

Gleams

From between the Crescents of Ramadan and the Festival

Flowers from the Seeds of Reality

A short 'Mathnawi' and collection on the subject of belief
for the *Risale-i Nur* students

Bediuzzaman
SAID NURSI

NOTE

The reason this work entitled *Lemeat* (Gleams) is not about only one or two subjects like other collections (*diwan*), is that it was written in order to expound to a degree Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's previous work, *Hakikat Çekirdekleri* (Seeds of Reality), and in prose form; and it does not indulge in fancies and imaginings like other collections of poetry or in unbalanced emotion. It was written as scholarly instruction for some of his students, including his nephew who was assisting him, about the truths of the Qur'an and belief entirely in accordance with logic; it was a lesson about the Qur'an and belief. As Ustad himself said, and we understood the same thing, he had no propensity for verse and poetry, and did not occupy himself with them, portraying the meaning of *And We did not teach him poetry*.¹

Working every day for two or two and a half hours, this work was written in versified form in twenty days during Ramadan while Bediuzzaman was a member of the Darü'l-Hikmet and had numerous preoccupations. Although to write one page of verse is as difficult as writing ten of prose, and it was written in this short period of time, it was dictated 'extempore', without study, and was published without being changed or corrected. In our opinion it is a marvel on account of the *Risale-i Nur*. There has been no other versified collection of poetry that can be read in straightforward manner, as though it was prose, like this one.² God willing, this work will at some time be a sort of Mathnawi for the *Risale-i Nur* students. It is also a sort of index of the *Risale-i Nur*, which appeared ten years subsequently and was completed in twenty-three years; a sort of forerunner of the *Risale-i Nur*, giving the good tidings of its major parts.

The *Risale-i Nur* students,
Sungur, Mehmed Feyzi, Hüsvrev

¹ Qur'an, 36:69

² NOTE ON THE TRANSLATION: While attempting to convey the meaning as faithfully as possible, the present translation has not attempted to reflect the versified aspects of the original. It is hoped that since, as was stated above, the work was written primarily to convey the author's ideas, the readers will benefit, despite the loss of many of the subtleties. [Tr.]

W A R N I N G

In accordance with the rule ‘A man is hostile to what he does not know,’ I have attached no importance to the rules of versification and rhyme, since I do not know them. I at no time wanted to transform reality to comply with the demands of versification, as though sacrificing lucidity to rhyme. I have clothed the most exalted truths in a rumpled dress in this unversified, unrhymed piece. Firstly, I did not know any better and was only thinking of the meaning. Secondly, I wanted to demonstrate my criticism of those poets who chip away and file the body to suit the clothes. Thirdly, a childish style such as this was preferred in order to busy the instinctual soul as well as the heart during Ramadan. But, my reader, I confess I made a mistake. Beware, do not do likewise! Don’t be distracted by the torn style and so be disrespectful towards its exalted truths!

S T A T E M E N T O F I N T E N T I O N

O Reader! I confess in advance that I have many complaints about my abilities in the art of writing and versification. Even now I cannot write my name properly. Nor have I made versification and metre a chapter of my life. But suddenly my mind was beset by a persistent desire for verse. There is an epic about the expeditions of the Companions called *Qawl-i Nawala Sisaban*. Its natural verse, like a hymn, was pleasing to my spirit. So I chose its form of verse, but in a way particular to myself. I wrote some poetry which resembled verse, but I took absolutely no pains with the metre. Anyone who wishes may read it easily as prose without thinking of the versification. Also it should be thought of as prose so that the meaning may be understood. In every section there is a pointer to the meaning. It should not depend on rhyme. A hat may be without a tassel, and metre may be without rhyme, and verse without rules. I think that if the words and versification attract the attention to themselves through their art, they busy the mind with themselves. It is better to be at odds and ends in order not to distract attention from the meaning.

My master in this work was the Qur’an; my book was life; the one I addressed, myself. And you, my reader, are my listener. The listener has no

right to criticize; he takes what pleases him, and ignores what he does not like. This work of mine proceeded from the effulgence of blessed Ramadan,³ so it is my hope that it will have an effect on the hearts of my brothers in religion, and their tongues will utter a prayer of forgiveness for me, or recite a *Fatiha*, God willing.

The Suppliant

*My demolished grave in which are piled up⁴
Seventy-nine dead Said's⁵ with his sins and sorrows.
The eightieth is a gravestone to a grave;
Altogether they weep at Islam's decline.⁶
Together with my gravestone and moaning grave of dead Said's
I go forward to the field of tomorrow's future.
I am certain that the skies of the future and Asia
Will together surrender to Islam's clean, shining hand.
For it promises the prosperity of belief;
It affords peace and security to mankind.*

³ In fact, the date it was written is signified by the line, "*Najm adabin wulida li-hilalay Ramadan*;" that is, "A literary star born of the two crescents of Ramadan." It makes 1337. [1337 according to the Rumi calendar. According to the Hijri calendar, it was 1339. 1st Ramadan, 1339 fell on 8th May, 1921. –Tr.]

⁴ This line is his signature.

⁵ Since the body is renewed twice every year, it means that [each year] two Said's have died. Also, this year Said is in his seventy-ninth year. It means one Said has died every year, so that he will live to this date. [Bediuzzaman died in 1379 according to the Hijri calendar, and his grave was demolished and moved in 1380. –Tr.]

⁶ With a premonition of the future, he perceived its present state, twenty years later.

*In the Name of God, the Merciful,
the Compassionate.
All praise be to God, the Sustainer of All the Worlds,
and peace and blessings be upon Muhammad,
the Chief of His Messengers, and on all his Family and Companions*

Two Sublime Proofs of the Affirmation of Divine Unity

In its entirety the universe is a supreme proof; it declares God's glory and unity with both its manifest and its unseen tongues. Yes, it recites the unity of the Most Merciful in resounding voice, saying:

THERE IS NO GOD BUT HE!

All its particles and cells, all its parts and members, are tongues mentioning God. Together they declare in that resounding voice:

THERE IS NO GOD BUT HE!

The tongues are various, the voices of differing pitch, but they are united on one point: the mentioning of Him, saying:

THERE IS NO GOD BUT HE!

It is the macroanthropos; it mentions God in high-sounding voice, while all its parts and particles join their tiny voices to its mighty voice. In unison they declare:

THERE IS NO GOD BUT HE!

The world recites the Qur'an's verses within its circle for God's remembrance, the Qur'anic dawn spills forth its light. All beings with spirits express this idea:

THERE IS NO GOD BUT HE!

The Glorious Criterion of Truth and Falsehood, articulate proof of Divine unity, all of whose verses are truthful tongues, all its rays are flashes of belief. All together they declare:

THERE IS NO GOD BUT HE!

If you lay your ear on the breast of that Criterion, in its profoundest depths you will hear clearly a heavenly voice which recites:

THERE IS NO GOD BUT HE!

Its voice is utterly exalted, utterly serious, truly sincere, most familiar; it is utterly convincing, decked out with proofs. Repeatedly it declares:

THERE IS NO GOD BUT HE!

All six aspects are transparent in this enlightened proof: upon it is the shining stamp of miraculousness; in this shines the light of guidance, which says:

THERE IS NO GOD BUT HE!

Yes, beneath it is interwoven logic and elegant proof; on its right is its questioning the intelligence; the mind affirms it on its every side, saying:

THERE IS NO GOD BUT HE!

On its left is its calling on the conscience to testify; before it is pure good; its aim is happiness and prosperity. Its key is every instant:

THERE IS NO GOD BUT HE!

Its support beyond it is heavenly: unadulterated Divine revelation. All these six aspects are luminous, manifested in its constellations,

THERE IS NO GOD BUT HE!

Can any thieving suspicion, any stealthy doubt, any renegade delusion steal in on that resplendent castle with its walls of lofty Suras, every word of which is an angel uttering:

THERE IS NO GOD BUT HE!?

The Qur'an of Mighty Stature is an ocean affirming Divine unity. To take a single drop as an example, a single Sura: Sura al-Ikhlās.⁷ Only a single, slight allusion out of innumerable allusions: its six phrases, three negative, three positive, refute all kinds of ascription of partners to God, and prove seven aspects of the affirmation of Divine unity:

The First Phrase: Say, He is is unassociated. That is, it is defined as absolute. But within that definition is a specification:

THERE IS NO 'HE' BUT HE

This is an allusion to the experiential (*shuhud*) affirmation of Divine unity. If the reality-perceiving gaze becomes immersed in the affirmation of Divine unity, it says:

THERE IS NOTHING OBSERVED SAVE HE!

The Second Phrase: God, The One is an explicit affirmation of the unity of the Godhead. Reality declares in the tongue of truth:

⁷ Sura 112.

THERE IS NOTHING FIT TO BE WORSHIPPED SAVE HE!

The Third Phrase: *God, the Eternally Besought One.* This is the shell of two pearls of the affirmation of Divine unity. The first is the affirmation of the unity of Divine dominicality. Yes, it declares with the tongue of the order of the universe:

THERE IS NO CREATOR SAVE HE!

The second pearl is the affirmation of the unity of Divine Self-Subsistence. Yes, the universe in its entirety declares through the tongue of need for an effectual power, both for its coming into being and its continued existence:

THERE IS NO SELF-SUBSISTENT SAVE HE!

The Fourth Phrase: *He begets not.* This conceals the affirmation of the unity of Divine Glory, rejecting every sort of ascription of partners to God. It decisively refutes disbelief. That is, one who is subject to change or division, or who reproduces, can be neither God, nor Creator, nor Self-Subsistent.

The negation, *lam* (not), refutes the idea of offspring, or the blasphemy of paternity, and rejects them.

The greater part of man's misguidance has arisen from this association of partners with God at various times, in the form of 'the ten intellects,' or the angels, or Jesus (PUH) or Uzayr being Divine offspring.

The Fifth Phrase: *And neither is He begotten* indicates the affirmation of Divine pre-eternity and unity. Thus: one whose existence is not necessary or pre-eternal cannot be God. That is, one created in time, or born of physical matter, or descended from a progenitor, cannot be the universe's protector.

Causality, the worship of stars, idolatry, and Naturalism: these are all varieties of the association of partners with God, all stages of misguidance.

The Sixth: *And there is none like unto Him.* This is a comprehensive affirmation of Divine unity. That is, the negating *lam* infers that He has no like, partner, or peer either in His essence, or in His attributes, or in His actions.

In meaning, each of these six phrases is the result of the others, and the proof of the others; proofs in sequence, set in order in the fortress of this Sura.

That is to say, included in Sura al-Ikhlās appropriately to its stature are thirty suras in sequence and order, a source of their effulgent dawn.

None knows the Unseen save God

Causes Are Purely Apparent

Divine grandeur and dignity require that natural causes are but a screen to the Hand of Power in the mind's eye,
While Divine unity and glory require that natural causes draw back their hands and have no true effect in the works of power.⁸

Existence Is Not Restricted to the Physical World

The innumerable sorts of existence could not be restricted to this manifest world; it could not contain them;
The physical world but is a lace veil strewn over the irradiating worlds of the Unseen.

The Universality of the Pen of Power Proclaims Divine Unity

The skilful works of art found in every corner of creation clearly refute the creativity of causes;
The inscriptions of the Pen of Power in every point of creation necessarily reject the existence of intermediaries.

Nothing Can Exist Without Everything Else

Throughout the universe the mystery of co-operation is both concealed and pervasive; intimated in every part of it are mutual assistance and the reciprocal answering of needs.
Only an all-encompassing power could do this, and create the particle, situating it suitably to all its relations.
Every line and word of the book of the world is living; need drives each, acquaints one with the other.
Wherever they come from, they respond to the call for help; in the name of Divine unity, they meet with their surroundings.
Every living word has a face and eye that looks to all the sentences.

⁸ This means they should refrain from having any true effect, and not interfere in creation.

**The Sun's Motion Is For Gravity,
And Gravity Makes Stable the Solar System**

The sun is a fruit-bearing tree; it shakes itself so that the planets fall not, its fruits.
If it rested in silence, the attraction would cease; and they would weep through space, its
ecstasies.

Small Things Are Tied To Big Things

Certainly, the one who created the mosquito created both the sun and the Milky Way;
And the one who ordered the flea's stomach clearly set in order the solar system;
While the one who gave sight to the eye and need to the stomach, definitely painted the
sky's eye with light and spread a table of foods over the face of the earth.

There is a Miraculousness in the Order of the Universe

See, there is a miraculousness in the writing of the universe; if to suppose the impossible
all natural causes were effective agents possessing will,
In utter impotence they would prostrate before its miraculousness, conforming to it and
declaring:
"Glory be to You! We have no power! It is You Who is the All-Glorious Pre-Eternal
Possessor of Power, O our Sustainer!"

Everything is Equal Before Divine Power

*Your creation and your resurrection are but as a single soul.*⁹

Divine power is essential, inherent; impotence cannot impinge on it.
There can be no degrees in it, obstacles cannot intervene in it. For power, there is no
difference between universal and particular;
For everything is tied to everything else; one who cannot make everything can make
nothing.

⁹ Qur'an, 31:28.

**Without Holding the Universe in One's Hand,
One Cannot Create a Particle**

To raise up the earth together with innumerable suns and stars and string them in order
like prayer-beads,
And to place them on the head and chest of endless space – no one's hand has the
strength for this.
There is nothing in the world that can claim to create anything.

Raising a Species to Life Is The Same as Raising to Life an Individual

Just as raising to life a fly drowsy with death-tainted sleep presents no difficulty to
Divine power,
So will neither the death of the earth nor its resurrection present any difficulty.
Nor will raising to life all beings with spirits present much problem.

Nature Is Divine Art

Nature is not the printer, it is the press;
It is not the inscriber, but the inscription; it is not the doer, it is the recipient; It is not the
source, but the pattern. It is not the orderer, it is the order;
It is not the power, but the law; it is a code of laws proceeding from the attribute of will;
it has no external reality.

The Conscience Recognizes God Through Attraction

In the conscience is an attraction, a being drawn; it is permanently drawn through the
attraction of an attractive force.
If the All-Beauteous One were to appear, if He were to be manifested permanently in
refulgent fashion without veil, conscious beings would be overcome by ecstasy.
Man's conscious nature testifies decisively to a Necessarily Existent, One of Glory and
Beauty;
It testifies through the ecstasy, and the attraction.

Innate Disposition Speaks the Truth

The innate disposition of things does not lie, whatever it says is the truth. The inclination to grow, the tongue of the seed, says: "I shall sprout and produce fruit..", and what it says is proved true.

The desire for life murmurs in the depths of the egg: "With Divine permission I shall be a chick." What it says is true.

If a handful of water intends to freeze inside an iron cannon-ball, when the temperature falls

The desire to expand within it says: "Expand! I need more space." This command cannot be gainsaid.

Strong iron strives, but cannot prove it wrong; the water's truthfulness and honesty split the iron.

All these inclinations are creational commands, Divine decrees. They are all natural laws, all manifestations of will.

Divine will directs all beings, in this way: all inclinations are a conforming to the dominical commands.

The manifestation in the conscience is the same; attraction and ecstasy are two polished souls,

Two burnished mirrors, within which are reflected Sempiternal Beauty, and the light of belief.

Prophethood Is Essential For Mankind

Divine power does not leave the ant without leader, or bees without a queen;

It surely would not leave mankind without prophet or code of laws. In any case, the order of the world demands this.

The Ascension Was for the Angels What the Splitting of the Moon Was for Mankind

In truth, as a wonder, the angels saw an Ascension, a supreme sainthood within incontestable prophethood.

That shining Being mounted Buraq, became as lightning, and like the mansions of the moon observed the World of Light.

Just as for mankind scattered through this Manifest World, *And the Moon split*¹⁰ was an important miracle in the corporeal realm;

So for the dwellers in the Spirit World, the Ascension, that is, *Glory be to Him Who conveyed*,¹¹ was the greatest miracle.

¹⁰ Qur'an, 54:1.

¹¹ Qur'an, 17:1.

The Proof of the Confession of Faith Is Within It

The confession of faith contains two phrases, each of which testifies to the other and is its proof and evidence.

The former is an argument from cause to effect, and the latter an argument from effect to cause.

Life is a Manifestation of Unity

Life is a light of unity; it manifests unity in this realm of multiplicity. Yes, it manifests unity, unifying multiplicity and making it one.

Life appropriates all things to everything. While for a lifeless thing all things are non-existent.

Spirit is a Law Clothed in External Existence

Spirit is a luminous law clothed in external existence, endowed with consciousness.

Existent spirit is the brother, the companion, of intelligent law.

Like fixed and constant natural laws, spirit comes from the world of the Divine command and attribute of will.

Power clothes it in a being decked out with senses, attaches consciousness to its head, makes a subtle inner faculty the shell for that pearl.

If the Creator's power were to clothe the laws of species in external existence, each would become a spirit;

If it were to remove the spirit from the being and take the intelligence from its head, it would again become an undying law.

Existence Without Life Resembles Non-Existence

Both light and life disclose beings. See, if there is no light of life,

Existence is stained with non-existence; indeed, it is non-existence. Yes, a stranger, an orphan; if it is the moon, it is without life...

Thanks to Life, the Ant Is Greater than the Earth

If you were to weigh the ant on the scales of existence, the universe emerging from it could not be contained in our globe.
In my view, the globe is living. But if according to what others suppose, you were to take the dead globe and place it in the opposite pan to the ant,
It would not weigh even half its conscious head.

Christianity Will Submit To Islam

Christianity will either erupt or be extinguished. It will surrender and submit to Islam. It was split repeatedly until finally Protestantism appeared, but in that it did not find what would rectify it.
The veil was again rent, it fell into absolute misguidance. However, a part of it approached the affirmation of Divine unity; in that it will find salvation.
It is preparing to be split again.¹² If it is not extinguished, it will be purified and will join Islam.
In this lies a mighty mystery to which the Glory of the Messengers alluded when he said: "Jesus will come and follow my Shari'a; he will be of my community."¹³

The Impossible May Appear Possible When Seen Indirectly

It is well-known, a large group of people looked for the crescent moon of the 'Id, but no one could see anything.
Then an old man swore he had seen it. But what he had seen was a curved white eyelash. The eyelash had been his moon. But can one compare a curved eyelash and the crescent moon? If you have understood our parable:
The motion of particles has become the eyelash over the reason; each particle, a dark eyelash blinding the materialist eye.
It cannot see the One Who fashioned all these beings, so has been engulfed in misguidance.
But can there be any comparison between that motion and the universe's Orderer? It is a compounded impossibility that the former be the latter!

¹² This alludes to the situation which resulted from the Great War. Indeed, it is an accurate prediction foretelling the Second World War.

¹³ .*Bukhari*, iv, 205; *Muslim*, i, 136; *Bijuri*, *Jawharat al-Tawhid*, 29, 232.

The Qur'an Requires Mirrors, Not Someone to Act on Its Behalf

Rather than proofs it is the sacredness of the source that drives the mass of the Umma and the ordinary people to conform to it and encourages them to obey it.

Ninety per cent of the Shari'a consists of the incontestable matters and essentials of religion, each of which is a diamond pillar.

Only ten per cent are matters open to interpretation, controversial, and secondary. Ninety diamond pillars may not be put in the purse of someone with ten gold pieces, nor be made to follow him.

The source of the diamond pillars is the Qur'an and Hadith. They are their property and should always be sought from them.

Books and interpretations of the Shari'a should be mirrors of the Qur'an, or telescopes.

That Sun of Miraculous Exposition is not in need of shadows or anyone to act on its behalf!

The Falsifier of the Truth Looks On the False as True

Since by nature man is noble, he intentionally seeks the truth.

Sometimes he encounters falsehood, and supposing it to be the truth, stores it away in his heart...

Then when digging out the truth he involuntarily falls into misguidance; supposing it to be the truth, he commits it to his head.

The Mirrors of Divine Power Are Numerous

The power of the All-Glorious One has numerous mirrors. They open up windows each more transparent and subtle than the other, onto the World of Similitudes.

Various mirrors from water to air, air to ether, ether to similitudes, similitudes to spirits, spirits to time, time to imagination, and from imagination to thought, all represent the manifesting attributes. Turn your ear to the mirror of the air: a single word becomes millions!

The Pen of Power writes it out in extraordinary fashion, this mystery of reproduction...

Representation Is of Various Sorts

The image in a mirror may be of four sorts: either the identity alone; or the identity together with its particularities; or both the identity and the rays of the thing's nature; or both its true nature and its identity.

The images in the mirrors of luminous spirits are living and connected; expansive lights which even if not the same as the spirits, are not other than them.

If the sun had been living and its heat light, and its colours consciousness, it would have possessed the above qualities of the image in the mirror.

The key to this mystery is this: Gabriel is both at "the Lote-tree," and in the form of Dihya, and in the Prophet's company, and who knows in how many other places!

While God knows how many places Azra'il is present simultaneously, seizing the spirits of the dying.

At the same time, the Prophet appears to his community both in the visions of the saints, and in true dreams,

And at the resurrection of the dead he will meet with all through his intercession.

The 'substitutes' (*abdāl*) of saints appear and are seen in numerous places at the same time.

All Those Qualified May Interpret the Law, But They May Not Be Lawgivers

Everyone capable who is qualified to practise *ijtihad*, may interpret matters for himself which are not incontestable; and they are binding on himself, but not on others.

He cannot make laws and call on the Umma to conform to them. His ideas are from the Shari'a, but they are not the Shari'a. He may be a *mujtahid*, but he cannot be the Lawmaker.

The Shari'a is ratified through the consensus of the majority of scholars. The first condition for calling on others to accept an idea is the surmised acceptance of the majority.¹⁴

Such a call is otherwise innovation; it gets stuck in the gullet, never again to emerge!

¹⁴ *Zann-ı kabul-u cumhur*: "The surmised acceptance of the majority of *mujtahids* and learned authorities of the correctness of a judgement, that is, the strong possibility of their accepting it." [See, Abdullah Yeğin, *Yeni Lügat* (Istanbul: 1975), 782]. [Tr.]

The Light of Reason Comes From the Heart

Unenlightened illuminati should know that ideas cannot be enlightened without the light of the heart.

So long as the light of the mind and of the heart are not combined, there is darkness, producing oppression and ignorance. Darkness garbed in sham light.

If the white of the eye, which resembles daytime, is not combined with the black pupil, which resembles night, it is not an eye, it will see nothing. Unseeing sight is also worth nothing.

So, if the black depths of the heart are not present in the white of thought, the miscellaneous information in the mind will produce no knowledge or insight. There can be no reason without the heart.

Undigested Knowledge Should Not Be Imparted To Others

The truly learned guide is a sheep, not a bird; he gives his knowledge altruistically.

For the sheep gives its lamb digested, pure milk;

Whereas the bird gives its chick regurgitated vomit.

Destruction Is Easy; The Weak Person Is Destructive

The condition of the existence of the whole is the existence of all the parts; while its non-existence may be through the non-existence of one of its parts; so destruction is easy.

It is because of this that the impotent man never approaches anything positively and constructively; he always acts negatively, and is always destructive.

Force Should Always Serve Right

If the principles of wisdom, codes of government, laws of right, and rules of force do not aid and support one another,

They will be neither fruitful nor effective among the mass of the people. The marks of the Shari'a will be neglected and remain in abeyance.

The people will not rely on them in their affairs, nor have confidence in them.

Sometimes Opposites Comprise Their Opposites

Sometimes opposites conceal their opposites. In the language of politics, the word becomes the opposite of its meaning.
Tyranny has donned the cap of justice.¹⁵ Treachery has found a cheap dress in patriotism.
Jihad and war in God's way have been called revolt. Enslavement to the animal passions, the despotism of Satan, have been called freedom.
Things have become their opposites, forms have been transposed, names have been swapped, places have been exchanged.

Politics Based On Self-Interest Is Savagery

The politics of the present, which is founded on self-interest, is a rapacious beast.
If you feign affection for a ravenous beast, you will not attract its compassion but will whet its appetite.
Then it will turn on you, and both its claws and fangs will want their rent from you.

No Limit Has Been Placed On Man's Powers, So His Crimes Are Great

Unlike the animals, there is no natural limit on man's powers; the good and evil that proceed from them are infinite.
If the selfishness of this power and the egotism of that one are combined with pride and obstinacy, man commits such sins¹⁶ that up to the present mankind
Has found no name for them. Just as they indicate Hell's necessity, so their penalty can only be Hell.
And, for example, in order to justify just one of his lies, a man sincerely desires the downfall of Islam.
The present has shown that neither is Hell unnecessary, nor is Paradise won easily.

¹⁵ This speaks of the present as though seeing it.

¹⁶ This is a prediction about the future.

Sometimes Good Leads To Evil

While in reality the qualities of the upper classes should be the cause of humility and self-effacement, regrettably they have led to arrogance and oppression. And while the helplessness of the poor and poverty of the common people should have led to the upper classes being gracious and compassionate, unfortunately it has resulted in the common people's abasement and servitude. If honour and good result from something, it is offered to the leaders and upper classes. But any evils and bad results are divided among the common people and ordinary soldiers. The honour won by a victorious tribe is expressed as adulation for "Hasan Agha," but any evils are poured on his soldiers as vituperation. A sorry evil among mankind!

The Absence of an Objective Strengthens Egotism

If people have no aim in mind, or they are overcome by forgetfulness or they feign forgetfulness, their minds turn in on themselves and revolve around them. The ego strengthens, sometimes growing angry; it is not deflated, that it might become "we." Those who love themselves, love no one else.

The Life of Revolution Sprang From the Death of *Zakat* and the Life of Usury

The origin of all revolutions, all anarchy and corruption; the inciter and source of evils, depravity and abomination, are two phrases, or one or two words: The first is this: "I'm full, so what is it to me if others die of hunger?" And the second: "You suffer so I can be comfortable. You work so that I can eat. The food's for me, labouring's for you." There is one single cure for the fatal poison of the first phrase, that will cut it at the root and heal it: That is the *Zakat* of the Shari'a, a pillar of Islam. In the second phrase is a tree of Zaqqum; what will extirpate it is the prohibition on usury and interest. If mankind wants what's best and it loves life, it must impose *Zakat* and abolish usury and interest.

If Mankind Wants Life, It Must Put to Death Usury of Every Sort

Relations between the upper and lower classes have been severed. From below arise cries of revolution, shouts of revenge, screams of hatred and envy.

From above descend fires of tyranny and scorn, the burden of arrogance, the inciter of oppression.

What should arise from below are love, obedience, respect, and conformity. And from above should descend compassion and bounty, kindness and education.

If mankind wants these, it should embrace *Zakat* and drive out usury and interest.

Qur'anic justice stands at the door of the world telling usury and interest: "No entry! You have no right to enter! Return whence you came!"

Mankind did not heed this command, and received a blow;¹⁷ it should heed it now before receiving one more severe.

Mankind Smashed Slavery, So Will It Smash Wage-Earning

In a dream I said: the skirmishing between nations and states is making way for fierce battle between the social classes.

For in the era of slavery, man did not want slavery and smashed it, spilling his blood.

Now he has become a wage-earner; he bears that burden and will smash it too.

Mankind has grown old, having passed through five stages: primitive nomadism, slavery, captivity;¹⁸ now the wage-earning age has begun and is passing.

An Unlawful Way Leads to the Opposite of What Was Intended

The murderer may not inherit¹⁹ is an important principle: "Someone who pursues his goal by unlawful paths, generally pays the penalty of achieving the opposite of what he intended."

¹⁷ This is a powerful prediction. Mankind did not listen, and received an awesome blow with this Second World War.

¹⁸ See, Nursi, *Mektubat* (Ottoman ed.) (Istanbul n.p., n.d.), 455. Here, Bediuzzaman, ascribing it to "the materialist view of history," lists five main stages that mankind has passed through: i) primitive nomadism; ii) slavery; iii) captivity; iv) wage-earning; v) ownership and free enterprise. Concerning the third stage, he writes: "... (men) were saved from slavery, but in accordance with the tyrannical principle 'Might is right,' the powerful treated the weak as captives. Then as a result of numerous revolutions such as the French Revolution, that stage was transformed into the wage-earning stage..." [Tr.]

¹⁹ *Tirmidhi*, Fara'id, 18, No: 2109; *Ibn Maja*, Fara'id, 8, No: 2645; *Musnad*, i, 49; *Darimi*, Fara'id, 41.

Love of Europe was illicit, as well as blind imitation and familiarity. Its consequences and recompense were the tyrannical animosity of the beloved, and crimes. The loser and sinner will find neither pleasure nor salvation.

A Grain of Truth Is To Be Found in the Jabriyya and Mu'tazila

O seeker after truth! The Shari'a differentiates between the past and disasters, and the future and sins.
Divine Determining²⁰ is looked to in connection with the past and calamities, and the word is the Jabriyya's.
Man's accountability is considered concerning the future and sins; then the word is the Mu'tazila's. The Mu'tazila and Jabriyya are reconciled here.
Both these false schools contain a grain of truth; it has a particular place; it is false when made general.

Impotence and Anxiety Are For the Inadequate

If you want life, don't cling onto impotence in things for which there are solutions;
If you want ease of mind, don't become needlessly anxious about things for which there is no solution.

Sometimes Little Things Do Big Works

Under some conditions a small point²¹ raises its owner to the highest of the high...
Then there are circumstances when a slight movement sends down the doer to the lowest of the low...

For Some People A Moment Is A Year

Some people's innate capacities blossom in a instant, while others are gradual, unfolding little by little. Human nature contains both of these.
They look to conditions, and change accordingly. Sometimes they develop slowly.
Sometimes they are dark like gunpowder, then suddenly explode into luminous fire.

²⁰ Divine Determining (*Kader*), sometimes known as 'fate', 'destiny', or 'predestination'. For a detailed exposition, see, the Twenty-Sixth Word in the present volume. [Tr.]

²¹ That is, a diacritical point (*hareke*) in the Arabic or Ottoman script. [Tr.]

Sometimes one look transforms coal into diamonds. Sometimes a touch transmutes stone into elixir.

A single glance of God's Messenger in an instant transformed an ignorant nomad into an enlightened man of knowledge.

If you want an example, 'Umar before Islam, and 'Umar after Islam.

Compare the two: a seed, a tree. It instantaneously produced fruit, that look of Muhammad, the Prophetic effulgence.

Of a sudden he changed the coal-like natures of the Arabian people into diamonds, with their morals as black as gunpowder, they all became luminous lights.

Falsehoods Are Blasphemies

One grain of truth wipes out a million lies. O grain of reality razes a castle of dreams. Honesty is a grand principle, a lustrous jewel.

If for the truth to be uttered it is damaging, it resigns its place to silence; lies have no place, even if they have some use.

Everything you say should be true, all your pronouncements right, but you have no right to say all that is true.

One should be well aware of this, and take as one's principle: 'Take what is clear and untroubled, leave what is turbid and distressing.'

See the good side of things; you will have good thoughts. Know things to be good and think of them as good; you will find the pleasure in life.

In life, hope and thinking favourably of things are life itself. While to think the worst is despair, the destroyer of happiness and slayer of life.

A Dream Assembly

*Comparisons between the Shari'a and modern civilization,
and the genius of modern science and guidance of the Shari'a*

In a true dream on a Friday night at the beginning of the Armistice Period following the First War, I was asked by a vast assembly in a World of Similitudes:

"What will the Islamic world's situation be following its defeat?" I replied as the deputy for the present age, and they listened to me:

This State, which through undertaking from early times the religious obligation of jihad to maintain Islam's independence and uphold the Word of God, considered itself bound to sacrifice itself for the undivided unity of the Islamic world and saw itself as the standard-bearer of the Caliphate –

this State's, this Muslim nation's, past calamity will certainly bring about Islam's prosperity and freedom.

The disaster of the past will be made up for in the future. One who loses three and gains three hundred makes no loss. The zealous will transform its past into the future.

For wondrously this calamity has made unfold compassion, Islamic solidarity and brotherhood, the leaven of our lives, and has expedited the shaking, the destruction, of civilization.

Present-day low civilization will change form, its system will fall apart, then Islamic civilization will emerge.

Muslims will certainly be the first to enter it voluntarily. If you want a comparison, look closely at the principles of the civilization of the Shari'a and those of present-day civilization, and consider their results:

The principles of present-day civilization are negative. Its foundations and values are five negative principles. Its machinery is based on these.

Its point of support is force instead of right, and the mark of force is aggression and hostility, and their result is treachery.

Its goal is mean self-interest instead of virtue, and the mark of self-interest is rivalry and dispute, and their result, crime.

Its law of life is conflict instead of co-operation, and the mark of conflict is this: contention and mutual repulsion, and their result, poverty.

Its principle for relations between peoples is racialism, which flourishes through harming others and is nourished through devouring others.

The mark of negative nationalism and racialism is ghastly clashes, disastrous collisions, and their result, annihilation.

The fifth is this: its alluring service is to excite lust and the appetites of the soul and facilitate the gratification of whims, and their result is vice.

The mark of lust and passion is always this: they transform man into a beast, changing his character; they deform him, perverting his humanity.

If most of these civilized people were turned inside out, you would see their characters in the form of apes and foxes, snakes, bears, and swine.

They appear to the imagination in their pelts and skins! Examples of its products are these. The Shari'a, however, is the balance and equilibrium of the earth.

The mercy in the Shari'a comes from the skies of the Qur'an. The principles of Qur'anic civilization are positive. Its wheel of happiness turns on five positive principles:

Its point of support is truth instead of force, and the constant mark of truth is justice and balance. Security and well-being result from these, and villainy disappears.

Its aim is virtue instead of self-interest, and the mark of virtue is love and mutual attraction. Happiness results from these, and enmity disappears.

Its principle in life is co-operation instead of conflict and killing, and its mark is unity and solidarity, and the community is strengthened.

Its service takes the form of guidance and direction instead of lust and passion. And the mark of guidance is progress and prosperity in way befitting humanity;

The spirit is illumined and perfected in the way it requires. The way it unifies the masses repulses racialism and negative nationalism;

It establishes in place of them the bonds of religion, patriotic relations, ties of class, and the brotherhood of belief.

The mark of these bonds are sincere brotherhood, general well-being; defence in the case of external aggression. You have understood now the reason Islam was affronted, and did not embrace civilization.

Up to the present, Muslims have not entered this present civilization voluntarily, it has not suited them, moreover it has clamped on them fetters of bondage.

While it should be the cure for mankind, it has become poison. It has cast eighty per cent into penury and misery, and produced a false happiness for ten per cent.

The remaining ten per cent it has left uneasily between the two. Commercial profits have been the tyrannical minority's. But true happiness is happiness for all;

Or at least salvation for the majority. The Qur'an, revealed as a mercy for mankind, only accepts civilization of this kind,

Happiness for all, or at least for the majority. In its present form the passions are unrestricted, caprice too is free; it is an animal freedom.

The passions dominate, caprice too is despotic; they have made unessential needs essential, and banished comfort and ease.

In primitive life, a man was in need of four things, civilization has put him in need of a hundred, and impoverished him.

Lawful labours are insufficient to meet the cost. This has driven mankind to trickery and the unlawful. It is on this point that it corrupted morality.

It bestowed wealth and glitter on society and mankind, but made the individual immoral and indigent. There are numerous witnesses to this.

This malignant civilization vomited all at once the combined savagery and crimes, all the cruelty and treachery, of former centuries, and its stomach is still queasy.²²

The Islamic world's holding back from it is both meaningful and noteworthy. It has been loath to accept it, and has acted coldly.

Yes, the distinguishing quality of the Divine light of the Illustrious Shari'a is independence and self-sufficiency.

²² This means it will vomit in even more violent fashion. Yes, it vomited so terribly in the two World Wars that it filthied the faces of the land, sea, and air, staining them with its blood.

It will not give up that quality, that light of guidance, so that the genius of Rome, the spirit of civilization, should dominate it.

The guidance of the former cannot combine with the philosophy of the latter, nor be grafted onto it, nor follow it.

The Shari'a has nourished the compassion and dignity of belief in the spirit of Islam. The Qur'an of Miraculous Exposition has taken the truths of the Shari'a in its shining hand;

Each is a Staff of Moses in that shining hand. In the future that sorcerer civilization will prostrate in wonderment before it.

Now, note this: Ancient Rome and Greece were two geniuses; twins from a single stock. One fanciful, the other materialist.

Like oil and water, they never combined. It needed time, civilization worked at it too, and so did Christianity, but none was successful at combining them.

Both preserved their independence. And now it is as though those two spirits have changed their bodies; one has become German, the other, French.

They experienced a sort of metempsychosis. O my dream-brother! This is what time has shown. Like two genius oxen those twins rejected any moves to combine them;

They still are not reconciled. Since they are twins, they are brothers and friends, companions in progress; but they fought and never made peace.

How could it be that with its different source, origin, and place of appearance, the light of the Qur'an and guidance of the Shari'a should be reconciled with the genius of Rome, the spirit of modern civilization, and should join and combine with it?

Their origins are different: guidance descended from the heavens, genius emerged from the earth. Guidance works in the heart, and works the mind.

Genius works in the mind and confuses the heart. Guidance illumines the spirit, making it seeds sprout and flourish; dark Nature is illumined by it.

Its potentiality for perfection suddenly advances; it makes the carnal soul a docile servant; it gives aspiring man an angelic countenance.

As for genius, it looks primarily to the soul and physical being, it plunges into Nature, making the soul an arable field; the animal potentialities develop and flourish;

It subjugates the spirit, dessicating its seeds; it shows up satanic features in mankind. But guidance gives happiness to life, it spreads light in this life and the next; it exalts mankind.

Antichrist-like²³ genius, blind in one eye, sees only the domain of this life; it is materialist and worships this world. It turns men into beasts.

Yes, deaf genius worships Nature, it empowers blind force. But guidance

²³ There is a subtle indication in this.

recognizes conscious art and looks to purposeful power. Genius draws a curtain of ingratitude over the earth; guidance scatters the light of thanks.

It is because of this that genius is deaf and blind, while guidance is hearing and seeing. In the view of genius, the bounties of the earth are ownerless booty;

It provokes the desire to seize and steal them thanklessly, to savagely snap them off from Nature.

In the view of guidance, the bounties scattered over the breast of the earth and face of the universe are the fruits of mercy; it sees a gracious hand beneath every bounty, and has it kissed in gratitude.

I cannot deny that there are numerous virtues in civilization, but they are neither the property of Christianity, nor the invention of Europe.

Nor are they the product of this century; they are common property, produced by the conjunction of minds and ideas, from the laws of the revealed religions, out of innate need,

And particularly from the Islamic revolution brought about by the Shari'a of Muhammad. No one can claim ownership of them.

The leader of the Dream Assembly asked another question:

"Man of the present century! Calamities are always the result of treachery and the cause of reward. Divine Determining dealt a blow and issued its decree.

"With which of your actions did you issue the fatwa to both Divine Decree and Determining so that they decreed this calamity and gave you a beating?"

I replied: The error of the majority is always the cause of general disasters. Mankind's misguided ideas, Nimrod-like obduracy, Pharaoh-like pride,

Swelled and swelled on the earth till it reached the skies. It upset too the sensitive mystery of creation.

It caused to descend from the heavens the plague and storm of the last war's quakes; it caused a heavenly blow to be visited on the infidel. That is, the calamity was the calamity of all mankind.

The joint cause, inclusive of all mankind, were the misguided ideas arising from Materialism. Bestial freedom, the despotism of the appetites.

The reason for our share was our neglect and giving up of the pillars of Islam. For the Exalted Creator wanted one hour out of the twenty-four.

He demanded of us, and for us, only one hour for the five daily prayers, and commanded this. But out of laziness we gave them up, neglected them due to heedlessness.

So we received the following punishment: He made us perform prayers of a sort these last five years by constant twenty-four hour drill and hardship, being driven on and made to strive.

He also wanted of us one month's fasting a year, but we pitied ourselves, so in atonement He compelled us to fast for five years.

As *Zakat*, He wanted either a fortieth or a tenth of the property He had given us, but out of stinginess we did wrong: we mixed the illicit with our property, and did not give it voluntarily.

So He had our accumulated *Zakat* taken from us, and saved us from what was unlawful.

The deed fitted the punishment. The punishment fitted the deed.

Righteous acts are of two sorts: one positive and voluntary, the other negative and enforced. All pains and calamities are good works; but negative and enforced. The Hadith offered consolation.²⁴

This sinful nation took its ablutions with its blood; it repented actively. As an immediate reward, four million, a fifth of this nation, were raised to the degree of sainthood. It gave them the ranks of martyrdom and ghazis; it obliterated the sin.

The lofty dream assembly appreciated these words.

I awoke suddenly; rather, with awakening I went to sleep. I think the waking state is a dream and the dream state a sort of wakefulness.

There was this age's deputy, and here is Said-i Nursi!

The Ignorant Suppose Metaphors To Be Fact

If figures of speech fall from the hand of knowledge to that of ignorance, they are transformed into fact, opening the door to superstition.

When small I saw an eclipse of the moon. I asked my mother, and she said: "A snake has swallowed it." I asked her: "Why is it visible, then?" She said: "The snakes there are semi-transparent." She thought a metaphor was reality. At a Divine command, on the earth interposing between "the head" and "the tail", which are the points of intersection of the moon and circuit of the sun, the moon is eclipsed. The two hypothetical arcs were called "Tinnin", it was named with a fanciful simile. Tinnin means the Serpent.²⁵

Exaggeration Is Implied Disparagement

Whatever you describe, describe it as it is. In my opinion, exaggerated praise is implied disparagement.

Favour greater than Divine favour is not favour...

²⁴ See, Bayhaqi, *Dala'il al-Nubuwwa*, vi, 383; Suyuti, *al-Khasa'is al-Kubra*, ii, 477-8; *Musnad*, iv, 195-6. See also, *Bukhari*, i, 167.

²⁵ For a fuller explanation, see, Nursi, *The Flashes Collection* (Istanbul: Sözler Publications, 1995), 128.

Fame Is Tyrannical

Fame is a despot; it ascribes to its owner the property of others.
As in the famous Nasreddin Hoja joke, his *Zakat*, that is, one tenth, is his true property...
The imaginary renown of Rustam-i Sistani plundered an age of the glories of Iran.
That famous fancy swelled with plunder and pillage, it was mixed with superstition, and
threw down mankind.

Those Who Suppose Religion and Life Can Be Separated Are the Cause of Disaster

The mistake of the Young Turks: they did not know our religion is the basis of life; they
thought nation and Islam were different.
They imagined civilization would endure and always be dominant, and saw happiness
and prosperity to lie within it.
Now time has shown civilization's system to be corrupt and harmful;²⁶ incontrovertible
experience has taught us this.
Religion is the very life of life, its light and its basis. This nation will be revived only
through the revival of religion. Islam understood this.
Contrary to other religions, our nation has progressed to the extent we adhered to our
religion. And it has declined to the degree we neglected it.
This is an historical fact which occurred due to our feigned forgetfulness.

Death Is Not Terrifying As Is Imagined

Misguidance is misleading, it makes death terrifying. Death is a change of clothes, or a
change of abode. It removes man from dungeon to garden.
Whoever wants life should want martyrdom. The Qur'an describes the martyr's life.
Martyrs, who do not experience the pangs of death, all know themselves to be alive
and see themselves thus.
But they find their new lives to be purer. They do not suppose they have died. Note
carefully what their relation to the dead is, it is like this:
In a dream two men are walking in a beautiful garden holding every sort of delight. One
knows it is only a dream and receives no pleasure.
It does not delight him; it fills him with regret. The other one thinks it is the waking
world, and receives true pleasure; it is real to him.

²⁶ This is an accurate prediction; it looks to irreligious, tyrannical civilization, in the throes of death

The dream is the shadow of the similitude, and the similitude is the shadow of the Intermediate Realm. It is due to this that their principles resemble each other.

**Politics Are a Satan in the World of Ideas;
One Should Seek Refuge With God From Them**

The politics of civilization sacrifice the minority for the comfort of the majority. Indeed, the despotic minority sacrifices the majority of people for themselves.

Qur'anic justice would not take the life of a single innocent, spill their blood, or sacrifice him even for all mankind, let alone the majority.

The verse, *If anyone slew a person –unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land– it would be as if he slew the whole people*²⁷ lays two mighty mysteries before the eyes.

One is pure justice. This sublime principle deems equal the individual and the community, the person and mankind; Divine justice sees no difference between them; this is a constant Sunna.

An individual may sacrifice his rights himself, but they cannot be sacrificed otherwise, even for all mankind.

The cancelling of his rights, or the spilling of his blood, or the smearing of his name is equal to the cancelling of the rights of all humanity, or the besmirching of it, and is its equivalent.

The second mystery is this: if a selfish man murders an innocent out of greed or passion, he will lay waste the whole world if he can, should it be an obstacle to his desires, and wipe out all humanity.

**Weakness Emboldens the Enemy;
God May Try His Servants, but They May Not Try Him**

O fearful, weak one! Your fear and weakness are in vain and cause you harm; they embolden outside influences and attract them.

O you who suffers from doubts and delusions! Definite benefits may not be sacrificed for imaginary harms. What you need is action; the result is with God.

One may not interfere in God's concerns. He draws His servant to the arena of trial and says: "If you do that, I'll do this."

²⁷ Qur'an, 5:32.

But the servant can never try God. If he says: "God should help, so I'll do this," he is overstepping his mark.
Satan said to Jesus: "Since it is He Who does everything; His determining does not change. Throw yourself down off the mountain and let's see what happens to you."
Jesus replied: "Confound you! God's servants cannot put Him to the test!"

Don't Overdo It In Things You Like

The cure for one ailment merely exacerbates another; the antidote becomes poison. If the cure is taken to excess, it is the cause of ill, and is fatal.

The Eye of Obstinacy Supposes an Angel To Be Satan

Obstinacy is this: if Satan helps someone, he calls him "an angel" and calls down blessings on him.
But if he sees an angel on the opposing side, he supposes it to be Satan in a different guise, and calls down curses on the angel.

After Finding What's Right, Don't Cause Dispute for the Sake of Something Better

O seeker after truth! If there is consensus concerning what is right and dispute concerning what is better, sometimes what is right is better than what is better. And sometimes what is good is better than what is better.

Islam Is Peace and Reconciliation, It Wants No Dispute or Hostility Within

O World of Islam! Your life lies in unity, and if you want unity, your guiding principle should be this:
It should be "This is true," rather than "This alone is true." And "This is the best," rather than "This is the only good way."
All Muslims should say about his own school and way: "This is true, I don't interfere with others. If others are good, mine is the best."
They should not say: "This is the only true way, the others are all false. Only

mine is good, the others are all wrong and unpleasant.”

The exclusivist mentality arises from love of self. It later becomes a sickness and leads to dispute.

The multiplication of ills and cures is right, and right too multiplies. The increase in the varieties of needs and foods is right, and right becomes various.

The increase in capacities and education is right, and right too multiplies. A single substance is both poison and the antidote.

The truth is not fixed in secondary matters; it is relative and compound in accordance with different temperaments.²⁸

The temperaments of the authoritative scholars imparted a share to it, and it was realized and compounded accordingly; the founders of the schools made judgements in absolute, unspecific terms.

They left it to the various temperaments and their leanings to specify the limits of their schools; but bigoted attachment to them was the cause of generalization.

The partisanship arising from this led to dispute. The profound rifts between the social classes before Islam,

And their extraordinary distance from each other, demanded a great many prophets at any one time, and a variety of sacred laws, and numerous schools.

Islam caused a revolution among mankind, and men drew closer to each other. It reduced to one the sacred law, and there was one Prophet.

But the levels of men were not the same, so the schools of law multiplied. When a single training and instruction is sufficient, the schools will unite.

There is Great Wisdom in the Creation and Combining of Opposites: The Sun and a Minute Particle Are Equal in the Hand of Power

O Brother with an alert heart! Power is manifested in the combining of opposites. Do you know why there is pain in pleasure, evil within good, ugliness within beauty, harm within benefit, revenge within beneficence, fire within light?

It is so that the relative truths may be established; that there may be many things within one thing, and that they may find existence and become apparent.

Swift motion makes a point into a line. Its being spun at speed makes a flash of light, a luminous circle.

²⁸ For further explanation, see, the Conclusion of the Twenty-Seventh Word, pp. 500-2 of the present work. [Tr.]

The function of relative truths is that seeds should sprout in this world. They form the mud of the universe, the links in its order, the connections between its inscriptions. In the hereafter these relative matters will be truths. The degrees of heat are caused by the intervention of cold.

The degrees of beauty come about through the intervention of ugliness. The cause becomes the reason.

Light is indebted to darkness, pleasure is indebted to pain; there is no health without illness.

If there was no Paradise, perhaps Hell would not be torment. It cannot be without extreme cold. If there was no extreme cold, it would not burn.

The Undying Creator demonstrated His wisdom in the creation of opposites. His majesty became apparent.

That Eternal All-Powerful One displayed His power in the combining of opposites. His tremendousness was manifested.

Since Divine power is a necessary inherent quality, and necessarily essential to that Pre-Eternal One, it can comprise no opposites, impotence cannot intervene in it, there can be no degrees in it, nothing can be difficult for it.

The sun became a niche for the light of His power. The surface of the sea became a mirror to the light of the niche, the dewdrops' eyes all became mirrors.

The sun the broad surface of the sea reflects is reflected also by the droplets in the creases of its frowns; the tiny eye of the dewdrop also shines like a star.

They hold the same identity: in the view of the sun, the dewdrop and the sea are the same, its power makes them equal; the pupil of the dewdrop's eye is a tiny sun.

The magnificent sun also is a tiny dewdrop; the pupil of its eye is a light received from the Sun of Power; it is the moon to that power.

The heavens are an ocean; at the breath of the Most Merciful, droplets undulate in the creases of its frowns, which are the stars and suns.

Power was manifested, it scattered coruscating gleams on those droplets. Every sun a droplet, every star a dewdrop, each the likeness of a flash.

The drop-like sun is a tiny reflection of that manifestation's effulgence. It makes its burnished soul pearl-like to that glass gleam. The dewdrop stars shine

In its delicate eye, it gives a place to the flash, the flash becomes a lamp, its eye becomes glass, its lamp is lit up.

If You Have Any Qualities, They Should Remain in the Dust of Concealment, So They May Flourish

O man of famous quality! Don't be oppressive by displaying your qualities; if they remain in concealment, you'll be a source of bounty and blessing for your brothers. If you appear beneath all your brothers, and there is the possibility of its being you, it will attract respect to each of them.

But if you emerge from concealment and display yourself, although when beneath them you were revered, above, you become a tyrant. There you were a sun, here you cast shadows.

You belittle your brothers, and lose them their respect. That means, to display one's qualities and one's individuality is doubly tyrannical. If it is thus, that is how you will appear.

So what place remains for lying artificiality and hypocrisy, the 'personality,' and fame? This is a profound mystery, springing from Divine wisdom and perfect order.

An exceptional individual draws the veil of concealment over himself within his species or group, thus affording it value in the view of others, and making it appreciated.

Examples for you: saints among mankind, the appointed hour within a lifetime are unknown, indefinite. Concealed within Friday is the hour prayers are accepted. Hidden in Ramadan is the Night of Power. Concealed in the Most Beautiful Names is the elixir of the Greatest Name.

It is their indefiniteness that makes these examples awesome, this mystery, beautiful; they are proved through concealment.

For example, there is a balance in the appointed hour being vague; it holds true, whatever your circumstances.

The two pans of fear and hope, working for the next world or for this; imagined permanent existence imparts a pleasure to life.

Twenty years of uncertain life are preferable to a thousand-year lifetime the end of which is specified. For after half of it had passed, every passing hour you would be taking another step towards the gallows.

Your suffering would increase proportionately; it would afford you no solace; you would find no peace.

It Is Mistaken To Feel Mercy and Anger Greater Than God's

Greater mercy than God's may not be bestowed. Greater wrath than God's may not be visited on something.

So leave matters to the All-Just and Compassionate One, for to be more compassionate causes you pain, and to be more wrathful is wrongful.

Wastefulness Leads To Squandering, Squandering Leads To Poverty

My wasteful brother! Two morsels which are the same as regards nutrition, one costing one *kurush*, the other, costing ten,
Are equal both before they enter the mouth, and after they have passed down the gullet.
Only for a few seconds in the mouth do they give pleasure to the heedless.
They have different tastes, which always deceives it, that sense of taste; it is a doorkeeper and inspector for the body and stomach.
The taste's effect is negative, not positive; its function, only to tip the doorkeeper and gratify it; to give pleasure to that senseless one!
To confuse it in its true duty, to give it eleven *kurush* rather than one, is a satanic habit.
The most prodigal of wastefulness, the worst form of extravagance, is one sort, one way: so don't seek it.

The Sense of Taste Is a Telegraphist; Don't Seduce It By Gratifying It²⁹

Divine dominicality, wisdom, and grace, made two centres with the mouth and nose, placing within them a frontier post, and correspondents.
In the microcosm, God made the blood-vessels telephones, and the nerves, telegraphs.
That True Provider made the sense of smell a telephone, and posted the sense of taste to the telegraph. Out of His mercy, he put an instruction sheet on the food: flavour, and colour, and smell.
Thus, these three attributes are proclamations, invitations, permits, and heralds on the part of the food; with them it invites the needy and its customers.
He gave taste, sight, and smell to the feeding animals as tools. He adorned the foods with various decorations, then soothed their flighty breasts, and attracted the indifferent by exciting them.
When the food enters the mouth, the sense of taste immediately sends telegraphs to every part of the body. The sense of smell telephones, giving information about the types of foods.
These senses act according to all the different needs of the different animals receiving food; the necessary preparations are made, or it receives a refusal.
Then they throw it out, and spit it in your face! Since they have been charged with this by wisdom, don't seduce them with pleasure. Don't deceive them by gratifying them.

²⁹ This piece forms the seed of *İktisad Risalesi* [The Nineteenth Flash]. Indeed, he expressed in ten lines the ten-page *Treatise On Frugality* before it came into existence.

For then they will forget what true appetite is; false appetite will be born; it will strike your head, bringing illness and disease as penalties.

True pleasure springs from true appetite, true appetite from true need; this pleasure is ample for king and beggar alike.

Moreover, a *dinar* and a *dirhem* are equal; the pleasure jumbles them together, soothing the pain.

Like Intention, Point of View May Transform Habitual Actions Into Worship

Note this point! Just as through intention, permissible habitual actions may become worship, so according to the point of view, the physical sciences may become knowledge of God.

If you study and reflect, that is, if you look at things as signifying one other than themselves,³⁰ and in respect to art: “How beautifully the Maker made these, how well He did it!” instead of: “How beautiful it is;”

If you look from this point of view at the universe, the inscriptions of the Pre-Eternal Inscriber, His order and wisdom, and flashes of purpose and art will illuminate your doubts;

The sciences of the universe will become knowledge of God. But if you look at things as signifying themselves from the point of view of Nature, saying: “The thing looks to itself alone,”

If you look thus at the universe, whatever the extent of your scientific knowledge, it will be ignorance. Wretched truths become worthless in worthless hands. The witnesses to this are many.

At This Time the Shari’a Does Not Permit Us Affluence

When tasty foods call one, one should say: “It’s as though I ate it.” For someone who made this his rule, did not eat a mosque!³¹

Formerly, most Muslims did not go hungry; they enjoyed comfortable living to an extent. Now, however, most have declined into penury, and the Shari’a no longer permits the taking of pleasure.

³⁰ ‘*Mana-yı Harfî*’: the Qur’anic view that things bear the meaning of one other than themselves, that is, point to their Maker, and His Names and attributes, like a letter or word signifies its writer, as opposed to ‘*Mana-yı İsmî*,’ the view that things signify themselves alone. [Tr.]

³¹ There is a mosque in Istanbul called ‘Sanki Yedim’ (It is as though I ate it). The man who said “It is as though I ate it” saved himself from his appetites and built the mosque with the proceeds.

The subsistence of the mass of Muslims, and most innocents, is simple. It is a thousand times preferable to follow them in their simple sustenance
Than to resemble the extravagant minority, or the few profligates, in their luxurious living.

Sometimes the Absence of Bounty Is Bounty

Memory is a bounty, but for an immoral person at times of misfortune, forgetfulness is preferable.
Forgetfulness is also a bounty; it allows one to suffer the pains of only one day; it makes one forget the accumulated sorrows.

All Misfortunes Have Sides Which Are Bounty

O you smitten by misfortune! Within the misfortune is a bounty. Look closely and you will see it!
Just as in everything is a degree of heat, so in every calamity a degree of bounty is to be found. Think of a worse calamity, then see the extent of the bounty in the lesser one, And offer abundant thanks to God. For if you're scared by exaggerating it, and whine and complain, it will grow.
And as it grows it will worsen. If you are anxious, it will double. Its image in your heart will turn into fact.
It will learn from reality, then turn on you and start striking your heart...

Don't Appear Important, Or You'll Be Put Down

O you with an inflated ego and conceited head! You should understand this rule: in the social building of the human community, everyone has a window, called a rank, in which to see and be seen.
If the window is larger than a person's stature and worth, he will stretch and lengthen through pride. But if the window is smaller than his stature and aspiration, he will bend and bow down out of modesty.
In the mature and perfected, the measure of greatness is smallness. While in the faulty, the measure of littleness is bigness.

If Qualities Change Places, Their Natures Change

One quality... different places, one face. It is sometimes a demon, sometimes an angel, sometimes upright, sometimes wicked; some examples are these:
If an attribute which for the weak in the face of the strong is considered to be dignity, is found in the strong, it is pride and arrogance.
If an attribute which for the strong before the weak is considered to be humility, is found in the weak, it is abasement and hypocrisy.
In his office, a person of authority's gravity is dignity, and his humility abasement. But in his house, his humility is modesty, and his gravity, arrogance.
Tolerance in someone speaking on his own account is patriotism, and self-sacrifice, a quality, a good deed.
But if the person is speaking on account of others, his tolerance is treachery, and self-sacrifice, an attribute, a wicked act.
In setting up the preliminaries reliance on God is laziness. But handing over to Him in the reaping the consequences is the reliance taught by the Shari'a.
Contentment with one's lot in respect of the fruits of one's labour is praiseworthy contentment, and strengthens the desire to work.
But sufficing with existent goods is not desirable contentment, but lack of aspiration. There are numerous other examples.
The Qur'an mentions absolute good works and taqwa. By its indefiniteness, it hints at the existence of degrees; its conciseness is a detailed explanation; its silence, an expansive word.

Both 'Truth Will Prevail,' and Its Consequences, Are Intended

Friend! One time, a questioner asked: "Since 'truth will prevail' is the truth, why have the infidel prevailed over the Muslim, and force over right?"
I replied: Consider these four points and your difficulty will be resolved. The first point is this. It is not necessary that every means of every truth is true.
Similarly, not every means of every falsehood has to be false. This result emerges: a means which is false prevails over a true means. In which case, a truth is overcome by a falsehood. It occurs temporarily and indirectly; not essentially or permanently.
However, finally, it is always still the truth's. Force possesses a truth, there is an underlying meaning in its creation. The second point is this:
While it is obligatory that all attributes of all Muslims are Muslim, outwardly it is not always thus.

Similarly, not all the attributes of all infidels have to be infidel and to arise from their unbelief.

So too, all the attributes of all sinners do not always have to be sinful and have arisen from their sinfulness.

This means an infidel's Muslim attribute prevails over a Muslim's unlawful attribute. Indirectly, the infidel prevails over him.

Furthermore, in this world the right of life is general and all-embracing. It is a universal mercy that has a meaningful manifestation, a wise inner purpose, which unbelief does not impede.

The third point is this: two of the All-Glorious One's attributes of perfection, two 'legislative' manifestations: the determining through His choice, which proceeds from the attribute of Will, and that is the Shari'a of Creation;

And the well-known Shari'a, which proceeds from the attribute of Speech.

Just as there is compliance and rebellion in the face of the commands of the latter, so there is compliance and rebellion before the creational commands.

The reward and punishment for the former is received mostly in the hereafter, while the penalties and rewards of the latter are suffered mostly in the realm of this world.

For example, the reward of patience is victory. The penalty for laziness is poverty; and the reward of toil is wealth.

The reward of constancy is victory. The penalty of poison is illness, the reward of its antidote is health.

Sometimes the injunctions of both Shari'as are included in a single thing; it has faces looking to both.

That means obedience to the creational command is a truth. Obedience prevails; rebellion in the face of the injunction is a false stand.

If a truth has been the means to a falsehood, when it prevails, it will have been the means to a falsehood. Indirectly, a truth is defeated by a falsehood, but not essentially.

This means that "the truth prevails" means "essentially." Also, the end is intended, and the restriction of viewpoint is meant.

The fourth point is this: a truth remained unexpressed, or powerless, or adulterated, or convoluted. It needed to be expressed and opened up, or given fresh strength.

In order to improve and gild it, falsehood had to be temporarily imposed on it, in order to assay that ingot of truth.

Then it could emerge pure and unadulterated from its origins. Even if falsehood prevails in this world, it cannot win the war. "*The future belongs to the God-conscious*"³² will strike them a blow!

So falsehood is defeated. The mystery of "truth prevails" inflicts punishment on it; see, truth prevails!

³² Qur'an, 7:128.

A Few Social Principles

If you want some principles for society: unequal justice is not justice.
Resemblance is an important reason for contrariety. Mutual proportion is the basis of solidarity.
Small-mindedness is the source of pride. Pusillanimity is the mine of arrogance.
Impotence is the source of opposition.
Curiosity is the teacher of knowledge. Need is the master of progress. Distress is the teacher of dissipation.
Thus, the source of dissipation is distress. As for distress, its mine is despair and pessimism.
Misguidance springs from ideas, darkness stems from the heart, wastefulness pertains to the body.

Women Left Their Homes and Led Mankind Astray

When men become amiable through following their fancies, women become masculine by being impudent.³³
Low civilization took womankind out of their homes, and turning them into common goods, destroyed the respect in which they were held.
The Shari'a of Islam mercifully invites them back to their homes. It is there they are respected, in their homes they are comfortable, in family life.
Cleanliness is their adornment; their good character is their splendour; their gracious beauty is their chastity; their compassion, their perfection; their children, their relaxation.
With so many tools of corruption, one has to be as strong and unyielding as steel to withstand them.
A beautiful woman entering a gathering of brothers, arouses veins of hypocrisy, rivalry, envy, and selfishness. Slumbering desires suddenly awaken.
Increased freedom for women led to a sudden unfolding of bad morality in mankind. The represented forms of little smiling corpses have played a large role in making the evil-polluted perverse spirit of modern man what it is.³⁴
The prohibited statue is either petrified tyranny, or embodied lust, or personified hypocrisy. Or it is a talisman, attracting those evil spirits.

³³ This is the basis of *Tesettür Risalesi* [The Twenty-Fourth Flash, Treatise On Islamic Dress for Women]. Twenty years later, a court of law forever shamed itself and its judges by making it the pretext for the author's conviction.

³⁴ Just as to look lustfully at a dead woman shows an awesomely degenerate soul, so to look at a beautiful picture of an unfortunate female corpse needy for compassion, extinguishes the elevated sentiments of the spirit.

The Scope of Divine Power Rejects Intermediaries and Helpers

From the point of view of the comprehensive effectiveness of the disposals of the All-Glorious and Powerful One's power, our sun is like a particle.
There are vast disposals of power in a single realm of beings. Take the gravity between two particles,
Then go and put it beside the gravity between the Sun of Suns and the Milky Way.
Bring an angel whose load is a snowflake to the radiant angel who holds the sun; put a needle-fish beside a whale;
Conceive at once of the vast manifestation of the Pre-Eternal All-Powerful One of Glory,
His perfect art in things from the smallest to the greatest;
Customary matters like gravity and laws, fluid intermediaries, are only names for the manifestation of His power and the disposal of His wisdom;
They signify Him alone; they can have no other meaning; think of them together, you will necessarily understand the true cause.
In the view of that power, apparent intermediaries, helpers, and partners are all false, all imaginary and impossible.
Life is the perfection of existence, its rank is high and important. Consequently, I say: why should the globe, our world, not be obedient and subjugated to it, like an animal?
Living birds of the Pre-Eternal Sovereign of this sort are numerous, spread through the arena of space, majestic, beautiful.
Dispersed through the garden of creation, they spin; their refrains, their motion, are words of glorification, modes of worship, of the Pre-Eternal Undying One, the Eternal All-Wise One.
The globe resembles a living being, it displays signs of life. If to suppose the impossible it was reduced to the size of an egg,
There is a strong possibility it would become a tiny animal. If a micro-organism was expanded to the size of the earth, most probably it would be just like it.
If the world was reduced to the size of a man, and the stars transformed into particles, it is possible it would become a conscious animal, as well as intelligent.
This means the world with all its parts is a glorifying servant of the Undying Creator, the Eternal All-Powerful One, obedient, subjugated.
To be large quantitatively does not always infer being great qualitatively, for a clock the size of a mustard-seed is more eloquent than a clock the size of Aya Sophia.
A fly's creation is more wondrous than that of an elephant, that indiscriminating creature.
If a Qur'an was to be written by the Pen of Power in atoms of ether on the

minutest particle, the art being in inverse proportion to the size of the page, Its eloquence would be equal to a Qur'an written in stars on the face of the heavens. The Pre-Eternal Inscriber's art is everywhere of the utmost beauty and perfection. Everywhere it is thus. The pen proclaims Divine unity since it always works with utter perfection. Study carefully this most meaningful piece!

The Angels Are a Community, Charged With the Shari'a of Creation

There are two Divine Shari'as: proceeding from two attributes, man is addressed by both, and bound to comply with both.

The Shari'a of Creation, which proceeds from the attribute of Will, orders the circumstances and motions of the world, the macrocosm, which are not voluntary. It is dominical will, and is also wrongly termed 'Nature.'

The Shari'a proceeding from the attribute of Speech is the code of laws which orders the actions of man, the microcosm, which are voluntary.

The two Shari'as sometimes come together in the same place. The Divine angels are a vast community, a Divine army.

They are obedient bearers of the first Shari'a, workers and representatives. Some of them are worshipping slaves of God, others throng the Divine Throne in ecstasy.

As Matter Is Refined, Life Is Intensified

Life is fundamental, basic; matter is dependent on it, and subsists through it. If you compare a microscopic organism with its five senses, and man's senses, you will see that however much larger man is than the organism, his senses are inferior to the same degree.

The organism hears its brother's voice. It sees its food. If it was enlarged to the size of a man, its senses would be wondrous, its life dazzling, and the sight of it like a lightning flash lighting up the skies.

Man is not a living being composed of dead beings, but a living human cell composed of thousands of millions of living cells.

Man is like the Sura Ya. Sin., in which is inscribed Sura Ya. Sin. *Blessed be God, the Best of Creators!*³⁵

³⁵ Qur'an, 23:14.

Materialism Is an Immaterial Plague

Materialism is an immaterial plague; mankind caught this fearsome fever.³⁶ Its inculcation and imitation caused mankind to be visited suddenly by Divine wrath. This plague spreads to the extent the ability to criticize spreads. It was inculcated by science, and learnt blind imitation from modern civilization. Freedom led to criticism; misguidance sprang from its pride.

There Is Nothing Idle In Existence; The Unemployed Man Works On Account of Non-Existence

The most miserable, wretched, and distressed person, is the unemployed. For idleness is non-existence within existence, death within life. Whereas exertion is the life of existence, and the waking state of life!

Usury and Interest Cause Absolute Harm to Islam

Usury is the cause of idleness, it extinguishes enthusiasm for work. The profit of the doors of usury and their containers, the banks, is always for the worst group of mankind, the infidels. The infidels' profits go to the worst of them, that is, the oppressors. The profit of the oppressors always goes to the worst of them; that is, the dissolute; it causes the World of Islam absolute harm. In the view of the Shari'a all mankind cannot always be prosperous. For a belligerent infidel is disrespectful, unchaste, and his blood is spilt for nothing, always.

The Qur'an Will Defend Itself and Perpetuate Its Sovereignty³⁷

I saw someone who was stricken by despair, he was sick with pessimism. He said: "The 'ulama have decreased in number, quantity has replaced quality. 'I'm frightened our religion will die out one day." I replied: So long as the universe is not extinguished, Islamic belief will not die. Also, so long as the marks of Islam, the minarets of religion, the places of

³⁶ This alludes to the First World War.

³⁷ This piece, which was written thirty-five years ago, is in a style that could have been written this year. That is, it was a sort of prediction inspired by the effulgence of Ramadan.

Divine worship, the works of the Shari'a, all like nails struck in the face of the earth, –so long as they are not extinguished, Islam will ever shine.

All the mosques are instructors, teaching their frequenters; and all the instructors have become masters; through the tongue of disposition, without error or forgetfulness, they instil in them the religion.

All the marks are learned teachers, constantly teaching the spirit of Islam to those who look on them. With the centuries, they have become the cause of continuity.

The lights of Islam are as though embodied in its marks; and the pure water of Islam has solidified in its places of worship, embodying them – each a pillar of belief.

The injunctions of Islam are as though embodied within its works; the pillars of Islam have become petrified in its worlds – each a diamond pillar; through them the earth and sky are bound together .

Especially the orator of the Qur'an of Miraculous Exposition, a constantly repeated pre-eternal discourse; no village, no place at all has remained within the Islamic lands

That does not listen to its address, does not hear its teaching. According to the inner meaning of *Indeed We preserve it*,³⁸ to be a *hafiz* is a very high station. To recite it is worship for men and jinn.

It is for this reason it should be taught, and its incontestable matters mentioned. With constant repetition, theoretical matters become incontestable, and turn into self-evident facts, not requiring further expounding.

The essentials of religion ceased being theoretical matters and became essentials. To mention them is sufficient. To remind is enough. The Qur'an is always a healer.³⁹

The Islamic revival and social awakening provides evidence for everyone and a balance, for reminders and mentioning.

Since social life began in Islam, the belief of an individual is not restricted to proofs particular to himself; it is based on the conscience. Indeed, it is based on innumerable matters in the common heart.

It is worthy of note, it is difficult to abolish even a weak school of thought as time passes.

So what about Islam, which is based on the two firm foundations of revelation and innate disposition, and has ruled so effectively for so many centuries!

With its firmly rooted principles, its profound works, it has cohered to half the globe, becoming a natural spirit. If it is now eclipsed, it will immediately emerge!

But regrettably certain giddy infidels with their false arguments attack the firm foundations of this lofty palace whenever they find the chance.

³⁸ Qur'an, 15:9.

³⁹ For further explanation, see, The Twenty-Seventh Word, pp. 498-9 in the present work. [Tr.]

They try to shake them. But those principles cannot be interfered with, or tampered with; fall silent now, irreligion! That scoundrel is bankrupt. Enough now, the experiment of disbelief and lies!

The Islamic world's advance-post against the world of unbelief was the Darülfünun.⁴⁰

But due to indifference and heedlessness, the reptilian foe of Nature Opened up a breach behind the front; irreligion assaulted, the nation was well shaken.

The advance-post should be a paradise illuminated with the spirit of Islam.

It should be the firmest, and truly awakened, or it should not be that institution. It must not deceive Islam. The heart is the seat of belief; the mind is where the light of belief is reflected.⁴¹

Sometimes it is a *mujahid*, sometimes it is a sweep; if the doubts of the mind do not enter the heart, the likelihood is belief and the conscience will not be shaken.

For if as some people suppose belief is in the mind, numerous possibilities, all pitiless enemies, oppose 'absolute certainty,' which is the spirit of belief.

The heart and conscience are the seat of belief. Intuition and inspiration are the evidence for belief. A sixth sense, the way of belief. Thought and intellect, the watchmen of belief.

Reminding About Incontestable Matters Is Needed, Rather Than Instruction In Theoretical Ones

The essentials of religion, the incontestable matters of the Shari'a, are present in people's hearts; they are made conscious of them by being reminded.

The desired result is obtained. Arabic⁴² performs this reminder in more lofty fashion.

The Arabic Khutba in the Friday prayers is sufficient for recalling the essentials and incontestable matters.

There, instruction in theoretical matters is not required. Moreover, those Arabic words stamp an imprint of unity on the face of Islam's conscience; to multiply [their language] is unacceptable.

⁴⁰ *Darü'l-Fünun*: the university opened finally in 1869 after 24 years of preparations and unsuccessful attempts. Based on the Western model, it was designed to teach the modern sciences. [Tr.]

⁴¹ See the piece, *The Light of Reason Comes From the Heart*, above p. 739. [Tr.]

⁴² The author perceived an event that was to occur ten years later, and attempted to reply to it.

Hadiths Say To The Qur'an's Verses: It's Impossible To Reach You!

If you compare verses and Hadiths, you will see clearly that the most eloquent of men was the conveyer of revelation, yet not even his eloquence was equal to the eloquence of the Qur'an's verses.

Not even he could emulate it. That means that all the words issuing from Muhammad's tongue were not his.

Expound The Qur'an's Miraculousness Concisely

One time I had a dream: I was at the foot of Mount Ararat. The mountain suddenly exploded, scattering rocks the size of mountains all over the world, shaking it. Then a man appeared at my side. He told me: "Expound the aspects of the Qur'an's miraculousness you know, concisely and succinctly!"

I thought of the dream's meaning while still dreaming, telling myself: the explosion here symbolizes a revolution in mankind.

As a result of it the guidance of the Criterion of Truth and Falsehood will be exalted everywhere, and will rule. And the time will come to expound its miraculousness!

I said to the questioner in reply: The Qur'an's miraculousness is manifested from seven sources, it is also composed of seven elements:

First Source: This is the fluency of its wording, arising from the purity of its language; and its brilliant manner of exposition, born of the beauty of the word-order; the eloquence of the meanings, the originality of the concepts, the excellence of the inferences, and the singularity of its styles.

Combined with these, in its miraculousness are a wondrous embroidery and exposition, and an original art and language, so its repetition never wearies or bores.

Second Element: A treasury of occult sciences containing the hidden principles of cosmic events, the obscure mysteries of the Divine truths, the unseen matters of revelation, events concealed in the past, and matters hidden in the future.

The tongue of the worlds of the Unseen speaks with the Manifest World; it discloses its matters symbolically; its aim is mankind, a luminous flash of miraculousness.

Third Source: It has a wondrous comprehensiveness in five aspects. In its words, meanings, injunctions, and its knowledge, and the balance of its aims.

Its words contain truly vast possibilities and numerous aspects, yet each is

the one preferred by eloquence, the most correct in its Arabic and apt in the view of the Shari'a.

Its meaning: The miraculousness of its exposition at once comprehends and comprises the ways of all the saints, the illuminations of those versed in knowledge of God, the schools of those on the sufi way, the ways of the scholars of kala\m, and the paths of the philosophers. The breadth of its evidence, the expanse of its meanings. If you look through this window, what a broad arena you will see!

The scope of its injunctions: The wondrous Shari'a has deduced from it all the principles for the happiness of this world and the next, all the means of salvation.

Its pronouncements at once embrace all the relations of social life, all methods of education, the realities of all conditions.

The profundity of its knowledge: It has brought together in its paradise, in the fortresses of its Suras, both the physical sciences and the Divine sciences, and all signs, allusions, and indications to them.

Its aims and purposes: It has applied perfect balance and regular sequence; conformed with the principles of the innate nature of things and unity, and has preserved the balance.

So see the marvellous encompassment in the comprehensiveness of its words, the breadth of its meanings, the scope of its injunctions, the profundity of its knowledge, and the balance of its aims.

Fourth Element: It bestows a luminous effulgence on every age in accordance with its understanding and degree of literacy, and on all the classes of men in accordance with their capacities and abilities.

Its door is open to every era and every class within each. It is as though this Speech of the Most Merciful is freshly revealed every instant, everywhere.

The Qur'an grows younger as it grows older; its signs become apparent; it rends the veil of Nature and causes, that Divine address.

It sheds the light of Divine unity continuously from every verse. It raises the veil of the Manifest World, cast over the Unseen.

The loftiness of its address invites man's attentive gaze, for it is the tongue of the Unseen; it speaks with the Manifest World. Its wondrous freshness proceeds from this element, an all-encompassing ocean!

Divine condescension to the mind's of men, to make it familiar. The variety of the styles of its revelation makes it familiar to men and jinn.

Fifth Source: It relates in an original style laden with meaning, as though itself had witnessed them, of its stories and narrations, and truthful accounts, making their essential points ;

With them it warns mankind. What it relates is these: it tells of former events, and future events, the secrets of Hell and of Heaven;

Truths of the Unseen, and mysteries of the Manifest World, Divine mysteries, stories about cosmic relations;

Clear stories that neither fact has refuted, nor logic. Even if logic does not accept them, it cannot refute them – the revealed books, which are revered by all the world.

It relates faithfully the points on which they agree, and mentions in correct form the subjects on which they differ. These matters issuing from one “unlettered” was a wonder of the time!

Sixth Element: It was the founder of the religion of Islam, and comprises it. If you investigate time and place, neither the past was capable of producing the like of Islam, nor is the future.

This heavenly thread holds the globe in its annual and daily rotations, and spins it. It weighed down heavily on the earth and mounted it, but the earth still does not give up its rebellion.

Seventh Source: The six lights pouring forth from these six sources blend together; from this a beauty becomes apparent, and from this an intuition, a luminous means of understanding.

This produces a pleasure: the pleasure of miraculousness may be known, but our language is inadequate to describe it. The mind too is defective; that celestial star may be seen, but not held.

For thirteen centuries the Qur'an's enemies have desired to challenge it, while it has aroused in its friends a desire to imitate it. This too is a proof of its miraculousness.

Millions of Arabic books have been written in consequence of these two intense desires, coming into the library of existence.

If they are compared with revelation, if they are weighed up, relying on the evidence of their eyes and ears not only the learned scholar, even the common man, will declare: “This is heavenly, those are human!”

They will also say: “It doesn't resemble them, it is not of the same class. It is therefore lower than all of them, and this is self-evidently not true.

“In which case, it is superior to all of them.” Its meanings in all that time. The door is open, dedicated to mankind; it has summoned to itself spirits and minds!

Man had power over it, and laid claim to it, but his meanings still could not oppose the Qur'an; he never could; now the time of testing has passed.

It does not resemble other books, it cannot be compared to them. For it was dominical wisdom its being revealed bit by bit over twenty years in relation to need, in miscellaneous parts.

The immediate causes of revelation were various and distinct. The questions about any one matter were repeated and various. The events related to injunctions were numerous and changed. The times of revelation were distinct and different.

The conditions it was considering were various and different; the groups of those it was addressing were numerous and remote from each other; the aims of its guidance were graded and various.

Its structure, and expositions, and replies, and addresses were based on these foundations. Yet despite this, its smoothness of style and lack of defect, its mutual proportion and harmony, demonstrated its perfection.

Witness to this is that according to the science of rhetoric, the Qur'an has a characteristic not present in other speech: if you listen to other speech, you will see the speaker (or writer) behind it, or you will find him within it. Style is the mirror of man.

O dream-questioner! You asked for conciseness, so I have made an indication. If you want a detailed exposition, that is beyond my capabilities! A fly cannot behold the sky. For of the forty sorts of miraculousness, only one is the eloquence of the word-order; and an exposition of it did not fit in *Isharat al-I'jaz*.

My hundred-page commentary was insufficient for it. Rather, I want a detailed exposition from spirit-inspirations like yourself!

The Fanciful, Lust-Exciting Genius-Style Hand of Western Literature Cannot Reach Up To the Healing, Light-Scattering, Guidance-Laden, Eternal Literature of the Qur'an

A state of mind pleasing to the mature and perfected with their appreciation of meaning, does not gratify the childish, whimsical, and dissolute,

It does not entertain them. In consequence, those raised amid base, dissolute, carnal and lusty pleasures will not experience spiritual pleasure.

Looking with the 'novel-based' view of modern literature, which issued from Europe, they will neither see nor experience the elevated subtleties, the majestic virtues, of the Qur'an.

Their touchstone cannot assay those virtues. There are three areas in which literature promenades; it roams within their bounds:

Either love and sorrow, or heroism and valour, or depiction of reality. In foreign literature, it does not seek the truth in heroism; it rather instils a desire for power by applauding mankind's cruelties.

As regards sorrow and love, it does not know true love; it injects into the soul a lust-exciting thrill.

In the question of depicting reality, it does not look on the universe as Divine art; it does not see it with its hue of the Most Merciful.

It rather approaches it from the point of view of 'Nature,' and depicts it thus; and it cannot be freed from this.

For this reason, what it inculcates is love of 'Nature.' It instils in the heart a

feeling of materialism, from which it cannot easily be saved.
Again, that unmannerly literature, both sedative and narcotic, can provide no beneficial salve for the distress of the spirit which arises from the misguidance resulting from the above.
It has found a single remedy, and that is its novels and fiction. Books with their dead living, the cinema with its animated corpses. The dead cannot bestow life!
And the theatre with its reincarnations and ghosts from the vast grave known as the past.
– It is completely unashamed at these three sorts of its fiction.
It has put a mendacious tongue in mankind's mouth, attached a lustful eye to its face, dressed the world in a scarlet petticoat, and does not recognize sheer beauty.
If it points to the sun, it puts in the reader's mind a beautiful blonde actress. It apparently says: "Vice is bad, it is not fitting for man."
It points out its harmful consequences. But its depictions so incite vice that they make the mouth water and the reason cannot remain in control.
They whet the appetite, excite desire, so the emotions no longer heed anything. The literature of the Qur'an, however, does not stir up desire;
It imparts a sense of love of the truth, a passion for sheer loveliness, an appreciation and taste for beauty, a desire for reality. And it does not deceive.
It does not look at the universe from the point of view of Nature; it speaks of it from the point of view of Divine art, with the colouring of the Most Merciful. It does not confuse the mind.
It instils the light of knowledge of the Maker. It points out His signs in all things. Both produce a touching sorrow, but they do not resemble each other.
The literature born of Europe excites a pathetic sorrow arising from the lack of friends, from being ownerless; not an elevated sorrow.
For it is a woebegone sadness inspired by deaf Nature and blind force. It shows the world as desolate, not in any other way.
It depicts it in this way, holds the sorrowing man there, places him ownerless among strangers, leaving him without hope.
Due to this feeling of consternation it has given him, he gradually sinks into misguidance; it opens up the way to atheism, from whence it is difficult to return. Perhaps he never will return.
Qur'anic literature produces a sorrow, but it is the sorrow of love, not of orphans. It arises from separation from friends, not from the lack of them.
Its view of the universe, in place of blind Nature, is as conscious, merciful Divine art; it does not speak of Nature.
Instead of blind force, it describes wise and purposeful Divine power. The universe, therefore, does not take on the form of a desolate wasteland.

Indeed, in the view of the grieving one it addresses, it becomes a gathering of friends. On every side mutual love and response, which cause no distress.

The friendliness at every corner draws the melancholy person into society, giving him a yearning sorrow, an elevated feeling; not a dejected mournfulness.

Both give rise to eagerness. But through the eagerness provoked by the foreign literature, the soul becomes excited, the desires are stimulated; it gives no joy to the spirit.

The Qur'an's eagerness, however, fires the spirit, gives rise to a lofty eagerness. It is for this reason that the Shari'a of Muhammad (PBUH) wants no amusements or diversion.

It has forbidden some musical instruments, for amusement, and permitted others. That is to say, instruments producing Qur'anic sorrow or revelational eagerness are not harmful.

But if it produces the woebegone grief of the orphan or carnal thrills, the instrument is prohibited. It changes from person to person, not everyone is the same.

Branches Offer Fruits In the Name of Mercy

On every side the branches of the tree of creation apparently extend the fruits of bounties to the hands of beings with spirits.

But in reality it is a hand of mercy, a hand of power, which holds out to us those branches and fruits.

You should kiss that hand of mercy in gratitude; you should proclaim the holiness of that hand of power thankfully.

An Explanation of the Three Ways Indicated at the End of Sura al-Fatiha

O brother full of hope! Take your imagination and come with me. See, we are in a land, we look around. There is no one to see us.

A layer of black cloud has settled on the high mountains, like tent-posts. The cloud has covered too the whole face of the earth.

It forms a solid ceiling, but its six sides are open, so the sun is visible. We are under the cloud, the darkness oppresses us.

The distress is suffocating, the airlessness is killing us. Now three ways are open to us. One is a luminous world, I beheld it once, that metaphorical land.

Yes, I came here once before, I have passed down these three ways. The first way is this:
most people take it; it is the way of the world, it invites us to travel it.
See, we are on our way, we are going on foot. See how the sea-sands of the desert scorch
us with their anger, threatening us!
See the mountainous waves; they are threatening us too. Now thanks be to God we have
emerged on the other side, we can see the face of the sun.
But only we know the difficulties we have suffered. Oh! we have returned to the
wasteland, the ceiling of cloud with its lowering darkness. What we need is the eye
of the heart to illumine things.
A wondrous light-filled world; if you have the courage, we shall enter it together, this
way so fraught with dangers. Our second way:
We shall plunge through Nature-earth, and pass to the other side. Or trembling, we shall
pass through a natural tunnel.
I travelled this way one time, fearlessly and full of prayer. But on that occasion I had with
me a substance to smelt and rend the Nature-earth.
The third way: The Qur'an had given me that miraculous evidence. Brother, stick close
behind me, and have no fear!
See, here await us tunnel-like caves and underground torrents. They will let us pass.
Don't let these awesome lifeless beings of Nature scare you in the slightest!
For behind its sour face is the smiling countenance of its compassionate Owner. I
perceived that radium-like substance of the Qur'an through its light.
There, you see! We have come out in the light-filled world, see this delicate earth, this
soft and gentle air. Raise your head! See, it has drawn its head to the skies, rent the
clouds, leaving them far below. This Tuba-tree invites us –
It is the Qur'an. It has spread its branches everywhere. We must hang onto this branch
which is trailing down, so that it can raise us up.
That heavenly tree – on earth, one of its personifications is the Illustrious Shari'a. That is
to say, we ascended to this world of light in that way without difficulty; we were
shaken by no distress.
Since we went wrong, we'll return to our former place and find the right way. See, our
third way! Over the mountains hovers a Royal Falcon;
He is reciting the ezan to the whole world. See, the supreme muezzin, Muhammad al-
Hashimi (PBUH), is summoning mankind to the luminous world of light. He enjoins
supplication and obligatory prayers.
Look at the mountains! See, the guidance has rent the clouds! The mountain of the
Shari'a has raised its head to the skies. How it has adorned the face and eye of the
earth!
Now we must depart from here in the aircraft of endeavour. The light and

breeze are there; the light of beauty is there. Ah, now here is the Uhud of Divine unity, that mighty mountain.

Here is the Judi of Islam, that wholesome mountain. Here is the Mountain of the Moon, the Qur'an of al-Azhar, the pure water of the Nile flows from that sublime source.

Take a drink of its sweet water!

*So blessed be God, the Best of Creators.*⁴³ * *And their call shall close with "All praise be to God, Sustainer of All the Worlds!"*⁴⁴

Friend! Now cast away your imagination and don your reason! The first two ways are those of "*those who have received Your anger*" and "*those who have gone astray*."⁴⁵

Their perils are numerous. On them is perpetual winter, their autumn and summer. Only one out of a hundred is saved, like Plato and Socrates.

The third way is easy, and direct and straight. Weak and strong are equal. Everyone may take it. The most comfortable is this: to be either martyr or 'ghazi'.

Now we come to the conclusion: Yes, the first two ways are the path and school of the genius of science. As for the guidance of the Qur'an, the third way is its straight path; it will take us there.

*O God! Guide us to the straight path. * The path of those whom You have blessed, not those who have received Your anger, nor those who have gone astray.*

All True Pain Is In Misguidance, and All True Pleasure In Belief; A Mighty Truth Robed In Imagination

Prudent fellow-traveller! My friend! If you want to see clearly the differences between the luminous way of the "straight path" and the gloomy path of "those who have received Your anger" and "those who have gone astray,"

Come, take your fancy and mount your imagination, together we shall go to the darkness of non-existence. We shall visit that vast grave, that city of the dead.

A Pre-Eternal All-Powerful One took us out of that place of darkness with His hand of power, mounted us on existence, and sent us to this world, this city without pleasures.

Now we have come to the world of existence, this fearful desert. Our eyes have opened, we've looked in the six directions.

⁴³ Qur'an, 23:14.

⁴⁴ Qur'an, 10:10.

⁴⁵ Qur'an, 1:7.

Firstly we look before us seeking favours, but tribulations and pains assault us like enemies. We take fright at that and draw back.

We look to left and right to the natural elements, seeking assistance. But we see their hearts are hard and merciless. They grind their teeth, glowering at us angrily. They heed neither plea nor plaint.

Like creatures beleaguered, we despairingly lift our gazes upwards. Seeking help, we look to the heavenly bodies, but they threaten us awesomely.

As though each was a bomb; having shot out of their cases they are speeding through space. But somehow or other they do not obstruct each other.

If by chance one confused its way, this Manifest World would be blown to pieces, God forbid! It is tied to coincidence; no good can come of that.

In despair we turn back our gaze from that direction, overcome by grievous bewilderment. We bow our heads and look to ourselves; we consider and study ourselves.

Now we hear the shouts of myriad needs coming from our wretched selves. The cries of thousands of wants issue forth. While expecting solace, we take fright.

No good comes from that either. Seeking refuge, we consult our consciences, we look within seeking a solution. Alas, again we can find none; we have to help the conscience.

For in it are thousands of hopes, turbulent emotions, wild desires, spread throughout the universe. We tremble with all of them, and cannot offer help.

Compressed in the world of existence, those hopes stretch out to pre-eternity on one side and post-eternity on the other. They have such breadth, if they swallowed the world, the conscience still would not be satisfied.

Wherever we have recourse on this grievous road, we encounter misfortune. For the ways of “those who have received Your anger” and “those who have gone astray” are thus. Chance and misguidance beset that road.

We follow it and fall into our present state. Even now we temporarily forget its beginning and end, the Maker and resurrection of the dead.

It is worse than Hell, it scorches more terribly, it crushes our spirits. For we had recourse to those six directions, but this state resulted.

It fills us with awesome terror, making us shudder with impotence, disquiet and apprehension, orphanhood and despair, so that it racks our conscience.

Now we shall form a front opposite each of the directions and try to repulse them. Firstly we have recourse to our own strength, but alas! we are powerless, weak.

Secondly, we address ourselves to silencing the needs of the soul. But alas! we see that they cry out unceasingly.

Thirdly, we cry out for help seeking a saviour, but no one hears or responds.

We suppose everything to be hostile, everything strange. Nothing consoles our hearts, nothing gives a sense of security, or true pleasure.

Fourthly, the more we looked at the celestial bodies, the more they filled us with fright and awe. Vexing the conscience, alienating it; tormenting the mind, filling it with delusions.

Brother! That is the way of misguidance! On it we experienced all the darkness of unbelief. Come, now, my brother, we'll turn again to that non-being.

Again we shall come. This time our way is the Straight Path, and the way of belief. Our guide and leader are wisdom and the Qur'an, the Falcon that overflies the centuries.

At one time, the Pre-Eternal Sovereign's mercy and grace willed our existence, His power brought us forth, graciously mounting us on the law of His will, completing us stage after stage.

Then it compassionately clothed us in the garment of existence, bestowed on us the Trust and its rank; the mark of this is supplication and the obligatory prayers.

All the stages are stopping-places on our long road. To make our road easy, Divine Determining issued a decree and pasted it on the page of our foreheads;

Wherever we go, with whichever group we are guests, we are welcomed in truly brotherly fashion. We give of our belongings, and we receive from theirs.

Love born of commerce, they nourish us, adorn us with gifts, then they see us on our way. Now at last we have come to the door of the world. We hear a noise.

See, we have arrived at the earth. We have stepped foot in the Manifest World. The festival of the Most Merciful, the clamorous habitation of man.

We know nothing at all, our guide and leader is the will of the Merciful One. Our guide's deputy, our delicate eyes. We open our eyes and look around. Do we recall the first time we came?

We were strangers, orphans. Our enemies were many. We did not know our protector.

Now, with the light of belief, we have a strong pillar, a point of support, a protector, who repulses those enemies.

And that is belief in God, which is the light of our spirits, and light of our lives, and spirit of our spirits. Now our hearts are easy, we disregard the enemies, not even recognizing them.

When on our first journey we consulted our consciences, we heard innumerable cries and laments, and complaints.

It was due to them that we were overcome by misfortune. For our hopes and desires, capacity and senses always desire eternity. But we did not know how to obtain it, hence their lamentations and cries.

However, all praise be to God, this time we have found a point of succour which always gives life to our innate disposition and hopes; it makes them take flight for eternity. Our innate disposition shows them the way from that point, and seeks help; drinks down the water of life, and races to its perfection through that point of succour, that encouraging, elusive symbol.

The second pole of belief is affirmation of the resurrection of the dead. Everlasting happiness is that shell's pearl. The proof of belief, the Qur'an; the conscience, a human mystery.

Now raise your head, and take a look at the universe. Speak a word with it. It appeared formidable on our former way. Now it is smiling, laughing on every side, coyly winking and blinking.

Do you not see, our eyes have become bees? They fly everywhere in the garden of the universe, around the profusion of flowers; each flower proffers them a delectable draft.

Each also offers solace, love, and a feeling of familiarity. They too give and take, and offer testimony, they make honey flow forth from honey, that mysterious falcon.

As our gaze alights on the motions of the heavenly bodies, or the stars, or suns, they show up the Creator's wisdom, and the manner of His instruction, and the manifestation of His mercy, making them take flight.

It is as though the sun is speaking with us, saying: "My brothers! Don't feel frightened or dismayed. You are welcome, how good you have come! This dwelling-place is yours, I am but a candle-holder.

"I am like you, but a pure, obedient, unrebelling servant. Out of His utter mercy, the Single and Eternally Besought One subjected me so that I would serve you with my light. Light and heat are from me, supplication and prayer from you!"

Now look at the moon! And the stars and the seas; each says in its own tongue:

"Welcome! It's good you've come! Don't you recognize us?"

Look through the mystery of co-operation, through the signs of the order. Each says: "We are all servants, mirrors of the All-Glorious One's mercy; don't worry, don't be dismayed!

"Don't feel frightened or sceptical at the crashing of the thunder and cries of events, for within them are the rolling of recitations, the clamour of glorifications, the tumult of supplication and entreaty.

"The All-Glorious One Who sent us to you holds their reins in His hands. The eye of faith reads on their faces the signs of mercy; each proclaims them."

O believer with a wakeful heart! Let our eyes rest a little; we shall hand over our sensitive ears to the blessed hand of belief in their place. We shall send them to the world to listen to its delightful refrains.

The universal mourning and lamentations of death imagined on our first way are now all supplications and orisons, cries of glorification.

Listen to the murmuring of the air, the twittering of chicks, the pattering of the rain, the plashing of the seas, the crashing of thunder, the crackling of stones; all are meaningful refrains.

The humming of the air, the intoning of the thunder, the strains of the waves are all recitations of Grandeur. The chanting of the rains, the warbling of birds are all glorifications of Mercy, allusions to reality.

The sounds of things are all sounds of existence: "I too exist," they say. The silent universe suddenly finds voice: "Don't suppose us to be lifeless, O chattering man!"

A tasty morsel or droplet of rain; the birds break into song.

With their different voices, their tiny songs, they applaud mercy, alight on bounties, proclaiming their thanks.

Implicitly they say: "Beings of the universe, my brothers! How fine are our circumstances;

We are tenderly nourished, we are happy at our lot." With beaks upstretched they scatter their songs on the air.

In its entirety the universe is a lofty orchestra; through the light of belief its recitations, its glorifications, are heard.

For its wisdom rejects the existence of chance, its order repulses it; in unison they banish doubt.

Fellow-traveller! We are leaving now this world of similitudes, stepping down from imagination and fancy. We shall alight in the arena of reason, take stock, and close down those ways.

Our first way, full of pain, that of "those who have received Your anger" and "those who have gone astray," inflicts suffering on the innermost conscience, and severe pain. Consciousness showed this; we became the reverse of conscious.

We have to be saved from it, we need to be, so the pain can be pacified, or numbed, we can't endure it otherwise; no one heeds the cries for help.

Guidance is healing, but fancies block out the feelings. This requires solace, it requires feigned unmindfulness, it requires occupation, it requires entertainment. Enchanting desires.

Then it can deceive the conscience and put the spirit to sleep so they feel no pain. Otherwise that grievous suffering scorches the conscience; the pain is unendurable, the despair cannot be borne.

This means, however far one deviates from the Straight Path, to that extent one is affected in that way, causing the conscience to cry out. Within every pleasure is a pain, a taint.

That means glittering civilization, which is a mixture of fancy, lust, amusement, and licentiousness, is a deceptive panacea for the ghastly distress arising from misguidance, a poisonous narcotic.

My dear friend! On our second way, that light-filled road, we perceived a state of mind in which life became a source of pleasure, pains became joys.

We understood that it imparts a state to the spirit varying in degree according the strength of belief. The body receives pleasure through the spirit, the spirit receives pleasure through the conscience.

An immediate pleasure is felt in the conscience; a spiritual paradise is present in the heart. To think of it is to open it up; while consciousness is marked by its secrets.

Now, however much the heart is aroused, the conscience stimulated, the spirit stirred, it increases the pleasure, transforming fire into light, and winter into spring.

The doors of paradises open up in the conscience, the world becomes a paradise. Within it our spirits take flight, soaring like kites, entreating, praying.

Worthy fellow-traveller! Farewell for now. Let us offer a prayer together, then we shall part, to meet again!

O God! Lead us to the Straight Path. Amen.