

This, the Thirteenth Flash, explains the meaning of

“I seek refuge with God from Satan the Accursed”

This is about seeking refuge with God from Satan. Thirteen indications will be written. Some of them have been explained and proved in various places in the Twenty-Sixth Word and other parts of the Risale-i Nur so here will be discussed only briefly.

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

*And say: O My Sustainer, I seek refuge with You from the whisperings of the Evil Ones, And I seek refuge with you, my Sustainer, lest they should come near me. (23:97-8)*

#### FIRST INDICATION

**Q u e s t i o n :** Although evil spirits do not interfere in the universe in any way in regard to creation; and through His mercy and favour Almighty God takes the part of the people of truth; and the attractive beauties and virtues of truth and reality strengthen and encourage the people of truth, and the repulsive ugliness of misguidance revolts the people of misguidance; what is the reason for Satan’s party very often gaining the upper hand; what is the wisdom in it? And why should the people of truth always seek refuge with God from Satan’s evil?

**T h e A n s w e r :** The wisdom and purpose is this: for the most part, misguidance and evil are negative, destructive, and pertain to non-existence. While in the great majority of cases, guidance and good are positive, constructive, repairing, and pertain to existence. Everyone knows that one man can destroy in one day a building constructed by twenty men in twenty days. Yes, a person continues to live due to the existence of all the basic members and conditions of life, life being particular to the All-Glorious Creator’s power; yet, by severing a member a tyrant may make the person manifest death, which is non-being in relation to life. Therefore, the saying “Destruction is easy” has become proverbial.

In consequence, the people of misguidance sometimes triumph over the people of truth, who are very powerful, with what is in reality a weak force. But the people of truth possess a stronghold so

unassailable that when they take refuge in it, those fearsome enemies cannot draw close; they can do nothing. If they cause some temporary harm, according to the verse,

*And the end is best for the righteous, (7:128, etc.)*

everlasting reward and profit make up for the damage. That impregnable stronghold, that fortified citadel, is the Shari'a of Muhammad (UWBP) and his practices.

## SECOND INDICATION

**Q u e s t i o n :** The creation of devils, who are pure evil, and their harassing the people of belief, and many people not believing and going to Hell because of them, appears to be terrible and ugly. How does the mercy and beauty of the Absolutely Beauteous One, the Absolutely Compassionate One, the Truly Merciful One, permit this infinite ugliness and awesome calamity? Many people have asked about this question, and it occurs to many people.

**T h e A n s w e r :** In addition to the minor evils, there are numerous universal good purposes in the existence of Satan, and human attainments and perfections. Yes, however many the degrees from a seed to the huge tree, the degrees in the abilities lodged in human nature are more numerous. They range from a minute particle to the sun. For these abilities and potentialities to develop, action is required, a transaction is necessary. In such a transaction the action of the mechanism of progress is triggered through striving. And striving occurs due to the existence of evil spirits and harmful things. Otherwise man's station would have been constant like that of the angels; there would have been no classes in humankind, which resembles thousands of species. It is contrary to wisdom and justice to abandon a thousand instances of good so as to avoid one minor evil.

For sure the majority of people embrace misguidance due to Satan, but importance and value look mostly to quality; they look to quantity little or not at all. If someone has a thousand and ten seeds which he buries, and under the earth the seeds undergo a chemical reaction as a result of which ten become trees and a thousand rot, the profit the man receives from the ten seeds which have become trees certainly eliminates the loss he suffers from the thousand rotted ones. In exactly the same way, through the struggle against the soul and Satan, the

profit, honour, enlightenment, and value for humankind gained by ten perfect men, who are like stars, certainly reduce to nothing the harm caused to mankind through the people of misguidance embracing unbelief, who are so base as to be considered vermin. Since this is so, divine mercy, wisdom, and justice have permitted the existence of Satan, and allowed him to molest men.

O people of belief! Your armour against this awesome enemy is the fear of God fashioned on the workbench of the Qur'an, and your shield is the Noble Messenger's (UWBP) practices, and your weapon, seeking refuge with God from Satan, and seeking forgiveness, and taking refuge in divine protection.

### THIRD INDICATION

**Question:** The very great complaints and massing of forces against the people of misguidance in the All-Wise Qur'an does not appear to the reason to be conformable with its equitable and apt eloquence and the congruence and moderation of its style. It is quite simply as though it is mustering armies against a single man. It threatens him on account of one minor action as though he had committed thousands of crimes. It affords him a position and complains about him as though he were an aggressive partner, despite his being bankrupt and having no share of the property. What is the reason for this and the wisdom in it?

**The Answer:** The reason for it is this: because the evil spirits and those who follow them take the path of misguidance, they can cause great destruction with a small act, and they can violate the rights of many creatures and cause much harm with a small deed.

For example, by some small action or neglecting a small duty, a man on a king's large merchant ship can be the cause of all the efforts of those employed on it and all the fruits of their labour being lost and going for nothing. The illustrious owner of the ship therefore complains about and threatens the rebellious man in awesome fashion on account of all his subjects who are connected with the ship. And he inflicts a terrible punishment on him, taking into account not his insignificant action but its dreadful results, not in his own name but in that of the rights of his subjects.

In exactly the same way, through their apparently insignificant mistakes and sins, the people of misguidance, Satan's party, who are on the ship of the earth together with the people of guidance, transgress against the rights of numerous creatures and nullify the results of their elevated duties. The Monarch of Pre-Eternity and Post-Eternity's awesome threats and complaints about them, therefore, and His mobilization of forces against them are pure wisdom within perfect eloquence, and are most apt and appropriate.

It is in conformity with the requirements of the situation, which is the definition of eloquence and its basis. And it is free of exaggeration, which is wastefulness in words.

It is clear that the person will be wretched who does not take refuge in a secure stronghold in the face of terrible enemies who wreak much destruction with little action. O people of belief! Such a heavenly stronghold of steel is the Qur'an. Enter it and be saved!

#### **FOURTH INDICATION**

Investigative scholars and the people of illumination have agreed that non-existence is pure evil and existence, pure good. Yes, in the great majority of cases, good, virtues, and perfections are based on existence and are related to it. Even if they are superficially negative and hint of non-existence, their basis is in existence and pertains to it. While the basis and leaven of all ugliness, such as misguidance, evil, calamities, and sins, is non-existence and denial. Their badness and ugliness arise from non-existence. Even if they appear superficially to be positive and pertaining to existence, essentially they are non-existence and denial. Also, observedly, the existence of something like a building is realized through the existence of all its parts. While its destruction, non-existence, and annihilation occur through the non-being of one of its main parts. Furthermore, existence requires an existent cause, it is based on a cause that has an actual reality. Whereas non-existence may be based on things which pertain to non-existence. Such things may be the cause of something non-existent.

In consequence of this rule, despite the awesome destruction in the universe of devils from among jinn and men, and the varieties of unbelief, misguidance, evil, and destruction they perpetrate, they neither interfere one iota in creation, nor do they have any share in

divine sovereignty. Moreover, they do not perform those acts through any power or ability; they perpetrate many of the things they do through neglect and abstaining from action. They commit evils by not allowing good to be done, that is, they become evil. For since bad and evil are a sort of destruction, their causes do not have to be an existent power and active creativity. Indeed, vast destruction is wrought due to one non-existent matter or one condition being nullified.

It was because the Zoroastrians did not develop this mystery that they believed there was a creator of good in the universe, called Yazdan, and a creator of evil, called Ahriman. However, the imaginary god of evil they called Ahriman was Satan, who causes evil through the power of choice and the power to act, which has no ability to create.

O people of belief! Your most effective weapon and equipment for repairs in the face of this awesome destruction of Satan is seeking forgiveness from God, and declaring "I seek refuge with God," to have recourse to Him. And your stronghold is the Prophet's (UWBP) practices.

## **FIFTH INDICATION**

In the revealed scriptures Almighty God points out to mankind great rewards like Paradise and terrible punishments like Hell, and He gives guidance, many admonishments and reminders, and threats and encouragement. But despite there being so many means guiding the people of belief to the straight path, they are defeated in the face of the feeble, unrewarding, repellent stratagems of Satan's party. At one time this caused me much thought. How is it, I wondered, that although they believe, they disregard Almighty God's severe threats? Why isn't their belief enough? They are carried away by Satan's baseless wiles and rebel against God, although according to the verse, "Feeble indeed is the cunning of Satan." (4:76) Some of my own friends, even, although they sincerely affirmed the teachings about reality they had heard from me a hundred times and had an excessively good opinion of me and relations with me, they were carried away by the trite and hypocritical compliments of a corrupt person, and took up a position in favour of him and against me. "Glory be to God!," I exclaimed, "How can a person fall so low? What a deceitful man he was." I slandered him and committed a sin.

Later, the truth explained in the previous Indications became clear and illuminated many obscure points. Thanks be to God, through its light I understood both that the All-Wise Qur'an's powerful encouragement and assurances are completely in place, and that the people of belief being deceived by Satanic machinations is not due to a lack of belief or weakness of faith. I understood too that someone who commits grievous sins is not an unbeliever, and that the Mu'tazilites and some Kharijite sects are in error by stating: "The person who commits a grievous sin is either in a state of unbelief or is between belief and unbelief," and that that unfortunate friend of mine sacrificing a hundred lessons in reality to win the attentions of such a scoundrel was not despicable abasement and degeneration; I thanked Almighty God and was saved from the abyss. For as I said before, Satan pushes man into serious peril because of some insignificant matter that in reality lacks existence. Moreover, man's soul always listens to Satan; and his powers of anger and animal appetites are like both receivers and transmitters of Satan's whisperings.

It is in consequence of this that Almighty God's names of Oft-Forgiving and All-Compassionate are turned to the people of belief with a maximum manifestation, and He points out in the All-Wise Qur'an that the greatest gift He bestows on the prophets is forgiveness and He calls on them to seek forgiveness. Repeating the blessed words, "In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate" at the start of every Sura and commanding that it be recited at the commencement of all good works, He shows that His all-encompassing mercy embraces the universe and is a stronghold and place of refuge. And by the command, "Seek refuge with God,"(7:200, etc.) He makes a shield of the phrase, "I seek refuge with God from Satan the Accursed."

## **SIXTH INDICATION**

One of Satan's most dangerous stratagems is this: he makes certain sensitive and ingenuous people confuse imagining unbelief with affirming it. He shows the imagining of misguidance to be the affirmation of it. He also conjures up in their imaginations ugly thoughts about holy individuals and sacred things. He shows also things which are essentially possible together with those that are reasonably possible, thus making those things appear to be doubts

opposed to the certainty of belief. Then the wretched sensitive man supposes that he has fallen into misguidance and unbelief, and that his certainty of belief has been lost; he falls into despair and becomes the plaything of Satan. Satan works both his despair, and that weak vein of his, and his confusion, so that he either goes mad, or exclaiming: "All is lost," embraces misguidance. We have explained in some parts of the Risale-i Nur just how lacking in substance are these diabolical stratagems, so here shall discuss them only briefly, as follows:

Just as a snake's image in a mirror cannot bite, nor the similitude of fire burn, or the reflection of filth soil; so the reflections of unbelief and association of partners with God cannot corrupt belief nor the shadows of misguidance, or the imaginings of ugly abuse and words in the mirror of the imagination or of thought change faith, or damage respectful courtesy. For the well-known rule goes, "To imagine abuse is not abuse, to imagine unbelief is not unbelief, and to conceive of misguidance is not misguidance."

As for the question of doubts in belief, possibilities that are essentially possible do not belie the certainty of belief and do not harm it. One of the established rules of the science of the principles of religion is: "An essential impossibility cannot negate the certainty afforded by knowledge." <sup>1</sup> For example, we are certain that Barla Lake is in its place consisting of water. It is, however, essentially possible that this very moment the lake sank into the ground. It is within the bounds of possibility that it might sink. But since there is nothing to indicate such a possibility, it is not a reasonable possibility and cause doubt. For another established rule of the principles of religion is: "A possibility that does not arise from any proof or evidence holds no importance." That is, an essential possibility unsupported by any indication cannot be deemed a reasonable possibility and so cause doubts and warrant importance.

Hence, the unfortunate man exposed to those Satanic whisperings supposes that due to essential possibilities he has lost his certain belief in the truths of faith. For example, numerous essential possibilities about the human aspects of the Noble Messenger (Upon whom be blessings and peace) may occur to him which cause no harm to his firm belief, but he imagines that they have and so suffers harm.

Also, sometimes Satan suggests bad things about Almighty God in the form of whisperings in the heart. The man trembles, supposing that

his heart is corrupted so that it says such things. But his fear and trembling and lack of consent shows that those words did not come from his heart; they rather came from Satanic whisperings, and were imparted and caused to be imagined by Satan.

Also, among man's subtle faculties are one or two that I have been unable to specify; they do not heed the will and power of choice and probably should not be held responsible. Sometimes they govern, do not listen to the truth, and incline towards wrong. Then Satan whispers to the man: "You're not capable of attaining to reality and belief, so you involuntarily attempt what is futile and fruitless. That means your fate has condemned you to perdition." The wretched man falls into despair and is ruined.

The believer's stronghold in the face of the former stratagems of Satan are the truths of belief and incontestable matters of the Qur'an, the limits of which have been defined by the principles of the purified exacting scholars. And in the face of the latter stratagems, the believer's stronghold is to seek refuge with God and to attach no importance to them. For the more importance is given them, the more it attracts attention to them, and they grow and swell. The believer's antidote and remedy for such spiritual wounds is adhering to the practices of the Prophet (UWBP).

## SEVENTH INDICATION

*Question:* The Mu'tazilite authorities considered the creation of evil to be evil, and therefore did not attribute the creation of unbelief and misguidance to God, as if by so doing they were exonerating Him. They misguidedly said: "Man creates his own actions." They also said: "A believer who commits a grievous sin loses his belief, for believing in God and affirming Hell is incompatible with such acts. Out of fear at a minor prison sentence in this world, a man restrains himself from acting contrarily to the law, so if he commits serious sins, which infers disregard of divine wrath, it certainly points to his lack of belief."

**The Answer** to the first part of the question: as is elucidated in the treatise on divine determining, <sup>3</sup> the creation of evil is not evil; it is the inclination to do evil that is evil. For creation and bringing into being look to all the results. Since the existence of one evil is



preliminary to numerous good results, by virtue of those results, the creation of the evil becomes good, and is as though good. For example, fire has a hundred good results, but if because they misuse their wills people make the fire evil for themselves, they cannot say that the creation of evil is evil. In the same way, the creation of devils has numerous wise results such as human progress; so if a person is defeated by Satan due to his misuse of his will and misguided inclinations, he cannot say that the creation of Satan is evil. For he did evil to himself because he was himself disposed to it.

Yes, since the tendency is a particular relation, it has a particular evil result and becomes evil. But since creation looks to all the results, the creation of evil is not evil; it is good. The Mu'tazilites did not understand this mystery, so they said: "The creation of evil is evil, and the creation of bad, bad." And to exonerate Almighty God of all fault, they did not ascribe the creation of evil to Him; they fell into misguidance, wrongly interpreting the pillar of belief "belief in divine determining, both the good of it and the evil of it are from God."

**The Answer to the second part of the question** "How can someone who commits grievous sins remain a believer?": Firstly, their error may be understood clearly from the previous Indications, so there is no need to repeat it. Secondly, the man's evil-commanding soul prefers an ounce of immediate, present pleasure to a ton of postponed, hidden pleasure; similarly, he shrinks at the fear of an immediate slap more than at a year's torment in the future. Furthermore, if the emotions dominate a person, they do not heed the reason and mind. Desires and delusions govern in him, and he prefers the slightest, most trivial present pleasure to huge reward in the future, and he shrinks from some minor present distress more than from some terrible postponed torment. For desire, illusions, and emotions do not see the future, indeed, they deny it. And if the soul assists them, the heart, which is the seat of belief, and the mind, fall silent and are defeated. In which case, committing grievous sins does not arise from lack of belief, but from the defeat of the heart and mind by the predominant emotions, desires, and illusions.

Moreover, as is understood from the previous Indications, since the way the passions and evil work is through destruction, they are extremely easy. Satans from among jinn and men quickly drive people down that road. It is an astonishing situation, for according to a Hadith, a light to the extent of a fly's wing from the World of Eternity

is comparable to the pleasure and bounties a person receives in his entire life in this world, yet following Satan, certain unfortunates prefer the pleasures of this fleeting world, which are a mere fly's wing in comparison with the pleasures of that eternal world, which are worth all this world.

It is for these reasons that the All-Wise Qur'an repeatedly and insistently, and with encouragement and threats, restrains believers from sin and urges them to do good.

One time this severe guidance of the All-Wise Qur'an gave me the idea that these continual warnings and reminders imply that believers are inconstant and faulty. They suggest a situation inconsistent with man's integrity.

For although a single order from his superior is sufficient to exact an official's obedience, if the superior repeats the same order ten times, the official will be seriously offended. He will say: "You are insulting me. I am not disloyal." However, the All-Wise Qur'an insistently repeats the same command to the most sincere believers.

At the time I was puzzling over this idea, I had two or three loyal friends. I frequently used to warn and remind them lest they be deceived by the machinations of satanic humans. They were not offended at me, nor said I was insulting them. However I used to tell myself that I was offending them with these continual admonitions and that I was accusing them of disloyalty and inconstancy. Then suddenly the truth explained and proved in the above Indications became clear. I understood that the All-Wise Qur'an's insistent repetitions were apt and exactly as required by the situation, and wise and not excessive or accusing; they were pure wisdom and pure eloquence. I understood too the reason those loyal friends of mine were not offended. A summary of the truth is this:

Since evil spirits provoke people in respect of destruction, they commit much evil with few actions. People who take the path of truth and guidance, therefore, are in need of much caution and great care and repeated warnings and various assistance. For this reason Almighty God offers assistance to the people of belief through His thousand and one names by way of those repetitions, and stretches out thousands of compassionate hands to help them. He does not slight their integrity, but upholds it. He does not belittle man, but shows Satan's evil to be great.

O people of truth and people of guidance! The way to be saved from the above-mentioned wiles of satanic jinn and men is this: make your headquarters the school of the people of the truth, the Sunnis; enter the stronghold of the Qur'an of Miraculous Exposition's incontestable matters; and take the Prophet's (UWBP) practices as your guide; find safety and salvation!

## **EIGHTH INDICATION**

***Question:*** You have proved in the above Indications that the way of misguidance is easy, and is destruction and aggression, so that many take it. Whereas in other parts of the Risale-i Nur you have proved decisively that the way of unbelief and misguidance is so fraught with difficulties and problems that no one should take it; that it is not possible to follow it. And you have shown that the path of belief and guidance is so easy and clear that everyone should take it.

**The Answer:** There are two sorts of unbelief and misguidance. One pertains to actions and secondary matters, and is also denial and rejection of the matters of belief. This kind of misguidance is easy. It is a non-acceptance of the truth, an abdication, non-existence, and the absence of acceptance. In the Risale-i Nur, this sort has been shown to be easy.

As for the second sort, it pertains not to actions and secondary matters, but is a judgement of the mind and pertains to belief. It does not only deny belief, but opens up a way that is the opposite of it. It is the acceptance of what is false and invalid, the proof of the reverse of truth. This is not only the denial and refutation of belief, it is its opposite. It is not non-acceptance so that it should be easy, but the acceptance of non-being, and can only be accepted through proving non-existence. In accordance with the rule "Non-existence cannot be proved," it is certainly not easy to prove it.

Thus, the unbelief and misguidance shown in other parts of the Risale-i Nur to be so difficult and problematic as to be impossible is this sort. Anyone with even a grain of intelligence would not take this way. Moreover, as is demonstrated, it imparts such grievous pains and suffocating darkness that anyone reasonable to the tiniest degree would not follow it.

***If it is asked:*** Why do most people take it, seeing that it is so grievous, dark, and difficult?

**The Answer :** They have fallen into it and cannot extricate themselves. And because the animal and vegetable powers in man do not see the consequences and do not think of them, and come to dominate man's subtle faculties, such people do not want to extricate themselves, so console themselves with immediate, temporary pleasure.

***Question :*** Since misguidance gives rise to such dreadful suffering and fear, the unbeliever should not be able to live, let alone receiving pleasure from life. He should be crushed by the pain and be absolutely terrified. For although by reason of his humanity he desires innumerable things and loves life, because of his unbelief, he constantly sees death confronting him as eternal extinction and everlasting separation, and the passing of beings and deaths of his friends and those he loves as annihilation and eternal parting, so how can such a man live? How can he receive pleasure from life?

**The Answer :** He deceives himself through an extraordinary sophistry of Satan, and lives. He supposes he receives a superficial pleasure. We shall allude to the true nature of this with a well-known comparison.

It is related that they said to the ostrich: "You've got wings, so fly!" But it folded its wings and said: "I'm a camel," and didn't fly. So it fell into the hunter's trap, and not wanting the hunter to see it, stuck its head in the sand. However, it left its huge body exposed, as prey for the hunter. They later said to it: "You say you're a camel, so you should carry loads." Whereupon it opened its wings and declared: "I'm a bird," and so avoided being a beast of burden. But then it had neither protector nor food, and was pursued by the hunters.

In exactly the same way, the unbeliever gave up absolute disbelief in the face of the Qur'an's heavenly proclamations and fell into scepticism. If he is asked: "You think death is eternal extinction. How can a person live when he perpetually sees before him the gallows on which he is to be hanged? How can he be happy?" Thanks to the portion he has received of the Qur'an's universal mercy and all-encompassing light, the man replies: "Death doesn't mean going to nothingness; perhaps there is life after death." Or else he plunges his head in the sand of heedlessness like the ostrich so that the appointed

hour will not spot him and the grave will not watch him and the transience of things will not let fly their arrows at him!

**I n S h o r t :** When like the ostrich the unbeliever looks on death and decline as extinction, his scepticism makes him consider possible the certain tidings of the Qur'an and revealed scriptures concerning belief in the hereafter afford him a possibility. He grasps the possibility and does not suffer that ghastly pain. If he is then told: "Since one will go to an everlasting realm, to have a good life there, here one has to put up with the difficulties of performing the religious obligations," his scepticism leads him to reply: "Perhaps there is no such world, so why should I work for something that doesn't exist?" That is to say, he is saved from the pain of eternal nothingness by the possibility of immortality afforded by that decree of the Qur'an, and clinging onto the possibility of unbelief, he is saved from the hardship of the religious obligations by the possibility of non-existence afforded by his scepticism. That is to say, from this point of view, he supposes he receives more pleasure from this life than the believers, for due to the possibility afforded by unbelief he is saved from the hardship of the religious obligations, and due to the possibility afforded by belief, he does not expose himself to everlasting pains. However, this satanic sophistry is extremely superficial, temporary, and without benefit.

Thus, the All-Wise Qur'an produces a sort of manifestation of mercy for the unbelievers too that to an extent saves their lives in this world from being Hell; it induces doubt in them, so they live through doubt. Otherwise, by recalling the Hell of the hereafter they would have suffered the torments of a sort of Hell in this world too, and they would have been compelled to commit suicide.

O people of belief! Fully confident in your belief enter under the protection of the Qur'an, which will save you from eternal extinction and the hells of this world and the hereafter. Submissively and appreciatively remain within the bounds of the Prophet's (UWBP) practices, and so be saved from both misery in this world and torment in the next!

#### **NINTH INDICATION**

**Q u e s t i o n :** Why is it that the people of guidance, who are God's party, are so often defeated by the people of misguidance, who are Satan's party, despite the Glory of the World (Upon whom be blessings and peace) being at their head and their receiving so much divine

mercy and assistance and so many favours? What was the reason for the dissemblers of Medina insisting on misguidance and their not embracing guidance, despite being close to the brilliant sun-like prophethood and messengerhood of the Seal of the Prophets (UWBP) and the Qur'anic truths, which are more captivating than the universal laws of attraction?

**The Answer:** To solve the two parts of this awesome question, a profound principle must be explained. It is like this:

The All-Glorious Creator of the universe has two sort of names, those pertaining to His glory and those pertaining to His beauty. Since the names require to demonstrate their decrees through different manifestations, the Glorious Creator blended together opposites in the universe. Bringing them face to face, he gave them aggressive and defensive positions, in the form of a wise and beneficial contest. Making the opposites transgress one another's bounds, He brought conflict and change into being, and made the universe subject to the law of change and transformation and the principles of progress and advancement. In humankind, the comprehensive fruit of the tree of creation, he gave the law of contest an even stranger form, and opening the door to striving, which would be the means to all human progress, He gave Satan's party certain faculties with which to challenge God's party.

It is because of this subtle mystery that the prophets were often defeated by the people of misguidance. And the people of misguidance, who are extremely weak and impotent, temporarily triumph over the people of truth, who in reality are extremely strong, and struggle against them. The wisdom in this strange opposition is as follows:

Misguidance and unbelief comprise both non-existence and omission, so that they are extremely easy and do not require action. They also give rise to destruction, which is also easy, and need little action. They are also a source of aggression, which may cause much harm to many with little action, and by way of intimidating others and satisfying the soul's desire for power, may secure rank and position for a person. There is also freedom in misguidance and unbelief, which gratifies man's vegetable and animal powers, which are blind to consequences and obsessed by present pleasure, and induces such subtle faculties as the heart and reason to give up their humane and far-sighted duties.

However, the sacred way of foremost the Noble Messenger (Upon whom be blessings and peace), the Beloved of the Sustainer of All the Worlds, and of the people of prophethood and the people of guidance, both pertains to existence, and is firmly established, and is constructive, and is based on the important principles of action, moderation, prudence and foresight, worship, and smashing the domination and independence of the evil-commanding soul. It is because of this that the dissemblers of the Prophet's (UWBP) time in Medina closed their eyes to that refulgent sun like bats, and surrendering themselves to a satanic force of repulsion in the face of that huge attraction, remained in misguidance.

*If it is said:* The Noble Messenger (Upon whom be blessings and peace) was the Beloved of the Sustainer of All the Worlds; and he held truth in his hand and spoke the truth with his tongue; and among the soldiers of his army were angels; and he watered a whole army with one handful of water; and provided a feast for a thousand men with four handfuls of wheat and the meat of one kid; and caused the unbelievers' army to flee by throwing a handful of dust at them, which entered all their eyes; so how was that dominical commander who performed a thousand miracles similar to these, defeated at the end of Uhud and at the beginning of Hunayn?

**The Answer :** God's Noble Messenger (Upon whom be blessings and peace) was sent to mankind as an exemplary guide and leader so that men might learn from him the rules of social and personal life, become accustomed to obeying the laws of the All-Wise One of Perfection, and act in conformity with the principles of His wisdom. If the Messenger (Upon whom be blessings and peace) had always relied on wonders and miracles, he could not have been absolute guide and leader.

He therefore displayed miracles from time to time, in answer to need, solely to make them affirm his claim to prophethood and to nullify the unbelievers' denial. At other times he obeyed the divine commands more than anyone, and more than everyone acted in conformity with the divine laws in creation, established through dominical wisdom and will, and submitted to them. He used to wear armour when confronting the enemy, and would order his troops to enter their trenches. He received wounds and suffered hardship. In this way he obeyed and observed to the letter the laws of divine wisdom and the Greater Shari'a of Creation.

## TENTH INDICATION

One of the most cunning of Iblis's wiles is to make those who follow him deny himself. Since at this time people whose minds have been tainted by materialist philosophy in particular have been hesitant in these self-evident matters, we shall say one or two things in the face of this stratagem of Satan. They are as follows:

There are self-evidently corporeal evil spirits who perform Satan's functions. It is also certain to the same degree that there are evil spirits without bodies from the jinns. If they were clothed in physical bodies, they would be the same as those evil human beings. Also, if those evil spirits in human form were able to leave aside their bodies, they would be those jinn-satans. Indeed, in consequence of this terrible relationship one deviant school pronounced: "After they have died, excessively evil spirits in human form become devils."

It is well-known that when something of high quality is corrupted it becomes more corrupted than something of less quality. For example, if yoghurt and milk go bad they may still be eaten, but if oil goes bad it becomes inedible, and poisonous even. Similarly, if the most noble, indeed the highest of creatures, man, is corrupted, he becomes more corrupt than a depraved animal. Like vermin who enjoy the stink of putrifying matter and snakes who take pleasure at biting and poisoning, they take pride and pleasure at the evils and wicked immorality of the swamp of misguidance, being gratified at the harms and crimes of the darkness of evil-doing; quite simply they take on the nature of Satan. Yes, a decisive indication of the existence of devils from the jinn, is the existence of human satans.

***Secondly:*** All the hundreds of decisive evidences proving the existence of angels and spirit beings in the Twenty-Ninth Word prove also the existence of evils spirits. We refer this aspect to that Word.

***Thirdly:*** The existence of the angels, the representatives and supervisors of the laws of the good matters in the universe, is established and agreed upon by all the religions. So too, the existence of evil and satanic spirits, who are the representatives and ushers of evil matters and the means of the laws of such matters, is required by wisdom and reality, and is certain. Indeed, in evil matters, a conscious screen is more necessary. For as is stated at the beginning of the Twenty-Second Word, since everyone cannot see the true good of



everything, the All-Glorious Creator has made apparent intermediaries a screen to apparent evils and defects, so that objections should not be levelled at Him, nor His mercy be accused, nor his wisdom criticized or unjustly complained about, and so that objections, criticisms, and complaints should be directed at the screen, and not turned to the Generous Creator, the Absolutely Wise One. Just as He made illness a screen to the appointed hour of death in order to save Azra'il from the complaints of His servants who die, so too He made Azra'il a screen to the seizing of the spirits of the dying so that the complaints at that situation, which is fancied to be lacking in compassion, should not be directed at Almighty God. And even more certainly, dominical wisdom demanded the existence of Satan, so that objections and criticisms in the face of evils and bad things should not be directed at the All-Glorious Creator.

Fourthly: Just as man is a small world, the microcosm, so is the world a large human being, the macroanthropos. Small man is an index and summary of the macroanthropos. The large originals of the samples in man will necessarily be found in the macroanthropos. For example, the existence of man's faculty of memory is a certain indication of the existence of the Preserved Tablet in the world. So too everyone has experienced in himself the inner faculty situated in a corner of the heart which is the means to diabolical suggestions <sup>2</sup> and temptations and is a satanic tongue that speaks at the promptings of the surmising faculty and the corrupted power of imagination, which becomes like a small Satan and acts contrary to its owner's will and opposed to his desires – these are certain evidences of the existence of great satans in the world. And since the inner faculty which is the means of diabolical suggestions and the power of imagination are an ear and a tongue, they infer the existence of an external evil individual who blows on the one and makes the other speak.

## **ELEVENTH INDICATION**

The All-Wise Qur'an states in miraculous fashion that the universe grows angry at the evil of the people of misguidance, and the universal elements becomes wrathful and beings, furious. Awesomely, it depicts the storm visited on Noah's people and the assaults of the heavens and earth, the anger of the element air at the denial of the 'Ad and Thamud peoples, and the fury of the sea and element water at the people of

Pharaoh, and the rage of the element earth at Qarun, and in accordance with the verse, “Almost bursting with fury,”(67:8) the vehemence and anger of Hell at the people of unbelief in the hereafter, and the rage of the other beings at the unbelievers and people of misguidance; in miraculous fashion it restrains the people of misguidance and rebellion.

**Q u e s t i o n :** Why do the unimportant actions and personal sins of unimportant men attract the anger of the universe in this way?

**T h e A n s w e r :** As proved in other parts of the Risale-i Nur and in the previous Indications, unbelief and misguidance are terrible aggression and crimes that concern all beings. For one of the most important results of the universe’s creation is man’s worship and his responding to divine dominicality with belief and submission. However, due to the denial which is a part of disbelief, the people of unbelief and misguidance reject that supreme result, which is the ultimate reason for the continued existence of beings, and they therefore perpetrate a sort of transgression against the beings’ rights. Moreover, since they deny the manifestations of the divine names which are apparent in the mirrors of beings and exalt their value, they both insult those sacred names, and by degrading the value of all beings, greatly depreciate them. Also, although beings are dominical officials charged with elevated duties, by their unbelief, the people of misguidance cast them down, and showing them to be lifeless, transitory, meaningless creatures, they in a way violate the rights of all of them.

Thus, since the varieties of misguidance impair to a greater or lesser extent the dominical wisdom in the universe’s creation and the divine purposes in the world’s continued existence, the universe becomes angry at the people of rebellion and misguidance, as do all beings and creatures.

O wretched man, whose being is small but guilt great and sin grievous! If you want to be delivered from the wrath of the universe, the rage of beings, and the aversion of creatures, here is the means: enter the sacred bounds of the All-Wise Qur’an and follow the practices of God’s Noble Messenger (Upon whom be blessings and peace), who was the herald of the Qur’an. So put yourself within its fold and adhere to the practices!

## TWELFTH INDICATION

This consists of four questions and answers.

***First Question:*** How can infinite torment in an endless Hell in return for limited sins in a limited life be justice?

***The Answer:*** It was understood clearly in the above Indications, and particularly in the Eleventh, that unbelief and misguidance constitute an infinite crime and are transgression against innumerable rights.

***Second Question:*** It is said in the Shari'a that Hell is punishment for actions, but Paradise is a divine favour. <sup>1</sup> What is the reason for this?

***The Answer:*** It is clearly shown in the above Indications that with his faculty of will and trifling wishes, man causes awesome destruction and evils by giving form and reality to something non-existent or theoretical. Similarly, since his soul and appetites always incline towards evil and harm, he is responsible for the evils that occur as a result of his trivial wishes. For his soul wanted them and his desires gave rise to them. And since evil pertains to non-existence, the servant is the agent and Almighty God creates it. Being responsible for the infinite crime, he certainly deserves infinite punishment.

However, since good deeds and actions pertain to existence, man's will and wishes cannot be the direct cause of their existence. Man cannot be the true agent in such acts. Also, his evil-commanding soul does not tend towards good deeds; it is divine mercy that requires them and dominical power that creates them. Man can only lay claim to them through belief, a wish, or an intention. And having claimed them, such good works consist of thanks for the infinite divine bounties received, such as the gifts of belief and existence. Such thanks looks to past bounties, while Paradise is a favour of the Most Merciful which since it has been promised by Him will be given. Apparently it is a reward, but in reality it is a favour.

That is to say, in evils the soul is the cause and deserves the punishment, while in good deeds, both the cause and the occasion are from God. Man can only lay claim to them through belief. He may not say: "I want the reward," but he may say: "I hope for divine favour."

***Third Question:*** It is understood from the above explanations that since evils multiply through contagion and aggression, a single

evil deed should be recorded as a thousand; and since good deeds pertain to existence, they do not multiply nor do they occur through the servant's creative act or the desires of his soul; they therefore should not be recorded at all or as only one. So why are evil deeds recorded as one and good deeds as ten, and sometimes as thousands?

**The Answer :** In this way Almighty God demonstrates His perfect mercy and the beauty of His compassionateness.

**Fourth Question :** The successes the people of misguidance have achieved and the power they display and their victories over the people of guidance show that they rely on some power and truth. This means either that the people of guidance possess some weakness, or that the misguided possess some truth?

**The Answer :** God forbid, neither do they possess any truth, nor do the people of truth have any weakness. But regrettably some of the ordinary people who are short-sighted and unreasoning become doubtful and hesitant, and harm comes to their belief. For they say: If the people of truth had possessed complete truth and reality, they should not have suffered defeat and abasement to this degree. For the truth is powerful. According to the fundamental principle "Truth is exalted and shall not be overcome," power lies in truth. If the people of misguidance had not possessed a true power and point of support, they could not have predominated over the people of truth and triumphed to this extent.

**The Answer :** As is proven in the above Indications, the defeat of the people of truth does not arise from lack of power and absence of truth, and as is also proven, the people of misguidance's victory does not spring from their power and capacity and their having some source of support. Hence, the answer to this question is all the above Indications; here we shall only point out a number of the tricks and weapons they employ, as follows:

I myself have frequently observed that mischief-makers, who form ten per cent, defeat the righteous, who form ninety per cent. I used to be astonished and curious. Investigating, I understood certainly that their victory results not from power, but from corruption, baseness, destruction, taking advantage of differences among the people of truth, sowing conflict among them, from playing on their weak traits of character and grafting them with such traits, and exciting the emotions of the soul and personal hatred, and through working the

evil capacities in human nature which are like mines of corruption, and through hypocritically flattering the soul's tyranny in the name of fame and glory, and through everyone fearing their unfeeling destruction. By means of diabolical machinations like these, they temporarily triumph over the people of truth. But in accordance with the verse,

*And the end is best for the righteous, (7:128)*

and the rule, "Truth is exalted and shall not be overcome," in addition to its not yielding any significant benefit for them, their temporary triumph will lead to their earning Hell for themselves and Paradise for the people of truth.

Thus, because in misguidance those without power appear powerful and the insignificant win fame, they take up a position opposed to the people of truth. In this way conceited, fame-seeking, hypocritical people demonstrate their power although it has little substance and win a position for themselves through intimidating others and causing harm; they are seen and attention is drawn to them, and the destruction of which they are the cause, not through power and ability, but through omission and failure to act, is attributed to them and they become talked about. Just like the person obsessed with fame who defiled a place of worship so that everyone would talk about him. Even if it meant being execrated, so long as he was talked about, his worship of fame made it appear desirable to him. The case became proverbial.

O wretched man created for the eternal realm and enamoured of this transient world! Study closely the meaning of the verse,

*And neither heaven nor earth shed a tear over them, (44:29)*

and heed it. Look, what does it say? With its explicit meaning it says: "When the people of misguidance die, the heavens and earth, which are connected with man, do not weep over them, that is, they are pleased at their deaths." While with its implied meaning, it says: "The heavens and earth weep over the bodies of the people of guidance when they die; they do not want them to depart." For all the universe is connected with the people of belief and its beings are happy with them. For by virtue of their belief they know the Creator of the Universe, so appreciate the universe's value, and respect and love it. They do not nurture implicit enmity and contempt for it like the people of misguidance.

O man, think! You are bound to die. If you follow your soul and Satan, your neighbours, and even your relations, will be happy at being delivered from you. But if saying, “I seek refuge with God from Satan the Accursed,” you follow the Qur’an and the Merciful One’s Beloved (UWBP), then in accordance with your degree the heavens and earth and all beings will be sorry at your parting, and in effect weep. Mourning in elevated fashion and giving you a splendid send-off, they will indicate that you will have a good welcome in the world of eternity according to your degree, when you enter it through the door of the grave.

### THIRTEENTH INDICATION

This consists of three points.

**First Point:** One of Satan’s most cunning wiles is to deceive people with narrow minds, short views, and constricted hearts concerning the immensity of the truths of belief. He says: “It is said that a single Being directs and administers within His dominicality all particles and planets and stars and all the other beings and all their states. How can a person believe in such an immense and extraordinary matter? How can it be contained in the heart? How can the mind accept it?” He awakens a feeling of denial in respect of human impotence.

**The Answer:** The way to silence this wile of Satan’s is “God is Most Great!” And its true answer is “God is Most Great!” Yes, the reason “God is Most Great!” is the most frequently repeated of all the marks of Islam is to eliminate this wile. For it is through the light of “God is Most Great!” that man’s impotence and lack of power, weakness and lack of strength, and narrow thought see such infinitely vast truths and affirm them. It is through the strength of “God is Most Great!” that man sustains those truths, and situates them within the sphere of “God is Most Great!” And he says to his heart which starts to doubt:

It is self-evident that the universe is administered and directed in most orderly fashion. There are two ways in which this may occur:

**The First Way:** It is possible that despite its wondrous immensity, such an astonishing work comes about through wondrous art in a wondrous way. So this first way is that the universe exists through the

dominicality, will, and power of a Single and Eternally Besought One, to whose existence are witnesses to the number of beings, indeed, of minute particles.

**The Second Way:** This is the way of unbelief and associating partners with God, which is in no way possible and is so difficult as to be impossible and is in no respect reasonable. For as is proved decisively in many parts of the Risale-i Nur such as the Twentieth Letter and Twenty-Second Word, there would have to be present in all the beings in the universe and even in every single particle absolute divinity and all-encompassing knowledge and infinite power so that the total order and regularity, the sensitive balance and distinction, and the perfect, adorned embroideries of art to be observed in beings could come into existence.

**In Short:** If there were no immense and tremendous dominicality, which is completely appropriate and fitting, it would necessitate following a way that is in every respect unreasonable and precluded. Even Satan cannot propose fleeing from such necessary immensity, and suggest accepting impossibility.

**Second Point:** Another of Satan's cunning wiles is to prevent man admitting his faults in order to close up the way of seeking forgiveness and taking refuge with God. He also incites the egotism of the human soul, so that the soul defends itself like a lawyer, quite simply acquitting itself of all fault.

Yes, a soul that listens to Satan does not want to see its own faults. Even if it does see them, it explains them away in a hundred ways. According to the saying: "The eye of contentment is blind to faults," when a person looks with pleasure on his soul, he does not see its errors. And because he does not see them, he does not admit to them or seek forgiveness, or seek refuge with God from them, so becomes the plaything of Satan. How can the soul be relied on when a noble prophet like Joseph (UWP) said:

*"Nor do I absolve my own self of blame; the human soul is certainly prone to evil, unless my Sustainer do bestow His mercy."? (12:53)*

The person who accuses his soul, sees its faults. And he who admits his faults, seeks forgiveness for them. And he who seeks forgiveness, takes refuge with God. And he who takes refuge with God, is saved

from Satan's evil. Not to see one's faults is a greater fault than the first fault. And not to admit to one's faults is a serious defect. If one sees the fault, it ceases to be a fault. If one admits it, one becomes worthy of forgiveness.

***Third Point:*** A satanic wile corrupting the life of society is this: not to see all the virtues of a believer on account of a single bad point. Those unjust people who heed this wile of Satan are in this way inimical to believers. However, when Almighty God weighs up deeds with absolute justice on the supreme scales at the Last Judgement, He will judge in accordance with the predominance of good deeds over evils and vice versa. Seeing that the causes of evil deeds are numerous and their existence is easy, sometimes He veils numerous bad deeds with a single good deed.

That is to say, dealings in this world should be in accordance with divine justice. If a person's good points are greater in regard to quality or quantity than his bad points, he is deserving of love and respect. Indeed, one should forgive numerous bad points on account of a single laudable virtue. However, due to the vein of tyranny in his nature, at the promptings of Satan, the person forgets the hundred virtues of others because of a single bad point; he is hostile towards his believing brother, and commits sins. Just as a fly's wing covering the eye conceals a mountain, so too, the veil of hatred makes man conceal virtues as great as a mountain due to a single evil resembling a fly's wing; he forgets them, is hostile towards his brother believer, and becomes a tool of corruption in the life of society.

By means of another wile resembling this one, Satan corrupts the integrity of peoples' thoughts. He impairs sound judgement concerning the truths of belief and damages integrity and correctness of thought. It is like this:

He desires to destroy hundreds of evidences proving the truths of belief with a slight hint refuting them. Whereas it is an established principle that "a single proof is superior to a hundred denials." The statement of a witness proving a claim is preferable to a hundred people denying it. Consider this truth by means of the following comparison:

There is a palace with a hundred doors all closed. If one of its doors is opened, the palace may be entered and all the doors opened. If all the



doors are open and one or two are closed, it may not be said that the palace cannot not be entered.

Thus, the truths of belief are the palace. Each evidence is a key; it proves the truths and opens a door. If one of the doors remains closed, the truths of belief cannot be abandoned and denied. Satan however, in consequence of certain things or by means of heedlessness or ignorance, points out a door that has remained closed, thus causing a person to disregard all the positive evidences. He deceives the person, saying: "See, this palace cannot be entered. Perhaps it isn't a palace and perhaps there's nothing inside it."

O wretched man afflicted by Satan and his wiles! If you want the life of religion and of society and personal life all to be healthy, and if you want integrity of thought, a sound view, and a sincere heart, weigh up your actions and thoughts on the scales of the incontestable matters of the Qur'an and the balance of the Prophet's (UWBP) practices. Always take the Qur'an and the practices as your guide. Say: "I take refuge with God from Satan the Accursed," and seek refuge with God Almighty!

The above thirteen Indications are thirteen keys. Use them to open the door of the fortified stronghold of the Sura,

*Say: I seek refuge with the Lord and Cherisher of mankind  
The Ruler of mankind      The God of mankind      From the  
mischief of the Whisperer of evil, who withdraws after his  
whisper-      The same who whispers into the hearts of  
mankind-      Among jinns and among men; (114:1-6)*

enter this secure citadel and find safety!

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

*And say: O My Sustainer, I seek refuge with You from the  
whisperings of the Evil Ones,      and I seek refuge with you, my  
Sustainer lest they should come near me. (23:97-8)*