In the Recitation (1)

The Praised bore witness of a particular connection with Abraham that was both spiritual and by blood. He is a maternal prophet, as well as a principle for humanity. The prophecies and all associated matters are realized through the maternal prophet, as a link with original perfection. The Praised was thus Abraham’s most sublime desire, the son he desired.

The Praised is the son who represents for Abraham, his father, the principle. Like all the prophets, Abraham was a man of peace,¹ but the Praised was the first of them.² Being-at-peace connects whatever reveals God as Peace with any human being thus made manifest. We may deny or affirm our nature, depending on whether we accept or reject the confidence God offered as our relationship. The Praised accepted His will as his own and never betrayed it.

Abraham’s desire for the Praised is expressed in his prayer: “Our Lord, do Thou send among them an apostle, one of them, who shall recite to them Thy signs, and teach them a Book and the Wisdom, and purify them; Thou art the All-mighty, the All-wise.”³ Facing posterity, Abraham hitched his desire to the God Who sends down signs and the Books and wisdom and purification, towards what is highest, without which nothing exists or has reason or purpose. The Praised is a higher level of his own self, pre-announced in history.

The first house was established to mark our covenant with God at the centre of our earthly present, the rediscovery of our high potential.⁴ Adam lost his original fullness, in which his being-at-peace and Peace were undifferentiated and being praised, praising, and the All-praised were a whole reflected in all things. He travelled to the lowest depth, repented, and was offered the house as a sign of the covenant’s renewal and of return by the upright path.

The renewed covenant was offered to recall us to our primordial oath as servant to God as Lord. The house in Becca is just a sign of this. Oblivion has brought us far from this memory and the house’s meaning. The self has darkened, as the circuit of the house, worship, and prostration have lost meaning. Oblivion is cast over the world’s essence, as we are increasingly reduced to the surface, cut off from the heart’s authentic comprehension of all things.

¹ See Qurʾan, 2:128; and 3:67.
² Ibid., 39:12.
³ Qurʾan, 2:129.
⁴ See Qurʾan, 3:96.
Oblivion of God is oblivion of the self, and vice versa – recollecting God means recollecting the self. The self’s authentic nature is service in which God is revealed as Lord. He uses us for revelation, so that our authentic condition is the highest of sublimities. Divine lordship is manifest in it. Oblivion was near universal when God Whom all things serve at peace called Abraham to wander the paths of the world and submit to His guidance. God called Abraham to free himself from the things that cover his Creator’s will: “And We made covenant with Abraham and Ishmael: ‘Purify My house for those that shall go about it and those that cleave to it, to those who bow and prostrate themselves.’”

The covenant is how the faithful relate to Faithful God. Our faith derives from love for Him we always know insufficiently. God’s knowledge is absolute. He loves us who love Him entirely, in both His revealing and concealing Himself from us. The covenant is for those who love Him, who have not forsaken their faith with Him. Aligned by the ritual of the first house, the self enters the order of the world, split like itself between the depths and the most beautiful height, which includes all of Creation as His revelation.

Abraham’s desire for the Praised is our eternal higher potential issued in two posterities. This is why the Praised is first and last. His connection with Abraham, expressed through their like selves, marks the Praised’s maternity as inner principle of humanity. The Praised referred to this thus: “May God bestow His mercy on the mother of Ishmael! Had she not hastened, Zam-zam would have been a stream flowing on the surface of the earth.”

Still there by the house, the spring of Zam-zam marks the axis of the upright path towards the frequented house in the seventh or ultimate heaven. Abraham links these two houses, earthly and heavenly: with Ishmael he restored the house on earth and now resides beside the house in the seventh heaven. The Praised said of passing through all the heavens: “And there was a man sitting on the throne of the gate of the immortal mansion” and elsewhere that “Gabriel said: ‘This is your father; pay your greetings to him.’ So I greeted him and he returned the greetings to me and said: ‘You are welcomed, O pious son and pious prophet.’ Then I was made to ascend to the Lote-Tree of the utmost boundary.”

The Praised ascended from the lowest depths to the highest height, through all the heavens, to meet the patriarch Abraham. But he passed beyond even

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5 Qur’an, 2:125.
7 Bukhārī, 4:372.
8 Ibn Isḥāq, Sīrat Rasūl Allāh, 186.
9 Bukhārī, 5:447.