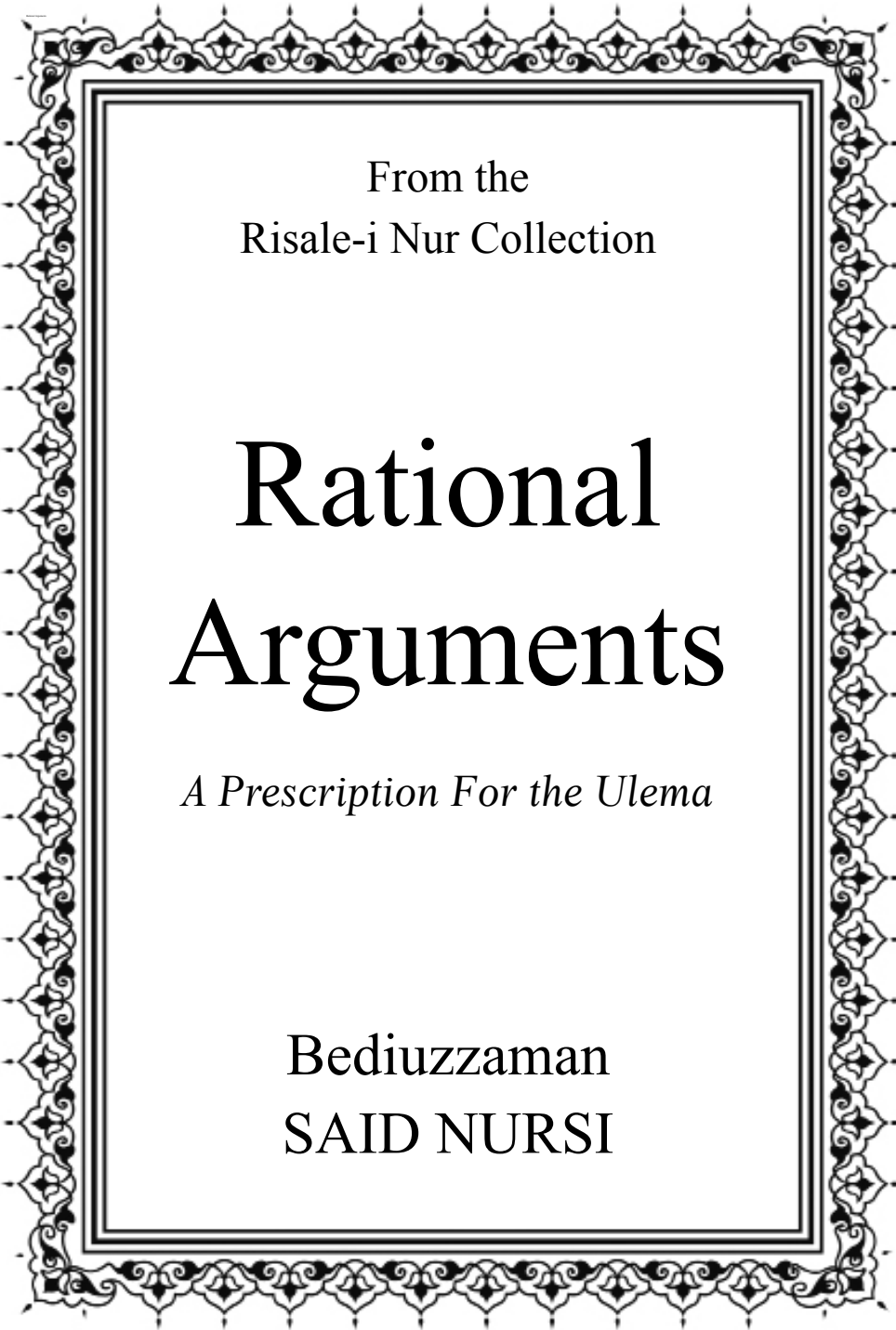


RATIONAL ARGUMENTS

Sözler®



From the
Risale-i Nur Collection

Rational Arguments

A Prescription For the Ulema

Bediuzzaman
SAID NURSI

ISBN:978-975-432-509-6

Sözler Neşriyat Tic. ve San. A.Ş.

Translated from the Turkish Muhâkemât

by Şükran Vahide

Copyright © 2017, 2020 by Sözler Neşriyat Ticaret ve Sanayi A.Ş.

All rights reserved. This book may not be reproduced by any means in whole or in part without prior written permission.

For information, address: Sözler Neşriyat A. Ş.,

Ankara Cad. No: 31/10, Cağaloğlu, İstanbul, Turkey.

Tel: + 90 212 527 10 10

Fax: + 90 212 520 8231

S. Demirel Bulvarı, Aykosan San. Sit.

A Blok, Kat 3, No: 244,

İkitelli, İstanbul, Turkey.

Tel: + 90 212 671 25 47-48.

Fax: + 90 212 671 25 49

www.sozler.com.tr

www.erisale.com

www.istanbul.sozler.com.tr

Email:sozler@sozler.com.tr

Printed at:

Contents

Publisher's Preface	7
<i>Rational Arguments: A Prescription for the Ulema</i>	11
The First Article: The Element of Reality	19
The First Premise	19
The Second Premise.....	22
The Third Premise	24
The Fourth Premise.....	27
The Fifth Premise	29
The Sixth Premise	30
The Seventh Premise	33
The Eighth Premise.....	36
The Ninth Premise	39
The Tenth Premise	43
The Eleventh Premise	45
The Twelfth Premise.....	46
The First Matter	51
The Second Matter.....	54
The Third Matter. Qaf Mountain	56
The Fourth Matter. The Barrier of Dhu'l-Qarnayn.....	59
The Fifth Matter.....	62
The Sixth Matter	63
The Seventh Matter.....	65
The Eighth Matter	65

The Second Article : The Element of Rhetoric and Eloquence	73
The First Matter	73
The Second Matter	75
The Third Matter	76
The Fourth Matter	78
The Fifth Matter	79
The Sixth Matter	81
The Seventh Matter	84
The Eighth Matter	85
The Ninth Matter	86
The Tenth Matter	88
The Eleventh Matter	89
The Twelfth Matter	89
Conclusion	91
The Third Article : The Element of Doctrine.....	95
The First Aim.....	97
The Second Aim	111
The First Way	118
The Second Way	120
The Third Way.....	121
The Fourth Way	124
The Fifth Way	131
The Third Aim	134
General Index.....	139
Index of Qur'anic Verses and Hadiths	147

Publisher's Preface

Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (1876–1960) states clearly at both the beginning and end of the present book his intention in writing it. His chief aim was to set out the principles of Qur'anic exegesis, and in so doing to demonstrate the straight path of Islam, thereby removing the doubts of the sceptics on the one hand and rectifying a number of misunderstandings adhered to by literalist ulema on the other. The basis of the doubts and misunderstandings he was attempting to reply to was “the groundless idea” of there being a clash and conflict between Islam and science. This preface will firstly set the work in context and explain briefly the background to its writing and then in the light of this will outline the way the book is set out.

Some time after returning to eastern Anatolia from Istanbul in early 1910 two years after the reinstatement of the Constitution, Bediuzzaman made a journey around the region which produced two fruits: one was a work which recorded his debates with Kurdish tribesmen about constitutionalism and what it meant for them and was called *Disputations (Münâzarat)*, while the other was the present work, which addressed the ulema and was entitled *Rational Arguments (Muhâkemat)* and in the original Arabic version, *A Prescription for the Ulema*. The full title of the Turkish version is *The Prescription for a Sick Age, An Ill People, A Diseased Member, or Polishing Islam, or Bediuzzaman's Rational Arguments*. Its shortened title, however, is generally used.

The projects for educational reform that Bediuzzaman proposed as the mainspring of the development of eastern Anatolia within the Ottoman Empire envisaged the introduction of the modern sciences into medrese education and their joint teaching with the traditional religious sciences. This demanded the acceptance of science by the religious scholars of standing, the ulema, who were held in respect by the people, in both the medreses and the mosques. Most probably due to the influence of certain traditional schools of thought, the ulemas' literalist interpretation of verses of the Qur'an and Hadiths, together with their lack of knowledge of modern science and their associating it with increasing European influence, had led

many of them to bitterly oppose it, chiefly on the grounds that some of its matters conflicted with Revelation. In this they were in agreement with religious sceptics who lacked knowledge of Islam and put their faith in science. Bediuzzaman therefore specified literalism and those who practised it as a key factor hindering the development and progress of the region and the Ottomans generally.

The solution for the above situation that Bediuzzaman offered with this book lay in his setting out a number of rational principles for Qur'anic exegesis, included in a variety of disciplines. What he was proposing was not new as is shown below; what was new was his approach and style and his pinpointing specific problems associated with literalism and his demonstrating how they could be overcome. He was also at pains to show that, if interpreted correctly in the light of such sciences as rhetoric, Arabic, and logic, verses of the Qur'an that had been imagined to conflict with modern science, were in fact congruent with it.

The basis of Bediuzzaman's argument was that "Islam ... is founded on reality, girded with proof, consults with reason, is seated on the throne of truth, and is conformable with the principles of wisdom [in the cosmos] that continue in sequence from pre-eternity to post-eternity." In the course of time, however, Islam as it was in reality had become obscured due to neglect and other circumstances, causing the decline of the Muslims and Islamic world. Bediuzzaman argued that since the Qur'an addresses the human reason and conscience and other inner faculties, it indicates both the path to be taken to reverse the decline, and its superiority over other religions. He therefore exposed what he saw to be the main matters obscuring Islam's reality, causing superstition and false beliefs to become confused with it, and he showed that applying the disciplines of logic, rational demonstration and argumentation, rhetoric, and the linguistic sciences, truth, in other words, the reality of Islam, might be revealed. In any event the purpose of all these disciplines, as well as of all the Islamic sciences, is the ascertainment of truth and reality. It is the purpose too of modern science, as Bediuzzaman was at pains to show, for which reason, just as the Qur'an and the universe are mutually interpretative, so the Qur'an and Islam are "completely compatible" with the physical sciences, let alone conflicting or being contradictory. Hence the title of the First Article, The Element of Reality.

In his endeavours to reveal the reality of Islam Bediuzzaman employed the disciplines mentioned above. This was not an innovation, however, for they were all taught in the medreses. He states his position and method with

the first proposition of the First Premise of the First Article: if reason and scripture conflict, reason is taken as basic and scripture is interpreted. As he says, this is “an established principle,” for it was an exegetical principle favoured by scholars of the Ash‘arī School. It had been called “the rule of interpretation” by al-Ghazali, “the universal rule” by al-Razi, and had been expounded by al-Taftazani and al-Sayyid al-Sharif al-Jurjani, whose *kalām* manuals were basic texts taught in the medreses. Mention is made of all these eminent scholars in various contexts in this book.

Recalling the importance of logical reasoning and the other disciplines he has elucidated in outlining his proposed principles for Qur’anic exegesis, Bediuzzaman invites his readers to combine the Element of Reality, the First Article, with the Element of Rhetoric and Eloquence, the Second Article, as though the former were the major premise and the latter the minor premise, so as to produce the result or conclusion of the Element of Doctrine, the Third Article.

In the Third Article, Bediuzzaman intended to offer proofs for the four main aims of the Qur’an; that is, proof of the Single Maker, prophethood, bodily resurrection, and justice, the chief tenets of belief. However, having established the truth of the first two of the four main aims with various proofs and in places making reference to modern science, the work remained unfinished with the third, the resurrection of the dead, to be completed only thirty years later with the *Risale-i Nur*.

A note on the term ‘hikmet’, a key term in the First Article:

Historically, various meanings have been assigned the term *hikmet* in different branches of Islamic thought in addition to its usual meaning, wisdom. It has been defined as “knowledge of, or the theoretical science that investigates to the limits of human ability, the true nature or reality of the things in existence.” It was thus used synonymously with the term philosophy, and often with what was known as natural philosophy. By natural philosophy was meant natural science, especially the physical sciences and the study of nature. In the nineteenth century, what we now know as science acquired its modern meaning, together with the development of its various branches, that is, biology, botany, geology, and so on. With the introduction of the modern sciences into the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century, writers used the term *hikmet* to refer to both Islamic philosophy and Western philosophy. *Hikmet-i cedide* referred to modern philosophy. *Hikmet* was also used to refer to modern science in such expressions as *hikmet-i tecrübiye* (empirical science). When it comes to Bediuzzaman, he uses the term *hikmet* in all

three meanings: he occasionally uses in the sense of philosophy generally, as when referring to Greek philosophy; he more frequently uses it meaning natural philosophy, but in doing this, distinguishes between ancient philosophy (*eski hikmet*, *hikmet-i atika*), which he denigrates as superstition since it was based on the geocentric Ptolemaic system, and modern science (*hikmet-i cedide*). He also uses the term *hikmet* on its own meaning modern science. For modern science he also and more usually uses the newer term *fenn* (pl. *fünun*) and in the text mentions many of its disciplines.

Sözler Publications

Rational Arguments
A Prescription
For the Ulema

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

All benedictions are due to the Pre-Eternal Sovereign, Eternally All-Wise, the Undying Most-Merciful, Who has honoured us with Islam and guided us with the Illustrious Shari‘a to the straight path.

Such a Shari‘a that reason and transmitted knowledge have united to affirm the veracity of its truths.

Such truths that being firmly rooted in the ground of reality, their boughs and branches rise spreading to the skies of perfection. Such branches that they yield the fruits of happiness in this world and the next.

And He has guided us through the Inimitable Qur’an;

Such a Book that having disclosed through its principles the precise, profound, divine laws inscribed by the hand of destiny and pen of wisdom in the book of the world’s creation, and are in force in it, it has become the absolute guarantor through its just injunctions of mankind’s order, balance, and progress, and is its universal master.

Endless blessings be bestowed upon the Prince of the Universe and Glory of the World to whose messengersh the world with all its realms and their beings testified, and to whose miracles it bore witness, and announced the lofty wares he brought from the treasury of the unseen. As though on coming into the world, each realm applauded him in its own tongue. The Pre-Eternal Monarch, plucking the strings of the heavens and the earth so that each with a different tongue hymned the strains of his miracles, caused the empyrean to ring out with the sweet sound. And so it will for all eternity. As though the skies uttered felicitations with the heavenly tongues of the angels and moons and his own ascension; and the earth lauded his miracles with the tongues of its stones, trees, and animals; and the atmosphere gave the glad tidings of his prophethood through the signs of the jinns and the shady clouds; and the past betokened through the prognostications of the prophets and soothsayers

the dawn of that sun of truth; and the present, that is, the Era of Bliss, held up as witness to his prophethood the mighty revolution that occurred in the character of the Arabs and the almost instantaneous emergence of absolute civilisation out of absolute primitivity; and the future welcomed his propitious arrival through its events and the stages of its precise sciences, and offered thanks with its wise tongue for his guidance; and humankind proclaimed through its seekers after truth, and particularly through the articulate tongue of Muhammad (UWBP) himself, being a proof of himself, that he had come from the Truth; and the All-Glorious One recited through the eloquent tongue of His Qur'an the decree of the Unlettered Prophet's messengership. And so they do all recite and declaim it.

Verse:

جُمْلَه شِيرَانِ جِهَانُ بَسْتَهٗ اَيْنِ سِلْسِلَهٗ اَنَد
رُوبَهٗ اَزْ حِيَلَهٗ چِه سَانِ بَغْسَلَدِ اَيْنِ سِلْسِلَهٗ رَا ¹

1. Shaykh Aḥmad Sirhindī, Maktūbāt-i Rabbānī, i, nos. 27, 58.

To proceed: this wretched, strange Nursi, who although he deserves to be called the Oddity of the Age became known as the Wonder of the Age (Bediuzzaman), cries out in extreme pain at the nation's decline, alas and alack! For abandoning the essence and kernel of Islam, we fixed our gazes on its exterior and shell. And due to misunderstandings and ill manners, we did not afford Islam its right nor pay it the respect it was due. So in disgust it swathed itself in clouds of illusion and delusion, and concealed itself. And it had the right, for we mixed *israiliyyat*¹ with the fundamentals of belief, and stories with the tenets of faith, and metaphors with the truths of belief, and did not appreciate its value. So to punish us in this world, it left us in abasement and penury. And what will save us, is again its mercy.

O Muslim brothers! We shall offer it an apology. Together we shall declare our loyalty and pay it allegiance. We shall grasp hold of its strong rope.

Also, I declare fearlessly that what has stirred me up and given me the courage to contest the ideas of past centuries, and to defend against the imaginings and misapprehensions that have gained strength through the strategies of hundreds of years, is my certain conviction that truth will sprout and grow, although it is concealed in the earth; and its partisans and supporters will be triumphant, although they may be weak and few in number due to the inclemency of time and place.

It is also my belief that it shall be the reality of Islam (*hakikat-ı İslamiye*) which will prevail over the future and be absolute ruler in every continent. It is Islam that will conquer them; the signs of this are to be seen. For in the past, eight obstacles prevented the Illustrious Shari'a vanquishing completely the bigotry and blind imitation of tent-dwellers in their far-flung privation, and the embellished trivia and despotism of house-dwellers in the lands of ignorance. But now they have been routed by three truths, or are being routed. The obstacles obstructing the Europeans were their blind imitation, ignorance, and bigotry, and the authority of their priests; while those obstructing us were various forms of despotism, immorality, our confused circumstances, and despair, which leads to idleness. These obstacles caused the steady eclipsing of the sun of Islam.

1. *İsrailiyyat* (Ar. *isrā'īliyyāt*): the body of narrative material derived from Jewish and Christian sources that from an early date was introduced into Islam and used chiefly in *tafsirs* and histories to illustrate and enlarge upon topics about which few details were given or known.

The eighth, and principal, obstacle and chief calamity is this: together with the Europeans we deludedly imagined (*tevehhüm*) there to be a clash and contradiction between some of the apparent matters of Islam (*zevâhir-i İslamiyet*) and some questions of science. Bravo to the abounding efforts of education and science (*fünun*)! For they have decked us out with the desire to search for the truth, love of humanity, and the tendency to be fair, and have overturned those obstacles and got rid of them, and are so doing.

Yes, the chief reason we have been deprived of the comforts of this world and the Europeans have been deprived of the happiness of the next and the sun of Islam has been eclipsed, is the misunderstanding and groundless idea of the clash and conflict between Islam and science. How strange! How can a slave hostilely oppose his master, or a servant his lord, or a child his father? For Islam is the master and guide of the sciences (*fünun*), and the chief and father of all true knowledge (*ulûm*). But regrettably, the above misapprehension and false idea has prevailed up to the present, and with its doubts has caused despair and closed up the door of civilisation and learning (*ma'arif*) to the Kurds and their likes. For imagining some of the apparent matters of religion to be opposed to some questions of science, they shied away from them. For instance, the sphericity of the earth, the very first step of geography, is the most elementary matter of science. But because they supposed this self-evident matter to be contrary to the six matters to be discussed later, they did not hold back from arrogantly challenging it.

O you who is scrutinizing this book of mine! Know that the service I want to perform with it is this: by demonstrating the straight path of Islam, I want both to repel the doubts of those inimical to religion – who go to one extreme – and to throw their doubts in their faces; and to repulse the misapprehensions of the literalists (*zâhirperest*) and those who go to the other extreme and deserve the epithet ‘fatuous friends’ and to show their false notions to be baseless. I want too to help and support the genuine scholars of Islam, and the intelligent and loyal, who guide to the truth and pave the way leading to Islam’s good fortune and future, striving with complete certainty of victory.

In Short: My aim is to polish that diamond sword.

If you ask: What is this anxiety of yours? And what need is there to provide proofs (*bürhan*) for knowledge that is axiomatic? For to advance proofs for questions that have become self-evident through the admixture of ideas and discoveries of the empirical sciences, is to announce what is known.

By way of answer I say this: Regretably, although all those who share with me this slice of time are apparently the children of the thirteenth century, they are in respect of ideas and progress, relics of the Middle Ages. It is as if our contemporaries are the index of the centuries from the end of the third to the thirteenth, or are samples of them, or are a hybrid people. In fact, many self-evident matters of the present, are deemed by them to be delusions.

THE ELEMENT OF REALITY

Introduction

This book is set out as three articles. The First Article throws light on the element of reality, or on the polishing up of Islam by means of a number of premises and matters. The Second Article discloses the element of rhetoric. The Third elucidates by means of the element of doctrine the answers to the Japanese. As for the books,¹ they are a sort of Qur'anic commentary (*tef-sir*) realised through investigation of the sciences of the heavens, earth, and humankind alluded to in the Qur'an.

The First Article

It is one of the rules of the authoritative scholars to use premises (*mukad-deme*) in order to reach one's objective. We therefore shall build a staircase of twelve steps.

The First Premise

It is an established principle that when reason and transmitted sacred texts conflict, reason is taken as basic and the sacred text is interpreted.² But then reason has to be [true] reason.

It is also established that the fundamental aims of the Qur'an and its essential elements, which pervade all parts of it, are fourfold. They are proof of the Single Maker, prophethood, bodily resurrection, and justice. That is to say, it is only the Qur'an that can supply decisive answers to the questions

1. The books (*kitap*) here mentioned, which in other places in the text are said to number three, evidently refer to three sections which were planned for this uncompleted work but remained unwritten. They were to contain more detailed expositions of some of the matters discussed. See pages 57, 103, 115, 118, 125. It is suggested that these books were realised in different form in Bediuzzaman's Qur'anic commentary, *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, composed 1913-14, published 1918. English tr., *Signs of Miraculousness. The Inimitability of the Qur'an's Conciseness*. 2nd edn. (Istanbul: Sözlür Publications, 2013).

2. For this rule, see Publisher's Preface.

posed to the universe by science (*hikmet*): ¹ “Tell me, O universe, where do you come from and at whose command? Who is your ruler? Who is your guide and your spokesman? What will you do here and where will you go afterwards?” Accordingly, apart from in connection with its main aims, mention of the universe in the Qur’an is digressive; it should lead by way of deductive reasoning (*istidlâl*) from the order of its art to the Glorious Maker. Yes, order is apparent; in its perfect clarity it is self-evident. Its art testifies decisively to the Maker’s existence, intention, and will, and shows itself in every facet of the universe, displaying the shining beauty of its creation to the gaze of science. It is as though every creature is a tongue extolling the Maker’s wisdom, and every species and realm of being raises its finger, testifying and pointing to it. Since the purpose is this, and since we are learning the signs and indications of the order from the book of the universe, and since the conclusions are all the same; how the universe is actually formed does not concern us. However, each being that enters the lofty council of the Qur’an is charged with four duties:

The First: To proclaim through its conforming with the order, the sovereignty of the Pre-Eternal Monarch.

The Second: Since each is the subject of a true science (*fenn-i hakikî*), it is to show that Islam is the sum and substance of the true sciences.

The Third: Since each is a sample of its species, to prove that Islam is in conformity with the divine laws and principles in force in the universe, and corresponds to them. Then Islam may grow and flourish through the assistance of those natural laws. Yes, in this respect the clear religion of Islam is far superior to other religions, which uncertain and unaided, at the behest of whim and caprice sometimes scatter light and sometimes darkness, and are subject to change.

The Fourth: Since each being is a sample of reality, its duty is to direct minds towards truths and to encourage them and admonish them. For instance, the heavenly bodies, both lofty and lowly, are distinguished by being the subject of oaths in the Qur’an, and constantly exhort the heedless to ponder over themselves. Yes, the Qur’anic oaths are a rap over the knuckles for those drifting in slumbers of heedlessness.

We have now established this to be the case, so it should in no way be doubted that the Guiding Qur’an, which is inimitable and whose eloquence is of the very highest degree, will choose the most appropriate styles of

1. For the term *hikmet*, see, note at the end of the Publisher’s Preface.

Arabic and the most direct, the clearest, and the shortest method of deductive reasoning. This means that to an extent it will take into account the feelings of the masses in order to get them to understand and to guide them. So it will mention the universe's order, which forms the evidence, in a way that is familiar to them and known by them. Otherwise the evidence would be more obscure than the thing claimed, and that would be contrary to correct methods of guidance, eloquence, and inimitability.

For example, if the Qur'an had said: O people! Behold the globe ecstatically whirling in space, and the sun stationary in its settled abode although it is in motion, and the power of gravity holding the lofty bodies together, and the chemical reactions between the many elements, the tree of creation the branches of which spread through infinite space; ponder over these and envisage the sublimity of the world's Maker. Or peer through microscope of your mind at a drop of water, for it contains a world of organisms despite its small size, and affirm that the cosmos' Maker is powerful over all things.

The evidence would surely then be more obscure than the thing claimed and more in need of explanation. Is that not so? And would it not be unreasonable to elucidate the truth with something that is unknown to them or to confuse their honest emotions with sophistries? The Qur'an's miraculousness is so elevated and free of fault, however, that the dust of misleading statements cannot cloud its shining purity.

Nevertheless, the Qur'an of Miraculous Exposition both makes allusion to its true aims within the convolutions of its clear verses, and it beams light on them with the apparent meanings of some of its verses, as with the allusions (*kinâye*) it makes.

Also, it is an established principle in the art of rhetoric that when using metonymies and making allusions, the literal meanings, known as primary meanings, are not deemed true or false. For such figures refer to the secondary meaning, which is what is intended. For example, if it is said that so-and-so's sword-belt is long, the statement is true if the person is tall, even if he does not have a sword. It is not a lie.

Also, just as in speech one word is the indicator (*karine*) of a metaphor; so some verses of Allah's Word, which resembles a single word, act as indicators of the truths and substance of their brothers, and show them the way, and point to the secrets in their neighbours' hearts, and interpret them.

In Short: Those people who cannot visualize this truth and balance up and judge the verses properly only make themselves ridiculous in the view

of reality, like the famous Bektashi who when seeking an excuse to give up the obligatory prayers, said: “The Qur’an says: (4:43) لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ and I haven’t memorised the rest.”

The Second Premise

Something that in the past was theoretical may in the future be self-evident. It has been as follows: present in the world is an inclination towards perfection ¹ due to which creation is dependent on the law of evolution (*tekâmül*). Humanity, too, inclines towards perfection and desires progress since it is one of the world’s fruits and parts. This desire grows and develops through the meeting of minds and accumulation of ideas, and the accumulation of ideas expands through basic principles being perfected. Basic principles being perfected fertilises the seeds of the physical sciences by sowing them in the ground from the loins of creation cultivated by the times. As for the seeds, they sprout and grow through gradual experimentation.

In consequence, there are numerous questions that are now obvious and have become common knowledge, but in the past were completely theoretical and hidden and in need of proof. For we see that thanks to the perfecting of principles and means and the discoveries of combined minds, many matters of geography, astronomy, chemistry and applied geometry are not unknown even to the children of today; they play with them like toys, but to Ibn Sina ² and his likes they were theoretical and hidden. Ibn Sina was like the father of science, and in respect of his acute intelligence, powerful thought, mature wisdom, and breadth of imaginative power, would prove far superior if compared with even hundreds of today’s sages. He was not lacking anything, for he was a son of his times; he was made deficient by the deficiency of the times. Isn’t it clear that if the discovery of the New World, which was the reason for the learned Columbus’ ³ fame, had remained to

1. One of us said:

*In every atom the predisposition to perfection is evident;
In every species with clear effusive display
The universe speeds towards a point of perfection;
Life rises, turned towards that point.*

Kahriyat

2. Ibn Sīnā: Abū ‘Alī al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Sīnā (d. 428/1037). The pre-eminent philosopher and physician. He was born near Bukhara and died at Hamadan.

3. Christopher Columbus (d. 1506), the explorer and navigator who made four voyages across the Atlantic to America under the patronage of the Spanish monarchs. He was born in Genoa and died in Spain.

today, any caique owner, the least worthy of sea captains, would have been capable of making the New World the neighbour of the Old. A small boat and a compass would have been sufficient substitute for the wide knowledge and braving of hazards of the earlier explorer. Attention should also be paid to the following truth. The matters are of two sorts:

The meeting of minds is influential on the first; indeed, it is dependent on it; just as co-operation is necessary to lift a large physical stone. But in the second sort, co-operation and combining ideas are essentially without effect. One and a thousand are equal. Just like jumping over a chasm or passing through a narrow defile; the whole and a part are the same. Co-operation is profitless.

According to this analogy, some of the sciences (*fünun*) are in need of co-operation, like when lifting a large boulder. These are mostly the physical sciences (*ulûm-u mâddiye*). The other sort resemble the second example; they are perfected instantaneously, or so it seems. They are mostly sciences dealing with ethics or metaphysics (*mâneviyat*) or theology. The accumulation of ideas does not alter, perfect, or augment them, but it does clarify, disclose, and strengthen their methods of proof.

It should also be noted that if a person becomes deeply involved in something, it usually makes him slow in other things. It is because of this that the person who becomes absorbed in materiality grows ignorant of spiritual and non-material matters and his knowledge is superficial. Hence, just as the pronouncement concerning moral and spiritual matters of someone proficient in material ones will not be authoritative, so most of the things he says about them will not be worth listening to. For sure, if, drawing an analogy between medicine and engineering, an invalid were to consult an engineer instead of the doctor and take the medicine he prescribed, it would mean inviting his relatives to his wake and asking for a report ordering his transfer to the hospital of the graveyard. Similarly, to consult the ideas of the materialists concerning spiritual matters, which are sheer truths and totally abstract, is quite simply to announce the arrest of the heart, a subtle dominical faculty, and the death of the mind, a luminous substance. Yes, the minds of those who seek everything in materiality see no further than their eyes, and the eyes cannot see spiritual matters.

The Third Premise

On entering the fold of Islam, a sort of *israiliyyat*¹ and a part of Greek philosophy assumed the garb of religion and threw minds into confusion. It was like this: the Arabs had been an illiterate people in the Era of Ignorance. Then the truth was manifested among them and their emotions were awakened with all their potentialities. And since they had seen the Clear Religion open up a way in full view, they focused all their efforts and desires on learning it alone. And they observed the universe not with the dissecting eye of philosophy but in second place, for purposes of deduction. The only inspiration their sensitive natural intuition received was from their expansive, elevated surroundings, which were in tune with their primordial natures; and the only training and education their unsullied, capable innate dispositions received was from the Qur'an. Later, just as the Arabs swallowed up other peoples, so too the knowledge of the other nations began to become Muslim, even. By virtue of this, such scholars of the People of the Book as Wahb and Ka'b found a way into the treasures of the Arabs' imaginings and caused confusion in their unspoilt minds. Later they were even held in respect. For the scholars of the People of the Book who embraced Islam acquired great dignity and they advanced through its distinction, and their former gilded knowledge became accepted and seemingly incontestable, and it was not refuted. For since it did not clash with the principles of Islam, it was narrated like stories, and because of its unimportance, the Arabs listened without criticising it. But alas! It was later looked on as fact and became the cause of many doubts and uncertainties.

Also, the *israiliyyat* could have been source of some allusions of the Qur'an and Sunna, or, by some connection or other, a reference for some of their concepts. But supposing the *israiliyyat* had been true, since it was possible that it corroborated aspects of the scriptures' meanings, due to their ill judgement some literalist scholars who could find no other source or did not look for one, applied certain verses and Hadiths to those *israiliyyat* stories and expounded them by means of them. However, it is only the Qur'an itself and sound Hadiths that can expound the Qur'an, not the Gospels and Torah, whose injunctions have been abrogated and stories even are corrupted. Yes, the meaning of a thing and something that corroborates it (*māsadaq*) are

1. See page 15 fn 1 above.

different. But then something that could have corroborated the meaning was substituted for it, and numerous possibilities were confused with facts.

Also, in Ma'mun's time, Greek philosophy was translated so as to make it Muslim. But since it had as its source numerous myths and superstitions, it was somewhat putrid, and confused to a degree the unspoiled minds of the Arabs when it intermixed with them. So too it paved the way leading from investigative study to blind imitation.

Also, although with their innate imaginative faculties they had the ability to deduce matters from Islam, the water of life, they deigned to become pupils of that philosophy. Yes, just as when their ability to speak truly eloquent Arabic ¹ began to be impaired by mixing with non-Arabs, the authoritative scholars codified the rules of the sciences of Arabic so as to preserve them; so too, when philosophy and *israiliyyat* entered the fold of Islam, some punctilious Islamic scholars attempted to sort them out and purify Islam of them. But alas! they were not altogether successful.

But that was not all; for when they endeavoured to expound the Qur'an, literalists applied the transmitted knowledge it contains (*nakliyat*) to some *israiliyyat* and adapted its verses requiring reasoned interpretation (*akliyat*) to the above-mentioned philosophy. For they saw that the Qur'an comprises both transmitted (*menkul*) and reasoned (*mâkul*) knowledge. Hadiths are the same. Then they deduced a correspondence and relation between some of the true matters of the Qur'an and Sunna, and corrupted matters of the *israiliyyat*. And because they imagined similarities and agreement between the matters addressing reason of the former, which are true, and philosophy, which is fallacious and delusive, they supposed that the correspondence and similarities expounded the meanings of the Book and Sunna and elucidated their purposes.

Allah forbid! The criterion of the Book of Miraculous Exposition is its miraculous inimitability. What will expound it is its own parts. Its meaning is within it. Even its shell is of pearl, not clods. Even if their purpose in disclosing the congruity had been to pronounce fit that truthful witness, it still would have been futile. For the Perspicuous Qur'an is far above such pronouncements concerning reasoned and revealed knowledge, which have anyway handed over to it the keys of submission, and it stands in no need of them. For if it does not pronounce them fit, their testimony will

1. The most eloquent Arabic, *kelâm-ı Mudarî*. This refers to the Arabic spoken by the tribe, Mudar, whose speech in that era was reputed to be the most eloquent and whose dialect was favoured when differences arose on the Qur'an being put down in writing.

not be heard. Yes, you have to search for the Pleiades in the skies not on the ground. And you should seek the Qur'an's meanings in its shells, not in your pocket, which is all mixed up. For you won't find them there. And even if you do, the Qur'an will not accept them, for they will not bear the stamp of miraculousness.

For it is established that the true meaning is that which the words empty out in the ear-hole then penetrating the mind, suffuses the conscience and produces copious blossoms of ideas. For if some possibilities have impinged on your imagination due to your preoccupation with other things, or you have filched some futilities from philosophy and fables and stories, and filling your pockets with them have hidden them in amongst the convolutions of the Qur'an's verses and Hadiths, then pulled them out, held them up and called out: "The meaning is this! Come and take it!" - if you were to do this, you would receive this answer: "Come on! This meaning of yours is unclear. It bears the stamp of blind imitation!" The assayer of truth will reject it. The Sultan of Miraculousness will send the minter packing. You will have transgressed against the orderliness of the verses and Hadiths, so they will issue a complaint against you, and the judge of eloquence will imprison your delusions in your imagination. Moreover, the customer for reality will not buy these wares of yours. He'll say: "The verses' meanings are of pearl and this is mere clods. What the Hadiths impart is spirit, but this resembles nothing more than a gadfly!"

An Explanatory Tale

A literary tale told by the Kurds: There was a man called Alo who used to steal honey. He was told he would be found out. So in order to fool them, he got wild bees to fill up an empty comb and stole honey from somewhere else. This he hid in the hive. If anyone asked him about it, he would say: "It's the artwork of my bees, for they are honey engineers." Then when conversing with his bees, they would say together: *فَطْ فَطْ رَوْه هِنْكَفِينْ رِمْنْ* "You do the buzzing, I provide the honey!"

Good Sir who makes forced interpretations with good appetite! Don't find solace in this tale; it is a parable (*teşbih*). The meaning you produce is not honey; it's poison. And those words are not bees; they are the words of that consummate Book, revealing the spirits of truths to the heart and conscience, like angels. Hadiths are the source of life and inspire reality.

In Short: To be deficient is harmful, as is going to excess. Perhaps it is even more harmful. But going to excess is more at fault since it causes deficiency. Yes, excess opened the door to indulgence. For rotten things

had been mixed in with those lofty truths, so the deficient and the unfair cavillers unjustly felt disgust at the truths, and, Allah forbid, deemed them blemished and worthless. But if one defaced coin is found in a treasury and one rotten windfall from elsewhere is spotted in an orchard, is it right and fair to assume that the entire treasury is false or all the apples are rotten, and so defame them by spurning them?

Conclusion

My aim with this Premise: public opinion wants a [new] interpretation (*tefsir*) of the Qur'an. In every era one particular thing is dominant; time too is an interpreter; situations and circumstances also disclose things. The generally held ideas of the ulema still educate public opinion. In consequence of this and basing my view on it, it is my wish that a Qur'anic commentary should be written through consultation, by setting up an assembly of deputies elected from among authoritative scholars, each a specialist in one of the physical sciences (*fen*), under the chairmanship of time, the supreme interpreter. They should collect together in this commentary in order to gild and emend it, the best points and virtues scattered through other commentaries. Yes, this is the time of constitutionalism; mutual consultation governs in everything. Public opinion is the watchman. The validity of the agreed opinions among the scholars (*icma-ı ümmet*) is proof of this.

The Fourth Premise

Fame ascribes to man what is not his. It is like this: it is a human characteristic to ascribe something unusual or precious together with similar things to the person who gains fame through them in order to draw attention to his excellence. In order to gain acceptance for their ideas, or not to have them denied, or for some other purpose, people despotically and wrongfully see in one person the ideas and virtues of a nation and their results, and they think of them as originating from him. He, however, will reject their tyrannical gift. For a person who is famous for some fine attribute or elevated art will reject something unjustly ascribed to his art-loving view, the mark of which is to see beneath the surface, for if it is presented as his own work, it will mar the beauty arising from the proportion and balance of his art. He will decline it and avoid it, exclaiming: "Allah forbid!"

In consequence of this characteristic and in accordance with the well-known rule "If something is established, it is established together with its corollaries," in order to set in order the things they imagine in the famous person, people are obliged to ascribe to him extraordinary attributes such

as great power, eminence, and intelligence so that he can be a source of assistance for all his followers. He is thus embodied in their minds as a marvel. If you like, think of Rustam Zal's image, nourished in the Persian imagination. See what a marvel he is! Because he became famous for his courage, and because the Persians were never ever able to free themselves from oppression and despotism, through the power of fame he grew and grew and plundered all their means of glory. He was aggrandised and filled their imaginations. Then since lies breed lies, extraordinary valour was augmented by a wondrous life and awesome stature and many other matters that these necessitated. That frightful fantasy cried out: "The whole race is embodied in me!" Trailing behind him superstitions like an ogre, he is ever on people's tongues.

You who wish to see the naked truth! Pay close attention to this Premise, for this is where the door to superstition opens. It is also where the door to verification of the truth is blocked up. It is also the salt-marsh where the story's moral is lost, and the attempt to build – thanks to the inclination to progress – on the foundations of the earlier scholars (*mütekaddimîn*) is foiled as are efforts to work on the legacy of the righteous forefathers (*selef*), and the courage to do more than this is destroyed. If you like, ask the renowned Molla Nasreddin Efendi: "Are all these strange words yours?" He will of course reply: "If they were, they would fill volumes and need a lifetime at that. For not everything I say is a witticism. I'm a teacher. I'd be happy if they were to give me the *zakat* due on them as well. I wouldn't want more. Because my wit would cease being natural and become forced." Yes, superstitions and customs sprout and grow from this root, choking the power of what is right.

Conclusion

Favour greater than divine favour is not favour. A grain of truth is preferable to a stack of illusions. It is obligatory to content oneself with divine favour when making ascriptions. The member of a community should not infringe its regulations. A thing's honour looks to the thing itself, not to its offspring. It is the fruit of a thing that shows its essential character. Even if valuable, mixing other property with one's own makes it worthless; it will also lead to its seizure. Now, basing it on these points I say the following: it is a serious instance of ignorance to ascribe false Hadiths to persons like Ibn 'Abbas ¹ in order to encourage the common

1. 'Abdullāh b. 'Abbās b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib (d.68/687-8). First cousin and Companion of the Prophet Muhammad (UWBP), who narrated many Hadiths and is deemed an authority in Qur'anic interpretation (*tafsir*) and in *fiqh*.

people to do what is right and to deter them from what is wrong. Yes, truth stands in need of nothing else, and reality is rich. The Hadiths' lights are sufficient to illuminate hearts. Sound Hadiths, the Qur'an's expounder, suffice us. And we are content with authentic histories which have been weighed up on the scales of logic.

The Fifth Premise

If figures of speech (*mecaz*) fall into the hand of the ignorance from that of learning, they are taken literally and open the door to superstition. It is like this: whenever the dark left hand of ignorance seizes figures of speech and similes (*teşbih*) from the luminous right hand of knowledge, or when such figures are long-lived, they acquire a literal meaning and lose their freshness and translucence. While being a cordial they turn into vinegar, and though once fresh and comely they grow old and withered. Yes, it is the transparency of figurative language that allows the rays of reality to shine out from it. Once it is taken literally, it becomes opaque and obscures the original truth. Such a transformation is a natural law. If you want evidence for this, refer to the mysteries of the change and renewal of words, and their shared and synonymous meanings. If you listen carefully, you will hear the following:

Numerous words, tales, fantasies, and meanings which were to the taste of the people of early times have become old and vapid. Since they did not coincide with the childish caprices of the people of later times, they gave rise to the desire for renewal and the idea of invention, and bold desire for change. This rule governs in imaginings, meanings, and stories as it does in words. In which case, everything should not be judged according to its apparent meaning. The mark of the investigative scholar is to be thorough, divest himself of the influences of time, enter the depths of the past, weigh up things on the scales of logic, and find the source of everything.

What made me aware of this was an eclipse of the moon when I was young. I asked my mother about it, and she replied: "A snake has swallowed the moon." So I asked: "Why can you still see it?" So she said: "The snakes in the sky are semi-transparent."

See how a simile (*teşbih*) had become reality and with its interposition, obscured the reality. For employing a simile, astronomers called the intersections of the two arcs of the two imaginary circles formed by the moon's orbit and the zodiac, the head and tail of the great serpent. Then when the

moon passes either the head or the tail and the sun passes the other, the moon will be eclipsed by the interposition of the earth. ¹

Gentle reader who is not bored with these confused words of mine! Study this Premise attentively too. Scrutinise it with a microscope. For numerous superstitions and contradictions have been born of this stock. Logic and rhetoric should be taken as the guide.

Conclusion

The true meaning should bear a stamp. What defines the stamp is the sheer beauty born of the balance between the aims of the Shari'a. Figurative language (*mecaz*) is permissible if subject to the rules of rhetoric. For to look on a rhetorical figure as reality and reality as figurative, and to show them thus, is to strengthen the despotism of ignorance. However harmful the tendency to be negligent, which continually understanding everything literally gave rise to the misguided way of the literalists (*zâhiriyyûn*; Ar. *zâhiriyyûn*); so love of excess was even more harmful, for continually interpreting everything figuratively, it gave rise to the futile school of the esoterists (*batıniyyûn*; Ar. *bâṭiniyyûn*). It is only the philosophy of the Shari'a and rhetoric, and logic and science (*hikmet*) that will show the middle way ² and confute the two extremes.

I say science (*hikmet*), because for the greater part it is good. It contains evil, but this is minor. It is an incontestable principle that to abandon a matter which is mostly good because of some minor evil is to perpetrate a greater evil. It is essential to choose the lesser of two evils. Yes, ancient philosophy contained little good, its superstitions were many, [it led to] minds losing their capacity, to the limiting of ideas due to blind imitation, and to ignorance ruling the mass of people. For these reasons later generations prohibited it to an extent. But relatively to ancient philosophy, philosophy now [modern science] contains much good from the material point of view, its lies are few; thought is free and learning predominates. In any event, every age has its ethos.

The Sixth Premise

For example, not all the matters mentioned in a Qur'anic commentary have to be commentary on the Qur'an; knowledge corroborates knowledge. But such matters should not preponderate. It is an established fact

1. For a more detailed description of this childhood memory, see, *The Flashes Collection* (Istanbul: Sözlür Publications, 2009), 129.

2. Here the author emphasises this point by using the term "hadd-i evsat," which also denotes the middle term of a syllogism.

that a person skilful in engineering may be unversed in another profession such as medicine. And it is a rule of the science of the principles of religion that the opinions of a person who is not an authority in jurisprudence (*fiqh*) are not held to be valid by the consensus of the scholars of that science, even if he is a *mujtahid* in the principles (*usûl*) of *fiqh*. Because compared to them his knowledge is deficient.

Furthermore, it is an historical fact that one person cannot be expert and proficient in numerous sciences (*fen*). Only an exceptional person can be a specialist in four or five sciences. To attempt all means abandoning all. Proficiency in a science is that science's true form. It has to assume its true form through it. For if a person is not an expert in one science and does not use the rest of his knowledge to complete and supplement it, all the miscellaneous things he knows will form an anomalous conglomeration.

A humorous yarn to explain this:

Suppose there is a portraitist who arrives on the earth from another world. He has seen the entire figure of neither man nor beast, so if he wants to draw the picture of a man or a figure out of all the things he has observed; for instance, a man out of one hand, one foot, one eye, half a face, a nose, and a turban; or an animal made up of various things that strike his eye like a horse's tail, a camel's hump, a man's face, and a lion's head: the people will tell him that because of the incompatibility of those things they cannot support life, and such weird creatures do not meet the conditions of life. They will pour scorn on the portraitist.

This rule is exactly applicable to the modern sciences. The solution is to take one science as one's main science and to make all the rest of one's knowledge a reservoir and pool for it.

Also, it is a constant law that if a single book contains numerous sciences (*ulûm*), the sciences will push and jostle each other. For since they will lead to one another and take each other by the hand, they will embrace and answer each other, and will therefore be so interwoven that in comparison with the book as a whole, the matters of any one science (*fen*) will be negligible. It is because this question has been disregarded that when a literalist or a Sophist sees a matter included parenthetically in a work about the Shari'a or a Qur'anic commentary (*tefsir*), he declares: "That is the Shari'a or the commentary!" [and holds such matters to be fundamental to the work]. If he is friendly, he says: "The person who doesn't accept this can't be Muslim." Or if hostile, he makes it a pretext, [and condemns the work,] saying: "The Shari'a or the commentary is wrong."

O you who goes to one extreme or the other! Qur'anic commentaries and the Shari'a are one thing, and books written about them are something else. For books are more extensive. Worthless things may be found in such shops besides the jewels. If you've grasped this, you'll be saved from doubts. Just as the necessities of a household can't all be obtained from a single craftsman, but each has to be sought from an expert in the craft needed; so too, in the palace of civilisational achievements the law in question has to be complied with. Isn't it clear that if someone asks the tailor to sew up his broken watch, he will receive nothing but a blast of invective?

Indication

The gist of this Premise is as follows: although it is obligatory to act in accordance with the law of progress, which has been made operative in the world's creation by the Glorious Maker and issues from the rule of the division of labour, and to comply with what it infers, this has not been fully observed. It is like this: by virtue of the potentialities and inclinations planted in human nature by the gracious hand of divine wisdom – which necessitates the division of labour – a sort of command has been given to practise the arts and sciences. This is an obligation on a section of the community (*farzü'l-kifâye*) imposed by the Shari'a of Creation. But we abused this and due to our desire for superiority, which is a false ambition and pure hypocrisy, we extinguished the enthusiasm that would strengthen and assist the inclinations born of those potentialities, and wasted it. Certainly the rebellious deserve Hell. And we were tormented by the hell of ignorance because we did not comply with the code of natural laws (*şeriat-ı fitriye*) known as creation. But if we act in conformity with the law of the division of labour, we will be saved from this torment. For our forebears acted in accordance with it and entered the paradise of the sciences.

Conclusion

Just as a non-Muslim does not become a Muslim by merely entering a mosque; so some matter of a natural science like geography or history does not become Shari'a or Qur'anic commentary by being included in a book of the Shari'a or a commentary. Also, – on condition he is an expert – a ruling made by a scholar of the Shari'a or Qur'anic interpretation, is authoritative only in the science concerned. His statements about intrusive matters that have entered works of the Shari'a and exegesis (*tefsir*) without permission are not authoritative. For they are probably just spongers. But those who have related them should not be blamed. Yes, if a person whose words on one science are authoritative holds his rulings on another science to be

authoritative by moving them from one to the other or just as an assertion, it means he is not complying with the divine laws of the division of labour and organisation of work.

Also, it is accepted in logic that the proposition necessitates the statements of the subject and predicate in only one respect. Others of their statements are not part of that science. They have to be matters of some other science.

It is also established that a general statement cannot express a particular one with any of the three significations.¹ For example, it is completely illogical to consider definitive the interpretation of the verse, (18:96) *بَيْنَ الصَّدَفَيْنِ* in the tefsir of Baydāwī,² that refers to what lies between the mountains of Armenia and Azerbaijan. For basically it is a narration (*nakil*). Also, what it states specifically is not what the Qur'an indicates; such an interpretation cannot be considered exegesis (*tefsir*), for it is a specific statement (*teşrih*) based on another science about part of the verse. It is unfair, therefore, to make such weak points a pretext and raise doubts about the well-grounded competence in Qur'anic exegesis of that masterly commentator. The essential truths of Qur'anic commentaries and the Shari'a are clear. They shine like the stars. Their power and clarity give courage to someone powerless like myself. So I claim that however many fundamental truths there are in the Shari'a and in Qur'anic commentaries, if they are studied closely, it will be seen that each one of them emerges from reality, is weighed up with wisdom, and as truth returns to truth. Dubious points, whatever they are, have appeared from prattling minds which have then muddled them. This is a challenge to whoever doubts the essential truth of Qur'anic commentaries and the Shari'a! Let him step forward and show himself!

The Seventh Premise

Exaggeration is a revolutionary. It is like this: it is a human characteristic to mix imagination with truth by tending to excess in what one takes pleasure in, to overstate something one describes, and to exaggerate something one relates. In consequence, doing good is actually to do evil. Although one is not aware of it, deficiency arises from the excess, corruption

1. The three types of signification (*delâlât-i selase*. Ar. *al-dalâlât al-thalātha*): *delâlet-i mutabîkiye* (Ar. *al-dalāla al-muṭābiqiyya*), *delâlet-i tazammuniye* (Ar. *al-dalāla al-taḍammuniyya*), and *delâlet-i iltizâmiye* (Ar. *al-dalāla al-iltizâmiyya*). These are said to refer respectively to the primary or literal meanings of words or phrases, the implied meanings, and figurative significations.

2. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Umar al-Baydāwī (d. 685/1286). Famous Shafi'i scholar and *qadi* of Shiraz. His most famous work was the commentary, *Anwār al-Tanzīl wa Asrār al-Ta'wīl*.

from reform, disparagement from praise, and ugliness from beautification. For, *مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَشْعُرُ* mars the beauty arising from the balance and proportion. Just as to increase the dose of a medicine because you deem it salutary will make the cure injurious; so to show backbiting to be equal to murder or passing water while standing to be equal to adultery due to enjoining the good and deterring from evil in exaggerated terms – although the truth never needs this, or to hold giving one *dirhem* as charity equal to making the Hajj, is to take murder and adultery lightly and to devalue the Hajj. In consequence, the preacher should speak both wisely and in reasoned manner. Yes, those preachers whose words are unbalanced cause the eclipse of many luminous truths of religion. Due to the tendency to exaggerate, it has been added to the shining, unanimously related miracle of the splitting of the moon that the moon descended to earth, entered the Messenger's (UWBP) pocket then emerged from it. This has both made that sun-like miracle as faint as the star Suha and eclipsed that moon-like proof of prophethood, and opened the door to the deniers' pretexts.

In Short: Everyone who loves religion and is enamoured of the truth should content himself with the worth of things [as they are] and not exaggerate and go to excess. For to do so is to decry divine power. It is to be dissatisfied with the perfection and beauty in creation, which caused al-Ghazali to declare: "There could be nothing better in the sphere of contingency than what exists,"¹ and to belittle them.

Gentle reader! Sometimes comparisons (*temsil*) serve as proofs (*bürhan*). See! Just as the value and properties of diamonds, gold, silver, lead, iron, and so on are all different; so the value of the aims of religion and their proofs are all different. If the place of one is the imagination, the place of another is the conscience, and of yet another the inner heart. If when engaged in commerce someone gives a diamond or a piece of gold instead of a fish-scale or ten *para*, he will be judged incompetent and denied right of disposal; or if the reverse is the case, he will rightly be sent packing. Similarly, those, who lacking discernment, fail to distinguish between the truths of religion and do not accord to each the right and respect it deserves; who do not recognise the stamp of the Shari'a on each of its ordinances, and even arrest the motion of the components of that vast factory, each on its own axis – they resemble an apprentice who sees a tiny cogwheel in a

1. al-Ghazālī, *Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* (Cairo: 1356/1937), iv, 2509. In this work, the phrase is "There could be nothing more beautiful, perfect, or complete in the sphere of contingency than what is." The much-quoted aphorism that appears in the text above is in fact a composite of variations of the phrase in others of al-Ghazali's works.

huge, smoothly-running machine and because it appears incongruous to his superficial view, is deceived by his arrogance although he has no knowledge of engineering, and attempts to alter its fine-tuning in order to correct it, so overturns the order of the factory and ruins it.

To Conclude: Each of the Shari‘a’s ordinances bears the Lawgiver’s stamp of approval. The stamp has to be read. An ordinance is in need of nothing to give it value over and above the stamp. And it stands in no need whatsoever of the embellishments or interference of the verbose exaggerations of those addicted to excess. Take note! How ugly in the view of truth are those exaggerators when they proffer advice. For instance, one of them, not being content with the Shari‘a’s method of restraint, said something in a large gathering to put people off intoxicants, but I was ashamed to write it and crossed it out. You scoundrel, you’re opposing the Shari‘a with these words of yours! Supposing you were faithful to it even, you would still be foolishly faithful. You’re more harmful than the worst enemy.

Conclusion

O you unfair people who try to criticise Islam from outside and from afar! Don’t be deceived! Think and reason! Don’t make do with looking superficially, for those people who are the cause of these pretexts of yours are called “reprehensible religious scholars” (lit. scholars of evil, wickedness – *ulema-i sū’*) in the language of the Shari‘a. Look beyond the veil caused by their imbalance and externalist literalness. You’ll see that each truth of Islam is a light-scattering proof, like a luminous star. It appears within a tapestry stretching from pre-eternity to post-eternity. Indeed, that which proceeds from pre-eternal divine speech will go to post-eternity. But alas! Due to love of self and taking the part of oneself and exonerating oneself, which arise from egotism and impotence, they blame their own faults on others. They want to exonerate themselves by ascribing something they say or do that might possibly be wrong to some lofty person or esteemed book, or even sometimes to religion and very often to Hadiths, and finally to divine determining. Allah forbid! Darkness cannot come from light. Even if they conceal the stars appearing in their own mirrors, they cannot hide the stars in the sky. It’s only themselves who can’t see them!

Kind sir who objects and opposes! It is a great injustice to regard as proofs doubts arising from misunderstandings or attitudes springing from opposition to the Shari‘a, and to seek pretexts like a child looking for something to cry about or a rancorous enemy seeking revenge, and so to tarnish Islam. For not every attribute a Muslim possesses, has to derive from Islam.

The Eighth Premise

Introduction

Do not be wearied by the lengthy introduction that follows, for its conclusion is extremely important. Moreover, it will eliminate despair, which annihilates every moral quality, and will revive hope, the leaven of all happiness. It gives the good news that while the past belongs to others, the future shall be ours. We are happy at this apportionment. Its subject is this: weighing up the people of the past and those of the future. Indeed, the alphabet is not taught in high schools. Even if the knowledge is essentially the same, the way it is taught differs. Yes, the school of the emotions (*mekteb-i hissiyat*) called the past is not the same as the school of ideas (*medrese-i efkâr*) called the future.

Firstly, what I mean by the people of the past are the non-Muslims of the Middle Ages from before the tenth century (AD sixteenth century), and in ancient times. As for the Muslim peoples (*millet-i Islam*), for the first three hundred years they were eminent and superior, and in five hundred years reached full development. I call the period from the fifth to the twelfth centuries the past, and the subsequent centuries I call the future. Now, it is well-known that it is either the reason or the eye that governs in human beings. Or to put it another way, it is either thought or emotions; or truth or force; or wisdom or imperatives; or either the inclinations of the heart or the leanings of the intellect; or either whims or guidance. In consequence, we see that with the people of the past their mostly uncorrupted morals and unmixed emotions predominated and their unenlightened minds caused personalities and conflicts to gain the upperhand. But since the somewhat enlightened minds of the people of the future have conquered their emotions, which are clouded by lust and appetites, and have subjugated them to its command, it is certain that the rights of people generally shall rule. Humanity has become manifest to a degree, giving the glad tidings that in the cloudless skies of the future Islam, which is supreme humanity, will shine over the lands of Asia like the sun.

Rancour and hatred reigned over the valleys of the past, together with brute force, feelings, and emotion, all of which breed the desire for superiority. Persuasion was sufficient to guide the people of those times. For embellishing and aggrandising what one said to flatter their emotions and touch their feelings, or employing drama or powerful eloquence to familiarise it to their imaginations, took the place of proof. But to compare us now to

them means confining us to the corner of those times as though in a military retreat. We want proof; we are not deceived by embroidered words.

The source of the steam of the facts of science, which causes the rain to fall ceaselessly in the plains of the present and on the mountains of the future, is thought, reason, truth, and science (*hikmet*). One's assertions, therefore, can be proved only by conclusive arguments, and these give rise to the wish to search for reality and the love of truth, and preferring the general good to one's own, and the inclination to act humanely. We are the people of the present and are destined for the future. Embellishing what is claimed does not satisfy our minds; we want proof.

Let's talk a little about the good things and the bad of the past and future, which resemble two kings. For the most part, in the country of the past force, caprice, nature, feelings, and emotions ruled, one of the evils of which was that despotism and domination were present in all matters, if only on the whole. Hostility towards outlooks other than one's own was preferred to love and partiality for one's own outlook. While hatred for one person was manifested as love for another. And partisanship and fierce support and partiality intervened, all of which form obstacles to the discovery of truth.

In Short: Since the above tendencies were various, feelings of partisanship incited differences and revolt by pointing the finger at everything, and the truth fled and was hidden.

Another evil of the emotions' despotism was that it was mostly bigotry or accusing others of error or sophistry that led to the founding of schools of thought and law and ways (*mesâlik ve mezâhib*). Whereas all three are reprehensible in the view of the Shari'a, and opposed to Islamic brotherhood and human relations and natural mutual assistance. It reached such a pitch that if a person was to give up his bigotry and false stand, as though affirming the people's consensus and unanimity he would have to change his school and outlook altogether. Whereas if he was to take truth instead of bigotry, and proof instead of sophistry, and adaptability, conformability, and mutual consultation instead of accusing others of error, the whole world even could not make him change his true school and way, even if it were to unite against him. Similarly to the time of the Prophet (UWBP) and righteous first generations of Islam, doubt and scepticism were of little consequence since truth, proof, reason, and consultation prevailed.

Similarly, we see that thanks to science, at the present time for the most part truth governs in place of force, proof instead of sophistry, reason instead of instinct, guidance instead of caprice, steadfastness in place of bigotry,

zeal instead of malice, the propensities of the intellect rather than the desires of the soul, and thought rather than emotion. In the future this will be the case completely, Allah willing, as it was in the first, second, and third centuries of Islam, and was mostly so until the fifth. From the fifth centuries down to the present force overcame right.

It is one of the beneficial works of the rule of ideas that the sun of Islam has been saved from the clouds of misapprehensions and imaginings, and has started to illuminate everywhere. Even those rotting in the bog of irreligion have begun to profit from its light. Moreover, it is one of the advantages of the consultation of ideas that aims and outlooks are being founded on certain proofs and are being bound to fixed truths and right, which extend to every attainment. In consequence, falsehood will be unable to deceive minds by assuming the garb of truth.

Brother Muslims! With the tongue of disposition the present hails us with good news: in meaning, the verse, *قَدْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ* has raised its head, and pointing to the future, proclaims in ringing tones: the reality of Islam alone, the manifestation and exemplification in this world of pre-eternal justice, will rule time and the natural dispositions of men until the onset of doomsday, for it is what is called supreme humanity. What is called lesser humanity, that is, the virtues of civilisation, is its precursor. Has it not become apparent that with minds being illuminated through meeting with other minds, the misapprehensions and delusions, resembling soil, have lifted from the shoulders of the truths of Islam. This indicates that those truths, which are the stars of the skies of guidance, will be disclosed completely and will shine and shimmer.

عَلَى رَغْمِ أَنْوَافِ الْأَعْدَاءِ

Enter the future, if you so wish, in defiance of our enemies and take a look: for those seeking divine unity in the trinity in the field of facts under the supervision and control of science (*hikmet*) are bound to be defeated and routed if, citing false arguments, they do battle with those girded with sword of proof and equipped with pure divine unity and complete and perfect beliefs and the doctrine of truth, which sound minds accept.

I swear by the wise styles (*uslûb*) of the Qur'an that what raises up the Christians and their likes and casts them down into the valleys of misguidance is their dismissal of reason, rejection of proof, and blind following of the clergy. While what constantly makes Islam manifest and discloses its

truths in relation to the expansion of minds, is it's being founded on reality, girded with proof, consulting with reason, being seated on the throne of truth, and its conformity with the principles of wisdom that continue in sequence from pre-eternity to post-eternity. It is seen, is it not, that the beginnings and ends of the Qur'an's verses enjoin human beings to refer to their consciences and to consult with their reasons. Its verses say:

أَفَلَا يَنْظُرُونَ ، فَأَنْظُرُوا ، أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ، نَنْفَكِرُوا ، وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ،
يَعْقِلُونَ ، لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ، يَعْلَمُونَ ، فَأَعْتَبِرُوا يَتَأُولِي الْأَبْصَارِ (59:2)

I too say: فَأَعْتَبِرُوا يَتَأُولِي الْأَبْصَارِ

Conclusion

“So ponder over it, O you with understanding!” Penetrate to the meaning from the words' literal exterior! Reality awaits you. But don't offend it when you see it. It is most right and necessary.

The Ninth Premise

It is most definitely true according to those of sound mind that good is essential to creation and evil is secondary. Good is universal and evil particular. It appears that a science has been formed about every realm of being (lit. species – *nev'*) and is being formed. The sciences consist of universal laws. The universality of the laws disclose the fine order in the field concerned. That is to say, each science is a faithful witness to the fine order. Yes, universality points to order. For if there is no order in a thing, the rule cannot be in force universally; it will be all awry with numerous exceptions. It is inductive reasoning and the teleological view (*nazar-i hikmet*) that pronounces those witnesses acceptable. But sometimes the order is not visible, for it extends farther than can be envisaged and cannot be completely comprehended and conceived of. So the incomparable picture of the order does not reveal itself. In consequence, it is established by the testimony of all the sciences and affirmed by inductive reasoning, which is born of the view of wisdom, that it is good, beauty, truth, and perfection that are intended in the creation of the world and that predominate absolutely. As for evil, ugliness, and futility, they are secondary, subordinate, and overwhelmed. If sometimes they transgress, they do so temporarily.

It is also established that the noblest of creation is humankind. Man's inborn disposition and art testifies to this. And the best of humankind are true Muslims, who are the people of truth and reality. Just as the truths of Islam are witness to this, so will the events of the future bear witness to it.

It is also established that the most perfect in every way was Muhammad (Upon whom be blessings and peace), as is testified to by his miracles and excellent morals, and is affirmed by the authoritative scholars (*muhakkikin*) among humankind. His enemies even had to admit to this truth, and are compelled to do so.

At one time it was thus. I wonder, will mankind despite its wretchedness be able to refute the testimony of the sciences, and annul and invalidate the inductive reasoning, and obstinately oppose divine will? No! They are not able and will not be able. I swear by the names Merciful and Compassionate of the Absolutely All-Wise and Just One that humankind will not easily be able to swallow and digest evil, ugliness, and futility. In any case, divine wisdom would not permit it.

Indeed, the person who transgresses the general rights of beings is not forgiven. Thousands of years during which evil predominates will result in at least a thousand years of its total defeat in this world alone, and in the next world, good will sentence evil to eternal extinction. Otherwise all the orderly, perfect species and sorts of beings in the world, which comply with the divine commands, will not agree to having wretched, disorderly humankind amongst them, and will request that human beings are denied the rights of existence, are banished to the dark abode of non-being, and dismissed from the duties of creation. This would necessitate the futility and meaninglessness of all the human potentialities, and all the abilities and talents with which human beings have been decked out in order to hold sway over this world and experience everlasting bliss in the next. Futility is contrary to inductive reasoning, just as it is at variance with the All-Wise Maker's wisdom and opposed to the Truthful Prophet's (UWBP) word.

The future will refine a part of these assertions, but complete clarification will be in the hereafter. It is as follows: not taking into account individual persons, it is in the future that general, universal good will preponderate. If we die, our nation will live. We will not accept forty years, we want at least a thousand years' supremacy. However, the supreme tribunal and place of ascendancy of beauty, truth, good, and perfection, which are both personal and general, and particular and universal, is the hereafter, where humankind will be set in order like the rest of its brothers, the orderly universe, and will receive reward and punishment commensurate with its innate capabilities. For it is there that truth and absolute justice will be manifested.

This narrow world is not suitable for the sprouting of the unlimited abilities lodged in man's essential being, and of his desires and inclinations,

which are created for eternity. He will be sent to another world where they may be nourished and trained. Man's essential being is great, his nature is lofty, his crimes too are vast. His order is important, he does not resemble other beings; he cannot exist without order. Yes, one destined for eternity is great; he cannot be meaningless, he cannot be futile. He cannot be doomed to absolute oblivion. He cannot escape to pure non-being. Hell has opened its jaws and Paradise has thrown wide its sweet arms. Both are awaiting him.

Conclusion

From afar, Islam's future and that of Asia appear to be brilliant, for four or five irresistible strengths have united allowing the supremacy of Islam, which is the first ruler of Asia and its last.

First Strength: Islam's true strength, which is its being decked out with civilisation and the teaching of knowledge.

The Second: Severe need, which is equipped with the perfecting of ways and means.

The Third: Envy, competition, and hidden rancour, which are equipped by a total awakening resulting from seeing the utter deprivation of Asia and the affluence of other places.

The Fourth: Its innate disposition, which is equipped with the rule of the affirmers of divine unity – unity of word; the characteristic of the place – moderation and a balanced temperament; the light of the times – the enlightenment of minds; the law of civilisation – the conjunction of ideas; the inherent quality of a primitive way of life – unspoilt natures; and the fruits of exigency – bold enterprise and unencumberedness.

The Fifth: The longing for civilisation and desire for renewal, which are equipped with the upholding of the Word of Allah. This, at the present time, is contingent on material progress, and on hope, which has sprung to life at Islam's command at the death of despair, the annihilator of every desire, and is demanded by the times and necessitated by our intense poverty. The above strengths will also be assisted by the evils of civilisation overcoming its virtues and causing decline and revolution among the Europeans, and by their human labour and effort being unequal to vice and dissipation. There are two reasons for this:

The First: Permissiveness and leniency towards the lusts of the soul, which result from failing to make religion and virtue the bases of civilisation.

The Second: The appalling inequality in livelihoods, which arises from a lack of compassion, which in turn results from pandering to the appetites and impiety. Yes, impiety has become interlarded with the inner face of European civilisation to such an extent that it has given birth to numbers of revolutionary and seditious groups. If recourse is not had to the firm rope of Islam and the truth of the Illustrious Shari‘a, which resembles the barrier of Dhu’l- Qarnayn, those forces of corruption will overturn the world of their civilisation, just as they are now threatening to do so.

If *zakat*, the purification tax, which is only one of the thousands of matters of the reality of Islam (*hakikat-i İslâmiye*), were to be taken as a basic principle of civilisation, for its assistance, would it not be the healing remedy for the calamity and snakes’ lair of this appalling inequality in incomes? It would indeed be the most effective and incorruptible cure.

If it is asked: Why shouldn’t whatever made Europe dominant up to the present continue to ensure its dominance?

The Answer: Study the introduction to this book, then study the following attentively: the causes of their progress were the cold climates of their countries, which make people slow to act and be unprecipitant and constant; the smallness of those lands; the idea of education and desire for crafts and industry, arising from their numerous inhabitants; and the co-operation and mutual assistance allowed by the seas, mines, and other means of development. But now just as with the development of means of transport the world has become like a single town; so with such means of communication as the press and telegraph, the world’s people have become like the members of a council. In short: because their loads are heavy and ours are light, we shall catch up with them and overtake them – if we are accompanied by divine assistance. ¹

Conclusion of the Conclusion

It is only constitutional government and liberty that will disclose the good fortune of Asia and reveal the prospects of Islam. But only on condition the Illustrious Shari‘a is adhered to.

Reminder: The matters known as the virtues of civilisation are each ordinances of the Shari‘a put in another form.

1. NOTE: Fellow Nur students! The Party of the Qur’an that our beloved Master was addressing at that time has emerged today as the *Risale-i Nur* students. Take careful note, for these pages address us. You must make science and civilisation serve Islam and proclaim Islamic civilisation to the world.

The Tenth Premise

A speaker should not be blamed for what springs to other people's minds from what he says. For it is only by an act of will that he takes on himself meanings other than what he intends from his speech. If he has no such intention, he should not be blamed. But he is definitely responsible for what is intended and meant. It is established by the science of figurative speech (*fenn-i beyan*; Ar. *'ilm al-bayān*) that true and false follow on from the intention and aim of the speaker. Hence, blame and criticism levelled at what is intended and aimed at in speech looks to the speaker. However, any faults ascribed to the allusions and hints termed associative meanings (*müstetbeât*), and to depictions of the meanings and the manner of expression, and the literary style and means called the primary meanings (*maânî-i ûlâ*), and the censure directed at them, look to customary usage and colloquial speech not to the speaker. For common usages and generally understood meanings are respected so as to facilitate understanding. Moreover, if the speech is a story, any faults or errors look to what is being related; the speaker certainly should not be blamed for any literary devices or allusive meanings. For his intention is not to grasp them and seize their fruits, but to climb up to the branches of the higher aims. If you wish, take note of the following metonymical things. For example, "So-and-so's sword-belt is long" and "he has lots of ashes." If someone says this, meaning that the man is tall and generous, it is true even if he has no sword or ashes. If you wish take note now of allegory and parables: you will see that by virtue of the value and power gained from fame, they become worthy of being ambassadors between people's minds and in the exchange of ideas. In fact, even such veracious authors and exacting sages as the author of the *Mathnawî* ¹ and Sa'di Shirazi ² were never contested because they used parables. If the meaning of this is now clear to you and has been lit up, light your candle from it and betake yourself to the nooks of stories and tales. For what is valid in the part may sometimes be valid in the whole.

Reminder

A rule concerning the obscurities and allegorical verses of the Qur'an will be discussed in the Third Article, but because of the context we are

1. Mawlānā Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī (d. 672/1273), renowned founder of the Mevlevi Order, Sufi, scholar, poet, and author of the *Mathnawî*. He was born in Balkh and died in Konya.

2. Sa'di Shirāzī (d. 691/1292). The great Persian poet and literary genius, and author of the didactic works, *Bustān* and *Gulistān*.

going to mention it very briefly here. It is like this: the main purpose of the Wise Book is the guidance of the mass of people, who form the majority. For the elite can profit from the common people's way, but the common people cannot properly understand a discussion addressed to the elite. The greater part of the mass of people are uneducated (*avam*), and the uneducated cannot disengage themselves from their imaginings and their habitual modes of thought and see the naked, unadorned truth or purely abstract ideas. To allow them to see them, abstract ideas have to be presented in a dress familiar to them, in order to accustom their minds to them. They then may see and understand the abstract ideas by beholding them beyond those imaginary forms. In which case, pure truth will be clothed in something familiar to them. But attention should not be fastened on the form or style. It is because of this that included in the styles of Arabic used in the Qur'an of Miraculous Exposition is 'divine condescension to the minds of men' in consideration of people's understanding and as a concession made to their intelligences. For example, the verses, *يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ* (48:10); *فَاسْتَوَى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ*; *وَجَاءَ رَبُّكَ* (89:22). And the verse *وَجَدَهَا تَغْرُبُ فِي عَيْنٍ حَمِئَةٍ* (18:86) and its likes. And, *تَغْرُبُ (الشَّمْسُ) فِي عَيْنٍ حَمِئَةٍ*, and those similar to it. These are all examples of this style. (2:2) *ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ*

Conclusion

The difficulty or obscurity of speech arises either from the muddled words and style – and there is nothing of this in the Qur'an of Clear Exposition – or because the meaning is subtle and profound, or of high value, or unfamiliar or rare; it as though acts coyly before the understanding, and in order to excite its appetite hides itself so as to accord itself value and importance. The obscurities of the Qur'an are of this sort.

Reminder

As in Hadiths, all the verses of the Qur'an have an inward (*batin*; Ar. *bāṭin*) and an outward (*zahir*; Ar. *ẓāhir*) meaning; and each of those have a moral (*had*; Ar. *ḥadd*) and an anagogical or mystical meaning (*muttala'*; Ar. *maṭla'* or *muṭṭala'*);¹ and each of those have numerous branches and boughs. The Islamic sciences testify to this. Each of these levels has a degree, a value, a station, and these have to be distinguished between. They do not, however, impinge on each other. But complications lead to doubt. If the sphere of causes (*dāire-i esbab*) is confused with that of beliefs

1. Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, i, 146; al-Munāwī, *Fayḍ al-Qaḍīr*, iii, 54.

(*dâire-i akâid*), it leads to laziness under the name of reliance on Allah, or to joining the Mu‘tazilites (*i‘tizal*) and calling it having recourse to causes; if those spheres and degrees are not differentiated, it produces the results described.

The Eleventh Premise

Numerous injunctions may be contained in a single discourse. A single shell may contain numerous pearls. It is accepted by men of understanding that a single premise comprises numerous premises; each emerges from a different source, just as each produces different fruits. The person who does not differentiate between them will remain unaware of the truth. For example, it says in a Hadith: **أَنَا وَالسَّاعَةُ كَهَذَيْنِ** “I and the Last Hour are as [close as] these two [fingers.]”¹ That is, there will be no Messenger to intervene between us. Or, whatever it means, it is right. Now, this Hadith comprises three propositions:

The First: It was spoken by Allah’s Messenger (UWBP). This proposition results from there being a consensus among witnesses of it (*tevatür*), if there was such a consensus.

The Second: The meaning intended by the statement is true and right. This proposition results from the proof born of miracles. Both these have to be agreed to. And if a person denies the first, he is arrogant, while if he denies the second, he falls into misguidance and darkness.

The Third: This is what is intended by the statement and this is the jewel found in the shell; I am showing it. The proposition is this: it is the result of an independent judgement, not wishful thinking. In any event, someone who makes such judgements is not obliged to follow the judgements of others like himself. This proposition has been the cause of fierce dispute. All the gossip about it testifies to this. If it proceeds from an independent judgement, the person who denies it is neither ignorant, nor does he fall into disbelief. For a general matter is not extinguished when one particular thing is extinguished. In consequence, all houses should be entered by their own doors since each has its own door and each lock has its own key.

Conclusion

These three propositions are relevant to verses of the Qur’an just as they are relevant to Hadiths. For they are general. However, there is a subtle difference in the first one. And besides this, any statement comprises numerous

1. *Bukhārī*, Riqāq, 39; *Tafsīr*, 79; *Sūra*, 1; *Muslim*, Fitan, 39; *Musnad*, iii, 124, 130, 131, 218, 222, 237, 275, 278, 283, 311, 319; iv, 309; v, 92, 103, 108, 330, 335, 338.

implied matters. But these are particular; they may each have different sources and fruits.

Reminder

Due to such ignominious and contemptible qualities as supporting the opposition, cold bigotry, one-upmanship, partisanship, self-justification through falsely ascribing misapprehensions to facts, seeing weak things as strong since they are tally with one's wishes, showing off one's perfections by belittling others, and advertising one's own honesty by declaring others liars or misguided – due to these, all of which arise from self-love, numerous fallacious arguments may be advanced in matters such as these, and pretexts found.

وَالِلّٰهِ الْمُشْتَكٰى

The Twelfth Premise

One who does not find the kernel will busy himself with the shell. One who does not recognize the truth, will deviate into fancies. One who cannot see the mean (lit. straight path – *sirat-ı müstakîm*), will go to one extreme or the other. The unbalanced, unstable person will often deceive and be deceived. Something that deceives the literalists is confusion about the relationship between the tale and its moral, and the association in the mind of the premise and what is intended, and its association in external existence and what is intended. Take note of this point, because you will need it later.

Furthermore, something, and perhaps the foremost thing, that gives rise to confusion and is a cause of conflict, creates superstitions, and gives rise to exaggeration is dissatisfaction with the beauty, grandeur, and loftiness of creation. Allah forbid, this is to decry its order out of vicious pleasure. Whereas the beauty of the order, and the perfection and loftiness of the truths of the world – each of which in the view of reason and wisdom is a clear miracle of power – have been so embroidered by the hand of wisdom that if they were to be compared with all the past amazing beauty and perfection of all the fanciful and the exaggerators, it would show those wondrous delusions to be utterly commonplace and those divine practices to be utterly beautiful and full of majesty. But familiarity, the sister of compounded ignorance and mother of superficiality, have closed the eyes of those exaggerators. It is to open such eyes that the Wise Book commands that attention be directed to the outside world and to the self, both of which are familiar. Yes, it is only the stars of the Qur'an that will open eyes. They are stars so bright they both disperse the darkness of ignorance and the dimness of superficiality;

and with their perspicuousness, they rend the veils of familiarity and superficiality and rip up the masks of the literalists, and direct them towards the truths of the world and of the self and offer them guidance.

Furthermore, what gives rise to the tendency to exaggerate is man's innate propensity to actualise the potential. For one of his predilections is to see and display unusual things that arouse wonder, and to renew and innovate. In consequence, since due to his superficial view man does not appreciate the spiritual sustenance in the dishes of the universe beneath the lid of familiarity, he becomes weary at licking the dish and the lid; and since it produces nothing but dissatisfaction and desire for the extraordinary and appetite for fancies, the desire for the extraordinary gives rise to the tendency to exaggerate, to effect renewal and to give it currency. Then the exaggeration, like a snowball at the top of a mountain, rolling down from the summit of the imagination to the tongue, then rolls along from tongue to tongue, both scatters pieces of its own truth to left and right, and grows like an avalanche as numerous fanciful notions increase its size from every tongue due to the tendency to exaggerate. Then it does not fit in the heart, or in the ear, or even in the imagination. Eventually the eye of truth comes, and divesting it of the conglomeration of all its accretions, shows it for what it is. The meaning of "the truth comes and falsehood perishes" is made manifest.

In Short: A recent happening may be related here by way of example: I do not say this out of pride, but ever since my youth, essentially my way has been to cleanse the truths of Islam of the stains made by those who go to one extreme or the other and to polish up those diamond-like truths. Numerous events in my life testify to this. In connection with this, recently I mentioned the sphericity of the earth, a self-evident matter, and some relevant religious matters, and I applied and adapted them and thus refuted the objections of enemies and the doubts of those who love religion. But then it seemed that since the brains of the literalists are accustomed to such make-belief things as ghouls, they would not accept it. But the true reason must have been something else. They acted idiotically as though by shutting their eyes they could make it nighttime, or by puffing they could extinguish the sun. They suppose that by accepting the sphericity of the earth, one is opposing numerous questions of religion. Making it a pretext they uttered serious calumnies. And it did not remain at that: suspicious minds found grounds suitable for the spread of the slander, and so increased it they caused extreme distress to the religiously minded and made the patriotic despair of Islam's progress. But it provided an exemplary lesson. It awakened me to

the fact that an ignorant friend can cause as much harm as an enemy. Until now, I considered only the enemy's side and smashed their excesses with the diamond sword I was wielding. But now I shall have to poke gently with the sword at those friends' vulgar and excessive imaginings in order to educate them. For sure, one should not have to mention such personal things in discussions of this sort, but it is no longer personal; it has become a general matter concerning the life of the medreses. The literalists should know certainly that their efforts are futile. They have kept us ignorant uptil now with their banal sophistries, and want in the future to take advantage of our ignorance. But it is not to be! The medreses will spring to life, and that's that!

Also, what confuses the literalists' ideas and spoils the order of their imaginings is their believing that the evidences of the prophets' veracity are limited to marvels (*harikulâdele*), as well as their supposing that all or most of our Prophet's (UWBP) acts have to be wondrous. But existence does not allow this, so their fancies remain disordered. For such a belief arises from disregarding the mystery of divine wisdom and the divine laws in force in the creation of the world, and the prophets submitting to these and complying with them; it results from a serious disregard of the truth. Yes, although all the Prophet's (UWBP) actions and behaviour indicate his veracity and testify that he adhered to the truth, he still submitted to and followed those divine laws. Attention is drawn to this in the Third Article.

Marvels (*harikulâde*) are displayed in order to verify prophethood. Such verification may be obtained by their miracles (*mu'cize*) being in the best possible form. If the miracles are more wondrous than they need to be, they would be either futile or opposed to the mystery of man's accountability – for accountability is a test or trial about something theoretical (*nazarî*). The most inferior and most superior may be equal in things that are obvious or nearly obvious – or they would be opposed to submission to the inner workings of wisdom in things and compliance with them. Whereas more than everyone, the prophets were charged with servitude and submission to Allah Almighty.

O searcher after truth who is scrutinising these disorderly words of mine! The proclivities planted in your nature will sprout and grow with the light of the sun of truth, which travels despite being stationary, and will produce flowers.

Conclusion

Both those sayyids who deny being sayyids, and non-sayyids who claim to be sayyids are sinful and both their entry and exit is proscribed, just as it

is proscribed to either add to the Qur'an or miss something out from it. To add to it is more harmful since it spoils the order and opens the door to baseless ideas. To miss any part out arises from ignorance and may therefore be forgiven to an extent. But adding to it needs knowledge, and a knowledgeable person is not to be excused. Similarly it is not permissible to eliminate anything from religion or to join something alien to it. To include the base metal of stories and the refuse of *israiliyyat* and misleading similes among the diamonds of the tenets of belief, the jewels of the Shari'a, and the pearls of its injunctions, reduces their value to an even greater degree and disgusts their customers, the seekers after truth, even more.

Conclusion of the Conclusion

It is a serious act of non-compliance with the Shari'a of Creation for a person to give up what he has a propensity for and to attempt something for which he has no ability. For the mark [of those laws] is for the man's potentialities to enter into and expand within his craft, and to esteem and love it, and to comply with and follow its rules; in short, to become engrossed in his craft. While his duty towards creation is this, by failing to comply, he alters the true form of the craft and infringes its laws. And because his inclination is towards the craft for which he has an innate capacity, he makes disagreeable the form of the craft he attempts in contravention of his nature. For confusion is born of the incompatibility of the propensity, which is potential, and the actual craft. In consequence, because out of their tendency to dominate and control and desire to be superior, numerous people want to assume positions of domination, they give up offering encouragement, guidance, and advice, and being gracious, which are the marks of knowledge, and they use their despotic, superior positions as means of compulsion and harsh censure and castigation. They exploit knowledge instead of serving it. The duties of teaching have thus passed into the hands of the incompetent, and the medreses in particular have headed for ruin. The sole solution for this is for the instructors, who form a single faculty, to be reorganized into numerous faculties like a university. Then everyone, impelled by their humanity and claiming their rights, will follow their natures and obey the command of pre-eternal wisdom, and put into practice the rule of the division of labour.

Reminder

One of the main reasons for the decline of the medrese sciences and their being diverted from their natural channel was the instrumental sciences (*'ulûm-u âliye*) being given priority over the fundamental sciences (*'ulûm-u 'âliye*). Just as the latter were neglected, so brains were busied

with deciphering Arabic phraseology; the main sciences became subsidiary, and those profusely wordy works that were made the official syllabus took everyone's time and attention, and allowed them no opportunity to escape.

Scrupulous brother! I reckon you want to know now what the three books¹ consist of, according to which these Premises are set out. Bide in patience a while longer, for now I'm going to tell you about a subject that forms a concise summary of those books, or is a photograph or an abbreviated chart. I am also going to present to you hastily eight or nine matters from those books. I have the idea to discuss them in detail after the Third Article, if divine will sees fit and I am visited with divine assistance. The subject is this: I'm going to rise to the sciences (*ulûm*) of the heavens on a journey of the spirit directly through the power of science (*hikmet*) by means shown by the Qur'an. From there we shall gaze down on the earth and see that it revolves like a ball or top, or a pebble flung by the All-Wise Maker's hand of power and is spinning. With the eye of wisdom we shall see that breaking into pieces it will be transformed into something better. Descending from the heavens, we shall pass through the atmosphere and gradually descend to the earth, our cradle, which the Merciful Creator has laid out and prepared for the ease and comfort of humankind. We shall then observe attentively how humankind throws away its cradle on emerging from childhood and destroys it, and is sent to the everlasting palace of bliss. Having watched this in its entirety, we shall embark on a journey of the spirit, which is unrestricted by time and space, to the past and with the electric current of history shall there exchange news with its people. We shall learn of events in that dusky eventide, and build a railway with its ideas. Then turning towards the morningtide of the future, we shall visit and welcome our fellow humans, who are on the point of departure, and view and point out from afar the true dawn of happiness. Boarding the train of progress and ship of endeavour, and holding up the lamp of proof, we shall enter upon those times, which although their beginnings appear dark, are bright indeed. There we shall embrace the people of the future, and congratulate them on their achievement and happiness.

This small photograph contains a truly beautiful picture which, on being defined, will later become clear to you. Now, the trees of the aforementioned books will sprout in this ground and will be watered by means of the canals of the three Articles.

1. For the three books, see, page 19 fn 1 above.

Brother! Before taking you by the hand and leading you to the treasury of truths, I am going to dispel the fancies that veil the eye of your discernment and quickly mention the several matters I mentioned. The fancies are such that with their hands they blind your eyes like ghouls, beat you on the chest, and terrify you. If they show you anything at all, they make light appear as fire and pearls as clods. Beware of those imaginings! The most important source of the satanic whisperings that afflict you are several matters related to the sphericity of the earth. For instance, the ox and fish; Qaf mountain; the barrier of Dhu'l-Qarnayn; the mountains acting as pegs; and Hell as being as being specifically located beneath the earth; and such matters as (79:30) دَحَاهَا (88:20) وَالشَّمْسُ تَجْرِي لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ لَهَا (36:38) سَطَّحَتْ (24:43) وَيُنَزَّلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَنَ الْجِبَالِ فِيهَا مِنْ بَرٍّ . I shall explain what they mean in reality in order to close up the eyes of the enemies of religion and open the eyes of its friends. I am commencing:

The First Matter

Your fair mind knows that the investigative scholars of Islam have agreed on the sphericity of the earth, if only tacitly. If you have any doubts, go to the *Maqāṣid* and *Mawāqif*, study them and become acquainted with their purpose, and you will see that Sa'd¹ and the Sayyid² hold the globe in their hands like a ball and are looking at every side of it.

If that door does not open to you, enter upon Imam Razi's extensive commentary, *Maḥāṭib al-Ghayb*,³ and join his study circle as he teaches, and listen to him.

1. Sa'd al-Dīn al-Taftazānī (d. 793/1390). Renowned scholar of grammar, rhetoric, *kalām*, *fiqh*, and *tafsīr*. Among his many works is his own commentary on his *kalām* work, *al-Maqāṣid*, called, *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*. Which of the two is referred to here is uncertain, probably the latter. He was born in Khurasan and died in Samarqand.

2. Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Sayyid al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī (d. 816/1413). Born near Astarabad and died in Shiraz. An authority in the sciences Arabic, *kalām*, and *fiqh*. The work referred to here is his famous commentary on 'Aḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī's *kalām* manual, *al-Mawāqif*. al-Jurjānī's work, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, was a standard medrese text. For the earth's sphericity, see, *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif* (Beirut: 1433/2012), vii, 145-7.

3. Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. 'Umar Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1209). One of the most celebrated theologians and exegetists of Islam. His numerous works are mostly concerned with *kalām*, philosophy, and Qur'anic exegesis, his most famous work of exegesis being *al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr* otherwise known as *Maḥāṭib al-Ghayb*. He was born in Rayy and died at Herat. For the earth's sphericity, see for example, *al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr* (Beirut: 1429/2008), vii, 336, 337 (2:22).

If you are not assured by him and you still have not grasped the idea of sphericity, follow İbrahim Hakkı, ¹ approach Imam Ghazali, the Hujjat al-Islam, ² and request a *fatwa*. Ask him if there is any dispute over the earth's sphericity, he is bound to reply: "If you don't accept it, there'll be a dispute!" For even at that time he issued such a *fatwa*: "If anyone denies a definitely proven and established matter like the earth's sphericity on the pretext of defending religion, he perpetrates a serious crime. To do so is betrayal of religion, not loyalty towards it."

If you are illiterate and can't read his *fatwa*, listen to what Husayn Jisr ³ has to say, since he is our contemporary and holds similar ideas to us. For he both loudly threatened those who deny that the earth is round, and with the power of truth declared fearlessly: "Whoever denies the earth's sphericity citing religion and to defend it is a foolish friend and more harmful than a fierce enemy."

If his resounding voice does not rouse your idea of the truth from its slumbers and your eyes do not open, take the hand of people like Ibn Humam ⁴ and Fakhr al-Islam. ⁵ Go to Imam Shafi'i ⁶ and ask for a *fatwa*. Ask him:

"It is included in the Shari'a that all five of the daily *ṣalāt* may be performed in a single period between two of the *ṣalāt*. Moreover, there is a people for whom there are times they cannot perform the '*Ishā*' *ṣalāt*, and there is another people for whom the sun never sets for days and for many nights the sun never rises, so how can they perform the fast?" And ask that since

1. Erzurumlu İbrahim Hakkı (d. 1194/1780), author of the compendious *Mârifetnâme*. See, *Mârifetnâme*. Ed. Meyan (Istanbul: 1999), 86 ff., 270-86.

2. Abū Hāmid Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111). The pre-eminent theologian, jurist, original thinker, and mystic. He was born in Tus in Khurasan, where he also retired in his last years and died. For the earth's sphericity, see, *The Incoherence of the Philosophers*. Tr. Michael E. Marmura (Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2000), 6.

3. Ḥusayn al-Jisr of Syria (d. 1327/1909), scholar, educationalist, and apologist, and author of the famous exposition of the basic beliefs of Islam, *al-Risāla al-Ḥamīdiyya*. See, *al-Risāla al-Ḥamīdiyya* (Beirut: 1305 Mali), 372-3.

4. Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wāḥid Ibn al-Humām (d. 861/1457). An eminent Hanafi/Maturidi jurist and theologian. Born in Alexandria, though his family hailed from Sivas, and died in Cairo.

5. Abū al-'Usr Fakhr al-Islām al-Bazdawī (d. 482/1089). Another eminent Hanafi/Maturidi jurist. Born in the region of Bukhara and died at Kish, some distance from Samraqand.

6. Imām Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī (d. 204/820), founder of the Shafi'i school of law. Born in Gazza in Palestine, and died in Cairo. He was descended on his father's side from the Quraysh tribe, sharing a great-great grandfather, 'Abd al-Manaf, with the Prophet Muhammad (UWBP).

according to the Shari‘a a matter is stipulated in accordance with its connection (*mukârin*) with other principal matters, how should the direction of the *qibla* be fixed, which is obligatory for the *ṣalât*? For there is a connection (*mukârenet*) only in those parts of the *ṣalât* performed while standing and half-sitting?

You may be certain that Imam Shafi‘i would solve the first matter by depicting a curved sphere stretching from east to west, while the second and third matters he would solve by describing a curve stretching from south to north. He would reply as though with a rational demonstration (*bürhan-ı akli*). Concerning the *qibla* he would say that the *qibla* and Ka‘ba form a column of light so luminous it fastens the heavens to the divine throne in regular order, and piercing all the levels of the globe to the innermost, has become a luminous pillar of the universe. If the veil were to be lifted, following a perpendicular line the beam of your eye would meet and salute the Ka‘ba’s eye at every action of the *ṣalât*.

Brother! If you are the man I think you are, the strange fancies you have, have found nowhere other than the world of imagination to settle and lack any value that they should enter your heart. You don’t believe them yourself even and you can’t convince your soul, but you’ve gone astray. If the globe, which is many times smaller than your imagination, cannot be situated in your heart, which is open to those fancies and closed to the truth, broaden your horizons and expand your mind! Behold the dwellers on the earth, who have become like the members of a council, and ask them. For the land-owner knows his house. Basing it on observation and consensus, they will tell you unanimously: “Our globe, our cradle and railway through space, is not so crazy as to make itself an unbridled exception to the divine laws in force in the lofty bodies.” And they would proffer some relief maps.

Indication

The Divine Shari‘a of Creation, called the order of the world’s creation, has made it obligatory that the travelling globe, in ecstasy like a Mevlevi, joins the row of the orderly stars and complies with it. For together with its partner, the earth declared: (41:11) *أَتَيْنَا طَائِعِينَ*. Worshipful obedience is preferable and more meritorious in congregation.

In Short: The world’s Maker created the earth as He wished and as His wisdom required, not as your appetites wanted, you fond imaginers! He didn’t appoint your intelligences as the world’s engineers!

Reminder

Another matter that indicates weakness of belief, or a tendency towards the Sophists' way, or a perusing customer, is the idiotic statement: "This fact is opposed to religion." For the person who deems it possible that something established by decisive proof to be true and right is opposed to religion, and is frightened of such contraity, either has a Sophist hidden in his brain who is confusing it, or a whispering devil has pierced his heart and being concealed there is inciting a revolution, or he is again thinking of taking up religion and is examining it critically.

The Second Matter

It's no secret that the Bull (Taurus) and the Fish (Pisces) in the famous story are intruders on Islam and spongers. They became Muslim together with their narrator. If you like, go to the Third Premise and see by which door they entered Islam. And look in the mirror of the Fourth Premise for its relation to Ibn 'Abbas; you'll see the reason for its appropriation. It was subsequently narrated as a Hadith: "The earth rests on a bull and a fish."

Firstly: We do not accept that it is a Hadith, for it has signs of being *israiliyyat*.¹

Secondly: Even if it is a Hadith, it is narrated from a single source (*âhâd*), which infers doubt. It may not be included among the tenets of belief, because for those certain knowledge is requisite.

Thirdly: Even though there is agreement in narrations concerning it (*mütewâtir*) and its text is certain, there is nothing definite to substantiate it. If you wish, refer to the Fifth Premise and consult the Eleventh. You'll see that just as fanciful imaginings deluded the literalists; so the literalists distorted the Hadith's correct aspects. The correct aspects are threefold:

The bearers of the divine throne, called the Bull, the Vulture, Man, and others, are angels. The Bull and Fish are two such angels. For it is contrary to the world's order to load the sublime throne on angels and the globe on a bull, which is in need of support like the globe itself. Moreover, it is heard from the tongue of the Shari'a that each realm of being has a particular and appropriate angel appointed to it. Due to the relationship, the angel is called after the realm in question; indeed, in the angelic realm it represents it. It is heard as a Hadith: "Every evening the sun approaches the divine throne. There it prostrates and receives permission before returning." Yes, the angel

1. *Israiliyyat*, see, page 15 fn 1 above.

appointed to the sun bears the sun's name and is its similitude; it is the angel that goes and returns. Furthermore, according to the philosopher theologians, every realm and species of being has a transcendent nature which is living and articulate and brings assistance and aid to its members. In the terminology of the Shari'a they are called the Angel of the Seas, the Angel of the Mountains, and the Rain Angel. Nevertheless, they have no true effect; it is solely the Most Pure and Holy One who creates effects.

إِذْ لَا مُؤَثَّرَ فِي الْكَوْنِ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

The reason for external causes is so that the hand of power, the term for the display of grandeur and sovereignty, should not appear without veil to be in contact with lowly matters to those looking towards the sphere of causes (*dâire-i esbâb*). But in reality and in the inner dimensions of things (*melekûtiyet*), known as the sphere of belief (*dâire-i akîde*), everything is lofty; there it is in keeping with divine dignity that the hand of power should have contact without veil.

(6:96) ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ

The Second Meaning: Thawr (the Bull) is the ox, the main means of cultivating the earth and developing it. While Hût (the Fish) is the means of livelihood of people who live near the sea, indeed, for many of humankind. If someone asks: "What does the state rest on?", he is told: "On the sword and the pen." Or if he asks: "What sustains civilisation?", he is told: "Education, industry, and commerce." Or if he asks: "How does humankind perpetuate itself?", he is told: "With knowledge and labour." Similarly, and Allah knows best, the Glory of the World (UWBP) answered the way he did in reply to a similar question. The person who asked it, although it was not his business, did so because his mind had not acquired the capacity for such truths – as discussed in the Second Premise. So our Prophet (UWBP) gave an appropriate answer, which was: "The earth rests on the bull." That is, it is humankind that cultivates the earth. The means of livelihood of rural communities, one of its groups, is agriculture. And agriculture rests on the backs of oxen and is their job. The people of coastal regions, another group, subsist mostly on fish; indeed, fish is one of the main commodities the city-dwellers' trade rests on. It corroborates the saying:

كُلُّ الصَّيْدِ فِي جَوْفِ الْفَرَا¹ This is an apt answer. Even if it's humorous, it's true. Because even if he is joking, what he says is true. Supposing the

1. That is, the hunter is in need of nothing else. (Tr.)

questioner had asked about the nature of creation. In accordance with the wise rule of the science of figurative speech (*fenn-i beyân*),

تَلَقَّى السَّامِعُ بِغَيْرِ الْمُتَرَقَّبِ the Prophet (UWBP) gave the appropriate and required answer. He did not give the answer the sick questioner wanted due to his false appetite. The verse, (2:189) يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَهْلِ قُلْ هِيَ مَوَاقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ is an apt introduction to this truth.

The Third Meaning: The Bull (Taurus) and the Fish (Pisces) are two constellations determined in the earth's annual orbit. They are certainly hypothetical and imaginary, but because the law of divine practice known as gravity, which is in force in the world and is charged with holding the physical heavenly bodies in order, is centred on those constellations, it makes permissible the wise saying: "The earth rests on the constellations." This is the point of view of modern science. For ancient philosophy supposed the constellations to be in the heavens, while modern science assumes they are in the earth's orbit. This interpretation has great value in the view of science.

It is also narrated that the question was asked several times. One time, the reply was "it's (the earth's) on the Fish," which means that a month later it would be on the Bull. That is, since the rays and beams of the above-mentioned law, radiating in every direction through endless space, were focused on the constellation of Pisces, the globe of the earth had raced from the constellation of Aquarius, grabbed the law as it was lowered from Pisces, and was hung like a fruit on a branch of the tree of creation. Or it alighted on it like a bird. That is, the flying earth built its nest on the constellation of Taurus. Having learnt this, consider it fairly! As is explained in the Fifth Premise, how can the well-known fictitious tale be interpreted, other than by ascribing futility to pre-eternal wisdom, proving divine art to be superfluous, and spoiling the wondrous order of the universe, which is proof of the Maker? May ignorance be damned a thousand times !

The Third Matter

Qāf Mountain

As is well-known, it is one thing to know the nature of something, and another to affirm its existence. The two have to be distinguished between. For there are many things whose existence is certain but then a person is beset by misgivings and deems them impossible, let alone probable. If you like, ask the Seventh Premise; it will reply in the affirmative. Moreover, there are many texts that are incontrovertible, yet doubts have thronged

around what they signify. Indeed, confusion has been caused by the answer received to the question: “What does it mean?” If you wish, crack the shell of the Eleventh Premise and you’ll find this pearl.

Reminder

It is like this: among certain texts, only the verse (50:1) **قَافٌ وَالْقُرْآنِ الْمَجِيدِ** indicates “Qāf.” But “Qāf” could have been like “*Ṣād*,” not in the east of the world, but in the west of the mouth. Such a possibility, however, causes the evidence to cease being certain. Furthermore, evidence that what it definitely signifies is not other than this is that Qarāfi,¹ an authoritative scholar (*mujtahid*) of the Shari‘a, said that it was **لَا أَصْلَ لَهُ**. However, you may refer to the Fourth Premise for the well-known ascriptions to Ibn ‘Abbas.² Its relevance will become clear to you. Nevertheless, just as everything Ibn ‘Abbas said did not have to be a Hadith, so everything he related did not have to be acceptable. For in his youth, he used some *israiliyat* in order to disclose certain truths by means of stories.

If you ask: “The Sufi verifiers of reality depicted Qāf [Mountain] in many ways, didn’t they?”

I say in reply: The renowned World of Similitudes is where they make their peregrinations. They slip out of their bodies as we take off our clothes, and journeying in the spirit gaze on its strange wonders. As for Qāf, it is represented in that world as they describe it. Like the heavens and its stars may be displayed in a small piece of glass, even tiny things in this Manifest World – for instance seeds – become huge trees in the World of Similitudes through the embodiment of meanings and its effects. The laws of the two realms should not be confused. Those familiar with the gist of Muhyi al-Din ‘Arabi’s³ ideas will affirm this. So if you want to learn the worth of what has gained currency among the common people or those who resemble them: that Qāf encompasses the earth and is numerous; that between the two is a five-hundred-year distance; and that its peak touches the skies; go and light the lamp of the Third Premise, then come back here and enter the darkness. Perhaps you’ll espy its eloquence, like the water of life.

1. Abū al-‘Abbās Shihāb al-Dīn Ahmad b. Idrīs al-Qarāfi (d. 684/1285), a famous authority on Mālikī jurisprudence (*faqīh*) and its principles (*uṣūl*). Born in Būsh in Egypt, though his family hailed from the Maghrib, died in Cairo.

2. For Ibn ‘Abbas, see page 28 fn 1, above.

3. Muhyī al-Dīn ibn al-‘Arabi (d. 638/1240). Known as al-Shaykh al-Akbar, he was one of the most influential Sufis of all time. The most famous of his numerous works are *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya fī asrār al-mālikiyya wa’l-mulkiyya* and *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam wa khuṣūṣ al-kilām*. He was born in Murcia in Andalucia, and died in Damascus.

If you want to understand my conviction concerning this matter, know that I have decided that Qāf [Mountain] exists, but I'll pass over what it is in reality. If there is a sound, unanimously reported Hadith explaining this, I'll believe that what the Prophet (UWBP) meant is right and true and real. But what he intended, not what people imagine. Because sometimes what is understood is not what was intended. What we know about this matter is as follows:

Qāf Mountain is the Himalaya mountain range, which covers most of the East and in olden times divided the civilised peoples from the nomadic ones, and is the mother of the Chamus,¹ the highest mountains in the world. It is said that most of the mountains of the world branched out from this range (lit. from its "roots"). This shows that the famous fanciful idea that Qāf encompasses the world must have originated from this branching out.

And secondly, the World of Similitudes solves the riddle, since it resembles the Manifest World in form and the World of the Unseen in meaning. Whoever wishes may behold that world to a degree through the window of true visions, the aperture of true dreams, the telescope of transparent objects, or at least beyond the veils of imagination. There are numerous indications that the World of Similitudes exists and that meanings are embodied in it. Hence, the Qāf on the earth may be the seed of the wonderful Qāf on that world.

Moreover, the Maker's dominions are extensive and not restricted to this lowly globe. As for space, it is Allah's world and truly vast, and may contain Qāf with its wonders. But it is not reasonably impossible to touch the heavens, which are "a wave rolled back," although they are a five-hundred-year distance from the earth, reckoned in "the days of Allah." For like the heavens, Qāf may be transparent and invisible.

And fourthly, why shouldn't Qāf consist of a mighty mountain-chain, manifested from the sphere of the horizon? Just as the horizon's name may be a source of Qāf, for wherever one looks a band of ranges appears like concentric circles. They gradually disappear from sight and hand over to the imagination. Finally the imagination conceives of an encompassing circle of mountain ranges touching the skies. By virtue of the sphericity, even if they are five-hundred-years distant, they still appear contiguous.

1. Çamular in the original. This probably refers to Jammu, as in Jammu and Kashmir, a state in northern India, situated mostly in the Himalaya mountains.

The Fourth Matter

The Barrier of Dhu'l-Qarnayn ¹

You know that it is one thing to know something exists and another to know its nature and what it is. Also, a single proposition comprises numerous assumptions. Some of them are necessary, and some are theoretical and controversial. Furthermore, it is well-known that if an obstinate, imitative man asks someone about something he sees in a book in order to test him, although it may have been somewhat falsified, and the second man answers in accordance with what the first man knows, which is unexpressed; his reply is right in two respects. If he replies directly, or he gives an answer that conforms to what the obstinate questioner knows, either explicitly or interpreting it, both are right. That is to say, one answer both satisfies reality, because it is true; and it convinces the questioner, because even it is not what was intended, it conforms with what he knows. It does not offend the context either, because it inserts a spark of life into the answer from which the original intention will draw life.

The Qur'an's answers are thus, so from now on we shall distinguish between the necessary [belief in which is obligatory] and the unnecessary [belief in which is not obligatory]. Thus, the matters in the Qur'an's answer belief in which is understood to be obligatory may not be denied. It is like this: Dhu'l-Qarnayn was a person whose existence is corroborated by Allah. Under his direction and guidance a barrier was constructed between two mountains in order to repel the incursions of brigands and nomads. Gog and Magog were two raiding tribes. At the divine command, the barrier will be destroyed. And so on. According to this analogy, belief in the Qur'an's statements referring to him is compulsory. Not even a letter of them may be denied. However, the Qur'an makes no defining or specific statement concerning the nature of those subjects and their predicates. Rather, in accordance with the rule, "A general statement can express or signify a particular (*hâs*) one with none of the three types of signification" (*delâlât-i selâse*), ² and the rule of logic, "The subject and predicate of a proposition may be

1. Dhu'l-Qarnayn, the two-horned one, mentioned in Qur'an 18:83-98. Below the author disagrees with the view that it refers to Alexander the Great of Macedon (356-323 BC).

2. The three types of signification (*delâlât-i selâse*. Ar. *al-dalâlât al-thalâtha*): *delâlet-i mutabîkiye* (Ar. *al-dalâla al-mutâbiqiyya*), *delâlet-i tazammuniye* (Ar. *al-dalâla al-ta'ammuniyya*), and *delâlet-i iltizâmiye* (Ar. *al-dalâla al-iltizâmiyya*). These are said to refer respectively to the primary or literal meanings of words or phrases, the implied meanings, and figurative significations.

conceived of in any form” it is established that the Qur’an does not denote them specifically; but it may accept them. That is to say, the above statements are theoretical or speculative (*nazarî*) statements. They may denote other things. They are open to interpretation and may be interpreted. Their being disputed by authoritative scholars shows that they are theoretical or speculative. But regrettably, fancying that the answer should conform with the question in every respect and attaching no importance to the defects of the question, they garnered the essential and theoretical components of the answer from the questioner and the question, and became commentators. No, they became interpreters; no, they gave meanings at variance with the truth. No, they interpreted something that might possibly have confirmed the meaning as something inferred or understood. But as explained in the Third Premise, the literalists listened to them uncritically and accepted them as did the authoritative scholars, since they considered them to be trivial tales. If those specific statements are accepted as they are in the corrupted Torah and Gospels, it means opposing the infallibility (*mâsumiyet*) of the prophets, which is a doctrine of the Sunnis. The stories of Lot and David (Upon whom be peace) both testify to this. One may make independent judgements and interpretations concerning the matter and how it was. So seeking Allah’s assistance, I say: Firm belief in what Allah and His Prophet intended is definitely obligatory, because belief in it is a religious obligation. But what they actually intended is disputed. It is as follows:

I do not say that Dhu’l-Qarnayn was Alexander, for the name does not fit. Some of the commentators called him *malik* (king) spelling it with *kasra*, others called him *malak*, spelling it with a *fatha*, others said he was a prophet, and others said he was a saint, and so on. But certainly Dhu’l-Qarnayn was the person who conducted the construction of the Barrier.

As for the Barrier, some commentators said it was the Wall of China, others said it was a great mountainous barrier somewhere else, others said it was a hidden barrier, concealing the revolutions and circumstances of the world. And others said such-and-such, and so on and so forth. Most probably it was a mighty rampart or huge wall to repulse the depredations of marauders.

As for Gog and Magog, some commentators said they were two tribes descended from Yasef,¹ others said they were the Mongols and Manchurians, others said they were the peoples of the north-east, and yet others said that they were a vast body of men, a horde which would overturn the world

1. Yasef: the third son of Noah.

and civilisation; and still others said they were a sort of creature, either human or sub-human, from beyond the earth or from inside it. They would be the cause of the end of the world and would thus overturn humankind. Yet other commentators said other things. What is certain and the point on which they are agreed is this: Gog and Magog, two pillaging plundering tribes, and the people of civilisation are two groups of Allah's creatures.

As for the destruction of the Barrier, some say that it will occur on the Last Day; others, near to the Last Day; others, when it's still a long way off, but as a sign of it; and still others, that it has been destroyed. But it has not been demolished. Much has been said about it. Most probably, what is agreed upon is that its ruin will be a sign that a grey hair has appeared in the Earth's beard and that the human race, its offspring, is growing old. If you have weighed up and contemplated this discussion, you will admit that the following is possible: the Qur'anic Barrier is the Great Wall of China, which is of great length and, as one of the seven wonders of the world, was built under the guidance of a person whose existence is confirmed by Allah. He delivered the city-dwellers of that time from the despoliation of nomadic tribes. The Huns, one group of those savages, overturned Europe; the Mongols, another, overturned Asia. Then the Barrier's destruction was looked on as a sign of the last times. But it's being levelled is something else. The Prophet (UWBP) said: "I'm one of the signs of the last times. The end of the world and myself are as [close as] these two [fingers]," so why should it be thought strange that the Barrier's destruction will be a sign of the end of the world after the Era of Bliss? Also, in view of the earth's great age, it's ruin is merely a wrinkle of old age on its face, or like the fading light of evening compared to high noon. Though admittedly there is an interval of thousands of years. Similarly, the turmoil of Gog and Magog resembles a fever arising from humanity's decrepitude. After all this, the opening section of the Twelfth Premise will open the door for you to another interpretation. It is like this:

Just as the Qur'an relates its stories to give lessons; so it makes vital points suitably to one of its aims (*makasid*) and joins them to it. Although outwardly the light and fire of things do not appear together, they still may embrace and accompany one another in the mind or in style. The story's purpose is its moral; you don't need the details; whatever they are, they do not concern you. Take your lesson and go! Also, you can seek further explanation from the Tenth Premise. Figurative speech opens the door to further figurative speech. *تَغْرُبُ (الشَّمْسُ) فِي عَيْنِ حَمِيَّةٍ* drives the literalists out.

The key to Allah's argument (*hüccetullah* – the Qur'an), which is manifested in the styles of Arabic, lies in rhetoric and eloquence (*belâgat*), which is founded on metaphor and figurative speech and is the basis of its miraculous inimitability (*i'caz*). It does not consist of baubles found by the wayside through false conjecture due to their fame and hidden in the shells of its verses without their consent. If you wish, experience with pleasure the conclusion of the Tenth Premise, for it is sweet indeed and contains honey. Moreover, like other signs of the last times, the Barrier, about which nothing is known, may be concealed somewhere else and remaining there unknown through various revolutions until the end of the world, will then be destroyed.

Indication

As is well-known, habitations survive longer than their inhabitants. Citadels last longer than those who fortified them. Dwelling and fortification are the reason (*'illet*) for their existence, not for their continuance and survival. Even if they are the reason for their survival, this does not necessitate their enduring and not being vacant. The continuation of the purpose of something, or its existence even, is not one of the things that necessitate its continuance. Numerous buildings remain vacant and empty although they were built as dwellings or forts. Misunderstandings about this question have led to false notions.

Reminder

The aim of these details is to pave the way for distinguishing and differentiating between exegesis and interpretation, certitude and supposition, existence and modality, a question and various explanations of it, meaning and verifications of it, and occurrence and possibility.

The Fifth Matter

As is well-known, Hell is beneath the earth, but we Sunnis cannot specify its location with any certainty. Nevertheless, what is clear is 'beneathness;' its being under the earth. Our globe, like the other celestial bodies (*nücûm*), is a fruit of the world's creation, which resembles the Tuba tree. What is beneath the fruit encompasses all that is under the tree's branches. In consequence, Hell is among the branches under the earth. Its place is there wherever it is. Its distance below does not have to be long and contiguous. According to modern science, fire overruns most of the cosmos. This shows that beyond this Hell, which is the origin and basis of the fire and accompanies humankind on the road to eternity, will one day rend the veil and emerge, commanding attention. I want to draw attention to this point.

Secondly: It is under the earth and is its centre inside it. Because of this, the globe is pregnant with the seed of the Zakkum tree of Hell, and one day it will give birth to it. Indeed, the earth flying through space will lay such an egg that even if it is not Hell in its entirety, it will comprise its head or some other organ, folded up. On the Last Day, uniting with others of its parts, the ghastly demons of Hell will assault the people of rebellion. Think of it! Even if you yourself are not destined for Hell, reckoning and calculation can take you that far. For heat increases one degree approximately every thirty-three metres, which means it reaches around two hundred thousand degrees at the centre. This is two hundred times hotter than our heat, which generally reaches one thousand degrees, as is proved by the Hadith: “The fire of Hell is two hundred times fiercer than ours.” Furthermore, part of Hell is extremely cold. This cold (*zemherir*) burns as it freezes. It is established by natural science (*hikmet-i tabiiyye*) that fire may reach such a degree it freezes water. It instantaneously consumes the heat and burns with its cold. This means that fire encompasses all degrees, one of which is extreme cold.

Reminder

It should be known that the world of the hereafter, which is destined for eternity, cannot be measured or dealt with with the criteria of this world, which doomed to pass. Be ready! The hereafter will be offered in small part for your consideration at the end of the Third Article.

Indication

The testimony of the order established by all the sciences, and the instruction of philosophy’s (*hikmet*) inductive reasoning, and the intimations of the essence of humanity, and the signs of never-ending human hope, and the indications of the repeated resurrections of all the realms of beings like the days and the years, and the hints of the lack of futility and pointers of pre-eternal wisdom, and tokens of infinite divine mercy, and the explicit statements of the Truthful Prophet (UWBP), and the guidance of the miraculous Qur’an, all reveal eight doors and two windows through which the eye of the intellect may behold the gardens of bliss of the hereafter.

The Sixth Matter

It is certain that what is attractive about Revelation is its miraculous inimitability (*i’caz*). Its miraculousness is born of the high level of rhetoric and eloquence (*belâgat*; Ar. *balāgha*). Rhetoric is founded on linguistic figures and qualities, and particularly on metaphor and figurative language. Any person who does not look through the telescope of metaphor and figures

of speech will be unable to perceive its qualities. For Revelation, which conveys the spring waters of the sciences of the styles of Arabic in order to bring its truths close to the minds of men, takes into consideration their understanding and shows regard and respect for their feelings, which is called divine condescension. At that time it was thus.

Qur'anic commentators should give the Qur'an its due and not diminish its value, nor interpret it with anything that does not bear the ratifying stamp of eloquence. For it is clearer and more obvious than any truth that just as the Qur'an's meanings are true, so are its manner of expression and ways of conveying meaning eloquent and elevated. So one who does not refer particulars to that source and mine is being niggardly in giving it its due. We shall point out one or two examples, since they attract attention.

First Example: (78:7) وَالْجِبَالُ أَوْتَادًا (Allah knows best what he intended). It is permissible that the figure of speech indicated here alludes to the following notion: the globe is like a submarine in the oceans of space and since, with its mountains planting masts or casting anchor, it merges with the air, its balance has been preserved. That is to say, the mountains resemble the ship's anchor and masts.

Secondly: The earth's inner revolutions and tremors are calmed through the mountains, for they are as though the earth's pores. When an internal excitement occurs, the earth breathes through the mountains and its anger and upset are calmed. That is to say, the mountains are means of its calm and tranquillity.

Thirdly: The earth is cultivated by means of human beings. And human life is perpetuated by human beings preserving water, earth and air, the sources of life, so that they may be profited from. And what ensures these three conditions of life are the mountains. For the mountains serve both as reservoirs for the water, and as combs for the air as they attract the moisture, and since they are the means of precipitating the harmful gases mixed with the air so purifying it, they also water the earth. So too they preserve the earth from the formation of muddy swamps and the encroachment of the sea.

Fourthly: The relevance and similitude [of the verse] according to eloquence is this: Suppose a man ascends high up in the balloon of his imagination, and looking down on the mountain ranges imagines them to be the haircloth shelters of nomads thrown over the poles of the layers of earth, and the individual mountains to be tents erected on poles. Would this be opposed to nature and imagination? If, in conversation with a nomad, you fancy and

conceive of the face of the earth together with its mountain ranges and the mountains as tents pitched on it, you would not be far from the Arabs' imagination and styles. They would not condemn you if gazing from afar through the telescope of wisdom at the earth, man's cradle, and the skies, its lofty roof, you imagine the sky stretching from the wide horizons to the heavens as a tent-roof bound with the pegs of the mountains on the face of the earth. One or two more examples follow in the Reminder of the Eighth Matter.

The Seventh Matter

In order to mislead people, certain literalists persistently cite verses like the following: (79:30) *دَحَّهَا* ; (88:20) *سُطِّحَتْ* ; (51:48) *فَرَشْنَهَا* ; (18:86) *تَقَرَّبُ فِي عَيْنِ حَمَّةٍ* . There is no need for us to defend [the verses' interpretation], for the great commentators have divulged the secrets in the pronouns (T. *zamâir*; Ar. *ḍamā'ir*) the verses contain.¹

وَلَكِنْ بَكَّوْا قَبْلِي فَهَيَّجُوا إِلَى الْبُكَاءِ وَهَيَّهَاتْ دُورَ حَمْدٍ يَرْقُ لِبُكَائِي

It is futile to state the obvious, especially if it is observed, as everyone knows. This means there must be some singular point to save it from meaninglessness. If it is said: "Look! The earth has been spread out although it is spherical, and is a cradle for you, and has been saved from being overrun by the seas;" or "The sun is both stationary and travels to regulate your livelihood;" or "Although the sun is thousands of [light] years away, it sets in a muddy spring"—the verses' meanings cease being allusive (*kinâye*) and become unambiguous. These singular points are fine points of eloquence.

The Eighth Matter

One of the things that casts the literalists into the abyss of doubt and hesitation, perhaps the chief of them, is their confusing possibilities with actual occurrences. For instance, they say: "If it were such-and-such, it would be possible for divine power, and to our way of thinking, would indicate divine power more compellingly. So it should occur." Alas, you wretches! When have your minds been shown to be sufficiently proficient to act as engineers for the cosmos? You can't comprehend the universal good with your insignificant particular intellects. If there were a cubit-long nose made of gold and all gazes were fixed on it alone, only then would someone appear who found it beautiful.

1. This is a play on words: *zamir* also means heart or inner consciousness.

Furthermore, what bewilders literalists is their fancying that essential possibility is opposed to certain knowledge. They almost become Sophists (*lâedrîler*) since they are in doubt concerning sensory knowledge (*ulûm-u âdiye*). They are unashamed even that their way demands that they doubt self-evident things like Lake Van and Mount Subhan due to the possibility that Lake Van may turn into grape molasses and Mount Subhan into sugar-encrusted honey. Or because they do not accept that the earth is round like some of our friends, the possibility that dragging their feet they will tumble into the oceans of non-existence. So one shouldn't affirm that Lake Van and Mount Subhan remain permanently in their original states. So now you know, O wretches! Where are you? Look! It is accepted in logic that conjectures about concrete perceptible things are held to be self-evident. If you deny such self-evident matters, I'll send you my condolences rather than giving you advice. Because you look on knowledge obtained through the external senses (*ulûm-u âdiye*) as dead and sophistries as living.

The Fourth Calamity that confuses the literalists is their mixing up conjectural or delusive possibilities (*imkân-ı vehmî*) with reasonable ones. But because conjectural possibilities have given birth to sophistry out of the rootless race of blind imitation, without offering proof (*delîl*) they have each opened the way in self-evident matters to a "perhaps," a "possibly," and to doubts. This arises mostly from the failure to reason, a weakness of the heart or nervous disorder of the brain, and the failure to conceive of the subject and attribute of propositions. Whereas, to doubt a reasonable possibility means being hesitant about a matter that is not necessary and about which there is no certain proof of its existence or non-existence. If such doubt has arisen from proof (*delîl*) it is acceptable; otherwise it is not creditable. However, concerning conjectural possibilities, some people given to delusions say: "They may not be as the proofs (*bürhan*) show, because reason cannot comprehend everything. Our reasons tell us that this may be the case." Yes, no, what affords such a possibility is your delusive imagination. For the mark of the reason is to operate through proofs (*bürhan*). For sure it cannot weigh up everything, but it can judge such material matters and any matter that cannot escape the clutches of sight, its smallest servant. If it can't do this, then like a child, we should not be held accountable.

Reminder

My literalist and superficial-viewing addressee of the mind, whom I have scolded and rebuked and exposed: it is usually the enemies of religion who going to one extreme and looking on Islam from afar are unable to see

its beauty. But sometimes its ignorant friends who go to the other extreme cause harm, thinking they are doing good.

The Fifth Calamity: One of things that taking the hands of those unfortunates who go to one extreme or the other and cast them into darkness, is their seeking literal truth in every part of figurative speech. For sure a seed of truth has to be found in all figurative speech from which the figures may sprout and grow. Alternatively, truth is a light-giving wick, while figurative speech is the lamp's glass, increasing the light. Yes, love is in the heart, and the intellect in the brain; it's futile to search for them in the hand or foot.

Sixth Calamity: What screens the sight and conceals eloquence is restricting the view to literal meanings. This means that however much the truth is perceived by the intellect, so figures cannot be aggressed against. If they are, the meanings are hidden. It is due to this that the beauty and eloquence of the Qur'an's verses and of Hadiths cannot be shown through exegesis or translations. It is as though the literalists consider the associated meaning of the figure to be opposed to what is reasonably true. But such meanings may be either mental, or emotional, or customary, or contextual, or any of a lot of other things. If you wish, enter the two hundred and twenty-first door of *Dalā'il al-I'jāz*, a garden of Paradise, and you'll see how the mighty 'Abd al-Qāhir ¹ angrily drew such unfortunates to him and rebuked and scolded them.

Seventh Calamity: One of the things that makes the [grammatical] definite indefinite is the literalists restricting such inessentials as vowel points to what is essential (*zātiye*). This necessitates denying a usual quality (*vasf-i câri*) which is other than the subject (*gayr-i men hüve leh*), so diverting the sun of truth from its course. Such people have evidently never studied the Arabs' literary styles, for the Arabs say: "The mountains came to us then departed, then the peak of another appeared, then disappeared and parted from us," and so on. As explained in the *Miftāḥ* of al-Sakkākī, ² imaginary inversion (*kalb-i hayali*), a literary device of the science of figurative speech (*beyan*), is used in many places to elucidate its mysteries. It is a subtle art which is based on fallacious imaginings. I'm now going to cite two

1. 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (d. 471/1078), eminent philologist and literary theorist, and author of *Asrār al-Balāgha* (on the theory of imagery) and *Dalā'il al-I'jāz* (on the theory of style). He was born and died in Gurgān, east of the Caspian Sea.

2. Sirāj al-Dīn al-Sakkākī al-Khwārazmī (d. 626/1229), influential rhetorician and author of *Miftāḥ al-'Ulūm*, a work covering nearly all the linguistic disciplines. The work's third part, on what came to be known as the science of rhetoric (*'ilm al-balāgha*), became a major source for the teaching of that subject in medrese education.

important examples by way of explanation, to pursue the discussion:

وَيَنْزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِزَاجٌ فِيهَا مِنْ بَرَدٍ (24:43) وَالشَّمْسُ تَجْرِي لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ لَهَا (36:38)

These two verses are truly striking. To ascribe them a rigid apparent meaning is to deny rhetoric its right. For the fine metaphor of the first is so warm it melts frozen, solid things such as ice, and like lightning rends the veil of the apparent, such as cloud. While the eloquence of the second is so firm and brilliant that it halts the sun's travel. Similar to this is the verse, (76:16) قَوَارِيرَ مِنْ فِضَّةٍ which comprises a fine metaphor, as follows: the food dishes of Paradise are neither crystal nor silver. The difference between the two constitutes the indicator (*karine*) of the metaphor. That is to say, with its transparency the crystal and with its shining whiteness, the silver are two samples to depict the paradisaical goblets which the Beneficent Maker has sent to this world to excite with His wares the appetites of customers desirous of Paradise, and to stimulate demand.

Similarly, a fine metaphor may be distilled from مِزَاجٌ فِيهَا مِنْ بَرَدٍ which is based on imagining a beauty contest between the earth and the sky and a competition between them. Its field is this: it's as though just as the earth is adorned with its mountains clothed in white garments of snow and ice and with its colourful gardens; so too as though competing with it, the sky appears veiled, attired in the broken clouds like towering mountains and hills and valleys, and tinted with various colours like the earth's gardens. Were those towering, billowing clouds to be likened to mountains, ships, gardens, valleys, and caravans of camels, there would be no error in the simile. The thunder acts as shepherd to those itinerant bodies of the atmosphere, whisking the lightning around their heads like a whip. The floating clouds travelling through the oceans of the skies recall mountains crumbling on doomsday. As though the sky summons to arms with the thunder the molecules of water vapour, which, having later received the order to retire, return to their places and are hidden.

Indeed, very often the clouds wear the dress of the mountains, assume their forms, together with the whiteness of snow and ice and their moisture and coldness. The two are thus friends and neighbours and are compelled to exchange what they have. This brotherhood and mutual exchange of forms and dress is found in many places in the Qur'an. The Revelation testifies to their shaking hands as they converse and embrace each other on many lines of the page of the earth in the book of the world. For we see the clouds

resting on the mountain making the mountain like a dock or anchorage for the ships of the clouds.

The second verse: (36:38) *وَالشَّمْسُ تَجْرِي لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ لَّهَا*. Here, just as *تَجْرِي* indicates a style, so *لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ* hints at a truth. That is to say, it is permissible that with the former it indicates that, like a gilded ironclad ship with a golden anchor, the sun voyages through the oceans of the sky, which are known as “waves held back.” The molten golden sun is at anchor in its point of rest, yet is in motion. But its motion is accidental and secondary, and is presented visually as a concession and to facilitate understanding. In reality it has two motions, but even if this were not the case, it would not be important, for the purpose is to demonstrate the order. Whether the motion is secondary or actual as in the styles of Arabic, from the point of view of the order it is the same.

Secondly: Since the sun is in motion in its resting point in its orbit, its parts of molten gold are in motion too. Its true motion is the seed of its metaphorical movement, mentioned above; indeed, it is its spring.

Thirdly: The sun’s travelling through the deserts of the world in its litter or couch, known as its resting place, and with its planets, appears to be required by wisdom, for divine power made everything living and in motion and condemned nothing to absolute motionlessness. His mercy left nothing in absolute idleness, the brother of death and cousin of non-existence, that it should be recorded as such. Hence, the sun is free on condition it complies with the divine law. It can roam, but on condition it does not transgress the freedom of others. Yes, the sun is a desert chieftain who complies with the divine command and in each of its motions carries out the divine will. Yes, just as its motion is actual and essential, so it may be accidental and perceived. Just as it is real, so it may be metaphorical. *تَجْرِي* illuminates the metaphor. *لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ* alludes to the style’s vitalising signification.

In Short: The divine aim here is to point out the order and regularity. The order shines like the sun. In accordance with the rule: *كُلُّ الْعَسَلِ وَلَا تَسَلْ* whether it is the sun’s motion or the earth’s rotation that results in the order, we are not obliged to search out the fundamental cause since it does not spoil the true aim. For example, a lightness is obtained with the *alif* of *قَالَ* (he said). Whatever the original vowel, even if it were *kāf* (k) instead of *wāw* (w) it would make no difference. It’s still *alif* and light.

Indication

Basing it on the external sense of sight and the above depictions, I say this: to display a bigoted, literalist, lifeless frigidity is opposed to the warmth and subtlety of eloquence; similarly, it wounds and opposes the intellectual appreciation which testifies to the divine wisdom underlying the world's order, which is proof of the Maker. For example, if you turn yourself towards Mount Subhan from a great distance and you want it to be opposite you on every side; or you've seen it opposite you on every side; and you give up the short way of taking a few steps in order to bring about the change and imagine or propose taking the enormously long way of traversing a vast circle around the huge mountain, it would be an extraordinary example of waste and futility and in my view a crime against the world's order. Now look fairly with the eye of truth at this cold bigotry: just as it opposes a self-evident fact that is established through the testimony of inductive reasoning – the facts that there is no waste or futility in creation, and pre-eternal wisdom never leaves the short and direct way or chooses long and injurious ways; so too, could anything be conceived that prevents inductive reasoning being the indicator of a figure of speech? Why shouldn't it be permissible?

Reminder

If you wish, return to the Premises and make the First, the lesser and the Third the greater. They will lead you to the conclusion that what confuses the minds of the literalists is the attractions of Greek philosophy. They even look on it as an incontestable principle in understanding verses of the Qur'an. An example that would make even an elderly widow who has lost her only son roar with laughter is this: some of them who were unable to distinguish the trifles of philosophy from the jewels of truth in the words of an elevated, discerning person who was far superior to themselves, said in Kurdish:

عَنْصَرُ چَهَارُنْ ژَوَانِ مَلَكْ But these words are taken from the school of philosophy which states that the angels are luminous bodies created from the elements, and this explicitly refutes the fact that the angels are free of corporeality. They understood that the elements are fourfold and from Islam. But their being four and elements and simple are philosophers' terms and among the basic principles of the false natural sciences. They have no connection with any principle of Islam. It is rather a matter based on superficial observation. Yes, everything that touches on religion does not have to have originated from religion. And to believe that every matter that has combined

with Islam is derived from its elements infers that one does not know the character of Islam's elements. For the Book, Sunna, consensus, and analogy, the four elements of Islam, would not give rise to or comprise such matters.

In Short: The idea that the elements are elementary and fourfold originated from the swamp of philosophy, not from the pure mine of the Shari'a. But since philosophy's error entered our forefathers' language, it found a sound bearer. For when they said "they are fourfold," they meant they were apparently four. Or oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, and carbon, which in truth form the members of bodies, are also four in number.

If you are openminded, consider these evils of philosophy, see how they have captivated minds and cast them into poverty. Bravo to the efforts of freedom-loving modern science, which has overturned tyrannous Greek philosophy with all its four walls. This means that it is certain that the key to the evidences of the Qur'an's verses' miraculousness and the discloser of the secrets of eloquence are to be taken only from the mine of Arabic rhetoric,¹ not from the workbench of Greek philosophy.

Brother! The desire to uncover the mysteries has brought us this far, and we have drawn you along with us. We have annoyed you. And we know that you're very weary. Yet I want to take you on a tour of the Element of Rhetoric and Eloquence and the contents of the Second Article, which is the key to the Qur'an's miraculous inimitability (*i'jāz*). But beware, don't let the obscure style and wretchedness of the matters' dress put you off. For what makes it complicated is the fineness and value of the meanings. And what makes it wretched and disdainful of outward adornment, is the meanings' essential beauty.

The dowries of delicate creatures who feign reluctance and disdain is their finesse, and their alighting place is the centre of the heart. The dress I have clothed them in is contrary to the fashion of the times, for I was raised in the high mountains known as the school of Kurdistan and have not grown accustomed to *à la Turca* tailoring. Also, a person's style represents his personality. And as you see or have heard, I am a riddle that is difficult to solve.

تَمَّ... تَمَّ

1. Here, Bediuzzaman is making allusion to the masters of rhetoric mentioned above: "Âyâtun delâil-i i'câzının (al-Jurjānī) miftahı (al-Sakkākī) ve esrar-ı belâğatın (al-Jurjānī) keşşafı (al-Zamakhsharī), yalnız belâğat-ı Arabiyyenin madenindendir."

THE ELEMENT OF RHETORIC AND ELOQUENCE



The Second Article

In explanation of several matters related to the spirit of eloquence

The First Matter

History teaches us regretfully that when, attracted by the Arabs' rule the non-Arabs intermingled with them, the non-Arabs both confused Qur'anic eloquence, known as the natural speech of the Mudarī, ¹ and, although novices, when they adopted the art of Arabic rhetoric, they changed rhetorical taste from composition following the meanings, which is the natural course of ideas and essence of eloquence, into composition based on the words themselves. As follows:

The natural channel for ideas and emotions is the ordering of the meanings expressed. The arrangement of the meanings is constructed firmly through the rules of logic. Logic progresses step by step towards truths. And thought reaches truths when it penetrates the subtleties of the natures of things (*māhiyat*). The subtleties of the essences of things are derived from

1. This refers to the Arabic spoken by the tribe, Muḍar, whose speech in that era was reputed to be the most eloquent and whose dialect was favoured when differences arose on the Qur'an being put down in writing.

and reinforce the world's perfect order. Within the perfect order resides sheer beauty, the source of all beauty. And sheer beauty is the garden of the elegant and refined sayings that are the flowers of eloquence. This flower-filled garden is where the nightingales wander who are known as the poets and lovers of blooms. And what imparts to the sweet, soft songs of those nightingales their spiritual harmony is the meanings' arrangement. But while this was the case, the non-Arab newcomers, spongers, and novices tried to enter the ranks of the literary masters of Arabic rhetoric, and the matter went off the rails. For a nation's temperament is the source of its emotions and its language reflects those emotions. Just as the temperaments of nations differ, so does the rhetorical capacity of their languages differ, especially a grammatical language like Arabic. It was due to this that because they turned from the ordering of the meanings, the natural channel of ideas, to the ordering of the words, which is much too deficient, dry, and infertile to be the channel for the flow of ideas and garden for the flowers of eloquence, they threw rhetoric into disorder. For the newcomers, due to ill choice or driven by need, and because they had need to learn the words' literal meanings and their positioning and enhancement, and because since the words are channels, they are easier, clearer, and more familiar to the superficial view, and more suitable for popular display and drawing the people's attention, the newcomers expended all their efforts on the words. That is to say, however much they progressed, they kept their minds from becoming immersed in the ordering of the meanings before them, which may reveal dazzling vistas, and wandered around chasing the words.

After imagining the meanings, their ideas bifurcated on pursuing the words. Using mere words, these by degrees came to predominate over the meanings, and since the natural function of words, serving the meanings, was reversed, a vast distance opened up between true eloquence and the art of those word-worshipping braggarts, or rather, their artificiality. If you wish, consider a literary genius like *al-Ḥarīrī*; ¹ take a look at his *Maqāmāt*: he was defeated by his passion for words and this stained his fine writing. So too he was imitated by the word-worshippers and was responsible for subsequent developments. So to cure the illness, the renowned 'Abd al-Qāhir filled a third of his *Dalā'il al-I'jāz* and *Asrār al-Balāgha* ² with his remedies. Yes, the passion for words is an illness, but it is not known as such.

1. Abū Muḥammad Qāsim b. 'Alī al-Ḥarīrī (d. 516/1122). Author of the celebrated literary work, *al-Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīriyya*. Born and died in Basra.

2. See, page 67 fn 1 above.

Note

Just as the passion for words is an illness, so too through its excesses the passion for literary forms, styles, similes, imaginings, and rhyme becomes an illness, each type of which sacrifices the meaning for itself. For some witty point even, or for the sake of the rhyme, many literary figures immediately offend against propriety. Writing should be embellished, but on condition it is natural to its meaning; and the form expressing the meaning should be made imposing, but on condition permission is sought from the meaning; and the style should be made brilliant, but on condition the relationship with its purpose is taken into consideration and it consents to it; and the imagination should be allowed to roam and to sparkle, but on condition it is not detrimental to reality and is not burdensome, and is a simile for reality and seeks assistance from reality.

The Second Matter

Speech springs to life and burgeons when, by embodying meanings and breathing spirit into inanimate things, it is infused with conversation and discussion. It is like this: built on a fanciful sophistry proceeding from the convention called juxtaposition (*deveran*) according to which two things, one existent and the other non-existent, are supposed to be the cause and source of each other on their being associated, thus making one another speak. With the rhetorical magic produced by the power of imagination this animates the inanimate like a magician. It also embodies meanings, and gives them life and vital warmth.

If you wish, enter the following lines, which worthily evoke the idea of a noisy house:

يُنَاجِينِي الْإِخْلَافُ مِنْ تَحْتِ مَطْلِهِ
وَتَخْتَصِمُ الْأَمَالُ وَالْيَأْسُ فِي صَدْرِي¹

That is, “the breaking of a promise addresses me from beneath the delayed restitution of my right. It tells me not to be deceived, for which reason hope and despair have begun to struggle in my heart; they are destroying the heaving house that is my breast.” You can see how with his magic the poet has breathed life into the verse by embodying the hope and despair, and has represented the conflict and dissension caused by the broken promise. As in a dream, these lines appear to one’s mind like a film. Yes, such rhetorical magic is hypnotic in a way.

1. Ibn al-Mu‘tazz, *Dīwān Ibn al-Mu‘tazz*, ii, 125; also quoted in *Dalā’il al-I‘jāz* (Damascus: 1428/2007), 120.

Or take note of the complaints and love between the earth and the rain, as follows:

تَشْكِي الْأَرْضُ غَيْبَتَهُ إِلَيْهِ ۞ وَتَرْشِفُ مَائَهُ رَشْفَ الرُّضَابِ¹

That is, it complains to the rain on its late arrival, then absorbs its waters as though from the mouth of its beloved. These lines conjure up in the imagination the image of Majnun as the earth and the clouds as Layla, do they not?

Note

What beautifies these verses is their imaginary subjects being somewhat close to reality. For when the rains are late, the earth makes a cracking sound and absorbs the rainwater. One who observes this will think of the rain's belatedness and the earth's intense need, which, by exercising the power of imagination and employing the famous device of juxtapositioning, will take on the form of love-making and conversation.

Indication

It is imperative that a seed of truth be present in every fanciful idea.

The Third Matter

The garment in which speech is clothed, or its beauty and form, lie in its manner of expression (*üslûb*); that is, in its mould or framework (*kalıp*). It is like this: [the speaker's] inclinations arise in the imagination due to the cross-pollination of his perceptions or preoccupations or contacts or work. The manner of expression, which is illuminated and takes form from the joining of the pieces of the parabolic metaphor (*istiare-i temsiliye*) which in turn is composed of the facets of those inclinations, is both the speech's mould, and the source of its beauty and workbench of its fine garment. As though, on the sounding of the will, which deserves to be called the intellect's bugle, the meanings reposing in the dark corners of the heart emerge bare-footed and bare-headed and enter the imagination, where forms reside. In the store of the imagination they don whichever form they find there. At least they tie a kerchief around their heads, or put on a slipper, or at least pin on a bauble, and emerge. Or at least they show through a button or a word where they have been raised.

If you study some speech, but one that has deviated from its nature, you will see through the mirror-like manner of expression, the speaker, who expresses things in line with his own art. Even, if you form an image of him from his breathing and his voice and you imagine his temperament and art

1. See, al-Mutanabbî, *Dîwân*, i, 263.

to be combined with his speech, you will be reproached for belonging to the Romantics School (*Hayaliyyûn mezhebi*). If your imagination is sick due to uncertainty, apply to the hospital of the following lines from the *Kaside-i Bürde*:

وَاسْتَفْرِغِ الدَّمْعَ مِنْ عَيْنٍ قَدْ امْتَلَأَتْ
مِنْ الْمَحَارِمِ وَالزَّمِ حَمِيَّةَ الدَّمِ

See how the physician Busayri¹ prescribes a diet of tears and repentance. If on regaining your appetite you wish to see how the pure water of meaning in the phial of reality known as the manner of expression, is appropriate for you and how it agrees with you, and you have appetite for that pure water, go to the tavern and ask the taverner what eloquent speech is. He will tell you that eloquent speech is what is cooked in the cauldrons of knowledge – the elegant water-bearers swill around the water of life which stands in the jars of wisdom and is filtered through understanding, and imbibe ideas – speech which, pervading the innermost faculties, excites the emotions.

If you do not find such drunkard's words agreeable, listen to the news brought from Saba' by Solomon's Hoopoe, a deviser of water-works. See how it describes the All-Glorious One Who sent down the Qur'an and created the heavens and earth. The Hoopoe says:

(27:24-25) الَّذِي يُخْرِجُ الْحَبَّاءَ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ See, out of the attributes of perfection [the Qur'an] chose only the above-mentioned, which alludes to the Hoopoe's water-divining.

Indication

What I intend by the manner of expression (*üslûb*) is the form of speech and its mould (*kalıp*). Others say otherwise. Its rhetorical value is its bringing together and uniting the parts of a story and its disparate pieces. The intention, in accordance with the rule, "If something is established, it is established together with its corollaries," is, by prompting a part, to invigorate the whole of the story. As though, by the speaker pointing out a corner of his expression (*üslûb*), his addressee will himself be able to see all of it, if only faintly.

1. Sharaf al-Dīn al-Buṣayrī (d. between 694-6/1294-7). Born in Egypt, joined the Shāzālī Order under its founder Abū'l-Ḥasan al-Shāzālī, and died in Cairo. His most widely published work was the *Qaṣīdat al-Burda*, a poem of 160 couplets eulogising the Prophet Muhammad (UWBP).

Consider the word ‘combat’; wherever you are, it displays the battlefield like a window with the battle raging in it. There are many such words. It may be said that they are the imagination’s cinema.

Note

The degrees of the styles of speech are numerous. Some are so soft and light, they blow more gently than the morning breeze. Some are so secret, they are more covert than the subterfuges of war employed by the diplomats of the present. To divine them, a diplomat has to possess a keen sense of smell.

In Short: al-Zamakhsharī¹ divined from the verse,

(36: 78) مَنْ يُحِى الْعِظَمَ وَهِيَ رَمِيمٌ

مَنْ يَبْرُزُ إِلَى الْمَيْدَانِ Yes, by rebelling, man in effect opposes and combats the Creator’s commands.

The Fourth Matter

The power and strength of speech is achieved through all its parts responding to one another and assisting one another, and by all indicating the basic aim to its own extent and pointing the finger at what is intended, representing the rule:

عِبَارَاتُنَا شَتَّى وَحُسْنُكَ وَاحِدٌ ۖ وَكُلُّ إِلَى ذَاكَ الْجَمَالِ يُشِيرُ

That is to say, the parts should be like streams or ditches feeding a pool at the centre of them, which is the aim of the speech.

In Short: Mutual response and co-operation are necessary so that the form of the speech’s aim, which is traced on the mind’s networks by the view of reason, should not be confused.

Indication

Order emerges from this point, from which proportion is born and beauty and elegance shine. If you wish, ponder over the word of the Lord of Dignity. Consider, for instance, the verse,

(21:46) وَلَئِنْ مَسَّتْهُمْ نَفْحَةٌ مِّنْ عَذَابِ رَبِّكَ

It was revealed to induce fear of punishment an atom of which crushes like

1. Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144) in Khwārazm, where he was born. An outstanding scholar of the linguistic sciences, and of *kalām* and *tafsīr*. He is most famous for his Qur’an commentary, *al-Kashshāf ‘an Ḥaqā’iq Ghawāmiḍ al-Tanzīl*.

a huge boulder and to show how anxious and querulous is man. In accordance with the rhetorical rule of ‘causing a thing to be reflected through its opposite,’ it wants to illustrate the severity of a small amount of punishment in order to scare, so every part of the verse reaches out and reinforces the basic aim, which is littleness or fewness. As follows:

The words, **إِنْ** signify doubt, and doubt looks to littleness or fewness. The word **مَسَّتْ** means to touch lightly and expresses a small amount. And just as the word **فَفَحَةً** is merely a whiff, so is it in the singular form. Grammatically it is a *maṣḍar marra* and signifies once. Also the *tanwīn* indicating indefiniteness in **فَفَحَةً** expresses littleness or fewness and means it is so insignificant it can scarcely be known. The word **مِنْ** signifies division or a part; it means a bit and indicates paucity. The word **عَذَابٍ** points to a light sort of punishment in relation to chastisement (*nakāl*) and suggests a small amount. And by alluding to mercy the word **رَبِّكَ** indicates littleness or fewness. If the small amount of punishment suggested in all this paucity is such, Allah protect us from what is greater.

Warning

This is a pattern or model for you; if you know calligraphy, you can copy it out, for all the Qur’anic verses display the same order, proportion, and beauty. However, the aims are sometimes overlapping and in unbroken succession; the one that follows the previous is connected with the next, but they are not mixed up. You have to study them carefully, for a superficial reading may lead to much confusion.

The Fifth Matter

Just as the manner in which a speech is composed (*suret-i terkib*) indicates the speech’s main aim; so too the allusions of its secondary meanings and of its styles indicate the speech’s subsidiary aims and purport, and enliven it; it is in these that the speech’s richness and scope lie. For allusions and hints are a powerful source stimulating slumbering imaginings and by exciting their silent aspects, elicit praise and appreciation in the furthest corners of the heart. Yes, hints and allusions are for promenading and beholding the sides of the path; they are not for purposeful demanding and disposal. This means that the speaker is not answerable for them. If you wish, enter into the following lines, for they contain points worthy of note.

Behold the beard of an aged man who, seated on his high-spirited horse, wants to appear youthful to a coy young maid; you'll find numerous keys to rhetorical eloquence. Open the gates, and listen:

قَالَتْ كَبُرَتْ وَشَبَتْ قُلْتُ لَهَا ۖ هَذَا غَبَارُ وَقَايعِ الدَّهْرِ

She said: "You're old and grey!" I replied: "I'm not! The white dust risen from beneath the pounding hooves of calamitous time has rested on my beard."

وَلَا يَرَوُّعْكَ إِمَاضُ الْقَتِيرِ بِهِ ۖ فَإِنَّ ذَاكَ ابْتِسَامُ الرَّأْيِ وَالْأَدَبِ

Then I said: "Fear not the shining white of my beard, for like beaming light, it is the smile of thought and fine art which, having melted in the brain, have found a channel in the beard and shown themselves."

وَعَيْنُكَ قَدْ نَامَتْ بِلَيْلِ شَبِيَّةٍ ۖ فَلَمْ تَنْتَبِهْ إِلَّا بِصُبحِ مَشِيبِ

Then, "Your eyes slumbered in the dark night of youth; You awoke only in the morn of old age."

وَكَاثِمًا لَطَمَ الصَّبَاحُ جَبِينَهُ ۖ فَاقْتَصَّ مِنْهُ وَخَاضَ فِي أَحْشَائِهِ

"While seeking a javelin, morning struck my horse's brow with its white hand. To avenge itself, my horse caught up with the fleeing morn, struck it to the ground and stamped on it with its four hooves. My horse is high-spirited!"

كَأَنَّ قَلْبِي وَشَاحَاهَا إِذَا خَطَرْتُ ۖ وَقَلْبُهَا قُلْبُهَا فِي الصَّمْتِ وَالْخَرَسِ

Then: "Like my beloved's sash, my heart is heaving and rustling; but like her bracelet, her heart is as still and silent. This means that just as her waist is slender and wrist is thick, so my heart is eager while hers is unresponsive. Therefore, beauty has struck passion, remoteness, and eagerness with one stone."

وَالْقَى بِصَحْرَاءِ الْغَيْطِ بَعَاةُهُ ۖ نُزُولَ الْيَمَانِيِّ ذِي الْعِيَابِ الْمُحْمَلِ

Then, "Like the Yemeni merchant, the rainwater floods have swept their goods and loads to the thorny desert. It is like this: A merchant arrives at a village in the evening and that night the villagers buy his colourful wares, then in the morning they all emerge from their houses attired in various colours. The village shepherd, even, has a red kerchief tied round his head. Similarly, like the flood swept the goods over the desert, through chemical reactions resembling secret trade, the colourful dresses of the coy beauties,

the flowers, are bought and sewn. Even, the thorny mountain flower, *kefne*, the flowers' shepherd, displays its red head."

غَارُ الْوَفَاءِ وَفَاضَ الْغَدْرُ وَانْفَرَجَتْ ۞ مَسَافَةُ الْخُلْفِ بَيْنَ الْقَوْلِ وَالْعَمَلِ

Also, "Loyalty has withdrawn to the cave of non-being; the storm of tyranny has begun to erupt; a long distance has opened between word and action."

If you do not want to go far off, take a look at what preceded this Article (*Makale*); you will find many pieces which are examples of this. For example, "The key to the evidences for the verses' inimitability and the discloser of the secrets of eloquence are [derived] only from Arabic rhetoric. Not from Greek philosophy." Or take a look at the Indication in the Conclusion of the First Matter of the First Article. Thus: "The code of natural laws (*şeriat-ı futriyye*) ruled that the ecstatic guest, the globe of the earth, should remain in the ranks of the stars that follow the sun and should not quit them.

For together with its spouse, the earth declared: (41: 11) *قَالَتَا أَتَيْنَا طَائِعِينَ*. As for obedient worship, it is worthier in conjunction with the community." These examples point to such levels before and beyond them that beyond them, further levels appear faintly.

The Sixth Matter

As for the fruits of speech, they are the meanings obtained on various levels in various forms. Thus: as is known by those familiar with chemistry, when some matter, for example an element (*unsur*) like gold is produced, it is passed through various machines and pipes with their sedimentation, and assumes various forms at various stages. Finally, an amount is obtained from it. Like a reduced photograph taken with a camera and comprising various meanings, called speech, various ideas take form in this way:

By some of the heart's sensitivities being stimulated by outside influences, inclinations arise. As a consequence, empty meanings impinge on the intellect's view, and turn it towards themselves. Then with some of those steam-like meanings condensing, a number of inclinations and ideas are suspended, while the intellect shows an interest in others since they are distilled into droplets. Then since some of those that are liquid solidify, the intellect includes them in speech. Then since some of the solidified meanings take on a form and manifestation through a particular depiction, the intellect presents the meanings with a particular figure in accordance with their stature. That is to say, those thus distinguished are assimilated in the particular

form of the speech. Those that do not solidify are handed to its general tenor and import. And those that are not reproduced are assigned to the speech's implications. Those that are not distilled are handed over to the speech's allusions, and those that are not condensed assist the speech's effectiveness through the speaker's attitude which accompanies the speech.

Thus, of the pipes of this sequence, the one named, and the verb's meaning, and what is indicated by the letters, and contained in the ordering, and understood by the whole, and alluded to by the style, and referred to by what is denoted, are the stimuli arising from the speaker's attitudes which escort the speech. So too, what is intended by the literal meanings, the allusive meanings, the analogical meanings, the necessary meanings, and others, all come together from the sequence's different levels and emerge from this mine.

If you would like to observe this, take a look at your own conscience; you will see the levels, as follows:

If, sometime, the rays and flashes of your beloved's beauty shine on your conscience through window of your eyes, the searing fire of passion will suddenly flare up. On the emotions swelling, hopes and desires will be fired also, and because those hopes will pierce the ceiling of the imagination on the upper floor, calling for help; and because in the treasury of imagination, ranged in rank they hold the beloved's beauties in their hands or picture them on bringing them to mind, the imaginings, sated with the loveliness of others, hasten to the aid of those hopes. Together they assault, and together descending from imagination to tongue, the beloved's beauties cause thirst for the water of union from behind them, and on the right grief at separation, on the left yearning to exalt and extol, before them mercy and kindness, and to take in their hands the necklace of compliment and pearls of rapture. In so doing they evince the need to describe her virtues, which draw the water of union, so to extinguish the fire, which may be depicted as,

النَّارُ الْمُوقَدَةُ عَلَى الْأَفْتِدَةِ

See how many meanings appear besides the few levels you know. If you are undaunted, take a look at the awesome consciences of Ibn al-Fāriḍ¹ and Abū Ṭayyib² through their own eyes. Consider the following interpreters of

1. Sharaf al-Dīn 'Umar b. 'Alī Ibn Fāriḍ (d. 632/1235), the celebrated Sufi poet. Born and died in Cairo.

2. Abū 'l-Ṭayyib Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Mutanabbī (d. 354/955). An exceptionally gifted poet whose knowledge of Arabic was profound. Born in Kufa, killed by nomads on the road from Shiraz to Baghdad.

the conscience:

غَرَسْتُ بِاللَّحْظِ وَرَدًّا فَوْقَ وَجَّتِهَا ۖ حَقٌّ لِّطَرْفِي أَنْ يَجْنِيَ الَّذِي غَرَسَا

Also,

فَلِّلْعَيْنِ وَالْأَحْشَاءِ أَوَّلَ هَلْ أَتَى ۖ تَلَا عَائِدِي الْأَهَى وَثَالِثَ تَبَّتْ

¹ تَبَّتْ يَدَا (Q:111) and the third of (76:1) هَلْ أَتَى

Also,

صَدَّ حَمَى ظَمْمِي لُمَاكَ لِمَاذَا ۖ وَهَوَاكَ قَلْبِي صَارَ مِنْهُ جُدَادًا

Also,

حُشَايَ عَلَى جَمْرٍ ذِكِّي مِنَ الْعَصَا ۖ وَعَيْنَايَ فِي رَوْضٍ مِنَ الْحُسْنِ تَزُوعُ

Listen to these and see how their eyes roam in Paradise while the Hell in their consciences torment them. Both pointing to the beloved's beauty, alluding to her aloofness, hinting at the pain of separation, stating their ardour, indicating their desire for union, and describing her beauty which excites their compassion, they point out many tender imaginings from the mass of feelings that excite the emotions.

Indication

In the working of any government, the officials should all be given wages commensurate with their capabilities, duties, and functions. Similarly, the muddle of meanings proceeding from the various levels of speech should be distinguished from one another fairly and carefully, appropriately to their dues, and proportionately to their closeness to the general aim, purpose, and intention. Then from the proportion proceeding from the order, which results from that balance, and from the agreeable harmony proceeding from the proportionateness, and from the beauty of the relationships proceeding from the harmony, a fine balance may emerge to achieve the speech's perfection. Otherwise those who should serve yet have puerile natures become conceited and in their conceit, confuse the relationships and spoil the order. This means that the capabilities of the parts of speech should be borne in mind. Yes, each should be promoted in accordance with its abilities. It is clear that however beautiful a member like an eye or nose may be, if it is smaller or bigger than it should be, it renders the whole ugly.

1. That is, (76: 1) هَلْ أَتَى عَلَى الْإِنْسَانِ حِينٌ مِّنَ الدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُن شَيْئًا مَّذْكُورًا

سَيَصِلْنَ نَارًا ذَاتَ لَهَبٍ (111:3)

Note

Sometimes a lowly private may perform a task, for example, discover the enemy's secrets, that a field marshall could not perform. Or a young student may carry out some task that an eminent scholar could not perform. For an eminent person is not necessarily eminent in everything. Everyone is eminent or proficient in his own profession. Similarly, among conflicting meanings, a minor meaning may govern and gain value. For its function has importance due to some future cause. The thrust of the speech is thus because the explicit meaning lacks competence. For it is either clear and obvious, or it is tenuous and slight, and adds nothing to the main aim of the speech. Or there is no addressee to greet it favourably and accept and heed it. Or it is neither in agreement with the speaker's state of mind nor does it serve the impulse which prompted the speech. Or it appears alien to its context and implications. Or it lacks the ability to preserve its aim and procure its necessities. This means that at each level only one of these causes is heeded. Nevertheless, if they unite, they raise the speech to the highest level.

Conclusion

There are some suspended meanings which have no defined form or particular domicile. They can enter all the bureaux like inspectors. Sometimes they assume a word particular to themselves. They are ephemeral, significative meanings. They draw other words into themselves and absorb them. Sometimes they penetrate a sentence or a story even. If such a sentence is pressed, the meaning may be distilled from it; such meanings as longing, desire, self-praise, regret, and so on.

The Seventh Matter

The source of vitality in rhetoric, or to put in another way, the philosophy of figurative speech or the purpose (*hikmet*) of poetry is their representing the laws and measures of the outside world. Like this: the source of their vitality and art is their situating the laws of external truths in notional situations by means of parabolic analogies and juxtapositioning and fanciful depictions. They show like a mirror the rays of reality reflected from outside, as though imitating creation and nature with their own imaginative art and literary embellishments. Yes, even if speech cannot be reality, it can at least seek assistance from its similitudes and order, and can sprout from its seed. But all seeds produce their own seedlings; a wheat-grain cannot grow into a tree. If the science of figurative speech is disregarded, rhetoric yields no benefits other than arousing wonder in the listener, like tales about fantastic monsters.

Like the science of figurative speech, grammar has a philosophy, and that philosophy makes known the wisdom and purpose of the one who instituted it. It is founded on the famous rules (*münâsebat*) mentioned in the grammar books. For instance, a word cannot be governed by two other different words. The interrogative particle ‘hal’ will not wait patiently on seeing the verb, but desires to join with it. Also, the doer (*fā’il*) is powerful; it seizes for itself the nominative vowel point ‘u’ (*damma*), which is strong. Each is a reflection and similitude of the laws in force in the universe and external world.

Note

The manifest wisdom in these rules of grammar and syntax has great value, even if it is less than that of the science of figurative speech. In short: the rules transform the transmitted sciences (*ulûm-u nakliye*), established through induction, into rational sciences (*ulûm-u akliye*).

The Eighth Matter

With the figurative meanings being grafted and fecundated and the significations being transposed and transformed, the true meaning absorbs either the aim or one of the suspended meanings and draws it to itself. For when either of them enters into it, it is changed into the truth and fundament. The meaning, which is the word’s true owner, assumes a vital form, and assists it, and seeks help from the secondary meanings. It is because of this that a single word may have numerous meanings. The transpositions and fecundations arise from this. Anyone who neglects this point, loses out on a significant point of eloquence.

Indication

If something is mounted on something, it takes the preposition ‘on’ عَلَى and if it puts something inside something like an envelope, it requires the preposition ‘in’ فِي like in تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ. And if something is an instrument, it requires the instrumental ‘by’ or ‘with’ بِأَنْ .

صَعَدْتُ السَّطْحَ بِالسَّلَامِ And since it is a place and mounted, it requires the prepositions ‘in’ فِي and ‘on’ عَلَى

And since it is the aim, it requires ‘to’ إِلَى and حَتَّى . And since it is a cause and adverb, it requires the ‘to’ لَأَمْ and ‘in’ فِي like in

(36:38) وَالشَّمْسُ تَجْرِي لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ لَهَا This is the method; you can make further examples, if you can.

Note

Whichever of these concentric meanings touches more on your aim and is closer to your purpose, advance it and impart it and make the others corroborate it. Your manner of expression will otherwise lack impressiveness and be devoid of rhetorical embellishment.

The Ninth Matter

The highest degree of eloquence, which confounds the faculty of will and simple conceptions, is by the aims, which are one within the other yet in sequence, being numerous; and the inferences, which are interconnected, being in succession; and the basic intentions, which produce a single result, coming together; and the many branches comprising different fruits, or having the potential to produce them. It is like this:

Breadth and grandeur are imparted to speech when the aims that have departed from and are furthest from the ultimate aim are interconnected and they complete each other's deficiencies and fulfil their duties to their neighbours. It is as though when one of the aims is positioned, so is the next positioned, then the next and the next, and so on. With their relations being observed in every respect to the right and left, together the aims found the well-constructed palace of the speech; as though they have consulted and employed many intelligences to assist their own; as if each of the clusters of aims is an element participating in the interconnected representations. Just as if an artist puts a black spot on a picture overlying other pictures, the spot will be an eye in one of the pictures, a mole on the face in another, a nostril in another one, and a mouth in another; so too are there such points in elevated speech.

Second Point: With compound and branching analogies, the aims multiply successively.¹ As though the speaker is pointing to the aim's continuance and a natural history of its increase. For example, the world is beautiful, which means its Maker is wise; He does nothing in vain, wastes

1. In this sentence, the Turkish of which is, "Kıyas-ı mürekkebe ve müteşâab sırıyla metalib tenasül edip teselsül etmektedir," the term kıyas-ı mürekkebe also refers to a polysyllogism. This is a multi-premise syllogism – a string of any number of propositions forming together a sequence of syllogisms, such that the conclusion of each syllogism, together with the next proposition, is a premise for the next, and so on.

nothing, nor neglects the potentialities of anything. Therefore, He will perpetually perfect the world's order. He will not condemn human beings to non-existence, which is harrowing, intolerable, eternal separation, for eternal separation destroys all hope and perfections. There will therefore be everlasting happiness.

The above is a good example of the third aspect of difference between man and the animals in the discussion on general prophethood in the introduction to the second part of the profession of faith in the Third Article.

The Third Point puts together and mentions a number of fundamentals (*usûl*) that produce a single result. For even if each fundamental (*asl*) is not intentionally and itself linked to some elevated result, it at least provokes it and causes it to emerge. As though the exemplifications, which are called fundamentals, indicate the aim's abstract loftiness, caused by the mirrors' difference and the sameness of the result and what is shown, and indicate too the conjoining of the vital power of the speech with the truth known as universal life, or the general motion called the life of the world. The First Aim of the Third Aim at the end of the Third Article is an example of this. Another example is furnished by the Indication, Guidance, Note and Judgement in the Fourth Matter and Way of the Third Article.

فَانْظُرْ إِلَى كَلَامِ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ. فَبَايَ آيَاتِ رَبِّكَ
لَا تَتَجَلَّى هَذِهِ الْحَقِيقَةُ؟ فَوَيْلٌ حِينَئِذٍ لِلظَّاهِرِيِّينَ الَّذِينَ يَحْمِلُونَ
مَا لَا يَفْهَمُونَ عَلَى التَّكْرَارِ

Yes, if attention is paid to the Lord of Glory's Word, this truth is seen to shine everywhere like light. Indeed, with all its elements combining like light in its corners and crossroads, this truth causes the pure water of eloquence to pour forth. Curses upon those literalists who ignoring it, call it repetition!

Fourth Truth: This is to mould and shape the speech in such a way that it comprises the seeds of numerous branches, is the source of numerous statements, and indicates numerous meanings and different aspects. As though, since the speech holds such a potentiality, this truth alludes to its power to grow and the abundance of its produce. As if all those branches and aspects crowd together in the matter so as to balance the virtues and fine points, direct each branch towards an aim and lay a duty on each aspect.

فَانْظُرْ إِلَىٰ فِصَّةِ مُوسَىٰ فَإِنَّهَا أَجْدَىٰ مِنْ تَفَارِيقِ الْعَصَا،
أَخَذَهَا الْقُرْآنُ بِيَدِهَا الْبَيْضَاءِ، فَخَرَّتْ سَحَرُهُ الْبَيَانَ سَاجِدِينَ لِبَلَاغَتِهِ

Yes, Moses' staff is more useful than the proverbial staff in the famous tale.¹ The staff in the story still found a use, however much it was split up, just like the story of Moses. It was owing to this that the Qur'an took the story with the shining white hand of its miraculous exposition and exhibited it in many different forms. It employed every side of it brilliantly so that the magicians of the science of rhetoric (*beyan*) prostrated before it in wonderment and love.

Brother! With these literary styles, the elusive eloquence of this matter depicts for you a tree of reality with vast intertwining roots, well placed nodes, interwoven branches, and diverse fruits. Take a look at the Sixth Matter if you wish, for even if poorly arranged, it illustrates this matter to a degree.

Note and Apology

Brother! I know that this Article appears to be quite obscure to you. But what can I do? The mark of premises and preliminaries is conciseness and abbreviation. It will be made clear to you in the three books.²

The Tenth Matter

The fluency of speech is achieved by not complicating matters or entirely eschewing feelings; but by imitating nature, representing the outside world, appositely following the drift of what is intended, and making the main aim distinct. For it will mar the fluency to push forward in speech and combine with others without fully addressing the emotions.

One should beware of disorderly complications and progress gradually with the consecutive meanings.

Furthermore, one should be a student of nature in applying imaginative art so to reflect the natural laws in the art.

Also, one should make one's conceptualisations imitate the outside world and be similar to it in form. If they were to escape from the brain and become embodied outside it, the beings outside would annex them and not reject

1. This refers to an Arabic proverb. See, Abū Faḍl Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Maydānī (d. 518/1124), *Majmā' al-Amthāl*.

2. For the three books, see page 19 fn 1.

their progeny. They would say: “They’re mine!”, or “It’s as though they are,” or “they’re my offspring.”

Also, one has to be apt and to the point so that the drift and flow are not impeded and what is intended does not become disparate and deviate to left and right. The sides should not absorb the power of the aim so lessening its import. Indeed, with their freshness and pleasantness the corners should assist the aim like a pool.

Also, to ensure the fluency, the main aim should be made distinct and where the subsidiary aims come together, specified.

The Eleventh Matter

The integrity and correctness of speech are obtained by its proving the proposition together with its necessary consequences and conditioning precedents and means of defence. It is like this: so as not to impair the necessary consequences or disturb the proposition’s equanimity and to seek vitality from the precedents and have recourse to them, the speech has to be girded with parts that will reply to implicit questions and the assaults of nagging objections. That is to say, speech is a fruit-bearing tree; it is decked out with thorns and bayonets to protect it from abuse and fruit-thieves. As though the devils of delusions cannot share in listening to that speech since it is the elevated result of many debates and is the substance of much thought and reasoning; they cannot look on it malevolently. As though the speaker has raised up walls all around it, considering its six sides. That is, placing defenders against the assaults of misapprehensions by reinforcing the subject and predicate, and the adjectives, or at other strategic points, so decking it out from top to bottom with parts that reply to implicit questions. If you would like an example of this, the whole of this book provides a lengthy one. The Third Article is an especially fine example of it.

The Twelfth Matter

Speech may be correct and be honed and moderate by allotting each part its right and due and clothing it in the appropriate style. Also, if recounting a tale, the speaker should put himself in the place of the one recounted. That is, if he is describing another’s feelings and thoughts, he should enter into that person, visit his heart as a guest, and speak with his tongue. While if he is directing his own affairs, he should dispense justice by allotting care and attention, the sign of worth, taking into account the right, capacity, and rank of each part, and should fashion the garment of the literary styles and devices in accordance with the disposition of each. Then each of the aims

will acquire a striking beauty from the style that is appropriate to it. For there are three basic styles or modes of speech:

The First is a sheer or detached style, like the uncomplicated style of the works of Sayyid Sharīf ¹ and Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī. ²

The Second is the embellished style, like the brilliant, shining style of ‘Abd al-Qāhir’s *Dalā’il al-I’jāz* and *Asrār al-Balāgha*. ³

The Third is the high style, like some of the majestic writing (*kelâm*) of al-Sakkākī, ⁴ al-Zamakhsharī, ⁵ and Ibn Sīnā. ⁶ Or like the Arabic pieces in the Turkish translation of this book, especially the disorderly yet sound pieces in the Third Article. For the loftiness of the subject fashioned this book in the high style; the influence of my own skills has been negligible.

In Short: When speaking of theological matters and the principles of religion and describing them, you should not depart from the high style, which comprises intensity, power, and grandeur.

When engaged in oratory and persuasion, never give up the embellished style if you can, which is ornamented and brilliant and both encourages and alarms. But you should not be pretentious, artificial, or vulgarly ostentatious.

When engaged in business, discussions, or the instrumental sciences, make do with the detached style, which is characterised by its faithfulness, conciseness, correctness, fluency, and naturalness, and displays its innate beauty through its simplicity.

The Conclusion of this Matter: Speech may be self-sufficient, independent, and ardent when the style is not sought outside the context. It is like this: when you want to fashion a literary style commensurate with the meaning’s stature, it should at least be pieced together with parts necessitated by the subject or story that the speech comprises or its art and be sourced from the subject’s factory, and it should be sewn in a style out of the pieces of the secondary meanings. It will certainly add power to the speech if, as long as there is no need, you don’t fix your gaze beyond and you boycott the outside – if the expression’s not mistaken, for this is one of the main ways to prevent

1. Sayyid Sharīf al-Jurjānī. See, page 51 fn 2 above.

2. Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (d. 672/1274) in Baghdad. Preeminent, influential Shi’i scholar in the fields of mathematics, geometry, astronomy, philosophy, and theology. He founded the astronomical observatory at Maragha under Hulagu Khan.

3. ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī. See, page 67 fn 1 above.

4. al-Sakkākī. See, page 67 fn 2 above.

5. al-Zamakhsharī. See, page 78 fn 1 above.

6. Ibn Sīnā; Abū ‘Alī al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Sīnā (d. 428/1037). The pre-eminent philosopher and physician. He was born near Bukhara and died at Hamadan.

your wealth being dissipated. In this way, both meaning and context and art may assist what the speech alludes to with its arrangement. Just as speech indicates the meaning through its manner of composition, so does the style or mode point through itself to the meaning. If you would like an example, take a look at the Arabic pieces in the Ninth Matter.

فَانْظُرْ إِلَى كَلَامِ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ فَيَايَ آيَاتِ رَبِّكَ لَا تَتَجَلَّى هَذِهِ الْحَقِيقَةُ؟
فَوَيْلٌ حِينَئِذٍ لِلظَّاهِرِيِّينَ الَّذِينَ يَحْمِلُونَ مَا لَا يَفْهَمُونَ عَلَى التَّكْرَارِ
فَإِنْ شِئْتَ فَانْظُرْ إِلَى قِصَّةِ مُوسَى فَإِنَّهَا أَجْدَى مِنْ تَفَارِيقِ الْعَصَا أَخَذَهَا الْقُرْآنُ
بِالْيَدِ الْبَيْضَاءِ فَخَرَّتْ سَحْرَةُ الْبَيَانِ مَحَبَّةً وَحَيْرَةً سَاجِدِينَ لِبَلَاغَتِهِ

Take a look at the prefaces of the books on the instrumental sciences; even if their rhetorical eloquence is not overly subtle and elegant, their introductory lines furnish good introductions to this truth. Also, in the preface of this book when alluding to miracles, our Prophet's (UWBP) person is shown to be a miracle of his prophethood. Also, in the preface of the Third Article, the two parts of the profession of faith are shown to testify to each other. Also, in the Seventh Premise it is said to those who added to the Splitting of the Moon that it descended to the earth: "You've been the cause of the moon of the miracle being eclipsed and a sun-like proof of prophethood being obscured!" Making analogies, you can find numerous examples of this truth in this book. For like myself, its way is to boycott the outside. Indeed, as long as it is not necessary, it is to boycott ideas, matters, examples, and styles. But there may be coincidences, for the truth is one. You will see the same thing, whatever door you enter by.

Conclusion

It has been said that one should look to what is said, not to the one who said it. But I say: Who said it? To whom did they say it? In what context did they say it? For what reason did they say it? In respect of eloquence these should be considered as well as what is said; indeed, this is of the utmost importance.

Indication

It should be known that according to eloquence, the features of the sciences of *Ma'ānī* (the semantics of syntax) and *Bayān* (figurative speech) are dependent on your showing your aim and purpose by planting signs and

allusions indicating them. For randomness renders them worthless. While the science of *Badī'* (the embellishment of speech) and verbal ornamentation (*tezyinat-ı lafziyye*) are dependent on chance and the lack of intention, or to be close to the true meaning as though by chance.

Allusion

It is no secret that the most penetrating of instruments that points to external truths and fastens a mental proposition to the external law, and if one may say so, rends the veil and discloses the truth behind it, is the intensive particle **أَنَّ**. It is due to this characteristic of **أَنَّ** that it is used frequently in the Qur'an.

Note

Brother! You should not be misled by the subtle laws described in this article standing aloof from these wretched styles of mine and their disliking them. For instance, one should not think that if the laws had been good, they would have given a good lesson in rhetoric to the person who included them, and they would have donned a fine style. But the person who included them is illiterate and his style of writing is wretched too. But don't get carried away imagining this, for all those knowledgeable about a science are not necessarily expert in it. Moreover, the power of attraction, which is centripetal, prevails over the power of repulsion, which is centrifugal. For the ear is near the brain and close to the intellect, whereas the heart, the source of speech, is distant from the tongue and a stranger to it. Also, very often the tongue does not understand the heart's tongue. Especially if the heart tinnabulates from the depths of some matter, like from the bottom of a well, the tongue will not hear it at all, so how could it interpret it?

In Short: It is easier to understand than to make understood, and that's that!

Apology

Patient and steadfast friend who has accompanied me on this narrow, sharp, dark road! I reckon you have only been an astonished observer in this Second Article, not a listener. Because you haven't understood it. You're quite justified, for the matters are very profound, the conduits are lengthy, and the phrases extremely concise and obscure. My Turkish is also somewhat deficient and confused, and I have little time, am in haste, my health is impaired, and my head is full of cold. In such a disarranged field, only these words could emerge:

وَالْعُذْرُ عِنْدَ كِرَامِ النَّاسِ مَقْبُولٌ

Brother! Combine the Element of Reality as the greater (the major premise) with the Element of Rhetoric and Eloquence as the lesser (the minor premise). Pass an accurate intuition (*hads-ı sâdık*) through them like an electric current so that they may infuse your brain with the ability to produce the impassioned, shining, and light-filled Element of Doctrine.

Now we shall seek the Element of Doctrine in the Third Section.

I am beginning, thus...

THE ELEMENT OF DOCTRINE

The Third Article

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

Just as these lofty words are the very fundament of Islam, so, flying over the universe, are they its most luminous and lofty banner. With the pre-eternal covenant, belief, our oath and pledge, was written on this sacred proclamation. Yes, Islam, the water of life, flows forth from the life-giving spring of these words. This proclamation is a pre-eternal decree given to the hands of humankind, which, destined for eternity, is awarded the good news of everlasting happiness. It is a lucent chart proclaiming the Pre-Eternal Monarch with its luminous image taken by the camera of the dominical subtle faculty called the heart, which is seated in its window facing the unseen worlds. It is the heart's eloquent interpreter. Yes, it is the eloquent orator deputed to declaim before the universe the conscience's mysterious, expressive address. It is an eternal banner in the hands of the tongue, the lucid herald of belief, which proclaims the Pre-Eternal Sovereign to the universe.

Indication

The two phrases of the profession of faith attest truly to each other and illuminate each other. Yes, Divinity (*ulûhiyet*) is a proof of prophethood from cause to effect (*bürhan-ı limmî*), while with his self and his tongue, Muhammad (Upon whom be blessings and peace) is a proof of the All-Glorious Maker from effect to cause (*bürhan-ı innî*).

Note

The principal beliefs of the Islamic religion and their truths are proved and explicated in all their details in the books on Islam, and are there to be seen. Since to point out what may be seen obscures the obvious or infers the stupidity of the one addressed and his ignorance, I am going to expound only three or four elements of those beliefs, and for the other truths refer readers to the books of the authoritative scholars. For they have left no need for me.

Premise

It is known by the heedful and attentive that, in short, the Qur'an has four [main] aims: proof of the Single Maker, prophethood, the resurrection of the body, and justice.

The First Aim explicates evidences (*delâil*) of the Maker. One proof (*bürhan*) of Him is Muhammad (Upon whom be blessings and peace). The Maker's existence and unity are beyond any need of proof. They are abundantly clear and obvious, especially for Muslims. As a consequence, I have directed my address to foreigners, and the Japanese in particular, for at one time they asked me some questions and I replied to them. Now I am going to recount briefly a part of my answer to only one or two of their questions. One of their questions was:

مَا الدَّلِيلُ الْوَاضِحُ عَلَى وُجُودِ الْإِلَهِ الَّذِي تَدْعُونَنَا إِلَيْهِ وَالْخَلْقُ مِنْ أَيِّ شَيْءٍ
أَمِنَ الْعَدَمِ أَوِ الْمَادَّةِ أَوْ ذَاتِهِ إِلَى آخِرِ سُؤَالَاتِهِمُ الْمُرَدَّةِ

That is to say: Is there clear proof of the Maker's existence?

Indication

Knowledge of Allah, which is infinite, cannot be contained in limited words such as these. It is therefore to be hoped that any ambiguity in what I have to say will be excused.

Note

The purpose of the following discussion is to point out the way to employ the reason and to weigh up matters so that the truth may become manifest in the whole. For, due to the mind's particularity, if one seeks the conclusion of the whole in every part of it, it causes the surmising faculty to beset one and obscures the truth with its delusive notions amid uncertainties.

Premise

If you can comply with my conditions by restraining yourself from such things as the desire to oppose and taking the part of the opposer and considering yourself excused when ascribing baseless misgivings to some other person in order to justify yourself, and from seeing only faults like a customer, and making excuses like children, then listen to the following with an easy heart.

The First Aim

All the atoms in existence, while hesitant as regards essence, attributes and other aspects amid innumerable possibilities, take one way which results in wondrous benefits, thus testifying to the necessary existence of the Maker. This lights up from the subtle inner faculties of man – which are samples of the worlds of the unseen – the lamp of belief and proclaims the Maker. Yes, just as each minute particle on its own proclaims the Maker; so too, all particles, by each preserving the balance of the general current in all its relationships at every stage of the ascending, intermingled compounds of the universe, which resemble concentric circles, and by producing different beneficial results with every relationship, recite and proclaim the Maker's wisdom and purpose, thus showing that proofs of the Maker far exceed atoms in number.

If you ask: Why doesn't everyone see this with their minds?

The Answer: Because of its perfect clarity. Indeed, some things are so intensely evident, they reach the degree of invisibility. Like the body of the sun.

تأمل سطور الكائنات فإنها ۞ من الملائكة الأعلى إليك رسائل

That is, behold with the eye of wisdom the lines of successive events the Pre-Eternal Inscraper has written on the outspread pages of the wide world. Embrace the idea of truth, then the continuous missives arriving from the Sublime Assembly may raise you up to the certainty of the highest of the high.

Indication

By reason of the source of assistance and point of support in his heart, man's conscience does not forget the Maker. Even if his mind ceases to work, his conscience does not; it is preoccupied with two important duties. It is like this: if one refers to his conscience, [he will see that] like the physical

heart conveys life to all the parts of the body, knowledge of the Maker, the source of the heart's vitality, spreads life to all his various desires and inclinations which arise from his unlimited abilities and potentialities; it affords them pleasure and value and expands and extends them. This is the point of assistance.

It is also knowledge of the Maker which is the only point of support against the calamities and troubles of the tumultuous world in which life – the field of conflict and struggle – is constantly under attack.

Yes, if a person does not believe in the All-Wise Maker and His works, all of which are in accordance with wisdom and order, and blindly ascribes them to chance, and if he thinks of the total insufficiency of his power in the face of disaster, he will become more wretched than anything due to the resulting hellish, piteous state comprising terror, desolation, anxiety, and fear, and he will oppose the perfect order and regularity of the universe. This is the point of support; yes, his only refuge is knowledge of the Maker.

This means that since, to be dominant in the world's order through these two points is the exclusive quality of the truth itself, from them the Maker's existence is manifested in the conscience, for they are two windows. Even if the intellect does not see this, man's essential nature does. The conscience is the observer and the heart, its window.

Note

There are four methods by which to ascend to knowledge of the Maker, the throne of attainment and perfections:

The First is the way of the Sufi mystic-scholars, which is based on purification and illumination.

The Second is the way of the scholars of the science of *kalām*, which is based on contingency and createdness. For sure these two ways have branched out from the Qur'an, but since human thought has poured them into different moulds, they have acquired lengthy glosses and annotations, making them onerous.

The Third is the way of the philosophers.

These three are not free of the assaults of delusive notions.

As for *The Fourth*, it is the Qur'anic ascent, which proclaims the lofty rank of the Qur'an's eloquence, and is the shortest and most direct, and in respect of clarity is the most comprehensive, embracing all humankind. We too have chosen this way. It is of two kinds:

THE FIRST is the proof of divine providence (*delil-i inâyet*). All the Qur'anic verses that recount the benefits of things allude to this proof and they set it in order. Its essence is the following of benefits and instances of wisdom in the universe's superlative order. This proves the Maker's wisdom and purpose and banishes erroneous ideas about chance.

Premise

For sure not everyone can perceive through induction the following of benefits and order in the world and not everyone can comprehend it. But thanks to the meeting of minds among men, a science has been and is being formed consisting of the regular, universal laws particular to each species and realm of beings in the universe.

On the other hand, if there is no order in a matter, since the proposition (*hüküm*) will not be in force universally, the law's universality is evidence for the good order of the species. This means that by reason of the universality of their laws, through induction the physical sciences (*fünun-u ekvân*) are each proofs producing (*intâc*) the perfect order. Yes, by showing the benefits and fruits hanging from the links of the chains of beings, and the instances of wisdom and advantages hidden in the intertwined revolutions of events, all the physical sciences both point to and testify to the Maker's intention and wisdom, and each is a shooting star repulsing devilish delusions.

Indication

If you detach yourself from familiarity, which leads one to view things superficially and gives rise to compounded ignorance, and you restrain your soul from perpetual argumentation, the nest of misapprehensions which block up the path to reason; you won't be able to deceive yourself that the wondrous, miniscule, divine machine underlying the form of a microscopic organism came into being out of simple, lifeless, natural causes. For the causes lack intelligence, and their paths and trajectories are unlimited, and they possess nothing to cause either their existence or their non-existence, and are the objects of that workbench. You won't be able to convince yourself and feel assured. Unless, after proving that each atom possesses the intelligence of Plato and the wisdom of Galen, you believe that each can communicate without means with all the other atoms, and you can remove the brand of impossibility from the snout of the combining of the powers of attraction and repulsion in the smallest indivisible atom, which is like the fundament of natural causes.

If your soul allows the possibility of all these impossibilities, it will erase you from the book of humanity. It is permissible, however, that attraction, repulsion, and motion, which they suppose to be the basis of everything, are each names for the laws of divine practice. We accept them only on condition the laws neither cease being laws nor become nature, and neither cease to be mental nor are given external existence, and neither cease to be theoretical nor are supposed to be actual, and neither cease being means nor are ascribed an actual effect.

Note

Take a look around the world with the verse,

فَأَرْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَىٰ مِنْ فُطُورٍ (67:3)

Can you see any deficiency anywhere? Absolutely not! No one with sight can see any. If anyone did, he would have to be either blind or afflicted with myopia. If you wish, refer to the Qur'an; you will find there the proof of divine providence in its finest possible form. For just as it commands reflection on the universe, so it mentions the benefits and recounts the bounties. Such verses display the proof of divine providence. In brief it is as above, so hold on to it! As for a detailed exposition, if divine will is manifested, it will be expounded in the three books¹ which will be bound, by way of explicating the signs in the outer and inner worlds, to the sciences of the heavens, the earth, and humankind. Then this proof will appear to you in its entirety.

THE SECOND QUR'ANIC PROOF is the proof that things are given existence out of nothing (*delil-i ihtira'*; Ar. *ikhtirā'*). In summary it is this: it is the giving to all the species of creatures and all their members a body that will produce the particular works that are planned for those species and members, and is appropriate for the perfecting of their innate abilities. For no successive species is pre-eternal. Contingency does not permit this. And necessarily, the createdness of some things is apparent through observation and the createdness of the rest is to seen by the intellect in respect of wisdom and purpose.

Misapprehension and Note

Truth cannot be turned into its opposite (*inkılab-ı hakikat*). The chains of intermediate species do not persist. The transformation or mutation of classes of beings (*tahavvül-ü esnaf*) is not the same as the turning of realities into their opposites.

1. For the three books see, page 19 fn 1.

Indication

Since all species have a progenitor and forefather, the false notion arising from the reproduction occurring in the chains of beings, may not be imputed to those progenitors and forefathers. Yes, according to natural philosophy and the sciences of geology, biology, and botany, the number of species exceeds two hundred thousand. The origins of the species, which are like their ‘Adams’ or progenitors, each testify independently to createdness (*hudûs*; Ar. *hudûth*). Similarly, the natural laws, which are imaginary and theoretical, and natural causes, which lack intelligence, lack the ability to create and fashion the innumerable astonishing chains of beings and the countless, wondrous, divine machines which form the chains. Therefore, every single being and all the species proclaim independently and make known that they proceed from the All-Wise Maker’s hand of power. Yes, the All-Glorious Maker put the stamp of contingency and createdness on the foreheads of all things.

Note

When deeming possible such false questions as the pre-eternity of matter and the formation of the species from the motion of particles, the intention is to persuade oneself by something else, so the error arises from giving those questions secondary importance then failing to perceive their fallacious principles. For if one addressed oneself to them in order to convince oneself, one would see that they are irrational and precluded. Supposing one did accept them, one could do so only out of the distress caused by forgetfulness of the Maker.

Note

Being noble and honourable, by virtue of the human essence man always wants to buy what is right and always seeks the truth and his perpetual goal is happiness. But unsuspectingly, while seeking the truth, he obtains what is false and wrong. While digging the mine of truth, the false falls on his head. Or else, if forced to find the truth or he finds no part of it, his inborn nature, conscience, and mind are compelled to accept something he knows to be irrational and invalid, because he considers it superficially and in second place.

Now, keep this fact in view. You will see that the inborn natures of those who have mistaken ideas about the pre-eternity of matter and motion due to their not heeding the order in the world, and imagine blind coincidence in the wondrous art and embroidery, which leaves all minds in astonishment,

and who believe that lifeless causes have an actual effect despite the testimony of all the purposes and instances of wisdom, and find consolation by making imaginary, embodied nature the source due to misleading their souls and the seductions of unending delusions – you will see that their inborn natures surely reject all this. But those baseless delusions assault them without warning from the sides of the road only because they are turned to the truth and their intention is to discover it. So for sure, the person who has fixed his gaze on his goal, looks at those false conjectures superficially and secondarily. He does not penetrate into the adorned lies. But if and when he considers them purposefully with the intention of buying them, he does not condescend to look at them even, let alone buy them.

Indeed, the conscience and reason see that such ugly things are impossible. The heart does not accept them either. Unless with squabbling and empty words they ascribe to every single particle the intellects of the philosophers and the politicking of the rulers so that each might unite with his brothers, consult concerning the general order, and communicate with each other. An animal would not accept such a way, let alone a human being. But what can one do? A way necessitates whatever it necessitates. This way cannot be depicted in any other manner. Yes, the mark of fallaciousness is that whenever a matter is not given primary importance and is seen as secondary, it may appear to be valid; but if it is given full attention, the possibility of its validity disappears.

Indication

What they call matter can never be abstracted from ever-changing forms and the evanescent motion of events. This means that createdness (*hudûs*; Ar. *ḥudūth*) is certain. How astonishing it is! How is it that those who cannot fit in their minds the pre-eternity of the necessarily existent Maker, which is a self-evident necessity, can fit into them the pre-eternity of matter, which is in every way contrary to pre-eternity? It really is astonishing. The more one thinks of it, the more it makes one regret one's humanity that they should consider anomalous and deny the Maker, Who possesses all the attributes of perfection, and ascribe these wondrous artefacts to blind chance and the motion of particles.

Allusion

In so far as they are accidents, the forces and forms which, it is claimed, are produced from the motion of particles cannot constitute the substantial differences in the species of beings. Accidents cannot be substances. Hence, all the families of the species and the distinguishing characteristics

of substances are given existence (lit. invented; T. *muhtera'* A. *mukhtara'*) out of nothing. Successive generation is one of the theoretical habitual conditions in the chains of beings. That, in brief, is the proof that things are given existence out of nothing (*delil-i ihtira'*). If you want a clear, detailed exposition, enter the garden of the Qur'an, for there is nothing "*fresh or dry*" (6:59) in that place of promenading that is not found as a flower or a bud. If our allotted span permits, and divine will and assistance accompany us, the jewels which adorn this proof in the shells of the Qur'an's words will be set out in the forthcoming books.

Misconception and Note

If you ask: What is this nature that they're always going on about? What are these laws and forces that they are always muttering about?

We answer as follows: There is the code of divine natural laws (*şeriat-i fitriye-i ilâhiye*), which holds in order the acts of the elements and members of the body of creation, called the Manifest World (*âlem-i şehâdet*). It is this code of natural laws which is called nature or the divine printing press. Yes, nature consists of the totality of the theoretical laws in force in the creation of the universe. Each of what they call forces is an article of the code of laws, and the things they call laws are each a matter of the code. But because of the continuance of the code's articles, and, because the abilities of those who perceive the imaginary to be truth have prepared saline ground, delusion and imagination have prevailed and this delusory nature has become established and embodied, and has assumed external existence and become a cliché rather than imaginary. Delusions and erroneous views play many tricks like this.

Indication

Nature and the matters they call the general laws possess nothing at all to persuade the reason or make themselves agreeable to thought or appear familiar to the truth, and they lack the ability to be the source and original cause of the universe. Therefore, to consider the astounding works of divine power to proceed from the artistry of nature, which resembles a printing press, and to imagine nature to be the source rather than a pattern is the result of an absurd analogy that attempts to extrapolate a particular necessary consequence from the most general precedent, and is due solely to heedlessness of the Maker and the distress arising from the constraints of the cosmic order. This absurd analogy has opened up numerous paths to the valleys of misguidance and perplexity.

Elucidation

Despite suffering much opposition and violation, the Shari'a and laws, which set voluntary actions in order, have been imagined by many ignoramuses to be some sort of spiritual ruler; fancying the order to be a monarch, they suppose it possesses effectiveness. Yes, wouldn't it be peculiar if a savage observed the regular actions of a regiment of soldiers and their uniform movements, and supposed those numerous individuals to be tied together with string? Or would one ever see a vagrant or rhymester attributing external existence to the system which endowed a large number of people with a pleasing arrangement, seeing the code of laws as a sort of leader? In which case, why should the code of divine natural laws which is linked to events in the cosmos and is called nature and is violated only to affirm the prophets and exalt the saints and is ceaseless, why should it be embodied due to delusions? Why should it be considered strange?

Misapprehension and Note

Just as man's mind, tongue, and hearing are particular and follow each other in succession, so are his thought and endeavour minor and particular. His attention can be focused on only one thing after another and he is busy with things one at a time. Also, man's worth and nature are proportionate to his aspirations. And the degree of his aspirations are proportionate to his goals and what he is preoccupied with. Moreover, man becomes absorbed and lost in his aims and what he is turned to. It is because of this that lowly or minor matters are not ascribed to the great, for they would not condescend to them and their aspirations could not be contained in such petty matters. The balance would be broken because such aspiration is weighty, while petty matters are light. Also, whatever man beholds, he seeks its criteria and principles in himself. If he cannot find them there, he seeks them in his surroundings or in his fellow men. Even, if he ponders over the Necessary Existent, Who in no way resembles contingent beings, his surmising faculty wants to make its false conjectures into principles and telescopes. Whereas the All-Glorious Maker may not be beheld in this way. There is no limit to His power. His power, knowledge, and will are all-embracing and comprehensive like the light of the sun, and may not be restricted or measured. As they connect with the greatest thing, so they connect with the tiniest and lowliest. The measure of the grandeur and balance of their perfection is the totality of His works. So to compare the Necessary Existent to contingent beings is absurd and a contrariety.

To reason in accordance with the above-mentioned futile conjectures is pure error. It is due to the unfortunate results of this boorish error and delusive surmise that the Naturalists believed that causes have an actual effect, the Mu'tazilites believed they created their voluntary actions, the philosophers denied that divine knowledge encompassed particulars, and the Zoroastrians ascribed the creation of evil to things other than Allah. As though according to them with His mighty grandeur the Maker would not condescend to busy Himself with lowly, particular matters. Pooh to their intelligences for becoming captive to such futile delusions! Brother! Even if not by way of their beliefs, this delusory notion has assailed some believers due to the whisperings of Satan.

Indication

If you say: The proof that things are given existence out of nothing (*delil-i ihtira'*; Ar. *ikhtirā'*) is the giving of existence. The giving of existence goes together with annihilation. But with our intelligences we cannot conceive of existence out of pure non-existence and absolute non-existence out of pure existence.

My reply: Your surprise and supposing this to be difficult is the unfortunate result of a misleading analogy. For you are comparing divine creation and giving of existence with the art and acts (*kisb*, lit. acquisition) of His servants. Yet the servants' power is insufficient to give existence to an atom even or to annihilate it. They have only some proficiency and acquisition in theoretical matters and in manipulating existent ones. This analogy is deceptive; one cannot save oneself from it [and make sense of it].

In Short: Man has never seen in the contingent beings in the universe a power and strength that might bestow pure existence and annihilate it. But essentially he always judges with his reason from what he observes. That is to say, he looks at the divine works by way of contingent beings. Whereas he should behold them by way of the Maker's power, which is proven by its wonder-provoking works. That is, he imagines the Maker within the imaginary power of the powers and forces that have no effect, for they are merely theoretical matters pertaining to the cosmos and His servants, and he considers this question from their point of view. He should, however, look at it from the side of the Necessary Existent and from the point of view of His absolute power.

Indication

If one reasons about the works of a person, one has to take his characteristics into consideration. This has not been done in this question. For it has been looked at beneath the veil of parabolic analogies (*kıyas-ı temsili*) behind the powerlessness of the servants and by way of the power of contingent beings. Whereas, concerning the world's being given existence, they have disregarded the fact that the perfection of divine power is demonstrated by some of the miracles of so many astonishing works being brought into existence without matter and others being compounded from matter. They have regarded the Necessary Existent in accordance with a limited rule, like making the false analogy of looking on the unseen as present and judging it as they judge their fellow-men. Even, they imagine to be irrational many questions which sound minds consider reasonable.

Note

Quite apart from existents from non-being, if one beholds from the point of view of perfect divine power the astonishing laws of the luminescence of the world's eye, which they call light and is the most obvious and luminous of works, as well as the astonishing laws of the eye's light, which is the former's fruit and a miniature sample of it, and if one compares them with matters that are imagined to be irrational and distant, they will appear more than familiar between the eyelashes of the mind's eye.

Note

Just as theoretical matters are deduced from necessary ones (*zarûriyat*), so too, the necessary matters of the Maker's works are proof of the hidden matters of His art. Both prove this question together.

Allusion

Can the mind conceive of anything finer, stranger, or more wondrous than the art in the world's order and anything further from the power of contingent beings? It surely cannot. For the sciences necessarily testify to the Maker's intention, art, and wisdom through the benefits and instances of wisdom they show, thus compelling the reason to accept them. If it had been left to the human intellect alone, it would not have accepted even the most minor of these self-evident matters.

Why should it be considered strange that what is infinitely easier and lighter be ascribed to the Most Pure and Holy One Who upholds the earth and skies and employs the cosmic bodies within the universal order and

none of Whose commands are disobeyed? It is pure sophistry to doubt that one who lifts a mountain cannot lift an inkwell.

In Short: Just as parts of the Qur'an expound other parts, so some of the lines of the book of the universe expound the art and wisdom that lie beyond them.

Indication

If you say: Union, unification, and metempsychosis are apparent in what some of the Sufis have said. One might surmise from this a connection with the unity of existence (*vahdetü'l-vücûd*), which is the way of some of the materialists.

The Answer: With their ecstatic, symbolic utterances, the Sufi verifiers of reality became immersed in beholding the Most Holy Existent and, withdrawing from contingent beings, saw the result in the evidence. That is to say, on the way they followed in beholding the Maker from the world, they gazed on the flowing manifestations in the streams of the world and the swirling effusions in the inner face of things and the manifestation of the divine names in the mirrors of beings, and used due the lack of words such terms as, 'suffusing divinity' (*ulûhiyet-i sâriye*) and 'suffusing life' (*hayat-ı sâriye*), but others did not understand the truths these expressed. Due to the misunderstanding, they applied the words and utterances of the Sufi mystics to the garbled nonsense that emerged from their own stunted abilities. Pooh to their intelligences! The abstract ideas of the Sufi verifiers of reality, at the heights of the Pleiades, are infinitely distant from the lowly thoughts of the materialists' imitators in the pits of the earth. Any attempt to correlate these two sets of ideas shows that the human mind has suffered an arrest at this time of progress and has fallen into the abyss of death! Observing this with regret, humankind is compelled to declare with the tongue of its investigative and progressive abilities:

كَأَلَا وَاللَّهِ أَيْنَ الثَّرَى مِنَ الثَّرْيَا
وَأَيْنَ الضِّيَاءُ السَّاطِعُ مِنَ الظُّلْمَةِ الطَّامِسَةِ

Indication

These are the followers of the unity of witnessing (*ehl-i vahdetü's-şuhûd*), but metaphorically (*mecâzen*) they can be called the followers of the unity of existence. However, in reality, the unity of existence is the fallacious way of some ancient philosophers.

Note

The leader and shaykh of the Sufis stated that those who made claims about union or unification or metempsychosis had apprehended nothing about the knowledge of Allah. Is union or unification with the Necessary Existent possible? Absolutely not! What value have contingent beings that the Necessary Existent should incarnate in them? Allah forbid! An emanation from the superabundance of divine munificence may be manifested in contingent beings. Their way [the way of the Sufis' leader and shaykh] has no relation or link with the other one. For since on their way the materialists concentrated solely on materiality and became immersed in it, their ideas grew distant from any idea of the divinity and were dissociated from it. They attached such importance to matter that the regrettable way they adopted beheld matter alone and even combined divinity with it.

However, the Sufi verifiers of reality who were followers of the unity of witnessing restricted their view to the Necessary Existent to such an extent that contingent beings ceased to have any value at all. They said: "All is one." Be reasonable! The Necessary Being and contingent beings are as far from each other as the ground is from the Pleiades! I swear by the All-Glorious Creator Who creates matter with all its sorts and in all its forms, that there is no idea more ugly or base or ludicrous than this, which attempts to associate these two ways, thus proving that those who subscribe to it are utterly deranged.

Elucidation

If the globe of the earth is imagined to consist of multicoloured, multifarious fragments of glass, each fragment will receive an emanation (*feyz*) from the sun relative to its colour, shape, and proportions. This imaginary emanation is neither the sun's essence nor the essence of its light. Also, if the hues of these multicoloured blooms, which are the manifestation (*tecelli*) of the sun and the depiction of the seven colours in its light, were to speak, each would say: "The sun's like me" or "The sun's mine."

أَنْ خَيَّالَاتِي كِه دَامِ أَوْلِيَا سَتِ * عَكْسِ مَهْرُويَانِ بُوسْتَانِ خُدَا سَتِ¹

The way of the followers of the unity of witnessing, however, is the way of those who practise intoxication and self-annihilation. The purest and best way is that of sobriety and separation.

حَقِيقَةُ الْمَرْءِ لَيْسَ الْمَرْءُ يُدْرِكُهَا فَكَيْفَ كُنْفِيَّةُ الْجَبَّارِ ذِي الْقَدَمِ
هُوَ الَّذِي أَبْدَعَ الْأَشْيَاءَ وَأَنْشَأَهَا فَكَيْفَ يُدْرِكُهَا مُسْتَحْدَثُ النَّسَمِ²

1. From Mawlana Rumi's *Mathnawī*, vol. i, 72 nd. couplet.

2. A paraphrase of lines from the *Diwān* of al-Imām 'Alī b. Abi Ṭālib (Beirut), 158.

Note

The above are proofs of the Maker's existence in brief; detailed exposition will be the three books. If you say that you want a clear exposition of the proofs of divine unity here, even if only in summary, I would say that they are so well-known and so many that there is no need to mention them in this book. The proof *tamānu*, which is hidden in the shell of the verse, (21:22)

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا ءَالِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا , is a beaming lighthouse for this way. Yes, independence is an essential quality of the Godhead, and necessary to Him.

Elucidation

The similarity between works in the universe, and the various sides of it embracing each other, and their co-operating to maintain the order, and their replying favourably to each other's questions and cries for help, and their looking to one point, and their revolving around a single orbit all hint at the Maker's unity, indeed they declare in all clarity the unity of the Pre-Eternal All-Wise One. For sure, a machine has only one maker and inventor.

وَفِي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ لَهُ آيَةٌ تَذُلُّ عَلَى أَنَّهُ وَاحِدٌ¹

Of limitless dimensions are the leaves of the book of the world,

Numberless are the works on the lines of the world of being.

Every being in the world is an embodied, meaningful word

Printed on the press of the preserved tablet of nature.

Hoca Tahsin² uses “limitless” and “numberless” relatively here; he does not intend actually infinite numbers.

Indication

However many the attributes of perfection, the All-Glorious Maker possesses them all. For it is established that the traces of perfection in creatures are faint shadows derived from the Maker's perfection. Hence, however much beauty, goodness, and perfection there are in the universe, the Maker possesses attributes of beauty and perfection at a level infinitely higher than

1. By Ibn Mu'tazz, quoted in al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā'* (Cairo: 1356/1937), i, 178; and in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm*, i, 24.

2. Hoca Tahsin (d. 1881). Though originally a member of the ulema class, he gained wide knowledge of the natural sciences, astronomy, and contemporary intellectual developments, and was first director of the Darülfünûn (Ottoman University), in Istanbul. Among his writings were scientific works, and poetry.

all of them. Bounty is derived from and is evidence of riches, and the giving of existence is evidence of existence, and necessitating of necessity, and beautifying of beauty. Moreover, the All-Glorious Maker is free of every sort of defect. He utterly lacks the imperfections arising from the essential incapacity of material beings. He is exalted above the attributes intrinsic to the contingent natures of all beings.

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ

The Second Aim

Premise

If you say: You said in the preface that the second part of the profession of faith both testifies to the first and is testified to by it.

The Answer: Yes, indeed! The straightest and firmest of the ways leading to the *ka'ba* of perfections known as knowledge of Allah, is the luminous, felicitous way laid out by the Master of Medina the Illumined (Upon whom be blessings and peace). For the veracious tongue of Muhammad (Upon whom be peace), who was the spirit of guidance, reflected and interpreted his heart, which was a light-scattering lamp encapsulating the Unseen Worlds, and was the truest living proof of the proofs of the Maker, and the most eloquent and articulate evidence. Yes, both his self and his tongue were illuminating proofs. The person of Muhammad (UWBP) was a clear proof from the side of creation; his tongue was a truthful witness from the side of reality. Yes, Muhammad (Upon whom be peace) was a decisive proof of both the Maker, and prophethood, and the resurrection of the dead, and truth, and reality. Detailed exposition is coming later.

Note

This does not necessitate a circular argument, for proof of truthfulness is not dependent on the Maker's evidences.

Foreword

Our prophet was a proof of the Maker, in which case, the veracity of this proof has to be established, and its consequences, and its validity in form and content. As follows:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ الَّذِي دَلَّ عَلَى وُجُوبِ وُجُودِكَ

Lover of the truth! If you want to observe true facts by studying my conscience, you must neither justify your misapprehensions, which give rise to the desire to oppose and take the part of the opponent and offer excuses so tarnishing the dominical faculty they call the heart, nor ascribe them to their

origin, nor seek the whole's result from each of the parts. For to do so is weakness and causes inability and rejection of the result. ¹

Also, cleanse the mirror of the heart of the childish or inimical propensity to offer pretexts and of such traits as seeing only faults like a customer, and polish it up. Respond to and balance up the truths. Deduce from the burning brand of the truth which appears from the combining of the allusions of the greater part, an illumined conjecture, so that the dark delusions of the lesser may be lit up and repulsed. Listen fairly and attentively, and don't object until what I have to say is finished. My words form an entirety, a whole statement. If any delusive ideas remain in your mind when they are completed, state them!

Note

The minor premise is prophethood generally, the major premise is the prophethood of Muhammad (Upon whom be blessings and peace). We begin:

Indication

The Maker's wisdom and the absence of futility in His actions, and the observance of order in even the lowliest and least thing in the universe and its never being neglected, and the ineluctable need which is humankind's teacher, most certainly necessitate the existence of prophethood in humankind.

If you say: I don't understand so brief a statement. Explain it further.

I say: Listen! The proof of prophethood generally is humanity's advancing from animality in respect of three points. For prophethood resembles the centre and mine of the material and spiritual order of humankind and of the order given to the disposition of the numerous species which have been placed under its disposal owing to the power of the human faculty of reason.

THE FIRST POINT is the strange mystery inferred by the rule 'To think first is to act afterwards; to act first, is to think afterwards.' It is like this: humankind's ability to develop sciences by discovering through the light of speculative thought the sequences and configurations of causes, and by analysing and reducing to elementary substances the compounds that are like the seeds of human attainments; and in respect of its ability to produce art, which it does through copying nature and employing the laws in force in the things they call compound wholes, the human being's faulty view, thronging

1. This should be noted. (Author)

anxieties, and inability to arouse humanity, all show the need for a prophet-guide, so that the balance of the perfect order in the world may be preserved.

THE SECOND are the human potentialities, which are infinite; human beings' hopes and desires, which are unrestricted; their thoughts and ideas, which are boundless; and their appetitive powers and power of anger, which are unlimited.

Indication

Even if a person were to be given a lifetime of millions of years and complete enjoyment of all worldly pleasures in every respect, he would still sigh "if only ..." due to the infinity within his innate disposition. It is as though his discontentment suggests and hints that humankind is destined for eternity and is created for everlasting happiness so that the unrestricted innate human capabilities may emerge in fact in infinite time in an unlimited, expansive world.

Note

The absence of futility and the realities of things intimate that the human perfections cannot be contained in this narrow, restricted, and lowly world, which is not free of the conflict and envy arising from the numerous factors hindering every single pleasure. There must be a wide world where there are no obstructions and disorder so that human beings may truly burgeon and blossom, and setting their own circumstances and attainments in order, conform to the order in the world.

Note and Indication

The resurrection of the dead has been alluded to indirectly and will anyway be proved conclusively below. The point I want to make here is that the innate human potentialities look to eternity. If you wish, study and ponder over the human essence, the value of man's rationality, and the requirements of his innate capabilities. Then take a look at his imagination, the least and lowliest servant of the human essence. Approach it and say: "Hey, imagination! You'll be given sovereignty over the world and all it holds and a lifetime of millions of years, but your end will be demise and extinction never to return." How would your imagination respond to you, I wonder? Would it reply joyfully and happily, or regretfully and sorrowfully? Surely, the human essence would cry out woefully from the depths of its conscience, "Alas and alack at the loss of everlasting happiness!" It would reproach the imagination bitterly, saying: "Don't be content with this fleeting world!"

My brother, if such transient sovereignty does not satisfy the lowliest servant of humanity's sovereign – the human essence, or its poet, artist, or painter, how could it satisfy the sovereign itself, who has many servants such as the imagination? It could in no way do so! Only eternal happiness could satisfy it, concealed as it is in the shell of bodily resurrection.

THE THIRD are the moderateness and sensitivity of human nature and the wish for fine things. It is humanity's innate desire for a way of living appropriate to itself. Yes, human beings should not live like animals; they cannot. They have to live with a completeness that is congruous with human honour. In consequence, for their dress, food, and dwellings, they need to engage in numerous industries. But because singly, a person's power is insufficient for these industries, he has to mingle with his fellow-men, and this requires participating with them, and this, co-operating with them, and this, exchanging the fruits of their labours. Then due to the pertinaciousness and truculence of the human powers, they are in need of justice, and, because the human reason lacks the capacity for justice, of the laying down of universal laws to preserve it. Then in order to perpetuate the laws' effectiveness, they need a lawgiver to enforce them. Also, the lawgiver has to be superior materially (*maddeten*) and morally (*mānen*) so that he may preserve his inward and outward domination. And since he has been assigned certain duties by the world's Maker, worship is needed since it repeatedly recalls and instils in people's minds the idea of the Maker's grandeur, and ensures obedience to the lawgiver's position and relative power, and to his commands. And worship directs minds towards the Maker, and being directed in this way, induces submission, and such submission leads to the establishment of a perfect order. The perfect order is born of the mystery of wisdom, and the inner meaning of wisdom makes the absence of futility and the Maker's wisdom and the skilful art in creatures testify to itself.

Thus, if you have been able to understand these three ways in which humankind is privileged over the animals, the necessary conclusion is that prophethood is the pole of humanity; indeed, is its centre and pivot, for all human affairs turn on it. It is like this: consider carefully the upper aspect, see how the management of humankind and the insufficiency of the human being's natural inclinations and the faultiness of his views and mixing of doubts in the progress of his reason all make humankind extremely needy for a guide and teacher. Such teachers are the prophets. Then study the second aspect. It is as follows: man-made laws are in conformity neither with the stature of the human person's innate potentialities which have the ability

to progress and are like the fruit of a branch of the world's tendency towards perfection, nor with his desire for infinity and the inclination towards aggression in his nature and the lack of restrictions on his faculties and hopes; man-made laws are lifeless and temporary. They have come into existence gradually through the meeting of minds and their products and experiments. Due to the inadequate training of and assistance for the seeds of those fruits of the human potentialities, there is need for a divine code of laws that will ensure human happiness materially and spiritually in this world and the next, and being living and eternal, will expand together with the development of the stature of the human potentialities. It is the Prophet who brings that code of laws, the Shari 'a.

If you say: We see that the affairs of the irreligious or of members of false religions are orderly and just.

The Answer: Such order, justice, and virtues are obtained through the warnings and guidance of the religious, since the latter's principles have been established by the prophets. That is to say, the prophets laid down the principles and matters; they practised the principles and virtues, and the rest followed what they did. Other systems and attainments are temporary. If they are upright and straight in one respect, in many respects they are misshapen and crooked. That is, no matter how orderly they are superficially, materially, and in regard to livelihood, they are corrupt and impaired morally, spiritually, and in meaning.

Brother! It is the turn of the third aspect. Think about it! It is like this: both extremes in morality, that is, excess and negligence, corrupt man's innate capabilities, and such corruption results in futility. Futility is contrary to the divine wisdom which governs in the world and is self-evident in the benefits and purposes followed in even the smallest and least important things in the universe.

Misapprehension and Note

The conceptions of the irreligious and their rejection of the divine Shari 'a concerning the matters they call "knowledge of the law," which they instil by continually bruited the harms of every sort of wrong, and "conforming to the law," which is achieved by informing public opinion, are false delusions. For the world has grown old. And the premises of such a thing are not clear. On the contrary, evils progress together with good things and assume a more fearsome and deceptive form. Indeed, just as the laws of wisdom are not unrelated to the principles of government, so too they have intense

need for the laws of the Shari‘a and virtue. The above-mentioned mistaken moral training is insufficient to preserve the mean of the three powers – wisdom, chastity, and courage. In consequence, of necessity man is in need of a prophet who will uphold the balance of divine justice, that it might be thoroughly effective on his conscience and disposition.

Indication

Thousands of prophets have claimed prophethood and supported their claims with thousands of miracles. All their miracles proclaim in unison prophethood generally. This is a decisive proof of our minor premise too. You can call this *tevâtür* (Ar. *tawâtur*)¹ in meaning or anything you like, it is firm evidence.

Note

The points of similarity in these reasoned arguments (*muhâkemat*) are these: if one considers all the sciences, and if one observes the good order and harmony the sciences have disclosed by reason of the universality of their laws; and if one studies from the point of view of divine providence how such disorderly matters and acts as eating and marriage become connected and linked by adding a pleasure or affection or some other thing, which are the vitalising leaven of various useful things; and if one dwells upon the absence of futility and of neglect in things, which is testified to by the wisdom and purpose they display; one will conclude through induction that as the pole and pivot of universal uses and benefits and the source of their life, prophethood is necessary for humankind. If it were not so and one believes that wretched humanity fell into this well-ordered world from a chaotic world, so spoiling the balance and harmony of the general course of things, how could we human beings face the other beings in the universe?

Note

Brother! If the minor premise of the proof of the Maker has been engraved on the page of your mind, prepare yourself, for we are moving on to discussion of Muhammad’s (UWBP) prophethood, the major premise.

Indication and Guidance

The major premise is true, for if you study the works of the prophets which are inscribed on the instructive page of the world, and if you listen to their exploits recounted by the tongue of history, and if you are able to divest

1. *Tevâtür*: A unanimous report. See also, page 131 fn 1 below.

the truth of the various forms it has assumed due to the effects of time and place, you will see that the prophets acted in accordance with the principles of public law (*hukûkullah*) and private law (*hukûk-u ibad*), which are a flame of sheer virtue and a light of divine providence, and they taught how people should be regarded by humanity and how they should act towards other peoples and renounce personal interests, and other matters. The principles that were the pivot of prophethood were found in Muhammad (UWBP) in clearer and more perfect form, since he is the master of the sons of man at the age of their maturity and elderliness, and the source of the high sciences in the medrese of the Arabian Peninsula and their teacher. That is, in addition to pointing to the conclusion of Muhammad's (UWBP) prophethood through induction, particularly with the assistance of the hidden syllogism in one type based on the regular order [in the universe] and corroborated by the analogy known as *evlevi*, through the tongue of their miracles and in respect of the procedure of discarding extraneous matters called *tenkih-ül menât*,¹ the prophets testified to the veracity of Muhammad (UWBP), who was a clear proof of the Maker's existence.

Apology

I can't express this in short sentences and it becomes unclear. For these truths have sent out deep roots in every direction and the discussion has become protracted. I don't want to spoil the form of the question, or to break it up and injure the truth. I want also to draw a circle around the truth so that it is hemmed in and can't escape. If I can't capture it, others should do so. If you excuse me, so be it. Anyway, there is liberty and no oppression, so it's up to you!

Premise

The evidence (*delîl*) of the Prophet's veracity is all his actions and all his conduct. Yes, the absence of hesitation in everything he did, and his disregard for his objectors, and unconcern in the face of his opponents, and lack of fear of his enemies all show his veracity and seriousness. Also, the fact that the truth of his commands struck his very spirit shows his rightness.

1. The hidden syllogism (*kıyas-ı hafî*; Ar. *qiyās khafî*) is an enthymeme: an argument in which one premise is not explicitly stated. The analogy called *evlevî* (*kıyas-ı evlevî*) is an analogy in which the reason or purpose for it is more compelling in the subject (*fer'*) than in the analogue or thing from which the analogy is drawn. *Tenkih-ül menât* (Ar. *tanqih al-manât*) is the procedure of removing irrelevant details from the reason for or cause of a legal judgement reached by analogical reasoning.

In Short: While being free of things like fear, hesitation, alarm, and disquiet which infer trickery and a lack of confidence and assurance, he established fearlessly and with complete confidence and completely appositely in the most perilous situations, living rules that would produce fruits in this world and the next. This being the case, from beginning to end his actions and attitudes show plainly to the attentive his seriousness and veracity. Indeed, like a corruscating light his seriousness and rightness appear from the blending of the totality of his actions, and like flashing lightning, his veracity and percipience are manifested from their reflections and balance.

Indication

The past and the present, that is, the Era of Bliss and the future, demonstrate to anyone not blind that together and in unison they proclaim the proofs of prophethood in the person of Muhammad (Upon whom be blessings and peace), who was a mine of high morals, also in reply to the cry of the proof supplied by his person, as the summoner to truthfulness and herald of prophethood. In which case, we shall study the three pages from the chapter of time from the book of the world. And we shall visit and behold the person of Muhammad (UWBP), the supreme, illumined matter of that book. With him we shall submit our main proof and assertion.

In consequence of this point, the ways of prophethood are fourfold. The fifth is both famous and concealed.

The First Way

Four points should be known in beholding the elevated question of his person.

The First: In accordance with the rule لَيْسَ الْكَحْلُ كَالْتَّكْحُلِ no matter how perfect, the artificial and fake can never take the place of the genuine, for it gives an impression of showy pretence.

The Second: What fixes elevated morals in the ground of truth is seriousness. And what perpetuates their life like the circulation of blood, and strengthens the self-respect born of their blending, and sets those moral virtues in order is truthfulness. Yes, the moment the bonds of truthfulness and seriousness are severed, elevated morals dry up and wither.

The Third: The famous rule that attraction is felt between mutually corresponding things and repulsion is experienced between mutually contradictory things is valid in spiritual and moral matters just as it is in material ones.

The Fourth: **لِلْكُلِّ حُكْمٌ لَيْسَ لِكُلِّ** Let us come now to the main aim. According to the testimony of the books of the Prophet's (UWBP) biography, the self-respect and dignity arising from the multiplicity of elevated morals which he most certainly possessed, and from their being comprehensive and blending together, indicated that – by reason of the honour and integrity which proceeded from that self-respect and dignity and due to the mystery of opposites, like the angels are exempted from mixing with devils – those high morals were exalted above and exempt from lying and trickery. And also, since they comprised truthfulness and rightness, which are their very life and leaven, they proclaim prophethood as brilliantly as a blaze of light.

Note

Brother! You see that a man who is famous for bravery alone does not stoop easily to lying, lest he wounds the honour his fame accords him. So how could a person who possessed all the moral qualities at once descend to deceit? Yes, there is found in the whole what is not present in the parts.

Indication and Note

We see that at the present time there is only the space of a finger between truthfulness and lying. Both are sold in the same market. Each age has its ruling ethos. At no time has the distance between truthfulness and lying been so great as it was in the Era of Bliss. Since truthfulness displayed its true beauty in all its glory, it raised Muhammad (UWBP), who adhered to it, to the highest of the high and was the cause of a mighty revolution in the world. It raised its market value by showing that it was as distant from lying as the East is from the West and it made itself highly sought after and in demand.

¹ As for lying, since it drained its great undertakings of life, like carrion or corpses, it displayed its despicable ugliness, and casting down Musaylima and his likes to the lowest of the low since they became addicted to it, rendered inactive the market for its poisonous wares and made it stagnant. ²

True to their character, with their powerful self-esteem and penchant for boasting, the Arab people competed with each other to increase demand, and abandoned that stagnant lying. Acquiring beauty through practising that sought-after truthfulness, they caused the world to accept their justice. The Companions' reasoned justice arose from this point.

1. Like liberty now. (Author)

2. Like loathsome spying. (Author)

Guidance and Indication

Considered from the point of view of history and the books of biography, the facts that from the age of four until forty when the natural passions are vigorous and intense and any character traits become evident, the Prophet (UWBP) lived with complete rectitude and perfect steadfastness and regularity, and total balance and perfect chastity, with none of his actions remaining secret and displaying not the slightest hint of trickery in the face of his most obdurate enemies. Then consider the supreme revolution he brought about after the age of forty when habitual conduct and morals have become ingrained and permanent, if one doesn't affirm that that revolution proceeded from the truth and was truth, he has only himself to blame, for there must be a Sophist hidden in his head. Then again, the Prophet's (UWBP) conduct, stance, and state in the most perilous of situations, like in the cave, when there was no escape and all hope was lost: his unwavering staunchness and perfect assurance and confidence are sufficient testimony to his prophethood and seriousness and are evidence that he adhered to the truth.

The Second Way

The first page, that is, the past. Attention needs to be drawn to four points on this page:

The First: If a person acquires the principles, spirit, and bases of a science or a tale and constructs his assertions on them, he will display his skill and proficiency in that science.

The Second: Brother! If you know human nature, you will be aware that no matter how inconsequential, opposing views cannot be voiced concerning some minor case among few people or a small tribe. So if a cause of the very greatest importance which comprises matters exceeding human reason, is advanced boldly and fearlessly and with the utmost assurance among very numerous predominantly illiterate peoples who display extremes of obduracy, you will see that truthfulness will rise like the sun over everyone's heads out of what is written and what is said.

The Third: There are many theoretical sciences which, while remaining unknown to nomadic peoples, for the civilised have become axiomatic due to the inculcation of customs and practices. In consequence, if one is to judge the nomads' circumstances, one has to imagine oneself as present in their desert habitations. If you wish, you may refer to the Second Premise above, for it sets out this point clearly.

The Fourth: If an illiterate person propounds his ideas before the ulema concerning some current science, and agrees with the points on which they are agreed and disagrees with the points of dispute and corrects any errors, it establishes his superiority and that his knowledge is not acquired. In accordance with these points we say this: notwithstanding his well-known illiteracy, the Most Noble Messenger (Upon whom be blessings and peace) traversed time with his fleet, untrammelled spirit and entered the hidden depths of the past then described the circumstances and secrets of the previous prophets as though he had been present and witnessed them. He attracted the gaze of all the intelligent and proclaimed his mighty cause before the whole world. In preparation he fearlessly and with utter confidence announced the principles of his cause, which in essence were similar to the endeavours of the previous prophets' missions and their mysteries. The facts that he related to us the stories of the prophets and affirmed the points of agreement of the previous scriptures and corrected points of difference, furnish necessary proof of his veracity and prophethood.

Addendum: The proofs of the prophethood of all the previous prophets are evidence of Muhammad's (UWBP) veracity, and all their miracles are in effect a miracle of his. You will understand this if you ponder over it carefully.

Indication

Brother! Sometimes an oath may take the place of a proof, because it comprises the proof. In which case,

وَالَّذِي فَصَّ عَلَيْهِ الْقِصَصَ لِلْحِصَصِ وَسَيَّرَ رُوحَهُ فِي أَعْمَاقِ الْمَاضِي وَفِي شَوَاهِقِ
الْمُسْتَقْبَلِ فَكَشَفَ لَهُ الْأَسْرَارَ مِنْ زَوَايَا الْوَافِعَاتِ إِنَّ نَظَرَهُ النَّقَّادَ أَدَقُّ مِنْ أَنْ يُدَلِّسَ
عَلَيْهِ وَمَسْلَكَهُ الْحَقَّ أَغْنَى مِنْ أَنْ يُدَلِّسَ عَلَى النَّاسِ

Yes, indeed! Fancy could not present itself as truth to the light of his gaze; his true way disdained deception.

The Third Way

Four points from the page of the present, that is, the Era of Bliss. Attention will be drawn to one point in particular.

The First: Consider the following: even with considerable effort a mighty ruler cannot easily eradicate an unimportant custom from an inconsiderable people or an insignificant trait from a small tribe, yet someone

lacking power extirpates from the depths of an extremely numerous, bigoted, and perverse people's spirits their very various, long-held, deep-seated, and completely ingrained customs and practices with little effort and in a short time. If you don't agree that this is quite wondrous, I shall inscribe your name in the book of Sophists.

The Second: The formation, or natural growth, of a state – which resembles a collective personality – is slow. And only gradually can a state gain mastery over a former state since submission to the latter has become like second nature to it. In which case, the formation in a short time of a vast, and materially and morally powerful state, and its almost instantly gaining ascendancy over other, firmly established states shows that its customs and practices in both moral and material matters are necessarily extraordinary. If you can't see this, your name will be written in the register of the blind.

The Third: It is possible to dominate outwardly through force and oppression, but to conquer minds, and be loved by spirits, and command human nature, and permanently preserve one's rule over consciences is the distinguishing mark of the truth. If you are unaware of this quality, you are unacquainted with the truth.

The Fourth: Employing false or deceptive incentives or threats will have only a superficial effect and will block up paths to the intellect. In which case, to penetrate to the depths of the heart, excite the finest emotions, disclose the bud-like human potentialities, arouse latent, dormant abilities, fire the passion of the human essence, and reveal the value of human reason must be the mark of the rays of the truth. Yes, Muhammad's (UWBP) cleansing their hearts of such things as the live burial of girl-children, a concrete embodiment of hardness of heart, and his adorning them with such things as kindness to animals, to ants even, which is a flash of tender-heartedness, was such a mighty revolution – especially among those primitive peoples – that it has been endorsed as extraordinary by the perspicacious since it was not conformable with any natural laws. You too will affirm it if you have any understanding.

Now listen to the Point: History testifies that only the greatest geniuses can arouse a few emotions in people and develop one or two of their abilities and fire their passions, for if their dormant emotions are not awakened, the effects of their efforts will be temporary and go for nothing. Even the greatest geniuses have succeeded in arousing only one or two of the emotions.

In Short: A sense of freedom and feelings of zeal and love... To swiftly arouse and disclose in the nomadic peoples of the boundless deserts of the

Arabian Peninsula thousands, even, of elevated dormant, latent, hidden emotions, and to cause them to burst into flower instantaneously was the mark of the light-scattering sun of truth. For anyone whose mind cannot comprehend this Point, we shall lay out before his eyes the Arabian Peninsula. Take Arabia: if a hundred of the most eminent philosophers were to be sent there after thirteen centuries of human progress and they were to labour there for a hundred years, could they achieve at the present time one hundredth of what he achieved there at that time?

Indication

Whoever seeks success has to be acquainted with and comply with divine practice (*âdetullah* – the natural laws), creation, and the nature of things. The innate disposition of things will otherwise confound his efforts and he will be unsuccessful; the general current of things casts into nothingness those who oppose it. In consequence, consider the following. You will see the degree to which the truths of the Shari‘a are in conformity with the profound, precise laws in force in creation, which are invisible to the microscope of the mind. Those truths are cognisant of them and in harmony with them. For they have preserved the balance of those laws. Yes, the fact that the Shari‘a has preserved its truths throughout the mighty upheavals of the long ages, indeed, has caused them to unfold, shows that the way of the Most Noble Messenger (Upon whom be blessings and peace) is founded upon the truth, which can never perish. Having grasped these points, listen with a broad, reasoning, and attentive mind to the following:

Despite being unlettered and lacking any outward power or rule or wish for sovereignty, Muhammad Hashimi (Upon whom be blessings and peace) set out with perfect assurance in a most perilous situation, and conquering minds, becoming loved by spirits, and commanding natures, demolished numerous, deep-seated, ingrained, habitual, and savage customs and mores. Together with instilling elevated morals in their place, so firmly as to mix with the people’s very flesh and blood, he stifled the savage cruelty of a people moribund in the far-flung corners of barbarism, and excited the finest of feelings. Yes, arousing lofty emotions and disclosing the essence of their humanity, he raised them in a short time to the peak of civilisation. He founded in a brief time a vast empire that spread from East to West, swallowed up other empires like a swirling fire or blinding light or Moses’ staff and brought those empires to the point of extinction. He thus demonstrated to anyone whose vision and insight are not impaired his veracity, prophethood, and that he adhered to the truth. If you cannot see this, it will erase you from the book of humanity.

The Fourth Way

This is the question of the Shari'a in particular, from the page of the future.

You must not hold back from considering four points carefully.

The First: One person cannot be an expert and proficient in four or five sciences, unless he is a marvel.

The Second: Two people speak of a single matter. One of them expresses it suitably to the context and what precedes and succeeds it and its relationship with them and situates it suitably; that is, he sets it in fertile ground, thus indicating his skill and proficiency in the science and his knowledge of it. The other one, however, because he neglects these points, displays his superficial and plagiaristic knowledge. Whereas what they speak of is the same. If you cannot not discern this with your mind, your spirit discerns it.

The Third: As described in the Second Premise, if a discovery which two centuries ago was considered wondrous had remained undiscovered until the present, even a child could discover it now due to the progress of science. Keep this in mind and go back thirteen centuries. Divest yourself of the developments of the intervening time and seat yourself in the wild Arabian Peninsula. Observe it carefully and you will see an unlettered, inexperienced man, unassisted by time and place. He is alone, yet he has established in accordance with the laws of science – which have been discovered not only through human intelligence but also through very many experiments – such a system and such justice that if the human stature and potentialities were to increase through absorbing the products of man's thought, that system and Shari'a also would expand and head for eternity. It thus proclaims that it proceeds from Allah's pre-eternal speech and ensures the happiness of this world and the next. If you are fair, you will see that this is beyond the power of the people of that time, and even of all humankind, unless evil doubts have rotted your inborn nature's eye ¹ so that it looks only to the here and now.

The Fourth: As is described in the Tenth Premise and will be mentioned in the answer to the second objection, the Shari'a offers guidance in accordance with the mental capacity of the mass of the people. Since people generally have little education and cannot comprehend abstract truths without their being presented in familiar form, the Shari'a depicts them with figures of speech and allegories and metaphors. Also, since the people perceive

1. Note should be taken of this. (Author)

things through their external senses, and consider necessary what is contrary to reality and in the physical sciences have not followed the necessary steps in their development, the Shari‘a is vague and unspecific in such matters lest the people fall into the abyss of error. But it is still not devoid of hints to the truth.

Misapprehension and Note

Truthfulness shines forth in all the conduct and actions of the Most Noble Messenger (UWBP), but all his acts and all his conduct did not have to be wondrous. For the purpose of his displaying marvels was to affirm his claim to prophethood. When there was no need or it was inappropriate, he complied with the laws of divine practice and followed the general course of things. And it was requisite that he did so.

Brother! This note is of the same type as the premise (*mukaddeme*) of the First Way. It lost its way and place due to forgetfulness and ended up here. Keep these points firmly in mind, for now we are embarking on the conclusion.

Consider this, my brother! The Islamic Shari‘a and religion, which are founded on rational proofs, comprise the sum and substance of the sciences and branches of knowledge. These include the science of refining the spirit, and of training the heart, and of educating the conscience, and the science of physical training, and domestic science, and the science of local government, and that of international relations, and the legal sciences, and so on. The Shari‘a explains and elucidates where necessary or needed, and is concise where it is not necessary or people’s minds are not ready or the times do not allow, and it lays down principles that can be elaborated, deduced, and expanded through consultation and the exercise of reason. At the present time, all these sciences or even a third of them after thousand three hundred years – having grown through the meeting of minds and expansion of their results – could not be found in a single person even in a civilised place and among clever people. In all fairness, your conscience could not prevent your affirming this.

Virtue is such that enemies even cannot deny it. The New World’s most famous philosopher, Carlyle, ¹ quoted a German thinker and politician, who after conducting some close studies, asked himself: “If Islam is thus,

1. The famous historian and philosopher Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) was actually Scottish. He was born in Scotland and died in London. The sentences here are loosely quoted from his work *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History* (London: 1841), the chapter entitled: The Hero as Prophet. Mahomet: Islam.

wouldn't present-day civilisation flourish within the bounds of its truths?" He replied to himself in the affirmative. The punctilious scholars of the present are living within its sphere. The above-mentioned philosopher said that when the truths of Islam burst forth, they swallowed up like flames the religions and ideas of that time as though they were dead wood. And it was right they they did, for nothing but falsehood proceeded from those religions. And so so.

Yes, Islam has preserved its truths for thirteen centuries despite all the clashes and confrontations. Indeed, the clashes have lessened and lightened the dust of concealment settled on the shoulders of the truths of Islam. Yes, existence and the state of the world testify to this. One needs to ponder over the Premises in the First Article above.

Misapprehension and Note

If you say: It's possible for one person to know all the sciences in summary.

The Answer: Yes and no, because the summaries are such that as with the points mentioned above, being employed appositely in suitable positions and fertile ground, they show like glass full knowledge of and proficiency in [the sciences] beyond them. Yes, if two people speak of the same matter, what they say will hint at the ignorance of one and the knowledge of the other.

Indication and Guidance and Note

Brother of conscience who has travelled with me in the imagination through the previous stopping places of this book! Take a broad look and weigh them up. Convene a high council in your imagination to judge them. Then summon your choice from the Twelve Premises to secure their presence. Then consult with the following rules.

One person cannot be an expert and proficient in numerous sciences. Also, when two people speak of the same matter, what they say differs. Also, the sciences are the product of the meeting of minds in the course of time. Also, something that is self-evident in the future, may have been hypothetical in the past. Also, what is known by the civilised may be unknown to the uncivilised. Also, it is a false analogy and misleading to compare the past to the future. Also, the simplicity of hunters and desert dwellers is quite dissimilar to the trickery and cunning of peasants and the civilised; trickery is disguised behind the veil of civilisation. Also, many sciences may be given rise to and provoked by customs, circumstances, and events. Also, the light

of human vision cannot penetrate the future and cannot see what is particular to it. Also, human laws have a natural lifespan; at some point they cease like human respiration. Also, time and place have a powerful effect on the affairs of people. Also, things that formerly were considered marvels, may now be looked on as commonplace, for ways and means have been perfected. Also, no matter how wondrous human intelligence may be, it is inadequate to perfect a science all at once, so how could it perfect numerous sciences?

Brother! Consult with these matters, then withdraw and assume the position of inspector. Divest yourself completely of the imaginings and assumptions of time and place; then from the shore of this age enter the boundless ocean of time and emerge on the island of the Era of Bliss. What will strike your eye before all else is a single person who bereft of helper and power is challenging the whole world. He has taken on his shoulders a truth greater than the globe – a Shari‘a and code of laws which guarantees the happiness of all humankind; which as the sum and substance of all the divine sciences and branches of true knowledge, expands in conjunction with the unfolding of the human potentialities, and establishes such justice that it organises humankind’s circumstances – yielding fruits in this world and the next – as though men were members of a single council and the people of the same era. If you were to ask the Shari‘a’s laws whence they had come and where they were going, they would tell you that they had come from pre-eternity, and that, accompanying humankind for its well-being on the road to eternity, they were headed for post-eternity. Even if their outward links with us are severed after departure from this transient world, in spirit they will always be the guide and spiritual sustenance of human kind.

Conclusion

There are three sources of doubts. It is like this: you feign ignorance of what the Lawgiver intends and the guidance that is commensurate with the capacity of people’s minds, and you object, uttering the following erroneous statement, which is the breeding ground of all evil suspicions: “The Qur’an, which is the chief component of the Shari‘a, comprises three doubtful points.”

The First: The Qur’an contains allegorical verses and obscurities, which are opposed to eloquence, and eloquence is the cause of its distinction and is based on clarity of expression.

The Second: The Qur’an is vague and general concerning the physical sciences and this is contrary to guidance and instruction, the true purposes of the Shari‘a.

The Third: Some of the Qur'an's literal meanings tend to be contrary to rational proof and so may be opposed to reality, and this is incompatible with verification and guidance, which constitute its method and way.

Brother! Success is from Allah. I say that these three points which you claim are defects, are not as you imagine. The three of them are rather veracious witnesses to the Qur'an's miraculous inimitability.

Answer to the First Point: You have anyway twice received the implicit answer to this. It is as follows: ordinary people form the majority, and in the Lawgiver's view, the minority follows the majority. For the elite understand and profit from a discourse addressed to the common people, while the opposite is not true. The common people cannot free themselves from what they are familiar with and how they imagine them, and they can comprehend abstract ideas and sheer truths only through the telescope of the imagination. But to see the depictions (lit. forms—*suver*; sing. *suret*) of imaginary things and restrict attention to them necessarily gives rise to such impossibilities as their embodiment and having physical dimensions. And then they are seen as actual things rather than mere depictions. For instance, the mass of people can see divine rule over the beings in the cosmos in the form of the sultan's rule on the throne of his dominion, as in (20:5) *إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى*. Since they perceive things in this way, guidance and eloquence require that their feelings are taken into account and respected and that allowance is made for their understanding. Such respect and allowance for human understanding is called 'divine condescension.' The purpose of this condescension is to familiarise and get the people to understand. You may refer to the Tenth Premise.

By reason of the above, the depictions in the allegorical verses have been put as telescopes to flatter the feelings of the mass of people with their fanciful views so that they may look on the abstract truths. This answer is corroborated by the fact that numerous metaphors are utilised in speech generally in order to conceptualise or depict profound or various meanings in a simple and straightforward way. That is to say, the allegorical verses are the most abstruse of metaphors. For they are the parabolic forms of hidden truths. This means that the abstruseness is due not to the incomprehensibility of the words, but to the subtlety of the meanings.

You who objects! Consider this fairly: is it not in conformity with eloquence, which is to speak suitably to any situation and clearly in any context, to bring close to the people's understanding in this way those

truths which are furthest from them, or is it as you imagine it to be? You judge for yourself!

Answer to the Second Point: This was discussed in detail in the Second Premise. The sciences are successive and sequential, for they are the fruits of man's inclination to progress – a branch of the desire in the world to be perfected – and are like the steps of the ladder of progress formed through numerous experiments and the products of the meeting of minds. The formation of the succeeding one is dependent on the forming of the previous one. That is, the science which is previous becomes established as axiomatic, then it may be preliminary to one that succeeds it. It is because of this that supposing a man had tried ten centuries ago to teach a science which had come into being through the refinement of experiments, he would have done nothing but cause confusion and error. For instance, if he had said: "Behold the stationary sun and rotating earth and the swarming millions of living organisms in a droplet of water, then conceive of the Maker's grandeur!", the mass of people would have either denied it due to their superficial view and their supposing it to be contrary to what their external senses perceived, or they would have deceived themselves, or competed with it. But to confuse people, especially over a period of a thousand years, is a grievous error when offering guidance. In short, the earth being flat and the rotation of the sun were considered by them to be self-evident truths since that is how they saw them.

Note

Matters like this cannot be compared with future theoretical matters. For matters that belong to the future are possible in two respects since they are not connected with the external senses. They may be believed in, for they are possible. One may feel confident about them. Clearly their right is to be clarified. But errors arising from the senses raised this matter of ours [that is, matters dealt with by the physical sciences] from the level of possibility to that of plain self-evidence, that is, to that of compounded ignorance. Whereas their undeniable right in the view of eloquence is to be vague and indefinite lest the people's minds become confused. Nevertheless, allusions, hints, and indications should be made to the truth. Doors should be opened to minds and they should be invited to enter. That is anyway what the Illustrious Shari'a has done.

Brother! Is it fair, is it investigating the truth, to imagine to be contrary to guidance the thing that is the very essence of guidance and pure eloquence? And to suppose to be defective something which according to eloquence is

perfection itself? Is it eloquence according to your defective understanding to cast the people's minds into error and confusion and to propose things reason cannot support because time and place have not adequately equipped their understanding? Allah forbid! The rule **كَلِمِ النَّاسَ عَلَى قَدَرِ عُقُولِهِمْ**¹ is wise and meaningful. Refer to the Premises if you wish, especially the First Premise; ponder over it.

Now the Answer to the Third Point, which is that some of the literal meanings of verses are contrary to rational evidences. Study the First Premise then listen to this: the Lawgiver's main aims in guiding the mass of people are proof of the Single Maker, prophethood, the resurrection of the dead, and justice. In which case, mention of the universe is secondary and digressive; it is in order to deduce from the wondrous order in the art which is clearly apparent to people [the existence] of the All-Glorious Maker, Who is the True Orderer. The works of art and their order are apparent in everything; the manner of their formation is unrelated to their main purpose.

Note

It is an established fact that the evidence has to be known before what is being asserted. Therefore, the literal meanings of some verses incline towards the people's beliefs, which are acquired through their external senses, in order to clarify the evidence and familiarise the ideas. They are not for purposes of deduction. For the Qur'an has placed hints and associations in the web of its verses which for investigators of the truth point to and indicate the pearls in those shells and the truths in the literal meanings. Yes, some verses of the Perspicuous Qur'an, which is the Word of Allah, expound other verses. That is, some verses disclose what is hidden in their sisters' hearts. In which case, some may indicate others; their literal meanings are not intended.

Misapprehension and Note

If it is said by way of inference or deduction (*istidlāl*): consider the wonders of electricity, the marvels of [the laws of] general attraction, the daily and annual rotations of the earth, the chemical combinations of the more than seventy elements, and the motionlessness of the sun together with its apparent motion! Know that the Maker exists! In this case, the art, which is

1. Cf. *Bukhārī*, 'Ilm, 49: **حَدِّثِ النَّاسَ بِمَا يَعْرِفُونَ** (Speak to the people in accordance with what they know)

the evidence, would be more obscure than the conclusion, which is knowledge of the Maker, and since it would be more obscure and contrary to the rules of inference, people would incline towards understanding some of the verses literally. But such verses contain associative expressions and allusions, and these are neither true nor false. For instance, the *alif* in the word *قَالَ* is *alif*; even if it is actually *wāw*, or *kāf* even, it does not affect it.

Brother! Be fair! Aren't these three objections the very clearest evidence of the miraculous inimitability of the Qur'an, which was revealed to guide all the people of all times. Indeed,

وَالَّذِي عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ الْمُعْجَزَ، إِنَّ نَظَرَ الْبَشِيرِ النَّذِيرِ وَبَصِيرَتَهُ النَّقَادَةَ أَدَقُّ وَأَجَلُّ
وَأَجَلَى وَأَنْفَذُ مِنْ أَنْ يَلْتَبَسَ أَوْ يَشْتَبِهَ عَلَيْهِ الْحَقِيقَةُ بِالْخَيَالِ، وَإِنَّ مَسْلَكَهُ الْحَقَّ
أَغْنَى وَأَعْلَى وَأَنْزَهُ وَأَرْفَعَ مِنْ أَنْ يُدَلِّسَ أَوْ يُغَالِطَ عَلَى النَّاسِ

Indeed, how could imagination show itself to be the truth in his light-scattering view. His way is pure truth and his method, purely right. Truth and right are free of deception and do not lead astray.

The Fifth Way

This concerns the well-known apparent wonders and perceptible miracles. The books of biography and history are loaded with them. The illustrious ulema (May Allah reward them well) have categorised them and expounded them appropriately. We have skipped the details so as not to teach what is already known.

Although there may be no consensus concerning the transmission of all the instances of the apparent wonders (*mütevätir*),¹ there are many in their different categories and so may be considered to be unanimously reported in respect of their meanings (*mütevätir-i bilmânâ*). There are several categories of those wonders.

One Category is the various *irhâsât*;² As though that century profited from the Messenger (UWBP) as a highly sensitive wonderworker that had premonitions of his coming, and gave news of it.

1. *Mütevätir* (*Ar. mutawâtir*) refers to the kind of report that is transmitted by numerous authorities and about which there is no room for doubt; that is, a report concerning the authenticity of which there is a consensus of opinion.

2. *Irhâsât*: the paranormal events that took place before the prophetic mission but which were related to it.

Another Category was the numerous predictions of the future. As if the Messenger's (UWBP) ethereal, winged spirit rent the bonds of fixed time and space, roamed in the climes of the past and the future, then told us of what it had witnessed.

Another: Wonders that could be perceived by the physical senses and were performed during the period of his challenging the existing order. These have been said to number nearly a thousand. That is to say, as we said, even if each miracle was reported from only one source (*âhâdî*), in total they may be considered as being reported unanimously in respect of their meanings.

And Another is water flowing from his blessed fingers. As though with its flowing from his blessed hand, which was a source of munificence, the water – the leaven of life – was depicting the outpouring of the water of guidance – the leaven of spirits – from his tongue, which was the source of guidance.

And Another was the utterances of trees, stones, and animals. As though the spiritual life of his guidance spread to inanimate beings and animals and brought them to speech.

And Another was the splitting of the moon. As though the moon, which is like the heart of the sky, longingly split its pure shining breast at the sign of his blessed finger in order to form a relationship with his blessed heart.

Note

The splitting of the moon may be held to be unanimously reported in respect of its meaning (*mütevâtir-i bi'l-mâna*), and is established by the verse, (54:1) وَأَنشَقَّ الْقَمَرُ. For those who denied the Qur'an did not object to it. And apart from one forced interpretation that does not deserve attention, the verse has not been interpreted otherwise.

Doubt and Note

The whole world did not necessarily witness the splitting of the moon since it was both unexpected, and it occurred at night when people were heedless, and there were no celestial observations at that time, and there were shooting stars, and the times of moonrise differed according to place. But it was affirmed by those who were present at the time it occurred. One of these, and the first and foremost, was the Perspicuous Qur'an. Its miraculousness has been proved above to a small extent, in seven respects. And so on and so forth. I refer you to the relevant reliable books for the rest of the miracles.

Conclusion

O you who have studied these words of mine! Consider all I have said, that is, the above five Ways, attentively and with a broad and balanced view, and looking on them as an encircling enclosure or wall, gaze on the prophethood of Muhammad (Upon whom be blessings and peace) at their centre. Or see them as mutually supporting soldiers surrounding the sultan in order that together with the other mutually responsive and assisting answers they may repulse the groundless suspicions that assault from one side. This being the case, in reply to the question of the Japanese:

مَا الدَّلِيلُ الْوَاضِحُ عَلَى وُجُودِ الْإِلَهِ الَّذِي تَدْعُونَنَا إِلَيْهِ

I say this: Muhammad, Upon whom be blessings and peace!

Indication, Guidance, and Note

On science (*fenn-i hikmet*) being sent as interrogator and questioner by the universe and the government of creation, it happened upon the vanguard of humankind, which was turned towards the future, and it posed human beings with the following questions: “Sons of men! Where do you come from and at whose command? What are you doing? Where are you going? What is your origin? And what is your destination?” Upon this, the guide, leader, and orator of humankind, Muhammad (Upon whom be blessings and peace) rose to his feet and replied to science, which had proceeded from the government of creation: “Interrogator, sir! We companies of beings have come as officials from the realm of divine power on the orders of the Pre-Eternal Monarch. He is the Pre-Eternal Ruler, the Necessary Existent, the possessor of all the attributes of perfection. He has clothed us in the garment of existence and bestowed on us our faculties and capabilities, which are our capital and felicity. We companies of men are at present busy preparing for everlasting happiness. Then later we shall depart all together for the bodily resurrection of the dead and shall head for eternity.”

So science (*hikmet*)! Don’t quibble or talk nonsense! Relate exactly what you have seen and heard!

The Third Aim

This is the bodily resurrection of the dead. Yes, there would be no creation without it; it would be futile. The resurrection is indeed true and right, and its clearest proof is Muhammad (Upon whom be blessings and peace).

Introduction

The Perspicuous Qur'an has set forth bodily resurrection so clearly it has left not the slightest doubt concerning it. Here, as far as we can, we are going to point out several of its aims and stopping places in order to expound its proofs.

THE FIRST AIM: The following are truthful witnesses to bodily resurrection and true, verifiable proofs of it: the perfect order in the universe, the total wisdom in creation, the absence of futility in the world, the absence of waste in the innate disposition of things, the induction established by all the sciences, the repeated resurrections of a sort in many realms of beings such as the alternations of the days and years, the essence of the human capabilities, the infinite hopes of human beings, the All-Wise Maker's mercy, the veracious Messenger's (UWBP) tongue, and the expositions of the Inimitable Qur'an.

Stopping Place and Indication

1. If there were no everlasting happiness, the [cosmic] order would consist only of a flimsy and fatuous form. All its non-material aspects, bonds, and relationships would go for nothing. This means that what makes the order order is eternal happiness.

2. Divine wisdom, the exemplification of pre-eternal providence, proclaims eternal happiness since it pursues uses and purposes in all beings. For if there were no eternal happiness, all the self-evident instances of wisdom and benefits in the universe would compete with each other and cease to be thus.

3. The absence of futility in creation, which is testified to by reason, wisdom, and induction, points to eternal happiness within the resurrection of the dead; indeed, is evidence of it. For absolute non-existence would make everything futile and pointless.

4. The absence of waste in the nature of things, for instance, in the microcosm that is man, which is testified to by the science of anatomy, proves the

absence of waste in man's mental faculties, and hopes, ideas, and desires. And this announces that he is destined for eternal happiness.

5. If it were not so, those faculties and desires would all wither up and go for nothing. Is it at all possible? Could the shell of a pearl worth the world be cherished and prized, protecting it from a speck of dust even, and then that priceless pearl be smashed and destroyed? No, indeed! It is cherished for its own sake.

6. Indeed, as explained above, the perfect [cosmic] order, the existence of which is established by induction and all the sciences, necessitates everlasting happiness within bodily resurrection, which saves the order from defect and disturbance, and will manifest perfectedness and eternal life.

7. The days, years, human lifespan, and rotations of the world precede each other like the workings of a clock which count the seconds, minutes, hours, and days. They indicate that as the morning follows the night, and spring the winter, so the resurrection will follow on after death and appear from that workshop. Yes, each individual human being resembles a species, for the light of thought has given such breadth to his hopes that he would not be satisfied even if he swallowed all time. The nature, worth, view, attainments, pleasures and pains of the members of other species are particular, individual, limited, restricted, and instantaneous; but those of human beings are elevated, universal, and everlasting. The various sorts of recurrent diurnal and annual resurrections of many species hint at and point to a general, personal resurrection of man; indeed, they testify to it.

8. The unlimited potentialities included in the essence of man's spirit, and the unlimited abilities contained in those potentialities, and the endless desires arising from those abilities, and the infinite hopes resulting from those endless desires, and the limitless thoughts and ideas born of those infinite hopes are hands stretched out towards eternal happiness, which is beyond this Manifest World, and are eyes gazing at it, being turned towards it.

9. The mercy of the All-Wise Maker, the All-Merciful and Compassionate One, will bestow on the human race everlasting happiness, to make His bounties bounty and save them from being an affliction and deliver the universe from the anguish of eternal separation. For if divine mercy were not to bestow everlasting happiness, the chief of all bounties, the bounties would turn into rancour and be transformed into an affliction and one would have to deny the mercy the existence of which is indubitably established by the testimony of the whole universe.

Brother! Consider the various bounties of love, compassion, and affection, then think of everlasting separation and unending parting! Love becomes a grievous calamity. This means that eternal separation cannot confront love. Everlasting happiness will deal everlasting separation such a blow, it will despatch it to eternal non-existence!

10. The five Ways set out above together with the tongue of our Prophet (UWBP), whose truthfulness and veracity has been proven, are the keys to everlasting happiness within the treasury of bodily resurrection.

11. The Qur'an of Miraculous Exposition, the miraculous inimitability of which has been proved in seven respects for thirteen centuries, is the discloser of bodily resurrection, and is its revealer and initiator.

THE SECOND AIM is an exposition of two proofs of resurrection which are alluded to by the Qur'an. As follows:

نَخُو : بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Ustad Bediuzzaman, the author of this treatise, wrote at the beginning of the Ninth Ray ¹ of the Risale-i Nur, which he composed thirty years later:

It is a subtle instance of dominical grace that thirty years ago at the end of his work entitled *Muhâkemat (Rational Arguments: Prescription for the Ulema)*, which was written to set out the principles of Qur'anic exegesis, the Old Said wrote: "Second Aim: Two Qur'anic verses alluding to the resurrection of the dead will be expounded and explained. نَخُو : بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ" There he stopped and could write no further. Now, praise and thanks be to my Compassionate Creator to the number of signs and indications of the resurrection, that thirty years later He has given me success.

1. See, *The Rays Collection* (Istanbul: Sözlery Publications, 2013), 202.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أحمدته تعالى حمداً بلا حدٍّ، وأصلى على رسوله سيدنا محمد
وعلى آله وصحبه سالكي الطريق الأسدّ.

وبعد: فاعلم أنه من يَرْمُ أن يعرج إلى سماء الحقائق، وَيَسْمُ أن يسرح فكره في
رياض الدقائق، ويطلب ميزاناً لتمييز الكاذب عن الصادق، ومكنسة لتكنيس
غبار الأوهام عن وجوه الشقائق، وجنة يروض فيها جياذ الأفكار، وجنة يدافع بها
نضال السقيمة من الأخبار، ومضماراً يبارز فيه الأبطال من الأحبار: فعليه بتدرّس
وتدريس هذا الكتاب.. لأنه قد بُنى على أساسى تهديم الخطأ وتعمير الصواب،
وأصلّى تصقيلاً الإسلامية عن الوهميات التى بها تعاب، وتصفية العقائد عن الخرافات
التى بها تشاب.. كيف لا، وقد أخرج تلك الحقائق المؤودة فى أخاديد الخبالات،
وفضّ أفواه الأوهام عن مكنونات هاتيك النكات. فحل الأذهان، وأذهن الفحول،
وسمح به ثاقب الأفكار، وأفكر العقول وخاطر كل ما يوصف به فهو فوقه
ولو بذل الواصف فى أطرائه طوقه.

وإن شككت فيما أقول فيه، انظر إلى الفرائد السافطة من فيه...

ويحق أن يقال فى تأليفه:

بديع النسج والأسداء أنشا * من التعيب والتغيير حاشا
كتاباً باللالى قد توشا * أناسى النصوص قد تحشّا
مرى الصدق والحق المبين * ويومى للكنوز تحت غين
ولذى الدين والأحباب زين * كما للقالى والحساد شين
يَمَرِّقُ عن وجوه الحق مينا * يُعَمِّى لذوى الإلحاد عيناً

محك للنحول من نقول ❊ وقيد للعقول من فحول
 جدير بالتقلد فى نحور ❊ محافظة الحدود والثغور
 خليق بالتقلد فى العناق ❊ لضرب الفرق فى رأس النفاق
 على الطرف متى يُسطر سَطْرُ ❊ هُلا يغشاه طول الدهر عور
 على القلب بأن تكتب أخرى ❊ وأن تجعل مكان الحبر تبراً
 صغير الجرم تبرئ المثل ❊ كمرقاة الى أوج الكمال
 كثير الرموز والمعنى دقيق ❊ وعن دركه ذو الطعن سحيق
 هلال الشك معناه فحدد ❊ بكحل ضده العين فراود
 وأننى لا يكون ذا كذا كا ❊ ويختصم بكتفيه السماكا
 وقد أنشاه رازى الأوان ❊ مُجيدٌ للبديع فى الزمان
 وذا العصر به يعلو وسام ❊ لذا التأليف تاريخ تمام

GENERAL INDEX

- ‘Abd al-Qāhir, see, al-Jurjānī
 Abū Ṭayyib (al-Mutanabbī) 83
 accidents (a‘raz) 103
 accountability 48
 akliyat 25
 Alexander 60
 allegorical verses, see, Qur’an, allegorical
 verses
 allegor(y)(ies) 43, 124
 allusi(ons)(ve) (kināye) 21, 24, 65, 79-81,
 129, 131
 analog(y)(ies) (see also, parabolic analo-
 gies) 23, 59, 71, 91, 104, 107; branch-
 ing, 87; compound, 87; evlevî 117;
 false, 105, 126; misleading, 105
 angel(s) 13, 54-5, 70, 119; of the Moun-
 tains 55; of the Seas 55; Rain, 55
 Aquarius 56
 Arabia 123
 Arabian Peninsula 117, 123, 124
 Arabic 21, 25, 50, 74, 90; sciences of, 25;
 styles of, 43, 61, 64, 69
 Arab(s)(people) 14, 24, 25, 64, 73, 119;
 literary styles of, 68
 Armenia 33
 art 68, 76, 84, 88, 91, 101, 105, 113, 114,
 130
 Asia 36, 41, 43, 61
 Asrār al-Balāgha 75, 90
 astronomy 22
 atom(s) 22 fn 1, 97, 99, 105; indivisible,
 99
 Azerbaijan 33
 Bâtıniyyûn 30
 Baydāwī, tefsir of, 33
 beauty 34, 34, 40, 47, 67, 71, 74, 76, 78,
 79, 82-4, 90, 109; sheer, 30, 74
 Bektashi 21
 belâgat, see, rhetoric
 belief(s) 59, 60, 95, 96, 97; fundamentals
 of, 15; sphere of, 44, 55; tenets of, 49,
 54; truths of, 15; weakness of, 54
 biology 100
 books, the three, 19, 50, 88, 100, 103, 109
 botany 100
 brotherhood, Islamic, 37
 Bull, the, (Taurus) 54-7
 bürhan-ı innî (see also, proof) 95
 bürhan-ı limmî (see also, proof) 95
 Buşayri 76
 Carlyle 125
 cause(s) 69, 95, 101, 105; external, 55;
 natural, 99, 101; sphere of, 44, 55
 Chamus, the, 58
 chance 98, 99, 102
 chemistry 22, 81
 China, Wall of, 60
 Christians 38
 civilisation 14, 16, 41-3, 55, 60, 124, 127;
 European, 42; present day, 125; virtues
 of, 38, 43
 collective personality 122
 Columbus 22
 communication, means of, 42
 Companions (of Prophet UWBP) 119
 comparison(s) (temsil) 34
 conscience(s) 26, 26, 34, 38, 82, 83, 95,
 98, 101, 102, 111, 114, 115, 122, 125,
 126
 consensus 30, 38, 45, 53, 71, 131
 constitutional(ism) 27, 43
 consultation 27, 38, 125
 contingency (imkân) 99, 100, 101
 contingent beings 105, 105, 106, 107, 108,
 109
 creation 13, 21, 22, 32, 34, 39, 40, 46, 48,
 49, 56, 62, 96, 103, 123, 133, 134, 135;

laws of, 49; shari'a of, 32, 49, 53; tree of, 21, 56
 createdness (hudûth) 99, 100, 101, 102
 Dalā'il al-I'jāz 67, 75, 90
 David (UWP) 60
 deduction (inference) (istidlāl) (see also, reasoning, deductive) 20, 24, 130
 delil-i ihtira', see, proof of existence out of nothing
 delil-i inâyet, see, proof of divine providence
 despotism 16, 28, 37
 destiny 13
 deveran, see, juxtaposition
 Dhu'l-Qarnayn 60; barrier of, 42, 51, 59-63
 Divine Names:
 Allah 58
 Absolutely Wise and Just 40
 All-Glorious 14, 77
 All-Glorious Creator 108
 All-Wise Maker 40, 50, 98, 101, 134, 135
 Beneficent Maker 68
 Creator 78
 Eternally All-Wise 13
 (All-)Glorious Maker 20, 32, 95, 101, 105, 109, 130
 Lawgiver 34
 Lord 87, 91
 Lord of Dignity 78
 Lord of Glory 88
 Maker 20, 21, 56, 58, 87, 96, 97, 99, 101, 102, 104, 105, 106, 107, 109, 109, 114, 130
 (All-)Merciful and Compassionate 40, 135
 Merciful Creator 50
 Most Holy Existent 107
 Most Merciful 87, 91
 Most Pure and Holy 55, 106
 Necessarily Existent Maker 102
 Necessary Existent 105, 105, 108, 133
 Pre-Eternal All-Wise 109
 Pre-Eternal Compeller 109
 Pre-Eternal Inscriber 97
 Pre-Eternal Monarch 13, 20, 95, 133

Pre-Eternal Ruler 133
 Pre-Eternal Sovereign 13, 95
 Single Maker 20, 96
 True Orderer 130
 Undying Most-Merciful 13
 Wise 87
 divine (Maker's) art, 106; commands 40, 69, 78, 106; creation 105; determining 35; (necessary) existence 20, 96, 98, 109, 117, 130, 133; favour 28; justice 115; knowledge 105; mercy 64, 69, 134, 135; names 107; power 34, 50, 55, 65, 69, 101, 104, 105, 105, 106, 133; practices 47, 123; (pre-eternal) providence 116, 117, 135; (pre-eternal) speech 35, 124; throne 54, 55; unity 38, 96, 109; will 20, 40, 50, 69, 100, 105; wisdom 13, 20, 32, 40, 48, 56, 64, 70, 97, 99, 99, 106, 112, 115, 135; works 105, 106
 division of labour, (rule) (laws) of, 32, 33, 49
 doubt(s) 16, 24, 38, 47, 65, 114, 124, 128
 dreams, true, 58
 Earth, the (globe of,) 13, 19, 21, 30, 34, 50, 53, 55, 56, 56, 57, 58, 60, 61, 62-3, 64-5, 65, 68, 81, 91, 106, 108, 129, 130; sphericity of, 16, 47, 50, 51-4, 58, 66; rotation of, 69, 130
 education 16, 42
 element(s), (the), 21, 70-1, 81, 103, 130
 eloquence 26, 37, 57, 61, 64, 64, 65, 67, 68, 69, 71, 73, 74, 80, 81, 85, 86, 88, 91, 92, 128, 128, 129
 engineer(ing) 23, 30, 34, 65
 Era of Bliss 14, 61, 118, 119, 121, 127
 Era of Ignorance 24
 esoterists 30
 eternity 41, 63, 113, 114, 124, 127, 134
 ethics 23
 Europe 42, 61
 Europeans 16, 41
 evil(s) 30, 34, 37, 39-40, 105, 115
 evolution, the law of, 22

- exaggeration 34, 46-8
 existence (see also, divine existence) 40, 48, 56, 59, 61, 62, 66, 97, 99, 100, 103, 105, 105, 109, 112, 114, 126, 134, 135, 135; external, 46, 99, 103, 104
 experiment(ation) 22, 114, 124, 128
 externalist literalness 35

 faith (see also, belief), profession of, 87, 91, 95, 111; tenets of, 15
 (Fakhr al-Dīn) al-Rāzī 52
 Fakhr al-Islām 52
 farzū'l-kifāye 32
 fenn-i beyan (see also, science of figurative speech) 43
 figurative (language)(speech) (see also, science of figurative speech) 30, 61, 64, 67
 figure(s) of speech (mecaz) 29, 64, 70, 124
 fiqh (see also, jurisprudence) 30; principles of, 30
 Fish, the, (Pisces) 51, 54-7
 future, the, 14, 15, 16, 21, 36-9, 39, 40, 41, 51, 118, 121, 124, 126, 127, 129; predictions of, 132

 Galen 99
 geography 22, 32
 geology 100
 geometry, applied, 22
 German 125
 al-Ghazālī 34, 52
 Gog and Magog 59, 60, 61
 good(ness) 30, 34, 37, 39-40, 67, 92, 99, 109, 115, 116; universal, 65
 Gospels 25, 60
 grammar 84-5; philosophy of, 84; and syntax 85
 gravity 21, 56
 guidance 14, 21, 36, 38, 38, 43, 44, 47, 49, 59, 61, 64, 111, 115, 124, 128, 128, 129, 132

 hadd-i evsat 30 fn 2
 Hadith(s) 25, 26, 26, 35, 44, 45, 46, 54-6, 57, 63, 67; âhâd 54, 132; false, 29; mütevâtir 53, 131; sound, 29
 Hajj 34
 al-Ḥarīrī 74
 heart(s) 23, 26, 29, 36, 47, 53, 67, 71, 76, 80, 81, 83, 89, 92, 95, 98, 102, 111, 112, 122; inner, 34
 heavens 13, 19, 50, 56, 57, 58, 64
 heavenly (lofty, celestial, cosmic) bodies 21, 53, 54, 56, 62, 106
 Hell 32, 41, 51, 62-3
 hereafter, the, (see also, world, the next) 40, 64; world of, 63
 hikmet 20, 30, 37, 38, 63, 84
 Himalayas 58
 history 32, 50, 116, 119, 123, 131; natural, 87
 Hoca Tahsin 109
 Hoopoe of Solomon (UWP) 77
 human (beings) 40, 51, 64, 87, 102, 133, 135-6; inborn (innate) disposition 24, 39, 41, 101, 102, 113, 123, 124, 134; innate faculties (capabilities, propensities) 25, 40, 47, 49, 100, 113, 114, 114, 115; potentialities 40, 49, 98, 113, 114, 114, 122, 124, 127, 135
 human nature 120, 122
 humanity 22, 49, 61, 63, 99, 114, 117, 124
 (hu)man(kind) 13, 14, 19, 39-41, 50, 55, 56, 60, 63, 95, 99, 104-5, 107, 109, 112, 113, 114, 116, 124, 127, 133, 135
 Huns 61
 Ḥusayn al-Jisr 52

 Ibn 'Abbās 29, 54, 57
 Ibn al-Fāriḍ 83
 Ibn Humām 52
 Ibn Sīnā 22, 90
 İbrahim Hakkı Erzurumlu 52
 icma-i ümmet 27
 imagin(ation)(ings) 15, 26, 26, 28, 34, 34, 37, 43, 47, 48, 51, 53, 58, 64, 68, 75, 76, 76, 80, 81, 114, 126, 128
 imitation, blind, (taklid) 25, 26, 30, 38, 66
 independent judgement(s) (içtiḥad) 45, 60

induction 85, 99, 116, 117, 134, 135
 inductive, see, reasoning
 inference (see also, deduction) 86
 inner dimension of things (melekûtiyet)
 55, 107
 intellect (see also, reason) 36, 38, 76, 82,
 92, 98, 100, 106, 122
 intuition (hads) 92
 inversion (kalb) 68
 irhâsât 131
 irreligion 38,
 Ishârât al-I'jâz 19 fn 1
 Islam 13, 15, 16, 16, 20, 24, 25, 35, 36, 38,
 38, 41, 42, 43, 54, 67, 70, 95, 96, 125;
 apparent matters of, 16; progress of,
 47; reality of, 15, 38, 42; scholars of,
 16; supreme humanity 36, 38; truth(s)
 of, 35, 38, 39, 47, 126
 israiliyyat 15, 24-6, 49, 54, 57

 Japanese 19, 96, 133
 jinns 14
 jurisprudence (see also, *fiqh*) 30
 al-Jurjānī, ('Abd al-Qāhir) 67, 75, 90
 justice 20, 38, 89, 96, 114, 115, 119, 124,
 127, 130; absolute, 40
 juxtaposition(ing) (deveran) 75, 76, 84

 Ka'b 24
 Ka'ba, the, 53
 Kahriyat 22 fn 1
 kefne 81,
 kināya, see, allusion
 knowledge 16, 24, 29, 41, 49, 55, 77, 120;
 axiomatic, 16; certain, 54, 65; com-
 mon, 22; reasoned, 26; revealed, 26;
 sensory, 65; through external senses
 (ulûm-i âdiye) 66; transmitted (nakil),
 13, 25; true, 127
 knowledge of Allah (of Maker) (mârifet)
 (-ullah)(-i Sâni') 96, 98, 108, 111, 130
 Kurdish 70
 Kurdistan 71
 Kurds 26

Lake Van 65-6
 Last Day 60, 63
 Last Hour 45
 last times 61; signs of, 61, 62
 law(s) 31, 32, 56, 57, 84, 85, 92, 103, 113,
 115, 123, 130; divine (code of), 13, 20,
 48, 53, 69, 114, 127; of divine practice
 56, 99, 125; external, 84, 92; general,
 104; man-made (human), 114, 127;
 (divine) natural, (code of,) 20, 29, 88,
 101, 104, 122, 123; private, 117; pub-
 lic, 117; of science 124; theoretical,
 103; universal(al)ity of), 39, 99, 114,
 114, 116
 liberty 43, 117
 life 21, 25, 26, 28, 31, 41, 47, 57, 59, 64,
 75, 76, 77, 78, 87, 95, 98, 99, 116, 119,
 119, 132; eternal, 135; human, 64; suf-
 fusing, 107; universal, 87
 linguistic figures 64
 literalist(s) (see also, scholars, literalist)
 16, 30, 31, 46, 47, 47, 48, 54, 60, 64,
 65, 67, 69, 70, 88, 91
 logic 29, 30, 33, 60, 73
 Lot 60

 maânî-i ûlâ, see, meanings, primary
 Mafâtîh al-Ghayb 52
 Maktûbât-i Rabbânî 14 fn 1
 Ma'mun (Caliph) 25
 Manchurians 60
 Manifest World 57, 58, 103, 135
 Maqâmât 74
 Maqâsid 51
 materialists 23, 107, 108
 material(ity) 23, 66, 108
 Mathnawî 43,
 matter 102, 108; pre-eternity of, 101, 102
 Mawâqif 51
 Mawlânâ Jalâl al-Dîn Rûmî 43 fn 1
 meaning(s) 26, 26, 29-30, 38, 43-5, 57,
 60, 62, 71, 73-5, 77, 81-2, 83-4, 85-7,
 88, 91, 128; allusive, 43, 82; analogi-
 cal, 82; apparent (outward), 29-30, 44,
 68; associative, 43, 67; figurative, 85;

- inward, 44; literal, 21, 29, 82; moral, 44; mystical (anagogical), 44;
 necessary, 82; primary, 21, 43; of Qur'an 64; secondary, 21, 85, 91; significative, 84; suspended, 84, 85
 medicine 23, 30
 medreses 47, 49, 50
 metaphor(s) (see also, parabolic metaphor) 15, 21, 61, 64, 68, 124, 128; indicator (karine) of, 21, 68
 metaphysics 23
 metempsychosis 107, 108
 metonym(ical)(ies) 21, 43
 Mevlevi 53
 microcosm 135
 Middle Ages 16, 36
 Miftāh (al-'Ulūm) 68
 miracle(s) (see also, Prophet Muhammad UWPB) 34, 45, 48, 91, 105, 116, 117, 121
 misapprehension (evham, tevehhüm)(delusion, false notion) 15, 16, 16, 26, 35, 38, 38, 47, 66, 89, 99, 100, 102, 103, 104, 105, 111, 112, 115, 124, 126, 130, 133
 Molla Nasreddin Efendi 28
 Mongols 60, 61
 moon(s) 14, 30, 34; eclipse of, 30; the Splitting of, 34, 91, 132-3
 Moses, staff of, 88, 124; story of, 88, 91
 motion 21, 68-9, 87, 101,
 Mount Subhan 66, 70
 Muḍar(T) (tribe) 25 fn 1, 73
 Muhammad (UWPB) (see also, Prophet) 39
 Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn 'Arabī 57
 Musaylima 119
 Muslim(s) 24, 25, 31, 32, 35, 36, 39, 54, 96
 müstetbeât, see, meanings, associative
 mutation 100
 Mu'tazilites 44, 105
 Mütেকaddimîn (see also, scholars, earlier) 28
 nakliyat, see, knowledge
 Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī 90
 nation(s), (the), 15, 27, 24, 40, 74
 natural laws, code of, (şariat-ı fitriye) 32, 81, 103, 104
 Naturalists 105
 nature 88, 102, 103-4, 113
 New World, the, 22, 125
 Ninth Ray 136
 non-being 40
 non-existence 66, 69, 87, 99, 105, 135, 135
 non-Muslims 32, 36
 Nursi, Bediuzzaman Said, 15, 136
 observation 53, 70, 100, 133
 Old World, the, 22
 order 13, 20, 21, 34, 39, 47, 53, 54, 56, 63, 69, 70, 74, 78, 79, 83, 84, 87, 98, 99, 101, 102, 104, 106, 109, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 130, 134-5
 organism(s) 21, 99, 128
 ox 51,
 parable(s) 26, 43
 parabolic analogies (kıyas-ı temsiliye) 84, 105
 parabolic metaphor (istiare-i temsiliye) 76
 Paradise 41, 67, 68
 particle(s), (minute) (see also, atoms) 97, 102; motion of, 101, 102, 103
 past, the, 36-7, 50-1, 118, 121, 126, 132
 people (common, mass of), the, 21, 30, 36, 38, 42, 43, 57, 124, 128-9, 129, 130, 131; beliefs of, 130
 People of the Book, scholars of, 24
 Persian 28
 philosopher(s) 99, 102, 105, 123, 126; ancient, 107; theologians 55
 philosophy 24, 26, 63, 70, 71; ancient, 30, 56; Greek, 24, 25, 70, 71, 81; natural, 100
 Pisces, see, Fish
 planets 69
 Plato 99
 Pleiades 26, 107, 108

possibilit(y)(ies) (imkān) 65-6, 97
 prayers, obligatory, (see also, ṣalāt) 21
 progress 13, 16, 22, 28, 42, 47, 51, 107,
 114, 123, 128; law of, 32; material, 41
 proof(s) (būrhan) 16, 23, 34, 35, 37, 38,
 38, 45, 51, 66, 95, 96, 99, 116; of
 (Single) Maker 97, 111, 116, 130; of
 divine independence (tamānuʿ) 109; of
 Prophet 118; rational, 125
 proof (evidence) (dalīl) 37, 66, 70; of
 divine providence 99-101; of divine
 unity 109; of existence out of nothing
 100 ff, 103, 105-6; of Maker's exis-
 tence 96, 109, 117, 133; of Prophet's
 veracity 118-134
 Prophet (Muhammad UWBP) 14, 48, 56,
 57, 60, 61, 95, 96, 114, 117, 133, 134;
 ascension of, 14; high morals of, 118,
 119-21; messengership of, 13, 14;
 miracles of, 13-14, 39, 91, 121, 132-3;
 proof of the Maker 111, 117; prophet-
 hood of, 14, 112, 116, 117, 118, 120,
 121, 124, 133; time of, 38; veracity of,
 117, 118-134, 135
 Prophet Muhammad UWBP, titles of:
 Bringer of Good News and Warner 131
 Allah's Messenger 45, 95
 Glory of the World 13, 55
 Master of Medina the Illumined 111
 Messenger, the, 34, 132
 Most Noble Messenger 121, 123
 Muhammad Hashimi 124
 Prince of the Universe 13
 Truthful Prophet 40, 64
 Unlettered Prophet, the, 14
 prophethood 20, 87, 96, 112, 114, 116,
 117, 119, 130; proof(s) of, 26, 91, 111,
 112, 118, 121
 prophet(s) 14, 48, 60, 104, 114, 115, 116,
 117, 121; infallibility of, 60
 proposition 45-6, 60, 66, 89, 99; mental,
 92
 public opinion 26, 27, 115
 Qāf Mountain 51, 56-8

al-Qarāfī 56
 qibla 52-3
 Qur'an 14, 20, 21, 24, 25, 26, 33, 48,
 59-60, 61, 64, 67, 68, 70, 87, 91, 92,
 99, 100, 103, 106, 128, 136; aims of,
 20, 61, 96; allegorical verses of, 43-4,
 128-9; eloquence of, 21, 99, 128;
 (miraculous) inimitab(le)(ibility of,) 21,
 26, 61, 64, 71, 81, 128, 131, 135;
 literal meanings of, 128, 130; miracu-
 lousness of, 21, 26, 71, 133; oaths of,
 21; obscurities of, 44; styles of, 38,
 Qur'an, titles of:
 Book 71
 Clear Exposition, of 44
 Guiding, 21
 Inimitable, the 13, 134
 Miraculous 64
 Miraculous Exposition, of 21, 26, 43-4,
 135
 Perspicuous, 26, 130, 133, 134
 Allah's Word 21, 130
 Wise Book 43, 47
 Qur'an commentary (see also, tefsir) 19,
 27, 30, 31, 32-4; scholar of, 32
 Qur'anic exegesis 33, 62, 67
 rational demonstration 53
 realit(y)(ies) (hakikat) 13, 21, 21, 26, 29,
 30, 34, 37, 38, 59, 75, 77, 84, 88, 100,
 109; proof of, 111
 reason (intellect) (akl) 13, 19, 26, 36, 37,
 38, 38, 47, 66, 67, 78, 96, 99, 102, 104,
 105, 106, 112, 114, 114, 120, 122, 125,
 129, 135
 reason (illet) 62
 reasoning 89; inductive, 39, 40, 63, 70;
 deductive, 20, 21
 religion(s) 34, 47, 49, 54, 71, 126; aims
 of, 34; enemies of, 51, 67; false, 115;
 principles of, 90; truths of, 34
 repetition 88, 91
 resurrection(s) (of the dead) 63, 114, 130,
 134, 135, 135; bodily, 20, 96, 114,
 134, 135, 135; proof of, 111, 136

Revelation (see also, Qur'an) 64, 68;
 miraculousness of, 64
 rhetoric(al) 21, 30, 61, 64, 68, 74, 79, 84,
 88, 91, 92; Arabic, 71, 73-4, 81; rules
 of, 30; science of, 88
 rhetorical embellishment 86
 rhetorical magic (sihr-i beyanî) 75, 76
 right(s) 49, 76, 89; of existence 40; gen-
 eral, 36, 40
 Romantics School 76
 Rustam Zal 28

Saba' 77
 Sa'd (al-Dîn Taftazânî) 51
 Sa'dî Shirâzî 43
 saint(s) 60, 104, 109
 al-Sakkākî 68, 90
 ṣalāt (see also, prayers) 52-3; 'Ishā', 52
 al-Sayyid (al-Sharîf al-Jurjānî) 52, 90
 scepticism 38
 scholars 27, 125; authoritative, 25, 27, 39,
 56, 60, 96; earlier, 28; investigative,
 30, 51; Islamic, 25; of kalām 99; liter-
 alist, 24; reprehensible religious, 35
 science(s) 16, 20, 23, 30-1, 32, 33, 37,
 38, 38, 39, 50, 99, 100, 113, 116, 120,
 124, 126, 127, 128, 133, 134, 135; of
 anatomy 135; of badî' 92; of bayân 92;
 divine, 127; domestic, 125; empirical,
 16; of educating the conscience 125;
 false natural, 70; of figurative speech
 43, 56, 68, 84, 85; fundamental (high),
 50, 117; of heavens 50; instrumental,
 50, 90, 91; of international relations
 125; Islamic, 44; of kalām 99; legal,
 125; of local government 125; of
 ma'ânî 92; medrese, 50; modern, 30,
 31, 56, 62, 71; natural, 32, 63; physi-
 cal, 22, 23, 27, 99, 124, 128, 129; of
 physical training 125; precise, 14; of
 principles of religion 30; rational, 85;
 of refining the spirit 125; of training
 the heart 125; transmitted, 85; true, 20
 selef 28
 sense(s), external, 66, 69, 124, 129, 130

Shafi'i, Imam, 52-3
 (Illustrious) Shari'a 13, 16, 31, 32-4, 34-5,
 37, 42, 43, 49, 52, 55, 57, 71, 104, 114,
 115, 124-6, 127, 128, 129; aims of, 30;
 of Creation 32, 49; philosophy of, 30;
 scholar of, 32; truths of, 123
 Signs of Miraculousness 19 fn 1
 similes 29, 30, 75
 Sirhindî, Shaykh Aḥmad, 14 fn 1
 soothsayers 14
 Sophist(s) 31, 54, 65, 120, 122; way 54
 space 21, 50, 53, 56, 58, 63, 64, 132
 species 22 fn 1, 39, 99, 100-1, 103, 112,
 135, 135
 spirit(s) 50, 57, 122, 124, 127, 132
 stars 35, 53, 57, 81, 133
 Sublime Assembly 97, 98
 substances (cevher) 103
 suffusing divinity (ulûhiyet-i sâriye) 107
 Sufi(s) 107, 108; mystics, 107; verifiers of
 reality 57, 99, 107, 108
 Suha (star) 34
 sun 21, 30, 36, 38, 44, 47, 48, 51, 52, 55,
 61, 65, 68, 68, 69, 81, 86, 97, 105, 108,
 120, 123, 128, 130; rotation of, 129
 Sunna 24, 25, 71
 Sunnis 60, 62
 superstition(s) 25, 28, 29, 30, 30, 46
 syllogism 30 fn 2; hidden, 117

Taurus, see, Bull, Ox
 tefsîr (see also, Qur'an commentary) 19, 26
 tekâmül, see, evolution
 temsil, see, comparison
 tenkih-ül menât 117
 teşbih (see also, parable, simile) 26, 29, 30
 tevâtûr (tawâtûr) (see also, Hadith, müt-
 evâtîr) in meaning 45, 116
 theology 23
 three significations, the, (delâlât-ı selâse)
 33, 60
 time 26, 27, 30, 38, 50, 56, 113, 117, 118,
 121, 124, 126, 127, 129, 132, 135
 Torah 25, 60
 Trinity 38

truth(s) (hakk) 14, 16, 21, 21, 24, 26, 26,
28, 29, 33-4, 34, 36, 37, 38, 40, 47-8,
48, 49, 51, 56, 60, 67, 68, 68, 70, 73,
76, 85, 87, 88, 91, 92, 96, 97, 98, 100,
101-2, 112, 117, 122, 123, 124, 124,
129, 131; abstract, 128; external, 84,
92; literal, 67; people of, 39; proof of,
111; sheer, 23, 128

Turkish 90, 92

ulema 26, 120, 131

unity of existence 107-8

unity of witnessing 107, 108, 109

universe 20, 21, 24, 47, 56, 95, 97, 98, 99,
100, 103, 109, 112, 115, 130, 133, 134,
135, 135; book of, 20, 106; cause of,
104

unseen, the, 13

Wahb 24

wisdom (hikmet) 34, 36, 38, 39, 47, 48,
49, 50, 69, 85, 97, 98, 99-100, 100,
102, 114, 116, 134, 135

world, (this, the), 13, 16, 21, 38, 40, 63,
87, 113, 114, 115, 118, 126, 127; book
of, 68, 109, 118; end of, 62; the next,
(see also, hereafter) 13, 16, 40, 118,
127; rotations of, 135; truths of, 47

World of Similitudes 57, 58

World(s) of the Unseen 58, 95, 97, 111

Yasef 60

zâhiriyyûn 30

zakât 28, 42

Zakkum tree 63

al-Zamakhsharî 78, 90

Zoroastrians 105

INDEX OF QUR'ANIC VERSES AND HADITHS

This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt.

2:2 44

They ask you concerning the new moons. Say: they are but signs to mark fixed periods of time in [the affairs of] men.

2:189 56

Do not approach the prayers.

4:43 21

... fresh or dry.

6:59 103

Such is the judgement and ordering of [Him] the Exalted in Power, the Omniscient.

6:96, etc. 55

Then He established Himself on the Throne.

7:54, etc. 44

Truth has now come and falsehood has withered away.

17:81 44

Until when he reached the setting of the sun, he found it set in a spring of murky water.

18:86 44, 61, 64,

Between the two steep mountain-sides.

18:96 33

The Most Gracious on the throne of His almightiness.

20:5 128-9

Were there gods other than Allah in [the heavens and earth], both would have been spoiled.

21:22 109

But if a breath of your Sustainer's punishment touches them.

21:46 78

And He sends down from the sky mountains masses [of cloud] wherein is hail.

24:43 51, 68

And the sun runs its course.

36:38 44, 51, 69

The sun runs its course to its point of rest.

36:38 68, 68, 86

Who can give life to [dry] bones and decomposed ones [at that]?

36:78 78

We do come [together] in willing obedience.

41:11— 53, 81

The hand of Allah is over their hands.

48:10 44

Qāf: By the Glorious Qur'an.

50:1 56

And We have spread out the [spacious] earth: how excellently We do spread out!

51:48 64

And the moon split.

54:1 132

So turn your gaze, do you see any flaw.

67:3 99

Has there not been over man a long period of time, when he was nothing – [not even] mentioned?

76:1 83 fn 1

Crystal-clear, made of silver.

76:16 68

And We placed the mountains as pegs.

78:7 64

He has extended [to a wide expanse].

79:30 51

And the earth, moreover, hath He extended [to a wide expanse].

79:30 64

And at the earth, how it is spread out.

88:2 64

How it is spread out.

88:20 51

And your Lord comes.

89:22 44

Burnt soon will he be in a fire of blazing flame!

111:3 83 fn 1

“All the verses of the Qur’an have an inward and an outward meaning; and each of those have a moral and an anagogical or mystical meaning.” 44

“I and the Last Hour are as [close as] these two [fingers.]” 45

“I’m one of the signs of the last times. The end of the world and myself are as [close as] these two [fingers].” 71

“The fire of Hell is two hundred times fiercer than ours.” 63