

Philosophical Passages

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The Believer And The Infidel

A hermetic monk said to an older fellow monk, “We have come to this wilderness, my brother, to save ourselves from sin and evil. In these distant forests where there are no other human beings, we distract our bodies and our souls from temptation, but I still feel that sin is chasing me, and I believe that this mighty tree that stands above the valley is more innocent than me.”

Suddenly, a merchant from a distant country passed by. When he saw the two monks, he rushed to them and asked them about the existence of God.

The younger monk asked the merchant, “Is it true that you have not found God and do not know Him?”

The merchant answered, “Yes, it is true, my brother, for I was born in a tribe that worships the moon and glorifies the stars, but I have heard in some cities that God exists, and that is why I am here to find out more about Him.”

The older monk asked the merchant, “Did the holy books not reach you?”

The merchant replied, “No, Reverend Father. Even so, my people do not know how to read and write.”

As he painted a pale smile on his lips, the younger monk said, “I pity your people, strange man, and grieve for they are unbelievers, and they have not arrived at the truth that we have come to.”

The merchant left in sadness and walked through the thick forest.

The older monk said to the other, “I have just discovered why this tree that stands above the valley is more innocent than you.”

Two Women

The enemy soldiers entered a village after a long siege and took revenge on its inhabitants, killing many of them, burning houses and destroying crops. A group of them captured two women and threatened one of them with death if she would not accept humiliation and offer them her body obediently. When she refused, they opened fire and killed her.

The second woman feared for her life and accepted humiliation in the hopes of saving her life. Before the soldiers left, one of them shot her, and her corpse fell next to her sister's.

To this day, there are still two adjacent graves in that remote village; on one of them, it is written, “Here lies a woman who died of fear”, and on the other, it is written, “Here lives a woman who was born from bravery.”

The Crow

People in a village situated behind the mountains worshipped a black crow. They mummified it and made a shrine for it in the middle of the village. They visited and blessed it. The men prostrated and prayed to it to bestow them with abundance and fill their lands with grains, and the women begged it to have pity on them so that they would have children who resemble it in its beauty and majesty. The little boys asked of it that every day, they would have a holiday and not go to school.

An old priestess who practiced witchcraft and sorcery was appointed to guard the crow. One

night, the priestess fell ill and stayed home. She did not guard the embalmed crow. A strange man passed through the village, saw the black bird, and became disturbed by its appearance. He removed the crow and replaced it with a dove.

The next morning, the villagers went out. The first thing they did was go out to have a look at their crow. They were stunned when they did not find the black bird, but rather, they found the dove standing in its place and singing in a sweet voice. The villagers attacked the dove and caught it, plucked its feathers, cut it into pieces, and threw it into a deep well. They said to each other, “Justice has been served, and we have been freed from the evil that surrounds us. Now, we only have to look for our beloved crow or find any similar crow so that the light returns to our hearts, and the misfortune that this dove brought to our village will be wiped out as will this black day from our glorious history.”

The Sermon

A priest was preaching in the temple and said, “Those who were afflicted by calamity are children of heaven, and God has chosen to reward them in His heavenly Kingdom for their patience and suffering in life.”

There were two men in the crowd, one of whom was a thief, and the other a criminal who had just been released from prison. The thief said to the criminal, “Do you know, my brother, that the priest means us too?”

As his gaze of joy widened, the criminal replied, “Yes, I know, my friend. We also have a calamity because our eyes are blinded about

the truth, and our hearts are unable to understand the true meaning of good and righteousness... This kind of calamity warrants the Lord's pity and Him preparing for us a place in His Kingdom.”

The Sinner

A beautiful woman was selling her body on the sidewalk. She came to the same place every evening where men waited for her and asked her to offer them her sins.

On the same street, there was a luxurious home owned by a rich man. In that house lived a conservative woman. She rarely left her house, and if she did, it was only with her husband. When she would return home, she would close the door and stay inside.

One evening, the conservative woman opened the window of her home. When she saw the other woman, she said to her, “Many years

have passed, and you have not changed. I only look at you as a cheap commodity. Men interact with you to have fun, then they throw you away like a dead body, and they do not care about you or talk to you again, except to satisfy their needs.”

The woman in the street said, “O sister, forgive me for my bad behaviour, but if you knew how my destiny led me to this point of degradation, you would have pity on me, and you would not dare to blame me.”

The rich woman said, “Hunger and thirst are far better than having your body become a commodity in the market. Have you not heard the commandment that says, ‘Do not commit adultery?’”

The other woman sadly answered, “Yes, I have heard it, but I am also a victim. Whenever my body dies on a mattress, my soul also dies a thousand times... I tried many times to be a better woman, but I have failed.”

At that moment, a poor young man passed by on the street. He was barefooted, weak and agitated. When he saw the rich woman in the window, he asked her for a little food. She refused to help him, and she locked her window with a great deal of anger. The young man looked at the second woman but did not speak to her. He vowed to walk away, then she called him saying, “I have a few dinars that I have just received, and I wanted to buy some bread for my young children. I will give the money to you.”

While signs of wonder appeared on the young man’s pale face, he said to her, “How will you feed your children, O woman, if you put your money in my hands?”

The woman replied, “God will not leave me, and with His help, I will find a way to feed my children.”

While the woman took out her money to offer it to the young man, he gently smiled and said to her, “God Himself will take care of me too.

Return your money to your purse because you need it more than I do, but be sure, woman, that your sin has saved you.”

He said that before he disappeared into the darkness of the street.

A Woman Who Knows Me

I encountered a fortune-teller on a narrow and crowded street. When she saw me, she said to me, “After two steps, you will meet the light and walk with it to the sea. There, the light will leave you alone and go on its way, so do not shed a tear for its absence.”

I walked only two steps, and I saw the daylight. I walked with it until it disappeared.

The next day, I passed by that same woman, and she said, “After a few steps, you will meet the darkness, and you will walk with it for a long time until you tire.”

It was only a short distance walked when I met the night, which was limping in the city. When I got tired of it and it also got tired of me, it left me near the trunk of an ancient tree and went away.

On the third day, I went to that woman again to find out from her what I would see during my day. She said, “On that crossroad over there, you will stand between the daylight and the darkness. Neither will the day make you happy with its lights, nor will the night sadden you with its secrets. Hence, you will remain confused between sadness and joy as you are always confused between the good and evil within yourself.”

When I got to the crossroad, I saw the night and day fighting. I rushed to stand in between them and tried to prevent them from hurting each other. Each of them claimed to be the origin from which the other had emerged.

I have now become an old man, and I am still standing between the light and darkness. I

decided more than once to go back to the narrow street to marry that fortune-teller who told me the truth about myself, but some passersby told me that she had waited a long while for me as she also wanted to marry me. I was told that she moved to a faraway city where she married another man who resembles me. He refuses the darkness and embraces the light, instead of being stranded between them.

The Winter

Years after my birth, I began to wonder what my name was. I proclaimed that my name was unknown.

On that day, the winter passed in the city, so I went out and asked the winter, “Would you give me one of your names?”

The winter answered angrily, “I have only one name, and I do not want any other name, and if I give you my name, you will scare people, and you will have no friends.”

I asked the winter, “Why would I frighten people?”

He replied, “Do you get angry like me? Is there a storm in your soul like my storms that blow ferociously, uproot trees and strip the forests?”

I answered, “I have anger and a storm in my soul, so what more do I need?”

The winter said, “I am afraid that if I give you my name, you will become lonely. You know that people praise the other seasons and wish that they would be longer and that my days would be short. People hate me, shower me with curses, and whenever they see lightning, they run to their homes in terror and anxiety. When I lavish them with rain, their faces frown, and they carry umbrellas so that they do not get wet. That is why I feel that I am offending them instead of making them happy.”

For a little while, the winter stopped talking. I watched him with pity for the disappointment he felt, and when he realised that I was silent and had no response, he added, “If you like my name, take it. You will be the first human to

bear it.”

I cried with great joy, “Is it true that you will allow me to take your name, O winter?”

The winter answered me with furious thunder and a strong voice, “Take my name so you may bear some of the curses that have afflicted me throughout the years.”

The winter left me quickly, and since that moment, my name became “Winter”. The people of the city became afraid whenever I passed by and cursed me whenever I met them, and no one ever greeted me.

The Three Philosophers

Three philosophers met at a remote seaport after the ship of wisdom had ventured off into the roaring ocean.

The first philosopher said, “I am a philosopher of matter. I do not believe in God or the Day of Judgement, and I do not understand how people think the angels exist even though angels are unseen. My philosophy is based on the value of the material and the progress of science in discovering planets and dimensions.”

The second philosopher said, “I am a philosopher of spirituality. I deny matter and

prefer to live in caves and prairies. I ask people to refute science, wear coarse clothing, embrace religious books and live according to religious scriptures, for religion is the source of science.”

The third philosopher said, “I am a philosopher of both matter and spirituality, for matter and spirituality accept each other sometimes and contradict each other at other times... I believe in science and progress, and that the material is a means of improving people’s lives, but at the same time, I believe in spirituality, for matter and spirituality are like a flower and its fragrance or a lamp and its light.”

Suddenly, a pretty woman passed by. The first philosopher said, “I will follow her so that she may offer me her body.”

The second said, “I will follow her too so that she may offer me her soul, because her body is made of dust which does not mean anything to me.”

The third philosopher said, “As for me, I will seek her soul to adore her, and I will write on her body what my soul desires.”

Slavery

I went searching for myself so I could be set free from slavery. While I was on my way, I saw a man bound by his hands and feet. I rushed to loosen his handcuffs, and I freed him from torture.

After a one-day walk, I saw a woman slapping her face and shouting, “My husband persecuted me and burdened me with duties that the mountains could not carry. I wish someone would free me and grant me a new life.”

I pity that woman who offered to run away with me and marry me in a distant city.

My journey did not end with my marriage to that woman. I saw, one day on a high mountain, a young man stripped of his clothes and crucified. I was so sad to see him tormented and humiliated. I made a ladder of wood, and I went up to him and took him off the cross.

On that day, I said to myself, “I wish that this crucified man would be Jesus of Nazareth so that he may treat me the way Jesus treated the Penitent Thief.”

Many years have passed. I have met a great number of people who needed freedom. I no longer remember how many shackles I destroyed, how many women I married, and how many men I rescued off the cross. I have become an old man, and I feel sad because I could not free the god of myself.

The Candle

One day, I decided to do a good deed, so I carried a lit candle and walked at night in front of people so that they could see where they were going. They were happy to see the light shearing the veil of darkness.

When I held the illuminated candle during the day, people were surprised. They accused me of madness and said, “What a foolish man you are! Are you lighting our path during the day while the sun has bestowed upon us its beautiful rays which are brighter than your meagre candle?”

I answered, “It is wise to add the little that I

have to the lot that you have. The truth is, I tell you, if the sun sets now, the light of this candle will erase the darkness of the night in front of you.”

I still carry my candle and walk with people. At night, they thank me and appreciate my favour, and in the daylight, they insult and judge me, but my candle does not go out.

The Coloured Bird And The Owl

The coloured bird said to the owl, “Why do you, my brother, condone my beauty, and you know that I was born with the colours of the rainbow? Kings cannot wear dresses like my dress, and no one has ever sung like me. Poets have written great poems about my beauty.”

The owl said, “It is not important that people see you as beautiful, but the important thing is that you see beauty in yourself. My little brother, I see this beauty in myself, and therefore, I do not consider that you are better than me in any way. The female owls flock to me, and want to marry me, and don't pay any attention to you.”

While the coloured bird and owl were arguing, a hunter passed through the woods and aimed his rifle at the small bird who trembled and escaped in panic to hide among the rocks. The owl remained in his place with no fear, paying no attention to the hunter's rifle. He said to himself, "Blessed are the ugly people, for they are protected against an ugly destiny."

Amazing Time

What an amazing time when I see kings knocking on the doors of the poor! What an amazing time when some people believe that their money can make their glories! But glories cannot be made, and the sublime spirits can neither be sold nor bought.

A man who had just walked out of prison forgot to wash his hands. When some people greeted him with their polluted hands, he said to them with a smirk on his face, “O criminals! You forgot to wash your hands, and I got tainted by you.”

A woman was selling her body on the street. She saw an old woman with a wrinkled face

and slender legs carrying a heavy bag on her shoulder. The old woman almost fell from fatigue and her body almost touched the ground. The woman who was selling and buying laughed at the old woman and said to her, “Look at me, you frail and wretched woman. Look how beautiful my clothes are and how I adorn myself with jewels and perfume my body with the most expensive fragrances.”

The old woman said, without looking at her, “Look at this bag on my back. It is very heavy because I carry my freedom.”

The thorn said to a little flower, “I am higher than you, and I have hurt many people. As for you, you are despicable.”

The flower answered, “But I am more beautiful than you in colour. I also have the softest feel and the sweetest aroma.”

Soon after, a storm blew up. The flower and thorn were torn away together, but the

flower's fragrance remained immortalised in gold urns.

One man was talking proudly about his treasures, servants and palaces, and exaggerated about his exploits and what he had done in his life in order to attain his wealth. Another old man was sitting in the crowd, leaning on a stick and wearing a pair of black spectacles over his eyes. When he heard what the arrogant rich man said, he got up from his seat, albeit heavily, almost stumbling from his effort. He removed his glasses and spoke before the crowd with a trembling voice, "Do you remember me? I am the judge who sentenced you to thirty years in prison, for you took your brother's money and did not return it, and you borrowed a large sum of money from a bank then fled to another country... If you return the money to your brother at this moment, you will become poor and destitute, so why do you lie and show pride?"

I am astonished by ignorant people who consider themselves better than philosophers,

by the destitute who steal the loaves of the prophets, and by the bankrupt who claim to have made the sun and the seas.

I am amazed by someone whom I bow my head before out of a heart full of love, but who thinks that he is a huge mountain and I am a grain of dust. My modesty is what makes him feel proud. I now wish that I had not bowed my head before him so that he could know the truth about himself and remember his past before he utters a single word about his present!

The Unknown Woman

I was sitting at the door of my house with three bags made of swollen cloth. They looked worn out and tattered, for I would carry them on my back while walking through the cities.

I felt hungry and I had nothing to eat, so I took one of the bags to the market, and asked, “Who will buy my happiness?”

People were surprised, and one of them approached me. He was apparently rich, judging by his appearance and attire.

He asked me, “Are you really selling your happiness?”

I replied, “Yes. This is my happiness in the bag. Will you buy it?”

The rich man took out some gold and silver coins from his pocket and placed them in my hand. In return, I gave him the bag, and I returned to my home.

Many days passed and the rich man kept asking me every day if I had more happiness that he could buy, to the point where I grew weary of him.

A few days later, I felt hungry again. I took the second bag to the market and shouted, “Who will buy disinterest from me?”

People gathered around me. They were amazed by what I was offering, and one of them said, “Are you really selling disinterest?”

I said, “Yes, and it is one of my most precious possessions, so will you buy it?”

The man replied, “I know nothing about disinterest. There is nothing wrong with trying

it.”

The man paid the price for my disinterest and went on his way. But he always asked me if I had more disinterest, until I became upset with him.

In a few days, I was very hungry again, so I brought the third bag to the market and I called out, “Which of you, O people, will buy my sorrows?”

All the people crowded around me, turning their lips, for no one before me had ever sold their sorrows. None of them dared to ask me about my sorrows. Rather, they became antagonistic and retreated with anger.

I remained alone in the market until the sun almost set. A beautiful woman with black eyes and hair, and thin lips passed in front of me in the empty market. When she saw me alone with the bag, she approached me, and in a voice sweeter than that of cooing pigeons, she said, “Ye man wearing the grass of the earth, what are you selling?”

I replied, "I am selling my sorrows."

The woman said, "No one will buy any of your sorrows unless they love you."

I told her, "I do not want anyone to love me because I love my loneliness and it loves me back, and I am satisfied with it."

She said, "It seems that you are a poor and kind person, and I am the daughter of a rich minister. I will buy your sorrows. Are you happy?"

My heart was elated with joy when the woman took some of her money and put it in my hands, and I hurriedly gave her the bag. She bid me farewell and walked away in the evening.

Long days have passed, and I am still awaiting the return of that woman, wondering if she may require more sorrows from me. But I no longer see her face, and I do not know where the darkness took her.

The Defrauders

For a short period of time, I stayed with a group of people, and after three days with them, I saw the most horrible things. One of them took me to a nearby mountain where many men were crucified.

Whenever the wind blew, the dead bodies swayed as if they were seeking resurrection from death.

I asked the man about these poor victims. He told me that his people are hateful and cannot tolerate any person who thinks, writes, philosophises, or excels in any kind of science or arts. Hence, they punished every genius,

surgeon and scholar until the valleys became full of these crosses that carve the sky with continuous shrills.

The man continued, “There are now only a few people who reside in this town. They are satisfied with little knowledge and only work for basic sustenance.”

The man asked me about my life and profession. I had to lie and tell him that I was a simple farmer who only hoped to grow trees, reap fruits and live in subsistence.

He rejoiced and said to me, “You can stay with us for as long as you like, and we will consider you one of us. How just is equality, for no one has any merit over another, neither by his faith nor by his good deeds!”

The man left me and went along his way, and I remained quiet as I stared at the crucified bodies. My soul trembled before the atrocity and horror of the truth.

Suddenly, a group of my countrymen passed in the same place. They were traders who knew me. As soon as they saw me, they rushed to greet me and ask about what had happened to me and how I got to this area. I told them that my donkey had died of thirst during my long journey and that I had been lost in the desert until my destiny guided me to these people.

My countrymen told me, “We will sleep here tonight, and in the morning, we will continue our way to another town.”

That night, I could not sleep. I crept under the cover of darkness to flee, and I have not visited that town of defrauders since.

My Folly

I walked through a narrow street where there were many people. A man asked me, “Why do you wear beautiful attire when we wear torn clothes?”

I felt sorry for the man, so I gave him my clothes. Instead, I wore the grass of the fields and covered myself with inexpensive cloth.

Another man asked me, “Why are your words made of gold yet I cannot speak eloquently?”

I gave the man all my words and was left speechless. He went to his family to tell them about his knowledge and creativity.

A third man asked me, “Why are your thoughts brilliant yet my thoughts are completely arid?”

I uprooted my thoughts and donated them to him so that he would be able to spread his thoughts and preach to the crowd. Since then, my thoughts have become dull and useless.

A fourth gentleman said, “Since I have known you, I have tried to imitate you in every way, wanting to be like you, even by means of trickery and deceit, but I have failed, for you always create something new. I will not rest until I prove that I am better than you!”

I felt sad because this gentleman desired another man’s possessions, and he lied to obtain what others had achieved. I gave him my ambition and knowledge until I had nothing left to be proud of.

A year later, I walked through the same street, and I came across these four men. They were still wearing my clothes, adorning themselves

with my gold, and boasting with my thoughts and knowledge. When they saw me, they said in front of the crowd, “Look at this poor man. He spent many years of his life in struggle and hard work, but he still wears worn clothing, and he is indeed ignorant and foolish.”

Several years have passed, and I still give my clothes and ideas to other people, and whenever I open my treasure box, I find nothing but my folly.

Conscience

I asked a man who buys people's consciences with his money, "Do you know that what you do is an act of Satan's abomination?"

The man burst out a long laugh and said, "I am a small demon, and there is a bigger demon than me. He is the one who sells his conscience."

Return To God

An inventor used to go to work every morning after a long, sleepless night of inventing.

He was always studying and trying to discover new dimensions and prove new scientific theories to bring people closer to distant planets and to link the earth with the universe. He succeeded in designing the first manned spacecraft to be launched towards a remote planet.

The inventor put up a slogan on top of his desk which read: Go upward to discover just some of the truth about the Creator who knows you.

One day, the inventor was carrying a bag full of documents worth its weight in gold. As he crossed the street and headed towards the Space Research Institute, an old man intercepted him. The old man had disheveled hair and a grey beard. He was dressed in a robe that almost touched the ground.

The old man was shouting, “Go back to God! Go back to God!”

The inventor was in a hurry to reach the institution in which he worked, but he was curious to observe this elderly man who was saying only one sentence, “Go back to God! Go back to God!”

The inventor approached the man and examined him from head to toe. How surprised he was when the old man grabbed him by his tie, as if he wanted to pull it out, and kept saying, “Go back to God!”

The eyes of the old man were full of anger, and his long beard had a terrible stench. After a

little struggle, the inventor managed to escape from the old man's grip. After catching his breath, the inventor was able to say, "Did you lose your senses? We go to God every day, so why do you want us to go back to Him? If there is someone who does not know God and should return to Him, it is you."

A Homeless Bird

Birds have homes in many cities, but these homes are burdened with deprivation and locked with lost memories.

I am one of these birds who flee from house to house and from forest to forest. The rain knows me more than I know myself. The storms like the smell of my clothes, and the earth wears the grass that I am wearing.

Does any one of you know my place and address?

No. You only know my sorrows because my sorrows are me. They are my identity, a bird that does not know where to fly.

The Judge

The judge brushed through his beard with the fingers of his right hand as his weathered forehead dripped with sweat.

The temperature was high in the courthouse, and the cooling system had broken down on this sweltering day.

The judge was in a hurry to proceed with the rulings of the cases. Sitting in the courtyard and awaiting their turn were five litigants - a philosopher, a farmer, a veterinarian, a pharmacist and a postman.

The judge asked the litigants to stand up, and

asked, “Who is the plaintiff?”

They all yelled with one voice, “Me!”

The judge asked, “Then who is the defendant?”

They all shouted, “Me!”

The judge said, “Listen, men. We are not here to play, but to judge. Who will start talking?”

The philosopher raised his hand and said, “Since we are in the country of lies, honesty is a mortal sin, and those who lie take the lead in the councils...”

The judge interrupted with reprimand, “Are you giving us a lecture?”

The philosopher replied, “No, Sir. Rather, it is as you see. The one who assumes a false identity is the one who takes precedence over others, and the one who falsifies a position, a certificate or a position is the leader. In our society, the ignorant become teachers, the

naive are writers who publish books, and the uneducated claim to be engineers, lawyers or doctors.

The judge struck the table with his gavel and said in a riled tone, “Start from the end, Man!”

The philosopher said, “Okay. I bought a bull from this farmer who is standing by my side, and he assured me that it is a fine bull that can plow an entire field before midday. After I paid the full price for the bull and returned to my place with the animal, I discovered that it was instead a poor goat that cannot walk or plow my field.

The judge addressed the farmer, saying, “Is it true that you lied to this philosopher?”

The farmer said, “Truly, Your Honour, I gave him a bull, a bull that was large and strong like a mountain, but after this man took it to his house, the bull turned into a goat.”

The judge plucked at his mustache and irately

shouted, “Farmer, are you joking? How does a bull as strong as a mountain suddenly turn into a scabby goat?”

The farmer looked at the man standing next to him and said, “The one who is guilty is this veterinarian who prescribed for my bull a pill that made him get smaller and become a goat.”

The judge asked the vet, “Is it true that you prescribed a pill that made the bull smaller and weaker?”

The vet answered, “Yes, Your Honour, but I am not guilty, for this fourth man who stands beside me is a fraudulent pharmacist. I asked him to sell me a pill that would make the bull as strong as a horse, as fast as a deer, and as stubborn as an elephant, but he lied to me, and gave me a fake pill.”

The pharmacist then said, “Do not believe him, Your Honour. I am not responsible for this fiasco. The culprit is this postman. I paid him to deliver the drugs to my store, but he

stole some of them and replaced the others with counterfeit drugs made in India. Hence, the crisis began to emerge, and society faced the danger of collapse.”

At that point, the postman asked for permission to speak. He shouted with a great deal of frustration, “No, Your Honour. I am not responsible for the collapse of honesty and the fall of moral values, but rather this philosopher is the one who should be held accountable! In the past, I was honest and upright, but when I learned of the falsehood of people, I complained to the philosopher about my loss, and he advised me to act like others.”

The judge stood up as if he had been sitting on burning wood, and bellowed, “O sons of snakes! You have allowed deception to control your lives, and you have disrespected justice in broad daylight! You did not feel shame when you acted like proud peacocks. It is my duty to sentence you with no pity to set an example for others!”

At that moment, there was a loud noise in the courtroom. The Minister of Justice entered with several armed soldiers.

The Minister pointed to the judge saying, “Hurry up soldiers and arrest this deceiver! He was working on repairing kerosene burners, but when he realised that forgery and deception were common practice, he pretended to be a judge in the court.”

Hidden Truth

Truthfully, I tell you, those who strive to hide the virtues of others and distract attention from others' great deeds resemble a man who had a broken mirror and he needed to replace it, so he went to the market and asked a merchant about the best mirror in the shop.

The buyer paid two golden coins for the mirror and hid it under his long robe so others would not be able to see their faces in the mirror.

When he arrived home, he tried to hang his mirror on the wall. He was stunned when he looked in the mirror but could not see his own image.

No One Is God

No one can say, “I am God and God is me.” Instead, one can say, “God dwells within me, and because He loves me, He has allowed me to dwell in Him.” So, do not be afraid as he who loves does not fear whom he loves.

Go to your God just as a little boy goes to his father and be hopeful that God will accept you with a gentle smile and compassion.

But those who do not love God are farther from Him than the earth is from the sky.

The Seller And The Buyer

There once was a painter who was afflicted by starvation. He sold his paintings to another man, and the buyer displayed these paintings in elite exhibitions while claiming to be the original painter.

A poor woman who was living on the trackway heard the news about the two men. She felt pity for the real painter and said to herself, “A righteous and wise person once said, ‘The chaste woman starves but does not eat from the selling of her body.’”

The Shipmaker

A shipmaker was working at the harbour when a few men passed by and asked him, “Why do you tire yourself to make a ship when you know that many people do not like to sail to distant harbours?”

The shipmaker answered, “It is not that important for those people to sail. The most important thing is for the ship to sail because it is one with its destiny. Have you seen birds fly into forests that they do not love? Have you smelt the fragrance of the flowers filling the air but not reaching a certain place? Truly I tell you, the sea knows the sailors, and the sailors know that the sea is only a drop of water that

has grown day after day. The ship may not be able to reach the shore, but those who cry when they farewell the ship, cry for themselves.”

Searching For Barabbas

When I entered the temple, the priest had just begun his sermon, and I heard him saying that Barabbas had come to complete a mission and that he had no role in his release and in the crucifixion of Jesus.

I was angered by the priest's words. I stood up in protest and said, "You are wrong in your claims. Barabbas has been released for over two thousand years, but that does not mean he is innocent."

The priest was astonished by my intrusion as were the believers, and a clamour arose in the temple. No one had ever objected to what the priest spoke, for people believed that he had

read the holy books and understood the principles of religion.

The priest addressed me with a nervous tone, “You are a strange man, and you do not belong in this town. We have not seen you here before.”

I shook my head in agreement and replied, “Yes, I am a stranger. A long time ago, I was a judge in a court. I retired from my post. I do not feel remorse for all the rulings that I pronounced which led many to prison, but there is one thing that still troubles me, that is how Barabbas spared his life on that black day in the history of mankind. I came here looking for him so I could try him. I was told that he was with you.”

The members of the congregation looked at each other in awe and started to whisper. At that point, the priest raised his voice and said, “Yes, he is here, so ask these worshippers about him.”

I asked the man sitting next to me. He told me

that his name was Barabbas, and that all the men in the temple have the same name.

My face turned pale and I became agitated. I looked at the priest who was smiling a faint smile. He said, “Did you hear him clearly? All the men here bear the name Barabbas.”

I cried, “It is not possible! It is not possible! In all the cities that I have visited in my life, people have different names for distinction. How could it be that all parents in this area have chosen one name for all of their male children?”

Then, I understood that there was a conspiracy to hide Barabbas from facing the just ruling, and that the criminal’s trial would inevitably lead to the acquittal of the Man who is innocent, and this is what people do not want.

I left the temple in a rage while the believers mocked me. I was a few steps away from the door when I heard the priest laughing loudly, saying, “Watch out, Judge. Your name may also be Barabbas without your knowledge.”

You Are Every Storm

Change the thoughts of people who stick to the past and imprison themselves in nonsense. Every aspect can be changed. Can you walk on the same path every time? Does the ship carry you to the same port each time you want to travel?

Do not create chaos, but change the rules and make them more suitable for your life because not everything that your parents and grandparents decided is appropriate for your children, and the teachings that you have preserved and repeated cannot be useful forever.

Every new day has a new sun, and every day has a funeral.

What benefitted you in the past may become harmful to you as the wheel of time rotates, so get rid of the teachings that limit your ambition and revert you to dark caves, and refuse to abide by the laws that numb the mind and limit your creativity.

If someone asks you, “Why do you revolt?”, say, “The revolution was born with us, and it lives with us. If God wanted us to be objects, we would have been objects like these stones that do not speak and these mountains that do not move from their places, and they are nothing but a mass of boredom and weariness.”

Subordination to the ignorant is worse than ignorance itself, so expel those who preach darkness while the darkness is only in their hearts and thoughts. You have gone out of the darkness into the light, and you will not go back. There is a difference between a god who

enslaves you and a god who liberates you and makes you as pure as the perfume of the rose.

Look high above, even if you were born from the dirt. The eagles have no places on the earth, and they have no borders and addresses because their homelands are in the sky.

You are every storm that uproots the dry trees, every planet that shines, and every drop of ink that becomes a miracle. You, every man and woman who say to things, “Be and it shall be.”

A Bird Without Wings

I saw a group of people with white wings flying in the azure sky, and I was stunned by such a sight. They were Angels of Light. They fluttered calmly and talked to each other loudly like pigeons.

I looked around and could not find any person in the village. The houses were closed, and the streets were empty.

I said to myself, “If all the people are flying, why shouldn’t I? And why do I remain alone in this city, on the ground, unable to rise from the dirt?”

I called the people who were flying over and said, “O people... O angels... O saints... What happened to you? How did you get wings and why am I not able to fly like you do?”

No one answered me. They were in the vast space chattering in a language of sanctity that I am unfamiliar with.

I tried to fly, but found myself stuck in the mud, and I remembered them say, “You are from the dust and unto dust you shall return.” But these people in the sky are my friends and my family members, and others from my village are angels with bright wings like snow, yet I do not have wings.

I rushed to my house and took two large bags of fabric and a few long pieces of wood, wrapped the fabric around the wood, trying to make two wings for myself. I connected the wings to my skinny body, and I walked to the top of a hill, stood on it and breathed a sigh of relief, then I closed my eyes, and threw myself over the hill, but my wings that I made were

badly shattered. I fell into the valley, and my ribs were broken. I cried of pain and disappointment.

I looked again at the blue sky, and shouted once more, “O my family and people, would somebody descend to the ground to save me?”

They did not answer as they were in a different world.

On that day, I was unable to go up the hill, so I remained in the valley in pain as I pressed onto the deep wound on my side, while my wings were scattered and torn on the ground nearby.

As soon as the evening came, a stranger from another city passed by in the valley. He saw me bleeding and screaming in agony, and he hurried to rescue me. He was wondering what happened to me. I told him about the strangeness of that day, and how my village became empty of its inhabitants, leaving nobody behind apart from me, and how

everyone had white wings and turned into an angel.

After the man took a quick look at the sky, he smiled and said to me, “You are really amazed and feel bitter disappointment. But be sure, my brother, that these people who are above are human beings without sin. None of them had ever committed a crime, or lied, or falsely testified, or desired a woman, or killed another person, or worshipped a god other than God. You alone are the only sinner. That is why you could not catch up to them.

I replied defiantly, “You lie, strange man, for among these are men and women I know, who have committed all disobedience, have stolen the money of orphans, looted temples and raped innocent people, so how can I be the one who carries their sins?”

The stranger helped me ascend from the valley and accompanied me to my house. After leaving me and going along his way, I remained unaccompanied for a long time,

bemoaning my loneliness and solitude.

Since then, I decided to go to the temple every morning to pray, repent and light candles to purify my soul and my heart, and I became an angel just like the others.

City Of Equality

What is the difference between the words of philosophers that illuminate the world and the words of malice that spread darkness?

How do rusty lamps differ from the planets that shine eternally?

There is no difference between one value and another in a city that believes in equality. That is why the ignorant and hateful boast with pride, while the thinkers retreat with dignity.

How easy is the word that kills the one who utters it, and how difficult is the word that revives the one who pronounces it and

enlightens the souls of others!

Thinkers speak and rise with their knowledge,
and the ignorant speak loudly but fall with
their ignorance. How difficult is that moment
when the hollow reed seeks revenge from the
fruitful tree and when a bandit stomps a rose
that fills the atmosphere with beauty and
aromatic perfume!

And how cursed is the tribe that silences its
poets, favouring instead the squawking of
crows and owls!

Mother Nature Taught Me

When I spoke to the sea, it did not answer me because it was busy on its long journey from one shore to another.

When I spoke to the forest, I discovered that its silence is deeper than wisdom, and I understood that silence is a kind of worship.

When I spoke to the night, it told me that it knows everything, but it prefers stillness for it is the language of the soul.

And when I spoke to the rivulet, it pretended not to hear me, but I learnt that eternal music expresses feelings more than any language.

Music is the treasury of the sacraments, and it is more precious than the gold of kingdoms.

Since I befriended nature, I have become a quiet listener, and I have been talking to people through my silence.

Who Hears Me?

A hundred years have passed, and I have not come across anyone. When will I have an encounter with someone on a shore?

When will somebody discover me and take me to a museum? I am a museum of wax. I am a tribe. I scream in the wilderness. I am nobody.

Drowning

I drowned in a drop of water. The drop of water swallows me if it is big, and inside it are all the secrets of the depths. The drop of water is a mirror of secrets, so who will discover its sacraments? How poor I become when I claim to be strong, yet I am afraid that I will drown in a drop of water.

I Asked About The Time

Today, I drank several cups of my memories. The cello player wanted me to stay when the weary ones left. In front of me, on the table, was a pile of cigarettes, and a shivering lamp wrestled with the monotony of the place. I asked about time, and I found it to be as short as a dancer's skirt. The time was long, but not long enough for me to seek revenge on it.

The Body And The Sidewalk

What is a body made out of wood able to do without getting chipped? What does a dock do without getting bored? The body and the sidewalk are one. If you do not believe me, look at me when I wear the dust of the street.

The Thief

I gave my suitcase to the thief, and I said to him, “There is a lot of gold in this.”

The thief quickly grabbed my case and fled the place. He left his lighter on the bench. All I had wanted was a lighter in order set fire to reality.

My Book

One day, I lost my book, and there was only one woman at the port. I know that this woman was the one who had stolen and ran away with it. I have nothing in my book but her image.

The River

I had an appointment with the river, but I could not see any trace of water between two banks. I asked a blind man about the location of the river. The man was terrified of my voice. I then asked a woman about it. She said, “You are really strange. Do you see any river flowing in this area?”

I asked a child who was playing in the field. He politely replied, “I am sorry to have to say, O stranger, that the river has not yet come.”

I cried for the river because it was not truly there. I had never thought that the river would be lost before the day of its birth.

The Wind

The wind is a female. I saw her undress the trees and strike her chest with thunder. She knocked on doors with her long fingers and trampled on roofs with her angry feet. The wind is an old woman. She is furious because Autumn refused to marry her.

Descartes

Descartes probably did not mean me when he said, “I think, therefore I am”, for like any other thing, when I do not think, I am too.

Nothingness

The book is only a word but multiplied.

The sea is only a drop of water, but it gave birth to many little droplets. Everything expands, and every planet shines indefinitely.

One thing does not change, and one person was born and is still alive, and one candle which is melting near the wall is the non-existence that we call life.

Naked

I need the street to become a human, and I need shade to become a tree. God has created me and left me somewhere between reality and nonsense. I was born once while I was watching myself naked like the snow.

When I die after a while, I will be naked as well. We are not the children of life but are naked who get old and expand like the oceans that have no clothes but pure nudity.

Time

I approach autumn because it is a rainy spring,
and I talk to winter because it is a crying
summer.

The seasons are a woman who rejoices and
suffers, who wears her coloured clothes and
undresses.

Time is a magician who lies before our eyes.

The Driver

How often do I have to open this door to sit beside the driver?

How many times do I have to give him a name to be like me of clay and ashes?

How many times will I pay him to get to the end of the road?

And how often will I refer him to the addresses in order for him to know who I am, who you are, and who he is?

How many times will he turn back and get lost?

The addresses are not correct. I am not right. I am a tyrant.

If someone is looking for my address, I am on the sidewalk, fighting with the truth. My main concern is how to steal a precious moment from the hand of time.

Sinful

I am as quiet as a tree in the field. The breeze passes through me and my veins shiver. With silence, I arrange my temple and pray.

The priest of myself orders me with awe and says to me, “Close your eyes, for there are many sins that surround you.”

I argue with the priest because I do not like darkness, and because I believe that the image of a woman is more beautiful than the image of obscurity.

I tell the priest, “If I am a feather in the hand of fate, where can I flee? I am a broken wing. I

am a blind wound. I am a sinner without blame. My sins scare me, but I trample over my sins and conquer the humiliation of life.

The Planet Is Not A Sphere

How much suffering does this lamp need to endure to be extinguished?

How many galaxies does this dream need to have an end?

And how much blood do seasons need to change colours?

No one can answer me, and my confusion will continue to torture me.

I left the train of questions a long time ago to sit with drunkards and murmurers. And I discovered that the earth is not spinning. The

Earth is not a sphere, Galileo. I saw it with my naked eyes while arguing with the poor and peasants. I held it in my hand. It was rigid and cold as a woman murdered a few days prior. The earth is rectangular, rectangular, rectangular, but God is excellent in rounding the corners.

Socrates

Socrates teaches me to live in danger, but without fear.

He tells me, “Go back to yourself, to the original, and do not tell anyone that you know me. They will arrest you in the cities. They will accuse you of thinking. Ideas belong to powerful people, not to the naked ones.”

The ignorant have everything, and those who wear the clothes of knowledge are homeless. If you are not afraid of death, then you can say that the perfume has made the forest, the dry soil has created the field, and death is the one that has given birth to the song, but the blind

do not see the truth, and the lame do not know that the way exists.

Socrates added, “If they persecute you, give them a rose from the garden of your soul. If they open the door for you to flee to a faraway city, tell them, ‘Cities are nonsense. My city is my soul, and I will not leave it. I will follow it and it will follow me. It will sing with me, day and night, and the song will never end.’”

I sit with Socrates in the Garden of Light where the planets shine and the flowers are covered with the tears of words. The bench in the shadow is large enough for us. There, we will not refrain from speaking words, for our words are the real miracle, and our silence is more difficult than our death.

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