INTUITION OF GOD IN THE THEORY OF MULLA SADRA

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Abstract: Mulla Sadra's attitude on the issue of knowing God creates the possibility of intellectual knowledge about God. By proving its capabilities, he rejects the intolerant textualists. Since the reason is limited, he does not accept its undisputed authority. In addition, he refuses the separation of some religious secrets from the reason and suggests another kind of knowledge called intuitive knowledge. We attempt to study the three fields of this knowledge; i.e. intuition of essence, intuition of essence manifested in His Names and Attributes as well as actions. Besides, we try to resolve the complex issue of God's infinite intuition of essence in the presence of the finite creature. The analytical method is used in this study, and the logical connections of each of the components are investigated.

Keywords: Intuitive knowledge, Divine Essence, the names and attributes of God, Mulla Sadra.

INTRODUCTION

Undoubtedly, the Wisdom and Philosophy among the Muslims were blossomed in the historic period of Mulla Sadra and reached the peak of inherent perfection. Mulla sadra is not only deeply familiar with the theories of the theologian, Ibn Arabi, but also is one of the top figures of all times. Mulla Sadra's mystical vision regarding the issue of intuition is mostly based on Shiite written texts, and recalls the mystic thoughts which were flourished earlier in the ideas of Neoplatonism and illumination philosophers and then – in a more noble way- in the ideas of Ibn Arabi – who is the center of Sufism. He has introduced this knowledge as the most honorable knowledge and has obligated all people to use it in proportion to their inner abilities because the real evolution of human which is to approach to Him is not possible without it. This great good that causes the true happiness of human is in fact an attempt to bear a resemblance to Him. Its objective is to eliminate all strangers in the realm of greatness that is always hidden and chant "Ya huwa ya man laysa illa huwa¹".

In this brief study, we will first study the opinions of Mulla Sadra regarding the intuition, the nature of intuitive knowledge and the possibility of its realization and then we will consider their levels and limitations.

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THE NATURE OF INTUITIVE KNOWLEDGE AND THE POSSIBILITY OF ITS REALIZATION

The Meaning of Intuition as a Word and Expression

Intuition or observation of God is Salek's² beholding of God by His presence and His essential manifestation in the creatures (Jurjani, 1987: 57; Al- Farouti At- Tahanavi, 1985, Volume 1: 738) and literally is the presence of intuition. This presence is achieved by the bright unity of observer with Him resulting in the unity of internal and external perceptions, the fading of dark veils from the eyes, and acknowledging the destruction of any evidences of the creature's presence in the presence of God (Kashani, 2000: 343, 344).

Suhrawardi believes that Intuition is the power of the human imagination in the worlds of existence, and the rise in the world of pure images. Intuition of God's realm - that is the most unachievable price in the universe- is possible only in the realm of mysticism. (Armstrong, 2006: 268).

The Definition of Intuitive Knowledge from the Viewpoint of Mulla Sadra

Mulla Sadra defines the intuitive knowledge as the presence of discernable essence - free from matter and its limitations by the attainment of deposition of body and the purification of the heart from carnal sins- in the soul of the universe. Almighty God represents the achievement of observing otherworldly and heavenly forms – which are only known by common people as literal words- to a person who is free from anything other than God (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1973: 28, 29, Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 2002: 51).

Another definition of the intuitive knowledge is a breeze from the garden of observation to the land of manifestation through the purification of the heart from the carnal belongings and leading to the observation of revelations and joining the trustworthy saints of God all around. (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 2005: 63; ibid, 1984: 27, 137; ibid, 1990: The second part of the first expedition 284, 285).

Features of Intuitive Knowledge

Superior to all knowledge is a supreme knowledge leading to the finest and most noble evidence – i.e. the supreme objective which voids the reality of other objectives' nature - naturally other knowledge are separated from this knowledge. (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1985: 54, 55, 90, 156; ibid, 2002: 421). Intuition, is an induction of the shrine of lordship, that makes the soul of Salek (seeker) full of love and eternal joy. It cannot be achieved unless there is an appeal of the Supreme Universe "Exalted is He who took His Servant by night to show him of Our signs"³.

² A traveler who seeks the truth about things; here it refers to the travelling in the mind and soul

³ Isra, verse 1

Central to this spiritual sensation, is the heart, which is the superior component of human being, and its true perfection is knowledge being full of passion and love (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 2005: 193, 194; ibid 1340: 80; ibid 2005: 319, 320; ibid 1987, Vol. 1: 253).

Oh Saqi give me a drink form the cup of Alast

So that I will be drunk and leave behind whatever is with me

(Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1997: 83-82)

This knowledge is not reflected in mystic's heart, but is alive in the heart of the wise men of the world. The Intuition of the realm of majesty, is the end result of every act and every move (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1992: 336; ibid, 1971: 38; ibid, 1987, Vol. 1: 232; ibid, 1984: 137). In addition, this ideal cannot be achieved except by His special guiding. "So whoever Allah wants to guide - He expands his breast to [contain] Islam³⁴. A person who lacks this kind of sensation, does not possess the true knowledge at all (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1987, Vol. 1: 101).

This type of Intuition is an ensuring knowledge free from doubts and resulted by good deeds. A gift that is polished by the mirror of heart and exonerated from the material dirt. The gift of God is only bestowed to the human heart by His guardianship. It makes the original and inalienable knowledge reach the heart and the true appearance of His kingdom be imprinted on human. Because the descended blessings from the higher principles are eternal (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1996: 367; ibid, 13199271: 193; ibid 1987, Vol. 1: 85; ibid, 1988: 24).

Following this observation, the life of Seeker in this dishonest world becomes a perpetual boring struggle that reduces man to the rank of beasts. At this point, all the belongings of the world seem unfounded and windswept. He is dismounted from the horse of craving, has torn apart the cocoon of material body, overcome the overwhelming boredom of matter and seeks the achievement of humble soul in talking to the beloved. He travels beyond the heart because he knows that the tablet of the heart and spirit must be free from the material veils of the world.

The seeker believes that being dissolved in the eternal existence is obtained through the removal of his worldly existence. This is a situation between Madness and the pain. It cannot be called anything but enthusiasm and submergence. Being faded by the beloved burns the belongings of the lover. Mystic finds his ways in the blue sky being filled with purity and cleanliness, finds heavenly life in any worldly being around and believes that both worlds are a blaze of His appearance. The secrets and symbolic language of the mystic do not refer to literal meanings but they refer to superior meanings that suggest their intuitive experiences. It means that the discerning insight borrows the inventive words of the wisdom to reach the meanings. This is due to the inability of natural language to express the elusive experience of ordinary experiences. Otherwise, we have to bear the banality of

⁴ Al- An'am, verse 125

intuitive experiences being full of spiritual dimensions, until they are reduced to regular and common experiences.

Facilities and Conditions of Realization of Intuitive Knowledge

Whenever a being is separated from the materialistic belongings and dark veils resulted from lack of insight, abundance of ignorance, negligence, imitation and nervousness, he can be connected to the invisible world. The mystic will be able to reach the treasures and knowledge of the divine world (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1984: 135, 28, 27; ibid, 70: 1996; ibid, 1987, Vol. 3: 274; ibid, 2002: 418, 422). The abject soul is miserable in essence and nature, it cannot focus on its true essence but it merely suffice to hearing the stories of the supreme world (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1996: 367, 368; ibid, 1973: 55). Therefore, the inability of the self in having Intuition about the facts is either resulted from the impairment of the strength and perfection such as in children or is from the obscurity caused by the dark veils of the world (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 2002: 425).

The Possibility of the Intuition of the Essence of Almighty Glorified God

Thoughts are unable to understand and intuit His Essence and the wisdom cannot tolerate seeing His divine beauty (Let alone the illusion of it) and suffices to reflect on a brief transcendental tip in a way that even the principles of Sharia prohibits us from thinking and speaking of this issue (Javadi Amoli, 2007, Volume 1: 182). As Imam Baqir (PBUH) says that speak of God's people and not the essence of God because it brings nothing but astonishment and perplexity. Because the essence of God having a secret missing identity cannot be perceived and there is no name and description for it. Any being who contains these issues will attain knowledge and can inform of His essence (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 2004, Vol. 2: 327; ibid, 1987, Vol. 3: 206).

The Intuition field of His Names and Attributes and the manifestation of God in people although is very vast - because there is nothing in the essence of beings but God's essence and attributes and actions – it is not included in the perceptions of unable wisdoms that sometimes try to resemble His Names and Attributes and actions to possibilities. There is no evidence of this secret position except the ones found in manifestations, unless he has control over everything. "But is it not sufficient concerning your Lord that He is, over all things, a Witness?⁵" Such knowledge is narrow and far from the human minds (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1989: 15; ibid, 1989, Vol. 1: 71; ibid, 2005: 70, 71; Javadi Amoli, 2007, Vol. 1: 182). To observe that indescribable essence and attributes, the salek or the Seeker sometimes sees creatures as mirrors reflecting God and sometimes considers God as a mirror reflecting the world (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1998: 62).

⁵ Fussilat, verse 53

Insights cannot perceive Him as He deserves. Perhaps in the interpretation of the famous Hadith of "Ma arafnak-e haggah marefetek⁶" we can refer to Aqa Ali Zonouzi and accept his interpretation: "we knew you as it is your right, because more than this amount - which corresponds to the nature of your essence has not been any one's right". It seems that, this sentence is used to express those denying the resurrection and the origin, those who have not perceived the knowledge of God as it is necessary. In Zonouzi's view, the possibilities though having strong knowledge cannot be stronger than their original limited existence. Therefore, they cannot surround an unlimited non-binding critter (Javadi, 2007, Vol. 1: 474-475).

Thus, the intuitive knowledge that is obtained by linking and transplanting knower and the known's positions is not fulfilled in the divine essence. Because His mere absolute existence is not bound to any limited existence. Every gesture of such essence that is not determined by any object - because it precedes all determinations- is nothing but failure (Javadi Amoli, 2007, Vol. 2: 46, 100; ibid, Vol. 1: 462; Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 2002: 49).

On the issues of the intuition of essence and the existence of unlimited infinite intuition by the side of limited creature, Mulla Sadra asserts that the existence of effect is a grace in the manifestation of God. In addition, when the effect achieves recognition, he will be the one that has rushed into the God rather than Sublime God goes to him because He is the center of mercy, compassion and grace (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 2002: 43, 49). This is the limits and flaws of our perception that, like a veil, lead to the inappropriateness of Knower and the known and rules out the understanding of His majestic realm. In fact, the effect sees the sacred existence from the viewpoint of his own limitations and knows Him as he deserves.

Therefore, the failure in the intuition of God is not resulted from the cause's contiguity with the power and talent. In other words, Allah's essence never allows another person in His realm to understand His essence and He becomes the Hijab between Him and His creature. So for a Salek who is drown in God, there remains no existence – there is no longer any one there- to pose the problem of the existence of infinite along with the finite critter because the Salek (seeker) has been filled with Him (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1989: Volume 6: 245, 254; ibid, 2004, Vol. 1: 115; ibid, 1984: 55).

Mulla Sadra enumerate three kinds of presence, two of which are not considered for God; The presence of cause to effect, as well as the presence of cause to its essence. Note that the presence of cause to effect is obvious because of the surrounding of the knower (being a possible being) to known (being the unlimited essence of God). Also the requirement of the presence of cause to its essence is in the equality of the knower and the known; the equality of possible creatures and the obvious presence of God cannot be allowed clearly. For the effect of the critter

⁶ We have not been able to justify Your Mystic knowledge

is not declined from the inherent nature of the sublime God, but it is determined from other levels (Javadi Amoli, 2007, Vol. 1: 183; ibid, Vol. 2: 126).

Inevitably, the understanding of the Essence of God is not realized for any one, except for Himself. The effect has a weak awareness in the field of his own being of the cause because there is no presence for the essence except a manifestation that He wills. It seems that there is a certain diversity between the ideas of Mulla sadra (regarding that the vast essence of God cannot be recognized except by its especial materials and effects) and those of Mohiuddin Ibn Arabi (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1990, Vol. 1: 338).

Unlike Mulla Sadra, Ibn Arabi believes that there is no limit for the reason – being a single light which is central to all knowledge- to benefit from the gifts of God's essence. (Ibn Arabi, 1998, Vol. 1: 140).

The amount of the intuition of the critter is as much as the amount the grace receiver receives from the grace giver. Since the submergence of the cause id more than the effect, it cannot be compared to the intuition of the essence of God. Inevitably, even the evidence of some Intuitions such as the Intuition of the Holy Prophet, on the night of ascension was only considered as glimpses of signs of God. Since His glorious light is above the power of prophecy of the Prophet, surely seeing the signs does not require the observation of the essence (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1987, Vol. 3: 223- 225-101).

This limitation of perception is resulted from parallelism with the execution and the power and evil of matter and is emerged after the cause. "Allah knows what is [presently] before them and what will be after them, but they do not encompass it in knowledge⁷." Prophet (PBUH) also says: "if devils were not around the hearts of descendants of Adam, they would have always seen heavens." (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 2005: 316)

Imam Ali – the commander of the faithful- (PBUH) says: "I did not see anything unless I observed God earlier". This sentence stemmed from the overcoming of the afterlife to his noble essence and was a miracle coming through his senses. It means that after the destruction of the essence, the divine insight is used to look at God (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1989, Vol. 1: 16 - 248-249; ibid, 1984: 64-79; ibid, 1987, Vol. 3: 100).

Mulla Sadra believes that the end of intuition is the resemblance to the essence of God and not being united with Him. Because the requirement of unity is the lack of difference between creator and creation, resulting in the rejection of the universe' leveling. That it is incompatible with transcendental philosophy assumptions. And because each entity, though extended in existence, cannot escape from its constraints and the order of his determination still remains even if he reaches the level of destruction and depreciation⁸. (Fazlurahman.1975.pp: 39).

⁷ Taha, verse 110

⁸ According to this position, the Salek is not even satisfied with his essence and intuition

When Mulla Sadra talks about the observation, he means the intellectual intuition resulting from the spiritual heart – and not the observation with the material eyes which are filled with darkness- because if the sensational observation of the essence of God is provided, the critter will resemble the creator. However, God is free from these illusions and nothing is similar to Him in essence. Therefore, the bodily entity will never perceive the spiritual entity and sense will not reach the concepts. It also should be noted that the eyes of sense, always depend on conditions such as belonging to the material body and some specific situation, yet the majestic realm of God is free from these issues. Through the mastery of His might, the power of vision is shattered in front of Him. "And [all] faces will be humbled before the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of existence.⁹" (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi 1987, Vol. 3: 240 - 207- 254).

True knowledge is the one which is not obtained through the observation of manifestations. In fact the knowledge about God is obtained through the knowledge of manifestations. The purity of divinity prevent us from likening Him to the creatures. There is no sensory or even intellectual form to be likened to Him. Because He is so honorable that, the creatures cannot know Him. Rather, the creatures are known to God. (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1987, Vol. 3: 108; ibid, 2007: 27).

True companions of knowledge, not with the pen of reason but with a sound heart and pure nature enter this realm. "The Day when there will not benefit [anyone] wealth or children, But only one who comes to Allah with a sound heart."¹⁰ They have known the light of God, being ready for the destruction and death of the world, they have rushed to meet God (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 2007: 11). The Prophet (PBUH) has also said: "God loves to meet the person who loves to meet God" Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1987, Vol. 3: 223).

Therefore, no one can perceive God, because the knowledge of the creatures, though strong, is not stronger than their original existence. Believing in the limits and conditionality of the life of every critter it will be realized that the limited critter cannot dominate the unlimited and unconditioned creator. Thus, the eyes do not understand Him as He deserves because knowing God more than the knowledge related to the basics of His essence is not the right of anybody and is not attainable for anyone other than Himself.

His anonymous essence is not considered as a concept among other concepts to be acquired. In addition, the intuition of His essence is impossible with the intuitive knowledge because this knowledge is achieved through the establishment of the relationships with knower and known. However, the absolute existence of God has no relationship with any other creature. The obvious essence is not a determined object because He precedes all determinations. Thus, all signs are unable to discuss

⁹ Taha Surah 111

¹⁰ Shu'ara verse 88-89

about Him and express nothing but failure. No argument can be implied about Him. Since such essence is not derived from His absolute essential identity but is determined from some next levels, never can perceive His spiritual intuition. In this level that is merely divine, neither describing Him with analogous attributes is correct nor glorifying Him of these attributes.

Intuitive Knowledge of the Names and Attributes of God

The knowledge of the names and attributes of God is an important issue in acquiring the knowledge of the divine world since the truth about essence is reveled through them. This knowledge is realized by a person who is an embodiment for all names and attributes - Unlike other creatures that are only the manifestation of a particular name among the names of Allah - (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1984: 89).

Of course, the discussion of the truth of divine names and attributes being equivalent to His obligatory presence are impossible such as His absolute essence; it is not obtained through the education of mind "And with Him are the keys of the unseen; none knows them except Him.¹¹" (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1987, Vol. 3: 302). However, since each of the names and attributes have a general and intellectual meaning. Discussion of the meanings of the names and attributes of Allah is an open door for thinking, so that even our sacred texts are full of descriptions of God. "He is Allah, other than whom there is no deity¹²". In discussing the semantics of attributes of God. Mulla Sadra considering spiritual sharing, although believes in ascribing multiple attributes to essence, the number of these attributes does not require the multiplicity of the divine essence. He is an immense truth and the true meaning of His attributes are the same as His essence. Otherwise impossibilities such as the uniqueness of His essence and the need to others in the acquisition of these attributes naturally leads to a multiplicity of self-existence. In other words, the absolute essence in terms of uniqueness is obvious. In addition, it should be noted that lack of objectivity leads to a possibility of non-eternality of these attributes. However, all the issues on Almighty God and His attributes lead to the essential eternality (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1981, Vol. 6: 120, 121; ibid, 1981: 90).

Mulla Sadra expressing the possibility of abstractness of multiple concepts derived from a unique ultimate issue believes that all these conceptual multiplicities are referred to a united absolute – the essence of necessity. In case of the truth of the attributes of God, he believes that the objectivity of the existence of Almighty God is not caused by His essence and all verdicts of existence are true about this issue. Since the absolute existence contains all existences, and attributes like the knowledge of the Sublime God contains all knowledge – the same process exists for other attributes of God (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1981: 38-94). In short, Mulla

¹¹ An'am verse 59

¹² Hashr verse 23

Sadra believes that the essence which is covered by the attributes, always appears as a name among other names and its intuition is possible in this way. Thus, the documents of these attributes are subjective in terms of other attributes other than the mentioned ones. External objects being a manifestation of the divine names and attributes are signs of a hidden issue.

Intuition of Sublime God in the Mirrors

Needless to say that the discussions on creatures who are limited in terms of existential order is constrained through the inherent posteriority of them in essence compared to the truth of names and attributes that are the same as His essence (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1984: 86; Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 2002: 422). However, intuition of essence in the lights of His essential manifestation in the mirror of the universe means the overflow of his descent from the divine heaven and makes the hearts of humans to benefit from that great source of light. So the critters that are manifestation of His names and attributes are hidden signs of the world. According to Imam Reza (PBUH) "whatever in testimony is a reason for the hidden signs". (Javadi Amoli, 2007, Vol. 2: 563-567). The difference of essence and names and attributes is in that the essence is the identity of a particular object and the way of its existence. Nouns and attributes both capture the essence and the collection of names and attributes are called divinity (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 2005: 432, 436).

The soul of observations is attended by the signs all around the world and through the observation of the ultimate light and is destructed by the infinite will of Him. The book of being with all contents is a manifestation of the essence of the unseen and is the key of this hidden treasure (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1984: 57).

The advent of widespread light is caused by the great Grace or the compassionate image of God other than that of essence. It is the manifestation and sign of the Sublime creator in the critters. Whatever free from the image is not even a manifestation, it is inherently destroyed and mortal; it is only manifested through the light of divine image. This unlimited image is present in the multiple natures and provides an explanation of that hidden Essence for other than essence. Since, this entity that is other than essence is nothing, so this second appearance is ascribed to the essence. Yet, the image is shown in different modes and this multiplicity is not resulted from the multiplicity of the image is appeared. "Thanks to God who is manifested for his critters in his creations"¹³. (Javadi Amoli, 2007, Vol. 2: 170-174-171).

In this regard, Mulla Sadra considers a dual classification of Attributes of Allah; he believes that they are either Jalali – implying the lack of deficiency- or Jamali and

¹³ The first paragraph of Nahj al-Balagha Sermon 108

provable. Then he classifies Jamali attributes to Haqiqi¹⁴ attributes – such as Nazir, Alem, Qader etc. - and additional¹⁵ - such as Razeq, Khaleq etc. – finally all the Haqiqi attributes being the same as his essence are referred to His essential existence. He believes that the return of all additional attributes is bound to inherent guardianship. However, according to Mulla Sadra the additional attributes are resulted from the Essence. However, because their origin is the same as the essence of God and does not negate the absolute unity of His attributes (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 1997, Vol. 6: 109, 110). Therefore, knowledge of the act is the same as the intuition of the manifestation of the divine names and attributes in appearances. This means that the external creatures are elements of the essence God (Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi, 2005: 443).

CONCLUSION

According to the statements of Mulla Sadra, everyone has a certain degree in proportion to the boundless sea of divine Knowledge. God is the original light and the derivations are His manifestations. Therefore, the intuition of such being sometimes results in the consideration of critters as a mirror reflecting God. This makes the critters to be a medium through which His Essence suggests the names and the attributes. This means that the unseen is observed through manifestations; the Seeker sees God as a mirror reflecting entities and the universe.

In short, intuition is a strong light encompassing the inner darkness and a call to travel from this unworthy world. It is a confrontation with the bright world being full of glory, filing the heart with a mysterious fragrance. In the light of intuition, the unseen is revealed and the soul is raised to the depth of the blue sky where it is revived with the blessings.

When the seeker reaches to the chamber of the Almighty God and sees the glory and majesty of the King, he will be stunned and seek to find a way to speak to Him and searching the beloved – God - walks in the distant horizons of the unknown. Efforts of the spiritual journey provide a way to escape from the evil grips and unlink the animalistic desires; it is the first level to overcome. This is a rejection of the tempting propositions of the body; rushing to Him and meeting Him, giving the last mortal breath to an immortal, sublime being.

This type of intuition results in awakening in a magic place and makes the seeker to be in harmony with all the universe. Depreciation during the entire universe causes a transformation in the soul of the seeker. The scope of this intuition and its influence is beyond the world of sense extending to the throne of glory where the convergences and aversions are turned into hooks and the mind in exonerated from the poisonous temptations of the world.

¹⁴ truth

¹⁵ Izafi

The spiritual path is full of doubts that refer to the way of observing the manifestations of God. This is all due to the overcoming of some existential entities over other existential entities and the covering of some with others. However, the true companions of intuition and investigators of knowledge observe, knows and does not deny God in all the observations. These people receive the lights of knowledge and are guided with the authority of God. They will get close to Him through the closeness of statutes and their inner submergence in the infinite power of God. "And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me - indeed I am near."¹⁶

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¹⁶ Al- baqarah verse 186

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