**The Thirty-first Word**

**The Ascension of Prophet Muhammad**

(NOTE: Belief in the Prophet’s Ascension is the result of, and draws its light and strength from, belief in the pillars of belief.[[1]](#footnote-1) The Ascension may not be proved independently to those who do not accept these pillars, without first proving them. Therefore we address believers who doubt it. From time to time, however, we will address unbelievers. Some aspects of the Ascension’s truth have been mentioned else- where in the *Risale-i Nur*. At the insistence of my brothers, we seek God’s grace and help to unite them with the essence of that truth and make them into a mirror to reflect the total beauty of the perfections of Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings.)

In the Name of God, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate.

All-Glorified is He Who took His servant for a journey by night from *al-Masjidu’l-Haram* to *al-Masjidu’l-Aqsa’*, the environs of which We had blessed, so that We might show him of Our signs. Surely He is the Hearing, the Seeing. (17:1)

It is but a Revelation revealed. One with mighty power has taught it, one firm, with the ability to penetrate and perfect in spirit, rose with all splendor, when he was in the highest horizon. Then he drew near and came close, so he was at a distance between the strings of two bows or even nearer. And He revealed to His servant what He revealed. The heart did not contradict what he saw. Will you then dispute with him concerning what he saw? Surely he saw him during a second descent, by the Lote-tree of the farthest limit, near it is the Garden of Refuge and Dwelling. It was when what enveloped the Lote-tree enveloped it. The sight did not swerve, nor did it stray. Truly did he see one among the greatest signs of his Lord. (53:4-18)

OUT OF THE FIRST VERSE’S VAST TREASURY, WE WILL DESCRIBE ONLY TWO points which the pronoun *He* in *Surely He is* refers to as a principle of eloquence, as they are included in our present concern.

After mentioning the Prophet’s journey from the *Masjidu’l- Haram* in Makka to the *Masjidu’l-Aqsa’* in Jerusalem (the beginning of his Ascension), the Qur’an concludes: *Surely He is the Hearing, the Seeing.* The pronoun *He* in *Surely He is*, which alludes to the furthest point of the Ascension which is indicated in 53:4-18 above, refers either to Almighty God or the Prophet.

If it refers to the Prophet, according to the rules of the language and the preceding part of the verse, it means: This apparently particular journey is, in reality, comprehensive. It signifies such a universal ascent that, during it, the Prophet heard and saw all of the Lord’s signs and the Divine art’s wonders that caught his sight and encountered his ears due to the Divine Names’ manifestations in universal degrees as far as the *Lote-tree of the farthest limit* and *the nearness of the distance between the strings of two bows*. Thus, through its conclusive phrase, the verse describes that particular journey as the key to a journey that is universal and full of extraordinary events.

If this pronoun refers to God Almighty, it means: In order to invite one of His servants on a journey to His Presence and and entrust him with a duty, God Almighty took him from the *Masjidu’l-Haram* to the *Masjidu’l- Aqsa’,* where the Prophets came together. There, He caused him to meet with them and showed that he is the absolute, indisputable heir of all the Prophets’ principles of religion. Then He took him through both the exter- nal and inner dimensions of His dominion as far as the *Lote-tree of the farthest limit* and the nearness of the *distance between the strings of two bows.*

We know that he was a servant and that his Ascension was a particular event. However, since he was given a trust connected to the whole universe, was accorded a light that would change the universe’s color, and also had a key that opens the door to eternal happiness, Almighty God describes Himself as the One Who hears and sees all things so that His world-embracing, comprehensive and all-encompassing wisdom in the trust, the light, and the key might be observed and understood.

This mighty truth contained in the Ascension may be dealt with under four principles: Why was the Ascension necessary, what is its reality, what is its wisdom, and what are its fruits and benefits?

First principle: Why was the Ascension necessary?

**QUESTION:** Almighty God is nearer to one than one’s jugular vein, closer to everything than itself, and absolutely free of corporeality and space. Therefore, while all saints can converse with Him in their hearts, why did the sainthood of Muhammad have to make a long journey (the Ascension) to talk to God?

**ANSWER:** We will discuss this profound matter via two comparisons from The Twelfth Word, which concern the mystery of the Qur’an’s miraculousness and of the Ascension.

**First comparison:** A king has two forms of speech and address. He either speaks on his private phone to a common subject regarding a minor matter or private need, or, in his capacity or position as the supreme sovereign, supreme head of the religious office, and supreme ruler, conveys his orders in the form of an exalted decree manifesting his majesty by means of an envoy or high official.

As in the comparison, the Creator of this universe, the Master of existence in its external and inner dimensions, and the Lord of eternity has two kinds of conversing and speaking and two manners of favoring. One is particular and private; the other is universal and general. The Ascension is the man- ifestation of Muhammad’s sainthood in a universal and most exalted form and much superior to all other sainthoods. It is the Prophet’s being honored with the conversation and direct address of Almighty God through His Name the Lord of the entire universe and His title the Creator of all existence.

**Second comparison:** A person holds a mirror up to the sun. According to its capacity, the mirror receives what it can from the sun’s seven-colored light. That person has a relation with the sun through the mirror and according to its ability to reflect the sun. If he or she directs the mirror’s shining side toward his or her dark house or small, private, and roof-covered garden, he or she can benefit only according to the mirror’s capacity, not in proportion to the sun’s value.

Another person puts down the mirror and, facing the sun directly, sees its splendor and comprehends its grandeur. He or she then climbs a very high mountain and faces the sun without veil, witnessing the majesty of its broad dominion. Coming back, this person tries to have a direct connection with the sun’s constant light by making large windows in his or her house or garden’s roof, and obtains other means of benefiting from the sun directly. Facing it, that person may say in indebtedness: “O amiable sun, beauty of the world and darling of the skies, who gilds the earth’s face with light and makes it and all flowers smile in joy and happiness! You have illuminated and heated my house and garden, as you illuminate the world and heat the earth’s face.” The first person cannot say this, for the sun’s reflection in his or her mirror is restricted to the mirror’s capacity.

Likewise, the Single, Eternally Besought One, Who is the Sun without beginning and the Lord of eternity, manifests Himself in the nature of humanity in two forms that comprise innumerable degrees. The first manifestation occurs in the heart’s mirror through one’s relationship with the Lord. Everyone may receive a manifestation of the Eternal Sun’s light and conversation in certain degrees in accordance with their capacity, the character of their spiritual journey toward sainthood, and their ability to receive manifestations of Divine Names and Attributes. As a result, the kind of sainthood which is attained through journeying within the shade of some particular Name(s) or Attribute(s) contains innumerable degrees.

The second is that since we have a comprehensive nature and are the most enlightened fruit of the tree of creation, we can reflect all Divine Names in the mirror of our spirits. Thus Almighty God manifests Himself and all His Beautiful Names most comprehensively in humanity’s best and greatest representative. This form of manifestation occurred during the Ascension of Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, in which his sainthood found its meaning and became the first stage of his Messengership.

Sainthood contains veils between one’s heart and the Divine Names’ manifestations, as in the case of the first person in the second comparison above. Messengership contains no veils, as in the case of the second person in the second comparison, for it is connected directly with the the All-Majestic Being’s manifestation with all His Names, in a single being. Since the Prophet’s Ascension was the greatest wonder of his sainthood and marked its final and greatest station, it was transformed into Messengership.

In its inner aspect, the Ascension signifies sainthood and is a journey from the created to the Creator. In its outer aspect, it is Messengership and signifies a return from the Creator to the created (to guide them). Sainthood is the journey through the degrees of nearness to God. As such, it requires the attainment of many ranks and so takes a long time. Messengership, whose light is greatest, proceeds from the realization of Divine nearness—God’s choosing one and making him near to Himself personally—in all its comprehensiveness. This may occur in an instant, which accounts for the Tradition: “The Ascension took place in an instant. The Prophet went and returned in the same instant.”

Here we must say to the unbeliever: Since this universe resembles a most orderly country, magnificent city, or adorned palace, it must have a ruler, owner, and builder. There is such a magnificent, All-Majestic Owner, All-Perfect Ruler, All-Gracious Maker. There is also a man with a universal view, who has a relationship with that entire country, city, or palace and is connected to each by means of his senses, feelings, and faculties. Given this, the All-Magnificent Maker will have a sublime relationship to the fullest degree with that man, who has a universal view and comprehensive consciousness, and will favor him with a sacred address.

Among those honored with this relationship, Prophet Muhammad displayed this relationship to its fullest degree. His achievements speak for themselves: One-half of the world and one-fifth of humanity are under his control and influence, and he enlightened the universe by giving it a new spiritual form and furnishing it with a sublime meaning. The Ascension, the fullest degree of that relationship, is most deserved by and suitable for him.

Second principle: What is the Ascension’s reality?

**ANSWER:** It is Prophet Muhammad’s journey through the degrees of perfection. Almighty God has various Names and Titles manifested in the arrangement and disposition of creatures, and displays diverse works of His Lordship—His upbringing, training, sustaining, and providing—as the results of executing His absolute authority in inventing and administering creatures in the levels of the “heavens” where He executes His Lordship in different ways and according to each level’s conditions.

Thus, to show His Lordship’s works to His special servant and thereby enable him to encompass all human perfections, receive all Divine manifestations, view all levels of the universe, announce His Lordship’s sovereignty, proclaim what He approves of, and unveil creation’s enigmatic meaning, God Almighty mounted him on *Buraq* (heavenly mount). God raised him through the heavens like lightning, promoted him to higher and higher ranks, and displayed Divine Lordship to him from mansion to mansion and from sphere to sphere. He also showed him the Prophets, his brothers, whose abodes are in the heavens of those spheres, one after the other. Finally He raised him to the station of *the nearness of the distance between the strings of two bows* and honored him with the special manifestation of all His Names to the fullest degree, with His Speech, and with the vision of Himself.

We may examine this sublime truth through two comparisons.

**First comparison:** As explained in The Twenty-fourth Word, a king has different titles by which he is known and mentioned in his government’s various departments, different designations and attributes among his subjects’ classes, and different names and signs for his rule’s levels. For example, he is the supreme judge in the justice department, chief administrator in the civil service, commander-in-chief in the military, and supreme teacher in the education department. He has a seat or a chair in each sphere and department, which has the meaning of a throne. That one king may have a thousand names and titles in his sovereignty’s spheres and his government’s departments, as well as a thousand thrones of sovereignty one within the other. It is as if, due to his public person and system of communication, he is present in every department. Through his laws, regulations, and representatives, he superintends all officials, watches all subjects, and is seen by them. Behind the veil at every level, he administers, executes his orders, and is watchful through his decree, knowledge, and power. He has a different center and headquarters in each sphere. Each sphere and department has different rules. The king designates one of his subjects, shows him to all those spheres and departments, and makes him witness his imperial dominion and commands unique to each. He then brings him to his presence, entrusts him with certain general and universal commands concerning all spheres and departments, and sends him back.

Similarly, the Lord of the worlds, the King of eternity, has at the levels of His Lordship’s manifestations Qualities and Designations which are all different but correspond to each other. In the spheres of His Divinity, He has Names and marks which are all different but whose manifestations are concentric with each other. In His majestic execution of His rule, He has representations and appellations which are all different but resemble each other. In the operations of His Power, He has titles which are all different but imply each other. In the manifestations of His Attributes, He has sacred ways of revealing Himself that differ but point to each other. In His modes of acting, He has wise operations which are of numerous sorts but perfect each other. In His colorful artistry and varied works of Art, He has magnificent aspects of Lordship which differ but correspond to each other.

He organized the universe in an amazing and wonderful fashion because of this mysterious reality. The universe has different formations one over the other, from particles to the heavens, from the heavens’ first level to God’s Supreme Throne. Each heaven is the roof of a different world, a chair for exercising Divine Lordship, a center for Divine operations. Due to His absolute Oneness demonstrating Itself through the concentrated manifestation of all His Names on single entities, all Divine Names may be found in all spheres and levels, and He may show Himself with all of His Titles in them.

However, just as the title of just ruler belonging to the king in the comparison dominates in the department of justice and the others are subordinate, in each level of creatures and in each heaven, a Divine Title dominates and the others are subordinate to It. For example, in whichever heaven Prophet Muhammad met Prophet Jesus, who was distinguished with the man- ifestation of the Divine Name the All-Powerful, Almighty God is in constant manifestation in that heaven, primarily with that very Name. Again, in the sphere of the heaven which is the abode of Prophet Moses, God’s title as the All-Speaking, with Which He distinguished Moses, is predominant.

Finally, since Prophet Muhammad was honored with the manifestation of God’s Greatest Name and of all His other Names as well as being given a universal Prophethood, he must be connected with all of His Lordship’s spheres. Therefore, the Ascension’s reality required Prophet Muhammad to meet with the Prophets whose seats are in those spheres and pass through all of those levels.

**Second comparison:** The title of commander-in-chief, a title of a king, is seen throughout an army’s ranks. A private sees his corporal as a sample of that imposing title, and so listens to and obeys him. A corporal sees his sergeant in the same way, and so obeys him. A sergeant sees his lieutenant in the same way, and so on. He will see the title in each sphere (e.g., captain, major, colonel, general, and field-marshal) in proportion to the sphere’s size.

If the commander-in-chief entrusts a soldier with a duty connected to all military ranks, or gives him a rank that allows him to appear in every office and control it like an inspector, the soldier must be given the necessary knowledge and be recognized by the personnel. Thus the commander-in- chief arranges for him to make a study and inspection tour of all the ranks. After that, the soldier will be admitted into the commander-in-chief’s presence to have a private conversation, receive a decoration and decree, and be sent back from whence he came.

The following point must be noted: If, in addition to his political power, the king has spiritual, saintly power, he will not deputize others to act in his name in different offices. Rather, he will be present everywhere in person and give orders directly, appearing in the form of persons of certain rank. In fact, there are narrations of sultans who reached sainthood’s highest level and so executed their rule in many spheres in the form of certain individuals. Since the commander-in-chief in our parable is such a saintly, powerful king, the decrees and commands come directly from him in every office and are executed through his command, will, and power.

Similarly, the Ruler of the heavens and the earth, the Absolute Sovereign and Lord of eternity having the command of *“Be!” and it is,* has a sphere of Lordship, a level of rulership in the levels of creatures and classes of beings, ranging from particles to planets, from flies to the heavens, all of which differ but are related to each other. In each sphere, His regulations, statutes, and commands are carried out in perfect order and obedience. Thus in order to comprehend this universe’s elevated aims and tremendous results, witness the duties of worship particular to each level and class, observe the sovereignty of the One of Grandeur’s Lordship and His rule’s majesty, understand what is pleasing to Him, and be a herald of His sovereignty, one must travel through all levels and spheres of His rulership until reaching the Supreme Throne (the title of the greatest, all-encompassing sphere) and attaining to the ultimate rank that a servant can reach (called *the nearness of the distance between the strings of two bows)*, and meet with the One of Majesty and Grace. This journey is the reality of the Ascension.

Like ordinary people travelling in their minds with the speed of imagination, saints journeying in their hearts with the speed of lightning, angels, whose bodies are of light, circulating between God’s Supreme Throne and the earth with the speed of spirit, the people of Paradise rising from the Place of Supreme Gathering to Paradise covering a distance of five hundred years with the speed of *Buraq*, Prophet Muhammad’s body will certainly accompany his elevated spirit in his journey as far as God’s Supreme Throne. For the body of Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, is the storehouse of all of his faculties and serves his spirit, which is pure light and has the capacity and characteristics of light, and is more refined than saints’ hearts, lighter than the deceased’s spirits and the angels’ forms, and finer than the beings’ ethereal bodies, in performing its duties.

Now we say to the unbeliever who does not recognize God or know of the Prophet, and so does not believe in the Ascension: The universe and all of those creatures exist, and diverse acts and a continual creation are observed in the universe. An orderly act must have an author; a meaningful book must have a writer; and a skillful design must have a designer. Therefore, the wise and purposeful acts filling the universe must have an author, and the meaningful letters and amazing inscriptions or designs covering the earth and renewed seasonally must have a writer and a designer.

In addition, the result of two rulers interfering in the same affair is disorder. But we can see that there is perfect order in everything, from a fly’s wings to the sky’s lamp (the sun). So the ruler is One, for if this were not true, and given that the art and wisdom seen in everything are so wonderful and amazing that they require an All-Powerful and All-Knowing Maker, there would have to be as many deities as there are creatures. Since such deities would be both opposite and similar to each other simultaneously [because the acts and creatures in the universe have infinite diversity and yet resemble each other in many ways], it is inconceivable that this amazing order would not be upset.

Also, since those creatures clearly move by a command and in a far more organized form than an army, and since each group of creatures, from heavenly objects to almond flowers, displays in a perfect and organized manner and in far more orderly fashion than an army, the uniforms, decorations, and other beautiful garments given to it by the Eternal All-Powerful One and carries out the duties and drills He has assigned to them, this universe has an Absolute Ruler behind the veil of the Unseen, Whose commands are heeded and carried out by all creatures.

As His wise acts and majestic works testify, that Ruler is a Majestic Sovereign. As shown by His favors, He is an extremely Compassionate Lord. As His most beautiful works of art bear witness, He is a Maker Who is a Lover of art and Who loves His own art. As is apparent from the decorations and curiosity-exciting arts He exhibits, He is a Wise Creator Who wills to attract the appreciative gaze of conscious beings to His works of art. As is understood from His Lordship’s wisdom, He wills to inform conscious beings of what the amazing and wonderful decorations displayed in the universe’s creation mean, and where creatures come from and where they go. Therefore this All-Wise Ruler and All-Knowing Maker wills to demonstrate His Lordship.

He also wills to make Himself known to and loved by conscious beings through all these traces of grace and mercy, as well as the wonders of the art He displays. Given this, He will use an envoy to inform conscious beings of what He wants them to do and what pleases Him. He will choose a conscious being and declare His Lordship through him. To show His favorite arts, He will honor a herald with the nearness of His presence, and use him to exhibit them. To display His perfections by informing conscious beings of His lofty purposes for creating the universe, He will appoint one of them as a teacher and a guide so that the mystery of creation and the enigma of existence do not remain meaningless.

So that the beauties of the art He displays will not remain useless, He will choose a guide to teach the purposes contained in them. To inform them of the things that please Him, He will select a conscious being, raise him above all others, and use that person to inform others of those things. Reality and wisdom require this. As the one most worthy to perform these duties was Prophet Muhammad, who performed them perfectly, a fact attested to by the truthful and just witnesses of the world of Islam that he founded and the light of Islam that he showed, he would have to rise above all creatures and attain the rank of holding a universal and elevated conversation with the Creator of the universe. In this lies the Ascension’s reality.

In short, Since Almighty God formed, organized, and decorated this universe for mighty purposes and great aims, such as those mentioned above; and since among beings there is humankind to see the universal Divine Lordship with all Its subtleties, and this mighty Divine sovereignty with all its truths, most certainly that Absolute Ruler will speak to and inform us of His purposes. But not everyone can rise to the highest, universal position to receive the Ruler’s universal address directly. Given this, certain special people will be entrusted with that duty. Being human beings themselves, they can teach other human beings. They also should be extremely exalted spiritually, for only such people can receive God’s direct address.

The one who taught the purposes of the universe’s Maker most perfectly, unveiled the universe’s and creation’s mysterious meaning, and best heralded the beauties of His Lordship’s dominion was Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings. He would therefore make a spiritual journey and rise above all others and to the most exalted and comprehensive rank; he would make an Ascension by journeying through the corporeal world and then reaching beyond the “seventy thousand veils” of the manifestations of Divine Names, Attributes and acts, and all levels of creation. This is the Ascension.

**QUESTION:** How can I believe this? What does it mean to journey thousands of years to a Lord Who is nearer to all things than themselves and to meet with Him after passing through seventy thousand veils?

**ANSWER:** Almighty God is nearer to everything than itself, but everything is infinitely far from Him. If the sun were conscious and could speak, it would talk to you via a mirror in your hand. It could do with you as it wished. Although it is nearer to you than your eye’s pupil, which is like a mirror, you are millions of miles away from it and cannot draw closer to it. If you rose to a position corresponding to the moon and came face to face with it, you would only be a kind of mirror to it.

Likewise, the All-Majestic One, the Sun of Eternity, is nearer to everything than itself, yet everything is infinitely far from Him. To be honored with a sort of nearness to Him, one should pass through all levels of existence. Freed from the restrictions of being a single particular, one should rise above the thousands of veils in the degrees of universality, draw near to a Divine Name encompassing all creation, and then traverse many other degrees beyond it.

A private is far below the commander-in-chief. He views him through an insignificant sample of command that he sees in a corporal, at a great distance and beyond many veils. To be nearer to his position, the private should be promoted to the higher and comprehensive ranks of lieutenant, captain, major, and so on. The commander-in-chief, however, is always present with the private through his rules, decrees, knowledge, and com- mands. If he is a saint having certain spiritual rank, he can be present with him personally, without the private seeing him. This truth has been argued convincingly in The Sixteenth Word.

**QUESTION:** I believe neither in the levels of heavens nor in angels. How

can I believe that one can travel through the heavens and meet with angels?

**ANSWER:** It is really hard to convince those whose minds depend on their eyes. But since the truth is so brilliant that even the blind can see, we say the following: (Scientists generally agree that) space is full of “ether.” Such subtle and refined matters as light, electricity, and heat point to the existence of a more subtle and refined matter that fills space.

Just as fruits demonstrate the existence of the trees that bear them, flowers their flower-bed, shoots their field, and fish the sea, so too stars present the existence of their origin to the mind’s eye. Since there are different formations in the celestial realm and different rules are in force under different conditions, the heavens requiring the existence of those rules must be different. Just a person has, in addition to their bodily existence, immaterial forms of existence such as mind, heart, spirit, imagination, and memory, certainly the universe, the macro-human and the tree of which humanity is the fruit, contains other worlds beside the physical one. Also each world, from the earth to Paradise, has a heaven.

As for angels, we say: the earth is a medium-sized one among planets and highly small and dense among stars. And yet life and consciousness, which are luminous and of the greatest value among creation, are found on it in great abundance. So the stars, adorned castles and perfectly built palaces compared to the dark house of the earth, and the heavens, which are like the stars’ seas, are inhabited by conscious, animate, numerous, and different kinds of angels and spirit beings. The Twenty-ninth Word discusses angels in more detail.

In conclusion, the heavens are formed of “ether” and are the source of such subtle and refined matters, energies, or forces as light, heat, electricity, and gravity. As pointed to in the Tradition “Heaven is a wave stretched and restrained,” they were created in such a way that certain stars and planets can move easily within them. Wisdom and reason require that from the Milky Way to the nearest planet, there should be heavenly levels of different formations and a heaven as the roof of a world from the world of the earth to the Intermediate World (of the grave) and the World of Ideal Forms or Representations, and to the World of the Hereafter.

**QUESTION:** We can ascend only to a certain height by aircraft. How can someone bodily travel within a few minutes a distance that would normally take thousands of years to cover?

**ANSWER:** According to science, whose findings you accept without question, a heavy body like the earth travels about four hundred miles in a minute, and about two hundred million miles in a year. Should an All- Powerful One of Majesty, Who causes the earth to make that regular motion and revolves it like a stone in a sling, be unable to convey a human being to His Supreme Throne? Should a Wisdom that causes the heavy earth to revolve around the sun like a dervish through a law of Divine Lordship (gravity) be unable to raise a person, like lightning, to the All- Merciful One’s Throne through the “gravity” of the All-Merciful One’s Mercy and the attraction of the Eternal Sun’s love?

**QUESTION:** Even if he could ascend, why did and why should he? Would

it not have been enough for him to ascend in heart and spirit like saints?

**ANSWER:** The All-Majestic Maker wanted to show His amazing signs in His domain’s inner and outer dimensions, make this world’s workshops and sources observed, and display the results of our actions pertaining to the Hereafter. Given this, and as required by reason and wisdom, He would take Muhammad to His Supreme Throne not only with his eyes (the key to the world of visible objects) and ears, (which perceived His signs in the world of sound and voices,) but also with his entire blessed body, which, as his spirit’s machine composed of different members and faculties, is the means for the fulfillment of his uncountable duties. Just as Divine Wisdom makes the body accompany the spirit in Paradise, because the body enables numerous duties of worship to be performed and innumerable pleasures and pains to be experienced, it also is pure wisdom that He would make Muhammad’s blessed body accompany his spirit in ascending to the *Lote-tree of the furthest limit*, the “trunk” of the Garden of Refuge and Dwelling.

**QUESTION:** How, in the name of reason, can the distance that normally takes thousands of years to cover be covered in a few minutes?

**ANSWER:** In the All-Majestic Maker’s art, motions have infinitely different degrees. For example, the speeds of electricity, spirit, imagination, and sound are quite different from each other. Also, science has established that the speeds of planetary movements are astonishingly different. So why should it be unreasonable that Muhammad’s body acquired a sort of refinement, accompanied his spirit in the Ascension, and moved at its speed? Sometimes you sleep for ten minutes but have a year’s worth of experiences. If the words spoken and heard in a dream lasting for only a minute were collected, it would take a day and even longer to speak or hear them while awake. Thus a single period of time means a day for one and a year for another.

Consider this analogy: A clock measures the speed of a person, a cannonball, sound, light, electricity, spirit, and imagination. It has ten hands to show the hours, minutes, and seconds down to fractions of an hour to the tenth power. It also has ten circles, one round the other and sixty times larger than it, respectively. If the circle with the hour hand is the size of a normal clock, the circle with the fraction-of-an-hour hand to the tenth power would have to be the size of the earth’s annual orbit or much greater.

Suppose there are two people. One is mounted on the hour-hand and observes according to its motion, while the other is on the hand showing fractions of an hour to the tenth power. There would be a huge difference, as great as the proportion between a normal clock and the earth’s annual orbit, with respect to what they could see during the same time period.

Since time is like an aspect or a “ribbon” of motion, a rule that is in force in motion is also in force in time. While we would see the same amount of things during an hour as the one mounted on the hour-hand, which moves in the smallest circle at the slowest speed, God’s Messenger, like the one mounted on the hand showing fractions of the hour to the tenth power, gets on the mount of Divine assistance and, in the same space of time, traverses the entire sphere of contingency like lightning. Seeing the wonders in the inner and outer dimensions of contingent existence and rising as far as the boundary of the immaterial realm of the necessary existence (Divine realm’s limits), he is honored with Divine conversation and vision of His Beauty, receives the decree, and returns to his duty of Messengership on the earth. It was possible for him to do that, and he did it.

**QUESTION:** Even if this were possible, not everything possible occurs. Is there something similar that we can accept? How can we accept the occurrence of something unique, only because it is possible?

**ANSWER:** There are countless similar cases. For example, people with sound sight can ascend with their eyes to Neptune in a second. Astronomers can mount the laws of astronomy in their minds and travel beyond the stars in a minute. Believers can mount in thought on the acts and pillars of the prescribed Prayers and, leaving the universe behind through a sort of Ascension, go as far as the Divine Presence. Perfected saints can make a spiritual journey and travel the spiritual ranks beyond the realms of God’s Supreme Throne and His Names and Attributes in forty days. Such people as ‘Abdu’l-Qadir al-Jilani and Imam ar-Rabbani truthfully reported that they used to ascend spiritually as far as the Divine Throne in a minute.

Angels, whose bodies are of light, come and go between the ground and the Divine Throne in a very short time. The people of Paradise will ascend to the gardens of Paradise from the Supreme Plain of Gathering in a short period of time. Many such examples demonstrate that it is pure wisdom, completely rational, and that it undoubtedly occurred that Prophet Muhammad, the lord of all saints, leader of all believers, head of all people of Paradise, and accepted by all angels, realized an Ascension, which marks his journey through and beyond all ranks of sainthood, in a form appropriate to his position.

Third principle: What is the Ascension’s wisdom?

**ANSWER:** The wisdom here is so elevated that human minds cannot reach it, so profound that human minds cannot comprehend it, and so subtle and fine that the intellect cannot grasp it. However, even if we cannot know its wisdom or the exact Divine purposes for it, some indications allow us to show the existence of several purposes. They are as follows.

To show the light of His Unity and the manifestation of His absolute Oneness in the levels of publicity, the Creator of this universe distinguished an eminent individual with an Ascension in the form of a link between the realm of multiplicity and corporeality’s furthest limit and the Dominion of Pure Unity and spirituality’s starting point. Addressing him on behalf of all creatures, He explained all Divine purposes to him in the name of conscious beings, and made them known through him. He also willed to observe through his sight His Art’s beauty and His Lordship’s perfection in the mir- rors of His creatures and to cause them to be observed by others.

Furthermore, His works testify that the Maker of the world has infinite beauty and perfection, both of which are loved because of themselves. Thus the One with infinite beauty and perfection has a boundless love for His Beauty and Perfection, a love that manifests itself in the works of His Art, which He loves because He sees His Beauty and Perfection in them. The most lovable and elevated of His works of Art are animate beings. The most lovable and elevated animate beings are conscious beings. By virtue of their comprehensiveness, the most lovable conscious beings are found among humanity. The most loveable person is the one who has developed his or her potentiality most fully and manifested the samples of the perfections observed in all creatures.

To see at one point and in one mirror all manifestations of His Love pervading all creatures, and to display all varieties of His Beauty focused on one individual, the Maker of beings chose one person, an illustrious, enlightened fruit of the tree of creation, one whose heart is like a seed containing all the essential truths contained in that trees. To demonstrate how He loves that individual in the name of the universe, He drew him to His Presence through an Ascension, which is like a thread linking the seed (the origin) with the fruit (the end), and honored him with the vision of His Essential Beauty. So that others could imitate his holiness and excellence, He favored him with His speech and entrusted Him with His decree.

To understand this exalted wisdom, consider the comparisons below.

**First comparison:** As explained in The Eleventh Word, imagine a glorious king with vast treasuries containing many varieties of jewels. He is well-versed in all industries, and had a vast knowledge of all artistic and scientific disciplines, and countless fine arts. As anyone with perfect beauty and perfection tend to see and show themselves, that glorious king wants to open up an exhibition and display his kingdom’s magnificence, his wealth’s splendor and extent, and the wonderful products of his artistry and skill. He so desires in order to behold his beauty and perfection with his own discerning eye and through the eyes of others.

And so he begins to build a very large, magnificent palace. Dividing it into many apartments and rooms, he decorates it with his finest and most beautiful works of art, and embellishes it with his precious stones. Designing it according to his artistic and scientific principles and disciplines, he furnishes it with the miraculous products of his knowledge. Finally, he sets up therein tables containing most delicious specific foods and drinks, and specifies an appropriate table for each tribe of his subjects. He prepares a general banquet.

Then, to show his perfection, the king invites his subjects to eat and see the palace. He appoints a representative or supreme commander and gives him the highest rank with himself. He invites him to rise above the bottom floor in order to tour all mansions and floors one after or above the other. Showing him the successive machinery, all workshops of his wonderful art and storehouses for the produce coming from below, he brings him to his private apartment. There he honors him with his presence and the vision of his blessed person, who is the origin of all those perfections, and informs him of the palace’s true nature and of his own perfections.

Appointing him to guide the rest of his subjects, he sends him back to describe the palace’s maker through its contents, inscriptions, and wonders. The guide also will explain the inscriptions’ meanings, what the works of art and well-proportioned and well-arranged furniture and decorations signify, and how they point to the perfections and skills of the palace’s owner. He will teach them the correct behavior and formalities when visiting the palace and beholding the exhibition, and describe the protocol and ceremonies that meet with the pleasure and desires of the learned and skillful king, who does not appear to them.

Similarly, the All-Majestic Maker, the Lord of Eternity, willed to see and display His infinite Beauty and Perfections. So He made the palace of this world in such a fashion that each creature voices His Perfections in numerous tongues and points to His Beauty with many signs. Through all its inhabitants, this universe shows how numerous immaterial treasuries are hidden in each of His All-Beautiful Names and how many subtleties are concealed in each sacred Title. It shows this in such a way that although scientists, together with all of science’s laws and principles, have studied this book of the universe since the time of Adam, they still have not discovered one-hundredth of that book’s meanings and signs concerning the Divine Names and Perfections.

Thus the Wisdom of the All-Majestic One of Beauty, the Beautiful One of Majesty, the Maker having infinite Perfection, Who has made that palace of the universe like an exhibition to see and display His Perfections and transcendent Beauty, requires that He inform someone of the meanings of His signs contained therein so that they do not remain useless and without benefit for conscious beings on the earth; that He have someone travel through the exalted worlds, which are the sources of the palace’s wonders and the store- houses where the results of their lives accumulate; that He raise him above all others, honor him with nearness to Him in His Presence, have him tour the Hereafter’s worlds, and entrust him with such duties as teaching His servants, heralding His Lordship’s sovereignty, informing His servants of things pleasing to Himself, and expanding His signs in the universe’s creation and operation; that He should show his pre-eminence through the decorations of miracles; and that He should proclaim through a decree like the Qur’an that that person is a truthful personal interpreter of the All-Majestic One.

So far, we have demonstrated through this comparison a few instances

of wisdom in the Ascension. You may infer others by analogy.

**Second comparison:** Suppose a knowledgeable, skillful person writes a miraculous book, each page of which contains as many truths as would fill a hundred books, each line of which contains as many subtle meanings as would fill a hundred pages, and each word of which would contain as many truths as would fill a hundred lines. If all the meanings and truths of such a book point to its miracle-displaying writer’s transcendent perfections, he surely would not leave it closed and therefore worthless. Rather, he would teach it to others so that others could benefit, so that his hidden perfections would be unveiled and his beauty (intellectual and spiritual excellence) would be seen, and so that he would be pleased and make himself loved. To this end, he would have someone go through that entire wonderful book, all the while instructing him in its meanings and truths so that the person would then instruct others in them.

Similarly, in order to show His Perfections, Beauty, and the truths of His Names, the Eternal Inscriber has “written” the universe in such way that all creatures proclaim and express His infinite Perfections, Names, and Attributes in innumerable ways. If a book’s meaning is not known, it has no value. But a book (such as the universe), each letter of which contains thousands of meanings, cannot be reduced to nothing. Given this, the One Who wrote it will make it known and cause it to be explained in parts according to the capacity of each group of creatures.

He will teach the whole of it to one with the most comprehensive view, most universal consciousness, and greatest capacity. But to teach such a book in its entirety and with all its universal truths requires that, starting from the furthest limits of the levels of multiplicity (the corporeal world, the book’s first page) as far as the Realm of Unity (its final page), the individual should make a most elevated and universal journey. Through this comparison, one can gain some understanding of the exalted instances of wisdom in the Ascension.

**QUESTION:** Those deniers who are beginning to believe still might

face some confusion over such things as:

l Why is this Ascension special to Prophet Muhammad?

l What do you mean by saying that Muhammad is the seed of the universe, that the universe was created from his light, and that he is its farthest and most enlightened fruit?

l You say that he made his Ascension to rise to the elevated realm, to see the machinery and workshops whose produce or works are exhibited on the earth, as well as the storehouses where the results of those works are kept. What does this mean?

**ANSWER:** The first question was answered in previous Words, and so we give only a brief list of signs showing Muhammad’s Prophethood and perfections, and why he is the most worthy to make the Ascension.

*Firstly*: Despite the great corruption in the Torah, the Gospels, and the Psalms, Husain al-Jisri found in them one hundred and ten signs indicating Muhammad’s Prophethood. These are presented in his *Risala al-Hamidiya*.

*Secondly*: History also records the words of many pre-Islamic soothsayers, such Shiq and Satih, who accurately foretold the Prophethood of Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, and that he was the Last Prophet.

*Thirdly*: Many extraordinary events before his Prophethood (*irhasat*) foretold his imminent advent. For example, on the night he was born, the Ka‘ba’s idols toppled over and the pinnacles of the famous palace of the Persian ruler Chosroes broke.

*Fourthly*: Prophet Muhammad was distinguished with approximately a thousand miracles, which have been related by historians and biographers. To cite only a few examples, he satisfied an army’s thirst with the water flowing from his fingers and split the moon (54:1). The dry wooden pole against which he leaned while preaching in the Mosque moaned like a camel in front of many people when it was separated from him.

*Fifthly*: Friend and foe who are fair agree that all good qualities were found in him to the highest degree, and that, as demonstrated by his conduct, all attributes and character of the highest excellence were apparent in the way he performed his mission. As testified to by Islam’s moral principles, praiseworthy virtues of the highest order are found in the Law he brought.

*Sixthly*: Wisdom requires that Divinity manifest Itself and be responded with worship. Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, manifested God’s Divinity at the highest level and in the most brilliant fashion through the most perfect and comprehensive way of worship contained in the religion that he brought. Due to the wisdom in the universe’s creation, the Creator of the world wants to display His most perfect Beauty and Grace through the most appropriate means. Clearly, Prophet Muhammad showed and described His Beauty and Grace in the most perfect fashion.

The Maker of the world wills to exhibit and draw attentive gazes toward His perfect Art of infinite beauty; Prophet Muhammad proclaimed that Art with the clearest voice. Muhammad, in response to the desire of the Lord of the worlds to proclaim His Oneness in the realms of multiplicity, most perfectly announced Unity with all Its aspects.

As a consequence of His Wisdom, the Owner of the world wills to see and show His infinite essential Beauty and Grace, with all their manifestations, in the mirrors of all beings; Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, reflected them in the most brilliant fashion and made others love them. Also, Muhammad, in response to the will of the Builder of the palace of the world to describe His Perfections by exhibiting His unseen treasuries of invaluable gems, most perfectly displayed and described them.

The Maker of the universe has decorated the universe with the most beautiful and exquisite embellishments, and has included therein His conscious creatures so that they may travel to receive enjoyment and reflect. As required by wisdom, He also wills to communicate the meaning and value expressed by the works of His Art to people who observe and reflect. Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, guided humanity, jinn, and angels in the most comprehensive way, in this respect, through the Qur’an.

The All-Wise Ruler of the universe wills to use an envoy to provide for all conscious beings the answers to three perplexing questions: Where do we come from? Where are we going? What are we?, and therefore to reveal the purpose of the changes and transformations in existence. By means of the Qur’an’s truths, Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, revealed this purpose and provided the answers in the clearest and most perfect way.

The Maker of this world wills to make Himself known to conscious beings through His exquisite works and to be loved by them through the precious bounties He bestows on them. Thus He wants to communicate to them, by means of an envoy, what He wants them to do and how they may obtain His approval and good pleasure in return for those bounties. By means of the Qur’an, Prophet Muhammad communicated the things that please God in the most exalted and perfect way.

The Lord of the worlds has endowed humanity, the fruit of the tree of creation, with a comprehensive disposition that can encompass the universe, and with a corresponding ability—and even need—to perform a uni- versal worship. But humanity inclines to the world and its attractions. So God wills, by means of a guide, to turn humanity’s attention from worldly multiplicity to Divine Unity, from transience to eternity. In response to this will and by means of the Qur’an, Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, guided humanity to this goal in the most desirable fashion and performed the duty of Messengership in the most perfect way.

Thus the most superior members of creation are living beings, the most superior living beings are conscious beings, the most superior conscious beings are true human beings, and the true human being who carried out all of the duties mentioned in the most perfect and comprehensive way naturally would rise through an all-embracing Ascension to *the nearness of the distance between the strings of two bows*, the station nearest to God, to knock at the door of eternal happiness, open Mercy’s treasury, and witness directly belief’s unseen truths.

*Seventhly*: Everything displays the most pleasing instances of beauty and utmost degree of adornment, thereby demonstrating that their Maker wills to make things beautiful and adorn them. In turn, this shows that the Maker has a strong inclination and sacred love toward His Art. Therefore the person with the most comprehensive disposition to display this Art’s wonders in himself; one who knows them, makes them known, and thus makes himself lovable; and who deeply appreciates the beauties manifested in other beings in full appreciation of their coming from the Maker, will be the most beloved in the sight of the Maker, Who nurtures art and loves His Art greatly.

This same being, in full awareness of the exquisite beauties and qualities adorning all beings and of the perfections illuminating them, makes the heavens echo: “All-Glorified is God! What wonders God has willed!” and “All these are from God! God is the All-Great!” This same being causes the universe to reverberate with the sounds of the Qur’an, and enraptures land and sea with his appreciative reflections and glorification as well as with his proclamation and demonstration of Divine Unity.

Such a being, according to the principle of “The cause is like the doer,”

receives a reward equivalent to his community’s good deeds. His spiritual perfections draw strength from the blessings invoked upon him by his community, and the duties he performed during his Messengership cause him to receive an immaterial recompense and infinite emanations of Divine Mercy and Love. Given this, the result of pure truth and absolute wisdom is that this being should advance by means of Ascension as far as Paradise, *Sidratu’l- Muntaha*—the Lote-tree, contingency’s farthest limit—the Divine Throne, and to the *nearness of the distance between the strings of two bows*.

**Answer to the second question**: The truth behind the second question is so elevated and profound that the human mind cannot comprehend it. It can be discerned only through the light of belief. However, we will try to indicate it through comparisons.

This universe, when considered with regard to the wisdom in its purposes, appears to have the meaning of a mighty tree. Just like a tree, this world, which is a branch of the tree of creation, has branches (elements), leaves (plants), flowers (animals), and fruits (humanity). His Name the All-Wise requires that any law of the All-Majestic Maker that is prevalent in trees be prevalent in this supreme tree. Therefore, like any other tree, this tree of creation must also have been formed from a seed. It must have been such a seed that, besides those of this material world, it would encapsulate the models and foundations of all other worlds. For the origin and essential seed of the universe, which comprises thousands of different worlds, cannot be a dried, inanimate piece of matter.

Since there was not another tree prior to this tree of creation, the Divine Name the All-Wise requires that the meaning or light constituting its seed or origin be clothed within a fruit. A seed cannot remain naked forever. As it was not clothed within a fruit at the beginning of creation, it would certainly be clothed in it in the end. Since this seed is humanity, and since Prophet Muhammad, as pointed out earlier, is the best-known and illustrious among humanity—one who has attracted humanity’s attention to himself and has fixed the attention of half of the globe and one-fifth of humanity on himself, and one who, through his exceptional virtues and excellencies, has made the world consider him with love and amazement— for sure, the light constituting the universe’s seed would be clothed in Muhammad’s person and appear in the form of the final fruit.

Why should it be considered unlikely that this amazing, mighty universe was created out of a man’s nature? Why should the All-Powerful One of Majesty, Who creates a huge, world-resembling pine tree from a grain-sized seed, not create—or be unable to create—the universe from the light of Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings? The tree of the universe being (like the *Touba* tree of Paradise) upside down, with its roots and trunk spreading upward and branches downward, contains a link of light and a link in meaning between the position of the fruit below and that of the essential seed above. The Ascension is that link’s form: Prophet Ahmad (Muhammad) opened the way of traveling along it; he ascended through sainthood, returned with Messengership, and left the door open to a sort of ascension. Saints travel in heart and spirit on that highway of light under the Prophetic Ascension’s shadow, and rise to the elevated stations according to their capacity.

While answering the first question, we saw that the Maker of the universe made it in the form of a palace for the purposes mentioned. Since the Prophet is the means for accomplishing those purposes, he would have to be under the eyes of the favor of the universe’s Maker and receive His Manifestation before the universe was created, for something’s result or fruit is considered first. Thus the latest in existence is the first in meaning and consideration. Since Prophet Muhammad is the most perfect fruit, the means for valuing all other fruits and the cause for realizing all purposes (for the universe’s creation), his light must receive the first manifestation of Divine creation.

**As for the third question**, it is so extensive that people like us cannot comprehend it. We can only glimpse it from afar. The “immaterial factories” producing the material world are in the celestial worlds and its governing laws are determined or issue from there. The results of the acts performed by the earth’s innumerable inhabitants, and the consequences of what is done by humanity and jinn, also assume form in those worlds. Together with the testimony of many indications and Prophetic Traditions, the Qur’an suggests, and the wisdom in the universe and the Divine Name the All-Wise require, that the good deeds done by humanity and jinn assume the forms of Paradise’s fruits, while their evil deeds assume the forms of the bitter, poisonous fruits of the tree (*Zaqqum*) of Hell.

Creatures exist on the earth in such abundance, and creation has been divided into so many branches, that the groups and species of beings and divisions of creatures are found here in far greater numbers than anywhere else in the universe. These beings and creatures are replaced constantly by newer ones, for the world is filled and emptied of them continuously. All of these multiple beings and creatures have their sources and origins in the universal laws and manifestations of Divine Names, which are first reflect- ed in and received by the heavens.

To some degree simple and pure, each heaven is like a different world’s roof, and represents a center for the administration of that world and regulation of its affairs. One of those worlds is the Garden of Refuge and Dwelling, an apartment of Paradise beside the *Lote-tree of the farthest limit*. The Truthful Reporter (the holy Prophet) says the praises and glorifications of God performed on the earth assume the forms of that Garden’s fruits. In other words, the storehouses containing the results or fruits of the works done here are located in those heavenly worlds; the harvest obtained here is sent there (to “reap” on a predetermined day.)

So do not say how an utterance, such as “All praise and gratitude are for God,” which is lost in the air, become embodied in a fruit of Paradise? Sometimes you say an agreeable word while awake and eat it in the form of a delicious apple in your dream at night. A disagreeable word said during the day returns at night as a bitter thing to swallow. If you backbite someone, they will make you eat it as decaying flesh. So whatever good or bad words you utter in this worldly sleep, you will eat them in the forms of fruits in the Hereafter, the world of being awake.

Fourth principle: What are the Ascension’s fruits and benefits?

**ANSWER:** Out of the numerous fruits of the Ascension, which is like an

elaborate tree of Paradise in meaning, we will mention only five as examples.

**First fruit:** The vision of the original forms of the pillars of belief or the truths from which they originate, as well as seeing angels, Paradise, and the Hereafter, and even the vision of the All-Majestic Being (beyond all features of quality and quantity), resulted in a vast treasury, an eternal light, and a gift for the universe and humanity. Through it, the universe could no longer be seen as a disordered heap of things doomed to destruction, for its reality was revealed: It is the harmonious collection of the Eternally Besought’s sacred writings and the lovely mirrors where the Single One’s Grace and Beauty are reflected. It has pleased and caused the universe and all conscious beings to rejoice.

It also freed us from our confused state of misguidance, in which we considered ourselves wretched, helpless, and destitute beings entangled in infinite need and hostility and doomed to eternal annihilation. It showed us our reality as beings of the fairest composition and creation’s best pattern, miracles of the Eternally Besought’s Power, a comprehensive copy of His writing, and beings addressed by the Sovereign of Eternity. It also revealed that we are His private servants appreciating His Perfections, His friends beholding His Beauty in amazement, and His beloved and honorable guests designated for Paradise. It implanted infinite joy and enthusiasm in those who are truly human.

**Second fruit:** The Ascension brought to jinn and humankind as a gift the essentials of Islam, including primarily the prescribed five daily Prayers, which comprise whatever is approved by and pleasing to the Ruler of Eternity, the Maker of creatures, the Owner of the universe, and the Lord of the worlds. To perceive the things that are pleasing to Him are so curiosity-exciting and brings such happiness that it cannot be described. For everyone wants to know the wishes of a renowned benefactor or a benevolent king, and so wishes that they could talk with him directly to know what he asks of them and what pleases him.

All creatures are in the grasp of His Power, and their grace, beauty, and perfections are but dim shadows when compared to His Beauty, Grace, and Perfection. See to what degree humanity, who needs Him in infinite respects and receives His boundless bounties every moment, should be curious about and want to know His will and what pleases Him. One of the Ascension’s fruits was that after passing through “seventy thousand” veils, Prophet Muhammad heard what pleases the King of Eternity directly from Him with absolute certainty, and then relayed this information to us as a gift.

Humanity is very curious about the moon and other planets. We hope that someone will go there and tell us what they see, and are ready to make great sacrifices for this end. But the moon travels in the domain of the Master Who makes it fly around the earth like a fly. The earth flies around the sun like a moth, and the sun is only one of thousands of lamps and functions as a candle in a guest-house of the All-Majestic Master’s Kingdom. During the Ascension, Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, observed the essential Characteristics of such an All-Majestic Being, as well as the originals of His Acts, His Art’s wonders, and His Mercy’s treasuries in the eternal world. The observed these and returned to tell us about them. How contrary to reason and wisdom it would be if humanity did not listen to him with utmost curiosity and in perfect amazement and love.

**Third fruit:** The Prophet saw the hidden treasury of eternal happiness during the Ascension and brought its keys to humanity and jinn as a gift. He saw Paradise, observed the everlasting manifestations of the Majestic All- Merciful One’s Mercy, and perceived eternal happiness with absolute certainty. He then gave humanity and jinn the glad tiding that the eternal happiness exists (in an everlasting world).

The great happiness that surged in the mortal, wretched human beings and jinn, all of whom before this event had considered themselves condemned to eternal annihilation, cannot be described. They learned of this at a time when all creatures were pouring out heart-rending cries at the thought of being in a flux amid the convulsions of death and decay in an unstable world, entering the ocean of non-existence and eternal separation through time’s flow and atoms’ motion. Consider how happy such people become when they learn, just before they are to be hanged, that the king has given each of them a palace near his own palace. Add together the joy and happiness of all human beings and jinn, and then you will understand the value of this good tiding.

**Fourth fruit:** Prophet Muhammad received the fruit of the vision of God’s Beautiful “Countenance,” and brought it to humanity and jinn as a gift so that every believer may be honored with the same vision. You can understand how delicious, fine, and beautiful that fruit is by the following comparison: Anyone with a heart loves a beautiful, perfect, and benevolent one. This love increases in proportion to the extent of beauty, perfection, and benevolence; expands to adoration and self-sacrifice; and increases to the point that one may sacrifice possessions and life for a single vision of the beloved one.

When compared to His, all beauty, perfection, and benevolence in creation do not even resemble a few flashes of the sun in comparison to the sun itself. Understand from this what a pleasant, beautiful, rejoicing, and blissful fruit it is to receive in eternal happiness the vision of an All- Majestic One of Perfection, Who is worthy of infinite love, the sight of Whom deserves to inspire an infinite eagerness.

**Fifth fruit:** Another fruit is that this event made it understood that humanity is a valuable fruit of the universe and a darling beloved of the Maker of the universe. Though outwardly an insignificant creature, a weak animal, and an impotent conscious being, humanity has risen through this fruit to a position so far above all other creatures that it is the cause of pride for us. The joy and happiness it gives is indescribable. If you tell an ordinary private that he has been promoted to the rank of field-marshal, he will feel infinite joy. While being a mortal, helpless, reasoning, and articulating animal knowing only the blows of decay and separation, we were told unexpectedly through the Ascension: As you may realize all your heart’s desires in an everlasting Paradise, enveloped by the Mercy of an All-Merciful, All-Compassionate, and All-Magnificent One, and in recreation, in traveling with the speed of imagination and in the broad sphere of the spirit and the mind, you also may see His All-Beautiful “Countenance” in eternal happiness.

Imagine the great joy and happiness one who is truly human will feel in his or her heart upon hearing this. O unbelievers, tear the shirt of denial and irreligion and put on the ears of a believer and the eyes of a Muslim. Consider the following two comparisons.

*First comparison:* Suppose we are in an unfriendly land in which everything and everyone is hostile and strange to us and to each other. Dreadful corpses are everywhere. All we hear are cries of orphans and laments of the oppressed. While there in that situation, if one goes and brings the good news from the king, which somehow changes hostility into friendship; enemies into friends; dreadful corpses into worshippers occupied with praising and glorification, in veneration and humility; cries and wailings into shouts of approval or acclamation; and death, killing, and robbery into discharges from life’s duties— and if we somehow share the joy and happiness of others, while experiencing our own joy and happiness, you can understand how joyful that tiding is.

Prior to the light of belief, a fruit of Prophet Muhammad’s Ascension, all creatures seemed to be strange, harmful, troublesome, and frightening objects. Mountain-like bodies seemed like dreadful corpses, death cut off everyone’s head and threw it into the well of eternal non-existence, and all voices were cries of lament coming from death and separation. At a time when misguidance presented everything in such a way, the truths contained in the pillars of belief, a fruit of the Ascension, showed every creature as a friend or sibling, something that mentions and glorifies its All-Majestic Maker, death as a discharge from life’s duties, and voices as praises and glorifications of God. If you want to comprehend this truth perfectly, refer to the Second and Eighth Words.

*Second comparison:* Suppose we are trapped at night in a desert sandstorm. We cannot see even our hands and are hungry, thirsty, hopeless, and exposed. Just then, someone appears unexpectedly with a car and takes us to a Paradise-like place, where an extremely merciful lord welcomes us and extends his protection to us. Our future has been secured, and a banquet has been prepared for us. You can well imagine our great happiness.

The desert is the world, and the sandstorm is the violent disturbances of time and events. All of us are anxious about our future. Since we look at it through the view of misguidance, we see it in a thick darkness. No one we know can hear our cries. Moreover, we are very hungry and thirsty. But thanks to the pillars of belief, ways of worship and principles of good conduct that Prophet Muhammad brought as a fruit of the Ascension, the world is the guest-house of an extremely Munificent One and we are His guests and officers. In such a guest-house, the future appears as beautiful as Paradise, as lovely as mercy, and as brilliant as eternal happiness. Given this, understand how lovely, pleasant, and beautiful that fruit is.

The unbeliever remarks: “Boundless praise and gratitude be to Almighty God! I am convinced and reject my unbelief. I am a believer.” We congratulate you, and may God Almighty include us in His Messenger’s intercession.

O God, bestow blessings from the beginning of the world until the end of the Day of Judgment, on him by whose sign the moon split, and from whose fingers water gushed forth like the spring of Paradise; who made the Ascension and whose eyes did not swerve— our master Muhammad, and on his Family and Companions.

All-Glorified are You! We have no knowledge save what You have taught us. Surely You are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

O Lord, accept from us (all our good deeds); surely You are the All- Hearing, the All-Knowing. Our Lord, take us not to task if we forget or make mistakes. O Lord, do not let our hearts swerve after You have guided us. O Lord, complete our light for us and forgive us. Surely You have full power over all things. The conclusion of their call will be: “All praise and gratitude are for God, the Lord of the Worlds.”

1. These are belief in God’s Existence and Unity, angels, Scriptures, Prophethood and Divine Messengership (including belief in all of God’s Prophets and Messengers), and the Resurrection, and Divine Decree and Destiny, without excluding human free will. (Tr.) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)