

# The Twenty-Second Word

[This Word consists of Two Stations]

## First Station

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

*So God sets forth parables for men, so that they may bear [them] in mind.<sup>1</sup> \**

*Such are the similitudes which we propound to men that they may reflect.<sup>2</sup>*

One time two men were washing in a pool. Under some extraordinary influence they lost their senses and when they opened their eyes, they saw that it had transported them to a strange land. It was such that with its perfect order it was like a country, or rather a town, or a palace. They looked around themselves in complete bewilderment: if it was looked at in one way, a vast world was apparent; if in another, a well-ordered country; and if in another, a fine town. And if it was looked at in still another way, it was a palace which comprised a truly magnificent world. Travelling around this strange world, they observed it and saw that creatures of one sort were speaking in a fashion, but they did not understand their language. Nevertheless, it was understood from their signs that they were performing important works and duties.

One of the two men said to his friend: "This strange world must have someone to regulate it, and this orderly country must have a lord, and this fine town, an owner, and this finely made palace, a master builder. We must try to know him, for it is understood that the one who brought us here was he. If we do not recognize him, who will help us? What can we await from these impotent creatures whose language we do not know and who do not heed us? Moreover, surely one who makes a vast world in the form of a country, town, and palace, and fills it from top to bottom with wonderful things, and embellishes it with every sort of adornment, and decks it out

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'an, 14:25.

<sup>2</sup> Qur'an, 59:21.

with instructive miracles wants something from us and from those that come here. We must get to know him and find out what he wants.”

The other man said: “I do not believe it, that there is a person such as the one you speak of, and that he governs this whole world on his own.”

His friend replied to him: “If we do not recognize him and remain indifferent towards him, there is no advantage in it at all, and if it is harmful, its harm will be immense. Whereas if we try to recognize him, there is little hardship involved, and if there is benefit, it will be great. Therefore, it is in no way sensible to remain indifferent towards him.”

The foolish man said: “I consider all my ease and enjoyment to lie in not thinking of him. Also, I am not going to bother with things that make no sense to me. All these things are the confused objects of chance, they are happening by themselves. What is it to me?”

His intelligent friend replied: “This obstinacy of yours will push me, and a lot of others, into disaster. It sometimes happens that a whole country is laid waste because of one ill-mannered person.”

So the foolish man turned to him and said: “Either prove to me decisively that this large country has a single lord and single maker, or leave me alone.”

His friend replied: “Your obstinacy has reached the degree of lunacy, and you will be the cause of some disaster being visited on us. So I shall show you twelve proofs demonstrating that this world which is like a palace, and country which is like town, has a single maker and that it is only he who runs and administers everything. He is completely free of all deficiency. This maker, who does not appear to us, sees us and everything, and hears our words. All his works are miracles and marvels. All these creatures whom we see but whose tongues we do not understand are his officials.”

## **FIRST PROOF**

Come and look carefully at everything around you: a hidden hand is working within all these works. For something which has not even an ounce of strength,<sup>3</sup> something as small as a seed, is raising a load of thousands of pounds. And something that does not have even a particle of consciousness<sup>4</sup> is performing extremely wise and purposeful works. That means they are not working by themselves, but that a hidden possessor of power is causing them to work. If they were independent, it would necessitate all the works which we see everywhere in this land being miracles and everything to be a wonder-working marvel. And that is nonsense.

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<sup>3</sup> This alludes to seeds, which bear trees on their heads.

<sup>4</sup> This indicates delicate plants like the grapevine, which themselves cannot climb or bear the weight of fruits, so throwing their delicate arms around other plants or trees and winding themselves around them, they load themselves onto them.

## SECOND PROOF

Come, look carefully at the things which adorn all these plains, fields, and dwellings! There are marks on each telling of that hidden one. Simply, each gives news of Him like a seal or stamp. Look in front of your eyes: what does He make from one ounce of cotton?<sup>5</sup> See how many rolls of cloth, fine linen, and flowered material have come out of it. See how many sugared delights and round sweets are being made. If thousands of people like us were to clothe themselves in them and eat them, they would still be sufficient. And look! He has taken a handful of iron, water, earth, coal, copper, silver, and gold, and made some flesh<sup>6</sup> out of them. Look at that and see! O foolish one! These works are particular to such a one that all this land together with all its parts is under his miraculous power and is submissive to his every wish.

## THIRD PROOF

Come, look at these mobile works of art!<sup>7</sup> Each has been fashioned in such a way that it is simply a miniature sample of the huge palace. Whatever there is in the palace, it is found in these tiny mobile machines. Is it at all possible that someone other than the palace's maker could come and include the wondrous palace in a tiny machine? Also, is it at all possible that although he has included a whole world in a machine the size of a box, there could be anything in it that was purposeless or could be attributed to chance? That means that however many skilfully fashioned machines you can see, each is like a seal of that hidden one. Rather, each is like a herald or proclamation. Through their tongues of disposition they are saying: "We are the art of One Who can make this entire world of ours as easily and simply as He created us."

## FOURTH PROOF

O my stubborn friend! Come, I shall show you something even stranger. Look! All these works and things in this land have changed and are changing. They do not stop in any one state. Note carefully that each of these lifeless bodies and unfeeling boxes has taken on the form of being absolutely dominant. Quite simply it is as though each rules all the others. Look at this

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<sup>5</sup> This indicates a seed. For example, a poppy seed like an atom, the kernel of an apricot stone, and a tiny melon seed, produce from the treasury of mercy woven leaves finer than broadcloth, flowers whiter than linen, and fruits sweeter than sugar and more delicate and delicious than sweets and preserves, and they offer them to us.

<sup>6</sup> This indicates the creation of animal bodies from the elements, and living creatures from sperm.

<sup>7</sup> This alludes to animals and humans. For since animals are tiny indexes of the world, and man is a miniature sample of the universe, whatever there is in the world, a sample of it is in man.

machine next to us;<sup>8</sup> it is as though issuing commands; all the necessities and substances necessary for its adornment and functioning come hastening to it from distant places. Look over there: that lifeless body<sup>9</sup> is as though beckoning; it makes the largest bodies serve it and work in its own workplace. Make further analogies in the same way.

Simply, everything subjugates to itself all the beings in this world. If you do not accept the existence of that hidden one, you have to attribute all his skills, arts, and perfections in the stones, earth, animals, and creatures resembling man everywhere in this land to the things themselves. In place of a single wonder-working being, which your mind deems unlikely, you have to accept millions like him, who are both opposed to one another, and similar, and one within the other, so they do not cause confusion everywhere and the order be spoiled. Whereas if two fingers meddle in a country, they cause confusion. For if there are two headmen in a village, or two governors in a town, or two kings in a country, the result is chaos. So what about an infinite, absolute ruler?

### FIFTH PROOF

O my sceptical friend! Come, look carefully at the inscriptions of this vast palace, look at all the adornments of the town, see the ordering of this whole land, and reflect on all the works of art in this world! See! If these inscriptions are not worked by the pen of one hidden who possesses infinite miracles and skills, and are attributed to unconscious causes, to blind chance and deaf nature, then every stone and every plant in this land has to be an inscriber so wondrous it can write a thousand books in every letter and include millions of works of art in a single inscription. Because look at the inscription on these stones;<sup>10</sup> in each are the inscriptions of all the palace, and the laws ordering all the town, and the programmes for organizing the whole country. That means that it is as wonderful to make these inscriptions as to make the whole country. In which case, all the inscriptions, all the works of art, are proclamations of that hidden one, and seals of his.

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<sup>8</sup> The machine indicates fruit-bearing trees. For they bear on their slender branches hundreds of workbenches and factories, and weave, adorn, and cook wonderful leaves, flowers and fruits, and stretch them out to us. And majestic trees like the pine and the cedar, even, set up their workbenches on dry rock, and work.

<sup>9</sup> This alludes to grains, seeds, and the eggs of flies. For example, a fly leaves its eggs on the leaves of the elm. Suddenly the huge tree turns its leaves into a mother's womb and a cradle for the eggs, and into a store full of a food like honey. Simply, in that way the tree, which is not fruit-producing, produces fruits bearing spirits.

<sup>10</sup> This alludes to man, the fruit of the tree of creation, and to the fruit which bears its tree's programme and index. For whatever the pen of power has written in the great book of the universe, it has written its summary in man's nature. And whatever the pen of Divine Determining has written in a tree the size of a mountain, it has also included it in its fruit the size of a finger nail.

Since a letter cannot exist without showing the one who wrote it, and an artistic inscription cannot exist without making known its inscriber, how is it that an inscriber who writes a huge book in a single letter and inscribes a thousand inscriptions in a single inscription, should not be known through his writing and through his inscribing?

## SIXTH PROOF

Come, let us go out onto this broad plain.<sup>11</sup> On it is a high mountain whose summit we shall climb to so that we can see all the surrounding country. We shall take with us a good pair of binoculars which will bring everything close, for strange things are happening in this strange land. Every hour things are taking place that we could not imagine. Look! These mountains, plains, and towns are suddenly changing. And how? In such a way that millions of things are being changed in a most regulated and orderly fashion one within the other. Truly wondrous transformations are being wrought, just as though millions of various cloths are being woven one within the other. Look! These flowery things which we know and are familiar with are disappearing and others have come in their place in orderly fashion which resemble them in nature but are different in form. It is quite simply as though this plain and the mountains are each a page, and within them are being written hundreds of thousands of different books. And they are being written faultlessly and without defect.

It is impossible a hundred times over that these matters should have come about on their own. Yes, for these works which are skilfully and carefully fashioned to an infinite degree to have occurred on their own is impossible a thousand times, for rather than themselves, they show the artist who fashioned them. Moreover, the one who did this displays such miracles that nothing at all could be difficult for him. It is as easy for him to write a thousand books as to write one book. Look all around you; he both puts everything in its proper place with perfect wisdom, and he munificently showers the favours on everyone of which they are worthy, and he draws back and opens general veils and doors so bountifully that everyone's desires are satisfied. And he sets up tables so generously that a feast of bounties is given to all the people and animals of this land; each group and individual is given one particular and suitable for it, even. So, is there anything more impossible in the world than that there should be anything attributable to chance in these matters that we see, or that among these matters that we see there is anything

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<sup>11</sup> This indicates the face of the earth in the spring and summer. For the groups of hundreds of thousands of different creatures are created one within the other and written there. They are changed without fault or error and with perfect order. Thousands of tables of the Most Merciful One are laid out, then removed and replaced by fresh ones. All the trees as though bear trays, all the gardens are like cauldrons.

purposeless or vain, or that many hands should be interfering in them, or that their maker should not be capable of everything, or that everything should not be subjugated to him? And so, my friend, find a pretext in the face of these if you can!

### SEVENTH PROOF

Come, my friend! Now we shall leave these particular matters and turn our attention to the mutual positions of the parts of this wondrous world in the form of a palace. Look! Universal works are being carried out and general revolutions are occurring in this world with such order that all the rocks, earth, trees, everything in this palace, observe the universal systems of the world, and conform to them as if each was acting with will. Things which are distant hasten to assist one another. Now look, a strange caravan<sup>12</sup> has appeared, coming from the Unseen. The mounts in it resemble trees, plants, and mountains. Each bears a tray of provisions on its head. And look, they are bringing the provisions for the various animals awaiting them on this side. And see, the mighty electric lamp<sup>13</sup> in that dome both furnishes them with light, and cooks all their food so well that the foods to be cooked are each attached to a string<sup>14</sup> by an unseen hand and held up before it. And on this side, see these wretched, weak, powerless little animals; how before their heads are attached two small pumps<sup>15</sup> full of delicate sustenance, like two springs; it is enough for those powerless creatures to only press their mouths against them.

***In Short:*** Just as all the things throughout the world look to one another, so they help one another. And just as they see one another, so they co-operate with one another. And just as they perfect each other's works, so too they support one another; standing shoulder to shoulder, they work together. Make analogies with this for everything; they are uncountable. Thus, all these things demonstrate as decisively as two plus two equals four that everything is subjugated to the maker of this wondrous palace, that is, to the owner of this strange world. Everything is like a soldier under his command. Everything turns through his strength. Everything acts through his command. Everything is set in order through his wisdom. Everything helps the others through his munificence. Everything hastens to the assistance of the others through his compassion, that is, they are made to hasten to it. Now, my friend, say something in the face of this if you can!

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<sup>12</sup> These are the caravans of plants and trees, which bear the sustenance of all the animals.

<sup>13</sup> The mighty electric lamp indicates the sun.

<sup>14</sup> And the string, and the food attached to it, are the slender branches of trees and their delicious fruits.

<sup>15</sup> And the two small pumps allude to the breasts of mothers.

## EIGHTH PROOF

Come, my foolish friend who thinks himself reasonable like my soul! You do not want to recognize the owner of this magnificent palace! But everything shows him, points to him, testifies to him. How can you deny the testimony of all these things? You have therefore to deny the palace as well, and say: "There is no world, no country." Deny yourself, too, and disappear! Or else come to your senses and listen to me! Now, look, there are uniform elements and minerals inside the palace and encompassing the land.<sup>16</sup> Simply, everything appearing in the country is made of those elements. That means, whoever those things belong to, everything made of them is also his. Whoever the field belongs to, the crops are his too. And whoever the sea belongs to, the things within it are also his.

And look, these textiles, these decorated woven materials, are being made out of a single substance. It is self-evidently the same person who brings the substance, prepares it, and makes it into string. For such a work would not permit the participation of others. In which case, all the woven, skilfully made things are particular to him.

And look! Every sort of these woven, manufactured goods is found in every part of the country; they have spread with all their fellows, and are being made and woven together and one within the other, in the same way, at the same instant. That means they are the work of the same person and the same act through a single command, otherwise their correspondence and conformity at the same instant, in the same fashion, of the same sort, would be impossible. In which case, each of these skilfully fashioned things is like a proclamation of that hidden one which points to him. As if each sort of flowered material, each ingenious machine, each sweet mouthful, is a stamp of that miracle-displaying person; a stamp of his, a mark, a decoration; each says through the tongue of disposition: "Whose-ever work of art I am, the boxes and shops where I am found are also his property." Each inscription says: "Whoever wove me also wove the roll of cloth of which I am a part." Every sweet mouthful says: "Whoever makes me and cooks me, the cauldron in which I am is also his." And every machine says: "Whoever made me, also makes all those like me who have spread throughout the land, and the one who raises us in every part of it, is also he. That means he is also the country's owner. In which case, whoever the owner of all this country and palace is, he may be our owner too."

For example, in order to be the true owner of a single cartridge-belt or

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<sup>16</sup> As for the elements and minerals, these indicate the elements of air, water, light, and earth, which have numerous well-ordered duties; they hasten to the assistance of all needy beings with dominical leave, enter everywhere and bring help at the Divine command, and raise all the things necessary for life and suckle living creatures, and are the source of the weaving and inscribing of the Divine artefacts, and their progenitors and cradles.

even a button belonging to the government, one also has to own all the factories in which they are made. If a bragging irregular soldier claims otherwise, he will be told: "They are government property." And they will be taken from him, and he will be punished.

***In Short:*** Just as the elements in this country all surround and encompass it, and their owner can only be one who owns the whole country, in the same way, since the works of art that are spread throughout it resemble one another and display a single stamp, they show that they are the art of a single person who governs everything.

And so, my friend! There is a sign of oneness, a stamp of unity, in this country, that is, this magnificent palace. For while being the same, certain things are all-encompassing. And while being numerous, some display a unity or similarity, since they resemble one another and are found everywhere. As for unity, it shows One of Unity. That means that its maker, owner, lord, and fashioner has to be one and the same. In addition, look carefully at this: from behind the veil of the unseen a thickish string has appeared.<sup>17</sup> Now look, thousands of strings have hung down from it. And see the tips of the strings: a diamond, a decoration, a favour, a gift has been attached to each. Suitable presents are being given to everyone. Do you know what a lunatic action it is not to recognize or thank the one who stretches out from behind the strange veil of the unseen such wondrous favours and gifts. Because if you do not recognize him, you will be compelled to say: "These strings are making the diamonds and other gifts on their tips themselves and offering them." Then you have to attribute to each string the meaning of a king. Whereas before our eyes an unseen hand is making the strings too, and attaching the gifts to them. That means, everything in this palace points to that miracle-displaying one rather than to themselves. If you do not recognize him, through denying them, you fall a hundred times lower than an animal.

## **NINTH PROOF**

Come, my unreasoning friend! You do not recognize this palace's owner, and you do not want to recognize him because you deem his existence unlikely. You deviate into denial because you cannot comprehend with your narrow brain his wondrous arts and acts. Whereas the true unlikelihood, real difficulties, hardships, and awesome trouble lie in not recognizing him. For if we recognize him, this whole palace, this world, becomes as easy, as trouble-free as a single thing; it becomes the means to the abundance and plenty around us. If we do not recognize him and he does not exist, then everything becomes as difficult as this whole palace, because everything is as skilfully

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<sup>17</sup> The thickish string alludes to fruit-bearing trees, the thousands of strings, to their branch-es, and the diamonds, decorations, favours, and gifts, to the varieties of blossoms and fruits.

made as the palace. Then neither the abundance nor the plenty would remain. Indeed, not one of these things which we see would pass to anyone's hand, let alone ours. Look at just the jar of conserve attached to this string.<sup>18</sup> If it had not emerged from his hidden, miracle-displaying kitchen, we could not have bought it for a hundred *liras*, although we buy it now for forty *para*.<sup>19</sup>

Yes, all unlikelihood, difficulty, trouble, arduousness, indeed, impossibility, lies in not recognizing him. For a tree is given life from one root, through one law, in one centre, and the formation of thousands of fruits is as easy as one fruit. But if the fruits were tied to different centres and roots, and different laws, each fruit would be as difficult to produce as the tree. And if the equipping of an entire army is in one centre, through one law, and from one factory, as regards quantity it is as easy as equipping a single soldier. While if each soldier is equipped from all different places, then to equip one soldier there would have to be as many factories as for the entire army.

Just like these two examples, if, in this well-ordered palace, this fine town, this advanced country, this magnificent world, the creation of all things is attributed to a single being, it becomes so easy, so light, it is the reason for the infinite abundance, availability, and munificence we see. Otherwise everything would become so expensive, so difficult, that if the whole world was given to someone, they could not obtain them.

### TENTH PROOF

Come, my friend, who has come a little to his senses! We have been here fifteen days<sup>20</sup> now. If we do not know the regulations of this world and do not recognize its king, we shall deserve punishment. We have no excuse, because for fifteen days, as though given a respite, they did not interfere with us. Of course we have not just been left to our own devices. We cannot wander around among these delicate, well-balanced, subtle, skilfully made and instructive creatures like an animal and spoil them; they would not permit us to harm them. The penalties of this country's august king are bound to be awesome. You can understand how powerful and majestic he is from the way he orders this huge world as though it was a palace, and makes it revolve like a machine. He administers this large country like a house, missing nothing. See, like filling a container and emptying it, he continuously fills this palace, this country, this town, with perfect order, and empties it with perfect wisdom. Like spreading out a table then clearing it away, varieties of foods are brought in turn and given to eat in the form of a great

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<sup>18</sup> The jar of conserve indicates the gifts of Divine mercy like melons, water melons, pomegranates, and coconuts, which are the conserves of Divine power, and like tins of milk.

<sup>19</sup> 1 *Para* = 1/40th of a *kurush*; 100 *kurush* = 1 *lira*.

<sup>20</sup> Fifteen days indicates the age of fifteen, the age of discretion. (See, *Bukhari*, iii, 232.)

variety of tables<sup>21</sup> being laid out by an unseen hand in every part of his vast country, and then being cleared away. The unseen hand clears away one, then brings another in its place. You see this too, and if you use your head, you will understand that within that awesome majesty is an infinitely munificent liberality.

And see, just as all these things testify to that unseen one's sovereignty and unity, so too these revolutions and changes which pass on in succession like caravans and are opened and closed from behind that true veil, testify to his continuance and permanence. For the causes of things disappear along with them. Whereas the things which we attribute to them, which follow on after them, are repeated. That means those works are not theirs, but the works of one who does not perish. It is understood from the the bubbles on the surface of a river disappearing and the bubbles which succeed them sparkling in the same way that what makes them sparkle is a constant and elevated possessor of light. Similarly, the speedy changing of things and the things that follow on after them assuming the same colours shows that they are the manifestations, inscriptions, mirrors, and works of art of one who is perpetual, undying, and single.

### ELEVENTH PROOF

Come, my friend! Now I shall show you a decisive proof as powerful as the ten previous ones. We shall board a boat,<sup>22</sup> and sail to a peninsula, far away. For the key to this riddle-filled world will be there. Moreover, everyone is looking to that peninsula and awaiting something from it; they are receiving orders from there. See, we are going there. Now we have arrived and have alighted on the peninsula. There is a vast gathering, a great concourse, as though all the important people of the country have gathered there. Look carefully, this great community has a leader. Come, we shall draw closer; we must become acquainted with him. Look! What brilliant decorations he has, more than a thousand of them.<sup>23</sup> How powerfully he speaks! How pleasant is his conversation! In these two weeks I have learnt a little of what he says. You learn them from me. See, he is speaking of this country's miracle-displaying king. He is saying that the glorious king sent him to us.

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<sup>21</sup> The tables indicate the face of the earth in summer, during which hundreds of tables of the Most Merciful emerge fresh and different from the kitchens of mercy. Every garden is a cauldron, every tree, a tray-bearer.

<sup>22</sup> The ship indicates history, and the peninsula, the Era of Bliss or Age of the Prophet (PBUH). Through casting off the dress of this low civilization on its dark shore, entering the seas of time, boarding the ship of history and alighting at the Arabian Peninsula and Era of Bliss, and visiting the Glory of the World (PBUH) at his duties, we know that he is a proof of Divine Unity so brilliant that he illuminates the entire globe and the two faces of the past and the future, and disperses the darkness of unbelief and misguidance.

<sup>23</sup> The thousand decorations are the miracles of Muhammad (PBUH), which according to those who have investigated them, reach nearly a thousand. (Bayhaqi, *Dala'il*, i, 10.)

And he is displaying such wonders that they leave no doubt that he is his special envoy. Look carefully, it is not only the creatures on this peninsula that are listening to what he says; he is making the whole country hear in wondrous fashion. For near and far everyone is trying to hear the speech here. It is not only humans that are listening, animals are listening too. Look, even the mountains are listening to the commands he brought so that they are stirring in their places, and the trees, too, move to the place that he indicates. He brings forth water from wherever he wishes. He even makes his fingers like a Spring of Kawthar, and gives to drink from them. Look, at his sign, an important lamp<sup>24</sup> in the dome of this palace splits into two. That means this country together with all its beings recognizes that he is an official and envoy. They heed and obey him, as though knowing that he is the most eminent and true interpreter of an unseen displayer of miracles, and the herald of his dominicality, the discloser of his talisman, and a trustworthy envoy delivering his commands. All those with intelligence around him declare: "Yes, that is right!" about everything he says, and affirm it. Indeed, through submitting to his signs and commands, the mountains and trees in this country and the huge light<sup>25</sup> that illuminates it, say: "Yes, yes, everything you say is true!"

My foolish friend! Could there be any contradiction or deception concerning the miracle-displaying king about whom this most luminous, magnificent, and serious being, who bears a thousand decorations particular to the king's own treasury, is speaking with all his strength, confirmed by all the country's notables, and concerning the king's attributes which he mentions, and the commands which he relays? If there is anything contrary to the truth in these things, it will be necessary to deny this palace, these lamps, this community, both their reality and their existence. If you can, raise any objections against these; but you will see that they will be smashed by the power of the proof, and flung back at you.

## TWELFTH PROOF

Come, my brother, who has come to his senses a little! I shall show you a further proof of the strength of all the eleven preceding proofs. See this luminous Decree,<sup>26</sup> which descends from above and which everyone looks

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<sup>24</sup> The important lamp is the moon, which split into two halves at his indication. That is, as Mawlana Jami said: "With the pen of his finger, that unlettered one who knew no writing, wrote an alif on the page of the skies and made one forty, two fifties." That is, before it split, the moon resembled m□m, the value of which is forty; and after splitting it became two crescents, and resembled two nu\ns, the value of which is fifty.

<sup>25</sup> The huge light is the sun; when it reappeared from the East on the earth's revolving backwards, Imam 'Ali (May God be pleased with him), who had been unable to perform the prayers since the Prophet (PBUH) was sleeping in his arms, due to this miracle, was able to perform the prayers on time. (See, Qadi Iyad, *al-Shifa'*, i, 240; Suyuti, *al-Khasa'is al-Kubra*, ii, 342.)

<sup>26</sup> The luminous Decree refers to the Qur'an, and the seal on it, to its miraculousness.

on in rapt attention out of either wonder or veneration. The one with the thousand decorations has stopped by it and is explaining its meaning to everyone. The styles of the Decree so shine they attract everyone's appreciative gaze, and it speaks of matters so important and serious that everyone is compelled to give ear to them. For it describes all the qualities, acts, commands, and attributes of the one who governs this whole land, who made this palace, and exhibits these wonders. Just as there is a mighty stamp on the Decree as a whole, look! there is an inimitable seal on every line and every sentence, and, moreover, the meanings, truths, commands, and instances of wisdom it states are seen to be in a style particular to him, thus bearing the meaning of a stamp.

**In Short:** The Supreme Decree shows the Supreme Being as clearly as the sun, so that anyone who is not blind can see it.

My friend! If you have come to your senses, this is enough for now. If you have something to say, say it.

In reply, the obstinate man said: "I can only say this in the face of these proofs of yours: All praise be to God for I have come to believe. And I believe in a way bright as the sun and clear as daylight that this country has a single King of Perfection, this world, a Single Glorious Owner, this palace, a Single Beauteous Maker. May God be pleased with you, for you have saved me from my former obstinacy and foolishness. Each of the proofs you showed was sufficient to demonstrate the truth. But because with each successive proof, clearer, pleasanter, more agreeable, more luminous, finer levels of knowledge, veils in acquaintanceship, and windows of love were opened and revealed, I waited and listened."

The story in the form of a comparison indicating the mighty truth of Divine unity and belief in God has reached its conclusion. Through the grace of the Most Merciful, the effulgence of the Qur'an, and the light of belief, we shall now set out twelve 'Flashes' and an Introduction from the sun of true Divine unity corresponding to the twelve proofs in the story.

*Success and Guidance are from God alone.*

## The Second Station of the Twenty-Second Word

### Introduction

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

*God is the Creator of all things, and He is the Guardian and Disposer of all affairs. \* To Him belong the keys of the heavens and the earth.<sup>27</sup> \* So glory to Him in Whose hands is the sovereignty of all things, and to Him will you all be brought back.<sup>28</sup> \* And there is not a thing but its [sources and] treasures [inexhaustible] are with Us; but We only send down thereof in due and ascertainable measures.<sup>29</sup> \* There is not a moving creature, but He has grasp of its forelock. Verily it is my Sustainer that is on a Straight Path.<sup>30</sup>*

In my treatise entitled *Katre*, which is about belief in God, the principal pole of the pillars of belief, I explained in brief the evidence to Almighty God's existence and unity given by all beings through fifty-five tongues. Also, in the treatise *Nokta*, I mentioned four universal proofs out of the evidences of Almighty God's existence and unity each of which has the strength of a thousand proofs. Moreover, since I have discussed in around twelve of my Arabic treatises hundreds of decisive proofs demonstrating Almighty God's necessary existence and unity, I shall be content with those and not now undertake any profound investigations. Only, I shall try to explain in this Twenty-Second Word, twelve 'Flashes' from the sun of belief in God which I have written briefly in other places in the *Risale-i Nur*.

#### FIRST FLASH

The affirmation of Divine unity is of two sorts. For example, if the goods of a rich man arrive in a market or a town, there are two ways in which one

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<sup>27</sup> Qur'an, 39:62.

<sup>28</sup> Qur'an, 36:83.

<sup>29</sup> Qur'an, 15:21.

<sup>30</sup> Qur'an, 11:56.

may know they are his. One is briefly and simply, as with ordinary people, which is: "No one apart from him is capable of owning this vast amount of goods." But when under the supervision of a common man such as that, much of it may be stolen. Many others may claim ownership of parts of it. The second sort is this: through reading his writing on every packet, recognizing his signature on every roll, and seeing his seal on every bill, the man declares: "Everything belongs to that person." Here, everything in effect shows the important man. Similarly, the affirmation of Divine unity is of two sorts:

**One** is the superficial and common affirmation of Divine unity which says: "Almighty God is One, He has no partner or like. This universe is His."

**The Second** is the true affirmation of Divine unity which, through seeing on everything the stamp of His power, the seal of His dominicality, and the inscriptions of His pen, is to open a window directly onto His light from everything and to confirm and believe with almost the certainty of seeing it that everything emerges from the hand of His power and that in no way has He any partner or assistant in His Godhead or in His dominicality or in His sovereignty, and thus to attain to a sort of perpetual awareness of the Divine presence. In this Word, we shall mention rays demonstrating this pure and elevated true affirmation of Divine unity.

**A Reminder within the First Point:** O heedless worshipper of causes! Causes are a veil; for Divine dignity and grandeur require them to be thus. But that which acts and performs matters is the power of the Eternally Besought One; for Divine unity and glory require it to be thus, and necessitate their independence. The officials of the Pre-Eternal Monarch are not executives of the sovereignty of dominicality, they are the heralds of His sovereignty and the observers and superintendents of His dominicality. Their purpose is to make known the dignity of power and majesty of dominicality, so that power should not be seen to be associated with base and lowly matters. Not like a human king, tainted by impotence and indigence, who therefore takes officials as partners. That is to say, causes have been placed so that the dignity of power may be preserved in the superficial view of the mind. For like the two faces of a mirror, everything has an outer face that looks to this manifest world, which resembles the mirror's coloured face and may reflect various colours and states, and an inner face which looks to its Maker, which resembles the mirror's shining face. In the outer face which looks to the manifest world may be states incompatible with the dignity and perfection of the Eternally Besought One's power, so causes have been put to be both the source and the means of those states. But in the inner face, that of reality, which looks to their Creator, everything is transparent and beautiful; it is fitting that power should itself be associated with it. It is not

incompatible with its dignity; therefore, causes are purely apparent and in the inner face of things and in reality have no true effect.

A further instance of wisdom in apparent causes is this: causes have been put so that unjust complaints and baseless objections should be directed at them and not at the Absolutely Just One. For the faults arise from them, from their incapacity and lack of ability. A comparison is narrated which is in the form of a subtle example illustrating this mystery:

The Angel Azra'il (Peace be upon him) said to Almighty God: "Your servants will complain about me while I am carrying out my duty of taking possession of the spirits of the dying; they will be resentful towards me." So Almighty God said to him through the tongue of wisdom: "I shall leave the veil of disasters and illnesses between you and my servants so that the complaints will be directed at them, and they will not be indignant at you."<sup>31</sup> So see, illnesses are a veil; what are imagined to be the bad things at the appointed hour are attributed to them, and what are in reality the good things in the spirits of the dying being seized are attributed to Azra'il (PBH) and his duty. Azra'il is also a veil; he is a supervisor of that duty and a veil to Divine power so that certain conditions when spirits are seized which are apparently unkind and are inappropriate to the perfection of mercy be attributed to him.

Yes, dignity and grandeur demand that causes are a veil to the hand of power in the view of the mind, while Divine unity and glory demand that causes withdraw their hands and have no true effect.

## SECOND FLASH

Look at this garden of the universe, this orchard of the earth; look carefully at the beautiful face of the heavens gilded with stars! You will see that on all the artefacts spread out and scattered over them are stamps particular to the Creator of All Things, and on all creatures are seals special to the Maker of All Things, and on the levels of being written on the pages of night and day, and summer and winter, all published by the pen of power, are inimitable, illustrious signatures of an All-Glorious Maker, an All-Beauteous Creator. We shall now mention a few of those stamps, seals, and signatures by way of example:

For example, of the innumerable stamps, consider this one out of many placed on life: "He makes everything out of one thing and makes one thing out of everything." For He makes the innumerable members and systems of animals out of a fluid and also out of simple water which is drunk. Thus, to make one thing everything is surely the work of One possessing Absolute Power. And One Who with perfect order transforms into a particular body numerous substances from the innumerable foods eaten, whether plant or animal, and weaves from them a particular skin, and makes from them

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<sup>31</sup> Suyuti, *al-Durr al-Manthur*, v, 173-4.

simple members, is surely One Powerful over All Things and One Knowing of All Things. Indeed, the Creator of Life and Death administers life through His wisdom in this workshop of the world through a law issuing from His command so miraculous that only one Who holds the whole universe in the grasp of His power could apply that law and enforce it.

Thus, if your mind is not extinguished and your heart not blind, you will understand that what makes one thing with perfect ease and order, and makes everything one thing skilfully with perfect balance and order, is a stamp particular to the Maker of everything and a seal special to the Creator of All Things. For example, if you see that together with weaving a hundred rolls of broadcloth and various other cloths like silk or cambric from a single ounce of cotton, a wonder-worker makes many foods from it like helva and pastries, then you see that he takes a handful of iron and stone, honey and butter, water and earth, and makes some fine gold, you would certainly pronounce him to possess unique art, for all the elements of the earth are subjugated to his command and all the substances of the earth subject to his word. Indeed, the manifestation of power and wisdom in life is a thousand times more wondrous than this example.

Thus, one stamp on life out of many.

### **THIRD FLASH**

Look at the living creatures revolving in this flowing universe, in this flood of beings! You will see that on each are many seals placed by the Ever-Living and Self-Subsistent One. One of them is this: a living creature, for example a human being, is quite simply a miniature sample of the universe, a fruit of the tree of creation, and a seed of the world, for he comprises samples of most of the realms of beings in the world. It is as if the animate being is a drop filtered from the universe in an extremely fine measure. So to create it and be its Sustainer, one has to hold the whole universe in the grasp of one's power.

Thus, if your mind is not submerged in delusions you will understand that to make a word of power, for example, a honey-bee, a minute index of most things, and to write in one page, for example in man, most of the matters in this book of the universe, and to include in one point, for example in a tiny fig seed, the programme of the mighty fig-tree, and to display in a single letter, for example in the human heart, the works of all the Divine Names manifested in the pages of the macrocosm which encompass it, and to make written in the human faculty of memory, which is situated in a place the size of a lentil, writings enough to fill a library, and to include in that tiny faculty a detailed index of all events in the cosmos –to do all things is most certainly a stamp particular to the Creator of All Things, the Glorious Sustainer of the universe.

Thus, if one seal out of many dominical seals on living beings displays its light and makes read its signs thus, if you were able to see and consider all those seals at once, would you not declare: "Glory be to Him Who is concealed in the intensity of His manifestation!"?

#### **FOURTH FLASH**

Look carefully at the multicoloured, multifarious beings swimming in the seas of the heavens and scattered over the face of the earth! You will see that on each are inimitable signatures of the Pre-Eternal Sun. Just as the stamps on life and seals on living beings are apparent and we saw one or two of them, so are there such signatures on the giving of life. Since comparisons bring profound meanings closer to the understanding, we shall demonstrate this truth with a comparison.

For example, from the planets to droplets of water, to fragments of glass and sparkling snow-flakes, a signature from the sun's image and reflection, a luminous work particular to the sun, is apparent. If you do not accept the tiny suns apparent in those innumerable things to be the manifestation of the sun's reflection, you have to accept the actual existence of a true, natural sun in every droplet and fragment of glass facing the light, and in every transparent speck before it, thus descending to the depths of lunacy.

In just the same way, there is such a signature on all living beings in regard to the giving of life from among the luminous manifestations of the Pre-Eternal Sun, that supposing all causes were gathered together and had the power to act and possessed will, they still could not imitate that signature. For living beings, all miracles of Divine power, are points of focus of the Divine Names, which are like the rays of the Pre-Eternal Sun. If that strange inscription of art, that wondrous ordering of wisdom, that manifestation of the mystery of Oneness on living beings is not ascribed to the Single and Eternally Besought One, it necessitates accepting that concealed within each living creature, and even in a fly or a flower, is an infinite creative power, a knowledge encompassing all things, an absolute will with which to govern the universe, and even the eternal attributes particular to the Necessarily Existent One, thus falling to the most ludicrous degree of misguidance and superstition. Quite simply, it necessitates attributing Divinity to each particle of the flower or fly. For a state has been given to those particles, especially if they are in seeds, whereby they look to the living being of which they are a part, and take up a position in accordance with its systems and ordering. The particle is even in a position to look to all members of the species to which its living being belongs, or to fly with wings in order to be planted in a place suitable to the continuation of its species and to plant the species' flag. In fact, it holds a position whereby that living being's transactions with all other beings may be continued, and its relations with them connected with sustenance. For it is in need of all of them.

Thus, if that particle is not an official of a Possessor of Absolute Power, and if its relation with Him is severed, it has to be ascribed an eye which sees all things and a consciousness which encompasses all things.

***In Short:*** If the miniature suns and various colours in droplets of water and fragments of glass are not attributed to the sun's reflection and the manifestation of its reflection, one has to accept the existence of innumerable suns in place of the one sun; it necessitates accepting an utterly impossible superstition. In exactly the same way, if everything is not attributed to the Absolutely Powerful One, it necessitates accepting infinite gods instead of the Single God; indeed, gods to the number of particles in existence, thus falling to the degree of accepting a hundredfold impossibility.

***To Sum Up:*** From every particle three windows open up onto the light of unity and necessary existence of the Pre-Eternal Sun:

**First Window:** A soldier has a relation with each of the spheres of the military, that is, with his squad, his company, his battalion, his regiment, his division, and the army, and duties in accordance with those relations, and actions in accordance with the duties and army regulations. Particles have similar relations.

For example, a lifeless particle in the pupil of your eye has relations with your eye, your head, your body, your powers of reproduction, and attraction and repulsion, with your veins and arteries, and motor and sensory nerves, and with the rest of the human race, and it has duties in relation to each. This shows self-evidently to eyes that are not blind that it is the work of art and charged official of the Pre-Eternal All-Powerful One, and is under his regulation.

**Second Window:** All molecules of air may visit all flowers and fruits. They may also enter them and work within them. If they are not the subjugated officials of an Absolutely Powerful One Who sees and knows all things, those wandering molecules would have to know all the systems and structures of the fruits and flowers and their art, and the tailoring of the all-different forms which clothe them with its perfect and all-embracing art. Thus those particles all display as clearly as the sun the rays of a light of Divine unity. You may compare light with air, and earth with water.

In any event, the original sources of things are these four substances. According to modern science they are hydrogen, oxygen, carbon, and nitrogen, the components of the former elements.

**Third Window:** You fill a flower-pot with some earth, which is composed of particles and is the means of growth of any flowering or fruit-bearing plant, then put some seeds in it. The same as the seed of animals does not differ, but is a fluid, the seeds of all the flowering and fruit-bearing plants in the world do not differ from one another. Being composed of

carbon, nitrogen, hydrogen, and oxygen, they only differ by virtue of the programme of their progenitors, deposited in them through the immaterial writing of the pen of Divine Determining.

Thus, if we put these seeds in turn in the flower-pot, we believe as though it has occurred that each plant will appear together with its wonderful forms and shapes and parts. If those particles are not officials under the orders of one who knows all the states and conditions of everything, is capable of giving everything a being suitable to it and everything necessary for it, and to whose power everything is subjugated with utterly facility, every particle of the earth would then have to contain immaterial factories and printing-presses to the number of all the flowering and fruit-bearing plants, so that it could be the source of all those various and different beings whose parts, members, and forms are all distant and different from one another. It is otherwise necessary to attribute to all those beings comprehensive knowledge and a power capable of forming them, so that they could be the means of the above.

That is to say, if the connection with Almighty God is severed, it becomes necessary to accept gods to the number of particles of earth, and this is an impossible superstition compounded a thousand times over. However, when they are officials, it becomes extremely easy. Just as, in his king's name and through his power, a common soldier of a mighty king can make a whole country migrate, or join two seas, or take another king prisoner, so at the command of the Monarch of Pre-Eternity and Post-Eternity, a fly did away with Nimrod, and an ant destroyed Pharaoh's palace, razing it to the ground, and a fig-seed bears the load of a fig-tree.

Moreover, in all particles are two further truthful witnesses to the Maker's necessary existence and unity. One is that together with their absolute impotence, they all perform most important and various duties. The other is that despite their lifelessness, they all conform to the universal order and systems, thus displaying a universal consciousness. That is to say, through the tongue of its impotence each particle testifies to the necessary existence of the Absolutely Powerful One, and through its conforming to the order in the world, each testifies to His unity.

Just as every particle testifies in two ways to His being the Necessarily Existent One of Unity, so too on every living being are two signs that He is the Single and Eternally Besought One.

Yes, on all living beings are a seal of Divine oneness and a stamp of 'eternal besoughtness.' For each displays together in the mirror of its being most of the Divine Names, the manifestations of which are apparent in the universe. Quite simply, like a point of focus, each displays the manifestation of the Greatest Name of Ever-Living and Self-Subsistent One. Thus, since it

shows a sort of shadow of the oneness of the Divine Essence under the veil of the Name of Giver of Life, it bears a stamp of Divine oneness. And since the living being is like a miniature sample of the universe and a fruit of the tree of creation, it shows a seal of Divine eternal besoughtness, which conveys altogether with ease to the tiny sphere of its life its needs, which are as many as the universe. That is to say, this shows it has a Sustainer Whose regard and favour take the place of all things. Everything in existence cannot take the place of His regard.

Furthermore, this situation shows that its Sustainer is in need of nothing, nor does anything diminish His treasury, and nor is anything at all difficult for His power. This, then, is a sort of seal of 'eternal besoughtness.'

Thus, on every living being are a seal of Divine oneness and stamp of eternal besoughtness. Yes, through the tongue of its life, every living being recites:

*Say, He is God, the One, \* The Eternally Besought.*<sup>32</sup>

In addition to these two seals are several more important 'windows', but since they have been explained in detail in other places, our discussion here has been brief.

Seeing that each particle in existence at once opens up three windows and two openings onto the unity of the Necessarily Existent, and life too opens two doors, you can compare how all the levels of beings from particles to the sun spread the light of knowledge of the All-Glorious One.

Thus, you can understand from this the degrees of progress in knowledge of God, and the levels of awareness of His presence.

## **FIFTH FLASH**

If a book is hand-written and in the form of a letter, a single pen is sufficient to write it, while if it is printed, pens, that is, pieces of print, are necessary to the number of the book's letters so that it can be printed and come into existence. If most of the book is written in an extremely fine script within some of its letters, like Sura Ya. Sin. being written within the letters Ya. Sin., then for it to be printed all the small pieces of print are necessary for those single letters.

Similarly, if you say the book of the universe is the writing of the pen of power of the Eternally Besought One and the missive of the Single and Unique One, you travel a reasonable road so easy as to be necessary. But if you attribute it to nature and causes, you travel a road so difficult as to be impossible, and so full of superstition and delusion as to be unacceptable. For then there would have to be present in every bit of earth and every drop

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<sup>32</sup> Qur'an, 112:1-2.

of water and every piece of air millions of metal printing-presses and innumerable immaterial factories, which could fashion and form the countless numbers of flowering and fruit-bearing plants. Otherwise one has to accept that they possess all-encompassing knowledge and power over all things so that they could be the true source of those creatures. For every piece of earth, water, and air can be the source of most plants. However, plants, whether flowering or fruit-bearing, are formed in so well-ordered and balanced a fashion, and are so distinctive and different from one another, that a different immaterial factory or different printing-press would be necessary for each. That means, if nature ceases being a pattern and becomes the source, it necessitates that everything contains the machines to make everything else. Nature-worship is therefore based on an idea so superstitious that even those who subscribe to it are ashamed of it. See the infinitely delirious unreason of the misguided, who suppose themselves to be intelligent, and take a lesson!

***In Short:*** All the letters of a book describe themselves to the extent of a letter and point to their own existence in one way, while they describe their writer with ten words and show him in many ways. For example: "The one who wrote me has fine handwriting. His pen is red, and so on." In just the same way, all the letters of the mighty book of the universe point to themselves to the extent of their own size and physical beings, but describe the Names of the Pre-Eternal Inscraper like odes, and testify to the One they signify and point to His Names with fingers to the number of their attributes. That means that even if one denies both oneself and the universe like the foolish Sophists, one still should not deny the All-Glorious Maker.

## SIXTH FLASH

Just as the All-Glorious Creator has placed on the heads of all His beings and on the foreheads of all His creatures the seals of His oneness, some of which you have seen in the previous Flashes, so in brilliant fashion has He placed many stamps of oneness on all species and numerous seals of unity on all universals, as well as the various stamps of unity on the world as a whole. Of those many seals and stamps, we shall point out one on the page of the face of the earth in the springtime. It is like this:

The Pre-Eternal Inscraper's raising to life in the spring and summer at least three hundred thousand species of plants and animals with complete distinction and differentiation and total order and separation amid infinite intermingling and confusion, is a stamp of Divine unity as clear and brilliant as the spring itself. Yes, anyone with an iota of consciousness will understand that to create with perfect order while raising to life of the dead earth in the spring, three hundred thousand samples of the resurrection of the dead, and to write without fault, error, mistake or deficiency, in most well-balanced, well-proportioned, well-ordered, and perfect fashion the individual

members of three hundred thousand different species one within the other on the face of the earth, is a seal particular to an All-Glorious One, an All-Powerful One of Perfection, an All-Wise One of Beauty, possessing infinite power, all-encompassing knowledge, and a will capable of governing the whole universe. The All-Wise Qur'an decrees:

*So look to the signs of God's Mercy, how He raises to life the earth after its death; He it is Who will raise the dead to life, for He is Powerful over all things.*<sup>33</sup>

Yes, it is surely easy for the Creative Power which, within a few days, demonstrates examples of three hundred thousand resurrections in raising the earth to life, to raise men to life. For example, could it be said to a Displayer of Miracles Who at a sign will remove the mountains of Gelincik and Sÿbhan: "Are you able to remove from this valley this huge rock which is blocking our path?" Similarly, can it be said in a way that infers doubt to an All-Wise and Powerful One, an All-Generous and Compassionate One, Who created the sky and the mountains and the earth in six days and continuously fills and empties them: "Can you remove from us this layer of earth which was prepared and laid out in eternity and is blocking our way to your banquet? Can you level the earth and let us pass on?"

You observed a seal of Divine unity on the face of the earth in the summertime. Now look! A stamp of unity is clearly obvious on the vast, wise and perspicacious disposals of the spring on the face of the earth. For that activity is on an absolutely vast scale, and the vastness is together with an absolute speed, and that speed is together with an absolute munificence, and together with these an absolute order and perfect beauty of art and exquisiteness of creation are apparent. These form a seal which could belong only to one possessing infinite knowledge and boundless power. Yes, we see that on the earth within an absolute extensiveness are a creation, disposal, and activity which are on an absolutely vast scale. And these are occurring within that vast scope with absolute speed. And together with that speed and vast scope an absolute munificence is apparent in the multiplication of individual beings. And together with that munificence, vast scope, and speed, an absolute ease is apparent. And to create the absolute order and exceptional beauty of art to be seen in all species and individuals, and the perfect differentiation within infinite intermingling, and the valuable works within extreme abundance, and the complete correspondence on an extensive scale, and the artistic marvels with the greatest ease, and to demonstrate a wondrous art and miraculous activity at one moment, everywhere, in the same fashion, in every individual – together with that munificence, ease, speed, and vast scope, is certainly and without doubt the stamp of One Who although He is

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<sup>33</sup> Qur'an, 30:50.

nowhere is all-present and all-seeing everywhere. Nothing is hidden from Him, nor is anything difficult for him. Particles and stars are equal in relation to His power.

For example, in a garden of that All-Glorious and Compassionate One's munificence, I counted the bunches hanging from a grape-vine of the thickness of two fingers, which I saw to be like one little pip among the bunches of His miracles: there were one hundred and fifty-five. I counted the grapes in one bunch: there were around one hundred and twenty. I thought: if this vine was a tap from which flowed honeyed water and it produced water continuously, it would only just be enough for the bunches which, in the face of this heat, suckle those hundreds of little pumps of the sherbet of mercy. However, it only occasionally obtains a little moisture. The One Who does this, then, must surely be powerful over all things. *Glory be to Him at Whose art minds are bewildered!*

### SEVENTH FLASH

Look! With little difficulty you can see the seals of the Single, Eternally Besought One on the page of the earth, so raise your head, open your eyes, and look too at the great book of the universe. You will see that on it as a whole a stamp of unity is read out which is as clear as it is big. For like the components of a factory or members of a palace or town, these beings support one another, stretch out their hands to assist one another, and answer the needs and requests of one another, saying: "Here I am, at your service!" Assisting one another, they work together in order. Joining efforts, they serve animate beings. Co-operating and turned a single goal, they obey an All-Wise Disposer. They conform to a rule of mutual assistance which is in force from the sun and moon, night and day, and winter and summer, to plants coming to the assistance of hungry and needy animals, and animals hastening to the assistance of weak, noble men, and even nutritious substances flying to assist delicate, weak infants and fruits, and particles of food passing to the assistance of the cells of the body. They show to anyone who is not altogether blind that they are acting through the strength of a single, most generous Nurturer, and at the command of a single most wise Disposer.

Thus, on the one hand this mutual support and assistance, this answering one another's needs, this mutual embracing, this subjugation, this order, testify decisively that beings are administered and organized by a single Disposer and are being impelled and directed by a single Nurturer. And on the other hand, this perfect grace within the universal wisdom to be seen plainly in the art of things; and the all-embracing mercy which shines within the providence; and the sustenance spread over that mercy and scattered so as to answer the needs of all living beings needy for sustenance; –these form a stamp of Divine unity so brilliant that anyone whose mind is not altogether

extinguished will understand it and anyone who is not altogether blind will see it.

Yes, a veil of wisdom demonstrating intention, consciousness, and will, has covered the whole universe, and upon that veil of wisdom has been spread a veil of grace and favour exhibiting beneficence, adornment, embellishment, and benevolence; and over that adorned veil of favour a garment of mercy displaying flashes of making known and loved, of bestowal and the granting of gifts has enveloped the universe; and spread over that illuminated veil of universal mercy is a table of general provisions showing kindness and bestowal and benevolence and perfect compassion and fine nurturing and dominical favour.

Yes, all beings from particles to suns, whether individuals or species, or large or small, have been clothed in a magnificent shirt of wisdom embroidered with fruits and aims, benefits and purposes. And over the wisdom-displaying shirt, a garment of favour embroidered with flowers of grace and beneficence has been cut out in accordance with the stature of things; and over that ornamented garment of favour, a general table of sustenance has been set up, lit up with flashes of love, bestowal, affection, and the granting of gifts, to which the decorations of mercy have been attached, and which, together with bestowing those illuminated and jewel-encrusted decorations, is sufficient for all the groups of living beings on the face of the earth, and meets all their needs. Thus, this matter points to an All-Glorious Provider Who is All-Wise, All-Generous, and All-Compassionate, and shows Him as clearly as the sun.

Is that so? Is everything in need of sustenance?

Yes, like individual beings are in need of sustenance and all the necessities to continue their lives, we see that all the beings in the world, and especially living beings, whether universal or particular, wholes or parts, have many desires and needs, material and otherwise, for their existence, their lives, and the continuation of their lives. But their wants and needs are for such things that their hands cannot reach the least of them and their power is insufficient for the smallest of them. Yet, we see that all their wishes and material and immaterial sustenance is given to them "From where he could not imagine,"<sup>34</sup> from un hoped for places, with perfect order, at the appropriate time, in a suitable fashion, with perfect wisdom. And so, does this want and need of creatures and this manner of unseen help and assistance not show an All-Wise and Glorious Nurturer, an All-Compassionate Beauteous Disposer?

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<sup>34</sup> Qur'an, 65:3.

## **EIGHTH FLASH**

Any sort of seed sown in a field shows that the field must be at the disposal of the seed's owner, and that the seed too is under the disposal of the one who has control of the field. Similarly, the arable field of beings known as the elements and their universality and comprehensiveness as well as their sameness and uncomplex nature, and the plants and animals –these fruits of mercy, miracles of power, and words of wisdom known as creatures– and their spreading to most places and settling everywhere as well as their being similar and resembling one another, show that they are under the disposal of a single Miracle-Displaying Maker, and in such a way that it is as if every flower, fruit, and animal is a seal, stamp, and signature of its Maker. Wherever they are found, each says through the tongue of disposition: “Whose-ever seal I am, the place I am found is also of his making. Whose-ever stamp I am, this place is a missive of His. Whose-ever signature I am, this land too is of his weaving.” That means, to be Sustainer of the least creature is particular to the One Who holds all the elements in the grasp of His power. Anyone who is not blind can see that to regulate and govern the simplest animal is particular to the One Who has all beings in the grasp of His dominicality.

Indeed, through the tongue of similarity to other individuals, all individual beings say: “Only one who owns my species can be my owner. It cannot be otherwise.” And through the tongue of spreading over the face of the earth together with other species, each species says: “Only one who owns the whole face of the earth can be our owner. It cannot be otherwise.” And through the tongue of being bound to the sun and other planets and mutually supportive with the skies, the earth says: “Only one who is owner of the whole universe can be my owner. It cannot be otherwise.” Yes, supposing someone were to say to a conscious apple: “You are my work of art.” Through the tongue of disposition, the apple would reply: “Be silent! If you are capable of fashioning all the other apples on the earth; indeed, if you can have disposal over all my fellows, the other fruit-bearing trees, spread over the earth, and all the gifts of the Most Merciful proceeding from the treasury of mercy in boatloads, then you can claim to be my Sustainer.” The apple would say that and aim a slap at that foolish person.

## **NINTH FLASH**

We have pointed out some of the seals, stamps, and signatures on particulars and parts, universals and wholes, on the world as a whole, and on life, living beings, and raising to life. Now, we shall indicate one of the countless stamps on species.

Since the countless fruits of a fruit-bearing tree are administered from one centre, in accordance with one law and a single way of raising, the difficulty, hardship, and expense are transformed into ease. It is so easy the numerous

fruits raised become equal to a single fruit. That means in regard to quantity, multiplicity and numerous centres necessitate the difficulty, expense, and equipment of the whole tree for a single fruit. The difference is only in regard to quality. Like all the factories required for the whole army are necessary to manufacture all the military equipment necessary for a single soldier. That is to say, if the matter passes from unity to multiplicity, in respect of quantity the difficulties increase to the number of individuals. Thus, the extraordinary ease to be seen clearly in all species is the result of the ease and facility arising from unity.

**In Short:** The conformity and similarity in basic members between all the individuals of a species, and all the species of a genus, prove that they are the works of a single Maker, because the unity of the pen and oneness of the seal requires this. Similarly, the observable absolute ease and lack of difficulty require –indeed, necessitate– that they are the works of One Maker. Otherwise difficulties rising to the degree of impossibility would doom the genus and the species to non-existence.

**To Conclude:** If all things are ascribed to Almighty God, they become as easy as a single thing, while if they are attributed to causes, they become as difficult as everything. Since it is thus, the extraordinary profusion observed in the universe and the boundless abundance before our eyes display a stamp of unity like the sun. If these fruits which we obtain in such plenty were not the property of the Single One of Unity, we would not have a single pomegranate to eat, even if we gave the whole world for it.

## TENTH FLASH

Just as life, which displays a manifestation of Divine beauty, is a proof of Divine oneness, and a sort of manifestation of unity, death too, which displays the manifestation of Divine glory, is a proof of Divine unity.

For example, *And God's is the highest similitude*, by showing the sun's light and reflection, the bubbles on a wide flowing river which sparkle in the sun and transparent objects which glisten on the face of the earth testify to the sun. On those tribes of bubbles and transparent objects disappearing, the continued magnificent manifestation of the sun and the uninterrupted and constant display of its light on the successive groups and tribes of bubbles and transparent objects which follow on after them, testify decisively that the little images of the sun and the lights and flashes which appear and sparkle, flare up and die away, and are changed and renewed, are the manifestations of an enduring, perpetual, elevated, single Sun whose manifestation is undying. That is to say, just as through their appearance and becoming visible, the shining droplets demonstrate the sun's existence, so with their disappearance and extinction, they demonstrate its continuation, permanence, and unity.

In exactly the same way, through their existence and lives these flowing beings testify to the necessary existence and oneness of the Necessarily Existent One, and with their deaths and disappearance, they testify to the His pre-eternity, everlastingness, and unity. Yes, the beautiful creatures and fine beings which are renewed and restored within the decline and disappearance that occur through the alternation of night and day, winter and summer, and the centuries and ages, surely point to the existence, continuance, and unity of an elevated, eternal possessor of continually manifested beauty. While the deaths and disappearance of those beings together with their apparent and lowly causes demonstrate that the causes are nothing but a mere veil. This situation proves decisively that these arts, these inscriptions, these manifestations, are the constantly renewed arts, the changing inscriptions, the moving mirrors of an All-Beauteous One of Glory, all of Whose Names are sacred and beautiful; that they are His seals which follow on one after the other, and His stamps that are changed with wisdom.

***In Short:*** The mighty book of the universe both teaches us the creational signs concerning Divine existence and unity, and it testifies to all the attributes of perfection, beauty, and glory of that All-Glorious One. And they prove the perfection of the Divine Essence faultlessly and without defect. For it is obvious that perfection in a work points to the perfection of the act which is the source and origin of the work. And the perfection of the act points to the perfection of the name, and the perfection of the name, to the perfection of the attribute, and perfection of the attribute to the perfection of the essential qualities, and the perfection of the qualities point necessarily and self-evidently to the perfection of the essence possessing those qualities.

For example, the perfect inscriptions and adornments of a faultless palace indicate the perfection of a master builder's acts behind them. And the perfection of the acts shows the perfection of that active master's titles and names, which demonstrate his rank. And the perfection of the names and titles show the perfection of the other attributes qualifying the master builder's art. And the perfection of the art and attributes show the perfection of the abilities and essential capacity of that craftsman, which are called the essential qualities. And the perfection of those essential qualities and abilities show the perfection of the master's essential nature.

In exactly the same way, the faultless works observed in the world, which manifest the meaning of "Do you see any flaw?",<sup>35</sup> this art in the well-ordered beings of the universe, point observedly to the perfect acts of an active possessor of power. And those perfect acts point clearly to the perfect Names of a Glorious Agent. And that perfection necessarily points to and testifies to the perfect attributes of the Beauteous One signified by the

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<sup>35</sup> Qur'an, 67:3.

Names. And certainly those perfect attributes point and testify to the perfection of the Perfect One qualified by the attributes. And those perfect qualities point with such absolute certainty to the perfect Essence of the One possessing the qualities that they indicate that all the sorts of perfection to be seen in the whole universe are but signs of His perfections, hints of His Glory, and allusions to His beauty, and pale, weak shadows in relation to His perfection.

**THE ELEVENTH FLASH,  
WHICH HAS THE STRENGTH OF SUNS**

As is defined in the Nineteenth Word, our master Muhammad the Trustworthy (Peace and blessings be upon him) is the supreme sign of the mighty Book of the Universe and the Greatest Name of that mighty Qur'an, the seed of the tree of the universe and its most luminous fruit, the sun of the palace of the world and the radiant moon of the world of Islam, the herald of the sovereignty of Divine dominicality, and the wise discloser of the talisman of the universe, who flies in the levels of reality with the wings of Messengership, which take under their shade all the prophets, and the wings of Islam, which take under their protection all the world of Islam; who took behind him all the prophets and messengers, all the saints and veracious ones, all the purified and the scholars, and demonstrated Divine unity with all his strength and opened up the way to Divine oneness; has any doubt or suspicion, then, the power to conceal or obscure the belief in God which he demonstrated, or the Divine unity which he proved? Since in the Nineteenth Word and Nineteenth Letter we have defined and described briefly and to a small degree in Fourteen Droplets and Nineteen Signs from the water of life of that Clear Proof's knowledge that miracle-displaying Being together with his various miracles, we shall here content ourselves with this indication, and conclude with a benediction for him:

*O God! Grant blessings to the one who demonstrated Your necessary existence and unity, and testified to Your glory and beauty and perfection; the verified and veracious witness, the verifying articulate proof; the lord of the prophets and messengers, the bearer of the mystery of their consensus, affirmation, and miracles; the leader of the saints and veracious ones, the holder of the mystery of their accord, verifications, and wonder-working; the one with evident miracles, clear marvels, and decisive evidences which corroborated and affirmed him; who displayed exalted purity in his self, elevated morals in his duty, and lofty qualities in his Shari'a, perfect and free of all contradiction, to whom according to the consensus of the revealed and the Revealer and the one who revealed it to him, dominical reve*

*lation descended; the traveller through the Worlds of the Unseen and of the Inner Dimensions of Things; the observer of spirits, who conversed with the angels; the sample of the perfections of the universe, in regard to both individuals, and species, and realms of beings; the most luminous of the fruits of the tree of creation; the lamp of truth; the proof of reality; the embodiment of mercy; the exemplification of love; the discloser of the talisman of the universe; the herald of the sovereignty of dominicality; the sign that the elevatedness of his collective personality was before the eyes of the world's Creator at the creation of the universe; the possessor of a Shari'a that indicates through the breadth of its principles and strength that it is the order of the Orderer of the World, drawn up by the Creator of the Universe.*

*Yes, the One Who ordered the universe with this perfect and total order is He Who ordered this religion with its fine and beautiful order, our master, we are the community of the sons of Adam, our guide to belief, we are the community of believers, Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Abd al-Mutallib, Upon him be the most perfect blessings and most complete peace as long as the heavens and earth subsist, for he is the veracious and verified witness who summoned the leaders of witnesses and has instructed the branches of mankind throughout the centuries and all the regions of the world in elevated fashion with all his strength, with complete seriousness and utter steadfastness, and with the power of his certainty and perfect belief, testifying:*

*"I testify that there is no god but God, the One, He has no partner."*

#### **THE TWELFTH FLASH, WHICH HAS THE STRENGTH OF SUNS**

This Twelfth Flash of the Twenty-Second Word is such an ocean of truths that all the previous twenty-two Words form only twenty-two drops of it, and it is a source of such lights that they form only twenty-two flashes of that Sun. Yes, all the previous twenty-two Words are flashes of the stars of the verses shining in the skies of the Qur'an; all are single droplets from the river of a verse flowing from that ocean of discernment distinguishing truth and falsehood; each is but one pearl from a single of its verses, all of which are chests of jewels in the sublime treasury of God's Book. Thus, the Word of God, which is in small part defined in the Fourteenth Droplet of the Nineteenth Word, has been revealed from the Greatest Name, the Sublime

Throne, and the greatest manifestation of dominicality, and it repeatedly states with all its strength within a breadth and elevatedness that binds pre-eternity to post-eternity and ties the ground to the Divine Throne, and with the certainty of all its verses: *There is no god but God!*; it calls the whole universe to witness and makes it testify. Yes, altogether the world hymns: *There is no god but God!*

If you look at the Qur'an with the eyes of a sound heart, you will see that its six aspects are so brilliant and transparent that no darkness, no misguidance, no doubt or suspicion, no trickery could enter it or find a fissure through which to enter and violate its purity. For above it is the stamp of miraculousness; beneath it, proof and evidence; behind it, its point of support, pure dominical revelation; before it, the happiness of this world and the next; on its right, questioning the reason and ensuring its confirmation; on its left, calling on the conscience to witness and securing its submission; within it is self-evidently the pure guidance of the Most Merciful; its outside observedly consists of the lights of belief; and its fruits, with all certainty the purified and veracious scholars and saints, who are adorned with all the human perfections and attainments. If you fasten your ear to the breast of that tongue of the Unseen, you will hear from afar a most familiar and convincing, an infinitely serious and elevated heavenly voice equipped with proof which repeats "*There is no god but God.*" It states this so certainly it is at the degree of 'absolute certainty', and illuminates you with a 'knowledge of certainty' resembling 'vision of certainty.'

**In Short:** Both God's Most Noble Messenger (Peace and blessings be upon him) and the Most Decisive Criterion of Truth and Falsehood were suns. One, the tongue of the Manifest World, pointing with the fingers of Islam and Messengership and confirmed by all the prophets and purified ones supported by a thousand miracles, demonstrated this truth with all his strength.

And the other, like the tongue of the World of the Unseen, indicating with the fingers of right and guidance under the confirmation of all the creational signs in the universe within forty aspects of miraculousness, demonstrates the same truth with all seriousness. Is that truth then not clearer than the sun and more brilliant than sunlight?

Oh, obdurate little man sunk in misguidance!<sup>36</sup> How can you oppose these suns with the lamp of your head, dimmer than a fire-fly? How can you show disdain for them? Are you trying to extinguish them by puffing? Pooh to your denying mind! How can you deny the words and claims which those two tongues of the Manifest and Unseen Worlds speak in the

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<sup>36</sup> This is addressing someone who was trying to abolish the Qur'an.

name of the Sustainer of all the worlds and Owner of the universe; which they speak on His behalf? Oh, you wretch, lower and more impotent than a fly! Who are you that you attempt to give the lie to the universe's Glorious Owner?

## Conclusion

O friend, whose mind is alert and heart, attentive! If you have understood this Twenty-Second Word from the beginning up to here, take the twelve Flashes together in your hand, and finding a lamp of truth as powerful as a thousand electric lamps, adhere to the below-mentioned verses of the Qur'an. Mount the steed of Divine assistance, ascend to the heavens of truth, rise to the Throne of Divine knowledge. Declare:

*I testify that there is no god but You, You are One, You have no partner!*<sup>37</sup>

And, saying,

*I testify that there is no god but God, He is One, He has no partner; His is the dominion and His is the praise; He gives life and gives death, and He is ever-living and dies not; in His hand is all good, and He is powerful over all things,*<sup>38</sup>

proclaim His unity over the heads of all the beings in the universe in this mighty mosque of the world.

*Glory be to You! We have no knowledge save that which You have taught us; indeed, You are All-Knowing, All-Wise.*<sup>39</sup>

*O our Sustainer! Do not call us to task if we forget or fall into error. \* Our Sustainer! Lay not a burden on us like that which you laid on those before us; \* Our Sustainer! Lay not on us a burden greater than we have the strength to bear. \* Blot out our sins. And grant us forgiveness. Have mercy on us. You are our Protector; help us against those who stand*

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<sup>37</sup> Bukhari, i, 214; Ibn Hibban, *Sahih*, i, 272; iii, 136, 227, 229.

<sup>38</sup> Baghawi, *Sharh al-Sunna*, v, 53, 75, 132; Ibn Hajar, *Majma' al-Zawa'id*, iv, 86-115; x, 85, 114.

<sup>39</sup> Qur'an, 2:32.

against faith.<sup>40</sup> \* Our Sustainer! Let not our hearts deviate now after You have guided us, but grant us mercy from Your presence; for You are the Granter of bounties without measure. \* Our Sustainer! You are He that will gather mankind together against a Day about which there is no doubt; for God never fails in His promise.<sup>41</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. And have mercy of us and have mercy on his community, through Your mercy, O Most Merciful of the Merciful. Amen.

And the close of their prayer will be: Praise be to God, the Sustainer of All the Worlds!<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Qur'an, 2:286.

<sup>41</sup> Qur'an, 3:8-9.

<sup>42</sup> Qur'an, 10:10.