

# The Tenth Word

## Resurrection and the Hereafter

### NOTE

[The reasons for my writing these treatises in the form of metaphors, comparisons and stories are to facilitate comprehension and to show how rational, appropriate, well-founded and coherent are the truths of Islam. The meaning of the stories is contained in the truths that conclude them; each story is like an allusion pointing to its concluding truth. Therefore, they are not mere fictitious tales, but veritable truths.]

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

*Look, then, to the signs of God's mercy —how He restores life to the earth after its death— verily He it is Who quickens the dead, for He is powerful over all things.<sup>1</sup>*

Brother, if you wish for a discussion of resurrection and the hereafter in simple and common language, in a straightforward style, then listen to the following comparison, together with my own soul.

Once two men were travelling through a land as beautiful as Paradise (by that land, we intend the world). Looking around them, they saw that everyone had left open the door of his home and his shop and was not paying attention to guarding it. Money and property were readily accessible, without anyone to claim them. One of the two travellers grasped hold of all that he fancied, stealing it and usurping it. Following his inclinations, he committed every kind of injustice and abomination. None of the people of that land moved to stop him. But his friend said to him:

“What are you doing? You will be punished, and I will be dragged into misfortune along with you. All this property belongs to the state. The people

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'an, 30:50.

NOTE: The main part of this translation of the Tenth Word is by Hamid Algar, Prof. of Middle Eastern Studies in the Univ. of California, Berkeley, USA, and was first published in 1980. It has been slightly amended to fit the present work

of this land, including even the children, are all soldiers or government servants. It is because they are at present civilians that they are not interfering with you. But the laws here are strict. The king has installed telephones everywhere and his agents are everywhere. Go quickly, and try to settle the matter.”

But the empty-headed man said in his obstinacy: “No, it is not state property; it belongs instead to some endowment, and has no clear or obvious owner. Everyone can make use of it as he sees fit. I see no reason to deny myself the use of these fine things. I will not believe they belong to anyone unless I see him with my own eyes.” He continued to speak in this way, with much philosophical sophistry, and an earnest discussion took place between them.

First the empty-headed man said: “Who is the king here? I can’t see him,” and then his friend replied:

“Every village must have its headman; every needle must have its manufacturer and craftsman. And, as you know, every letter must be written by someone. How, then, can it be that so extremely well-ordered a kingdom should have no ruler? And how can so much wealth have no owner, when every hour a train<sup>2</sup> arrives filled with precious and artful gifts, as if coming from the realm of the unseen? And all the announcements and proclamations, all the seals and stamps, found on all those goods, all the coins and the flags waving in every corner of the kingdom — can they be without an owner? It seems you have studied foreign languages a little, and are unable to read this Islamic script. In addition, you refuse to ask those who are able to read it. Come now, let me read to you the king’s supreme decree.”

The empty-headed man then retorted: “Well, let us suppose there is a king; what harm can he suffer from the minute use I am making of all his wealth? Will his treasury decrease on account of it? In any event, I can see nothing here resembling prison or punishment.”

His friend replied: “This land that you see is a manoeuvring ground. It is, in addition, an exhibition of his wonderful royal arts. Then again it may be regarded as a temporary hospice, one devoid of foundations. Do you not see that every day one caravan arrives as another departs and vanishes? It is being constantly emptied and filled. Soon the whole land will be changed; its inhabitants will depart for another and more lasting realm. There everyone will be either rewarded or punished in accordance with his services.”

That treacherous empty-headed one retorted rebelliously: “I don’t believe it. Is it at all possible that a whole land should perish, and be transferred to another realm?”

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<sup>2</sup> Indicates the cycle of a year. Indeed, every spring is a carload of provisions coming from the realm of the unseen.

His faithful friend then replied: “Since you are so obstinate and rebellious, come, let me demonstrate to you, with twelve out of the innumerable proofs available, that there is a Supreme Tribunal, a realm of reward and generosity and a realm of punishment and incarceration, and that just as this world is partially emptied every day, so too a day shall come when it will be totally emptied and destroyed.

- **First Aspect:** Is it at all possible that in any kingdom, and particularly so splendid a kingdom as this, there should be no reward for those who serve obediently and no punishment for those who rebel? Reward and punishment are virtually non-existent here; there must therefore be a Supreme Tribunal somewhere else.

- **Second Aspect:** Look at the organization and administration of this kingdom! See how everyone, including the poorest and the weakest, is provided with perfect and ornate sustenance. The best care is taken of the sick. Royal and delicious foods, dishes, jewel encrusted decorations, embroidered garments, splendid feasts — all are to be found here. See how everyone pays due attention to his duties, with the exception of empty-headed people such as yourself. No one transgresses his bounds by as much as an inch. The greatest of all men is engaged in modest and obedient service, with an attitude of fear and awe. The ruler of this kingdom must possess, then, great generosity and all-embracing compassion, as well as, at the same time, great dignity, exalted awesomeness and honour. Now generosity requires liberality; compassion cannot dispense with beneficence; and awesomeness and honour make it imperative that the discourteous be chastised. But not even a thousandth part of what that generosity and awesomeness require is to be seen in this realm. The oppressor retains his power, and the oppressed, his humiliation, as they both depart and migrate from this realm. Their affairs are, then, left to the same Supreme Tribunal of which we speak.

- **Third Aspect:** See with what lofty wisdom and ordering affairs are managed, and with what true justice and balance transactions are effected! Now a wise polity requires that those who seek refuge under the protecting wing of the state should receive favour, and justice demands that the rights of subjects be preserved, so that the splendour of the state should not suffer. But here in this land, not a thousandth part of the requirements of such wisdom and justice is fulfilled; for example, empty-headed people such as yourself usually leave this realm unpunished. So again we say, matters are postponed for the consideration of a Supreme Tribunal.

- **Fourth Aspect:** Look at these innumerable and peerless jewels that are displayed here, these unparalleled dishes laid out like a banquet! They demonstrate that the ruler of these lands is possessed of infinite generosity and an inexhaustible treasury. Now such generosity and such a treasury

deserve and require a bounteous display that should be eternal and include all possible objects of desire. They further require that all who come as guests to partake of that display should be there eternally and not suffer the pain of death and separation. For just as the cessation of pain is pleasurable, so too is the cessation of pleasure painful! Look at these displays and the announcements concerning them! And listen to these heralds proclaiming the fine and delicate arts of a miracle-working monarch, and demonstrating his perfections! They are declaring his peerless and invisible beauty, and speaking of the subtle manifestations of his hidden beauteousness; he must be possessed, then, of a great and astounding invisible beauty and perfection. This flawless hidden perfection requires one who will appreciate and admire it, who will gaze on it exclaiming, *Ma'shallah!*, thus displaying it and making it known.

As for concealed and peerless beauty, it too requires to see and be seen, or rather to behold itself in two ways. The first consists of contemplating itself in different mirrors, and the second of contemplating itself by means of the contemplation of enraptured spectators and astounded admirers. Hidden beauty wishes, then, to see and be seen, to contemplate itself eternally and be contemplated without cease. It desires also permanent existence for those who gaze upon it in awe and rapture. For eternal beauty can never be content with a transient admirer; moreover, an admirer destined to perish without hope of return will find his love turning to enmity whenever he imagines his death, and his admiration and respect will yield to contempt. It is in man's nature to hate the unknown and the unaccustomed. Now everyone leaves the hospice of this realm very quickly and vanishes, having seen only a light or a shadow of the perfection and beauty for no more than a moment, without in any way being satiated. Hence, it is necessary that he should go towards an eternal realm where he will contemplate the Divine beauty and perfection.

• **Fifth Aspect:** See, it is evident from all these matters that that peerless Being is possessed of most great mercy. For he causes aid to be swiftly extended to every victim of misfortune, answers every question and petition; and mercifully fulfils even the lowliest need of his lowliest subject. If, for example, the foot of some herdsman's sheep should hurt, he either provides some medicine or sends a veterinarian.

Come now, let us go; there is a great meeting on that island. All the nobles of the land are assembled there. See, a most noble commander, bearing exalted decorations, is pronouncing a discourse, and requesting certain things from that compassionate monarch. All those present say: "Yes, we too desire the same," and affirm and assent to his words. Now listen to the words of that commander favoured by his monarch:

"O monarch that nurtures us with his bounty! Show us the source and origin of these examples and shadows you have shown us! Draw us nigh to

your seat of rule; do not let us perish in these deserts! Take us into your presence and have mercy on us! Feed us there on the delicious bounty you have caused us to taste here! Do not torment us with desperation and banishment! Do not leave your yearning, thankful and obedient subjects to their own devices; do not cause them to be annihilated!” Do you not hear him thus supplicating? Is it at all possible that so merciful and powerful a monarch should not totally fulfil the finest and highest aim of his most beloved and noble commander?

Moreover, the purpose of that commander is the purpose of all men, and its fulfilment is required by the pleasure, the compassion and the justice of the king, and it is a matter of ease for him, not difficulty, causing him less difficulty than the transient places of enjoyment contained in the hospice of the world. Having spent so much effort on these places of witnessing that will last only five or six days, and on the foundation of this kingdom, in order to demonstrate instances of his power, he will, without doubt, display at his seat of rule true treasures, perfections and skills in such a manner, and open before us such spectacles, that our intellects will be astonished.

Those sent to this field of trial will not, then, be left to their own devices; palaces of bliss or dungeons await them.

• **Sixth Aspect:** Come now, look! All these imposing railways, planes, machines, warehouses, exhibitions show that behind the veil an imposing monarch exists and governs.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> When a vast army in the present age receives the order, “take up your weapons and fix your bayonets,” in accordance with the rules of war while on manoeuvre, it comes to resemble a forest of upright oaks. Similarly, when the soldiers of a garrison are commanded on festive days to don their parade uniforms and pin on their medals, it will resemble from one end to the other a colourful and ornate garden, where all the flowers have blossomed. Conversely, when on the parade-ground of the world, the various and infinite species of the soldiery of the Pre-Eternal Monarch —angels, jinn, men, animals and even unfeeling plants— receive the order of “Be!” And it is in the struggle for life’s preservation and the command, “take up your weapons and equipment, and prepare to defend yourselves,” when they fix the minute bayonets that are the spiked trees and plants found throughout the world, — then they resemble a magnificent army advancing with bayonets fixed.

Similarly, each day and each week of the spring is like a festival for each class of the vegetable kingdom, and each class presents itself to the witnessing gaze of the Pre-Eternal Monarch with the jewelled decorations He has given them, as if it were on parade in order to display the fine gifts He has bestowed on them. It is as if all the plants and trees were heeding a dominical command, don the bejewelled garments produced by God’s artistry, put on the decorations made by His creative power — flowers and fruit. The face of the earth then comes to represent a parade-ground on a splendid festive day, a magnificent parade brilliant with the uniforms and jewelled decorations of the soldiers.

Such wise and well-ordered arrangement and ornament demonstrates of a certainty, to all who are not blind, that they derive from the command of a monarch infinite in power and unlimited in wisdom.

Such a monarch requires subjects worthy of himself. But now you see all his subjects gathered in a hospice for wayfarers, a hospice that is filled and emptied each day. It can also be said that his subjects are now gathered in a testing-ground for the sake of manoeuvres, and this ground also changes each hour. Again, we may say that all his subjects stay in an exhibition-hall for a few minutes to behold specimens of the monarch's beneficence, valuable products of his miraculous art. But the exhibition itself changes each moment. Now this situation and circumstance conclusively shows that beyond the hospice, the testing-ground, the exhibition, there are permanent palaces, lasting abodes, and gardens and treasuries full of the pure and elevated originals of the samples and shapes we see in this world. It is for the sake of these that we exert ourselves here. Here we labour, and there we receive our reward. A form and degree of felicity suited to everyone's capacity awaits us there.

• **Seventh Aspect:** Come, let us walk a little, and see what is to be found among these civilized people. See, in every place, at every corner, photographers are sitting and taking pictures. Look, everywhere there are scribes sitting and writing things down. Everything is being recorded. They are registering the least significant of deeds, the most commonplace of events. Now look up at the tall mountain; there you see a supreme photographer installed, devoted to the service of the king;<sup>4</sup> he is taking pictures of all that happens in the area. The king must, then, have issued this order; "Record all the transactions made and deeds performed in the kingdom." In other words, that exalted personage is having all events registered and photographically recorded. The precise record he is keeping must without doubt be for the sake of one day calling his subjects to account.

Now is it at all possible that an All-Wise and All-Preserving Being, who does not neglect the most banal doings of the lowest of his subjects, should not record the most significant deeds of the greatest among his subjects, should not call them to account, should not reward and punish them? After all, it is those foremost among his subjects that perform deeds offensive to his glory, contrary to his pride and unacceptable to his compassion, and those deeds remain unpunished in this world. It must be, therefore, that their judgement is postponed to a Supreme Court.

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<sup>4</sup> Some of the truths indicated in this parable have been set forth in the Seventh Truth. However, let us point out here that the figure of the "supreme photographer devoted to the service of the king" is an indication of the Preserved Tablet. The reality and existence of the Preserved Tablet has been proved in the Twenty-Sixth Word as follows: a little portfolio suggests the existence of a great ledger; a little document points to the existence of a great register; and little drops point to the existence of a great water tank. So too the retentive faculties of men, the fruits of trees, the seeds and kernels of fruit, being each like a little portfolio, a Preserved Tablet in miniature or a drop proceeding from the pen that inscribes the great Preserved Tablet — they point to, indicate and prove the existence of a Supreme Retentive Faculty, a great register, an exalted Preserved Tablet. Indeed, they demonstrate this visibly to the perceptive intellect.

• **Eighth Aspect:** Come, let me read to you the decrees issued by that monarch. See, he repeatedly makes the following promises and dire threats: “I will take you from your present abode and bring you to the seat of my rule. There I shall bestow happiness on the obedient and imprison the disobedient. Destroying that temporary abode, I shall found a different realm containing eternal palaces and dungeons.”

He can easily fulfil the promises that he makes, of such importance for his subjects. It is, moreover, incompatible with his pride and his power that he should break his promise. So look, o confused one! You assent to the claims of your mendacious imagination, your distraught intellect, your deceptive soul, but deny the words of a being who cannot be compelled in any fashion to break his promise, whose high stature does not admit any such faithlessness, and to whose truthfulness all visible deeds bear witness. Certainly you deserve a great punishment. You resemble a traveller who closes his eyes to the light of the sun and looks instead upon his own imagination. His fancy wishes to illuminate his awesomely dark path with the light of his brain, although it is no more than a glow-worm. Once that monarch makes a promise, he will by all means fulfil it. Its fulfilment is most easy for him, and moreover most necessary for us and all things, as well as for him too and his kingdom.

There is therefore, a Supreme Court, and a lofty felicity.

• **Ninth Aspect:** Come now! Look at the heads of these offices and groups.<sup>5</sup> Each has a private telephone to speak personally with the king. Sometimes too they go directly to his presence. See what they say and unanimously report, that the monarch has prepared a most magnificent and awesome place for reward and punishment. His promises are emphatic and his threats are most stern. His pride and dignity are such that he would in no way stoop to the abjectness inherent in the breaking of a promise. The bearers of this report, who are so numerous as to be universally accepted, further report with the strong unanimity of consensus that “the seat and headquarters of the lofty monarchy, some of whose traces are visible here, is in another realm far distant from here. The buildings existing in this testing-ground are but temporary, and will later be exchanged for eternal palaces. These places will change. For this magnificent and unfading monarchy, the splendour of which is apparent from its works, can in no way be founded or based on so transient, impermanent, unstable, insignificant, changing,

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<sup>5</sup> The meanings indicated in this Aspect can be found in the Eighth Truth. For example, by heads of offices we mean the prophets and the saints. As for the telephone, it is a link and relation with God that goes forth from the heart and is the mirror of revelation and the receptacle of inspiration. The heart is like the earpiece of that telephone.

defective and imperfect matters. It is based rather on matters worthy of it, eternal, stable, permanent and glorious.”

There is, then, another realm, and of a certainty we shall go toward it.

• **Tenth Aspect:** Come, today is the vernal equinox.<sup>6</sup> Certain changes will take place, and wondrous things will occur. On this fine spring day, let us go for a walk on the green plain adorned with beautiful flowers. See, other people are also coming toward it. There must be some magic at work, for buildings that were mere ruins have suddenly sprung up again here, and this once empty plain has become like a populous city. See, every hour it shows a different scene, just like a cinema screen, and takes on a different shape. But notice, too, that among these complex, swiftly changing and multifarious scenes perfect order exists, so that all things are put in their proper places. The imaginary scenes presented to us on the cinema screen cannot be as well-ordered as this, and millions of skilled magicians would be incapable of this artistry. This monarch whom we cannot see must, then, have performed even greater miracles.

O foolish one! You ask: “How can this vast kingdom be destroyed and re-established somewhere else?”

You see that every hour numerous changes and revolutions occur, just like that transfer from one realm to another that your mind will not accept. From this gathering in and scattering forth it can be deduced that a certain purpose is concealed within these visible and swift joinings and separations, these compoundings and dissolvings. Ten years of effort would not be devoted to a joining together destined to last no longer than an hour. So these circumstances we witness cannot be ends in themselves; they are a kind of parable of something beyond themselves, an imitation of it. That exalted being brings them about in miraculous fashion, so that they take shape and then merge, and the result is preserved and recorded, in just the same way that every aspect of a manoeuvre on the battleground is written down and recorded. This implies that proceedings at some great concourse and meeting will be based on what happens here. Further, the results of all that occurs here will be permanently displayed at some supreme exposition. All the transient and fluctuating phenomena we see here will yield the fruit of eternal and immutable form.

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<sup>6</sup> You will find what this Aspect alludes to in the Ninth Truth. The vernal equinox is equivalent to the beginning of spring. As for the green plain covered with flowers, this is the face of the earth in springtime. The changing scenes and spectacles are an allusion to the different groups of vernal beings, the classes of summer creation, and the sustenance for men and animals, that the All-Powerful and Glorious Maker, the All-Wise and Beauteous Creator, from the beginning of spring to the end of summer, brings forth in orderly succession, renews with the utmost compassion, and despatches uninterruptedly.

All the variations we observe in this world are then, for the sake of a supreme happiness, a lofty tribunal, for the sake of exalted aims as yet unknown to us.

• **Eleventh Aspect:** Come, o obstinate friend! Let us embark on a plane or a train travelling east or west, that is, to the past or the future. Let us see what miraculous works that being has accomplished in other places. Look, there are marvels on every hand like the dwellings, open spaces and exhibitions we see. But they all differ with respect to art and to form. Note well, however, what order betokening manifest wisdom, what indications of evident compassion, what signs of lofty justice, and what fruits of comprehensive mercy, are to be seen in these transient dwellings, these impermanent open spaces, these fleeting exhibitions. Anyone not totally devoid of insight will understand a certainty that no wisdom can be imagined more perfect than his, no providence more beautiful than his, no compassion more comprehensive than his, and no justice more glorious than his.

If, for the sake of argument, as you imagine, no permanent abodes, lofty places, fixed stations, lasting residences, or resident and contented population existed in the sphere of his kingdom; and if the truths of his wisdom, compassion, mercy and justice had no realm in which to manifest themselves fully (for this impermanent kingdom is no place for their full manifestation) — then we would be obliged to deny the wisdom we see, to deny the compassion we observe, to deny the mercy that is in front of our eyes, and to deny the justice the signs of which are evident. This would be as idiotic as denying the sun, the light of which we clearly see at midday. We would also have to regard the one from whom proceed all these wise measures we see, all these generous acts, all these merciful gifts, as a vile gambler or treacherous tyrant (God forbid!). This would be to turn truth on its head. And turning a truth into its opposite is impossible, according to the unanimous testimony of all rational beings, excepting only the idiot sophists who deny everything.

There is, then, a realm apart from the present one. In it, there is a supreme tribunal, a lofty place of justice, an exalted place of reward, where all this compassion, wisdom, mercy and justice will be made fully manifest.

• **Twelfth Aspect:** Come, let us return now. We will speak with the chiefs and officers of these various groups, and looking at their equipment will inquire whether that equipment has been given them only for the sake of subsisting for a brief period in that realm, or whether it has been given for the sake of obtaining a long life of bliss in another realm. Let us see. We cannot look at everyone and his equipment. But by way of example, let us look at the identity card and register of this officer. On his card, his rank, salary, duty, supplies and instructions are recorded. See, this rank has not been awarded him for just a few days; it may be given for a prolonged

period. It says on his card: “You will receive so much salary on such-and-such a day from the treasury.” But the date in question will not arrive for a long time to come, after this realm has been vacated. Similarly, the duty mentioned on his card has not been given for this temporary realm, but rather for the sake of earning a permanent felicity in the proximity of the king. Then, too, the supplies awarded him cannot be merely for the sake of subsisting in this hospice of a few days’ duration; they can only be for the sake of a long and happy life. The instructions make it quite clear that he is destined for a different place, that he is working for another realm.

Now look at these registers. They contain instructions for the use and disposition of weapons and equipment. If there were no realm other than this, one exalted and eternal, that register with its categorical instructions and that identity card with its clear information, would both be quite meaningless. Further, that respected officer, that noble commander, that honoured chief, would fall to a degree lower than that of all men; he would be more wretched, luckless, abased, afflicted, indigent and weak than everyone. Apply the same principle to everything. Whatever you look upon bears witness that after this transient world another and eternal world exists.

O friend! This temporary world is like a field. It is a place of instruction, a market. Without doubt a supreme tribunal and ultimate happiness will succeed it. If you deny this, you will be obliged also to deny the identity cards of all the officers, their equipment and their orders; in fact, you will have to deny too all the order existing in the country, the existence of a government in it and all the measures that the government takes. Then you will no longer deserve the name of man or the appellation of conscious. You will be more of a fool than the sophists.

Beware, do not imagine that the proofs of the transfer of creation from one realm to another are restricted to these twelve. There are indications and proofs beyond counting and enumeration, all showing that this impermanent, changing kingdom will be transformed into a permanent and immutable realm. There are also innumerable signs and evidences that men will be taken from this temporary hospice and sent to the eternal seat of rule of all creation.

I will show one proof in particular that is stronger than all the twelve aspects taken together.

Come now, look, in the midst of the great assembly visible in the distance the same noble commander whom we previously saw on the island, adorned with numerous decorations, is making an announcement. Let us go and listen. See, that luminous and most noble commander is conveying a supreme edict, beautifully inscribed. He says:

“Prepare yourselves; you will go to another and permanent realm, a realm

such that this one will appear as a dungeon by comparison. You will go to the seat of rule of our king, and there receive his compassion and his bounty, if you heed this edict well and obey it. But if you rebel and disobey it, you will be cast into awesome dungeons.” Such is the message that he conveys. If you look at the decree, you will see that it bears such a miraculous seal that it cannot in any way be imitated. Everyone apart from idiots such as yourself knows of a certainty that the decree is from the king. Moreover, the noble commander bears such bright decorations that everyone except those blind like yourself understands full well that he is the veracious conveyer of the king’s orders.

Is it at all possible that the teaching of transfer from one realm to another, challengingly conveyed by that noble commander in the supreme edict he has received, should at all be open to objection? No, it is not possible, unless we deny all that we have seen.

Now, o friend, it is your turn to speak. Say what you have to say.

“What should I say? What can be said to contradict all of this? Who can speak against the sun at midday? I say only: Praise be to God. A hundred thousand thanks that I have been saved from the dominance of fancy and vain imagination, and delivered from an eternal dungeon and prison. I have come to believe that there is an abode of felicity in the proximity of the monarch, separate from this confused and impermanent hospice.”

Our comparison indicating the truth of resurrection and the hereafter is now complete. Now with God’s grace, we will pass on to the most exalted truth. We shall set forth twelve interrelated Truths, corresponding to the twelve Aspects discussed above, as well as an Introduction.

## Introduction

[By means of a few indications, we refer here to several matters explained elsewhere, that is, in the Twenty-Second, Nineteenth and Twenty-Sixth Words.]

### • **First Indication**

The foolish man in the previous story and his trustworthy companion correspond to three other pairs:

- The instinctual soul and the heart;
- The students of philosophy and the pupils of the All-Wise Qur'an;
- The people of unbelief and the community of Islam.

The worst error and misguidance of the students of philosophy, the people of unbelief and the instinctual soul, lies in not recognizing God. Just as in the preceding story the trustworthy man said, "there can be no letter without a scribe, no law without a legislator," we too say the following:

A book, particularly one in each word of which a minute pen has inscribed another whole book, and in each letter of which a fine pen has traced a poem, cannot be without a writer; this would be entirely impossible. So too this cosmos cannot be without its inscriber; this is impossible to the utmost degree. For the cosmos is precisely such a book that each of its pages includes many other books, each of its words contains a book, and each of its letters contains a poem. The face of the earth is but a single page in the book of the cosmos. See how many books it contains. Every fruit is a letter, and every seed is a dot. In that dot is contained the index of the whole tree in its vastness. A book such as this can have been inscribed only by the mighty pen of a Possessor of Glory Who enjoys the attributes of splendour and beauty, and Who is the holder of infinite wisdom and power. Faith, then, follows inevitably on the observation of the world, unless one is drunk on misguidance.

Similarly, a house cannot arise without a builder, particularly a house adorned with miraculous works of art, wondrous designs, and amazing ornaments. As much art has been put into one of its stones as into a whole palace. No intelligence will accept that it could arise without a builder; definitely it needs a master architect. Moreover, within the building, veritable

rooms take shape and change each hour with the utmost order and ease, just as if clothes were being changed, or as if scenes were passing across a cinema screen. We can say even that numerous little rooms are constantly being created in each of those scenes.

In like manner, the cosmos also requires an infinitely wise, all-knowing and all-powerful maker. For the magnificent cosmos is a palace that has the sun and the moon as its lamps and the stars as its candles; time is like a rope or ribbon hung within it, on to which the Glorious Creator each year threads a new world. And within the world that He thus threads on the string of time He places three hundred and sixty fresh and orderly forms. He changes them with the utmost orderliness and wisdom. He has made the face of the earth a bounteous spread that He adorns each spring with three hundred thousand species of creation, that He fills with innumerable kinds of generous gifts. This He does in such a fashion that they all stand apart from each other, quite separate and distinct, despite their being at the same time so close and intermingled. Is it possible to overlook the existence of the Maker of such a palace?

Again, to deny the existence of the sun, on a cloudless day at noon, when its traces are to be observed and its reflection is to be seen in every bubble on the surface of the ocean, in every shining object on dry land, and in every particle of snow — to make such a denial would be to rave like the deranged. For if one denied and refused to accept the existence of the single, unique sun, he would be compelled to accept the existence of a whole series of minor suns, each real and existent in its own right, as numerous as the drops and bubbles of the ocean, as countless as the particles of snow. It would be necessary to believe that each minute particle contains a huge sun, even though the particle is large enough only to contain itself. It would be an even greater sign of lunacy and misguidance to refuse one's assent to the attributes of perfection of the Glorious Creator, even while beholding the well-ordered cosmos that is constantly changing in wise and regular fashion, that is being ceaselessly renewed in disciplined manner. This, too, would be like the ravings of a lunatic, since it would then become necessary to believe and accept that absolute divinity is present in all things, even a particle. For every particle of air is somehow able to enter and work its effects upon every flower, fruit and leaf, and unless the particle be entrusted with this task by a Creator, it must know of itself the structure and form of all the objects it penetrates and affects. In other words, it must possess all-encompassing power and knowledge.

Every particle of soil is potentially capable of giving rise to all the different seeds that exist. If it is not acting under command, it must contain within itself equipment and instruments corresponding to all the various trees and plants in the world. Or, to put it differently, one must attribute to the particle

such artistry and power that it is aware of the structure of each of them, knows the forms that each of them is caused to assume, and is capable of fashioning those forms. The same is true with respect to the particle and other realms of creation.

From this you can understand that in all things there are numerous and manifest proofs of God's Unity. To create all things from one thing, and to make all things into one thing, is a task possible only for the Creator of all things. Pay heed to the sublime declaration: "There is naught but proclaims His Glory with praise." For if one does not accept God, the One and Unique, one must accept gods as numerous as created beings.

• **Second Indication**

In our story, we made mention of a Most Noble Commander and said that whoever is not blind and sees his decorations and medals will understand that he acts in accordance with the commands of a monarch and is his favoured servant. Now that Most Noble Commander is the Most Noble Messenger of God, may peace and blessings be upon him. The sacred Creator of so ornamented a cosmos must of necessity have a Noble Messenger, just as the sun must of necessity have light. For the sun cannot exist without giving light, and Divinity cannot be without showing itself through the sending of prophets. Is it at all possible that a beauty of utter perfection should not desire to manifest itself by means of one who will demonstrate and display it?

Is it at all possible that a perfection of beauteous artistry should not desire to make itself known by means of a herald that will draw men's gazes upon it?

Is it at all possible that the universal monarchy of all-embracing dominicality should not desire to announce its unity and eternal besoughtness throughout the different levels of multiplicity and particularity by means of an envoy possessing two aspects? By the two aspects, we mean that he is both the envoy of the realm of multiplicity to the Divine Court, by virtue of his universal worship, and also the messenger of the Divine Court to the realm of multiplicity, by virtue of his closeness to God and being entrusted with His message.

Is it at all possible that a possessor of infinite inherent beauty should not wish both to behold himself and to display to others, in numerous mirrors, the charms of his beauty and the allurements of his fairness? God's Messenger is His beloved, making himself beloved of Him by means of his worship and holding up a mirror to Him, and he is also the bearer of His message, making Him beloved of men and demonstrating to them the beauty of His Names.

Is it at all possible that the owner of treasures full of wondrous miracles, rare and valuable items, should not wish and desire to display them to men's

gaze by means of an expert jeweller, and eloquent describer, thereby revealing his hidden perfections?

Is it at all possible that the One Who manifests the perfection of all His Names in the cosmos by means of artful adornment for men to look upon, so that the cosmos comes to resemble a palace decorated with all kinds of wondrous and subtle art, should not also designate a teacher and a guide to the wonders of his creation?

Is it at all possible that the Lord of the cosmos should not solve, by means of a messenger, the complex talisman of the aim and purpose of all the changes that take place in the cosmos, and the riddle contained in the three difficult questions posed by all beings: “What is our origin? What is our destination? What is our purpose?”

Is it at all possible that the Glorious Maker Who makes Himself known to sentient beings by means of His fair creation, and Who makes himself loved by means of His precious bounties, should not also communicate to sentient beings, by means of a messenger, what His pleasure desires of them in exchange?

Is it at all possible that God should create mankind in a form predisposing it to suffer the consciousness of multiplicity but also containing the ability to engage in universal worship, without at the same time wishing to turn it away from multiplicity to unity, by means of a teacher and guide?

There are numerous other functions of prophethood, each of which is a decisive proof that Divinity necessarily implies messengership.

Did anyone ever appear in the world more worthy and more in possession of the abovementioned qualities and functions than Muhammad, the Arabian Prophet, may peace and blessings be upon him? Has time ever shown us one more fitting and suited to the rank of messengerhood and the task of conveying God’s message? No, by no means! He is the master of all messengers, the foremost of all prophets, the leader of all pure ones, the closest to God of all those who have drawn nigh unto Him, the most perfect of all creatures, the monarch of all guides to righteousness.

Quite apart from the countless indications of his prophethood deriving from more than a thousand miracles, such as the splitting of the moon and the flowing of water from his fingers, that all scholars unanimously confirm, the supreme miracle of the Glorious Qur’an—an ocean of truth and a book miraculous in forty different respects—is itself enough to demonstrate his prophethood as clearly as the sun. Since we discuss the forty different aspects of the Qur’an’s miraculousness in other treatises, particularly the Twenty-Fifth Word, we curtail our discussion of the matter here.

• **Third Indication**

Let it not be thought that petty man is too insignificant for this vast world to be brought to an end and another realm to be unfolded simply for the sake of his being brought to account. For apparently petty man bears great importance as the master of all creatures, by virtue of the comprehensiveness of his disposition, as the herald of God's monarchy, and the manifester of universal worship. Also let nobody ask: "How can one earn eternal torment in the course of a very brief life?" For unbelief seeks to drag creation, something as valuable and exalted as a letter written by God, down to the depths of meaninglessness and purposelessness. It is an insult to all being, since it denies and rejects the manifestations and impresses of God's Sacred Names that are visible in all being, and it seeks to negate all the infinite proofs that demonstrate the veracity and truthfulness of God Almighty. Hence, unbelief is a crime of infinite proportions, deserving of infinite punishment.

• **Fourth Indication**

In the story, we saw by means of twelve aspects that a king who had one realm resembling a transient hospice must of a necessity have another realm, one eternal and permanent, manifesting his splendour and the sublimity of his power. In the same way, it is not at all possible that the Eternal Creator of the transient world should not create also an eternal realm. It is not possible that the Everlasting Maker of this fine but unstable cosmos, should not create another cosmos, permanent and lasting. It is not possible that the Wise, Powerful and Merciful Creator of this world, which is like an exhibition, or a testing-ground, or a field, should not create also a hereafter in which the purposes of this world shall be made manifest. Entry is to be had to this truth by means of twelve gates, and the twelve gates are to be unlocked by means of twelve other truths. We will begin with the shortest and simplest of them:

**FIRST TRUTH**

**The Gate of Dominicality and Sovereignty,  
the Manifestation of the Name of Sustainer**

Is it at all possible that the glory of God's dominicality and His Divine sovereignty should create a cosmos such as this, in order to display His perfections, with such lofty aims and elevated purposes, without establishing a reward for those believers who through faith and worship respond to these aims and purposes? Or that He should not punish those misguided ones who treat His purposes with rejection and scorn?

**SECOND TRUTH**  
**The Gate of Generosity and Mercy,**  
**the Manifestation of the Names of Generous and Merciful**

Is it at all possible that the Lord of this world, Who in His works demonstrates infinite generosity, infinite mercy, infinite splendour and infinite glory, should not give reward in a manner befitting His generosity and mercy, and not punish in a manner befitting His splendour and glory? If one looks at the disposition of affairs in this world, one sees that all animate beings —from the weakest to the most powerful— are given some fitting form of sustenance.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, the weakest and most powerless are given the best form of sustenance. This largesse and bounty is distributed with such lofty generosity that a hand of infinite generosity is manifestly at work.

For example, in the spring, all the trees are garbed in clothes as fine as silk, just like the houris in Paradise; they are encrusted with flowers and fruits, as if with jewels, and caused to offer us numerous varieties of the choicest fruits, on branches delicately outstretched like the hands of a servant. Similarly, we are given wholesome and sweet honey to eat, from the hand of the bee with its sting; we are clothed in the finest and softest of clothes by means of an insect that has no hands; and within a small seed a great treasure of mercy is preserved for us. It is self-evident that all of this is the effect of a most beautiful generosity, a most delicate sense of mercy.

Then, too, the fact that, with the exception of man and certain wild animals, all things, from the sun, the moon and earth to the smallest of creatures, perform their functions with the utmost exactitude, do not overstep their bounds by an inch, and observe a universal obedience in a spirit of great awe — this shows that they act by the command of a Possessor of great glory and dignity. It is also apparent that the fashion in which all mothers, in the vegetable, animal and human realms, succour their weak and powerless infants with the delicate nurture of milk, in tender compassion, is a manifestation of God's all-embracing mercy.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> All licit nourishment is obtained not through the exercise of strength, but through the existence of need. The decisive proof of this is that powerless infants enjoy the finest of livelihoods, while strong wild beasts suffer from all kinds of deficiency, and that fish, for all their lack of intelligence, wax fat, while the cunning fox and monkey remain thin in their quest for livelihood. There is, therefore, an inverse relationship between sustenance on the one hand and strength and will power on the other. The more one relies on strength and will power the more difficult it will be to sustain one's livelihood.

<sup>8</sup> The fact that a hungry lion will prefer its offspring to itself, and give to it a piece of meat it would otherwise have eaten; that the cowardly rabbit will attack a lion in order to protect its young; that the fig-tree contents itself with mud while giving pure milk to its offspring, the fruit — this shows to anyone not blind that they act in accordance with the commands of a Being infinitely merciful, generous and solicitous. Again, the fact that even unconscious plants and beasts function in the wisest and most conscious of fashions demonstrates irrefutably that One Utterly Knowing and All-Wise has set them to work, and that they are acting in His name.

Since the master of this world has, then, such infinite generosity, mercy, splendour and glory, it follows that His infinite glory and splendour require the chastisement of the discourteous; that His infinite generosity requires infinite bounty, and His infinite mercy requires a bestowal of favour worthy of itself. Now in this transitory world and brief life, only a millionth part of all this, like one drop from the ocean, establishes and manifests itself. There must therefore be a realm of blessedness appropriate to that generosity and worthy of that mercy. One would otherwise have to deny the existence of the mercy that is visible to us, and this would be like denying the existence of the sun that fills every day with its light. For irrevocable death would transform compassion into disaster, love into affliction, blessing into vengeance, intellect into a tool of misery, and pleasure into pain, so that the very essence of God's mercy would vanish.

There must in addition be a realm of punishment appropriate to God's glory and dignity. For generally the oppressor leaves this world while still in possession of his might, and the oppressed while still subjected to humiliation. These matters are therefore deferred for the attention of a supreme tribunal; it is not that they are neglected. It sometimes happens too that punishment is enacted in this world. The torments suffered by disobedient and rebellious peoples in previous centuries show that man is not left to his own devices, and that he is always subject to the blows that God's splendour and majesty may choose to inflict on him.

Is it at all possible that man should have the most important duty in all of creation and be endowed with the most important capacities; that man's Sustainer should make Himself known to him with all His well-ordered works, and man should then fail to recognize Him in return by way of worship — or that God should make Himself beloved of men through the numerous adorned fruits of His mercy, and man should then fail to make himself beloved of God through worship — or that God should demonstrate His love and mercy to man through His variegated bounties and man should then fail to respect Him with thanks and with praise — is it at all possible that man should remain unpunished, left to his own devices, or that that powerful Possessor of splendour and glory should not make ready for him a realm of requital?

Is it at all possible, on the other hand, that He should not prepare a realm of reward and eternal bliss for those believers who respond to the Merciful and Compassionate One's making Himself known by recognizing Him in faith; to His making Himself beloved by loving Him in worship; and to His mercy by offering thanks and veneration?

**THIRD TRUTH**  
**The Gate of Wisdom and Justice,**  
**the Manifestation of the Names of Wise and Just**

Is it at all possible<sup>9</sup> that the Lord of Glory, Who demonstrates His dominical sovereignty in the wisdom and order, the justice and equilibrium that pervade all things, from the atom to the sun, should not bestow favour on those believers who seek refuge beneath the protective wing of His dominicality, who believe in His Wisdom and Justice, and whose acts are for the purpose of worshipping Him?

Again, is it possible that He should not chastise those rude and discourteous men who disbelieve in His wisdom and justice, and rebel against Him in insolence? Now not even a thousandth part of that wisdom and justice is exercised with respect to man, in this transient world; it is rather deferred. Most of the people of misguidance leave this world unpunished, and most of the people of guidance leave it unrewarded. All things are, then, postponed for a supreme tribunal, an ultimate bliss.

Yes, it is apparent that the Being Who controls this world does so in accordance with an infinite wisdom. Do you require a proof? It is the preservation of interest and benefit in all things. Do you not see that numerous wise benefits are intended in all the limbs, bones and veins of man, even in the cells of his brain and in every particle of his body? Do you not see that from certain limbs wise benefits are to be had as numerous as the fruits of a tree? All of this shows that matters are done in accordance with infinite wisdom. The existence of the utmost regularity in the making of all things is a proof of the same truth.

The compression of the exact programme of development of a beautiful flower into a minute seed, the inscription on a small seed by the pen of destiny of the scroll of deeds of a tree, its life-history and list of equipment, show that a pen of utmost wisdom is at work.

The existence of a high degree of fine artistry in all things proves that there exists also the impress of an infinitely Wise Maker. Further, the

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<sup>9</sup> The sentence “is it at all possible?” is indeed repeated many times, because it expresses a most significant mystery. Misguidance and lack of belief generally spring from the habit of imagining things to be impossible, far removed from the realm of reason, and therefore denying them. Now in this discussion of resurrection it has been decisively demonstrated that true impossibility, absurdity and irrationality pertain to the path of misbelief and the road of misguidance, whereas true possibility, facility and rationality are characteristics of the path of faith and highway of Islam.

In short, the philosophers tend to unbelief on account of their regarding things as impossible, whereas the Tenth Word (discussion of resurrection), by means of the repeated sentence, “is it at all possible?” shows where impossibility lies, and thus deals them a blow in the mouth.

inclusion within the minute body of man of an index of all being, of the keys to all the treasures of mercy, and of the mirrors of all the Divine Names, demonstrates the existence of wisdom within that infinitely fine artistry. Now is it at all possible that the wisdom that thus permeates the workings of dominicality should not wish eternally to favour those who seek refuge beneath the wing of dominicality and who offer obedience in faith?

Do you wish for a proof that all things are done with justice and balance? The fact that all things are endowed with being, given shape and put in their appropriate place in accordance with precise equilibrium and in appropriate measure, shows that all matters are done in accordance with infinite justice and balance.

Similarly, the fact that all things are given their rights in accordance with their disposition, that they receive all the necessities of their being and all the requirements of life in the most fitting form — this too is the sign left by a hand of infinite justice.

Again, the fact that answer is always given to every petition and request made by the tongue of disposition, and of natural need or necessity, demonstrates the existence of infinite justice and wisdom.

Now is it at all possible that the justice and wisdom that hasten to relieve the pettiest need of the smallest of creation should fail to provide immortality, the greatest need of man, the greatest of creatures? That it should fail to respond to his greatest plea and cry for assistance? Or that it should not preserve the dignity of God's dominicality by preserving the rights of His servants? Man, whose life is so brief, cannot experience the true essence of justice in this transient world; it is for this reason that matters are postponed for a supreme tribunal. For true justice requires that man, this apparently petty creature, should be rewarded and punished, not in accordance with his pettiness, but in accordance with the magnitude of his crime, the importance of his nature and the greatness of his function. Since this passing and transient world is far from manifesting such wisdom and justice for man, who is created for eternity, of necessity there will be an eternal Hell and everlasting Paradise of that Just and Awesome Possessor of Beauty, that Wise and Beauteous Possessor of Awe.

#### **FOURTH TRUTH**

##### **The Gate of Generosity and Beauty, the Manifestation of the Names of Generous and Beautiful**

Is it at all possible that infinite generosity and liberality, inexhaustible riches, unending treasures, peerless and eternal beauty, flawless and everlasting perfection, should not require the existence of grateful supplicants,

yearning spectators and astounded onlookers, all destined to stay an eternity in an abode of bliss, a place of repose? Yes, adorning the face of the world with all these objects of beauty, creating the moon and the sun as its lamps, filling the surface of the earth with the finest varieties of sustenance and thus making it a banquet of bounty, making fruit-trees into so many dishes, and renewing them several times each season — all this shows the existence of infinite generosity and liberality. Such unending liberality and generosity, such inexhaustible treasures of mercy, require the existence of an abode of repose, a place of bliss, that shall be everlasting and contain all desirable objects within it. They also require that those who enjoy such bliss should remain in that abode of repose eternally, without suffering the pain of cessation and separation. For just as the cessation of pain is a form of pleasure, so too the cessation of pleasure is a form of pain, one that such infinite generosity is unwilling to countenance. It requires, then, the existence both of an eternal paradise and of supplicants to abide in it eternally.

Infinite generosity and liberality desire to bestow infinite bounty and infinite kindness. The bestowal of infinite bounty and infinite kindness require in turn infinite gratitude. This necessitates the perpetual existence of those who receive all the kindness so that they can demonstrate their thanks and gratitude for that perpetual bestowal and constant bounty. A petty enjoyment, made bitter by cessation, and lasting for only a brief time, is not compatible with the requirements of generosity and liberality.

Look too at the different regions of the world, each like an exhibition where God's crafts are displayed. Pay attention to the dominical proclamations in the hands of all the plants and animals on the face of the earth<sup>10</sup> and listen to the prophets and the saints, the heralds of the beauties of dominicality. They unanimously display the flawless perfections of the Glorious Maker by demonstrating His miraculous arts, and thus invite the gazes of men.

The Maker of this world has, then, most important, astounding and secret perfections. It is these He wishes to display by means of His miraculous arts. For secret, flawless perfection wishes to be manifested to those who will appreciate, admire and wonderingly gaze at it. Eternal perfection requires eternal manifestation. Such eternal manifestation in turn requires the perpetual existence of those who are to appreciate and admire it. The value of perfection will always sink in the view of its admirer if he is devoid of perpetual existence.<sup>11</sup> Again, the beauteous, artistic, brilliant and adorned creatures

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<sup>10</sup> The existence of a brightly designed and brilliantly adorned flower, a most artfully conceived and bejewelled fruit on a twig as thin as a wire, affixed to a dry, bonelike tree — this is without doubt a proclamation to all animate beings of the fine arts produced by a most skilled, wise and miraculous maker. This holds true not only of the vegetable kingdom, but also of the animal realm.

<sup>11</sup> There is a proverbial occurrence pertaining to this point. A celebrated beauty once expelled from her presence a common man who had become infatuated with her. In order to console himself, he said, "how ugly she is!", thus denying her beauty.

Once a bear stood beneath a vine trellis, and wished to eat the grapes. But he was unable to reach out for the grapes, or to climb up the trellis. So he said to himself, by way of consolation, "the grapes must be sour," and growling went on his way.

that cover the face of the globe, bear witness to the fairness of a peerless, transcendent beauty, and indicate the subtle charms of an unparalleled, hidden pulchritude, just as sunlight bears witness to the sun.<sup>12</sup> Each manifestation of that sacred, transcendent beauty, indicates the existence of countless hidden treasures in each of God's Names. Now so exalted, peerless and hidden a beauty, just as it desires to view its own fairness in a mirror and to behold the degrees and measures of its beauty in an animate reflection, desires also to become manifest, in order to look on its own beauty through the eyes of others. That is, it wishes to look at its own beauty in two ways; firstly, by beholding itself in mirrors of variegated colour; secondly, through the gaze of yearning witnesses to itself, of bewildered admirers of its beauty.

In short, beauty and fairness desire to see and be seen. Both of these require the existence of yearning witnesses and bewildered admirers. And since beauty and fairness are eternal and everlasting, their witnesses and admirers must have perpetual life. An eternal beauty can never be satisfied with transient admirers. An admirer condemned to irreversible separation will find his love turning to enmity once he conceives of separation. His admiration will yield to ridicule, his respect to contempt. For just as obstinate man is an enemy to what is unknown to him, so too he is opposed to all that lies beyond his reach, and love that is not infinite will respond to a beauty that deserves unending admiration with implicit enmity, hatred and rejection. From this we understand the profound reason for the unbeliever's enmity to God.

So endless generosity and liberality, peerless fairness and beauty, flawless perfection — all these require the existence of eternally grateful and longing supplicants and admirers. But we see in this hospice of the world that everyone quickly leaves and vanishes, having had only a taste of that generosity, enough to whet his appetite but not to satiate him, and having seen only a dim light coming from the perfection, or rather a faint shadow of its light, without in any way being fully satisfied. It follows, then, that men are going toward a place of eternal joy where all will be bestowed on them in full measure.

In short, just as this world, with all its creatures, decisively demonstrates the existence of the Glorious Maker, so too do His sacred attributes and Names indicate, show and logically require, the existence of the hereafter.

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<sup>12</sup> Although all beings that act as mirrors for God's beauty constantly vanish and disappear, those that succeed them display and manifest in their forms and features the same beauty and fairness. This shows that the beauty in question does not belong to them; the visible instances of beauty are rather the signs and indications of a transcendent and sacred beauty.

**FIFTH TRUTH**  
**The gate of Compassion and Muhammadan Worship,**  
**the Manifestation of the Names of**  
**Answerer of Prayer and Compassionate**

Is it at all possible that a Lord possessing infinite compassion and mercy, Who most compassionately fulfils the smallest need of His lowliest creatures in the most unexpected fashion, Who heeds the muffled plea for help of His most obscure creature, and Who responds to all the petitions He hears, whether vocal or mute — is it at all possible that such a Lord should not pay heed to the greatest petition of the foremost among His servants, the most beloved among his creatures, that He should not hear and grant his most exalted prayer? The kindness and ease manifested in the feeding and nurturing of weak and young animals show that the Monarch of the cosmos exercises his dominicality with infinite mercy.

Is it at all possible that a compassion merciful to this degree in the exercise of dominicality should not accept the prayer of the most virtuous and beautiful of all creation?<sup>13</sup> This truth is explained in the Nineteenth Word, but let us repeat our statement of the matter here:

O friend listening to these words together with my own soul! We said in the comparison that a meeting took place on a certain island, and a most noble commander delivered a speech there. In order to find out the truth indicated in the comparison, come, let us depart from this age, and in our mind and imagination travel to the Arabian Peninsula in the blessed age of the Prophet, in order to visit and watch him while he is performing his duties and engaging in worship. See, just as he is the means for the attainment of eternal bliss, by means of his messengerhood and guidance, so too he is the cause for the existence of that bliss and the means for the creation of Paradise, by means of his worship and prayer.

Now see! That being is praying for eternal bliss in such supreme supplication, with such sublime worship, that it is as if this island, or even the whole world, were praying and supplicating together with him. For the worship he performs contains within itself not only the worship of the community that

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<sup>13</sup> He whose kingdom has lasted one thousand three hundred and fifty years, who has generally had more than three hundred and fifty million subjects, to whom his subjects daily renew their pledge of allegiance and to whose perfections they continually bear witness, whose commands are obeyed in perfect submission, whose spiritual hue has coloured half of the globe and a fifth of mankind, who is the beloved of men's hearts and the educator of their spirits — such a being is without doubt the greatest servant of the Lord Who holds sway over the universe. Also, since most of the realms of beings applauded that being's function and duty through each bearing the fruit of his miracles, he is for sure the most beloved creature of the Fashioner of the cosmos. Similarly, the desire for perpetuity existing in all men by virtue of their very nature, a desire that lifts men from the lowest of the low to the highest of the high, is the greatest of all desires and petitions, fit to be presented to the Provider of all Needs only by the greatest among His servants.

follows him, but also that of all the other prophets, in its essential form, by virtue of the correspondence existing between him and them. Moreover, he performs his supreme prayer and offers his supplications in such a vast congregation that it is as if all luminous and perfect men, from the time of Adam down to the present, were following him in prayer and saying “amen” to his supplications!<sup>14</sup> He is praying for so universal a need — immortality— that not merely the people of this earth, but also the inhabitants of the heavens and the entirety of creation are participating in his supplications and silently proclaiming, “yes, o Lord! Grant his prayer; we too desire it.” He petitions for everlasting bliss with such touching sadness, in so yearning, so longing, and so pleading a fashion, that he causes the whole of the cosmos to weep and thus to share in his prayer.

See, he desires and prays for bliss, for such a purpose and goal that he elevates man and all creatures from captivity in the abysmal state of utter annihilation, from worthlessness, uselessness, and purposelessness to the apex of preciousness, eternity, exalted function, and the rank of being a script penned by God.

See, he makes his petition with such elevated plea for succour, makes his supplication with so sweet a request for mercy, that it is as if he caused all beings, the heavens and God’s throne itself to listen, and to echo his prayer ecstatically with cries of “amen, o Lord, amen!”<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> From the time that the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) first made his supplication down to the present, all the invocations upon him of peace and blessings made by his community are a kind of eternal amen to his prayer, a form of universal participation in it. Every invocation of peace and blessings upon him by every member of the Muslim community in the course of his prayer, as well as the prayer for him uttered after the second call to prayer according to the Shafi’i school — this too is a powerful and universal amen to his supplication for eternal bliss. So the eternity and everlasting bliss desired by all men with all of their strength, in accordance with their primordial disposition, is requested in the name of humanity by the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him), and the luminous segment of humanity says “amen” after him. Is it at all possible that such a prayer should not be accepted?

<sup>15</sup> Indeed, it is not at all possible that the Master of this world, all of Whose doings are self-evidently inspired by consciousness, knowledge and wisdom, should be unaware and uninformed of the acts of the foremost among all of His creatures. Again, it is not at all possible that the All-Knowing Master should remain indifferent to the deeds and prayers of that foremost among His creatures, and deem them unimportant despite being aware of them. It is further impossible that the Powerful and Merciful Master of the World should not accept his prayers, having not remained indifferent to them. Yes, through the light of the Muhammadan Being the form of the world has changed. The true essence of men and all beings in the cosmos became apparent through that light; it became clear that they are each missives of the Eternally Besought One proclaiming the Divine Names, precious and profound beings with God-given functions and destined to manifest eternity. Were it not for that light, beings would be condemned to utter annihilation, they would be valueless, meaningless, useless, confused, the result of blind chance, sunk in the darkness of illusion. It is for this reason that just as men say “amen” to the prayer of the Prophet, so too all other beings, from the face of the earth up to God’s throne, from the soil to the stars, all take pride in his light, and proclaim their connection with him. The very spirit of the worship of the Prophet is indeed none other than this prayer. Again, all the motions and workings of the cosmos are in their essence prayer. For example, the progress of a seed until it becomes a tree is a form of prayer to the Creator.

See, he requests bliss and eternity from a Being, One so All-Hearing, Generous and Powerful, so All-Seeing, Merciful and Knowledgeable that He sees, hears, accepts and takes pity upon the most secret wish, the slightest desire of the most obscure of his creatures, this, in observable form. He answers all pleas even if they are silently proffered. He bestows all things and answers all pleas in so wise, percipient and merciful a fashion that no doubt remains that all that nurturing and regulating can derive only from One All-Hearing and All-Seeing, One Generous and Merciful.

Let us listen to what the Pride of All Being is requesting, that source of honour for all of mankind, that one unique in all of creation, who bears on his back the burden of all men, who standing on this earth lifts up his hands towards God's throne and offers up a prayer which in its reality contains the essence of the worship of all of mankind. See, he is asking for eternal bliss for himself and for his community. He is asking for eternity and Paradise. He is making his plea together with all the Divine Sacred Names that display their beauty in the mirrors of all created being. You can see, indeed, that he is seeking intercession from those Names.

If there were not countless reasons and causes for the existence of the hereafter, a single prayer of that exalted being would be enough for the creation of Paradise, a task as easy for the power of the Merciful Creator as the creation of spring.<sup>16</sup>

Indeed, how could the creation of spring be difficult for the Possessor of Absolute Power Who each spring makes the face of the world into a plain of resurrection, and brings forth there a hundred thousand examples of resurrection? In just the same way that the messengerhood of the Prophet was the reason for the foundation of this realm of trial—the saying “were it not for thee, were it not for thee, I would not have created the spheres”<sup>17</sup> being an indication of this— so too the worship he performed was the cause for the foundation of the abode of bliss.

Is it at all possible that the flawless perfection of artistry, the peerless beauty of dominicality expressed in the order of the world and the comprehensive mercy that reduce all to bewilderment, should not answer his prayer, and thus tolerate an extreme form of ugliness, cruelty and disorder? Is it possible that it would listen to the most petty and insignificant desires and grant them, but dismiss significant and important desires as worthless, and fail to

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<sup>16</sup> To display wondrous samples of art, and examples of resurrection on the face of the earth that, compared with the hereafter is like a narrow page, to inscribe and include on that single page, in perfect order, all the different species of creation, that resemble three hundred thousand separate books, is certainly more difficult than building and creating the delicate and symmetrical structure of Paradise in the broad realm of eternity. Indeed, it may be said that to whatever degree Paradise is more elevated than the spring, to that degree the creation of the gardens of spring is more difficult and wondrous than the creation of Paradise.

<sup>17</sup> ‘Ali al-Qari, *Sharh al-Shifa*, i, 16; al-‘Ajluni, *Kashf al-Khafa*, ii, 164.

fulfil them? No, a thousand times no! Such beauty can never accept such ugliness and itself become ugly.<sup>18</sup>

So just as the Prophet opened the gates of this world with his messengerhood, he opens the gates of the hereafter with his worship.

*May the blessings of the Compassionate One be upon him, to the extent of all that this world and paradise contain. O God, grant blessings and peace to Your servant and Messenger, that Beloved One who is the Master of both Realms, the Pride of all the Worlds, the source of life in both spheres, the means for the attainment of happiness here and in the hereafter, he who flies on two wings, who is the messenger to both men and jinn — to him, and to his Family, and all of his Companions, as well as his brethren from among the prophets and messengers. Amen.*

### **SIXTH TRUTH**

#### **The Gate of Splendour and Eternity, the Manifestation of the Names of Glorious and Eternal**

Is it at all possible that the splendour of dominicality that subdues and commands all beings, from suns and trees down to particles, just like obedient soldiers, should concentrate its entire attention on the wretched and transient beings that pass a temporary life in the hospice of this world, and not create an eternal and everlasting sphere of splendour, an unending manifestation of dominicality? The display of Divine splendour in the changing of the seasons, the sublime motions of the planets in the heavens as if they were aeroplanes, the subjugation of all things and the creation of the earth as man's cradle and the sun as his lamp, vast transformations such as the reviving and adornment of the dead and dry globe — all of this shows that behind the veil a sublime dominicality exists, that a splendid monarchy is at work.

Now such a dominical kingdom requires subjects worthy of itself, as well as an appropriate mode of manifestation. But look at this hospice of the world, and you will see that the most significant class of its subjects, endowed with the most comprehensive of functions, are gathered together only temporarily and that, in the most wretched of states. The hospice fills and empties each day. All of the subjects stay only temporarily in this abode of trial for the sake

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<sup>18</sup> It is unanimously agreed the total reversal of truths is impossible. It is quite impossible that something should become the very opposite and reverse of itself, and impossible to the thousandth degree that something should retain its own nature, and yet at the same time become identical with its opposite. Thus infinite beauty cannot become ugliness, while yet remaining beauty, and, in our example, it is not possible that the beauty of dominicality, a beauty perceptible and manifest in its existence, should retain its quiddity as the beauty of dominicality, but become the very essence of ugliness. This would be the strangest of all impossible and false notions in the world.

of being tested in service. The abode itself changes each hour. Again, all of the monarch's subjects stay only for a few brief minutes in order to behold the samples of the precious bounty of the Glorious Maker, to look on His miraculous works of art in the exhibition of the world with the eye of a buyer. Then they disappear. The exhibition itself changes every minute. Whoever leaves it, never returns, and whoever comes to it, will ultimately depart.

Now this state and circumstance definitively shows that behind and beyond this hospice, this testing-ground, this exhibition, there are permanent palaces and eternal abodes that fully manifest and support God's everlasting sovereignty; there are gardens and treasure houses full of the pure and exalted originals of the forms and copies we see in this world. If we strive here in this world, it is for the sake of what awaits us there. We work here, and are rewarded there. Bliss awaits everyone there, in accordance with his capacity, as long as he does not squander his share. Yes, it is impossible that such eternal kingship should concentrate exclusively on these wretched transient beings.

Consider this truth through the telescope of the following comparison. You are travelling along a road. You see a caravanserai ahead of you on the road, built by a great personage for people coming to visit him. Millions are spent on the decoration of the caravanserai so that guests should enjoy their one night's stay there, and for their instruction. But the guests see very little of those decorations, look at them for a very short time; briefly tasting the joys of what is offered them, they go on their way without being satiated. But each guest takes a photograph of the objects in the caravanserai by means of his special camera. Also, the servants of that great personage record with great care the conduct of all the guests and preserve the record. You see, too, that he destroys every day most of the valuable decorations, and replaces them with fresh decorations for the newly arriving guests. After seeing all this, will any doubt remain that the personage who has constructed this caravanserai on the road has permanent and exalted dwellings, inexhaustible and precious treasures, an uninterrupted flow of great generosity? By means of the generosity displayed in the caravanserai, he intends merely to whet the appetite of his guests for those things he keeps in his immediate presence; to awaken their desire for the gifts he has prepared for them. So too, if you look upon the state of the hospice of this world without falling into drunkenness, you will understand the following nine principles:

- **First Principle:** You will understand that this world does not exist for its own sake, any more than does the caravanserai. It is impossible that it should assume this shape by itself. Rather, it is a well-constructed hospice, wisely designed to receive the caravan of beings that constantly arrive to alight before departing again.

• **Second Principle:** You will understand, too, that those living within this hospice are guests. They are invited by their Generous Sustainer to the Abode of Peace.

• **Third Principle:** You will understand, further, that the adornments of this world are not simply for the sake of enjoyment or admiration. For if they yield pleasure for a time, they cause pain for a longer time with their cessation. They give you a taste and whet your appetite, but never satiate you. For either the life of the pleasure is short, or your life is short, too brief for you to become satiated. These adornments of high value and brief duration must, then, be for the sake of instruction in wisdom,<sup>19</sup> for arousing gratitude, and for encouraging men to seek out the perpetual originals of which they are copies. They are, then, for other exalted goals beyond themselves.

• **Fourth Principle:** You will understand also that the adornments of this world<sup>20</sup> are like samples and forms of the blessings stored up in Paradise by the mercy of the Compassionate One for the people of faith.

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<sup>19</sup> Now the lifespan of everything is short, although its value is high and the subtleties of its artistry are most exalted and beautiful. This implies that everything is only a sample, a form of something else, that it has the function of drawing the gaze of the customer to the authentic and original object. This being the case, it may be said that the variegated adornments of this world are the samples of the bounties of Paradise, prepared by the Compassionate and Merciful One for His beloved servants.

<sup>20</sup> There are numerous purposes for the existence of everything, and numerous results flow from its being. These are not restricted to this world and to the souls of men, as the people of misguidance imagine, being thus lost in vanity and purposelessness. On the contrary, the purposes for the existence and the results of the lives of all things relate to the following three categories.

**The first** and the most exalted pertains to the Creator. It consists of presenting to the gaze of the Pre-Eternal Witness the bejewelled and miraculous wonders He has affixed to the object in question, as if in a military parade. To live for a fleeting second is enough to attain that glance. Indeed, the potentiality and intent for existence is enough, without ever emerging into life. This purpose is fully realized, for example, by delicate creatures that vanish swiftly and by seeds and kernels, each a work of art, that never come to life, that is, never bear fruit or flower. They all remain untouched by vanity and purposelessness. Thus the first purpose of all things is to proclaim, by means of their life and existence, the miracles of power and the traces of artistry of the Maker and display them to the gaze of the Glorious Monarch.

**The second** purpose of all existence and the result of all being pertains to conscious creation. Everything is like a truth-displaying missive, an artistic poem, or a wise word of the Glorious Maker, offered to the gaze of angels and jinn, of men and animals, and desiring to be read by them. It is an object for the contemplation and instruction of every conscious being that looks upon it.

**The third** purpose of all existence and result of all being pertains to the soul of the thing itself, and consists of such minor consequences as the experience of pleasure and joy, and living with some degree of permanence and comfort. If we consider the purpose of a servant employed as a steersman on some royal ship, we see that only one hundredth of that purpose relates to the steersman himself, the wage he receives; ninety-nine hundredths of the purpose relate to the king who owns the ship. A similar relation exists between the purpose of a thing related to its own self and its worldly existence, and its purpose related to its Maker. In the light of this multiplicity of purposes we can now explain the ultimate compatibility between divine wisdom and economy on the one hand, and divine liberality and generosity—in fact, infinite generosity—on the other hand, even though they appear to be opposites and contradictory. In the individual purposes of things, liberality and generosity predominate, and the Name of Most Generous is manifested. From the point of view of individual purpose, fruits and grains are indeed beyond computation, and they demonstrate infinite generosity. But in universal purposes, wisdom predominates, and the name of All-Wise is manifested. However many purposes a tree has, each of its fruits contains that many purposes, and these can be divided into the three categories we have established. Their universal purposes demonstrate an infinite wisdom and economy. Infinite wisdom and infinite generosity and liberality are thus combined, despite their apparent opposition. For example, one of the purposes for raising an army is the maintenance of order. Whatever troops are available for the purpose will suffice or be more than enough. But the whole army will be barely enough for other purposes such as protecting the national frontiers and repelling

• **Fifth Principle:** You will understand, too, that all of these transient objects have not been created for the sake of annihilation, in order to appear briefly and then vanish. The purpose for their creation is rather briefly to be assembled in existence and acquire the desired form, so that these may be noted, their images preserved, their meanings known, and their results recorded. This is so that, for example, everlasting spectacles might be wrought for the people of eternity, and that they might serve other purposes in the realm of eternity. You will understand that things have been created for eternity, not for annihilation; and as for apparent annihilation, it has the sense of a completion of duty and a release from service, for every transient thing advances to annihilation with one aspect, but remains eternally with numerous other aspects.

Look, for example, at the flower, a word of God's power; for a short time it smiles and looks at us, and then hides behind the veil of annihilation. It departs just like a word leaving your mouth. But it does so entrusting thousands of its fellows to men's ears. It leaves behind meanings in men's minds as numerous as those minds. The flower, too, expressing its meaning and thus fulfilling its function, goes and departs. But it goes leaving its apparent form in the memory of everything that sees it, its inner essence in every seed. It is as if each memory and seed were a camera to record the adornment of the flower, or a means for its perpetuation. If such be the case with an object at the simplest level of life, it can be readily understood how closely tied to eternity is man, the highest form of life and the possessor of an eternal soul. Again, from the fact that the laws —each resembling a spirit— according to which large flowering and fruit bearing plants are formed and the representations of their forms are preserved and perpetuated in most regular fashion in tiny seeds throughout tempestuous changes — from this fact it can be easily understood how closely tied and related to

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enemies; its size will be in perfect balance with utter wisdom. Thus the wisdom of the state will be joined to its splendour, and it can be said that there is no excess in the army.

eternity is the spirit of man, which possesses an extremely exalted and comprehensive nature, and which although clothed in a body, is a conscious and luminous law issuing from the divine command.

- **Sixth Principle:** You will also understand that man has not been left to graze at will, with a halter loosely tied around his neck; on the contrary, the forms of all his deeds are recorded and registered, and the results of all his acts are preserved for the day when he shall be called to account.

- **Seventh Principle:** You will understand, further, that the destruction visited upon the beautiful creatures of summer and spring in the autumn is not for the sake of annihilation. Instead, it is a form of dismissal after the completion of service.<sup>21</sup> It is also a form of emptying in order to clear a space for the new creation that is to come in the following spring, of preparing the ground and making ready for the beings that are to come and assume their functions. Finally, it is a form of Divine warning to conscious beings to awake from the neglect that causes them to forget their duties, from the drunken torpor that causes them to forget their obligation of offering thanks.

- **Eighth Principle:** You will understand this, too, that the eternal Maker of this transient world has another, everlasting world; it is to this that He urges and impels His servants.

- **Ninth Principle:** You will understand, also, that so Compassionate a Being will bestow upon His choice servants in that world such gifts as no eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard, nor has their image crossed the heart of any man.<sup>22</sup> In this we believe.

## SEVENTH TRUTH

### **The Gate of Protection and Preservation, the Manifestation of the Names of Preserver and Guardian**

Is it at all possible that God's attribute of Preserver, which protects all things with the utmost order and balance, —things in the heavens and on the earth, on dry land and in the ocean, dry and wet, large and small, commonplace and exalted— and as it were, sifts their results by way of accounting

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<sup>21</sup> Yes, it is fitting that the fruits, flowers and leaves on the tips and branches of a tree, proceeding from the treasuries of sustenance provided by Divine mercy, should depart when they become old and their duties are at an end. Otherwise the gate will remain closed to those that come after them, and a barrier will be erected against the expansion of God's mercy and the services to be performed by their brethren (i.e., other members of the species). Moreover, with the passing of youth, they will become wretched and distraught. Spring is like a fruit-bearing tree that in turn is an indication of the plain of resurrection. Similarly, the world of humanity in every age is like a tree inviting contemplation, and the world as a whole is like an amazing tree the fruits of which are despatched to the market of the hereafter.

<sup>22</sup> *Bukhari*, Bad'u'l-Khalq, 8; Tafsir al-Sura xxxii, 1; Tawhid, 35; *Muslim*, Iman, 312.

— is it at all possible that this attribute should permit the deeds and acts of man, man who has been given the lofty disposition of humanity, the rank of the supreme vicegerency, and the duty of bearing the Supreme Trust, not to be recorded, not to be passed through the sieve of accounting, not to be weighed in the balance of justice, not to be punished or rewarded fittingly, even though his acts and deeds closely pertain to God's universal dominicality? No, it is not in any way possible!

Yes, the Being that administers this cosmos preserves all things in order and balance. Order and balance are the manifestation of knowledge and wisdom, of will and power. For we see that the substance of every created object is fashioned in well-ordered and symmetrical fashion. Not only is each of the forms it changes throughout its life well-ordered, but the totality of these forms is also marked by the same orderliness. We see, too, that the Glorious Preserver preserves many forms of all things the life of which comes to an end when they have performed their function and which depart from the manifest world, in the memories of men, that are like a kind of preserved tablet,<sup>23</sup> or in a form of archetypal mirror. He also writes and inscribes a brief history of their life in a seed, that is like the result and outcome of the whole. Thus He causes all things to be preserved in mirrors pertaining to both the outer and inner worlds. The memory of man, the fruit of the tree, the kernel of the fruit, the seed of the flower — all of these demonstrate the universality and comprehensiveness of the law of preservation.

Do you not see that all the flowers and fruits of the vast spring, the records of their deeds in appropriate form, the laws of their formation, and the images of their forms, are all inscribed into the finite space of a minute seed and are there preserved? The following spring, their record of deeds is set forth, in a form of accounting appropriate to them, and another vast world of spring is brought forth, with the utmost order and wisdom. This demonstrates with what powerful comprehensiveness God's attribute of Preserver exercises itself. Considering that the results of such transient, commonplace, impermanent and insignificant things are preserved, is it at all possible that men's deeds, that yield important fruit in the world of the unseen, the world of the hereafter, and the world of spirits, from the point of view of universal dominicality, is it at all possible that they should not be guarded and preserved, should not be recorded as a matter of importance? No, by no means!

Yes, from this manifestation of God's attribute of Preserver it can be deduced that the Master of all creation devotes great care to the orderliness of all things that come to pass in His realm. He pays great attention to the function of sovereignty, and lavishes extreme care on the dominicality of kingship. Thus He records, or causes to be recorded, the pettiest of happen

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<sup>23</sup> See, the footnote to the Seventh Aspect above.

ings, the smallest of services, and preserves in numerous things the form of everything that happens in His realm. This attribute of Preserver indicates that an important register of deeds will be subjected to a precise examination and weighing: the records of men's deeds will stand revealed.

Now is it at all possible that man should be ennobled with the vicegerency and the Trust, that, as a witness to the universality of dominicality, he should proclaim God's unity in the realm of multiplicity, and thus act as a controller and witness by having some share in the glorification of God and worship of most beings — is it at all possible that he should do all of this and then go to his grave and sleep peacefully without ever being awakened? Without ever being asked concerning his deeds, small and great? That he should not go to the plain of resurrection and be tried at the Supreme Tribunal? No, by no means!

Or is it possible for man to flee and hide himself in annihilation, for him to enter the earth and conceal himself from that Powerful and Glorious One to Whose Power over all contingencies in the future,<sup>24</sup> the occurrences of past time — each a miracle of His power— bear witness, and Who visibly creates winter and spring, that, taken together, resemble resurrection? Since

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<sup>24</sup> The entirety of the past, extending from the present back to the beginning of creation, consists of occurrences. Every day, year and century that came into being is like a line, a page, a book, written by the pen of destiny; the hand of God's power has inscribed His miraculous signs there with the utmost wisdom and order.

Similarly, time from the present until resurrection, Paradise and eternity, consists entirely of contingencies. The past consists of occurrences, the future of contingencies. Now if these two chains of time be compared with each other, it will be seen to be true of a certainty that the Being That created yesterday and brought into being the creatures peculiar to it, is capable, too, of creating tomorrow together with its creatures. Again, there is no doubt that the beings and wonders of past time, that wondrous display, are the miraculous works of a Powerful and Glorious One. They bear decisive witness that that Powerful One is capable of creating all of the future and its contingencies, and manifesting all of its wonders.

The one who creates an apple must of a certainty be able to create all the apples in the world and to bring the vast spring into being. Conversely, the one who cannot create a spring cannot create a single apple either, for the apple is made at the same workbench. But the one who makes an apple can make the spring. Each apple is an example in miniature of a tree, even of a garden or a cosmos. The apple seed that carries within itself the life-story of the huge tree is, from the point of view of artistry, such a miracle that the one who creates it thus is incapable of nothing. So too, the one that creates today is able also to create the day of resurrection, and it is only the one capable of creating the spring that is able, too, to create resurrection. The one who affixes all the worlds of past time to the ribbon of time and displays them there in utmost wisdom and order, is without doubt capable of attaching other beings to the ribbon of the future and displaying them there. In several of the Words, particularly the Twenty-Second Word, we proved with utter certainty that: "the one who cannot create everything cannot create anything, and the one who can fashion one thing, can fashion everything. Also, if the creation of everything is entrusted to a single being, the creation of all things becomes as easy as the creation of a single thing; thus facility arises. If, on the contrary, it is entrusted to numerous causes, and ascribed to multiplicity, the creation of a single thing becomes as difficult as the creation of everything, and such difficulty arises as borders on impossibility."

man is not called to account and judged in fitting fashion while in this world, it follows that he must proceed to a Supreme Tribunal and a final felicity.

**EIGHTH TRUTH**  
**The Gate of Promise and Threat,**  
**the Manifestation of the Names of Beautiful and Glorious.**

Is it at all possible that the Maker of this world, the Possessor of Absolute Knowledge and Absolute Power, should not fulfil the oft-repeated promise and threat that has been proclaimed unanimously by all the prophets and been witnessed in unison by all the veracious and the saints, and thus display weakness and ignorance? God forbid! All that is implied by His promise and threat is not at all difficult for His power to fulfil; it is extremely simple and easy. It is as easy for Him as bringing back next spring the countless beings of last spring, in part identically,<sup>25</sup> in part in simile.<sup>26</sup> It is our need, the need of everything, His own need and the need of His dominical sovereignty, that He should fulfil His promise. For Him to break His promise would be contrary to the dignity of His power, and it would contradict the comprehensiveness of His knowledge. For the breaking of a promise can arise only from ignorance or impotence.

O denier! Do you know how foolish a crime you are committing with your unbelief and denial? Paying heed to your own lying fancy, your delirious intellect, your deceptive soul, you reject as a liar One Who in no way can be compelled to the breaking of His promise, Whose glory and stature can in no way admit the breaking of His word, and Whose truthfulness and veracity are attested by all visible matters and objects! Despite your infinite pettiness, you are committing a crime of infinitely great proportions. Without doubt you deserve great and eternal punishment. According to certain narrations, the fact that the teeth of some of the people of Hell will be as big as a mountain<sup>27</sup> will serve as an indication of the magnitude of their crime. O denier, you are like a traveller who closes his eyes to the sunlight and looks instead at the fantasy in his own mind. His imagination wishes to illumine the awesome path in front of him with the light proceeding from his mind's lamp that in reality is no stronger than a glow-worm. Whatever has been promised by God Almighty, Whose veracious words are these beings we see and Whose truthful, eloquent signs are the processes of nature, He will of a surety fulfil. He will establish a Supreme Tribunal, and bestow an ultimate bliss.

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<sup>25</sup> Like trees and the roots of grasses.

<sup>26</sup> Like leaves and fruits.

<sup>27</sup> *Muslim*, Janna, 44; *Tirmidhi*, Jahannam, 3; *Ibn Maja*, Zuhd, 38; *Musnad*, ii, 26, 328, 334.

**NINTH TRUTH**  
**The Gate of God's bestowal of life and death,**  
**the Manifestation of the Names of Eternally Living**  
**and Self-Subsistent, and Giver of Life and Giver of Death.**

Is it at all possible that the One Who gives life to this vast dead and dry earth; Who in so doing demonstrates His power by deploying more than three hundred thousand different forms of creation, each of them as remarkable as man; Who further demonstrates in this deployment His all-embracing knowledge by the infinite distinctions and differentiations He makes in the complex intermingling of all of those forms; Who directs the gaze of all His slaves to everlasting bliss by promising them resurrection in all of His heavenly decrees; Who demonstrates the splendour of His dominicality by causing all of His creation to collaborate with one another, to revolve within the circle of His command and His will, to aid one another and be submitted to Him; Who shows the importance He has given to man by creating him as the most comprehensive, the most precious and delicate, the most valued and valuable fruit on the tree of creation by addressing him without intermediary and subjugating all things to him; — is it at all possible that so Compassionate and Powerful a One, so Wise and All-Knowing a One, should not bring about resurrection; should not gather His creatures together or be unable to do so; should not restore man to life, or be unable to do so; should not be able to inaugurate His Supreme Court; should not be able to create Heaven and Hell? Nay, indeed, by no means is any of this possible.

Indeed, the Almighty Disposer of this world's affairs creates in every century, every year and every day, on the narrow and transient face of the globe, numerous signs, examples and indications of the Supreme Gathering and the Plain of Resurrection.

Thus in the gathering that takes place every spring we see that in the course of five or six days more than three hundred thousand different kinds of animal and plant are first gathered together and then dispersed. The roots of all the trees and plants, as well as some animals, are revived and restored exactly as they were. The other animals are recreated in a form so similar as to be almost identical. The seeds which appear, in their outward form, to be so close to each other, nonetheless, in the course of six days or six weeks, become distinct and differentiated from each other, and then with extreme speed, ease and facility, are brought to life in the utmost order and equilibrium. Is it at all possible that for the One Who does all of this anything should be difficult; that He should be unable to create the heavens and the earth in six days; that He should be unable to resurrect men with a single blast? No, by no means is it possible!

Let us suppose there were to be some gifted writer who could write out in a single hour the confused and obliterated letters of three hundred thousand books on a single sheet without any error, omission or defect, complete and in the best form. If someone were then to say to you that that writer could write out again from memory a book written by him that had fallen into the water and become obliterated, would you then say that he is unable, and would you not believe in his ability? Or think of some talented king who, in order to demonstrate his power or for the sake of providing a warning example, removes whole mountains with a single command, turns his realm upside down, and transforms the sea into dry land. Then you see that a great rock rolls down into a valley, so that the path is blocked for guests travelling to attend the king's reception and they are unable to pass. If someone should say to you: "that exalted one will remove or dissolve the stone, however great it may be, with a single command; he will not leave his guests stranded," would you then say that he will not remove the stone, or be unable to do so? Or if someone one day should gather together a great army, and you are then informed that he will summon its battalions together with a blast of the trumpet after they had dispersed to rest, and the battalions will form up in disciplined shape, would you respond by saying, "I don't believe it?" Were you to say any of these things your behaviour would truly be madness.

If you have understood these three parables, now look further and see how the Pre-Eternal Designer turns over in front of our eyes the white page of winter and opens the green pages of spring and summer. Then He inscribes on the page of the earth's surface, with the pen of power and destiny, in the most beautiful form, more than three hundred thousand species of creation. Not one encroaches upon another. He writes them all together, but none blocks the path of another. In their formation and shape, each is kept separate from the other without any confusion. There is no error in the writing. That Wise and Preserving One, Who preserves and inserts the spirit of a great tree in the smallest seed, no bigger than a dot — is it permissible even to ask how He preserves the spirits of those who die? That Powerful One Who causes the globe to revolve like a pebble in a sling — is it permissible even to ask how He will remove this globe from the path of His guests who are travelling to meet Him in the Hereafter?

Again, the One of Glorious Essence Who from non-being recruits anew and inscribes into His battalions, with the command of "Be, and behold it is," and with utmost discipline, the troops of all living things, the very particles of all of their bodies, and thus creates highly disciplined armies — is it permissible even to ask how He can make bodies submit to His discipline like a battalion, how He can gather together their mutually acquainted fundamental particles, and their component members?

You can, moreover, behold with your own eyes, the numerous designs made by God as signs, similes and indications of resurrection, designs placed by Him in every age and epoch of the world, in the alternation of day and night, even in the appearance and disappearance of clouds in the sky. If you imagine yourself to have been living a thousand years ago, and then compare with each other the two wings of time that are the past and the future, then you will behold similes of the gathering and indications of resurrection as numerous as the centuries and days. If, then, after witnessing so many similes and indications, you regard corporeal resurrection as improbable and rationally unacceptable, know your behaviour to be pure lunacy.

See what the Supreme Decree says concerning the truth we are discussing:

*Look upon the signs of God's mercy, and see how He restores life to the earth after its death. Verily He it is Who shall bring to life the dead, and He is powerful over all things.*<sup>28</sup>

**In short:** There is nothing that makes impossible the gathering of resurrection, and much that necessitates it. The glorious and eternal dominicality, the almighty and all embracing sovereignty of the One Who gives life and death to this vast and wondrous earth as if it were a mere animal; Who has made of this earth a pleasing cradle, a fine ship, for man and the animals; Who has made of the sun a lamp furnishing light and heat to the hostelry of the world; Who has made of the planets vehicles for the conveyance of His angels — the dominicality and sovereignty of such a One cannot rest upon and be restricted to the transitory, impermanent, unstable, insignificant, changeable, unlasting, deficient and imperfect affairs of this world. He must, therefore, have another realm, one worthy of Him, permanent, stable, immutable and glorious. Indeed, He does have another kingdom, and it is for the sake of this that He causes us to labour, and to this that He summons us. All those of illumined spirit who have penetrated from outer appearances to truth, and have been ennobled with proximity to the Divine Presence, all the spiritual poles endowed with luminous hearts, all the possessors of lucent intelligence, all bear witness that He will transfer us to that other kingdom. They inform us unanimously that He has prepared for us there reward and requital, and relate that He is repeatedly giving us firm promises and stern warnings.

As for the breaking of a promise, it is baseless and utter humiliation. It cannot in any way be reconciled with the glory of His sanctity. Similarly, failure to fulfil a threat arises either from forgiveness or powerlessness.

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<sup>28</sup> Qur'an, 30:50.

Now unbelief is extreme crime, and cannot be forgiven.<sup>29</sup> The Absolutely Omnipotent One is exempt of and exalted above all powerlessness. Those who bring us their testimony and report, despite all the differences in their methods, temperaments and paths, are totally unanimous and agreed on this basic matter. By their number, they have the authority of unanimity. By their quality, they have the authority of learned consensus. By their rank, each one is a guiding star of mankind, the cherished eye of a people, the object of a nation's veneration. By their importance, each one is an expert and an authority in the matter. In any art or science, two experts are preferred to thousands of non-experts, and two positive affirmers are preferred to thousands of negators in the transmission of a report. For example, the testimony of two men affirming the sighting of the crescent moon at the beginning of Ramadan totally nullifies the negation of thousands of deniers.

**In short:** In the whole world there is no truer report, no firmer claim, no more apparent truth than this. The world is without doubt a field, and the resurrection a threshing-floor, a harvest. Paradise and Hell are each storehouses for the grain.

### **TENTH TRUTH**

#### **The Gate of Wisdom, Grace, Mercy and Justice; the Manifestation of the Names of All-Wise, Generous, Just and Merciful.**

Is it at all possible that the Glorious Possessor of all Dominion in this impermanent hospice of the world, in this transient place of testing, in this unstable showplace of the earth so manifest a wisdom, so evident a grace, so overwhelming a justice, so comprehensive a mercy, — is it at all possible that in His realm, in the worlds of the outer and inner dimensions of things, there should not exist permanent abodes with eternal inhabitants, everlasting stations with immortal residents, and that as a result all the truths of wisdom, grace, mercy and justice that we now see should decline into nothingness.

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<sup>29</sup> Unbelief denounces creation for alleged worthlessness and meaninglessness. It is an insult to all of creation, a denial of the manifestation of the Divine Names in the mirror of beings. It is disrespect to all the Divine Names, and rejection of the witness borne to the Divine Unity by all beings. It is a denial of all creation. It corrupts man's potentialities in such a way that they are incapable of reform and unreceptive to good. Unbelief is also an act of utter injustice, a transgression against all of creation and the rights of God's Names. The preservation of those rights, as well as the unredeemable nature of the unbeliever's soul, make it necessary that unbelief should be unpardonable. The words, "to assign partners to God is verily a great transgression," (Qur'an, 31:13) express this meaning.

Again, is it at all possible that that All-Wise Being should choose man, among all His creation, to receive direct and universal address from Him, should make him a comprehensive mirror to Himself, should permit him to taste, weigh, and become acquainted with, all the contents of His treasuries of mercy, should make Himself known to him with all His Names, should love him and make Himself beloved of him — that He should do all this and then fail to despatch wretched man to that eternal realm, to invite him to that abode of permanent bliss and make him happy there?

Is it at all reasonable that He should impose on every being, even the seed, a task as heavy as a tree, mount in it instances of His wisdom as numerous as the flowers, and beneficial aspects as numerous as the fruits, but assign to that task, to those instances of His wisdom and those beneficial aspects, a purpose pertaining only to this world, one as small as a seed? That He should make that purpose nothing more than the life of this world, something less valuable than a grain of mustard-seed? That He should not make of beings seeds for the world of meaning and tillage for the realm of the hereafter, for them to yield there their true and worthy results? That He should permit such significant alternations to remain without purpose, to be empty and vain? That He should not turn their faces towards the world of meaning and the hereafter, so that they might there reveal their true purposes and fitting results?

Again, is it at all possible that by thus causing things to controvert their own nature He should present His own veracious Names, All-Wise, Generous, Just, Merciful, as being characterized by their opposites —God forbid!— that He should deny the true essences of all those beings that indicate His wisdom and generosity, His justice and mercy, that He should reject the testimony of all creatures, that He should negate the indications made by all things?

Can intelligence at all accept that God should impose on man and his senses duties as numerous as the hair on his head, but give him no more than an earthly reward, something no more valuable than a hair? That He should act meaninglessly, in a fashion contrary to His true justice and opposed to His true wisdom?

Again, is it at all possible that God Who proves and shows Himself to be a possessor of absolute wisdom, by attaching to every animate being, or even to every member like the tongue, indeed to every creature, instances of His wisdom and sources of benefit as numerous as the results and the fruits He has attached to a tree — is it at all possible that He should fail to bestow of Himself the greatest of all instances of His wisdom, the most significant of all sources of benefit, the most necessary of all results, that which makes His wisdom into wisdom, His blessings into blessings, His mercy into mercy, the

source and aim of all of His wisdom, bounty, mercy and beneficence — eternity, the meeting with Him in the hereafter and everlasting bliss? Were He to abandon these, He would plunge all of His doings unto utter pointlessness and cause Himself to resemble a being who constructed a palace, each stone of which contained thousands of designs, in each corner of which thousands of adornments were to be found, and in each part of which thousands of precious household instruments and tools were provided, but failed to build a roof over it, so that everything rotted and was needlessly destroyed. No, by no means can this be true! From absolute goodness comes forth goodness, and from the Possessor of Absolute Beauty comes forth beauty. So too nothing devoid of purpose can emerge from the Possessor of Absolute Wisdom.

Whoever in his imagination embarks on the ship of history and sets sail for the past, will see dead stages, places, gatherings and worlds, as numerous as the years, and each like the stopping-place that is the world, the field of trial, the gathering of creation, that we now see. In form and quality they are different from each other, but they resemble each other with respect to their orderliness, their wondrousness and the fashion in which they display the power and wisdom of the Maker.

In those impermanent stopping-places, those transient fields, those fleeting gatherings, he will also see the orderly workings of so manifest a wisdom, the indications of so evident a beneficence, the signs of so imperious a justice, the fruits of so comprehensive a mercy, that he will know of a certainty — unless totally devoid of perception— that a more perfect wisdom than that which he beholds is inconceivable, that a beneficence more beautiful than that the signs of which he observes is impossible, that a justice more glorious than that the indications of which he sees cannot exist, and a mercy more comprehensive than that the fruits of which he sees is unimaginable.

If, to suppose the impossible, there were no permanent abodes, lofty mansions, everlasting stations and eternal abodes, with their eternal residents, God's joyous servants, in the realm of that Eternal Monarch Who disposes all affairs and Who constantly is changing the hospice and its inmates, then it would be necessary to reject the true essences of wisdom, justice, beneficence and compassion, those four powerful and universal spiritual elements that are like light, air, water and earth, and to deny their existence, even though they are as apparent as that of the external elements. For it is plain that this impermanent world and its contents cannot be a complete manifestation of their true essences. If there is no other place, somewhere else, where they can be manifested fully, it then becomes necessary, with a lunacy like that of the man who denies the existence of the sun even though

he sees its light filling the day, to deny the wisdom that we can see in everything in front of our eyes; to deny the beneficence that we can observe in our own souls and in most other things; to deny the justice the signs of which appear so strongly;<sup>30</sup> and to deny the compassion we see everywhere in operation. It follows in turn that we must regard as a foolish prankster, a treacherous tyrant, the one from whom proceed all the wise processes, the generous deeds and the merciful gifts we perceive in the universe. God forbid that this should be so; it is a totally impossible reversal of the truth. Even the foolish sophists, who denied the existence of everything and even that of their own selves, would not readily contemplate such a proposition.

**In short:** Considering the utter disparity between —on the one hand— this state of affairs which we see together with the universal fusions of life and the swift separations of death, the imposing gatherings and the rapid dispersions, the magnificent revolutions and the great manifestations, and —on the other hand— the petty fruits we see briefly attained in this transient world, the temporary and insignificant purposes of beings that pertain to this world, we conclude that the non-existence of the hereafter would mean attaching to a little stone wise purposes as great as a mountain, and to a great mountain, a purpose as petty as a small stone. No intelligence or wisdom can find this acceptable.

In other words, this lack of proportion between beings and these matters on the one hand, and their purposes pertaining to this world on the other, demonstrates with certainty that all beings have their faces turned to the world of meaning. It is there that they will yield their appropriate fruits, and their eyes are fixed on the Sacred Names. Their ultimate aims pertain to that world alone. While their substance is hidden beneath the soil of this world, their flowers will unfold in the World of Similitudes. Man sows and is sown in this world, in accordance with his capacity; the harvest is gathered in the hereafter. If you look at the aspect of things that is turned towards the Divine Names and the hereafter you will see that each seed, a miracle of

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<sup>30</sup> There are two varieties of justice, one affirmative, the other negative. The positive variety consists in giving the deserving his right. This form of justice exists throughout the world in the most obvious fashion, because, as proven in the Third Truth, it observably bestows, in accordance with special balances and particular criteria, all the objects of desire requested by everything from its Glorious Creator with the tongue of innate capacity, the language of natural need, the speech of necessity, and all the requirements of life and existence. This variety of justice is, then, as certain as life and existence itself. The other variety of justice, the negative, consists in chastising the unjust; it gives wrongdoers their due by way of requital and punishment. This type of justice is not fully manifest in this world, even though there are countless signs and indications that permit us to sense its true nature. For example, all the chastising blows and punitive lashes that have descended on all rebellious peoples, from the 'Ad and Thamud to those of the present age, show definitely that an exalted justice dominates the world.

power, has an aim as vast as a tree. Each flower, which is like a word of Divine wisdom, has meanings as numerous as the flowers on a tree, and each fruit, a wonder of God's workmanship and a poem dictated by His mercy, has wise purposes as numerous as the fruits of a tree. As for the fruit serving us as sustenance, it is merely one out of those many thousand wise purposes; it fulfils its purpose, expresses its meanings, and dies, being buried in our stomach.<sup>31</sup> Since these transient beings yield eternal fruits in another place, leave there permanent forms of themselves, and express there everlasting meanings; since they engage in ceaseless glorification of the Maker; and since man becomes man by perceiving these aspects of things that are oriented to the hereafter, thus finding his way to eternity by means of the transient — since all of this is true, there must be some other purpose for all these beings that are cast around between life and death, that are first gathered and then dispersed.

There is no error in this comparison: the above-mentioned state of affairs resembles circumstances formed and arranged by way of imitation and representation. Brief gatherings and dispersions are arranged at great expense merely for the sake of taking pictures that can thereafter be shown in the cinema. So too, one of the reasons for our passage through individual and social life in this life, for a brief time, is to enable pictures to be taken and images formed, to enable the result of our deeds to be registered and recorded, for display on a day of accounting, for being shown at a vast gathering, and to yield the fruit of supreme happiness. The noble saying of the Prophet (Peace and blessing be upon him) "This world is the tillage for the hereafter,"<sup>32</sup> indicates this meaning.

Since the world exists, and within this world wisdom, beneficence, compassion and justice also exist, with their numerous evidences, of a certainty the hereafter also exists, just as surely as does this world. Since one aspect of everything in this world is turned to that world and is proceeding toward it, to deny that world would be denying this world with all it contains. Just as the allotted hour and the grave await man, so too do Paradise and Hell, anxiously watching for his arrival.

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<sup>31</sup> If it be asked, "why do your parables consist chiefly of flowers, seeds and fruits," our answer is that they are the most wondrous, remarkable and delicate of the miracles of God's power. Moreover, since naturalists, philosophers and the people of misguidance have been unable to read the subtle script written upon them by the pen of destiny and power, they have choked on them, and fallen into the swamp of nature.

<sup>32</sup> al-'Ajluni, *Kashf al-Khafa*, i, 320.

**ELEVENTH TRUTH**  
**The Gate of Humanity, and**  
**the Manifestation of the Name of Truth**

Is it at all possible that God Almighty, He Who is worshipped by right, should create man within creation as the most significant of all of His servants with respect to His absolute dominicality and with respect to His universal dominicality in all of His realms; that He should make him the most thoughtful recipient of His glorious address, the most comprehensive mirror to the manifestation of His Names; that He should create him as the most beautiful miracle of His power in the fairest of forms, in order to receive the manifestation of the Greatest Name, as well as that quality of the Greatest Name inherent in the other Names, in order for him to assess and perceive the contents of His treasures of mercy; that He should make him an investigator of secrets equipped more than any other creature with balances and instruments; and He should make him the most needy of all creatures with respect to His infinite gifts, the one suffering most from annihilation and the one most desirous of immortality; that He should make him the most delicate, the poorest and neediest of animals, most wretched and subject to pain in his worldly life but most sublime in disposition, in the highest of forms and characters — is it possible that God Almighty should do all this with man and not send him to the Eternal Realm for which he is suited and fitted and for which he is longing? Is it possible that He should thus negate the whole essence of humanity, act in a manner totally contrary to His own veracity, and perform an act of injustice that the eye of truth must deem ugly?

Again, is it at all possible that He Who rules justly, Whose mercy is absolute, should bestow on man such a disposition that he took up the Supreme Trust, from which the heavens and mountains both shrank, in order to measure and know, with his slight and petty measures and crafts, the all encompassing attributes, the universal workings, and the infinite manifestations of the Creator; that He should create him as the most delicate, vulnerable, weak and powerless of beings, while yet entrusting him with the regulation of all the vegetal and animal life upon earth, and causing him to intervene in their modes of worship and glorification of God; that He should cause him to be a representation in miniature of His cosmic processes; that He should cause him to proclaim His glorious dominicality to all beings, in word and deed; that He should prefer him to the angels and give him the rank of vicegerent — is it at all possible that God should bestow all of this on man and not give him eternal bliss, the purpose, result and fruit of all of these duties? That He should cast him down to low degree, as the most wretched, ill-fortuned, humiliated and suffering of all His creatures; or that He should make of intelligence, a gift from His own wisdom and a most blessed and luminous tool for the attainment of happiness, an inauspicious and sombre tool of torment

for that wretch, thus acting in total contradiction to His absolute wisdom and in opposition to His absolute mercy? No, it is by no means possible!

**In short:** Just as we saw by looking at the identity papers of an officer in our comparison that his rank, duty, wage, instructions and equipment prove that he exists not for the sake of some temporary battlefield, but rather that he is proceeding to some permanent kingdom, for the sake of which he is exerting himself — so too those to whom truth and certainty have been unveiled are unanimously agreed that the subtleties inscribed in the book of man’s heart, the senses written down in the notebook of his intellect, the equipment contained in his essential character, are all turned towards Eternal Bliss; they have been given to man and fashioned in accordance with this ultimate goal.

For example, if one servant and illustrator of the intellect called “the imaginative power,” is told that “you can have a million years of life and rule over the world, but in the end you shall become nothing,” it will react with sorrow instead of pleasure, unless deceived by vain fancy and the interference of the soul. The greatest of transient things cannot, then, satisfy the smallest faculty of man.

It is, then, this disposition of man — his desires extending to eternity, his thoughts that embrace all of creation and his wishes that embrace the different varieties of eternal bliss— that demonstrates he has been created for eternity and will indeed proceed to eternity. This world is like a hospice for him, a waiting-room for the hereafter.

## **TWELFTH TRUTH**

### **The Gate of Messengerhood and Revelation, and the Manifestation of**

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

Is it at all possible that errant doubts, no stronger than the wing of a fly, could close the path to the hereafter and the gate to Paradise that have been definitively opened by the Most Noble Messenger (Peace and blessings be upon him), with all of his might, relying upon the power of his thousand certified miracles as well as the thousands of decisive verses of the All-Wise Qur’an, a book miraculous in forty different ways — that Messenger whose words are affirmed by all of the other prophets, relying upon their own miracles, whose claim is affirmed by all of the saints, relying upon their visionary and charismatic experiences, and to whose veracity all of the purified scholars bear witness, relying upon their investigations of truth?

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From the previous truths it has become apparent that resurrection is so firmly rooted a truth that not even a power capable of lifting up the globe, breaking it and casting it aside, could shake it. For God Almighty Himself affirms this truth in accordance with the meaning of all His Names and attributes; His Noble Messenger confirms it with all of his miracles and evidences; the All-Wise Qur'an establishes it with all of its truths and verses; and the cosmos itself bears witness to it with all the creational signs it contains and all the wise processes that take place within it. Is it at all possible that the Necessary Being should unite with all of His creation (excepting only the unbelievers) on this question of resurrection, and doubts feebler than a whisker and satanic insinuations should shake and uproot that exalted and firmly-rooted truth which resembles a mountain? No, by no means!

Beware, do not imagine that the proofs of resurrection are restricted to the Twelve Truths we have mentioned. The All-Wise Qur'an alone, that instructed us in these Twelve Truths, indicates thousands of other aspects of the matter as well, each aspect being a sign that our Creator will transfer us from this transient realm to an eternal one.

Again, do not imagine that the Divine Names which logically require the existence of resurrection are only those we have discussed — Wise, Generous, Merciful, Just, Preserver. On the contrary, all the Divine Names manifest in the ordering of the cosmos logically require the existence of resurrection, indeed make it imperative.

Do not imagine, either, that the creational signs indicating resurrection are confined to those we have mentioned above. On the contrary, in the majority of beings, there exist different aspects and qualities that are like curtains opening to the right and the left: one aspect bears witness to the Maker, and the other aspect indicates resurrection. For example, the beauty of man's being, fashioned as he is in the fairest of forms, demonstrates the existence of the Maker, while at the same time the fact that together with his comprehensive abilities, lodged in that fairest of forms, he soon declines and dies, demonstrates the existence of resurrection. Sometimes, if one looks at the same aspect in two different ways, one sees that it demonstrates the existence both of the Maker and of resurrection. For example, if one looks at the wise ordering, the just balance, the gracious adornment and the merciful favour inherent in most things, they are seen to demonstrate that they proceed from the powerful hand of a Wise, Generous, Just and Merciful Maker. So too, if one looks at the brief and insignificant life of the transient beings that are the manifestations of these qualities, despite their power and infinitude, the hereafter appears before one. In other words, all things silently recite and cause others to recite "I believe in God and the Last Day."

## Conclusion

The preceding Twelve Truths confirm, supplement and support each other. Coming together in union, they demonstrate the required result. Does it lie in the capacity of any doubt to penetrate those twelve firm walls, each like steel or diamonds, in order to shake the belief in resurrection housed within their closed citadel?

The verse, *Your creation and resurrection is but like a single soul*,<sup>33</sup> indicates the following meaning: “The creation and resurrection of all men is as easy for God’s power as the creation and resurrection of a single man.” Yes indeed. In a treatise entitled *Nokta* (Point), I explained in detail the truth expressed by this verse. Here we will indicate only a summary by means of a few comparisons. If you want more detail, then refer to *Nokta*.

For example, *And God’s is the highest similitude*,<sup>34</sup> and there is no error in the comparison, if the manifestation of the sun were in accordance with its own will, it could be said that the sun bestows its mystery of manifestation on numerous transparent objects with the same ease as on a single particle.

In accordance with the mystery of transparency, the little pupil of a transparent particle is equal to the vast face of the ocean in receiving the reflection of the sun.

In accordance with the mystery of order, it overturns a huge battleship with the same ease as a child turning over his toy boat with his finger.

In accordance with the mystery of obedience, it causes a vast army to move with the same word that a commander uses to make a single infantryman move.

In accordance with the mystery of equilibrium, let us imagine there to exist in space a balance so sensitive and at the same time so large that were two walnuts to be placed in its pans it would feel them, and be equally able to hold and to weigh two suns. If two suns of equal weight were placed in the pans of the scale; the same power, which causes one of the walnuts to be lifted up to the heavens and the other walnut to descend to the ground, will move these heavenly bodies with the same ease. Since in this lowly, deficient and transient world of contingency, the greatest and smallest things are

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<sup>33</sup> Qur’an, 31:28.

<sup>34</sup> Qur’an, 16:60.

equal, and numerous, infinite things appear equal to a single thing, through the mystery of luminosity, transparency, order, obedience and balance, then of a certainty little and much, small and great, will be equal in the sight of the possessor of absolute power, and He will be able to summon all men to resurrection with a single blast on the trumpet, just as if they were one man — this, by virtue of the mysteries of the luminous manifestations of the infinite and utterly perfect power of His essence, the transparency of the inner dimension of things, the order decreed by wisdom and destiny, the complete obedience of all things to His creational commands, and the equilibrium existing in contingent being, that consists of the equivalence of the being and non-being of the contingent.

Furthermore, the degrees of strength and weakness that a thing possesses are determined by the intervention in that thing of its opposite. For example, degrees of heat are determined by the intervention of cold; degrees of beauty, by the intervention of ugliness; stages of light, by the intervention of darkness. But if something exists of itself, and is not accidental, then its opposite cannot interfere with it, for then a union of opposites would logically have to occur, and that is impossible. In something that exists of itself, there can then be no gradation. Now the power of the Possessor of Absolute Power pertains to His essence; it enjoys absolute perfection and is not accidental like contingent being. It is therefore impossible that its opposite, impotence, should intervene in it. Hence it is as easy for the Lord of Glory to create a spring as it is to create a flower. But if creation were ascribed to causality, then the creation of a single flower would be as difficult as that of a whole spring. For God it is as easy to resurrect and gather all men as it is to resurrect and gather one man.

All that we have expounded so far with regard to resurrection, the comparisons indicating it and its truths, is derived from the effulgence of the All-Wise Qur'an. Its sole purpose has been bringing the soul to surrender and the heart to acceptance. It is to the Qur'an that the right to speak belongs. It is true speech, and all speech is subordinate to it. Let us listen, then, to the Qur'an:

*Say: "With God is the argument that reaches home: if it had been His will, He could indeed have guided you all."<sup>35</sup>*

*Look upon the signs of God's mercy, and see how He restores life to the earth after its death. Verily He it is Who shall bring to life the dead, and He is powerful over all things.<sup>36</sup>*

*And he makes comparisons for Us, and forgets his own [Origin and]*

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<sup>35</sup> Qur'an, 6:149.

<sup>36</sup> Qur'an, 30:50.

*Creation: he says, “Who can give life to [dry] bones and decomposed ones [at that]?”<sup>37</sup>*

*O mankind! Fear your Lord! For the convulsion of the Hour [of Judgement] will be a thing terrible!*

*The Day ye shall see it, every mother giving suck shall forget her suckling-babe, and every pregnant female shall drop her load [unformed]: thou shalt see mankind as in a drunken riot, yet not drunk: but dreadful will be the Wrath of God.<sup>38</sup>*

*God! There is no god but He: of a surety He will gather you together against the Day of Judgement, about which there is no doubt. And whose word can be truer than God’s?<sup>39</sup>*

*As for the righteous, they will be in bliss;  
And the wicked — they will be in the fire.<sup>40</sup>*

*When the Earth is shaken to her [utmost] convulsion,  
And the Earth throws up her burdens [from within],  
And man cries [distressed]: “What is the matter with her!” —  
On that Day will she declare her tidings:  
For that thy Lord will have given her inspiration.  
On that Day will men proceed in companies sorted out, to be shown the deeds that they [had done].  
Then shall anyone who has done an atom’s weight of good, see it.  
And anyone who has done an atom’s weight of evil, shall see it.<sup>41</sup>*

*The [Day] of Noise and Clamour:  
What is the [Day] of Noise and Clamour?  
And what will explain to thee what the [Day] of Noise and Clamour is?  
[It is] a Day whereon men will be like moths scattered about,  
And the mountains will be like carded wool.  
Then, he whose balance [of good deeds] will be [found] heavy,  
Will be in a life of good pleasure and satisfaction.  
But he whose balance [of good deeds] will be [found] light,—  
Will have his home in a [bottomless] Pit.  
And what will explain to thee what this is?  
[It is] a Fire blazing fiercely!<sup>42</sup>*

*To God belongs the mystery of the heavens and the earth. And the*

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<sup>37</sup> Qur’an, 36:78.

<sup>38</sup> Qur’an, 22:1-2.

<sup>39</sup> Qur’an, 4:87.

<sup>40</sup> Qur’an, 82:13-14.

<sup>41</sup> Qur’an, 99:1-8.

<sup>42</sup> Qur’an, 101:1-11.

*decision of the Hour is as the twinkling of an eye or even quicker: for God has power over all things.*<sup>43</sup>

Listening to these and other clear verses of the Qur'an, let us say, "yes, we believe and give our assent."

*I believe in God, His angels, His books, His messengers and in the Last Day. I believe that both the good and evil of destiny are from God Almighty; that resurrection after death is a reality; that Paradise is a reality; that Hell-fire is a reality; that intercession is a reality; that Munkar and Nakir are reality; and that God will resurrect those who are in the tombs. I bear witness that there is no god but God, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of God.*

*O God, grant blessings to the most delicate, the most noble, the most perfect, the most beautiful fruit of the Tuba of Your mercy, him whom You sent as a mercy to all the worlds, and as a means for our attaining unto the most beautiful, the fairest, purest and most exalted of the fruits of that Tuba, the branches of which are outspread over the hereafter and paradise; o God, protect us and our parents against the fire, and cause us and our parents to enter Paradise with the pious, for the sake of Thy chosen Prophet. Amen.*

O brother studying this treatise with an open mind! Do not say, "why cannot I immediately understand this 'Tenth Word' in all its details?" and do not be saddened by your failure to understand it completely. For even a master of philosophy such as Ibn Sina said that "resurrection cannot be understood by rational criteria." His judgement was that we must believe in resurrection, but reason cannot aid our belief. Similarly, all the scholars of Islam unanimously have held that resurrection rests entirely on traditional proofs; it cannot be rationally examined. Naturally, so profound, and at the same time, so exalted a path cannot suddenly become a public highway for the exercise of the reason. But we would offer a thousand thanks that the Merciful Creator has bestowed upon us this much of the path, by means of the effulgence of the All-Wise Qur'an and His own mercy, in an age when belief by imitation is past and meek acceptance has disappeared. For the amount vouchsafed to each of us is enough for the salvation of our faith. Being content with the amount that we have been able to understand, we should reread the treatise and seek to increase our comprehension.

One of the reasons that it is impossible to approach a rational understanding of resurrection is that since the supreme gathering, resurrection, is

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<sup>43</sup> Qur'an, 16:77.

through the manifestation of the Greatest Name, only through beholding and demonstrating the great deeds evident in the maximum manifestation of the Greatest Name of God as well as His other Names, is it possible to prove it as certain; and unshakeably believe that resurrection is as simple as the spring. Thus do matters appear and thus they are demonstrated in this 'Tenth Word' (Resurrection and the Hereafter), by means of the effulgence of the Qur'an. Were it not for this effulgence, and were our intelligence to be left to its own petty devices, it would be powerless, and condemned to believing in resurrection by way of imitation.

## The First Part of an Important Supplement and Addendum to the Tenth Word

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

*So [give] glory to God, when you reach eventide and when you rise in the morning; Yea, to Him be praise, in the heavens and on earth; and in the late afternoon and when the day begins to decline.*

*It is He Who brings out the living from the dead, and brings out the dead from the living, and Who Gives life to the earth after it is dead: and thus shall you be brought out [from the dead].*

*Among His Signs is this, that He created you from dust; and then,— behold, you are men scattered [far and wide]!*

*And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquillity with them, and He has put love and mercy between your [hearts]: Verily in that are Signs for those who reflect.*

*And among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variations in your languages and your colours: verily in that are Signs for those who know.*

*And among His Signs is the sleep that you take by night and by day, and the quest that you [make for livelihood] out of His Bounty: verily in that are Signs for those who hearken.*

*And among His Signs, He shows you the lightning, by way both of fear and of hope, and He sends down rain from the sky and with it gives life to the earth after it is dead: verily in that are Signs for those who are wise.*

*And among His Signs is this, that heaven and earth stand by His Command: then when He calls you, by a single call, from the earth, behold, you [straightway] come forth.*

*To Him belongs every being that is in the heavens and on earth: all are devoutly obedient to Him.*

*It is He Who begins [the process of] creation; then repeats it; and for Him it is most easy. To Him belongs the loftiest similitude [we can think of] in the heavens and the earth: For He is Exalted in Might, Full of Wisdom.<sup>44</sup>*

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<sup>44</sup> Qur'an, 30:17-27.

In this Ninth Ray will be expounded a supreme point of these sublime heavenly verses, which demonstrate one of the ‘poles’ of belief; these mighty sacred proofs of the resurrection of the dead will be explained. It is a subtle instance of dominical grace that thirty years ago at the end of his work entitled *Muhâkemat* (Reasonings), which was an introduction to Qur’anic commentaries, the Old Said wrote: “Second Aim: Two Qur’anic verses alluding to the resurrection of the dead will be expounded and explained. *In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.*” There he stopped and could write no further. Now, praise and thanks to my Compassionate Creator to the number of signs and indications of the resurrection, that after thirty years He has given me success. Yes, nine or ten years ago, He bestowed the Tenth and Twenty-Ninth Words, two brilliant and powerful proofs expounding the Divine decree of:

*So look to the signs of God’s mercy, how He raises to life the earth after its death; He it is who will raise the dead to life, for He is Powerful Over All Things*<sup>45</sup>

which was the first of the two verses. They silenced the deniers of resurrection. Now, nine or ten years after those two impregnable bastions of belief in the resurrection of the dead, He bestowed with the present treatise a commentary on the second of the above two sublime verses. This Ninth Ray, then, consists of Nine Elevated Stations, indicated by the above-mentioned verses, and an important Introduction.

## Introduction

[This consists of two Points comprising a concise explanation of one comprehensive result of the numerous spiritual benefits of belief in resurrection and of its vital consequences; a demonstration of how essential it is for human life and especially for the life of society; a summary of one universal proof out of numerous proofs of the tenet of belief in the resurrection; and a statement of how indubitable and self-evident is that tenet of belief.]

### FIRST POINT

We shall indicate, as a measure, only four out of hundreds of proofs that belief in the hereafter is fundamental to the life of society and to man’s personal life, and is the basis of his happiness, prosperity, and achievement.

*The First:* It is only with the thought of Paradise that children, who

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<sup>45</sup> Qur’an, 30:50.

form almost a half of mankind, can endure all the deaths around them, which appear to them to be grievous and frightening, and strengthen the morale of their weak and delicate beings. Through Paradise they find hope in their vulnerable spirits, prone to weeping, and may live happily. For example, with the thought of Paradise, one may say: "My little brother or friend has died and become a bird in Paradise. He is flying around Paradise and living more happily than us." The frequent deaths before their unhappy eyes of other children like themselves or of grown-ups will otherwise destroy all their resistance and morale, making their subtle faculties like their spirits, hearts, and minds weep in addition to their eyes; they will either decline utterly or become crazy, wretched animals.

***Second Proof:*** It is only through the life of the hereafter that the elderly, who form half of mankind, can endure the proximity of the grave, and be consoled at the thought that their lives, to which they are firmly attached, will soon be extinguished and their fine worlds come to an end. It is only at the hope of eternal life that they can respond to the grievous despair they feel in their emotional child-like spirits at the thought of death. Those worthy, anxious fathers and mothers, so deserving of compassion and in need of tranquillity and peace of mind, will otherwise feel a terrible spiritual turmoil and distress in their hearts, and this world will become a dark prison for them, and life even, grievous torment.

***Third Proof:*** It is only the thought of Hell-fire that checks the turbulent emotions of youths, the most vigorous element in the life of society, and their violent excesses, restraining them from aggression, oppression, and destruction, and ensuring that the life of society continues tranquilly. If not for fear of Hell, in accordance with the rule 'might is right,' in pursuing their desires, those drunken youths would turn the worlds of the wretched weak and powerless into Hell, and elevated humanity into base animality.

***Fourth Proof:*** The most comprehensive centre of man's worldly life, and its mainspring, and a paradise, refuge, and fortress of worldly happiness, is the life of the family. Everyone's home is a small world for him. And the life and happiness of his home and family are possible through genuine, earnest, and loyal respect and true, tender, and self-sacrificing compassion. This true respect and genuine kindness may be achieved with the idea of the members of the family having an everlasting companionship and friendship and togetherness, and their parental, filial, brotherly, and friendly relations continuing for all eternity in a limitless life, and their believing this. One says, for example: "My wife will be my constant companion in an everlasting world and eternal life. It does not matter if she is now old and ugly, for she will have an immortal beauty." He will tell himself that he will be as kind and devoted as he can for the sake of that permanent companionship, and treat his elderly wife lovingly and kindly as though she were a

beautiful houri. A companionship that was to end in eternal separation after an hour or two of brief, apparent friendship would otherwise afford only superficial, temporary, feigned, animal-like feelings, and false compassion and artificial respect. As with animals, self-interest and other overpowering emotions would prevail over the respect and compassion, transforming that worldly paradise into Hell.

Thus, one of the hundreds of results of belief in resurrection is connected with the life of society. If a comparison is made between the above four proofs out of the hundreds of aspects and benefits of this single consequence and the rest, it will be understood that the realization of the truth of resurrection, and its occurrence, are as certain as the elevated reality of humanity and its universal need. It is clearer even than the evidence for the existence of food offered by the existence of need in man's stomach, and tells of its existence even more clearly. And it proves that if the consequences of the truth of resurrection were to quit humanity, whose nature is extremely significant, lofty, and living, it would descend to being a corrupt corpse fed on by microbes.

The sociologists, politicians, and moralists, who govern mankind and are concerned with its social and moral questions should be aware of this! How do they propose to fill this vacuum? With what can they cure these deep wounds?

## **SECOND POINT**

This explains in summary form a proof—one of many—proceeding from the testimony to the truth of resurrection of the other pillars of belief. It is as follows:

All the miracles indicating the Messengership of Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him) and the evidences for his prophethood, and all the proofs of his veracity, together testify to the occurrence of the resurrection, and prove it. For after Divine unity, everything he claimed throughout his life was centred on the resurrection of the dead. Also, all his miracles and proofs affirming, and making affirmed, all the previous prophets attest to the same truth. Also, the testimony of the phrase “and in His Scriptures,” which makes completely clear the testimony of the phrase “and in His Prophets,” testifies to the same truth. Like this:

All the miracles, truths, and proofs proving foremost the veracity of the Qur'an of Miraculous Exposition, testify to and prove the realization and occurrence of resurrection. For almost a third of the Qur'an is about resurrection, and at the beginning of most of its short suras are powerful verses about it. It expresses the same truth explicitly and implicitly with thousands of its verses, and proves and demonstrates it. For example:

*When the sun is folded up.*<sup>46</sup>

*O men, fear your Sustainer; the trembling of the Hour  
is an awesome event;*<sup>47</sup>

*When the earth is convulsed;*<sup>48</sup>

*When the heavens are torn asunder;*<sup>49</sup>

*When the heavens are torn apart;*<sup>50</sup>

*Concerning what they dispute;*<sup>51</sup>

*Has the story reached you, of the overwhelming event?*<sup>52</sup>

Besides demonstrating with complete certainty at the beginning of thirty or forty suras that resurrection is the most important and necessary truth in the universe, it sets forth various persuasive evidences for that truth in others of its verses.

Is there any possibility that belief in the hereafter should be false, which emerges like the sun from the thousands of declarations and statements of a Book a single indication of one of the verses of which has yielded before our eyes the fruits of numerous learned and cosmic truths in the Islamic sciences? Is there any possibility of denying the sun, or the existence of the universe? Would it not be impossible and absurd? Is it at all possible that although an army may sometimes be plunged into battle so that a mere sign of the king should not be given the lie, to show as false the thousands of words, promises, and threats of that most serious, proud monarch? Is it possible that they should be false?

Although a single sign of that glorious spiritual monarch who for thirteen centuries without break has ruled over innumerable spirits, minds, hearts, and souls within the bounds of truth and reality, and trained and raised them, would be sufficient to prove the truth of resurrection, it has demonstrated it with thousands of explicit statements. Is the torment of Hell-fire not necessary then for the compounded idiot who does not recognize this fact? Is it not pure justice?

Moreover, by their definite acceptance of the truth of resurrection, which the Qur'an—prevailing over the future and all times—repeatedly proves in detail and elucidates, all the revealed scriptures and sacred books, each of which dominated a particular period, proved it according to their own times

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<sup>46</sup> Qur'an, 81:1.

<sup>47</sup> Qur'an, 22:1.

<sup>48</sup> Qur'an, 99:1.

<sup>49</sup> Qur'an, 82:1.

<sup>50</sup> Qur'an, 84:1.

<sup>51</sup> Qur'an, 78:1.

<sup>52</sup> Qur'an, 88:1.

and centuries, but in undetailed, veiled, and summary manner, confirming with a thousand signatures what the Qur'an teaches.

Included here since it is related to this discussion is the testimony at the end of the Third Ray of the other pillars of faith and particularly "the Prophets" and "Holy Scriptures" to "belief in the Last Day." It forms a convincing proof of resurrection, and is in the form of a powerful yet succinct supplication, which dispels all doubts. It says in the supplication:

"O My Compassionate Sustainer!

"I have understood from the instruction of Your Noble Messenger (PBUH) and the teaching of the Qur'an, that foremost the Qur'an and the Messenger, and all the sacred scriptures and prophets, have unanimously testified and pointed out that the manifestations of the Names related to Your beauty and glory, examples of which are to be seen in this world, will continue even more radiantly for all eternity, and that Your bounties, samples of which are to be observed in this transitory world, will continue in the abode of bliss in more glittering fashion, and that those who long for them in this world will accompany them for all eternity.

"Also, relying on hundreds of evident miracles and decisive signs, foremost Your Most Noble Messenger (Peace and blessings be upon him) and the All-Wise Qur'an, and the prophets with their luminous spirits, and the saints, who are spiritual poles with their light-filled hearts, and the purified scholars with their enlightened intellects, relying on Your repeated threats and promises in all the sacred scriptures, and trusting in Your sacred attributes like power, mercy, favour, wisdom, glory, and beauty, and on Your functions, and the dignity of Your glory, and the sovereignty of Your dominicality, and in consequence of their illuminations and visions and beliefs at 'the knowledge of certainty,' give the glad tidings to men and jinn of eternal happiness and inform them of Hell for the people of misguidance; they firmly believe this and testify to it.

"O All-Powerful and Wise One! O Most Merciful and Compassionate! O Munificent One True to His Promise! O All-Compelling One of Glory, One of Dignity, Grandeur, and Wrath!

"You are utterly exempt from and exalted above giving the lie to so many loyal friends, and so many promises, and attributes and functions, and denying the certain demands of the sovereignty of Your dominicality and the endless prayers and supplications of Your innumerable acceptable servants, whom You love and who attract Your love by assenting to You and obeying You; and You are exempt from confirming the denial of resurrection by the people of misguidance and unbelief, who through their disbelief and rebellion and denial of Your promises, offend the magnificence of Your grandeur and affront Your dignity and glory and the

honour of Your Godhead, and sadden the compassion of Your dominicality. We declare Your justice, beauty, and mercy to be exempt from such infinite tyranny, such ugliness. We believe with all our strength that the testimony of the prophets, purified scholars, and saints, who are those truthful envoys of Yours, those heralds of Your sovereignty, at the degrees of 'absolute certainty,' 'knowledge of certainty,' and 'the vision of certainty,' to the treasuries of Your mercy in the hereafter and the stores of Your bounties in the everlasting realm, and to the wondrously beautiful manifestations of Your Beautiful Names, which will be manifested totally in the abode of bliss, are absolutely true and veracious, and what they have indicated conforms absolutely with reality, and that what they have given glad tidings of is true and will occur. Believing that the supreme ray of Your Name of Truth, which is the source, sun, and protector of all realities, is this truth of the resurrection and Great Gathering, they teach it to Your servants.

“O God! For the sake of what they teach and in veneration of it, grant us and all students of the Risale-i Nur perfect belief and a happy death. And allow us to receive their intercession. Amen!”

Moreover, just as all the proofs demonstrating the veracity of the revealed scriptures, and all the miracles and evidences proving the prophethood of God's Beloved (PBUH) and of all the prophets, indirectly prove the reality of the hereafter, which is what they teach above all else; so most of the evidences for the existence and unity of the Necessary Existent testify indirectly to the existence and opening up of an eternal realm of bliss, which will be the supreme manifestation of dominicality and divinity. For as is explained and proved in the following paragraphs, both the existence of the Necessarily Existent One, and most of His attributes, functions and Names, like dominicality, Godhead, mercy, grace, wisdom, and justice, necessitate the hereafter with the utmost certainty, and demand an eternal realm and the resurrection of the dead and Last Judgement for the granting of reward and punishment.

Since there is a pre-eternal and post-eternal God, most certainly there is the hereafter, the everlasting means of the sovereignty of His Godhead.

And since there is in the universe and in living beings a most majestic, wise, and compassionate absolute dominicality, and it is apparent; there is certain to be an eternal realm of happiness which will save the majesty of that dominicality from abasement, its wisdom from purposelessness, and its compassion from cruelty; and that realm shall be entered.

And since the unlimited bestowals, bounties, favours, gifts, and instances of grace and mercy which are to be seen, show to minds that are not extinguished and hearts that are not dead that behind the veil of the Unseen is

One All-Merciful and Compassionate; surely there is an immortal life in an eternal realm which will save the bestowal from mockery, the bounties from deception, the favours from enmity, the mercy from torment, the grace and gifts from treachery, and will make the bounties bounty and the bestowal bestowal.

And since in the springtime on the narrow page of the earth, a pen of power writes a hundred thousand books without error tirelessly before our eyes; and since the Holder of the pen has promised a hundred thousand times: "I am going to write a fine, immortal book in a broad realm, easier than this book of the spring, which is written in this narrow realm, confused and intermingled, and I shall allow you to read it;" He mentions the book in all his decrees; certainly, the main part of the book has been written, and with the resurrection and Last Judgement its footnotes shall be added, and all the notebooks of people's actions shall be recorded in it.

And since, with its multiplicity of creatures, and its being the dwelling, source, factory, exhibition, and gathering place of hundreds of thousands of constantly changing species of living beings and beings with spirits, and the heart, centre, summary, and result of the universe, and the reason for its creation, the earth has supreme importance, and is held equal to the mighty heavens despite its smallness; in the heavenly decrees, it is always said: Sustainer of the Heavens and Earth...

And since there is man, who rules over the earth, which is thus, has disposal over most creatures, and subjects most living beings gathering them around himself; and so orders, displays, and gathers each remarkable species together in one place like a list, adorning them, that he attracts not only the attention and admiration of men and jinn, but of the dwellers of the heavens and the universe, and the appreciative gaze of the universe's Owner, thus gaining great importance and high worth; and who shows through his sciences and arts that he is the purpose of the universe's creation, and its most important result, and most precious fruit, and the vicegerent of the earth; and who because with respect to this world, he has ordered and displayed excellently the miraculous arts of the world's Maker, is left in this world despite his rebellion and disbelief, and whose punishment is postponed, and because of this work of his, whose term is prolonged and is allowed success...

And since there is an extremely powerful, wise, and compassionate Disposer, Who makes the mighty globe into a treasury of every sort of metal and mineral that man needs in a way entirely beyond his strength and will—who despite being weak, impotent, and wanting by nature and creation, has innumerable needs and is subject to innumerable pains—and a store of every sort of food, and a shop stocking goods of every kind that pleases

man, and looks to man in this way, and nurtures him, and gives him what he wants...

And since there is a Sustainer Who is thus, Who both loves man, and causes man to love Him, and Who is enduring, and has eternal worlds, and Who performs every work with justice, and carries out everything with wisdom; and since the splendour of that Pre-Eternal Sovereign's rule and His eternal rule cannot be contained in this brief worldly life, and in man's fleeting span, and in the temporary and transient earth; and since the excessive wrongdoing and rebellion that occur among men, which are contrary to and opposed to the universe's order, justice, balance, and beauty, and their denial, treachery, and disbelief towards their Benefactor, Who nurtures them tenderly, are not punished in this world, and the cruel oppressor passes his life in ease, while the unhappy oppressed live in hardship; and since the absolute justice whose traces are to be seen throughout the universe is entirely opposed to the cruel tyrant and despairing oppressed being equal in death, and would in no way permit it...

And since just as the universe's Owner has chosen the earth from the universe, and man from the earth, and bestowed on him a high rank and importance; so out of mankind He has chosen the prophets, saints, and purified ones, true human beings who conform to the aims of His dominicality and through their belief and submission make Him love them; He has taken them as friends and addressees, and bestowed miracles and success on them and punished their enemies with heavenly blows. And out of these worthy and lovable friends He has chosen their leader and source of pride, Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him), and for long centuries has illuminated with his Light half the globe and a fifth of humanity; as though the universe was created for him, all its purposes become apparent through him and his religion and the Qur'an. And although he deserved to live for an infinite time in recompense for his infinitely valuable service, for millions of years, he only lived a brief sixty-three years of great hardship and striving. Is there any possibility then that he should not be resurrected together with all his peers and friends? That they should not now be living in the spirit? That they should have been annihilated eternally? God forbid, a hundred thousand times! Yes, all the universe and the reality of the world demand that he should be resurrected and they beseech the universe's Owner that he should be living...

And since in the Seventh Ray, The Supreme Sign, each with the strength of a mountain, the thirty-three powerful consensuses have proved that the universe emerged from a single hand and is the property of a single being; and have demonstrated self-evidently His unity and oneness, the means of the Divine perfections; and through unity and oneness all beings become like soldiers under orders and subservient officials; and with the coming of

the hereafter, perfections are saved from decline, absolute justice from mocking cruelty, universal wisdom from foolish absurdity, all-embracing mercy from jeering torment, and the dignity of power from abased impotence, and they are exonerated from this...

Certainly and without any doubt, as necessitated by the truths in these six ‘sinces’ — six out of hundreds of points of belief in God— the end of the world shall come and the resurrection of the dead occur. Abodes of reward and punishment shall be thrown open so that the above-mentioned importance of the earth, and its centrality, and man’s importance and value shall be realized, and the above-mentioned justice, wisdom, mercy, and sovereignty of the All-Wise Disposer, Who is the Creator of the earth and of man, and their Sustainer, shall be established; and the true and yearning friends of that eternal Sustainer shall be saved from eternal annihilation; and the most eminent and worthy of those friends receive the recompense for his sacred services, which have made all beings pleased and indebted; and the perfections of the Eternal Sovereign should be exempted and exonerated from all fault and deficiency, and His power from impotence, and His wisdom from foolishness, and His justice from tyranny.

**In Short:** Since God exists, so does the hereafter certainly exist.

Moreover, just as with all the evidences that prove them, the above three pillars of belief testify to and indicate resurrection; so do the two pillars “and in the angels, and in Divine Determining, that both the good of it and the evil of it are from God Almighty,” also necessitate resurrection and testify in powerful fashion to the eternal realm. It is like this:

All the evidences proving the existence of the angels and their duties of worship, and innumerable observations of them and conversations with them, prove indirectly the existence of the Spirit World, and the World of the Unseen, and the eternal realm and world of the hereafter, and the existence of an abode of happiness and Paradise and Hell, which in the future shall be populated with men and jinn. For with Divine permission, the angels can see these worlds and enter them. And all the high-ranking angels who meet with humans, like Gabriel, tell unanimously of the existence of these worlds and of their travelling round them. Just as we are certain, due to the information of those coming from there, that the continent of America exists, although we have not seen it, so due to information about the angels, which has the strength of a hundredfold consensus, we should believe in the existence of the world of eternity, the realm of the hereafter, and Paradise and Hell with the same certainty. And thus we do believe in it.

Furthermore, all the evidences proving the pillar of “belief in Divine Determining,” included in the Treatise on Divine Determining, the Twenty-Sixth Word, prove indirectly the resurrection of the dead, the balancing of

deeds on the supreme scales, and the publishing of the pages of deeds. For the recording before our eyes of the appointed courses of all things on the tablets of order and balance, and the inscribing of the life-stories of all living beings in their faculties of memory, and the transcribing of the notebooks of deeds of all beings with spirits, and especially men, on the Preserved Tablet, such a comprehensive determining and wise apportioning and precise recording and preserving inscription could surely only be the result of a general judgement in a supreme tribunal set up to mete out permanent reward and punishment. That comprehensive and precise recording and preservation would otherwise be completely meaningless and purposeless, and contrary to wisdom and reality.

Also, if there was no resurrection, all the certain meanings of the book of the universe, written with the pen of Divine Determining, would be nullified, which is completely impossible. It is as impossible as denying the universe's existence, indeed, is a delirium.

**In Short:** The five pillars of belief demand with all their evidences the occurrence of the resurrection and Last Judgement, and their existence, and the existence and opening up of the realm of the hereafter, and they testify to these and necessitate them.

Thus, it is because there are such vast and unshakeable supports and proofs of the resurrection, completely in conformity with its vastness, that almost one third of the Qur'an of Miraculous Exposition is formed by resurrection and the hereafter, and it makes it the basis and foundation stone of all its truths, and constructs everything on it.

(The end of the Introduction)

## Second Part of the Addendum

The first of nine stations comprising the nine levels of proofs of resurrection miraculously indicated in the following verse:

*Glory be to God in the evening and at daybreak, and praise is His in the heavens and earth, at nightfall and when the day begins to decline. It is He Who brings forth the living from the dead, and brings forth the dead from the living, and gives life to the earth after its death; thus, too, will you be brought forth.*<sup>53</sup>

The manifest proof and brilliant evidence of God's decree concerning resurrection contained in this verse will now be expounded and set forth, God willing.<sup>54</sup>

In connection with the twenty-eighth property of life it was explained that life looks upon the six pillars of faith and proves them; it contains a series of indications of their truth.

Now the most important result, substance and reason for the creation of the cosmos is none other than life, and life, that exalted verity, can in no way be restricted to this transient, brief, defective and painful worldly life. Rather the purpose and result of the tree of life, the splendour of which can be deduced from its twenty-nine properties, the fruit of that tree worthy of its splendour, is the eternal life of the hereafter; it is life in the eternal realm where even stones, trees and the soil will be endowed with life. Otherwise, it will follow that the tree of life, so plentifully decked out with significant instruments, yields no fruit, benefit or truth for animate beings, especially man; and man who in his substance and faculties is twenty times superior to the sparrow and is indeed the most important and elevated of all creation, will fall to a degree twenty times lower than that of the sparrow; with respect to the felicity of his life, he will be the most unfortunate and humiliated of wretches.

Similarly, intelligence, the most precious of gifts for man, will wound his heart through constant reflection of the pains of the past and the fears of the

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<sup>53</sup> Qur'an, 30:17-19.

<sup>54</sup> The whole station has not yet been written and has been included here because of the relevance of the topic of life to resurrection. In addition, it contains a subtle and profound allusion to the pillar of Divine Determining at the end of the topic of life.

future; it will mix nine pains with every pleasure and thus become a disaster to man. Now this is false to the hundredth degree. The life of this world thus proves decisively the pillar of faith that is belief in the hereafter and displays to our eyes every spring more than three hundred thousand specimens of resurrection.

Is it at all possible that an All-Powerful Agent Who promptly supplies and provides, with wisdom, solicitude and mercy, all the instruments and tools needed for your life, in your body, your garden and your homeland, Who hears and answers the private and particular prayer made for sustenance by your stomach, for the sake of its life and survival, Who shows His acceptance of that prayer by means of numerous delicious foods — is it at all possible that such a Being should not be aware of you or hear you, that He should not provide you with the means of life eternal, the greatest purpose of the human species? Is it possible that He should not accept the greatest, most significant, most worthy and most universal prayer for eternity of the human species by establishing eternal life and creating paradise? Is it possible that He should not heed the universal and insistent prayer of the human species, the most important creature in the cosmos, the monarch of the earth, a prayer that resounds throughout heaven and earth, and not pay it the same attention, or grant it the same gratification, as a little stomach? Is it possible that He should thus cause His perfect wisdom and infinite mercy to be denied? No, a hundred thousand times no!

Again, is it at all possible that He should hear the most secret voice of the most minute of beings, remedy its pain and succour its plaint; that He should nourish it with the utmost care and consideration and cause creatures greater than itself to serve it — is it at all possible that He should do all of this and not hear the thunderous cry of life, the greatest, most precious, most eternal and most delicate form of life? That He should pay no heed to its powerful prayer and supplications for eternity? It would be like equipping a single soldier with the utmost care and totally ignoring a vast and obedient army! Like seeing a speck and overlooking the sun! Like hearing the buzz of a fly and not hearing the roar of the thunder! No, a hundred thousand times no!

Again, can the intelligence at all accept that an All-Powerful and All-Wise Being, Whose mercy, love and solicitude are infinite, Who loves His own artistry, Who causes Himself to be loved, and Who greatly loves those that love Him — can it accept that such a Being would annihilate through permanent death a life that loves Him greatly, that is itself lovable and that instinctively worships its Maker; and, the essence and jewel of that life, the spirit? That He would offend and insult His lover and beloved for all eternity, that He would injure his feelings and deny Himself, and cause others to deny, the mystery of His mercy and the light of His love? No, a hundred thousand times no! An absolute beauty that adorns creation with its

manifestation and the absolute mercy that makes all creatures rejoice are without doubt exempt and purified from such infinite ugliness, such utter abomination and pitilessness.

The result, then, is that considering the existence of life, those men who understand the purpose of life and who do not misuse their lives will become manifestations of eternal life in the realm of eternity and eternal Paradise. In this we believe. So, too, the shining of brilliant objects found on the earth through the reflection of sunlight, the brief glinting on the surface of the ocean of little bubbles through flashes of light, and the coming in their place of further bubbles that like them hold up a mirror to a whole series of imaginary suns — this demonstrates tangibly that those flashes are the reflectory manifestation of the one supreme sun. With their manifold tongues, they make mention of that one sun and they point toward it with their luminous fingers.

So, too, the fashion in which, through the supreme manifestation of the Name ‘Giver of Life’ of the Living and Self-Subsistent Being, all the animate beings on the face of the earth and in the depths of the sea shine through God’s power, and then disappear behind the veil of the unseen, saying, “O Eternally Living One!”, in order to make room for those that follow them — this represents a series of testimonies to and indications of the life and necessary existence of the Living and Self-Subsistent Being.

Similarly, all the proofs that bear witness to the Divine knowledge the traces of which are visible in the ordering of all beings; all the evidences that establish the existence of a power working its will throughout creation; all the arguments that point to a volition and purposefulness dominating the ordering and administering of the cosmos; all the signs and miracles that attest the messengerhood of the prophets, the means of dominical speech and Divine revelation, and the indications bearing witness to the seven attributes of Divinity — all of them point to, testify to, and indicate unanimously the life of the Living and Self-Subsistent Being. For if the faculty of vision is present in a thing, there must also be life. If there is hearing, this too is a sign of life. If there is speech, this also points to the existence of life.

Similarly, attributes the existence of which is proven and self-evident by virtue of their traces throughout the cosmos, attributes such as Absolute power, all-embracing will, and comprehensive knowledge, bear witness with all of their proofs to the life and necessary existence of the Living and Self-Subsistent Being. They attest His everlasting life, one shadow of which is enough to illumine the whole of the cosmos, and one manifestation of which suffices to give life to the hereafter, together with all of its particles.

The Divine attribute of life is also connected with the pillar of belief in the angels, and proves it by way of indication. For the most important of all

goals of the cosmos is life, and animate beings constitute the most widespread form of creation, with its specimens multiplied on account of their value; they constantly animate the hospice of this world with the coming and going of their caravans. Further, the globe, which is filled with so many species of animate beings, is being constantly emptied and refilled as these various species are renewed and multiplied, and animate beings are created in multiplicity even in the vilest and most corrupt substances, so that there is—as it were—a constant resurrection of microbes. Finally, consciousness and intellect, which are the distilled essence of life, and the spirit, which is its subtle and stable substance, are also created everywhere on the globe in the utmost multiplicity, so that it is as if the globe were animated and caused to rejoice by life, intellect, consciousness and spirit. If we take into consideration all of the foregoing, it is totally impossible that the heavenly bodies, which are subtler, more luminous, greater and more significant than the globe, should be dead, rigid, lifeless, and dumb.

There must, then, exist and be provided with the property of life, conscious and animate beings that animate the skies, the suns, and the stars, bestow upon them their vitality, manifest the result of the purpose for the creation of the heavens, and receive address from the Glorious Creator. These creatures, of a nature suited to the heavens, are none other than the angels.

Similarly, the innermost essence of life symbolically proves the pillar of belief in the prophets. For the cosmos was created for the sake of life, and life is in turn one of the supreme manifestations of the Living, Self-Subsistent and Eternal One. It is one of His most perfect designs, one of His most beautiful arts. Further, the eternal life of God shows itself only through the sending of messengers and the revelation of books. If there were no books or prophets, then eternal life would remain unknown. When a man speaks, he is recognized to be alive. Similarly, it is the prophets and revealed books that make manifest the words and decrees of the Being Who, from behind the world of the unseen that is veiled by the cosmos, speaks, talks, and emits His commands and prohibitions. Just as the life existent in the cosmos bears decisive witness to the necessary existence of the Living and Eternal One, so too does it point to and indirectly confirm the pillars of belief in the sending of messengers and the revelation of scriptures, for these are the rays, the manifestations, and the relations of that eternal life. And especially the messengership of Muhammad—Peace and blessings be upon him—and the Qur’anic revelation, since they are like the very spirit and intellect of life, their veracity is as indisputable as the existence of this life.

Life is, then, the distilled essence of the cosmos; consciousness and feeling are the distilled essence of life; the intellect is the distilled essence of consciousness; and the spirit, finally, is the pure and unsullied substance, the

stable and autonomous essence, that lies at the heart of life. So, too, the life of the Prophet Muhammad —Peace and blessings be upon him— in both its outer and its inner aspects is the distilled quintessence of life and the spirit of the cosmos, and the messengership of Muhammad —Peace and blessings be upon him— is the pure and distilled essence of the feeling, the consciousness and the intellect of the cosmos. Rather, the life of the Prophet Muhammad —Peace and blessings be upon him— in its outer and inner aspects is, as the centuries have borne witness, the very essence of the life of the cosmos, and the prophethood of Muhammad —Peace and blessings be upon him— is the very light and essence of the consciousness of the cosmos. The Qur’anic revelation is also the spirit of the life of the cosmos and the intellect of its consciousness.

If the light of the messengership of Muhammad —Peace and blessings be upon him— were to depart from the cosmos and vanish, the cosmos would die. If the Qur’an were to depart, the cosmos would lose its sanity, and the globe would lose its sense and its head. Its dizzy, uncomprehending head would collide with a planet, and the end of the world would result.

Life also looks to the pillar of belief in Divine Determining, and proves it indirectly. Because, since life is the light of the Manifest World, and it dominates it, and is the result and aim of existence, and since it is the most comprehensive mirror of the Creator of the universe and the most perfect sample and index of dominical activity, and —let there be no mistake in the comparison— is like a sort of programme, for sure, the mystery of life necessitates that the creatures in the World of the Unseen, that is, the past and the future, that is, that have been and will come, are predisposed to conform to order, regularity, being known and observed, specific individual existence, and the creative commands, which are their lives in one respect.

The original seed of a tree and its root, as well as the seeds contained in its fruit and final outcome, all manifest a sort of life, no less than the tree itself; indeed, they bear within themselves laws of life more subtle than those of the tree. Similarly, the seeds and roots left by last autumn, before the present spring, as well as the seeds and roots that will be left to subsequent springs after this spring has departed — they all bear the manifestations of life, just like this spring, and are subject to the laws of life. In just the same way, all the branches and twigs of the cosmic tree each have a past and a future. They have a chain consisting of past and future stages and circumstances. The multiple existences and stages of each species and each member of each species, existing in Divine knowledge, forms a chain of being in God’s knowledge, and both its external existence, and its existence in God’s knowledge, is a manifestation of universal life that draws all the aspects of its life from these meaningful and vital Tablets of Divine Determining.

The fact that the World of Spirits—which is one form of the World of the Unseen—is full of the essence of life, the matter of life and the spirits, which are the substances and essence of life, demands and requires of a certainty that past and future—which are another form of the World of the Unseen and its second segment— should also receive the manifestation of life.

In addition, the perfect order, the meaningful circumstances and vital fruits and stages inherent in the existence of a thing within God's knowledge, also demonstrate the manifestation of a sort of life. Such a manifestation of life, which is the light emitted by the sun of eternal life, cannot be limited to this manifest world, this present time, this external existence. On the contrary, each world receives the manifestation of that light in accordance with its capacity, and the cosmos together with all its worlds is alive and illumined through it. Otherwise, as the misguided imagine, beneath a temporary and apparent life, each world would be a vast and terrible corpse, a dark ruin.

One broad aspect of the pillar of faith in Divine Determining and Decree is, then, understood through the mystery of life and is established by it. Just as the life and vitality of the Manifest World and existent, visible objects becomes apparent from their orderliness and the consequences of their existence, so too past and future creatures—regarded as belonging to the World of the Unseen— have an immaterial existence and sort of life, and a spiritual presence in God's knowledge. The trace of this life and presence is made manifest and known by means of the Tablet of Divine Determining and Decree and through all the stages and circumstances of their external lives and existences.

## Third Part of the Addendum

A question related to the resurrection of the dead:

The frequently repeated verse, *It will be naught but a single cry*,<sup>55</sup> and the verse, *The command of the Hour will be like the glance of the eye*,<sup>56</sup> show that the resurrection of the dead and Great Gathering will occur instantaneously, in a flash. But man's narrow reason requires some tangible example so that it can conceive of this wondrous, extraordinary, and unparalleled event, and accept it.

*The Answer*: At the resurrection there will be the return of spirits to their bodies, the revivification of the bodies, and the remaking of the bodies. It consists of three matters.

**THE FIRST MATTER:** An example for the return of spirits to their bodies is the mustering, at a loud bugle call, of the members of a well-disciplined army after they have dispersed to rest. Yes, the Sur of the Angel Israfil is no less powerful than an army bugle. The spirits, too, who, while in post-eternity, reply with "Yes, we accept" to the question "Am I not your Sustainer?",<sup>57</sup> which comes from pre-eternity, are infinitely more subjugated, disciplined, and obedient than the soldiers of an army. The Thirtieth Word has demonstrated with decisive proofs that not only spirits, but all particles, form a Divine army and are its soldiers under command.

**SECOND MATTER:** An example for the revivification of bodies is the springing to life in an instant of the hundred thousand electric lights of a large city on a festival night, switched on from one centre. It would be possible to light up in the same way a hundred million lamps scattered over the face of the earth from one centre. Since through the training and instruction in regularity and order it has received from its Creator, a creature of Almighty God like electricity—a servant and candleholder in His guest-house—possesses this quality, surely the resurrection of the dead could occur in the twinkling of an eye within the bounds of the regular laws of Divine wisdom which thousands of luminous servants represent, like electricity.

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<sup>55</sup> Qur'an, 36:29, 49, 53; 38:15; 54:31.

<sup>56</sup> Qur'an, 16:77.

<sup>57</sup> Qur'an, 7:172.

**THIRD MATTER:** An example for the remaking of bodies instantaneously is the perfect remaking within a few days of all the trees in the spring, which are far more numerous than all humanity, together with all their leaves, in exactly the same way as those of the previous spring; and the bringing into being, again like those of previous springs, all the blossoms, fruits and leaves of the trees with the speed of lightning; and the sudden awakening of the uncountable numbers of seeds, grains, and roots, which are the source of the spring, and their unfolding and being raised to life; and reflecting the meaning of “resurrection after death,” the sudden raising to life at a command of the upright skeleton-like corpses of the trees; and the reanimation of the innumerable members of all species of small animals; and the revivification of all the sorts of flying insects, particularly those which, continually cleaning their faces, eyes, and wings, remind us of our ablutions and cleanliness, and caress our faces—the resurrection and remaking of all the members of this tribe within a few days every spring before our very eyes together with all the other species, despite being greater in number than all mankind since the time of Adam, provides not one example of the remaking of all human bodies at the resurrection, but thousands.

Yes, since this world is the realm of wisdom and the hereafter the realm of power, numerous Divine Names like All-Wise, Arranger, Disposer, and Nurturer, and dominical wisdom, require that the creation of things in this world is gradual and in the course of time. In the hereafter, however, power and mercy will be manifested more than wisdom, and there being no need for matter, time, and waiting, things will be made instantaneously. Alluding to the fact that things which are made here in a day or in a year will be made in the hereafter in an instant or a flash, the Qur’an of Miraculous Exposition states:

*The command of the Hour will be like the glance of the eye, or briefer.*<sup>58</sup>

If you want to be as certain about the occurrence of the resurrection of the dead as you are about the arrival of next spring, study the Tenth and Twenty-Ninth Words carefully, which are about this, and you will see! If you do not then believe that it will occur as you believe the coming of spring, come and stick your finger in my eye!

**A FOURTH MATTER:** The death of the world and Doomsday. The sudden collision with this globe, our guest-house, at a dominical command, of a planet or comet, could wipe out this dwelling-place of ours. Like the destruction in a minute of a palace the building of which had taken ten years.

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<sup>58</sup> Qur’an, 16:77.

## Fourth Part of the Addendum

*He said: “Who shall give life to decaying bones?” Say: “He shall give them life who first gave them life, and He is All-Knowing concerning all creation.”<sup>59</sup>*

As was illustrated in the third comparison in the Ninth Truth of the Tenth Word, some personage may one day summon together before your eyes a great army. If someone were then to say, “that personage is able to call together the troops in his army, who had dispersed to take rest, and assemble them again in battalions,” and you were to say, “I don’t believe it,” you know well how lunatic would be your denial. So too, an All-Powerful and All-Knowing Being Who out of nothing recorded and put in place, with the command of, “*Be!*”, and it is, all the particles and subtle aspects of the bodies of all animals and other animate beings, as if they were an army with the utmost orderliness and wise equilibrium, and Who creates each century, or rather each spring, the hundreds of thousands of different species and groups of animate beings that populate the face of the earth, each like an army — such a Being can gather together, with one blow on the trump of Israfil, all the fundamental particles and original components that enjoy mutual acquaintance through joint submission to the order of the body that corresponds to a battalion. Were you to say, “how can this be?” or consider it unlikely, it would be idiotic lunacy.

It sometimes happens in the Qur’an that, in order to impress upon the heart the wondrous deeds He will perform in the hereafter and to prepare the mind for acceptance of them, God Almighty mentions the wondrous deeds He performs in this world as a kind of preparation. Alternatively, He may sometimes mention the wondrous deeds He will perform in the future and the hereafter in such a fashion that we are convinced of them by analogy with the similar deeds we observe in this world. One example is furnished by the verse,

*Has not man seen that We created him from a drop of sperm?  
And then he becomes an open disputer.<sup>60</sup>*

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<sup>59</sup> Qur’an, 36:78.

<sup>60</sup> Qur’an, 16:4.

and the remaining verses of the same sura. The All-Wise Qur'an thus proves the question of resurrection in seven or eight different forms.

It first directs man's attention to his own origins. It says "you see how you advanced from a drop of sperm to a drop of blood, from a drop of blood to a formless lump of flesh, and from a formless lump of flesh to human form. How, then, can you deny your second creation? It is just the same as the first, or even easier of accomplishment for God." God Almighty also refers to the great bounties He has bestowed on man with phrases such as:

*He Who made fire for you from the green tree*<sup>61</sup>

and says to man: "Will the Being Who thus bestowed bounty upon you leave you to your own devices, in such fashion that you enter the grave to sleep without rising again?" He also hints at the following: "You see how dead trees come to life and grow green again. Refusing to regard as a parallel the reanimation of your bones, that resemble dry wood, you dismiss the whole matter as improbable. Now is it at all possible that the One Who creates the heavens and earth should not be empowered over the life and death of man, the fruit of heaven and earth? Do you imagine that He would make fruitless and vain the tree of creation that He has moulded with wisdom in all its parts, by abandoning the supreme result of that tree?"

The Qur'an says further: "The Being That will restore you to life at resurrection is such that the whole cosmos is like an obedient soldier of His. It bows its head submissively whenever it hears the command,

*"Be!", and it is.*<sup>62</sup>

To create a spring is easier for Him than the creation of a flower. To create the whole of the animal realm is as easy for His power as creating a fly. None may belittlingly challenge His power by saying to Him:

*Who will give life to the bones?*<sup>63</sup>

Then, from the verse,

*Glory be to Him in Whose hand lies the sovereignty of all things,*<sup>64</sup>

we see that the index of all things is in His hand, the key to all things is in His possession; He rotates night and day, winter and summer, with as much ease as if He were turning the pages of a book. He is an All-Powerful, Glorious Being Who closes the door on this world and opens it on the hereafter as if they were two stations. This being the case, as the result of the mentioned evidences,

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<sup>61</sup> Qur'an, 36:80.

<sup>62</sup> Qur'an, 2:117.

<sup>63</sup> Qur'an, 36:78.

<sup>64</sup> Qur'an, 36:83.

*To Him you shall return,*<sup>65</sup>

that is, He will bring you back to life from your graves, take you to the plain of resurrection, and judge you in His majestic presence.

Now these verses prepare the mind and make ready the heart to accept the reality of resurrection, for they have demonstrated parallels to resurrection in worldly processes. Sometimes it also happens that He mentions the deeds He will perform in the hereafter in such a way as to draw attention to their worldly parallels, so that no room should be left for doubt and denial. Examples are the Suras introduced by these verses:

*When the sun is rolled up,*<sup>66</sup>

*When the heavens are torn asunder.*<sup>67</sup>

In these Suras, God Almighty mentions resurrection and the vast revolutions and dominical deeds that shall take place at that time, in such a fashion that man thinks of their worldly parallels that he has seen in autumn and spring, and then, with awe in his heart, easily accepts what the intellect would otherwise refuse. Even to indicate the general meaning of the three suras just mentioned would take very long. Let us, then, take simply one word as a specimen of the whole. With the words,

*When the pages are spread out,*<sup>68</sup>

God Almighty expresses the following: “Upon resurrection, everyone’s deeds will be revealed on a written page. This appears to be very strange, and totally beyond the reach of reason. But as the Sura indicates, just as the resurrection of the spring is a parallel to other matters, so too the ‘spreading out of pages’ has a very clear parallel. Every fruit-bearing tree, every flowering plant has its deeds, actions and functions. It performs a certain kind of worship, depending on the fashion in which it glorifies God through the manifestations of His Names. Now all of its deeds and the record of its life are inscribed in all the seeds that are to emerge next spring in another plot of soil. With the tongue of shape and form, the seeds make eloquent mention of the origins of those deeds, and spread out the page of deeds together with branch, twig, leaf, flower and fruit. He Who says: “*When the pages are spread out*” is the same Being That performs, before our eyes, these wise, preserving, nurturing and subtle acts.

Compare other matters with this by analogy, and deduce the truth if you have the capacity. Let us aid you with the following. The verse, *When the sun is folded up*, refers to a brilliant similitude and hints at its parallel:

**First:** God Almighty has cast aside the curtains of non-being, the ether

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<sup>65</sup> Qur’an, 10:56.

<sup>66</sup> Qur’an, 81:1.

<sup>67</sup> Qur’an, 82:1.

<sup>68</sup> Qur’an, 81:10.

and the heavens to bring forth from His treasury of mercy and show to the world a jewel-like lamp illumining the world — the sun. After closing the world, He will wrap that jewel again in His veils and remove it.

**Second:** The sun may be depicted as an official entrusted with the task of distributing the commodity of light over the globe, and causing it and darkness to succeed each other. Every evening the official is ordered to gather up the light. It may sometimes happen also that his trade may be slackened when he is hidden by the veil of a cloud. At other times it may be that the moon will also form a veil, and hinder his task. Now just as that official has his goods and ledgers gathered up for inspection, so too he will one day be relieved of his duties. Even if there be no cause for his dismissal, there are two dark spots on the sun—now small, but liable to grow—that one day will grow to the point that the sun will take back, by dominical command, the light it now wraps around the head of the earth, and wrap it around its own head. It will then be told: “Come, your task on earth is now complete. Go to Hell, and burn there those who have worshipped you and thus mocked with faithlessness an obedient servant like you.” With its own dark and scarred face, it will read out the decree, “*When the sun is rolled up.*”

## Fifth Part of the Addendum

The hundred and twenty-four thousand prophets,<sup>69</sup> who are according to explicit prophetic tradition the choice part of humanity, have unanimously and with one accord reported, partly on the basis of direct vision and partly on the basis of absolute certainty, that the hereafter exists and that all beings will be taken to the hereafter as the Creator has firmly promised.

Similarly, the one hundred and twenty-four million saints who confirm the reports of the prophets through unveiling and witnessing, give testimony to the existence of the hereafter in the form of certain knowledge, and also bear testimony to the existence of the hereafter. All the Names of the All-Wise Maker of the cosmos also necessitate the existence of an eternal realm through the manifestations they display in this world.

The existence of the hereafter is furthermore necessitated by the infinite eternal power, the unlimited and exact everlasting wisdom, that revives every spring the countless dead trees scattered all over the earth with the command of “*Be!*”, and it is, thus making of them manifestations of “resurrection after death,” and that resurrects three hundred thousand different species of the various groups of plant and nations of animals, as hundreds of thousands of specimens of the supreme resurrection.

The existence of the hereafter is also necessitated by an eternal mercy and permanent grace that sustains in wondrous and solicitous fashion all animate beings that stand in need of nurture, and that display each spring, in the briefest of periods, infinite different varieties of adornment and beauty. Finally, there is the self-evident proof and indication given by the intense, unshakeable, and permanent love of eternity, yearning for immortality and hope of permanence that are lodged in man, the most beloved creation of the Maker of the cosmos, and whose concern with all the beings in the cosmos is the greatest.

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<sup>69</sup> *Musnad*, v, 266; Tabrizi, *Mishkat al-Masabih*, iii, 122; Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzi, *Zad al-Ma’ad* (Tahqiq: al-Arnawut), i, 43-4.

All of the foregoing so firmly prove that after this transient world there will be an eternal world, a hereafter, a realm of felicity, that we are compelled to accept the existence of a hereafter as indisputably as we accept the existence of this world.<sup>70</sup>

One of the most important lessons taught us by the All-Wise Qur'an, is, then, belief in the hereafter. This belief is so firm and contains within itself so powerful a hope and a consolation that if a person be assailed by old age hundred thousandfold, the consolation derived from this belief will be fully enough. Saying, "Praise be to God for the perfection of belief," we old people should rejoice in old age.

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<sup>70</sup> It can be realized from this comparison how easy it is to make a positive affirmation and how difficult to make a denial and negation. If, for example, someone should say, "there exists somewhere on this earth a wondrous garden containing canned milk," and someone else should say, "there is not," the affirmer need only point to the place of that garden or show some of its fruits in order to prove his claim. The denier, by contrast, will have to inspect and display the whole world in order to justify his negation. So too the testimony of two veracious witnesses will be enough to establish the existence of Paradise, quite apart from the hundreds of thousands of traces, fruits and indications demonstrated by those who assert its existence. Those who deny it must examine, explore and sift the infinite cosmos and infinite time before they can prove their denial and demonstrate the non-existence of Paradise. So, o aged brothers of mine, understand how firm is belief in the hereafter.