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## The Analysis and Evaluation of Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī About Ṭīnat Teaching

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### ABSTRACT

One of the Shī'a teachings discussed in the Twelver Shī'a narrations and the qur'ānic commentaries is ṭīnat (nature). This teaching suggests the difference of the humans in creation and discusses the ties of faith and disbelief with the human's ṭīnat. At the first glance, this teaching is about the inherent human blissfulness and wretchedness as well as the rejection of his freedom in bringing about his own destiny (and so suggests a type of predestination). Many Twelver Shī'a narration transmitters and exegetes have explicated the contents of these narrations and have tried to solve their problems. The question examined in this study regards the solution of Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī for the problems of ṭīnat narrations and its evaluation. In his Tafsīr al-mīzān, Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī presents a comprehensive plan based on the principles of Ṣadrian theosophy to provide a content analysis of this teaching. Taking ṭīnat as a worldly matter that makes the human body, which in turn bases the human soul, he deems the effect of ṭīnat on the human blissfulness and wretchedness at an essential requirement level and does not deem it as requiring predestination. We will ultimately show that Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī's analysis is mostly a philosophical one, which is not so congruent with the semantic network of the narrations related to ṭīnat.

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## Introduction

In the valid Twelver Shī‘a hadīth collections, numerous traditions about the creation of the human from two types of nature. Some narrations refer to the “‘illiyīn” and “sijjīn” natures, while others refer to “heaven” and “hell” natures. It is said that the believers and Shī‘as have been created from the “‘illiyīn” and heavenly nature, while the disbelievers and enemies of Imāms are created from “sijjīn” and hellish nature. Baraqī has collected 9 traditions about the nature of the believers and Shī‘as in four sections and two traditions about the combination of the natures of the believers and disbelievers in another section of his book *Maḥāsīn* (Barqī, 1951, vol. 1: 132-137). Likewise, Şaffār in his book *Başā’ir al-darajāt* has presented a sum of 21 narrations about ẓīnat, from among which the first 17 narrations are about the “creation of Imāms and Shī‘a’s bodies and hearts” (Şaffār, 1983, vol. 1: 14-20). In addition, Kulaynī have also collected some valid Twelver Shī‘a narrations in this regard in the section “the nature of believer and disbeliever” and two other sections called “another section in which the first duty is added” and “another section” (Kulaynī, 2008, vol. 3: 7-29). In his book *Ḥujjat*, too, he has presented four traditions called “creation of bodies, souls, and hearts of Imāms”, the last one of which – i.e., the narration by Abū Ḥamza Thumālī – is one of the traditions related to the believer’s body (ibid, vol. 2: 302). Şadūq presents in his book *‘Ilal al-sharāyi’* five narrations in this regard, with four narrations in one section (Şadūq, 1966, vol. 1: 116-117) and one narration in another section (ibid, vol. 2: 606-610). Majlisī has collected 110 traditions that are in one way or another related to ẓīnat in various chapters (Majlisī, 1983, vol. 5: 225-260; vol. 64: 77-129) (q.v. Naqīzādī, 2006: 184). Among these traditions, the two narrations by Abū Nahshal from Muḥammad b. Ismā‘īl from Abū Ḥamza Thumālī and the narration by Ḥammād b. ‘Isā from Rib‘ī are among the most important ẓīnat traditions repeated in all narration collections. Of course, Ḥammād’s narration in *‘Ilal al-sharāyi’* is narrated through Abū Nu‘aym Hudhalī. All in all, it seems that by deletion of the repetitious narrations with common chain of transmission, there have been narrated 18 different traditions about ẓīnat teaching in the four early hadīth collections.<sup>1</sup>

**The number of unique and common traditions in each source**

No.	Book name	Number of ẓīnat narrations	Exclusive narrations	Common narrations
1	Maḥāsīn	11 traditions in 5 sections	4 traditions	2 traditions common with Başā’ir, Kāfī, and ‘Ilal, 4 traditions common with Kāfī; 3 traditions about the believer’s ẓīnat and 1 tradition about brotherhood of the believers, 1 tradition common with Başā’ir,
2	Başā’ir al-darajāt	21 traditions in 3 sections	14 traditions	2 traditions common with Maḥāsīn, Kāfī, and ‘Ilal 4 traditions common with Kāfī; 3 traditions common with Kāfī; 1 tradition about the believer’s ẓīnat and 2 traditions about the creation of Imāms’ bodies 2 traditions common with Maḥāsīn
3	Al-Kāfī	13 traditions in 3 sections	4 traditions	2 traditions common with Maḥāsīn, Başā’ir, and ‘ILAL 2 traditions common with Başā’ir; 1 tradition about the creation of Imāms’ bodies and hearts and 1 tradition about what God has specified from the guardianship of the Possessor of Constancy for Imāms in the covenant 2 traditions common with ‘Ilal; 1 tradition about the reason for the creation of different conditions of the creatures and 1 tradition about the reason of knowledge and denial 3 traditions common with Maḥāsīn
4	‘Ilal al-sharāyi’	7 traditions in 4 sections	2 traditions	2 traditions common with mm, Başā’ir, and Kāfī 1 tradition common with Kāfī and Başā’ir 2 traditions common with Kāfī

A look at the outer appearance of these narrations triggers various content problems to mind, the most important of which are as follows.

1. Out of these, at least 7 traditions are sound according to the validations made by the later scholars. Nonetheless, as this is out of the scope of this study, we ignore discussing it and presenting evidences about it.

- A. Conflict with the outer appearance of the noble Qur'ān verses, including the “covenant” verse (Qur'ān 7: 172)
- B. Conflict with the narrations that imply the monotheistic inward of all humans.
- C. The implication of the theme of ṭīnat narrations with predestination and rejection of human volition in choosing between the paths of blissfulness and wretchedness (Māzandarānī, 1962, vol. 8: 4, commented by Sha'rānī).

Thus, the discussion on the verses related to ṭīnat has grabbed the attention of hadīth researchers and each researcher has tried to give in his response to solve the problems associated with these narrations. Accordingly, the main question of this article regards the evaluation of the answer provided by Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī to the problems of the ṭīnat narrations. Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī is one of the thinkers who have tried to present a comprehensive model to analyze the content of ṭīnat traditions and to show that this group of narrations is congruent with the intellectual-doctrinal system of Twelver Shī'a.

Valuable studies have been carried out on the ṭīnat traditions and their content problems. Most of these studies have focused on answering the problem of the inconsistency of the narrations with the human volition and incongruence with the divine justice teaching. Some examples include “Bāzkāwīyī aḥādīth ṭīnat: rawzani'ī bi baḥth dar sirisht wa ikhtiyāri insān” (Abul-Qāsimī, 2011: 143-162), “Ṭīnat wa 'adli ilāhī” (Dhākīrī, 2014: 111-127), “Riwāyāti ṭīnat wa ikhtiyāri insān” (Riḍwānī, 2016: 47-73), and “Taḥlīlī aḥādīthi ṭīnat wa rābiṭiyi ān bā ikhtiyāri insān” (Fadāyī Iṣfahānī, 2016: 89-122). Authors of these articles have undertaken thematic analyses of the narrations and semantic analysis of ṭīnat to answer the posed problems. The article “Akhbāri ṭīnat” (Naqīzādī, 2006: 183-211) has classified the opinions of hadīth researchers in this regard, and the article “Taḥlīlī aḥādīthi ṭīnat az manzari fiqh al-hadīth” (Karīmī, 2017: 65-84) have adopted the fiqh al-hadīth (contextual study of traditions) to esoterically interpret these narrations based on the divine knowledge. However, some studies have expressed the opinions of some contemporary Twelver Shī'a thinkers such as Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī and Imām Khumaynī to help readers understand the discussion. Examples include the articles “Dīdgāhi Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī pīrāmūnia ḥādīthi ṭīnat dar tabīyni sa'ādat wa shiqāwati insān” (Maḥmūdī, 2016: 77-90) and “Barrisīyi nisbati ṭīnat wa ikhtiyār bā tikiyi bar dīdgāhi Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī wa Imām Khumaynī” (Aṣlānī, 2017: 41-58). The important point is that the first article of this group has made grave mistakes in understanding Allāma's viewpoint due to its inconsideration of his intellectual-philosophical principles, while the second article has only provided a comparative study of the viewpoints of Allāma and Imām Khumaynī and has tried to solve the problems of ṭīnat narrations via combining the views of these two thinkers. It should be noted that the previously conducted studies have not precisely depicted Allāma's viewpoint, have not listed his hidden intellectual principles, and have not appropriately analyzed his solution to the forsouling problem. Thus, the attainment of a true understanding of Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī's efforts in this regard and evaluation of his viewpoint to these traditions are necessary.

### 1. The content analysis of ṭīnat traditions

Since Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī's analysis is based on the content classification of ṭīnat traditions and because of the higher validity of the book *Kāfi*, we adopt the classification of this book to explicate the content and themes of ṭīnat narrations.

As mentioned previously, Kulaynī has presented ṭīnat narrations in the book *Kāfi* in three sections:

- A. The narrations of the first section only refer to the difference between the ṭīnat (nature) of believers and disbelievers, without expressing the reason for this difference. One of the most important ṭīnat traditions that has been repeatedly mentioned in various Shī'a hadīth collections and has been narrated by Kulaynī in the first section of reports on ṭīnat is the fourth tradition of this section<sup>1</sup> (Kulaynī, 2008, vol. 2: 302; vol. 3: 13-14).

By reading the text of the narrations, especially after looking at other narrative texts of this section, we can say that the main content of these narrations are as follows:

1. Except for unknown transmitter Abī Nahshal, all transmitters of this narration are among the trusted Twelver Shī'a. Moreover, the beginning part of this narration has been mentioned by Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Khālīd Barqī in the book *Maḥāsin* (Al-Maḥāsin, vol. 1: 132) as well as Ṣaffār in *Baṣā'ir al-darajāt* (vol. 1: 15) (to see more, q.v. Kulaynī, 2008, vol. 3: 13, comment 5).

1. The praiseworthy God has created both the hearts and bodies of the prophets and Imāms (a) from ‘Illīyīn nature. It seems that hearts – as opposed to bodies – refer to the souls of prophets and Imāms (q.v. Māzandarānī, 1962, vol. 8: 3, commented by Sha‘rānī).
  2. The believers’ hearts have been created from ‘Illīyīn nature and their bodies from a nature inferior to that; thus, they have a mixed creation.
  3. The believers’ hearts are created from heavenly and ‘Illīyīn nature and the disbelievers’ hearts are created from hellish and sijjīn nature.
  4. The hearts of believers and disbelievers tend to the same matter from which they are created. Some humans are inclined to each other, and the similarity existing in their natures sets the ground for this congruence. Therefore, some people (i.e., the Shī‘as) love the family of the Prophet (s).
  5. It is mentioned in Hammād’s narration that after the praiseworthy God created the believers from ‘Illīyīn nature and the disbelievers from sijjīn nature, He mixed these two natures. Then, the effect of this mixture is suggested as believers being born from disbelievers and disbelievers being born from believers.
  6. The moral and behavioral differences among the humans originate from their ṭīnat. Believers commit negative deeds because their main nature (‘Illīyīn) is mixed with sijjīn nature. In this same way, disbelievers do good deeds because their main nature (sijjīn) is mixed with ‘Illīyīn nature.
  7. It is emphasized in the second narration of this section that the believer’s ṭīnat is such that he does not abandon his faith. Similarly, disbelievers and enemies of Ahl al-Bayt (a) do not abandon their enmity.
- B. The second groups of ṭīnat narrations in *Kāfī* are mentioned under the title “another section in which the first duty is added.” In all three narrations presented in this section by Kulaynī, it is noted that an order by the sublime God was given to the humans in the previous worlds that was obeyed by People of the Right and was disobeyed but People of the Left (Kulaynī, 2008, vol. 3: 19-23). In addition to the points that also exist in the first group of narrations, there are two more important points in this group of narrations:
1. These narrations refer to the responsibility of the human of the pre-existence world. After God divided the humans into the People of the Right and the People of the Left, He ordered them to enter the fire. Of course, the People of the Left asked God for forgiveness and so were examined once again, but were unsuccessful in the second examination as well.
  2. After this examination, the obedient and sinful people were fixed and no change could be made thereafter. Thus, none of the members of these two groups can move into the other group.
  3. The third group of ṭīnat narrations have connected ṭīnat topic with the narrations of the pre-existence world to explain the reason and philosophy behind the difference among humans’ natures.

Imām Bāqir (a) have referred to the covenant taken by God for His Lordship and the prophethood of every prophet originating from Adam. He expresses the philosophy of this covenant and then notes the difference among the humans’ natures (Kulaynī, 2008, vol. 2: 9-10).

The following points can be extracted from these narrations:

1. The sublime God got a covenant from all humans with any characteristics about His Lordship and prophethood of His prophets so that the humans worship Him and do not deem anything as His partner, and believe in His prophets and follow them.
2. God created Adam and his lineage with different natures based on His infinite, permeating knowledge. Thus, all differences among humans have been made based on the divine knowledge and will (ibid).
3. The reason for these differences is that God wants to examine the humans through this in this world and in different conditions (ibid).

## 2. Hadīth researchers’ view to ṭīnat teaching

Based on their view to suchlike traditions, the Shī‘a thinkers can be put into three groups.

A. Scholars that have avoided commenting about the content of these narrations and have deemed understanding them as difficult. An example of this group of scholars is Allāma Majlisī. He takes ṭīnat narrations as ambiguous reports and unclear traditions and addresses the way scholars have treated these narrations (Majlisī, 1983, vol. 15: 7).

In *Mir'āt al-'uqūl*, Majlisī – without judging the forsouling narrations – finishes the explication of the narrations. However, in *Bihār al-Anwār*, he introduces ṭīnat narrations as ambiguous and uncertain narrations that cannot be understood by the limited human minds. Thus, he deems their knowledge only to be in the hands of the Infallible Imāms (a) (Majlisī, 1982, vol. 5: 260-261).

B. Researchers that have absolutely rejected these traditions and have questioned the validity of their chains of transmission or their issuance: Sha'rānī – as a proponent of this second theory – has deemed suchlike narrations as incongruent with the content of qur'ānic verses, definitive conduct of the prophet, and consensus of Twelver Shī'a scholars, and as against intellectual arguments. In an explanation he has written on the commentary of Māzandarānī (Māzandarānī, 1962, vol. 8: 4) on *Kāfī*, he writes that all traditions of the section “the nature of believer and disbeliever” have weak chains of transmission. The two following sections entail some valid traditions, but these traditions have discrepancies with the Shī'a principles and fiṭrat (inward) narrations (Naqīzādi, 2006: 196). According to this stance, commitment to the content and themes of ṭīnat narrations is neither necessary nor correct, so these narrations should be disregarded. Of course, some scholars (Majlisī, 1983, vol. 5: 261; 1984, vol. 7: 15) have casted doubt on the source of their issuance rather than deeming their chains of transmission to be weak (Naqīzādi, 2006: 197).

C. Thinkers that in line with accepting the issuance of these traditions, have tried to interpret and analyze them and have presented analyses of their content. This viewpoint is based on the acceptance of ṭīnat narrations and has adopted a traditionist, mystic, or philosophical approach to explicate them. The main explications presented for the ṭīnat traditions are as follows:

1. Ṭīnat narrations metaphratically refer to a level of divine knowledge, i.e., in these narrations, only God's knowledge of the humans' blissfulness and wretchedness is mentioned, and this knowledge does not mean rejecting the human volition and power (Ḥillī, 2000: 384). Mullā Ṣāliḥ Māzandarānī, too, adds the point that God's a priori knowledge has had effects in the initial creation of the human from 'Illīyīn and sijjīn natures; however, he does not take God's knowledge and human creation from two different natures as the reasons for the actions performed by the Servants (Māzandarānī, 1962, vol. 8: 5). Shubbar, too, accepts this theory and uses a divine tradition to support his viewpoint (Shubbar, 1951, vol. 13: 1).
2. Based on the narrations, God has tried humans three times before this world and has bound them to some responsibilities. The volitional behaviors of the humans in these afflictions have led to the distinctiveness of their creation (Malikī Mīyānījī, 1994: 154; Māzandarānī, 1962, vol. 8: 131). In the light of such an interpretation, the creation of humans from good or bad nature is the result of their faith or disbelief in the previous worlds, not its cause, and so these traditions do not imply predestination and rejection of free will.
3. Ṭīnat narrations imply the existence of different talents in people as well as individuals' different capabilities to accept the divine guidance (Majlisī, 1983, vol. 5: 260).
4. Adopting an esoteric interpretation stance and dividing the worlds into three levels of jabarūt, malakūt, and mulk, Fayḍ Kāshānī talks about the effect of each of these levels on the creation and nature of the human. He takes 'Illīyīn as implying the highest and nearest level to God and sijjīn as the lowest and farthest level from Him. Thus, the attribution of the creation of believers' souls and hearts to 'Illīyīn and the creation of the disbelievers' hearts to the lowest level is because of their tendency and strength of love (Fayḍ Kāshānī, 1985, vol. 25: 4-27).

### 3. Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī and ṭīnat narrations

In his various works, Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī has made great efforts to explain and elucidate ṭīnat narrations. He has extensively commented on this issues in *Tafsīr al-mīzān*, *Rasā'il tawḥīdī*, *Ta'līqāt*

*bar Kāfī*, and *Ta'liqāt bar Biḥār al-anwār*. The discussions of Allāma in this regard can be divided into some general parts.

### A) Criticism of *ḥīnat* traditions via *hadīth* studies

In *Ta'liqāt bar Biḥār al-anwār*, Allāma criticizes those narration transmitters who have mixed the narration of the related section and writes, “The narrations of the *ḥīnat* section does not involve only one issue; rather, each one of the *ḥīnat* issues, delivery of deeds, beginning of creation, getting covenant, and covenant in the pre-existence world is a different issue related to the destiny and general will of God” (Majlisī, 1983, vol. 5: 276).

### B) Presentation of the problems related to *ḥīnat* narrations

In *Ta'liqāt bar Kāfī*, Allāma writes that *ḥīnat* narrations imply the creation of the blissful from ‘Illīyīn nature and the creation of the wretched from *sijjīn* nature, and that the blissfulness and wretchedness of each person is based on his nature. He then suggests that the content of these narrations suffers from two problems:

1. Opposition to the outer appearance of the *qur'ānic* verses
2. Implication of determinism and rejection of human volition

Of course, Allāma tries to answer both problems, and his responses in fact originates from his explanation of these narrations (Kulaynī, 2008, vol. 3: 9). In *Tafsīr al-mīzān*, too, he poses some problems on the consideration of human blissfulness and wretchedness as essential:

1. The essential blissfulness/ wretchedness contradicts the absolute possession of the praiseworthy God and requires limiting His dominance. This is against the *Qur'ān*, traditions, and reason.
2. Such a condition needs distortion in the intellectual system of all intellectuals, because the basis of all intellectuals confirms the effect of education and training, and every intellectual agrees that some deeds are good and praiseworthy and some deeds are vice and blameworthy.
3. Such a stance requires that divine legislation and the descension of heavenly scriptures and prophets are fruitless, because according to this stance, the separation phenomena from their essences is impossible, while the noble *Qur'ān* clearly opposes these requirements repeatedly (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1996, vol. 8: 95).

### C) Classification of *ḥīnat* traditions in *Tafsīr al-mīzān*

Allāma presents a comprehensive narrative discussion about blissfulness and wretchedness narrations and the traditions about the early creation of human in *Tafsīr al-mīzān* under the noble verse “... such as He created you in the beginning, so shall ye return” (*Qur'ān* 7:29). He then writes,

Although these narrations have different content, all of them suggest that the return of the human is like the beginning of his creation and everyone who is guided at the end has been guided in the beginning and the misled has been misled from the beginning. However, these narrations and verses are not to prove the essential blissfulness and wretchedness, and what they prove about the human is not similar to proving that [for example] number 4 is an even number (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1996, vol. 8: 95).

He then divides the narrations of this section into five groups:

1. Narrations that imply that God has created the humans in two types: blissful and wretched (believer and disbeliever). An example is the narration by Abī Al-Jārūd from Imām Bāqir (a) who said, “When He created them, He created them as believer and disbeliever and blissful and wretched, and they will return in the Resurrection Day as guided and misled” (‘Arūsī Ḥuwayzī, 1994, vol. 2: 18).

He does not take this group of narrations as suffering from grave problems, because first, there are some verses of the noble *Qur'ān* that agree with this group of narrations, e.g., “It is He Who has created you; and of you are some that are Unbelievers, and some that are Believers” (*Qur'ān* 64:2) and “He knows you well when He brings you out of the earth, And when ye are hidden in your mothers' wombs. Therefore justify not yourselves: He knows best who it is that guards against evil” (*Qur'ān* 53:32).

Second, the linguistic context of the verses imply that the divine destiny has divided the humankind into

two types, but the explanation of this implication and the point that who belongs to which of the two groups are related to the volitional acts of the individuals, because guidance or misguidance are related to volitional acts (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1996, vol. 8: 97).

2. Narrations that comprehensively imply that the praiseworthy God has created the humans differently: those who are created from a heavenly nature will finally go to Paradise and those who are created from hellish nature will return to Hell.
3. The third group of narrations in this section are those that introduce the creation of the human from fresh and bitter/salty water. An example is a narration from Imām Ṣādiq (a) in the book *'Ilal al-sharā'iyi'* (Ṣadūq, 1966, vol. 1: 82).

Of course, Allāma deems the narrations of the third group as “interpreter of ṭīnat narrations.”

4. The fourth group regards narrations that take the difference in creation to be based on the difference between light and darkness (ibid: 117).

Allāma takes the origin of this group of narrations to the same narrations that imply the origin of creation to be from 'illiyīn and sijjīn natures. The only difference is that in the fourth group of narrations, it is added that the human is turned into light or darkness after his creation. The reason for this suggestion might be that the blissful nature leads to the appearance of the right and knowledge, while the wretched nature accompanies ignorance (darkness).

5. The fifth group of reports in this section regards the narrations that imply the delivery of wretched people's good deeds to the blissful people's records of deeds and conversely the delivery of the bad deeds of the blissful people to wretched people's records of deeds (ibid, vol. 2: 609).

This classification clearly shows that at least the traditions of the second to fourth groups are about ṭīnat, and these narrations are the problematic ones discussed by Allāma in his various works. After grouping ṭīnat narrations, Allāma sets out to explain the themes of these narrations and respond those problems.

#### **D) Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī's analysis of ṭīnat teaching and his responses to the problems**

Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī's responses to the problems posed against the humans' essential blissfulness and wretchedness can be expressed in several stages:

1. In response to the problem on the opposition of ṭīnat traditions with the qur'ānic verses, Allāma mentions various verses, expresses the qur'ānic bases of the intended narrations, and rejects the conflict of this group of verses with ṭīnat narrations.
2. Allāma believes that ṭīnat traditions imply that the components of human body are made of an earthly matter, and the earthly matter has come to be called heavenly or hellish nature because of the differences in its qualities, that is, it is related to the human conditions and the various traits related to virtue or corruption. The other point is that the blend of the earthly matter present in the human body is different from person to person exactly like plants or any other creature created from the earthly matter because of the differences in the earthly matter samples. He believes that this part of the traditions content is absolutely sound and faultless, provided that the relationship between the earthly matter and the human blissfulness/ wretchedness is deemed “contingency” rather than “absolute cause” (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1996, vol. 8: 99).

Allāma uses experience to support the contingent effect of the earthly matter on the human destiny, and deems experience as corroborating the relationship among natures and the negative moral effects in the human soul. Thus, it gets clear that physical characteristics do not have a definitive and inviolable effects, but rather, they are considered merely as talents, although after then the temperaments become eternal (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 2009: 108).

3. In the next stage, Allāma tries to bring the effectiveness of the human nature and his volitional acts on his blissfulness/ wretchedness in one way or another and respond the problem of the accompaniment of ṭīnat narrations with predestination via introducing the effect of nature as partial cause. Through dividing the world of existence into several levels – after the divine essence into the three levels of “world of reason”, “world of forms”, and “world of matter” – and accepting the substantial movement, he explains the effect of nature on the human destiny. From his viewpoint, the creatures with abstract

soul get changed through substantial movement and turn into imaginary abstract (intermediary) beings or move beyond this level through substantial movement. Thus, all these types might even get to the intellectual noumena after getting abstract. On the other hand, by accepting the principle “the returning of ends to beginnings”, he believes that the last type the creatures move into in their evolutionary path through substantial movement is the same level they have descended from (ibid: 107-108).

Based on these introductory points, he concludes that the humans’ soul is created at the beginning due to the substantial movement of the body; it is at this time that “imagination” begins its activities. At this stage, the soul highly resembles body; however, this similarity is not at a level to make it eternal. It is from this stage that soul, due to factors such as type of training, knowledge, beliefs, and events occurring in relation to it, moves on in a constant path and receives an accumulation of moods and beliefs up to a point these moods and beliefs permeate and accompany it. The result of this movement of soul is a special form of soul that distinguishes individuals from each other, i.e., diversity of souls. Thus, if this form is the blissfulness form, that soul will be in the blissfulness path in the intermediary world, and if it is the wretchedness form, that soul will be in the wretchedness path, and if its abstraction is intermediary, it will stop at that stage, and if is beyond it, it passes over that stage. Allāma finally concludes based on these introductory points that a phenomenon in its returning route resides at the same level from which it has originated (ibid: 109).

This way, Allāma tries to show in another way how both the initial nature of the human (as the beginning of their creation) and the ensuing actions and education of them during their lifetime affect their destiny as either blissful or wretched. In this way, he tries to respond the problem of the accompaniment of *ḥīnat* narrations with predestination through introducing the effect of *ḥīnat* as partial cause.

4. At the end of his explication of *ḥīnat* narrations, Allāma suggests another solution for responding to the problems posed against the content of these narrations. He deems the realization of the blissfulness and wretchedness of the human dependent on the actualization of his perception, and since perception is free from matter, it is not bound to the limitations of matter, including time (amount of movement). Thus, although it might seem to us that blissfulness is realized after the movement of matter toward actualization, the reality is that since blissfulness – i.e., perception – is abstract, it is not bound to time. Therefore, the blissfulness that appears after the movement of matter has exactly existed before the movement. Allāma counts this issue like attribution of accidental issues to the action of the sublime God.

Thus, since the blissfulness and wretchedness of the human depends on the abstractness of his knowledge, which is abstract and out of time boundaries, he can be described as blissful or wretched before the lifetime of the human continues. Similarly, due to the relationship of the human destiny with his actions, blissfulness and wretchedness can be deemed as emanating from actions (Ṭabāṭabā’ī, 1996, vol. 8: 101).

5. In his explication of the fifth group of narrations that imply the delivery of the good deeds of the wretched people to the blissful people’s records of deeds and the delivery of the bad deeds of the righteous people to the wretched people’s record of deeds, Allāma takes this ruling as a divine decree that is in line with the seeming worldly ruling and its social life orders. That is, when the Resurrection Day is the day for the manifestation of inwards and appearance of right, then definitely the rulings will be divine on that day (ibid: 106).

### **E) Explication of Allāma’s viewpoint**

Taking some philosophical principles as the bases of his discussion, Allāma tries to intellectually explicate *ḥīnat* narrations. These principles are as follows.

#### **1. Longitudinal system of the world and the division of the world into three levels**

According to the philosophical teachings and Ṣadrian theosophy, the creatures of the world of being lower than the essence, names, and attributes of God are at three levels. According to this suggestion, these levels are the world of abstract intellect, the world of forms, and the world of matter (Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, 1981: 320-321). Allāma Ṭabāṭabā’ī takes the dependence of each of these worlds onto the



other ones as the dependence of effect on cause and the incomplete being on the complete being. Therefore, the form of what is realized in the world of matter matches with the forms that exist in the world of forms. Similarly, the forms existing in the world of forms match with what exists in the world of abstract intellect. Therefore, the system existing in the lower world is definitely realized in the higher world with not change and transformation, because the existential realization in the lower world needs a cause in the higher world (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 2009: 92; 1996, vol. 2: 290-302).

## **2. The difference between contingency and absolute cause**

From the viewpoint of Ṣadrīan philosophy, cause has two types. "Absolute cause" is attributed to something that functions as the basis for the existence of another thing. If it does not exist, the caused will necessarily not exist. However, "partial cause" or "non-absolute cause" refers to something that is the base of creation of something else, i.e., if it is absent, the caused will not exist, but its existence does not necessarily lead to the existence of the cause (Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, 1983, vol. 2: 127). Allāma accepts this point and believes that different phenomena do not have equal effects on each other. Some phenomena affect its caused in an absolute causation manner, while other phenomena have a contingent and partial causation effect (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 2007, vol. 2: 9).

## **3. The nature of soul and the substantial movement in the human soul**

Based on Mullā Ṣadrā's principles – i.e., consideration of existence as a graded issue and belief in substantial movement – matter is the lower level of existence and form is the higher level of existence. In his opinion, forms that are reflected in matter have the capability of existential intensification. The unification of these forms with matter is due to their existential weakness; however, via intensification in existence, they get free from it and continue to exist without it (Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, 1983, vol. 5: 300-301; vol. 9, 186-187 & 190). Based on this principle, Mullā Ṣadrā explicates "bodily accident" and "spiritual persistence" of the soul (ibid, vol. 8: 345-348; Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, 1984: 536-537). Therefore, soul does not have a fixed, unique level and its levels range from matter to reason and even beyond it. Soul moves from materiality to abstractness via substantial movement. In fact, soul is deemed as a unique, changing and moving existence. One existential limit of this being coincides with matter and body, but after existential intensification, abstractness is derived from it.

In line with Ṣadrīan philosophers, Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī believes in the bodily accident of the human soul. Based on this opinion and by accepting substantial movement (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 2007, vol. 2: 101), Allāma believes that the human soul can move beyond the world of matter and attain first the world of forms and then the world of abstract intellect.

## **4. How the soul perfects?**

From the viewpoint of transcendental theosophists, perfection and blissfulness are the very existence, and beings have different levels of perfection and imperfection; that is, any being that is purer than non-existence enjoys higher perfection and blissfulness. Moreover, the being's perception and wisdom are also perfection and blissfulness, and beings are different in perception. Thus, the perfection of soul and its levels are absolutely related to its existential intensity (Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, 1983, vol. 9: 121).

The intensity of soul existence increases its level from two dimensions: first, since the existence level is by itself a sign of perfectio level, and second as the soul and its faculties have stronger existence, they will be able to understand purer perceptions, and the purer the perception are, the higher the level of the perceiver – i.e., soul – will be. Therefore, Mullā Ṣadrā stipulates that the perfection and blissfulness of any faculty of soul is the perception of the matter that agrees with the disposition of that faculty, and since different faculties have different levels based on the different perceived things, they have different perfections, as well. That is, the more intense the faculty is, the higher the level of its perfection will be (ibid, vol. 22: 9).

Thus, Ṣadrā believes that the perceived forms are essences that rely on soul and unite with it. these perceived forms strengthen the soul essence and bring about substantial evaluations as a result of which soul changes from potential to actuality and perfects<sup>1</sup> (ibid, vol. 3: 320).

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1. To see more, q.v. Arshad Rīyāhī, 2012: 55-66.

### **5. Abstractness of perception and knowledge forms**

Şadrîans believe that knowledge forms are free from matter and faculty whatever they are imagined and whatever type they are, and if they are material, they should have material qualities such as division capability, temporality, and locationality; however, knowledge per se is neither dividable nor limited to time and place (ibid, vol. 8: 261-268; Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 2007, vol. 2: 151-155).

### **6. Ascription of time to the material world**

Mullā Şadrā does not take time as something out of body. Time and motion are the analytic consequences of physical substance and their difference is like the different of natural and mathematical body. Motion is the same connected, continuous identity of body and time is its quantitative specification (Muṭahharī, 2007, vol. 6: 140; Şadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, 1983, vol. 3: 140-141; Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 2007, vol. 2: 114-115). Nature has two type of continuation and quantity: one of them is sudden and locative and can be divided into locative prior and later, while the other is gradual and temporal that has imaginary division into temporal prior and later. Thus, time in the Şadrîan philosophy is deemed as the “fourth dimension” of physical substance (Akbarīyan, 2009: 17). Therefore, time belongs to things, and since body is inseparable from matter (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 2007, vol. 1: 173-178), time belongs to matter and things, and whatever is free from matter is not timed.

### **7. Analysis and evaluation**

It can be claimed that Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī has been a thinker who has tried to solve the problems of *ṭīnat* and explain it more seriously, scientifically, and comprehensively than others. However, the effort of Allāma might be questioned in some dimensions.

#### **A) analysis based on the philosophical principles rather than narrations content**

As we saw, Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī's analysis about *ṭīnat* narrations is mostly based on his philosophical principles and the worldview of Şadrîan theosophy, and without adopting the premises of Şadrîan theosophy principles one cannot construe these points. It should be noted that although Allāma's viewpoint is a worthwhile effort to solve the problems of these narrations, reference to the Twelver Shī'a narrations about the beginning of human creation shows that Allāma's response does not agree so much with these narrations.

#### **B) Faulty philosophical principles**

Most of the principles of Şadrîan theosophy employed in Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī's analysis are questionable. Some of these philosophical principles have serious rivals in other philosophical schools, and if we cannot prove the accuracy of one of these theories, it would not be possible to reasonably prefer these philosophical principles. Suchlike questions regard the definition of time, the factors effective on the perfection of soul, and substantial motion. Time is one of the hot topics of philosophy, which has received various opinions (Şadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, 1983, vol. 3: 142-144). Moreover, many criticisms have targeted the way human soul is perfected from perception and intellectual forms from the viewpoint of Şadrîans. The most important point in this regard has been than the perfection of soul based on perception is suggested based on the principle of subject and object unity. However, according to a famous report, Ibn Sīnā disagreed with this theory and criticized the unity viewpoint. He believed that the forms of things incarnate in soul, decorate soul, and soul turns into the home of those forms due to the material intellect (Ibn Sīnā, 1983, vol. 2: 212-213; Ṭūsī, 1996, vol. 3: 295-298).

Moreover, philosophers before Şadrā denied the substantial motion and accept movement only in the accidents. From their viewpoint, all substances – including soul – are fixed and no changes can be made into them. Accordingly, change in the substances is merely in the form of generation and corruption. In such a change, a form is annihilated and another form is generated and replaces it (Ibn Sīnā, 1983, vol. 1: 98).

#### **C) Disagreement with narrations content**

Aside from the fact that Allāma's analysis is presented based on Şadrîan philosophy principles, Allāma's explication does not agree with the content of traditions and narrative teachings. The most important problems in this direction are as follow.

1. The notion of the bodily accidentence of human soul and the co-occurrence of the human soul and body accidentence is rejected based on the narrative texts and from the viewpoint of the early Twelver Shī'a companions; the reason is that the mental succession of narrative evidences that imply the priority of the accidentence of soul over body is undeniable (q.v. Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, 1982: 239), and in the light of the problems posed against the intellectual evidences of the theory of the lack of priority of accidentence of soul over body, we don't have a reason to ignore the outer appearance of frequent narrative evidences (q.v. Muntazirī, 2015: 687-720).
2. Another problem is that Allāma takes ẓīnat traditions only related to body, and deems body as the only thing created form ẓīnat; however, the ẓīnat narrations evidently talk about the creation of hearts and souls from two types of ẓīnat. Of course, due to his special belief in the basis of the bodily accidentence of soul, he takes ẓīnat narrations as limited to the creation of bodies; because before the creation of body, the humans' souls are not individually exist.
3. Based on the narrations, all humans – before the worldly creation – have been with a soul and without any body in a stage of their existence. This stage is called in narrations as the world of “shadows” and “souls.” The important point is that according to the stipulation of some narrations, the human soul, too, has a material creation. As Imām Ṣādiq (a) says, “Soul is a soft body that has put on non-soft clothes” (Ṭabrisī, 1982, vol. 2: 349). On the other hand, according to the outer meaning of verses and narrations, the human has even a physical body in the afterlife, and the basis of resurrection is this very revival of the worldly body of the human from the graves<sup>1</sup>. For instance, when it was asked from Imām Ṣādiq that if the body of the dead decays, he said, “Yes, in a way that no flesh or bone remains from him, expect for the ẓīnat from which it has been created. This ẓīnat does not decay; rather, it remains in the grave so that it [the body] can be recreated from it the way it was created for the first time” (Kulaynī, 2008, vol. 5: 617).

Therefore, it can be said that the human always accompanies a material and bodily creation, and even time belongs to the material world<sup>2</sup>, the materialness of the creation of human soul and body is necessary in all worlds so that all stages of the human perfection can occur over time. Therefore, the other solution of Allāma does not agree with the qur'ānic and narrative themes. This solution introduces the blissfulness and wretchedness of human as dependent of the actualization of his perception, and does not bound perception to material limitations and rules due to its freedom from matter (one of these limitations is time, i.e., the movement quantity).

4. One of the solutions of Allāma to analyze ẓīnat traditions is the effectiveness of ẓīnat on the human destiny in a partial rather than absolute causation manner. However, with this analysis, the problem posed by figures such as Sha'rānī against these narrations remains unanswered, which regard them as opposition to the divine justice, because the requirement of such an explanation is that the distance of the humans to achieve blissfulness and wretchedness is not the same (i.e., the distance they should cover is far and near), because this contingent effect of good and bad nature on the human destiny is a kind of prejudice and unreasonable preference, which disagrees at least with the wisdom of the wise Agent.
5. Although by classification of the ẓīnat traditions, Allāma makes the analysis of these narrations easier, it seems that his analysis is void of a logical relationship between ẓīnat traditions and the traditions present in the sections related to it, such as pre-existence and covenant traditions, the natural disposition traditions, and the knowledge traditions. In other words, Allāma's effort to create ẓīnat tradition family and narration network is incomplete; in a way that we can say Allāma has disregarded in his analysis the traditions related to ẓīnat traditions. Of course, it seems that Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī's inattention to the traditions of pre-existence world, covenant, and innate disposition has been conscious,

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1. To see more, q.v. Afḍālī, 2011: 123-129.

2. The point that the Resurrection day and afterlife are void of time also disagrees with the outer appearance of verses and narrations, and derive mostly from the perception that the human is immaterial in the afterlife. Based on what we said, such a belief is baseless (to see more, q.v. Afḍālī, 2010: 61-66).

because he questions the occurrence of covenant in the worlds before this world and the introduction and presentation of God to the human in the world of pre-existence. He believes that doubts such as the priority of the accident of soul over body (which is rejected based on the principles of Ṣadrian theosophy) and the impossibility of gaining affirmative knowledge of the lordship and creatorship of the sublime God in a world other than this world are correctly applicable to the outer meaning of the traditions about the pre-existence world. Thus, he adopted a new analysis based on the longitudinal levels of existence to explicate the narrations about the world of covenant, and takes this covenant as related to the angelic world (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1996, vol. 8: 315-323).

### **Conclusion**

By classification of traditions, Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī precisely analyzes and explains the themes of *ḥīnat* traditions and addresses them unlike some other thinkers who have disregarded these narrations due to their outer disagreement with other religious teaching. By taking *ḥīnat* to mean the worldly matter that constitutes the human body, thus giving way to the human soul, Allāma takes the effect of *ḥīnat* on the human blissfulness and wretchedness at the contingency level, and in this way, removes the main problem posed against these narrations that expresses that these narrations suggest predestination and are in conflict with outer meaning of the qur'ānic verses and the intellectual thought system. However, Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī's analysis should be taken mostly a "philosophical analysis" that is designed based on the principles of "Ṣadrian theosophy." It seems that in the Twelver Shī'a narrations, these problems are removed based on the previous examinations and the volitional behavior of the human against it, and that the focus of these narrations is on expressing the reason for the differences in the humans' nature rather than their destiny. Thus, by reference to the Twelver Shī'a narrations about the beginning of the human creation, we can find out that Allāma's response is not so congruent with the narrative principles of Twelver Shī'a. Moreover, part of the knowledge and principles of transcendental theosophy such as the bodily accident of the human soul and the simultaneous accident of human soul and body disagree with the narrative teachings. It has also some other philosophical propositions. If we cannot prove the accuracy of one of these theories, their preference will be also without any reason. Some examples of these issues are the definition of time and the factors effective on the perfection of soul. Although the solution based on the contingent effect of *ḥīnat* on the human destiny is not based on the philosophical principles of transcendental theosophy, it is congruent with the divine justice and does not remove the problem of unreasonable prejudice in *ḥīnat*. Accordingly, Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī's analysis about the themes of *ḥīnat* narrations and his solution for the problems posed against these narrations does not seem to be acceptable.

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