

## **Humanity is your Religion**

After I had spent forty years serving the temple and became old, I handed the temple over to the younger servant and advised him to treat the parish fairly. Then, I proceeded to the mountain located above the forest, where there was an older temple previously occupied by some monks. This temple became deserted and neglected, so I refurbished it with the help of some men and women who lived near the forest.

A few days later, some people started to visit my temple. I welcomed them gladly and prayed with them. I never asked anyone about their origin, but I knew that several visitors had come from distant villages.

Names and places do not mean anything to me, for there are many names that do not resemble their owners and moreover, there are many places that are too small to house their residents, so those residents break the boundaries and flee towards the unknown, and many fake masks might fall off when the storms howl.

The value of Man does not exist in his image, for images hang on the walls of time and might disperse, while Man's soul does not shatter. For this reason, people abandon their bodies but do not abandon their souls. However, belief in God is the meaning of that value, and everything vanishes with time except that belief. It is like the sun that keeps shining year after year.

One day, a visitor asked me, "What is your religion?"

I answered, "All religions become worthless when they become a means for discrimination among people."

Then I asked the man, “Do you discriminate?”

He replied, “No, I have never discriminated.”

I said, “We have the same religion, so you should not ask pointless questions.”

I then said to the man, “If I were in a desert, suffering from hunger and thirst, and you saw me from your tent collapsing on the scorching sand, would you not rush from your tent to save my life? Would you ask me about my ancestors and my tribe? Would you ask me if I worship God or a stone?”

The man pondered for a moment as he contemplated the picture that I depicted before his eyes. He said, “Yes O priest. I would have rushed from my tent, carrying bread and water to offer you. I would not have asked you about your origin, for your life is more important than anything else.”

I was happy to hear the visitor’s response, and I said to him, “God bless you, O courageous man. Humanity is your religion.”

On that day, I carved the last sentence I had uttered to the man on a stone and placed it above the door of the temple, so that all the visitors would be able to read it and contemplate its meaning. That sentence offers a testament to my knowledge and pure belief in one God who is the God of all humanity. Hence, no one can claim that God belongs only to them.

## **The Fruitful Tree**

You heard some people talking about the fruitful tree that some passers-by may stone. Do not believe everything they say, for some trees give you delicious fruit while some others give bitter fruit which people complain about and birds refuse to eat.

There are many trees in the field that are so tall but don't produce fruit, and small trees that are generous and give with abundance.

You may see, in your land, a small tree that gives kindly and another tree that produces a little, but the fruit of the one that gives a little are extremely delicious and expensive. You shall be happy and thankful to the tree that offers less, but do not feel angry toward the tree that gives you generously, for God gives through this tree.

You may plant a tree and wait many years to see it providing fruit, but you discover that it is fruitless. This is a miserly tree and should be uprooted by the farmer and thrown into the fire.

You may also plant a tree and take good care of it. During summer, you discover that this tree does not offer you fruit. You may neglect another tree, but it gives you plenty unexpectedly when harvesting season comes. So, thank God for His wisdom and learn that giving may come to you when you least expect it, because God looks at you and knows what you desire.

Meanwhile, the most terrible tree is the one that gives ripe fruit. You desire that fruit, and when you pick them, you find out that they are rotten from the inside. Those fruits are debased and aim to display their beauty while they are sickening and may transfer their disease to other fruits.

Do not believe those who say, “Look at us. We are fruitful trees. For this reason, people throw stones at us, for the one who walks into the field may stone a tree because he is hungry and looking for something to eat but that tree refuses to provide him with food.” It is not strange to stone a tree that does not give when asked and offers nothing to the hungry.

Some trees pretend, in front of the owner, that they are too dry and wilted for the passers-by to stone them. Do not believe these lying trees for they deceive the owner to avoid the axe that threatens their branches. How numerous are those who act like these cowardly trees! You hear them talking about their good deeds and triumphant lives, and complaining that other people oppress them. These people are the biggest liars whose achievements are far less than the achievements of an ant that crawls on the dust. They use their continuous complaints, and grumble as a means to attract others’ attention and to claim that they are the messengers of virtue and giving, while they are no more than a stagnant water spring that does not satisfy the thirsty.

I truly say to you that those who show the traces of stones on their bodies may have stoned many innocent people, but they want people to see with one eye and hear with one ear. How many times did you hear from some trees that humans have stoned them, while these trees give only thorns and weeds? They claim that they are victims to detract attention away from their failure and futility, and to promote their value after being grossly neglected.

Yes my beloved, do not be naïve and believe everything that people say to you. Instead, be wise and profound, carrying the lights of your hearts and minds, for what is apparent on the face does not always reflect what is in the soul. Do not let the liars take control of you and deceive you with false claims. Be like the farmer who knows his trees and his trees know him, and who distinguishes between trees that give delicious and precious fruit, and

the trees that give rotten and terrible fruit. The useless faces may wear misleading veils, but the sunlight will uncover the truth and these faces will appear unveiled on Judgement Day, when no tears will save and no false testimony will help.

The most wonderful tree is a tree which gives unknowingly and saves those who walk under its shade. The worst tree is the one that does not give but criticizes those who enjoy its shade and claims that they ate its fruit and did not thank it.

## **The Woodchoppers' Banquet**

I was walking along the river that flows in the middle of the forest. I saw a group of woodchoppers consuming their lunch under a tree. One of them was singing a wonderful song. I liked his voice, and I was happy for those men who suffered from tiredness yet still enjoyed themselves. A woodchopper saw me and rushed to greet me saying, "O reverend priest, you are welcome to our banquet which is full of goodness." I looked at the banquet to see only a rug covered with a little amount of bread loaves, some black olives and pieces of cheese which were made by the women from this area.

I was very happy to share with the woodchoppers their meal and I was still listening to the man who was singing. I sang with him until he stopped singing while other men were looking at me in amazement. One man said to me, "I am now very old and I have never seen in my life a priest singing happily like you."

I replied, "Singing is a kind of praying. Listen to how the trees sing, how the water springs give from their souls to the thirsty and sing for them, and to the birds who chirp on the branches. So their poems are a celestial music. Look at the waves' song to discover the secrets of the depths. A drop of water that splashes on the shore can tell you many stories that you do not know and science cannot discover about ancient times. Yes my son, singing that emerges from pure hearts and devoted souls is a creed of life."

The man said to me, "We do not sing because we are happy but because we are tired."

I answered, "Yes my son, singing when you are tired is the most wonderful

type of singing. There is a big difference between one who sings happily and one who sings sadly. The one who sings with happiness resembles the breeze that blows towards a flower to receive its fragrance. On the contrary, the sorrow of the one who sings with sadness does not allow his sadness to take from him the perfume of the thorns, and when you sing with tiredness, you overcome your weariness before it oppresses your bodies and destroys your souls, and you rise toward hope as the solid core rises from under the stones to embrace the light.”

The man who was singing said to me, “We are afraid to sing before the arrogant ones for our voices frighten them and shake their thrones.”

I replied, “It is true. Some people fear singing for their voices are ugly and they did not discover the secret of melody that transforms frost into warmth. The arrogant ones want you to stop singing, for when you sing you unveil the truth that they hide. I truly tell you that the distance between silence and words can be driven only by the inspired ones.”

I also said to the man, “Those arrogant ones are not but frail, for they tremble in front of the word, they flee reality and hide in the darkness of their souls. Your thoughts should resemble these strong trees that rise around us and your words should resemble the axes that you use to chop the dry branches, but do not hurt other people. Tell the truth like the whistling bird does and like the dawn whispers to the roses. Courage is what makes you different from the standing trunks which do not dare to walk as the time requires.”

Another man said, “Our ancestors taught us how to sing and we teach our children. Hence, a song may always be sung in the coming centuries.”

I said to them, “You are doing the right thing when you teach your children what you have learned from your ancestors, but you should remember the

names of those who have taught you, for we do not know who the creators of many wonderful songs are. Meanwhile, if your little ones want to create new melodies, do not stop them. Instead, congratulate them and believe that the new wine is no less delicious and expensive than the aged wine. You are not to stay in the darkness of the past, but you are to depart from your past to the unknown. Since you embrace adventure, you do not waste the instant that transports you to another era.”

These words were my last words to the woodchoppers. I farewelled them to walk on my way. I was still hearing their voices reverberate in the forest as the thunder does, or as the whispering that is much tougher than the storms resonates.



### **Who did this to you?**

Many people feel happy for they were good to you, and they continue their work when you feel that what they did for you has changed your life and made you happy. There is no complete work without its benefit, even when the ones who achieve that work are geniuses. Look at how the carpenter makes doors and windows to protect you from the storms and thunders. These products have no value if they are not useful to you. Also, look at the farmer and how he plants trees to provide you with food. You may believe that he works to benefit himself, but the truth is that nobody struggles for himself only. The loaf of bread that is given to your children is a humble gift provided to them by the baker to save them from hunger. For this reason, you shall thank the farmer for his generosity and kindness.

It is true that the dressmaker works for himself when he struggles in his boutique from dawn to sunset and makes you outfits to wear and attire for your celebrations. He strives to buy food for his wife and family, but he also serves you and helps you to cover your bodies, and without his help, you would make clothes out of tree leaves to hide your nudity from other people's eyes.

You did not strike a deal with the sailor to sail in the high seas and discover the treasures. He sails by himself, but when sailing his boat in the far oceans, he guides the boats of your dreams and takes you with him on the trip of giving, so you get rich from his abundance. So do the painters, poets, actors and musicians, for some of them are men and women who are unknown by you, and they may live in faraway countries. When they create, you share with them their happiness as you share with them the beauty that emerges from their minds and souls which seek eternity. Do not deny the kindness

of those artists as does an egoist who looks at a piece of pottery that he has bought from the market and says, "This pot is mine and no one can take it from me." The truth is that this pot is not his, but he has his own share of it, for the one who produced it did not say, "This is mine and no one can take it."

When you claim ownership, the passion of taking overwhelms you, and when you admit that the spring that you drink from and the flower that you smell are not yours, and the sun does not rise but to light up the paths of all humans, you become wise and fair.

Every time you struggle to complete your work, remember that you do not work for yourself but for those who love you and you love them, even when you do not know them. This feeling of love is the value of giving that has no limit.

The whole universe was not created before God wanted it to be created. The universe was an idea and the idea became a reality, so you could see what you are seeing now and you have your share in it. Do you really know that the Creator who created for you all that you love and desire was happy for you and not for Himself? He does not eat from the fields that he planted with fruitful trees. He does not drink from your rivers, nor does He require warmth from the stars that he hangs in the sky like eternal lanterns. The joy of God is great only when you feel happy and satisfied. Meanwhile, many of you take from His hand and do not feel happy, while others neglect His generosity and think that giving comes from them and not from Him.

How great was the philosopher who stunned humanity with his wonderful thoughts and the whole world was delighted by his achievements! The king called him, asked him about his wellbeing, offered to reward him and ordered the treasurer to give him a thousand dinars. The philosopher was surprised and said, "I did not achieve anything to deserve the reward and I do not

remember that I owned anything to give. There is the One who is greater and higher than me, the first philosopher who offered me his thoughts to flourish and enrich. How can I allow myself to claim something that does not belong to me?... Yes Your Majesty, I am only a tool in a hand, smaller than a bird who whistles in a field, less than the colour in a rose and more humble than a drop of water in the roaring ocean. God could create me as a crawling insect. I have seen in my life many big trees that do not bear fruit and many people who talk with pride about their achievements. I wish that they would say instead, 'Our thoughts are in fact, the thoughts of God that act in our bodies and souls...'”

Yes my beloved, the one who claims that the grain that he eats has come from his field, does not know the truth. How hard is it to have the truth in front of our eyes when we are not able to see it?

## **The Humble**

The humble bow their heads in front of reality, while the arrogant raise their foreheads as a sturdy oak tree does in front of the wind, but a tree cannot overpass the shining planets.

The humble say, “We are little stars with a little remaining light, and we give from that light”, but the arrogant say, “We are great suns, and without us the whole world falls into darkness.”

Look at the high trees. They don’t give perfume, yet the Jasmine plant which bows gives you its scent with generosity.

Some arrogant ones are happy with their haughtiness, for without it, they live and die ignored and neglected. On the other hand, the humble endure their modesty, for people refuse to recognize them. For this reason, the humble person resembles the faltering cottage that no one visits.

You may hear many people talking about themselves, what they achieved in their lives, their money and glory. Do not be surprised, because their love for themselves is a nature that cannot be changed, while the quietness of those who work silently is their pain but salvation.

Many prophets lived on earth and taught generations lessons of love, humbleness, tolerance and peace, but many people did not embrace knowledge. If the prophets had a chance to come back to our world, they would cry due to our neglect.

How ugly are those who pretend modesty while they are, in fact, haughty and proud. They roll their eyes to show their prayers and obedience, when they think that God sees them, and when darkness comes, they think that

obscurity prevents the eyes of God from seeing them, they return to their haughtiness, even when they are alone and isolated. Don't you see how some people are proud of their treasures and castles, and how the poor people thank God for the bread and water that He put on their tables? The rich people eat and get full and so do the poor people, but the losers are those who envy others' food.

Some people ask you to be humble, and exaggerate while talking in front of you about denying oneself, until you consider them as reformers and philosophers. Be cautious before you believe those liars who cover their faces with masks and wear soft clothes in order to hide the bleakness of their souls. They used to show their pride when they were strong, and since they felt their weakness and realized what you achieved with your hands and minds, they felt their hearts burning with jealousy and hatred, so they came to you pretending that they are prophets and read in front of you homilies and words of wisdom from their yellowish books. All that they require is to limit your ambition, tie your tongues, and freeze your brains in cans. Hence, they can control you and declare their superiority with their weak achievements. These fake preachers resemble an ill man who vowed to compete in a race, and when he realised that all the competitors beat him, he started wailing. When all the other athletes stopped running and returned to help him, he suddenly jumped and ran in front of them to the finish line. How numerous are those who pretend that they have the power to heal the sick, but they are themselves sick and frail.

Humbleness, O beloved ones, does not mean that you should admit your failure, surrender to vicious storms, and let others lie to you, so you put your lights down and allow dust to cover your lanterns. Humbleness does not mean defeat, success is not shame and self-importance is not an insult to you.

Go, my brothers to the villages and cities, wearing the clothes of meekness and wisdom. Spread out the fragrance of love. Let your words shine, but be precise and courageous. Work in your fields, threshing floors, workshops and outlets to enrich and get rich. Everything that emerges from your hands will be beautiful, but the most important beauty lies in your souls whose command is, "be", and it is. If someone asks, "Did you do this?", say, "Yes, God had made it for us and we gave it to you in order to make you happy."

Telling the truth is not haughtiness, but haughtiness is claiming what is not ours. Hence, do not act like the deceivers and do not speak like the arrogant, but let your words be brief, for reality does not exist in speeches that disperse into the air, but in the few words that your goodwill carves on the stones of eternity.

## **Fear**

You fear the unknown, for you do not know what is hidden for you, and you fear ghouls and ghosts in the bleak nights, yet they do not exist but in the stories that you have inherited from your ancestors. You would not fear darkness if the night is not very dark, and when someone walks in front of you carrying his lantern to light up your way, your heart becomes fearless. The lantern does not break the darkness only, but it breaks your fear. Hence, when the lantern enlightens your way, it enlightens your souls.

You fear many things for you lack courage, and courage is your knowledge that you will conquer what is stronger than you. When you have this knowledge, you walk into darkness as you walk into daylight.

Courage offers you a shield while cowardice leaves you nude in front of storms and thunders. Meanwhile, courage that comes from your belief in God is the greatest courage.

One day, a priest was praying in his temple. There was only an elderly woman in that temple. Suddenly, an earthquake occurred and the walls started to tremble. The priest abandoned his prayer and rushed outside to protect himself from harm, but the elderly woman stayed in the temple and continued her prayer. She did not fear the danger, for she knew that God who listens to her prayer will not leave her. The priest fled his prayer and died, not knowing that death may come from another way.

The strong rulers managed to utilize their followers' fear to oppress and intimidate them without facing any kind of opposition, but humanity has known many courageous individuals who had revolted against fear and distress. The voices of these spirited individuals still reverberate into the centuries. Those chosen rebels are the sturdy sailors who conquered the storms and waves. Hence, the lights of justice rose from behind the gloomy veils.

Many aggressive leaders will rule in the coming century. Stand firm in front of them like the high and sturdy mountains, and say the righteous words to them. When you see a person crying and suffering from oppression, help him to renew his life and rise again from his pain.

Some people fear what they have done to themselves. They lie, forge, hate, envy and ignore others' feelings. Yet, they enjoy what they have done. When the messenger of the ruler comes to their doorsteps and orders them to appear in court, they get scared. These deceivers resemble a woman who planted trees in her field and awaited the harvest season. Some of her relatives advised her to set a fence around the field because the foxes may attack during the night and destroy her trees, but the woman did not listen to her relatives until the foxes entered her land and ate her fruit. Then, she slapped her face in desperation.

You should not act like this woman, for you listen with your ears, minds and souls. You should set around your fields a fence of virtues. You will not fear the darkness, for it is in fact, light that fell asleep for a short time only. You will also not fear storms and thunders when you walk in the forests. Furthermore, the oppressors will be unable to mute your voices, for the words that you speak are your existence.

You resemble a soldier who decided to conquer his enemies or die as a martyr. Hence, his victory became an eternal glory. You also resemble a sailor who was struggling against the tempest in the middle of the ocean, but he vowed to continue his journey towards his goal, and when he reached the shore like a broken winged eagle, people received him with great joy and they glorified his courage in a statue they made for him. Yes my beloved brothers, the sea that you see is very large and many sailors are reluctant to wrestle with its huge waves, but the sea is, in reality, a large drop of water, and only a coward fears drowning in a drop of water.



## **A Man who Knows God**

A man visited the temple and said that he came from a faraway country where people do not resemble us. He also said that he knows God and God knows him.

Some of my followers were surprised by his words and felt insulted by his claim while others got angry, and expected me to refute his claim and ask him to leave the temple, but they were stunned when they saw me smiling at him, approaching him with kindness and asking him, “When did you know God and when did God know you, my son?”

He replied, “I don’t remember when I knew Him, for it was a long time ago. I was then a young man. Meanwhile, He knew me before I was born and He will know me after I die. He is now listening to what I am saying to you and looking at me standing before you. Are you disturbed by me and Him?”

I said to the man without thinking, while my followers were looking at each other, rolling their lips, “No. We are not disturbed by you, but some of these men do not understand your claim as I understand it. They believe that you lost your way.”

The man asked, “Did I lose my way?”

I replied, “You resemble many people who lived in the previous centuries and claimed that they knew God and God knew them. Hence, they became subjected to judgement and sentencing. Their bodies were hung on poles to be eaten by hungry birds. Some of them wanted to be God and this is impossible, for God was not born but Man was born. God will not die as Man dies. God does not commit sins but Man does, and God is the complete reality while Man is unable to reach this reality.”

The visitor asked me with a ray of hope shining in his eyes, “What will

happen if Man is able to live for millions of years? Would he be one with the Creator?"

I answered, "There is a big difference between being with God, having God in your heart and being in the heart of God, and being God. No matter how many years pass, Man cannot be good without being bad, and he cannot own the Tree of Knowledge to eat from its fruit when he needs to. This tree is forbidden to us, not because the owner is greedy and wants to keep it for Himself, but because there is a universal system that was imposed since the beginning of time, and God will not change this system for anyone's sake."

The man said, "The matter of faith is confusing. Many generations will perish before we reach a part of the truth."

I added, "You are right. We made this temple for all people and we do not blame anyone for their faith. God Himself did not come to us and order us to punish others for their belief. Truly I say to you, O stranger, in front of these men, when you do not steal, do not kill, do not humiliate, and when you tolerate and show purity of your heart and conscience, you please God, for He does not want more than that. On the other hand, people always want from each other as if God asked them to help Him in His work or speak on His behalf when He is absent, despite that God is not and will not be absent... Those beloved ignorant ones who are here think that you are a non-believer for you are different to them. You look like one who lost his way and landed on a tree which houses different types of birds. Your problem is not knowing God or not knowing Him, but knowing these men or not knowing them. Some humans want you to act like them without expressing any opinion or objection."

The stranger asked me, "Why don't you teach them? Are you not the priest of this temple?"

My face brightened and I addressed the man, "Who told you that I do not teach them? But they are slow learners, for they read books and do not read what God has written on their hearts with eternal ink. I advise you, my son,

not to say you know God, despite that He knows you, for you know only a little portion of Him. Many centuries will end and no one will be able to know God. You understand that God is strong because He gave you strength, generous because He offered you generosity, tolerant for He granted you tolerance, and wonderful because He provided you with the plain, the mountain, the valley and the river that hums while it flows towards the huge ocean. When you lose this character, you lose some of the divinity that is a part of you. This divinity exists in everyone, and we should search for it in our souls to discover it. Some people know God by their tongues. These are the deceivers. Some know Him by their hearts. These people are overwhelmed by His light. Some know Him by their eyes. These ones prefer to focus on pictures instead of focussing on the Creator who made these pictures to speak about Him. It is not a disgrace to lack knowledge about God, but it is a disgrace to refuse knowledge and not aim for it.”

The stranger received my words with great happiness. He looked at the men who surrounded me and said to them, “See? You look with your eyes but not your hearts.” Then he bowed and left the temple. I kept looking at his steps that drew little traces on the sand. After he vanished, I kindly addressed my followers, saying, “Yes my beloved. The man who went on his way can see what you cannot see, so do not judge him, and thank God for He does not judge you. The prophets were not able to see God by their eyes, but by their hearts which were overwhelmed by the celestial lights. Eyes are not the only means for seeing. That is why you shut your eyes when you sleep, and you visit faraway places in your dreams.”

## **The Story of the Woman, the Boy and the Water Spring**

Once upon a time, there was a long period of drought. The rivers dried up and the water springs disappeared.

In the forest, there was a little spring which offered its water to the woodchoppers, farmers and passers-by who travelled between cities. Suddenly, that little spring had no more water.

In front of the temple, there was a well for the storm water, but it became empty.

There was no source of water that I knew of in the whole forest. I asked the woodchoppers who were passing by the temple about other water springs. They said that the only spring they know of is that small spring that vanished until the last drop.

Some people arrived from a nearby city looking for water in the forest, but they returned with their empty jars.

One day, I was in the temple, dusting off an old book when a cold breeze blew through the little open window. I left the book and rushed towards the window to close it. I saw a boy who was about ten years old, walking slowly in the square, then bowing to the ground to draw circles with his fingers.

A few moments later, he looked at the sky and said a few words that I was unable to understand.

I was still standing by the window, observing this boy's manner. I was wondering how he came here alone to this isolated place. I assumed that he might be a farmer's son who lost his way in the forest until he found himself in the temple square.

As this thought crossed my mind, the boy was wandering in the square, calmly observing every stone on the temple walls and murmuring as if he was taken by the reverence of the place.

A moment later, a woman emerged into the square. She had a pleasant appearance, tall build and black hair. She was looking around in confusion, and I soon realized that she was looking for the boy. It was surprising, since that woman had not visited the place before. I had never seen her praying in the temple or celebrating with the celebrants.

When the boy saw the woman walking in the square, he said to her, “Here you are once again trying to disturb me. I have no time to listen to you and you do not respect my feelings, for you want me to desert my childhood and perform miracles in the cities and towns.”

After the boy finished his words, I saw a touch of sadness and sorrow on the woman’s face, as if teardrops appeared in her eyes. While she was parting a curl of her hair backward, she said to the little boy, “You always disappoint me and you don’t listen to me. I have to look for you everywhere only to not find you, and if I find you after a long time of searching, you treat me with bitterness and frustrate me.”

The boy was moved by his mother’s words. He said, “Forgive me, woman, for I do not always understand what you say, but I love you with all my heart and I appreciate what you do for people. Did you have one moment of rest? Do you ever sleep one night without worry and concern? Truly I say to you that those whom we love, my dear, do not love themselves. We plant for them and they receive from us without thanking us. They are our ignorant loved ones and if we become ignorant like them, they will fall into the abyss of nothingness.”

The mother replied, “Despite that, our destiny is to love and forgive, and without this great love that resembles the sea, life becomes meaningless. When you grow up, my son, you will understand clearly what I am saying to

you right now, and you will suffer dearly at the hands of those who betray the value of love.”

The boy became shaky and anxious, but his mother’s warm smile put him at ease.

She gently continued, “They are now thirsty, my son. Their children scream out in agony and their tiny bodies grow weaker because of the drought. Do you now understand why I am following you?”

The woman continued, “Your father is looking for you, and your siblings say that they have not seen you in many days.”

The woman walked slowly, dragging the hem of her long dress, and left the square. The boy looked at her with sympathy and followed her steps with his tired eyes.

On that day, the water spring near the temple emerged as did the springs in the nearby cities. The woodchoppers who worked in the forest asserted that they saw a little thirsty boy near the spring asking for water. Since then, the water did not dry up during summer and winter, and no one saw the boy and his mother in the area ever again.

## **Walking in the Storm**

I saw those who walked in the storm destroy everything around them.

They were riding the horses of the wind to reach far destinations, which were further than dream and conscience. They were happy, for the winter surrounded them, and thunders surprised them on the crossroads.

Those people are the believers, the magnificent and the immortal, who have the will to carve their names in the Book of Destiny.

The storm may uproot the trees and hide the sun behind the clouds, but it cannot kill the souls that emerge nude from its veils to assure the meaning of existence.

Do not leave your souls in captivity between the walls of death, and do not listen to the call of the past, for the past wants you to obey its rules, while these rules are nonsense.

The future that you have been told of is either strange to you or it settles in a faraway island that is closer than fantasy. Raise your white ship's sail and advance to your future over the high tide without any fear, for your bodies and souls are stronger than fear.

The cowardly and the hesitant do not progress. Do not be deceived when you see them walking before you and talking to you. On the other hand, the courageous and adventurous shall reach the boundless shiny planets.

Do not ask a man who his father and mother are, but ask him if he has the ability to build a bridge between himself and impossibility, and if he can carry fire in his hand to illuminate the world.

Do not tell your children tales about ghouls; this may scare them. Rather, tell them stories about the prophets, great people and discoverers, so your little ones can fill their hearts with the perfume of greatness. Carry the yellow books that teach laziness and defeat to the graves of nullity, and believe that the letter that does not roar loudly is useless, and the word that does not raise the value of humanity to the highest level is a frail word and does not deserve to be written.

How glorified are those who plant for you to provide you with food, prepare your drinks and make a plough to cultivate your lands! How great is the priest who enlightens your way and saves you from the false teachings that lock you up in darkness! How beautiful is the woman who raises her children with virtues in order to build up the city of love and peace, and how courageous is the child who flies his kite and sends it soaring in the wind to fly towards the unknown, while his heart and soul ascend with it! And when the kite thread breaks and the kite gets stuck in the trees, he goes to create another kite because he refuses to surrender to failure.

And how ugly are those who isolate themselves in the caves of defeat, who cry about their past and present, and do not believe that the earth moves forward and time does not stop! These people are satisfied with crumbs and drink from shallow swamps.

Your souls are the wings that you fly with, without leaving your bodies. Did you ever see the wings of a bird hit the ground? Receive what I say to you and never believe those who say that you shall be the sons and daughters of the soul. Do not believe those who teach you to conquer with your bodies, for as long as you live, you should acknowledge that the body and soul interact as music and poetry do. The Man can defeat darkness and limits with both his body and soul. These two elements interrelate in life, but the soul defeats the body after death. The body dies and the soul is immortal.



Truly I say to you that those who live in their bodies do not differ from the green trees that are beneficial because of their wood, and those who live in their souls resemble the core of the fruit. The soul does not proceed alone on its way, while the body does not succeed without the soul. So stand firm in your bodies and strong in your souls, and do not say that God has given you frail bodies and weak souls, but say that our will can raise the earth to the highest level.

Yes my beloved friends, when you walk in the storm as your ancestors did, do not let the wind disrobe you and leave you shivering like the naked trees, but rather, let the wind cry and wail in the barren paths, and let the coming generations and the history books talk about your victory over the darkness.

## **The Woman on the Shore**

The forest stretches for miles. On its border, the sea waves splash and sing a song that only the genies can understand. It was a pleasure for me to walk along the ocean's shore, observing God's glory and majesty being reflected in the secrets of nature.

One day, I was gazing at the white birds that hover above the rocks and span their wings on the horizon. I saw a woman sitting on the sand, looking into the distance and murmuring with a high voice.

At first, I thought she was speaking to someone, but I could not see anyone around her. I said to myself, "She might have lost someone to the sea and she is whispering to them."

I approached the woman. When she saw me, she stopped talking to herself and addressed me, saying, "Are you looking at me, O priest?"

I quickly responded, "No, my daughter, I was wandering along the shore and then I saw you. I do not mean to bother you."

She replied, "You are not bothering me. Your presence comforts and relieves me from loneliness. Time has slowly passed before their return. Father, do you see those who left us and found infinity?"

I was trying to understand the meaning of the woman's words. She did not give me a chance to answer, for she continued immediately, "Every wave that splashes onto the shore carries their voices and thoughts, which they held throughout their journey to a land which cannot be discovered save by the chosen ones. Every drop of water is a life which proceeds and travels before its last breath. Listen to the waves and pay attention to how they

speaking, babble and murmur. They enjoy reaching the shore despite having the knowledge that they will scatter and become nothing but foam.”

I said to the woman, “The waves never die. Since the beginning, they transmigrate back and forth like a hymn that reverberates limitlessly. When the waves die, the sea will be empty and become a rigid desert.”

The woman sighed deeply and said, “Every day, at a certain time, I visit this place and wait for the courageous sailors who had sailed to the islands of imagination in their boats. Centuries and centuries have passed and these adventurers are yet to show up, but I certainly know that they will return one day. My parents have grown irate, as my beliefs are different to theirs. Yesterday, I was mocked by my relatives for my naivety. My father exclaimed, ‘The waves do not feel and suffer, so why do you always talk to the sea?’ I cared little about my father’s opinion, and I told him that the misplaced souls which he is unable to see can feel and remember our love.”

The woman paused for a moment, before continuing her tale while I listened to her ardently. She said, “The boats may not return soon, and I do not expect to listen to the voices of the sailors singing on the port, but my heart cannot believe that one can sail in one direction without making his way back home. The wind itself does not meet death and inaction, since it moves in different directions.”

I asked the woman, “Have you lost some of your loved ones?”

She replied, “Yes, but crying will not change anything about reality, and sadness may further complicate existence. We grasp a little part of reality when we agree that death bears the flower and throws it at the mercy of destiny, but the destiny of autumn is to come to an end, and the destiny of the flower is to conquer, despite its frailty amidst the storm’s aggression. There is no beginning without an end and no end without a beginning. The

dying stars are granted light by the sun, and we are lightless stars preserving the ray of light that God has bestowed upon us. This light will shine in us even after death.”

I was stunned by the woman’s words and ideas. I said to myself, after I had walked away from her, “This woman is one of the greatest poets. I wish I could talk to her and receive her wisdom every time I walk on the shore.”

In the following days, I headed to the shore but could not find the woman. I acknowledged that the boats she was awaiting had emerged from the high seas and that the sailors had returned to their beloved after a long journey.

Verily I say, our bodies were born to disperse as the light of the lantern does. Meanwhile, our souls stay with us, even when we think that they vanish, and they speak to us about the revived morning and the eternity that opposes the curse of death.

## **God Loves You**

Love God who loves you, not God who frightens you.

Walk with your God in the light, and do not allow a blind god to guide you, for the abyss is not too far.

I truthfully say to you that you have many gods in you; some are for wrath, some for desire, some for virtues and some for love and peace. Let it be known that the gods who guide you towards evil are false gods that you have made up, while God who leads you towards good is the real God. This God will not get tired or die, and you won't suffer when you glorify this God who offers you safety.

Every time you see a god deserting you forever, do not follow him to the forests and prairies to get him back, for God who loves you does not desert you, but the god who has come to place obstacles in front of you, is the one who gets angry when you do not listen to him, then he leaves you, wailing and slapping his face as his temptations are in vain.

There is no God who oppresses you and no God that you oppress, so carry your God in your hearts and souls, and no authority or jurisdiction can take Him away from you. Meanwhile, do not defend your God when He is flouted by others. God does not need your help, for He speaks many languages, listens with many ears and sees with many eyes. Numerous are those who defend God in courts, but they have no ears to hear and no eyes to see.

Sometimes, you may seek your God and assume that He is absent. Do not ask yourselves, "Why is God absent?", but rather ask yourselves why you are absent from God? On the other hand, when you see your God close to you, rejoice and invite the singers to your homes. Truly I say to you that

God will not come to you unless you open your doors, dust off your tables and break your bread to give to the hungry and needy.

When you pray to God, He will listen to you, even when your voice is low, for the ones who do not speak loudly pray calmly as the valleys, fields and high trees do.

The words do not make you prayers, but prayers make the words that glorify you and make heaven joyful.

Many people pretend that they love God, but their God does not resemble them or speak to them. Conversely, God opens His doors to those who truly love Him to receive them happily and address them softly as the father addresses his children. But do not get upset when God does not open His doors to you. Come back to Him more often. The greatest sin, which is not mentioned in books, is saying, "God does not love us."

Some love God every day. They are the chosen ones. Some people love Him sometimes. They are the followers of their desires, and when they tire from their desires, they look for God who comforts them and forgives them. Some others do not love their God unless they need Him. Those are the deceivers who enter the market to sell their goods and ask God to sell with them. If God listens to them and makes them benefit from their trade, they would love Him. If God turns a deaf ear to their pleas, they would rebuke Him and say, "You are not one of us and we do not want you to be with us."

How hard, dear beloved, is it to ask God and to not receive from Him. But God is not in our image; rather, we are in His image. For this reason, He cannot be the way we wish and desire. Meanwhile, we cannot imagine a God who obeys our instructions, a God to whom we say "do" and He does.

As God does not hate, you also shall not hate.

Do not only grant love to others, but be the embodiment of love, walking on the earth, and making sweet wine for the thirsty. How sad are those who walk with you carrying ugliness in their hearts. God knows them as He knows you, even when they hide their faces behind masks. And when the villains, deceivers and oppressors say, “We are safe and no one can see us”, they become nude in front of reality, yet reality cannot be deluded by anyone.

## **The Young Flute Player**

Time has swiftly passed since I commanded the citizens of my former hometown to love and allow love to reside and grow in their homes and streets. I said to them, “I have no commandment now but to let the peace settle and grow in your homes and streets. If you see peace walking along your paths and under your trees, do not say to it, ‘You are a stranger. What has brought you here?’ Instead, salute peace, converse with it, stay up with it, and listen to every word it says.”

I also said, “Make peace, my brothers and sisters, and let it be peace that reigns for your children and grandchildren. Plant in every field a tree, light in every home a candle for peace, and raise your prayers to glorify the God of peace. If you hear the god of war calling you, rush to him naked and barefooted, and banish him. If he refuses to leave, wrestle him down, put his face in the dust and forbid him from speaking among you. In my remaining years, I will feel no greater joy than that which I feel knowing that the God of peace lives among you and shall never leave you.”

I later came to know that some of my followers who used to come to the temple, tried to carry through my commandment and travelled to the cities and villages to make peace, but they returned in disappointment and fatigue. They visited me in my new temple to tell me what had happened to them and listen to my advice. One of them said, “O master, we did what you had instructed us to do, we saw peace wandering in our streets and under our trees, and when we decided to greet it and invite it into our houses, it fled and said to us, ‘I do not know you, so why are you coming to me?’”

One of my followers also said, “I went to my field to plant a tree for peace, and after a while I found it barren with crows croaking on its branches. I felt



sad, and I asked myself, 'How can a tree that I took care of, planted in fertile soil and watered with pure water become barren?'"

Another woman said, "I also tried to light a candle for peace in my house, but every time I would ignite a matchstick, a strong wind would blow, breaking my window and extinguishing my candle."

After my three followers concluded their stories, I said to them, "God forgive you, O beloved ignorant ones. Do you differ from those who listen with their ears and look with their eyes but do not understand the deep meaning of the word?"

The three ignorant followers looked at each other as if they could not understand my wisdom which was too distant from their knowledge. In order to explain what I meant by my commandment, I continued, "I wish you could resemble that courageous young boy who managed to bring peace to his people."

They gasped with astonishment and asked me, "Who is that little boy?"

I replied, "He was a young man who lived in a distant country that was engaged in a war with another country. He was a farmer's son, and God gifted him with the talent of playing the flute. Every morning, he used to play music. Heaven and earth listened to him, and the trees knelt down to glorify God. But the young musician was terrified when hearing the sound of gun shots in the city, so he ran away to his house and hid in his mother's lap.

One night, after the war destroyed everything and killed many innocent people, the boy had a little idea. There was a small square that extended between the fighters. He took his flute and started playing music. He played day and night, in the summer and winter. The fighters were looking at him with discontent, but they were unable to exchange fire again. They waited

for the boy to leave the square to proceed with their battle, until they felt bored and their rifles became rusty. Some of the men approached him and asked him to leave the square, but he did not stop playing. The fighters were enjoying the soft music and were unable to resist the delight that overcame them. Some others came from the other side of the square and asked the boy, 'Are you not tired of playing music? Our firearms have become corroded, and we are waiting for you to leave this square.' He did not answer, but continued playing and circling around them, with great pleasure. Minutes later, they started to dance and embrace each other. They decided not to battle again. Some traders passed by the square, carrying their merchandise on horses and wagons. They also danced, as did some monks who were returning back from their temples.

The women who were working in the fields danced, and people rushed from every place to dance."

I told this story to my three followers. They were stunned and amazed. I said to them, "When you preach peace, do not tire, do not despair and do not say that the route is too long. Your journey toward peace will not be harder than the consequences and devastation of wars. The language of peace cannot be pronounced by your tongues but by your souls that desire victory. Be like that boy who made his music a melody of love; a celestial melody that wiped out the darkness, dismantled the rifles, and allowed the rose to conquer the winter."

## **Weakness and Strength**

Every time you stand next to your mirror, you ask it, “Are we strong or weak?”

You are strong when you stand firm in front of the storms, when you plant and harvest, and when you build up your houses sturdy enough to resist destructive winds.

You are strong when you endure, when you read and write, and when you have ambition to advance to the future.

You are strong when you speak the truth, when you do good deeds and when you are tolerant.

You are also weak, and your weakness appears in your sorrow, your suffering and in your bodies when you fall ill. It also appears when your anger leads you to do evil.

So why would someone say that you are strong and mighty?

Ask the ancient kings who ruled the cities and villages, oppressed their people and founded their houses on the bones of the innocent; ask them if they were truly powerful. Why did their thrones collapse? Why did the crow croak on their towers, and why did the great rulers become tales in history books?

Ask the sailors who sailed their boats to the high seas, about the treasures that they found in the distant islands, and what had happened to their boats and to the treasures they discovered.

Ask the high mountain how they become eroded by the wind and trembled

by earthquakes until it became pieces of rocks left in the valleys and on the cliffs.

Ask the oak tree that was once higher than the clouds, how the woodchopper's axe fell on it, to cut its trunk and branches, until nothing was left but pieces of wood for the winter.

You were born strong, and you cut the veil of nonexistence to embrace the light, but you were indeed weak when you cried after your birth. You were strong when you got married and had children, but you were weak when you got hungry and thirsty, when you asked your land to give you but you received only a little, and you became worried about the safety of your children.

You were strong when you discovered, and landed with your thoughts on the unknown planets, but you admitted your weakness when you assumed that the knowledge that you have achieved is no more than a drop of water in a large sea.

You were strong when you read the books of philosophers and understood what they have written, but when somebody asked you a simple question, you scratched your heads and became baffled with no answer. So where is your valour after you had claimed knowledge and greatness?

The ones who said to you that you are strong were looking at you with one eye, and they also wanted you to look at yourselves with one eye of illusion to believe that a fraction of your reality is the whole reality.

They said to you, "You were born complete, so why are you struggling to look for God who made you complete?"

They also said to you that what you are looking for in the unknown does not exist. Hence, existence starts with you and does not end elsewhere. If

you believe these false claims, reality would become worthless, and you would believe that God who has granted you strength and firmness is deception created by the centuries and inherited by generations. Those who said that existence is defined in you, are the deceivers who want you to look like a child wearing men's clothes to laugh at himself and make others laugh at him, and like a dry weed on a wall which pretends that it is a long rose, while it cannot resist the wind.

Do not hesitate to admit that you are weak as you are proud of your power. I truly say to you that the one who disguises himself to avoid being seen by the truth is misleading himself before misleading the truth. On the other hand, the one who has the courage to accept his reality is the magnificent one who was smelted by the fire of knowledge and became a new human.

Yes, you are weak in many aspects, and you will not be strong without weakness until you reach the complete truth, and there is no complete truth but the truth of God. Moreover, you are not able to know God, even if you have the chance to reincarnate many times and become greater than the conquerors. So, reject the false teachings and do not act like the enemies of God, for by Him only you exist. He has given you from His power to defeat your weakness.

## **The Poor Rich man**

Two brothers travelled from a distant city to visit me in the temple. One of them said to me that he was very sad for he spent his life earning money. Ever since he was a little boy, he had to help his father in his work, and when he became older, he established his own trade. He had to wake up early every day to chase the dinar. He also told me that he used to hide the dinar under his pillow, so every morning, he held it in his hands, raised it before his eyes and said to it, "O my master dinar, I have offered you my life and my youth. Do not disappoint me and flee from me, but rather, be my friend and enter my kingdom with dignity and pride. With me, you will find a safe refuge and warmth that you will not be able to find elsewhere."

The man added that he is utterly regretful, for he exhausted the years chasing after riches. Hence, he was not able to discover that he has a priceless soul.

The second man said to me that, since his childhood, he did not like money or richness. He left his parents and settled in an isolated cottage. There, he had to eat dry bread and drink only water. Despite his poverty, he did not work, he had no ambition, but he was satisfied with crumbs.

Moreover, he said that he now feels miserable and regretful, for he wasted years and years until he became old and never experienced anything but meagreness and need.

I said to the two brothers, "You are both wrong, and if you are here to grieve and protest, I have heard from you what annoyed me, but if you want to change your life, it is so simple."

The two men became blessed. They looked at me hopefully and asked me, "How can we change our life?"

I said, “The rich man who abandoned his soul and embraced materialism, may give his poor brother some of his wealth, in order to recover his lost soul. Meanwhile, the poor man may become rich.”

The wealthy brother said, “I read in books that the Greatest Master had asked a rich man to offer his wealth to the poor, but the man was sad for he was not willing to give his fortune to other people. I will not act like him, but I will respect your advice and give my brother a great portion of my money.”

He then put his hand in a sack he was carrying, took a large quantity of gold and silver to give his brother, who was stunned and unable to believe what he was seeing.

The poor brother, who suddenly became rich, said to his brother, “Thank you so much. I will rush to the market to buy new clothes, and I will build a house on the ruins of my cottage.”

The rich brother looked at me with concern and hope, and said, “What about me? How will I be changed?”

I quickly replied, “Your brother who became rich will change his appearance, for material is only nutshells, but his soul will suffer only when he adores the material and decides to abandon his essence. On the other hand, you will not change your appearance because the soul is essential and does not appear clearly before eyes. When you feel happiness, satisfaction, love and goodness, you will be changed from the inside. Are you happy for you have saved your brother from his poverty, or unhappy because the richness of your brother was a great loss to you?”

He replied promptly, as if his words were quicker than his thoughts, “There is no happiness greater than my happiness after I made my brother rich. The gold and silver that I have provided are only a portion of my wealth. If

I have the chance to live long years, I would not be able to spend all the treasures and money that I have. Yes, O Reverend Father, I understand your philosophy. The material does not mean a lot, but when combined with the soul, they make the value of richness. I am now rich and my brother is also rich.”

I was silent, looking at the poor brother who was leaving to go to the market. The rich brother was still talking to me with a great deal of wisdom, like a philosopher who was reborn from his experience. I was very happy because his thoughts emerged from his new beliefs. He acknowledged that the material and soul interrelate, and a human achieves his significance by their interrelation.



## **The Nature of Anarchy**

When you walk in the far cities and suburbs, do not approach anarchy, for it destroys and does not build. You will see people who call for revolt against the past and its traditions, while their hearts are full of languidness. These people are the deceivers who exploit others to do evil. They harvest without planting and eat without struggling, and simple people believe them and become their servants. You should think and observe deeply to avoid falling into temptation.

You will hear some thinkers preaching in crowded squares and asking people to abandon all that they inherited from the past and to enter a new era of illumination. These thinkers delude you, for the light could emerge from the past and present together, and many virtues that you know are better and more valuable than the virtues that you do not know. Hence, you should not disobey the rules in order to achieve anarchy. Truly I say to you that anarchists want you to desert your fields, houses, families and children to chase the unknown which might be nonsense.

In the past centuries, several philosophers called to revolt against the traditional customs, religions and principles. What happened? All the corrupted teachings vanished like a grain of sand in the wind, and nothing was left of those teachings except traces in the books. You should read, study and compare what is right and what is wrong.

A group of philosophers also called to destroying statues, temples and castles. Have you ever seen people carrying their hammers to attack the cities, dismantle civilizations and displace innocent citizens? Do you consider those anarchists as reformers? Did someone manage to write for us a new language to replace the old languages that we use?

Socrates attempted to spread anarchy in Athens. Despite his greatness and honour, he failed, and the great teacher became a subject of satire in Aristophanes' play, "The Clouds". I truthfully say to you that Socrates was one of the pioneers who taught me, and his elite thoughts and teachings deserve my respect, but the philosopher makes mistakes just like any other human being, and no one is free from wrongdoing. As Socrates did, many other philosophers also did, as if they believed the proverb that says, 'Dissent and you will be known'. Hence, their thoughts were shiny from the outside and rigid from the inside. If people applied their teachings and followed their steps, nation would have been raised against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and brother would have hated his brother. Those doctrines that may surprise you resemble the fruit which is ripe on the tree, but when you want to taste it, you find out that it is sour and rotten from the inside.

Some thinkers aimed for destruction, inspired by Jesus of Nazareth who once said, "Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division." But the speech of the Greatest Teacher should not be understood in general, but you should reflect on it and contemplate its deep meaning. The division which is meant by Jesus is between the believer and non-believer, between the person who follows the truth and the person who denies it. So, try to understand and never receive the words through your ears, but rather, receive them with your hearts that do not analyse and examine wrongly.

You are going to make peace between people, and establish love, truthfulness, justice and tolerance. Do not discriminate between kings and servants, between races and religions. Do not differentiate between the father and his son or between two friends. When you visit a kingdom, respect its rules and obey its regulations. The revolution for itself is nonsense, but the revolution for justice, goodness and righteousness is a revolution that will be glorified by the nations and well-received by future generations.

You have learned to wear your new clothes to celebrate. So, do not throw those clothes out of your bodies to become nude and make others disrespect you. You have learned to get married, have children, struggle in your fields and workshops. Do not desert your work to embrace unemployment, for unemployment is the mother of famine. You have also learned to chant in your festivals and light candles. Do not abandon your singing and your candles in order to show that you love freedom, for freedom is not unlimited. It resembles a flowing river, but when the river flows above its banks, it becomes deadly and destructive.

This is my recommendation to you, my followers, and I want you to keep what I am saying to you in your minds, to avoid losing your way and deceiving others. Deception emerges from negligence, and despite that, many negligent persons pretend that they are the most dedicated and devoted people.

## **Your Word**

The word was in the beginning of time and will not vanish, and those who do not believe the word will not enjoy its richness. Let your word knock on every door instead of knocking on the door with your hands, for some words can break through the doors and pervade history like a storm that denudes everything in order to create a new world which is different from the world of silence and idleness.

There are no obstacles between you and the truth that you advance towards, knowing that you cannot reach the depth of the full truth, and during your trip between your past and your future, you may see some people who enslave the truth and make it a servant for their deeds. Others may be enslaved by the word.

You shall not be slaves, rather, you shall bask in your freedom. Hence, do not humiliate your words in front of other people to save yourselves from being humiliated, for your words are the mirrors of your faces.

Those who pour the essence of the words into your cups to make you drink and enjoy are the poets, the philosophers, the painters and the sculptors who depict the words in colours created by their imagination, and by the words they fly to their immortality with wings which are softer than the breezes.

How weak is the artist who fails to overcome the barriers between his past and future, and how great is the artist who can destroy these barriers and conquer time!

The true word is only known by its light, and light is only known by the word.

Your thoughts shine like the planets, your writings radiate like the

constellations, and your ideas are your boats that carry you to distant land, where you build your new homes, plant your new fields, and eat from their harvests.

Your black ink shines, and the ink that does not shine dies before its birth and chokes because of its suffering.

The word that is not soft like the spring, free like the wind and electrifying like the lightning, is no better than the dry weed on a wall. Do not be like this weed that lives while it is dying, and screams while it has no voice.

Many trees raise their branches towards the sky and say nothing. The most wonderful trees are the ones that raise their branches to pray to God, and every time they pray, they offer you delicious fruit and shade to protect you from sunburn.

Some people mumble on the doors of the temples, but their hearts do not pray. Those people do not listen to their words and no one listens to them. How magnificent are those who pray silently and deeply! Their words will be written on the doors of eternity.

You may see some people who fear your words, for they do not have the means to reach your elite thoughts. They ambush you in isolated places, and provoke the demons who follow their sinful spirits to abuse you. Whenever they hear somebody speaking about your great achievements, they send to him one of their servants to punish him for he had spoken the truth. You may also sing with celestial voices, but they chase you and dismiss you, and on the next day, they reward the crows for their ugly voices. You should know that these people who falsify the truth resemble a thief who disguises his face in order to hide his ugly nature and disappear in darkness. I truly say to you that the ugly voices are doomed to oblivion, and the soft and tender voices will reverberate in the deep valleys and live forever.

The words of the weak are only praised by the weak. Did you ever see the

deceiver respect the honest?

The great kings do not need anyone to glorify their words, while the inferior always need someone to exalt them, in order to hide their weakness behind untrue admiration.

Whenever you offer others gold from your mouths and perfume from your lips, you will see many people who ignore you and disregard your effort. These are the envious and malicious who bury their faces under the sand and think that their negligence will minimize your value.

Some may lie about you. Do not be concerned, for the truth speaks for itself, and those deceivers do not abuse the truth but humiliate themselves. Uglier than the deceivers are those who abuse and defame; they throw their words in garbage cans, for they know where their words should be. Hence, do not be surprised when the ignoble say bad things, but be surprised when the philosopher diminishes himself to the low level of the abject.

The unsuccessful man speaks more than the others. For this reason, you hear him in every place mumbling nonsense, while the successful man uses fewer words which are larger than the sea and deeper than the stars. Do not listen to the one who speaks a lot, for his words are only foam, and do not let anyone mislead you with their wordiness.

How numerous are the letters that die before their birth, and how great are the fewer words that become jewels in the coffer of infinity!

From your words I know you, and from your words you are born. If your words are not your pictures, throw them into darkness, for you shall not live with sombreness, but with the sunlight that you are seeking since you embraced life.

## **The Big Scholar and the Small Scholar**

Glorify the light that shines on your way, and praise the dark night, for it carries you to your dreams in far places where you meet unknown people.

Greet the sea that offers you from its banquet and moves your sails to the islands of imagination. And when the ocean gets frustrated, do not be afraid, but wait until it becomes calm. As you feel happy or sad, the ocean too feels the same way, but do not curse the meagre rivulet because it gives a little. The rivulet has taken and given a little as the sea has taken and given plenty.

Whenever you see the farmers gathering their harvests on the threshing floors, celebrate with them, for the harvest is monumental. Praise the one who does beneficial things for humanity. Do not say, "This invention does not benefit us", for there are many things that you may consider to be useless, which are in fact, useful to others. The buyer who walks in the market does not buy everything he sees, but only that which he needs. And so, the seller must not be angry with those who do not buy from him. If he does, he will end up living his entire life in poverty.

I faithfully say to you that every person who strives to reach a goal is an inventor. The little child who draws his dreams on a paper, the woman who makes garments for you to wear, and the baker who gives you bread to eat do not have any less knowledge than the scientists who provide you with inventions and ideals. How ignorant are those who curse and degrade knowledge and think that the inventions of humanity were made by the devil! You will see the ignorant spreading their cluelessness in every place and preaching their wrong ideologies in public while asking others to wear animal skin, ride camels and reside in the far prairies as their ancestors did.

Let me say to you in truth that these preachers resemble a group of men who lived in a city where there was a great chemist. This chemist was making medicine to save his people from sickness and epidemics. He was a poor man living among the rich. He had no concern regarding his clothes, food and drink, but he spent the long nights thinking about his work.

His happiness was great when he discovered a cure for a deadly illness, but an evil man provoked a group of his followers against the miserable chemist and accused him of practicing magic. They ambushed his house and burnt it to the ground. The chemist was forced to flee in order to save his life, and after a while, the epidemic spread throughout the whole city. Many lost their lives, but the chemist could not be found to help the sick.

Do not act like the foolish who misjudge. If you believe in God, you should also believe that He is an innovator, scientist and painter who created the world with His imagination and depicted it with His colours. From His eternal melody, he offered the birds, running rivers and the waves that mumble while proceeding towards the shore. Because God does not want anything for Himself only, He has granted you from His imagination, knowledge and art so that you may create in your world. So, do not let your day resemble your past and do not let your future wear the outfits of today.

Have you heard people saying to the farmers, “Go back home, for your lands do not require your efforts and your plants will grow on their own”?

When you accept the advice of those who tell you not to work, you subject your children to starvation, and you will bear the responsibility for the disasters they may face in the times ahead.

Some may advise you not to use cars and not to discover new planets or approach airplanes. So how will you move from one place to another? How will you travel with your ambitions, and how will you visit your relatives in



distant lands? I truly say to you, if the prophets come to us again, they will act like us, and if the Son of Man had to descend once again to our world, He would not enter Jerusalem on a donkey.

Look at the people who refuse to progress and to follow their ambitions. See how they isolate themselves in the cells of ignorance. Humans always walk backward, but they do not abide by the rules of time. For this reason, they celebrate and light the candles of joy every year. If humans were able to accept defeat, they would cancel their celebrations and mourn over the years that have passed.

You are little creators in God's own image, so make your lives rich as the fields that are abundant in fruit, like the rivers that offer their water to the thirsty, and like the limitless sea of dreams. Be like the wind that always swirls through the valleys, like the waves that proceed to the distant shores in spite of knowing they will disperse and merely become foam, like the clouds that gather in the sky to overwhelm the fields with their generosity and fill the wells with pure water, and like the sun which sends its rays of light to all people, whether they be rich or poor, kings or servants. I truly say to you that if all rulers and their soldiers decide to obscure the sunlight, they will fail.

Enrich others with your work without expecting reward. God will reward you when you make your thoughts shine like the immortal stars that light up the barren paths of humanity.

## **Your Mirrors**

When you look in your mirrors, you deceive yourselves and you may consider yourselves to be great when in reality you are not. You may also enjoy being giants, but you are in fact, weak and naïve, and you fear sickness, sadness and storms. If the mirror deceives you, why do you not break it and abandon your disappointment? And why do you stroll through the market looking for mirrors to buy, even when you know that these mirrors will delude you?

I have never heard in my lifetime that someone used a hammer to destroy his mirror after it had lied to him, for people like what deludes them and misrepresents their reality.

The most wonderful mirror is the one that reflects you as nude before the truth, honest, humble and having concern for kindness and virtue. If you have not found this mirror, you stand helpless in illusion. The mirror of your souls is the one that admires you and shows you loyalty. You ought to protect this mirror and prevent those who fear your souls from breaking it, knowing that many of the arrogant have ugly characteristics, evil spirits and callous, stone cold hearts.

When you are haughty, you resemble the man who bought a mirror and saw himself in it as a giant when he is really tiny and puny. Instead of returning the mirror to the market, he displayed it with pride and kept looking at it with pleasure until he considered himself as a king, but when the real kings went to the battlefield, his hand shivered and his tongue became tied with fear and anxiety.

Your souls do not deceive you as the mirror does, and the soul does not shatter as a picture does. In your life, the soul and body work in balance, but

in death, the body vanishes and the soul remains alive. Which one of them is then more beneficial, O ye, of little knowledge?

While you can see your bodies, you cannot see your souls, but the soul walks with you and speaks to you. At times, you may feel a hand being placed on your shoulder. This is the presence of the souls of those who love you as you love them. Although they have sailed to faraway shores, these souls are able to appear to the loved ones who long for their return, reminding them of their presence. You may think that what is clear before your eyes is better than the unclear. Is the darkness that appears better than the light that does not? Is the ugly voice that you hear softer than the angelic melodies that you do not hear?

You may meet someone while you are wearing your most wonderful clothes and enjoying the coverings that you dress in. If the one who looks at you is fair, he will ask about the beauty of your soul that he is unable to see.

How plentiful are the flowers in the field that are brightly coloured yet have an unpleasant essence! How greedy are the sea waves that move up and down and splash their foam in the air but refuse to offer a thirsty fisherman a drop of water to drink! On the other hand, how generous is the little rivulet, which with a drop of its shallow water, can save a strange man on the verge of dying from thirst!

How many times do you meet people who offer you honey out of their words and knives from their hearts and souls!

When a person extols you and praises the goodness that you have shown, do not believe all that he says, but rather, talk to him about the goodness that you were unable to do. Tell him that many words are like the ashes in an extinguished fireplace. The ashes disperse and vanish quickly into the air.

Nice words are not always the true mirror that reflects reality, just as the

words that humiliate others and taint their kindness are not always true.

If you have disguised faces, you will be known by those who have sharp eyes, but your souls cannot hide behind veils or become determined by limits. Do you have a mirror in which you hear your voice, see your emotions, feel your heart's pulse and chase your dreams?

Do not fall in love with your mirrors like the haughty, who love themselves and prevent others from stealing their fame. These boastful ones refuse to know anything about themselves except that which they desire, but what they see are only the veils that cover their faces. How will they act when the veils collapse? Certainly, there is no everlasting veil.

## **Immortality**

Look at the stones that remain throughout the years. Every stone speaks to you of the people who were once here. One is easily inspired to ponder: Who planted this field for his sons? Who dug this rivulet and poured into it his drops of sweat? Who raised these giant pillars that reach the highest peaks?

The names have disappeared like the sun vanishes behind the horizon, but these names are still calling out to us, reminding us of the achievements of our ancestors. You commit a crime when you forget these names and deny the virtues of your predecessors.

Nothing is born by itself, and if you manage to find one thing that is born without a creator, I may believe those who denied God's favour to them.

God is older than every existing thing, so why do you glorify the highest mountains, the nations and yourself? And why do you praise what you have made with your hearts and minds in the fields of science, art, literature and philosophy while hardly mentioning the greatest philosopher who has taught you all things?

Ask the sea about itself and it will tell you that it is only a little drop of water in a larger sea, while you fear drowning in a drop of water.

Ask the bird who taught it how to sing for you to enjoy and about the school in which it studied music.

Ask the beautiful garden how it wears colourful clothing without seeking the help of a dressmaker. I truly say to you that not one of the perfume makers can create its distinct scent. Acknowledge that the One who has poured this

perfume in the garden is greater than all of these makers. How many times did you admire the perfume maker in the market and not thank his Great Master?

You say that the clouds make the sea and the sea makes the clouds, and you scratch your heads to know which created the other. I truthfully say to you that there is a Creator who has created both of them, but you have become ignorant because you rely solely upon science and logic.

The thorn asked the flower, “Why did God create you more beautiful than me and why did He grant you a sweeter perfume?” After a little while, the wind blew and uprooted the flower. The thorn that resisted the wind thanked God for the strength it was granted and realized that the flower did not receive the same offering. The flower was not strong enough to resist the storm. You ought to be strong, but never say that the power which you have is unbeatable.

There was a neglected field in the far mountains whose owner had deserted it and left it to the thorns and storms. Next to that field, there were other fields that were well maintained by their owners. In the summer, the vineyards of the neglected field offered a lot of grapes, while the well maintained fields offered withered grapes. Hence, under which law can you blame the Creator for what He has offered you?

In the high seas, there was an adventurous sailor who could not reach a port until his sail got lost in the darkness and he was afraid of drowning. After several days, the waves led him to an island of treasure where he became rich. His agony and fear of the unknown sea transformed into great joy, but this sailor would be wise to admit that he is neither richer than the desert nor the dying stars.

Do not be afraid when you lose your way and reach unknown places, and

do not feel dismayed when other people refuse to recognize your goodness and to hear what you say to them, for the words become dry on the lips of those who hate the light. They love obscenity more than marvellous poetry.

You perhaps know that many giant rulers who spread misery over the earth believed themselves to be immortal. Though, when they became older, they discovered that there is only an instant which separates between the day of birth and day of death. You can imagine the despair eroding their souls as they recalled the misery they had inflicted upon the innocent. What is the eternity of these rulers? Is it in their statues which stand proudly in the squares, or is it in the pale books that disregard countless wrongdoings and only mention good deeds. If people were just and fair, they would have destroyed the statues of tyrants until nothing but dust remained and also burnt those pale and misleading books to write new ones in which there are no fake words.

How great were those humble kings! Their death was a glory and honour for them, and humanity remembers their goodness while shunning the killers and criminals.

## **The Four Geniuses**

One day, an unknown man entered the temple. He was calm, sharp-eyed, and had a little moustache. He began observing the temple silently as if he were taken by a great surprise. After all, the temple was different from any other he had seen. Here, there were no ornaments or pillars.

After I welcomed the visitor and asked him about himself, a masked thief entered the temple, waving a large knife and saying, "Give me your money!" My visitor was afraid and stunned, so he reached into his pocket and gave the money which he had to the thief as I did also. The villain then fled the scene and vanished quickly.

While still being affected by the incident that had unfolded, the visitor asked, "Have you seen, O priest, how the outlaws dominate the lives of good people? Do you not have in this area police with whom we can lodge a complaint and ask for the capture of this evil man and the return of our money?"

I replied, "Long ago, I heard a wise man saying, 'Verily when the good is hungry, it seeks food even in dark caves, and when it thirsts, it drinks even of dead waters.' You are the dark cave which the evil man approached to receive his bread, and I am the dead waters he sought to drink from. If you are surprised by how evil people dominate the lives of the good, it is obvious that you are unaware of the thinker who once said, 'It's a pity that the deer cannot teach swiftness to the turtles.'"

The man stared at me with anger, and he said nothing as he rushed out the huge door. Since then, I have not seen him.

A few minutes later, another stranger entered the doors of the temple.



After saluting me, the man explained that he had come from a far place located behind the great sea. He also told me that he had spent his whole life searching for the truth about God but that he had failed, and so, he became convinced that the existence of God is not necessary, and he tried to justify this by claiming that since we all have strength, will and intent, we do not need God.

I said to the man, "I will not blame and condemn you for what you have just said, but I will seek your help with a small matter. There is a big withered tree in the temple's square. I have always wanted to remove this tree because I find it to be useless. I have asked the packers near the temple to drag the tree using their horses, but they have not been able to remove it. Would you please offer me some assistance in uprooting this tree with your bare hands?"

The astonished man looked at me and said, "How can I uproot the tree with my bare hands when you just said that even the horses have failed to remove it?"

I replied, "But God can remove this tree and send thunder that can split it in two halves. He can also make a flood in an instant to sweep the ground and everything you see. Both of us will then have to look for Noah's Ark to save our lives."

My visitor was confused and appeared to be unable to find a response. After he had bid me farewell and left the temple to go his own way, he dragged the hem of his robe across the soil and vanished behind the large forest trees, heading towards the great sea. As I followed his movement with my eyes, I asked God to accompany him and show him the truth so that the man could know Him clearly and be saved from the harshness and agony of searching for the truth.

A few minutes later, two other visitors suddenly arrived. One of them looked Oriental in appearance, and the other, a Westerner with a fair complexion.

The Oriental man stayed outside and did not enter the temple, but the Westerner did and nervously asked me, "Have you seen a friend of mine? I lost him a few days ago and I am tired of looking for him."

I said to him, "He might be the man who was here just a few minutes ago before vanishing into the forest. He is a strange man from a place located behind the great sea, and he believes that humanity does not need God."

The Westerner replied, "I know him, and I had read his books. He is indeed a great philosopher, but I have nothing to do with him. I am looking for my devil who had planned with God to show me the evil way and walk every step with me."

I was surprised by the visitor's words, and I asked him, "Had the devil planned with God to set a trap for you?"

He replied, "Yes, and I struck a deal with my devil to stay together always, but he left me while I was asleep. My other friend who is now outside the temple has seen my devil."

"Your story is unbelievable. Why did your friend not tell you the whereabouts of your devil?" I replied.

The visitor explained, "He met him on a bridge and conversed with him. The devil claimed that he is the one who offered humanity the means of progress and taught us science. The devil said that and vanished, and we do not know where he is now."

"Why doesn't your friend enter the temple and tell us what happened between him and your devil?" I questioned.

He answered, "He does not like temples."

"Is he a believer?" I asked.

He replied, "Yes, he believes in God, but he has his own way of practicing

his faith. He only differs from other believers slightly.”

I responded, “So he knows God, and his God does not differ from our God. ‘He who is not against us is for us’. This is what the Greatest Master said.”

He said, “I do not care about what the Greatest Master said. I want my devil.”

“Why do you need him?” I asked.

“Because he draws me to temptation and helps me commit wrongdoings,” he answered.

I reflected on the man’s words, and I realized how negligent he is despite his sophisticated views. I quickly said to him, “How old were you when the devil came to you?”

He answered, “He came to me when I was thirty years old.”

I said, “You are the victim of oblivion, and your memory has deceived you. Had you never committed any wrongdoings prior to your befriending of the devil? Did you stop committing sins after you lost your devil?”

He scratched his head whilst in deep thought and then answered, “Yes, I committed sins and I commit sins now.”

I said, “You are wise when you profess that you were and still are a sinner. I know that you have a lot of goodness within you, for there is no one on the earth who is free from good and evil. Good and evil are in constant conflict in the human soul. Sometimes the good conquers and sometimes evil overcomes the good. I truly say to you that the thief that steals the temple’s money will feed his little ones as well as a poor man in need should he cross paths with him. Go back, my son, to your home, and do not let your suspicion dominate you. There is no evil outside you, and God does not need the devil to help Him set a trap for you. God offered you a brain

to think and choose what is beneficial for you.”

The man pondered in silence as I continued, “There are many people who allow evil to dominate their souls until their goodness erodes. These are the rulers and tyrants. Some others are so fulfilled with goodness and the love of God that they begin to believe that they are one with God. How many times have we read in books about people who were subjected to torture because they had said something which the rulers were unable to understand?! I do not assume any thinker can claim that he is God, but exaggeration has led many to their death.”

While I anticipated a response from my visitor, the other man who remained outside the temple yelled, “Why are we losing time in a futile conversation? We have a lot of things to do, and we might not find our devil.”

I spoke to my visitor, “Do you see? He strives to find the devil, for he believes that the devil is responsible for the progress of humanity. I verily say to you that God has granted each of us a brain, not to walk backward and not to keep ourselves hidden in the cocoon of dullness. We are responsible for advancement and deterioration, and we carry a message that we must deliver. What kind of failure does one submit to when he grows weary of carrying that message and instead tosses it in the wind before reaching his goal?”

The man bowed down before me to express his respect and regard. He then walked out to join his friend who was murmuring, “He was on the bridge. I invited him to my house where we had a drink together. Then, I lost him and could not find him. What kind of devil is he? What kind of devil?!”

## **The Dancer in the Temple**

One night, while we were celebrating in the temple, a beautiful woman arrived and said that she is a dancer from India. She was travelling with a group when she heard about our annual celebration, and she wanted to dance in the temple's square for free, for she loves our God even though her religion is different to ours.

I was happy to receive her, and I thanked her for her pure heart and said to her, "It is a good idea to dance in the square. We have no problem with that, for God is wonderful and as He loves beauty, we also love beauty."

Some of my followers heard my conversation with the dancer. They approached me with apparent surprise being marked on their faces and said, "Do you not see, O Reverend, that dancing is an aspect of wickedness and sin?"

I answered, "No, my brothers. You are saying that because of your ignorance. You need to have more wisdom before you judge. Would you be surprised if you were to see a male dancer? The sin does not exist in the body that you look at, but in your eyes that desire that body. You are not seeing the innocent soul of this Indian dancer, and you are not reading the wisdom in her eyes. Instead, you are taken by her body, and after you enjoy looking at her, you blame her for your guilt and you may seek revenge unto her. Do you not see how some men pursue women who sell their bodies to buy from them, then, they neglect these women and label them with obscene words? The dancer cannot abandon her body and toss it into oblivion. So you must put aside your pleasures and come to the woman like the explorer who arrives in a new continent and hesitates to walk on its land. Always believe that the eyes which observe pettiness are in fact knives in the neck

of reality. On the other hand, the eyes that show the lights of God and His beauty are the gardens of knowledge. Respect this woman who has shown us her love and who has left her people to dance for us. Let us look at her as we look at the colourful butterfly, the white flower which dances in the fresh air, and at the field, the moon and the valley. The woman's dance is not a shameful action, but the shame is to spoil her beauty with our eyes and mouths. How despicable are the eyes and mouths that disfigure! They are instruments in the hands of evil. When a dancer wears clothes that show parts of her legs and chest, you should stand with your innocence, and instead of whispering to each other, think about writing a poem to praise her and express your admiration. It is not a shameful act to follow your passion and to love the body of the dancer, for you should love everything made by the Creator, but do not let your materialistic love lead you to abandon your souls and fall into the ditch."

I left my followers as they were looking at each other and analysing my words. I entered the temple to read a book entitled The Incomplete Truth. I became amazed by an elite piece of writing which states, "In the ancient eras, the woman was blessed, and some kings had to kneel before her, but times have changed, and the kings have abused the woman's body and forced her to dance in their castles, and if they reward her, they do with a lot of betrayal and disrespect."

## **Adoring the Self**

Avoid those who adore themselves, for they are more dangerous than the criminals, and nothing prevents them from committing sins. They were born in sin and will die in it.

They will ambush you while you are walking on your way and attack you, even in the far deserts, so do not trust them and do not be deceived by the nice words they say, for they speak about love, humility and worship more than others do. They fill their homes with pictures of saints, while the humble hang those pictures in their hearts.

Do not utter a word in front of those who worship themselves, for they will rush to the ruler to tell him that you have provoked people against him, even though your message is not against the rulers but against the oppressors.

The good human does good, and might do a bit of evil, and the bad human does evil, while the little good he does resembles a tiny grain of sand in a large ocean.

Do not approach the evil person, even when he wears beautiful clothing and gold, and speaks out with soft words in front of others. Many evil faces can deceive the eyes, and many hearts that are full of hatred can feign purity and virtues.

The human resembles a vineyard that produces sweet grapes as well as bitter ones that deserve to be trampled under people's feet. Strive to be the sweet grapes that the farmer takes to the market to display with pride. Do not be the bitter grapes, and when you are in the hands of the farmer and the hateful people curse you, acknowledge that the hateful cannot stand anyone who is better than them, and the curse was born in their hearts and has

grown on their lips. The words of the hateful do not lessen your value but reveal much about their hearts that are full of harm.

The hateful man carries evil and does not abandon it until his death, and on his journey to the grave, he spreads destruction and pain, even when he does not gain anything in return. Hatred cannot be bought or sold, but it is rooted in the nature of some souls.

No one can teach you hatred, for your hearts embrace faith.

Look at the sun and how it grants you light and grace, and when the darkness falls on the earth, you carry your lanterns to be able to see your way. I truly say to you that the light of the lantern is not stronger than the sunlight, but it benefits you and allows you to conquer the darkness that surrounds you in all directions. A little candle can save a man from deviation.

Light, no matter how small, can revive, and darkness, no matter how tiny, can kill. No matter how strong hatred is, it will not be able to erase the light, for light is immortal.

Do not subject yourselves to danger when you meet people who worship themselves, and do not show them that you are intellectuals, for intelligence exists only in them. Their extreme haughtiness and superiority inspires them to utilize followers who praise them and admire their achievements. The arrogant ones resemble a king who inherited the throne from his father, but he spread injustice throughout his kingdom and then surrendered its keys to the enemies. In order to cover his failure, he gathered around him a group of singers to glorify him, while glory is far from him, as far as the planets are from the Earth.

You are the rain that falls from the sky, and no giant or strong colossus can prevent the rain from falling, except God.

The soldiers and armies of the earth are not stronger than the wind that



blows through the forest to denude the trees, and are not sturdier than the waves that hit the rocks, eroding them day after day.

I advise you to have no fear and never surrender. Did you see any king who was able to issue an order to capture the perfume of a flower? Did you hear anyone saying that he could seize the wonderful song and throw it into the darkness of his jail?

Your song is your armour. You are not to carry swords like the enemies of humanity do. You are not to reply to those who humiliate you with words that resemble theirs. To be known by others and to spread your message, be calm and resistant in your love. Acknowledge that the strength of someone is not in the destruction he commits, but in the goodness that he aims for.

How many times have you seen people who perpetuate destruction and celebrate their arrogance, while others spread goodness without hauteur?

God has blessed you with eyes to look into the depths, ears to hear what lies behind the words, and minds to discover what is distant from you. So, acknowledge that those who lie to you kill you twice, while trueness appears on the faces of those who speak the truth. With these truthful people, you shall live. And, in this way, you will never be separated despite the harshness of life.

## **Justice and Authority**

Once upon a time, there was a revered king who had a very strange nature. One night, he had an exceptionally peculiar dream, and the next morning, he called one of his consultants to tell him about it.

The king said, "I saw my late father descending from the sky and saying to me, 'You should make the richest man poor and the poorest man rich, and set justice between them. If you do not do this, your enemies will defeat you and conquer your city. They will kill the innocent, destroy houses and enslave women and children.'"

The consultant was terrified after what he had heard. After an instant of reflection, he said to the king, "I have no choice but to fulfil the desire of your late father. What do you have to lose by doing what he wants you to do?"

On the next day, the king ordered his soldiers to look for the richest man and the poorest man and bring them to his castle.

The richest man and the poorest man were brought to the king. He asked them about their lives. The richest man said that his vineyards are full of grapes, his lands are large, and he has gold and many jewels. The poorest man said that he does not complain and he is satisfied with what God has given him.

The king said to the poorest man, "But my soldiers told me that this rich man oppresses you and orders you to carry heavy burdens. Is it true what my soldiers said?"

The poor man replied with hesitation, "No, no, O Excellency. I have never seen anything from my master but goodness."

The king raised his voice to say, "Listen to me, O liar! If you do not tell the truth, I will throw you in jail! You will never be released until your death!"

Do you understand? And you, O rich man, do not lie just so you can avoid going to jail!”

The rich man said, “I always act according to the doctrines that I know. This worker is one of my belongings. I utilize him and he serves me by digging in my lands, planting my fruits and grazing my sheep. I have the right to make him work from dawn to sunset.”

The king said, “But I have heard that you overburden him with an unbearable load. When he bends his knees, you whip him and order him to continue his duty, and you show no signs of pity or compassion towards your humble manservant. I have also heard that you ride your donkey to ascend the mountain and leave this miserable man behind you to walk, despite the fact that you own several donkeys and you could have let him ride one of them, yet you deny him this luxury. Is it true?”

The rich man answered with fear, “Yes, Your Majesty. I do that.”

The king left his throne and walked a few steps towards the two men and said to them, “Well, from now on, all the fortunes, belongings and properties owned by the rich man will be taken from him to be given to the poor man. Hence, the rich man will be a servant for the poor man. The poor man must treat the rich man the same way he had treated him.”

The rich man was stunned. He shivered and almost fell to the ground. He wanted to protest, but his tongue was tangled. An instant later, he asked, “How could this happen, Your Excellency? Pity...”

The rich man could not finish his words, for he was removed by the soldiers, followed by the poor man who could not believe what he just heard.

A few days later, the king vowed to know about the lives of the two men. He called the poor man who became rich. The man came to the castle wearing simple clothes and no jewellery. The king asked him about his new life and if he treats the other man harshly. The man said, “Forgive me, Your Excellency, for my good deeds and sympathy. I could not oppress my master

the way he oppressed me. I have suffered a lot from his oppression and was afraid that he might suffer the same way I did.”

The king said with a great deal of frustration and anger, “You disrespected my instructions! You deserve punishment! I will call my prison guard to handcuff you! How dare you disobey me after I made you rich and granted you what you had never imagined? O unthankful one...”

The man trembled from fear and replied, “Would you allow me, Your Majesty, to say a word? There is, in the Temple of the Soul, a wise priest. I beg you to give me a chance to call him and have you listen to his advice before you judge me.”

-Who is this priest?

-He is an old man. I met him one day while I was carrying some firewood on a donkey.

-Is the temple far from here?

-Yes. It takes one day of walking for me to get there. I am able to visit him and ask him to come here with me. To be honest, I like this priest whom I visited after I became rich and he advised me to be fair and to not oppress anyone. I took his advice.

-He sounds like a very strange man. Go to him and let him come to my castle. You have only two days to bring him here, or you will be punished!

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The priest arrived at the castle. After greetings were exchanged between the priest and His Royal Highness, the king said to him, “You are the priest in the Temple of the Soul who advised one of my people to disrespect my orders.”

The priest said while bowing his head respectfully, “I am the priest. The man came to me and asked me how he should act in order to preserve justice.”

-Does justice allow a poor man to become rich and a rich man to become poor?

-I did not know how this happened, but I believe that wisdom is more important than justice.

“You contradict the doctrines,” retorted the king.

-Doctrines do not say everything that we understand. We should think deeply before blaming the doctrines for our mistakes.

-Do you say that what I have done was a mistake? You are humiliating my glory!

-Forgive me, Your Majesty. You asked me to tell the truth.

-Great. You should prove that wisdom is more important than justice. If you convince me, I will forgive the poor man who became rich. If you fail to convince me, I will make him poor again and punish him dearly!

The priest reflected for an instant and then asked, “Do you have prisoners in this city?”

The king replied with a great deal of surprise, “Of course we have prisoners. Do you want me to release them in order to prove that wisdom is more precious than justice?”

-God forbid, Your Majesty, I have no doubt that your prisoners are all criminals, thieves, sex offenders and wrongdoers. The criminal should be punished to prevent him from committing crimes again. If we open the door of the prison to release all the criminals, and we find excuses to forgive them, the whole world will be inundated with murder and destruction. On the other hand, we must not treat humans like animals. We have to preserve the honour of humanity, even though some people are notorious criminals.

The king was stunned by the priest’s words and asked him, “What are you aiming for? Would you please clarify with a few short words?”

-Yes, I will be brief. If we punish the criminals for their crimes, do we punish the good people? Do we discipline the humans for their wrongdoings and for their good deeds? The ones who lost their sight can differentiate between outlaws and good Samaritans.

-I do not understand.

-Wisdom can be achieved when the rich man remains rich, but he gives the poor from his belongings and has pity on them, but Your Majesty decided to make the poor man rich and the rich man poor. This does not prevent the new rich man from being innocent, kind and merciful. If you punish this innocent man, he will resemble those who have been jailed for their offences, despite the fact that there is no doctrine, wisdom and rules that equalize the sinners and the conscious people who strive to be good and innocent.

The king reflected for a short time, while he was combing his blonde beard with his fingers. He gazed at the priest and scanned him from head to toe, and said to him, "You are right, O wise priest. You convinced me with your sharp view. There is a big difference between the man who kills and the man who refuses to commit crimes due to his pure heart. I will ask the poor man who became rich to return a big quantity of his belongings to the rich man who became poor, and I will reward him for doing that and forgive those who have trespassed against him. Hence, my father in heaven will not be upset, but he will be happy for what we have done."

## **The Rose and the Perfume**

It was a lovely spring day. April laid down its blanket onto the field. A little rose fell from its hand and flew through the air while displaying its beauty and moving with the soft breeze like a dancer inspired by the movement of her body while wearing a thin dress that unveils the secrets of her body.

The gentle breeze does not wish to harm the rose or wage war against spring, and it does not want to see the tears run on the rose buds that look like children in their cradles.

There was nothing in that beautiful morning which resembled that elegant rose.

The air which was swirling around the rose and embracing it could not fill its lungs with its perfume. It was surprised and asked the rose, "Where is the scent that usually emanates from roses and is poured into delicate glasses?"

The rose was shy and unable to answer. The air continued, "I have seen in my long journeys many flowers and roses that were stolen by thieves and invaded by butterflies, but the scent of these flora is immortal. Please do not be saddened by my honesty. You were born as a wonderful creature, and you were raised in the lap of beauty, but you lack many things. I have in my sack some perfume that I can give to you. What do you say?"

The rose replied, "But I am a body and the perfume is a soul. I live in the ground and the perfume flies in the sky. Yesterday, it was here, next to me. I begged it to lower its wings, yet it went away and did not listen to me."

The air said in amazement, "Do not be sad, you humble creature, for one of the soul's characteristics is to rise, while the material stays low. For this

reason, the soul does not embrace dust, and the body does not seek divinity. How awful is the one who has a lowly soul and body! Those who rise with their souls and bodies are the chosen ones, and they are rare indeed! They resemble a hidden treasure on a desolate island which adventurers seek in vain. From time to time, we see the chosen ones dwelling among us, and we obtain their graces and enrich ourselves with their virtues. Do not surrender to despair, and do not think that the beauty which you possess is all the beauty there is. The spring blessed you with life, and it wanted you to be what you are now, and nobody can punish the giver for their generosity.”

The rose replied, “I am afraid that the perfume may die with me when winter arrives and that the storm will destroy me and the flood will sweep me away. I will perish indeed, and the perfume will perish with me.”

Assuredly I responded, “No, dear. Neither you nor the perfume will perish. The aroma will soar with me to immortality. I will carry it in my sack and in the folds of my robe. Meanwhile, you will be given a new life in the shape of another rose that will crack the soil and escape from non-existence, in the same place and in this very field.”

The rose was overjoyed upon hearing these words. It discarded the drops of dew that had covered its leaves. It looked at the rising sun that was approaching from the top of the mountain and tenderly touching the forest’s canopy. The rose was as happy as a bride on her wedding day. In an instant, a wave of perfume surrounded it and entered its heart. The harmony of nightingales and blackbirds filled the air to glorify the soul and body that have embraced one another and which look forward to staying unified beyond eternity.



## **Notions of the Weak – minded**

The woman is not your servant and is not a maid who bares herself in your beds. So, tear the ancient books and demolish in your minds the statues that were built by your ancestors. Carry your women in your souls and forever keep them there.

I have seen you oppressing your wives. I have seen you take them to your fields, making them work in the rigid lands to produce delicious wine from your vineyards and to knead and bake food for your sustenance. Are you yet to be satisfied by the wine of the old centuries and from bread and materials?

I have heard faulty comparisons which liken the woman to a machine whose worth is defined by the possession of beauty and youth. Are you immune to the inevitability of aging? Do you ever look into the mirror of your being to discover that you are unable to achieve complete knowledge and to learn that the woman is not a tree that you exalt when it gives you fruit and uproot when it becomes withered?

When a woman falls in love with a man other than her husband, you punish her and label her with the foulest of words. Do you also punish the man who loves her in return, and do you humiliate him in the same way you humiliate her, or has she loved and laid with an imaginary man who is unknown and cannot be found?

When a woman sells her body, there is also a man who buys from her. The one who sells is in need and the one who buys is also in need. I have seen you blaming the one who sells while forgiving the one who buys. I truly say to you that the rich trader who takes some of his gold and silver to the market but does not find buyers will not leave his gold and silver in the

market at the end of the day to be stolen by thieves or taken by the passers-by. Rather, he carries his jewels back home and hides them in a chest.

When a man sells his body to a woman, who do you blame? You readily blame the woman and exempt the man, whether he be the buyer or seller. Where then is the justice, you of little faith?

Not every woman offers her body to earn money. The woman who loves may offer her body too, and in both cases, the man offers his body. For this reason, do not look with one eye and neglect the other eye. The neglected eye may be the one that sees the truth, while the one in use may lead you to observe the truth in the way you wish to see it.

You ask women for many things that you do not ask men for, while God does not discriminate between His people, but the traditions which discriminate were made by you to satisfy your desires and are not for the purpose of justice.

Yesterday, a man visited me in the temple. His wife was walking behind him as if she is one of his servants. I said to them, "It is better for you to walk together with not one of you walking ahead of the other. This way, you will be glorified with the love that is gifted to you, and without this love, your life is meaningless." While leaving, the man told his wife to guard his flock, grind wheat and to carry water from the forest's spring to their house which was rather distant. After the man had left, the woman began expressing her anguish and spoke of the fatigue which consumed her days and nights. She said that she could no longer stand the sight of any man due to her husband's oppressive nature. I then said to her, "Strong souls do not tire, but bodies do. You carry heavy burdens, not for the sake of your husband, but for the sake of the life that binds you together and ensures you are not separated. I am not telling you this as a way to encourage you to endure more agony, but to be patient because it is better for you to bear the difficulties of life

alongside your husband. Do not say you hate men in front of anyone because hatred is not created by humans. It is in fact an outsider who comes from evil and who overcomes goodness by stabbing it in the heart while it is asleep. How many times have I heard women demanding their freedom! These women are great and triumphant. However, in many instances, I have seen women behaving with hostility towards men, even to the extent where once in a leadership position, these women refuse employment to men and instead seek the help of women, regardless of how capable, educated or analytical the male candidate may be. This sort of revenge on men does not fit in accordance with civilization. It is actually a degrading act of discrimination which conflicts with the woman who had to struggle for years to erase the traces of discrimination from her body and soul.

Allow me to ask you here: Are children guilty when their parents commit wrongdoings? Can we pardon the ruler who condemns someone for a crime he had no part in?

The weak-minded person is he who says that the woman is not equal to him, and similarly, weak-minded is the woman who claims that she is superior to men. They are both parts of the universe and of the home's foundation. If the foundation collapses, no one will be safe from destruction, not even those who are outside the house."

## **The Man who Returned from War**

I shall tell you about a man who fought in a war that erupted between neighbouring cities. This war saw many casualties and the destruction of houses aplenty.

I was in the temple, praying to the Lord of Peace, begging for His victory over the other god who enslaved and humiliated souls. These two gods were fighting each other, and that conflict produced only the ugliest defeat. Despite that, I was not upset with the people who were engaged in the combat. I rather called them to the banquet of the beautiful peace which flourishes in their gardens and bears fruit in their vineyards. They listened to my call after years of bitter harvest. Thus, the lights of love and virtue shone again over the houses that had cried and farewelled their children.

I had known the man during the war, but after the war ended, he became a different person. He began to seek the temple each day to pray wholeheartedly and sometimes cry silently before his tears would pour down his face.

One time, he approached me and asked, “Do the doctrines pardon me after I dyed my face black and killed the humanity within myself?”

I replied empathetically, “The war does not kill enemies only, but it kills us at the same time. For this reason, all those who started wars in the past and conquered their enemies were also defeated themselves, and the echo of their defeat still reverberates throughout the centuries. If we open up a book and read about the victories, we will find that they were short-lived victories which resemble a tiny speck of salt in the water, for the hero who declares his victory and celebrates his glory today will witness his glory collapse

through his defeat on the day which follows. We are all drowned up to our necks in mud. What did we earn? What kind of trees did we plant for our children? Our children are either dead or crying for the dead. I truthfully say to you that the living may suffer more by the hands of death than the deceased themselves.”

The man said, “You are right, O priest. This is why I am standing here before you, overwhelmed by my sadness and agony. I am unable to forget that hideous image of war or forgive myself.”

“Time will teach you how to forget, and day after day, the images of war which linger in your mind will disappear,” I consoled the man.

The man exclaimed, “Except for one image which will not fade but will forever screech in my conscience. It resembles the voice that Cain heard after he had killed his brother and fled to the prairies!”

“I understand that you are seeking refuge in this temple to protect yourself,” I said to the distressed man.

He replied, “You are right. I feel here the pleasure of hiding. I look like a bird that escapes a hunter and finds security behind the high rocks, but my despair is chasing me everywhere, and the bitterness in my throat hurts me day and night.”

“Did you kill someone?” I asked.

The man explained, “You ask me this question, and you know that the one who fights in a war cannot acquit himself of his crimes, even when he tries to excuse his actions. Some people consider the man who defends them to be a hero, and they do not ask him whether he kills or not. If they were to ask him, he might exaggerate his atrocities to save himself from being labelled a coward. As such, I have heard many unbelievable stories from the

fighters about their crimes. I killed someone. Yes, I killed once, but murdering one man is enough to accuse myself of murdering humanity in its entirety while slaying my soul in the process.”

The man continued his confession as his voice trembled and his face grew pale. He certainly recalled an ugly scene.

After a short pause, he said, “I killed one of my friends.”

I was stunned, for I did not know that friends could kill one another.

He continued, “We were two innocent children in the village. We played, climbed rocks and ran to the threshing floors together. We shared much happiness. We enjoyed our friendship, and my friend’s house was next door to mine. His father had come to reside in our village. He bought a piece of land to build his house upon and owned a small shop. One day, I was in the valley with my friend when I stumbled and fell down from a highly perched rock. I faced the danger of death because of my wounds, but my friend carried me on his back to the village after realising that nobody was able to hear his calls for help. He saved my life, and I promised him from that moment that I would one day return the favour. After the war erupted, my friend’s family left the village and their whereabouts became unknown. What happened to that family was not unusual, for the war scattered societies and sowed the seeds of division among people. It was also not unusual for me to carry a firearm, for the weapon was a sign of glory, and every time we returned from a battle, the women would throw roses at us as if we were in a wedding celebration.”

I said to the man while shaking my head, “It is ignorance, my son. Those women should have thrown roses at the life which embraces the children of life, in the river that offers its water to the thirsty, and on the principles of goodness and virtue. They should have lit their candles in the temples of

peace, asking the God of Peace to return and extend His hand over the nations. They should have taken the rifles out of the hands of their men, and instead offered them flowers to be planted in the gardens of hope.”

The man said, “The villagers were out of their minds and numbed by gunpowder. The ugliest fact of the war is that they were against the light and the truth.”

I responded, “You are right, my son. I have never seen the God of Peace hurting the truth. His followers spread the word of truth in all directions. I have the utmost respect for those philosophers and thinkers who passed long ago, but their thoughts are still alive among us and call us to righteousness. On the other hand, those who call for evil have become gloomy chapters in the history books, and people hardly learn from these books.”

The man said, “How can the ignorant one learn from the light while his eyes are looking at the sunset? I was one of the ignorant ones who refused to learn and who blindfolded their eyes to see the darkness that mirrors their souls. When I awoke from my ignorance, it was too late for a rebirth. If God forgives me and extends His hand to me as the father had extended his hand to the prodigal son, I would not be able to forgive myself, knowing that the most dishonourable sin is that which cannot be forgiven by the sinner, especially when the victim is innocent like the prophets.”

“Do you mean the friend whom you killed?” I questioned.

The man replied, “Yes, I did not know that the victim was my friend. We entered a house and mistakenly thought that the home’s residents were our enemies. We found a man and a woman who were killed inside and another man wailing in anguish from his wounds. He was lying on his face. I killed him with one bullet. How frightened I was when I later discovered that the

victim was my friend whom I had promised to one day reward for saving my life! I cried as I stared at his innocent face. I held him and asked him to return to life, but he did not listen. My comrades were stunned. I asked them to exit the room and leave me in solitude. Since then, I have been alone. I cry and suffer, but no one hears me.”

A tear appeared on the face of the man. I decided to leave him with his bitter memories. I proceeded to the temple’s square where I observed my followers decorating the place with roses and candles for the Day of Peace, an annual celebration we have been observing since the end of the war. Today, we will sing a new song together, and the generations to come will do the same.



## **The Wind and the Stagnant Souls**

Travel in all directions as the wind does, and do what it does to the stagnant souls. The storms do not ease until they change the aspects of nature and carve with their creative chisel in the forests and prairies. Do not return from your journey empty-handed, for the beggars themselves do not sleep empty-handed.

You will face those who hate the truth. They are the spiteful who hate you when you speak out truthfully about them. They want to cover people's eyes and lead them to the jungle of lies and deception.

The deceivers are not a few, but they are a group of creators in the field of sin, while you are a creator of goodwill. It is not easy for you to conquer the ones who disguise themselves and only reveal to you their untrue faces.

Whenever you express your beautiful thoughts, the hateful become more aggressive. You and them, resemble two brothers who inherited two pieces of land from their father for planting. The first brother planted one kind of plant and the other planted seven kinds. When the harvest season arrived, they picked a lot of fruit from their trees and went to the market to sell their goods. The first brother sold a little, but the second brother sold all of his fruit until his boxes became empty. In the evening, he returned to his house with a great deal of happiness and told his wife and children of his earnings. The first brother became angry, and instead of rushing to the field in the morning to plant more trees like his brother, he set fire to his brother's field. Hence, you shall know that the human who possesses evil in his soul does not bless goodness, and those who bless goodness are of less count than the fingers on your hand.

You may ask yourselves, "Why do we plant abundantly if others will burn

our fields?" I urge you to refrain from saying this, for you are not unfaithful and cursed, and you are not to deny the generosity of your heavenly Father who granted you a fertile piece of land, a sun that shines over your field, and rivers that flow for you to grow your trees. Moreover, you ought not to surrender to the hatred that ambushes you on your ways.

Keep my words in your hearts and minds. Do not allow the villains to defeat you, and do not fear them if they attack you in large numbers, for your faith will set you free from fear. Know that one drop of water can revive someone who is facing death.

You may see some who follow odiousness, honouring it in every place and denying the beauty that appears on your faces and in your thoughts. These people celebrate ugliness, for beauty is far from them as the earth is far from the sky. The difference between you and them is similar to that between the morning birds that whistle and fill the sky with joyfulness and the bats that tremble from the light and curse the sun.

You will also hear from the deceivers many unbelievable distortions of the truth. They will say that the deception they commit is not a form of arrogance but that the exact truth which you state is a form of boastfulness.

In the distant cities, you will see people who display their lies in the daylight, and others glorify them and show them great respect, for those who possess weak souls fear evil. Truly I say, those who commit the sin of deception will not be deterred by anything and will continue to commit the most horrendous crimes. For this reason, you see liars owning many houses and having many followers from all tribes and countries. The honest ones, on the other hand, are always looking for someone to help them and offer them refuge in the winter, and some may never find that refuge. Despite all this, there is a great difference between the roses and the thorns. When the rose emanates its perfume into the air, it does not care for nonsense, but the thorns despise

the perfume and wish to destroy the roses with their fingernails. Nobody who has sharp eyes is unable to differentiate between the soft leaves and the vicious nails that cause pain. So, spread your perfume in every place, and step with your bare feet on the thorns to discover that they are too weak to harm you.

The most powerful kings cannot extinguish the shining planets, and the spears in the hands of the evil cannot kill your hope and prevent the earth from moving ahead.

Carry your lanterns in the night, and the great darkness will be broken and shattered by a little pulse of light. Carve your thoughts onto the stones, on the forest's trees, and on the storms and thunder. Everything you leave behind will not vanish with time and will defeat death, yet the thoughts of those who speak nonsense are doomed to termination, and their markings will be swallowed by the abyss of oblivion.

While you pour wine from your casks into the glasses of the ignorant, avoid walking in front of those who lie, for the liar hinders you, but the honest and sincere one saves you from the weariness of looking backward.

## **The Singers**

I was walking in the fields, along with a few men and women who were singing with angelic voices.

They were singing for the earth that God created to give them and feed their children, for the farmers who dig in the soil to plant and grow, for the women who sow wheat to make out of their hands the threshing floors of abundance, for the nature that the Lord created to reflect His enlightenment, for the wind, the sky, the sea and the forest which are all depictions of the great Inventor, and they speak about Him.

Some strangers asked me, “Who are these people who chant pure melodies?” I answered, “These are the chosen ones who have immortal voices that live forever in the sun, the storm, and on the rocks of the deep valley. Their hearts are full of love and their souls call for eternal peace. Those are my children, whom I send to all places. They become subjects of oppression in castles and assemblies, but they do not surrender to death, for life is real in their eyes, and if they are to suffer by the hands of the tyrants, their suffering would become their resurrection. My children do not fear agony because their happiness resembles the deep ocean even in the face of condemnation. How great is the human who overcomes his pain and puts his suffering under his feet like a curse! How great is the one who makes the thrones tremble with the sound of his voice! My children do not have gold in their iron safes and do not wear elegant clothing, but they are fulfilled by bread and water, and they have the treasures of their souls that the great kings cannot own.

As the emperors send their soldiers to the distant countries to invade and intimidate their people with swords and fire, I send my followers in all

directions, and nothing can obstruct them in their quest to spread the word of peace and to free humanity from the handcuffs of slavery. Indeed, my people, the innocence of my children will cause the kings to shiver. No stone will stand on the other in the Jerusalem of hatred and revenge. My followers will enter the kingdoms barefooted and unclothed to topple the marble statues and free the pigeons from their cages, putting an end to a long chapter of fear. This way, the eyes that are drenched in tears can scream out and overcome the armies of death.

My followers are young men who were born out of courage and grew up after they were fed at my table. There is no traitor among them. For this reason, the servants of the dark temple are unable to capture me because their tongues are tangled and their hearts are dry like the firewood to be burnt. The gloomy tabernacles will collapse and the seas will flood the darkness.

For love I build, and love builds all who embraces it. My followers will build a temple to worship love. Over the ruins of the ancient temples, a new temple for God will emerge, and God will ask us for one sacrifice – the sacrifice of evil that resides in our souls. We will obey our God so that goodness can overcome evil and knowledge can flourish.”

## **I Embrace Innocence**

O my people who offer gold, know that your gold may become covered with dust.

O my visitors who come carrying silk, leave your silk in your wardrobes, for I cover my body with innocence.

O travellers, do not pour expensive wine on the temple's doorstep. Your wine will become finer if you store it in your casks for many years.

You assume that I ask you to give. You are right, for I only ask you to visit my temple, not carrying anything but celestial melodies on your lips to be heard in far places.

I do not have chests to hide your money. My safe is the hands of the needy that shiver in the winter. I have become one with the winter, storms and thunder. Since I resemble the miserable, why should I cover my body with clothing?

My beloved, if I accept your clothes, I become colder, and I fear that the wind will strike your children. Every time you offer your clothes to protect the body of a stranger, I feel warmth and happiness.

I do not sell or buy in the market. For this reason, I require naught but a small piece of bread.

One day, a villager put some food on my table. I said to him, "I am afraid that your loved ones may grow hungry." He replied, "I have come from a distant place to offer you something, and I will be hurt if you refuse my offering." I accepted his gift and said, "You will become rich because you have given your food to me."

The man assumed I said this as a mere expression of my gratitude. When he left the temple, I began to pray for him.

A few days later, the man returned, so I asked him, “Have you become rich?”

He answered, “No, O priest, but I have a spring of water that was once dried up. It has now begun flowing again as if it has been reborn. I also have a field in which I struggled to harvest anything but sour grapes, but all of a sudden, it has become abundant in sweet grapes. My threshing floors were empty but have become rich in good wheat. I do not know the mystery behind these changes.”

I said to the man, “You resemble a man who went to visit the king. This man did not have gold to offer the king, so instead, he took a bushel of corn with him. After the visitors bowed their heads in front of the king and offered him gold, silver and expensive bottles of perfume, the man advanced toward the throne with his bushel. The visitors laughed and mocked the man, but the king left his throne and patted him on the shoulder, saying, ‘This humble gift that you have brought with you is more valuable than all that I have received today. You will grow rich because of your favour.’

The man returned to his cottage and thought about the king’s words. The next morning, the king ordered his soldiers to deliver a jar full of gold to the humble man. He said to the soldiers, ‘Go to the miserable man’s cottage and leave this jar near the door while you carefully guard it from thieves. Do not let the man see you, and after he returns from his field in the evening and finds the jar, travel back to the castle and do not tell anyone of your doings.’”

When I finished telling this story to the visitor who had offered me his food, he reflected on it for a while and compared his situation to that of the

humble man who offered the king a bushel of corn.

I said to my visitor, “Yes, my brother, I do not need anything for myself, just as the king did not need anything for himself, but he had eyes to see and a heart to show mercy, and his soldiers are awake near the doors, but they cannot be seen, for their bodies are not dust.”



## **Do not Humiliate**

Do not humiliate anyone, for the beggars could be richer than the nobles, and the castles' servants may have thoughts that are more beautiful than those of the poets. Once, a woman was selling her body on the road when she saw a man falling off his horse. She left her trade and rushed to the man's aid. How miserable is this woman in her materialism, and how miserable are those who buy from her? But she was great when she gave freely. Hence, do not say, "This is rich and that is poor," for the rich do not own what the poor do. Meanwhile, the rich people possessing cold hearts may envy the love and purity which poor people breed in their hearts.

I have seen kings begging for a loaf of bread and miserable people making jewellery for the sun. I have also met some who eat and do not get full. These are the needy ones, and no one can help them.

Whenever you see a farmer working in his field, bow your heads in front of him and glorify his struggle, for he offers you bread to eat and to feed your children. I truly say to you that the great painters and sculptors display their artwork in galleries to be admired and purchased, but the farmer does not need to act like these artists, for nature is his gallery, and every piece of fruit that is brought forth from his hands is a work of art depicted by the hand of the Creator.

Whenever you see a blacksmith pounding metal with his hammer, offer him a rose, for he tires for your benefit. Likewise, do the same for the carpenter, the baker, the shepherd and for the woman who crushes the wheat, makes dough and gently swings the bed of her child. These people are angels walking amongst you, even when their clothes are tattered and covered with dust and dirt. They give you tulips from their gardens and prayers from their

lips. When you see anyone mocking them because of their garments, you should oppose him, for nobody is to mock honesty and virtue.

A great king was once wandering in his kingdom along with a group of his soldiers and ministers. He passed along a sea shore and saw a little boy standing in front of a tin cottage. The young boy was dressed in tattered clothes and was flying his paper kite. The king descended off his horse, approached the boy and asked him, "Little brother, would you allow me to fly the kite for a short time?"

The boy, as well as the group of soldiers and ministers, was surprised. After flying the kite in the air for a while, the king felt a sense of elation. He then returned the kite to the boy and said, "Thank you, my little brother, for giving me a chance at happiness."

On the journey back to the city, one of the king's ministers asked him about the happiness he had experienced. The king said, "Listen to me, minister, I have conquered the kingdoms and gathered great fortunes of gold and silver, yet I could not do anything that would draw me nearer to the Highest, but that boy offered me the opportunity to meet this goal."

Be like this king who possessed the wisdom that the haughty cannot have, and do not act like the kings who praise themselves for the glory which does not belong to them. They think that the Highest listens to them and obeys their instructions, while their souls are only dust.

Do not approach those who humiliate others while foolishly trying to demonstrate their superiority. People are not narrow-minded, and the masks cannot conceal forever.

To what extent can ugliness praise itself, and to what extent can darkness claim that it lights up the way of the passers-by? I truthfully say to you that

those who believe that the darkness shines will discover the reality of it when they stumble and fall.

If someone humiliates you, do not answer, for the one who humiliates has cheap goods that no one looks at, but you have treasures in your souls, and if you display your treasures everywhere, they will become endangered by thieves.

## **Freedom for all People**

Some of my beloved told me about a country they had visited, where there was a king who ruled the tribes and forced the tribesmen to obey him. One day, the tribes revolted against him, seeking freedom. The king became outraged and sent his soldiers to burn the houses down, kill the innocent people, displace women and children, and capture the rebels so as to sentence them to death.

My followers asked me, “Who was right, that king or the people who rebelled against him?”

I replied, “Do not be deceived by the kings who have treasures and glory, and do not disregard the weak who offer their souls for their dignity. God did not create humans to be slaves for the most powerful. The kings who oppress their followers subject themselves to the penalty of death, and their thrones to termination.

You may hear that the fate of people is to live in states. This is a good thing if these people have chosen to live side by side in these states and be under one flag, but forced unification which aims to make certain groups of people live with others who possess different languages, traditions and values, does not fit with logic and justice. How would the one who does not understand the other deal with him in the fields of trade, industry and agriculture when they both would require a translator to interpret what they say?

You also hear that those who struggle for their freedom are traitors but that the king who kills his people with his sword is right, for he consider them as outlaws and rebels against the authority which he inherited from his ancestors. Authority is in fact nothing but the feeling of power, pride and

domination over the fate of the weak.

When somebody asks you about the heroes who strived for the betterment of their people, tell him that these heroes are the chosen ones, and remind him about the countries which decided to split voluntarily. Indeed, every group has its own way, and the rulers of these countries did not punish anyone for their choice and did not lock them in jail. On the other hand, do not listen to one word of the antiquated books that are still read by miserable people who refuse to walk towards the light. These people praise freedom while their thoughts are locked in prisons smaller than tombs, and they falsely glorify their courage in battles, wars and great deeds that have no real value.

How beautiful it is to remember one's history, to learn from the past and teach one's children, but history is not a stone or rotten monument that is vulnerable to the wind that strikes and erodes. History advances to the future, and we ride the cart to the place where the planets shine and the convoys of goodness and virtue proceed.

As much as a king oppresses and persecutes, he cannot build a wall to prevent the storm from raging in all directions, and even when he builds a staircase to the skies, the giants of the earth will chase him and pull him to the ground. Hence, the flags of freedom will be raised in every square, for freedom is made by God. He has offered it from His hands to bring joy to His people. The oppressors are incapable of throwing your freedom into the darkness of obscurity."

## **Let the Jasmine Conquer Fear**

Come and walk with me to the sunlight, and let us sing for peace with the spring and the river. After all, our hearts have been filled with sorrow and we've cried a lot.

The men will sing and erase from their memories the gloomy days which resemble a ghost wearing the garments of the storms and thunder.

The women will sing with celestial voices, "Praised are those who return to their fields to sow wheat and plant olive and fig trees in the valley. Holy are the ones who break their chains, flee the death which enslaves them, and steadily rush towards a new era."

The children will sing new poems, reciting no words about death and oblivion, but only words about roses, perfume and the cooing of pigeons.

The elderly will harmonize with the singers, "We have abandoned wrath and walked away from a horrible darkness, in which our loved ones had been lost and never returned. We will meet our children again and celebrate. We will break the ancient caskets to drink the new wine which we have made from our vineyards to be pure and gentle like the violin's melody."

The needy people will obtain their food from abundant banquets, and they will never feel hungry again.

The rich will open their treasure chests, for they know that their lives are short and treasures do not enter the graves.

Come with me to save the cities from the fire and to give the wanderers a book of life.

Adieu O words of sympathy, O chants of heroism, O tales of short - lived

glory!

Adieu O great poems that glorify the tribesmen and the blood that still screams on the desert sand!

Adieu O sword, O rifle, O stone. Let the jasmine conquer fear, and let us exalt the ink!

We will head toward the forests and prairies until we reach the roaring ocean. There, we will talk to the white birds that spread their wings over the waves. We will say, "We resemble you, O birds. We care not for our houses, our food and our drink, for we know that God sees us and builds homes for us in His heart. God is the place and time. He feeds us from His harvest and gives us water from eternally flowing springs.

We have abandoned our arms on the footpath and left them to be eaten by rust, for we do not want to cry anymore. We do not seek revenge and do not want to return to our tribes."

Those who sanctify blood die by blood, and those who worship the soul, live with the soul. So, let us live with our souls, and leave the sons of matter to die in their terrestrial bodies. They mourn themselves but no one hears their voices except the pillars of their graves.

We build for peace because peace is life. How many loved ones did we lose when hatred covered our eyes, rendering us blind, and when smoke covered our clothing?

If you still have eyes, look at your past and see the agony that chases you. Learn that those who waged wars did not conquer, and those who used their weapons to kill the innocent vanished. Nothing remained but the gloomy pages in history books and statues that were eroded by the winds during the winter nights.

Return, my beloved children, to the white homes that you built in your villages, where you had lit your fireplaces and chanted for the seasons. Go back to your wells and tales, to the harmony of the rivers, to the cooing of doves on your roofs, and to the soul you abandoned without a word of farewell.

Your souls are crying from pain and asking about their children. However, only nothingness answers.

You are sad because your beloved sailed to the shores of the unknown and locked the doors of time. They cut their trees and left them in the lap of the night. So, when will your sadness end and your days rejoice?

The voice of God is the voice of innocence. Do not lose your innocence, for Mother Nature does not want you to fight for it. It is frustrating that you have succumb to disgrace, and your names are written on the slabs of defeat. But, it is amazing how you read these names and say, 'Look, our names are written in the book of eternity.'

You can achieve immortality through your love, both now and in the future. Hatred, however, cannot make you immortal, for hatred and death are one. Hence, look for your permanence in the city of life, and do not carry your coffins and walk towards the city of nonsense any longer. Nonsense itself does not desire you when you fill your bodies with hatred and celebrate revenge and destruction."



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