

*Return to Islam*

*Mansoor Hashemi Khorasani*



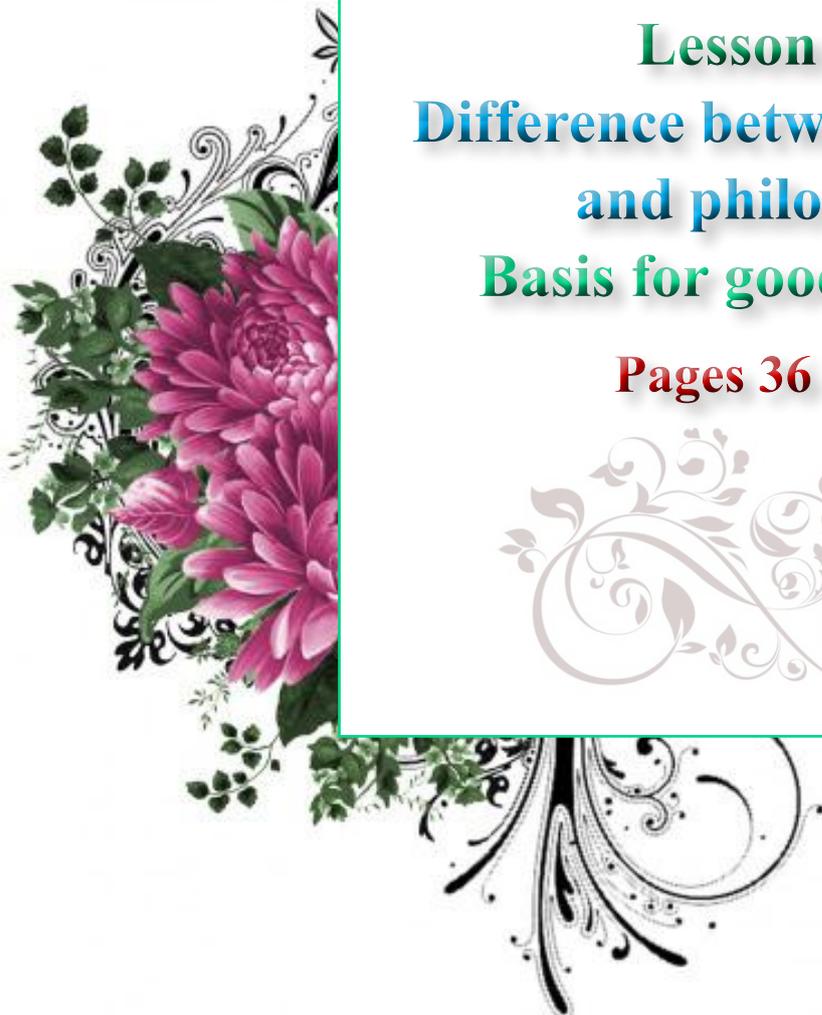
Translation of the Persian explanation of  
Shaykh Saleh Sabziwari



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explanation of  
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**Lesson ten  
Difference between intellect  
and philosophy  
Basis for good and evil**

**Pages 36 to 38**





(I seek refuge to God from the expelled Shaytan

In the name of God, the most merciful and the most beneficent

Praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and peace be upon Moham-  
mad and his purified family

After our master, Mansoor recognized “intellect” as the standard of cognition and recognized religion included in it and invited Muslims to "rationality", he addresses two doubts. The first doubt is whether the meaning of intellect is the same as “philosophy”? Considering that philosophy is a rational science that addresses existence based on the knowledge of beings and some Muslims, both from rationalists and anti-rationalisms, believe that intellect is equal to philosophy and intellect means philosophical thinking. The answer given by our master, Mansoor to this doubt is that the meaning of intellect is not philosophy, and there is a difference between intellect and philosophy. This difference, to the opinion of this theologian, is “absolute universal and particular” with one interpretation; meaning that intellect, absolutely includes philosophy, or, more precisely, an intellectual person is absolutely as a philosopher and philosophy is only a product of intellect, as for example, mathematics and medical science are products of intellect. With this description, to be intellectual, being a philosopher is not needed, just as being a mathematician or a doctor is not needed either. To explain this important point, our master, Mansoor says under the title of:)

### **Difference between intellect and philosophy**

**The point which must be mentioned** (so that nobody would misunderstood and mistaken about it) **here** (meaning after introducing intellect as the necessary, unitary and trivial standard for cognition) **is that some people** (like Sunni Salafists and Akhbari<sup>1</sup> Shias) **think that intellect**

1 . [Translator note: a group of Muslims who take the only source of fiqh (the deduction of shari'a laws) to be akhbars (narrations and hadiths by the Prophet (s) and Imams (a)).]



(where it is considered the cognition standard) **means philosophy** (in the sense of a particular intellectual science belonging to the likeness of Avicenna) **and therefore** (with their unwillingness for this special science and the likes of Avicenna), **they oppose it, while this opinion** (meaning the equality of intellect to philosophy) **is not true; since intellect is a God-given power** (not made by the likeness of Avicenna) **for correct comprehension** (meaning valid) **of the concepts** (meaning general mental concepts) **and their instances** (meaning objective details) **which is common among all human beings** (both philosopher and non-philosopher) **and is not specified to philosophers. While philosophy is a specific science like other humanities** (such as sociology and psychology) that appeared originally in the ancient Greek (by the likes of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle) **and was brought among Muslims at the time of the Abbasids reign** (through the translation movement of Greek texts into Arabic by the orders of some Motazilite caliphs) **and has found lovers** (such as Muslim philosophers and Mutakkalimin<sup>1</sup>) **and enemies** (such as Ahl al-Hadith and Muslim Salafists). **It is clear that intellect** (as a God-given power for cognition) **has existed before appearance of the philosophy** (as a particular science) **and philosophy is only a modern science based on intellect; as other sciences such as Arithmetic, Geometry and Medicine are based on intellect** (because they use analogy, sensation and experience) **and each one has applied intellect in a way** (according to their subject and purpose. It is understood from here that intellect is the cornerstone of all sciences, although subjects and purposes of sciences differ from one another). **Therefore, any philosopher is wise, but any wise person is not a philosopher and what is the cognition standard, is the intellect not philosophy** (this is a very important point; in the sense that for a valid cognition of concepts and their examples, we do not need to be a philosopher, but simply being wise is enough). **In other words, by intellect, where it is regarded as the cognition standard, we mean the typical intellect of the wise people** (meaning the intellect which typical wise people have), **not the philosophers' individual intellect** (meaning the intellect which individual philosophers have) **and it is clear that wise thinking is different from philosophical**

1 . [Translator note: The scholars of Kalam, the study of Islamic doctrine.]





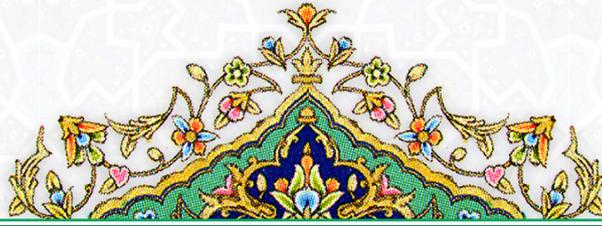
**thinking** (since wise people do not take many of the philosophical subtleties and accuracies into account and consider them unnecessary). **Therefore, opposing the philosophy (by some Islamic groups and religions) should not lead (them) to opposing the intellect; since intellect is not equal to philosophy and commitment to it is not concomitant with the philosophy** (In the sense that it is possible to be committed to intellect without having any commitment to philosophy; because commitment to philosophy is not essential and obligatory, but commitment to intellect is essential and obligatory. From this statement, we realize our master, Mansoor's unwillingness to philosophy; because he does not defend philosophy and does not suggest its opponents to make friends with it and does not insist on commitment to it; just as he does not show any certain opposition to philosophy and recognizes it as one of the "humanities"). **Although intellect has an especial scrutiny for specific subjects (such as fundamental beliefs) of exclusive importance (and define the main frameworks and lines of life), which is similar to the philosophical scrutiny (given that the most important difference between philosophy and intellectual thinking is this very amount and form of scrutiny), but this (quasi-philosophy) scrutiny should not be considered as switching to philosophy in common use (meaning the same special Greek science); Because its origin (is not philosophers foundation, but) is the unanimous foundation among wise people (meaning their habit) to have more scrutiny on subjects of extra importance (a simple example is scrutiny of wise people in buying and selling jewelry which is not comparable to their scrutiny in buying and selling vegetables!); As God has said for the purpose of proving His unity (which is a very important matter) that: ﴿لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا﴾<sup>1</sup>; **“Had there been in heaven and earth any deities other than God, both those realms would surely have fallen into ruin”** With this statement (meaning justification and reasoning) that the numerous deities (in heaven and earth) were a source of conflict (between those two) and conflict (between those two), was the source of destruction (because each would weaken and destroy the other one), while the heaven and earth (as it is visible and tangible) were not destroyed, therefore there is no God in them except for God. It is**

1 . Al-Anbya/ 22



**clear that this is a wise** (and quasi-philosophical) **scrutiny and with above description, it shall not be regarded as philosophy** (as the very special Greek science); **since God is not certainly a philosopher** (with the above description) **and His holy book is not considered as a philosophical book** (with the above description). **Therefore, the wise scrutiny in important subjects such as beliefs, even based on non-acceptance of the philosophy, is possible and permissible** (meaning it is not a matter of whether leaving intellect or turning to philosophy and it is not necessary for a Muslim to be an Akhbari or a philosophical person! As God, without linking to philosophy, has done intellectual scrutiny and for this reason, our master, Mansoor has also done the same in this book and has used intellectual scrutiny in many important faith topics and with this description, he should not be considered a philosopher and accused of philosophizing; therefore, his excellency will continue to explain this point and says:). **As, I myself do not like philosophy** (meaning I am not interested in it, not like I am the enemy of it like Akhbaris and Salafists); **since although its results** (especially Islamic philosophy) **are partly** (meaning in some intellectual issues such as proof of existence and unity of creator) **correct, its method** (meaning its way in addressing intellectual issues) **is different** (meaning contradictory) **from the method of wise people** (given that firstly, wise people, do not even think about many intellectual issues raised in philosophy, and secondly, do not feel the need of this much of scrutiny to address many of these issues) **and is more mental and abstract** (meaning non-objective and non-practical) **than applicable** (meaning having necessity and use for them). **Therefore, I consider the philosophy an unwise act** (it is interesting that an all-intellectual science, is unwise to this great scholar; because it is inconsistent with intellectual thinking); **since based on my definition** (which is assigned to him), **philosophy is thinking about things, about which the wise people do not usually think** (meaning they do not believe thinking about them is necessary), **such as geniunnity of existence and essence** (meaning existence or essence of which one is the principle and has ranking priority) **and laws of substance** (meaning the constant essence of living beings) **and disclaimer** (meaning things which disclaim on the constant essence); **otherwise thinking about things which wise people**





**habitually think** (meaning they are needed in normal life, such as belief and practical principals), **is not philosophy, even though it is accompanied with wise scrutiny** (and quasi-philosophical), **rather, it (simply) is called pondering** (or intellectuality). **Therefore, what separates philosophy from (intellectual) pondering, is its (non-intellectual) subject** (which is not needed by wise people and has less applied aspect), **more than its (non-intellectual) method** (which is so extreme and abstract. It is understood from here that our master, Mansoor prefers the applied sciences to non-applied sciences and considers philosophy from the non-applied sciences. It was the first doubt that he solved).

(But the second doubt is related to the) **Basis for good and evil** (meaning goodness and badness. From the early Islamic centuries, there has been a great controversy between Muslim intellectuals and anti-intellectuals about the origin of goodness and badness and has continued so far. This controversy has been about whether goodness and badness of one thing arises from its essence and is based on the independent perception of intellect or it does not arise from its essence and is not based on the independent perception of intellect, but is a presentable matter and is based on credibility of the religious ruler? Our master, Mansoor, who in this honorable book, judges among people on the things they dispute about in accordance with God's prophets, and distinguishes the right from the wrong and the correctness from the false and the truth from the lie, speaks with special respect and strength:)

**From what we have described above** (about essential unity of intellect and religion), **it is clear that the 1000-yearold dispute between the Ash'arites** (meaning followers of Abu al-Hassan al-Ash'ari which consists most of the Muslims) **and Adliyah** (meaning Mu'tazilite and Shia) **concerning the basis for goodness and badness has not been justified, but it has been a verbal** (meaning about verbs) **dispute** (this is very strange that such a massive and old dispute is considered verbiage by this divine theologian and has had no basis! He says in explaining his conclusion which ends the 1000-yearold dispute among Muslims in this area that:); **since as per the view of Ash'arites, the basis for goodness and badness, is the command and prohibition of God and prior to**



**God's command and prohibition, there is no goodness and badness; it means that anything regarded good by God, is good and anything regarded evil by God, is evil** (Regardless of whether the intellect understands it or does not understand it) **and this is the basis which is called "the religious goodness and badness"** (since it is originated from the credit of religion and has no basis in intellect) **and based on Adliyah's view, basis for goodness and badness, is not God's command and prohibition, rather** (conversely) **the basis for God's command and prohibition, is goodness and badness** (in the sense that God's command on one thing is due to its goodness, and God's prohibition of something is due to its badness) **and the basis for goodness and badness, is intellect not religion; it means that God has commanded to the thing that is good and has prohibited from the thing that is bad and goodness and badness are real titles** (meaning objective and actual) **that have not arisen on the credit of the religion** (with an ordering mode) **and this is the basis which is called "intellectual goodness and badness"** (because it was originated from the credit of intellect and has no basis in religion). **While upon what we said** (about essential unity of intellect and religion), **intellect and religion have originated from one origin and will return to one reference which is indeed God, of whom there is no disagreement in His creation and religious legislative deeds** (intellect is from His creation deeds and religion is from His legislative deeds and accordingly, there is no difference between them). **On this basis, the basis for goodness and badness** (as Ash'arites have interpreted), **is the command and prohibition of God; Except that** (contrary to the assumption of Ash'arites and also Adliyahs) **God's command and prohibition has occurred in two forms: One is the religious command and prohibition that has appeared in the religion and the other is the creation command and prohibition that has appeared in the intellect** (therefore, command and prohibition of intellect is also command and prohibition of God) **and since the union of His command to, and prohibition from a single subject simultaneously is impossible** (meaning it is not possible that God command and prohibit one thing at the same time), **conflict between religion and intellect** (which are both His command and prohibition) **is not possible** (and it is





impossible that intellect commands something which religion prohibits it or vice versa). **Consequently, the basis for goodness and badness is God** (Peace be upon this great man from whose soul flows the springs of knowledge and wisdom and guides us with God's inspiration to the best ways and resolves our millennial-long disputes with such simplicity and without any claims and desires. We regret and feel sorry that such a great scholar has appeared among the nation, but is so strangely unknown and anonymous, and Muslims with all that they need, do not come to him in order to benefit from his knowledge and wisdom, while it is desirable to rush to him with bare foot from every close and far land to learn in his school and get to his excellency with any difficulty and hazard, but what can we do that they do not seek knowledge and wisdom at all and are busy with their habits and daily routine, or they have gone to follow fools and dullards, and have made themselves disciples of claimants and the stupid! A few days ago, I received a letter from someone who wrote: "We are in need of meat and rice and oil, and yet, Mansoor Hashemi Khorasani talks about God's rulership upon world and appearance of Mahdi!" This is the wisdom level of some of the Muslims! Another letter came to me from someone who wrote: "What is the difference between Mansoor Hashemi Khorasani and that so-called claimant who chants the slogan of "Al-Bai'ah -tu- Lillah"<sup>1</sup> just like him?!" This is the recognition and differentiation level of some other Muslims who do not understand the difference of the day and night, and they consider a sacred scholar of this greatness equal to a fool! It is as if to say what is the difference between the Caliph of God and the caliph of Daesh who, like him, chants the slogan of "La ilaha illallah Muhammadur rasulullah"?! Indeed, with this level of consciousness and perseverance, how can we hope for salvation and happiness of this nation?! May God grant all Muslims with good sequel.

Wa salamualaikum wa rahmatullah)

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1 . البيعة لله .

