

# The Thirty-Second Word

[This Word consists of three Stopping-Places. It is an addendum explaining the Eighth Flash of the Twenty-Second Word, and is also a commentary on the first of the fifty-five tongues with which all the beings in the universe testify to Divine unity. These tongues have been alluded to in my treatise called *Katre* (A Droplet). It is one truth, which has been clothed in the garment of comparison, of many truths pertaining to the verse: *Had there been in heaven or on earth any deities other than God, there surely would have been confusion in both.*<sup>1</sup>]

## First Stopping-Place

*In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.*

*Had there been in heaven or on earth any deities other than God, there surely would have been confusion in both.*

*There is no god but God, He is One, He has no partner; His is the dominion and His is the praise; He grants life and deals death, and is living and dies not; all good is in His hand; He is powerful over all things; and with Him all things have their end.*

One night in Ramadan, I said that the above sentence affirming Divine unity consists of eleven phrases, and that in each of them is a degree expressing that unity and some good news. But of those degrees I only discussed the meaning and significance of He has no partner, and that was in the manner of an allegorical conversation and imaginary debate that would be accessible to ordinary people. I am now writing down that conversation at the request and desire of my much-valued brothers who assist me and my friends from the mosque. It is as follows.

Let us suppose one person represents all those things set up as partners to God that all the different varieties of idolators imagine to exist. These

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'an, 21:22.

idolators are the people of unbelief and misguidance, who worship nature and causes, for example, and assign partners to God. The fictitious person wants to have mastery over one of the beings in the universe, and so claims to be its true owner.

Firstly, that maker of false claims encountered a particle, which is the smallest of those beings, and he spoke to it in the language of Naturalism and philosophy saying that he was to be its master and true owner. But the particle replied to him with the tongue of truth and dominical wisdom, saying:

“I perform innumerable duties. Entering many creatures which are all different I do my work in them. And there are, from among countless particles like me, those that move from place to place<sup>2</sup> and work with me. If you have the knowledge and power to employ me in all those duties, and the authority and ability to employ and have at your command all those others as well, and if you are able to be the true owner of and to have total control over the beings of which I become a part in complete order, for example, over red blood-corpuscles, then you can claim to be master over me and ascribe me to something other than God Almighty. But if you cannot do all these things, be silent!

“And in the same way that you cannot have mastery over me, you cannot interfere in any way. For there is such complete orderliness in our duties and motion that one who does not have infinite wisdom and all-encompassing knowledge cannot meddle with us. If he did, it would cause chaos. However, a person like you who is thick, impotent, and unseeing, and is in the clutches of blind chance and nature, could not even begin to stretch out a finger to interfere.”

So, just like the Materialists, the one making these claims said: “In that case, own yourself. Why do you say you are working on someone else’s account?” To which the particle replied:

“If I had a brain like the sun, and all-embracing knowledge like its light, and all-encompassing power like its heat, and comprehensive senses like the seven colours in its light, and if I had a face that looked to all the places in which I travel and all the beings in which I work, and an eye that looked to them and words that carried authority with them, then perhaps I would

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<sup>2</sup> Indeed, every object which is in motion, from minute particles to the planets, displays on itself the stamp of ‘eternal besoughtness’ and unity. Also, by reason of its movement, each of them takes possession of all the places in which it travels in the name of unity, thus including them in the property of its owner. As for those creatures that are not in motion, they are each of them, from plants to the fixed stars, like a seal of unity showing the place in which it is situated to be the missive of its Maker. That is to say, all flowers and fruits are stamps and seals of unity which demonstrate, in the name of unity, that their habitats and native places are the missives of their Maker. In short, through their motion all things take possession of all things in the name of unity. That is, one who does not have all the stars within his grasp cannot have mastery over a single particle.

indulge in foolishness like you and claim to own myself. Get out! Go away! You won't get anything out of me!"

So, when the representative of those things held to be God's partners despaired of the particle, he hoped to pursue the matter with a red blood-corpuscle. And coming across one he said to it on behalf of causes and in the language of nature and philosophy: "I am your master and owner." And the red corpuscle replied to him through the tongue of truth and Divine wisdom:

"I am not alone. If you are able to own all my fellows in the army of blood whose stamp, nature as officials, and order is the same, and if you have subtle wisdom and mighty power enough to own all the cells of the body in which we travel and are employed with perfect wisdom, and if you can demonstrate this to be the case, then perhaps some meaning might be found in your claim.

"But someone stupefied like yourself cannot be owner with your only support being deaf nature and blind force; indeed, you are unable to interfere in so much as an atom. For the order with which we function is so perfect that only one who sees, hears, knows, and does everything can have authority over us." And saying: "So, be silent! My duty is so important and the order so perfect that I have no time to answer garbled rubbish such as yours," it repelled him.

Then, since he was unable to mislead it, the representative left and next came across the little house known as a cell of the body. He said to it in the language of philosophy and nature: "I could not persuade the particle and red corpuscle but perhaps you will be reasonable. Since you have been made of several substances just like a minute house, I am able to make you. You will be my artefact and true property." The cell responded to him through the tongue of wisdom and truth, saying:

"I am only a minute little thing but I have very important duties and very sensitive relations; I am connected to the body as a whole as well as to all its cells. For example, I perform complex and faultless duties in the veins, and in regard to the arteries, the sensory and motor nerves, the powers of attraction and repulsion and procreation, and the imaginative faculty. If you have the knowledge and power to form, arrange, and employ the whole body and all its blood-vessels, nerves and faculties, and if you have comprehensive wisdom and penetrating power with which to control all the body's cells, which are like me, as regards qualities and artistry we are brothers, demonstrate it. Only then can you claim to be able to make me. If you cannot, then off with you!

"The red corpuscles bring my food, while the white ones combat illnesses which attack me. I have work to do, do not distract me! Anyway, an impotent, lifeless, deaf and blind thing like you cannot in any way interfere with

us. For we have such an exact, subtle and faultless order<sup>3</sup> that if the one who has authority over us was not Absolutely Wise, Absolutely Powerful and Absolutely Knowing, our order would be broken and our regularity spoiled.”

Then the one making the claims despaired of it, too. He encountered the body of a human being and said to it, once again as the Naturalists say, in the language of blind nature and aimless philosophy: “You are mine, it is I who made you; or anyway I have a share in you.” The human body answered with the tongue of reality and wisdom and through the eloquence of its order:

“If you possess the power and knowledge to have actual control over the bodies of all human beings, who are the same as me and on whose faces are the stamp of power and seal of creation which are the same, and if you have the wealth and jurisdiction to own, from water and air to plants and animals, the treasures of my sustenance, and if you have infinite power and boundless wisdom with which to employ me with perfect wisdom and cause me to perform my worship, and the power and wisdom to lodge in a narrow, lowly

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<sup>3</sup> The All-Wise Maker has created the human body as though it was a well-arranged city. A number of the blood-vessels perform the duties of telephones and telegraphs, while others of them are like pipes from a fountain through which blood, which is the water of life, flows. As for blood, created within it are two sorts of corpuscles. One of them, known as red corpuscles, distributes nutrients to the cells of the body; it conveys sustenance to the cells according to a Divine law. (Like merchants and food officials.) The other sort are white corpuscles, which are fewer in number than the former. Their duty, like soldiers, is defence against enemies, such as illness. Whenever they undertake that defence, with their two revolutions like Mevlevi dervishes, they take on a swift and wonderful state. As for blood as a whole, it has two general duties; the first is to repair damage done to the body's cells and the second is to collect any waste-matter from the cells and to clean the body. There are two sorts of blood-vessels, veins and arteries. One of these carry purified blood, they are the channels through which clean blood is conveyed. The others are the channels for the turbid blood which collects the waste-matter; these convey the blood to where breathing occurs; that is, the lungs.

The All-Wise Maker created in the air two elements, nitrogen and oxygen. As for oxygen, when it comes into contact with the blood in breathing, it draws to itself, like amber, the impure element, carbon, which is polluting the blood. The two combine and are transformed into matter called carbonic acid gas. Oxygen also maintains the body temperature, and purifies the blood. This is because, in the science of chemistry, the All-Wise Maker bestowed on oxygen and carbon an intense relationship, which might be described as ‘chemical passion’, whereby, according to this Divine law, when those two elements come close to each other, they combine. It has been established by science that heat is produced by combining, because it is a sort of combustion.

The wisdom in this is as follows: the motion of the particles of those two elements is different. On combining, the particles of one element unite with those of the other, each two particles thereafter moving with a single motion. One motion remains suspended, because before combining there were two motions; now two particles have become one. Each pair of particles has acquired a motion like a single particle. The other motion is transformed into heat according to a law of the All-Wise Maker. As a matter of a fact, ‘motion produces heat’ is an established principle.

Thus, as a consequence of this fact, by this chemical combination, as carbon is removed from the blood the body temperature of human beings is maintained and at the same time the blood is purified. On inhaling, oxygen both cleanses the body's water of life and kindles the fire of life. On exhaling, it yields, in the mouth, the fruit of words, which are miracles of Divine Power.

GLORY BE UNTO HIM AT WHOSE ART THE MIND IS BEWILDERED.

vessel like me immaterial and subtle faculties like the spirit, heart, and intellect, which are extremely vast and exalted and for which I am merely the sheath, then demonstrate all these and afterwards say that you made me. Otherwise, be silent!

“Moreover, according to the testimony of the perfect order in my body and the indication of the stamp of unity on my face, my Maker is One Who is powerful over all things, knows all things, and sees and hears all things. Someone aimless and impotent like you cannot meddle in His art. You cannot interfere in so much as an atom.”

The representative of the things imagined to be God’s partners could find no way in which to interfere in the body so he went off. Next, he encountered the human race and said to himself “This is a disorganized and unruly group. Perhaps, like Satan interferes in their individual and social actions which they perform through the exercise of their wills, I’ll be able to find some way to interfere in the functioning of their bodies and natures. And then, finding some way, I’ll be able to exercise control over the body and the body’s cell which sent me packing.”

So, he said to the human race, once again in the language of deaf nature and aimless philosophy: “You seem to be to be in great confusion. I am your master and owner, or at least I partly own you.” To which the human race answered through the tongue of truth and reality, wisdom and order:

“If you possess the power and wisdom to make the shirt that clothes the whole globe of the earth and is woven and sewn with perfect wisdom from the multicoloured threads of all the hundreds of thousands of animal and plant species, of which we are one, and to make the carpet which is spread over the face of the earth and is woven from the hundreds of thousands of species of animate beings and is created in an extremely fine and ornamented fashion, and to continuously renew and refurbish it, and if you possess comprehensive power and all-embracing wisdom with which to have free disposal over the globe of the earth of which we are the fruit, and over the universe of which we are the seed, and to send us our vital necessities from all the regions of the cosmos with the balance of wisdom, and if you have the ability to create all those like us who have gone before us and those who will come after us, on whose faces the stamp of power is the same, then, perhaps, you can claim to have mastery over me.

“But if you cannot, be silent! Do not say that, seeing confusion in my species, you will be able to interfere in some way, because the order is faultless. The conditions you imagine to be confused and disorderly are transcribed with perfect order according to the book of power and Divine Determining. For the perfect order in animals and plants, which are far inferior to us and are under our supervision, demonstrates that this seeming disorder in us is but a sort of writing.

“Is it at all possible that the one who artistically positions one thread running through a whole carpet should be other than the master designer of the carpet; or that the one who creates a fruit should be other than the creator of the tree that bore it; or that the one who creates the seed should be other than the fashioner of the being that produced the seed?”

“Also your eyes are blind: you do not see the miracles of power on my face, the wonders of creation in my being. If you did see them, you would understand that my Maker is such that nothing at all can withstand Him or be difficult for Him. The stars are as easy for Him as particles. He creates the spring with as much ease as a flower. He is One Who includes the index of the vast universe in my being with perfect order. Could a lifeless, impotent, blind and deaf thing like you interfere in any way in the art of such a Being? So, be silent!” And saying: “Off with you! Go away!”, he drove him away.

Next the one making these claims went and addressed the broad carpet covering the face of the earth and the lavishly decorated and embroidered shirt clothing it on behalf of causes and in the language of nature and philosophy, claiming: “I can have control over you and be your owner, or at least have a share in you.” So the shirt, the carpet,<sup>4</sup> said to him on behalf of truth and reality and through the tongue of wisdom:

“If you have the power and art to weave and create all the well-ordered and purposeful shirts and carpets, whose embroideries are all different, which have clothed the earth to the number of years and centuries, then have been removed in an orderly fashion and strung on the line of past time, and will clothe the earth again, carpets and shirts whose programmes and forms have been drawn and specified in the sphere of Divine Determining, and which will be attached to the ribbon of future time, and if you have two wise and powerful hands with which to reach from the creation of the world to its destruction, indeed, from pre-eternity to post-eternity, and if you have the wisdom and ability to create every one of all my threads and to repair and renew them with perfect order and wisdom, and if you are able to hold in your hand and create the globe, which is our model and is wearing us, making us its veil and outer garment, then you can claim to have mastery over me. If you cannot, then away with you! There is no place for you here!

“Moreover, there is on us such a stamp of unity and seal of oneness that one who does not have the whole universe within the grasp of his power, and who cannot see at one time all things with all their functions, and cannot do innumerable things at the same time, who is not all-present and all-seeing everywhere, who is not unconfined by space, and who does not possess infinite wisdom, knowledge, and power, such a one cannot own us, neither could he interfere.”

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<sup>4</sup> In fact, the carpet is both living and vibrates in a regular fashion. Its embroideries are being continuously replaced with perfect wisdom and order in order to display the ever-differing manifestations of the Weaver’s Names.

So the representative went off, saying: "Perhaps I will be able to persuade the globe of the earth and find something going for me there." So he went and said to the globe,<sup>5</sup> once again on behalf of causes and in the language of nature: "Since you travel in such an aimless manner, you demonstrate that you have no owner. In which case, you can be mine." To which the earth replied in a thunderous voice, in the name of truth and with the tongue of reality:

"Do not talk such utter nonsense! How could I be just aimless and without an owner? Have you found my garments or even the tiniest point or thread in them to be in disarray, without order, and have you seen them to be without wisdom, purpose and art that you tell me I am ownerless and aimless?

"If you can really own my vast orbit round which I travel in one year, a distance that should take approximately twenty-five thousand years,<sup>6</sup> where I perform my duty of service with perfect balance and wisdom, and own the ten planets, which are my brothers and are charged with duties like myself, together with the space through which they travel, and if you have infinite wisdom and power with which to create and position the sun, which is our leader and to which we are bound and attached by a compassionate attraction, and to fasten me and the other planets to it like stones in a sling, and to employ us and cause us to revolve with perfect order and wisdom, then you can claim to have mastery over me. But if you cannot, get out! Go to Hell! I've got work to do, my duty to perform.

"Moreover, our magnificent order, awesome movement, and purposeful subjugation demonstrate that our Master is such that all beings from minute particles to the stars and galaxies are obedient and subjugated to him like soldiers under orders. He is an All-Wise Possessor of Glory, a Possessor of Absolute Sovereignty Who arrays the sun with planets as easily as He arrays and ornaments a tree with its fruit."

Since the claimer could find nothing for himself on the earth, he went off and said to himself about the sun: "This a huge great thing. Perhaps I'll be able to find a hole in it and open up a way in; then maybe I'll be able to subjugate it as well as the earth." So he said to the sun, as the fire-worshippers

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<sup>5</sup> In short, the particle referred the claimer to the red corpuscle. The red corpuscle referred him to the cell and the cell referred him to the human body; the human body to the human race and the human race to the earth's shirt, which is woven from all the species of animate creatures. The earth's shirt referred him to the globe of the earth, which in turn referred him to the sun. And the sun referred him to all the stars. Each one of them said; "Go away! If you are able to take possession of the next one up from me, do so, then come and try to be my master. If you are unable to defeat it, then you are unable to get possession of me." That is to say, one whose authority does not extend to all the stars cannot make a single particle heed his claim to mastery.

<sup>6</sup> If half the diameter of a circle is approximately one hundred and eighty million kilometres, the circle covers approximately a twenty-five thousand year distance.

speak, in the name of idolatry and in the language of the philosophy that is the mouthpiece of the Devil: "You are a ruler, you own yourself; you dispose of matters freely, as you wish." But the sun replied to him in the name of truth and through the tongue of reality and Divine wisdom, saying:

"God forbid! A hundred thousand times, God forbid! I am a subservient official. I am a candelabrum in my Lord's guest-house. I am not the true owner of a fly, or even of a fly's wing. For in the fly's being there are immaterial jewels and antique works of art, like eyes and ears, such as are not in my shop. They are outside the sphere of my power," thus reprimanding him.

So the one making the claims changed his approach and said with the tongue of devilish philosophy: "Since you do not own yourself, you are a servant; I claim you on behalf of causes." To which the sun replied, speaking for truth and reality and with the tongue of worship:

"I can only belong to one who is able to create all the lofty stars, which are my fellows, to place them in the heavens with faultless wisdom, make them revolve with utter magnificence and to adorn them with exquisite finery."

Next the claimer said to himself: "The stars are a great multitude, and they seem to be all scattered and in disorder. Perhaps I will be able to gain something out of them on behalf of my clients." So he went in among them and said to them on behalf of causes and those things ascribed to God as partners, in the language of rebellious philosophy and as the Sabeen star-worshippers said: "Since you are so scattered, you are all under the jurisdiction of different rulers." To which one star replied, speaking for all the others:

"Just how stunned, brainless, stupid and blind you are not to see and understand the stamp of unity and seal of oneness on us, and not to recognize our lofty order and regularity and the laws of our worship. You imagine us to be without order. But we are the works of art and servants of a Single and Unique One Who holds in the grasp of His power the heavens, which are our seas, the cosmos, which is our tree, and infinite space, which is where we make our excursions.

"We are like electric illuminations and resplendent witnesses displaying the perfection of His dominicality. We are radiant proofs proclaiming the sovereignty of His dominicality. With all our different sorts, we are luminous servants in the domain of His sovereignty which give light and display the majesty of that sovereignty in the lofty dwellings and in the lowly ones, in the dwellings of this world, the Intermediate World and the hereafter.

"Indeed, each of us is a miracle of the Single and Unique One's power, a well-ordered fruit of the tree of creation, an illuminated proof of unity; each of us is a dwelling place, aeroplane and mosque for the angels, and a lamp and sun for the lofty worlds, and a witness to the sovereignty of dominicality; and each of us is an ornament, palace, and flower of space, and a shining

fish in the heavenly seas, and a beautiful eye in the face of the sky.<sup>7</sup>

“Furthermore, throughout us as a whole there is a silence within tranquillity, a motion within wisdom, an adornment within majesty, a beauty of creation within order, and a perfection of art within symmetry.

“And although we are thus and proclaim our Glorious Maker and His unity, oneness, eternal besoughtness, and His attributes of beauty, glory and perfection to the whole universe with innumerable tongues, you still accuse us utterly pure, clean, obedient and subservient servants of being confused, disorderly, and without duties, and even of being without an owner. You therefore deserve a truly punishing slap.”

And one star, like the stone hurled at Satan, delivered such a mighty slap at the claimer’s face that it flung him from the stars to the very pit of Hell. And it cast nature,<sup>8</sup> which was together with him, into the valleys of delusion, and chance into the chasm of non-existence, and those things ascribed to God as partners into the darkness of impossibility, and the philosophy that is hostile to religion down to the lowest of the low. All the stars recited this sacred decree together with that star:

*Had there been in heaven or earth any deities other than God, there surely would have been confusion in both.*<sup>9</sup>

And they proclaimed: “There is nothing, from a fly’s wing to the lamps in the heavens, nothing, even the size of a fly’s wing, in which those things ascribed to God as partners could interfere.”

*Glory be unto You! We have no knowledge save that which You have taught us; indeed, You are All-Knowing, All-Wise!*<sup>10</sup>

*O God! Grant blessings and peace to our master Muhammad, the Lamp of Your Unity in the multiplicity of Your creatures, and the Herald of Your Oneness in the exhibition of Your creation, and to all his Family and Companions.*

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<sup>7</sup> This means, we are indications observing and contemplating the wonders of God Almighty’s creation and causing others to contemplate them. That is, just as the heavens are seen to be observing the wonders of Divine art on the earth with countless eyes, so like the angels in the skies, the stars watch the earth, which is an exhibition of wonders and marvels, and they cause conscious creatures to observe it with attention.

<sup>8</sup> But after its fall, nature repented. It understood that its true duty was not to act and to have an effect, but to accept and be passive. And it recognized that it was a sort of notebook of Divine Determining, but a notebook capable of change and transformation; that it was a sort of programme of dominical power, was similar to the body of the rules of creation laid down by the All-Powerful One of Glory, and was a collection of His laws. It assumed its duty of worship with perfect submission acknowledging its utter impotence, and thus acquired the title of Divine creation and dominical art.

<sup>9</sup> Qur’an, 21:22.

<sup>10</sup> Qur’an, 2:32.

*In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.  
Look, then, to the signs of God's mercy, how He  
restores to life the earth after its death.<sup>11</sup>*

The following section<sup>12</sup> alludes to one flower from the pre-eternal garden of the above verse.

It is as if all the blossoming trees are beautifully composed odes speaking poetically through the tongue of disposition reciting the manifest praises of the Glorious Creator.

Or, it is as if all the blossoming trees have opened thousands of gazing eyes and have caused thousands of others to open in order to behold, not with one or two eyes but with thousands, the Glorious Fashioner's wonders of art which are being broadcast and exhibited, and so that attentive people will gaze on them, too.

Or, it is as if all the blossoming trees have beautified their verdant limbs with the finest adornment for the moment of their parade and for their own particular festivals in the general festival of spring, so that their Glorious Monarch will contemplate the gifts, subtle wonders, and resplendent works of art He has bestowed upon them; and so that He will present to creation's gaze the bejewelled instances of His mercy, in springtime, and on the face of the earth, which is the exhibition of Divine art; and so that He will proclaim to mankind the wisdom in the creation of the tree.

He demonstrates the perfection of Divine power through showing what important treasure hangs on their delicate branches and what significant wealth there is in the fruits of His merciful bounties.

*The imagination sees heavenly angels embodied from these trees  
With thousands of flutes.  
From these flutes the consciousness hears  
The praises of the Ever-Living One.  
Their leaves have tongues, each reciting the word: It is He! It is He!*

Meaning,

*O Ever-Living One! O Ever-Living One!  
Since all things chant in unison: There is no god but He,  
And they are seeking Truth,  
From beginning to end they recite: O Ever-Living One!  
They are chanting in unison: O God!  
And We send down from the skies water rich in blessings.<sup>13</sup>*

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<sup>11</sup> Qur'an, 30:50.

<sup>12</sup> In the original text this section is in Arabic, together with the author's Turkish rendering, which is the source of the translation here. The lines at the end are in Persian. [Tr.]

<sup>13</sup> Qur'an, 50:9.

## A Short Addendum to the First Stopping-Place

Listen to the verse:

*Do they not look at the sky above them? How We have made it and adorned it, and there are no flaws in it?*<sup>14</sup>

*Then look at the face of the heavens, you see how it is silent in its tranquillity; how it is in motion with wisdom, how it is radiant with majesty, how it smiles with its adornment. An unending and infinite sovereignty is proclaimed to those who think by the order in its creation, by the symmetry in its art, by its shining lamps, its brilliant lanterns, its glittering stars.*

*Do they not look at the sky above them? How We have made it and adorned it, and there are no flaws in it?*

The following explains the above passage, *Then look at the face of the heavens*, etc., which in turn is an explanation of the verse quoted.

**Firstly, the phrase: *How it is silent in its tranquillity*.**

The verse directs an attentive gaze to the beautifully adorned face of the heavens so that the one beholding it may become aware of the silence there which is within a vast tranquillity, and so that he may understand that it is thus through the command and subjugation of One Possessing Absolute Power.

For if they had been independent and unrestrained, those huge globes, all in close proximity to each other, those infinite, awesome heavenly bodies, would have caused such an uproar with their enormously swift revolutions that they would have deafened the cosmos. And there would have been such confusion in that tumultuous commotion that it would have scattered the universe. It is well-known what a commotion and uproar it causes if twenty water-buffalo work on top of each other. Whereas, we know that there are among the stars some which are thousands of times larger than the earth and which revolve at a speed seventy times faster than that of a cannon-ball. So the degree of power and subjugation of the Glorious Maker and All-Powerful One of Perfection may be understood from this, together with the degree of obedience and submission to Him of the stars.

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<sup>14</sup> Qur'an, 50:6.

**Secondly, the phrase: *How it is in motion with wisdom.***

The verse commands us to look at the motion on the face of the heavens, which is with wisdom and purpose. Indeed, that mighty, wondrous motion occurs within a precise and comprehensive wisdom.

For example, a craftsman who operates a factory's machinery with wisdom and purpose demonstrates the degree of his skill and craftsmanship in proportion to the order and grandeur of the factory. Similarly, when we look at it in this way, the degree of power and wisdom of the All-Powerful One of Glory become apparent to us through His making the mighty sun as a factory, and its planets, those awesome, immense globes, like the factory's machinery, and His spinning and revolving them like stones in a sling.

**Thirdly, *How it is radiant with majesty, how it smiles with its adornment.***

It has this meaning: the radiant majesty and smiling adornment on the face of the heavens are such that they demonstrate the sublimity of the Glorious Maker's sovereignty and exquisiteness of His artistry. As the myriad electric lamps hung about on festival days demonstrate the degree of the king's majesty and achievement in material progress, the vast heavens, too, with their majestic and adorned stars demonstrate to attentive gazes the sublime sovereignty and exquisite artistry of the Glorious Maker.

**Fourthly, *By the order in its creation, by the symmetry in its art.***

This phrase says the following: look at the order of the creatures on the face of the heavens and see their symmetry and precise balance, then understand just how powerful and wise is their Maker.

Indeed, the vast heavens demonstrate the degree of power and wisdom of the One Who transforms various and tiny creatures or animals, thus preparing them for their duties, and Who impels each of them on a determined way by means of its particular balance, and the degree of their obedience and subjugation to Him. Similarly, the vast heavens demonstrate to attentive gazes through their awesome vastness and innumerable stars, and the stars, through their imposing hugeness and speedy revolutions and the fact that they do not exceed their bounds by an iota, even for a second, or neglect their duties for a tenth of a second, the exceedingly fine and particular balance with which the Glorious Maker carries out His dominicality.

**Fifthly, *An unending and infinite sovereignty is proclaimed to those who think by its shining lamps, its brilliant lanterns, its glittering stars.***

This phrase states clearly what is alluded to in the above verse, and in many similar to it, which mention the subjugation of the sun, moon, and stars. That is to say, to attach the heat and light-giving lamp of the sun to the embellished ceiling of the skies, and to make it the ink-pot for writing the missives of the Eternally Besought One in lines of day and night on the

pages of summer and winter; and to make the moon, like the hour-hands which shines on the large clocks on minarets and towers, an hour-hand of time's mighty clock on the dome of the heavens, and to make it move through its mansions with precise balance and perfect measure in the form of many varying crescents so that it leaves one crescent one night and then later returns to collect it; and to adorn the beautiful face of the sky with stars that twinkle and smile in the dome of the heavens, all these are signs of the unlimited sovereignty of a sustaining dominicality. They are indications of a majestic Divinity which makes Itself known to conscious creatures. They invite those who think to believe and to affirm Divine unity.

*Look upon the coloured page of the book of the universe;  
See what forms the golden pen of power has traced.  
No dark point remains for the gaze of the heart's eye;  
It is as if God has inscribed His signs with light.  
Look! What a miracle of wisdom is the amazing universe!  
Look! What a wondrous spectacle is the vastness of space!  
Then listen to the stars, listen to their harmonious address!  
See what wisdom has emblazoned on the decree of its light.  
Altogether they start to speak with the tongue of truth,  
They address the majesty of the All-Powerful, All-Glorious One's sovereignty:  
We are each of us light-scattering proofs of the existence of our Maker,  
We are witnesses both to His unity and His power,  
We are subtle miracles  
gilding the face of the skies for the angels to gaze upon.  
We are the innumerable attentive eyes of the heavens  
which watch the earth, which study Paradise.  
We are the innumerable exquisite fruits  
which the hand of wisdom of the All-Glorious and Beauteous One  
has fastened  
To the celestial portion of the tree of creation,  
to all the branches of the Milky Way.  
For the inhabitants of the heavens,  
we are each of us a travelling mosque, a spinning house, a lofty home,  
Each is an illumining lamp, a mighty ship, an aeroplane.  
We are each of us a miracle of power, a wonder of creative art  
Created by the Powerful One of Perfection, the All-Wise One of Glory;  
A rarity of His wisdom, a marvel of His creation, a world of light.  
We demonstrated to mankind innumerable proofs,*

*We made them hear with these innumerable tongues of ours;  
But their accursed unseeing, unbelieving eyes did not see our faces,  
They did not hear our words.  
And we are signs that speak the truth:  
Our stamp is one, our seal is one,  
We are mastered by our Sustainer;  
We glorify Him through our subjugation;  
We recite His Names;  
We are each of us in ecstasy,  
A member of the mighty circle of the Milky Way.*

## Second Stopping-Place

*In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.*

*Say: He is God, the One and Only. God, the Eternally Besought One.*<sup>15</sup>

This Stopping-Place consists of three Aims.

### THE FIRST AIM

The representative of the people of misguidance and those who assign partners to God fell to earth at the slap he received from a star, as was described at the end of the First Stopping-Place. So, because he could find nothing going for him anywhere from the particles to the stars, he gave up laying claim to them in that way and instead tried by means of three important questions to induce doubts in believers' minds about Divine unity and oneness.

**The First Question:** He said in the manner of the atheists: "O you who believe in One God! Looking on behalf of my clients, I could find nothing, nor get anything at all out of the beings in the universe; I could not substantiate my claims. But then, how do you prove the existence of One Who is Single and Unique and possesses infinite power? Why do you not think it possible for others to interfere and to share in His power?"

**The Answer:** It is decisively proved in the Twenty-Second Word that every creature, every particle, every star, is an illuminating argument for the Necessarily Existent and Absolutely Powerful One. Every link in the chains of beings in the universe is a clear evidence for His unity. The All-Wise Qur'an proves this with its innumerable proofs, and mentions most frequently those proofs that are clearest in the view of people generally. For example:

*If you ask them, who is it that created the heavens and the earth, they will certainly say, "God."*<sup>16</sup>

*And among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variations in your languages and colours.*<sup>17</sup>

With these and many verses like them, the All-Wise Qur'an presents the

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<sup>15</sup> Qur'an, 112:1-2.

<sup>16</sup> Qur'an, 31:25; 39:38.

<sup>17</sup> Qur'an, 30:22.

creation of the heavens and earth as self-evident proofs of Divine unity. And so, whether they like it or not, because of the way the heavens and earth have been created, anyone who is conscious and intelligent will be compelled to affirm the Glorious Creator. As the Qur'an says: They will certainly say, "God."

In the First Stopping-Place we started with a particle and demonstrated the stamp of unity on beings as far as the stars and the heavens. With verses like these the Qur'an repels the ascribing of partners to God from the stars and heavens down to particles. It indicates this in the following way.

The Possessor of Absolute Power Who creates the heavens and earth with such order and balance, of course creates the solar system, which is a region of it. The solar system is self-evidently within His controlling and directing grasp.

Since that Absolutely Powerful One holds the sun and its planets within His grasp, and orders, subjugates, and directs them, certainly the earth, which is a member of the solar system and is tied to the sun, is also within His regulating and controlling grasp. Since this is so, the beings which are created and inscribed on the face of the earth and are like its aims and fruits are also within His sustaining and perfecting grasp.

And since all the creatures spread and scattered over the earth, which gild and adorn its face, are continuously renewed, coming and going, filling the earth and being emptied from it, they are all of them within the grasp of His knowledge and power; and since they are measured and ordered on the scales of justice and wisdom; and since all the species of animate beings are within the grasp of His power; certainly, all the well-ordered and faultless members of those species, which are like miniature specimens of the cosmos, balance-sheets of its species, and tiny indexes of the book of the universe, must also be within His creating, sustaining, directing, and perfecting grasp.

And since this is so, the cells, blood-corpuscles, limbs and muscles which comprise those animate creatures' bodies are also self-evidently within the grasp of His knowledge and power.

And since every cell and corpuscle is under His command and within His grasp, and since they are in motion according to His laws, surely the particles out of which they are formed and which are like shuttles weaving the embroideries of art which clothe them, are also necessarily within the grasp of His power and the sphere of His knowledge. For they are in motion in orderly fashion faultlessly performing duties at His command, with His permission, and through His power.

And since this is so, the identifying features and distinguishing marks to be found on everyone, all the differences in faces, voices and languages, of necessity also occur through His knowledge and wisdom.

So now look again at the verse which mentions and points out the beginning and end of this chain:

*And among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variations in your languages and your colours: indeed, in that are signs for those who know.*

We therefore now say: O representative of the unbelievers! You can see, these arguments as strong as the chains of the universe prove the path of affirming Divine unity, and they demonstrate a Possessor of Absolute Power. Since the creation of the heavens and the earth demonstrates an All-Powerful Maker, and the infinite power of that All-Powerful Maker, and that His infinite power is at the point of infinite perfection, there is an absolute lack of need for any partners. That is to say, He in no way needs any associates.

Since He has no need, why do you take that dark path? Why is it you feel constrained to take it? Moreover, since both He, and beings, are in absolutely no need of partners, just as it is impossible for there to be any partners in His Divinity, so it is impossible for there to be any in His creation and sustaining of beings. Their existence is impossible. The reason for this is as follows:

We proved that the power of the Maker of the heavens and the earth is both infinite and at the point of infinite perfection. If there was any partner, it would mean that, although His power is infinite, another finite power would threaten and overcome His infinite and perfect power and would take possession of a certain areas of it. It would then be necessary, without there being any compulsion, for something finite to make something infinite finite and limited, and for itself to become infinite for a time. This is a manifold and most irrational impossibility.

Also, since there is no need for partners, and, since their existence is impossible, to claim otherwise is purely arbitrary. That is, since there is no cause that could induce such a claim, rationally or logically, it would be meaningless. According to the science of jurisprudence, such a claim is designated 'arbitrary'. That is, it is a meaningless 'abstract claim'.

A principle of the sciences of theology and jurisprudence is this, that a probability not originating from any indication or sign has no importance; it cannot induce doubt in a matter that is definite. It cannot shake the certainty that is based on sound judgement.

For example, it is possible that Barla or Eûridir Lake consists of grape-molasses or that it has been transformed into oil. But since that possibility does not originate from any indication, it does not affect our certain knowledge, or induce doubt in the fact, that it consists of water.

Therefore, we questioned every sort of creature from every corner of the cosmos and whatever was questioned, from the particles to the stars in the First Stopping-Place, and from the creation of the heavens and the earth to the individual features in faces in the Second Stopping-Place, everything demonstrated through the tongue of its being the seal of unity; everything testified that God is One.

You saw this for yourself. There is, then, nothing in any of the creatures in the universe on which the possibility of God having any partners could be constructed. That is to say, since to claim that God does have partners is purely arbitrary and meaningless and is an 'abstract claim', it is pure ignorance and unqualified stupidity.

Thus, nothing remained for the representative of the people of misguidance to say in the face of this. The only thing he could say was: "What indicates that God has partners is the configuration of causes in the cosmos. It is that everything is tied to a cause. So that means that causes have an actual effect, and if they have an effect, are not they able to be God's partners?"

**The Answer:** Effects have been tied to causes because Divine will and wisdom require them to be so, and so that great numbers of the Divine Names may be manifested. Everything has been tied to a cause, but we have decisively proved in numerous places, including many of the Words, that "causes have no actual power with which to create their effects." So, for now we shall just say this:

Among causes human beings are self-evidently the most superior, and have the greatest power of choice and the most extensive ability to control and direct other causes. And among the most obvious of man's actions over which he exercises choice are eating and the powers of speech and thought. Furthermore, all these faculties are extremely well-ordered, wonderful, and purposeful chains. But of the hundred links in these chains only one is subject to man's power of choice.

For example, in the chain of actions concerning food, which stretches from the nourishment of the body's cells to the forming of fruit, only moving the jaw and chewing the food is subject to man's choice. And in the chain of speech, only exhaling air and blowing it into the mould of articulated letters. And while a word in the mouth is a seed, it becomes like a tree; in the air it yields the fruits of millions of the same word and enters the ears of listeners along with millions of others. Man's imagination can barely reach this metaphorical shoot, so how should the short arm of choice reach it?

Since among causes man is the most superior and has the greatest power of choice and yet his hands are thus tied from real creation, how should other causes, such as inanimate creatures, animals, the elements, and nature have any real power of disposal over other causes? Each of those causes is

only a container; a cover for the dominical works; a tray-bearer for the gifts of the Compassionate One.

Of course, the receptacle for a king's gift, or the handkerchief in which it is wrapped, or the individual who brings the gift, which is placed in his hand, can in no way be partners in the king's sovereignty. Anyone who supposes that they are partners is imagining nonsensical absurdities. In the same way, apparent causes and intermediaries can have absolutely no share in God's sustaining of His creatures. Their lot is only to perform a service of worship.

## THE SECOND AIM

The representative of those who ascribe partners to God could in no respect prove that way, and so, although despairing, since he wanted to destroy the way of those who affirm Divine unity, he tried to sow doubts in their minds by asking the following question:

**The Second Question:** "O you who affirm Divine unity! You say, 'Say: He is God, the One and Only. God, the Eternally Besought One;'<sup>18</sup> that the Creator of the universe is one, He is single, He is eternally besought by all creatures; and that the Creator of everything is He. That He is one in essence and at the same time the reins of everything are directly in His hand, the key to everything is in His grasp; one thing cannot be an obstacle to another. And you say that at the same instant He has total disposal over all things and all their states. How can such a far-fetched fact be believed? How can a single individual be in innumerable places and do innumerable things at the same time with no difficulty?"

**The Answer:** This question may be answered through explaining an extremely profound, subtle, elevated, and comprehensive mystery concerning Divine oneness and eternal besoughtness. Man's mind can only look at this mystery through the telescope and observatory of comparison and allegory. While there is nothing similar or analogous to God Almighty's Essence and attributes, the functions of His attributes may be looked at to an extent by means of comparison and allegory. So we shall point to that mystery through comparisons of a material nature.

**First Comparison:** As is proved in the Sixteenth Word, a single individual may attain universality or comprehensiveness through the means of different mirrors. While actually being a particular or part of something greater than itself, it is as though it becomes a universal with numerous qualities and functions.

Indeed, matter like glass and water may be a mirror to physical objects,

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<sup>18</sup> Qur'an, 112:1-2.

and one such object may attain universality in such a mirror. In the same way, air, ether, and some creatures from the World of Similitudes are like mirrors to lucent objects and spirit beings. Those mirror-like creatures pass with the speed of lightning or imagination to being means of travel and spectating, so that the lucent and spirit beings travel with the speed of imagination in those spotless mirrors, those subtle dwellings. In the space of a single instant the spirit beings can enter thousands of places. And because they are lucent and because their reflections are the same as them and possess their qualities, they are as though present in person in every mirror, everywhere, as is contrary to the case with physical beings.

The reflections and likenesses of dense corporeal beings are not identical to the corporeality of those beings; they do not possess their qualities and may be thought of as dead. For example, although the sun is a particular and a single individual, it becomes like a universal by means of shining objects. It reflects its image, a sun like itself, in all shining objects, drops of water, and fragments of glass on the face of the earth, according to their capacity. The sun's heat, light, and the seven colours in its light, a sort of likeness of the essential sun, is found in all shining physical objects.

Let us suppose the sun had knowledge and consciousness, then every mirror would be like a sort of dwelling-place or seat or chair for it, it would be in contact with everything in person. It would be able to communicate with all conscious creatures by means of mirrors, with the pupil of every eye, even, each of which would be like a telephone. One thing would not be an obstacle to another. Communicating with one thing would not be a barrier to communicating with another. While being present everywhere, it would be present nowhere.

If the sun, which is like a material, partial, and inanimate mirror to only the Divine Name of LIGHT out of innumerable Names, can therefore display universal activity in an unlimited number of places while being a single individual, should the All-Glorious One, with the oneness of His Essence, be unable to perform innumerable actions at the same time?

**Second Comparison:** Since the cosmos is like a tree, all trees may be likened to the truths of the universe. So we shall take the mighty and majestic plane-tree facing this room as a miniature example of the universe and demonstrate with it the manifestation of Divine oneness in the universe.

This tree has at least ten thousand fruits and each fruit has at least a hundred winged seeds. At one instant of time the ten thousand fruits and million seeds display altogether one art and creativity. While the centre of the laws of the tree's formation is present in its roots and trunk, through a manifestation of Divine will and a condensing of the dominical command, which may be described as particular, individuated, and a 'knot' of life, it is also

present at the ends of all its branches, within every fruit and every seed. No part of any member of the tree is lacking the laws, they are not obstacles to one another; the tree is formed through them.

And that single manifestation of will and law issuing from a command are not transmitted and radiated like light, heat, and air. For they leave no trace nor may any hint of them be perceived in the long distances and various beings between the places they go. If their being present in all the fruits and seeds had occurred through being transmitted and radiated, some trace or hint of them would be perceived. Rather, they are present in all those places without being fragmented or radiated.

The universal and general actions are not incompatible with His oneness and individuality. It may even be said that while the manifestation of will, and the law and life-source are present in all the places, they are present in none of them.

It is as if the law has as many eyes and ears as there are fruits and seeds of the majestic tree. Yes, each part of the tree is like a centre of the senses of the law, so that their long intermediaries are not a veil and do not form a barrier, but like telephone wires, are a means of facilitating and bringing things closer. The farthest is like the nearest.

Since, as is clear from observation, through a single partial manifestation of an attribute of the Single and Eternally Besought One like will, millions of events occur in millions of places without intermediary, one has to be certain, completely certain, that the All-Glorious One can have total disposal over the tree of the universe, together with all its parts and particles, through the manifestation of His power and will.

As is proved and explained in the Sixteenth Word, while being in one place and being particulars identifiable as single, through the mystery of luminosity, impotent and subjugated creatures like the sun, and semi-luminous creatures like spirit-beings, which are restricted by matter, and the laws issuing from a command and the manifestations of will which are the life-source and centre of direction of this plane-tree, which in turn are like its light and spirit, are clearly present in numerous places and in numerous events. While being particulars restricted by matter, it is as though they acquire an absolute universality, and through the exercise of will, in the space of one second may demonstrably perform a great number of works. You see for yourself and you will not be able to deny it.

The Single and Most Pure and Holy Essence, Whose attributes are all-comprehending and functions, universal, is far beyond and exalted above matter, and is utterly remote and free from any restriction and the darkness of density. All these lights and luminous beings are but obscure shadows of His Sacred Names; and all existence and life and the World of Spirits, the

Intermediate Realm, and the World of Similitudes, semi-transparent mirrors reflecting His beauty.

What being can be hidden in the face of His oneness, which is within the manifestation of His attributes and actions, which in turn are evident through His universal will, absolute power, and all-embracing knowledge? What matter can be difficult for Him? What place can be concealed from Him? What object can remain distant from Him? What individual can draw close to Him without acquiring universality? Can anything at all be hidden from Him? Can any matter at all be an obstacle to another? Can any place at all be empty of His presence?

Ibn al-‘Abbas (May God be pleased with him) said: “In all beings are an immaterial eye that sees and ear that hears.” Is this not so? Are the chains of beings not each like a wire or vein for the swift conveyance of His commands and laws? Are obstacles and difficulties not means and intermediaries in His disposal of beings? Are causes and intermediaries not merely an apparent veil?

While He is present nowhere, is He not present everywhere? Does He have any need to be located in a place or situation? Can the veils of distance, smallness, and the degrees of existence be obstacles to His proximity, power of disposal, and witnessing?

Moreover, could the qualities pertaining to material, contingent, dense, numerous, restricted, and limited beings, and the states of change, transformation, division, and occupying space, which are their particular and confined necessary consequences, in any way touch the Most Pure and Holy Essence, Who is far beyond matter, is Necessarily Existent, the Light of Lights, and is Single, One, and free from any restriction or limitation and exalted above and pure of any fault or deficiency? Could impotence in any way be fitting for Him? Could any defect approach the skirt of His splendour and glory?

### **Conclusion of the Second Aim**

Once, when I was reflecting on Divine oneness, I looked at the fruits on the plane-tree outside my room. A chain of thought came to me as inspiration, and I write it here in Arabic exactly as it came to me.<sup>19</sup>

All these fruits and the seeds within them are miracles of dominical wisdom, wonders of Divine art, gifts of Divine mercy, material proofs of Divine unity, bearers of the good news that Divine favours will be granted in the hereafter. Just as they are all truthful witnesses to His all-embracing power and knowledge, each of them is a mirror confirming His unity in all the

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<sup>19</sup> In the original text the author follows the section in Arabic with a Turkish rendering of which is the basis of the translation here. [Tr.]

corners of the world of multiplicity and in all the parts of the world of this tree, a world that has become multiple.

They turn the gaze from multiplicity to unity. Each of them says through the tongue of its being: "Do not let your glance wander over all this mighty spreading tree lest you become distracted, for the whole tree is within us. Its multiplicity is contained within our unity."

Even, just as every seed, which is like the heart of the fruit, is a physical mirror confirming Divine unity, so it mentions and recites in the silent prayer of its heart the Divine Names the mighty tree recites in its audible prayer.

Furthermore, just as the fruits and seeds are mirrors professing Divine unity, so they are the visible signs of Divine Determining and embodied tokens of Divine power. Through these words, Divine Determining and power intimate the following:

"The many branches and twigs of this tree appeared from a single seed and demonstrate the unity of the tree's Artist in creating it and giving it form. Then, after growing and spreading its branches, it gathered together all its truths in a single fruit. It encapsulated its entire meaning in a single seed, thereby demonstrating the wisdom in the Glorious Creator's creation and planning."

Similarly, the tree of the universe takes its existence from a source of unity and is sustained by it. And man, the fruit of the universe, demonstrates unity within this multiplicity of beings, while with the eye of faith his heart sees the mystery of unity within multiplicity.

Moreover, the fruits and seeds are allusions of dominical wisdom. Wisdom says the following with them to those who are aware: "The comprehensive regard towards this tree and its planning look with their comprehensiveness and universality to a single fruit. For the fruit is a miniature specimen of the tree. It is what is aimed at by the tree. Also, the comprehensive regard and planning look to every seed within the fruit, for the seed bears the meaning or index of the whole tree. That is to say, since the fruit is the aim the tree's existence and the purpose of its creation, the One Who plans the tree regards each fruit with all His Names connected to the planning. Moreover, the mighty tree is sometimes pruned and trimmed for the sake of the tiny fruit; some parts of it are destroyed so that it may make new growth. It is grafted in order to produce even better, permanent fruit."

In the same way, man, who is the fruit of the tree of the universe, is the purpose of its creation and existence and the aim of the creation of beings. While his heart, which is the seed of the fruit, is a most brilliant and comprehensive mirror to the universe's Maker. It follows on from this wisdom,

therefore, that tiny man will be the cause of the destruction and transformation of the universe. He will be the point of momentous revolutions like the Day of Resurrection. It will be for his judgement that the door of this world will be closed and that of the hereafter opened.

Since we have arrived at a discussion of resurrection, it is appropriate to explain one point concerning its reality which demonstrates the clarity and strength with which the Qur'an of Miraculous Exposition illuminates and proves resurrection.

The result yielded by this sequence of thought shows that if it is necessary for man's judgement and his gaining eternal happiness, the whole universe will be destroyed and that a power capable of destroying and transforming the universe shows itself and exists. But resurrection has many degrees. It is obligatory to believe in some of them; they must be acknowledged. Whereas others become apparent according to levels in spiritual and intellectual development, and for these knowledge pertaining to both are necessary.

In order to present cogent and strong proofs for the simplest and easiest level, the All-Wise Qur'an points out a power capable of opening up a truly vast realm of resurrection. The degree of resurrection in which it is necessary for all to believe is this:

After human beings die, their spirits depart for another realm. And their bodies rot except for a minute cell from the base of the spine which will act as a seed. It remains intact, and on the Day of Resurrection God Almighty will create the human body out of it and return its spirit to it.<sup>20</sup> This degree is so simple, then, it may be seen every spring through millions of examples.

Sometimes in order to prove this degree, the verses of the Qur'an point out the unlimited activity of a power capable of raising to life all particles, and sometimes the traces of a power and wisdom capable of sending all creatures to extinction and then recalling them. Then they point to the activity and traces of a power and wisdom able to scatter the stars and shatter the heavens, and sometimes to the activity and manifestations of a power and wisdom capable of causing all animate creatures to die and then raising them to life again all at once at a single trumpet-blast.

Sometimes the verses demonstrate the manifestations of a power and wisdom that will raise to life the face of the earth and animate creatures all separately. And sometimes they demonstrate the traces of a power and wisdom that, lopping off its mountains, will cause the globe of the earth to disintegrate completely, and then restoring it will transform it into an even more excellent form.

That is to say, apart from the Day of Resurrection, in which it is obligatory for everyone to believe and to acknowledge, with that power and wisdom,

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<sup>20</sup> See, page 544, footnote 22.

God Almighty can create numerous other degrees and resurrections. And what is more, dominical wisdom requires that besides certainly bringing about mankind's resurrection, He shall bring about all those other degrees or create certain other important matters.

**A Question:** You say: "You make much use of analogies in the form of comparisons or parables in the Words. Whereas according to the science of logic, this form of analogy does not afford certainty. A logical proof is required for matters of certain knowledge. Analogy in the form of comparison and parable is utilized by scholars of canon law in matters in which the prevailing opinion is sufficient. Also, you present comparisons in the form of certain stories; the stories are imaginary and cannot be true. Is this not contrary to reality?"

**The Answer:** It has often been stated in the science of logic that analogies in the form of comparisons and parables do not afford certain knowledge. However, there is a certain type of this form of analogy that forms a proof more powerful than those proofs consisting of certain knowledge used in logic. Also, it is more certain than that sort of deduction. This type of analogy is as follows.

It demonstrates the tip of a universal truth by means of a partial comparison and constructs its judgement on that truth. It demonstrates the truth's law in a particular matter, so that the vast truth may be known and particular matters may be ascribed to it.

For example, although the sun is a single being, by means of luminosity it is present in every shining object. A law of a truth is demonstrated by means of this comparison which states that light and luminosity cannot be restricted: for them, distance and proximity are the same, many and few are equal, and space cannot conquer them.

This is another example: a tree's fruits and leaves are all shaped and formed at the same time, in the same fashion, easily and perfectly, in a single centre and through a law issuing from a command. This is a comparison or parable demonstrating the tip of a mighty truth and universal law. It proves the truth and the truth's law in a truly decisive form, so that, like the tree, the mighty universe displays and is the field of operation of that law of truth and mystery of Divine oneness.

Thus, the analogies, comparisons, and parables employed in all the Words are in this form and are more powerful and afford more certainty than the categorical proofs of logic.

**Answer to the second part of the question:** It is a well-known fact that in the art of composition, when the true meaning of a word or phrase is used solely as the means to perceive another meaning, it is called an 'allusive

expression.’ The essential meaning of a phrase defined as ‘allusive’ is not the means of either truth or falsehood; it is its allusive meaning that is such. If the allusive meaning is correct then the phrase is true. Even if its essential meaning is false, it does not damage its veracity. If the allusive meaning is not correct while its essential meaning is, then the phrase is false.

For example, “So-and-so’s salvation is of great length.” That is, “His sword-belt is very long.” This phrase alludes to the man’s tall stature. If he was tall but did not have a sword and belt, the phrase would still be correct and true. If he was not tall but had a long sword and belt, then the phrase would be false, since it is not its essential meaning that is intended.

So, the stories or parables in the Words, like for example, those in the Tenth and Twenty-Second Words, are sorts of allusions. The truths at the end of the stories are extremely correct, extremely true and conformable to reality; they are the allusive meanings of the stories. Their essential meanings are comparisons that bring distant objects close like a telescope and however they may be it does not damage their veracity and truthfulness. Moreover, all those stories are comparisons or parables. Purely to enable people in general to understand, what is properly communicated without words is put into words, and immaterial and abstract matters are represented in material form.

### THIRD AIM

After receiving this decisive and convincing answer to his second question,<sup>21</sup> the representative of all the people of misguidance was reduced to silence, but then asked the following third question.

“Phrases in the Qur’an like *The Best of Creators*,<sup>22</sup> and *The Most Compassionate of the Compassionate*,<sup>23</sup> suggest that there are other creators and compassionate ones. And you also say, ‘the Creator of all the worlds possesses endless perfections. United in Him are the utmost levels of every kind of perfection.’ Whereas, the perfections of beings are known through their opposites: if there was no pain, pleasure would not be a sort of perfection; if there was no darkness, light could not be proved to exist; if there was no separation, there would be no pleasure in union, and so on, would there?”

**The Answer:** We shall answer the first part of the question in five Indications.

**FIRST INDICATION:** From beginning to end, the Qur’an demonstrates Divine unity; this is a clear indication that those sort of phrases in the Qur’an

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<sup>21</sup> That is, the question at the beginning of the Second Aim, not the small questions at the end of the Conclusion.

<sup>22</sup> Qur’an, 23:14, etc.

<sup>23</sup> Qur’an, 7:151, etc.

are not as you understand them. Rather, *The Best of Creators* is to say, “He is at the highest and best rank of creativity,” which in no way indicates that there is another creator. Like the other attributes, creativity has many degrees or ranks. The Best of Creators means, “He is a Glorious Creator at the furthest and most excellent degree of creativity.”

**SECOND INDICATION:** Terms like, *The Best of Creators* do not look to a plurality of creators, but to the varieties of the state of being creature. That is, “He is a Creator Who creates everything in an appropriate form, at the most faultless degree.” Verses like, *Who makes most excellent everything He creates*,<sup>24</sup> express this meaning.

**THIRD INDICATION:** The comparison suggested by terms like, *The Best of Creators*, *God is Most Great*, *The Best Judge between truth and falsehood*,<sup>25</sup> and *The Most Bountiful* are not comparative and superlative adjectives comparing God Almighty’s attributes and actions, which are actual, with others who possess samples of those attributes and actions. For all the perfections in the universe, and in jinn, men, and angels, are but pale shadows in relation to His perfection. How should any comparison be possible? It is rather human beings, and particularly the people of neglect, who see perfection in terms of comparison.

For example, a private shows complete obedience and respect to his corporal. It seems to him that all benefits come from him and he thinks little of the king. Even if he does think of him, it is still to the corporal that he shows his gratitude. So it is said to the private: “See here! The king is much greater than your corporal, it is only him that you should thank.” Now this sentence does not compare the king’s imperial commandership, which is actual, with that of the corporal, which is partial and only apparent; because to do so would be meaningless. It is a result of what the private considers to be important, of how he sees his relations with the corporal, that he prefers him and loves and thanks only him.

Similarly, when apparent causes are imagined to be the creator and bestower of bounties in the view of the people of neglect, they become a veil to the True Bestower of Bounties. These neglectful people cling onto causes and think that bounties and favours are from them; they praise and acclaim them. The Qur’an says: “God Almighty is a greater, more excellent Creator, a far better Bestower of Bounties. So look to Him, and thank Him.”

**FOURTH INDICATION:** Just as there may be comparison between actual beings and preference for some over others, so there may be comparisons between possible or even hypothetical things and preference. Numerous

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<sup>24</sup> Qur’an, 32:7.

<sup>25</sup> Qur’an, 6:57.

degrees or levels are present in the true natures of most things. So too, in the view of the intellect, innumerable degrees may be present in the true natures of the Divine Names and sacred attributes. Whereas God Almighty is at the most perfect and excellent of all the possible and imagined degrees of those attributes and Names. The whole universe witnesses to this truth through all its perfections. *His are the Most Beautiful Names*,<sup>26</sup> “describing all His Names as the most excellent,” expresses this meaning.

**FIFTH INDICATION:** This use of the comparative and superlative is not to be understood in terms of creatures, but in terms of the fact that God Almighty has two sorts of manifestations and attributes.

**The First Sort:** Through the mystery of His unity, this consists of His disposal over creatures under the veil of causes and intermediaries and in the form of a universal law.

**The Second Sort:** Through the mystery of His oneness, it is His disposal over creatures directly, without veil, regarding each in a particular way. This means that through the mystery of oneness, His bestowal, creation, and grandeur which are direct are greater and more elevated and excellent than the works of His bestowal, creation, and grandeur which are apparent through the manifestations of causes and intermediaries.

For example, let us suppose there is a king, but he is a saint-king. He has great numbers of officials and commanders but they are only veils, for the authority and execution of all matters are directly in his hand. The king’s power of disposal and execution of affairs are of two kinds:

**The First Kind:** The execution of affairs he demonstrates and the commands he gives through a universal law in the form of visible officials and commanders in accordance with their abilities and ranks.

**The Second Kind:** This is not through a universal law. He does not make visible officials a veil; his execution of affairs and royal favours are direct and may be described as more elevated and excellent.

In the same way, the Creator of the universe, the Monarch of Pre-Eternity and Post-Eternity, has made numerous causes and intermediaries a veil to His execution of affairs and has demonstrated the majesty of His dominicality. But He left private telephones in His servants’ hearts so that they might leave causes behind and turn directly to Him, and might say: *You alone do we worship and You alone do we ask for help!*<sup>27</sup>

Thus, the meanings of *The Best of Creators*, *Most Compassionate of the Compassionate*, and, *God is Most Great* look to this meaning, too.

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<sup>26</sup> Qur’an, 17:110, etc.

<sup>27</sup> Qur’an, 1:5.

We shall answer the second part of the representative's question with five Signs.

**The First Sign:** In his question, he said: "If something has no opposite, how can it be perfection?"

**The Answer:** The questioner does not know what true perfection is. What he has in mind is only relative perfection. For merits, virtues, and qualities that look to something and are acquired relatively to something else are not real, they are relative and weak. If what they look to disappears, then they too will disappear.

For example, the relative pleasure and merits of heat occur through the effect of cold, and the relative pleasure of food, through the effect of the pain of hunger. If the cold and hunger disappear, then the pleasure diminishes. Whereas true pleasure, love, perfection, and virtue are such that they are not constructed on imagining something else. They are present of themselves. They are essential, inherent truths.

Qualities such as the following are like this: the pleasures of existence, life, love, knowledge, mercy, and compassion; and the beauty of light, sight, speech, noble-heartedness, fine character, and form; the perfection of essence and of attribute and perfection in actions. Whether or not there is something else, these qualities will not change. Thus, all the perfections of the Glorious Fashioner, the Beauteous Maker, the Perfect Creator are true perfections; they are essential and what is other than Him cannot affect Him. They can only be recipients.

**The Second Sign:** Sayyid Sharif al-Jurjani wrote in *Sharh al-Mawaqif*: "The cause of love is either pleasure, benefit, resemblance (that is, inclination towards creatures of same kind), or perfection. For perfection is loved for itself." That is to say, if you love something, you love it either because of the pleasure it affords, or the benefits it brings, or because it is similar in kind, like the inclination towards children, or because it possesses some perfection. If it is for perfection, no other cause or purpose is necessary; it is loved purely for itself. For example, in the olden days everybody loved people who possessed perfection; even if they had no connection with them they would still love them admiringly.

Thus, since all God Almighty's perfections and qualities and all the degrees in His Beautiful Names are true perfections, they are loved for themselves. The Glorious One, Who is the true beloved, loves His perfections, which are true perfections, and the beauties of His attributes and Names in a manner appropriate to Himself. And He loves the good qualities of His art and creatures, which are mirrors reflecting those perfections.

He loves His prophets and saints, especially the Most Noble Beloved,

who is the Lord of the Prophets and Prince of the Saints. That is, with His love for His own beauty, He loves His Beloved One, who is the mirror to that beauty. With His love for His own Names, He loves His Beloved One and his brothers who are comprehensive and aware loci of those Names' manifestations.

With His love for His art, He loves His Beloved One and those like him who are heralds and exhibitors of that art. With His love for His artefacts, He loves His Beloved One and those who follow him who appreciate and admire those artefacts and respond to them saying: "What wonders God has willed! How beautifully they have been made." And with His love for the good qualities of His creatures, He loves His Most Noble Beloved One and his followers and brothers in whom are united the finest of moral qualities.

**The Third Sign:** All the perfections in all the universe are signs and indications of a Glorious Being's perfection and beauty. Indeed, all the goodness, perfection, and beauty in the universe is but a pale shadow in relation to His true perfection. We shall indicate briefly five proofs of this truth.

**First Proof:** A perfect and splendidly adorned and decorated palace plainly points to perfect skill and craftsmanship. And that craftsmanship and art, which is a perfect act, plainly points to a perfect author, master, and craftsman together with his titles and names like Fashioner and Adorner. And those perfect names doubtlessly point to the master's perfect and skilful attributes. And that perfect skill and those attributes self-evidently point to his perfect ability and faculty. And that perfect ability and faculty necessarily point to the perfection of his essence and the exaltedness of his nature.

In exactly the same way, this palace of the universe, this perfect and adorned work of art, self-evidently points to actions of the utmost perfection. For perfections in works of art result from perfection of action and they demonstrate it. And perfection of actions point to a Perfect Author and the perfect Names of that Author. That is, in relation to the works of art, they point to the perfection of Names like, Planner, Fashioner, All-Wise, All-Compassionate, and Adorner.

Moreover, the perfection of the Names and titles, without any doubt, point to the Author's perfect attributes. For if the attributes were not perfect, the Names and titles which originate from the attributes would not be perfect. And the perfection of the attributes self-evidently points to the perfection of His functioning essence, because it is from the functioning essence that the attributes proceed. And the perfection of essential functions point at the degree of 'knowledge of certainty' to the perfection of the functioning essence. They point to a perfection so worthy that although the light of the perfection passes through the veils of functions, attributes, Names, actions,

and works of art, it still demonstrates the goodness, beauty, and perfection to be seen to this great extent in the universe,

Thus, after the existence of this degree of true, essential perfection has been established with cogent proofs what importance remains for relative perfections, which look to other things and which exist only in so far as they gain superiority over their likes and opposites? You may understand, then, just how paltry they become.

**Second Proof:** When the universe is studied as something from which lessons are to be taken, the conscience and heart may conjecture and perceive the following: the one who has so beautified and adorned the universe with all manner of fine things, himself possesses an infinite degree of beauty and perfection so that he might make it thus.

**Third Proof:** It is a well-known fact that works of art which are well-proportioned, symmetrical, perfect, and beautiful are based on an exceedingly well-drawn-up plan. And a perfectly drawn plan points to a perfectly sound knowledge, fine intellect, and refined faculty of spirit. That is to say, it is the spirit's immaterial beauty which is manifested in art by means of knowledge. Thus, the universe, with its innumerable material fine qualities, is formed of the distillations of immaterial fine qualities pertaining to knowledge. And those immaterial qualities pertaining to knowledge and those perfections are certainly the manifestations of an infinite, eternal loveliness, beauty, and perfection.

**Fourth Proof:** It is obvious that that which gives light must possess light, and that which illuminates must be luminous, that bounty comes from riches, and kindness proceeds from one who is kind. Since this so, since all this loveliness and beauty is given to the universe and perfection is bestowed on beings, they point to an eternal beauty as light points to the sun.

Beings pass over the face of the earth like a vast river sparkling with flashes of perfection. In the same way that a river sparkles with manifestations of the sun, the flood of beings momentarily sparkles with flashes of loveliness, beauty, and perfection, and then is gone. And the beings following after them display the same flashes and sparkling. It may be understood from this that just as the manifestations and instances of beauty on the flowing bubbles of water are not from themselves, but are manifestations and instances of beauty from the light of a sun, so the qualities and perfections which glisten briefly on the flood of the universe are the flashes of the beauty of an Eternal Sun's Names.

*Yes, the annihilation of the mirrors and the vanishing of beings is together with perpetual manifestation and constant effulgence. It is clear from the manifestations appearing that their apparent beauty is not theirs; they are rather eloquent manifestos and clear proofs of a Transcendent*

*Beauty and Renewed Munificence; of the Necessarily Existent, the Loving One, the Undying One.*

**Fifth Proof:** If four people who have arrived via four different routes all speak of the same event, it suggests with a certainty born of unanimity that the event definitely occurred. Thus, although their ways, dispositions, abilities, and times were all different, all the scholars of religion with their different ranks, the saints and purified ones with their different paths and ways, and the true philosophers with their different creeds are in agreement. They are the people of illumination and experiential knowledge, who have unveiled the secrets of the cosmos and have observed and borne witness to the truth – through their unveilings, illuminations, and witnessings, they have unanimously agreed that the qualities and perfections to be seen in the mirrors and displays of the universe and its beings, are the manifestations of a Single Necessarily Existent One's perfection and the manifestations of the beauty of His Names.

Their consensus and accord, then, constitutes an unshakeable proof.

Let us suppose that in order not to hear this Sign, the representative of the people of misguidance was compelled to stop up his ears and flee. For certainly, like bats, heads so plunged into darkness cannot endure these lights. In which case, from here on we shall consider them little, if at all.

**The Fourth Sign:** Rather than looking to its likes and opposites, the pleasure, loveliness, and beauty of a thing look to where those qualities are manifested. For example, generosity is a fine and pleasing attribute. The pleasure a generous person obtains from the joy and pleasure of those he has favoured is thousands of times more gratifying than the relative pleasure obtained from feeling superior to other generous people.

Also, a kind and compassionate person receives true pleasure proportionately to those towards whom he has been compassionate find ease and comfort. For example, the pleasure a mother receives from the happiness and comfort of her children, because of her compassion, is so strong she would sacrifice her very soul for their comfort. The pleasure of such compassion will even make a hen attack a lion in order to protect her chicks.

Thus, the true pleasure, goodness, happiness and perfection in elevated attributes do not look to peers and opposites, but to their dependants and the places they are manifested. The beauty, therefore, of the Glorious and Perfect One's mercy, Who is Ever-Living and Self-Subsistent, Clement and Benevolent, Compassionate and Merciful, looks to those who receive His mercy.

There are endless degrees in the happiness, ease and joy of those who receive the manifestation of His mercy and compassion, and especially those who receive its endless varieties in everlasting Paradise. We may

understand that, according to the degrees of their happiness and joy, the Merciful and Compassionate One experiences exalted, pure, holy, and beautiful meanings, like fondness and love, in a manner appropriate to Him, that may be described through qualities which are proper to Him. He possesses utterly pure and holy qualities which we may not mention because the Shari'a does not permit it, but which may be described as 'sacred pleasure,' 'holy love,' 'pure joy' and 'sacred happiness.' We have proved in many places that they are infinitely more exalted, elevated, holy, and pure than the love, joy, and happiness that we see in the universe and may perceive among creatures. If you wish to take a look at a flash of those meanings, then look through the telescope of the following comparisons.

For example, a noble-hearted and magnanimous personage laid out a fine banquet on his magnificent voyaging ship in order to feed the poor, the needy, and hungry. Then he himself watched from on deck. You can understand how pleased and happy the thankful pleasure and appreciative gratitude of the poor, hungry and needy made that generous personage; how much it gratified him.

Man is not the true owner of even the humblest repast and is merely like a distributor. Therefore, if his joy is thus, you can draw an analogy with the sacred meanings of love and results of mercy that pertain to the Merciful and Compassionate One and which we are powerless to express. For He causes men, jinn, and animals to journey in the seas of space, and to board the mighty earth, which is a dominical ship. Then, loading the table of the face of the earth with innumerable varieties of foods, He invites all living creatures to the feast, which is a sort of light snack or appetizer. For besides this, He will make each of every sort of perfect delight a table laden with bounties in a permanent and everlasting realm. He will inaugurate an unending and comprehensive banquet of innumerable pleasures and subtle wonders, which will be true food for His countless and endlessly needy and yearning slaves.

And, for example, a skilful and practised craftsman who likes to display his ingenuity, after inventing an object like a gramophone which plays without records, will set it up, try it out and then show it off. If it gives the desired and expected results perfectly, how proud will its inventor feel, how pleased and gratified will he be. He will say to himself: "May God bless this!"

And so, if an insignificant man is so pleased with the smooth working of a gramophone and with his craftsmanship which is only superficial, for in reality he creates nothing, then how should the All-Glorious Maker be? For He created the mighty universe as an orchestra and gramophone, and He made the earth, and all the animate creatures on it, and among animate creatures especially man. And man's head He created in such a fashion that it is a

dominical gramophone and Divine orchestra so that science and philosophy are struck with wonderment at the art and craftsmanship displayed in it.

Thus, all these beings show all the results desired of them to the utmost degree and in the best possible way. They are completely obedient to the commands that give them existence, which are described by the creatures' particular worship and glorification and their appointed salutations to God. The pride, pleasure and joy together with the sacred meanings and pure qualities, which we are unable to describe, that are obtained from these and from the attainment of the dominical aims sought from the beings, are so exalted and holy that if all the minds of mankind were to unite and become one mind, it would still be unable to reach or comprehend their substance.

And another example. What pleasure and enjoyment a just ruler who loves to enforce justice and right receives from giving the oppressed their rights and receiving their thanks and from punishing the wrongdoers and taking revenge for the oppressed. You can draw an analogy with the sacred meanings pertaining to the Absolutely Wise One, the Truly Just One, the All-Compelling and Glorious One, which arise from establishing justice, and not only for men and jinn, but for all creatures.

That is to say, the sacred meanings arising from bestowing the right of existence and the right of life on everything, from protecting existence and life from aggressors, and from arresting and restraining those ghastly creatures from their aggression; and that arise especially from the judgement of men and jinn at the Great Gathering in the realm of the hereafter. And besides this, the sacred meanings arising from the greatest manifestation of justice and wisdom that is apparent in animate creatures.

Thus, as may be seen from these three examples, just as a great many degrees of loveliness, beauty, grace, and perfection are present in all the thousand and one Divine Names, so there are a great many degrees of love, pride, glory, and grandeur.

It is because of this that the elevated and authoritative saints who manifested the Name of Loving One said: "Love is the very leaven of the universe. It is through love that all beings are in motion. It is from love that the laws of attraction, affinity, and ecstasy present in all beings spring." One of them wrote the following:

*The firmament is intoxicated, the angels and the stars are intoxicated,  
The heavens are intoxicated, the moon and the earth are intoxicated,  
The elements are intoxicated, the plants, the trees and mankind are intoxicated,  
Animate creatures are all intoxicated,  
All the particles of all beings are altogether intoxicated, and yet more  
intoxicated.*

That is to say, everyone receives the manifestation of Divine love and is

intoxicated in accordance with his capacity. It is well-known that every heart has affection for someone who bestows kindnesses on it, and that it loves true perfection and is enamoured of noble beauty. And the heart loves even more one who bestows kindnesses, not only on itself, but also on those it loves and feels compassion for.

And so, as we explained before, may it not be understood from the following just how deserving of love and passion is the All-Beauteous and Glorious One, the All-Perfect Beloved One, and how intoxicated and giddy is the whole universe with love of Him? For He is named with a thousand Names each of which is the source of thousands of perfections and the means for thousands of degrees of beauty. And through His bounties, in all the Names are thousands of treasuries containing bounties, and He makes all those beings we love happy.

It is because of this mystery that the saints who manifested the Name of Loving One declared: "We do not want Paradise. One flash of the Divine love will suffice us for ever."

It is also because of this that as is recorded in the Hadith: "A minute's vision of the Divine beauteousness in Paradise will far surpass all its other delights."<sup>28</sup>

Thus, these endless perfections of love only occur through the All-Glorious One's Names and His creatures within the sphere of His unity and oneness. That is to say, those perfections that are imagined to exist outside that sphere are not perfections at all.

**The Fifth Sign:** The Fifth Sign consists of five Points.

**First Point:** The representative of the people of misguidance said next: "The world is execrated in your Hadiths and called 'carriion.'<sup>29</sup> Also, all the saints and people of truth have contempt for the world, they say that it is pernicious and unclean. Whereas, you show it to be the means and proof of all Divine perfections and speak of it rapturously."

**The Answer:** The world has three faces.

*Its First Face* looks to God Almighty's Names; it displays their impress. It is a mirror to them, reflecting their meanings. This face of the world consists of innumerable letters or missives describing the Eternally Besought One. This face is utterly beautiful, and is worthy of love, not loathing.

*Its Second Face* looks to the hereafter. It is the seed-bed of the hereafter and arable field for Paradise. It is the flower-bed of mercy. This face is also beautiful like the first one and is deserving of love not contempt.

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<sup>28</sup> *Tirmidhi*, Zuhd, 14; *Ibn Maja*, Zuhd, 3; *Darimi*, Muqaddima, 32; Suyuti, *al-Durr al-Manthur*, iii, 305-6.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibn Maja*, No: 4112; al-Manawi, *Fayd al-Qadir*, No: 4281.

*Its Third Face* looks to man's base appetites. It is a veil of neglect and a plaything for satisfying the desires of the worldly. This face is ugly because it is transient and mortal; it is full of pain and it deceives. The contempt described in the Hadith and the loathing of the people of truth, then, is for this face.

The importance and approbation which the All-Wise Qur'an demonstrates towards the universe and all beings is towards the first two faces. It is the first two faces of the world that the Companions of the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) and other people of God seek.

There are four classes of people who have contempt for the world.

*The First:* Those who seek knowledge of God. They have contempt for it because it is a barrier to knowledge, love, and worship of God.

*The Second:* Those who look to the hereafter. They see the world as ugly either because unavoidable worldly matters prevent them from doing works pertaining to the hereafter. Or, due to their elevated degree of belief, they see it as ugly in relation to the perfections and beauties of Paradise.

Indeed, in the same way that a handsome man will appear ugly when compared to the Prophet Joseph (Peace be upon him), however valuable the qualities of this world, when compared to those of Paradise, they become as nothing.

*The Third:* These have contempt for this world because they cannot obtain it. This contempt arises not from loathing but from love.

*The Fourth:* These have contempt for the world because although they obtain it, it does not stay, it leaves them. And this vexes them. They insult it in order to console themselves and say it is foul. But this arises from love of the world, whereas acceptable contempt arises from love of the hereafter and the love that springs from knowledge of God.

That is to say, acceptable contempt is of the first two kinds. May God Almighty make us like those people. Amen.

#### IN VENERATION OF THE LORD OF THE PROPHETS

## Third Stopping-Place

*In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.  
And there is nothing but it glorifies Him with praise.<sup>30</sup>*

### FIRST TOPIC

According to the meaning of And there is nothing but it glorifies Him with praise, everything has numerous aspects that give onto God Almighty like windows.

The realities of all beings and of the universe are based on the Divine Names. Each being's reality is based on one Name or on many. The attributes of things and the arts they display are also based on and rely upon a Name. True natural science is based on the Name of All-Wise, true medicine on the Name of Healer, and geometry on the Name of Determiner, and so on. In the same way that all the sciences are based on and come to an end in a Name, the realities of all arts and sciences, and of all human attainments, are based on the Divine Names. Indeed, one group of the most learned of the saints stated that the Divine Names constitute the true reality of things, while the essences of things are only shadows of that reality. They said too that even only apparently as many as twenty manifestations and impresses of the Divine Names may be seen on a single living creature. We shall try to make this subtle yet vast truth easier to understand by means of a comparison, and shall analyze it by passing it through a sieve two or three times as it were. However long our discussion, it would still be short, but one should not become bored.

When a skilful portraitist or sculptor wishes to paint a picture of a beautiful flower or to sculpt a great beauty belonging to mankind's fair sex, firstly he determines the general shapes of those two objects with a few lines. He determines these by ordering and adjusting them, by estimating and measuring them. And this he does according to rules and limits defined by geometry.

It is clear that this ordering and measuring is carried out with knowledge and wisdom or purpose. That is to say, the acts of ordering and limiting turn on the compasses of knowledge and wisdom. In which case, the meanings of knowledge and wisdom govern behind the ordering and limiting. The compasses of knowledge and wisdom, then, point to themselves and they demon

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<sup>30</sup> Qur'an, 17:44.

strate that, within those limits, they have begun the portrayal of small particulars like the eyes, ears, nose, leaves, and stamens.

Now we see that the members determined by the motion of those inner compasses are taking shape artistically and carefully. Since this is so, the one who turns these knowledge and wisdom compasses possesses meanings of craftsmanship and care; it is they who command and then display themselves.

Thus, it may be understood from this that they point to inherent qualities of beauty and adornment. Since this is so, what makes the craftsmanship and care function is the will to beautify and the intention to decorate. In which case, it is at their command that the artist begins to adorn and illuminate. He gives a smiling and living form to the statue and flower. And what makes this meaning of beautifying and illuminating function is surely the meaning of favouring and munificence.

Yes, these two meanings govern him to such a degree that, quite simply, the flower is an embodied favour, and the statue, embodied munificence. So now it is the meanings of making loved and known that impel the meanings of favouring and munificence and make them work. That is, behind the latter two meanings, the meanings of making himself known through his art and making people love him govern.

This making loved and known, without a doubt arise from an inclination toward being merciful and the will to bestow bounties. So, since mercy and the will to bestow bounties are governing behind them, he will adorn the statue with all sorts of bounties and also bestow the form of the flower as a present. Thus, he fills the statue's hands and pockets with precious bounties and bestows the form of the flower as jewels. That is to say, what makes his mercy and will to bestow function is a feeling of gentleness and pity. That is, the meaning of pity and gentleness impels the mercy and bounty.

Furthermore, what impels and makes manifest the meaning of pity and gentleness within that person, who is self-sufficient and needs no one, are the meanings of beauty and perfection. These desire to be manifested. And as for love and mercy, which are the sweetest and most delightful parts of that beauty, they desire to be seen in the mirror of art and to see themselves through the eyes of yearning admirers.

That is to say, since beauty and perfection are loved for themselves, they love themselves above everything. They are also both loveliness and love. The union of beauty and love stems from this point. Since beauty loves itself, it desires to see itself in mirrors. Thus all the lovable bounties and beautiful fruits which were set on the statue and on the picture bear the flashes, each according to its capacity, of that meaning of beauty. They display those flashes both to the owner of the beauty and to others.

In exactly the same way, the All-Wise Maker delimits, orders and gives determined proportions and shapes to all things, particular and universal, through the manifestation of His Names; to Paradise and this world, the heavens and the earth, plants and animals, men and jinn, angels and spirit beings. By doing this, He causes them to recite His Names of Determiner, Orderer, and Giver of Form.

He determines the limits of their general shapes in such a manner that He displays His Names of All-Knowing and All-Wise. Then, through the definition of knowledge and wisdom, He begins to form them within those limits. He does this in such a way that He displays the meanings of craftsmanship and care and His Names of Maker and Munificent.

Next, with the miraculous hand of art and the brush of munificence He gives the colours of beauty and adornment to the members of that form, whether a single human being or a single flower, like the eyes, ears, leaves, and stamens. If it is the earth, He gives the colours of beauty and adornment to its minerals, plants and animals. If it is Paradise, He gives the colours of beauty and adornment to its gardens, palaces, and houris. And so on. You can make analogies for the rest, too.

Furthermore, He adorns and illuminates in such a fashion that the meanings of favouring and munificence are predominant in those objects. They govern to a degree where those adorned beings, those illuminated artefacts, become like embodied favours and incarnate munificence. They mention the Names of Gracious and Munificent.

Next, what impels the favouring and munificence to manifest are clearly the actions of making loved and known. That is, the qualities of making Himself loved by animate creatures and known by conscious ones. They cause animate and conscious beings to recite the Names of Loving and Known One behind the Names of Gracious and Munificent, and for this recitation, which is performed by the very mode of their beings, to be heard.

Then, embellishing those adorned and beautiful creatures with delicious fruits and lovable results, He turns from adorning to bestowing bounties, from graciousness to compassionateness. He causes them to recite the Names of Bestower and Compassionate and displays the manifestation of those two Names behind the outer veils.

Next, what impels that One, Who is absolutely without need, to manifest these Names of Compassionate and Munificent are the qualities of mercy and gentleness, which display the Names of Gentle and Merciful and cause them to be recited.

And what impels the meanings of mercifulness and gentleness to manifest are doubtless, an essential beauty and perfection which desire to become evident; they cause the Name of Beautiful, and the Names of Loving and

Compassionate, which are within the Name of Beautiful, to be recited. For beauty is loved for itself. Beauty and one possessing beauty love themselves. Moreover, it is both loveliness and love.

Perfection, also, is loved for itself; no other cause is necessary. It is both lover and beloved. Since a beauty that is at the utmost degree of perfection and a perfection that is at the utmost degree of beauty are loved and are worthy of love to the utmost degree, most certainly will they desire to see and to exhibit themselves through displaying their flashes and manifestations in mirrors, in accordance with the capacity of the mirrors.

That is to say, the beauty and perfection essential to the All-Glorious Maker, the All-Wise One of Beauty, the All-Powerful One of Perfection, require the qualities of mercy and gentleness, and impel the Names of Merciful and Gentle to be manifested.

As for mercy and gentleness, through displaying compassion and bounty, they impel the manifestation of the Names of Compassionate and Bestower.

And compassionateness and bestowal require the qualities of making known and loved and impel the Names of Loving and Known One to be manifested.

Making known and loved impel the meanings of favouring and munificence and display them on some of the facets of those artefacts; they cause the Names of Gracious and Munificent to be recited amongst them.

As for the qualities of graciousness and munificence, they impel the acts of adorning and illuminating. They cause the Names of Adorner and Illuminer to be recited by the tongues of the artefacts' beauty and luminosity.

And the qualities of adorning and beautifying require the meanings of craftsmanship and care. They cause the Names of Maker and Bountiful to be recited by the beautiful features of the artefacts.

As for craftsmanship and care, they require knowledge and wisdom, and they cause the Names of All-Wise and All-Knowing to be recited by their well-ordered, wise, and purposeful members.

And knowledge and wisdom require the acts of ordering, forming, and shaping. They display the Names of Determiner and Giver of Form, causing them to be recited by the artefact in its entirety, through its form.

Thus, the All-Glorious Maker has made all His creatures or artefacts in such a way that He causes most of them, and especially animate beings, to recite numerous Divine Names. It is as if He has dressed each creature in twenty different shirts, one on top of another or has enfolded them in twenty veils, and on each shirt or veil He has inscribed different Names.

For example, as was demonstrated in the comparison, there are many

pages in what is only apparent in the creation of a beautiful member of mankind's fair sex or of a beautiful flower. From these two small and particular examples you can draw analogies with other large and universal creatures.

*The First Page:* It is the state which demonstrates the general shape and proportion. It mentions the Names of O Giver of Form! O Determiner! O Orderer!

*The Second Page:* This is the plain and unadorned state of the human being and flower in the comparison, which occurs with the disclosure of the forms of all the different members of those two creatures. Many Names, like All-Knowing and All-Wise, for example, are written on this page.

*The Third Page:* Through bestowing a different beauty and adornment on all the different members of those two creatures, many Names like Maker and Designer, for example, are written on this page.

*The Fourth Page:* Such a beauty and adornment are given to those two artefacts it is as though they have become embodied favours and munificence. This page mentions and recites numerous Names, like for example, O Gracious One! O Munificent One!

*The Fifth Page:* Through attaching delicious fruits to the flower and lovable children and a fine character to the beautiful woman, this page recites Names like O Loving One! O Compassionate One! O Bestower of Bounties!

*The Sixth Page:* On this page of bestowal and bounties, Names like O Merciful One! O Gentle One! are recited.

*The Seventh Page:* Flashes of such beauty are apparent in these bounties and results that they are worthy of a sincere gratitude and pure love which have been kneaded with true desire and compassion. On this page, the Names of O Beauteous One of Perfection! O Perfect One of Beauty! are inscribed and recited.

Thus, if the beautiful flower and human being display this number of Names, and that only in material and apparent form, you can conclude what exalted and universal Names all flowers and animate creatures, as well as vast, universal beings, cause to be recited.

You can also conclude how many luminous, sacred Names, like Ever-Living and Self-Subsistent One, and Giver of Life, man recites and causes to be recited by reason of his spirit, heart, mind, and through the pages of life and other subtle qualities.

Thus, Paradise is a flower. The company of houris is also a flower. The face of the earth is a flower. The spring is a flower. The heavens are a flower, while the stars are their gilded embroideries. And the sun is a flower, while the seven colours in its light are the flower's embroidered colours.

The universe is a beautiful and huge human being, in the same way that each human being is a miniature universe. The company of houris, the assembly of spirit beings, the realm of angels, the congregation of jinn, and human kind, have all been formed, ordered, and created as if they were beautiful individuals. Just as they all display the Beauteous Maker's Names through their universality, as does each individual singly, so are they all different mirrors to His beauty and perfection, mercy and love. All are truthful witnesses to His infinite beauty and perfection, mercy and love. All are signs and tokens of that beauty and perfection, mercy and love.

Thus, this infinite number of different sorts of perfections occurs within the sphere of Divine unity and oneness. That is to say, what are imagined to be perfections outside that sphere are not perfections at all.

Understand therefore that the reality of beings is based on and relies on the Divine Names; rather, that their true realities are the manifestations of those Names; and that everything mentions and glorifies its Maker with numerous tongues in numerous ways.

And understand one meaning of the verse:

*And there is not a single thing but extols His glory and praise.*<sup>31</sup>

Say, "Glory be to Him Who is hidden in the intensity of His manifestation." And understand one reason why phrases like the following are repeatedly mentioned at the end of the Qur'an's verses:

*And He is the Mighty, the Wise.*<sup>32</sup> \* *And He is the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.*<sup>33</sup> \* *And He is All-Knowing, All-Powerful.*<sup>34</sup>

If you are unable to read the Names in a flower and cannot see them clearly, look at Paradise, study the spring, watch the face of the earth. You will be able to read clearly the Names written there, for they are the huge flowers of mercy. You will be able to see and understand their impresses and manifestations.

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<sup>31</sup> Qur'an, 17:44.

<sup>32</sup> Qur'an, 3:62, etc.

<sup>33</sup> Qur'an, 42:5, etc.

<sup>34</sup> Qur'an, 30:54, etc.

## The Second Point of the Second Topic

When the representative of the people of misguidance could find no support or basis on which to build his misguidance and was thus defeated in argument, he said the following:

“I consider happiness in this world and life’s pleasures, and the progress of civilization and perfection of arts as all lying in refusal to think of the hereafter and to know God, in love of this world, in absolute freedom and licence and in relying exclusively on myself. And in so doing I have drawn most men onto this path, through the assistance of Satan, and continue to do so.”

**The Answer:** We say, in the name of the Qur’an: O wretched man! Come to your senses! Do not listen to the representative of the people of misguidance. If you do listen to him, your loss will be so great that your intelligence, spirit, and heart will shudder even to imagine it. There are two paths in front of you.

**The First:** The path of wretchedness laid out in front of you by the representative of the people of misguidance.

**The Second:** The path of happiness defined for you by the All-Wise Qur’an.

You will have noted and understood numerous comparisons between these two paths in the Words, particularly the Short Words. So, note and understand now one of those thousands of comparisons which is suitable to this discussion.

The path of assigning partners to God, misguidance, dissipation and vice causes man to fall to the lowest degree. Afflicted with infinite pains, he is forced to bear an infinitely heavy load on his weak and powerless shoulders. For if man does not recognize God and place his trust in Him, he becomes extremely weak and impotent, needy and impoverished, a suffering, grieving and ephemeral animal, exposed to endless misfortunes. Suffering continuously the pain of separation from all the objects of love and attachment, he will ultimately abandon all of his loved ones and go alone to the darkness of the grave.

Throughout his life, he struggles vainly, with an extremely limited will,

slight power, a short lifespan and dull mind, against infinite pains and hopes. To no avail, he strives to attain innumerable desires and goals.

Even though he is unable to bear the burden of his own being, he takes the load of the vast world onto his wretched shoulders and mind. He suffers the torment of Hell before even arriving there.

Indeed, in order to avoid feeling this grievous pain, this awesome spiritual torment, the people of misguidance have recourse to a drunkenness that is like a form of stupor and thus are temporarily able to avoid feeling their pain. But when they do feel it, they suddenly feel the proximity of the grave. For whoever is not a true bondsman of God Almighty will imagine that he owns himself. But with his partial and limited will and his petty power and strength, he is unable to administer and control his being in this tempestuous world. He sees thousands of different sorts of enemy attacking his life, from harmful microbes to earthquakes. In an awesome state of painful fear he looks towards the door of the grave, that at all times appears dreadful to him.

While in this state, man will also be troubled by the state of the world and of mankind, for as a human being he is attached to both. But, he does not imagine them to be in the control of One All-Wise, All-Knowing, All-Powerful, Merciful and Generous, and has attributed them instead to chance and to nature. And so, together with his own pains, he suffers also the pains of the world and of mankind. Earthquakes, plagues, storms, famine and scarcity, separation and decease; all of this torments him in the most painful and sombre fashion.

But such a man is not worthy of pity and sympathy, for he himself is responsible for it.

In the Eighth Word is a comparison between two brothers who entered a well. One was not content with a refreshing, sweet, reputable, pleasant and licit drink at a splendid feast with pleasant friends in a beautiful garden and so drank some ugly and unclean wine in order to obtain illicit and impure pleasure. He became drunk and then imagined himself to be in some foul place in the middle of winter surrounded by wild beasts, and trembling cried out.

But such a man is not worthy of pity, for he imagined his honourable and blessed companions to be monsters, and thus insulted them. He also imagined the delicious foods and clean dishes at the feast to be impure and filthy stones and began smashing them. And the respected books and profound writings there to be meaningless and banal designs, and so ripped them up and trod on them.

Such a person is not merely unworthy of sympathy, rather, he deserves a good beating.

In exactly the same way, a person who, through incorrect choice and the lunacy of misguidance, is intoxicated with unbelief, imagines this hospice of the world, which belongs to the All-Wise Maker, to be the plaything of chance and natural forces. He fancies the passage of creatures into the World of the Unseen, that is in fact renewing the manifestation of the Divine Names, to be execution and annihilation. He supposes the echoes of those creatures' glorification of God, who are accomplishing their duties with the passing of time, to be the lamentations of death and eternal separation. He deems the pages of created beings, which are inscriptions of the Eternally Besought One, to be meaningless and confused. He imagines the door of the grave, which opens onto the world of mercy, to be the entrance to the darkness of non-existence. And he deems the appointed hour, which is in reality an invitation to join his true friends, to be the onset of separation from all of them.

Such a person both brings upon himself grievous and ghastly torments, and denies, denigrates and insults all beings and God's Names and His inscriptions. He is, therefore, not only unworthy of compassion and sympathy but also deserving of severe punishment. He is not in any way worthy of pity.

And so, O wretched people of misguidance and dissipation! What accomplishment of yours, what art, what perfection, what civilization, what progress, can confront this awesome silence of the grave, this crushing despair? Where can you find that true consolation that is the most urgent need of the human spirit?

What nature, what causality, what partner ascribed by you to God, what discovery, what nationality, what false object of worship, in each of which you place so much trust and to which you attribute God's works and His sustaining bounties, which of them can deliver you from the darkness of death that you imagine to be eternal annihilation? Which of them can enable you to cross the frontiers of the grave, the boundaries of the intermediate realm, the marches of the plain of resurrection, the Bridge of Sirat? Or can bring about your eternal happiness?

But know that most definitely you will travel on this path for you cannot close the door of the grave. And a traveller on such a path ought to rely on one whose control and command embraces all this vast sphere and its extensive boundaries.

O wretched people of misguidance and neglect! In accordance with the principles that 'the consequence of an illicit love is suffering a merciless torment,' you are suffering a fully justified punishment, for you are unlawfully employing your innate capacity for love, knowledge, thanks and worship that relate properly to the essence, attributes and Names of God Almighty, on your own soul and the life of this world.

You have lavished the love that belongs to God Almighty on yourself. Your own soul has become your beloved and will cause you endless suffering: you are not giving true peace to that beloved. You are suffering constantly because you do not hand it over to the Possessor of Absolute Power Who is the only true beloved and you do not trust wholly in Him.

You suffer further misfortunes because you give to the world the love that belongs to God Almighty's Names and attributes and divide up the works of His art among causes in the world. One group of those innumerable beloveds of yours will turn their backs on you and leave you without even saying good-bye. Another group will not even recognize you, or if they do, they will not love you. Or if they love you, their love will be of no use. You will constantly suffer from innumerable separations and farewells without hope of return.

This, then, is the essence and true nature of what the people of misguidance call life's happiness, human perfection, the advantages of civilization and the pleasure of freedom. And dissipation and intoxication are but a veil; they temporarily block all feeling. So, say, "I spit on the intelligence of those who follow such a path."

But as for the luminous highway of the Qur'an, it cures with the truths of faith all the wounds of the people of misguidance. It disperses all the gloom and darkness of that first path. It closes the door on all misguidance and perdition.

It cures man's weakness, powerlessness, poverty and need with trust in One All-Powerful and Compassionate. For, handing over the burden of his life and being to His power and mercy instead of loading it on himself, man finds ease and comfort as if he were riding on his own life and soul. The Qur'an states that he is not a 'rational animal', but rather a true man and a well-accepted guest of the All-Merciful One.

It gently cures man of the wounds inflicted on him by the transience of the world, the ephemeral nature of things and the love of them, and delivers him from the darkness of delusion and fancy. It does this by showing the world to be a guest-house of the All-Merciful One, and the beings in it to be mirrors to the Divine Names and ever-fresh inscriptions of the Eternally Besought One.

It shows death and the appointed hour to be the bridge to the intermediate realm and the prelude to joining and meeting beloved ones already in the world of eternity. It thus cures the wounds inflicted by the notion of death as eternal separation, as held by the people of misguidance. It demonstrates that separation is in fact the truest form of meeting.

Further, by establishing that the grave is a door opening onto the world of

mercy, an abode of happiness, a garden of Paradise, the luminous realm of the All-Merciful One, it dispels man's most terrifying fear and shows that the apparently painful, troublesome and unpleasant journey to the intermediate realm is in fact the most pleasurable, enjoyable and joyous of journeys. With the grave, it shows that the grave is not a dragon's mouth but is, rather, a door opening onto the garden of mercy.

The Qur'an also says to the believer, "Since you have only partial and restricted choice, hand over your affairs to your Owner's universal will. Since your power is slight, rely on that of the Possessor of Absolute Power. Since your life is brief, think of eternal life. Do not fret! There is an unending life. If your mind is dull, let the sun of the Qur'an shine on you. Look with the light of belief, and instead of the fire-fly of your own mind, each verse of the Qur'an will illumine you like a star.

"Since you have innumerable hopes and pains, know that infinite reward and limitless mercy await you. Since you have innumerable desires and aims, do not think of them and become disturbed. This world cannot contain them; the proper place for them is another realm, and the one who will grant them is one other than yourself."

The Qur'an also says, "O man! You do not own yourself. Rather, you are totally owned by One Whose power is infinite, an All-Compassionate One of Glory Whose mercy is infinite. Therefore, do not trouble yourself by shouldering the burden of your life, for it is He Who grants you life and administers it.

"Also, the world is not without an owner. So do not be anxious thinking of the state of it and load that burden onto your mind, for the world's Owner is All-Wise and All-Knowing. You are a guest so do not be officious and meddlesome.

"Furthermore, creatures such as men and animals have not been left to their own devices, rather, they are all officials with specific duties. They are watched over by an All-Wise and Compassionate One. Do not distress your spirit thinking of their pains and afflictions. Do not try to be more sympathetic and kind-hearted than their All-Compassionate Creator.

"Also, the reins of all those things that are hostile to you, from microbes to plagues, storms, famine and earthquakes, are in the hands of that All-Compassionate All-Wise One. Being All-Wise, He does nothing in vain. Being All-Compassionate, His mercy is superabundant. There is a form of grace and favour contained in everything He does."

The Qur'an also says, "This world is indeed ephemeral, nevertheless, it produces the necessities for an everlasting world. It is transient and fleeting, but it yields eternal fruits, and displays the manifestations of an Eternal

Being's eternal Names. Its pleasures are indeed few and its pains many, but the favours of the All-Merciful and Compassionate One are everlasting and true pleasures. And as for the pains of this world, they too yield a sort of pleasure by reason of the reward to be had for enduring them.

"Since the sphere of the licit is sufficient for all the pleasures, delights and joys of the spirit, heart and soul, do not approach the sphere of the illicit. For one pleasure within that sphere sometimes leads to a thousand pains. It will also cause the loss of the All-Merciful One's favours, which are true and lasting pleasures.

"Furthermore, as described above, illicit pleasure on the path of misguidance causes man to fall to the lowest of the low. Then no civilization, no philosophy can provide a remedy for him, and no human progress and scientific advances can deliver him from that deep, dark pit. Whereas, the All-Wise Qur'an elevates man, through belief and good deeds, from the lowest of the low to the highest of the high, and demonstrates that it does this with clear proofs. And it fills in that deep pit with rungs of inner development and spiritual progress.

"Moreover, it facilitates man's long, stormy and troublesome journey towards eternity. It shows him the means for traversing a distance of a thousand years, or rather of fifty thousand years, in a single day.

"Also, through making known the All-Glorious One, Who is the Monarch of Pre-Eternity and Post-Eternity, it confers on man the position of a bondsman, guest and official entrusted with specific duties. And it ensures that he travels with the greatest ease both in the guest-house of this world and in the stages and stopping-places of the intermediate realm and the hereafter.

"A loyal official will travel in his monarch's kingdom and pass through the frontiers of each province with ease, journeying by the fastest means, such as by aeroplane, ship or train. So too one who forms a relation with the Pre-Eternal Monarch through belief and obeys Him through good works will pass with the speed of lightning or of Buraq through the stages of this guest-house of the world, the spheres of the intermediate realm and the world of resurrection and the extensive frontiers of all the realms that are beyond the grave, until he attains eternal happiness." The Qur'an proves this truth decisively and points it out to those who are purified and to the saints.

The truth of the Qur'an also says, "O believer! Do not give your infinite capacity for love to your ugly, defective, evil, and for you, harmful instinctual soul. Do not take it as your object of love and its whims as your object of worship. Take rather the One Who has bestowed on you that infinite capacity for love. He will also make you infinitely happy in the future, and, through His bounties, all those to whom you are attached and whose happiness makes you happy.

“Take for your object of love and worship One Who possesses infinite perfection and a beauty that is infinitely sacred, exalted, transcendent, faultless, flawless and unfading. The beauty of His mercy and the mercy of His beauty are demonstrated by all the beauties and bounties of Paradise. All of His Names are infinitely beautiful and in each of them are abundant lights of fairness and beauty. His beauty and perfection are indicated and pointed to by all the fairness, beauty, virtue and perfection of all lovable and loved objects in the cosmos.”

The Qur'an also says, “O man! Do not squander your infinite capacity to love, which properly belongs to His Names and attributes, on other transient creatures. For the works and creatures of God are ephemeral, but the Beautiful Names, whose impress and manifestation may be seen on them, are eternal and permanent. And in each of His Names and attributes there are thousands of degrees of bounty and beauty, perfection and love. Look only at the Name of All-Merciful: Paradise is a manifestation of it, eternal happiness, a flash of it, and all the sustenance and bounty in the world, a mere drop of it.”

Consider carefully, then, this verse which indicates the true nature of the people of misguidance and that of the people of belief, with regard to their lives and duties:

*Verily We have created man in the fairest of forms, then sent him down to the lowest of the low, except for those who believe and do good deeds.*<sup>35</sup>

And this verse that indicates their final result and outcome:

*The heavens and the earth wept not over them.*<sup>36</sup>

How sublimely and miraculously they express the comparison we have made. Since the truth expressed miraculously and concisely in the first verse is explained in detail in the Eleventh Word, we refer our readers to that part of the Risale-i Nur for a discussion of it.

As for the second verse, we shall show, through a brief indication, how sublime a truth it expresses. It is as follows.

The explicit meaning of the verse is that the heavens and the earth do not weep when the people of misguidance die. The implied meaning is that the heavens and the earth do weep when the people of belief depart this world. For the people of misguidance, through their denial of the duties and functions of the heavens and earth, their ignorance of their meaning, their rejection of their value, their refusal to recognize their Maker, are in fact acting insultingly and with hostility toward them. So, of course, the heavens

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<sup>35</sup> Qur'an, 95:4-6.

<sup>36</sup> Qur'an, 44:29.

and earth will not weep over them, but in fact curse them and rejoice at their death.

As for the implied meaning, that the heavens and earth weep over the death of the people of belief, this is because they know the duties and functions of the heavens and earth, assent to their true realities, and understand, through belief, the meanings they express. They say, "How beautifully they have been made, how finely they are carrying out their duties." They respect them and assign them their true worth. They love them and the Names they mirror for the sake of God Almighty. And so it is for this reason that the heavens and earth grieve over the death of the people of belief as if weeping.

### **An Important Question**

You say, "Love is not voluntary. And, as a consequence of innate need, I love delicious foods and fruits. I love my father, mother and children, my wife, and my friends and companions. I love the prophets and the saints. And I love my life and my youth, the spring, beautiful things and the world. How may I not love these things? So how should I rather give all this love to God Almighty's essence, attributes and Names? What does this mean?"

The Answer: Listen to four 'Points'.

### **FIRST POINT**

Indeed, love is not voluntary, but by means of the will love's face may turn from one object of love to another. For example, when a beloved displays some ugliness or shows that he is a veil or mirror to another beloved, who is truly worthy of love, then love's face may be turned from the metaphorical to the true beloved.

### **SECOND POINT**

We do not tell you not to love the things you enumerated, but rather to love them for God Almighty's sake and in the name of His love. For example, to love delicious foods and luscious fruits as being the bounty of God Almighty, the All-Merciful and Compassionate One, is to love His Names of All-Merciful and Bestower of Bounties, and, moreover, takes on the meaning of thanks. This love is to seek gain contentedly within the sphere of the licit, which shows that it is not only for the sake of the instinctual soul but is in the name of the All-Merciful One. It is to eat thoughtfully and with gratitude.

Furthermore, love and respect for parents, when for the sake of the wisdom and mercy that compassionately fitted you out and caused them to bring you up with tender care, pertain to God Almighty's love. The sign that this love, respect and compassion are for God's sake is that when they are old

and are of no more use to you and bring you only trouble and difficulty, you are even more loving, kind and compassionate towards them. The verse,

*Should one of them, or both, attain to old age in your care, never say to them a word of contempt,*<sup>37</sup>

summons children to respect and be kind to their parents in five degrees, and demonstrates how important are the rights of parents in the eyes of the Qur'an, and how ugly ingratitude towards them.

A father desires only his son, and no one else, to be much better than himself, however, the son cannot claim any rights over his father in return for this. That is to say, there is no inherent cause for dispute between parents and child. This is because dispute arises from envy and jealousy and there is nothing of this in the father towards his son. Or it arises from abuse of rights and the son has no rights that he can claim against his father. If he considers his father to be unjust, he may not rebel against him. That is to say, one who does rebel against his father and cause him pain is a monster, a corrupted human being.

And, to love and protect children with perfect compassion and tenderness because they are gifts of the All-Compassionate and Generous One once again pertains to God. The sign indicating that that love is for Almighty God's sake is patience and thankfulness should they die, rather than crying out in despair. It is to say, "He was a lovable little being created and owned by my Creator, Who entrusted him to my supervision. Now that His wisdom requires it to be thus, He has taken him from me, taken him to a better place. If I had one apparent share in that little creature, a thousand true shares belonged to his Creator." It is to submit saying, "All authority is with God."

As for friends and acquaintances, if they are friends of God Almighty by reason of their belief and good works, according to the meaning of 'love for God's sake,' that love, too, pertains to God.

Furthermore, love and cherish your wife as a companionable and gracious gift of divine mercy. But do not fasten your love to her physical beauty, which swiftly fades. Rather, woman's most attractive and agreeable beauty is the fineness of character that accompanies the delicacy and refinement peculiar to her. As for her most precious and sweet beauty, it is her earnest, sincere, sublime and luminous compassion. This beautiful tenderness and fineness of character continues and increases until the end of her days. Moreover, that weak and delicate creature's rights of respect will be protected by that love. Otherwise, when her superficial beauty fades the poor woman will lose her rights, even when she most needs them.

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<sup>37</sup> Qur'an, 17:23.

And to love the prophets and saints as God Almighty's most esteemed bondsmen is to do so for the sake and in the name of God Almighty, and from that point of view it pertains to Him.

And to love and preserve life as most precious wealth and capital that will gain eternal life, and a comprehensive treasury yielding eternal perfections which Almighty God has given to you and to all humanity, and to employ it in His service, is, once again, in one respect, love that pertains to the True Object of Worship.

Also, to admire, love and put to proper use the grace and beauty of youth as being a fine, sweet and beautiful bounty of Almighty God is a sort of licit and thankful love.

And to love the spring thoughtfully as being the page of the subtlest and most beautiful inscriptions of Almighty God's luminous Names and the most finely adorned and glittering exhibition of the All-Wise Maker's antique art is to love His Names.

And to love this world as being the tillage for the hereafter, as a mirror of the Divine Names and a missive of God Almighty, and as a temporary guest-house, on condition that the evil-commanding soul does not interfere, is to do so for God Almighty's sake.

***In short:*** Love this world and the creatures in it as pointing to a meaning beyond themselves, like a word. Do not love them just for themselves. Say, "How beautifully they have been made." Do not say, "How beautiful they are." Do not give any opportunity to other loves to enter into your inner heart because the inner heart is the mirror of the Eternally Besought One and pertains only to Him. Say, "O God, grant us love for You, and love for that which will draw us closer to You."<sup>38</sup>

Thus, if in this form, all the loves that you have enumerated will give a pain-free pleasure, and, in one respect, an unending union. Moreover, they will increase love of God. They are licit loves. And are, furthermore a sort of gratitude which is pure pleasure, and thought, which is pure love.

For example, if a mighty king<sup>39</sup> were to bestow an apple on you, there would be two loves for that apple and two pleasures in it. The first of these is that the apple would be loved because it is an apple, and there would be a pleasure peculiar to and to the extent of the apple. This love does not concern the king. On the contrary, the man who puts the apple to his mouth and eats it in the king's presence loves the apple itself and his own soul rather than the king. It sometimes happens that the king is not pleased with that

<sup>38</sup> *Kanz al-'Ummal*, i, 195; Waliuddin Tabrizi, *Mishkat al-Masabih*, i, 762.

<sup>39</sup> Once two tribal chiefs entered the presence of a king. They were in exactly the same situation as is described here.

love which nourishes the instinctual soul; in fact, he detests it. Moreover, the pleasure that the apple gives is very limited and passes quickly. After the apple is eaten it is gone, only regret remains.

As for the second love, it is for the royal favour that is demonstrated by means of the apple. One who holds the apple precious as if it were the sample and embodiment of a royal favour shows that he loves his king. Moreover, the pleasure in that fruit, which is a sort of container for the favour, is such that it is far greater than the pleasure obtained from a thousand apples. This pleasure, then, is the essence of thankfulness. This love is a respectful love for the king.

In exactly the same way, if all bounties and fruits are loved for themselves, if they are thoughtlessly delighted in only for the material pleasures that they yield, that love is merely love of self. Also, those pleasures are transient and bring pain. But, if they are loved as favours proceeding from Almighty God's mercy and as fruits of His munificence, and if pleasure is obtained from them with good appetite by appreciating the degree of kindness in that munificence and favour, then it has both the meaning of gratitude and is a pain-free pleasure.

### **THIRD POINT**

There are levels in the love for God Almighty's Names. As we explained above, sometimes the Names are loved with a love for finely made objects. Sometimes they are loved as being titles of the Divine perfections. Sometimes, man is needy and desirous of the Names by reason of the comprehensiveness of his true nature together with his having endless needs. It is through those needs that he loves.

For example, if someone were to come forward and do a kindness to all your relations, and the poor, the weak and the needy, for all of whom you feel sympathy although you are powerless to meet their need for help, how that person's favour-granting title and generous name would please you, how you would love that person through that title.

So too, think only of God Almighty's Names of All-Merciful and Compassionate. They make happy all the believing fathers and forefathers, relations and friends whom you love and feel sympathy for, in this world by means of all kinds of bounties, and in Paradise by means of all kinds of delights. They cause happiness by showing you in eternal bliss to them, and them in eternal bliss to you. So how deserving of being loved is the Name of All-Merciful and the title of All-Compassionate. And you can see for yourself just how needy for those two Names is the human spirit. And you can understand just how appropriate is the phrase, 'Praise be to God for His mercifulness and His compassionateness.'

You are connected to the world and as a result are afflicted by its wretchedness, so if you consider carefully, you may understand just how needy and desirous is your spirit for the Name of All-Wise and for the title of Nurturer. For the Owner of those Names orders, regulates and sustains with perfect wisdom the world, which is like a sort of house for you, and the creatures within it, which are its familiar furniture and lovable decorations.

And you are altogether connected to other human beings and grieve when they die. So, if you consider carefully, you may understand just how needy is your spirit for the Names of Inheritor and Resurrector, and for the titles Eternal, All-Generous, Giver of Life, and Munificent. For the Owner of these Names saves human beings at the time of their death from the darkness of non-existence and establishes them in a far finer place than this world.

Thus, since man's nature is exalted and his disposition comprehensive, he is, by his very nature, needy with thousands of different sorts of needs for the innumerable Divine Names, each of which has many degrees. Intensified need is longing. Intensified longing is love. And intensified love is passion. As the spirit is perfected, the degrees of love unfold according to the degrees of the Names. Furthermore, since the Names are the titles and manifestations of the One of Glory, love of them will be transformed into love of the Divine Essence.

Now, just as an example, we shall explain one of the innumerable degrees of the Names of All-Just, All-Wise, Truth, and All-Merciful. If you wish to see the Names of All-Merciful and Compassionate, and Truth within wisdom and justice to the utmost extent, consider the following comparison.

Let us suppose there is an army in which there are four hundred different sections. And the uniforms that each section prefers are different, the provisions that please them, the weapons they will carry with ease and the medicines to cure their particular ills are all different. Furthermore, rather than being separated into squads and companies, they are all intermingled.

If the peerless and single king, then, out of perfect compassion and solicitude, wonderful power, miraculous all-embracing knowledge and extraordinary justice and wisdom, without confusing or forgetting any of them were himself, in person, without helper, to give all of them their completely different though appropriate uniforms, provisions, medicines and weapons, would you not see what a powerful, solicitous, just and generous personage that king was. For if there were individuals from ten nations in one battalion, it would be extremely difficult to clothe and equip them all differently. Whatever people they were from they would of necessity have to be fitted out in the same way.

Similarly, if you wish to see the manifestation of the Names of Truth and All-Merciful and Compassionate within the justice and wisdom of God Almighty, look at the plant and animal armies comprising four hundred thousand magnificent nations with their tents pitched on the face of the earth in springtime. For those groups and sections are all one within the other. And the uniform of each one is different, and the provisions, weapons, way of life, drill and demobilization are all different. Furthermore, they do not have the power to provide for those needs and the tongues to ask for those wishes. So, watch and see the titles of Truth, All-Merciful, Provider, Compassionate and Generous together with order and equilibrium within the sphere of wisdom and justice. See how, without confusing, obscuring or forgetting any of them, He sustains, regulates and administers them all.

Could another hand, therefore, interfere in a matter performed with such amazing and all-encompassing order and balance? What, apart from the One Who is Single and Unique, Absolutely Wise, and Powerful over all things, could even stretch out its hand towards this art, this organizing, this sustaining, this administering? What cause could interfere?

#### FOURTH POINT

**You ask:** "So long as they are in the form that the Qur'an commands, what are the results and benefits of all my different and various loves? That is, my love for food, myself, my wife, parents and children, my friends, the saints, the prophets, beautiful things, the spring and this world?"

**The Answer:** It would be necessary to write a thick book in order to explain all the results. For now only one or two results will be briefly alluded to. Firstly, the immediate results in this world will be explained, then those that will become apparent in the hereafter will be mentioned.

As was explained above, loves such as those of the people of neglect and those attached to this world, that are for the sake of the evil-commanding soul, bring many tribulations, and much pain and suffering in this world. While the ease, pleasures and enjoyment they bring are little and few.

For example, compassion becomes a painful calamity on account of impotence. Love becomes a calamitous misfortune on account of separation. Pleasure becomes a poisoned cup on account of its transience. And in the hereafter, because they were not for God Almighty's sake, they will either be without benefit or will be torment. (If they were illicit.)

**Question:** How might love for the prophets and saints be without benefit?

**The Answer:** In the same way that the love of the Christians for Jesus (Peace be upon him), and the heretics for 'Ali (May God be pleased with him) remain without benefit. If that love is in the form that the Qur'an

directs, for God Almighty's sake and in the name of the All-Merciful One's love, then it has favourable results both in this world and in the hereafter.

Now, to return to our subject, the results in this world of your love for delicious foods and luscious fruits will be that they are a pain-free bounty and a pleasure that is the essence of gratitude.

**Your love of your instinctual soul.** The result will be pity it, to train it, and to prevent harmful desires. Then the soul will not ride you, it will not make you a prisoner of its desires, rather, you will ride it. You will drive your soul, not to whims and fancies, but to right-guidance.

**Your love for your wife.** Since it will be built on her being a mine of tenderness, a gift of compassion and on her fineness of character, if you have sincere love and affection for her, she too will have earnest love and respect for you. As the two of you approach old age these sentiments will increase, you will pass your life happily. But if it is otherwise, if it is love of a pretty face and for the sake of the instinctual soul, then that love will be quickly destroyed and so too will be good relations.

**Your love for your father and mother.** Since it will be for God Almighty's sake, it will be both worship and the older they grow the more your love and respect for them will increase. If you earnestly desire and pray, with the noblest of sentiments and most manly zeal, that they will live far into old age, and even kiss their hands with sincere respect and say, "Let me gain even more reward on their account", it will obtain for you a most elevated pleasure of the spirit. But if it is otherwise, and for the sake of the soul and this world, when they grow old and approach the time of becoming a burden for you, if you show them, with the most base and despicable sentiment, that they are a nuisance and then wish for the deaths of those respected people, who were the cause of your life, it will be savage and grievous pain for the spirit.

**Your love for your children.** As for love for those lovable, friendly creatures whom God Almighty entrusts to your supervision and upbringing, it will be a most happy love, a most happy bounty. Neither shall you suffer too much pain at their misfortunes, nor shall you cry out with despair at their deaths. As was stated above you will say, "Since their Creator is both All-Wise and Compassionate, as far as they are concerned, that death is happiness." Moreover, concerning yourself, you will think of the mercifulness of the One Who gave them to you and you will be saved from the pain of separation.

**Your love for your friends.** Since it is for God's sake, because separation from those friends, and even their deaths, will not be an obstacle to your conversing and your brotherhood, you will benefit from that immaterial love and relation of the spirit. And the pleasure of meeting will be permanent. If it is not for the sake of God, the pleasure of one day's meeting will result in

the pain of a hundred days' separation.<sup>40</sup>

**Your love for the prophets and saints.** Since the intermediate realm, which seems to the people of neglect to be a dark, lonely and desolate place, appears to you as a stopping-place illuminated by the presence of those luminous beings, the fact that you will go there will not induce terror and fright, but, on the contrary, an inclination towards it and a feeling of longing; it will not drive away the pleasure of worldly life.

But if it is otherwise, if love for the prophets and saints is of the same sort as the love of the subscribers to modern culture for their idols and heroes, on thinking of the death and disappearance of those perfect human beings and of their rotting in that mighty grave known as the past, it will add one more sorrow to lives that are already painful. That is to say, each will say to himself, "I too will end up in the grave, which rots even such perfect men."

Whereas, when they are seen from the first point of view, they are thought of with complete ease of mind, for they have discarded the clothes of their bodies in the past and now their dwelling-place is the intermediate realm, which is the waiting-room for the future. And the graveyard will be seen as having a familiarity and friendliness.

**Your love for beautiful things.** Since it is for the sake of the One Who fashioned them, it will be in the manner of, "How beautifully they have been made." This love is pleasurable thought and it causes the gaze of beauty-worshipping delight to see the more elevated and holy and thousand times more beautiful treasures of the degrees of God's beauty. This love opens up a way to these treasures because it transfers the eye from those beautiful works to the beauty of the Divine actions. And it opens a way from them to the beauty of the Names, and from them to the beauty of the attributes, and from them to the One of Glory's peerless beauty; it opens a way to the heart. Thus, if this love is in this form, it is both pleasurable, and it is worship, and it is thought.

**Your love of youth.** Since you have loved it as a beautiful bounty of God Almighty, you have, of course, done so in worship, you have not drowned it in dissipation and destroyed it. Since this is the case, the worship you have gained during your youth is the undying fruit of that transient state. As you grow older, because you will have obtained the enduring fruits that are the positive aspect of youth, you will have been saved from its harm and excesses.

Also, in old age you will see that you have achieved success in performing more worship, and so will be more worthy to receive Divine mercy. Unlike the people of neglect, you will not feel sadness for the pleasures of

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<sup>40</sup> One second's meeting for God's sake is a year. Whereas, if it is for the sake of this world, a year is a second.

youth that lasted five or ten years, then wail for fifty years, "Alas, my youth has fled!" Neither will you be like one of them who said, "If only my youth would return one day, I would tell it of the woes old age has brought me."

**Your love for finely adorned exhibitions like the spring.** Since it is in the form of contemplating Divine artistry, when the spring ends the pleasure of the spectacle does not fade. For the meanings that the spring delivers, like a gilded missive, may be contemplated all the time. Both your imagination and time are like films in the cinema, they both cause the pleasure of that contemplation to continue for you, and they renew the spring's meanings and beauties. Your love, therefore, cannot be temporary and full of regret and pain. Rather, it will be full of pleasure and enjoyment.

**Your love of this world.** Since it is in the name of God Almighty, the formidable creatures of this world will be like familiar friends for you. Since you love it as the tillage for the hereafter, you will be able to find in everything capital or a fruit that will produce benefits in the hereafter. Neither will its disasters frighten you, nor will its transience and ephemerality trouble you. You will pass your sojourn in this guest-house with the greatest of ease. But should you love it as the people of neglect do, then as we have told you a hundred times, you will drown and perish in a fruitless love, condemned to a depressing, crushing and suffocating transitoriness.

Thus we have shown only one subtle point out of hundreds from each of the loves you enumerated, when they are in the form that the Qur'an directs. We indicated too one hundredth of the harm they cause if they are not in this way. Now, if you want to hear and understand the results of these loves in the eternal realm, in the world of the hereafter, the results to which the All-Wise Qur'an points with its clear and distinct verses, then we shall show briefly by means of an Introduction and nine Indications the results and one hundredth of the benefits of those various licit loves in the hereafter.

## AN INTRODUCTION

God Almighty, with His glorious Divinity, His beautiful mercy, His mighty dominicality, His generous benevolence, His immense power, and His subtle wisdom, has equipped and adorned tiny man with many senses and feelings, limbs and systems, members and faculties, and subtle and immaterial aspects so that through them He might cause man to perceive, know, taste and recognize the limitless varieties and levels of His bounty, munificence and mercy; and so that, through these tools, He might cause man to ponder over, know and love the endless kinds of manifestations of His thousand and one Names. Just as each of man's great many members and faculties performs a completely different service and worship, so too does each of them have completely different pleasures, pains, duties and rewards.

For example, the eye beholds the beauty of forms and the varieties of the

beautiful miracles of power in the world of things seen. Its duty, taking its lesson from these, is gratitude to its Maker. The pleasures and pains peculiar to sight are known, there is no need to enlarge upon them.

And, for example, the ear perceives the various sorts of sounds and their melodious songs, and the subtle instances of God Almighty's mercy in the world of things heard. Its worship, pleasures and rewards are all different.

And, for example, the sense of smell perceives the subtle instances of mercy within the realm of scents. It has a duty of gratitude and pleasure peculiar to itself. And, of course, it has a reward, too.

And, for example, the sense of taste, in the tongue; through appreciating all the tastes of foods, it performs its duty with a truly diverse thankfulness; and so on. All man's faculties, including his important subtle aspects such as the heart, intellect and spirit, have quite distinct duties, pleasures and pains.

Thus, God Almighty, the Possessor of Absolute Wisdom, will certainly give suitable recompense to each one of those faculties, which He employs in human beings. Everyone may perceive with his conscience the immediate results in this world of those numerous varieties of love, as was explained above, and they may be confirmed through experience.

As for the results in the hereafter, their existence and reality have been conclusively, through briefly, proved by the decisively clear Twelve Truths of the Tenth Word, and by the six self-evident Fundamental Points of the Twenty-Ninth Word. They are also clearly demonstrated in detail by the distinct verses and the explanations, allusions, symbols and indications of the All-Wise Qur'an, which is, 'The most truthful of all words, most eloquent in its order, the Word of God – The Lord, The Mighty, The All-Knowing.' There is no need to present more extensive proofs. In any case, there are further proofs in other Words: in the Second Station of the Twenty-Eighth Word, which is about Paradise and is in Arabic, and in the Twenty-Ninth Word.

**First Indication:** According to the Qur'an, the result in the hereafter of licit and thankful love for delicious foods and fruits is again delicious food and fruit, but in a form appropriate for Paradise. This licit love desires those foods and fruits of the hereafter. So much so that when you utter the phrase 'Praise be to God' over the fruit you eat in this world, it will be embodied as a fruit of Paradise and presented to you there. Here you eat fruit, while there you will eat 'Praise be to God'.

Since you see Divine munificence and the All-Merciful One's favours in bounty and food, as is established by Hadith, the indications of the Qur'an, and the requirements of wisdom and mercy that that pleasurable

gratitude will be given to you in Paradise in the form of a truly delicious food.<sup>41</sup>

**Second Indication:** Licit love for your instinctual soul in this world is not a love built on its good qualities, but rather one that sees its short-comings and trains it with a compassion that seeks to perfect it, and that impels it towards good. This love results in giving to the soul objects of love worthy of it in Paradise.

As is explicitly stated and proved by a great number of verses in the Qur'an, when the soul utilises its desires and wishes correctly and employs its faculties and senses in the best way in this world, that is, in the way of God Almighty, as a result of this licit and worshipful love the Absolutely Generous One will bestow on it houris in Paradise, the everlasting realm. He will clothe these houris in seventy varieties of the finery of Paradise. He will adorn their beings with seventy kinds of beauty that will carress and gratify all the senses of the soul. Each houri will be like a miniature animated Paradise.

Furthermore, your love of youth in this world, that is, the result of expending the power of youth in worship, will be eternal youth in the realm of bliss.

**Third Indication:** Licit love for your wife in this world is sincere love in consequence of her delicate tenderness, fine virtues and good character, together with your protecting her from disobeying God obstinately and sinning. The Absolutely Merciful One has promised that as a result of this licit love your wife shall be given to you as an eternal wife in the hereafter, the realm of bliss. She will be in a form more beautifully adorned and attractive than the Houris. You will relate to one another in delight your former adventures in the world, bringing to mind old memories. She will be an intimate, gracious and eternal friend, who loves and is beloved. And, most certainly, that which He promises shall definitely be given.

**Fourth Indication:** The result of licit love for parents and children is this. According to the Qur'an, the Most Merciful of the Merciful will bestow on that happy family, even though their stations may be quite different, the pure pleasure of each other's company in the everlasting realm.

He will return children who die before reaching the age of fifteen years, that is, the age of puberty, once more to the embrace of their fathers and mothers, in a manner appropriate to Paradise. They will be most beautifully adorned and lovable, in the form of the children of Paradise, who are known

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<sup>41</sup> Baghawi, *Masabih al-Sunna*, iii, 197; *Musnad*, iii, 439; *Ibn Maja*, ii, 1093, No: 3285.

as immortal youths.<sup>42</sup> He will gratify their child-cherishing sentiments and will give them that pleasure and delight eternally. Since those children had not reached the age of responsibility, they will remain eternally as lovable and sweet children.

Every pleasurable thing in this world will be found in its highest form in Paradise. Some people surmise that since Paradise is not appropriate for reproduction, there will be none of this cherishing of children, which is so sweet, that is, the pleasure of loving and carressing them. But it will be there too and in the most delightful and sweet form. This then is good news for those whose children die before puberty.

**Fifth Indication:** The result of love for righteous friends in this world, according to the decree of, 'Love for God's sake' is, as the Qur'an states, *Facing one another on thrones of happiness.*<sup>43</sup> God Almighty will seat them on the chairs of Heaven facing one another. He will cause them to meet with their friends, pleasantly, agreeably and sweetly. They will enjoy themselves recounting their old memories and adventures in this world, with a pure love and companionship that will not be subject to separation.

**Sixth Indication:** The result of love for the prophets and saints is as the Qur'an explains. That is, it will be both to benefit in the intermediate world and at the resurrection from the intercession of the prophets and saints, and also to profit abundantly, through that love, from the station and blessings that befit them.

Indeed, according to the meaning of 'a person will be together with whom he loves,'<sup>44</sup> an ordinary man may approach the highest station by following an exalted person whom he loves.

**Seventh Indication:** The result of licit love for beautiful things and the spring. That is, to see with the eye of, 'how beautifully they have been made,' and to love the beauty and order of the acts, which lie behind those works of art. To love the manifestations of the Beautiful Names, which lie behind the order and harmony of the actions, and to love the manifestations of the attributes behind those Beautiful Names. And so on.

The result will be to see in Paradise, the everlasting realm, the manifestation of the Names, and the beauty and attributes within the Names, in a form a thousand times more beautiful than the beautiful creatures to be seen here.

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<sup>42</sup> Qur'an, 76:19, 56:17.

<sup>43</sup> Qur'an, 15:47, 37:44.

<sup>44</sup> See, page 515, footnote 4.

More than this even, Imam Rabbani (May God be pleased with him) said, "The subtle exquisiteness of Paradise will be the similitude of the manifestation of God's Names."<sup>45</sup> Just think of it!

**Eighth Indication:** The result in the hereafter of thoughtful love in this world for the two beautiful faces of the world, which are the tillage for the hereafter and the mirror of the Divine Names. An everlasting Paradise will be given that is as large as the world but is not ephemeral and transient like this world. And the Names, only pale shadows of which are shown in this world, will be displayed in the mirror of Paradise in a most brilliant form.

Moreover, the result of loving the world as being the tillage of the hereafter is as follows. When the world is seen thus, that is, as a seed-bed or small place of cultivation that produces only shoots, it results in a Paradise where those shoots burgeon and blossom. For in this world man's senses and faculties are tiny shoots and in Paradise they will unfold in the most perfect form. And his abilities, which are here like tiny seeds, will be given to him there in a form that will blossom with all sorts of delights and perfections. This is proved by the indications of the Qur'an and by Hadith, and is necessitated by mercy and wisdom.

For it is not blameworthy love of the world, which is the source of every fault, but love of its two faces that look to God's Names and to the hereafter, and is for the sake of the Names and the hereafter. It is to cultivate those faces with thoughtful worship, as if taking the whole world as the means for worship. It is, therefore, most definitely necessitated by mercy and wisdom that a reward should be given that is as large as the world. And, one who through love of the hereafter, has loved its seed-bed, and through love of Almighty God, has loved the mirror of His Names, will most certainly desire a beloved like the world, and that too will be a Paradise as great as the world.

**Question:** What is the use of such a vast and empty Paradise?

**Answer:** If it was possible for you to travel with speed of imagination round all the regions of the earth and most of the stars, you would be able to say, "The whole universe is mine." The fact that the angels, other human beings and the animals share the world with you would not quash your claim. In the same way, if Paradise is thus full, you would be able to say, "Paradise is mine." The meaning of the Hadith, A five hundred year Paradise will be given to some of those in Paradise, has been explained in the Twenty-Eighth Word and the Twentieth Flash, the Treatise on Sincerity.

**Ninth Indication:** The result of faith and love of God. It is proved by the consensus of the

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<sup>45</sup> Suyuti, *al-Fath al-Kabir*, iii, 62; al-Manawi, *Fayd al-Qadir*, v, 373.

people of unveiling and verification, by certain Hadith,<sup>46</sup> and by the Qur'an that a thousand years of happy life in this world is not worth one hour of life in Paradise, and that a thousand years of heavenly life is not worth one hour's vision and contemplation of the All-Glorious One, Who possesses incomparable beauty and perfection.

Everyone may perceive in his conscience a great longing for the vision of a personage famous for his magnificence and perfection, like the Prophet Solomon (Peace be upon him), and a great yearning to behold a personage distinguished by his beauty, like the Prophet Joseph (Peace be upon him). And so, if you can, compare how longed-for, sought after, and desire-arousing is the vision of One, one manifestation of Whose beauty and perfection are all the virtues and perfections of Paradise, which are thousands of times more elevated than all the virtues and perfections of this world.

*O God, bestow upon us in this world love for You and love for that which will draw us closer to You, and the right-guidedness that You have commanded, and, in the next world Your mercy and the vision of You.*

*Glory be unto You! We have no knowledge save that which You have taught us; You are indeed All-Knowing, All-Wise.*<sup>47</sup>

*O God, grant blessings and peace to the one whom You sent as a mercy to all the worlds, and to all his Family and Companions. Amen.*

## Reminder

Do not consider over-lengthy the detailed explanations in the last section of this Word; they are short in relation to their importance and require further explanation.

It is not I who speaks in any of the Words; it is reality in the name of 'INDICATIONS FROM THE QUR'AN.' As for reality, it speaks the truth. Should you see anything incorrect, then you can be certain that without my being aware of it my own ideas interfered and caused the error.

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<sup>46</sup> Included in the Hadith is the following: "That vision far surpasses all the other delights of Paradise, so much so that it causes them to be forgotten. And after the vision the loveliness and beauty of those who experience it will have increased to such a degree that when they return, it will be only with difficulty and scrutiny that their families in their mansions will recognize them."\*

\* al-Munziri, *al-Tarhib wa'l-Tarhib*, iv, 541, 556.

<sup>47</sup> Qur'an, 2:32.

## Supplication

O God! When a man knocks on the door of a grand palace and it is not opened to him, he knocks on it and calls out in the voice of someone who is familiar to the palace, so that it may be opened. Thus this wretched one knocks on the door of the Court of Your Mercy crying out in the voice of Your well-loved servant Uvays al-Qarani and with his supplication. Open that Court of Yours to me, as you opened it to him! I cry out as he did:

*O God! You are our Sustainer, for we are mere slaves; we are powerless to sustain and raise ourselves. That is to say, the One Who sustains us is You! It is You Who is the Creator, for we are creatures, we are being made! It is You Who is the Provider, for we are in need of provision, we have no power! That is to say, the One Who creates us and bestows on us our provisions is You! It is You Who is the Owner, because we are totally owned property; someone other than us has power of disposal over us. That is to say, it is You Who is our Owner! And You, You are Mighty! You possess grandeur and sublimity! As for us we look to our baseness and see that there are manifestations of a mightiness on us. That is to say, we are mirrors to Your mightiness! And it is You Who is the Possessor of Absolute Riches, because we are utterly wanting, and riches are bestowed on us that our indigent hands could not obtain. That is to say, it is You Who is rich, the One Who gives is You! And You, You are the Ever-Living, Ever-Enduring One, because we, we are dying, and in our dying and in our being resurrected we see the manifestation of a perpetual giver of life! And You, You are Ever-Enduring, because we see Your continuation and perpetualness in our demise and transience! And the One Who responds to us and answers us, the Granter of Gifts, is You. For all of us beings, we are ever crying out and requesting, entreating, imploring by tongue and by state. And our desires are brought about, our aims are achieved. In other words, the One Who answers us is You!...*

*So forgive me my sins and bear with me and heal my ills, O my God! O All-Sufficing One! O Sustainer! O Faithful One! O Most Compassionate One! O Healer! O Munificent One! O Forgiving One! Pardon all my sins, and grant me health from all sicknesses, and be pleased with me for all eternity! Through Your Mercy, O Most Merciful of the Merciful!*

*And the close of their prayer will be: All praise be to God, the Sustainer of All the Worlds!*