Two mosques, in the Valley and on the Mount, mark our descent and ascent. They are signs, as are the heavens and earth. On the axis of ascent, they denote the Throne, as revealed to David: “The Lord is in His holy temple, the Lord’s throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.”\(^1\) God told the Praised: “His Throne comprises the heavens and earth; the preserving of them oppresses Him not; He is the All-high, the All-glorious.”\(^2\)

That differentiation of existence – between depths and height, earth and heavens, fallen and risen, body and Spirit, darkness and Light, rationality and Intellect, sign and Signified, concealment and revelation, visible and invisible, hell and heaven\(^3\) – is resolved first and last by Intellect as the first of creation. Intellect is concomitant to our core or heart as Unity, manifest in feeling, thought, speech and motion. It is always at a higher level than its manifestations, with the One, as Its first expression, the womb or treasury of what exists in the flux of being. All things are sent down from, illuminated by, united within, and dispersed outside Intellect.

So long as those things are seen as linked with the signs in the self and manifesting the unseen as the other face of the visible, we and the world are two facets of one existence, whose truth is Unity as their source and confluence. We cannot know multiplicity without knowing Unity, in Which we realize ourselves, being what the self knows, knowing what it is.

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3. The association between the Inviolable Mosque and the lowest depth, corresponding to darkness and hell, may seem questionable to some. The lowest depths, the depths of hell, are potential in each of us; but even in those depths, God’s mercy is primal, for it embraces all things. Whatever our human condition, we are always in need of God’s mercy and the guidance of the Praised. The Praised is therefore with us through every experience from the lowest depth to the sublime height; he is our guide out of whatever state we find ourselves in, but is himself always perfect, sinless, a mercy to the worlds and the finest example. It should also be remembered that both the Anointed and the Praised descended to hell in their experience of ascension, the former from the tomb, the latter from the Inviolable Mosque. The enigmatic fall to the lowest depth cannot be understood without taking into account their intimate connection and their role of redeemer or mercy to all people, even those who are in the uttermost depths.
With multiplicity divorced from Unity, something – anything – can occupy the centre, so that the world is closed off. Its closure isolates us too, in a state of corruption, all Reality hidden.

Abraham was a man of peace related to God as Peace through being-at-peace. He defined his will in witness of no will but the Will, acquiescent in God’s guidance, infallibly guided through the wastes of the world, revealing through himself the perfect paths of return.

Abraham’s posterity turned in different ways to the Inviolable and Further Mosques. Ishmael and his children settled by the house in the Valley and they included the Praised as transmitter of God’s Word. The children of Isaac settled by the house on the Mount. God sent down His Word for them to Moses, who placed it in the Ark to be carried on their journey to that Mosque. David housed the Ark where it belonged in Sion, on the Rock, as a sign of return, gathering, and unification. Solomon built the buildings of that Mosque around the Ark. Both signs were thus connected with His Word, which is us. When we are perfect, in and through us God’s “Be”4 is manifest at every moment.

The two houses, in the Valley and on the Mount, have the Word as their foci. The former was empty; the latter housed Stone Tablets inscribed with His Word as revealed to Moses. Both houses fell to ruin, but their emptiness did not. It is the heart’s full and inviolable presence.

“The earth and everything in it is damned,” said the Praised, “except for the remembrance of God, and what attends it, and its teacher and its student.”5 Nothing in world or self is without the original Divine “Be.” Everything recalls God; nothing is damned. The alchemy of remembrance transforms damned into blessed. The heart is the site of remembrance, in which God is truly present, for which we are blessed, but only knowledge can bring the heart to life and enable most beautiful uprightness. This is why Ibn ʿArabī wrote:

The greatest sin is what kills hearts. They do not die except through the absence of the knowledge of God. This is what is named ignorance. For the heart is the house that God has chosen for Himself in this human configuration. But such a person has usurped the house, coming between it and the owner. He is the one who most wrongs himself because he has deprived himself of the good that would have come to him from the owner of the house had he left the house to Him. This is the deprivation of ignorance.6

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4 Qurʾan, 36:81.
5 Tirmidhī, 4:561, tradition 2322.