

On Fiṭrah (Innate Disposition), Ma‘rifah (Acquaintance) and Establishment of the Proof

Shaykh Muḥammad Amān al-Jāmī (رحمته الله) was asked: “What is the meaning of the statement of the one who said: ‘How have you come to know your Lord?’ What is intended by this acquaintance (ma‘rifah)?” The Shaykh answered: “Acquaintance (ma‘rifah) is your attribute, it is not an attribute of Allāh, you are the one who becomes acquainted with Allāh. Acquaintance with the meaning of knowledge (‘ilm). By what did you come to be acquainted with your Lord and know Him? You know of His existence and His attributes through what? Through His creations (makhlūqāt). Thus, acquaintance with Allāh is not dependent on revelation [alone]. Acquaintance with Allāh is through the innate disposition (fiṭrah), every child is born upon the fiṭrah before his mother or father turns him into a Jew or a Christian. The meaning is that he comes to be acquainted with the Lord (سُبْحَانَكَ وَبِحَمْدِكَ) through sound reason that has not been muddled and through sound innate disposition. However, the proof is not established upon the servants through the evidence of innate disposition or the evidence of reason until revelation comes and that acquaintance becomes perfect [complete], it becomes stronger thereby and the proof is established upon the servants. If the proof was established upon the servants through the evidence of reason and innate disposition, Allāh would not have sent the Messengers or revealed the Books. However, these [types of evidences] work together until Allāh’s proof is established upon the servants of Allāh.”

Qurrat ‘Uyūn al-Salafiyyah bil-Ajwibat al-Jāmiyyah, (1437), Dār Ibn Rajab, p.49

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