

Al-Arbaʿin fī Uṣūl ad-Dīn

The Forty Principles of the Religion

An Adapted Summary of
Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm ad-Dīn

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*To my two dear friends and my guides in life,
Mufti Dr. Kamal Uddin Ahmed ؓ
Mufti Dr. Abdur-Rahman Mangeri,
whose practice and teaching of Imām al-Ghazālī's
works have benefitted many. I pray that Allāh
accepts their efforts. Āmīn.*

YAHYA BATHA

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FOREWORD



In the name of Allāh, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. All praise is to Allāh, Lord of the Worlds, who created mankind on the natural faith (*fiṭrah*), guided them through prophets, scriptures and signs, divinely enabled the obedient and righteous among them to choose the way of salvation, promised them His pleasure, and prepared for them the Eternal Gardens. May Allāh send His abundant blessings and peace on His Messenger of Mercy, Muḥammad ﷺ, and on his family and followers into limitless eternity.

The human body starts off as a limp, lifeless and dark substance. When the soul enters it, the body becomes alive and illuminated, as do the five senses. However, the soul in its initial state is also dark and without awareness. When bestowed with intellect, it too becomes bright and illuminated. Similarly, the intellect is also not complete in its illumination, sharpness and purity until it matures. This occurs through recognition of its Creator and His Attributes, knowledge of the states of souls and bodies, and realising the reality of the two worlds—a gnosis which is achieved by means of the Qur’ān and Divine Revelation. In other words: the Qur’ān provides knowledge of the Divine which illuminates the intellect; the matured intellect then illuminates the soul, which in turn illuminates the body and gives it life.¹

This book by the great sage and Proof of Islām, Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad aṭ-Ṭūsī al-Ghazālī (d. 505/c. 1111), details the nurturing of the ideal human being and his connection with his Creator. It discusses the soul, the states of servitude, obedience and disobedience, praiseworthy and blameworthy character, illumination and purification of the heart, success and salvation, and this transient world and the eternal abode of the afterlife.

Many great individuals have passed through this world, but not all have left their mark on Islām as Imām Ghāzālī did. In his student days, he was fortunate to have studied under one of the greatest scholars of his time, Imām

¹ See Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Al-Taḥfīr al-Kabīr*, Sūrat al-Naḥl 2.