# Fifteen Notes

*Introduction[[1]](#footnote-1)*

*Twelve years before this Flash was written,[[2]](#footnote-2) I wrote down in note form in Arabic in such treatises as Zühre, Şu’le, Habbe, Şemme, Zerre, and Katre, a number of flashes concerning divine unity which became clear to me through dominical grace during an unfolding of the spirit and progress of the mind and journey of the heart in divine knowledge. But since they were written to show only one tip of a lengthy truth and point out only one beam of a shining light, and since each was in the form of a memento and reminder for myself only, their benefits for others were limited, and particularly as the great majority of my most select and special brothers were unable to read Arabic. On their insistent and pressing requests, therefore, I was obliged to write in Turkish an approximation of those notes, those flashes, in part expounding them and in part abbreviating them. Since these notes and Arabic treatises form the first of the New Said’s works proceeding from the knowledge of reality, which he, to a degree, witnessed in the form of illumination, their meanings have been written unchanged. Because of this, a number of the sentences are included here despite being mentioned in others of the Words. And some are not expounded despite being very concise, so that the refinement of the original should not be lost.*

# First Note

I addressed myself saying: O heedless Said! Know that it is unworthy of you to attach your heart to something that will not accompany you after this world comes to an end and on its destruction will part from you. It is not reasonable to fasten your heart to transitory things that will turn their backs on you and leave you when the age in which you live comes to an end, and will not befriend you on the journey through the Intermediate Realm, or accompany you to the door of the grave,[[3]](#footnote-3) and which, leaving you forever after one or two years, will burden you with their sins and out of spite abandon you at the moment of accomplishment.

If you are sensible, you will give up matters that will be shattered and destroyed under the blows of worldly revolutions and the stages of the Intermediate Realm and clashing upheavals of the hereafter; which are not able to accompany and befriend you on the journey to eternity. Give them no importance! Do not grieve at their passing!

Consider your own nature; among your subtle faculties is one that will be content with nothing other than eternity and the Eternal One. It can address itself to none but He. It cannot demean itself for any other. Should you give it the whole world, it would not satisfy that innate need. It is the sovereign of your senses and faculties. So obey it, for it obeys the All-Wise Creator’s command! Find salvation!

# Second Note

 I had a true dream in which I said to people: *“O man! One of the Qur’an’s principles is this: consider nothing other than Almighty God to be greater than yourself to the degree that you worship it. And do not consider yourself to be greater than anything else to the degree that you become arrogant and haughty before it. For just as all creatures are equal in regard to their distance from being fit to be worshipped, so too are they equal in regard to their createdness.”*

# Third Note

 O heedless Said! You have illusions and see the exceedingly temporary world as undying and permanent. When you look around yourself at the world, you see it as stable to a degree, and constant. Since looking with the same view you also consider your own transient self to be constant, you only take fright at Doomsday. You are only frightened at that as though you were going to live till then.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Use your reason! You and your personal world are perpetually subject to the blows of death and decline. Your illusion and sophistry resemble this comparison: if you have a mirror and hold it up to a house or a town or a garden, their images will appear in it. If the mirror is moved the tiniest amount or the smallest change occurs to it, the images become confused and distorted. The fact that the actual house, town or garden outside the mirror continue and are constant is of no avail to you, for the house in the mirror in your hand and your town and garden are only in the scale and proportions which the mirror gives you.

Your life is the mirror. The support and mirror of your world and its center is your life. Every minute it is possible that the house, town, and garden will die and be destroyed, their condition is such that any minute they may collapse on your head and your doomsday will come. Since it is thus, do not burden this life and world of yours with loads they cannot raise and support!

# Fourth Note

Know that it is generally the practice of the All-Wise Creator to return important and valuable things exactly the same. That is to say, renewing most things in similar form in the alternating of the seasons and changing of the centuries, He returns the things of value and importance exactly. This law of divine practice is seen to be mostly unvarying in the resurrections of the days, years, and centuries.

In consequence of this constant law, we say: since according to the agreement and testimony of science, man is the most perfect fruit of the tree of creation, and among creatures is the most important, and the most valuable, and since a human person is equivalent to a species of the other animals, it may be surmised with certainty that at the supreme resurrection, each human being will be returned exactly the same, with his body and all his attributes.

# Fifth Note

Western science and civilization had to some extent a place in the Old Said’s thought, so when the New Said embarked on his journeys of the mind and the heart, they were transformed into sicknesses of the heart and were the cause of excessive difficulties. The New Said therefore wanted to shake off from his mind that fallacious philosophy and dissolute civilization. In order to silence the emotions of his evil- commanding soul, which testified in favor of Europe, he was compelled to hold in his spirit the following discussion – which in one respect is very brief and in another is long – with the collective personality of Europe.

It should not be misunderstood; Europe is twofold. One follows the sciences which serve justice and right and the industries beneficial for the life of society through the inspiration it has received from true Christianity; this first Europe I am not addressing. I am addressing the second corrupt Europe which, through the darkness of the philosophy of Naturalism, supposing the evils of civilization to be its virtues, has driven mankind to vice and misguidance. As follows:

On my journey of the spirit at that time I said to Europe’s collective personality, which apart from beneficial science and the virtues of civilization, holds in its hand meaningless, harmful philosophy and noxious, dissolute civilization:

Know this, O second Europe! You hold a diseased and misguided philosophy in your right hand and a harmful and corrupt civilization in your left, and claim, *“Mankind’s happiness is with these two!”* May your two hands be broken and may these two filthy presents of yours be the death of you! And so they shall be!

O you unhappy spirit which spreads unbelief and ingratitude! Can a man who is suffering torments and is afflicted with ghastly calamities in both his spirit and his conscience and his mind and his heart be happy through his body wallowing in a superficial, deceptive glitter and wealth? Can it be said that he is happy?

Don’t you see that on feeling despair at some minor matter and his hope for some illusory wish being lost and his being disillusioned at some insignificant business, such a person’s sweet imaginings become bitter for him, what is pleasant torments him, and the world constricts him and becomes a prison for him?

But what happiness can you ensure for such a wretched person who through your inauspiciousness has suffered the blows of misguidance in the deepest corners of his heart to the very foundations of his spirit, and because of this whose hopes have all been extinguished and whose pains all arise from it? Can it be said of someone whose body is in a false and fleeting paradise and whose heart and spirit are suffering the torments of Hell that he is happy? See, you have led astray wretched mankind in this way! You make them suffer the torments of Hell in a false heaven!

O evil-commanding soul of mankind! Consider the following comparison and see where you have driven mankind. For example, there are two roads before us. We take one of them and see that at every step is some wretched, powerless person. Tyrants are attacking him, seizing his property and goods, and destroying his humble house. Sometimes they wound him as well. The heavens weep at his pitiful state. Wherever one looks, things are continuing in this vein. The sounds heard on this way are the roars of tyrants and the groans of the oppressed; a universal mourning envelops the entire way. A person is afflicted with a boundless grief since due to his humanity man is pained at the suffering of others. But because his conscience cannot endure so much pain, one who travels this way is compelled to do one of two things: either he strips off his humanity and embracing a boundless savagery bears such a heart that so long as he is safe and sound, he is not affected even if all the rest of mankind perish, or else he suppresses the demands of the heart and reason.

O Europe corrupted with vice and misguidance and drawn far from the religion of Jesus! You have bestowed this hellish state on the human spirit with your blind genius which, like the Dajjal,[[5]](#footnote-5) has only a single eye.[[6]](#footnote-6) You afterwards understood that this incurable disease casts man down from the highest of the high to the lowest of the low, and reduces him to the basest level of animality. The only remedy you have found for it are the fantasies of entertainment and amusement and anodyne diversions which temporarily numb the senses. These remedies of yours are being the death of you, and so they shall be. There! The road you have opened up for mankind and the happiness you have given it resembles this comparison.

The second road, the All-Wise Qur’an has bestowed on mankind; it is like this: We see that in every stopping-place, every spot, every town are patrols of a Just Monarch’s equitable soldiers doing the rounds. From time to time at the King’s command a group of the soldiers is discharged. Their rifles, horses and gear belonging to the state are taken from them and they are given their leave papers. They are apparently sad to hand over their familiar rifles and horses, but in reality are happy to be discharged and extremely pleased to visit the Monarch and return to his court.

Sometimes the demobilization officials encounter a raw recruit who does not recognize them. *“Surrender your rifle!,”* they say. The soldier replies: *“I am a soldier of the King and I am in his service. I shall go to him later. Who are you? If you come with His permission and consent, I greet you with pleasure, show me His orders. Otherwise go away and stay far from me. Even if I remain on my own and there are thousands of you, I shall still fight you, and it would not for myself, because I do not own myself; I belong to my King. Indeed, myself and the rifle I have now are in trust from my owner. I shall not submit to you because I have to safeguard the trust and defend my King’s honor and dignity!”*

This situation then is one of thousands on the second way which are the cause of joy and happiness. You can think of the others for yourself. Throughout the journey there is the mobilization and dispatch of troops with joy and celebrations under the name of birth, and the discharge of troops with cheer and military bands under the name of death. This road has been bestowed on mankind by the All-Wise Qur’an. Whoever accepts the gift wholeheartedly travels down it to happiness in this world and the next. He feels neither grief at the things of the past nor fear at those of the future.

O second corrupted Europe! A number of your rotten and baseless foundations are as follows. You say: *“Every living being from the greatest angel to the tiniest fish owns itself and works for itself and struggles for its own pleasure. It has the right to life. Its aim and purpose and all its endeavor is to live and continue its life.”* And you declare idiotically: *“Life is conflict,”* because you supposed to be conflict the compassionate, munificent manifestations of the universal law of the All-Generous Creator which is manifested through plants hastening to the assistance of animals and animals hastening to the assistance of man through a principle of mutual assistance, which is conformed to in perfect obedience by all the principal beings of the universe.

How can particles of food hastening with total eagerness to nourish the cells of the body – a manifestation of the principle of mutual assistance – be conflict? How can it be a clash and struggle? It is, rather, mutual help at the command of a Munificent Sustainer.

Another of your rotten foundations is, as you say: *“Everything owns itself.”* A clear proof that nothing owns itself is this: among causes the most noble and with regard to choice the one with the most extensive will is man. But out of the most obvious acts connected to man’s will like thinking, speaking, and eating, only a hundredth single, doubtful, part is subject to his will and is within his power. So how can it be said that he owns himself?

If the highest beings with the most extensive will are thus inhibited from real power and ownership to this degree, someone who says that the rest of beings, animate and inanimate, own themselves merely proves that he is more animal than the animals and more lifeless and unconscious than inanimate beings.

What pushes you to make such an error and casts you into this abyss is your one-eyed genius. That is, your extraordinary, ill-omened brilliance. Due to that blind genius of yours, you have forgotten your Sustainer, who is the Creator of all things, you have attributed His works to imaginary nature and causes, you have divided up the Creator’s property among idols, false gods. In regard to this and in the view of your genius, every living creature and every human being has to resist innumerable enemies on his own and struggle to procure his endless needs. They are compelled to do this with the power of a minute particle, a fine thread-like will, a fleeting flash-like consciousness, a fast extinguishing flame-like life, a life which passes in a minute. But the capital of those wretched animate creatures is insufficient to answer even one of the thousands of their demands. When smitten by disaster, they can await no salve for their pain other than from deaf, blind causes. They manifest the meaning of the verse:

*For the prayer of those without faith is nothing but [futile] wandering [in the mind].(13:14)*

Your dark genius has transformed mankind’s daytime into night. And in order to warm that dark, distressing, unquiet night, you have only illuminated men with deceptive, temporary lamps. Those lamps do not smile at them with joy, they rather smirk idiotically at their pitiful and lamentable state. Those lights mock and make fun of them.

In the view of your pupils, all living beings are miserable, calamity-striken, and subject to the assaults of oppressors. The world is a place of universal mourning. Issuing from it are cries and wails at death and suffering. The pupil who has absorbed your instruction thoroughly becomes a pharaoh. But he is an abject pharaoh who worships the basest things and holds himself to be lord over everything he reckons advantageous. Student of yours is obstinate, but an obstinate wretch who accepts utter abasement for a single pleasure. He is so despicable as to kiss Satan’s foot for some worthless benefit. And he is a bully. But because he has nothing in his heart on which to rely, he is an impotent bullying braggart. His whole aim and endeavor is to satisfy the lusts of his soul, to cunningly seek his own personal interests under the screen of patriotism and devotion, and work to satisfy his ambition and pride. He loves seriously nothing at all other than himself and sacrifices everything for his own sake.

As for the sincere, wholehearted student of the Qur’an, he is a worshipping servant. But he is an esteemed servant who does not stoop to bow in worship before even the mightiest of creatures, and does not make the supreme benefit of Paradise the aim of his worship. And he is mild and gentle, but at the same time noble and gracious and lowers himself before none but the All-Glorious Creator, and only stoops before the lowly with His permission and at His command. And he is needy, but due to the reward his All-Generous Owner is storing up for him in the future, he is at the same time self-sufficient. And he is weak, but he is strong in his weakness for he relies on the strength of his Lord whose power is infinite. Would the Qur’an make its true student take this fleeting, transient world as his aim and purpose while not making him have even eternal Paradise as his goal? Thus you can understand how the two students’ aims and endeavors differ from one another.

You can further compare the zeal and self-sacrifice of the All-Wise Qur’an’s students with the pupils of sick philosophy as follows:

The student of philosophy flees from his brother for his own sake and a files a lawsuit against him. Whereas, looking on all the righteous worshippers in the heavens and on the earth as brothers, the Qur’an’s student makes supplication for them in sincere fashion. He is happy at their happiness and he feels a powerful connection with them in his spirit, so that praying he says: *“Oh God, grant forgiveness to all believing men and women!”* Furthermore, he considers the greatest things, the divine throne and the sun, to be subservient officials, and servants and creatures like himself.

Also, compare in the following the loftiness and expansion of spirit of the two students: the Qur’an imparts such a joyous elevation to its students’ spirits that instead of the ninety-nine prayer-beads, it places in their hands the minute particles of ninety- nine worlds displaying the manifestations of the ninety-nine divine names, and tells them to recite their invocations with them. Listen to the invocations of such students of the Qur’an as Shah Geylani, Rufa’i, and Shazali (May God be pleased with them)! See, in their fingers are the strings of particles, the droplets of water, the breaths of all creatures, and recite their invocations with them. They praise and glorify God with them and mention His most beautiful names.

Behold the miraculous instruction of the Qur’an of Miraculous Exposition and see how man is elevated by it – insignificant man who is stunned and confused at some minor grief or tiny sorrow and is defeated by a microscopic germ. How his inner senses expand so that the beings in the mighty world appear inadequate as prayer-beads for his invocations. He considers Paradise to be insufficient as the aim of his invocations and recitations of the divine names, yet he does not see himself as superior to the lowest of Almighty God’s creatures.[[7]](#footnote-7) He combines the utmost dignity with the utmost humility. You can see from this how abject and base are philosophy’s students.

Thus, the guidance of the Qur’an – which looks at the two worlds with two shining eyes familiar with the Unseen and points with two hands to the two happiness for mankind – says concerning the truths which the one-eyed genius proceeding from the sick philosophy of Europe sees wrongly:

O man! The self and property you hold is not yours; it is in trust to you. The owner of the trust is an All-Compassionate and Munificent One, powerful over all things and with knowledge of all things. He wants to buy from you the property you hold so that He can guard it for you and it will not be lost. He will give you a good price for it in the future. You are a soldier under orders and charged with duties. Work in His name and act on His account, for He sends you the things you need as sustenance and protects you from the things you are unable to bear. The aim and result of this life of yours is to manifest your Owner’s names and attributes. When a calamity comes your way, say:

*To God we belong, and to Him is our return.(2:156)*

That is to say, *“I am in the service of my Owner, O calamity! If you have come with His permission and consent, greetings, you are welcome! For anyway some time we shall return to Him and enter His presence, and we yearn for Him. Since He will release us from the responsibilities of life, let the release and discharge be at your hand, O calamity, I consent to it. But if He has decreed your coming as a trial for my dutifulness and loyalty in preserving my trust, then without His permission and consent to surrender it to you, so long as I have the power, I will not surrender my Owner’s trust to one not certainly charged to receive it.”*

Consider this one example out of a thousand and see the degrees in the instruction given by the genius of philosophy and guidance of the Qur’an. In reality, the two sides proceed in the manner described above, but the degrees of people in guidance and misguidance differ, and the degrees of heedlessness differ. Not everyone can perceive completely this truth in every degree, because heedlessness numbs the senses. In the present age it has so deadened them that the civilized do not feel this grievous pain and suffering. However, sensitivity is increasing and rending the veil of heedlessness due to developments in science and the warnings of death which every day displays thirty thousand corpses. Utter abhorrence and a thousand regrets should be felt for those who take the way of misguidance due to the Europeans’ idols and the natural sciences, and for those who follow them in blind imitation!

O sons of this land! Do not try to imitate Europeans! How can you reasonably trust in and follow the vice and invalid, worthless thought of Europe after the boundless tyranny and enmity it has shown you? No! No! You who imitate them in dissoluteness, are not following them but unconsciously joining their ranks and putting to death both yourselves and your brothers. Know that the more you follow them in immorality the more you lie in claiming to be patriots! Because to follow them in this way is to hold your nation in contempt, to hold the nation up to ridicule!

God guides us, and you, to the Straight Path.

# Sixth Note

 O you unhappy person who is alarmed at the great numbers of the unbelievers and their agreement in denying some of the truths of belief, and as a result is shaken in his faith! You should know that value and importance do not lie in quantity and number. For if man is not a true human being, he is transformed into a diabolical animal, and the more he increases in animal greed, the more animal he becomes – like some Europeans and their imitators. You can see that in number, men are extremely few in comparison to the countless animals, and yet they are sovereign rulers over all the animal species and vicegerents of the earth.

The harmful unbelievers and those depraved wretches who follow in their way are a vicious species among Almighty God’s animals which the All-Wise Maker has created for the development and prosperity of the world. He has made them a unit of measurement in order to make known to His believing servants the degrees of the bounties He has bestowed on them, and finally will consign those animals to the Hell they deserve.

There is no power in the unbelievers and misguided denying or disputing any truth of belief. Their agreement lacks power; a thousand deniers are equal to one denier. Even if the whole population of Istanbul, for example, denies seeing the new moon at the beginning of Ramadan, the proven testimony of two witnesses invalidates that great multitude’s negation and agreement.[[8]](#footnote-8) In reality unbelief and misguidance are negation and denial, so are ignorance and non-existence, and the agreement of large numbers of unbelievers even has no significance.[[9]](#footnote-9) Since matters of belief are true and established, and their validity is proven, the judgement of two believers based on certain witnessing takes preference and prevails over the agreement of those vast numbers of the misguided. The reason for this is as follows:

Superficially, the claims of those who deny are the same but in fact they are diverse and cannot unite and so gain strength. While the claims of those who affirm unite and receive strength from each other. This is because a person who does not see the new moon of Ramadan in the sky says: *“In my view, there is no moon. It has not appeared that I can see.”* And another says: “In my view, the moon has not appeared.” And so does another. Each says that in his view, there is no moon. Since the view of each is different, and the causes that prevent them seeing it may also be different, their claims are all different as well; each claim cannot reinforce the other claims. But those who are affirming it are not saying: *“In my view and opinion the new moon is there,”* but, *“The new moon has actually appeared in the sky.”* Those who sight it all make the same claim and say: *“In actuality...”* That is to say, all the claims are the same. But since the views of those who are denying it are all different, their claims also are different. They are not making the judgement according to what actually is. Because a negation of what actually pertains cannot be proved; for that, an all- embracing proof is necessary.

It is an established rule that *“absolute non-existence can only be proved with extreme difficulty.”[[10]](#footnote-10)* Yes, if you claim that a particular thing exists in the world, it is enough to merely point that thing out. But if you say it does not exist and you deny it, the whole world has to be sifted through in order to demonstrate it so that the denial can be proved. It is in consequence of this that the unbelievers denying a truth is like solving a problem or passing through a narrow hole or jumping over a ditch; it makes no difference whether there is one man or a thousand, because they cannot help one another. But since those who affirm look at the heart of the matter and reality of the situation, their claims unite and the individual strength of each of them combines and assists all. It resembles lifting a great boulder: the more hands there are, the stronger they are and the easier it becomes.

# Seventh Note

O miserable pseudo-patriot who fervently encourages Muslims to embrace this world and forcibly drives them to European industry and progress! Beware, don’t let the bonds be broken that tie certain members of this nation to religion! If thus foolishly blindly imitating and crushed under foot, their bonds with religion are broken, those irreligious people will become as harmful for social life as fatal poison. For the apostate’s conscience is completely corrupted and he becomes like poison in the life of society. It is because of this that according to the science of the principles of religion, “The apostate forfeits the right to life, whereas if an unbeliever is a member of the protected minorities or he makes peace, he has the right to life;” this is a principle of the Shari‘a.[[11]](#footnote-11) Furthermore, according to the Hanafi school, the testimony of such an unbeliever is acceptable,[[12]](#footnote-12) whereas the testimony of someone who has strayed from the path of the Shari‘a is rejected. For he is perfidious.[[13]](#footnote-13)

O miserable sinner who has deviated from Shari‘a! Do not look at the multitude of the dissolute and be deceived; do not say: *“Most people think the same as me!”* For the depraved do not want to embrace depravity; they rather fall into it and cannot extricate themselves. There is no sinner who does not want to be righteous and who does not want to see his superior and chief as religious. Other than if – I seek refuge with God! – his conscience is corrupted through apostasy and he receives pleasure from poisoning, like a snake.

O crazy head and corrupted heart! Do you suppose that Muslims do not love the world, or that they do not think about the poverty into which they have fallen, and that they are in need of admonishment so that they do not forget their share of the world?

Your supposition is false, your surmise, wrong. Their greed has increased; that is the reason they are impoverished. Because for Muslims, greed causes loss and indigence. The saying: *“The greedy is subject to loss and disappointment”*[[14]](#footnote-14) has become proverbial.

Yes, there are many things calling and driving man to the world, like his soul and its appetites, and need, and his senses and emotions, and the Devil, and the superficial enticement of the world, and false friends like you. While those who call to the hereafter, which lasts forever, and to long-lasting eternal life, are few. If you are patriotic even to the tiniest degree towards this nation and the high aspirations you brag about are not lies, you should help the few who call to eternal life. For if you silence them and help the many, you will be befriending Satan!

Do you suppose this nation’s poverty is the result of a sort of religious asceticism or of laziness arising from abandoning the world? You are wrong to suppose that. Do you not see that the nations dominated by Europe, such as China and the Brahmins and Zoroastrians of India, and the blacks of Africa are poorer than we are? And do you not see that nothing apart from the most basic subsistence is left in the hands of Muslims? The rest is either stolen or seized by the European infidel tyrants or the dissemblers of Asia.

You should be certain that if your intention in forcibly driving the people of belief to degenerate civilization in this way is the country’s law and order and easy administration, you are mistaken and you are driving them down the wrong path. For it is more difficult to govern a hundred degenerates whose belief is shaken and morals corrupted, and to maintain public security among them, than to govern thousands of the righteous.

Thus, according to these principles, the people of Islam are not in need of being encouraged and driven to the world and to greed. Progress and public order cannot be secured in that way. They are rather in need of having their working conditions set in order, of security being established among them, and of having the principle of co- operation encouraged. And these needs can be brought about through the sacred commands of religion, and fear of God, and firm adherence to religion.

# Eighth Note

 O idle man who is unaware of the pleasure of effort and happiness of work! Know that out of His perfect munificence, Almighty God placed the reward for work within it. He included the wage for work within the work itself. It is for this reason that in their particular duties, which are called creative commands, animate beings, and even from one point of view inanimate creatures, conform to the dominical commands with complete eagerness and a sort of pleasure. Everything from bees, flies, and chickens to the sun and the moon carry out their duties with perfect pleasure. This means there is an enjoyment in their work so that they perform it perfectly, although they do not think of the results since they do not possess intelligence.

If you ask: *“Living creatures have the ability to receive pleasure, but how can inanimate beings experience eagerness and enjoyment?”*

The Answer: Inanimate beings desire and seek a position, a rank, perfection, beauty, and order, not on their own accounts but on account of the divine names manifested on them. They become illumined and progress because in performing their natural duties, they become like mirrors and places of reflection of the names of the Light of Lights.

For example, if, although they are unimportant and of themselves without light, a droplet of water or fragment of glass are turned with their pure hearts to the sun, they become thrones to the sun and smile at you. Similarly, by being mirrors in respect of their duties towards the names of the All-Glorious One, who possesses absolute beauty and perfection, particles and beings rise from a very lowly position to a most elevated degree of manifestation and illumination like the droplet and fragment of glass. Since they rise to a luminous and exalted rank by virtue of their duties, it may be said that if it is possible and they have the capacity to receive pleasure, that is, if they receive a share of general life, they perform their duties with perfect pleasure.

For clear evidence of the pleasure to be found in the performance of duties consider your own members and emotions. Each receives different pleasures in performing the duties connected to your personal survival and the survival of the human race. The duties themselves are a means of enjoyment for them, and to give up a duty is a sort of torment for a member.

Further clear evidence is the self-sacrifice and courage which such animals as cocks and hens with chicks display in performing their duties: even if hungry, the cock prefers the hens to itself, summoning them to feed. It does not peck up the food itself but allows them to do so. And it is clear that it feels pleasure, pride and enjoyment in carrying out this duty. This means it receives greater pleasure from carrying out the duty than from feeding. The hen too will sacrifice its life for its chicks, throwing itself at a dog. It will also remain hungry and give them grain. That is to say, it receives such pleasure in its duty that it makes preferable the pains of hunger and pangs of death.

Animal mothers receive pleasure in trying to protect their young, it is their duty when the young are small. When the young are grown, the duty ceases and so does the pleasure. The mothers beat their offspring and take the grains of feed from them. Only, for human mothers the duties continue for some time, for due to their weakness and impotence, humans are always children in one respect, and are all the time in need of compassion.

Consider the males and females of the animal species, like the mother hen and the cock, which acts as shepherd, and understand that they do not perform these duties on their own account, in their own names, or for their own perfections. For if they have to sacrifice their lives in the course of their duties, they do so. They rather perform them on account of the Munificent Bestower of Bounties, the All-Glorious Creator, who employs them in their duties, in which, through His mercy, He includes pleasure.

Evidence that the wage is present in the duty itself is this: plants and trees conform to the Glorious Creator’s commands in a manner that implies eagerness and pleasure. For the fragrant scents they disperse, and their being adorned with decorations that attract the glances of their customers, and their sacrificing themselves for their shoots and fruits until they rot, shows to the attentive that they receive such pleasure in conforming to the divine commands that it rots and destroys them.

Look, fruit-bearing trees like the coconut, which bears so many cans of milk on its head, and the fig, request through the tongue of disposition the finest food like milk from the treasury of mercy; they receive it and give it to their fruits to eat, while they content themselves with muddy water.

In seeds also a longing is clearly apparent in their duty of germinating and sending out shoots. Like someone imprisoned in a constricted place longs to go out into a garden or open space, such a longing, such a joyful state, is also apparent in seeds, in their duty of sprouting.

It is because of this long and mysterious principle, which is in force in the universe and is called a divine practice that those idle, lazy people who live in ease and affluence for the most part suffer more distress than those who strive and work. For the idle always complain about their lives and want to pass them quickly by indulging in amusements. Whereas the one who works and strives is thankful and offers praise and does not want his life to pass quickly. *“The person who lives in idleness and ease complains about his life, while the industrious striver is thankful”* is a universal principle. It is also for this reason that the saying *“Ease lies in hardship, and hardship in ease”* has become proverbial.

Indeed, if inanimate creatures are studied carefully, it will be seen that on their undeveloped innate capacities and abilities expanding from the potential to the actual through great effort and exertion, a state similar to the above-mentioned divine practice comes about. This shows that the natural duty produces an eagerness and pleasure. If the inanimate creature partakes of general life, the eagerness is its own; otherwise it pertains to the thing which represents and supervises the creature. It may even be said that when subtle, delicate water receives the command to freeze, it conforms with such intense eagerness that it may split iron, breaking it into pieces. That is to say, in conveying the dominical command of *“Expand!”* with the tongue of freezing sub-zero temperature to the water in a closed iron container, it breaks the container with its intense eagerness. It splits the iron and itself becomes ice.

You can make analogies with this for everything. From the rotations of the suns and their peregrinations to the Mevlevi-like spinning and turning and vibrations of minute particles, all striving and motion in the universe turns on the law of divine determining and proceeds from the hand of divine power and is manifested through the creative command which comprises divine will, knowledge, and command.

Each particle, each creature, each living being, even, resembles a soldier who has different relations with all the sections of the army and different duties that look to each; all particles and living beings are similar to this. For example, a particle in your eye has a relation with the cells of the eye, with the eye itself, the facial nerves, and the blood vessels of the body; and it has duties arising from those relations, and yields benefits in accordance with those duties. And so on, you can compare everything with this. Thus, everything testifies to the Necessary Existence of the Pre-Eternal All- Powerful One in two respects:

The First: By carrying out duties far exceeding its own power, everything testifies to the All-Powerful One’s existence.

The Second: By acting in conformity with the laws that form the order of the world and principles that perpetuate the balance of beings, everything testifies to that All-Knowing and All-Powerful One. For lifeless things like particles, and tiny animals like bees cannot know order and balance, which are the subtle matters of the Clear Book. How can a lifeless particle and tiny bee read the subtle, significant matters of the Clear Book, which is in the hand of the All-Glorious One, who opens and closes and gathers up the levels of the heavens as though they were the pages of a notebook? If you crazily suppose the particle possesses an eye capable of reading the fine letters of that book, you can try to refute the particle’s testimony!

Yes, the All-Wise Creator summarizes the principles of the Clear Book in most beautiful form and abbreviated fashion and with a particular pleasure and through a special need, and includes them in beings. If everything acts thus with a particular pleasure out of a particular need, it unknowingly conforms to the principles of the Clear Book. For example, the minute the mosquito with its proboscis comes into the world, it emerges from its house, and without hesitation attacks man’s face; it strikes it with its long staff causing the water of life to spurt out, and it drinks it. It shows the skill of a practiced warrior in dodging the blows directed at it. Who taught the tiny, inexperienced, newly-born creature the science of war and art of extracting water? Where did it learn it? I, that is, this unfortunate Said, confess that if I had been in the place of that mosquito with its proboscis, I could only have learnt this art, this warfare of attack and retreat, this extracting of water, only after lengthy instruction and much experience.

Compare with the mosquito animals like the bee, who receives inspiration, the spider, and the nightingale, who weaves his nest like a stocking, then compare plants to these animals in just the same way. Yes, the Absolutely Generous One (May His glory be exalted) has given each living being a memorandum written with the pen of pleasure and ink of need, and with it has deposited in the being the program of His creative commands and index of its duties. See how the All-Wise One of Glory has written on a receipt the amount concerning the bee’s duties, from the principles of the Clear Book, and placed it in the coffer in the bee’s head. And the key to the coffer is the pleasure particular to the diligent bee. With it, it opens the coffer, reads the program, understands the command, and acts. It proclaims the meaning of the verse,

*And your Sustainer has inspired the bee. (16:68)*

If you have listened to the whole of this Eighth Note and understood it completely, through the intuition of belief you will understand one meaning of,

*And His mercy embraces all things,(7:156)*

and one truth of the verse,

*And there is nothing but it glorifies Him with praise,(17:44)*

and one principle of the verse,

*Verily when He intends a thing, His command is “Be!” and it is,(36:82)*

and one point of the verse,

*So glory to Him in Whose hands is the dominion of all things; and to Him will you all be brought back. (36:83)*

# Ninth Note

 Know that among mankind prophethood is the summary and foundation of human good and perfections; True Religion is the index of prosperity and happiness; belief is sheer, transcendent good. Since apparent in this world are a shining beauty, an extensive and exalted good, an evident truth, and superior perfection, self- evidently truth and reality lie in prophethood and in the hands of prophets. While evil, misguidance, and loss are with those who oppose them.

Of the thousands of merits of worship, consider only the following: the Prophet (UWBP) unites the hearts of the affirmers of divine unity in the prayers of the Festivals and of Friday, and worship performed in congregation. He brings together their tongues in a single phrase so that one man responds to the sublime address of the Pre-Eternal Worshipped One with the voices, supplications, and invocations uttered by innumerable hearts and tongues. Strengthening one other, assisting one other and uniting, those voices, supplications, and invocations display so expansive a worship before the Godhead of the Pre-Eternal All-Worshipped One that the globe of the earth as though recites the invocations, offers the supplications, and performs the prayers with its regions, and conforms with its climes to the command of

*And be steadfast in prayer, (2:43, etc.)*

 which was revealed with glory and tremendousness from beyond the heavens. Through this mystery of unity, man, a miniscule, powerless creature in the universe like a particle, by virtue of the vastness of worship becomes a beloved servant of the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth, vicegerent of the earth, the earth’s ruler and chief of the animals, and the result and aim of the universe’s creation.

Yes, if the voices of hundreds of millions of people proclaiming *“God is Most Great!”* after the five daily prayers, and particularly in the Festival Prayers, unite in the Manifest World as they do in the World of the Unseen, the globe in its entirety becomes a huge human being. Since the *“God is Most Great!”* it proclaims with a mighty voice is equal to its own greatness, the believers in divine unity proclaiming *“God is Most Great!”* at the same instant in unison becomes a mighty *“God is Most Great!”* uttered by the earth.

The earth is as though shaken with a great tremor with the invocations and glorifications of the World of Islam at the Festival Prayers. Proclaiming *“God is Most Great!”* with all its regions and climes, it forms its intention with the pure heart of the Ka‘ba, its qibla, and on its uttering *“God is Most Great!”* with the tongue of Mount Arafat in the mouth of Mecca, that single phrase assumes a form in the air in the cave-like mouths of the believers in all parts of the earth. Just as through the echo of the words *“God is Most Great!”* innumerable *“God is Most Great’s”* come into being, so too that acceptable recitation and invocation causes the heavens to ring out and resounds rising and falling in the Intermediate Realms.

We praise and glorify and exalt to the number of the particles of the earth the All-Glorious One, who made the earth thus prostrate to Him in worship, glorifying and exalting Him, and made it a mosque for His servants and cradle for His creatures. And we offer praise to Him to the number of beings that He made us members of the community of His Noble Messenger (Upon whom be blessings and peace), who taught us worship of this kind.

# Tenth Note

 Know, O heedless, confused Said! If you are to attain to the light of knowledge of God and look on it, and are to see its manifestations in the mirrors of signs and witnesses, and behold its proofs and evidences, you should not examine it with the fingers of criticism. You should not examine critically every light that passes over you or occurs to your heart or appears to your mind, or criticize it with the hand of hesitation. Do not stretch out your hand to catch hold of a light that appears to you! Rather withdraw from the things that cause heedlessness, be turned to the light, and wait. For I have observed that the witnesses and proofs of knowledge of God are of three sorts:

One Sort is like water. It is visible and palpable, but cannot be held with the fingers. For this sort, one has to detach oneself from illusions and submerge oneself in it as a whole. It cannot be spied on with the fingers of criticism; if it is, it flows away and is lost. The water of life cannot make the finger its dwelling!

The Second Sort is like air. It may be perceived, but it is neither visible nor may it be held. You should turn towards it with your face, your mouth, your spirit, and hold yourself before that breeze of mercy. But do not stretch out the hand of criticism towards it, for you will be unable to hold it. Breathe it with your spirit. If you look on it with the eye of hesitation and lay hands on it by criticizing it, it will escape you and depart. It will not make your hand its dwelling; it would never be content with it!

As for the Third Sort, it is like light. It is visible, but is neither palpable nor may it be held. So you should hold yourself before it with the heart’s eye and spirit’s vision; you should direct your gaze towards it and wait. Perhaps it will come of its own accord. For light cannot be held in the hand or hunted with the fingers; it can be chased only with the light of insight and intuition. If you stretch out a grasping, physical hand and weigh it on material scales, even if it is not extinguished, it will hide itself. For just as such light will not be consent to be imprisoned in matter, so it cannot be restricted, nor will it accept dense things as its lord and master.

# Eleventh Note

 Know that there is much kindness and compassion in the Qur’an of Miraculous Exposition’s manner of expression, for the majority of those it addresses are ordinary people. Their minds are simple so to flatter them it repeats the signs inscribed on the face of the heavens and earth, since their vision does not penetrate to fine things. It facilitates the reading of those large letters. For example, it teaches signs that are clearly apparent and easily read, like the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the rain being made to fall from the sky, and the raising to life of the earth. It rarely directs attention to the subtle signs written in small letters among the large ones lest ordinary people experience difficulty in reading them.

There is an eloquence, fluency, and naturalness in the Qur’an’s styles whereby it is like a hafiz; it recites the verses inscribed with the pen of power on the pages of the universe. It is as though the Qur’an is the recitation of the book of the universe and the verbal expression of its order, and reads out the Pre-Eternal Inscriber’s attributes and writes His acts and deeds. If you want to see this eloquence of expression, listen with an aware and attentive heart to decrees like Sura ‘Amma[[15]](#footnote-15) and the verse,

*Say: O God! Lord of All Dominion.(3:26)*

# Twelfth Note

 O my friends who are listening to these notes! You should know that the reason I sometimes write down my heart’s prayers, entreaties, and supplications to my Sustainer, which ought to be secret, is to request divine mercy to accept the words of my writing when death has silenced the words of my tongue. Yes, my short-lived tongue’s repentance and regret is insufficient to atone for my numberless sins. The tongue of writing is permanent to an extent, and more effectual. Thus, thirteen years ago,[[16]](#footnote-16) when as the result of a tumultuous storm of the spirit the laughter of the Old Said was being transformed into the weeping of the New Said – at a time I awoke from the heedless sleep of youth in the morning of old age – I wrote these entreaties and supplications in Arabic. The Turkish meaning of a part of them is as follows:

O my Compassionate Sustainer and Munificent Creator! Due to my mistaken choices my life and youth are lost and gone, and all that remains to me as their fruits are grievous sins, abasing sorrows, and misguiding doubts and scruples. I draw close to the grave shame-faced with this heavy load and sick heart. Like my departed friends, peers, and relations, without deviating to left or right I am involuntarily approaching the door of the grave.

The grave is the first stopping-place on the road leading from this fleeting realm to everlasting separation and all eternity; it is the first door opening onto it.[[17]](#footnote-17) But I am attached to the realm of this world and am captivated by it, and I have understood with absolute certainty that it is transient and will die, will perish and depart. The beings within it travel on convoy after convoy and disappear, as is to be observed. This world is exceedingly cruel and treacherous, especially for those like me with evil-commanding souls. For one pleasure, it inflicts a thousand pains. For a single grape, it deals a hundred slaps.

O my Compassionate Sustainer and Munificent Creator! As with the saying *“All that is coming is close,”*[[18]](#footnote-18) I see now that soon I will have donned my shroud, mounted the bier, bade farewell to my friends. Approaching my grave I call out to the court of Your mercy through the mute tongue of my corpse and the articulate tongue of my spirit: *“Mercy! Mercy! Most Kind, Most Clement! Deliver me from the shame of my sins!”*

Now I have reached the brink of my grave. I am standing at the head of my corpse stretched out beside it. Raising my head to the court of Your mercy, I cry out beseechingly with all my strength: *“Mercy! Mercy! Most Clement! Most Kind! Deliver me from the heavy burden of my sins!”*

Now I have entered my grave, I am wrapped in my shroud. Those who came to send me on my way have left me alone and departed. I await Your forgiveness and mercy. I see clearly that other than You there is no place of refuge or succour. I cry out with all my strength at the ugly face of sin, the savage form of rebellion against God, at the narrowness of the place:

*“Mercy! Mercy! Most Merciful One! Most Clement! Most Kind! Just Judge! Deliver me from the companionship of my ugly sins! Broaden my place! My God! Your mercy is my recourse. Your Beloved, the Mercy to All the Worlds, the means to Your mercy. I complain, not about You, but about my soul and my state.*

*“O my Munificent Creator and Compassionate Sustainer! Your creature and servant called Said is both rebellious, and impotent, and heedless, and ignorant, and sick, and base, and a sinner, and aged, and a wrong-doer, and like a runaway slave; but forty years late he has repented and wants to return to Your court. He seeks refuge in Your mercy. He confesses his countless sins and errors. Suffering from doubts and every sort of affliction, he beseeches and entreats You. If out of Your perfect mercy You accept him, if You forgive and have mercy on him, that befits you. For You are the Most Merciful of the Merciful. If You do not accept me, whose door can I approach? What other door is there? Other than You there is no sustainer to whose court recourse may be made. Other than You there is nothing fit to be worshipped with whom refuge may be sought.”*

There is no god but You, You are One, You have no partner; the last word in this world and the first word in the hereafter, and in the grave, is: I testify that there is no god but God and I testify that Muhammad is His Messenger, may God Almighty grant him blessings and peace!

# Thirteenth Note

This consists of five matters that have been the cause of confusion.

The First Matter

Although those who strive on the way of Truth should think only of their own duties, they think of those that pertain to Almighty God, base their actions on them, and fall into error. It is written in the work Adab al-Din wa’l- Dunya, that one time Satan tempted Jesus (Upon whom be peace) saying: *“The appointed hour of death and all things are specified by divine determining, so throw yourself down from this high place, and see, you’ll die.”* Jesus (Upon whom be peace) replied: *“God tries his servants, but His servants may not try their Sustainer.”*[[19]](#footnote-19) That is, *“Almighty God tests his servant, saying to him: If you do that I shall do this. Let’s see, are you able to do it? But the servant does not have the right and power to test Almighty God and say: If I do that, will You do this? To assume such a stance, as though subjecting Almighty God’s dominicality to test and examination, is bad conduct and contrary to worship and man’s being God’s slave.”* Since this is the case, man should do his own duty and not interfere in Almighty God’s business.

It is well-known that when one of the heroes of Islam who many times defeated Jenghis Khan’s army, Jalaluddin Khwarazmshah, was going to the war, his ministers and followers told him*: “You will be victorious; Almighty God will make you victor.”* He replied: *“I am charged by God’s command to act on the way of jihad, I do not interfere in God’s concerns. To make us victor or vanquished is His business.”* Because he thus understood the mystery of submission, he was wondrously victorious on numerous occasions.

In his voluntary actions man should not think of the results which pertain to Almighty God. For example, for some of our brothers, when people join the Risale-i Nur it fires their enthusiasm and makes them increase their efforts. Then when others do not listen, the weak ones among them become demoralized and their enthusiasm wanes somewhat. Whereas God’s Noble Messenger (Upon whom be blessings and peace), who was the Absolute Master, Universal Leader, and Perfect Guide, took as his absolute guide the divine decree,

*No more is the Messenger bound to do than deliver the message,(5:99)*

and when people held back and did not listen, conveyed the message with greater effort, endeavor, and earnestness. For in accordance with the verse,

*It is true you will not be able to guide everyone whom you love; but God guides those whom He will,(28:56)*

he understood that making people listen and guiding them was Almighty God’s concern. And he did not interfere in God’s concerns.

And so, my brothers! You shouldn’t be officious either by basing your actions on what is not your business, or take up a position testing your Creator!

The Second Matter

Worship and servitude of God look to the divine command and divine pleasure. The reason for worship is the divine command and its result is divine pleasure. Its fruits and benefits look to the hereafter. But so long as they are not the ultimate reason and not intentionally sought, benefits looking to this world and fruits which come about themselves and are given are not contrary to worship. They are rather to encourage the weak and make them incline to worship. If those fruits and benefits are made the reason for the invocation or recitation, or a part of the reason, it in part invalidates the worship. Indeed, it renders the meritorious invocation fruitless, and produces no results.

Thus, those who do not understand this mystery, recite for example the Awrad Qudsiya Shah Naqshband, which yields a hundred benefits and merits, or Jawshan al- Kabir, which yields a thousand, making some of those benefits their prime intention. Then they do not receive the benefits, and shall not receive them, and do not deserve to receive them. For the benefits may not be the reason for the invocation and may not themselves be intended and sought. For they are obtained when unsought, in consequence of the sincere invocation, as a favor. If they are intended, it damages the sincerity to an extent. Indeed, it ceases being worship and loses all value. But there is one matter, which is that weak people need something to encourage them to recite meritorious invocations. If they think of the benefits and eagerly recite them purely for God’s sake and for the hereafter, it causes no harm and is acceptable even. But because this instance of wisdom has not been understood, many of them come to doubt or even to deny the benefits narrated from the spiritual poles and righteous ones of former generations when they do not receive them.

The Third Matter

*“Happy is the man who knows his limits and does not exceed them.”*[[20]](#footnote-20) The sun has manifestations from a fragment of glass and a droplet of water to a pool, the ocean, the moon, and the planets.

Each contains the sun’s reflection and image in accordance with its capacity, and knows its limits. In accordance with its capacity, a drop of water says: *“There is a reflection of the sun on me.”* But it cannot say: *“I am a mirror like the ocean.”* In just the same way, the ranks of the saints have degrees, in accordance with the variety of the divine names’ manifestations. Each of the divine names has manifestations like a sun, from the heart to the divine throne. The heart too is a throne, but it cannot say: *“I am like the divine throne.”*

Thus, those who proceed reluctantly and with pride instead of knowing their impotence, poverty, faults, and defects, and prostrating entreatingly before the divine court, which form the basis of worship, hold their miniscule hearts equal to the divine throne. They confuse their droplet-like stations with the ocean-like stations of the saints. They stoop to artificiality, false display, and meaningless self-advertisement in order to make themselves fitting for those high ranks, and cause themselves many difficulties.

In Short: There is a Hadith which says: *“All will perish save those who know, and those who know will perish save those who act, and those who act will perish save the sincere, and the sincere are in grave danger.”*[[21]](#footnote-21) That is to say, the only means of salvation and deliverance is sincerity. It is of the greatest importance to gain sincerity. The tiniest act performed with sincerity is preferable to tons performed without sincerity.[[22]](#footnote-22) A person should understand that what gains sincerity for his actions is his doing them purely because they are a divine command and that their result is divine pleasure, and he should not interfere in God’s business.

There is sincerity in everything. A jot of love, even, with sincerity is superior to tons of official love for which return is wanted. Someone described this sincere love as follows*: “I do not want a bribe, recompense, return or reward for love, for love which seeks recompense is weak and short-lived.”*[[23]](#footnote-23) Sincere love has been lodged in human nature and in all mothers. The compassion of mothers manifests this sincere love in its true meaning. Evidence that through the mystery of this compassion mothers do not want or seek a reward or bribe for their love of their children, is their readiness to sacrifice their lives and even their eternal happiness for them. All a hen’s capital is its life, and one hen sacrificed its head in order to save its chick’s head from the jaws of a dog – as Hüsrev witnessed.

The Fourth Matter

One should not accept bounties which arrive at the hands of apparent causes on account of the causes. If a cause like an animal or a tree does not possess will, it gives the bounty directly on account of Almighty God. It says: *“In the Name of God”* through the tongue of disposition and gives it to you. So you too should say: *“In the Name of God,”* and take it for God’s sake. If the cause possesses will, he should say: *“In the Name of God,”* and you may accept it, otherwise you should refuse it. Apart from its explicit meaning, the verse,

*Eat not of [meats] on which God’s name has not been pronounced,(6:121)*

has an implicit meaning: Do not partake of bounties that do not recall the True Bestower of Bounties and are not given in His name.

Since this is so, both the one who gives and the one who receives should say *“In the name of God.”* If the giver does not say it and you are in need, you say, *“In the Name of God,”* and seeing the hand of divine mercy upon him, kiss it in thanks, and take the bounty from him. That is to say, look from the bounty to the bestowal, and from the bestowal think of the True Bestower. To reflect in this way is a sort of thanks. Then if you wish, offer a prayer for the apparent means, since it was by his hand that the bounty was sent to you.

What deceives those who worship apparent causes is the two things coming together or being together, which is called ‘association;’ they suppose the two things cause one another. Also, since the non-existence of one thing is the cause of a bounty’s non-existence, they suppose that the thing’s existence is also the cause of the bounty’s existence. They offer their thanks and gratitude to the thing and fall into error. For a bounty’s existence results from all the bounty’s conditions and preliminaries. Whereas the bounty’s non-existence occurs through the non-existence of only a single condition.

For example, someone who does not open the canal to water the garden is the reason and cause of the garden drying up and the non-existence of bounties. But the existence of the garden’s bounties is dependent on hundreds of conditions besides the man’s duty and the bounties come into being through dominical will and power, which are the true cause. So understand just how clear is the error of this sophistry and how mistaken are those who worship causes!

Yes, ‘association’ is one thing and the cause is another. You receive a bounty, but the intention of a person to bestow it on you was the ‘associate’ of the bounty, not the cause. The cause was divine mercy. If the man had not intended to give you the bounty, you would not have received it and it would have been the cause of the bounty’s non-existence. But in consequence of the above rule, the desire to bestow cannot be the cause of the bounty; it can only be one out of hundreds of conditions.

For example, some of the Risale-i Nur students (like Hüsrev and Re’fet) who have received Almighty God’s bounties have confused the ‘association’ and the cause, and have been over-grateful to their Master. However, Almighty God put together the bounty of benefiting from the Qur’anic instruction which He bestowed on them, and the bounty of instructing which He had bestowed on their Master; He ‘associated’ the two. They say: *“If our Master had not come here, we would not have received this instruction, so his instruction is the cause of our benefiting.”* However, I say: *“Brothers! The bounties Almighty God bestowed on you and on me arrived together. The cause of both bounties is divine mercy. Like you, I at one time confused the association with the cause, and felt much gratitude towards the hundreds of Risale-i Nur students with diamond pens like yourselves. I would say: ‘If it had not been for them, how could have a semi-literate unfortunate like myself have performed this service?’ Then I understood that after bestowing on you the sacred bounty by means of the pen, He bestowed on me success in this service. He associated the two; they were not the cause of each other. I do not thank you, but congratulate you. You too pray for me and congratulate me, rather than being grateful to me.”*

It may be understood from this Fourth Matter just how many degrees there are in heedlessness.

 The Fifth Matter

 Just as if the property of a community is given to one man, it is wrong; or if one man lays hands on charitable foundations which belong to the community, he does wrong; so too to ascribe to the leader or master of a community the results of that community’s labors or the honor and merits resulting from its good works, is wrong both for the community and for the leader or master. Because to do so flatters his egotism and encourages pride. While being the door-keeper, he supposes himself to be the king. He also does wrong to himself. Indeed, he opens the way to a sort of concealed association of partners with God.

Yes, the colonel cannot claim for himself the booty, victory, and glory belonging to a regiment which conquers a citadel. The master and spiritual guide should not be considered to be the source and origin, but known to be the place of reflection and manifestation. For example, heat and light reach you by means of a mirror. It would be crazy if you forget the sun, and considering the mirror to be the source, are grateful to it instead of being grateful to the sun. The mirror should be preserved because it is the place of manifestation. Thus, the guide’s spirit and heart are a mirror; they are the place for reflecting the effulgence emanating from Almighty God. He is the means of its being reflected to his followers. He should not be ascribed a station higher with regard to the effulgence than that of being the means. It sometimes even happens that a master considered to be the source is neither the place of manifestation nor the source. The follower supposes the effulgence he receives due to the purity of his sincerity, or his strength of attachment, or his concentration on his master, or in other ways, to have come from the mirror of his master’s spirit. Like by means of mesmerism, some people open up a window onto the World of Similitudes by gazing attentively at a mirror, and observe strange and wonderful things in the mirror. But they are not in the mirror; by focusing their attention on the mirror, a window opens up in their imaginations outside the mirror and they see those things. It is for this reason that sometimes the sincere student may be more advanced than a deficient shaykh. He returns, guides his shaykh and becomes the shaykh’s shaykh.

# Fourteenth Note

This consists of four short signs alluding to divine unity.

First Sign

 O worshipper of causes! You see a wondrous palace fashioned of rare jewels which is being made. Some of the jewels used in its construction are found only in China; others in Andalusia; others in Yemen; while others are found nowhere but Siberia. If you see that as it is being made, the precious stones are summoned that same day from north, south, east, and west, would you have any doubt that the master builder making the palace was a miracle-worker who ruled the whole earth?

Thus, every animal is a divine palace, and man is the finest and most wondrous of the palaces. Some of the jewels in the palace called man come from the World of Spirits, others from the World of Similitudes and the Preserved Tablet, and others from the world of the air, the world of light, and the world of the elements. He is also a wondrous palace whose needs stretch to eternity, whose hopes have spread to all the regions of the heavens and the earth, and who has relations and ties with all the epochs of this world and the hereafter.

O you who considers yourself to be a true man! Since your true nature is thus, you can only be made by One for whom this world and the hereafter are each a dwelling, the earth and the skies each a page, and who has disposal over pre-eternit y and post-eternity as though they were yesterday and tomorrow. In which case, the only being fit to be worshipped by man, and his place of recourse and savior, can be one who rules the earth and the heavens, and holds the reins of this world and the next.

Second Sign

There are certain foolish people who because they do not recognize the sun, if they see it in a mirror, start to love the mirror. With intense emotion they try to preserve the mirror so that the sun within it will not be lost. Whenever the foolish person realizes that the sun does not die on the mirror’s dying and is not lost on its being broken, he turns all his love to the sun in the sky. He understands then that the sun appearing in the mirror is not dependent on the mirror, and its continued existence does not depend on it. It is rather the sun that holds the mirror and supplies its shining light. The sun’s continuance is not dependent on the mirror; the continuance of the mirror’s living brilliance is dependent on the sun’s manifestation.

O man! Your heart, identity, and nature are a mirror. The intense love of immortality in your nature and heart should be not for the mirror, nor for your heart and nature, but for the manifestation of the Enduring One of Glory whose manifestation is reflected in the mirror according to the mirror’s capacity. However, out of stupidity that love of yours is directed to other places. Since it is thus, say: *“O Enduring One! You alone are Enduring!”* That is, *“Since You exist and are enduring, whatever transience and non-existence want to inflict on us, let them, it is of no importance!”*

Third Sign

O man! The strangest state the All-Wise Creator has included in your nature is your inability to settle in the whole world; like someone suffocating in prison, you gasp for somewhere wider than the world. Yet you enter the minutest matter, a memory, a moment, and settle in it. Your heart and mind which cannot settle in the vast world settle in that jot. You wander about with your intensest emotions in that brief moment, that tiny memory.

And He lodged in your nature such immaterial powers and subtle faculties that if some of them devoured the world, they would not be satisfied; and some of them cannot sustain even a minute particle within themselves. Like the eye cannot bear a hair although the head can bear heavy stones, those faculties cannot bear the weight of even a hair, that is, some insignificant state arising from heedlessness and misguidance. They are sometimes extinguished and die even.

Since it is thus, be careful, tread with caution, be frightened of sinking! Do not drown in a mouthful, a word, a seed, a flash, a sign, a kiss! Do not plunge your extensive faculties, which can swallow the world, in such a thing. For there are things which are very small that can in one respect swallow things which are very large. The sky together with its stars can enter a small fragment of glass and be drowned. And most of the pages of your actions and leaves of your life enter your faculty of memory, tiny as a mustard-seed. So too there are tiny things that swallow things thus large, and contain them.

Fourth Sign

O world-worshipping man! You conceive of your world as very broad, yet it resembles a narrow grave. But since the walls of that narrow grave-like dwelling are of glass, they are reflected one within the other and stretch as far as the eye can see. While being narrow as the grave, your world appears to be as large as a town. For despite both the right wall, which is the past, and the left wall, which is the future, being non-existent, they are reflected one within the other, unfolding the wings of present time, which is extremely brief and narrow. Reality mixes with imagination, and you suppose a non-existent world to be existent.

On being spun round at speed, a line appears to be broad like a surface, despite in reality being a fine line. Your world too is in reality narrow, but due to your heedlessness, delusions, and imagination, its walls have drawn far apart. If driven by a calamity you stir in that narrow world, you will hit your head on the wall, which you supposed to be distant. It will dispel the illusions in your head and banish your sleep. Then you will see that that broad world of yours is narrower than the grave, finer than the Bridge of Sirat. Your life passes faster than lightning, it pours away more swiftly than tea.

Since worldly life and the life of the flesh and animal life are thus, shake free of animality, leave behind corporeality, enter the level of life of the heart and spirit! You will find a sphere of life, a world of light, far broader than the world you imagined was broad. The key to that world is to make the heart utter the sacred words *“There is no god but God,”* which express the mysteries of divine unity and knowledge of God, and to make the spirit work them.

# Fifteenth Note

This consists of three matters.[[24]](#footnote-24)

The First Matter

This is the verse

*And whoever has done an atom’s weight of good shall see it, \* And whoever has done an atom’s weight of evil, shall see it.(99:7-8)*

which indicates the fullest manifestation of the name of Preserver. If you want proof of this truth of the All-Wise Qur’an, look at the pages of the book of the universe, which is written on the pattern of the Clear Book; you will see the maximum manifestation of the divine name of Preserver and many things similar in many ways to the supreme truth of this verse.

For instance, take a handful of seeds of various trees, flowers, and plants, which are like the small coffers and are themselves all different and various, then bury them in the darkness of simple and lifeless earth. Then water them with simple water, which lacks balance, cannot distinguish things, and runs wherever you pour it.

Now come back in the spring, the arena of the annual resurrection, and look! Note carefully the time in the spring when the Israfil-like angel of thunder calls out to the rain as though sounding his trumpet, giving the good news of the breath of life being breathed into the seeds buried beneath the ground; you will see that under the manifestation of the divine name of Preserver, those seeds that resemble each other and are all mixed up and confused, conform perfectly and without error to the creative commands proceeding from the All-Wise Creator. They conform so exactly that in their growth a brilliant consciousness, insight, purpose, will, knowledge, perfection, and wisdom are apparent. For you see that those seeds which all resemble each other separate out and are distinguished from one another.

For example, this tiny seed has become a fig-tree, it has started to spread the All- Wise Creator’s bounties over our heads. It distributes them, stretching them out to us with its hands. And these two seeds which are superficially the same have produced the flowers called sun-flowers and pansies. They have adorned themselves for us. They smile in our faces, making us love them. And this sort of seed has produced fine fruits; they became shoots, then trees. Whetting our appetites with their delectable tastes, scents, and forms, they invite us to themselves. They sacrifice themselves for their customers so that they may rise from the level of vegetable life to that of animal life. And so on. You can make further examples in the same way. The seeds developed in such a way that the single handful became a garden filled with multifarious trees and flowers. There was no fault, no error among them. They demonstrated the meaning of the verse,

*So turn your vision again; do you see any flaw?(67:3)*

Through the manifestation and bestowal of the name of Preserver, each of the seeds preserves and shows without confusion or defect the legacy inherited from its parent and origins.

This is a certain indication that the Preserver who carries out this wondrous work will demonstrate the supreme manifestation of His preservation at the resurrection of the dead and Last Judgement.

Yes, the manifestation of preservation that is thus faultless and without defect in insignificant, fleeting, transient states is a decisive proof that the actions, works, words, and good deeds and bad deeds of man, the holder of the Supreme Trust and vicegerent of the earth – deeds which have an eternal effect and supreme importance– are precisely preserved and will be subject to account.

Does man suppose he will be left to his own devices? God forbid! He is destined for eternity, and for everlasting happiness and perpetual misery. He will be called to account for all his actions, small and great, many and few. He will receive either reward or punishment.

Witnesses to the maximum manifestation of preservation and to the truth of the first-mentioned verse are beyond count or calculation. Those we have shown in this Matter are a mere drop from the ocean, an atom from a mountain.

*Glory be unto You! We have no knowledge save that which You have taught us; indeed, You are All-Knowing, All-Wise.(2:32)*

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1. The 17th Flash consists of Fifteen Notes taken from Zühre. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Twelve years previously was 1340/1921. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. See, Bukhari, Riqaq, 42; Muslim, Zuhd, 5; Nasa’i, Jana’iz, 52; Musnad, iii, 110. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See, al-Ghazali, Ihya’ ‘Ulum al-Din, iv, 64; al-‘Ajluni, Kashf al-Khafa’, ii, 368. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The Dajjal: the Antichrist related to come at the end of time. (Tr.) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. See, Bukhari, Anbiya’, 48; Libas, 68; Ta’bir, 11, 13; Fitan, 26; Muslim, Iman, 273-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 9; Ibn Maja, Zuhd, 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. See, Abu Da’ud, Sawm, 14; al-Sarakhsi, al-Mabsut, iii, 139-40; al-Kashani, Bada‘i al-Sana‘i, ii,

   81-2; al-Marghinani, al-Hidaya, i, 121. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. See, Qur’an, 59:14. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzi, al-Sawa’iq al-Mursala, iv, 1310; Idem., al-Ruh fi’l-Kalam, i, 198. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Bukhari, Jihad, 149; Tirmidhi, Hudud, 2; Musnad, i, 217, 282, 322; v, 231. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. al-Kashani, Bada‘i al-Sana‘i, ii, 254-5; vi, 266. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. See, Tirmidhi, Shahadat, 2; Abu Da’ud, ‘Aqdiyya, 16; Ibn Maja, Ahkam, 30; Musnad, ii, 181,

    204, 208. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. See, Ibn Qays, Qura al-Dayf, iv,, 301; al-Maydani, Majma’ al-Amthal, i, 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Sura 78, The Great News. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Thirteen years before this treatise was written. (That is, 1920 or 1921 – Tr.) [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. See, Tirmidhi, Zuhd, 5; Ibn Maja, Zuhd, 32; Musnad, i, 63. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Ibn Maja, Muqaddima, 7; Darimi, Muqaddima, 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Mawardi, Adab al-Dunya wa’l-Din, 12; Ma’mar ibn Rashid, al-Jami‘, xi, 113; Abu Nu’aym,

    Hilya al-Awliya’, iv, 12; Ibn al-Jawzi, Talbis Iblis, i, 344; Ibn Hajar, al-Isaba, iv, 764. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Bukhari, al-Tarikh al-Kabir, iii, 338; Tabarani, al-Mu‘jam al-Kabir, v, 71; Bayhaqi, al-Sunan al-Kubra, iv, 182. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. See, al-‘Ajluni, Kashf al-Khafa’, ii, 415; al-Ghazali, Ihya ‘Ulum al-Din, iii, 414; iv, 179, 362. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. al-Hakim, al-Mustadrak, iv, 341; Abu Nu’aym, al-Hilya al-Awliya’, i, 244. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. See, Ibn Qays, Qura al-Dayf, i, 95, 207; al-Dhahabi, Tarikh al-Islam, 103. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. The second and third matters of the Fifteenth Note are parts of the Twenty-Fourth Flash. The second is included in the Twenty-Fourth Flash, and the third in Barla Lahikası. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)