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Ismā'īlī Preface

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

[1] When the divine providence pulled back the veil of waiting from the face of the writer of this draft and he was granted the privilege of serving the Prince of Iran, chief and pride of the worldlings, most magnificent chief, pride of the Arabs and Persians, Mu‘īn al-Dawla wa-al-Dīn, protector of Islam and Muslims, treasure of kings and sultans, the most noble pedigree in the world, Abū al-Shams—may God magnify his glory and conjoin his morning and evening with auspiciousness—and the time helped him with the attainment of the wish and the accomplishment of the desire, i.e., with granting the fortune and attaining the proximity and benefit of having a conversation with such a generous person and noble man, the kind temper of this unequalled [man] of the time. Even though he is aware of the subtleties of the sciences and the secrets of the inner meanings, nevertheless, in order that this privilege becomes perfect and this nobility whose most sincere of his servants attained continues, he became pleased to command a scientific discourse that had started about the treatise that is named the *Mu‘īniyya* and had already been composed for the flourishing library of this prince—may God magnify his glory. During those discussions, as a result of his perfect sharpness and extreme proficiency, a noble order was issued to furnish some explanatory notes where a statement was phrased in an ambiguous way or there was obscurity and

uncertainty in order that when one comes to study [it], [one's] mind does not weary from elucidating those concepts, and memory need not be reminded of an explanation. Thus, in conformity with [what was mentioned in] this introduction and because obeying a commandment is one of the requisites of service and conditions of compliance, these pages have been arranged so that under each designated chapter something of what occurs to this humble one's imagination may be penned, to the extent of [his] ability. God willing, it will be ennobled through the honor of [bringing] satisfaction and will be regarded with contentment. May God—may He be glorified and exalted—make the essence of this honorable [person] the source of virtue and the confluence of glorious deeds—He is the answerer of prayers and kind.