

## **EXTRACTS FROM AN EPISTLE TO MUHAMMAD SHAH**

THE substance wherewith God hath created Me is not the clay out of which others have been formed. He hath conferred upon Me that which the worldly-wise can never comprehend, nor the faithful discover ... I am one of the sustaining pillars of the Primal Word of God. Whosoever hath recognized Me, hath known all that is true and right, and hath attained all that is good and seemly; and whosoever hath failed to recognize Me, hath turned away from all that is true and right and hath succumbed to everything evil and unseemly.

I swear by the righteousness of Thy Lord, the Lord of all created things, the Lord of all the worlds! Were a man to rear in this world as many edifices as possible and worship God through every virtuous deed which God's knowledge embraceth, and attain the presence of the Lord, and were he, even to a measure less than that which is accountable before God, to bear in his heart a trace of malice towards Me, all his deeds would be reduced to naught and he would be deprived of the glances of God's favour, become the object of His wrath and assuredly perish. For God hath ordained that all the good things which lie in the treasury of His knowledge shall be attained through obedience unto Me, and every fire recorded in His Book, through disobedience unto Me. Methinks in this day and from this station I behold all those who cherish My love and follow My behest abiding within the mansions of Paradise, and the entire company of Mine adversaries consigned to the lowest depths of hell-fire.

By My life! But for the obligation to acknowledge the Cause of Him Who is the Testimony of God ... I would not have announced this unto thee... All the keys of heaven God hath chosen to place on My right hand, and all the keys of hell on My left...

I am the Primal Point from which have been generated all created things. I am the Countenance of God Whose splendour can never be obscured, the Light of God

Whose radiance can never fade. Whoso recognizeth Me, assurance and all good are in store for him, and whoso faileth to recognize Me, infernal fire and all evil await him...

I swear by God, the Peerless, the Incomparable, the True One: for no other reason hath He -- the supreme Testimony of God -- invested Me with clear signs and tokens than that all men may be enabled to submit to His Cause.

By the righteousness of Him Who is the Absolute Truth, were the veil to be lifted, thou wouldst witness on this earthly plane all men sorely afflicted with the fire of the wrath of God, a fire fiercer and greater than the fire of hell, with the exception of those who have sought shelter beneath the shade of the tree of My love. For they in very truth are the blissful...

God beareth Me witness, I was not a man of learning, for I was trained as a merchant. In the year sixty<sup>1</sup> God graciously infused my soul with the conclusive evidences and weighty knowledge which characterize Him Who is the Testimony of God -- may peace be upon Him -- until finally in that year I proclaimed God's hidden Cause and unveiled its well-guarded Pillar, in such wise that no one could refute it. 'That he who should perish might perish with a clear proof before him and he who should live might live by clear proof.'<sup>2</sup>

In that same year [year 60] I despatched a messenger and a book unto thee, that thou mightest act towards the Cause of Him Who is the Testimony of God as befitteth the station of thy sovereignty. But inasmuch as dark, dreadful and dire calamity had been irrevocably ordained by the Will of God, the book was not submitted to thy presence, through the intervention of such as regard themselves the well-wishers of the government. Up to the present, when nearly four years have passed, they have not duly presented it to Your Majesty. However, now that the fateful hour is drawing nigh, and because it is a matter of faith, not a worldly concern, therefore I have given thee a glimpse of what hath transpired.

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<sup>1</sup> 1260 A.H. (1844 A.D.)

<sup>2</sup> Qur'án 8:44

I swear by God! Shouldst thou know the things which in the space of these four years have befallen Me at the hands of thy people and thine army, thou wouldst hold thy breath from fear of God, unless thou wouldst rise to obey the Cause of Him Who is the Testimony of God and make amends for thy shortcomings and failure.

While I was in Shiraz the indignities which befell Me at the hands of its wicked and depraved Governor waxed so grievous that if thou wert acquainted with but a tithe thereof, thou wouldst deal him retributive justice. For as a result of his unmitigated oppression, thy royal court hath become, until the Day of Resurrection, the object of the wrath of God. Moreover, his indulgence in alcohol had grown so excessive that he was never sober enough to make a sound judgement. Therefore, disquieted, I was obliged to set out from Shiraz with the aim of attaining the enlightened and exalted court of Your Majesty. The Mu'tamidu'd-Dawlih then became aware of the truth of the Cause and manifested exemplary servitude and devotion to His chosen ones. When some of the ignorant people in his city arose to stir up sedition, he defended the divine Truth by affording Me protection for a while in the privacy of the Governor's residence. At length, having attained the good-pleasure of God, he repaired to his habitation in the all-highest Paradise. May God reward him graciously...

Following his ascension to the eternal Kingdom, the vicious Gurgin, resorting to all manner of treachery, false oaths and coercion, sent Me away from Isfahan with an escort of five guards on a journey which lasted seven days, without providing the barest necessities for My travel (Alas! Alas! for the things which have touched Me!), until eventually Your Majesty's order came, instructing Me to proceed to Maku...

I swear by the Most Great Lord! Wert thou to be told in what place I dwell, the first person to have mercy on Me would be thyself. In the heart of a mountain is a fortress [Maku] ... the inmates of which are confined to two guards and four dogs. Picture, then, My plight... I swear by the truth of God! Were he who hath been willing to treat Me in such a manner to know Who it is Whom he hath so treated, he, verily, would never in his life be happy. Nay -- I, verily, acquaint thee with the

truth of the matter -- it is as if he hath imprisoned all the Prophets, and all the men of truth and all the chosen ones...

When this decree was made known unto Me, I wrote to him who administereth the affairs of the kingdom, saying: 'Put Me to death, I adjure thee by God, and send My head wherever thou pleasest. For surely an innocent person such as I, cannot reconcile himself to being consigned to a place reserved for criminals and let his life continue.' My plea remained unanswered. Evidently His Excellency the Haji, is not fully aware of the truth of our Cause. It would be far more heinous a deed to sadden the hearts of the faithful, whether men or women, than to lay waste the sacred House of God.

Verily, the One True God beareth Me witness that in this Day I am the true mystic Fane of God, and the Essence of all good. He who doeth good unto Me, it is as if he doeth good unto God, His angels and the entire company of His loved ones. He who doeth evil unto Me, it is as if he doeth evil unto God and His chosen ones. Nay, too exalted is the station of God and of His loved ones for any person's good or evil deed to reach their holy threshold. Whatever reacheth Me is ordained to reach Me; and that which hath come unto Me, to him who giveth will it revert. By the One in Whose hand is My soul, he hath cast no one but himself into prison. For assuredly whatsoever God hath decreed for Me shall come to pass and naught else save that which God hath ordained for us shall ever touch us. Woe betide him from whose hands floweth evil, and blessed the man from whose hands floweth good. Unto no one do I take My plaint save to God; for He is the best of judges. Every state of adversity or bliss is from Him alone, and He is the All-Powerful, the Almighty.

In brief, I hold within My grasp whatsoever any man might wish of the good of this world and of the next. Were I to remove the veil, all would recognize Me as their Best Beloved, and no one would deny Me. Let not this assertion astound Your Majesty; inasmuch as a true believer in the unity of God who keepeth his eyes directed towards Him alone, will regard aught else but Him as utter nothingness. I swear by God! I seek no earthly goods from thee, be it as much as a mustard seed. Indeed, to possess anything of this world or of the next would, in My estimation, be tantamount to open blasphemy. For it ill beseemeth the believer in the unity of

God to turn his gaze to aught else, much less to hold it in his possession. I know of a certainty that since I have God, the Ever-Living, the Adored One, I am the possessor of all things, visible and invisible...

In this mountain I have remained alone, and have come to such a pass that none of those gone before Me have suffered what I have suffered, nor any transgressor endured what I have endured! I render praise unto God and yet again praise Him. I find Myself free from sorrow, inasmuch as I abide within the good-pleasure of My Lord and Master. Methinks I am in the all-highest Paradise, rejoicing at My communion with God, the Most Great. Verily this is a bounty which God hath conferred upon Me; and He is the Lord of unbounded blessings.

I swear by the truth of God! Wert thou to know that which I know, thou wouldst forgo the sovereignty of this world and of the next, that thou mightest attain My good-pleasure, through thine obedience unto the True One... Wert thou to refuse, the Lord of the world would raise up one who would exalt His Cause, and the Command of God would, verily, be carried into effect.

Through the grace of God nothing can frustrate My purpose, and I am fully conscious of that which God hath bestowed upon Me as a token of His favour. If it were My will, I would disclose to Your Majesty all things; but I have not done this, nor will I do it, that the Truth may be distinguished from aught else beside it, and this prophecy uttered by the Imam Baqir -- may peace rest upon Him -- be fully realized: 'What must needs befall us in Adhirbayjan is inevitable and without parallel. When this happeneth, rest ye in your homes and remain patient as we have remained patient. As soon as the Mover moveth make ye haste to attain unto Him, even though ye have to crawl over the snow.'

I implore pardon of God for Myself and for all things related to Me and affirm, 'Praise be to God, the Lord of all the worlds'.