THE NINETY-NINE BEAUTIFUL NAMES OF ALLAH

Pearls of the Faith

EDWIN ARNOLD

Edited and Prefaced by Hamza Yusuf

Foreword by Dr. Robert P. George

Afterword by Gai Eaton

CALLIGRAPHY BY MOHAMED ZAKARIYA




بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

THE NINETY-NINE BEAUTIFUL NAMES OF ALLAH

Pearls of the Faith

OR

Islam's Rosary



The Ninety-Nine Beautiful Names of Allah (Asmā' al-Ḥusnā)
With Comments in Verse from various Oriental Sources
(As made by an Indian Muslim)

by

EDWIN ARNOLD



SANDALA



ARABIC CALLIGRAPHY BY
MOHAMED ZAKARIYA

Published by Sandala, Inc. 2016
www.sandala.org
info@sandala.org

© Copyright 2016 by Sandala, Inc.
Reprint of the original text published in 1883
by Roberts Brothers (Boston, MA, USA)

ISBN-10: 0-9855659-4-2
ISBN-13: 978-0-9855659-4-7

Project Director: Hamza Yusuf
Calligraphy: Mohamed Zakariya
Cover Design and Layout: Ian Abdallateef Whiteman

Printed in the United States of America

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all the sincere and fair adherents to faith in its various expressions, who recognize that we are all wayfarers trying to make our way back to our Source, and who also, despite disapprobation, choose to stand by beleaguered communities, in solidarity with them, asserting their human dignity and God-given right to worship freely as they see fit. To demonize any people of faith is to diminish all peoples of faith. The Qur'an reminds us, "*Do not curse even the idols of others, for that will cause them, out of animosity, to curse God without right*" (6:108).

A special dedication goes to the master calligrapher, Mohamed Zakariya, who has patiently waited for years to see his masterful work finally come to light. Thank you.



Contents

FOREWORD • *Robert P. George* IX
EDITOR'S PREFACE • *Hamza Yusuf* XIII
AUTHOR'S PREFACE • *Edwin Arnold* XXI

1 Allah – 1
2 Ar-Raḥmān – The Merciful • *The Sinful Angels* 2
3 Ar-Raḥīm – The Compassionate • *Solomon and the Ant* 5
4 Al-Malik – The King of Kings • *The Sultan and the Potter* 8
5 Al-Quddūs – The Holy One • *God's Name in Heaven* 12
6 As-Salām – The Peace • *The Peace of Paradise* 14
7 Al-Mu'min – The Faithful • *The Verity of Sayyid* 17
8 Al-Muhaymin – The Help in Peril • *The Spider and the Dove* 20
9 Al-ʿAẓīm – The Mighty-One • *The Throne-Verse* 22
10 Al-Jabbār – The All-Compelling • *Sura Fifty-Nine* 24
11 Al-Mutakabbir – The Majestic • *Āzar and Abraham* 26
12 Al-Khāliq – The Creator • *Signs of the Lord* 28
13 Al-Bārī' – The Artificer • *Angels' Wings* 31
14 Al-Muṣawwir – The Fashioner • *The Making of Man* 33
15 Al-Ghaffār – The Forgiver • *Abraham's Offence* 36
16 Al-Qahhār – The Dominant • *Sura "Of the Cattle"* 39
17 Al-Wahhāb – The Bestower • *ʿAlī and the Angels* 41
18 Ar-Razzāq – The Provider • *Sura "Of the Forenoon"* 46
19 Al-Fattāḥ – The Opener • *The Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ Journey to Heaven* 48
20 Al-ʿAlīm – The All-Knower • *The Mu'aqqibāt* 54
21 Al-Qābiḍ – The Closer • *Evil Deeds* 56
22 Al-Bāsiṭ – The Uncloser • *Good Deeds* 58
23 Al-Khāfiḍ – The Abaser • *Nimrūd and the Gnat* 62
24 Ar-Rāfiʿ – The Exalter • *Allah's Prophets* 64
25 Al-Muʿizz – The Honourer • *Sura "Of Imran's Family"* 66
26 Al-Mudhīll – The Leader Astray • *God's Will and Free-will* 68
27 As-Samīʿ – The All-Hearing • *A Shepherd's Prayer* 70
28 Al-Baṣīr – The All-Seeing • *Azrael and the Indian Prince* 73

29 Al-Ḥakam – The Judge of All • *The Last Day* 76
30 Al-ʿAdl – The Just Lord • *Sura "Of Jonas"* 79
31 Al-Laṭīf – The Gracious One • *Sura "Of Counsel"* 80
32 Al-Khabīr – He Who is Aware • *The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in the Cemetery* 81
33 Al-Ḥalīm – The Clement • *The Dharra and the Date-stone* 83
34 Al-ʿAzīz – The Strong and Soveriegn One • *Sura "Of Al-Aḥqāf"* 85
35 Al-Ghafūr – The Pardoner • *Hassan's Slave* 87
36 Ash-Shakūr – The Grateful • *Sura "Of Al-Kauthar"* 89
37 Al-ʿAlīyyu – The Exalted • *Sura "Of the Bee"* 91
38 Al-Kabīr – The Very Great • *The Seven Heavens* 92
39 Al-Ḥāfīẓ – The Preserver • *Sura "Of the Night Star"* 94
40 Al-Muqīt – The Maintainer • *Sura "Of the Inevitable"* 96
41 Al-Ḥasīb – The Reckoner • *Sura "Of Women"* 98
42 Al-Jamīl – The Benign • *The Rose-Garden* 99
43 Al-Karīm – The Bountiful Lord • *Sura "Of the Cleaving Asunder"* 101
44 Ar-Raqīb – The Watchful One• *The Books of Good and Evil* 102
45 Al-Mujīb – The Hearer of Prayer • *ʿAli and the Jew* 104
46 Al-Wāsiʿ – The All-Comprehending One • *Turning to Mecca* 108
47 Al-Ḥākim al-Muṭlaq – The Judge of Judges • *The Angels of the Scales* 110
48 Al-Wadūd – The Loving • *Tasnīm and Salsabīl* 112
49 Al-Majīd – The All-Glorious • *Sura "Of the Cow"* 115
50 Al-Bāʿith – The Raiser from Death • *Iblīs and Abraham* 117
51 Ash-Shahīd – The Witness • *Poets and Prophets* 120
52 Al-Ḥaqq – The Truth • *The Sin of Sins* 122
53 Al-Wakīl – The Guardian • *Sura "Of the Cow"* 123
54 Al-Qawīyyu – The Almighty • *The Fly and the False Gods* 125
55 Al-Matīn – The Firm • *The Tent-Pole* 127
56 Al-Walī – The Nearest Friend • *Abraham's Bread* 128
57 Al-Ḥamīd – The All-Praiseworthy • *The Garden and the Rock* 132
58 Al-Muḥṣī – The Accountant • *Sura "Of the Earthquake"* 134
59 Al-Mubdī' – The Beginner • *The Light of Life* 135
60 Al-Muʿīd – The Restorer • *A Message from the Dead* 137
61 Al-Muḥyī – The Quickener • *Sura "Of the Signs"* 140
62 Al-Mumīt – The Slayer • *The Angel of Death* 142
63 Al-Ḥayy – The Ever-Living • *The Life Beyond* 146
64 Al-Qayyūm – The Self-Subsisting • *The Trumpet* 148
65 Al-Wājid – The All-Perceiving • *Sura "Of Daybreak"* 150
66 Al-Wāḥid – The One • *Al-Ikhlās* 152

67 Aṣ-Ṣamad – The Eternal • *Ozair the Jew* 153
68 Al-Qādir – Providence • *Kismat* 157
69 Al-Muqtadir – The All-Powerful • *Sura "Of the Moon"* 159
70 Al-Muqaddim – The Forewarner • *Sura "Of Qāf"* 161
71 Al-Mu'akhir – The Fulfiller • *Sura "Of Qāf"* 161
72 Al-Awwal – The First • *The Mothers of the Names* 164
73 Al-Ākhir – The Last • *The Mothers of the Names* 164
74 Aẓ-Ẓāhir – The Manifest • *The Mothers of the Names* 164
75 Al-Bāṭin – The Hidden • *The Mothers of the Names* 164
76 Al-Wālī – The All-Governing • *Solomon's Signet* 167
77 Al-Mutaʿālī – The One Above Reproach • *Moses and the Angel* 173
78 Al-Barr – The Good • *The Adulteress* 176
79 Al-Tawwāb – The Relenting • *Adam quitting Eden* 179
80 Al-Muntaqim – The Avenger • *Hell and Heaven* 181
81 Al-ʿAfuww – The Forgiver • *Hell and Heaven* 181
82 Al-Ra'ūf – The Ever-Indulgent • *Sura "Of the Star"* 185
83 Mālik-al-Mulk – King of the Kingdom • *Sura "Of the Emigration"* 187
84 Dhu'l Jalāli wa-l-Ikrām – Lord of Splendid Power • *Sura "Of the Merciful"* 188
85 Al-Muqsiṭ – The Equitable • *The Last Sermon of the Prophet* ﷺ 190
86 Al-Jāmiʿ – The Gatherer • *Sura "Of Women"* 193
87 Al-Ghanī – The All-Sufficing • *Sura "Of the Troops"* 194
88 Al-Mughnī – The Sufficer • *Sura "Of the Afternoon"* 196
89 Al-Muʿṭi – The Provider • *The Two Gateways* 198
90 Al-Māniʿ – The Withholder • *The Two Gateways* 198
91 An-Nāfiʿ – The Propitious • *The Dove* 200
92 Aḍ-Ḍārr – The Harmful • *King Sheddād's Paradise* 202
93 An-Nūr – The Light • *Sura "Of Light"* 208
94 Al-Hādī – The Guide • *The Four Travellers* 209
95 Al-Azalī – Eternal in the Past • *Sura Of "Yā Sīn"* 211
96 Al-Bāqī – Eternal in the Future • *Sura "Of Yā Sīn"* 211
97 Al-Wārith – The Inheritor • *The Rose and the Dewdrop* 214
98 Ar-Rashīd – The Unerring • *The Prophet's Oath* 216
99 Aṣ-Ṣabūr – The Patient • *Islam* 218

AFTERWORD • *Charles Le Gai Eaton* 221
NOTES • 231
BIOGRAPHIES OF CONTRIBUTORS • 241
TRANSLITERATION KEY • 244

Foreword

It is a tragedy that the image of Islam being formed in the minds of many Americans and others in the West is that of violent Islamist cults such as al Qaeda, Boko Haram, and ISIS. What Christians, Jews, and others need to know is that the Islam practiced by the vast majority of their Muslim neighbors is the very opposite of the ugly and murderous ideology they rightly fear and abominate. Most Muslims are outraged and horrified by those who oppress and rape and murder in the name of Islam. Indeed, Muslims are, if anything, more likely to be among the victims of the oppressors, rapists, and murderers than are Christians, Jews, and people of other faiths.

Islam is a rich and diverse tradition. The literary, artistic, philosophical, and other achievements of those who practice the faith are impressive by any standard of measurement. It has ennobled the lives of countless of its faithful and inspired in their hearts a love of God and an attitude of benevolence to their fellow men—Muslim and non-Muslim alike. As with other faiths, the historical record is mixed; but it is untrue and unfair to depict Islam as inherently evil or to ignore the good that it has inspired.

Although it is not for me or others outside the Muslim community to pronounce on questions of Islamic orthodoxy, or to say what is and isn't "the true Islam," I am happy to introduce this book of poems, originally published more than a century ago, which conveys a sense of the richness of the Islamic tradition and the beauty of its conception of the divine. The poems explore and explain the 99 names of God in Islam. Thoughtfully reading them will deepen Jewish and Christian readers' understanding not only of the points of difference between the teachings of their faiths and the beliefs of their Muslim neighbors, but also the profound points of agreement and unity.

I myself am a Catholic. My Church teaches its faithful to have, in the words of the great declaration *Nostra Aetate* of the Second Vatican Council, "esteem for the Muslims."

> "They adore the one God, living and subsisting in Himself; merciful and all- powerful, the Creator of heaven and earth, who has spoken to men; they take pains to submit wholeheartedly to even His inscrutable decrees, just as Abraham, with whom the faith of Islam takes pleasure in linking itself, submitted to God ... . In addition, they await the day of judgment when God will render their deserts to all those who have been raised up from the dead. Finally, they value the moral life and worship God especially through prayer, almsgiving and fasting."

Later the declaration says,

> "Since in the course of centuries not a few quarrels and hostilities have arisen between Christians and Muslims, this sacred synod urges all to forget the past and to work sincerely for mutual understanding and to preserve as well as to promote together for the benefit of all mankind social justice and moral welfare, as well as peace and freedom."

It seems to me that the Church's teaching suggests that Catholics—and others who hold to biblical faith—should take the trouble more deeply to inform themselves of the beliefs of those Muslims—the majority—who wish to be our partners in seeking mutual understanding and working to promote justice and other moral values.

My own belief, based on many years of fruitful engagement with friends and colleagues representing the other great monotheistic traditions, is that Muslims, Christians, and Jews can not only learn to understand each other, we can learn from each other, just as the medieval theologians of all three faiths learned from the great tradition of classical Greek philosophy. All three faiths have produced great thinkers and spiritual leaders. All three have histories that illuminate the human condition. All three have experiences and insights to share.

It is no insult to one's own tradition of faith to suppose that one has something to learn from other great traditions. Indeed, the best versions of all three of the religions which look to Abraham as

our father in faith teach the importance of the kind of spiritual and intellectual humility that opens hearts and minds to the possibility of precisely this species of learning. Speaking as a Christian, the humility I am bound by devotion to Jesus the Christ to practice impels me to enter into dialogue with my Muslim and Jewish friends with a view not only to sharing the wisdom of my own tradition, but to receiving wisdom drawn from the traditions of my conversation partners. This is scarcely a capitulation to religious relativism; and it is the very reverse of religious indifferentism.

In *Nostra Aetate*, the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council pay tribute to "all that is true and holy," implying and then explicitly saying that there is much that is good and worthy, in other religions, especially Judaism and Islam. In so doing, they give recognition to the ways in which religion, even where it does not include the defining content of what the Fathers, as Catholics, believe to be the fullness of religious truth—namely, the Incarnation of Jesus Christ—enriches, ennobles, and fulfills the human person in the spiritual dimension of his being. This is to be honored and respected because the dignity of the human being requires it.

Naturally, the non-recognition of Christ as the Son of God must count for the Fathers as a falling short in the Muslim faith, and even in the Jewish faith in which Christianity is itself rooted and which stands according to Catholic teaching in an unbroken and unbreakable covenant with God, just as the proclamation of Christ as the Son of God must count as an error in Christianity from a Muslim or Jewish point of view. But, the Fathers teach, this does not mean that Judaism and Islam are by Catholic lights simply false and without merit (just as neither Judaism nor Islam teaches that Christianity is simply false and without merit); on the contrary, these traditions enrich the lives of their faithful in their critical spiritual dimensions, thus contributing vitally to their fulfillment.

So I invite my fellow Catholics and other Christians as well as my Jewish friends to learn about Islam and enter into dialogue and fellowship with their Muslim neighbors. And where better to begin

than with *Pearls of the Faith*? The poems in this book teach us about Islam by introducing us to what, from the Islamic point of view itself, is most important for the faith, namely, its understanding or "concept" of God and His sovereignty. They teach us, for example, about how Muslims understand the profound mystery of God's distance from us and nearness to us—His profound transcendence and His active involvement in the affairs of men (down to knowing, and caring about, even our innermost secret thoughts). They instruct us regarding Islam's insistence on God's absolute unity, His creative power, His unchallengeable authority, His inexpressible mercy and compassion. They inform us of the relationship Muslims conceive between God's sovereignty and our duties, both to God Himself and to our fellow man, whether it be the duty to deal fairly in business, to respect human life, or to comfort the afflicted and assist the needy.

With many of these Islamic ideas, Christians and Jews will feel a deep, and perhaps surprising, affinity; with some, not so much. But there is everything to be gained, and nothing to be lost, by learning all that is available to be learned about the points of agreement and difference. And even taking into account all the points of difference, the thoughtful reader will notice the enormous chasm that divides the peaceful, life-respecting, God-honoring kind of Islam practiced by most Muslims—certainly most American Muslims—from the violent, murderous, death-cult embraced by ISIS and its ilk. The two religions or worldviews both claim the mantle of "Islam," but are as different as day and night, life and death, good and evil.

Robert P. George
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Editor's Preface

BOOKSTORES, THE BRICK-AND-MORTAR kind, are fast disappearing in our technology-obsessed culture, as more and more people favor buying online. But I like walking into a bookstore browsing the offerings like a treasure hunter, and on occasion that hunt has led me to what can only be construed as "mystical" experiences. One such experience took place almost twenty years ago in a small used bookstore in the old city in Rabat, Morocco. The owner, who knew me for many years as a buyer of books, was himself a lover of books and usually sat behind a long counter with a shelf at his back that displayed treasures of the Islamic tradition.

On this particular occasion, I told the owner I was seeking a book with a thorough explanation of a subject known as *tawqīt* in Arabic, which is an amalgam of astronomy, sacred timekeeping, and calendar studies. I had begun studying the subject during my time in Mauritania, and Morocco was one of the few places where it was still taught. The owner reached back, picked up a small paperback, and handed it to me. It was *The Science of Topography* by Naṣīr al-Ṭūsī, one of the great polymaths of Islamic history. But while the book was related to *tawqīt*, it covered a different subject. Hence, I said to the owner, "No. I would like something on *tawqīt*; this is about *hay'ah* (topography)."

Then my eye fell upon a small blue book with no name on the spine. I was intrigued by it. Pointing to it, I asked, "What is that small blue book there?" He took it down and handed it to me.

I opened the book, and these were the first lines I read:

> O one asking for an abridgment of the science of *tawqīt*,
> Take this one by the help of the All Powerful, al-Muhaymin,
> Who is in charge of all affairs.

The book was the most popular Moroccan text on the very subject I was looking for!

About twenty years later and halfway across the world, I found myself in a small used bookstore in San Ramon, California. While browsing shelves of older books, I came upon a green, ornately gilded antiquarian book called *Pearls of the Faith*. I assumed it was a Christian book, but the title was tempting, and I thought perhaps there might be some pearls in it for a Muslim like me. I opened it, only to read these words:

> Call Him Muhaimin, "Help in danger's hour,"
> Protector of the true who trust his power.

Above those words, in Arabic script, was the divine name, *al-Muhaymin*, the same name in the book I had found in Morocco! As it turned out, this book was on the Ninety-Nine Names of God, which are mentioned in the hadith literature and dispersed throughout the Qur'an as attributes that serve as edifying endings to verses; they also add subtle nuance to meanings contained in the verses themselves. The author of the book was a Victorian Englishman, a distinguished notable of his time, named Edwin Arnold.

* * *

The magisterial eleventh edition of *The Encyclopædia Britannica* (1911) credits Sir Edwin Arnold, among other things, as the man who arranged H.M. Stanley's expedition to Africa in order to find the course of the Congo River. Arnold, born in 1832 in a town just outside London, studied at Oxford and then went to India to serve as the head of a college in Pune, and there he became deeply familiar with both Buddhist and Muslim teachings. He subsequently returned to England in 1861 to work as a journalist and later as editor for *The Daily Telegraph*.

This was a time when England was mired in colonial enterprises throughout the world, and *The Daily Telegraph* would churn out stories, often laced with racist and imperialist overtones, of Mus-

lims fighting British soldiers. Having lived among Asiatic peoples, Arnold was distressed by the prejudices of his own society as well as the religious illiteracy of even the educated classes. He set out to educate his class and increase their religious literacy by way of poetry and first penned an epic poem on the life of Buddha entitled, *The Light of Asia*. It was received with critical acclaim in 1879. The Encyclopædia Britannica states,

> The poem contains many lines of unquestionable beauty; and its immediate popularity was rather increased than diminished by the twofold criticism to which it was subjected. On the one hand it was held by Oriental scholars to give a false impression of Buddhist doctrine; while, on the other, the suggested analogy between Sakyamuni [Buddha] and Christ offended the taste of some devout Christians.[A]

After the success of *The Light of Asia*, he penned a second poem hoping to enlighten his fellow Englishmen about Islam; his goal was to use the Ninety-Nine Names of God as a conceit to explain Islam through the power of poetry, then extremely popular in Victorian England. This effort culminated in *Pearls of the Faith, or Islam's Rosary, Being the Ninety-nine Beautiful Names of Allah*. While *Pearls of the Faith* was not as popular as Arnold's first book, it was well received by the public. An interesting aside is that the first edition is dedicated to "The Many Friends in America (known and unknown)."

I have in my personal library a copy of *Pearls of the Faith* that Arnold signed and gifted to his mother in December of 1882, the year before it was officially released. The dedication reads, "Mrs. R.C. Arnold, with the author's endless love and reverence, Dec.

A *The Encyclopædia Britannica: A Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, Literature and General Information*, Eleventh Edition, Vol. II, Andros to Austria. Cambridge, England: University Press, 1911, 634.

1882." The gentility and decorum is quite telling of the times.

The book itself is a collection of largely iambic pentameter essays on each of the Ninety-Nine Names of God. He uses Qur'an, Qur'anic commentary, hadith tradition, as well as selections from Persian and Indian poetry that are often apocryphal.

What was his idea behind the book? He states clearly in the preface,

> Not more sublime, therefore, in religious history appears the figure of Paul the tent-maker, proclaiming the "Unknown God" at Athens, than that of the camel-driver Muhammad, son of Abdallah and Amīnah, abolishing all the idols of the Arabian Pantheon, except their chief – Allah Ta'Alah, "God the Most High" – and under that ancient and well-received appellation establishing the oneness of the origin, government, and life of the universe. Thereby that marvelous and gifted Teacher created a vast empire of new belief and new civilisation, and prepared a sixth part of humanity for the developments and reconciliations which later times will bring. For Islām must be conciliated; it cannot be thrust scornfully aside or rooted out. It shares the task of the education of the world with its sister religions, and it will contribute its eventual portion to "that far-off divine event, Towards which the whole creation moves."
>
> ... It does but aim, however, to suggest (in poetic form) juster thoughts than sometimes prevail of Islām, of its founder, and of its votaries; employing the language of one among them, and thinking with his thoughts, since this alone permits the necessary sympathy.

* * *

Arnold set out to express "juster thoughts than sometimes prevail of Islam," and he succeeded, as evidenced in this book. He knew that even the educated class of his time viewed Islam with a jaundiced eye and saw Muslims only as a threat to British soldiers in colonized lands. In this poem on God's Ninety-Nine Names, he succeeds in presenting an Islam that he personally experienced during his time in India. A contemporary of Arnold was Florence Nightingale, an Englishwoman who lived freely among Muslims

in Egypt, Palestine, and Turkey; indeed, she was honored in Turkey with medals from the Ottoman Caliph for her service to wounded and dying Turkish and Ottoman soldiers during the Crimean War.

Writing as a citizen at the center of colonial power, Arnold sought to educate his compatriots and build bridges where none existed.

Sadly, over a hundred and thirty years later, we find ourselves in the same situation that Arnold faced: the ignorance of Islam even among highly educated Westerners today is palpable in print, media, and daily conversations. Walk into any bookstore, as I often do, and you will find more books critical of Islam, many written by disgruntled ex-Muslims, than books that are a fair and accurate reflection of normative Islam.

But we do have Edwin Arnolds of our time, people of other faiths—such as Karen Armstrong and John Esposito—who are knowledgeable about our religion, its ethos and universal nature, its glory days, and the reality that it is the source of solace for countless souls in an often-soulless world. Among them is the brilliant Sinic scholar, Dr. Thomas Cleary, who very often, in the most unsuspecting places, forces his readers to confront their own prejudices. In his 1993 book, *No Barrier: Unlocking the Zen Koan*, he writes,

> Zen Koans are also used for purposes of testing and examining states of mind....
>
> The use of koans to test mentalities requires a certain degree of Zen psychological knowledge to apply, but parallel examples of its operation can be obtained with familiar materials. A simple method uses the prejudices of the environment, casually providing appropriate stimuli to observe whether an individual or group is infected with the habitual prejudices of the cultural environment, or whether evidence is shown of capacity for independent thought and perception.
>
> In a Western milieu, for example, environmental prejudice is easily elicited by reference to Islam. When people with no knowledge of the Qur'an or usages of the Prophet are ready to offer opinions on Islam as fact, this represents the working of conditioned

> bias, not the operation of independent cognition. The inclination to accept unverified opinion simply because of currency or familiarity is a dangerous human weakness that is instrumental in self-deception, and easily exploited for the deception of others. Zen study exposes such fallacies of thought in order to liberate the mind from bondage to the views and attitudes they produce.[B]

One of the great challenges for Muslims today is precisely people's "inclination to accept unverified opinion simply because of currency or familiarity," as every day they face a fusillade of unrelenting media images of Islam and Muslims as violent, vengeful, and filled with hatred for the West. The media traffics in stereotypes, and like all stereotypes, there is some truth to these images of Islam and Muslims. But the stereotype fails abysmally because it does not reflect the perennial teachings of Islam or even the views of the overwhelming majority of Muslims. It also ignores the role that Western imperialism has played in fostering this environment of enmity, whether it be the British Mandate for Palestine, the creation of the nation states in a *divida et impera* colonial policy, or the more recent deadly debacles in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya.

The Islam of the 19th Century that Arnold experienced was almost entirely informed by its mystic tradition, Sufism, which recognizes the divine gift in everyone and everything. Through poetry and literature, among other things, metaphysics permeated traditional Muslim society, and even the common people were steeped in a metaphysical awareness of reality. Eventually, though, the Islamic civilization declined, partly because of the decadence and a loss of rigor in the tradition but also because of the political collapse of Muslim sovereignty that enabled their lands to be conquered by Western colonizers. This spawned certain movements that flourished and began to alter the face of Islam to a point where it would largely be unrecognizable by Muslims of any previous generation.

B Thomas Cleary, No Barrier: Unlocking the Zen Koan. London: Aquarian Press, 1993, xvii-xviii.

What remains are remnants of these traditions in a post-modern world where much confusion has been sowed by an Islam funded with petro-dollars that perpetuates a sterile, barren, fundamentalist, exclusivist, and puritanical Islam that is anti-intellectual, marginalizes scholarship, and removes from its adherents any appreciation of diversity, history, culture, poetry, and music. It leaves life desiccated and lacking the spiritual nourishment that has always sustained souls in the midst of the hardships of our earthly home.

* * *

Pearls of the Faith is a book that harkens back to a slower time, before the nanosecond, before supersonic travel, before the advent of cyberspace, when handwritten letters took weeks to deliver, and people could sit under a canopy and read light verse about other faiths in faraway lands. It was a time when lettered men and women wrote prose and poetry in the hope that it might engender greater understanding of a richly diverse world in dire need of peaceful co-existence, reciprocal respect, and a deeper knowledge of the evergreen truths hidden in the myriad teachings of our various world faiths.

The love and appreciation of poetry, far more widespread in Sir Edwin Arnold's day, is unfortunately lost on many in our impoverished and illiterate post-modern culture. In light of that lamentable reality, we humbly offer this reprint of a 19th century British poet's effort to help cleanse the doors of perception regarding Islam and hope that it may also help revive a love of such aspirational literature in these troubled times.

Hamza Yusuf
ZAYTUNA COLLEGE

Author's Preface

IT IS A CUSTOM of many pious Muslims to employ in their devotions a three-stringed chaplet, each string containing thirty-three beads, and each bead representing one of the "ninety-nine names of Allah," whenever this use – among many other religious uses – is made of it. The Korān bids them "Celebrate Allah with abundant celebration," and on certain occasion – such as during the intervals of the Tarāwih night service in Ramadhān – the Faithful pass these ninety-nine beads of the rosary through their fingers, repeating with each "Name of God" an ejaculation of praise and worship. Such an exercise is called Zikr, or "remembrance," and the rosary *Masba'hah*.

In the following pages of varied verse I have enumerated these ninety-nine "beautiful names," and appended to each – from the point of view of an Indian Muhammedan – some illustrative legend, tradition, record, or comment, drawn from diverse Oriental sources; occasionally paraphrasing (as closely as possible) from the text of the Korān itself, any particular passage containing the sacred Title, or casting light upon it. In this way it seemed possible to present the general spirit of Islām under a new and not unacceptable form; since almost every religious idea of the Korān comes up in the long catalogue of attributes. Tender, as well as terrible; lofty in morality, albeit grim and stern in dogma, the "Perspicuous Book" is still, and must be, replete with interest for Christendom, since, if Islām was born in the Desert, with Arab Sabaeanism for its mother and Judaism for its father, its foster-nurse was Eastern Christianity, and Muhammad's attitude towards Christ, and towards the religion which bears His name, is ever one of profound reverence and grateful recognition. Nor are the differences between the older and younger creed really so great as their similitudes in certain aspects. The soul of Islām is its declaration of the unity of God: its heart is the inculcation of an absolute resignation to His will. Not more sublime, therefore, in religious history appears the figure of Paul the tent-maker, proclaiming the "Unknown God" at Athens, than

that of the camel-driver Muhammad, son of Abdallah and Aminah, abolishing all the idols of the Arabian Pantheon, except their chief – Allah Ta-alah, "God Most High" – and under that ancient and well-received appellation establishing the oneness of the origin, government, and life of the universe. Thereby that marvellous and gifted Teacher created a vast empire of new belief and new civilization, and prepared a sixth part of humanity for the developments and reconciliations which later times will bring. For Islām must be conciliated; it cannot be thrust scornfully aside or rooted out. It shares the task of education of the world with its sister religions, and it will contribute its eventual portion to:

> *"that far-off divine event,*
> *Towards which the whole creation moves."*

Composed amid Scotch mountains during a brief summer-rest from politics, and with no library near at hand for references, my book has need to ask indulgence from the learned. It does but aim, however, to suggest (in poetic form) juster thoughts than sometimes prevail of Islām, of its founder, and of its votaries, since this thought permits the necessary sympathy.

I have thus at length finished the Oriental Trilogy which I designed. In my 'Indian Song of Songs' I sought to transfer to English poetry a subtle and lovely Sanskrit idyll of the Hindu theology. In my 'Light of Asia' I related the story and displayed the gentle and far-reaching doctrines of that great Hindoo prince who founded Buddhism. I have tried to present here, in the simple, familiar, and credulous, but earnest spirit and manner of Islām – and from its own points of view – some of the thoughts and beliefs of the followers of the notable Prophet of Asia.

Edwin Arnold

GLENGYLE, PERTHSHIRE, SCOTLAND,
SEPTEMBER 1882

PEARLS OF THE FAITH

Allah hath most excellent names, therefore call upon Him by the same

QUR'AN, CH. VII, AL-ʿARĀF

1 Allah



"Allah!" Bi-'smi-'llah! Say that God is One, Living, Eternal; and besides Him none.

2 Ar-Raḥmān

The Merciful



Say Ar-Raḥmān! "The Merciful" Him call;
For He is full of mercy unto all.

THE SINFUL ANGELS

Once on a day, in Paradise,
Discourse indignant did arise
Amongst the Angels, seeing how
The sons of Adam sinned below;
Albeit Allah's grace had sent
Prophets with much admonishment.
'Heedless and guilty race," they cried,
"Whose penitence is set aside
At each temptation! Truth and Right
Ye know not!" Then a wondrous light
Fell on their brows – a mighty word
Sounded – the Presence of the Lord
Spake: "Of your number choose ye two
To go among mankind and do
'Justice and Right,' teaching them these."
Therewith, from those bright companies,

Harūt went and Mārūt [i] went down
On earth, laying aside their crown
Of rays, and plumes of rainbow feather;
And on the judgment-seat together
Many long years they sate, and wrought
Just judgment upon each cause brought.
Until, before that justice-seat
There came a woman, fair and sweet,
So ravishing a form and mien
That great Soharah, who is queen
Of the third planet, hath not eyes
As soft, nor mouth made in such wise.
And one whom she did wrong, besought
Sentence against her: she had nought
Of plea, but in her dazzling grace
Stood fearless in the audience-place:
Consuming hearts with hot desire
By subtle Beauty's searching fire.
Then said Hārūt, forgetting Heaven,
"Pardon to such must, sure, be given."
Whispered Mārūt, "If thou wilt be
Leman of mine, thou shalt go free."
And for her love those two contended,
Till the false scene was sorely ended
With earthquake, and with lightning-flash,
And rolling thunder's wrathful crash.
'Midst which the city and the folk
Passed from their ken, and a voice spoke:
"Come unto judgment, ye who called
Allah too merciful!"
  Appalled
Hārūt lay and Mārūt lay prone
In Paradise, before the Throne;

Hearing that doom of God, which said:
"Until My trumpet, calls the dead,
Dwell on earth, where ye have learned
The just may unto sin be turned."

Merciful One and just! we bless
Thy name, and crave forgiveness.



3 Ar-Raḥīm

The Compassionate

Say Ar-Raḥīm! call Him "Compassionate",
For He is pitiful to small and great.

SOLOMON AND THE ANT

'Tis written that the serving-angels stand
Beside God's throne, ten myriads on each hand,
Waiting, with wings outstretched and watchful eyes,
To do their Master's heavenly embassies.
Quicker than thought His high commands they read,
Swifter than light to execute them speed;
Bearing the word of power from star to star
Some hither and some thither, near and far.
And unto these nought is too high or low,
Too mean or mighty, if He wills it so;
Neither is any creature, great or small,
Beyond His pity; which embraceth all,
Because His eye beholdeth all which are;
Sees without search, and counteth without care.
Nor lies the babe nearer the nursing-place
Than Allah's smallest child to Allah's grace;
Nor any ocean rolls so vast that He
Forgets one wave of all that restless sea.

Thus it is written; and moreover told
How Gabriel[ii], watching by the Gates of gold,
Heard from the Voice Ineffable this word
Of two-fold mandate uttered by the Lord:
"Go earthward! pass where Solomon hath made
His pleasure-house, and sitteth there arrayed,
Goodly and splendid – whom I crowned the king –
For at this hour My servant doth a thing
Unfitting: out of Nisibis[iii] there came
A thousand steeds with nostrils all a-flame
And limbs of swiftness, prizes of the fight;
Lo! these are led, for Solomon's delight,
Before the palace, where he gazeth now
Filling his heart with pride at that brave show;
So taken with the snorting and the tramp
Of his war-horses, that Our silver lamp
Of eve is swung in vain, Our warning Sun
Will sink before his sunset-prayer's begun;
So shall the people say, 'This king, our lord,
Loves more the long-maned trophies of his sword
Than the remembrance of his God?' Go in!
Save thou My faithful servant from such sin."

"Also, upon the slope of Arafat[iv],
Beneath a lote-tree which is fallen flat,
Toileth a yellow ant who carrieth home
Food for her nest, but so far hath she come
Her worn feet fail, and she will perish, caught
In the falling rain; but thou, make the way naught,

And help her to her people in the cleft
Of the black rock."
  Silently Gabriel left
The Presence, and prevented the king's sin,
And holp the little ant at entering in.

O Thou whose love is wide and great,
We praise Thee, "The Compassionate."

4 Al-Malik

The King of all the Kings



Call him "Al-Malik," King of all the kings,
Maker and Master of created things.

THE SULTAN AND THE POTTER

The Sultan of Damascus found asleep
The potter Ibn Solūl,
And bore him to the palace, where he waked
In garments beautiful.

* * * * *

Consider! if a king should call thee "friend",
And lead thee to his court,
Roofed large with lazulite, and pavemented
With flow'rs, on green floors wrought;

If he should bid thee sit at meat; and spread
A table, served so fine
There lacked not any pleasant food or fruit
But came at call of thine:

If he hung high a glorious golden lamp
To shine where thy feet tread;
And stretched black 'broidered hangings, sown with gems,
For curtains to thy bed;

If for thy heats he bade soft zephyrs blow;
Sent, at thy thirst, sweet rains;
And filled the groves with minstrels, gaily garbed,
To charm thee with their strains;

If, past the confines of his palace-grounds,
He showed thee spacious seas,
Where, wafted o'er the dancing foam, might sail
Thou and thine argosies:

If, for society in that fair place,
He gave glad companies,
Kinsmen and friends and helpmates, and the bliss
Of beauty's lips and eyes;

With wisdom's scroll to study, and the ways
Of wondrous living things:
And lovely pleasure of all ornaments
That Nature's treasure brings,

Coral and pearl: turkis, and agate stones
Milk-white or rosy-veined;
Amber and ivory; jade; shawls wove with gold,
Scarves with sea-purple stained;

If the king gave thee these, and only wrote
Upon his inner door:
"Serve me and honour me and keep my laws,
And thus live evermore

In better bliss, when ye shall pass hereby, –
As surely pass ye must:– "
Who is there would not praise that monarch's name
With forehead in the dust?

* * * * *

Lo! but He doeth this – Allah our King,
His sky is lazulite;
His earth is paved with emerald-work: its stores
Are spread for man's delight;

His sun by day, His silver stars by night,
Shine for our sakes, His breeze
Cools us and wafts our ships; His pleasant lands
Are girdled with the seas

Which send the rain, and make the crystal bridge
Whereby man roams at will
From court to court of Allah's Pleasure-house;
Seeing that writing still

Upon the inner gate – which all must pass –
"Love me and keep my laws
That ye may live, since there is greater life
Beyond these darkened doors."

* * * * *

If Ibn Solūl, the potter, loved Him not
Whose kindness was so strong;
If Ibn Solūl kept not the palace laws,
Had not that Sultan wrong?

O sovereign Giver of good things,
We praise Thee, "Malik", King of kings.

5 Al-Quddūs

The "Holy One"



Allah al-Quddūs-the "Holy One" He is;
But purify thy speech, pronouncing this;

GOD'S NAME IN HEAVEN

For even Isrāfīl[v],
Who waits in Heaven still
Nearest the Throne, and hath the voice of sweetness,
Before his face doth fold
The wings of feathered gold,
Saying "Al-Quddūs;" and in supreme completeness

Of lowly reverence stands,
Laying his angel-hands
Over his lips, lest Allah's holiest name
Be lightly breathed on high;
And that white mystery
Pass, as if that and others were the same.
Iblīs[vi] – 'tis written – when
He heareth among men
The name of "Allah" spoken, shrinks and flies;

[1] Cf. Qur'an, CXIV. chapter "Of Men."

But at the sound of this,
Uttered in realms of bliss,
The Jinns and Angels, in their ranks, arise.

And what believer dares
Begin his morning prayers
Without "*wuḍū*"[vii] – th' ablution? who is seen
His Qur'an to rehearse
But hath in mind its verse,
"Let none me touch, save such as are made clean?"

Lo! if with streams or sands
Ye lave the earnest hands
Lifted in prayer; and if ye wash the mouth
Which reads the sacred scroll,
Dare ye with sullied soul
Meditate this dread word, that shrines the truth

Of Allah's purity?
Bethink! His great eyes see
The hearts of men unto their inmost core!
Make clean your hearts within;
Cast forth each inmost sin;
Then with bowed brows, say this name, and adore.

Forgive, Thou Pure One! – Whom we bless –
Of our good deeds the sinfulness.

6 As-Salām

The Peace



Thou Who art "Peace", and unto peace dost bring,
Allah-as-Salām! we praise Thee, Judge and King!

THE PEACE OF PARADISE

When th'unshunnëd Day arriveth, none of men shall
doubt it come;
Into Hell some it will lower, and exalt to Heaven some.

When the earth with quakenings quaketh, and the
mountains crumble flat,
Quick and dead shall be divided threefold; on this side,
and that,

The Companions of the right hand[viii] (ah! how joyful
they will be!)
The Companions of the left hand (oh! what misery to
see!)
Such, moreover, as of old time[ix], loved the truth and
taught it well,

First in faith, they shall be foremost in reward: the rest
to Hell!

But those souls attaining Allah, – ah, the Gardens of
good cheer
Kept to lodge them! yea, besides the "Faithful," many
will be there.

Lightly lying on soft couches, beautiful with broidered
gold,
Friends with friends, they shall be served by youths
immortal, who will hold

Akwab, abareek – cups and goblets – brimming with
celestial wine –
Wine which hurts nor head nor stomach – this and
fruits of Heaven which shine

Bright, desirable: and rich flesh of what birds they
relish best;
Yea, and feasted, there shall soothe them damsels
fairest, stateliest-

Damsels having eyes of wonder, large black eyes like
hidden pearls,
Lulu-'l-maknun, Allah grants them, for sweet love,
those matchless girls.

Never in that Garden hear they speech of folly, sin, or
dread;
Only "Peace" – As-Salām only – that one word for ever
said,

"Peace! Peace! Peace!' and the Companions of the right
hand (ah! those bowers!)
They shall roam in thornless lote-groves, under mawz-
trees[x] hung with flowers;

Shaded, fed by flowing waters; near to fruits which
never cloy,
Hanging always ripe for plucking; and at hand the
tender joy

Of those maids of Heaven, the Houris[xi]: lo! to them We
gave a birth
Specially creating, lo! they are not as the wives of earth;

Ever virginal and stainless, how so often they embrace,
Always young and loved and loving these are; neither is
there grace

Like the grace and bliss the black-eyed keep for you in
Paradise,
O Companions of the right hand! O ye others that were
wise![2]

Giver of peace! when comes that day,
Set us within Thy sight, we pray.

[2] Cf. Qur'an, LVI. chapter "Of the Inevitable."



7 Al-Mu'min

The Faithful

Al-Mu'min! "Faithful," fast, and just is He,
And loveth such as live in verity.

THE VERITY OF SAYYID

Ibn Sāwa, Lord of Bahrein, in the field.
Captured a Sheikh, an Arab of the hills,
Sayyid-bin-Tayf: and the king's oath was passed
That each tenth man of all the captives die
Together with their chieftains, for the war
Waxed fierce, and hearts of men were turned to flame.
So led they Sayyid forth before the camp
At Azan[xii]: and a eunuch of the guard,
Savage and black, stood with his haick uprolled
Back to the armpit, and the scimitar's edge
Naked to strike.
But suddenly the king
Inquired, "art thou not he gave me to drink,

Hunting gazelles, before the war began?"
"Yea, I am he!" said Sayyid.
Quoth the king,
"Ask not thy life, but ask some other boon,
That I may pay my debt."
Sayyid replied,
"Death is not terrible to me who die
Red with this unbelieving blood of thine:
But there hath come a first-born in my tent:
Fain would I see my son's face for a day,
Before mine eyes are sealed. Lend me my life,
To hold as something borrowed from thy hand,
Which I will bring again."
"Ay!" laughed the king,
"If one should answer for it with his own.
Show me thy hostage!"
"Let me stand his bond,"
Spake one on whom the lot of mercy fell –
Isḥāq of Tayf, a gallant youth and fair –
"I am his sister's son: bind ye my arms,
And set free Sayyid, that he ride at speed,
And see his first-born's face, and come again."

So Sayyid went free again, seeking his home.
But in the camp they mocked that faithful friend,
Saying, "Lo! as a fool thou diest now,
Staking thy life upon an Arab's word.
Why should he haste, to abide the bitter blade?
Will the scared jackal try the trap again;
The hawk once limed return unto the snare?
Cry to the desert-wind to turn and come,
But call not Sayyid."
Isḥāq only smiled,
And said, "He is a Muslim, he will come!"

The days passed, Sayyid come not, and they led
The hostage forth, for Isḥāq now must die;
But still he smiled, saying, "Till sunset's hour
Slay me not, for at sunset he will come."

So fell it, for the sun had touched the palms,
And that black swordsman stood again in act
To strike, when Sayyid's white mare, galloping in,
Drew steaming breath before the royal tent;
And Sayyid, leaping from the saddle, kissed
His kinsman's eyes, and gently spake to all,
"Labbayki! I am here."
Then said the king,
"Never before was known a deed like this
That one should stake his life upon a word;
The other ride to death as to a bride.
Live, and be friends of Ibn Sāwa, but speak!
Whence learned ye these high lessons?"
Isḥāq spake,
"We are believers in the book which saith,
'Fulfil your covenants, if ye covenant;
For God is witness! break no word with men
Which God hath heard; and surely He hears all.'"[3]

That verse the king bade write in golden script
Over the palace gate; and he and his
Followed the Faith.

Ya! Allah-al-Mu'min!
In truthfulness of act be our faith seen.

[3] Cf. Qur'an, XVI. chapter "Of the Bee."

8 Al-Muhaymin

The Help in Peril



Call Him Muhaymin, "Help in danger's hour,"
Protector of the true who trust His power.

THE SPIDER AND THE DOVE

The spider and the dove-what thing is weak
If Allah makes it strong?
The spider and the dove! – if He protect,
Fear thou not foemen's wrong.

From Mecca to Medina fled our Lord,
The horsemen followed fast;
Into a cave to shun their murderous rage,
Muhammad ﷺ, weary, passed.

Quoth Abu Bakr, "If they see, we die!"
Quoth Ibn Foheir, "Away!"
The guide Abdallah said, "The sand is deep,
Those footmarks will betray."

Then spake our Lord, "We are not four, but Five;
"He Who protects' is here.
Come! Al-Muhaymin now will blind their eyes;
Enter, and have no fear."

The band drew nigh; one of the Quraysh cried,
"Search ye out yonder cleft,
I see the print of sandalled feet which turn
Thither, upon the left!"

But when they drew unto the cavern's mouth,
Lo! at its entering-in,
A ring-necked desert dove sate on her eggs;
The mate cooed soft within.

And right athwart the shadow of the cave
A spider's web was spread;
The creature hung upon her net at watch;
Unbroken was each thread.

"By Thammuz' blood," the unbelievers cried,
"Our toil and time are lost;
Where doves hatch and the spider spins her snare
No foot of man hath crossed!"

Thus did a desert bird and spider [xiii] guard
The blessed Prophet then;
For all things serve their Maker and their God
Better than thankless men.

Allah-al-Muhaymin! shield and save
Us, for his sake within that cave.

9 Al-ʿAẓīm

The Mighty-One



Say Al-ʿAẓīm! He is the Mighty One!
Praise Him, and hear the great "Verse of the Throne." [xiv]

THE THRONE-VERSE

"Allah! there is none other God but He,
The Living God, the Self-subsistent One;
Weariness cometh not to Him, nor sleep;
And whatso is belongs to Him alone
In heaven and earth; who is it intercedes
With Him, save if He please? He is aware
What is before them and what after them,
And they of all His knowledge nothing share
Save what He will vouchsafe. His throne's foundation
Sits splendid, high above the earth and sky.
Which to sustain gives Him no meditation:
Mightiest He is, Supreme in Majesty."

Āyatu-'l Kursī! this we Muslims grave
On polished gem and painted architrave;
But thou, write its great letters on thy heart,
Lauding the Mighty One, whose work thou art.

10 Al-Jabbār

The All-Compelling



The "All-compelling!" golden is that verse,
Which doth His title – Al-Jabbār – rehearse.

SURA FIFTY-NINE[xv]

Sura the nine and fiftieth: "Fear ye God,
O true believers! and let every soul
Heed what it doth to-day, because to-morrow
The same thing it shall find gone forward there
To meet and make and judge it. Fear ye God,
For He knows whatsoever deeds ye do.
Be not as those who have forgotten Him,
For they are those who have forgot themselves;
They are the evil-doers: not for such,
And for the heritors of Paradise,
Shall it be equal: Paradise is kept
For those thrice blessed who have ears to hear.

Lo! had we sent "the Book" unto Our hills,
Our hills had bowed their crests in reverence,
And opened to the heart their breasts of rock
To take Heaven's message. Fear ye Him who knows
Present, and Past, and Future: fear ye Him
Who is the Only, Holy, Faithful Lord,
Glorious and good, compelling to His will
All things, for all things He hath made and rules.

So rule, Al-Jabbār: make our wills
Bend, though more stubborn than the hills.

11 Al-Mutakabbir

The Majestic



Al-Mutakabbir! all the heavens declare
His majesty, who makes them what they are.

ĀZAR AND ABRAHAM

Āzar[xvi], of Abraham the father, spake
Unto his son, "Come! and thine offerings make
Before the gods whose images divine
In Nimrūd's carved and painted temple shine.
Pay worship to the sun's great orb of gold;
Adore the queen-moon's silver state; behold
Otāred, Moshtari, Sohayl, in their might,
Those stars of glory, those high lords of light.
These have we wrought, as fitteth gods alone,
In bronze and ivory and chiselled stone.
Obey, as did thy sires, these powers of Heaven
Which rule the world, throned in the circles seven."

But Abraham said, "Did they not see the sun
Sink and grow darkened, when the days were done;
Did not the moon for them, too, wax and wane,
That they should pay her worship, false and vain?
Lo! all these stars have laws to rise and set –
Otāred, Moshtari, Sohayl – wilt thou yet
Bid me praise gods who humbly come and go,
Lights that a greater Light hath kindled? No!
I dare not bow the knee to one of these;
My Lord is He who (past the sky man sees)
Waxeth and waneth not, Unchanged of all,
Him only 'God', Him only 'Great', I call."

Well spak'st thou, Friend of Allah![xvii] none;
Is "great" except the Greatest One.

12 Al-Khāliq

The Creator



Praise the "Creator!" He who made us live,
Life everlasting unto us can give.

SIGNS OF THE LORD

By the glorious Book We have sent! do they wonder a warner is come
Out from among themselves? do the misbelievers say
"This is a marvelous thing! what! when we are dead and dust
To live! to arise! see now, this hope is a hope far away!"

But what the grave shall consume, and what of the man it shall leave,
We know, for a roll is with Us where each soul's order is set.
Will they call the truth a lie when it cometh to them, and dwell
Wrangling and foolish and fearful, confounding the matter? But yet

The heaven is above them to see how fair We have builded
its arch,
Painted it golden and blue, finished it perfect and clear;
And the earth how We spread it forth, and planted the
mountains thereon;
And made all the manifold trees and the beautiful
blossoms appear.

Memorials are these to the wise, and a message to him
who repents;
Moreover We drop from the clouds the blessing of water,
the rain,
Whereby the cool gardens do grow, and the palms
soaring up to the sky
With their date-laden branches and boughs, one over the
other; and grain

To nourish the children of men. Lo! thus We have
quickened dead clay
On the bosom of the earth, and beneath her so, too, shall
a quickening be.

* * * * *

What! deem they it wearied God create? – that His power
was spent?
They are fools, and they darken their eyes to that which He
willeth them see.
We have fashioned man, and we know the thoughts of his
innermost heart;

We are closer to him than his blood, more near than the vein of his throat;
At the right of ye all sits a watcher, a watcher sits at your left;
And whatso each speaketh or thinketh, those two have known it and note.

Al-Khāliq! Fashioner Divine!
Finish Thy work and make us Thine!



13 Al-Bārī'

The Artificer

Al-Bārī'! Moulder of each form and frame,
Pots praise the Potter, when we speak this name.

ANGELS' WINGS

Praise be to God, the Designer, Builder of earth and
of Heaven!
Fashioned His Angels [xviii] He hath, making them
messengers still;
Two wings to some and four wings to some, and to
some He hath given
Six and eight silver wings, making what marvels He
will.

Verily mighty is He, and what bestoweth of blessing
None can withhold; and none what He withholdeth
can send;
Children of men! remember the mercies of Allah
towards ye,

Is there a Maker, save this, is there another such
Friend?

Nowhere another one, we see,
Wondrous "Artificer!" like Thee.



14 Al-Muṣawwir

The Fashioner

Al-Muṣawwir! the "Fashioner!" say thus;
Still lauding Him who hath compounded us.

THE MAKING OF MAN

When the Lord would fashion men,
Spake He in the Angels' hearing,
"Lo! Our will is there shall be
On the earth a creature bearing
Rule and royalty. To-day
We will shape a man from clay."

Spake the Angels, "Wilt Thou make
Man who must forget his Maker
Working evil, shedding blood,
Of Thy precepts the forsaker?
But Thou knowest all, and we
Celebrate Thy majesty."
Answered Allah, "Yea! I know

What ye know not of this making;
Gabriel! Michael! [xix] Isrāfīl!
Go down to the earth, and taking
Seven clods of colours seven,
Bring them unto Me in Heaven."

Then those holy Angels three
Spread their pinions and descended;
Seeking clods of diverse clay,
That all colours might be blended;
Yellow, tawny, dun, black, brown,
White and red, as me are known.

But the earth spake, sore afraid,
"Angels! of my substance take not;
Give me back my dust, and pray
That the dread Creator make not
Man, for he will sin, and bring
Wrath on me and suffering."

Therefore empty-handed came
Gabriel, Michael, Isrāfīl,
Saying, "Lord! Thy earth imploreth
Man may never on her dwell;
'He will sin and anger thee,
Give me back my clay!' cried she."

Spake the Lord to Azrael [xx],
"Go thou, who of wing art surest.
Tell my earth this shall be well;
Bring those clods, which thou procurest
From her bosom, unto Me;
Shape them as I order thee."

Thus 'tis written how the Lord
Fashioned Adam for His glory,
Whom the Angels worshipped,
All save Iblīs; and this story
Teacheth wherefore Azrael saith,
"Come thou!" at man's hour of death.

Allah! when he doth call us, take!
We are such clay as Thou did'st make.

15 Al-Ghaffār

The Forgiver



Al-Ghaffār, the "Forgiver," praise thereby
Thy Lord who is so full of clemency.

ABRAHAM'S OFFENCE

Once, it is written, Abraham, "God's Friend,"[xxi]
Angered his Lord; for there had ridden in
Across the burning yellow desert-flats
An aged man, haggard with two days' drouth.
The water-skin swung from his saddle-fork
Wrinkled and dry; the dust clove to his lids,
And clogged his beard; his parched tongue and black lips
Moved to say, "Give me drink," yet uttered nought;
And that gaunt camel which he rode upon,
Sank to the earth at entering of the camp,
Too spent except to lay its neck along
The sand, and moan.

To whom when they had given
The cool wet jar, asweat with diamond-drops
Of sparkling life, that way-worn Arab laved
The muzzle of his beast, and filled her mouth;
Then westward turned with blood-shot, worshipping eyes,
Pouring forth water to the setting orb:
Next, would have drunk, but Abraham saw, and said,
"Let not this unbeliever drink, who pours
God's gift of water forth unto the sun,
Which is but creature of the living Lord."

But while the man still clutched the precious jar,
Striving to quaff, a form of grace drew nigh,
Beauteous, majestic. If he came afoot,
None knew, or if he glided from the sky.
With gentle air he filled a gourd and gave
The man to drink, and Abraham – in wrath
That one should disobey him in his tents –
Made to forbid; when full upon him smote
Eyes of divine light, eyes of high rebuke –
For this was Michael, Allah's messenger –
"Lo! God reproveth thee, thou Friend of God!
Forbiddest thou gift of the common stream
To this idolater, spent with the heat,
Who, in his utmost need, watered his beast,
And bowed the knee in reverence, ere he drank?
Allah hath borne with him these threescore years,
Bestowed upon him corn and wine, and made
His household fruitful and his herds increase;
And find'st thou not patience to pity him
Whom God hath pitied, waiting for the end,
Since none save He wotteth what end will come,
Or who shall find the light. Thou art rebuked!
Seek pardon! for thou hast much need to seek."

Thereat the Angel vanished, as he came;
But Abraham, with humbled countenance,
Kissed reverently the heathen's hand, and spake –
Leading him to the chief seat in the tent –
"God pardon me, as He doth pardon thee!"

Long-suffering Lord! ah, who should be
Forgiven, if Thou wert as we?



16 Al-Qahhār

The Dominant

Al-Qahhār call Him – "Dominant," the King,
Who maketh, knoweth, ruleth everything.

SURA "OF THE CATTLE"

The "Chapter of the Cattle:"[4] Heaven is whose,
And whose is earth? Say Allah's, That did choose
On His own might to lay the law of mercy.
He, at resurrection, will not lose

One of His own. What falleth, night or day,
Falleth by His Almighty word alway.
Wilt thou have any other Lord than Allah,
Who is not fed, but feedeth all flesh? Say!

For if He visit thee with woe, none makes
The woe to cease save He; and if He takes
Pleasure to send thee pleasure, He is Master
Over all gifts; nor doth His thought forsake

[4] Cf. Qur'an, vi. chapter "Of the Cattle."

The creatures of the field, nor fowls that fly;
They are "a people" also: "These, too, I
Have set," the Lord saith, "in My book of record;
These shall be gathered to Me by and by."

With Him of all things secret are the keys;
None other hath them, but He hath; and sees
Whatever is in land, or air, or water,
Each bloom that blows, each foam-bell on the seas.

Nor is there any little hidden grain
Swelling beneath the sod, nor in the main
Any small fish or shell, nor of the earth
Green things or dry things upon hill or plain,

But these are written in th' unerring Book:
And what ye did by day, and when ye took
Your slumbers, and the last sleep; then to Him
Is your return, and the account's there! – look!

Al-Qahhār! All-embracing One!
Our trust is fixed on Thee alone.



17 Al-Wahhāb

The Bestower

Praise "the Bestower:" unto all that live
He giveth, and He loveth those who give.

ʿALĪ AND THE ANGELS

The Imam ʿAlī, Lion of the Faith,
have ye not heard his giving? what he had
The poor had, for he held his gold and goods
As Allah's almoner. ʿAlī it was
Who in the Mecca mosque at evening prayer –
Being entreated by some needy one –
Would not break off, yet would not let the man
Ask him in vain for what he asked of God,
Favour and aid; wherefore – amid the words –
He drew his emerald, carved with Allah's praise,
From his third finger, giving it; and prayed
With face unturned.
If he had pieces ten,
He succoured five score; if one dinar, then
Into ten dirhems he divided that,

And fed ten "people of the bench."[xxii] Our Lord
(On whom be peace!) in all men's hearing said,
"This is the Prince of Givers!"
Once it fell,
Being sore hungered in his house, he cried,
"Fāṭimah! thou daughter of the Prophet of God,
Find me to eat, if thou hast any food."
And Fāṭimah said, "Father of Hassan! here
Not a dry date is left – not one – I swear
By Him besides Whom is none other God;
But in the corner of the tomb I laid
Our last six dirhems: take them, if thou wilt,
And buy thee in the market food, and bring
Fruits for our boys, Hassan and Hussain." Thus
ʿAlī departed. On his way he spied
Two Muslims, of whom one rudely haled
The other, crying, "Pay the debt, or come
Unto the prison where the smiter waits."
And he who owed had nought, and wept amain,
Sighing, "Alas the day!" But ʿAlī asked,
"What is thy debt, my brother?" Then he moaned,
"Six dirhems, for the lack of which the chains
Must load me." "Nay!" spake ʿAlī, "they are here;
Take them and pay the man, and go in peace."
So went that debtor free, but ʿAlī came
Empty in hand and belly home again
Unto his door, where Fāṭimah and the sons,
Hassan and Hussain, seeing him approach,
Ran joyous forth, crying, "He bringeth us
Dates now, and honey, and new camels' milk;
Soon shall we feast." But when they saw his cloth

Hang void, and troubled eyes, and heard him say,
"Upon my road I met a poorer man
Who, for six dirhems, should have borne the chains;
To him I gave them, and I brought ye nought,"
Then the lads wept; but Fāṭimah smiled and spake:
"Well hast thou done, O servant of the Lord!
Weep not, ye sons of ʿAlī, though we fast;
Who feedeth Allah's children, feasts his own:
He, the 'Bestower', will provide for us."

But ʿAlī turned, heart-sore because his boys
Lacked meat, and Fāṭimah's lovely eyes were sunk
Hollow with hunger. "I will go," thought he,
"Unto the blessed Prophet, for, if one
Be burdened with a thousand woes, his word
Dismisses them and makes the sorrow joy."
So bent he mournful steps thither, to tell
The Lord Muhammad ﷺ of this strait, when – lo!
An Arab in mid path encountered him,
Of noble bearing, with a chieftain's mien,
Leading a riding-camel by her string,
Black, with full teeth, the best beast ever foaled.
"Buy Wurdah! – buy my desert rose," quoth he;
"One hundred dirhems make her thine, so thou
Shalt own the best in Hedjaz, or at choice
Sell her for double money." ʿAlī said,
"The beast is excellent! fain would I buy,
But have not in my scrip thy price." "Go to,"
The Sheikh replied; "take her and bring thy gold,
When Allah pleaseth, to the western gate;
I will await thee."

ʿAlī nodded; took
The nose-string, turning to the left to seek
The camel-merchants that should buy the beast;
Whom at the very centre of the khan
Another Arab in desert garb,
Lordly and gracious like his fellow, met,
And quick saluted, saying, "Peace with thee!
God send thee favour! wilt thou sell me now
Thy riding-camel with the great stag-eyes?
Here be three hundred dirhems counted down,
Silver and gold, good money! Such an one
I sought, but found not, till I saw thee here."
"If thou wilt buy," quoth ʿAlī, "be it so!"
And thereupon the Bedawee counted out
Dinars and dirhems – little suns and moons
Of glittering gold and silver – in his cloth,
And took the beast; but when ʿAlī, with one piece
Bought food and fruits, and, hastening home again,
Heard his lads laugh with joy to see the store
Poured forth; – white cakes and dates and amber grapes –
And smiled himself to mark Fāṭimah's soft eyes
Gladden; then, having eaten, blessed the Lord,
Giver of gifts, "Bestower."
So, once more,
Made he to go unto the western gate
To pay his seller; but upon that street
The Prophet met him. Lightly smiled our Lord,
(On whom be comfort!) lightly questioned he,
Saying, "O ʿAlī! who was he did sell
Thy riding-camel, and to whom didst thou

sell her again?" Quoth ʿAlī, "Only God
Knoweth, except thou knows!" Spake our Lord,
"Yea, but I know! That was great Gabriel,
Chief messenger of Heaven, from who thou
bought'st;
And he to whom thou sold'st was Isrāfīl,
His heavenly fellow; and that beast did come
Forth from the pleasure-fields of Paradise,
And thither back is gone; for – look! my son,
Allah hath recompensed thee fifty times
The goodly deed thou didst, giving thine all
To free the weeping debtor. Oh, He sees
And measures and bestows; but what is kept,
Beyond gifts here, for kindly hearts that love,
God only wotteth, and the Eternal Peace."

Bestower! grant us grace to see
Our gain is what we lose for Thee.

18 Ar-Razzāq

The Provider



Ar-Razzāq! the "Provider!" thus again
Praise Him who, having formed thee, doth sustain.

SURA "OF THE FORENOON"[xxiii]

By the high dawn
When the light of the sun is strong!
By the thick night,
When the darkness is deep and long!
He hath not forsook thee, nor hated!
By His mercies, I say,
The life which will come shall be better
Than the life of to-day.

In the latter days
The Lord thy "Provider" shall give;
When thou knowest His gift
Thou wilt not ask rather to live;

Look back! thou wert friendless and frameless,
He made thee from nought;
Look back! thou wert blinded and wandering,
To the light thou art brought!
Consider! shall Allah forego thee
Since thus He hath wrought?[5]

The favour of thy Lord perpend,
And praise His mercies without end.

[5] Cf. Qur'an, xciii. chapter "Of the Forenoon."

19 Al-Fattāḥ

The Opener



Al-Fattāḥ! praise the "Opener!" and recite
The marvels of that "Journey of the Night."[6] [xxiv]

PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S ﷺ JOURNEY TO HEAVEN

Our Lord Muhammad ﷺ lay upon a hill
Safā, whereby the holy city stands,
Asleep, wrapped in a robe of camels' wool.
Dark was the night – that Night of grace – and still;
When all the seven spheres, by God's commands,
Opened unto him, splendid and wonderful!

For Gabriel, softly lighting, touched his side,
Saying, "Rise, thou enwrapped one! come and see
The things which be beyond. Lo! I have brought
Burāq, the horse of swiftness; mount and ride!"
Milk-white that steed was, with embroidery
Of pearls and emeralds in his long hair wrought.

[6] Cf. Qur'an, xvii. chapter "Of the Night Journey."

Hooved like a mule he was, with a man's face;
His eyes gleamed from his forelock, with a star
Of lucent hyacinth; the saddle-cloth
Was woven gold, which priceless work did grace:
The lightning goeth not so fast or far
As those broad pinions which he fluttered forth.

One heel he smote on Safā, and one heel
On Sinai – where the dint is to this day.
Next at Jerusalem he neighed. Our Lord,
Descending with th' Archangel there, did kneel
Making the midnight prayer; afterwards they
Tethered him to the Temple by a cord.

"Ascend!" spake Gabriel; and behold! there fell
Out of the sky a ladder bright and great,
Whereby, with easy steps, on radiant stairs,
They mounted – past our earth and heaven and hell –
To the first sphere, where Adam kept the gate,
Which was of vaporous gold and silvery squares.

Here thronged the lesser Angels: some took charge
To fill the clouds with rain and speed them round,
And some to tend live creatures; for what's born
Hath guardians there in its own shape: a large
Beauteous white cock crowed matins, at the sound
Cocks in a thousands planet hailed the morn.

Unto the second sphere by that white slope
Ascended they, whereof Noah held the key;
And two-fold was the throng of Angels here;
But all so dazzling glowed its fretted cope,
Burning with beams, Muhammad ﷺ could not see
What manner of celestial folk were there.

The third sphere lay a thousand years beyond
If thou should'st journey as the sun-ray doth,
But in one Fātiḥah[xxv] clomb they thitherward.
David and Solomon in union fond
Ruled at the entrance, keeping Sabaoth
Of ceaseless joy. The void was paven hard

With paven work of rubies – if there be
Jewels on earth to liken unto them
Which had such colour as no goldsmith knows –
And here a vast Archangel they did see,
"Faithful of God" his name, whose diadem
Was set with peopled stars; wherefrom arose

Lauds to the glory of God, filling the blue
With lovely music, as rose-gardens fill
A land with essences; and young stars, shaking
Tresses of lovely light, gathered and grew
Under his mighty plumes, departing still
Like ships with crews and treasure, voyage-making.

So came they to the fourth sphere, where there sate
Enoch, who never tasted death; and there
Behind its portal awful Azrael writes;
The shadow of his brows compassionate
Made night across all worlds; our Lord felt fear,
Marking the stern eyes and the hand which smites.

For always on a scroll he sets the names
Of new-born beings, and from off the scroll
He blotteth who must die; and holy tears
Roll down his cheeks, recording all our shames
And sins and penalties; while of each soul
Munkar and Nakīr[xxvi] reckon the arrears.

Next, at the fifth sphere's entry, they were 'ware
Of a door built in sapphire, having graven
Letters of the flashing fire, the faith unfolding,
"THERE IS NO GOD SAVE GOD." Aaron sate there
Guarding the "region of the wrath of Heaven;"
And Isrāfīl behind, his trumpet holding,

His trumpet holding – which shall wake the dead
And slay the living – all his cheeks puffed out,
Bursting to blow; for none knows Allah's time,
Nor when the word of judgment shall be said:
And darts, and chains of flame, lay all around,
Terrible tortures for th' ungodly's crime.

When to the sixth sphere passed they, Moses sped
Its bars of chrysoprase, and kissed our Lord,
And spake full sweet, "Prophet of Allah! thou
More souls of Ismael's tribes to truth hast led,
Than I of Isḥāq's." Here the crystal sword
Of Michael gave the light they journeyed through.

But at the seventh sphere that light which shone
Hath not an earthly name, nor any voice,
Can tell its splendour, nay, nor any ear
Learn, if it listened; only he alone
Who saw it, knows how there th' elect rejoice,
'Īsā, and Ibrāhīm, and the souls most dear.

And he, the glorious regent of that sphere,
Had seventy thousands heads; and every head
As many countenances; and each face
As many mouths; and in each mouth there were
Tongues seventy thousand, whereof each tongue said,
Ever and ever, "Praise to Allah! praise!"

Here, at the bound, is fixed that lotus-tree
SEDRA, which none among the Angels pass;
And not great Gabriel's self might farther wend:
Yet, led by presences too bright to see,
Too high to name, on paths like purple glass
Our Lord Muhammad ﷺ journeyed to the end.

Alone! alone! through hosts of Cherubim
Crowding the infinite void with whispering vans,
From splendour unto splendour still he sped;
Across the "Lake of Gloom" they ferried him,
And then the "Sea of Glory:" mortal man's
Heart cannot hold the wonders witnessëd.

So to the "Region of the Veils" he came,
Which shut all times off from eternity,
The bars of being where thought cannot reach:
Ten thousands thousand are they, walls of flame
Lambent with loveliness and mystery,
Ramparts of utmost heaven, having no breach.

Then he saw GOD! our Prophet saw THE THRONE! –
O Allah! let these weak words be forgiven! –
Thou, the Supreme, "the Opener," spake at last;
The Throne! the Throne! he saw; – our Lord alone!
Saw it and heard! – but the verse falls from heaven
Like a poised eagle, whom the lightning blast.

* * * * *

And Gabriel waiting by the tree he found;
 And Borak, tethered to the Temple porch;
  He loosed the horse, and 'twixt its wings ascended.
One hoof it smote on Zion's hallowed ground,
 One upon Sinai; and the day-star's torch
  Was not yet fading when the journey ended.

Al-Fattāḥ! "Opener!" we say
Thy name, and worship Thee always. ﷺ

20 Al-ʿAlīm

The All-Knower



Al-ʿAlīm! the "All-Knower!" by this word
Praise Him Who sees th'unseen, and hears th'unheard.

THE MU'AQQIBĀT

If ye keep hidden your mind, if ye declare it loud,
Equally God hath perceived, equally known is each thought:
If on your housetops ye sin, if in dark chambers ye shroud,
Equally God hath beheld, equally judgment is wrought.

He, without listening, doth know how many breathings ye make;
Numbereth the hairs of your head, wotteth the beats of your blood;
Heareth the feet of the ant when she wanders by night in the brake;

Counteth the eggs of the snake and the cubs of the
wolf in the wood.
Mute the Mu'aqqibāt [7] sit this side and that side of
men,
One on the right noting good, and one on the left
noting ill;
Each hath those Angels beside him who write with
invisible pen
Whatso he doeth, sayeth, or thinketh, recording it
still.

Vast is the mercy of God, and when a man doeth
aright,
Glad is the right-hand Angel, and setteth it quick
on the roll;
Ten times he setteth it down in letters of heavenly
light,
For one good deed ten deeds, and a hundred for ten
on the scroll.

But when one doeth amiss the right-hand Angel
doth lay
His palm on the left-hand Angel and whispers,
"Forbear thy pen!
Peradventure in seven hours the man may repent
him and pray;
At the end of the seventh hour, if it must be,
witness it then."[8]

Al-ʿAlīm! Thou Who knowest all,
With hearts unveiled on Thee we call.

[7] These are the "Successors," or Angels of Record, who relieve each other in the duty of registering human action, &c.
[8] Cf. Qur'an, xiii. chapter "Of Thunder."

21 Al-Qābiḍ

The Closer



Yakbuzu wa Yabsutu! heaven and hell
He closeth and uncloseth – and doth well![9]

EVIL DEEDS

In gold and silk and robes of pride
An evil-hearted monarch died;
Pampered and arrogant his soul
Quitted the grave. His eyes did roll
Hither and thither, deeming some
In that new world should surely come
To lead his spirit to a seat
Of state, for kingly merit meet.
What saw he? 'twas a hag so foul
There is no Afrit, Jinn or Ghoul
With countenance as vile, or mien
As fearful, and such terrors seen

[9] Cf. Qur'an, ii. chapter "Of the Cow."

In the fierce voice and hideous air,
Blood-dripping hands and matted hair.
"Allah have mercy!" cried the king,
"Whence and what art thou, hateful thing?"
"Dost thou not know – who gav'st me birth?"
Replied the form; "thy sins on earth
In me embodied thus behold.
I am thy wicked work! unfold
Thine arms and clasp me, for we two
In hell must live thy sentence through."

Then with a bitter cry, 'tis writ,
The king's soul passed unto the pit.

Al-Qābiḍ! so He bars the gate
Against the unregenerate. ☙

22 Al-Bāsiṭ

The Uncloser



Yet He who shuts the gate, just wrath to wreak,
Unbars it, full of mercy, to the meek.

GOOD DEEDS

There died upon the Mirāj night,
A man of Mecca, Amru hight;
Faithful and true, patient and pure,
Had been his years; he did endure
In war five spear-wounds, and in peace
Long journeying for his tribe's increase;
And ever of his gains he gave
Unto poor brethren – kind and brave:
But these forsook, and age and toil
Drained the strong hearts as flames drink oil;
Till, lone and friendless, grey and spent –
A thorn-tree's shadow for his tent,
And desert sand for dying-bed – Amru the camel-man
lay dead.

What is it that the 'Hadith[xxvii] saith?
Even while the true eyes glazes in death,
And the warm heart wearied, and beat
The last drum of its long defeat,
An Angel, lighting on the san,
Took Amru's spirit by the hand,
And gently spake, "Dear brother, come!
A sore road thou didst journey home;
But life's dry desert thou hast passed,
And Zamzam[xxviii] sparkles nigh at last."
Then with a swift flight those twain did rise
Unto the gates of Paradise,
Which opened, and the Angel gave
A golden granate, saying, "Cleave
This fruit, my brother!" But its scent
So heavenly seemed, and so intent,
So rapt was Amru, to behold
The great fruit's rind of blushing gold
And emerald leaves – he dared no touch,
Murmuring, "O Mālik! 'tis too much
That I am here, with eyes so dim,
And grace all fled." Then bade they him
Gaze in the stream which glided stilly,
'Mid water-roses and white lily,
Under those lawns and smiling skies
That make delight in Paradise;
When, lo! the presence imaged there
Was of such comeliness, no peer
Among those glorious Angels stood
To Amru, mirrored in the flood.

"I! is it I?" he cried in gladness,
"Am I so changed from toil and sadness?"
"This was thy hidden self," replied
The Angels. "So shalt thou abide
By our bright river evermore;
And in that fair fruit's secret core –
Which on the Tree of Life hath grown –
Another marvel shall be shown.
Ah, happy Amru! cleave!" He clove:
Sweet miracle of bliss and love!
Forth from the pomegranate there grew,
As from its bud a rose breaks through,
A lovely, stately, lustrous maid,
Whose black orbs long silk lashes shade,
Whose beauty was so rich to see
No verse can tell it worthily;
Nor is there found in any place
One like her for the perfect grace
of soft arms wreathed and ripe lips moving
In accents musical and loving;
For thus she spake: "Peace be to thee,
My Amru!" Then, with quick cry, he:
"Who art thou, blessed one? what name
Wearest thou? teach my tongue to frame
This worship of my heart." Said she,
"Thy good deeds gave me being: see,
If in my beauty thou hast pleasure,
How the Most High doth truly treasure
Joy for his servants. Murzieh I –
She that doth love and satisfy –

And I am made by Allah's hand
Of ambergris and musk, to stand
Beside thee, soothing thee, and tending
In comfort and in peace unending."
So hand in hand, 'tis writ, they went,
To those bright bowers of high content.

Al-Bāsiṭ! thus He opens wide
His mercies to the justified. ☙

23 Al-Khāfiḍ

The Abaser



Al-Khāfiḍ! the "Abaser!" praise hereby
Him Who doth mock at earthly majesty.

NIMRŪD AND THE GNAT

Heard ye of Nimrūd?[xxix] Cities fell before him;
Shinar, from Accad to the Indian Sea,
His garden was; as God, men did adore him;
Queens were his slaves, and kings his vassalry.

Eminent on his car of carven brass,
Through foeman's blood nave-deep he drave his wheel;
And not a lion in the river-grass
Could keep its shaggy fell from Nimrūd's steel.
But he scorned Allah, schemed a tower to invade Him;
Dreamed to scale Heaven, and measure might with God;
Heaped high the foolish clay wherefrom We made him,
And built thereon his seven-fold house of the clod.

Therefore, the least Our messengers among,
We sent; a grey gnat dancing in the reeds:
Into his ear she crept, buzzing, – and stung.
So perished mighty Nimrūd and his deeds.

O Thou Abaser of all pride!
Mighty Thou art, and none beside. ∾

24 Ar-Rāfiʿ

The Exalter



Ar-Rāfiʿ! the "Exalter!" laud Him so
Who loves the humble and lifts up the low.

ALLAH'S PROPHETS

Whom hath He chosen for His priests and preachers,
Lords who were eminent, or men of might?
Nay, but consider how He seeks His teachers,
Hidden, like rubies unaware of light.

Ur of Chaldees! what chance to discover
Th' elect of Heaven in Āzar's leathern tent?
But Allah saw His child, and friend, and lover,
And Abraham was born, and sealed, and sent.

The babe committed to th' Egyptian water!
Knew any that the tide of Nilus laved
The hope of Israel there? yet Pharoah's daughter
Found the frail ark, and so was Moses saved.

Low lies the Syrian town behind the mountain
 Where Mary, meek and spotless, knelt that morn,
And saw the splendid Angel by the fountain,
 And heard his voice, "Lord ʿĪsā shall be born!"

Nay, and Muhammad (blessed may he be!),
 Abdallah's and Aminah's holy son,
Whom black Ḥalīmah[xxx] nursed, the Bedawee,
 Where lived a lonelier or a humbler one?

Think how he led the camels of Khadījah,
 Poor, but illumined by the light of Heaven;
Mightier than Noah, or Enoch, or Elijah,
 Our holy Prophet, to Arabia given.

Man knew him not, wrapped in his cloth, and weeping
 Lonely on Ḥirā'[xxxi] all that wondrous night;
But Allah for His own our Lord was keeping:
 "Rise, thou enwrapped one!" Gabriel spake, "and write."

Save God there is none high at all,
Nor any low whom He doth call.

25 Al-Muʿizz

The Honourer



Al-Muʿizz! by this title celebrate
The "Honourer" Whose favour maketh great.

SURA "OF IMRAN'S FAMILY"

Say "God," say "Lord of all!
Kingdoms and kings Thou makest and unmakest,
This Thou takest, that one Thou forsakest;
Alike are great and small;
Into Thy hand they fall."

"In Thy dread hand they rest;
Their nights and days, their waking and their sleeping,
Their birth, and life, and death lie in Thy keeping;
'Be thus' to each Thou say'st,
And thus to be is best,

"Though it seem good or ill.
Islam! – to Thee our souls we do resign,
Turning our faces to the blessed shrine;
Seeking no honour still
Save from Thy will."[10]

Al-Mu'izz! only this we pray
To learn will and to obey.

[10] Cf. Qur'an, iii. chapter "Of Imran's Family."

26 Al-Mudhill

The Leader Astray



O, Al-Mudhill! what if it be Thy will,
Having made man, to lead him unto ill!

GOD'S WILL AND FREE-WILL

Saith the Perspicuous Book: "All things which be are of God;
Neither, except by His word, falleth a leaf to the ground:
If He will open He openeth, and whom He hath blinded He blindeth,
Leading, misleading; to none liable, blameable, bound."[11]

Saith the Perspicuous Book: "Tied on the neck of a man
Hangeth the scroll of his fate, not a line to be gainsaid or grudged;
When the trumpet of Isrāfīl thunders, the Angels will show it and say,
Read there what thine own deeds have written; thyself by thyself shall be judged."[12]

[11] Cf. Qur'an, iii. chapter "Of Imran's Family."
[12] Cf. Qur'an, xvii. chapter "Of the Night Journey."

Wilt thou be wiser than God Who knoweth beginning and
end?
Wilt thou be juster than He whose balance is turned by a
sigh?
He sayeth, "It shall not be equal for the doers of right and
wrong."
"It shall not be equal," He sayeth, "for them that accept
and deny."[13]

Al-Mudhill! lead us not astray!
Teach us to find the perfect way.

[13] Cf. Qur'an, *eodem loco.*

27 As-Samīʿ

The All-Hearing



As-Samīʿ! O Thou Hearer! none can be
So far, his crying doth not come to Thee.

A SHEPHERD'S PRAYER

Writes in his Mesnevi, Jalāl ad-Dīn:
There came a man of Yaman, poor and old,
To Mecca, making pilgrimage; untaught,
A shepherd of the hills. Humble he trod
The six mīqāt,[xxxii] the stages of the Hajj;
Humbly indued the iḥrām, garb of faith
Which hath no seam; made due ablutions, kissed
The black stone; then three times with hastening feet
Circled the Kaabah, and four times paced
With slackened gait the ṭawāf, as is due,
(For such observances the Mollah taught).
But, when he bowed before the Holy Place,
Thus brake his soul from him, knowing no prayer,
Full of God's love, though ignorant of God:

"O Master! O my Sheikh! where tarriest Thou?
Show me Thy face that I may worship Thee,
May toil Thy servant, which I am in heart:
Ah! let me sew Thy robes, anoint Thine hair,
Wash Thy soiled robes, and serve Thee daily up
My fresh she-goat's freshest milk – I love Thee so!
Where hidest Thou, that I may kiss Thine hand,
Chafe Thy dear feet, and ere Thou takest rest –
In the gold sky, beside Thy sun, belike,
Among the soft-spread fleeces of Thy clouds –
Sweep out Thy chamber, O my joy, my King!"

Which hearing, they who keep the shrine, incensed,
Had haled him to the gateway, crying, "Dog!
What blasphemy is this thou utterest,
Saying such things of Him That hath no needs
Of nourishment, nor clothing, nor repose,
Nor hands, nor feet, nor any form or frame:
That thou, base keeper of the silly herd,
Shouldst proffer service to the All-Powerful?
Meet were it that we stoned thee dead with stones,
Who art accursed and injurious.
Begone! these holy walls are not for thee."

So, sore abashed, the shepherd made to go,
Silent and weeping; but our Prophet ﷺ marked,
And with mild eyes smiled on the man; then spake
To those that drave him forth: "Ye, when ye pray
Outside this holy place, in distant lands,
Whither turn ye your faces?" Each one said,
"Unto the Kaabah." "And when ye pray,

Within the blessed precincts, pilgrims here,
Which way lies Mecca?" "All is sacred here,"
They answered, "and it matters nought which way."
"Lo! now ye reason well," replied our Lord;
"Inside the Kaabah it matters nought
Whither men turn; and in the secret place
Of perfect love for God, words are as breath
And will is all. This simple shepherd's prayer
Came unto Allah's ears clearer than yours,
Nathless his ignorance, because his heart –
Not tongue, not understanding – uttered it.
make room for God's poor lover nighest me;
Good fellowship hath any man with him
To whom Heaven's ear as quick inclines itself
As doth a mother's when her babe lisps love."

Then they were sore ashamëd in that hour.

Hearer of hearts! As-Samīʿ! so
Our love inspire, and Thine bestow.



28 Al-Baṣīr

The All-Seeing

Al-Baṣīr! O Thou Seer! great and small
Live in Thy vision, which embraceth all.

AZRAEL AND THE INDIAN PRINCE

Were it one wasted seed of water-grass,
Blown by the wind, or buried in the sand,
He seeth and ordaineth if it live;
Were it a wild bee questioning honey-buds,
He seeth if she find, and how she comes
On busy winglets to her hollow tree.
The seeing of His eyes should not be told,
Though all the reeds in all the earth were cut
To writing-sticks, and all the seven seas
Were seven times multiplied, flowing with ink,
And seventy Angels wrote. He beholds all
Which was, or is, or will be: yea, with Him
Is present vision of the five secret things:

The day of Judgement; and the times of rain;
The child hid in the womb – its quickening,
And whether male or female; – what will fall
To-morrow (as ye know what did befall
Yesterday); and where every man shall die.[14]

"Where every man shall die." Al Beidhawi
Presenteth how there sate with Solomon
A prince of India, and there passed them by
Azrael, Angel of Death, on shadowy plumes;
With great eyes gazing earnestly, as one
Who wonders, gazing. And, because the prince
Sate with the king, he saw what the king saw,
The Jinns and Angels, and saw Azrael
Fixing on him those awful searching eyes.
"What name, I pray thee, wears yon messenger?"
So asked he of the king; and Solomon
Made answer, "It is Azrael, who calls
The souls of men." "He seemed," whispered the prince,
"To have an errand unto me; – bid now
That one among thy demon ministers
Waft me, upon the swiftest wing that beats,
To India, for I fear him." Solomon
Issued command, and a swift Jinn sprang forth
Bearing the prince aloft, so that he came
To Coromandel, ere the fruit – which fell
Out of the fig – had touched the marble floor.

[14] Cf. Qur'an, xxxi. chapter "Of Luqmān."

Thereupon Azrael said to Solomon,
"I looked earnestly upon the man
In wonder, for my Lord spake, 'Take his soul
In India;' yet behold he talked with thee
Here in Judaea! Now, see! he hath gone
There were it was commanded he should die."
Then followed Azrael. In that hour the prince
Died of a hurt, sitting in India.

With Thee, Lord, be the time and place,
So that we die in Thy dear grace.

29 Al-Ḥakam

The Judge of All



Al-Ḥakam! think upon the Day of Doom.
And fear "the Judge" before Whom all must come.

THE LAST DAY

When the sun is withered up,
And the stars from Heaven roll;
When the mountains quake,
And let ye stray your she-camels,[xxxiii] gone ten months in foal;
When wild beasts flock
With the people and the cattle
In terror, in amazement,
And the seas boil and rattle;
And the dead souls
For their bodies seek;
And the child vilely slain
Is bid to speak,
Being asked, "Who killed thee, little maid?[xxxiv]
Tell us his name!"

While the books are unsealed,
And the crimson flame
Flayeth the skin of the skies,
And Hell breaks ablaze;
And Paradise
Opens her beautiful gates to the gaze; –
Then shall each soul
Know the issues of the whole,
And the balance of its scroll.[15]
Shall We swear by the stars
Which fade away?
By the Night drowned in darkness,
By the dead Day?
We swear not! a true thing is this;
It standeth sure,
He saw it and he heard[xxxv], and Our word
Will endure!

* * * * * *

When the sky cleaves asunder,
And the stars
Are scattered; and in thunder
All the bars
Of the sea burst, and all the graves are emptied
Like chests upturned,
Each soul will see her doings, done and undone,
And what is earned.
The smiting, the smiting
Of that Day!

[15] Cf. Qur'an, lxxxi. chapter "Of the Folding Up."

The horror, the splendour,
Who will say?[16]
The Day when none shall answer for his brother;
The Day which is with God, and with none other.

Al-Ḥakam! Judge! Save by Thy power,
Who might abide that awful hour?

[16] Cf. Qur'an, lxxxii. chapter "Of Cleaving Asunder."



30 Al-ʿAdl

The Just Lord

Al-ʿAdl! O "Just Lord!" we magnify
Thy righteous Law, which shall the whole world try.

SURA "OF JONAS"

God will roll up, when this world's end approacheth,
The broad blue spangled hangings of the sky,
Even as As-Sigill[17] rolleth up his record,
And seals and binds it when a man doth die.

Then the false worshippers, and what they follow,
Will to the pit, like "stones of hell," descend;
But true believers shall hear the Angels saying,
"This is your day; be joyous without end."[18]

In that hour dust shall lie on many faces,
And many faces shall be glad and bright;[19]
Ye who believe, trust and be patient always,
Until God judges, for He judges right.[20]

Give us to pass before Thy throne
Among the number of Thine own!

[17] A name of the Angel of Registration.
[18] Cf. Qur'an, xxi. chapter "Of the Prophets."
[19] Cf. Qur'an, lxxx. chapter "Of the Frown."
[20] Cf. Qur'an, x. chapter "Of Jonas."

31 Al-Laṭīf

The Gracious One



Dread is His wrath, but boundless is His grace,
Al-Laṭīf! Lord! show us Thy "favouring" face!

SURA "OF COUNSEL"

Most quick to pardon sins is He:
 Who unto God draws near
One forward step, God taketh three
 To meet, and quit his fear.

If ye will have of this world's show,
 God grants, while Angels weep;
If ye for Paradise will sow,
 Right noble crops ye reap.[21]

Ah, Gracious One, we toil to reap:
The soil is hard, the way is steep!

[21] Cf. Qur'an, xlii. chapter "Of Counsel."



32 Al-Khabīr

He who is Aware

Al-Khabīr! Thou Who art "aware" of all,
By this name also for Thy grace we call.

PROPHET MUHAMMAD ﷺ IN THE CEMETERY

One morning in Medina walked our Lord
Among the tombs: glad we the dawn, and broad
On headstones and on footstones sunshine lay;
Earth seemed so fair, 'twas hard to be away.
"O people of the grave!" Muhammad ﷺ said,
"Peace be with you! Your caravan of dead
Hath passed the defile, and we living ones
Forget what men ye were, of whom the sons,
And what your merchandise and where ye went;
But Allah knows these things! Be ye content
Since Allah is 'aware.' Ah! God forgive
Those that are dead, and us who briefly live."

Yea! pardon, Lord, since Thou dost know
Tomorrow, now, and long ago.


الله هو
١٤٢٥



33 Al-Ḥalīm

The Clement

Al-Ḥalīm! "Clement" is our Lord above;
Magnify Allah by this name of love.

THE DHARRA AND THE DATE-STONE

Ye know the ant that creeps upon the fig,
The *dharra*, made so small,
Until she moveth in the purple seeds
She is not seen at all.

If, on judgment-day, holding the scales –
When all the trial's done –
The Angle of the Balance crieth, "Lord!
The good deeds of this one

Outweigh his evil deeds, justly assessed,
By half one *dharra*'s weight;"
Allah will say, "Multiply good to him,
And open Heaven's gate!"

Not if thy work be worth a date-stone's skin
Shall it be overpast;
Thus it is written in the Sacred Book,[22]
Thus will it be at last.

Faithful and just, Al-Ḥalīm! we
Take refuge in Thy clemency.

[22] Cf. Qur'an, iv. chapter "Of Women."



34 Al-ʿAzīz

The Strong and Sovereign One

Al-ʿAzīz! "Strong and Sovereign" God, Thy hand
Is over all Thy works, holding command.

SURA "OF *AL-AḤQĀF*"

Maker of all ye truly call the Strong and Sovereign
One,
Yet have ye read that verse which saith whereto His
work was done?
Open "the Book," and, heedful, look what weighty
words are given
(The Chapter of Al-Aḥqāf) concerning Earth and
Heaven.

"The Heavens and earth," Al-Aḥqāf[xxxvi] saith, "and
whatso is between,
Think ye that We made these to be, and then – not to
have been?

Think ye We fashioned them in jest, without their
times, and plan,
And purpose? Nay! accurst are they who judge of
God by man."[23]

O Higher, Wiser, than we know,
Let not Thy creatures judge Thee so.

[23] Cf. Qur'an, xlvi. chapter "Of Al-Aḥqāf."



35 Al-Ghafūr

The Pardoner

He is the "Pardoner," and his Scripture hath –
"Paradise is for them that check their wrath,
And pardon sins; so Allah doth with souls;
He loveth best him who himself controls."[24]

HASSAN'S SLAVE

Know ye of Hassan's slave? Hassan the son
Of ʿAlī. In the camp of Ras-al-hadd
He made a banquet unto sheikhs and lords,
Rich dressed and joyous; and a slave bore round,
Smoking with new-cooked pillaw, Badhan's dish
Carved from rock-crystal, with the feet in gold,
And garnets round the rim; but the boy slipped
Against the tent-rope, and the precious dish
Broke into shards of beauty on the board,
Scalding the son of ʿAlī. One guest cried,

[24] Cf. Qur'an, iii. chapter "Of Imran's Family."

"Dog! wert thou mine, for this thing shouldst thou
howl!"
Another, "Wretch! thou meritest to die."
And yet another, "Hassan! give me leave
To smite away this swine's head with my sword!"
Even Hassan's self was moved; but the boy fell
Face to the earth and cried, "My lord! 'tis writ,
'Paradise is for them that check their wrath.'"
"'Tis writ so," Hassan said; "I am not wroth."
"My lord!" the boy sobbed on, "also 'tis writ,
'Pardon the trespasser.'" Hassan replied,
"'Tis written – I remember – I forgive."
"Now is the blessing of the Most High God
On thee, dear master!" cried the happy slave,
"For He – 'tis writ – 'loves the beneficent.'"
"Yea! I remember, and I thank thee, slave,"
Quoth Hassan; – "better is one noble verse
Fetched from 'the Book,' than the gold and crystal
brought
From Yaman's hills. Lords! he hath marred the dish,
But mended fault with wisdom. See, my slave!
I give thee freedom, and this purse to buy
The robe and turban of a Muslim freed."

Al-Ghafûr! pardon us, as we
Forgive a brother's injury.



36 Ash-Shakūr

The Grateful

"Grateful"- Ash-Shakūr – is He; praise Him so
Who thanketh men for that He did bestow.

SURA "OF AL-KAUTHAR"

So much hast thou of thy hoard
As thou gavest to thy Lord;
Only this will bring thee in
Usance rich and free from sin:
Send thy silver on before,
Lending to His sick and poor.
Every dirhem dropped in alms
Touches Allah's open palms,
Ere it fall into the hands
Of thy brother. Allah stands
Begging of thee, when thy brother
Asketh help. Ah! if another
Proffered thee, for meat and drink,

Food upon Al-Kauthar's[xxxvii] brink,[25]
Shining Kauthar which doth flow
Sweet as honey, cool as snow,
White as milk, and smooth as cream,
Underneath its banks, which gleam –
Green and golden chrysolite,
In the Gardens of delight,
Whence who drinks never again
Tasteth sorrow, age or pain –
Who would not make merchandise,
Buying bliss in Paradise,
Laying up his treasure where
Stores are safe and profits clear?
But ye lend at lower cost,
Whilst Ash-Shakūr offers most,
Good returning seven times seven,
Paying gifts of earth with Heaven.

Allah, Who dost reward so well,
What maketh man in sin to dwell!

[25] Cf. Qur'an, cviii.



37 Al-ʿAlīyyu

The Exalted

Al-ʿAlīyyu! O believers, magnify
By this great name, Allah, our Lord "Most High."

SURA "OF THE BEE"

He willed, and Heaven's blue arch vaulted the air;
"Be!" said He – Earth![26] and the round earth was made;
See! at the hour of late and early prayer
The very shadows worship Him, low laid.

Most High! the lengthening shadows teach
Morning and evening prayer to each.

[26] Cf. Qur'an, xvi. chapter "Of the Bee."

38 Al-Kabīr

The Very Great



Praise Him, Al-Kabīr, seated on "the Throne,"
The "Very Great," the High-exalted One.

THE SEVEN HEAVENS

Seven Heavens Allah made:
First "Paradise," the *Jennat-al-Firdaus;*
The next, Al Khuld, "Gate of Eternity;"
The third, *Dar-as-Salām*, the "Peaceful House;"
The fourth, *Dar-al-Qarār*, "Felicity;"
The fifth was *Aidenn*, "Home of Golden Light;"
The sixth, *Al Naʿīm*, Garden of Delight;"
The seventh, *Al-ʿIlliyūn*, "Footstool of the Throne;"
And, each and every one,
Sphere above sphere, and treasure over treasure,
The great decree of God made for reward and pleasure.

Saith the Perspicuous Book:[27]
"Look up to Heaven! look!
Dost thou see flaw or fault
In that vast vault,

[27] Cf. Qur'an, lxvii. chapter "Of the Kingdom."

Spangled with silvery lamps of night,
Or gilded with glad light
Of sunrise, or sunset, or warm noon?
        Rounded He well the moon?
Kindled He wisely the red Lord of Day?
        Look twice! look thrice, and say!"

        Thy weak gaze fails;
Eyesight is drowned in yon abyss of blue;
Ye see the glory, but ye see not through:
        God's greatness veils
Its greatness by its greatness – all that wonder
Lieth the lowest of those Heavens under,
        Beyond which Angles view
Allah, and Allah's mighty works, asunder;
The thronged clouds whisper of it when they thunder.

Allah Kabīr! in silence we
Meditate on Thy majesty.

39 Al-Ḥafīẓ

The Preserver



Al-Ḥafīẓ! O "Preserver!" succour us
Who, humbly trustful, cry unto Thee thus.

SURA "OF THE NIGHT STAR"

By the Sky and the Night star!
By Al-Ṭāriq[xxviii] the white star!
Shining clear –
When darkness covers man and beast –
To proclaim dawn near,
And the gold sun hastening from the east,
We have set a guard upon you, every one;
Be ye not afraid!
Of seed from loins, and milk from bosom-bone,
Ye were made:
We are able to remake you, when ye die,
For cold death
Cometh forth from Us, as warm life cometh
And gift of breath.

Do the darkness and the terror plot against you?
We also plan;
They that love you are stronger than your haters.
Trust God, O man![28]

"Ya Al-Ḥafiẓ!" on your doors ye grave;
In your hearts, too, these scriptures have!

[28] Cf. Qur'an, lxxxvi. chapter "Of the Night Star."

40 Al-Muqīt

The Maintainer



Praise Al-Muqīt, the great "Maintainer!" He
Made us, and makes our sustenance to be.

SURA "OF THE INEVITABLE"

The chapter of "the Inevitable:"[29] We gave
The life ye live; why doubt ye We can save
What once hath been from wasting – if We will –
When, like dry corn, man lieth in his grave?

Did ye cause seed to grow, or was it We, –
Wherefrom spring all the many lives that be?
Who stirred the pulse which couples man and maid,
And in the fruit hid that which forms the tree?

[29] Cf. Qur'an, lvi.

Ye go afield to scatter grain, and then
Sleep, while We change it into bread for men;
 Have ye bethought why seed should shoot, not sand,
Granite, or gravel? Why the gentle rain

Falleth so clean and sweet from out Our sky,
Which might be salt and black and bitter? Why
 The soft clouds gather it from off the seas
To spread it o'er the pastures by and by?

The flame ye strike rubbing Afār and Markh,[30]
Have ye considered that such strange yellow spark?
 Did ye conceive such marvel, or did We
Grant it, to warm and cheer men in the dark?

Not now, but when the soul comes to the neck,[xxxix]
The meaning of those mercies each shall reck.
 Then are We nearest, though ye see it not;
Can ye that summoned spirit order back?

Nay, Al-Muqīt! in life and death
Thine are we: Truth Thy Scripture saith.

[30] The woods used by the ancient Arabs to kindle fire.

41 Al-Ḥasīb

The Reckoner



Laud Him as "Reckoner," casting up th'account,
And making little merits largely mount.

SURA "OF WOMEN"

Give more than thou takest:
If one shall salute thee,
Saying, "Peace be upon thee,"
The salute which thou makest,
Speak it friendlier still,
As beseemeth goodwill;
Saying, "Peace, too, and love
From Allah above
Be with thee:" – for heard
Is each brotherly word;
And it shall not be lost
That thou gavest him most.[31]

Ya Ḥasīb! praise to Thee; for all
Our good deeds needs must be so small.

[31] Cf. Qur'an, iv. chapter "Of Women."



42 Al-Jamīl

The Benign

Al-Jamīl! "the Benign;" ah, name most dear,
Which bids us love and worship without fear.

THE ROSE GARDEN

Too much ye tremble, too much fear to feel
That yearning love which Allah's laws reveal;
Too oft forget – your troubled journey through –
He who is Power, is Grace and Beauty too,
And Clemency, and Pity, and Pure Rest,
The Highest and the Uttermost and Best;
Sweeter than honey, and more dear to see
Than any loveliness on land or sea
By bard or lover praised, or famed in story;
For these were shadows of His perfect glory;
Which is not told, because, who sees God near
Loseth the speech to speak, in loving fear,
So joyous is he, so astonishëd.
Hath there come to ye what the Dervish said,

At Kaisereya, in the marble shrine,
Who woke from vision of the love divine?
"I have seen Allah!" quoth he – all a-glow
With splendour of the dream which filled him so –
"Yea! I have paced the Garden of Delight,
And heard and known!"
"Impart to us thy light,"
His fellows cried.
He paused, and smiled, and spake:
"Fain would I say it, brothers, for your sake,
for I have wandered in a sphere so bright,
Have heard such things, and witnessed such a sight,
That now I know whither all nature turns,
And what the love celestial is which burns,
At the great heart of all the world, ensuring
That griefs shall pass and joy will be enduring.
Yet ask me not! I am as one who came
Where, among roses, one bush, all aflame
By fragrant crimson blossoms, charged the air
With loveliness and perfume past compare.
Then had I thought to load my skirt with roses,
That ye might judge what wealth that land discloses;
And filled my robe, plucking the peerless blooms;
But ah! the scent so rich, so heavenly, comes;
So were my senses melted into bliss
With the intoxicating breath of this;
I let the border of my mantle fall –
The roses slipped! I bring ye none at all."

Brothers! with other eyes must we
Behold the roses on that Tree.[xi]



43 Al-Karīm

The Bountiful Lord

Allah-al-Karīm! Bountiful Lord! we bless
By this good name Thy loving kindnesses.

SURA "OF CLEAVING ASUNDER"

O Man! what hath beguiled,
That thou shouldst stray
From the plain easy way
Of Allah's service, being Allah's chid?
When thou wert not,
And when thou wast a clot,
He did foresee thee, and did fashion thee
From heel to nape,
Giving thee this fair shape,
Composing thee in wondrous symmetry –
More than thy mother – in the form thou wearest;
Nearer to thee than what on earth is nearest.

Kinder than kin is He –
Wilt thou forgetful be?[32]

Ya Karīm! since Thou lovest thus,
Quicken, ah, quicken love in us.

[32] Cf. Qur'an, lxxxii. chapter "Of Cleaving Asunder."

44 Ar-Raqīb

The Watchful One



Allah-ar-Raqīb! praise ye "the Watchful One,"
Who noteth what men do and leave undone.

THE BOOKS OF GOOD AND EVIL

The book of the wicked is in Sijjīn,
A close-writ book:
A book to be unfolded on the Awful Day,
A day whereto men would not look.

What Sijjīn is
Who shall make thee know?
The Black Gaol. Under Jehannum,
Under Laẓā, the "red glow,"
Under Ḥuṭamah, "the fires which split;"
Beneath Saʿīr, the "Yellow Hell,"
And scorching Saqar, lieth it,
And Jaḥīm, where devils dwell:
Lower from light and bliss
Than Hāwiyeh, "the abyss:"
Sijjīn is this.

But the books of the righteous are in 'Illiyūn,[xli]
 And what shall make thee see
The glory of that region, nigh to God,
 Where those records be?
Joy shall make their portion: they shall lie
 With the light of delight upon their faces,
On soft seats reclining
 In peaceful places;
Drinking wine, pure wine, sealed wine,
 Whose seal is musk and rose;
Allayed by the crystal waves that shine
 In Tasnīm,[xlii] which flows
From the golden throne of God: at its brink
 Angels drink.[33]

O "Watcher!" grant our names may be
In that Book lying near to Thee.

[33] Cf. Qur'an, lxxxiii. chapter "Of Short Weight."

45 Al-Mujīb

The Hearer of Prayer



Allah-al-Mujīb, Who biddest men to pray,
And hearest prayer; thus praise we Thee alway.

ʿALĪ AND THE JEW

Our Lord the Prophet (peace to him!) doth write –
Sura the seventeenth, intituled "Night:" –
"Pray at the noon, pray at the sinking sun,
In night-time pray; but most when night is done,
For daybreak's prayer is surely borne on high
By Angels changing guard within the sky."
And in another verse, "Dawn's prayer is more
Than the wide world with all its treasured store."

Therefore the Faithful, when the growing light
Gives to discern a black hair from a white,
Haste to the mosque, and, bending Mecca-way,
Recite Al-Fātiḥah[xliii] while 'tis scarce yet day:
Praise be to Allah, Lord of all that live.
Merciful King and Judge, to Thee we give

Worship and honour! Succour us and guide
Where those have walked who rest Thy Throne beside;
The way of peace, and not the wrongful path,
Nor theirs to whom, oh Lord! Thou hast shewn wrath.
He who saith this, before the east is red,
A hundred prayers of Azan hath he said.

Hear now this story of it – told, I ween,
For your soul's comfort by Jalāl ad-Dīn
In the great pages of the Mesnevi;
For therein, plain and certain, shall ye see
How precious is the prayer at break of day
In Allah's ears, and in His sight alway
How sweet are reverence and gentleness
Done to His creatures: "ʿAlī" (whom I bless!),
The son of Abū Ṭālib – he, surnamed
"Lion of God," in many battles famed,
The cousin of our Lord the Prophet (grace
Be his!), uprose betimes one morn, to pace,
As he was wont, unto the mosque, wherein
Our Lord (bliss live with him!) watched to begin
Al-Fātiḥah. Darkling was the sky, and strait
The lane between the city and mosque-gate,
By rough stones broken and deep pools of rain;
And therethrough toilfully, with steps of pain,
Leaning upon his staff an old Jew went
To synagogue, on pious errand bent;
For those be "People of the Book," and some
Are chosen of Allah's will who have not come
Unto full light of knowledge; therefore, he,
Alī, the Caliph of proud days to be –
Knowing this good old man, and why he stirred

Thus early, ere the morning mills[xliv] were heard –
Out of his nobleness and grace of soul
Would not thrust past, though the Jew blocked the whole
Breadth of the lane, slow hobbling. So they went,
That ancient first; and, in soft discontent,
After him ʿAlī, noting how the sun
Flared near, and fearing prayer might be begun;
Yet no command upraising, no harsh cry
To stand aside, because the dignity
Of silver hairs is much, and morning praise
Was precious to the Jew, too. Thus their ways
Wended the pair; great ʿAlī, sad and slow,
Following the greybeard, while the east, a-glow,
Blazed with bright spears of gold athwart the blue,
And the Muezzin's call[xlv] came, "*Allahu!*
La ilah' illahu!"
In the mosque, our Lord
(On whom be peace) stood by the mimbar-board,
In act to bow and Fātiḥah forth to say.
But, while his lips moved, some strong hand did lay
Over his mouth a palm invisible,
So that no voice on the assembly fell.
Ya! Rabbi 'lalamīna thrice he tried
To read, and thrice the sound of reading died,
Stayed by this unseen touch. Thereat amazed,
Our Lord Muhammad ﷺ turned, arose, and gazed,
And saw – alone of all within the shrine –
A splendid Presence, with large eyes divine
Beaming, and golden pinions folded down,
Their speed still tokened by the fluttered gown;
Gabriel he knew, the Spirit who doth stand

Chief of the Sons of Heav'n, at God's right hand;
"Gabriel! why stay'st thou me?" the Prophet said,
"Since at this hour the Fātiḥah should be read."
But the bright Presence, smiling, pointed where
Alī towards the outer gate drew near,
Upon the threshold shaking off his shoes,
And giving "alms of entry," as men use.
"Yea!" spake th' Archangel, "sacred is the sound
Of morning praise, and worth the world's great round,
Though earth were pearl and silver; therefore I
Stayed thee, Muhammad, in the act to cry,
Lest ʿAlī, tarrying in the lane, should miss,
For his good deed, its blessing and its bliss."
Thereat the Archangel vanished, and our Lord
Read Fātiḥah forth beneath the mimbar-board.

Us, too, Mujīb! in hearing keep;
Better is prayer than food or sleep!

46 Al-Wāsiʿ

The All-Comprehending One



"All-comprehending One," Al-Wāsiʿ! we
By this name also praise and honour Thee.

TURNING TO MECCA

Turn, wheresoe'er ye be, to Mecca's stone,
For this is holy, and your Lord doth hear;
Thitherwards turn! – so hath all Islam one
Heart to its thought and harbour of its prayer.

But Allah's house eastwards and westwards lies,
Northwards and southwards. He is everywhere:
Whithersoever way ye bend your eyes,
Face to face are ye with Al-Wāsiʿ there.

It is not righteousness to kneel aright
Fronting the Qibla; but to rightly hold
Of God, and of His judgment, and the bright
Bands of His Angels; and what truth is told

In the sure Qur'an by God's holy Prophet;
To succour orphans, strangers, suppliants, kin;
Your gold and worldly treasure – to give of it
Ransom for captives, alms which mercy win:

To keep your covenants when ye covenant;
Your woes and sufferings patiently bear,
Being the will of God: – this is to front
Straight for the Qibla: this is faith and fear.[34]

Abounding Lord! in every place
Is built the Mecca of Thy grace. ∾

[34] Cf. Qur'an, ii. chapter "Of the Cow."

47 Al-Ḥākim al-Muṭlaq

The Judge of Judges



Al-Ḥākim! Judge of all the judges! show
Mercy to us and make us justice know.

THE ANGELS OF THE SCALES

Only one Judge is just, for only One
Knoweth the hearts of men; and hearts alone
Are guilty or are guiltless. That which lied
Was not the tongue – he is a red dog tied.

And that which slew was not the hand ye saw
Grasping the knife – she is a slave whose law
The master gives, seated within the tent;
The hand was handle to the instrument;

The dark heart murdered. O believers! leave
Judgment to Heav'n – except ye do receive
Office and order to accomplish this;
Then honourable, and terrible, it is.

The Prophet ﷺ said:[35] "At the great day of doom
Such fear on the most upright judge shall come
That he shall moan, 'Ah! would to God that I
Had stood for trial, and not sate to try!'"

He said: "The Angels of the Scales will bring
Just and unjust who judged before Heav'n's King,
Grasping them by the neck; and, if it be,
One hath adjudged his fellows wickedly,

"He shall be hurled to hell so vast a height
'Tis forty years' fierce journey ere he light;
But if one righteously hath borne the rod,
The Angels kiss those lips which spake for God."

Lord! make us just, that we may be
A little justified with Thee. ﷺ

[35] Cf. "The Mishkāt-al-Maṣābīḥ."[xlvi]

48 Al-Wadūd

The Loving



"The Loving" – Al-Wadūd! ah, title dear,
Whereby Thy children, praise Thee, free of fear.

TASNĪM AND SALSABĪL

Sweet seem your wedded days; and dear and tender
Your children's talk; brave 'tis to hear the tramp
Of pastured horses; and to see the splendour
Of gold and silver plunder; and to camp

With goats and camels by the bubbling fountain;
And to drink fragrance from the desert wind,
And to sit silent on a mighty mountain;
And all the joys which make life bright and kind.

But ye have heard of streams more brightly flowing
Than those whereby ye wander; of a life
Glorious and glad and pure beyond earth's knowing;
Love without loss, and wealth without strife.

Lo! we have told you of the golden Garden
 Kept for the Faithful, where the soil is still
Wheat-flour and musk and camphire, and fruits harden
 To what delicious savour each man will

Upon the Tooba tree; which bends its cluster
 To him that doth desire, bearing all meat;
And of the sparkling fountains which out-lustre
 Diamonds and emeralds, running clear and sweet,

Tasnīm and Salsabīl, whose lucent waters
 Are rich, delicious, undistracting wine;
And of the Houris, pleasure's perfect daughters,
 Virgins of Paradise, whose black eyes shine

Soul-deep with love and langour, having tresses
 Night-dark, with scents of the gold-blooming date
And scarlet roses; lavishing caresses
 That satisfy, but never satiate;

Whose looks refrain from any save their lover,
 Whose peerless limbs and bosoms' ivory swell
Are like the ostrich egg which feathers cover
 From stain or dust, so white and rounded well:

Dwelling in marvellous pavilions, builded
 Of hollow pearls, wherethrough a great light shines –
Cooled by soft breezes and by glad suns gilded –
 On the green pillows where the Blest reclines.

A rich reward it shall be, a full payment
For life's brief trials and sad virtue's stress,
When friends with friends, clad all in festal raiment,
Share in deep Heaven the Angels' happiness;
Nay, and full payment, though ye give those pleasures
Which make life dear, to fight and die for faith,
Rendering to God your wives and flocks and treasures,
That He may pay you tenfold after death.

For, if the bliss of Paradise, transcending
Delights of earth, should win ye to be bold,
Yet know, this glory hath its crown and ending
In Allah's grace, which is the Joy untold,

The Utmost Bliss. Beyond the Happy River
The justified shall see God's face in Heaven,
Live in His sweet goodwill,[36] and taste for ever
Al-Wadūd's[37] love, unto His children given.

Yea! for high Heaven's felicity
Is but the shadow, Lord, of Thee.

[36] Cf. Qur'an, ix. chapter "Of Repentance."
[37] Cf. Qur'an, lxxxv. chapter "Of Zodiacal Signs."

49 Al-Majīd

The All-Glorious



Al-Majīd! Glorious Lord upon the Throne.[38]
With this great name we praise Thee, Sovereign One!

SURA "OF THE COW"

By the Heavens, walled with silver signs and towers!
By the Promised Day!
By the Witness and the Witnessed; and the Way
Of righteousness! – this glorious Book of ours
Lieth treasured up in Heaven,
As 'twas given
On the mighty "Night of Powers;"[xlvii]
And its easy bond is this,
The which to keep is bliss:
"None save Glorious Allah we serve;
Never from His precepts swerve;
Honour teacher, father, mother;
Unto him who is thy brother,
Unto kindred, friends also,

[38] Cf. Qur'an, lxxxv. chapter "Of Celestial Signs."

Orphans, suppliants, sad ones, show
Gentleness and help; to each
Speak with kind and courteous speech.
Give in alms that thou may'st spare,
And be constant in thy prayer."[39]

Allah al-Majīd! Thy favour grant,
That we may keep this covenant.

[39] Cf. Qur'an, ii. chapter "Of the Heifer."



50 Al-Bāʿith

The Raiser from Death

Al-Bāʿith! Opener of Tombs! we praise
Thy power, which unto life the dead can raise.

IBLĪS AND ABRAHAM

Iblīs spake to Abraham:
"What is this thy Lord hath told thee?
Shall the Resurraction be
When the mouldering clods enfold thee?
Nay! and if a man might rise,
Buried whole, in heedful wise,
See yon carcase, tempest-beaten –
Part the wandering fox hath eaten,
Part by the fishes hath been torn,
Part the sea-fowl hence have borne;
Never back those fragments can
Come to him who was a man."

Abraham spake unto his Lord:[40]
"Show me how is wrought this wonder;
Can Thy resurrection be
When a man's dust lies asunder?"

[40] Cf. Qur'an, ii. chapter "Of the Heifer."

"Art thou therefore not believing,"
Allah said, "because deceiving
Iblīs fills with lies thy heart?"
"Nay," he answered, "but impart
Knowledge, Mightiest One and Best!
that my heart may be at rest."

God said: "Take, thou doubting one!
Four birds from among My creatures;
Sever each bird's head, and so
Mingle feathers, forms, and features,
That the fragments shall not be
Knowable to such as ye.
Into four divide the mass,
Then upon the mountains pass,
On four peaks a portion lay,
And, returning homeward, say,
'By the name and power of God –
Who hath made men of the clod,
And hath said the dead shall rise –
Birds! fly hither in such wise
As ye lived.' And they shall come,
Perfect, whole, and living, home."

Thereupon Al-Khalīl took
A raven, eagle, dove, and cock;
From their bodies shore the heads,
Cut the four fowl into shreds,
Mingled all their mass together,
Blood and bone, and flesh and feather;
Then, dividing this four-wise,

Laid it where the four peaks did rise
Two to south and two to north.
Then the dove's head held he forth,
Crying, "Come!" Lo! at the word
Cooed at his feet the slaughtered bird.
"Come, raven!" spake he: as he spoke,
On glossy wing, with eager croak,
Flew round the raven. Then he said,
Return! thou cock:" the cock obeyed.
Lastly the eagle summoned he,
Which circling came, on pinions free,
Restored and soaring to the sky,
With perfect plumes and undimmed eye.

So in the Holy Book 'tis writ
How Abraham's heart at rest was set.

Why should we fear to yield our breath,
To Thee That art the Lord of Death?

51 Ash-Shahīd

The Witness



Ash-Shahīd! God is "Witness!" and He took
Witness of us, ye People of the Book!

POETS AND PROPHETS

THE spirits of the Prophets came at morn
To Sinai, summoned by their Lord's command,
Singers and seers; – those born and those unborn,
The chosen souls of men, a solemn band.

The noble army ranged, in viewless might,
Around that mountain peak which pierces heaven;
Greater and lesser teachers, sons of light;
Their number was ten thousand score and seven.

Then Allah took covenant with His own,
Saying, "My wisdom and My word receive;
Speak of Me unto men, known or unknown,
Heard or unheard; bid such as will, believe."

"And there shall come apostles, guiding ye,
Jesus, Muhammad: follow them and aid!
Are you resolved, and will you war for Me?"
"We are resolved, O Lord of all!" they said.

"Bear witness then!" spake Allah, "souls most dear,
I am your Lord and ye heralds of Mine."
Thenceforward through all lands His Prophet bear
The message of the mystery divine.[41]

Allah-ash-Shahīd! make us to hear
The errand that Thy children bear.

[41] Cf. Qur'an, iii. chapter "Of Imran's Family."

52 Al-Ḥaqq

The Truth



O Thou, the Truth! when so Thy name we call,
All's said that need be said, sith Thou art all.

THE SIN OF SINS

Truth and all truth He is! serve Him alone
Who hath none other by or near His Throne;
Unto all sins is Allah's pardon given
Except what giveth Him partners in Heaven,[42]
Being Apart, Exalted, Truth and Light,
Only and wholly – hold thou this aright!

Ya Ḥaqq! true God! never with Thee
Can other or can equal be.

[42] Cf. Qur'an, iv. chapter "Of Women."



53 Al-Wakīl

The Guardian

'Ala kuli shayin Wakīl![43] Guardian of all!
By this name trustfully on Thee we call.

SURA "OF THE COW"

Verily God is guard!
What other hath created you, and made
Men gone before, and earth's foundations laid
So broad and hard,
To be your dwelling-place;
And Heaven's star-jewelled face
Arched for you roof-top; and the tender rain
Sent down at the due season, whereby grain
Groweth, and clustered gold
Of dates, and grapes that hold
The purple and the amber honey-juice?
These for you use

[43] Cf. Qur'an, ii. chapter "Of the Heifer."

Your Lord and "Agent" gave.
Make Him no peers, nor other guardian have.

Allah-al-Wakīl! Thy wards are we;
Have us in Thy fidelity.



54 Al-Qawīyyu

The Almighty

Thou Mighty One! Whose mercy hath upraised
Mankind to praise Thee, be Thou hereby praised!

THE FLY AND THE FALSE GODS

Consider them that serve
The false gods, how they lay in golden dishes
Honey and fruits and fishes
Before their idols; and the green fly comes,
Shoots through the guarded gates, and hums
Scorn of their offering, stealing what she will;
And none of these great gods the thief can kill,
So swift she is and small:
And none at all
Can make one little fly, for all their state;
So feeble are they, and so falsely great.[44]
Ye people of the stocks and stones! herein
A parable is set against your sin.

[44] Cf. Qur'an, xxii, chapter "Of Believers."

But Allah high doth rule
Whose hand made all things, being "Powerful."

Al-Qawīyyu! King of power and might!
By Thy hand o'er us day and night!



55 Al-Matīn

The Firm

Allah-al-Matīn! "Firm" is our Lord and fast;
Praise Him Who doth uphold Thee to the last.

THE TENT-POLE

By the Angels ranged in ranks,
And the Rain-cloud Drivers,
And the reciters of the word, "Thy God is one,"
Firm is our Lord!
Of the heavens the tent-pole,
Al-Watad; and the earth
Ḥabl-al-Matīn, the sure Cord:[45]
By this thy soul
Holdeth, from birth:
Fast is the cord, and sure;
They only shall endure
Who dwell beneath the mighty tent upholden
By *Al-Watad*,[46] the Golden.

Stay of Thy servants, Al-Matīn!
In Thee is strong deliverance seen.

[45] Cf. Qur'an, iii, chapter "Of the Family of Imran."
[46] Cf. Qur'an, lxxxviii. chapter "Of the Information."

56 Al-Walī

The Nearest Friend



Al-Walī! Nearest of all friends, and Best,
So praise your Lord, Whose help is mightiest

ABRAHAM'S BREAD

Close is He always to His faithful ones,
But closer dwelt they in the times of old.
Hath it come to ye what Al-Bayḍāwi
Presenteth of the days of Abraham,
Whom Allah called His "friend," and like a friend
Softly entreated,[47] stooping out of Heaven
To help and comfort him so dear to God?
Ofttimes the Angels of his Lord would light
Familiarly, with folded wings, before
The curtain of his tent, conversing there;
Ofttimes, on thorny flats of wilderness,
Or in the parched pass, or the echoing cave,
The very voice of God would thrill his ears;
And he might answer, as a man with man,
Hearing and speaking things unspeakable.

[47] Cf. Qur'an, iv. chapter "Of Women."

Wherefore, no marvel that he gave his son
At Allah's bidding, and had back his son –
Patient and safe – when the wild goat came down
And hung amid the nebbuk by his horns,
On Thabīr, nigh to Mecca, in the vale
Of Mina;[48] and the knife of Abraham
Reddened with unwept blood.
There had fall'n drought
Upon the land, and all the mouths he fed
Hungered for meal; therefore Al-Khalīl sent
Messengers unto Egypt – to a lord
Wealthy and favourable, having store
Of grain and cattle by the banks of Nile.
"Give unto Abraham," the message said,
"A little part for gold, yet more for love –
(As he had given, if the strait were thine)
Meal of the millet, lentil, wheat, and bean,
That he and his may live; for drought hath come
Upon our fields and pastures, and we pine."
Spake the Egyptian lord, "Lo! now ye ask
O'ermuch of me for friendliness, and more
Than gold can buy, since dearth hath also come
Over our fields, and nothing is to spare.
Yet had it been to succour Abraham,
And them that dwell beneath his tent, the half
Of all we hold had filled your empty sacks.
But he will feed people we wot not of,
Poor folk, and hungry wanderers of the waste:
The which are nought to us, who have of such,
If there were surplusage. Therefore return;
Find food elsewhere!"

[48] Cf. Qur'an, xxxvii. chapter "Of the Ranged."

Then said the messengers
One to another, "If we shall return
With empty sacks, our master's name, so great
For worship in the world, will suffer shame,
And men will say he asked and was denied."
Therefore they filled their sacks with white sea-sand
Gathered by Gaza's wave, and sorrowfully
Journeyed to Kedar, where lay Abraham,
To whom full privately they told this thing,
Saying, "We filled the sacks with snow-white sand,
Lest thy great name be lessened 'mongst the folk,
Seeing us empty-handed; for the man
denied thee corn; since thou wouldst give, quoth he,
To poor folk and to wanderers of the waste,
And there are hungry mouths enough by Nile."

Then was the heart of Abraham sore, because
The people of his tribe drew round to share
The good food brought, and all the desert trooped
With large-eyed mothers and their pining babes,
Certain of succour if the sheikh could help.
So did the spirit of Al-Khalīl sink
That into a swoon he fell, and lay as one
Who hath not life. But Sarah, his wife –
That knew not – bade her maidens bring a sack,
Open its mouth, and knead some meal for cakes.
And when the sack was opened, there showed flour,
Fine, three times bolted, whiter than sea-sand;
Which in the trough they kneaded, rolling cakes,
And baking them over the crackling thorns;

So that the savour spread throughout the camp
Of new bread smoking, and the people drew
Closer and thicker, as ye see the herds
Throng – horn, and wool, and hoof – at watering-time,
When after fiery leagues, the wells are reached.
But Abraham, awakening, smelled the bread:
"Whence," spake he unto Sarai, "hast thou meal,
Wife of my bosom? for the smell of bread
Riseth, and lo! I see the cakes are baked."
"By God! Who is only One," she said,
"Whence should it come save from thy friend who sent,
The lord of Egypt?" "Nay!" quoth Abraham,
And fell upon his face, low-worshipping,
"But this hath come from the dear mighty hands
Of Allah – of the Lord of Egypt's lords –
My 'Friend,' and King, and Helper: now my folk
Shall live and die not. Glory be to God!"

He that hath Allah for a friend,
To want and woe hath put the end.

57 Al-Ḥamīd

The All-Praiseworthy



Rich to reward your Lord is; oh, do ye
Praise Al-Ḥamīd, the "Ever-praiseworthy!"

THE GARDEN AND THE ROCK

Praise Him by alms; and when ye help believers,
Mar not your gifts with grudging word or will;
Since ye at Allah's hands are free receivers,
Freely bestow. A garden on a hill

Is a likeness of that fair compassion
Shown for the sake of God: the heavy rain
Descendeth, and the dew; and every fashion
Of good seed springs tenfold in fruit and grain.

The likeness of the evil heart, bestowing
That men may praise, is as the thin-clad peak,
Wherefrom the rain washes all the soil for growing,
Leaving the hard rock naked, fruitless, bleak.

Say, will ye plant on rock or plenteous garden?
Grow nought, or grow green vines that shade afford? –
Forgive your brethren as ye ask for pardon;
Give as ye have received, and praise your Lord![49]

Allah-al-Ḥamīd! what tongue can tell
Thy goodness, ever-laudable? ☙

[49] Cf. Qur'an, ii. chapter "Of the Heifer."

58 Al-Muḥṣī

The Accountant



Al-Muḥṣī! The "Accountant!" laud Him so
Who reckoneth up the deeds men do below.

SURA "OF THE EARTHQUAKE"

In God's Name, Merciful, Compassionate!
When Earth shall quake with quaking,[50]
And cast her burden forth
Of corpses; and live men
Shall ask – with terror shaking –
"What aileth Earth?" that day
She shall reply, and say
That which her Lord commands:
And men shall come in bands,
This side and that side, ranged to show
Their works, and the account to know.
And he that wrought of good a red ant's weight
Shall see it writ:
And who did evil, aye! as the skin of a date,
Shall witness it.

Al-Muḥṣī! dread Accountant! look
In mercy on our judgement-book.

[50] Cf. Qur'an, xcix. chapter "Of the Earthquake."

59 Al-Mubdī'

The Beginner



Al-Mubdī'! praise Him by this holy name,
Who gave to all the spark which lights life's flame.

THE LIGHT OF LIFE

Whence came ye; and the people of the groves;
The streams, the seas, the wilderness, the air;
Beasts, fishes, fowl; each with their lives and loves,
Each glad to be, each in its kind so fair?

"Begotten of their like?" Yea! but "their like,"
Who did devise that, and the hidden charm
Whereby – as flame from torch to torch doth strike –
The light of life shines on, bright, joyous, warm?

Al-Mubdī' hath devised it! His decree
In the beginning shaped and ordered each,
Saying to all these things foreseen, "So be!"
And so they were, obeying Allah's speech.

Al-Mubdī'! "Great Beginner!" take
Our praises, for life's pleasant sake!


يا لطيف
١٤٢٥



60 Al-Muʿīd

The Restorer

He made life – and He takes it – but instead
Gives more; praise the Restorer, Al-Muʿīd!

A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAD

He who died at Azan sends
This to comfort faithful friends:

Faithful friends! it lies, I know,
Pale and white and cold as snow;
And ye say, "Abdullah's dead!"
Weeping at my feet and head;
I can see your falling tears,
I can hear your cries and prayers;
Yet I smile, and whisper this –
"I am not that thing you kiss;
Cease your tears, and let it lie;
It was mine, it is not I."

Sweet friends! what the women lave,
For its last bed in the grave,
Is a tent which I am quitting,

Is a garment no more fitting,
Is a cage from which, as last,
Like a hawk my soul hath passed.
Love the inmate, not the room;
The wearer, not the garb; the plume
Of the falcon, not the bars
Which kept him from the splendid stars.

Loving friends! be wise, and dry
Straightway every weeping eye;
What ye lift upon the bier
Is not worth a wistful tear.
'Tis an empty sea-shell, one
Out of which the pearl is gone;
The shell is broken, it lies there;
The pearl, the all, the soul, is here.
'Tis an earthen jar whose lid
Allah sealed, the while it hid
That treasure of His treasury,
A mind which loved Him; let it lie!
Let the shard be earth's once more,
Since the gold shines in His store!

Allah Mu'īd, Allah most good!
Now Thy grace is understood;
Now my heart no longer wonders
What Al-Barzakh[51 xlviii] is, which sunders
Life from death, and death from Heaven;
Nor the "Paradises Seven"
Which the happy dead inherit;
Nor those "birds"[xlix] which bear each spirit
Towards the Throne, "green birds and white,"
Radiant, glorious, swift their flight!

[51] Cf. Qur'an, xxii. chapter "Of Believers."

Now the long, long darkness ends,
Yet ye wail, my foolish friends,
While the man whom ye call "dead"
In unbroken bliss instead
Lives, and loves you; lost, 'tis true
By any light which shines for you;
But in light ye cannot see
Of unfulfilled felicity,
And enlarging Paradise,
Lives the life that never dies.

Farewell, friends! Yet not farewell;
Where I am, ye too shall dwell.
I am gone before your face
A heart-beat's time, a grey ant's pace.
When ye come where I have stepped,
Ye will marvel why ye wept;
Ye will know, by true love taught,
That here is all, and there is naught.
Weep awhile, if ye are fain.
Sunshine still must follow rain!
Only not at death, for death –
Now I see – is that first breath
Which our souls draw when we enter
Life, that is of all life centre.

Know ye Allah's law is love,
Viewed from Allah's Throne above:
Be ye firm of trust, and come
Faithful onward to your home!
"*Lā ilāha illā Allāh!*" Yea,
Mu'īd! Restorer! Sovereign!" say!

He who died at Azan gave
This to those who made his grave.

61 Al-Muḥyī

The Quickener



Al-Muḥyī! the "Quickener!" hereby
Praise Him Whom Angels praise eternally.

SURA "OF THE SIGNS"

"And of His signs is this,"[52] saith the Great Book;
"Under the angry sun the slain earth – look! –
Dries up to dust; dies every growing thing;
Then blow we breaths of southern wind which bring
Rain-dropping clouds, and see! the dead earth lives,
And stirs, and swells; and every herb revives.
So shall the dead be quickened by His breath,
This is Al-Muḥyī's sign," the Great Book saith.

O thou believer! shall it be
He saves the green thing, and not thee?

[52] Cf. Qur'an, xli. chapter "Of Signs Explained."


١٤٢٥

62 Al-Mumīt

The Slayer



He quickeneth, but "He killeth:" blessed they
Who may abide in trust that final day!

THE ANGEL OF DEATH

Yea! some have found right good to hear the
summons of their Lord,
And gone as glad as warriors proud, who take up spear
and sword
At sounding of the song of fight; as light of heart as
those
For whom the bride unveileth her mouth of pearl and
rose.

Jalāl ad-Dīn, ar-Rūmī, the saint of Balkh, the
son
Of him surnamed "Flower of the Faith," this was a
chosen one,
To whom Death softly showed himself, Heaven's gentle

call to give;
For what word is it bids us die, save that which made
us live?

Sick lay he there in Konya; 'twas dawn; the golden
stream
Of light, new springing in the east, on his thin lips
did gleam –
Those lips which spake the praise of God all through
his holy years,
And murmured now, with faith and hope unchanged,
the morning prayers.

Then one who watched beside his bed, heard at the
inner gate
A voice cry, "Iftaḥ! 'open!' from far I come, and
wait
To speak my message to Jalāl – a message that will
bring
Peace and reward to him who lies the Fātiḥah
murmuring."

Thereat the watcher drew the bar which closed the
chamber-door,
Wondering and 'feared, for ne'er was heard upon this
earth before
Accents so sweet and comforting, nor ever eyes of men
Saw presence so majestical as his who entered then.

Entered with gliding footsteps a bright celestial youth,
Splendid and strange in beauty, past words to speak

its truth;
Midnight is not so dark and deep as was his solemn
gaze,
By love and pity lighted, as the night with silvery rays.

"What is thy name?" the watcher asked, "that I may tell
my lord,
Thou fair and dreadful messenger! whose glance is as
a sword;
Whose face is like the Heaven unveiled; whose tender
searching voice
Maketh the heart cease beating, but bids the soul
rejoice."

"Azrael 'anā," spake the shape, "I am the Spirit of
Death;
And I am sent from Allah's throne to stay thy master's
breath.
"Come in! come in! thou Bird of God," cried joyously
Jalāl,
"Fold down thy heavenly plumes and speak! – Islam!
what shall be, shall."

"Thou blessed one!" the Angel said, "I bring thy
time of peace;
When I have touched thee on the eyes, life's latest
ache will cease;
God bade me come as I am seen amid the heavenly
host,
No enemy of awful mould, but he who loveth most."

"Dear Angel! do what thou art bid," quoth Jelal,
smilingly,
"God willing, thou shalt find to-day a patient one
in me;
Sweet is the cup of bitterness which cometh in such
wise!"
With that he bowed his saintly brow, – and Azrael
kissed his eyes.

Al-Mumīt! "Slayer!" send him thus,
In love, not anger, unto us.

63 Al-Ḥayy

The Ever-Living



Praise Him, Al-Ḥayy! the "Ever-living" King,
Who to eternal life His own doth bring.

THE LIFE BEYOND

Saith the Book: "Count not as dead[53]
Such as for the Faith have bled;
Stark and red their bodies lie,
But their souls are in the sky,
Resident with God, who grants
All for which the spirit pants.
Joyful are they, resting there
Free from sorrow, pain or fear;
Watching us who, left in life,
Are not quit, as yet, of strife;
But shall soon attain, to share
Allah's mercies, and declare –
Side by side with those – that He

[53] Cf. Qur'an, iii. chapter "Of Imran's Family."

Showeth grace eternally,
And withholdeth not the pay
At the ending of the day.

Ya-Ḥayy! Thou ever-living Lord,
Be ours such work and such reward. ☙

64 Al-Qayyūm

The Self-Subsisting



Magnify Him, Al-Qayyūm; and so call
The "Self-subsisting" God Who judgeth all.

THE TRUMPET

When the trumpet shall sound,
On that day,[54]
The wicked, slow-gathering,
Shall say,
"Is it long we have lain in our graves?
For it seems as an hour!"
Then will Isrāfīl call them to judgement;
And none shall have power
To turn aside, this way or that;
And their voices will sink
To silence, except for the sounding
Of a noise, like the noise on the brink

[54] Cf. Qur'an, xx. chapter "Of Ṭā-Hā"

Of the sea, when its stones
Are dragged with a clatter and hiss
Down the shore, in a wild breakers' roar:
The sound of their woe shall be this!

Then they who denied
That He liveth Eternal, "Self-made,"
Shall call to the mountains to crush them;
Amazed and affrayed.

Thou Self-subsistent, Living Lord!
Thy grace against that day afford.

65 Al-Wājid

The All-Perceiving



Al-Wājid! praise hereby that Watchful One
Whose eyes see all things underneath the sun.

SURA "OF DAYBREAK"

By the Ten holy eves[l] and the Dawns of gold![55]
By the One and the Manifold!
By the deepening of the Darkness of the night!
(And these be oaths of might:)
Hast thou considered what with ʿĀd God wrought,
And whereunto He brought
Proud Iram[li] of the pillared throne,
Whose like no other land did own;
And Thamūd's[lii] race, which hewed houses of rocks;
And Pharaoh, strong for shocks
As is a tent with tent-pegs driven deep?[56]
Lo! these their haughty state did keep,
and multiply their wickedness;
Till Allah, who long-suffering hath,
Laid upon them scourges of His wrath.

[55] Cf. Qur'an, lxxxix. chapter "Of Daybreak."
[56] The Arabic word *Watad* bears this significance.

Verily, as a "watch-tower" is your Lord.
Lo! if ye knew this, would ye shut your hoard
When the poor cry; devour the weak; and love
Your riches more than treasures stored above?
Ho! when the earth's bones crack,
And, rank on rank, the angels gather,
And hell's black gates fly back,
How will each say, "Would God in life's fair weather,
I had bethought me of this storm of hell!"

But then it shall be well
For thee, thou soul! to-day uncomforted,
Who know'st that Allah sees;
And patiently awaitest till He please
Call thee to comfort, praising Him and praised.
Joyous thou shalt be raised
To Paradise, hearing His angels say,
"Enter, and be exceeding glad to-day!"

Al-Wājid! "Watcher!" save by grace,
Who shall attain that happy place?

66 Al-Wāḥid

The One



Wāḥid! The "One!" ye faithful, say herein
Sura Al-Ikhlāṣ,[57] cleansing souls from sin.

AL-IKHLĀṢ

In God's Name, Merciful, Compassionate!
Say: "He is God alone,
Eternal on the Throne.
Of none begotten, and begetting none,
Who hath not like unto Him any one!"[58]

Ya Wāḥid! Holy! Only! we
Thus do declare Thy unity.

[57] This name is given to the Sura as "clearing oneself" from heresy.
[58] Cf. Qur'an, cxii, chapter "Of Unity."



67 Aṣ-Ṣamad

The Eternal

Aṣ-Ṣamad! the "Eternal!" by this name
Laud Him Who will be, was, and is the Same.

OZAIR THE JEW

Of Heaven's prodigious years man wotteth nought;
The "Everlasting!" – hast thou strained thy thought
Searching that depth, which numbs the seeking mind
As too much light the eager gaze doth blind?
The years of men are measured by the sun,
And were not, until he his course begun;
And will not be, when his gold dial dies:
But God lived while no sun shone in the skies;
And shall be living when all worlds are dead:
Yet hereof, though ye see the truth is said,
Ye take no more the meaning than one takes
Measure of ocean by the cup that slakes
His thirst, from rillet running to the sea.
Behind – before ye, shines Eternity,
Visible as the vault's fathomless blue,
Which is so deep the glance goes never through,

Though nothing stays save depth: so is it seen
That Allah must be ever, and hath been;
Seen, but not comprehended – for man's wit
Knows this, yet knows – not understanding it.

Mete ye not Allah's times by man's: life gives
No measure of the Life Divine which lives
Unending, uncommenced, having no stay
Of yesterday, to-morrow, or to-day;
Being forever one unbroken Now
Where past and future come not.
Heard'st thou how,
What time fair Zion was given to sword and flame,
Ozair[59] the Jew upon his camel came
Over the hills which ring the sea of Lot,[60]
So that one footstep and – ye see her not,
And then another – and the city comes
Full upon view with all her milk-white domes.
But the Chaldean now had spoiled the place,
And desolate and waste was Zion's face,
Her proud abodes unpeopled, and her ways
Heaped with charred beams and lintels. Ozair says,
"O Lord! who promised to Jerusalem
Comfort and peace; and for her sons, to them
A glad return, how shall Thy word be kept
When fire and steel over these roofs have swept,
And she, that was a queen, lies dead and black,
A smoking ruin, where the jackals pack?
A hundred years were not enough to give
Life back to Zion! Can she ever live?"

[59] Identified by some commentators with Ezra of Scripture.
[60] The Dead Sea.

But while he spake, the Angel of the Lord
Laid on his doubting front a fiery sword,
And Ozair in that lonely desert spot
Fell prone, and lay – breathing and moving not –
One hundred years, while the great world rolled on,
And Zion rose, and mighty deeds were done.
And when the hundred years were flown, God said,
"Awake, Ozair! how long hast tarried,
Thinkest thou, here?" Ozair replied, "A day,
Perchance, or half." The awful Voice said, "Nay!
But look upon thy camel." Of that beast
Nought save white bones was left: no sign, the least,
Of flesh, or hair, or hide: the desert grass
Was matted o'er its shanks, and roots did pass
From a gnarled fig-tree through the eye-pits twain,
And in and out its ribs grew the vervain.
But 'mid the moulderings of its saddle-bags
And crimson carpet, withered into rags,
A basket, full of new-picked dates, stood there
Beside a cruise of water, standing where
He set them fresh, twice fifty years ago;
And all the dates were golden with the glow
Of yestreen's sunset, and the cruise's rim
Sparkled with water to the very brim.
"Ozair!" the awful Voice spake, "look on these!
He maketh and unmaketh what shall please;
Saves or destroys, restores or casts away;
And centuries to Him are as a day;
And cities all as easy to revive
As this thy camel here, which now shall live."

Thereon the skull and bones together crept
From tangled weed and sand where they had slept;
The hide and hair came, and the flesh filled in,
The eyes returned their hollow pits within,
The saddle-bags upon its haunches hung,
The carpet on the saddle-horns was flung,
The nose-rope from the muzzle fell. The beast
Rose from its knees, and would have made to feast
On the green herbage where its bones had lain,
But that it heard bells of a caravan
Coming from Kedron, and with glad cry roared.
Then Ozair looked, and saw – newly restored –
Zion's fair walls and temples, and a crowd
Of citizens; and traffic rich and loud
In her white streets; and knew time should not be
Reckoned 'gainst Him who hath eternity.

Aṣ-Ṣamad! Everlasting One!
Thy times are good: Thy will be done.



68 Al-Qādir

Providence

Al-Qādir! He is "Providence!" hereby
The Lord of all things living magnify.

KISMAT

When ye say Kismat, say it wittingly,
O true believers! under Allah's throne
Place is not left for those accursed three,
"Destiny," "Fortune," "Chance." Allah alone

Ruleth His children: Kismat ye shall deem
Each man's "allotted portion," from of old
Fixed for his part in the Eternal scheme
By those great Hands which all the worlds enfold.

Sayeth "the Book:" "There passeth no man's soul
Except by God's permission, and the Speech
Writ in the scroll determining the whole,
The times of all men, and the times for each."[61]

[61] Cf. Qur'an, iii. chapter "Of Imran's Family."

Also it sayeth: "If a man shall choose
This world's reward, to him it shall be given;
And if a man shall dare his life to lose
For Paradise, he shall be paid in Heaven."[62]

Ya Qādir! "Ruler!" teach us still,
Islam, submission to Thy will.

[62] Cf. Qur'an, ii. chapter "Of the Cow."



69 Al-Muqtadir

The All-Powerful

Al-Muqtadir! the "Powerful!" by this
Praise we the Word, whence cometh woe and bliss.

SURA "OF THE MOON"

Verily, all things – saith "the Book"[63] – We made,
Decreeing; and Our bidding was one word,
Quick, as the twinkling of an eye; and all,
Whatever things men do, stands in the scrolls,
Where great and small alike are written down;
And then shall surely come the Hour – the Hour!
And bitter for the sinners it will be
When they are dragged, upon their faces, down
To hell, and taste the touch of fire; but sweet
Will it be for the pious – these shall sit
'Mid streams and gardens in the seat of truth,
Happy, near Muqtadir, the Mighty One.

Grant us that seat of truth to see,
Almighty Allah! nigh to Thee.

[63] Cf. Qur'an, liv. chapter "Of the Moon."


١٤٢٥



70 Al-Muqaddim

The Forewarner



71 Al- Mu'akhir

The Fulfiller

Muqaddim! Muakhir! by these names still
Praise Him who hath forewarned, and doth fulfil.

SURA "OF QĀF"

When the trumpet shall be ringing,
Then the threatened Day hath come,
Every soul to judgement bringing.[64]

Each soul shall itself deliver
With two Angels, unto doom,
With a Witness and a Driver.

[64] Cf. Qur'an, l. chapter "Of Qāf."

He that driveth shall say, "Vainly
Warned we thee, till this upholding
Of the veil: now thou seest plainly."

And the Witness by his side,
He shall say, a scroll unfolding,
"This is what I testified."

Loud shall sound th'award eternal:
"Hurl to hell the misbelievers,
Sinners, liars; – let infernal

"Torments seize perverse transgressors!"
Then will speak the wan deceivers,
Seeking pleas and intercessors.

But the awful Voice shall thunder,
"Wrangle not in Allah's hearing!
Many a sign and many a wonder

"Did forewarn ye of repentance;[65]
Time is past for more forbearing;
Not with Us is change of sentence."

Heaven shall say to Hell that morning,
"Art thou full?" Hell shall inquire,
"Hast thou others?" blackly yawning

[65] The text is "I put forth unto you the menace."

With choked gullet. But believing
Souls will see, brought nigh and nigher,
Paradise's gates, receiving

Those to whom We promised Heaven.
"Patient ones! for ever striving
Towards the Merciful! forgiven

Are your falterings; enter ye
Into peace; now is arriving
The great Day of eternity."

Forewarner and Fulfiller! we
Confess with dread Thine equity. ~

72 Al-Awwal

The First



73 Al-Ākhir

The Last



74 Aẓ-Ẓāhir

The Manifest



75 Al-Bāṭin

The Hidden



Awwal! Ākhir! Zāhir! Bāṭin! these four
Be "Mothers of the Names;"[66] *thy Lord adore,*
Speaking such words as do Him truly call
Essence and Substance, First and Last in all.

THE MOTHERS OF THE NAMES

Sura the seven and fiftieth:[67] there is writ
The holy verse which keeps charge of it;
The verse which all the names of Allah holdeth
As in one sky the silver stars all sit.

The chapter "of the Iron!" – and this script
Set on its forefront, as a hilt is tipped
With four-fold gold; or as a helm of steel
By some far-sparkling crest-gem is equipped.

"He is the First and the Last" – this scripture shows –
"Outer and Inner, That which doth disclose,
And That which hides Itself; the Manifest,
The Secret; and all things and thoughts He knows."

[66] These four divine titles are known by the technical appellation of "The Mothers of the Names," being regarded as fundamental and all-comprehensive.
[67] Cf. Qur'an, lvii. chapter "Of Iron," v.3.

"In six days earth and heaven He made alone,
Then reascended the Eternal Throne;
What entereth earth and issueth thence He sees,
And what goes up and down the sky is known."

"To Allah, Who is nigh where'er ye be,
And whatsoever deeds ye do doth see;
His is the kingdom of the earth and heaven;
All things return to Allah finally."

Beginning! End! Without! Within!
We celebrate Thy praise herein.



76 Al-Wālī

The All-Governing

Laud Him who governs governors and kings,
Angels, and Jinns, and men, and living things.

SOLOMON'S SIGNET

Wot ye of Solomon's signet, graved of a sapphire in
gold,
Graved with the great name of God, writ on the blue
of the stone?
Wisdom and riches and power had he who that treasure
did hold;
Safe in the strength of the signet he sate on his ivory
throne.

Only King Solomon knew how the dread letters did flow,
What was the breathing of *Aleph*, where came the
whispering *Yod*;
When he spake the ineffable Word, the sea-winds at
bidding would blow;
And the hills yield their iron, and jewels, and gold,
at the naming of God.

And out of the void of the sky, and up from the
gulfs and the capes,
And forth from the caverns of earth, and down from
the mountains of flame,
Flocked Demons with wonderful wings, and Ifreet of
horrible shape,
And Jinns, with red eyes, made of fire; Divs, Peris,
and Giants, they came.

They came, at the call of *the name*, from *Qāf*, that
engirdles the seas;
From the gloom of the tombs in the graveyard, from
ruins on desolate ground;
From the pool and the marsh and the forest; from
poisonous blossoms and trees: –
Monstrous or dwarfish, – constrained, enchained
subdued, by a sound;

The sound of the title of Allah, spoken so as the
Angels speak: –
Nor spirits uncomely only, and evil; ethereal bands
Thronged down from their heavenly houses, the Great
King's service to seek,
Hearing that nameless Name which all things living
commands.

And the fowl and the beasts were fain to gather, each
creature by each,
When Solomon summoned hereby, pronouncing the
mystical words.

Moreover, their dumb mouths opened, and the fly and
the bee had a speech;
And he knew the heart of the lions, and learned the
mind of the birds.

Thus it is writ how he marched by Tayf from the
Syrian land
Through the "Valley of Ants" and heard the cry
of the people of clay,
"Hide ye! hide in the earth! for there passeth
Solomon's band;
We are many and wise, but we die, if the king's foot
cometh this way."

And he laughed, but leaped to the ground, and bowed
his forehead and said,
"O Lord God! grant me to learn from the ant the
wit to be meek.
I am many and strong, and a king; yet Thou canst
instantly tread
The pride of this earth to dust, and the strongest
to Thee are but weak!"

Then he viewed the birds, and cried, "I see not
amongst ye here
Al-Hudhud[liii], the crested lapwing; what doth she to
linger away?
Ill shall it fall for her, who seeketh us water clear,
If she find not a fountain for prayers before the
ending of the day!

But they tarried not long until the whirr of her
speckled wings
Brought unto Solomon's feet the crested lapwing,
who spake,
"I have seen a queen that is greater than any save
thee, O King!"
In Seba she reigneth majestic, and glorious king-
ship doth make.

"There hath she a marvellous throne of silver, figured
with gold,
And the head of the throne is a moon in a jasper
and emerald curve;
For her people worship the moon." And Solomon
answered, "Behold!
Little bird! if thou liest not, this queen shall the
Merciful serve!"

Thereafter the message went from the servant of God,
the king:
"Solomon, son of David, to Bilqīs, queen of the
south:
Peace be to them that follow the Name upon Solomon's
ring;
Yield thee, and worship Allah; cursed is the idolatrous
mouth."

Then Bilqīs sent him gifts, of gold bricks, yellow and
red;
And beautiful slaves five hundred, with amber and
musk; and a gem

Drilled with a crooked hole, which never a goldsmith
could thread;
And a topaz of price, unpierced, and a diamond
diadem.

He bade the sea-worm[liv] eat a way through the unpierced
stone;
And the little ant carry a thread through the
ruby's crooked drill.
"Doth she offer to Solomon gifts?" quoth he, on his
ivory throne,
"We are richer than Seba's kingdom! By Allah!"
said he, "I will

"That one of my slaves bring hither Queen Bilqīs'
jewelled seat;
Thereby she shall learn that the glory is ours, and
the knowledge and might."
Then Āsaf the wise commanded, and a Jinn spread
his pinions fleet,
And brought the moon-throne thither, and set it
before them aright.

In a guarded house she had shut it, which a thousand
bowmen kept,
But when she was come to Salem, lo! Solomon the
king
Sate there on her own gold seat, and Bilqīs bowed her
and wept,
Saying, "I pray thee, teach me the Name on thy
signet ring!

"We have sinned against our souls, following lower
Lords;
Our kingdom we give, and our goods, and our lives,
and our spirits to thine."

* * * * *

Such worship had he of old who knew *Al-Wālī*'s
words
Which rule the rulers, and knew the sound of the
Name Divine.[68]

Ya Wālī! Gracious Lord! impart
True knowledge of Thee, as Thou art.

[68] Cf. Qur'an, xxvii. chapter "Of the Ant."



77 Al-Muta'ālī

The One Above Reproach

Praise Him, Al-Muta'ālī! Whose decree
Is wiser than the wit of man can see.

MOSES AND THE ANGEL

'Tis written in the chapter "of the Cave,"[69]
An Angel of the Lord, a minister,
Had errands upon earth, and Moses said,
"Grant me to wend with thee, that I may learn
God's ways with men." The Angel, answering, said,
"Thou canst not bear with me; thou wilt not have
Knowledge to judge; yet if thou followest me,
Question me not, whatever I shall do,
Until I tell thee."
They found a ship
On the sea-shore, wherefrom the Angel struck
Her boards and brake them. Moses said, "Wilt drown
The mariners? this is a strange thing wrought?"

[69] Cf. Qur'an, xviii.

"Did I not say thou couldst not bear with me?"
The Angel answered – "be thou silent now!"

Yet farther, and they met an Arab boy:
Upon his eyes with mouth invisible
The Angel breathed; and all his warm blood froze,
And, with a moan, he sank to earth and died.
Then Moses said, "Slayest thou the innocent
Who did no wrong? this is a hard thing seen!"
"Did I not tell thee," said the Minister,
"Thou wouldst not bear with me? question me not!"

Then came they to a village, where there stood
A lowly hut; the garden-fence thereof
Toppled to fall: the Angel thrust it down,
A ruin of grey stones, and lime, and tiles,
Crushing the lentils, melons, saffron, beans,
The little harvest of the cottage folk.
"What hire," asked Moses, "hadst thou for this deed,
Seeming so evil?"
Then the Angel said,
"This is the parting betwixt me and thee;
Yet will I first make manifest the things
Thou couldst not bear, not knowing; that my Lord –
'Exalted above all reproach' – be praised.
The ship I broke serveth poor fisher-folk
Whose livelihood was lost, because there came
A king that way seizing all boats found whole;
Now have they peace. Touching the Arab boy:
In two moons he had slain his mother's son,
Being perverse; but now his brother lives,

Whose life unto his tribe was more, and he
Dieth blood-guiltless. For the garden wall:
Two goodly youths dwell there, offspring of one
That loved his Lord, and underneath the stones
The father hid a treasure, which is theirs.
This shall they find, building their ruin up,
And joy will come upon their house! But thou,
Journey no more with me, because I do
Nought of myself, but all by Allah's will."

Al-Mutaʿālī! Maker of men,
Exalted art Thou past our ken.

78 Al-Barr

The Good



Praise Him, Al-Barr! Whose goodness is so great;
Who is so loving and compassionate.

THE ADULTERESS

Pity! for He is Pitiful – a king
Is likest Allah, not in triumphing
'Mid enemies o'erthrown, nor seated high
On stately gold, nor if the echoing sky
Rings with his name, but when sweet mercy sways
His words and deeds. The very best man prays
For Allah's help, since feeble are the best;
And never shall man reach th'angelic rest
Save by the vast compassion of Heaven's King.
Our Prophet ﷺ once, Aisha answering,
Spake thus: "I shall not enter that pure place,
Even I, except through Allah's covering grace."
Even our Lord (on him be peace!); oh, see!
If *he* besought the Sovereign Clemency,
How must we supplicate it? Truly thus

Great need there is of Allah's grace for us,
And that we live compassionate!
Hast seen
The record written of Ṣalaḥ ad-Dīn
The Sultan? how he met, upon a day,
In his own city on the public way,
A woman whom they led to die. The veil
Was stripped from her weeping face, and pale
Her shamed cheeks were, and wild her dark fixed eye,
And her lips drawn with terror at the cry
Of the harsh people, and the rugged stones
Borne in their hands to break her, flesh and bones;
For the law stood that sinners such as she
Perish by stoning, and this doom must be;
So went the wan adulteress to her death.
High noon it was, and the hot khamseen's breath
Blew from the desert sands and parched the town.
The crows gasped, and the kine went up and down
With lolling tongues; the camels moaned; a crowd
Pressed with their pitchers, wrangling high and loud,
About the tank; and one dog by a well,
Nigh dead with thirst, lay where he yelped and fell,
Glaring upon the water out of reach,
And praying succour in a silent speech,
So piteous were its eyes. Which when she saw,
This woman from her foot she did draw,
Albeit death-sorrowful, and looping up
The long silk of her girdle, made a cup
Of the heel's hollow, and thus let it sink
Until it touched the cool black water's brink;
So filled th'embroidered shoe, and gave a draught
To the spent beast, which whined, and fawned, and quaffed
Her kind gift to the dregs; next licked her hand,

With such glad looks that all might understand
He held his life from her; then, at her feet
He followed close, all down the cruel street,
Her one friend in that city.
But the king,
Riding within his litter, marked this thing,
And how the woman, on her way to die,
Had such compassion for the misery
Of that parched hound: "Take off her chain, and place
The veil once more above the sinner's face,
And lead her to her house in peace!" he said.
The law is that the people stone thee dead
For that which thou hast wrought; but there is come,
Fawning around thy feet, a witness dumb,
Not heard upon thy trial; this brute beast
Testifies for thee, sister! whose weak breast
Death could not make ungentle. I hold rule
In Allah's stead, who is 'Merciful,'
And hope for mercy; therefore go thou free –
I dare not show less pity unto thee!"

As we forgive – and more than we –
Ya Barr! good God! show clemency.



79 At-Tawwāb

The Relenting

Praise Him, Al-Tawwāb; if a soul repents,
Seven times and seventy times thy Lord relents.

ADAM QUITTING EDEN

At the gates of Paradise,
Whence the angry Angels drave him,
Adam heard in gentle wise
Allah's whisper, which forgave him:
"Go," it said, "from this fair place,
Ye that sinned; yet not despairing;
Haply there shall come a grace
And a guidance; and in fearing
Me, and following My will,
Blessed shall your seed be still."[70]

Know ye not that God recieves
Gladly back the soul which grieves?
Know ye not that He relents
Ere the sinner well repents?
Terribly His justice burns,
Easily His anger turns.[71]

[70] Cf. Qur'an, ii. chapter "Of the Heifer."

Spake our Lord: "If one draw near
Unto God – with praise and prayer –
Half a cubit, God will go
Twenty leagues to meet him so.
He who walketh unto God,
God will run upon the road,
All the quicklier to forgive
One who learns at last to live."

Ya Tawwāb! for Thy mercy's sake,
Us to sweet peace and pity take.

[71] Cf. Qur'an, ix. chapter "Of Repentance."



80 Al-Muntaqim

The Avenger



81 Al-ʿAfuww

The Forgiver

"Forgiver!" and "Avenger!" worship Him
By these two names, ʿAfuww and Muntaqim.

HELL AND HEAVEN

[72]O Men, of dry clay moulded, as the potter moulds
the jars;
O Jinns, that We have fashioned them from the
smokeless
fire of stars:
What terror of the Lord will ye abide?

He is Lord of east and west, He is Lord of south
and north;
And the seas obey the limits which He set them,
pouring forth:

[72] Cf. Qur'an, lv. chapter "Of the Merciful."

What terror of the Lord will ye abide?
Their white pearls, large and small, are the handiwork of Him;
And the ships, with towering sails, by His winds and waters swim:
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

But the earth and all her creatures shall die and be decayed;
Only the face of Allah will never change nor fade:
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

The face of Allah ruling in glorious array;
For all things look unto Him, and He governs day by day:
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

Yet will He find good leisure, ye twain! ye Jinns and Men,
To judge you at the judgment, O Clay and Flame! what then?
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

If ye can pass His gateways, east, west, and south and north –
Which shut in earth and heaven – hasten ye! pass ye forth:
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

But Life and Death enclose ye; by no way shall ye pass;

A fence of flame shall stay ye, and a moat of molten brass:
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

And when the sky is rended, red like a new-ripped hide,
There shall be no accusing, admitted or denied:
Which terror of you Lord will ye abide?

No yea nor nay! no questions! the sinner's brand is sin;
Thereby shall he be known, and flung Hell's blazing walls within:
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

Flung by the forelock and the feet: "'This Hell existed not,'
Ye said. Now broil! and when ye thirst, drink sulphur scalding hot:"
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

* * * * *

But sweet for him who was faithful, and feared the face of his God,
Are the Gardens of joy preparing, and the gates of the Golden Abode:
Which bounty of his Lord will he deny?

With leafy branching fruit-trees are set those Gardens twain,
And softly the streamlets warble, and brightly the fountains rain:
Which bounty of his Lord will he deny?

And the fruit of the Golden Gardens swings delicate,
near to reach.
Where they rest on their 'broidered couches, hearing
delightful speech:
Which bounty of their Lord will they deny?
Therein are the shy-faced maidens, refraining their
night-black eyes
From any save that glad lover whose joy is their
Paradise:
Which bounty of their Lord will they deny?
From any but that glad lover, that happy lord for whom
Their mouths of pearl rain kisses, their lips of ruby bloom:
Which bounty of their Lord will they deny?

Shall the wages of righteous-doing be less than the
promise given?
Nay! but by God, the Glorious, the debt shall be
paid in heaven!
What bounty of their Lord shall they deny?

O man! fear Him, magnify Him;
Al-'*Afuww and* Al-Muntaqim.



82 Ar-Raūf

The Ever-Indulgent

Praise Him, Al-Raūf, Just and Kind alway,
Who knoweth how He made us of the clay.

SURA "OF THE STAR"

Say, "Lord of all, to Thee
Goeth our road;
Require not of our souls
Too much, dear God!
Thou wilt not! what was earned
Thou dost defray;
And what was done amiss
That we must pay;
But ah! be not extreme
With what's forgot,
With error, or small sin.
And load us not

With burdens which we cannot carry, Lord!
But favour, help, forgiveness afford."[73]

[73] Cf. Qur'an, ii. chapter "Of the Heifer."

Tender His answers are:–
(The "Chapter of the Star,"[74]
Ayat the Thirty-Third): "The heavens and the earth
To Us pertain, and We
Will deal, assuredly,
Well with the good, but with the ill in wrath.
Yet not for each offence,
Errors of flesh or sense,
Shall there be judgement, children of the loam!
Our mercy reacheth far;
We know ye what ye are,
And knew ye while ye lay clots in the womb;
Sin, and be sorry, and amend:
Who seeketh God shall find Him in the end."

Ever-indulgent Maker! we
Praise for these words Thy clemency.

[74] Cf. Qur'an, liii. "Of the Star."

83 Mālik al-Mulk

King of the Kingdom



King of all kingdoms! only Thou art crowned,
Whose throne is heaven, and earth Thy footstool's round.

SURA "OF THE EMIGRATION"

Ya Mālik! Ya Quddūs! wa ya *Salām!*
O King! O Holy One! O Peace-giver!
Ya *Azīz!* Ya *Muhaymin!* Ya *Mūmin!*
O Mighty! O Protector! Faithful ever!
Ya *Jabbār!* O Thou Sovereign, All-compelling!
Ya *Mutakabbir!* O Thou Lord excelling!
Exalted art Thou over utmost praise;
Accurst are those who graven idols raise
Beside Thee; unto them fall plagues and shames!
To Thee alone belong "the comely names."[75]

King of all kings! we celebrate
With endless praise Thy glorious state.

[75] Cf. Qur'an, lix. chapter "Of the Emigration."

84 Dhū-l-Jalāli wa-l-Ikrām

Lord of Splendid Power



O "Lord of awfulness and honour!" we
Lack wit and words in fitly naming Thee.

SURA "OF THE MERCIFUL"

All things shall die and decay, but the kingdom
of Allah endureth,
Changeless in honour and might, changeless in glory
and grace;
Blessed be He who is Lord, possessed of all beauty and
greatness;
All things die and decay; only endureth His face.[76]

Dhu'l Jalāli wa'l Ikrām! thus ever
Praise we thy Throne which fadeth never.

[76] Cf. Qur'an, lv. chapter "Of the Merciful," vv. 26, 78


١٤٣٥

85 Al-Muqsiṭ

The Equitable



Al-Muqsiṭ! "Equitable!" make us know,
As men have wrought, they shall be wrought with so.

THE LAST SERMON OF THE PROPHET ﷺ

Three days before our Lord Muhammad ﷺ passed,
They bore him to the mosque, where he uprose –
Painfully leaning upon Omar's neck –
The fever burning in his cheeks, his mouth
Dry with the wind of death, and that knit brow
Shadowed with Azrael's overhanging wings.
One thin hand on the mimbar-rail he laid,
Speaking sweet words of guidance, precious words,
The last which ever fell from those lit lips,
Teaching his Faithful.
Then he gazed around,
And said, "Ye men of Mecca, where I lived,
Going and coming, testifying God,

I shall die soon; I pray ye answer me,
Is there among ye here one I have wronged?
I have borne rule, judging in Allah's name,
That am a man and sinful; have I judged
Unrighteously, or wrathfully, or pressed
Too hard in the amend? Let who saith 'Yea,'
Make his 'Yea' good before my people here,
And I will bare my back that he may smite.
I have borne testimony for the truth,
Not sparing sinners; speak, if there be here
One visited unjustly; let him shame
His Prophet now, telling the sin I wrought
Before the assembly. I have gathered dues;
Declare if I defrauded any here
Buying or selling."
And no answer came,
Except the sound of sobs and falling tears
From stern breasts and the eyes of bearded men,
Because our Lord would pass.
But one arose,
A hamal, with his cord across his back
And porter's knot, who cried, "Abdallah's son!
Three drachms of silver owest thou to me
For wood I bore thee after 'Ramadan!'"

"Good friend, I thank thee," softly said our Lord,
"Because thou didst demand thy money here,
And not before the judgment seat of God:
Ill is it if men thither carry debts!"
Therewith he paid his debt, kissing the hand
Wherein the dirhems dropped; and so went home

To die upon the lap of Aisha,
With glad face fixed upon high, and holy lips
That murmured, "Allah! pardon me my sins!"
O ye believers! if our Lord did thus,
Consider well! leave no unrighted wrongs
Against the ill time when the Angels come,
Munkar and Nakīr,[lv] gliding through the dark,
And set ye up for question in the grave;
When Isrāfīl his dreadful trumpet blows,
Summoning to judgment; when the skies roll back
Like a scorched scroll, and o'er the gulf of hell
Al-Ṣirāṭ[lvi] stretches, "thinner than a hair
And sharper than a sword," and yet to cross!
Ah, then! what good one wrought, he hath of help
Even to a date-stone; what of ill he wrought,
Of hindrance, to a date-stone; for your God
Is righteous, and the distribution just.

O just "Distributor!" incline
Our hearts to keep Thy laws divine.



86 Al-Jāmiᶜ

The Gatherer

Al-Jāmiᶜ! praise "the Gatherer," Who divides
Evil and good unto their proper sides.

SURA "OF WOMEN"

Ye who believe, stand ye steadfast in justice,
Witnessing true though it be to displease;
Heed not your patrons, nor parents, nor kinsmen,
Allah is nearer and richer than these.

Sit ye not down in the seat of the scornful,
Hear not the tales which the hypocrites tell;
On the day when His children are folded together
Al-Jami' shall scatter the sinners to hell.[77]

We take Thee for our Shepherd; keep
Safe in the fold Thy foolish sheep.

[77] Cf. Qur'an, iv. chapter "Of Women," v. 139.

87 Al-Ghanī

The All-Sufficing



We praise Thee; but no need of praise Thou hast,
Al-Ghanī! in Thy glory bright and vast.

SURA "OF TROOPS"

Mighty is He and forgiving.[78]
One soul did He first create,
Then He made therefore a mate:
And to help man in his living,
Gave his herds, each with the other,
Camels, oxen, goats and sheep.
Think how Allah wakes from sleep
The babe, close-folded in its mother!
In three darknesses[lvii] He shrouds it;
Wonder upon wonder clouds it.
He is Maker: can ye see
All these tokens and still be
Thankless? Yet, if so ye are,
Not beholden to your care

[78] Cf. Qur'an, xxxix. chapter "Of the Troops."

Is Al-Ghanī: self-sufficing
Lives high Allah, recognising
Gladly all His creatures' love
In a changeless peace above.
Judge ye each for each; with God
No man bears another's load.
Unto Him in your return,
Then shall every spirit learn
What it wrought, and what is due;
For He knows the hearts of you.

Ah, Self-sufficing One! we seek
To praise Thee well, but words are weak.

88 Al-Mughnī

The Sufficer



He is sufficient, and He makes suffice;
Praise thus again thy Lord, mighty and wise.

SURA "OF THE AFTERNOON"

God is enough! thou, who in hope and fear
 Toilest through desert-sands of life, sore-tried,
Climb trustful over death's black ridge, for near
 The bright wells shine: thou wilt be satisfied.

God doth suffice! O thou, the patient one,
 Who puttest faith in Him, and none beside,
Bear yet thy load; under the setting sun
 The glad tents glam: thou wilt be satisfied.

By God's gold Afternoon![79] peace ye shall have;
 Man is in loss except he live aright,
And help his fellow to be firm and brave,
 Faithful and patient: then the restful night!

[79] Cf. Qur'an, ciii. chapter "Of the Afternoon."

Al Mughnī! best Rewarder! we
Endure; putting our trust in Thee.

89 Al-Muʿṭī

The Provider



90 Al-Māniʿ

The Withholder



Muʿṭī and Māniʿ! Heav'n Thou mad'st, and Hell,
Providing and withholding – and didst well.

THE TWO GATEWAYS

When God fashioned Paradise,[80]
Spake He unto Gabriel:
"See this place which We created,
Where the justified will dwell."
Gabriel said, "My Lord! I swear
By Thy glory, none of men
Ever of its joys shall hear
But will strive to enter it."
Round about His Paradise
God set sorrows and denials;
Laid the pathway steep and strait,

[80] Cf. "The Mishkāt-al-Maṣābīḥ."

Hard to find and full of trials.
"Look again!" God said; and he
Looked, and came, and sadly spake:
"By Thy glorious majesty,
Not one man will entrance make!"

Then the Lord created Hell,
Set ablaze its ache and grieving;
Saying unto Gabriel,
"This is for the unbelieving."
Gabriel looked and said, "I swear,
By Thy splendour, not a mortal,
When of hell-fire he shall hear,
Ever will approach its portal."
Round about those awful gates
Allah set soft sins and pleasures;
Made the pathway broad and plain,
Rich with joys and gifts and treasures.
"Look again," said God; and he
Saw; and spake, "Save by Thy blessing,
O my Lord! there will not be
One that must not love transgressing."

Lord of the two-fold roads, we pray
Lead us upon the rightful way.

91 An-Nāfiᶜ

The Propitious



"Propitious" is He unto those that show
Compassion to His creatures; praise Him so.

THE DOVE

"No beast of earth, no fowl that flies with wings,"
Saith the great Book, "but is a people, too;
From Allah sprang their life, and unto Him
They shall return: with such heed what ye do!"

There came before our Lord a certain one
Who said, "O Prophet! as I passed the wood,
I heard the voices of youngling doves which cried,
While near the nest their pearl-necked mother cooed."

"Then in my cloth I tied those fledgelings twain,
But all the way the mother fluttered nigh;
See! she hath followed hither!" Spake our Lord:
"Open thy knotted cloth, and stand thou by."
But when she spied her nestlings, from the palm

Down flew the dove, of peril unafeared
So she might succour these. "Seest thou not,"
Our Lord said, "how the heart of this poor bird

"Grows, by her love, greater than his who rides
Full-faced against the spear-blades? thinkest thou
Such fire divine was kindled to be quenched?
I tell ye nay! Put back upon the bough

"The nest she claimeth thus. I tell ye nay!
From Allah's self cometh thus wondrous love:
Yea! and I swear by Him who sent me here,
He is more tender than a nursing dove,

"More pitiful to men than she to these.
Therefore fear God in whatsoe'er ye deal
With the dumb peoples of the wing and hoof.
Yours are they; yet whene'er ye lift the steel

"To slay for meat, name first the name of God,
Saying 'Bi'sm'illah! God judge thee and me!
God give thee patience to endure to-day
The portion that He hath allotted thee.'

"So shall ye eat and sin not; else the blood
Crieth against you." Thus our Prophet ﷺ spake,
And Islam doeth it, naming God's names
Before the slaughter,[lviii] – for that white dove's sake.

By those dumb mouths be ye forgiven,
Ere ye are heard pleading with Heaven.

92 Aḍ-Ḍārr

The Harmful



Aḍ-Ḍārr! "Harmful" He is to them that sin
Mocking the truth; O man! fear Him herein.

KING SHEDDĀD'S PARADISE

Sheddād, the son of ʿĀd, of Hadramaut,
Idolator, lord of the land and sea,
Hath it come to ye how he mocked at Heaven,
Saying the idols of the coast were best –
Sākia that makes the rain, and Hāfedha
The Thunderer, Razek who gives grain to men,
And Sālema, lady of life and death? –
And how he sware an oath by those four gods,
Drinking the palm-wine deep at Hadramaut,
That he would build a better Paradise
Than Allah's, and be Lord and God therein;
With earthly Houris fairer than those maids
Wrought of the musk and ambergris, who have
The great immortal breasts and black-pearl eyes;
With sweeter streams than Salsabīl,[81] and trees

[81] A stream of Paradise.

Richer in fruit than Ṭūbā:[82] this he sware,
Abiding not the judgment, nor the blasts
Of Isrāfīl, nor weighing of the scales.
Wherefore he gave command that there be built
In Akhaf, on the hills, beyond the sand –
Within a hollow vale walled by wild peaks –
A pleasure-house – beautiful with white courts
Of levelled marble, and in every court
A fountain, sparkling from a tank inlaid
With amber, nacre, coral; and around,
In every court, cloisters of columns carved
With reeded shafts and frontals, wonderful
For beast and bird and fish and leaf and flower.
And round about this pleasure-house he bade
A lovely garden bloom, terraced by lanes
Bosky with blossoming trees and rose-thickets,
Where hidden streamlets murmured and gold fruit
Loaded the boughs, and all the air was balm.
He gave command, moreover, that there rise
Hard by, with streets and markets, a fair town
Peopled by ministers of pleasure, and walled
With ramparts of the rose and pomegranate;
Wherethrough there led a double folding gate,
Fashioned of fragrant woods, and set with stars
Of silver, opening downwards to the vale,
Inscribed "The Paradise of Kind Sheddād."
And when the house was made, and all the courts
Were girdled with the carven shafts, and cooled
With leaping fountains; and the roses, blown,
Filled the green vale with sweetness; and the town

[82] The Tree of Happiness, which grows from the Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ pavilion in Paradise.

Was heaped with grain and wine, and people moved
Busy and glad about its new fair streets,
Sheddād set forth. A shining line of spears,
League-long, wound first upon the mountain-path;
And after them the camel-litters, decked
With silk and gold, and poles of silver, came
Bearing the Houris of his Paradise;
And next the Prince amid his lords: so clomb
The gay march up the sandy steeps, or streamed
Down the grey wadis. At the head of all
Rode one who held a flag of yellow silk,
Which had for its device, "*Amid his gods,*
Sheddād, the son of 'Ād, of Hadramaut,
Unasked of Allah, wends to Paradise."

That night they entered at the silver gate,
Making bold cheer; and sweet the garden was,
And green the groves, and bright the pleasure-house
Lit with a thousand scented lamps, and loud
With dance and cymbal and the beat of drum.
But when the golden horse-shoe of the moon
Waned in the west, there came into the sky
Three clouds; and one was white and had the shape
Of a winged angel; one was red and burned
Across the planets like a blazing sword;
And one, thick black, gathered around the head
Of a bare hollow mountain, seamed with gaps
And caverns, wherefrom – full upon their feast –
Brake, of a sudden, flame and cataracts
Of blood-red molten rock, with pitchy smoke
Veiling the heavens, and rain of blinding dust,

All pierced by livid lightning-spears, and driven
By fierce winds, hotter than the breath of hell;
Which sucked the streams, and parched the trees, and dried
Life from the body, as a furnace draws
The moisture from the potter's clay, while earth
Rocked, quaking; and the thunder's vengeful voice
Rolled horrible from crag to crag, and mocked
The death-cry of those choked idolators:
Whereof, when the sun rose, there breathed not one;
Nor any green thing lingered in the vale;
Nor road nor gate appeared; nor might a man
Say where the garden of Kind Sheddād stood:
So were the ways uptorn, and that fair sin
Blotted from vision by the wrath of God.

Yet to this day there lurketh – lost to view
Of all men, hardly found by wandering wolf,
Spied seldom by the vulture's hungry eyes –
The remnant of the garden of Iram.
Deep in the wilderness of Aden, hid
Behind wild peaks, and fenced with burning sands,
The perished relics of that pleasaunce lie
Which Sheddād made, mocking the power of God:
And one who tended camels in the land,
Abdallah-Ibn-Kelābah, seeking there
A beast estrayed, followed her footmarks up
Into a gorge, which split a cliff in twain
From sky to sand, dark as the heart of night,
With thickets at its mouth and jutting rocks.
Therethrough he pushed, and when the light once more
Glimmered and grew, he spied a hollow, shut

In the gaunt barren peaks, with black dust strewn,
And piled with cindery crags and bladdered slag,
In midst of which lay – plain to see – the bones
Of Sheddād's city and his pleasure-house;
All with their withered gardens, and the gate
Rusted and ruined; and the cloistered courts
Swathed in the death-drift, and the marble tanks
Choked to their brims; the carven columns fall'n
Or thrust awry; the bright pavilions foul
With ashes, and the remnants of the dead:
For Ibn-Kelābah passed into the place,
And saw the valley thronged with carcases
Of men and women and the townspeople –
Not mouldered, as is wont, to whitened bone,
But dried, by the hot blasts of that dread night,
Unto a life in death; the skin and flesh
Yet clinging, and the robes of festival
Still gay in colour; all those sinful ones
Slain in their sin even where the whirlwind struck:
So that he saw the dancers as they fell
With dancing-dress and timbrels; and the ring
Of watchers round them; and the slaves who made
Their music; and the bearers bringing wine,
Each by his shrivelled wineskin, dead and dry.
Also within the courts, lay corpses slim,
Rich-clad and delicate, with jewelled necks,
The Houris of that ruined Paradise.
The sunken eyes stared, and the drawn lips grinned
Under dead rose-crowns, and the shapely limbs

Were grown too lean for the loose tarnished gold
Of armlet and of anklet; dusty lay
Strings of dulled jewels on their shrunken breasts;
And brimmed with dust the cups were which they clasped
In stiff discoloured fingers. In their midst
Sate, all a-gape, King Sheddād, for a throne
Propped his dead form, and round the waist of it
A sword hung, in a belt of gold and silk,
Hilted with pearls and rubies. This he took –
The camel-man – and glided, terrified,
Back from that City of the Dead; and found
The night-black gorge, and groped his way, and brought
The sword and sword-hilt into Hadramaut,
Telling the dread things seen of Allah's wrath
Wrought on the misbelievers; and their streets
Wrecked, and their painted courts, people with the dead.
Such awful end came on the men of ʿĀd,
Who made the House of Iram; and their lord.

But no foot since hath found that road again,
Nor shall; till Isrāfīl sets to his lips
The trumpet, and *Aḍ-Ḍārr* will bid him blow.

O Harmful unto mockers! we
Know and adore Thy majesty.

93 An-Nūr

Light



An-Nūr! "The Light" that lightens all who live!
By this great name to Allah glory give.

SURA "OF LIGHT"

Of earth and heaven God is the Light. [83]
As when a lamp upon a height
Is set within a niche, and gleams
From forth the glittering glass, and seems
A star, – wide fall the rays of it:–
So shines His glory, and 'tis lit
With holy oil was never pressed
From olive tree in east or west.
It burneth without touch of flame,
A light beyond all light: the same
Guideth the feet of men, and still
He leadeth by it whom He will.

Light of the world! An-Nūr! illume
Our darkling pathway to the tomb.

[83] Cf. Qur'an, xxiv. chapter "Of Light."



94 Al-Hādī

The Guide

Al-Hādī! Lord! the way is hard, and we,
Thy creatures, have none other "Guide" than Thee.

THE FOUR TRAVELLERS

By many names and guides doth God
Lead men along the upward road;
He, unto each land under Heaven,
A prophet of its own hath given:
Hūd, Idrīs, Ayūb, Moses, – all
Upon the self-same Lord did call;
Seeing there is no way besides
His way, the Guiders of the guides;
Nor any light to mortals known
Except Al-Hādī – His alone.

'Tis told, nigh to a city-gate
Four fellow-travellers hungry sate,
An Arab, Persian, Turk and Greek;
And one was chosen forth, to seek
Their evening meal, with dirhems thrown
Into a common scrip; but none
Could with his fellows there agree

What meat wherewith should purchased be.
"Buy uzum," quoth the Turk, "which food
Is cheaper, sweeter, or so good?"
"Not so," the Arab cried, "I say
Buy *aneb*, and the most ye may."
"Name not thy trash!" the Persian said,
"Who knoweth üzüm or *aneb*?
Bring *anghur*, for the country's store
Is ripe and rich." The Greek, who bore
Their dirhems, clamoured, "What ill thing
Is *anghūr*? Surely I will bring
Staphylion green, *staphylion* black,
And a fair meal we shall not lack."
Thus wrangled they, and set to try
With blows what provend he should buy,
When, lo! before their eyes did pass,
Laden with grapes, a gardener's ass.
Sprang to his feet each man, and showed
With eager hand, that purple load.
"See uzum!" said the Turk; and "See
Anghur!" the Persian; "what should be
Better?" "Nay, *aneb*! *Aneb* 'tis!"
The Arab cried. The Greek said, "This
Is my *staphylion*!" Then they bought
Their grapes in peace.
Hence ye be taught!

But unto us Thy changeless name
Is Allah – praised be the same.



95 Al-Azalī

The Eternal in the Past



96 Al-Bāqī

The Eternal in the Future

SURA "OF YĀ SĪN"

Al-Azalī! Al-Bāqī! praise to Thee
Who wast before Beginning, and will be
After the Ending. From Thy mercy came
Man's breath, and unto Thee returns the same.

Al A'rāf[84] [lvix] saith – the seventh of "the Book:" –
In the Beginning God from Adam took
All who should be his seed, and bade them bear
Witness upon themselves, putting His fear
And knowledge in the hearts of all to be,
As salt is set in all the waves of the sea.
A countless, nameless, throng there gathered they,
That unborn multitude; and God did say,
"Testify! Am I not your Lord?" And those

[84] Cf. Qur'an, chapter vii. verse 172.

Replied, "Yea, Lord! we testify!" Propose
Never, then, Man! to say, "we did not have
Guidance;" it shall be answered, "Allah gave
With life that light which leadeth to the grave."

And in the chapter of "Yā Sīn"[85] it saith –
Read in the Muslim's ear at hour of death:- [86]
A blast! and then another blast! and, lo!
At summons of the trumpet, all shall go
Forth from their grave-beds, thronging once again
Unto their Lord; and some, in fear and pain,
Shall cry, "Woe, woe! what waketh us? Is this
God's word come true?" and some, in joy and bliss
Shall say, "Now praise to God! His prophets spake
Truth unto us." For mankind shall wake
Together, at the trumpet; and we shall wend
Together, to the Judgement, in the end.

And no soul shall be wronged in that dread place
For aught not wrought; nor any soul find grace
Except for what it wrought; and there shall fall
Endless delight in Paradise on all
Who kept that witness! happy they shall be
Reclining with sweet consorts, 'neath the Tree
Which bears all fruits, and groweth by the Throne.
And they shall hear the Lord say to His own,
"PEACE!" – they shall hear the Merciful say so.

But to the sinners shall be thundered, "Go!

[85] Qur'an, chapter xxxvi.
[86] This Sura is recited as the deathbed of Muslims.

Divide herefrom! did ye not testify?"
"Yea, dreadful Lord!" – thus shall they make reply,
Descending into Hell.

Thy mercy send,
Thou, the Beginning and the End!

97 Al-Wārith

The Inheritor



Inheritor! all things proceed from Thee,
And re-committed to Thy hands shall be.

THE ROSE AND THE DEWDROP

The chapter of Al-Ḥijr:[87] There is nought
But from the treasury of God was brought;
Such and so much He lends them; winds and waters;
Have *ye* the store of these things, or of aught?

Did *ye* set in the sky the starry band,
Or pile the mountain peaks upon the land?
Verily He hath made and will unmake them,
And all these shall return into His hand.

"O Rose!" the Dewdrop said, "whence didst thou spring,
That art so sweet and proud and fair a thing?"
"From dust I sprang," she said, "and ere to-morrow
Back to dust I shall be mouldering."

[87] Cf. Qur'an, chapter xv. verse 21.

"O Dewdrop!" said the Rose, "where didst thou gain
This light, that like a gem on me hath lain?"
"A cloud," he said, "uplifted me from ocean,
And I must trickle to the deep again."

The Bulbul heard; "O Allah's rose!" it said,
"The air is fragrant with thee, being dead;
O Allah's Dewdrop! ere the sea did suck thee,
She was fairer; be thou comforted!"

For saith the chapter of Al-Ḥijr: "Tell
My servants I have made the heavens well,
And the earth well, and with steadfast purpose;
And Paradise is Mine, and Mine is Hell.[88]"

Inheritor! all things are Thine;
Al-Wārith! O Thou might Divine!

[88] Cf. Qur'an, xv. Vv. 49, 85.

98 Ar-Rashīd

The Unerring



Earth knows, heaven shows; the holy scriptures say,
How righteous and "unerring" is Thy way.

THE PROPHET'S OATH

"We sent it down upon the 'Night of Power,'[89]
The Book which 'doth declare.'
In all the year that night is best: one hour
Thereof, in praise and prayer,

"Is worth a thousand days of joy; for then
The Angles bear commands,
Bringing the will of Ar-Rashīd to men;
Descending upon all lands.

"Peace ruleth till the rising of that dawn,
While Allah doth ordain
How many souls those twelve moons shall be born,
How many shall attain

[89] Cf. Qur'an, xcvii. chapter "Of Power."

"His mercy; for the books are brought of these,
And each account is cast;
And Allah maketh 'the allowances,'
Accepting souls at last."

Thus spake our Lord, and Aisha replied,[90]
"O Prophet! are there none
Accepted, save by mercy?" "None!" he cried,
"By God! I say not one!"

"Not thou! – not even thou! – thou not to go,
Unquestioned, into heaven,
Who walked with Allah's Angels, and below
Taught us the message given?" –

He drew his cloth across his bended face,
And thrice he spake to her:
"Except by God's mercy cover me with grace.
I shall not enter there!"

O Ar-Rashīd! and if not he,
Increase to us Thy clemency.

[90] Cf. the Mishkāt-al-Maṣābīḥ.

99 Aṣ-Ṣabūr

The Patient



O loving-kind, "long-suffering" Lord! once more
We praise Thee, magnifying Aṣ-Ṣabūr.

ISLAM

Patient is Allah, and He loveth well
The patient, saith "the Book,"[91] and such as dwell
In kindness, asking pardon of their sins
Each dawn, and pardoning the blameable.

Islam! this is the Faith! thyself resign,
Soul, mind, and body, to the will divine:
The kingdom and the glory and the power
Are God's, and God's the government, – not thine!

[91] Cf. Qur'an, iii. v. 15, chapter "Of Imran's Family."

THERE IS NO GOD BUT GOD! and He is All;
And whatso doth befall ye doth befall
By His decree: therefore, with fear and love
Upon His glorious names devoutly call.

Allah! His holy will be done!
Islam! – we bow before His throne.

Afterword

The Concept of God in Islam

THE FIRST PART of the Muslim confession of faith (the shahada) is the basis for the concept of God In Islam. The Muslim bears witness that: "There is no god but God", or "no divinity but the (one) Divinity". The revealed Scripture of Islam, the Qur'an, is like a vast commentary on this simple statement, drawing from it all its implications for human life and thought.

This conception of the Deity is strictly monotheistic and unitarian. God alone has absolute being, totally independent and totally self-sufficient. Whatever exists or ever could exist does so by His will. He has no "partner" either in creating the universe or in maintaining it in existence. He is not only the "First Cause" but also ultimately, the only cause, and He is Himself uncaused. The Qur'an tells us: "Say: He is Allah, One, the utterly Self-sufficient; He begets not neither is He begotten, and there is nothing that is like unto Him". It tells us also that: "When He wills a thing to be, He but says unto it—Be!; and it is".

A further implication of the first part of the shahada is that there can be no power, force or agency in the heavens or on earth which is independent of God. Everything that exists—and everything that happens—is subject to His control; there is nothing that can compete with Him or that escapes His grasp, nothing that does not bear witness to His creative power and majesty. "The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein praise Him", says the Qur'an, "and there is not a thing that does not hymn His praise, though ye understand not their praise".

In the Islamic view, it is impossible for the human mind to form an adequate conception of God as He is in His eternal and absolute being. The creature cannot comprehend the Creator. According to the Qur'an, "No (human) vision encompasseth Him, yet He encompasseth (all) vision".

But Islam does not demand blind belief. The Qur'an tells us a great deal about the nature of the Divine, and it describes God by

a number of terms – called "the most beautiful Names" – which help us to understand Him. The Qur'an tells us: "Allah, there is no god but He, the Living, the eternally Self-subsistent. Slumber overtakes Him not, nor sleep. To Him belong all that is in the heavens and all that is upon earth. Who is there that (can) intercede with Him except by His leave? He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they comprehend naught of His knowledge save what He pleases. His Throne extends over the heavens and the earth, and He is not wearied by preserving them; and He is the Most High, the Immense".

He is *Al-Aḥad*, The One, absolute unity. This is in sharp contrast to the Christian conception of the Trinity. The One cannot be divided, nor can it be diminished or "humanised" by incarnation in any created form. God does not become His own creature, in fact He does not "become" anything; He is.

The Qur'an describes Him also as *Al-ʿAlī*, the Most High, totally transcendent in relation to His own creations and therefore infinitely beyond all that we might attempt to associate with Him. He is *Al-ʿAzīz*, the Almighty, and *Al-Jabbār*, the Irresistible, for there is no one and nothing that could possibly resist His power, which governs and regulates all existence in accordance with a predetermined measure. It follows that there is no earthly power that is not derived from Him, no strength nor any virtue that is not loaned to us by Him; and no one can help us except by His will, nor can anyone harm us unless He permits them to do so (in which case this harm is a trial to be borne with patience).

He is called *Al-Ḥaqq*, the Truth (or the Reality), and to deny Him is to be far distant from truth at every level of experience. The Arabic word for such "deniers'" (or "unbelievers") is Al-Kāfirūn, and this word suggests a deliberate act of "covering"; in other words those who deny Him whose name is "the Truth", have "covered" their own understanding with an opaque covering so as not to see what is ultimately self-evident. In so doing they have shut out the light, for another of His names is *An-Nūr*, Light. These are they

whom the Qur'an describes as the "blind", for "Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth". In Islam everything is derived from the divine nature and therefore from the "names" by which God has made Himself known, and if He were not "Light" there could be no light anywhere, whether intellectual or physical.

Nothing escapes His knowledge, not even our most secret thoughts for He is Al-ʿAlīm, the Omniscient who knows everything in the heavens and the earth, and Al-Khabīr, the All-Aware from whom nothing is hidden. He is Ash-Shāhid, the Witness and, as such, He is described also as Al-Baṣīr, the Seer and As-Samīʿ, the Hearer. "Who is the Owner of hearing and of sight?" asks the Qur'an, and it answers "Allah!" We see only what is before our eyes, with their very limited range, but no limit is set to His vision; we hear only sounds that are either very loud or very close to us, but He hears everything. "And with Him are the keys of the Invisible", says the Qur'an. "None but He knoweth them, and He knoweth what is in the land and the sea. Not a leaf falls but He knoweth it, nor a grain amidst the darkness of the earth...".

He is Al-Awwal, the First before whom there is nothing, and Al-Akhīr, the Last, after whom there is nothing; but He is not only at the beginning and at the end of time, for He is also Aẓ-Ẓahīr, the Outward, present behind all the shifting scenes we perceive in the world around us, and Al-Bāṭin, the Inward, for it is His power that moves and motivates all that exists.

He is not only Al-Khāliq, the Creator, who gives each separate thing the light of existence by His command "Be!", but He is also Al-Muṣawwir who "shapes" it in accordance with the nature He wishes it to have, for everything in the world has its purpose and is moulded to serve that purpose.

When creatures have been brought into existence and fashioned in accordance with the divine purpose, they are not abandoned and left to fend for themselves. Two very particular "names" stand at the very centre of the Islamic concept of God. These are Ar-Raḥmān and Ar-Raḥīm. Both are derived from the

Arabic word for "Mercy", *raḥma*, which is closely related to the word for "womb" and therefore carries with it implications of creativeness and fecundity. In one of the inspired sayings in which God spoke to mankind through the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ we are told that His "Mercy" takes precedence over His "Wrath".

There are different opinions as to the exact distinction between the names Ar-Raḥmān and Ar-Raḥīm (which are placed at the beginning of all but one of the chapters of the Qur'an). The former is usually translated as the Merciful and the latter as the Compassionate. It is said that the former describes God as He is in His eternal nature and that everything is brought into existence through the overflowing of His innate "Mercy", while the latter – Ar-Raḥīm – refers to the blessings He pours out upon His creatures.

In whatever way we translate these words, the essential concept is not in doubt. God is infinitely merciful, first in giving us life and the means to enjoy life, secondly in caring for us and satisfying our legitimate needs. This concept is amplified by other divine names contained in the Qur'an. God is described as Al-Karīm, the Generous, and as Al-Wadūd, the Loving-Kind; He is also Ar-Razzāq, the Provider who nourishes us both spiritually and physically.

Despite this outpouring of mercy, we still go astray, for man – as the Qur'an tells us – was "created weak", and our situation might seem hopeless if God were not At-Tawwāb, the Relenting, who never tires of turning back to His creatures when they turn to Him in repentance. He is Al-Ghafūr, the Ever-Forgiving, and Al-ʿAfuww, the Effacer (of sins). Whatever people may do in the course of their lives they have the opportunity to seek this forgiveness so long as they have breath, but the opportunity is lost when death comes and, after that, they are judged for what they are or for what they have made of themselves. So the Qur'an says: "O My servants who have damaged your own selves despair not of the Mercy of Allah. Truly Allah pardons all sins. Truly He is the Forgiving, the Merciful. So turn unto your Lord repentant and sur-

render unto Him before the punishment comes upon you; then ye will not be helped".

But "sinning" and "going astray" would have no clear meaning if God had not shown His creatures the right way, the "straight path" as it is called in the Qur'an. One of His names is *Al-Hādi*, the Guide. We are assured that He has never left any nation or any group of people without guidance; to each He has sent a "messenger" to deliver them a "message" of hope and guidance and to instruct them as to how to follow the "straight way" which leads to Paradise and, ultimately, to Ar-Riḍwān, the Good Pleasure or Satisfaction of God Himself. These divine "messages" have been clothed in the language and thought-patterns of the people to whom they were addressed so as to be clear and unambiguous, and the "messengers'" who have been the instruments of this guidance have been men like other men, though in every way better than others.

Inspite of their clarity, these "messages" have again and again been rejected by many of those to whom they were addressed, and it is precisely this freedom to reject the truth that distinguishes man from the other creatures who share the earth with us – the animals, the birds and the fishes. They follow by instinct the way set before them, the law of their species, but mankind has the unique freedom either to follow the "straight path" consciously and deliberately or to turn away from it and follow the dictates of self-will. Man alone has been given a mind capable of understanding the truth, a will capable of choosing the path of truth, and a heart inclined by its very nature to love the truth.

"For each of you have We appointed a divine Law and a way of life," says the Qur'an; "Had Allah so willed, He could have made you one people; but so that He may try you by that which He hath bestowed upon you, (He hath willed otherwise). So compete in doing good. Unto Allah ye will all return, and He will inform you regarding that wherein ye differ". In terms of this and other similar verses, it is entirely possible for Muslims to accept the idea that

the pre-Islamic religions were at least partial statements of the One Truth, adapted to time and place and to the spiritual needs of different peoples.

The Muslim however believes that the message brought by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ completes the vast structure of revelation and provides a final synthesis, after which there is nothing more to be said. Judaism and Christianity are both "monotheistic" religions, but Muslims consider that the Jews appropriated the universal Truth, claiming it as the property of one single people, while the Christians redefined it through the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation[1]. In the Islamic view, the "message" transmitted through Muhammad ﷺ represented, not a completely new religion, but a corrective to the falsifications and distortions which had taken place and, at the same time, an uncompromising re-assertion of the pure doctrine of the One God.

According to the Islamic concept, God demands of us three things. The first is a constant awareness of Him, even in the midst of our worldly activities. This awareness is expressed in two words which constantly recur in the Qur'an. *Taqwa* is commonly translated either as "fear of God" or "God consciousness"; both translations are acceptable, since we cannot be truly "conscious" of Him without experiencing a profound sense of awe which results in a healthy fear of displeasing Him or offending against His laws. The Arabic word *dhikr*, meaning both "mention" and "remembrance", has a more devotional connotation, and we are assured that God is present with us when we "remember" Him or

1 The fact that the earliest followers of Jesus regarded him as purely human is evident from the many theological controversies which persisted during the first three or four centuries of the Christian era. Thus, some renowned theologians, like Theodotus of Byzantium, who lived towards the end of the second century, and his followers – among them Paul of Samosata, Bishop of Antioch in the year 260 – maintained that the "sonship of God" mentioned in the then-existing texts of the Gospels was purely symbolic, denoting no more than that Jesus was a human being exalted by God. The originally widespread teachings of Bishop Arius (280-326) centred in the concept of Jesus as a mortal man chosen by God

"mention" His name. Although Islam lays a great emphasis on the divine transcendence, the Qur'an speaks on many occasions of the "closeness" of God to His believing servants: "He is with you wheresoever you may be", and "We are closer to him (man) than his jugular vein". We read also in the Qur'an that "it is in the remembrance (*dhikr*) of Allah that hearts find rest".

Secondly, He demands of us that we should obey His commandments, which are in no way arbitrary; whether we know it or not, they are for our own good and are, therefore, an aspect of the divine Mercy. Their purpose is to maintain a healthy balance both within the human personality and in society and, at the same time, to provide a stable framework for human living. In Islam God is the only Legislator or Lawgiver. We cannot legislate effectively for ourselves since our laws would inevitably be designed in accordance with our short-term desires. From the commands and prohibitions contained in the Qur'an and from the teachings and example of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is derived the Shari'ah, the Law which governs every aspect of the Muslim's life on earth

Finally, since we are by nature weak and inclined to self-indulgence, God demands of us sincere repentance when we have failed to live up to what He requires of us. Muslims recognise that our weakness, however much we may deplore it, has a positive aspect, for if we were strong we would be tempted to see ourselves as self-reliant little "gods" quite independent of our Creator. Being weak by nature we soon find that we cannot rely either upon ourselves or upon other people and this obliges us to turn to Him whom the Qur'an describes as *Al-Wakīl*, the Utterly Reliable. "There is no power and no strength except with Allah", according to one of Muhammad's ﷺ favourite sayings.

The unfolding of human destinies, obedient or disobedient, as

for specific task, and in the concept of God as absolutely One, unknowable, and separate from every created being: this doctrine, however, was ultimately condemned by the Councils of Nicaea (325) and Constantinople (381), and gradually ceased to have any influence on the Christian masses. The Message of the Qu'ran – translated by Mohamed Assad, 1980.

the case may be, takes place against a meaningful background. In the Islamic view, God creates nothing without a purpose. "Do you not see", says the Qur'an "that Allah hath created the heavens and the earth with (and by) the Truth?" The whole universe is filled – like a great picture-book – with "signs" which bear witness to its Creator and which remind us, if we have pure hearts and seeing eyes, of His power, His majesty and His beauty. The Qur'an tells us: "Indeed, in the heavens and the earth are signs for believers, and in your creation and in all the beasts that He has scattered upon the earth are signs for people whose faith is sure; and in the difference of night and day and in the provision that Allah sendeth down from the heavens and thereby quickeneth the earth after her death – and in the ordering of the winds – are signs for people of understanding".

This serves to emphasize an essential element in the Islamic conception of God. Our existence and the existence of the whole universe around us are proofs of God, and this is cogently expressed in another passage from the Qur'an: "We shall show them Our signs on the horizons and within themselves until it is clear to them that this is the Truth. Doth not thy Lord suffice thee, since He is witness over all things? And so – are they still in doubt about the meeting with their Lord? Doth He not indeed encompass all things?"

To sum up: the God of Islam is transcendent, the all-powerful and all-knowing Creator and Lawgiver, though at the same time infinitely merciful, generous and forgiving. Man, His creature and His servant into whom He has breathed something of His spirit, stands before Him without intermediary or intercessor, meeting Him through prayer during this brief life on earth and meeting Him face-to-face when life is over. In Islam, God does not embody Himself in any human being or make Himself accessible through idols and images.

But he does make Himself accessible through His revealed Names. We, in our small way, can exemplify these qualities and

attributes in our daily lives. Inspired and aided by the Most Merciful we can show mercy. Inspired and aided by the One who creates Guidance we can guide our fellow men and women. Through His Light our lives may be illuminated. What we cannot hope to exemplify fully is His Perfection, but we can love it whole-heartedly. We love those who are kind to us, and God is Kindness itself. We love generosity when it is directed towards us, and He is the Selflessly Generous One. We are irresistibly drawn towards beauty, and He is the source of all Beauty. Above all, we love Perfection, and we seek it in vain in this imperfect world. We find it in God, who is alone perfect, and the Qur'an tells us that "the believers are strong in their love of God". At the end of the road, sign-posted by the divine Names, the Muslim rejoices in an overwhelming love for the One who awaits us at journey's end.

Gai Eaton

NOTES

i One version of this legend says that Soharah (Or Zoharah) herself, the spirit of the planet Venus, descended to tempt the two Angels. Hārūt and Mārūt are fabled to be confined still in the vicinity of Babel, where a man may go to learn sorcery from them, hearing their voices, but never seeing their forms.

ii Gabriel, or Jibrīl, is called in Arabian theology Rūḥ al-Amīn, "the Faithful Spirit, or Rūḥ al-Quddus, "the Holy Spirit." It was he who delivered the Qur'an to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

iii A commentator on this legend writes:

"Some say that Solomon brought these horses, being a thousand in number, from Damascus and Nisibis, which cities he had taken; others say that they were left him by his father, who took them from the Amalekites; while others, who prefer the marvellous, pretend that they came up out of the sea and had wings. However, Solomon, having one day a mind to view the horses, ordered them to be brought before him, and was so taken up with them that he spent the remainder of the day, till after sunset, in looking on them; by which means he almost neglected the prayer, which ought to have been said at that time, till it was too late: but when he perceived his omission, he was so greatly concerned at it, that ordering the horses to be brought back, he killed them all as an offering to God, except only a hundred of the best of them. But God made him ample amends for his loss, by giving him dominion over the winds."

iv Arafat is a mountain near Mecca, so named from the tradition that Adam, upon his repentance, was reunited there to Eve, after a separation of two hundred years.

v Isrāfîl is one of the Archangels, who will sound the last trumpet at the resurrection. He has "the sweetest voice of all God's creatures."

vi Iblīs, "he who despairs," is Shayṭān, or Satan, who fell from Heaven on account of arrogantly refusing to pay reverence to Adam at the creation, when all other Angels worshipped the first man.

vii Wuḍū', or washing (either with actual water or by imitating the process with sand &c.), must precede all those prayers, which are *farḍ*, or "incumbent." These are commenced in a standing attitude, Qiyām, the thumbs touching the lobes of the ears and the face turning towards Mecca.

viii The "Companions of the right hands" are so called because they will have the book of their good deeds put into their right hands in token of salvation; while evildoers will have their scroll of condemnation, at the last day, thrust into their left hands.

ix "Such, moreover, as of old time," etc. These are the early prophets and holy teachers in all nations. The text of the Qur'an calls them "the leaders, the leaders!" that emphatic repetition denoting their dignity, and the assurance of their prominence in the final reward.

x "Mawz-trees." The original word *ṭalḥ* may mean either the plantain, or that acacia which has small round golden blossoms.

xi Sale has a citation upon these privileged attributes of the Houris. " Allah has created them purposely of finer materials than females of this world, and subject to none of those inconveniences which are natural to the sex. Some understand this passage of the beatified women; who, though they died old and ill-favoured, shall yet all be restored to their youth and beauty in Paradise."

xii "At Azan." The time of the call to prayer for Muslims.

xiii "And spider." One of the Suras of the Qur'an, the 29th, is named after this insect.

xiv "The Verse of the Throne." This (which is often engraved

on seal rings in the east) is so called from the word Kursī, the "chair or throne" of Allah, which occurs in the sublime passage cited. In the judgment of Muslims the "Throne-Verse" is one of the noblest portions of the Qur'an, surpassing the majesty in diction of all other human compositions. It is taken from the second Sura, verse 256, and is rendered very exactly, as below, by Mr. Redhouse (to whose most learned and laborious article in the "Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society," January 1880, my indebtedness has been extremely great): – "God, save whom there is no God, is the living, the Self-existing One. Drowziness overcometh Him not, nor sleep. Unto Him belongeth whatever is in the heavens, and whatever in in the earth. Who is he that shall make intercession with Him, save by his permission? He knoweth whatever is before them, and whatever is behind them; and they comprehend not a single matter of His knowledge, save only that which He hath willed. His firmament spans the heavens and the earth, the preservation whereof doth not distress Him. And He is the Most High, the Most Supreme."

N.B. – Each chapter of the Qur'an is called a Sura, a term signifying a course of bricks in a wall; and the Suras are divided into 'āyāt, verses, or more literally "signs."

xv The Sura, 59, is known as the chapter "Of the Emigration."

xvi The Muslim doctors call the scriptural Terah, the father of Abraham, by the name of Āzar. This was also the title of the god of the planet Mars. Abraham's father is moreover styled Zarah is the Talmud, and Athar also, by Eusebius.

xvii "Friend of Allah." The Muslims so denominate Abraham, Al-Khalīl.

xviii This is suggested from Sura 35, the chapter "Of the Angels," or "Of the Originator." The Archangel Gabriel is said to have appeared to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, on the night of his journey to Heaven, having no less than three hundred pairs of wings!

xix "Michael," or Mikā'īl. The Archangel here named was especially the guardian of the Jews. The Israelites of Mecca

told Prophet Muhammad ﷺ that they would have received his Qur'an, if Michael instead of Gabriel had revealed it.

XX "Azrāël." The Archangel of death.

XXI "God's Friend." Please see note xvii.

XXII "People of the bench." This was the name given to the poor persons whom the Prophet ﷺ sustained by alms every day, and who used to wait for his gifts, sitting upon the bench outside the Prophet's house at Medina.

XXIII The very remarkable Sura quoted here, entitled sometimes "The Brightness," came to the Prophet ﷺ thus: – "It is related that no revelation having been vouchsafed to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ for several days, in answer to some questions put to him by the Quraysh, because he had confidently promised to resolve them the next day, without adding the exception, *if it please God*, or because he had repulsed an importunate beggar, or else because a dead puppy lay under his seat, or for some other reason; his enemies said that God had left him: whereupon this chapter was sent down for his consolation."

XXIV "The Journey of the Night." "It is a dispute," writes Sale, "among the Muhammedan divines, whether their Prophet's night-journey was really performed by him corporally, or whether it was only a dream or vision. Some think the whole was no more than a vision; and allege an express tradition of Muāwiyah, one of Muhammad's successors, to that purpose. Others suppose he was carried bodily to Jerusalem, but no farther; and that he ascended thence to Heaven in spirit only. But the received opinion is, that it was no vision, but that he was actually transported in the body to the journey's end; and if any impossibility be objected, they think it a sufficient answer to say, that it might easily be effected by an omnipotent agent."

XXV "One Fātiḥah." The name of the opening prayer for the Muslims.

xxvi "Munkar and Nakīr" are the two Angels who conduct "the examination of the Tomb." They come to a man directly as he is laid in his grave, and catechise him as to his faith. If he repeats quickly and gladly the formula of Islam, they cause him to repose in peace; but if he is uncertain or heterodox, they belabour him with iron clubs, till his cries are so bitter that they are to be heard all through the earth, except by men and Jinns. Then the two black Ministers press the clay down upon the corpse, and leave it to be wasted and consumed till the time of resurrection.

xxvii "Hadith." The traditional sayings which supplement the Qur'an.

xxviii "Zamzam." This is the holy well at Mecca, within the sacred precincts, believed to be that very spring which was revealed to Hagar when she fled with Ishmael.

xxix This legend of Nimrūd is alluded to in Sura 21 of the Qur'an, entitled the "Chapter of Prophets."

xxx "Black Ḥalīmah." The Prophet was suckled by a Bedouin foster-nurse.

xxxi "Ḥirā'." A wild and solitary mountain near Mecca.

xxxii "Mīqāt." These are the last six stages on the journey to Mecca. The iḥrām, or "garb of sanctity," consists of two wrappers without seams, one bound round the waist, the other passed over the shoulders. The Ṭawāf is the sevenfold circuit of the Kaabah, made three times quickly, and four times slowly, by all pilgrims.

xxxiii "Ye let stray your she-camels." Nothing is held more valuable among the goods of an Arab than a she-camel near to foaling.

xxxiv "Who killed thee, little maid?" This alludes to the ancient practice of infanticide among the Arabs, which the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ strenuously denounced.

xxxv "He saw it and he heard." Alluding to the Prophet ﷺ and his journey to Heaven.

xxxvi "Al-Aḥqāf" is the plural of Ḥaqf, and signifies "lands which lie in a winding or narrow boundary," specially applied to a district in the province of Hadramaut.

xxxvii "Al-Kauthar." This word signifies abundance, especially of good, and thence the gift of wisdom and prophecy. Or it may mean abundance of wealth, followers, and the like. It is here used of a river in Paradise, whence the water is derived into the Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ pond, of which the blessed are to drink before their admission. According to a tradition of the Prophet ﷺ, this river, wherein his Lord promised him abundant good, is sweeter than honey, whiter than milk, cooler than snow, and smoother than cream; its banks are of chrysolites, and those who drink of it shall never thirst.

xxxviii "Al-Ṭāriq" is the "star that appears" by night, i.e., the morning star.

xxxix "When the soul comes to the neck." A Qur'anic phrase for the last gasp of death.

xl "The roses on that tree." In the mystic language of the East, the rose is the symbol of that Divine beauty which is the object of the soul's love.

xli "'Illiyyūn." This means literally "exalted places."

xlii "Tasnīm." A stream in Paradise, so called because its waters the highest regions there.

xliii "Al-Fātiḥah." This is the 1st chapter of the Qur'an, which is also a prayer, and held in great veneration by the Muslims, who give it many honourable titles; as the chapter of *prayer*, of *praise*, of *thanksgiving*, of *treasure*, etc. They regard it as the quintessence of the whole Qur'an, and often repeat it in their devotions both public and private, as Christians do the Lord's Prayer.

xliv "The morning mills." At daybreak in Eastern countries almost the first sound of awakening domestic life in the noise of the stones used to grind meal.

xlv "The time for prayer," says Professor Palmer, "is called from the minarets of the mosques by Muezzins or criers, in the following words: – 'God is great' (4 times); 'I bear witness that there is no God but God' (twice); 'I bear witness that Muhammad is the apostle of God' (twice); 'Come hither to prayers' (twice)' 'Come hither to salvation' (twice); 'God is just!' 'There is no other God than God!' In the early morning the Muezzin adds, 'Prayer is better than sleep!'"

xlvi "The Mishkāt Maṣābiḥ." The book of the conversations of the Prophet ﷺ.

xlvii *Laylat al-Qadr* "The Night of Power," was that on which the Qur'an was declared to have been revealed.

xlviii "*Al-Barzakh*." The Qur'an says, "Behind them shall be a bar, until the day of resurrection." Upon this Sale writes: "The original word *barzakh*, here translated 'bar,' primarily signifies any partition, or interstice, which divides one thing from another; but is used by the Arabs not always in the same, and sometimes in an obscure sense. They seem generally to express by it what the Greeks did by the word Hades; one while using it for the place of the dead, another while for the time of their continuance in that state, and another while for the state itself. It is defined by their critics to be the interval or space between this world and the next, or between death and the resurrection; every person who dies being said to enter *Al-Barzakh*. The commentators on this passage expound it as a barrier, or invincible obstacle, cutting off all possibility of return into the world, after death."

xlix "Birds." If the departed person was a believer, the Muslims say two Angels must meet his soul, and convey it to Heaven, that its place there may be assigned, according to its merit and degree. They distinguish the souls of the Faithful into three classes: the first of prophets, whose souls are admitted into Paradise immediately; the second of martyrs, whose spirits, according to a tradition of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, rest in the crops of green birds which eat of the

fruits and drink of the rivers of Paradise; and the third of other believers, concerning the state of whose souls before the resurrection there are various opinions. Some say they stay near the sepulchres, with liberty, however, of going wherever they please; which they confirm from the Prophet's manner of saluting the dead, alluded to elsewhere.

l The "ten holy eves" are the first ten nights of the sacred month of Dhu'l Ḥijjah.

li "Iram" was the name of the palace and pleasure-garden built by Sheddād, son of ʿĀd, in the desert of Aden. The story is related on another page.

lii The Thamudites of the Hadramaut having killed their prophet, were utterly destroyed by tempests, and their city depopulated.

liii "Al-Hudhud." The Arab historians, Sale says, tell us that Solomon, having finished the temple of Jerusalem, went in pilgrimage to Mecca, where, having stayed as long as he pleased, he proceeded toward Yemen; and leaving Mecca in the morning, he arrived by noon at Sana'a, and being extremely delighted with the country, rested there; but wanting water to make the ablution, he looked among the birds for the lapwing, called by the Arabs *al-Hudhud*, whose business is was to find it; for it is pretended she was sagacious or sharp-sighted enough to discover water underground, which the devils used to draw, after she had marked the place by digging with her bill: they add, that this bird was then taking a tour in the air, whence, seeing one of her companions alighting, she descended also, and having had the description given her by the other of the city of Saba, whence she was just arrived, they both went together to take a view of the place, and returned soon after Solomon had made the inquiry which occasioned what follows.

"It may be proper to mention here what the Eastern writers fable of the manner of Solomon's travelling. They say that he had a carpet of green silk, on which his throne was placed, being of a prodigious length and breadth, and sufficient for all his forces to stand on, the men placing them-

selves on his right hand, and the spirits on his left; and that when all were in order, the wind, at his commands, took up the carpet, and transported it, with all that were on it, wherever he pleased; the army of birds at the same time flying over their heads, and forming a kind of canopy, to shade them from the sun."

liv "The sea-worm and the ant." The legend is that Solomon used the *teredo* to bore his topaz, and, by filling the winding hole of the ruby with sugar and water, tempted an ant to draw a silk thread through it.

lv "Munkar and Nakīr." These are the two Angels who visit the dead immediately after burial, and having set them upright in the grave, question them as to their faith and actions, as before described.

lvi "Al-Ṣirāṭ." The narrow bridge which all must cross from this world to the next world, "Finer than a hair and sharper than a razor."

"This bridge," it is written, "is beset on each side with briars and hooked thorns; which will, however, be no impediment to the good, for they shall pass with wonderful ease and swiftness, like lightning or the wind, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his Muslims leading the way; whereas the wicked, what with the slipperiness and extreme narrowness of the path, the entangling of the thorns, and the extinction of the light, which directed the former to Paradise, will soon miss their footing, and fall down headlong into hell, which is gaping beneath them."

lvii "Three darknesses." The body, the womb, and the amnion.

lviii This is the origin of the ḥalāl, a custom of Muslim hunters and butchers, who pronounce the formula of excuse and piety before slaying any animal.

lix "Al A'rāf." The partition between Heaven and Hell. The chapter quoted says, "And betwixt the two there is a wall and they shall cry out to the companions of Paradise, 'Peace be upon you,' but they cannot enter it, although they so desire."

Biographies of Contributors

MOHAMED ZAKARIYA

In 1960, Mohamed Zakariya began working as a machinist in a small Los Angeles factory catering to the Aerospace industry. During this period, he refined his interest in the Islamic religion's art and culture and began learning Arabic. A man of varied interests, his work and studies took him to Morocco, Europe, and England, where he studied Islamic manuscripts informally at the British Museum. At the same time, he was performing slapstick comedy with the zany British group Bruce Lacy and the Alberts, a precursor of Monty Python. His interest in music, which involved making musical instruments, was profoundly affected by his many long stays in London.

Zakariya returned to the United States in 1967 and worked with the antiquarian impresario Oscar Meyer, for whom he crafted a variety of instruments from the history of science, as well as other artistic constructs. In the early 1970s, he moved to Virginia, where he found a wife, some cats, and a home.

In 1984 Zakariya went to Istanbul at the invitation of the Research Center for Islamic History, Art, and Culture to study Arabic-script calligraphy with two Turkish masters. He subsequently received the *icazet* in Szulus/Nesih scripts from Hasan Celebi and in Talik script from the late Ali Alparslan. Since then, he has pursued the calligraphic life at home and abroad, having a number of exhibitions and fulfilling many commissions, as well as teaching the art to a circle of serious students.

Zakariya is represented by Suleyman Cooke, Salon D'Art. His work may be seen at www.MohamedZakariya.com.

HAMZA YUSUF

Hamza Yusuf is president and senior faculty member of Zaytuna College, America's first accredited Muslim liberal arts college. He is an advisor to Stanford University's Program in Islamic Studies and the Center for Islamic Studies at Berkeley's Graduate Theological Union. In addition, he serves as vice-president for the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies, which was founded and is currently presided over by Shaykh Abdallah bin Bayyah, one of the top jurists and masters of Islamic sciences in the world. He is the author of several books and scholarly articles, and has translated major creedal Islamic texts into English. Books he has authored or translated include *Purification of the Heart*, *The Content of Character*, *The Creed of Imam al-Tahawi*, *Caesarean Moon Births*, *Prayer of the Oppressed* and *Agenda to Change our Condition*. Recently, Hamza Yusuf was ranked as "the Western world's most influential Islamic scholar" by *The Muslim 500*, edited by John Esposito and Ibrahim Kalin.

ROBERT P. GEORGE

Professor George holds Princeton's celebrated McCormick Chair in Jurisprudence and is the founding director of the James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions. He served as chairman of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), and before that on the President's Council on Bioethics and as a presidential appointee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights. He also served as the U.S. member of UNESCO's World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST). He is a former Judicial Fellow at the Supreme

Court of the United States, where he received the Justice Tom C. Clark Award.

He is the author of *In Defense of Natural Law*; *Making Men Moral: Civil Liberties and Public Morality*; *The Clash of Orthodoxies: Law, Religion and Morality in Crisis*; *Conscience and Its Enemies: Confronting the Dogmas of Liberal Secularism*; and co-author of *Embryo: A Defense of Human Life*; *Body-Self Dualism in Contemporary Ethics and Politics*; *What is Marriage? Man and Woman: A Defense*; and *Conjugal Union: What Marriage Is and Why It Matters*. His scholarly articles and reviews have appeared in such journals as the *Harvard Law Review*, the *Yale Law Journal*, the *Columbia Law Review*, the *American Journal of Jurisprudence*, and the *Review of Politics*.

Professor George is a recipient of many honors and awards, including the Presidential Citizens Medal, the Honorific Medal for the Defense of Human Rights of the Republic of Poland, the Canterbury Medal of the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, the Sidney Hook Memorial Award of the National Association of Scholars, the Philip Merrill Award of the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, the Bradley Prize for Intellectual and Civic Achievement, and Princeton University's President's Award for Distinguished Teaching. He has given honorific lectures at Harvard, Yale, University of St. Andrews, and Cornell University. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, and holds honorary doctorates of law, ethics, science, letters, divinity, humanities, law and moral values, civil law, humane letters, and juridical science. A graduate of Swarthmore College, he holds J.D. and M.T.S. degrees from Harvard University and the degree of D.Phil. from Oxford University. In November of 2016 he will receive the degrees of B.C.L. and D.C.L. from Oxford.

CHARLES LE GAI EATON

The late Charles Le Gai Eaton, also known as Hasan 'Abd al-Hakim, was a renowned Muslim intellectual, writer and broadcaster. Eaton was born in 1921 in Switzerland, and educated at Charterhouse School and then at King's College, Cambridge.He was commissioned into the British Army during the second World War, and after the war, Eaton's life journey led him to serve as an actor, university lecturer, journalist, writer, and a diplomat in countries such as Jamaica, Egypt, India, and Ghana.

Eaton converted to Islam in 1951 in Cairo under the mentorship of notable British Scholar Martin Lings. It is through Lings where he met Frithjof Schuon, another important teacher who shaped Eton's intellectual and spiritual orientation. Eaton served as a consultant to the Islamic Cultural Centre in London, where he also edited the respected journal entitled *The Islamic Quarterly*. It was during these decades that Eaton made a major contribution to the expanding British Muslim community, both as writer and broadcaster, as well as in the capacity of advisor and counselor to those, Muslim and non-Muslim alike, who were particularly interested in Sufism, the inner, mystical tradition of Islam. For it was this dimension of the faith which had attracted him to Islam, and it was this dimension which dominated his two major Islamic works, *Islam and the Destiny of Man* (1985), and *Remembering God—Reflections on Islam* (2000).

He also authored works such as *King of the Castle* and the *Richest Vein*, but it was *Islam and the Destiny of Man* which became his bestseller, with over 85,000 copies sold. It established his reputation as one of the most serious Islamic thinkers of his generation.

For Eaton, Islam was about inward transformation and the cultivation of virtue through the remembrance of the Divine.

He harmoniously integrated his British identity with his Islamic faith, serving as an ideal role model for indigenous British Muslims. To those that argue that Islam is inherently incompatible with traditional British values, Eaton provided an eloquent living refutation. It is for this very reason, soon after his death, Eaton was hailed as "a towering patriarch of British Islam".

Charles Le Gai Eaton died on February 26, 2010—the same day as the Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ birthday, according to the Muslim calendar. He is survived by his sons Leo and Maurice, his daughters Judy and Ann, and his four grandchildren.*

* Edited from Dr. Reza Shah-Kazemi's extended biography (2010)

Transliteration Key

THE TRANSLITERATION CONVENTION used throughout this book represents the Arabic script as follows:

Consonants:

ء	'	د	d	ض	ḍ	ك	k
ب	b	ذ	dh	ط	ṭ	ل	l
ت	t	ر	r	ظ	ẓ	م	m
ث	th	ز	z	ع	¢	ن	n
ج	j	س	s	غ	gh	هـ	h
ح	ḥ	ش	sh	ف	f	و	w
خ	kh	ص	ṣ	ق	q	ي	y

Short vowels:	ـَ a	ـُ u	ـِ i	
Long vowels:	ـَا ā	ـُو ū	ـِي ī	
Dipthongs:	ـَو aw	ـَي ay		

The definite article is rendered *al-* to preserve the representation of the Arabic script as written, not as pronounced, except where fully inflected expressions are quoted as such. Therefore, *ash-shams* is rendered *al-shams*, unless it appears in a fully inflected verbal expression, such as *wa sh-shamsi wa ḍuḥāhā*. Without inflection, this written expression is rendered *wa al-shams wa ḍuḥāhā*.

The *tā' marbūṭah* is represented by a final *h*, unless it ends the first term of an *iḍāfah* construction, as in *laylat al-qadr*. Note that the *tā' marbūṭah* in *ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamāʿah*, for instance, is represented as an *h* because it is not the first term of an *iḍāfah* construction.

Hamzat al-waṣl will only be accounted for whenever preceded by a preposition, never for the definite article *alif-lām*, and will in such cases be indicated by a hyphen. Hence, the phrase *wa-mnun ʿalaynā minnata l-karīmi* indicates *hamzat al-waṣl* with a hyphen in *wa-mnun*, but not in *minnata l-karīmi*.

Words that have entered the English language, such as "hadith," "fatwa," and "imam," are not transliterated or italicized unless rendered in formulaic Arabic expressions or idiomatic phrases.

ﷺ An invocation of God's blessings and peace upon the Prophet Muḥammad: "May God's blessings and peace be upon him."