APPENDIX

On the End of Time

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful: Praise be to God, the Lord of all men, such praise as is His due, and blessings be upon His Messenger, Muḥammad, and upon his family, and upon the prophets and envoys who were before him [.....]

The Prophet, God's blessing and peace be upon him, has related the following: “Gabriel went to Muḥammad the Chosen One, the pride of heaven and earth, God's blessings and peace be upon him, and delivered God's words: ‘Oh Muḥammad, admonish the members of your community as long as you live, and convey My word to the effect that, when the end of time comes, it will also be through the Lord's omnipotent command, He is mighty and glorious, that the trials will become manifest, as He has declared in the Qurʾān, in His words, He is exalted: [“...........”]. God will do whatever He deigns to decide.’” The Prophet, peace be upon him, asked Gabriel: “Oh my friend, will you ever descend to this world after I am gone?” “Yes, oh Messenger of God. I will descend to earth four times. On my first descent I will remove God's blessings. On my second descent I will remove friendliness. On my third descent I will remove goodness. On my fourth descent I will remove the Qurʾān.”

According to some accounts: “On my fifth descent I will remove modesty from women's faces. On my sixth descent I will remove generosity from the rich. On my eighth descent I will remove the true faith from princes and rulers and remove justice. On my ninth descent I will remove the blessings from wealth. On my tenth descent I will remove the faith from the faithful.”

Gabriel said: “First, I will remove the Qurʾān. When people consult a copy of the Qurʾān, they will open it but not find anything written in it. Then I will remove learning. Meaningless books will be left. The Qurʾānic reciters will withdraw to the prayer-niche; they will not be able to recite and will run away. They will open the Qurʾān but will not find anything written in it. Religious scholars will mount the pulpit, but they will be unable to cite their learning. They will come running to open a book, but they will not find anything written in it.”

The Prophet, peace be upon him, asked: “Are there signs and indications of the end of time?” Gabriel replied: “I will tell you a number of signs and indications of it. First, friendliness will be removed. The blessing of what sprouts from the earth and the

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1 The seventh descent is missing!
blessing of fruits will be removed. There will be no more blessings from cultivating them. The world will be confounded, people will all become lustful, and the good things will be removed. Cruel persons will come to power, and justice and equity will disappear; the command to behave well will fail to occur. Neglect of prayer will become widespread. Women will not have husbands and they will not consider it illicit; their children will be bastards. The kings of that time will all take counsel from wicked persons. No pure persons will be left; the religious scholars will be despised and the players of the lute will be important persons. The people will all be bad. When they pray, their prayers will not be answered; their worshipping will not be accepted. These signs will become apparent at the end of time." When the Prophet heard these words, he wept bitterly and said: “Oh my friend Gabriel, has not the time you are referring to already arrived?”

When the Prophet described these conditions to the Companions, the Companions implored him: “Oh Messenger of God, when will these trials occur?” The Prophet, peace be upon him, declared: “When I have been transferred from this transient world to the eternal palace—five hundred years after my death these indications will become manifest.” Then he wept bitterly, exclaiming: “Oh poor members of my community!”

Oh true believers, your realm is no more than three cubits of earth! You must cultivate it with everlasting worship. Oh true believers, cattle and livestock, or any possessions, are of no use! If your property is licit, it speaks for itself; if it is illicit, it is a scourge—I take refuge with the Lord! Since such a day will arrive, one must perform much worship in this world. And one must acquire abundant provisions; the road ahead is filled with hardships. It seems that on that day mercy will depend on the Prophet’s intercession. Oh God, provide us with the means of subsistence!

Ḥasan Baṣrī, God be pleased with him, has reported the following which he learned [as transmitted] from the Twelve Imāms: One day the Prophet, peace be upon him, performed a ritual prayer in the mosque of Medina. Abū Bakr the Truthful has reported: “I asked: ‘Oh Messenger of God, how long will mankind remain in this transient world?’”

The Prophet, peace be upon him, answered his question: “For one week.” When the Companions heard him say this, they were grieved and said: “How are we to seek forgiveness for all our past sins in one week’s time?” No one understood the meaning of the Prophet’s statement. But it is as Muhammad the Chosen One, peace be upon him, the glory of heaven and earth, was informed by God in the Qurʾān—He has declared, in His words, He is exalted: “A day whose space is fifty thousand years.” God has declared: “The great day will last fifty thousand years according to the measurement of this world.” It is related that they were thereupon informed that seven thousand years is

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2 Q. 70/4.