

ordered that all the other Qur'anic materials, whether written in fragmentary manuscripts or whole copies, be burnt. Zayd ibn Thabit added, "A verse from Surah Ahzab was missed by me when we copied the Koran, and I used to hear Allah's Apostle reciting it. So we searched for it and found it with Khuzaima ibn Thabit Al-Ansari. (That verse was): "Among the believers are men who have been true in their covenant with Allah" (22:23).

Source: *Sahih al-Bukhari* 6:510, tr. Kahn.

SUNNI AND SHI' WRITINGS

SUNNI ISLAMIC LAW

Ibn Idris al-Shafi'i (767–820) was the foremost scholar of early Islamic law. He is best known for his analysis of the "four roots of jurisprudence." That is, legal questions are resolved by appealing first to the Qur'an, second to the Sunna, third to consensus, and last to analogical reasoning. After his death Shafi'i's disciples founded the Shafi'ite school; his penetrating analysis of the four roots was also adopted by the other schools of Islamic Law. The following from Shafi'i's Risala discusses the use of consensus, analogy, and personal reasoning in resolving legal questions.

Chapter 11, On Consensus (*ijma*).

480. Shafi'i said: Some asked me: I have understood your doctrine concerning God's commands and His Apostle's orders that he who obeys God obeys His Apostle, [for] God has imposed [on men] the duty of obeying His Apostle, and that the proof for what you held has been established that it would be unlawful for a Muslim who has known the Book [of God] and the sunna [i.e., Hadith tradition of the Prophet] to give an opinion at variance with either one, for I know that this [i.e., acceptance of the Book and the sunna] is a duty imposed by God. But what is your proof for accepting the consensus of the public [on matters] concerning which no explicit command of God nor any [sunna] related on the authority of the Prophet is to be found? Do you assert, with others, that the consensus of the public should always be based on an established sunna even if it were not related [on the authority of the Prophet]?
481. [Shafi'i] replied: That on which the public are agreed and which, as they assert, was related from the Apostle, that is so. As to that which the public do not relate [from the Prophet], which they may or may not relate as a tradition from the Prophet, we cannot consider it as related on the authority of the Prophet—because one may relate only what he has heard, for no one is permitted to relate [on the authority of the Prophet] information which may or may not be true. So we accept the decision of the public because we have to obey their authority, and we know that wherever there are sunnas of the Prophet, the public cannot be ignorant of them, although it is possible that some are, and we know that the public can neither agree on anything contrary to the sunna of the Prophet nor on an error. . . .

484. He asked: What is the meaning of the Prophet's order to follow the community? . . .
487. [Shafi'i] replied: When the community spread in the lands [of Islam], nobody was able to follow its members who had been dispersed and mixed with other believers and unbelievers, pious and impious. So it was meaningless to follow the community [as a whole], because it was impossible [to do so], except for what the [entire] community regarded as lawful or unlawful [orders] and [the duty] to obey these [orders].
- He who holds what the Muslim community holds shall be regarded as following the community, and he who holds differently shall be regarded as opposing the community he was ordered to follow. So the error comes from separation: but in the community as a whole there is no error concerning the meaning of the Qur'an, the sunna, and analogy.

Chapter 12, On Analogy (*qiyas*).

488. He asked: On what ground do you hold that [on matters] concerning which no text is to be found in the Book, nor a sunna or consensus, recourse should be had to analogy? Is there any binding text for analogical deduction?
489. [Shafi'i] replied: If analogy were [stated] in the text of the Book or the sunna, such a text should be called either God's command or the Apostle's order rather than analogy.
490. He asked: What is analogy? Is it personal reasoning [*ijtihad*], or are the two different?
491. [Shafi'i] replied: They are two terms with the same meaning. . . .
493. On all matters touching the [life of a] Muslim there is either a bonding decision or an indication as to the right answer. If there is a decision, it should be followed; if there is no indication as to the right answer, it should be sought by personal reasoning, and personal reasoning is analogy [*qiyas*]. . . .
496. [He asked]: If [legal] knowledge is derived through analogy—provided it is rightly applied—should [the scholars] who apply analogy agree on most [of the decision], although we may find them disagreeing on some?
497. [Shafi'i replied]: Analogy is of two kinds: the first, if the case in question is similar to the original meaning [of the precedent], no disagreement on this kind [is permitted]. The second, if the case in question is similar to several precedents, analogy must be applied to the precedent nearest in resemblance and most appropriate. But those who apply analogy are likely to disagree [in their answers]. . . .

Chapter 13, On Personal Reasoning (*ijtihad*).

534. He asked: On what ground do you hold that [the exercise of] personal reasoning [*ijtihad*] is permitted in addition to what you have already explained?

535. [Shafi'i] replied: It is on the basis of God's saying: "from whatever place thou issuest, turn thy face in the direction of the Sacred Mosque; and wherever you may be, turn your faces in its direction" [Koran. II. 145]. Regarding him who [wishes to] face the Sacred Mosque [in prayer] and whose residence is at a distance from it, [legal] knowledge instructs [us] that he can seek the right direction through ijtihad on the basis of certain indications [guiding] toward it. For he who is under an obligation to face the Sacred House and does not know whether he is facing the right or wrong direction may be able to face the right one through certain indications known to him [which helps him] to face it as accurately as he can, just as another person may know other indications which help to orient him [in the right direction], although the direction sought by each person may be different from that sought by the other.

Source: Ibn Idris al-Shafi'i, *Risala*, 480, 481, 484, 487, 488-491, 493, 496, 497, 534, 535, from *Islamic Jurisprudence: Shafi'i's Risala*, tr. Majid Khadduri (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1961). Reprinted by permission.

SUNNI CREED

Born in Basra, in what is now Iraq, al-Ash'ari (873-935) was a prominent theologian in the Sunni Hanbalite school of Islamic law. He argued that God's acts are utterly beyond rational comprehension and that, if God willed, He could send devout believers to hell. Al-Ash'ari is credited with having formulated the first systematic creed of Islam, which is presented below. Bracketed references are to passages in the Qur'an.

The essence of our belief is that we confess faith in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, the revelation of Allah, and what the trustworthy have handed down on the authority of Allah's Messenger, rejecting none of them.

We confess that Allah is One—There is none worthy of worship but He—unique, eternal, possessing neither consort nor child; and that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger, who He sent with the guidance and the real Religion; and that Paradise is real and Hell is real; and that there is no doubt regarding the Coming Hour; and that Allah will raise up all those who are in the graves; and that Allah is on His throne (as He has said, "The Merciful is on the Throne"—[20:4]); and that He has a face (as He has said, "but the Face of your Lord shall abide resplendent with majesty and glory"—[55:27]); and that He has two hands, *bila kaifa* (without asking how?) (as He has said, "I have created with my two hands,"—[38:75] and he has said, "nay! Outstretched are both His hands"—[5:69]); and that He has an eye, without asking how (as He said, "under Our eyes it floated on"—[54:14]), and that anybody who thinks that the names of Allah are other than He is in error; and that Allah has Knowledge (as He has said, "in His knowledge He sent it down,"—[4:164]), and as He said, "And no female conceives and brings forth without His knowledge"—[35:12]), we also assert that Allah has hearing and sight, and we do not deny it as the

Mu'tazila, the Jahmiyyah, and the Khaarijites deny it; and we assert that Allah has Prowess (*Quwwah*) (as He has said, "saw they not that Allah Who created them was mightier than they in Prowess?"—[41:14]); and we believe that the Word of Allah is uncreated, and that He has created nothing without first saying to it, "Be!" And it is as he has said, "Our word to a thing when we will it is but to say, 'Be,' and it is"—[16:42]), and that there is no good or evil on earth save what Allah wishes: and that things exist by Allah's wish; and that not a single person has the capacity to do anything until Allah causes him to act, and we are not independent of Allah, nor can we pass beyond the range of Allah's knowledge; and that there is no creator save Allah, and the works of human beings are things created and decreed by Allah (as He had said, "Allah has created you and what you make"—[37:94]); and that human beings have not the power to create anything, but are themselves created (as He has said, "Is there a creator other than Allah?"—[35:3], and as He has said, "they create nothing, but are themselves created,"—[16:20] and as he said, "Shall He who creates be as He who creates not?,"—[16:17] and as He has said, "were they created by nothing or were they themselves the creators?,"—[52:35] for this is mentioned in Allah's Book frequently); and that Allah favors the Believers by granting them obedience to Him, is gracious to them, considers them, does what is salutary for them, guides them; whereas He causes the Disbelievers to stray, does not guide them, does not give them the grace to believe.

As the deviators and rebels think for if He were gracious to them and did what is salutary for them they would be sound; and if He guided them, they would be guided; as He has said, "He whom Allah guides is the guided and they whom he misleads will be the lost"—[7:177], and that Allah has power to do what is salutary for the infidels and be gracious to them, that they may become believers, nevertheless He wills that they be infidels, as He knows; and that He forsakes them and seals up their hearts; and that good and evil are dependent upon the general and the particular decrees of Allah, His sweet and His bitter; and we know that what passes us by was not to befall us, and what befalls us was not to pass us by; and that human beings do not control for themselves what is hurtful or what is helpful, except what Allah wishes; and that we ought to commit our affairs to Allah and assert our complete need of and dependence upon Him.

We believe, too, that the Qur'an is the uncreated word of Allah, and that he who believes that the Qur'an is created is an infidel.

We hold that Allah will be seen in the next world by sight (as the moon is seen on the night it is full, so shall the faithful see Him, as we are told in the traditions that come down on the authority of Allah's Messenger; and we believe that the infidels will be veiled from Him when the faithful see Him in Paradise (as Allah has said, "Yea, they shall be shut out as by a veil from their Lord on that day"—[83:15], and that Musa asked Allah for the sight of Him in this world, and "Allah manifested Himself to the mountain" and "turned it to dust,"—[7:139], and taught Musa by it that he should not see Him in this world.

It is opinion that we ought not to declare a single one of the people of the Qibla an infidel for a sin of which he is guilty, such as fornication or theft or the drinking of wine, as the Kharijites hold, thinking that such people are infidels; but we believe that he who commits any of these mortal sins, such as fornication or theft or the like presumptuously declaring it lawful and not acknowledging that forbidden is an infidel.

We believe that Islam is more extensive than faith, and that faith is not the whole of Islam.

We hold that Allah changes men's hearts, and that their hearts are between two of Allah's fingers, and that Allah will place the heavens on a finger and the earth on a finger, as we are told in the tradition that comes down on the authority of Allah's Messenger.

We hold that we ought not to relegate any of the Monotheists, or those who hold fast to the faith, to Paradise or to Hell, save him in whose favor the Messenger of Allah has borne witness concerning Paradise; and we hope that sinners will attain to Paradise, but we fear that they will be punished in Hell.

We believe that Allah, by the intercession of Muhammad, Allah's Messenger, will bring forth a people from Hell after they have been burned to ashes, in accordance with what we are told in the traditions related on the authority of Allah's messenger.

We believe in the punishment of the grave, and the Pool, and hold that the Scales are real, and the Bridge is real, and the resurrection after death is real, and that Allah will line up human beings at the Station, and settle the account with the faithful.

We believe that faith consists of words and deeds, and is subject to increase and decrease; and we receive the authentic traditions regarding it related on the authority of the Messenger of Allah, which the trustworthy have transmitted, one just man from another, until the tradition goes back to the Messenger of Allah.

We believe in affection towards our forebears in faith, whom Allah chose for the company of His Prophet, we praise them with the praise wherewith Allah praised them, and are attached to them all.

We believe that the excellent Imam, after the Messenger of Allah, is Abu Bakr the Veracious, and that Allah strengthened the Religion by him and gave him success against the renegades, and the Muslims promoted him to the imamate just as the Messenger of Allah made him leader of prayer, and they all named him the caliph of Allah's Messenger; then after him came 'Umar Ibn Al-Kattab; then Uthmaan bin Affaan (those who fought with him wrongfully and unrighteously); then 'Ali Ibn Abi taalib, wherefore these are the Imams after the Messenger of Allah, and their caliphate of Prophecy.

We bear witness concerning Paradise in favor of the ten in whose favour the Messenger of Allah bore witness to it, and we are attached to all the Companions of the Prophet and avoid what was disputed among them.

We hold that the four Imam are orthodox, divinely guided, excellent caliphs, unmatched by others in excellence.

We accept all the traditions for which the traditionalists vouch: the descent in to the lower heavens, and the Lord's saying, "Is there any who has a request? Is there any who ask forgiveness?," and the other things they relate and vouch for; dissenting from what the deviators and followers of error assert.

We rely, in that wherein we differ, upon our Lord's book, and the sunnah of our Prophet and the unanimous consent (ijma) of the Muslims and what it signifies; and we do not introduce into Allah's religion innovations that Allah does not allow, nor do we believe of Allah what we do not know.

We believe that Allah will come in the day of resurrection (as He has said, "and thy Lord shall come and the Angels rank"—[80:23]); and that Allah is near His servants, even as He wishes (as He has said, "We are nearer to him than his Jugular vein,"—[50:15] and as He said, "He came nearer and approached and was at the distance of two bows or even closer"—[53:8,9]).

It belongs to our religion to observe the Friday Assembly, and the feasts, and the remaining prayers and public devotions under the leadership of every pious man or impious (as it is related of 'Abd Allah ibn Umar that he used to pray behind al-Hajjaj ibn-yusuf); and we believe that the wiping of the sandals is a sunnah at home and in travel, contrarily to the belief of anybody who denies it; and we approve prayer for the welfare of the imams of the Muslims, and the confession of their imamate; and we regard it as error on anybody's part to "going out" against them when they have clearly abandoned rectitude; and we believe in abstinence from "going out" against them with the sword, and abstinence from fighting in civil commotions.

We confess the going forth of Antichrist (ad-Dajjaal), as it is contained in the tradition related on the authority of Allah's Messenger.

We believe in the punishment of the grave, and in Munkar and Nakir, and their interrogation of those who are buried in the graves.

We accept the Hadith of Ascension (mi'raj) and regard as authentic many of the visions of sleep, and confess there are interpretations to them.

We approve alms on behalf of the Muslim dead, and prayer for their welfare; and we believe that Allah helps them by it.

We accept it as true that there are sorcerers and sorcery in the world, and that sorcery exists in the world.

We believe in praying for those of the people of the Qibla who are dead, the pious and the impious, and in the lawfulness of being their heirs.

We confess that Paradise and Hell are created; and that he who dies or is slain is at his appointed term; and that sustenance is from Allah who gives it to His creatures in the permitted and the forbidden; and that Satan Whispers to man and causes him to doubt and infects him, contrarily to the belief of the Mu'tazilah and the Jahmiyyahh (as Allah has said, "they who swallow down usury shall arise in the resurrection only as he arises who Satan hath infected by his touch,"—[2:276] and as he has said, "against the mischief of the stealthily withdrawn whisperer, who whispers in man's breast against jinn and men."—[114:46]).

We believe that Allah can design particularly for the just signs he manifests to them.

Our belief regarding the children of the polytheists is that Allah will kindle a fire for them in the next world, and then will say to them, "rush into it!" as the tradition tells us concerning it.

We hold that Allah knows what human beings are doing, and they are going to do, what has been, what is, and how what is not would have been if it had been.

We believe in obedience to the Imams and in the sincere counsel of the Muslims.

We approve separation from every innovation tendency, and the avoidance of the people of straying impulses.

Source: Islamicweb.com. Reprinted by permission.

SHI'I CREED

Eighty percent of Shi'i Muslims belong to the Twelver sect (Ithna 'Asha-Riyyah). The most distinctive feature of Twelver theology is the belief in the twelve Imams (Ali and eleven of his descendants) who intermediate between God and humans. The Imams carried both a spiritual and a civil authority derived from and virtually paralleling that of Muhammad. The following selections concerning the Imam are from one of the earliest Shi'i creeds, the Risalatul-I'tiqadat, compiled by Shi'i theologian ibn Babawayhi al-Qummi (918-991). Ibn Babawayhi was also a collector of Hadith and assembled one of the Four Books of Shi'i Hadith.

35. Our belief concerning the number of the prophets is that there have been one hundred and twenty-four thousand prophets and a like number of representatives. Each prophet had a representative to whom he gave instructions by the command of God. And concerning them we believe that they brought the truth from God and their word is the word of God, their command God's command, and obedience to them obedience to God. . . .

The leaders of the prophets are five on whom all depends: Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad. Muhammad is their leader; he confirmed the other apostles.

It is necessary to believe that God did not create anything more excellent than Muhammad and the Imams. After his prophet, the proofs of God for the people are the Twelve Imams. . . . Our belief regarding them is that they are in authority. It is to them that God has ordained obedience, they are the witnesses for the people and they are the gates of God. They are the road to Him and the guides thereto, and the repositories of His knowledge and the interpreters of His revelations and the pillars of His unity. They are immune from sins and errors. They are those from whom "God has removed all impurity and made them absolutely pure." They are possessed of the power of miracles and of irrefutable arguments; and they are for the protection of the

people of this earth just as the stars are for the inhabitants of the heavens. They may be likened, in this community, to the Ark of Noah: he who boards it obtains salvation or reaches the Gates of Repentance. . . .

We believe that the Proof of Allah in His earth and representative among His slaves in this age of ours is the Upholder of the laws of God, the Expected One, Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Askari (i.e., the Twelfth Imam). He it is concerning whose name and descent the Prophet was informed by God, and he it is who *will fill the earth with justice and equity just as it is now full of oppression and wrong*. He it is whom God will make victorious over the whole world until from every place the call to prayer is heard and religion will belong entirely to God, exalted be He. He is the rightly guided Mahdi about whom the prophet gave information that when he appears, Jesus, son of Mary, will descend upon the earth and pray behind him. We believe there can be no other upholder of the true religion than him; he may live in the state of occultation (as long as he likes); were it the space of the existence of this world, there would be no upholder of the true religion other than him.

36. Our belief concerning prophets, apostles, Imams and angels is that they are infallible and do not commit any sin, minor or major. He who denies infallibility to them in any matter is an infidel. . . .
37. Our belief concerning those who exceed the bounds of belief [such as those who ascribe divinity to Ali or the other Imams] and those who believe in delegation [that is, God delegated his rule to Muhammad and Ali] is that they are deniers of God. They are more wicked than the Jews, the Christians, the Fire Worshipers or any heretics; none have belittled God more. . . .

Our belief concerning the Prophet is that he was poisoned during the expedition to Khaybar. The poison continued to be noxious until it cut his aorta and he died of its effects. . . .

38. Our belief concerning the evildoers is that they are accursed and dislocation from them is necessary. . . . And our belief regarding those who killed the prophets and the Infallible Imams is that they are unbelievers and polytheists, who will forever remain in the lowest stage of fire. . . .
39. Our belief concerning permissible concealing of one's true beliefs (*taqiya*) is that it is obligatory, and he who forsakes it is in the same position as he who forsakes prayer. . . . Now until the time when the Imam al-Qa'im appears, such concealing is obligatory and it is not permissible to dispense with it. He who does . . . has truly gone out of the religion of God. And God has described the showing of friendship to unbelievers as being possible only in the state of concealing. . . .

And the Imam Ja'far said . . . "Mix with enemies openly but oppose them inwardly, so long as the authority is a matter of question." He also said, "Diplomacy with a true believer is a form of polytheism, but with a hypocrite in his own house, it is worship." And he said, "He who prays with hypocrites [that is, the Sunnis], standing in

the first row, it is as though he prayed with the Prophet standing in the first row." And he said, "Visit their sick and attend their funerals and pray in their mosques." . . .

40. Our belief concerning the ancestors of the Prophet, contrary to the Sunnis, is that they were Muslims from Adam down to 'Abdallah, father of the Prophet. . . .
41. Our belief concerning the descendants of Ali is that they are the offspring of the Messenger of God and devotion to them is obligatory reward for his apostleship. . . .

Source: Ibn Babawayhi al-Qummi, *Risalat al-I'tiqadat*, chs. 35–41; adapted from *A Shi'ite Creed*, tr. Asaf A. A. Fyzee (London: Oxford University Press, 1942).

JESUS AND ISLAM: THE GOSPEL OF BARNABAS

Muslim theology, both Sunni and Shi'i, rejects the view that Jesus is God or the Messiah and that he was crucified; rather, Jesus was a prophet whom his followers wrongly deified. The Gospel of Barnabas is an account of the life of Jesus from the Muslim perspective. While the exact origins of this work are unclear, it appears to have been written in the fourteenth or fifteenth century and survives in an Italian and a Spanish version. The work is pseudonymously attributed to Barnabas, the New Testament figure from the Book of Acts. The lengthy text reworks the New Testament account of Jesus into a Muslim-friendly narrative in which Jesus foretells the coming of Muhammad and in which Judas is mistaken for Jesus and crucified in his place.

Who Is Jesus?

42. [The Priests] sent the Levites and some of the scribes to question Jesus, saying: "Who are you?"
Jesus confessed and said the truth: "I am not the Messiah."
They said: "Are you Elijah or Jeremiah, or any of the ancient prophets?"
Jesus answered: "No."
Then they said: "Who are you? Tell us so that we may report back to those who sent us."
Jesus answered: "I am a voice that cries through all Judaea, and proclaims: 'Prepare the way for the Messenger of the Lord,' just as it is written in Isaiah." . . .
43. James said: "Master, tell us in whom this promise regarding the Messiah was made: the Jews say 'in Isaac,' and the Ishmaelites say 'in Ishmael.'"
Jesus then said: . . . "Believe me, for truly I tell you that the promise was made in Ishmael, not in Isaac." . . .
70. Jesus departed from Jerusalem after the Passover, and entered into the borders of Caesarea Philippi. Then, the angel Gabriel having told him

of the agitation which was beginning among the common people, he asked his disciples, saying: "What do men say of me?"

They said: "Some say that you are Elijah, others Jeremiah, and others one of the old prophets."

Jesus answered: "And you; what say you that I am?"

Peter answered: "You are Christ, son of God."

Jesus was angry and reprimanded him saying: "Get out and depart from me, because you are the devil and try to cause me offense!" He threatened the eleven, saying: "Misfortune to you if you believe this, for I have won from God a great curse against those who believe this." He was glad to send Peter away. Then the eleven pleaded with Jesus for him; he did not send Peter away, but rather rebuked him again saying, "Beware that never again you say such words, because God would condemn you!"

Peter wept and said: "Lord, I have spoken foolishly; ask God to pardon me."

Then said Jesus: "If our God willed not to show himself to Moses his servant, nor to Elijah whom he so loved, nor to any prophet, will you think that God should show himself to this faithless generation? Do you not know that God has created all things of nothing with one single word, and all people have had their origin out of a piece of clay? Now, how shall God have likeness to man? Misfortune to those who permit themselves to be deceived by Satan!"

Having said this, Jesus pleaded with God for Peter; the eleven and Peter wept and said: "So be it, so be it, holy Lord our God."

Afterwards Jesus left and went into Galilee in order to extinguish this foolish view which the common folk began to hold concerning him. . . .

Judas Crucified in Place of Jesus

215. When the soldiers with Judas drew near to the place where Jesus was, Jesus heard the approach of many people, and then withdrew into the house in fear. The eleven disciples were sleeping. Then God, seeing the danger of his servant Jesus, commanded his ministers Gabriel, Michael, Rafael, and Uriel, to remove Jesus from of the world. The holy angels came and took Jesus out through the window that faced toward the South. They carried him and placed him in the third heaven in the company of angels, praising God forevermore.
216. Judas suddenly entered before everyone else into the chamber from which Jesus had been taken up. The disciples were still sleeping. God then acted magnificently changing Judas in his speech and face to be like Jesus so that we believed him to be Jesus. Having awakened us, he was seeking where Jesus was. Perplexed, we answered "You, Lord, are our master. Have you now forgotten us?"
Judas smiled and said "Now you are foolish since you do not recognize me as Judas Iscariot!" As he was saying this, the soldiers entered and grabbed Judas since he appeared in every way like to Jesus.

217. . . . So they led Judas to Mount Calvary, where they hanged criminals, and there they crucified him naked for even greater humiliation. Judas did nothing but cry out: "God, why have you forsaken me, since the criminal has escaped and I die unjustly?"

I say in all truth that the voice, the face, and the character of Judas were so like that of Jesus that his disciples and believers entirely believed that he was Jesus. Thus some abandoned the doctrine of Jesus, believing that Jesus had been a false prophet, and that he performed his miracles through magic.

Jesus had said that he would not die until near the end of the world, and at that time he would be taken away from the world. But those who stood firm in the doctrine of Jesus were so overcome with sorrow, seeing him die who looked entirely like Jesus, that they did not remember what Jesus had said. So in company with the mother of Jesus they went to Mount Calvary. . . . They took Judas down from the cross crying unbelievably, and buried him in the new tomb of Joseph, having wrapped him up in a hundred pounds of precious ointments. . . .

218. Each man then returned to his house. . . . Those disciples who did not fear God went at night, stole the body of Judas and hid it, spreading a report that Jesus was risen again. Great confusion then arose. . . .
219. Jesus [while in heaven] prayed that God would give him power to see his mother and his disciples. Then merciful God commanded his four favorite angels—Gabriel, Michael, Rafael, and Uriel—to carry Jesus to his mother's house, and keep watch over him there continually for three days, permitting him only to be seen by them that believed in his doctrine. . . .
220. The four angels then explained to the Virgin Mary how God had sent for Jesus and transformed Judas so that he would suffer the punishment to which he had sold another. . . .

Then I, Barnabas, said: "Master, seeing that God is merciful, why has he tormented us, making us believe that you were dead? . . ."

Jesus answered: "Believe me, Barnabas, every sin, however small, God severely punishes, because God is offended by sin. Since my mother and my faithful disciples that were with me loved me a little with earthly love, God in his righteousness has chosen to punish this love with the present grief, in order that it may not be punished in the flames of Hell. I have been innocent in the world, even though people have called me "God," and "Son of God." To prevent me from being mocked by demons on the Day of Judgment, God has willed that I should be mocked by people in this world through the death of Judas, making all people believe that I died on the cross. This mocking will continue until the coming of Mohammed, the messenger of God, who will reveal this deception to those who believe in God's law."

Source: Adapted from *The Gospel of Barnabas*, tr. Lonsdale Ragg (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907), chs. 42, 43, 70, 215–220.

SUFI WRITINGS

LOVE: RABI'A

Almost as old as Islam itself, Sufism is the mystical tradition of Islam that emphasizes mystical union with God. Rabi'a al-Adawiya (717–801) was one of the earliest and most admired Sufis and is sometimes referred to as the Muslim St. Teresa. She was kidnapped as a girl, sold into slavery, and later freed because of her piety. Thereafter she lived as an ascetic with a small group of followers. Although she did not write systematic treatises on Sufism, her sayings were passed down to later generations of Sufis who recorded them and used them as sounding boards for their own mystical ideas. Her key theological contribution is the notion of the unconditional love of God (mahabbah), which parallels the Hindu notion of bhakti or the Christian notion of agape.

Abd Allah b. Isa said: I entered Rabi'a's presence and I saw the light on her face, and she used to weep much, and a man related of her that at every mention of fire (representing the punishment of the unrepentant sinner), she swooned, and I heard the falling of her tears on the ground like the sound of water filling a vessel. . . . I came into Rabi'a's presence and she was worshipping, and when I reached my place, she raised her head, and lo, the place of her worship was like a marsh from her tears and I saluted her. Then she received me and said, "O my son, do you need anything?" and I said, "I came to you to greet you," and she wept and said, "May God censure thee!" Then she rose up for the ritual prayer and said, "I ask forgiveness of God for my lack of sincerity when I say those words 'I ask forgiveness of God.'"

It is related that at one time she saw someone who had a bandage bound about his head. She said, "Why is this bandage bound round your head?" He said, "My head is paining me." Rabi'a asked him how old he was. "Thirty years old," he replied. She asked him, "Were you in pain and trouble for the greater part of your life?" "No," he answered. Then she said, "For thirty years (God) has kept your body fit and you have never bound upon it the bandage of gratitude, but for one night of pain in your head you bind it with the bandage of complaint."

They told us that Rabi'a al-Adawiya once said: I praised God one night with the praises of dawn, then I slept and I saw a bright green tree, indescribable in its size and beauty, and lo, upon it were three kinds of fruit, unknown to me among the fruits of this world, like virgins' breasts, white, red and yellow, and they shone like spheres and suns in the green spaces of the tree, and I admired them and said, "Whose is this?" and one said to me, "This is yours, for your praises aforetime." Then I began to walk round it, and lo, under it were eighteen fruits on the ground, of the color of gold, and I said, "If only these fruits were with the fruits on the tree, it would surely be better." That personage said to me: "They would have been there, but that you, when you offered your praises, were thinking, 'Is the dough leavened or not?' and this fruit fell off."

Some people were speaking in Rabi'a's presence of a devotee, who was known to be holy and in the favor of God, and who lived on what he