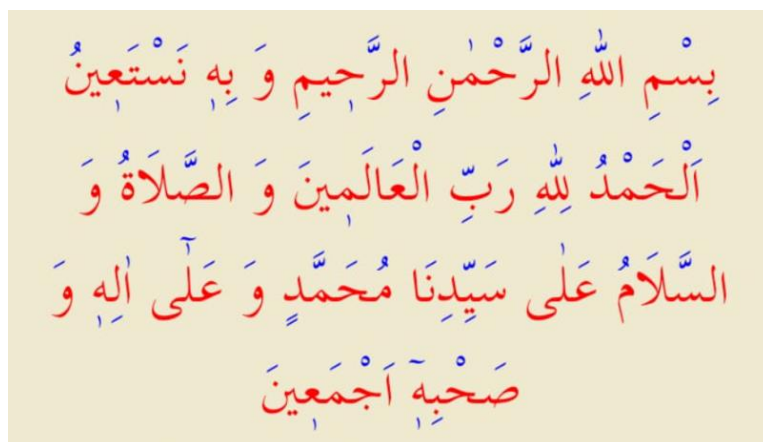


THE SHORT WORDS



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH,

THE MERCIFUL, THE COMPASSIONATE

And from Him do we seek help.

All praise be to Allah, the Sustainer of All the Worlds,
and blessings and peace be upon our master Muhammad,
and on all his Family and Companions.

Brother! You wanted a few words of advice from me, so listen to a few truths included in eight short stories, which since you are a soldier, are in the form of comparisons of a military nature. I consider my own soul to need advice more than anyone, and at one time I addressed my soul at some length with Eight Words inspired by eight verses of the Qur'an from which I had benefited. Now I shall address my soul with these same Words, but briefly and in the language of ordinary people. Whoever wishes may listen together with me.

The First Word

Bismillah, "In the Name of Allah" is the start of all things good. We too shall start with it. Know, O my soul! Just as this blessed phrase is a mark of Islam, so too it is constantly recited by all beings through their tongues of disposition. If you want to know what an inexhaustible strength, what an unending source of bounty is **Bismillah**, listen to the following story, which is in the form of a comparison. It goes like this:

Someone who makes a journey through the deserts of Arabia has to travel in the name of a tribal chief and enter under his protection, for in this way he may be saved from the assaults of bandits and secure his needs. On his own he will perish in the face of innumerable enemies and needs. And so, two men went on such a journey and entered the desert. One of them was modest and humble, the other proud and conceited. The humble man assumed the name of a tribal chief, while the proud man did not. The first

travelled safely wherever he went. If he encountered bandits, he said: “I am travelling in the name of such-and-such tribal leader,” and they did not molest him. If he came to some tents, he was treated respectfully due to the name. But the proud man suffered indescribable calamities throughout his journey. He both trembled before everything and begged from everything. He was abased and became an object of scorn.

My proud soul! You are the traveller, and this world is a desert. Your impotence and poverty have no limit, and your enemies and needs are endless. Since it is thus, take the name of the **Pre-Eternal Ruler** and **Post-Eternal Lord** of the desert and be saved from begging before the whole universe and trembling before every event.

Yes, this phrase is a treasury so blessed that your infinite impotence and poverty bind you to an infinite power and mercy; it makes your impotence and poverty a most acceptable intercessor at the Court of **One All-Powerful and Compassionate**. The person who acts saying, “In the Name of Allah” resembles someone who enrolls in the army. He acts in the name of the government; he has fear of no one; he speaks, performs every matter, and withstands everything in the name of the law and the name of the government.

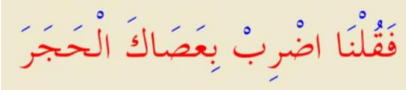
At the beginning we said that all beings say “In the Name of Allah” through the tongue of disposition. Is that so?

Indeed, it is so. If you were to see that a single person had come and had driven all the inhabitants of a town to a place by force and compelled them to work, you would be certain that he had not acted in his own name and through his own power, but was a soldier, acting in the name of the government and relying on the power of the king.

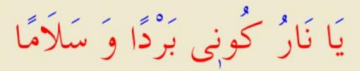
In the same way, all things act in the name of **Almighty Allah**, for minute things like seeds and grains bear huge trees on their heads; they raise loads like mountains. That means all trees say: “In the Name of Allah,” fill their hands from the treasury of mercy, and offer them to us. All gardens say: “In the Name of Allah” and become cauldrons from the kitchens of Divine power in which are cooked numerous varieties of different foods. All blessed animals like cows, camels, sheep, and goats, say: “In the Name of Allah” and produce springs of milk from the abundance of mercy, offering us a most delicate and pure food like the water of life in the name of the Provider. The roots and rootlets, soft as silk, of plants, trees, and grasses say: “In the Name of Allah” and pierce and pass through hard rock and earth.

Mentioning the name of **Allah**, the name of the **Most Merciful**, everything becomes subjected to them.

The roots spreading through hard rock and earth and producing fruits as easily as the branches spread through the air and produce fruits, and the delicate green leaves retaining their moisture for months in the face of extreme heat, deal a slap in the mouths of Naturalists and jab a finger in their blind eyes, saying: “Even heat and hardness, in which you most trust, are under a command. For like the Staff of Moses, each of those

silken rootlets conforms to the command of,  *And We said,*

O Moses, strike the rock with your staff, (Qur'an, 2:60) and splits the rock. And the delicate

leaves fine as cigarette paper recite the verse,  O fire be coolness and peace (Qur'an, 21:69) against the heat of the fire, each like the members of Abraham (UWP).

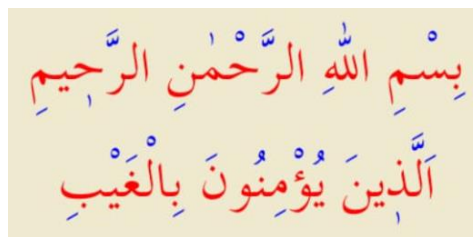
Since all things say: **"Bismillah"** and bearing Allah's bounties in Allah's name, give them to us, we too should say: **"Bismillah"** We should give in the name of Allah, and take in the name of Allah. And we should not take from heedless people who neglect to give in Allah's name.

Question: We give a price to people, who are like tray-bearers. So what price does Allah want, Who is the true owner?

The Answer: Yes, the price the **True Bestower of Bounties** wants in return for those valuable bounties and goods is three things: one is **remembrance**, another is **thanks**, and the other is **reflection**. Saying, **"Bismillah"** at the start is remembrance, and, **"Alhamdulillah"** (All praise be to Allah) at the end is thanks. And perceiving and thinking of those bounties, which are priceless wonders of art, being miracles of power of the **Unique and Eternally Besought One** and gifts of His mercy, is reflection. However foolish it is to kiss the foot of a lowly man who conveys to you the precious gift of a king and not to recognize the gift's owner, it is a thousand times more foolish to praise and love the apparent source of bounties and forget the **True Bestower of Bounties**.

O my soul! If you do not wish to be foolish in that way, give in Allah's name, take in Allah's name, begin in Allah's name, and act in Allah's name. And that's the matter in a nutshell!

The Second Word



In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

Those who believe in the Unseen. (Qur'an, 2:3)

If you want to understand what great happiness and bounty, what great pleasure and ease are to be found in belief in Allah, listen to this story which is in the form of a comparison:

One time, two men went on a journey for both pleasure and business. One set off in a selfish, inauspicious direction, and the other on a godly, propitious way.

Since the selfish man was both conceited, self-centred, and pessimistic, he ended up in what seemed to him to be a most wicked country due to his pessimism. He looked around and everywhere saw the powerless and the unfortunate lamenting in the grasp of fearsome bullying tyrants, weeping at their destruction. He saw the same grievous, painful situation in all the places he travelled. The whole country took on the form of a house of mourning. Apart from becoming drunk, he could find no way of not noticing this grievous and sombre situation. For everyone seemed to him to be an enemy and foreign. And all around he saw horrible corpses and despairing, weeping orphans. His conscience was in a state of torment.

The other man was godly, devout, fair-minded, and with fine morals so that the country he came to was most excellent in his view. This good man saw universal rejoicing in the land he had entered. Everywhere was a joyful festival, a place for the remembrance of Allah overflowing with rapture and happiness; everyone seemed to him a friend and relation. Throughout the country he saw the festive celebrations of a general discharge from duties accompanied by cries of good wishes and thanks. He also heard the sound of a drum and band for the enlistment of soldiers with happy calls of **“Allah is Most Great!”** and **“There is no god but Allah!”** Rather than being grieved at the suffering of both himself and all the people like the first miserable man, this fortunate man was pleased and happy at both his own joy and that of all the inhabitants. Furthermore, he was able to do some profitable trade. He offered thanks to Allah.

After some while he returned and came across the other man. He understood his condition, and said to him: “You were out of your mind. The ugliness within you must have been reflected on the outer world so that you imagined laughter to be weeping, and the discharge from duties to be sack and pillage. Come to your senses and purify your heart so that this calamitous veil is raised from your eyes and you can see the truth. For the country of an utterly just, compassionate, beneficent, powerful, order-loving, and kind king could not be as you imagined, nor could a country which demonstrated this number of clear signs of progress and achievement.” The unhappy man later came to his senses and repented. He said, “Yes, I was crazy through drink. May Allah be pleased with you, you have saved me from a hellish state.”

O my soul! Know that the first man represents an unbeliever, or someone depraved and heedless. In his view the world is a house of universal mourning. All living creature are orphans weeping at the blows of death and separation. Man and the animals are alone and without ties being ripped apart by the talons of the appointed hour. Mighty beings like the mountains and oceans are like horrendous, lifeless corpses. Many grievous, crushing, terrifying delusions like these arise from his unbelief and misguidance, and torment him.

As for the other man, he is a believer. He recognizes and affirms **Almighty Allah**. In his view this world is an abode where the Names of the **All-Merciful One** are constantly recited, a place of instruction for man and the animals, and a field of examination for man and jinn. All animal and human deaths are a demobilization. Those who have completed their duties of life depart from this transient world for another, happy and trouble-free, world so that place may be made for new officials to come and work. The birth of animals

and humans marks their enlistment into the army, their being taken under arms, and the start of their duties. Each living being is a joyful regular soldier, an honest, contented official. And all voices are either glorification of Allah and the recitation of His Names at the outset of their duties, and the thanks and rejoicing at their ceasing work, or the songs arising from their joy at working. In the view of the believer, all beings are the friendly servants, amicable officials, and agreeable books of his **Most Generous Lord** and **All-Compassionate Owner**. Very many more subtle, exalted, pleasurable, and sweet truths like these become manifest and appear from his belief.

That is to say, belief in Allah bears the seed of what is in effect a Tuba-Tree of Paradise, while unbelief conceals the seed of a Zakkum-Tree of Hell.

That means that salvation and security are only to be found in Islam and belief. In which

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ عَلَىٰ دِينِ الْإِسْلَامِ وَكَمَالِ
الْإِيمَانِ

case, we should continually say, "Praise be to Allah for the religion of Islam and perfect belief."

"Praise be to Allah for the religion of Islam and perfect belief."

The Third Word

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا

In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

O you people, worship...(Qur'an, 2:21)

If you want to understand what great profit and happiness lie in worship, and what great loss and ruin lie in vice and dissipation listen to and take heed of the following story which is in the form of a comparison:


One time, two soldiers received orders to proceed to a distant city. They set off and travelled together until the road forked. At the fork was a man who said to them, "The road on the right causes no loss at all, and nine out of ten of those who take it receive a high profit and experience great ease. While the road on the left provides no advantages, and nine out of ten of its travellers make a loss. But they are the same as regards distance. Only there is one difference: those who take the left-hand road, which has no rules and no one in authority, travel without baggage and arms. They feel an apparent lightness and deceptive ease. Whereas those travelling on the right-hand road, which is under military order, are compelled to carry a kit-bag full of nutritious rations four *okkas* or so in weight and a superb army rifle of about two *kiyyes* (1 *okka* approx. 2.8 lbs. or 1,300 grammes. *Kiyye*, another name for *okka*. 1 *batman* 2 - 8 *okkas* or 5 - 30 lbs.) which will overpower and rout every enemy..."

After the two soldiers had listened to what this instructive man had to say, the fortunate one took the road to the right. He loaded the weight of one *batman* onto his back, but his heart and spirit were saved from thousands of *batmans* of fear and feeling obliged to

others. As for the other, luckless, soldier, he left the army. He did not want to conform to the order, and he went off to the left. He was released from bearing a load of one batman, but his heart was constricted by thousands of batmans of indebtedness, and his spirit crushed by innumerable fears. He proceeded on his way both begging from everyone and trembling before every object and every event until he reached his destination. And there he was punished as a mutineer and a deserter.

As for the soldier who loved the order of the army, had guarded his kit-bag and rifle, and taken the right-hand road, he had gone on his way being obliged to no one, fearing no one, and with an easy heart and conscience until he reached the city he was seeking. There he received a reward worthy of an honourable soldier who had carried out his duty faithfully.

O rebellious soul, know that one of those two travellers represents those who submit to the Divine Law, while the other represents the rebellious and those who follow their own desires. The road is the road of life, which comes from the Spirit World, passes through the grave, and carries on to the hereafter. As for the kit-bag and rifle, they are worship and fear of Allah. There is an apparent burden in worship, but there is an ease and lightness in its meaning that defies description. For in the prescribed prayers the

worshipper declares,  "I bear witness that there is no god but Allah." That is to say, he finds the door of a treasury of mercy in everything because he is believing and saying, "There is no **Creator** and **Provider** other than Him. Harm and benefit are in His hand. He is both **All-Wise**; He does nothing in vain, and He is **All-Compassionate**; His bounty and mercy are abundant." And he knocks on the door with his supplication. Moreover, he sees that everything is subjugated to the command of his own Sustainer, so he takes refuge in Him. He places his trust in Him and relies on Him, and is fortified against every disaster; his belief gives him complete confidence.

Indeed, like with every true virtue, the source of courage is belief in Allah, and worship. And as with every iniquity, the source of cowardice is misguidance.

In fact, for a worshipper with a truly illuminated heart, it is possible that even if the globe of the earth became a bomb and exploded, it would not frighten him. He would watch it with pleasurable wonder as a marvel of the **Eternally Besought One**'s power. But when a famous degenerate philosopher with a so-called enlightened mind but no heart saw a comet in the sky, he trembled on the ground, and exclaimed anxiously: "Isn't that comet going to hit the earth?" *(On one occasion, America was quaking with fear at such a comet, and many people left their homes in the middle of the night.)*

Yes, although man is in need of numberless things, his capital is as nothing, and although he is subject to endless calamities, his power too is as nothing. Simply, his capital and power extend only as far as his hand can reach. However, his hopes, desires, pains, and tribulations reach as far as the eye and the imagination can stretch. Anyone who is not totally blind can see and understand then what a great profit, happiness, and bounty for the human spirit, which is thus impotent and weak, and needy and wanting, are worship, affirmation of Allah's unity, and reliance on Allah and submission to Him.

It is obvious that a safe way is preferable to a harmful way, even if the possibility of its safety is only one in ten. But on the way of worship, which our matter here, there is a nine out of ten possibility of it leading to the treasury of eternal happiness, as well as its being safe. While it is established by the testimony –which is at the degree of consensus– of innumerable experts and witnesses that besides being without benefit, and the dissolute even confess to this, the way of vice and dissipation ends in eternal misery. According to the reports of those who have uncovered the mysteries of creation this is absolutely certain.

In Short: Like that of the hereafter, happiness in this world lies in worship and being a soldier for **Almighty Allah**. In which case, we should constantly say:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ عَلَى الطَّاعَةِ وَالتَّوْفِيقِ

“Praise be to Allah for obedience to him and success,” and we should thank Him that we are Muslims.

The Fourth Word

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الصَّلَاةُ عِمَادُ الدِّينِ

In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The prescribed prayers are the pillar of religion.

(Tirmidhî, Îmân, 8; Ibn Mâja, Fitan, 12; Musnad, v, 231; al-Hâkim, al-Mustadrak, ii, 76.)

If you want to understand with the certainty that two plus two equals four just how valuable and important are the prescribed prayers, and with what little expense they are gained, and how crazy and harmful is the person who neglects them, pay attention to the following story which is in the form of a comparison:

One time, a mighty ruler gave each of two of his servants twenty-four gold pieces and sent them to settle on one of his rich, royal farms two months' distance away. “Use this money for your tickets,” he commanded them, “and buy whatever is necessary for your house there with it. There is a station one day's distance from the farm. And there is both road-transport, and a railway, and boats, and aeroplanes. They can be benefited from according to your capital.”

The two servants set off after receiving these instructions. One of them was fortunate so that he spent a small amount of money on the way to the station. And included in that expense was some business so profitable and pleasing to his master that his capital increased a thousandfold. As for the other servant, since he was luckless and a layabout, he spent twenty-three pieces of gold on the way to the station, wasting it on gambling and amusements. A single gold piece remained. His friend said to him: “Spend this last gold piece on a ticket so that you will not have to walk the long journey and starve. Moreover, our master is generous; perhaps he will take pity on you and forgive you your faults, and

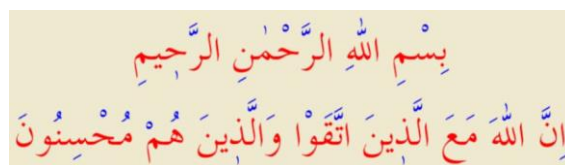
put you on an aeroplane as well. Then we shall reach where we are going to live in one day. Otherwise you will be compelled to walk alone and hungry across a desert which takes two months to cross.” The most unintelligent person can understand how foolish, harmful, and senseless he would be if out of obstinacy he did not spend that single remaining gold piece on a ticket, which is like the key to a treasury, and instead spent it on vice for passing pleasure. Is that not so?

O you who do not perform the prescribed prayers! And O my own soul, which does not like to pray! The ruler in the comparison is our **Sustainer**, our **Creator**. Of the two travelling servants, one represents the devout who perform their prayers with fervour, and the other, the heedless who neglect their prayers. The twenty-four pieces of gold are life in every twenty-four-hour day. And the royal domain is Paradise. As for the station, it is the grave. And the journey is man’s passage to the grave, and on to the resurrection and the hereafter. Men cover that long journey to different degrees according to their actions and the strength of their fear of Allah (taqwa). Some of the truly devout have crossed a thousand-year distance in a day like lightning. And some have traversed a fifty-thousand-year distance in a day with the speed of imagination. The **Qur’an of Mighty Stature** alludes to this truth with two of its verses. (Qur’an 32:5; 70:4)

The ticket in the comparison represents the prescribed prayers. A single hour a day is sufficient for the five prayers together with taking the ablutions. So what a loss a person makes who spends twenty-three hours on this fleeting worldly life, and fails to spend one hour on the long life of the hereafter; how he wrongs his own self; how unreasonably he behaves. For would not anyone who considers himself to be reasonable understand how contrary to reason and wisdom such a person’s conduct is, and how far from reason he has become, if, thinking it reasonable, he gives half of his property to a lottery in which one thousand people are participating and the possibility of winning is one in a thousand, and does not give one twenty-fourth of it to an eternal treasury where the possibility of winning has been verified at ninety-nine out of a hundred?

Moreover, the spirit, the heart, and the mind find great ease in prayer. And it is not trying for the body. Furthermore, with the right intention, all the other acts of someone who performs the prescribed prayers become like worship. He can make over the whole capital of his life to the hereafter in this way. He can make his transient life permanent in one respect.

The Fifth Word



In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

Indeed, Allah is with those who fear Him and those who do good. (Qur’an,16:128)

If you want to see what a truly human duty and what a natural, appropriate result of man's creation it is to perform the prescribed prayers and not to commit serious sins, listen to and take heed of the following comparison:

Once, at a time of general mobilization, two soldiers found themselves together in a regiment. One was well-trained and conscientious, the other, a raw recruit and self-centred. The conscientious soldier concentrated on training and the war, and did not give a thought to rations and provisions, for he knew that it was the state's duty to feed and equip him, treat him if he was ill, and even to put the food in his mouth if the need arose. He knew that his essential duty was to train and fight. But he would also attend to some of the rations and equipment as part of his work. He would boil up the saucepans, wash up the mess-tins, and bring them. If it was then asked him: "What are you doing?", he would reply: "I am doing fatigue duty for the state." He would not say: "I am working for my living."

The raw recruit, however, was fond of his stomach and paid no attention to training and the war. "That is the state's business. What is it to me?", he would say. He thought constantly of his livelihood, and pursuing it would leave the regiment and go to the market to do shopping. One day his well-trained friend said to him:

"Your basic duty is training and fighting, brother. You were brought here for that. Trust in the king; he will not let you go hungry. That is his duty. Anyway, you are powerless and wanting; you cannot feed yourself everywhere. And this is a time of mobilization and war; he will tell you that you are mutinous and will punish you. Yes, there are two duties which concern us. One is the king's duty: sometimes we do his fatigue duties and he feeds us for it. The other is our duty: that is training and fighting, and sometimes the king helps us with it."

Of course you will understand in what danger the layabout soldier would be if he did not pay attention to the striving, well-trained one.

O my lazy soul! That turbulent place of war is this stormy worldly life, and the army divided into regiments, human society. The regiment in the comparison is the community of Islam in this century. One of the two soldiers is a devout Muslim who knows the obligations of his religion and performs them, and struggles with Satan and his own soul in order to give up serious misdoings and not to commit sins. While the other is a degenerate wrongdoer who is so immersed in the struggle for livelihood that he casts aspersions on the **True Provider**, abandons his religious obligations, and commits any sins that come his way as he makes his living. As for the training and instruction, it is foremost the prescribed prayers and worship. And the war is the struggle against the soul and its desires, and against the satans among jinn and men, to deliver them from sin and bad morals, and save the heart and spirit from eternal perdition. And the first of the two duties is to give life and sustain it, while the other is to worship and beseech the **Giver and Sustainer of life**. It is to trust in Him and rely on Him.

Indeed, whoever made and bestowed life, which is a most brilliant miracle of the **Eternally Besought One's** art and a wonder of dominical wisdom, is the one who maintains and perpetuates it through sustenance. It cannot be another. Do you want

proof? The most impotent and stupid animals are the best nourished; like fish, and worms in fruit. And it is the most helpless and delicate creatures who have the choicest food; like infants and the young of all species.

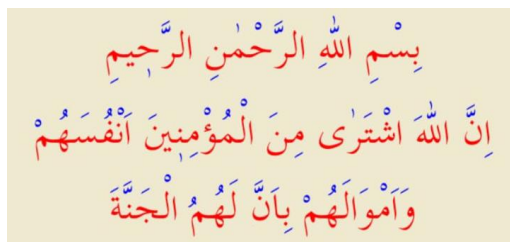
For sure, it is enough to compare fish with foxes, newly born animals with wild beasts, and trees with animals in order to understand that licit food is obtained not through power and will, but through impotence and helplessness. That is to say, someone who gives up performing the prescribed prayers because of the struggle for livelihood resembles the soldier who abandoned his training and trench and went and begged in the market. But to seek ones rations from the kitchens of the **All-Generous Provider's** mercy after performing the prayers, and to go oneself so as not to be a burden on others is fine and manly. It too is a sort of worship.

Furthermore, man's nature and spiritual faculties show that he is created for worship. For in respect of the power and actions necessary for the life of this world, he cannot compete with the most inferior sparrow. While in respect of knowledge and need, and worship and supplication, which are necessary for spiritual life and the life of the hereafter, he is like the monarch and commander of the animals.

O my soul! If you make the life of this world the aim of your life and work constantly for that, you will become like the lowest sparrow. But if you make the life of the hereafter your aim and end, and make this life the means of it and its tillage, and strive in accordance with it, then you will be like a lofty commander of the animals, and a petted and suppliant servant of **Almighty Allah**, and His honoured and respected guest.

Those are the two ways open to you! You can choose whichever you wish... So ask for guidance and success from the **Most Compassionate of the Compassionate**.

The Sixth Word



In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

Verily Allah has purchased from the believers their persons and their property that Paradise might be theirs. (Qur'an, 9:111)

If you wish to understand how profitable a trade it is, and how honour-able a rank, to sell one's person and property to Allah, to be His slave and His soldier, then listen to the following comparison.

Once a king entrusted each of two of his subjects with an estate, including all necessary workshops, machinery, horses, weapons and so forth. But since it was a tempestuous and war-ridden age, nothing enjoyed stability; it was destined either to disappear or to

change. The king in his infinite mercy sent a most noble lieutenant to the two men and by means of a compassionate decree conveyed the following to them:

“Sell me the property you now hold in trust, so that I may keep it for you. Let it not be destroyed for no purpose. After the wars are over, I will return it to you in a better condition than before. I will regard the trust as your property and pay you a high price for it. As for the machinery and the tools in the workshop, they will be used in my name and at my workbench. But the price and the fee for their use shall be increased a thousandfold. You will receive all the profit that accrues. You are indigent and resourceless, and unable to provide the cost of these great tasks. So let me assume the provision of all expenses and equipment, and give you all the income and the profit. You shall keep it until the time of demobilization. So see the five ways in which you shall profit! Now if you do not sell me the property, you can see that no one is able to preserve what he possesses, and you too will lose what you now hold. It will go for nothing, and you will lose the high price I offer. The delicate and precious tools and scales, the precious metals waiting to be used, will also lose all value. You will have the trouble and concern of administering and preserving, but at the same time be punished for betraying your trust. So see the five ways in which you may lose! Moreover, if you sell the property to me, you become my soldier and act in my name. Instead of a common prisoner or irregular soldier, you will be the free lieutenant of an exalted monarch.”

After they had listened to this gracious decree, the more intelligent of the two men said:

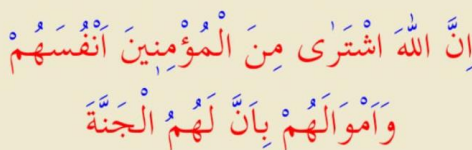
“By all means, I am proud and happy to sell. I offer thanks a thousandfold.”

But the other was arrogant, selfish and dissipated; his soul had become as proud as the Pharaoh. As if he was to stay eternally on that estate, he ignored the earthquakes and tumults of this world. He said:

“No! Who is the king? I won’t sell my property, nor spoil my enjoyment.”

After a short time, the first man reached so high a rank that everyone envied his state. He received the favour of the king, and lived happily in the king’s own palace. The other by contrast fell into such a state that everyone pitied him, but also said he deserved it. For as a result of his error, his happiness and property departed, and he suffered punishment and torment.

O soul full of caprices! Look at the face of truth through the telescope of this parable. As for the king, he is the **Monarch of Pre-Eternity and Post-Eternity**, your **Sustainer** and **Creator**. The estates, machinery, tools and scales are your possessions while in life’s fold; your body, spirit and heart within those possessions, and your outward and inward senses such as the eye and the tongue, intelligence and imagination. As for the most noble lieutenant, it is the **Noble Messenger of Allah**; and the most wise decree is the **Wise Qur’an**, which describes the trade we are discussing in this verse:



إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَى مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمْ
وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ

Verily Allah has purchased from the believers their persons and property that Paradise might be theirs. (Qur'an, 9:111)

The surging field of battle is the tempestuous surface of the world, which ceaselessly changes, dissolves and reforms and causes every man to think:

“Since everything will leave our hands, will perish and be lost, is there no way in which we can transform it into something eternal and preserve it?”

While engaged in these thoughts, he suddenly hears the heavenly voice of the Qur'an saying:

“Indeed there is, a beautiful and easy way which contains five profits within itself.”

What is that way?

To sell the trust received back to its true owner. Such a sale yields profit fivefold.

The First Profit: Transient property becomes everlasting. For this waning life, when given to the **Eternal and Self-Subsistent Lord of Glory** and spent for His sake, will be transmuted into eternity. It will yield eternal fruits. The moments of one's life will apparently vanish and rot like kernels and seeds. But then the flowers of blessedness and auspiciousness will open and bloom in the realm of eternity, and each will also present a luminous and reassuring aspect in the Intermediate Realm.

The Second Profit: The high price of Paradise is given in exchange.

The Third Profit: The value of each limb and each sense is increased a thousandfold. The intelligence is, for example, like a tool. If you do not sell it to **Allah Almighty**, but rather employ it for the sake of the soul, it will become an ill-omened, noxious and debilitating tool that will burden your weak person with all the sad sorrows of the past and the terrifying fears of the future; it will descend to the rank of an inauspicious and destructive tool. It is for this reason that a sinful man will frequently resort to drunkenness or frivolous pleasure in order to escape the vexations and injuries of his intelligence. But if you sell your intelligence to its **True Owner** and employ it on His behalf, then it will become like the key to a talisman, unlocking the infinite treasures of compassion and the vaults of wisdom that creation contains. It will thus rise to being a dominical guide preparing its owner for eternal bliss.

To take another example, the eye is one of the senses, a window through which the spirit looks out on this world. If you do not sell it to **Allah Almighty**, but rather employ it on behalf of the soul, by gazing upon a handful of transient, impermanent beauties and scenes, it will sink to the level of being a pander to lust and the concupiscent soul. But if you sell the eye to your **All-Seeing Maker**, and employ it on His behalf and within limits traced out by Him, then your eye will rise to the rank of a reader of the great book of being, a witness to the miracles of dominical art, a blessed bee sucking on the blossoms of mercy in the garden of this globe.

Yet another example is that of the tongue and the sense of taste. If you do not sell it to your **Wise Creator**, but employ it instead on behalf of the soul and for the sake of the stomach, it sinks and declines to the level of a gatekeeper at the stable of the stomach, a

watchman at its factory. But if you sell it to the **Generous Provider**, the sense of taste contained in the tongue will rise to the rank of a skilled overseer of the treasuries of Divine compassion, a grateful inspector in the kitchens of **Allah's** eternal power.

So look well, O intelligence! See the difference between a tool of destruction and the key to all being! And look carefully, O eye! See the difference between an abominable pander and the learned overseer of the Divine library! And taste well, O tongue! See the difference between a stable doorkeeper or a factory watchman and the superintendent of the treasury of **Allah's** mercy!

Compare all other tools and limbs to these, and then you will understand that in truth the believer acquires a nature worthy of Paradise and the unbeliever a nature conforming to Hell. The reason for each of them attaining his respective value is that the believer, by virtue of his faith, uses the trust of his **Creator** on His behalf and within the limits traced out by Him, whereas the unbeliever betrays the trust and employs it for the sake of the instinctual soul.

The Fourth Profit: Man is helpless and exposed to numerous misfortunes. He is indigent, and his needs are numerous. He is weak, and the burden of life is most heavy. If he does not rely on the **Omnipotent One of Glory**, place his trust in Him and confidently submit to Him, his conscience will always be troubled. Fruitless torments, pains and regrets will suffocate him and intoxicate him, or turn him into a beast.

The Fifth Profit: Those who have experienced illumination and had unveiled to them the true nature of things, the elect who have witnessed the truth, are all agreed that the exalted reward for all the worship and glorification of **Allah** performed by your members and instruments will be given to you at the time of greatest need, in the form of the fruits of Paradise.

If you spurn this trade with its fivefold profit, in addition to being deprived of its profit, you will suffer fivefold loss.

The First Loss: The property and offspring to which you are so attached, the soul and its caprice that you worship, the youth and life with which you are infatuated, all will vanish and be lost; your hands will be empty. But they will leave behind them sin and pain, fastened on your neck like a yoke.

The Second Loss: You will suffer the penalty for betrayal of trust. For you will have wronged your own self by using the most precious tools on the most worthless objects.

The Third Loss: By casting down all the precious faculties of man to a level much inferior to the animals, you will have insulted and transgressed against **Allah's** wisdom.

The Fourth Loss: In your weakness and poverty, you will have placed the heavy burden of life on your weak shoulders, and will constantly groan and lament beneath the blows of transience and separation.

The Fifth Loss: You will have clothed in an ugly form, fit to open the gates of Hell in front of you, the fair gifts of the **Compassionate One** such as the intelligence, the heart, the eye

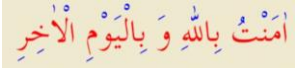
and the tongue, given to you to make preparation for the foundations of everlasting life and eternal happiness in the hereafter.

Now is it so difficult to sell the trust? Is it so burdensome that many people shun the transaction? By no means! It is not in the least burdensome. For the limits of the permissible are broad, and are quite adequate for man's desire; there is no need to trespass on the forbidden. The duties imposed by **Allah** are light and few in number. To be the slave and soldier of **Allah** is an indescribably pleasurable honour. One's duty is simply to act and embark on all things in **Allah's** name, like a soldier; to take and to give on **Allah's** behalf; to move and be still in accordance with His permission and law. If one falls short, then one should seek His forgiveness, say:

“O **Lord!** Forgive our faults, and accept us as Your slaves. Make us sure holders of Your trust until the time comes when it is taken from us. Amen!”, and make petition unto Him.

The Seventh Word

If you want to understand what valuable, difficulty-resolving talismans are the two parts

of the phrase  “I believe in Allah and the Last Day,” which solve both the enigmatical riddle of creation and open the door of happiness for the human spirit, and what beneficial and curative medicines are reliance on your **Creator** and taking refuge in Him through patience and entreaty, and supplicating your **Provider** through thanks, and what important, precious, shining tickets for the journey to eternity – and provisions for the hereafter and lights for the grave – are listening to the Qur'an, obeying its commands, performing the prescribed prayers, and giving up serious sins, then listen and pay attention to this comparison:

One time a soldier fell into a most grave situation in the field of battle and examination, and the round of profit and loss. It was as follows:

The soldier was wounded with two deep and terrible wounds on his right and left sides and behind him stood a huge lion as though waiting to attack him. Before him stood a gallows which was putting to death and annihilating all those he loved. It was awaiting him too. Besides this, he had a long journey before him: he was being exiled. As the unfortunate soldier pondered over his fearsome plight in despair, a kindly person shining with light like Khidr appeared. He said to him: “Do not despair. I shall give you two talismans and teach you them. If you use them properly, the lion will become a docile horse for you, and the gallows will turn into a swing for your pleasure and enjoyment. Also I shall give you two medicines. If you follow the instructions, those two suppurating wounds will be transformed into two sweet-scented flowers called the Rose of **Muhammad** (PBUH). Also, I shall give you a ticket; with it, you will be able to make a year's journey in a day as though flying. If you do not believe me, experiment a bit, so that you can see it is true.” The soldier did experiment a bit, and affirmed that it was true. Yes, I, that is, this unfortunate Said, affirm it too. For I experimented and saw it was absolutely true.

Some time later he saw a sly, debauched-looking man, cunning as the Devil, coming from the left bringing with him much ornamented finery, decorated pictures and fantasies, and many intoxicants. He stopped before the soldier, and said:

“Hey, come on, my friend! Let’s go and drink and make merry. We can look at these pictures of beautiful girls, listen to the music, and eat this tasty food.” Then he asked him: “What is it you are reciting under your breath?”

“A talisman,” came the reply.

“Stop that incomprehensible nonsense! Let’s not spoil our present fun!” And he asked a second question: “What is that you have in your hand?”

“Some medicine,” the soldier replied.

“Throw it away! You are healthy, there is nothing wrong with you. It is the time of cheer.” And he asked: “What is that piece of paper with five marks on it?”

“It is a ticket and a rations card.”

“Oh, tear them up!”, the man said. “What need do we have of a journey this beautiful spring?” He tried to persuade him with every sort of wile, and the poor soldier was even a bit persuaded. Yes, man can be deceived. I was deceived by just such cunning deceptions.

Suddenly from the right came a voice like thunder. “Beware!”, it said. “Do not be deceived! Say to that trickster: ‘If you have the means to kill the lion behind me, remove the gallows from before me, repulse the things wounding my right and my left, and prevent the journey in front of me, then come on and do so! Show that you can and let us see it! Then say, come on, let’s go and enjoy ourselves. Otherwise be silent!’ Speak in the same way as that Khidr-like Allah-inspired man.”


O my soul, which laughed in its youth and now weeps at its laughter! Know that the unfortunate soldier is you, and man. The lion is the appointed hour. As for the gallows, it is death, decline, and separation, through which, in the alternation of night and day, all friends bid farewell and are lost. Of the two wounds, one is man’s infinite and troublesome impotence, while the other is his grievous and boundless poverty. The exile and journey is the long journey of examination which passes from the world of spirits through the womb and childhood to old age; through the world and the grave and the intermediate realm, to the resurrection and the Bridge of Sirat. As for the two talismans, they are belief in **Almighty Allah** and the hereafter.

Yes, through the second sacred talisman, death takes on the form of a mastered horse, a steed to take believing man from the prison of this world to the gardens of Paradise and the presence of the **Most Merciful One**. It is because of this that the wise who have seen death’s reality have loved it. They have wanted it before it came. And through the talisman of belief in **Allah**, the passage of time, which is decline and separation, death and decease and the gallows, takes on the form of the means to observe and contemplate with perfect pleasure the miracles of the **All-Glorious Maker**’s various, multicoloured, ever-renewed embroideries, the wonders of His power, and the manifestations of His mercy. Yes, when

mirrors reflecting the colours of the sun's light are changed and renewed, and the images of the cinema changed, better, more beautiful scenes are formed.

As for the two medicines, one is trusting in **Allah** and patience, and the other is relying on the power of one's **Creator** and having confidence in His wisdom. Is that the case? Indeed it is. What fear can a man have, who, through the certificate of his impotence, relies

on a **Monarch of the World** with the power to command:  "Be!' and it is."

(Qur'an, 2:117) For in the face of the worst calamity, he says: 

"Verily, to Allah do we belong, and verily to Him is our return," (Qur'an,2:156) and places his trust in his **Most Compassionate Sustainer**. A person with knowledge of **Allah** takes pleasure from impotence, from fear of **Allah**. Yes, there is pleasure in fear. If a twelve-month baby were sufficiently intelligent to be asked: "What is most pleasurable and sweetest for you?", he might well say: "To realize my powerlessness and helplessness, and fearing my mother's gentle smack to at the same time take refuge in her tender breast." But the compassion of all mothers is but a flash of the manifestation of Divine mercy. It is for this reason that the wise have found such pleasure in impotence and fear of **Allah**, vehemently declaring themselves to be free of any strength and power, and have taken refuge in **Allah** through their powerlessness. They have made powerlessness and fear an intercessor for themselves.

The second medicine is thanks and contentment, and entreaty and supplication, and relying on the mercy of the **All-Compassionate Provider**. Is that so? Yes, for how can poverty, want and need be painful and burdensome for a guest of an **All-Generous and Munificent One** Who makes the whole face of the earth a table of bounties and the spring a bunch of flowers, and Who places the flowers on the table and scatters them over it? Poverty and need take on the form of a pleasant appetite. The guest tries to increase his poverty in the same way he does his appetite. It is because of this that the wise have taken pride in want and poverty. But beware, do not misunderstand this! It means to be aware of one's poverty before **Allah** and to beseech Him, not to parade poverty before the people and assume the air of a beggar.

As for the ticket and voucher, it is to perform the religious duties, and foremost the prescribed prayers, and to give up serious sins. Is that so? Yes, it is, for according to the consensus of those who observe and have knowledge of the Unseen and those who uncover the mysteries of creation, the provisions, light, and steed for the long, dark road to post-eternity may only be obtained through complying with the commands of the **Qur'an** and avoiding what it prohibits. Science, philosophy, and art are worth nothing on that road. Their light reaches only as far as the door of the grave.

O my lazy soul! How little and light and easy it is to perform the five daily prayers and give up the seven deadly sins! If you have the faculty of reason and it is not corrupted, understand how important and extensive are their results, fruits, and benefits! Say to the Devil and that man who were encouraging you to indulge in vice and dissipation: "If you have the means to kill death, and cause decline and transience to disappear from the world, and remove poverty and impotence from man, and close the door of the grave,

then tell us and let us hear it! Otherwise, be silent! The **Qur'an** reads the universe in the vast mosque of creation. Let us listen to it. Let us be illuminated with that light. Let us act according to its guidance. And let us recite it constantly. Yes, the **Qur'an** is the word. That is what they say of it. It is the **Qur'an** which is the truth and comes from the Truth and says the truth and shows the truth and spreads luminous wisdom..."

اللَّهُمَّ نَوِّرْ قُلُوبَنَا بِنُورِ الْإِيمَانِ وَالْقُرْآنِ اللَّهُمَّ اغْنِنَا بِالْإِقْتَارِ إِلَيْكَ وَلَا تُفْقِرْنَا بِالْإِسْتِغْنَاءِ عَنْكَ
تَبَرَّأْنَا إِلَيْكَ مِنْ حَوْلِنَا وَقُوَّتِنَا وَالتَّجَنُّنَا إِلَى حَوْلِكَ وَقُوَّتِكَ فَاجْعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ عَلَيْكَ وَلَا تَكِلْنَا
إِلَى أَنْفُسِنَا وَاحْفَظْنَا بِحِفْظِكَ وَارْحَمْنَا وَارْحَمِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَصَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
عَبْدِكَ وَنَبِيِّكَ وَصَفِيِّكَ وَخَلِيلِكَ وَجَمَالِ مُلْكِكَ وَمَلِيكِ صُنْعِكَ وَعَيْنِ عِنَايَتِكَ وَشَمْسِ هِدَايَتِكَ
وَلِسَانِ حُجَّتِكَ وَمَنَالِ رَحْمَتِكَ وَنُورِ خَلْقِكَ وَشَرَفِ مَوْجُودَاتِكَ وَسِرَاجِ وَحْدَتِكَ فِي كَثْرَةِ
مَخْلُوقَاتِكَ وَكَاشِفِ طَلْسِمِ كَائِنَاتِكَ وَدَلَالِ سُلْطَنَةِ رُبُوبِيَّتِكَ وَمُبَلِّغِ مَرْضِيَّاتِكَ وَمُعَرِّفِ كُنُوزِ
أَسْمَائِكَ وَمُعَلِّمِ عِبَادِكَ وَتَرْجُمَانِ آيَاتِكَ وَمِرْآةِ جَمَالِ رُبُوبِيَّتِكَ وَمَدَارِ شُهُودِكَ وَإِشْهَادِكَ وَحَبِيبِكَ
وَرَسُولِكَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلْتَهُ رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ وَعَلَى إِلَيْهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ وَعَلَى إِخْوَانِهِ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ
وَالْمُرْسَلِينَ وَعَلَى مَلَائِكَتِكَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ وَعَلَى عِبَادِكَ الصَّالِحِينَ آمِينَ

O Allah! Illuminate our hearts with the light of belief and the Qur'an.

O Allah! Enrich us with the need of You and do not impoverish us with the lack of need of You. Make us free of our own strength and power, and cause us to take refuge in Your strength and power. Appoint us among those who place their trust in You, and do not entrust us to ourselves. Protect us with Your protection. Have mercy on us and have mercy on all believing men and women. And grant blessings and peace to our Master Muhammad, Your Servant and Prophet, Your Friend and Beloved, the Beauty of Your Dominion and the Sovereign of Your Art, the Essence of Your Favour and the Sun of Your Guidance, the Tongue of Your Proof and the Exemplar of Your Mercy, the Light of Your Creation and the Glory of Your Creatures, the Lamp of Your Unity in the Multiplicity of Your Creatures and the Discloser of the Talisman of Your Beings, the Herald of the Sovereignty of Your Dominicality and the Announcer of those things pleasing to You, the Proclaimer of the Treasuries of Your Names and the Instructor of Your Servants, the Interpreter of Your Signs and the Mirror of the Beauty of Your Dominicality, the Means of witnessing You and bearing witness to You, Your Beloved and Your Messenger whom You sent as a Mercy to All the Worlds, and to all his Family and Companions, and to his brothers among the prophets and messengers, and to Your angels and to the righteous among Your servants. AMEN.

The Eighth Word



In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

Allah, there is no god but He, the Ever-Living, the Self-Subsistent. (Qur'an, 3:2; 2:255)

Verily, the religion before Allah is Islam. (Qur'an, 3:19)

If you want to understand this world, and man's spirit within the world, and the nature and value of religion for man, and how the world is a prison if there is no True Religion, and that without religion man becomes the most miserable of creatures, and that it is

يَا اللَّهُ "O **Allah!**" and, **لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ** "There is no god but **Allah**" that solve this world's talisman and deliver the human spirit from darkness, then listen to and consider this comparison:

Long ago, two brothers set off on a long journey. They continued on their way until the road forked. At the fork they saw a serious-looking man and asked him: "Which road is good?" He told them: "On the road to the right one is compelled to comply with the law and order, but within that hardship is security and happiness. However, on the left-hand road there is freedom and no restraint, but within its freedom lie danger and wretchedness. Now, the choice is yours!"

After listening to this, saying, **تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى اللَّهِ** "I place my trust in **Allah**," (Qur'an,11:56) the brother with a good character took the right road and conformed to the order and regulations. The other brother, who was immoral and a layabout, chose the road to the left just for the lack of restrictions. With our imaginations, we shall follow this man in his situation, which was apparently easy but in reality burdensome.

Thus, this man went up hill and down dale until he found himself in a desolate wilderness. He suddenly heard a terrifying sound and saw that a great lion had come out of the forest and was about to attack him. He fled. He came across a waterless well sixty yards deep, and in his fear jumped into it. He fell half-way down it where his hands met a tree. He clung on to it. The tree, which was growing out of the walls of the well, had two roots.

Two rats, one white and one black, were attacking and gnawing through them. He looked up and saw that the lion was waiting at the top of the well like a sentry. He looked down and saw a ghastly dragon. It raised its head and drew it close to his foot thirty yards above. Its mouth was as big as the mouth of the well. Then he looked at the well's walls and saw that stinging, poisonous vermin had gathered round him. He looked up at the mouth of

the well and saw a fig-tree. But it was not an ordinary tree; it bore the fruit of many different trees, from walnuts to pomegranates.

Thus, due to his lack of thought and foolishness, the man did not understand that this was not just some ordinary matter, these things were not here by chance, and that there were mysterious secrets concealed in these strange beings. And he did not grasp that there was someone very powerful directing them. Now, although his heart, spirit, and mind were secretly weeping and wailing at this grievous situation, his evil-commanding soul pretended that it was nothing; it closed its ears to the weeping of his heart and spirit, and deceiving itself, started to eat the tree's fruit as though it was in a garden. But some of the fruit were poisonous and harmful. **Almighty Allah** says in a Divine Hadith:

أَنَا عِنْدَ ظَنِّ عَبْدِي بِي

"I am according to how my servants think of Me." (*Bukhârî, Tawhîd, 15, 35; Muslim, Tawba, 1; Dhikr, 2, 19; Tirmidhî, Zuhd, 51; Da'wât, 131; Ibn Mâja, Adab, 58; Dârimî, Riqâq, 33; Musnad, ii, 251, 315, 391, 412, 445, 482, 516.*)

Thus, through his foolishness and lack of understanding, this unhappy man thought what he saw to be ordinary and the actual truth. So that is the way he was treated, and is treated, and will be treated. He neither dies so that he is saved from it, nor does he live – he is in such torment. Now we shall leave this ill-omened man in his torment and return, so that we may consider the situation of the other brother.

This fortunate and intelligent person went on his way, but he suffered no distress like his brother. For, due to his fine morals, he thought of good things and imagined good things. Everything was friendly and familiar to him. And he did not suffer any difficulty and hardship like his brother, for he knew the order and followed it. He found it easy. He went on his way freely and in peace and security. Then he came across a garden in which were both lovely flowers and fruits, and, since it was not looked after, rotting and filthy things. His brother had also entered such a garden, but he had noticed and occupied himself with the filthy things and they had turned his stomach, so he had left it and moved on without being able to rest himself. But this man acted according to the rule, 'look on the good side of everything,' and had paid no attention to the rotting things. He had benefited a lot from the good things, and taking a good rest, he had left and gone on his way.

Later, also like the first brother, he had entered a vast desert, and had suddenly heard the roar of a lion which was attacking him. He was frightened, but not as much as his brother. For, because of his good thoughts and positive attitude, he thought to himself: "This desert has a ruler, and it is possible that this lion is a servant under the ruler's command," and found consolation. But he still fled until he came across an empty well sixty yards deep. He threw himself into it. Like his brother, his hand clasped a tree half-way down and he remained suspended in the air. He looked and saw two animals gnawing through the tree's two roots. He looked up and saw the lion, and looked down and saw the dragon. Just like his brother he was seeing a most strange situation. He was terrified like him, but his terror was a thousand times less than his brother's. For his good morals had given him good thoughts, and good thoughts show the good side of everything. So, because of this, he thought as follows:

“These strange happenings are connected to someone. Also it seems that they are acting in accordance with a command. In which case, these matters contain a talisman. Yes, everything is happening at the command of a hidden ruler. Therefore, I am not alone; the hidden ruler is watching me, he is testing me, he is impelling me somewhere for some purpose, and inviting me there. A curiosity arising from this pleasant fear and these agreeable thoughts prompt me to say: I wonder who it is that is testing me, wants to make himself known, and is impelling me for some purpose on this strange road.”

Then, love for the owner of the talisman arose out of the desire to know him, and from that love arose the desire to solve the talisman. And from that desire arose the will to acquire good qualities which would please and gratify the talisman’s owner. Then he looked at the tree and saw it was a fig-tree, but it was bearing the fruits of thousands of trees. So then all his fear left him, for he understood that for certain the fig-tree was a list, an index, an exhibition. The hidden ruler must have attached samples of the fruits in the garden to the tree through a miracle and with a talisman, and must have adorned the tree in a way that would point to each of the foods he had prepared for his guests. For there is no other way a single tree could produce the fruits of thousands of different trees. Then he began to entreat that he would be inspired with the key to the talisman. He called out:

“O ruler of this place! I have happened upon you and I take refuge with you. I am your servant and I want to please you. I am searching for you.” After he had made this supplication, the walls of the well suddenly parted, and a door opened onto a wonderful, pleasant, quiet garden. Indeed, the dragon’s mouth was transformed into the door, and both it and the lion took on the forms of two servants; they invited him to enter. The lion even became a docile horse for him.

O my lazy soul! And O my imaginary friend! Come! Let us compare the position of these two brothers so that we can see how good comes of good and evil comes of evil. Let us find out.

Look, the unhappy traveller on the left road is all the time trembling with fear waiting to enter the dragon’s mouth, while the fortunate one is invited into a blooming, splendid garden full of fruit. And the unfortunate one’s heart is being pounded by an awful terror and grievous fear, while the fortunate one is gazing at and observing strange things as a delightful lesson, with a pleasant fear and loving knowledge. Also the miserable one is suffering torments in desolation, despair, and loneliness, while the fortunate one is enjoying himself, full of hope, longing, and a sense of belonging. Furthermore, the unfortunate one sees himself as a prisoner subject to the attacks of wild beasts, while the fortunate one is an honoured guest who is on friendly terms and enjoying himself with the strange servants of his generous host. Also the unhappy one is hastening his torments by indulging in fruits which are apparently delicious but in fact poisonous. For the fruits are samples; there is permission to taste them so as to seek the originals and become customers for them, but there is no permission to devour them like an animal. But the fortunate one tastes them and understands the matter; he postpones eating them and takes pleasure in waiting. Moreover, the unfortunate one is wronging himself. Through his lack of discernment, he is making a truth and a situation which are as clear and bright

as daylight into a dark and oppressive fear, into a hellish delusion. He does not deserve pity, nor does he have the right to complain to anyone.

For example, if a person at a pleasant banquet in a beautiful garden in summer among his friends makes himself drunk through filthy intoxicants, then imagines himself hungry and naked in the middle of winter among wild animals and starts shouting out and crying, he does not deserve to be pitied; he is wronging himself, and he is insulting his friends by imagining them to be wild beasts. Thus, the unfortunate brother is like this. But the fortunate one sees the truth. And the truth is good. Through perceiving the beauty of the truth, the fortunate brother is being respectful towards the truth's owner. So he deserves his mercy. Thus, the meaning of the Qur'anic decree: "Know that evil is from yourself, and good is from Allah" (Qur'an,4:79) becomes clear. If you make a comparison of other differences in the same way, you will understand that the evil-commanding soul of the first brother has prepared a sort of hell for him, while the good intention, good will, good character, and good thoughts of the other have allowed him to receive abundant bounty, experience true happiness and prosperity, and display shining virtue.

O my soul! And O you who is listening to this story together with my soul! If you do not want to be the unfortunate brother and want to be the fortunate one, listen to the **Qur'an**, obey its decrees, adhere to them, and act according to them.

If you have understood the truths in this comparison, you will be able to make them correspond to the truths of religion, the world, man, and belief in **Allah**. I shall say the important ones, then you deduce the finer points yourself.

So, look! Of the two brothers, one is a believing spirit and a righteous heart. The other is an unbelieving spirit and a depraved heart. Of the two roads, the one to the right is the way of the **Qur'an** and belief in **Allah**, while the left one is the road of rebellion and denial. The garden on the road is man's fleeting life in human society and civilization, where good and evil, and things good and bad and clean and dirty are found side by side. The sensible

person is he who acts according to the rule: **خُذْ مَا صَفَا دَعْ مَا كَدَّرْ** "Take what is pleasant and clear, and leave what is distressing and turbid," and goes on his way with tranquillity of heart. As for the desert, it is the earth and this world. And the lion is death and the appointed hour. The well is man's body and the time of his life, while its sixty-yard depth points to the normal life-span of sixty years. And the tree is the period of life and the substance of life. The two animals, one white and one black, are night and day. The dragon is the road to the Intermediate Realm and pavilion of the hereafter, whose mouth is the grave. But for the believer, that mouth is a door opening from a prison onto a garden. As for the poisonous vermin, they are the calamities of this world. But for the believer they are like gentle Divine warnings and favours of the **Most Merciful One** to prevent him slipping off into the sleep of heedlessness. The fruits on the tree are the bounties of this world which the **Absolutely Generous One** has made in the form of a list of the bounties of the hereafter, and both as examples of them, and warnings, and samples inviting customers to the fruits of Paradise. And the tree producing numerous different fruits despite being a single tree indicates the seal of the **Eternally Besought One's** power, the stamp of Divine dominicality, and the signet of the sovereignty of the Godhead. For 'to make everything from one thing,' that is, to make all plants and fruits from earth, and

create all animals from a fluid, and to create all the limbs and organs of animals from a simple food, together with ‘making everything one thing,’ that is, arts like weaving a simple skin and making flesh particular to each animal from the great variety of foods that animals eat, is an inimitable stamp and seal peculiar to the **Ruler of Pre-Eternity and Post-Eternity**, Who is the **Single, Eternally-Besought One**. For sure, to make one thing everything, and everything one thing is a sign, a mark, peculiar to the **Creator of all things, the One Powerful over all things**.

As for the talisman, it is the mystery of the purpose of creation which is solved through



the mystery of belief. And the key is **Allah**,” and, **Allah**, there is no god but He, the **Ever-Living**, the **Self-Subsistent**.” The dragon’s mouth being transformed into the door into the garden is a sign that, although for the people of misguidance and rebellion the grave is a door opening, in desolation and oblivion, onto a grave distressing as a dungeon and narrow as a dragon’s stomach, for the people of the **Qur’an** and belief, it is a door which opens from the prison of this world onto the fields of immortality, from the arena of examination onto the gardens of Paradise, and from the hardships of life onto the mercy of the **All-Merciful One**. The savage lion turning into a friendly servant and a docile mount is a sign that, although for the people of misguidance, death is a bitter, eternal parting from all their loved ones, and the expulsion from the deceptive paradise of this world and the entry in desolation and loneliness into the dungeon of the grave, for the people of guidance and the **Qur’an** it is the means of joining all their old friends and beloved ones who have already departed for the next world, and the means of entering their true homeland and abode of everlasting happiness. It is an invitation to the meadows of Paradise from the prison of this world, and a time to receive the wage bestowed out of the generosity of the **Most Merciful and Compassionate One** for services rendered to Him, and a discharge from the hardship of the duties of life, and a rest from the drill and instruction of worship and examination.

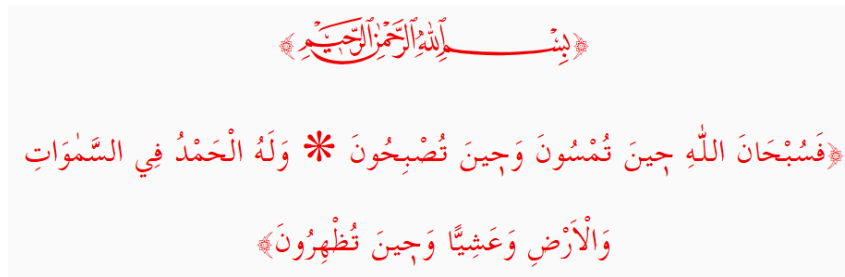
In Short: Whoever makes this fleeting life his purpose and aim is in fact in Hell even if apparently in Paradise. And whoever is turned in all seriousness towards eternal life receives the happiness of both worlds. However difficult and distressing this world is for him, since he sees it as the waiting-room for Paradise, he endures it and offers thanks in patience.

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنَا مِنْ أَهْلِ السَّعَادَةِ وَالسَّلَامَةِ وَالْقُرْآنِ وَالْإِيمَانِ آمِينَ * اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ بِعَدَدِ جَمِيعِ الحُرُوفَاتِ الْمُتَشَكِّلَةِ فِي جَمِيعِ الكَلِمَاتِ الْمُتَمَثِّلَةِ بِأَدْنِ الرَّحْمَنِ فِي مَرَايَا تَمُوجَاتِ الهَوَاءِ عِنْدَ قِرَائَةِ كُلِّ كَلِمَةٍ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مِنْ كُلِّ قَارِئٍ مِنْ أَوَّلِ النُّزُولِ إِلَى آخِرِ الزَّمَانِ وَارْحَمْنَا وَوَالِدَيْنَا وَارْحَمِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ بِعَدَدِهَا بِرَحْمَتِكَ يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ *

آمِينَ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

O Allah! Appoint us among the people of happiness, safety, the Qur'an, and belief. Amen. O Allah! Grant peace and blessings to our Master Muhammad, and to his Family and Companions, to the number of all the letters of the Qur'an formed in all its words, represented with the permission of the Most Merciful One in the mirrors of the air waves on the recital of each of those words by all the Qur'an's reciters from its first revelation to the end of time, and have mercy on us and on our parents, and have mercy on all believing men and women to the number of those words, through Your mercy, O Most Merciful of the Merciful. Amen. And all praise be to Allah, the Sustainer of All the Worlds.

The Ninth Word



In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

So glorify Allah when you reach evening and when you rise in the morning; for all praise is His in the heavens and on earth, and towards the end of the day and when you have reached noon. (Qur'an, 30:17-18)

Brother! You ask me concerning the wisdom in the specified times of the five daily prayers. I shall point out only one of the many instances of wisdom in the times.

Yes, like each of the times of prayer marks the start of an important revolution, so also is each a mirror to Divine disposal of power and to the universal Divine bounties within that disposal. Thus, more glorification and extolling of the **All-Powerful One of Glory** have been ordered at those times, and more praise and thanks for all the innumerable bounties accumulated between each of the times, which is the meaning of the prescribed prayers. In order to understand a little this subtle and profound meaning, you should listen together with my own soul to the following five 'Points'.

FIRST POINT

The meaning of the prayers is the offering of glorification, praise, and thanks to **Almighty Allah**. That is to say, uttering "**SubhanAllah**" (Glory be to Allah) by word and action before **Allah's** glory and sublimity, it is to hallow and worship Him. And declaring "**Allahu Akbar**" (**Allah** is Most Great) through word and act before His sheer perfection, it is to exalt and magnify Him. And saying "**Alhamdulillah**" (All praise be to **Allah**) with the heart, tongue, and body, it is to offer thanks before His utter beauty. That is to say, glorification, exaltation, and praise are like the seeds of the prayers. That is why these three things are present in every part of the prayers, in all the actions and words. It is also why these blessed words are each repeated thirty-three times after the prayers, in order

to strengthen and reiterate the prayers' meaning. The meaning of the prayers is confirmed through these concise summaries.

SECOND POINT

The meaning of worship is this, that the servant sees his own faults, impotence, and poverty, and in the Divine Court prostrates in love and wonderment before dominical perfection, Divine mercy, and the power of the **Eternally Besought One**. That is to say, just as the sovereignty of dominicality demands worship and obedience, so also does the holiness of dominicality require that the servant sees his faults through seeking forgiveness, and through his glorifications and declaring "**SubhanAllah**" (Glory be to **Allah**) proclaims that his **Sustainer** is pure and free of all defects, and exalted above and far from the false ideas of the people of misguidance, and hallowed and exempt from all the faults in the universe.

Also, the perfect power of dominicality requires that through understanding his own weakness and the impotence of other creatures, the servant proclaims "**Allahu Akbar**" (Allah is Most Great) in admiration and wonder before the majesty of the works of the **Eternally Besought One**'s power, and bowing in deep humility seeks refuge in Him and places his trust in Him.

Also, the infinite treasury of dominicality's mercy requires that the servant makes known his own need and the needs and poverty of all creatures through the tongue of entreaty and supplication, and proclaims his Sustainer's bounties and gifts through thanks and laudation and uttering "**Alhamdulillah**" (All praise be to **Allah**). That is to say, the words and actions of the prayers comprise these meanings, and have been laid down from the side of Divinity.

THIRD POINT

Just as man is an example in miniature of the greater world and Sura al-Fatiha a shining sample of the **Qur'an of Mighty Stature**, so are the prescribed prayers a comprehensive, luminous index of all varieties of worship, and a sacred map pointing to all the shades of worship of all the classes of creatures.

FOURTH POINT

The second-hand, minute-hand, hour-hand, and day-hand of a clock which tells the weeks look to one another, are examples of one another, and follow one another. Similarly, the alternations of day and night, which are like the seconds of this world –a vast clock of **Almighty Allah**– and the years which tell its minutes, and the stages of man's life-span which tell the hours, and the epochs of the world's life-span which tell the days look to one another, are examples of one another, resemble one another, and recall one another. For example:

*The time of **Fajr**, the early morning:* This time until sunrise resembles and calls to mind the early spring, the moment of conception in the mother's womb, and the first of the six days of the creation of the heavens and earth; it recalls the Divine acts present in them.

*The time of **Zuhr**, just past midday:* This resembles and points to midsummer, and the prime of youth, and the period of man's creation in the lifetime of the world, and calls to mind the manifestations of mercy and the abundant bounties they contain.

*The time of **Asr**, afternoon:* This is like autumn, and old age, and the time of the **Final Prophet** (PBUH), known as the Era of Bliss, and recalls the Divine acts and favours of the **All-Merciful One** present in them.

*The time of **Maghrib**, sunset:* Through recalling the departure of many creatures at the end of autumn, and man's death, and the destruction of the world at the commencement of the resurrection, this time puts in mind the manifestations of Divine glory and sublimity, and rouses man from his slumbers of heedlessness.

*The time of **Isha**, nightfall.* As for this time, by calling to mind the world of darkness veiling all the objects of the daytime world with a black shroud, and winter hiding the face of the dead earth with its white cerement, and even the remaining works of departed men dying and passing beneath the veil of oblivion, and this world, the arena of examination, being shut up and closed down for ever, it proclaims the awesome and mighty disposals of the **All-Glorious and Compelling Subduer**.

As for *the nighttime*, through putting in mind both the winter, and the grave, and the Intermediate Realm, it reminds man how needy is the human spirit for the **Most Merciful One's** mercy. And the *tahajjud* prayer informs him what a necessary light it is for the night of the grave and darkness of the Intermediate Realm; it warns him of this, and through recalling the infinite bounties of the **True Bestower**, proclaims how deserving He is of praise and thanks.

And *the second morning* calls to mind the Morning of the Resurrection. For sure, however reasonable and necessary and certain the morning of this night is, the Morning of the Resurrection and the spring following the Intermediate Realm are certain to the same degree.

That is, just as each of these five times marks the start of an important revolution and recalls other great revolutions, so through the awesome daily disposals of the **Eternally Besought One's** power, each calls to mind the miracles of Divine power and gifts of Divine mercy of both every year, and every age, and every epoch. That is to say, the prescribed prayers, which are an innate duty and the basis of worship and an incontestable debt, are most appropriate and fitting for these times.

FIFTH POINT

By nature man is extremely weak, yet everything touches him, and saddens and grieves him. Also he is utterly lacking in power, yet the calamities and enemies that afflict him are extremely numerous. Also he is extremely wanting, yet his needs are indeed many. Also he is lazy and incapable, yet life's responsibilities are most burdensome. Also his humanity has connected him to the rest of the universe, yet the decline and disappearance

of the things he loves and with which he is familiar continually pains him. Also his reason shows him exalted aims and lasting fruits, yet his hand is short, his life brief, his power slight, and his patience little.

It can be clearly understood from this how essential it is for a spirit in this state at the time of **Fajr** in the early morning to have recourse to and present a petition to the Court of an **All-Powerful One of Glory**, an **All-Compassionate All-Beauteous One** through prayer and supplication, to seek success and help from Him, and what a necessary point of support it is so that he can face the things that will happen to him in the coming day and bear the duties that will be loaded on him.

The time of **Zuhr** just past midday is the time of the day's zenith and the start of its decline, the time when daily labours approach their achievement, the time of a short rest from the pressures of work, when the spirit needs a pause from the heedlessness and insensibility caused by toil, and a time Divine bounties are manifested. Anyone may understand then how fine and agreeable, how necessary and appropriate it is for the human spirit to perform the midday prayer, which means to be released from the pressure, shake off the heedlessness, and leave behind those meaningless, transient things, and clasping one's hands at the Court of the **True Bestower of Bounties**, the **Eternally Self-Subsistent One**, to offer praise and thanks for all His gifts, and seek help from Him, and through bowing to display one's impotence before His glory and tremendousness, and to prostrate and proclaim one's wonder, love, and humility. One who does not understand this is not a true human being.

As for the time of **'Asr** in the afternoon, it calls to mind the melancholy season of autumn and the mournful state of old age and the sombre period at the end of time. It is also when the matters of the day reach their conclusion, and the time the Divine bounties which have been received that day like health, well-being, and beneficial duties have accumulated to form a great total, and the time that proclaims through the mighty sun hinting by starting to sink that man is a guest-official and that everything is transient and inconstant. Now, the human spirit desires eternity and was created for it; it worships benevolence, and is pained by separation. Thus, anyone who is truly a human being may understand what an exalted duty, what an appropriate service, what a fitting way to repay a debt of human nature, indeed, what an agreeable pleasure it is to perform the afternoon prayer. For by offering supplications at the Eternal Court of the **Everlasting Pre-Eternal One**, the **Eternally Self-Subsistent One**, it has the meaning of taking refuge in the grace of unending, infinite mercy, and by offering thanks and praise in the face of innumerable bounties, of humbly bowing before the mightiness of His dominicality, and by prostrating in utter humility before the everlastingness of His Godhead, of finding true consolation of heart and ease of spirit, and being girded ready for worship in the presence of His grandeur.

The time of **Maghrib** at sunset recalls the disappearance amid sad farewells of the delicate, lovely creatures of the worlds of summer and autumn at the start of winter. It calls to mind the time when through his death, man will leave all those he loves in sorrowful departure and enter the grave. It brings to mind when at the death of this world amid the convulsions of its death-agonies, all its inhabitants will migrate to other worlds

and the lamp of this place of examination will be extinguished. It is a time which gives stern warning to those who worship transient, ephemeral beloveds.

Thus, at such a time, for the **Maghrib** prayer, man's spirit, which by its nature is a mirror desirous for an **Eternal Beauty**, turns its face towards the throne of mightiness of the **Eternal Undying One**, the **Enduring Everlasting One**, Who performs these mighty works and turns and transforms these huge worlds, and declaring "Allahu Akbar" (**Allah** is Most Great) over these transient beings, withdraws from them. Man clasps his hands in service of his **Lord** and rises in the presence of the **Enduring Eternal One**, and through saying: "**Alhamdulillah**" (All praise be to **Allah**), he praises and extols His faultless perfection, His peerless beauty, His infinite mercy. Through declaring:

﴿إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ﴾

"You alone do we worship and from You alone we seek help," (Qur'an,1:5) he proclaims his worship for and seeks help from His unassisted dominicality, His unpartnered Godhead, His unshared sovereignty. Then he bows, and through declaring together with all the universe his weakness and impotence, his poverty and baseness before the infinite majesty, the limitless power, and utter mightiness of the

Enduring Eternal One, he says: **سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْعَظِيمِ** "All glory to My **Mighty Sustainer**," and glorifies his **Sublime Sustainer**. And prostrating before the undying **Beauty of His Essence**, His unchanging sacred attributes, His constant everlasting perfection, through abandoning all things other than Him, man proclaims his love and worship in wonder and self-abasement. He finds an **All-Compassionate Eternal One**. And through saying,

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْأَعْلَى

"All glory to my Exalted Sustainer," he declares his **Most High Sustainer** to be free of decline and exalted above any fault.

Then, he testifies to **Allah's** unity and the prophethood of **Muhammad** (Peace and blessings be upon him). He sits, and on his own account offers as a gift to the **Undying All-Beauteous One**, the **Enduring All-Glorious One** the blessed salutations and benedictions of all creatures. And through greeting **Allah's Most Noble Messenger**, he renews his allegiance to him and proclaims his obedience to his commands. In order to renew and illuminate his faith, he observes the wise order in this palace of the universe and testifies to the unity of the **All-Glorious Maker**. And he testifies to the Messengership of **Muhammad the Arabian** (Peace and blessings be upon him), who is the herald of the sovereignty of **Allah's** dominicality, the proclaimer of those things pleasing to Him, and the interpreter of the signs and verses of the book of the universe. To perform the **Maghrib** prayer is this. So how can someone be considered a human being who does not understand what a fine and pure duty is the prayer at sunset, what an exalted and pleasurable act of service, what an agreeable and pleasing act of worship, what a serious matter, and what an unending conversation and permanent happiness it is in this transient guesthouse?

At the time of **Isha** at nightfall, the last traces of the day remaining on the horizon disappear, and the world of night enfolds the universe. As the **All-Powerful and Glorious**

One, **مُقَلِّبِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ** **The Changer of Night and Day,** turns the white page of day into the black page of night through the mighty disposals of His dominicality, it recalls the

Divine activities of that **All-Wise One of Perfection,** **مُسَخِّرِ الشَّمْسِ وَالْقَمَرِ** **The Subduer of the Sun and the Moon,** turning the green-adorned page of summer into the frigid white page of winter. And with the remaining works of the departed being erased from this world with the passing of time, it recalls the Divine acts of The **Creator and Life and Death** in their passage to another, quite different world. It is a time that calls to mind the disposals of The **Creator of the Heavens and the Earth's** awesomeness and the manifestations of His beauty in the utter destruction of this narrow, fleeting, and lowly world, the terrible death-agonies of its decease, and in the unfolding of the broad, eternal, and majestic world of the hereafter. And the universe's Owner, its **True Disposer,** its **True Beloved and Object of Worship** can only be the One Who with ease turns night into day, winter into spring, and this world into the hereafter like the pages of a book; Who writes and erases them, and changes them.

Thus, at nightfall, man's spirit, which is infinitely impotent and weak, and infinitely poor and needy, and plunged into the infinite darkness of the future, and tossed around amid innumerable events, performs the **'Isha** prayer, which has this meaning: like Abraham

man says: **﴿لَا أُحِبُّ الْأَفْلِينَ﴾** "I love not those that set," (Qur'an, 6:76) and through the prayers seeks refuge at the Court of an **Undying Object of Worship,** an **Eternal Beloved One,** and in this transient world and fleeting life and dark world and black future he supplicates an **Enduring, Everlasting One,** and for a moment of unending conversation, a few seconds of immortal life, he asks to receive the favours of the **All-Merciful and Compassionate One's** mercy and the light of His guidance, which will strew light on his world and illuminate his future and bind up the wounds resulting from the departure and decline of all creatures and friends.

Temporarily man forgets the hidden world, which has forgotten him, and pours out his woes at the Court of Mercy with his weeping, and whatever happens, before sleeping – which resembles death– he performs his last duty of worship. And in order to close favourably the daily record of his actions, he rises to pray; that is to say, he rises to enter the presence of an **Eternal Beloved and Worshipped One** in place of all the mortal ones he loves, of an **All-Powerful and Generous One** in place of all the impotent creatures from which he begs, of an **All-Compassionate Protector** so as to be saved from the evil of the harmful beings before which he trembles.

He starts with the Sura al-Fatiha, that is, instead of praising and being obliged to defective, wanting creatures, for which they are not suited, he extols and offers praise to The **Sustainer of All the Worlds,** Who is **Absolutely Perfect** and **Utterly Self-Sufficient** and

Most Compassionate and **All-Generous.** Then he progresses to the address: **﴿إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ﴾** "You alone do we worship." That is, despite his smallness, insignificance, and aloneness, through man's connection with The **Owner of the Day of Judgement,** Who is the

Sovereign of Pre-Eternity and Post-Eternity, he attains to a rank whereat he is an indulged guest in the universe and an important official. Through declaring:

﴿إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ﴾

“You alone do we worship and from You alone do we seek help,” he presents to Him in the name of all creatures the worship and calls for assistance of the mighty congregation and huge community of the universe. Then through saying:

﴿اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ﴾

“Guide us to the Straight Path,” he asks to be guided to the Straight Path, which leads to eternal happiness and is the luminous way.

And now, he thinks of the mightiness of the **All-Glorious One**, of Whom, like the sleeping plants and animals, the hidden suns and sober stars are all soldiers subjugated to His command, and lamps and servants in this guesthouse of the world, and uttering: “**Allahu Akbar**” (**Allah** is Most Great), he bows down. Then he thinks of the great prostration of

﴿كُنْ فَيَكُونُ﴾

all creatures. That is, when, at the command of “Be!” and it is, (Qur’an, 2:117) all the varieties of creatures each year and each century – even the earth, and the universe – each like a well-ordered army or an obedient soldier, is discharged from its duty, that is, when each is sent to the World of the Unseen, through the prostration of its decease and death with complete orderliness, it declares: “Allahu Akbar” (**Allah** is Most Great) and bows down in prostration. Like they are raised to life, some in part and some the same, in the spring at an awakening and life-giving trumpet-blast from the command of “Be!” and it is,’ and they rise up and are girded ready to serve their Lord, insignificant man too, following them, declares: “Allahu Akbar!” in the presence of the **All-Merciful One of Perfection**, the **All-Compassionate One of Beauty** in wonderstruck love and eternity-tinged humility and dignified self-effacement, and bows down in prostration; that is to say, he makes a sort of Ascension. For sure you will have understood now how agreeable and fine and pleasant and elevated, how high and pleasurable, how reasonable and appropriate a duty, service, and act of worship, and what a serious matter it is to perform the **Isha** prayer.

Thus, since each of these five times points to a mighty revolution, is a sign indicating the tremendous dominical activity, and a token of the universal Divine bounties, it is perfect wisdom that being a debt and an obligation, the prescribed prayers should be specified at those times.

﴿سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ﴾

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى مَنْ أَرْسَلْتَهُ مُعَلِّمًا لِعِبَادِكَ لِيُعَلِّمَهُمْ كَيْفِيَّةَ مَعْرِفَتِكَ وَالْعُبُودِيَّةَ

لَكَ وَمُعْرِفًا لِكُنُوزِ أَسْمَائِكَ وَتَرْجُمَانًا لِآيَاتِ كِتَابِ كَائِنَاتِكَ وَمِرَاةً بَعْبُودِيَّتِهِ لِجَمَالِ

رُبُوبِيَّتِكَ وَعَلَى إِلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ وَارْحَمْنَا وَارْحَمِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ آمِينَ

بِرَحْمَتِكَ يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ

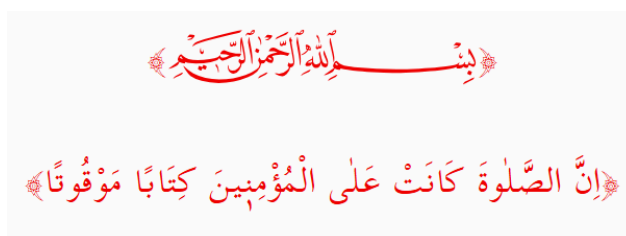
Glory be unto You! We have no knowledge save that which You have taught us; indeed You are All-Knowing, All-Wise. (Qur'an,2:32)

O Allah! Grant blessings and peace to the one whom You sent as a teacher to Your servants to instruct them in knowledge of You and worship of You, and to make known the treasures of Your Names, and to translate the signs of the book of the universe and as a mirror to its worship of the beauty of Your dominicality, and to all his Family and Companions, and have mercy on us and on all believing men and women. Amen. Through Your Mercy, O Most Merciful of the Merciful!

The Twenty-First Word

This Word consists of Two Stations.

First Station



In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

For such Prayers are enjoined on believers at stated times. (Qur'an, 4:103)

One time, a man great in age, physique, and rank said to me: "The prayers are fine, but to perform them every single day five times is excessive. Since they never end, it becomes wearying."

A long time after the man said these words, I listened to my soul and I heard it say exactly the same things. I looked at it and saw that with the ear of laziness, it was receiving the same lesson from Satan. Then I understood that those words were as though said in the name of all evil-commanding souls, or else they had been prompted. So I said: "Since my soul commands to evil, one who does not reform his own soul cannot reform others. In which case, I shall begin with my own soul."

I said: O soul! Listen to five 'Warnings' in response to those words which you uttered in compounded ignorance, on the couch of idleness, in the slumber of heedlessness.

FIRST WARNING

O my wretched soul! Is your life eternal, I wonder? Have you any incontrovertible document showing that you will live to next year, or even to tomorrow? What causes you boredom is that you fancy you shall live for ever. You complain as though you will remain in this world to enjoy yourself for ever. If you had understood that your life is brief and that it is departing fruitlessly, it surely would not cause you boredom, but excite a real eagerness and agreeable pleasure to spend one hour out of the twenty-four on a fine,

agreeable, easy, and merciful act of service which is a means of gaining the true happiness of eternal life.

SECOND WARNING

O my stomach-worshipping soul! Every day you eat bread, drink water, and breathe air; do they cause you boredom? They do not, because since the need is repeated, it is not boredom that they cause, but pleasure. In which case, the five daily prayers should not cause you boredom, for they attract the needs of your companions in the house of my body, the sustenance of my heart, the water of life of my spirit, and the air of my subtle faculties. Yes, it is by knocking through supplication on the door of **One All-Compassionate and Munificent** that sustenance and strength may be obtained for a heart afflicted with infinite griefs and sorrows and captivated by infinite pleasures and hopes. And it is by turning towards the spring of mercy of an **Eternal Beloved** through the five daily prayers that the water of life may be imbibed by a spirit connected with most beings, which swiftly depart from this transitory world crying out at separation. And being most needy for air in the sorrowful, crushing, distressing, transient, dark, and suffocating conditions of this world, it is only through the window of the prayers that a conscious inner sense and luminous subtle faculty can breathe, which by its nature desires eternal life and was created for eternity and is a mirror of the **Pre-Eternal and Post-Eternal One** and is infinitely delicate and subtle.

THIRD WARNING

O my impatient soul! Is it at all sensible to think today of past hardships of worship, difficulties of the prayers, and troubles of misfortune, and be distressed, and to imagine the future duties of worship, service of the prayers, and sorrows of disaster, and display impatience? In being thus impatient you resemble a foolish commander, who, although the enemy's right flank joined his right flank and became fresh forces for him, sent a significant force to the right flank, and weakened the centre. Then, while there were no enemy soldiers on the left flank, he sent a large force there, and gave them the order to fire. No forces then remained in the centre, and the enemy understood this and attacked it and routed him.

Yes, you resemble this, for the troubles of yesterday have today been transformed into mercy; the pain has gone while the pleasure remains. The difficulty has been turned into blessings, and the hardship into reward. In which case, you should not feel wearied at it, but make a serious effort to continue with a new eagerness and fresh enthusiasm. As for future days, they have not yet arrived, and to think of them now and feel bored and wearied is a lunacy like thinking today of future hunger and thirst, and starting to shout and cry out. Since the truth is this, if you are reasonable, you will think of only today in connection with worship, and say: "I am spending one hour of it on an agreeable, pleasant, and elevated act of service, the reward for which is high and whose trouble is little." Then your bitter dispiritedness will be transformed into sweet endeavour.

My impatient soul! You are charged with being patient in three respects. One is patience in worship. Another is patience in refraining from sin. And a third is patience in the face of disaster. (*Suyuti, al-Durar al-Muntathira, 46; Suyuti, al-Fath al-Kabir,ii, 200*) If you are intelligent,

take as your guide the truth apparent in the comparison in this Third Warning. Say in manly fashion: “O **Most Patient One!**”, and shoulder the three sorts of patience. If you do not squander on the wrong way the forces of patience **Almighty Allah** has given you, they should be enough to withstand every difficulty and disaster. So hold out with those forces!

FOURTH WARNING

O my foolish soul! Is this duty of worship without result, and is its recompense little that it causes you weariness? Whereas if someone was to give you a little money, or to intimidate you, he could make you work till evening, and you would work without slacking. So is it that the prescribed prayers are without result, which in this guest-house of the world are sustenance and wealth for your impotent and weak heart, and in your grave, which will be a certain dwelling-place for you, sustenance and light, and at the Resurrection, when you will anyway be judged, a document and patent, and on the Bridge of Sirat, over which you are bound to pass, a light and a mount? Are their recompense little? Someone promises you a present worth a hundred liras, and makes you work for a hundred days. You trust the man who may go back on his word and work without slacking. So if One for Whom the breaking of a promise is impossible, promises you recompense like Paradise and a gift like eternal happiness, and employs you for a very short time in a very agreeable duty, if you do not perform that service, or you act accusingly towards His promise or slight His gift by performing it unwillingly like someone forced to work, or by being bored, or by working in half-hearted fashion, you will deserve a severe reprimand and awesome punishment. Have you not thought of this? Although you serve without flagging in the heaviest work in this world out of fear of imprisonment, does the fear of an eternal incarceration like Hell not fill you with enthusiasm for a truly light and agreeable act of service?

FIFTH WARNING

O my world-worshipping soul! Does your slackness in worship and remissness in the prescribed prayers arise from the multiplicity of your worldly occupations, or because you cannot find time due to the struggle for livelihood? Were you created only for this world that you spend all your time on it? You know that in regard to your abilities you are superior to all the animals, but in regard to procuring the necessities of worldly life you cannot compete with even a sparrow. So why can you not understand that your basic duty is not to labour like an animal, but to strive for a true, perpetual life, like a true human being. In addition, the things you call worldly occupations mostly do not concern you, and are trivial matters which you meddle in officiously. You neglect the essential things and pass your time acquiring inessential information as though you were going to live for a thousand years. For example, you squander your precious time on worthless things like learning what the rings around Saturn are like or how many chickens there are in America. As though you were becoming an expert in astronomy or statistics.

If you say: “What keeps me from the prayers and worship and causes me to be lax is not unnecessary things like that, but essential matters like earning a livelihood,” then my answer is this: if you work for a daily wage of one hundred kurush, and someone comes to you and says: “Come and dig here for ten minutes, and you will find a brilliant and an emerald worth a hundred liras.” If you reply: “No, I won’t come, because ten kurush will

be cut from my wage and my subsistence will be less,” of course you understand what a foolish pretext it would be. In just the same way, you work in this orchard for your livelihood. If you abandon the obligatory prayers, all the fruits of your effort will be restricted to only a worldly, unimportant, and unproductive livelihood. But if you spend your rest periods on the prayers, which allow your spirit to relax and heart to take a breather, you will discover two mines which are an important source, both for a productive worldly livelihood, and your livelihood and provisions of the hereafter.

First Mine: Through a sound intention, you will receive a share of the praises and glorifications offered by all the plants and trees, whether flowering or fruit-bearing, that you grow in the garden. *(This First Station was a lesson for someone in a garden, so it was explained in this way.)*

Second Mine: Whatever is eaten of the garden’s produce, whether by animals or man, cattle or flies, buyers or thieves, it will become like almsgiving from you. *(Bukhari, iii, 135; Muslim, ii, 1189; Ibn Hibban, v, 152; Musnad, iii, 184)* But on condition you work in the name of the **True Provider** and within the bounds of what He permits, and see yourself as a distribution official giving His property to His creatures.

So see what a great loss is made by one who abandons the prescribed prayers. What significant wealth he loses, and he is deprived of those two results and mines which would otherwise cause him to work eagerly and ensure his morale is strong; he becomes bankrupt. Even, as he grows old, he will grow weary of gardening and lose interest in it, saying, “What is it to me? I am anyway leaving this world, why should I put up with this much difficulty?” He will sink into idleness. But the first man says: “I shall work harder at both worship and licit activities in order to send even more abundant light to my grave and procure more provisions for my life in the hereafter.”

In Short: O my soul! Know that yesterday has left you, and as for tomorrow, you have nothing to prove that it will be yours. In which case, know that your true life is the present day. So throw at least one of its hours into a mosque or prayer-mat, a coffer for the hereafter like a reserve fund, set up for the true future. Know too that for you and for everyone each new day is the door to a new world. If you do not perform the prayers, your world that day will depart dark and wretched, and will testify against you in the World of Similitudes. For everyone, every day, has a private world out of this world, and its nature is dependent on the person’s heart and actions. Like a splendid palace reflected in a mirror takes on the colour of the mirror; if it is black, it appears black; if it is red, it appears red. Also it takes on the qualities of the mirror; if the mirror is smooth, it shows the palace to be beautiful, and if it is not, it shows it to be ugly. As it shows the most delicate things to be coarse, so you alter the shape of your own world with your heart, mind, actions, and wishes. You may make it testify either for you or against you. If you perform the five daily prayers, and through them you are turned towards that world’s **Glorious Maker**, all of a sudden your world, which looks to you, is lit up. Quite simply as though the prayers are an electric lamp and your intention to perform them touches the switch, they disperse the world’s darkness and show the changes and movements within the confused wretchedness of worldly chaos to be a wise and purposeful order and a meaningful writing of Divine power. They scatter one light of the light-filled verse,

﴿اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ﴾

Allah is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth (Qur'an, 24:35)

over your heart, and your world on that day is illuminated through the light's reflection. It will cause it to testify in your favour through its luminosity.

Beware, do not say: "What are my prayers in comparison with the reality of the prayers?", because like the seed of a date-palm describes the full-grown tree, your prayers describe your tree. The difference is only in the summary and details; like the prayers of a great Saint (Awliya), the prayers of ordinary people like you or me, even if they are not aware of it, have a share of that light. There is a mystery in this truth, even if the conscious mind does not perceive it... but the unfolding and illumination differs according to the degrees of those performing them. However many stages and degrees there are from the seed of a date-palm to the mature tree, the degrees of the prayers and their stages are even more numerous. But the essence of that luminous truth is present in all the degrees.

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى مَنْ قَالَ: « الصَّلَاةُ عِمَادُ الدِّينِ » وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ

O Allah! Grant blessings and peace to the one who said: "The five daily prayers are the pillar of religion," (Tirmidhî, Imân, 8; Ibn Mâja, Fitan, 12; Musnad, v, 231, 237; al-Hâkim, al-Mustadrak, ii, 76.) and to all his Family and Companions.

Conclusion

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ﴾

In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

And what are the goods of this world but the goods of deception? (Qur'an, 3:185)

[A slap for the heedless and a warning lesson]

O my wretched soul sunk in heedlessness, which sees this life as sweet, has forgotten the hereafter, and seeks only this world! Do you know what you resemble? An ostrich! It sees the hunter, but cannot fly, so sticks its head in the sand so the hunter will not see it. Its bulky body remains in the open, and the hunter sees it. Only, its eyes are closed in the sand and it cannot see him. O my soul, consider the following comparison, and see it!

Restricting one's view to this world transforms a great pleasure into a grievous pain. For example, there are two men in this village, that is, in Barla. Ninety-nine out of a hundred of the friends of one of them have gone to Istanbul, where they are living in fine fashion. Only one has remained here, and he too will go there. For this reason, the man longs for

Istanbul and thinks of it; he wants to join his friends. When he is told to go there, he is overjoyed and goes happily. As for the second man, ninety-nine of his friends have departed from here. But some have perished, and some have been put in places where they neither see nor are seen. He imagines that they have departed and disappeared in utter misery. This wretched man becomes friendly with a single guest in place of all of them, and wants to find consolation. Through him he wants to forget his grievous pain of separation.

O my soul! Foremost **Allah's Beloved**, and all your friends, are beyond the grave. The one or two who remain will also depart for there. So do not be frightened of death, anxious at the grave, and avert your head. Look manfully at the grave, and listen to what it seeks. Laugh in death's face like a man, and see what it wants. Beware, do not be heedless and resemble the second man.

O my soul! Do not say, "The times have changed, this age is different, everyone is plunged into this world and worships this life. Everyone is drunk with the struggle for livelihood." For death does not change. Separation is not transformed into permanence and does not become different. Man's impotence and poverty do not change, they increase. Man's journey is not cut, it becomes faster.

Also, do not say, "I am like everyone else." For everyone befriends you only as far as the grave, and the consolation of being together with everyone else in disaster has no meaning beyond the grave. And do not suppose yourself to be free and independent. For if you look at this guest-house of the world with the eye of wisdom, you will see that nothing at all is without order and without purpose. How can you remain outside the order and be without purpose? Events in the world like earthquakes are not the playthings of chance. For example, you see that the extremely well-ordered and finely embroidered shirts, one over the other and one within the other, which are clothed on the earth from the species of animals and plants, are adorned and decked out from top to bottom with purposes and instances of wisdom, and you know that the earth revolves and is turned like an ecstatic Mevlevi in perfect order within most exalted aims. How is it then, as an atheist published, they suppose the death-tainted events of the earth, like the earthquake, (*This was written in connection with the İzmir earthquake.*) which resembles the earth's shaking off itself the weight of certain forms of heedlessness of which it disapproves from mankind, and especially from the believers, to be without purpose and the result of chance? How is it that they show the grievous losses of all those stricken to be without recompense and to have gone for nothing, and cast them into a fearsome despair? They are both making a great error and perpetrating a great wrong. Indeed, such events occur at the command of **One All-Wise** and **All-Compassionate**, in order to transform the transient property of the believers into the equivalent of alms, and make it permanent. And they are atonement for their sins arising from ingratitude for bounties. Just as a day will come when this subjugated earth will see the works of man, which are the adornment of its face, to be tainted by the attributing of partners to **Allah** and not to be the cause of thanks, and it will find them ugly. At the **Creator's** command, it will wipe them off its entire face and cleanse it. At **Allah's** command, it will pour those who attribute partners to **Allah** into Hell, and say to those who offer thanks, "Come and enter Paradise!"

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَ
الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ * الَّذِي جَعَلَ
لَكُمْ الْأَرْضَ فِرَاشًا وَالسَّمَاءَ بِنَاءً وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ
السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ رِزْقًا
لَكُمْ فَلَا تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أَنْدَادًا وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

O you people! Worship your Lord and Sustainer, who has created you and those who lived before you, so that you might remain conscious of Him; Who has made the earth a resting-place for you and the sky a canopy, and has sent down water from the sky and thereby brought forth fruits for your sustenance: then set not up rivals to Allah, when you know the truth.

Introduction

You should know that it is worship that instils the tenets of belief in the believers making them a very part of their character. For if matters pertaining to the conscience and reason are not nurtured and strengthened by worship, which consists of carrying out **Allah's** commands and abstaining from His prohibitions, they remain ineffectual and weak. The present state of the Islamic world testifies to this.

Know too that worship is the cause of happiness in this world and the next, and is a means of ordering life here and there, and a cause of attainment and perfection, both individual and collective. It is an exalted, esteemed relation between **Creator** and bondsman.

There are several reasons worship is the cause of happiness and prosperity in this world, which is the tillage of the hereafter:

Firstly: Man has been created with a strange, subtle nature distinguishing him from all other living beings and making him an exception to them. By virtue of this there have arisen in him the desire to choose, and the wish for the most beautiful things and for fine decoration, and a natural desire to have a livelihood and position befitting humanity.

For his food, dress, and accommodation – the need for which arises due to the above-mentioned desires – to be prepared proficiently man has need of multiple arts and crafts, but he is incapable of practising all of these on his own. He needs therefore to mix with his fellow-men and to co-operate with them, and for all of them to assist each other and exchange the fruits of their labour. However, since so as to allow men's progress by means of the mainspring of the will the **All-Wise Maker** placed no innate limits on the three human powers of appetite, anger, and intellect – as with the animals and their limited powers – tyranny and aggression have arisen. And since no limit has been placed on them, the powers tend to aggression and the human community is in need of justice when exchanging the fruits of its labour. But because the intellects of single members of society are incapable of comprehending justice, the human race as a whole needs a general or

universal intellect to establish justice from which all may benefit. and that intellect is the universal law, and that law is the **Shari'a**. Then in order to preserve the effectiveness of the **Shari'a** and its enforcement, a lawmaker is necessary, someone to lay claim to it and promulgate it, an authority, and that is the **Prophet** (Upon whom be blessings and peace).

Then in order to perpetuate his outward and inward domination over people's minds and hearts the **Prophet** needs to be eminently superior both physically and spiritually and morally, and in conduct and appearance, and by nature and in character. He is in need too of proof of the strength of his relations with the **Lord of All Sovereignty, the Master of the World**, and such a proof is his miracles. Then in order to secure obedience to its commands and avoidance of its prohibitions he is in need of perpetuating the idea of the **Maker's** grandeur, the **Master of all Sovereignty**, and that is possible through the manifestation of the tenets of belief. Then in order to perpetuate this idea and fix the tenets of belief firmly in their minds, he needs a constantly repeated reminder and renewed act, and that reminder is nothing but worship.

Secondly: The purpose of worship is to turn minds towards the **All-Wise Maker**. And this turning towards induces obedience and submission, and this includes the worshippers under the perfect order in the universe and binds them to it. To follow this order leads to the realization of the mystery of wisdom, and the wisdom is testified to by the perfect art in the universe.

Thirdly: Man resembles a pole to the top of which are joined electric cables, for attached to his head are the tips of all the laws of creation; the natural laws extend to him, and the rays of the divine laws and principles in the universe are reflected and centred on him. So man has to complete them and adhere to them and cling on to them to facilitate the general current lest his foot slips and he falls and is crushed under the wheels of the machinery turning in the levels of the world. And this is achieved through worship, which consists of conforming to the commands and prohibitions.

Fourthly: By complying with the commands and prohibitions numerous connections are formed for a person with the many levels of society, and the individual becomes like a species. For many of the commands, especially those that touch on the marks of **Islam** and the general good, resemble threads to which are tied people's honour and through which their rights are set in order. If it were not for them, all those rights and duties would be torn up and scattered to the wind.

Fifthly: The Muslim has firm relations with all other Muslims and there are strong bonds between them. By reason of the tenets of belief and the Muslims' Islamic traits these relations give rise to unshakeable brotherhood and true love. And it is worship that makes manifest the tenets of belief and renders them effective, and roots them firmly in the psyche.

How worship is the cause of personal attainment and perfection:

Consider this: together with being physically small, weak, and powerless, and being one of the animals, man bears within him an exalted spirit, and has vast potentiality, unrestricted desires, infinite hopes, uncountable ideas, and unlimited powers, and he has a nature so strange he is as though an index of all the species and all the worlds. As for

worship, it expands his spirit and raises his value; it causes his abilities to unfold and develop, allowing him to become worthy of eternal happiness. Worship is also a means of rectifying and purifying his inclinations, and of realizing his hopes and making them fruitful, and of marshalling his ideas and setting them in order, and also of reining in and limiting his three powers of appetite, anger, and intellect. Worship also removes the rust of nature from his members, physical and spiritual, each of which when transparent is like a window onto his private world and that of humankind. Also, when performed with both conscience and mind and heart and body, worship raises man to the dignity of which he is worthy and to his appointed perfection. It is a subtle, elevated relation, an illustrious lofty connection between the bondsman and the **One Worshipped**. This relation constitutes the utmost degree of human perfection.

Sincerity in worship is this, that it is performed only because it is commanded, although it comprises numerous instances of wisdom and benefits. Each of these may be a reason (*'illa*) for performing worship, but sincerity makes it imperative that the true reason be the command to perform it. If the wisdom or benefit is made the reason, the worship is null and void, but if it merely encourages the person to perform the worship, it is permissible. (*From the Signs of Miraculousness*)

Nur Way 2026

