



قَصِيدَةُ الْبُرْدَةِ

THE POEM OF THE MANTLE

A Study Booklet

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A Note on the Metre

مَوْلَايَ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ دَائِمًا أَبَدًا * عَلَى حَبِيبِكَ خَيْرِ الْخَلْقِ كُلِّهِمْ

My Master, send blessings and peace, always and forever, upon Your beloved, the best of all creation.

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Chapter I

LOVE AND ITS COMPLAINT

أَمِنْ تَذَكُّرِ حَيْرَانٍ بِذِي سَلَمٍ * مَزَجَتْ دَمْعًا جَرَى مِنْ مُقَلَّةٍ بِدَمٍ

1. *Is it from remembering the neighbours at Dhū Salam that you mixed tears – flowing from an eye – with blood?*

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أَمْ هَبَّتِ الرِّيحُ مِنْ تِلْقَاءِ كَاطِمَةٍ * وَأَوْمَضَ الْبَرْقُ فِي الظُّلُمَاءِ مِنْ إِضْمٍ

2. Or is it that the wind blew towards you from the direction of Kāzima, and lightning flashed in the darkness from Idam?

فَمَا لِعَيْنَيْكَ إِنَّ قُلْتَ اكْفُفَا هَمَّتَا * وَمَا لِقَلْبِكَ إِنَّ قُلْتَ اسْتَفِقْ يَهُم

3. Then what is wrong with your eyes, that if you say "stop" they pour all the more?
And what is wrong with your heart, that if you say "come to your senses" it only sinks
deeper?

أَيَحْسَبُ الصَّبُّ أَنَّ الْحَبَّ مُنْكِتٌ * مَا بَيْنَ مُنْسَجِمٍ مِنْهُ وَمُضْطَرِمٍ

4. Does the lovesick man imagine that love can stay hidden, when it lies between something flowing from him and something ablaze?

[illegible]

لَوْلَا الْهَوَى لَمْ تَرَقْ دَمْعًا عَلَى طَلَلٍ * وَلَا أَرَقْتَ لِذِكْرِ الْبَانِ وَالْعَلَمِ

5. *Were it not for passion, you would not have poured out tears over an abandoned campsite, nor lain awake at the memory of the bān tree and the mountain.*

[illegible]

فَكَيْفَ تُنْكِرُ حُبًّا بَعْدَ مَا شَهِدْتَ * بِهِ عَلَيْكَ عُدُولُ الدَّمْعِ وَالسَّقَمِ

6. *So how can you deny a love, after witnesses have testified against you — the upright witnesses of tears and of sickness?*

[illegible]

7. And passion has inscribed two lines — of tears and of wasting — like the yellow bahār and the red 'anam upon your cheeks.

8. *Yes — the phantom of the one I love travelled to me by night and robbed me of sleep.
Love intercepts every pleasure with pain.*

يَا لَأَيْمِي فِي الْهَوَى الْعُذْرِي مَعْدِرَةً * مَنِّي إِلَيْكَ وَلَوْ أَنْصَفْتَ لَمْ تَلُم

9. O you who blame me for this 'Udhri love — accept my apology; had you been fair,
you would not have blamed me at all.

عَدَّتْكَ حَالِي لَا سِرِّي بِمُسْتَتِرٍ * عَنِ الْوُشَاةِ وَلَا دَائِي بِمُنْحَسِمٍ

10. *May my condition pass you by. My secret is not hidden from the slanderers, nor is my sickness going to be cut short.*

[illegible]

مَحَضَّتَنِي النُّصْحَ لَكِنْ لَسْتُ أَسْمَعُهُ * إِنَّ الْمَحِبَّ عَنِ الْعُدَالِ فِي صَمَمٍ

11. *You have given me pure and sincere advice — but I do not hear it. The lover is deaf to those who reproach him.*

[illegible]

[illegible]

A WARNING AGAINST THE CAPRICES OF THE SELF

13. *For my soul, which commands to evil, took no heed — out of its ignorance of the warning of grey hair and old age.*

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14. *Nor did it prepare, from beautiful deeds, any hospitality for the guest who descended upon my head without the least shame.*

لَوْ كُنْتُ أَعْلَمُ أَنِّي مَا أُوقِرُهُ * كَتَمْتُ سِرًّا بَدَا لِي مِنْهُ بِالْكَتَمِ

15. *Had I known that I would not honour him, I would have concealed with katam-dye the secret he disclosed to me.*

مَنْ لِي بَرْدٍ جَمَاحٍ مِنْ غَوَايَتِهَا * كَمَا يُرَدُّ جَمَاحُ الْخَيْلِ بِاللُّجَمِ

16. *Who is there for me, to turn back its bolting waywardness — as the bolting of horses is turned back by the bit?*

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فَلَا تَرْمِ بِالْمَعَاصِي كَسَرِ شَهْوَتَهَا * إِنَّ الطَّعَامَ يُقْوِي شَهْوَةَ النَّهَمِ

17. *So do not seek to break its appetite by sinning — food only strengthens the appetite of the glutton.*

وَالنَّفْسُ كَالطِّفْلِ إِنْ تُهْمِلَهُ شَبَّ عَلَى * حُبِّ الرِّضَاعِ وَإِنْ تَفْطِمَهُ يَنْفَطِمِ

18. The soul is like an infant: neglect him and he grows up still loving to nurse; wean him, and he is weaned.

فَاصْرِفْ هَوَاهَا وَحَازِرْ أَنْ تُؤَلِّيَهُ * إِنَّ الْهَوَىٰ مَا تَوَلَّى يَصُمِ أَوْ يَصِمِ

19. *So turn away its desire, and beware of giving it charge — for desire, whenever it is put in charge, either kills or maims.*

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وَرَاعَهَا وَهِيَ فِي الْأَعْمَالِ سَائِمَةٌ * وَإِنْ هِيَ اسْتَحَلَّتِ الْمَرْعَى فَلَا تُسِمِ

20. *And watch over it while it grazes among good deeds; and if it finds the pasture sweet, do not let it graze on.*

[illegible]

كَمْ حَسَّنَتْ لَذَّةَ لِمَرْءٍ قَاتِلَةً * مِنْ حَيْثُ لَمْ يَدْرِ أَنَّ السُّمَّ فِي الدَّسَمِ

21. *How many a deadly pleasure has it made to seem beautiful to a man — while he did not know that the poison was in the fat.*

22. *And fear the hidden schemes of both hunger and fullness — for many a state of starvation is worse than indigestion.*

[illegible]

23. *Empty out the tears from an eye that has filled itself with forbidden things – and keep strictly to the regimen of remorse.*

وَخَالَفِ النَّفْسَ وَالشَّيْطَانَ وَاعْصِمَا * وَإِنْ هُمَا مَحْضَاكَ النُّصْحَ فَاتَّهِم

24. Oppose the soul and Satan, and disobey them both. And if they offer you the purest sincere advice — suspect it.

وَلَا تُطِغْ مِنْهُمَا خَصْمًا وَلَا حَكَمًا * فَأَنْتَ تَعْرِفُ كَيْدَ الْخَصْمِ وَالْحَكَمِ

25. *Obey neither of them, whether as adversary or as arbitrator — for you know well the cunning of the adversary and of the judge.*

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أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ مِنْ قَوْلٍ بِلاَ عَمَلٍ * لَقَدْ نَسَبْتُ بِهِ نَسْلاً لِيذِي عَقْمٍ

26. *I ask Allah's forgiveness for words without deeds — by them I have ascribed offspring to one who is barren.*

أَمَرْتُكَ الْخَيْرَ لَكِنْ مَا اتَّعَمَرْتُ بِهِ * وَمَا اسْتَقَمْتُ فَمَا قَوْلِي لَكَ اسْتَقِمِ

27. I commanded you to good, but did not follow it myself; I was not upright — so what is my saying to you, "Be upright"?

28. *Nor did I lay up any supererogatory provision before death; I prayed nothing but the obligatory, and I did not fast.*

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Chapter III

IN PRAISE OF THE PROPHET Γ

ظَلَمْتُ سُنَّةَ مَنْ أَحْيَا الظَّلَامَ إِلَى * أَنْ اشْتَكَيْتَ قَدَمَاهُ الضَّرَّ مِنْ وَرَمٍ

29. *I have wronged the way of the one who brought the darkness to life — until his feet complained of the hurt of their swelling.*

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وَشَدَّ مِنْ سَغْبٍ أَحْشَاءَهُ وَطَوَى * تَحْتَ الْحِجَارَةِ كَشْحًا مُتْرَفَ الْأَدَمِ

30. *And out of hunger he bound tight his inward parts, and folded beneath stones a flank whose skin was delicately nurtured.*

وَرَأَوْدَتُهُ الْجِبَالُ الشُّمُّ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ * عَنْ نَفْسِهِ فَأَرَاهَا أَيَّمَا شَمَمٍ

31. *And the towering mountains of gold sought to seduce him away from himself – so he showed them what true loftiness is.*

وَأَكَّدَتْ زُهْدَهُ فِيهَا ضَرُورَتُهُ * إِنَّ الضَّرُورَةَ لَا تَعْدُو عَلَى الْعِصَمِ

32. And his need only confirmed his renunciation of the world — for necessity does not overpower those whom Allah protects.

33. *And how could need summon to this world the one but for whom the world would never have emerged from non-existence?*

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34. *Muḥammad, master of both worlds, of both weighty races, and of both parties – Arab and non-Arab.*

[illegible]

نَبِيُّنَا الْأَمْرُ النَّاهِي فَلَا أَحَدٌ * أَبَرَّ فِي قَوْلٍ لَا مِنْهُ وَلَا نَعَمِ

35. Our Prophet, who commands and forbids — and none is more truthful than he in saying "no," nor in saying "yes."

هُوَ الْحَبِيبُ الَّذِي تَرْجَى شَفَاعَتَهُ * لِكُلِّ هَوٍ مِنَ الْأَهْوَالِ مُقْتَحِمٌ

36. *He is the Beloved whose intercession is hoped for against every terror that comes crashing in.*

[illegible]

دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ فَالْمُسْتَمْسِكُونَ بِهِ * مُسْتَمْسِكُونَ بِحَبْلِ غَيْرِ مُنْقَصِمٍ

37. *He called to Allah; so those who hold fast to him are holding fast to a rope that will never snap.*

فَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ فِي خَلْقٍ وَفِي خُلُقٍ * وَلَمْ يُدَانُوهُ فِي عِلْمٍ وَلَا كَرَمٍ

38. He surpassed the prophets in outward form and in inward character; and they did not approach him in knowledge or in nobility.

39. *And every one of them seeks from the Messenger of Allah a scoop from his ocean
or a sip from his steady rain.*

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40. *And they stand before him, each at his own limit — at a dot of knowledge, or a vowel-mark of wisdom.*

فَهُوَ الَّذِي تَمَّ مَعْنَاهُ وَصُورَتُهُ * ثُمَّ اصْطَفَاهُ حَبِيبًا بَارِئُ النَّسَمِ

41. He is the one whose meaning was complete, and whose form was complete; then the Creator of souls chose him as His beloved.

42. *He is exalted above having any partner in his excellences — the very essence of beauty in him is indivisible.*

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43. *Leave aside what the Christians claimed about their prophet; then judge as you will in praising him, and pronounce freely.*

[illegible]

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فَإِنَّ فَضْلَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ لَيْسَ لَهُ * حَدٌّ فَيُعْرَبُ عَنْهُ نَاطِقٌ بِفَمٍ

45. *For the excellence of the Messenger of Allah has no limit that any speaker with a mouth could express.*

[illegible]

لَوْ نَاسَبَتْ قُدْرَهُ آيَاتُهُ عِظْمًا * أَحْيَا اسْمُهُ حِينَ يُدْعَى دَارِسَ الرِّمَمِ

46. *Had his signs matched his rank in greatness, his very name, when called upon,
would revive decayed bones.*

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أَعْيَا الْوَرَى فَهُمْ مَعْنَاهُ فَلَيْسَ يُرَى * فِي الْقُرْبِ وَالْبُعْدِ فِيهِ غَيْرُ مُنْفَحِمٍ

48. Grasping his meaning has exhausted all creation; and none is seen, near or far,
who is not left speechless before it.

كَالشَّمْسِ تَطْهَرُ لِلْعَيْنَيْنِ مِنْ بُعْدٍ * صَغِيرَةً وَتُكِلُ الطَّرْفَ مِنْ أَمٍّ

49. *Like the sun, which appears small to the eyes from afar, yet blinds the gaze from close at hand.*

وَكَيْفَ يُدْرِكُ فِي الدُّنْيَا حَقِيقَتَهُ * قَوْمٌ نِيَامٌ تَسْلَوْنَ عَنْهُ بِالْحُلُمِ

50. *And how could a sleeping people, contenting themselves with dreams of him, grasp his reality in this world?*

[illegible]

فَمَبْلَغُ الْعِلْمِ فِيهِ أَنَّهُ بَشَرٌ * وَأَنَّهُ خَيْرُ خَلْقِ اللَّهِ كُلِّهِمْ

51. *The furthest our knowledge reaches concerning him is that he is a man — and that he is the best of all Allah's creation.*

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وَكُلُّ آيٍ أَتَى الرُّسُلَ الْكَرَامَ بِهَا * فَإِنَّمَا اتَّصَلَتْ مِنْ نُورِهِ بِهِم

52. *And every sign the noble messengers brought — it reached them only from his light.*

فَإِنَّهُ شَمْسٌ فَضْلٌ هُمْ كَوَاكِبُهَا * يُظْهِرْنَ أَنْوَارَهَا لِلنَّاسِ فِي الظُّلُمِ

53. For he is the sun of excellence, and they are its planets, displaying its lights to people in the darkness.

أَكْرَمَ خَلَقَ نَبِيَّ رَأَاهُ خَلْقُ * بِالْحُسْنِ مُشْتَمِلٍ بِالْبِشْرِ مُتَّسِمٍ

54. *How noble the form of a prophet, adorned by character — wrapped in beauty,
marked by a smiling countenance!*

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كَالزَّهْرِ فِي تَرْفٍ وَالْبَدْرِ فِي شَرْفٍ * وَالْبَحْرِ فِي كَرَمٍ وَالذَّهْرِ فِي هَمٍّ

55. *Like a flower in delicacy, the full moon in loftiness, the ocean in generosity, and time itself in resolve.*

[illegible]

كَأَنَّهُ وَهُوَ فَرْدٌ مِنْ جَلَالَتِهِ * فِي عَسْكَرٍ حِينَ تَلْقَاهُ وَفِي حَشَمٍ

56. It is as though, alone as he is, from his sheer majesty he were amid an army and a retinue whenever you meet him.

كَأَمَّا اللُّؤْلُؤُ الْمَكْنُونُ فِي صَدَفٍ * مِنْ مَعْدِي مَنْطِقٍ مِنْهُ وَمُبْتَسِمٍ

57. *As though the hidden pearl within its shell came from the twin mines of his speech
and his smile.*

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لَا طِيبَ يَعْدِلُ تُرْبًا ضَمَّ أَعْظَمُهُ * طُوبَى لِمُنْتَشِقٍ مِنْهُ وَمُلْتَمِ

58. *No perfume equals the earth that holds his bones. Blessed is the one who breathes its scent, or presses his lips to it.*

[illegible]

Chapter IV

HIS BLESSED BIRTH

أَبَانَ مَوْلَدُهُ عَنْ طِيبِ عُنْصَرِهِ * يَا طِيبَ مُبْتَدَأٍ مِنْهُ وَمُخْتَمٍ

59. *His birth made plain the purity of his origin — what a pure beginning, and what a pure ending!*

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يَوْمَ تَفْرَسَ فِيهِ الْفُرْسُ أَهْمُ * قَدْ أُنْذِرُوا بِحُلُولِ الْبُؤْسِ وَالنِّقَمِ

60. *A day on which the Persians perceived that they had been warned of the descent of hardship and retribution.*

وَبَاتَ إِيوَانُ كِسْرَى وَهُوَ مُنْصَدِعٌ * كَشَمَلِ أَصْحَابِ كِسْرَى غَيْرِ مُلتَمِّمِ

61. And the hall of Chosroes passed the night split apart — like the unity of Chosroes' people, never to be rejoined.

62. *And the fire, its breath extinguished from grief over it; and the river, its eye grown forgetful from sorrow.*

[illegible]

63. *And it grieved Sāwa that its lake sank away, and its water-carrier was turned back in rage, parched with thirst.*

كَأَنَّ النَّارَ مَا بِالماءِ مِنْ بَلَلٍ * حُزْنًا وَبِالماءِ مَا بِالنَّارِ مِنْ ضَرَمٍ

64. *As though the fire had taken on the water's wetness out of grief; and the water had taken on the fire's burning.*

وَالْجِئْتُ تَحْتَفُ وَالْأَنْوَارُ سَاطِعَةٌ * وَالْحَقُّ يَظْهَرُ مِنْ مَعْنَى وَمِنْ كَلِمِ

65. *And the jinn were calling out, and lights were blazing, and the truth was appearing — in meaning and in word.*

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عَمُّوْا وَصَمُّوْا فَاِِعْلَانُ الْبَشَائِرِ لَمْ * يُسْمَعْ وَبَارِقَةُ الْاِنْدَارِ لَمْ تُشْمِ

66. *They were blinded and deafened: the proclamations of glad tidings went unheard, and the flashing warning went unwatched.*

[illegible]

68. *And after they had seen with their own eyes, on the horizon, flames hurtling down
— matching what fell on earth of idols.*

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69. *Until, from the road of revelation, one routed devil went fleeing on the heels of another.*

كَأَنَّهُمْ هَرَبًا أَبْطَالُ أَبْرَهَةَ * أَوْ عَسْكَرٍ بِالْحَصَى مِنْ رَاحَتَيْهِ رُمِي

70. *In their flight they were like the champions of Abraha — or like an army pelted with pebbles from his blessed palms.*

71. *Flung out after glorifying Allah within them — as the glorifier was flung from the belly of the one that swallowed him.*

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Chapter V

HIS MIRACLES

جَاءَتْ لِدَعْوَتِهِ الْأَشْجَارُ سَاجِدَةً * تَمْشِي إِلَيْهِ عَلَى سَاقٍ بِلَا قَدَمٍ

72. *The trees came at his call, prostrating — walking to him upon a trunk, with no feet.*

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كَأَنَّمَا سَطَرْتُمْ سَطْرًا لِّمَا كَتَبْتُ * فُرُوعُهَا مِنْ بَدِيعِ الْخَطِّ بِاللَّقَمِ

73. *As though they had ruled a line for the exquisite calligraphy their branches wrote along the middle of the road.*

مِثْلَ الْغَمَامَةِ أَنَّى سَارَ سَائِرَةً * تَقِيهِ حَرَّ وَطِيسٍ لِلْهَجِيرِ حَمِي

74. Like the cloud, travelling wherever he travelled, shielding him from the burning heat of the midday furnace.

75. *I swear by the moon that was split: it bears to his heart a kinship that makes my oath a true one.*

وَمَا حَوَى الْغَارُ مِنْ خَيْرٍ وَمِنْ كَرَمٍ * وَكُلُّ طَرَفٍ مِنَ الْكُفَّارِ عَنْهُ عَمِي

76. *And by what the cave held of goodness and generosity — while every disbelieving eye was blind to it.*

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78. *They supposed that dove and spider would not weave or hover over the best of creation.*

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79. *Allah's protection dispensed with layered coats of mail and with lofty fortresses.*

[illegible]

مَا سَامَنِي الدَّهْرُ ضَيْمًا وَاسْتَجَرْتُ بِهِ * إِلَّا وَنِلْتُ جَوَارًا مِنْهُ لَمْ يُضَمِّ

80. *Never did time impose a hardship on me, and I sought his protection, but that I obtained from him a protection no wrong could reach.*

وَلَا التَّمَسُّتُ غَنَى الدَّارَيْنِ مِنْ يَدِهِ * إِلَّا اسْتَلَمْتُ النَّدَى مِنْ خَيْرِ مُسْتَلَمٍ

81. *Nor did I seek the riches of the two abodes from his hand, but that I received the bounty from the best of those from whom gifts are received.*

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لَا تُنْكِرِ الْوَحْيَ مِنْ رُؤْيَاهُ إِنَّ لَهُ * قَلْبًا إِذَا نَامَتِ الْعَيْنَانِ لَمْ يَنِمِ

82. *Do not deny that revelation came through his visions — he has a heart that does not sleep when the eyes sleep.*

وَذَاكَ حِينَ بُلُوغٍ مِنْ نُبُوَّتِهِ * فَلَيْسَ يُنْكَرُ فِيهِ حَالُ مُحْتَلِمٍ

83. *And that was at the coming-of-age of his prophethood, so the state of one who dreams is not to be denied in it.*

84. *Blessed be Allah! Revelation is not something earned, and no prophet is under suspicion concerning the unseen.*

85. *How many a chronic sickness his palm healed by a touch; and how many it freed from the noose of madness.*

وَأَحْيَتِ السَّنَةَ الشَّهْبَاءَ دَعْوَتُهُ * حَتَّى حَكَتْ غُرَّةً فِي الْأَعْصُرِ الدُّهْمِ

86. And his call brought the white year to life, until it rivalled a blaze on the brow of
the dark ages.

بِعَارِضٍ جَادٍ أَوْ خِلَتْ الْبِطَاحُ بِهَا * سَيْبًا مِنَ الْيَمِّ أَوْ سَيْلًا مِنَ الْعَرَمِ

87. *With a broad cloud that gave freely, until you would think the valleys held a torrent from the sea, or the flood of the dam.*

[illegible]

Chapter VI

THE NOBILITY OF THE QUR'AN

دَعْنِي وَوَصِّفِي آيَاتٍ لَهُ ظَهَرَتْ * ظُهُورَ نَارِ الْقَرَى لَيْلًا عَلَى عِلْمٍ

88. *Leave me to my describing of signs of his that appeared as the fire of hospitality appears by night upon a high peak.*

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

89. *For the pearl grows more beautiful when strung — and loses nothing of its worth unstrung.*

90. So how can the hopes of praise stretch their necks towards the nobility of character and disposition that is in him?

[illegible]

لَمْ تَقْتَرِنْ بِزَمَانٍ وَهِيَ تُخْبِرُنَا * عَنِ الْمَعَادِ وَعَنْ عَادٍ وَعَنْ إِرَمَ

92. *They are joined to no time, yet they tell us of the Return, and of 'Ād, and of Iram.*

دَامَتْ لَدَيْنَا فَفَاقَتْ كُلَّ مُعْجَزَةٍ * مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ إِذْ جَاءَتْ وَلَمْ تَدِمْ

93. *They have endured with us, and so surpassed every miracle of the prophets — which came, and did not endure.*

مُحْكَمَاتُ فَمَا تُبْقِينَ مِنْ شُبْهِ * لِذِي شِقَاقٍ وَمَا تَبْغِينَ مِنْ حَكَمٍ

94. Perfected, they leave no doubt for the contentious, and they seek no arbiter.

مَا حُورِبْتُ قَطُّ إِلَّا عَادَ مِنْ حَرْبٍ * أَعْدَى الْأَعَادِي إِلَيْهَا مُلْقِيَ السَّلَامِ

95. *They were never warred upon but that the bitterest of enemies came back from that war in ruin, casting down his arms in surrender.*

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رَدَّتْ بِلَاغَتُهَا دَعْوَى مُعَارِضِهَا * رَدَّ الْغَيُورُ يَدَ الْجَانِي عَنِ الْحُرْمِ

96. *Their eloquence turned back the claim of any who would rival them, as the jealous man turns the offender's hand from his womenfolk.*

[illegible]

98. *Their wonders are neither counted nor numbered, and however much they are repeated they never breed weariness.*

99. *The eye of their reciter was cooled by them, and I said to him: you have seized the rope of Allah — so hold fast.*

إِنْ تَتْلُهَا خِيفَةً مِنْ حَرِّ نَارٍ لَظَى * أَطْفَأَتْ حَرِّ لَظَى مِنْ وَرْدِهَا الشَّبِيبِ

100. If you recite them in fear of the heat of the blazing Fire, you will have quenched that heat with their cold water.

كَأَنَّهَا الْحَوْضُ تَبَيَّضُ الْوُجُوهُ بِهِ * مِنَ الْعُصَاةِ وَقَدْ جَاءُوهُ كَالْحَمَمِ

101. *As though they were the Basin, at which the faces of sinners are whitened, though they came to it like charcoal.*

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وَالصِّرَاطِ وَكَالْمِيزَانِ مَعْدِلَةً * فَالْقِسْطُ مِنْ غَيْرِهَا فِي النَّاسِ لَمْ يَقُمْ

102. *And like the Bridge, and like the Scale in justice — for without them justice among men has never stood.*

[illegible]

[illegible]

قَدْ تُنْكِرُ الْعَيْنُ ضَوْءَ الشَّمْسِ مِنْ رَمَدٍ * وَيُنْكِرُ الْفَمُ طَعْمَ الْمَاءِ مِنْ سَقَمٍ

104. *An eye may deny the light of the sun through inflammation; and a mouth may deny the taste of water through sickness.*

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THE NIGHT JOURNEY AND THE ASCENSION

105. O best of those whose courtyard the needy have made for — running on foot, and
upon the backs of swift-marking camels.

[illegible]

106. *And who is the greatest sign for one who would take a lesson, and the greatest blessing for one who would seize his share.*

[illegible][illegible]

وَبِتَّ تَرْقَىٰ إِلَىٰ أَنْ نِلْتِ مَنزِلَةً * مِنْ قَابِ قَوْسَيْنِ لَمْ تُدْرِكَ وَمَ تَرَمِ

108. *And you spent the night rising until you attained a station of two bow-lengths — never reached, and never even aspired to.*

وَقَدَّمْتُكَ جَمِيعُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ بِهَا * وَالرُّسُلُ تَقْدِمْ مَخْدُومٍ عَلَى خَدَمٍ

109. *And all the prophets and messengers put you forward there — as the one served is put before those who serve.*

وَأَنْتَ تَخْتَرِقُ السَّبْعَ الطَّبَاقَ بِهِمْ * فِي مَوْكِبٍ كُنْتَ فِيهِ الصَّاحِبَ الْعَلَمِ

110. And you were cutting through the seven layers with them, in a procession in which you were the standard-bearer.

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا لَمْ تَدْعُ شَأْوًا لِّمُسْتَبِقٍ * مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا مَرْقَىٰ لِمُسْتَنِمٍ

111. *Until you had left no goal for any racer in nearness, and no ascent for any who would rise.*

خَفَضْتُ كُلَّ مَقَامٍ بِالْإِضَافَةِ إِذْ * نُودِيَتْ بِالرَّفْعِ مِثْلَ الْمَفْرَدِ الْعَلَمِ

112. *You lowered every station by comparison, when you were called to be raised — like the singular proper noun.*

كَيْمَا تَفُوزَ بِوَصْلِ أَيِّ مُسْتَتِرٍ * عَنِ الْعُيُونِ وَسِرِّ أَيِّ مُكْتَتَمٍ

113. So that you might win a union — and what a union, hidden from all eyes! — and a secret, and what a secret, utterly concealed.

114. *So you gathered every glory that is not shared, and passed through every station
that is not crowded.*

[illegible]

115. *Mighty is the measure of the ranks you were entrusted with; and beyond reach is the grasping of the blessings you were given.*

[illegible]

بُشْرَى لَنَا مَعَشَرَ الْإِسْلَامِ إِنَّ لَنَا * مِنَ الْعِنَايَةِ رُكْنًا غَيْرَ مُنْهَدِمٍ

116. Good news for us, O company of Islam! We have, from divine care, a pillar that will never be demolished.

لَمَّا دَعَا اللَّهُ دَاعِيَنا لِطَاعَتِهِ * بِأَكْرَمِ الرُّسُلِ كُنَّا أَكْرَمَ الْأُمَمِ

117. *When Allah called the one who calls us to His obedience "the noblest of messengers," we became the noblest of nations.*

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رَاعَتْ قُلُوبَ الْعِدَا أَنْبَاءُ بَعْثِهِ * كُنْبَاءُ أَجْفَلَتْ غُفْلًا مِنَ الْغَنَمِ

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مَا زَالَ يَتَقَاهُمْ فِي كُلِّ مُعْتَرِكٍ * حَتَّىٰ حَكَمُوا بِالْقَنَاحِمَا عَلَىٰ وَضَمِّ

وَدُّوا الْفِرَارَ فَكَادُوا يَغْبِطُونَ بِهِ * أَشْلَاءَ شَالَتْ مَعَ الْعِقْبَانِ وَالرَّحِمِ

120. They longed to flee, until they almost envied the torn limbs carried aloft by eagles and vultures.

121. *The nights pass and they cannot keep count of them — unless they are nights of the sacred months.*

كَأَمَّا الدِّينُ ضَيْفٌ^{١٨} حَلَّ سَاحَتَهُمْ * بِكُلِّ قَرْمٍ إِلَى حِمِّ الْعِدَا قَرِمٌ

122. *As though the religion were a guest alighting in their courtyard, with every chieftain ravenous for the flesh of the foe.*

[illegible]

يَجْرُ بِحَرْ خَمِيسٍ فَوْقَ سَاجِحَةٍ * يَرْمِي بِمَوْجٍ مِنَ الْأَبْطَالِ مُلْتَطِمٍ

123. He draws on a sea of an army upon swimming steeds, hurling a crashing wave of champions.

مِنْ كُلِّ مُتَدَبِّ لِلَّهِ مُحْتَسِبٍ * يَسْطُو بِمُسْتَأْصِلٍ لِلْكَفْرِ مُضْطَلِمٍ

124. Every one of them answering Allah's call, seeking His reward, striking with what uproots disbelief and cuts it away.

حَتَّىٰ غَدَتْ مِلَّةَ الْإِسْلَامِ وَهِيَ بِهِمْ * مِنْ بَعْدِ غُرْبَتِهَا مَوْصُولَةُ الرَّحِمِ

125. *Until, through them, the religion of Islam — after its estrangement — became one with kin restored.*

126. *Guaranteed forever by them with the best of fathers and the best of husbands — never orphaned and never widowed.*

127. *They are the mountains — so ask about them the one who collided with them:
what did he see of them in every collision?*

128. *Ask Ḥunayn, and ask Badr, and ask Uḥud — seasons of death for them, more deadly than the plague.*

المِصْدِرِيُّ الْبَيْضُ حُمْرًا بَعْدَ مَا وَرَدَتْ * مِنْ الْعِدَا كُلِّ مُسْوَدٍّ مِنَ اللَّحْمِ

129. Who bring their white blades back red, after they had come down to drink at every black-locked head among the foe.

130. *And who write with the tawny spears of Khaṭṭ — their pens leaving no letter of a body undotted.*

[illegible]

131. *Fully armed, they bear a mark that sets them apart — as the rose is set apart by its mark from the thorn tree.*

[illegible]

تُهْدِي إِلَيْكَ رِيَّاحُ النَّصْرِ نَشْرَهُمْ * فَتَحَسِبُ الزَّهْرَ فِي الْأَكْمَامِ كُلِّ كَمِي

132. The winds of victory bear their fragrance to you, until you take every armoured warrior for a flower in its bud.

133. *On the backs of their horses they are like plants upon high ground — from the strength of their resolve, not from the strength of their girths.*

[illegible]

134. *The hearts of the enemy flew from them in terror, so that they could not tell the lambs from the champions.*

[illegible]

وَمَنْ تَكُنْ بِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ نُصْرَتُهُ * إِنَّ تَلْقَاهُ الْأُسْدُ فِي آجَامِهَا تَجِم

135. Whoever's help comes from the Messenger of Allah — should lions meet him in their thickets, they fall silent.

وَلَنْ تَرَى مِنْ وَلِيٍّ غَيْرِ مُنْتَصِرٍ * بِهِ وَلَا مِنْ عَدُوٍّ غَيْرِ مُنْقَصِمٍ

136. *You will never see a friend of his who is not given victory through him, nor an enemy who is not broken.*

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أَحَلَّ أُمَّتُهُ فِي حِرْزِ مِلَّتِهِ * كَاللَّيْثِ حَلَّ مَعَ الْأَشْبَالِ فِي أَجَمِ

137. *He settled his nation in the stronghold of his religion — as the lion settles with his cubs in the thicket.*

كَمْ جَدَّلْتُ كَلِمَاتُ اللَّهِ مِنْ جَدَلٍ * فِيهِ وَكَمْ خَصِمَ الْبُرْهَانُ مِنْ خَصِمٍ

138. How many a disputant have the words of Allah thrown down concerning him;
and how many an adversary has the clear proof defeated.

كَفَاكَ بِالْعِلْمِ فِي الْأُمِّيِّ مُعْجَزَةٌ * فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ وَالتَّأْدِيبِ فِي الْيُثْمِ

139. *Enough of a miracle for you: knowledge in an unlettered man, in an age of ignorance — and refinement in an orphan.*

[illegible]

Chapter IX

SEEKING INTERCESSION

خَدَمْتُهُ بِمَدِيحِ اسْتَقِيلُ بِهِ * ذُنُوبَ عُمْرٍ مَضَى فِي الشَّعْرِ وَالْخَدَمِ

140. *I have served him with a praise by which I seek release from the sins of a lifetime
spent in poetry and in service.*

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إِذْ قُلَّدَآيَ مَا تَحْشَى عَوَاقِبُهُ * كَأَنِّي بِهِمَا هَدَى مِنَ النِّعَمِ

141. *For those two have garlanded me with what has consequences to be feared — as though by them I were a sacrificial beast.*

أَطَعْتُ غَيَّ الصَّبَا فِي الْحَالَتَيْنِ وَمَا * حَصَلْتُ إِلَّا عَلَى الْآثَامِ وَالنَّدَمِ

142. I obeyed the folly of youth in both, and gained nothing but sins and regret.

فَيَا خَسَارَةَ نَفْسٍ فِي تَجَارَتِهَا * لَمْ تَشْتَرِ الدِّينَ بِالدُّنْيَا وَلَمْ تَسْمِ

143. *O the loss of a soul in its trading! It did not buy the religion with the world — nor did it even open the bargaining.*

وَمَنْ يَبِيعْ أَجْلاً مِنْهُ بِعَاجِلِهِ * يَبِيعْ لَهُ الْغَبْنُ فِي بَيْعٍ وَفِي سَلَمٍ

144. And whoever sells what is deferred for what is immediate will find the fraud made plain to him, in the sale and in the forward contract.

إِنْ آتٍ ذَنْبًا فَمَا عَهْدِي بِمُنْتَقِضٍ * مَنْ النَّبِيِّ وَلَا حَبْلِي بِمَنْصَرَمٍ

145. *If I commit a sin, my covenant with the Prophet is not undone, nor is my rope cut through.*

فَإِنَّ لِي ذِمَّةً مِنْهُ بِتَسْمِيَّتِي * مُحَمَّدًا وَهُوَ أَوفَى الْخَلْقِ بِالذِّمِّ

146. *For I have a bond from him, in that I am named Muḥammad — and he is the most faithful of creation to his bonds.*

إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ فِي مَعَادِي آخِذَا بِيَدِي * فَضْلاً وَإِلَّا فَقُلْ يَا زَلَّةَ الْقَدَمِ

147. *If, at my return, he does not take me by the hand out of pure bounty — then say:
O the slip of the foot!*

حَاشَاهُ أَنْ يَحْزِمَ الرَّاجِي مَكَارِمَهُ * أَوْ يَرْجِعَ الْجَارُ مِنْهُ غَيْرَ مُحْتَرَمٍ

148. Far be it from him to deny his generosity to one who hopes for it, or that a neighbour should return from him unhonoured.

وَمِنْذُ أَلْزَمْتُ أَفْكَارِي مَدَائِحَهُ * وَجَدْتُهُ لِحِلَاصِي خَيْرَ مُلْتَرِمٍ

149. *And since I bound my thoughts to praising him, I have found him the best of those who take my deliverance upon themselves.*

وَلَنْ يَفُوتَ الْغِنَى مِنْهُ يَدًا تَرَبَّتْ * إِنَّ الْحَيَا يُنْبِتُ الْأَزْهَارَ فِي الْأَكْمِ

150. *His riches will never pass by a hand made destitute — for the rains bring flowers
to life upon the barren hills.*

وَلَمْ أُرِدْ زَهْرَةَ الدُّنْيَا الَّتِي اقْتَطَفَتْ * يَدَا زُهَيْرٍ بِمَا أَثْنَى عَلَى هَرِمٍ

151. Nor did I want the flower of this world, which the two hands of Zuhayr plucked
for his praise of Harim.

INTIMATE DISCOURSE AND THE PETITION OF NEEDS

152. *O most noble of creation, I have no one to take refuge with but you, when the all-encompassing calamity falls.*

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

153. *And your standing, O Messenger of Allah, will not be straitened by me, when the Generous adorns Himself with the name of Avenger.*

فَإِنَّ مِنْ جُودِكَ الدُّنْيَا وَضَرَّتْهَا * وَمِنْ عُلُومِكَ عِلْمَ اللَّوْحِ وَالْقَلَمِ

154. For of your generosity are this world and its rival; and of your knowledge is the knowledge of the Tablet and the Pen.

يَا نَفْسُ لَا تَقْنَطِي مِنْ زَلَّةٍ عَظُمَتْ * إِنَّ الْكِبَائِرَ فِي الْعُفْرَانِ كَاللَّمَمِ

155. *O soul, do not despair over a slip however grave — for in the matter of forgiveness, the major sins are as the small ones.*

لَعَلَّ رَحْمَةَ رَبِّي حِينَ يَقْسِمُهَا * تَأْتِي عَلَى حَسَبِ الْعِصْيَانِ فِي الْقِسْمِ

156. Perhaps my Lord's mercy, when He apportions it, will come in proportion to the disobedience in its shares.

يا رَبِّ وَاجْعَلْ رَجَائِي غَيْرَ مُنْعَكِسٍ * لَدَيْكَ وَاجْعَلْ حِسَابِي غَيْرَ مُنْخَرِمٍ

157. O my Lord, make my hope in You not to be reversed, and make my reckoning not to be broken.

وَالطُّفُ بِعَبْدِكَ فِي الدَّارَيْنِ إِنَّ لَهُ * صَبْرًا مَتَى تَدْعُهُ الْأَهْوَالُ يَنْهَرِمُ

158. *And be gentle with Your servant in both abodes, for he has a patience which, whenever terrors call upon it, takes flight.*

[illegible]

وَأُذِّنْ لِسُحْبِ صَلَاةٍ مِنْكَ دَائِمَةٍ * عَلَى النَّبِيِّ بِمَنْهَلٍ وَمُنْسَجِمٍ

159. And give leave to clouds of blessing from You, unceasing, upon the Prophet —
pouring and streaming down.

[illegible]

مَا رَنَحَتْ عَذَبَاتِ الْبَانِ رِيحُ صَبَا * وَأَطْرَبَ الْعَيْسَ حَادِي الْعَيْسِ بِالنَّغَمِ

160. For as long as the east wind sets the branches of the bān tree swaying, and the camel-driver stirs the camels with his song.