکه سؤال میکنی ایطالب که ارواح بنی آدم را از پشت آدم چگونه بیرون آورد در حالتی
 که صورت آدم و اسم و رسم آدم موجود نبود و ظاهر نشده بود [ارواح]³ بنی آدم را از پشت
 او چگونه بیرون آورده باشد جواب آنست ای طالب که جواب این سؤال در اوّل مقدّمه گفته
 شده است نیکو تأمل کن که باز گفته میشود فهم کن و میگوئی که آن زمان که آدم موجود
 نبود [ارواح]⁴ بنی آدم را از کجا بیرون آورد؟

229 هرگاه که بدانستی که آدم چیست [و بنی آمد چیست]⁵ و از ظهر آدم مراد چیست این سؤال
 وارد نیست چرا که بکرات⁶ ذکر رفته است و ثابت شده است که آدم میگویم قوّت مراد است
 و ظهر آدم میگویم هم قوّت مرادست و بنی آدم میگویم نطق [و کلام]⁷ و کلمه مرادست و
 ثابت شده است که نطق و کلمه و کلام مجموع از قوّت بدرآمده است همچنانکه [آن]⁸ زمان
 صوت و حرف و مفرد و مرکّب و نطق و کلام مجموع از قوّت بدر می آید.

230 و اسمائی قوّت اینست خواه آدم بگو و خواه ربّ بگو و خواه اب بگو و خواه ظهر بگو و خواه
 قوّت بگو و پیارسی خواه پدر بگو و خواه پشت بگو و خواه پروردگار بگو مراد ازین همه که گفته
 شد قوّت ازلیست تا دانسته باشی و اسمائی روح اینست [تو]⁹ خواه ابن بگو و خواه [نطق]¹⁰
 بگو و خواه مرکّب بگو و خواه مدرک بگو و خواه روح بگو و خواه عیسی بگو و خواه حیات
 بگو و پیارسی خواه جان بگو و خواه روان بگو مراد ازین همه که گفته شد روح است | اینها را
 473 [چنین که]¹¹ ذکر رفت بدان ای طالب تا ﴿أَوَّلُ الْعِلْمِ﴾ باشی و عین معلوم شده باشی و گواهی
 از سر تحقیق توانی داد که ﴿شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ﴾.

¹ AEF 429a, added over the line: که; absent in the BL. ² AEF 429b: باشد; BL: است. ³ AEF

429b, added at the margin: ارواح; absent in the BL. ⁴ AEF 429b, added over the line: ارواح; absent in the BL. ⁵ AEF 429b, added at the margin: و بنی آدم چیست; absent in the BL.

⁶ AEF 429b: مرّات; absent in the BL. ⁷ AEF 429b, added over the line: کلام; absent in the BL.

⁸ AEF 429b: این. ⁹ AEF 429b, added under the line: کلام; absent in the BL. ¹⁰ AEF 429b,

previous text is deleted and overwritten: نطق; BL: مفرد. ¹¹ AEF 429b: که اینچنین.

the support and the source of all.¹⁵⁴ The voice and letter | are rooted in the power, while the Power without beginning is rooted in its own essence. The Back [designates] the same power. Thus, the voice and letter, detached and compound, which is the human spirit, come from the power and return to the power. There is no doubt and no hesitation in this.

473a

228 You also asked, O seeker, how the spirits of the children of Adam were extracted from his back at a time when neither the bodily form of Adam nor his name or shape existed or appeared [as a visible image]. The answer, O seeker, is that this question was already discussed in previous passages. Meditate on them well and understand, for this is being repeated. You ask, where were the spirits of Adam's descendants extracted from at a time when Adam did not yet exist?

229 If you knew what is represented by Adam and his children, and what is designated by the back of Adam, this question would not arise. For it has been repeatedly stated and firmly established that by Adam we understand the power, and the back of Adam designates the same power, and the children of Adam designate the [primary ontological] speech and Word. It has also been established that the speech and the Word are produced by the power, for the voice and the letter, the detached and the compound, the speech and the Word are all produced by the power.

230 The names of the power are as follows. Whether you say 'Adam', 'Lord', 'Father', 'Back' or 'Power' [in Arabic]; 'Father', 'Back' or 'Educator' in Persian,¹⁵⁵ all these [words] designate the Power without beginning, so that you could understand. And the names of the Spirit are as follows. Whether you say 'Son', 'Speech', 'Compound', 'He who Comprehends', 'Spirit', 'Jesus' or 'Life' [in Arabic]; 'Soul' or 'Life, soul, spirit' in Persian,¹⁵⁶ all these [words] designate the Spirit. | Learn them as they are mentioned here, O seeker, so that you become a *'possessor of knowledge'* [Q 3:18] and a source of certitude able to witness the secret of the personal spiritual realisation, for *'God bears witness that there is no god but He'* [Q 3:18].

473b

154 The author apparently wants to say that since the Power is eternal and unlimited, and the phonemes, which constitute the primary voice, are produced by the Power, their manifestations are also unlimited.

155 Three Persian words, *padar*, *pusht* and *parwardigār*, are cited as the counterparts to the Arabic equivalents of Power.

156 Two Persian words, *jān* and *rawān*, are cited as the counterparts to the Arabic equivalents of Spirit.

231 چون ابطال حضرت عزّت خود بخود گواهی میدهد که نیست خدایی الا او تا چنین که ذکر رفت ندانی چگونه دانی که او این گواهی که میدهد چگونه میدهد و چون چنین باشد یقین که [تا]¹ او نشوی او را چنانکه اوست نتوانی دانستن و گواهی بر وحدانیت او بتحقیق نتوانی دادن و تا از وجود جمیع موجودات سر برنیاوری و عین وجود همه نشوی و بر خط استواء جمیع موجودات نگذری و عین آن خط استوانشوی ﴿قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ﴾ را در جمیع موجودات چگونه مشاهده توانی کرد و ﴿أُولُو الْعِلْمِ﴾ چگونه توانی شدن و گواهی از سر تحقیق چگونه توانی داد که حضرت عزّت جلّ اسمه که میفرماید ﴿شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُو الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ﴾.

232 چون همچنین که ذکر رفت بدانی آن زمان ﴿أُولُو الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ﴾² باشی و امت وسط شده باشی و گواهی از سر تحقیق توانی داد و حضرت رسالت علیه افضل الصلوات و اکمل التحیات بر صدق تو گواهی تواند داد بی شک و بی تردّد و باید که در کلّ زمان این خطاب ﴿أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ﴾ [را]³ از ربّ یا از آدم یا از ظهیر یا از قوّت [که]⁴ همه یکیست بسمع [علم و]⁵ یقین بشنوی و جواب ﴿قَالُوا بَلَى﴾ را نه تنها از ارواح بنی آدم بلکه از ذرات موجودات ظاهر و باطن بالفعل و بالقوه از حیوات و ممات چه در خواب و چه در بیداری و [خیال]⁶ از ناطق و صامت و از جماد و نبات و حیوان بسمع⁷ علم و یقین [بشنوی]⁸ و مشاهده کنی تا گواهی از قبل ایشان نیز توانی داد که کلّ موجودات در ﴿أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ﴾ [قالوا]⁹ بلی گفته اند]¹⁰ و همه اقرار کرده اند.

¹ AEF 429b: تا; absent in the BL. ² AEF 430a: قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ; absent in the BL. ³ AEF 430a:

را; absent in the BL. ⁴ AEF 430a, added at the margin: که; absent in the BL. ⁵ AEF 430a:

علم و; absent in the BL. ⁶ AEF 430a: خیال; BL: خیالی و. ⁷ BL: و; absent in the AEF 430a.

⁸ AEF 430a: شنوی; BL: بشنوی. ⁹ This word is deleted in AEF 430a. ¹⁰ AEF 430a, added over

the line: که; absent in the BL.

- 231 O seeker, [in this verse] God bears witness to Himself that there is no god but He. So far as you have not assimilated the knowledge presented above [concerning the question of the Lord and the answer of the spirits during the primordial Covenant, which enables the seeker to witness God through his/her personal spiritual realisation], how can you know how He bore this witness? So far as you stay in this condition, you are certainly not Him, and therefore, you cannot know Him as He is, and cannot bear witness to His Oneness based on your personal realisation. So far as you do not experience the existence of all beings, and become identical with all existents, [so far as] you do not draw the line of balance of all beings and become identical with this line of balance, how can you contemplate [Him] '*standing firm on justice*'¹⁵⁷ [Q 3:18] in everything? How can you become '*endued with knowledge*', and bear witness on the basis of your personal spiritual realisation in accordance with what God said [in the verse]: '*That is the witness of Allah, His angels, and those endued with knowledge, standing firm on justice*'¹⁵⁸ [Q 3:18]?
- 232 But when you attain the above-mentioned knowledge, you become '*endued with knowledge, standing firm on justice*', and join the *midmost nation*,¹⁵⁹ and can therefore bear witness on the basis of your personal realisation. And the Messenger, upon him be the best of prayers and most perfect of praise, can then bear witness to your truthfulness, without any doubt or hesitation.¹⁶⁰ You must hear permanently, and with clear hearing, the call: '*Am I not your Lord?*' [Q 7:172] coming from Lord, or from the Father, or from Adam, or from the Back, or from the Power,¹⁶¹ which are all one and the same thing, and you must hear and contemplate, with clear hearing and knowledge, the answer '*Yes!*' coming not only from the spirits of Adam's descendants, but from [every] atom of existing [beings and objects], from the apparent and the hidden, from [anything] actual and possible, from the living and the dead, in dream, when awake, and in imagination, from the speaking and the silent, from the mineral, plant and animal. | Then, you can bear witness also on the part of all of them, for all existing [objects and beings] answered '*Yes!*' [when questioned by God]: '*Am I not your Lord?*' and all of them recognised [God as their Lord].

474a

157 Yusuf Ali.

158 Yusuf Ali.

159 Allusion to Q 2:143 cited in full in paragraph 233.

160 Allusion to Q 2:143.

161 The mention of 'Father' and 'Power' in this passage refer to the concept of Trinity borrowed from the *Book of the Rolls*, and consistently cited throughout the Christian Chapter.

- 233 و تا چنین که ذکر رفت ندانی گواهی بر تبلیغ رسالت انبیا چگونه خواهی داد و [از] ¹امت وسط چگونه خواهی شد و حضرت رسالت علیه افضل الصلوات و اکل التّجّیات بر صدق تو چگونه گواهی تواند داد و چنانچه قوله تعالی میفرماید که ﴿وَيَكُونُ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا﴾.
- 234 اکنون ایطالب این شناخت پیدا کن تا گاه ملک باشی و گاه نبی باشی و گاه انسان باشی و گاه آدم باشی و گاه ربّ باشی و گاه اب باشی و گاه ظهر باشی [و گاه قوّت باشی] ² و گاه ندای ابن آدم [که نطق است بشنوی] ³ و گاه روح باشی و گاه مدرک باشی و گاه نطق باشی و گاه صوت باشی و گاه حرف باشی و گاه مفرد باشی و گاه مرکب باشی اوّل تو باشی [و] ⁴ آخر تو باشی ظاهر تو باشی [و] ⁵ باطن [هم] ⁶ تو باشی شاهد تو باشی و مشهود [هم] ⁷ تو باشی عشق تو باشی و عاشق و مشعوق هم تو باشی درین حال ای عارف همه تو باشی.
- 235 بیان وحدت ای عارف عاشق بیش ازین نمیتوان کرد بدین مقام که [برسی] ⁸ تو بدانی [که تو] ⁹ کیستی و چیستی [و آدم چیست] ¹⁰ و ارواح بنی آدم [چیست و این ارواح چگونه از پشت آدم بیرون آورده است و بیرون می آورد و این خطاب ﴿أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ﴾ لحظه بلحظه چگونه میکند و ارواح بنی آدم] ¹¹ و کلّ موجودات چگونه ﴿یَلَا﴾ گفته اند و الله اعلم و احکم.

¹ AEF 430a, added under the line: از; absent in the BL. ² AEF 430a, added at the margin: و

بشنوی; که نطق است: BL; که نطق است بشنوی: AEF 430a; ³ گاه قوّت باشی; absent in the BL.

⁴ AEF 430b, added through the margin: و; absent in the BL. ⁵ AEF 430b, added over the line:

و; absent in the BL. ⁶ AEF 430b, added over the line: هم; absent in the BL. ⁷ AEF 430b,

added over the line: هم; absent in the BL. ⁸ AEF 430b: رسیدی. ⁹ AEF 430b: که تو; absent in the BL.

¹⁰ AEF 430b, added at the margin: و آدم چیست; absent in the BL. ¹¹ This passage

from the AEF 430b is absent in the BL.

- 233 So far as you did not realise the abovementioned condition, how can you bear witness to the delivery of the prophetic messages? How will you join the midmost nation? And how can the Messenger, upon him be the best of prayers and most perfect of praise, bear witness to your truthfulness, as it is said: '*[Thus We appointed you a midmost nation that you might be witnesses to the people,] and that the Messenger might be a witness to you*' [Q 2:143]?
- 234 O seeker, realise this knowledge, and you will be now an angel and now a prophet, now a human being and now Adam, now the Lord and now the Father, now the Back and now the Power. Now you will hear the call of the children of Adam, which is [the primordial] Speech, and now you will be the Spirit. Now you will be the one who comprehends, and now the Speech, now the Voice and now the Letter, now detached and now compound. You will be the First and the Last, Apparent and Hidden. You will be the Witness and the Witnessed. You will be Love, Lover and Beloved. O wise mystic, in that condition, you will be everything.
- 235 O wise lover, it is impossible to provide an explanation of the [divine] Unity beyond this. When you reach this station, you discover who and what you are, and what [reality] is [represented by] Adam, his children and their spirits, and how these spirits were extracted from the back of Adam, and how [the question] '*Am I not your Lord?*' is permanently addressed [to them], and how the spirits of Adam's descendants and all [other] existents answer '*Yes!*'. And God knows best, He is the Most Wise.

Astarābādī Vocabulary*

آ: آن	برآوی: برآورده	پیاسه: بیاید
ارشوی: فرستاد	براهی: برآمد، برآمده است	پیاھی: پیامد
از: از	برسا: برسیدی	پیاھی بو: پیامده باشد
ازرا: از برای این، از بجهت	بره: برآن یا برد	بی بند: بوده باشند
اژن: از این یا چنین	برهنه: برهاند	بیبو: بوده باشد یا برده باشد
اژه: از آن	بزآن: بدان	بی بی، بیبی: بوده بود، شده بود
اسا: آنوقت یا اکنون	بزآنان: بدانم	بین: بودم، شدم یا بردن یا بودن، شدن یا شده است
اشنوی: شنیدی یا شنید یا شنیده	بزایه، بزهی: بزاید یا زاده شود	پیند: بودند یا شدند یا باشند یا بردند
آمه: ما	بشو: برو یا برود	پینکو آهین: میباید آمدن
آن: این یا ام، هستم	بشه: بتوان	پور: پسر
آو: آب	بشی: بروی یا برفت	پیر: پدر
آون: آنم، آن هستم	بشینه: بتوانستند	ترسین شهر: شهر ترسا
آوه: آنرا یا آنست	بشیه: بتوان، میتوان	جن: زن
آوی: آنست یا آورد	بکامه بین: خواهد بودن یا خواهد شدن	جوا: جدا
آوین: آوردن	بکر: بکن	جینده: زنده
آهن، آهین: آمدن یا آمده است یا	بکران: بکنم	چی: چیز یا چه
آدم	بکرنند: بکنند	خدین گابند: گاب خدا اند
آهی: آمد	بکره: بکند	خان: ایشان
آهی بو: آمده باشد	بکی: بکرد	خو: او یا او را یا اوست
آهی بی: آمده بود	بکیته: بگرفته	خوازه: خواهد
باژ: باز یا بگو	بکیه بو: بکرده باشد	خواو: خواب
بان: باشم	بن: بودم	خوشتنه: خوشتن را
بیند: شوند یا شدند	بند: بودند یا باشند یا بردند یا شدند	خوی: اوست
بیو: شود، گردد	بندی: بودی، میبود	داره: دارد
بی: برد یا شد، گردید	بنکو، پینکو: باید، میباید	درآهی: درآمد
بییا: برده ای یا توانی	بنو: بنهد، بگذارد	دره: درآن یا است
بی بو: برده باشد یا شده باشد	بو: باشد	دشو: رود
بتان، بتیان: بتوان	بوشا: بگشاد	دکو: در باید
بخوانه: بخواند	بوشان: بگشایم	دکیره: درگیرد
بدی: بدید یا بداد	بوین: بین	دشوی: نرود
بدیا: بدیدی	بی: برد یا بود یا باشی	ده: در (انجیلده = در انجیل)
بدیند: دیدند، بدیدند	پیاسان: پیام	دی: دید یا داد
براسه: برآید		

* This vocabulary covers most of dialectal words and expressions used in the Christian Chapter. For a more extensive description of the Astarābādī dialect on the basis of Faql Allāh's works, see Šadiq Kiyā's *Wāzha-nāma-yi Gurgānī*.

هادر: بدهد	نان: نهادن	دیر: دیگر
هادی: داد	نبندی: نبودی	دیم: روی، صورت
هاکو: بیاید	نبو: نباشد، نشود	دین: دیدن
هدی: میداد یا میدید یا میدهی	نبی: نبود یا نبرد	رسان: رسیدن
هدیند: میدیدند	نبیاسه: نیباید	رسه: رسد
هزانه: میدانم	نشسته: نشسته	زان: دان، بدان
هستن: هستم	نکی: نکرد یا نمیکرد	زانا بی: دانسته بود
هستی: است، هست	نکین: نکردن	زانان: دانستن
هشنوی: می شنید	نما: نماید	زانی: دانست
هکره: میکند	نمان: مانند	ساتن: ساختن
هکری: میکنی	نهی: نهاد یا نهاده است	شمه: شما یا شما را
همازن: همچنان	نی: نیست یا نهاد	شنوه: شوند
همو: همه را	نیشتن: نشستن	شو: شوی یا رود یا شب
همیاسه: میاید	نیشوی: نرود یا نمیبرد	کامه: خواهد
هند: اند، هستند	نیشین: نتواند	کامه آهین: خواهد آمدن
هنکو: میباید	نیکران: نمیکنم، نکم	کامه بین
هنما: مینماید، نشان میدهد	و: به، بر	کتی: افتاد
هنو: می نهد	وا: با، به یا باد یا باز	کر: کن
هوا: میگوید یا میگوئی	وابو: شود	کران: کنم
هواژه: میگوید	وابی: شد یا شوی	کرن: کردن
هونی: می بینی	واتان، واتن: گفتن	کره: کند
هوی: میگوئی	واتن: گفتم یا گفتند یا گفتن	کشان: کشیدن
هوین: می بین	واتند: گفتند	کند: کردند
هویند: میگویند	واتی: گفت	کو: باید یا افتد یا جا
هوینه: مینیند یا میگویم	واتین: گفتم، گفته ام	کی: کیست یا کرد یا که
هی: یک یا می- یا است	وادی: باز دید یا پدید	کجا: که ای، کیست یا کردی
هیا: ای، هستی	وادی کره: پدید کند	کی بو: کرده باشد
هیبو: میشود	وادی کی: پدید کرد	کیتن: گرفتن
هیتن: یکتن، شخصی	واژ: باز یا بگو	کیتی: گرفت
هیوینه: مینیند	واژند: گویند	کین: کرده یا کردن یا کرده است
ی: است-	واژه: گوید	یا کرده ام، کردم
یا: به، با-	وراره، وراوه: برآورد	کیند: کردند
یاسه: آید	وریره: برخیزد	لو: لب
یانی: ایم، هستم یا اید، هستید	وکیتی: بگیرد	مار: مادر
یاوه: یابد	وکیره: برگردد، بگیرد	مسیحه: مسیح را
یراسه: فرود آید یا برآید	وینه: بیند	منی: من است
یراهین: فرود آمدن	ه: است یا آن یا را	نا: نه

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