



concealed in the treasure vaults of these words. But when the promised day arrived, the hand of might that belonged to the Manifestation of God who preceded me removed the seal in accordance with the condition and capacity of the people. Thus, the children of this era, who have never understood a word of the esoteric branches of knowledge, have become aware of hidden secrets, to the extent that they were able to do so, such that a child was able to compel one of the clergymen of this era by his discourse. This is the power of the divine hand and the sphere of influence exercised by the will of the sovereign of unity. Were anyone to contemplate the above-mentioned utterance, he would see that not an atom moves save by the will of the Absolute Truth, and no one learns a single letter save by his volition. Exalted be his station, power, dominion, greatness and cause, and exalted be his grace upon all who are in the kingdom of the heavens and the earth.

[4] Salman, the pen of the All-Merciful says in this dispensation: “I have removed the negative particle from before the affirmation, and the wisdom thereof will, should God desire, descend from the heaven of volition. We will send it later.” Salman, sorrows have encompassed me to such a degree that the tongue of the All-Merciful has been forbidden to make mention of exalted matters. By the one who reared the contingent world, the gate of the garden of meaning has been bolted up by the oppression of the idolaters, and the breezes of knowledge have been prevented from blowing from the Yemen of the Glorious, the One.

[5] Salman, I have been afflicted by tribulations in this physical world both earlier and later; do not think they are limited to these days. A person whom we raised over months and years with the hand of compassion once attempted to kill me. Were I to make mention of the secrets of the past, you would become aware that some individuals who had been brought into being by a word of command have arisen to contend with God and have set back the wonders of his Cause. Consider Harut and Marut, who had been servants of God and near to him, so holy that they became known as angels. By the all-encompassing divine will, they came from non-existence into being, and their names and works became renowned in the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. They were so close to God that the tongue of grandeur spoke of them. They reached such a station that they came to consider themselves the most pious, most exalted, and most self-denying of all the people. Then a breeze blew from the land of tests and they returned to the nethermost flames. The details of the story of these two angels that are current among the people are for the most part false and distant from the shore of truth. With us is the knowledge of everything in glorious and guarded tablets. Nevertheless, no one among the peoples of that age protested against God that he – may his greatness be glorified – had bestowed upon those two angels the station of holiness and nearness that they had attained.

[6] Salman, say to the people of the Bayan: “You are trading salt water for the divine, everlasting stream and the eternal, heavenly fountain, and are stopping up your ears from hearing the melodies of the nightingale of

immortality. Walk in the outstretched shade of the cloud of compassion and dwell in the shadow of the lotus tree of grace. Salman, the Absolute Truth has always judged the people according to outward appearances, and has commanded all the prophets and messengers to do the same. It is impermissible to do otherwise. For instance, consider a person who is at this moment a believer and a monotheist, such that the sun of divine unity is refulgent within him. He affirms and recognizes all the divine names and attributes and whatever the pre-existent Beauty testifies to, he bears witness to that, for himself and by himself. In this station all descriptions are true and current in regard to him. Rather, no one is capable of describing him as he really is save God. All these descriptions refer to the effulgence that shone upon him from the sovereign of manifestation. In this station, should any of the people oppose him, they would be opposing God himself. For in him nothing can be seen save the divine effulgences, as long as he remains in this station. Should a bad word be said about him, the speaker would be a liar. After he rises in opposition, however, that effulgence that had been the basis for describing him, and all the other related attributes, depart to their own habitation. Now that individual is not the same person, for those attributes do not subsist in him. If you look with sharp eyes you will notice that not even his clothes are the same. For a believer, while he is believing in and affirming God, might be wearing clothes of cotton, but in God's eyes they are of heavenly silk. But when he rises in opposition, they are transformed into the flaming tar of Gehenna. At this point, should anyone praise such an individual, he would be a liar and would be mentioned by God as among the people of hellfire.

[7] Salman, the evidence for this statement is present intrinsically in everything. It is remarkable that nevertheless the people have remained unaware of it, and have stumbled at the appearance of such matters. Consider the lamp. As long as it is lit and its flame is radiant, were anyone to deny its light he would, naturally, be a liar. But after a gale has blown and snuffed out its light, if anyone were to say that it is shining, then he would be the liar – even though the niche and the candle, whether lit or not, are the same. Today you should consider all things to be mirrors. For all creation was brought into being by a single word, and is standing in one spot in the presence of God. If all would turn their attention to this glorious and eternal sun, which has dawned forth from the holy and most glorious horizon, the effulgence of the sun would be inscribed and imprinted on their forms. In this case, all the characteristics and attributes of the sun are also true of those mirrors, for nothing is apparent in those mirrors save the sun and its light. To the insightful mystic it is self-evident that these characteristics of the mirrors are not intrinsic to them, but rather pertain to the effulgence from the dawning daystar of grace that has become manifest and radiant in these mirrors. As long as this effulgence persists, the characteristics persist. After that effulgence has been erased from the mirrors' forms, those who continue to praise the mirrors are guilty of pure lies and falsehoods. For the names and attributes circle around an effulgence that dawned from the sun, not around the mirrors in and of themselves.

[8] Salman, the honor, exaltation, greatness, and renown of all names depend on their relationship to God. For instance, consider the religious edifices that have become exalted among the various peoples. They are all circumambulating around these buildings to which they make pilgrimage from distant lands. It is clear that the pre-existent Beauty – may his splendor be glorified – has related himself to them, even though everyone knows that God has never and will never stand in need of a building, and his holy essence is related to all places equally. Rather, he has declared these houses of God and other such edifices to be the cause of the triumph and success of his servants, so that none of the people would be deprived of the wonders of his grace. Blessed are those who follow the command of God, implement his decree, and are among those who attain the goal. These buildings and those who circle round them are honored in the sight of God as long as this relationship is not severed. But after its link to God is abrogated, if anyone were to circumambulate such a structure, he would merely be circling his base self, and is considered by God as among the people of hell-fire. In the same way, consider the buildings of human souls, which, when they rise in opposition, are declared to be false idols, and all who bow down before them are idol worshippers in the eyes of God. Then contemplate how these structures possess the same physical form when they are related to God and when that relationship is abrogated, and their outward appearance in both of these conditions is identical. No change whatsoever can be noticed in them after the advent of a new dispensation. But after the abrogation, the hidden and concealed relationship of the spirit to those buildings is withdrawn. No one perceived it save the mystics. In the same way, consider all those who manifest names, who are buildings of the soul.

[9] Look upon the words of the All-Merciful with a pure heart and sanctified vision, and meditate, that perhaps you might attain to that which God desires. Salman, when we departed from Iraq, the tongue of God informed everyone that the pharaoh's magician, Samiri, was about to appear, that the golden calf would low, and that the birds of night would surely take flight once the sun had set. Soon these nocturnal fowl will arise to claim for themselves divinity. But we ask God to acquaint the people with their own selves, so that they might avoid trespassing beyond their bounds and their station, and might speak of God by means of this most great mention and might aid God with all their limbs and members. Thus might they become standards streaming between the heavens and the earth. Dwell, O people, in the shadow of God, then persevere in your seats of honor by means of the mysterious peace of God and his serene dignity. Hold firm to the cord of servitude. The creation is God's. This is a station unequalled by what he created between the heavens and the earth. Thereby God's command appears among his servants and his creatures. God will aid with true help the one who clings to it in these days. Whoever delays has shown arrogance toward God, and no one shows such arrogance save his sinful adversaries. God willing, all will dwell in tranquility in the shade of the pre-existent beauty and will gaze toward the regions of God. This is a mighty grace.

[10] You asked about the meaning of some lines of poetry. The pen of command does not ordinarily engage in explaining the meaning of poetry, since today the

oceans of meaning, in its being and origin, are manifest, and there is no need for the words of previous times. Rather, everyone who possesses knowledge, wisdom and mystical insight, whether past or future, stands in need of these wondrous and billowing oceans. In view of your request, however, a brief mention will be made, and the pre-existent pen will write in accordance with the will of God.

[11] The verse about which you asked is [this line from Rumi]: “Because the colorless has fallen captive to color, Moses has gone to war with Moses.” Salman, mystics have made many statements with regard to these lines. Some have supposed that God is the sea and the creation is the waves. They assert that the difference among the waves derives from outward forms, and forms are originated in time. After shedding their forms, all return to the sea. That is, they are the reality of the sea. With regard to their forms, some have explained things differently, the very mention of which is impermissible in this station. In the same way, some have asserted that God is the ink and all things are as the letters, which are the reality of the ink, and which in turn becomes manifest in the diverse forms of the letters. These forms are in reality the one ink. They call the first the station of oneness and the second the station of multiplicity. They also refer to God as the One and to things as the numbers, or to God as water and to things as ice. As one mystic wrote, “The similitude of the creation is nothing but ice, and you are to it as the water from which it originates.

But when the ice melts, its station is exalted –  
it is given the station of water! Thus does it occur.”

[12] Yes, they consider all things to be manifestations of the essential effulgence of God. They have divided effulgence itself into three types: having to do with the essence, having to do with attributes, and having to do with actions. They believe that things subsist in God manifestationally. If all these matters were set forth in their entirety, tedium would so overtake my listeners that they would be deprived of mystical insight into the essence of knowledge. Likewise, some have asserted that the subsisting essences are within the divine Essence. As one mystical philosopher put it, “The realities of things exist in God’s essence in a most noble manner, and then he emanates them forth.” For they hold that whoever bestows a thing cannot be said to lose it, a proposition they call impossible. Ibn `Arabi has written a lengthy commentary on this subject. Mystical philosophers and their modern successors, such as Mulla Sadra Shirazi, Mulla Muhsin Fayd Kashani, and others, have walked the road that Ibn `Arabi paved. But blessed are they who tread upon the crimson knoll on the shore of this ocean, which revives by one of its waves all forms and shades in a manner not imagined by the people. Blessed are they who strip themselves of all allusions and indications, and swim in this ocean and its depths, and arrive at the whale of meanings and the pearl of wisdom, which were created therein. Blessed are they who attain.

[13] Everyone who believed in the utterances of the mystics and became wayfarers on their path considered Moses and Pharaoh both to be manifestations of God. In the final analysis, they held that the former is a manifestation of the divine name, the Guide, the Great, and so forth, while the latter is a manifestation of the divine name, the Misleading, the Abaser, et cetera. Therefore, the command that these two come into conflict was implemented. They further believed that after shedding their human specificities, both are one for they hold that originally all things are one. A summary of this idea was presented above.

[14] But, Salman, the pen of the All-Merciful says, "Today, those who affirm and those who deny these utterances are on the same level." For the sun of reality is itself resplendent and is shining from the horizon of the heavens. All those who busy themselves with such sayings are, of course, deprived of mystical insight into the beauty of the Compassionate. The prime time for investigating illusions is the time when no divine guidance is present. Today is the springtime of unveiling and attainment. Roam, O people, in the garden of revelation and disclosure, and forsake illusions. Thus are you commanded by the pen of God, the Guardian, the Eternal. All branches of knowledge were set forth only for the sake of establishing that which is valid. Now, praise be to God that the sun of the object of knowledge has dawned above the horizon of the sky of eternity, and the moon of validity is shining in the heavens of command. Sanctify your heart from all allusions and gaze with your outward eyes toward the daystar of meanings in the holy and spiritual firmament. Note well his effulgence of names and attributes in what is other than he, so that you might attain to all knowledge, and to its origin, mine, and wellspring.

[15] Salman, by the pre-existent beauty! At every moment in these days new branches of knowledge are descending from the heavens of mystical insight into the Lord of the worlds. Blessed are they who arrive at this spring, and sever themselves from all else. People of mystical ecstasy and yearning, be just. There are now among the people endless numbers of books treating the utterances of the mystics that were summarized above. If anyone desired to read them all, two lifetimes would be insufficient.

[16] Salman, say: "God is manifest above all things and that day the dominion is God's. Leave the people to what is with them." Yes, leave the sciences of the past to the past. According to the mystics, Moses, who is among the greatest of prophets, during the first ten of thirty days annihilated his own deeds in the deeds of God. In the next ten days he annihilated his own attributes in those of God. In the final ten days he annihilated his own essence in the essence of God. They said that since a remnant of being remained in him, therefore God said to him, "You shall never see me." Now the tongue of God is speaking. Say, "Show me!" once, and attain to the presence of the All-Glorious a hundred thousand times! Compare the grace inherent in these days with that of the past.

[17] Salman, all that which the mystics have mentioned refers to the plane of creation. For however high exalted souls and purified hearts soar into the

heaven of knowledge and mystical insight, they can never escape the plane of contingent being or go beyond what was created in their own souls by their own souls. All the mystical insights of every mystic, all the mentions made by everyone who praises God, all the depictions of everyone who describes him, refer to the effulgence of his Lord that was created in his soul. All, in short, who meditate upon this matter will agree that creation cannot exceed the bounds of its own contingent being. All likenesses and all mystical insight refer, from the beginning that has no beginning, to his creation, which was created from nothing by the contingent will, by itself and for itself. Exalted be God above anyone's ability to know him by virtue of mystical insight, and above having the likeness of any soul refer to him. Between him and his creation there is no relationship, no link, no direction, no allusion, and no indication. He created contingent beings by means of a will that encompassed the worlds. The Absolute Truth remains in the heights of the sovereignty of exaltation, and his unity is sanctified above the knowledge of contingent beings. He shall ever be purified, in the sublimity of his own unattainable and sovereign nobility, from the perception of all beings. All who are in the heavens and on earth were created by a word from him, and thereby emerged from unadulterated nothingness into the realm of being. How could a creature that was fashioned by a word ascend to the essence of pre-existence?

[18] Salman, the path of all to the essence of pre-existence is blocked, and the way of all shall forever be cut off. God only made manifest among the people the grace and loving-kindness of the suns shining from the horizon of oneness. He equated the knowledge of these holy souls with the knowledge of himself. Whoever knows them knows God; whoever hears their words hears the words of God; and whoever affirms them affirms God. But whoever rises in opposition to them has risen in opposition to God; whoever opposes them opposes God, and whoever denies them denies God. They are the path of God between the heavens and the earth, the balance of God in the kingdoms of command and creation. They are the manifestations and the proofs of God among his servants and his guides among his creation.

[19] Sever yourself from all that which is renowned among the people, and soar with the wings of detachment into the most glorious and sacred heavens. By God, if you fly into it, and reach the pole of meaning therein, you shall never see in existence anything but the countenance of the divine beloved, and shall never see the opposers save as a day whereon none of them is mentioned. The mention of this station requires another tongue, and another ear is necessary in order to hear it. It is best that we now leave the secrets of the soul and the wonders of the mention of souls that are deposited in the heavens of the will of the All-Merciful, and turn to the meaning of the poetry.

[20] Know that Rumi's intent in the Mathnavi in mentioning Moses and Pharaoh was to invoke a similitude. It was not that these two were one in essence. We take refuge in God from that! For Pharaoh and his like were created by a word from Moses, if you did but know. The very outward dispute between them is proof that they were opposed to one another in all the worlds. This is a secret

utterance that none but the mystic with insight knows. Rumi has cast all persons in the realm of names as Moses, for all have been created from dust, and shall return to dust. Likewise, all are named by means of letters. In the world of spirits, which is a monochrome world, there was never any conflict or struggle, nor is there now. For the underlying causes of conflict are not visible. But after the spirits entered into bodies and they appeared in this world, the causes for contention came to exist, whether for good or evil. If this dispute and wrangling occurs in order to vindicate the cause of the All-Glorious, it is good. Otherwise, it is evil. This contention, conflict, love, hypocrisy, acceptance and opposition all derive from causes. For instance, note that cause becomes apparent by reason of a causal agent. The cause is one. But in each soul it is transformed by the nature of that soul, and its effects appear. But in each station they appear under a different aspect.

[21] For instance, consider the divine name, “the Self-Sufficient.” In its own kingdom, this name is unified. But after its effulgence in the mirrors of human existence, the effects of that effulgence appear in each soul according to that soul’s exigencies. For instance, in the generous it appears as generosity, whereas in the miserly it takes the form of avarice. In the ill-omened it becomes abasement, and in the blessed it appears as good fortune. For in the condition of poverty, souls and what is in them are concealed. For example, the generosity and avarice of someone who does not possess a single penny is hidden. Likewise, in such a condition his good or bad fortune would as yet be impossible to discern. After becoming self-sufficient, every soul shows forth what is within it. For instance, one might expend what he possesses in the path of God. Another might organize war materiel and arise to engage in battle with the truth. One might safeguard others to the point where he denies his wealth to himself and his family. Consider how from one effulgence so many different and contradictory things appear. But before that effulgence all these souls were subdued, concealed and languid. With one ray from the sun of the name, “the Self-Sufficient,” how he has resurrected these souls and made visible and manifest what was hidden within them! If you contemplate this utterance with the eye of insight, you will become aware of hidden mysteries.

[22] Consider the pharaoh of this age, who, if it were not for his outward wealth and power, would never have arisen to wage war against the beauty of divine unity. For had he lacked the means, he would have been powerless to do so, and his unbelief would have remained concealed within him. Therefore, happy are the souls who have not become prisoners of the multi-colored world and what was created therein, but rather attained to the hue of God, that is, who have taken on the color of the Absolute Truth in this wondrous dispensation. This estate is sanctification above all the diverse colors of the world. Only those who are detached have knowledge of this color, insofar as today the people of Baha, who are passengers on the ark of eternity and who ply the ocean of glory, recognize one another. Aside from these companions, no one else is aware, and even if others should come to know that color, it would only be to the same extent that the blind can perceive the sun.

[23] Salman, tell the servants to come to the shore of the sea of pre-existence, so that they might become sanctified above all colors and arrive at the most pure and holy seat and the most great panorama. The various colors of this world have deprived the servants of the holy and most glorious shore. Consider the individual (Subh-i Azal) who rose up to battle against me. I swear by the sun of the horizon of meanings that night and day he was in my orbit, and in the evenings when I was in bed, he was standing at its head. I recited to him the verses of God and he was standing in my presence at all hours of the day. When the cause was raised aloft and he saw that his name became visible, then the color of that name and love of leadership so overtook him that he was deprived of the sacred shore of unity. By the one in whose hand is my soul, the creation had never before seen the like of this soul in his love of leadership and high station. By the one who caused all things to speak forth in praise of God! If all the people of creation determine to reckon his envy and hatred, they would, every one, discover themselves incapable of doing so. We beseech God to purify his breast and return him to himself and to aid him in affirming God, the powerful, the exalted, the mighty.

[24] Salman, consider the cause of God. One word is made to appear from the tongue of the manifestation of divine unity, and this word was intrinsically one, coming from a single wellspring. But after the sun of the word dawns from the horizon of God's mouth upon his servants, it manifests itself in each soul according to its condition. For instance, in one person it becomes opposition, in another acceptance. In the same way, in others it becomes love or hatred, and so forth. Afterwards, this lover and this hater arise to struggle and do battle with one another. Color has tinged both of them, for before the appearance of the word, they were friends to one another and united. After the dawn of the sun of the word, the term "adherent" was embellished with the color of God, while "opponent" was tinted with self and passion. The radiance of this same divine word in the soul of an adherent was manifested with the color of acceptance, while in the soul of the opponent it appeared in the hues of opposition – even though the original ray was sanctified above colors. Consider the sun, which with one burst of light sheds its effulgence in mirrors and glasses. But in every pane of glass it appears with the color of that glass, as is apparent and as all have witnessed.

[25] Yes, the reason for the battle of the opponent and the adherent is color. But between these two colors lies an inestimable difference. One is tinged with God, and the other with base passion. The believer who advances and struggles is tinted with the All-Merciful, while the hypocritical opponent is tinted with Satan. The former color causes and brings about the purification of souls from the hue of anything but God. The latter causes souls to be sullied with the manifold colors of self and passion. The former bestows the grace of eternal life, and the latter unending death. The former guides those who are detached to the heavenly spring of immortality, while the latter causes the veiled ones to taste the fruit of the infernal tree. From the former the scent of the Compassionate wafts, and from the latter the odor of the prince of darkness.

[26] Rumi's intent in these words was not that Moses and Pharaoh were on the same level. We take refuge in God from that! But some of the ignorant have thus understood him. Moses' actions with regard to his own religion bear true witness, for he struggled on behalf of God, with the goal of delivering Pharaoh from the colors of annihilation and of allowing him to attain the hues of God, and so that he himself might taste the sweet waters of martyrdom in the path of the friend. Pharaoh struggled, on the contrary, in order to preserve himself and his power. Moses' goal was to light the lamp of God among the people, and Pharaoh's goal was to put it out. Is one who sacrifices his life in the way of God like one who keeps himself safe behind seventy thousand veils? What is their difficulty, that they do not understand at all an utterance of God, the Knowing, the Wise?

[27] Rather, Rumi's intent was that the cause of the war between Moses and Pharaoh was color. But Moses' color was a hue for the sake of which the people of the concourse on high sacrificed themselves. Pharaoh's color was one that even the people of the lowest rung of hell avoid. Rumi himself, in many places, mentioned Pharaoh. If you examine these verses closely, you will perceive that his intent was not that which some have attributed to him. What yearning he exhibited, that he might associate intimately with the divine friends and attain the honor of serving the companions of God. This is what he wrote in one place: "If he is without God's grace and his chosen ones, his page is black (siyah hastash varaq) though he be an angel."

[28] Yes, Salman, tell the beloved of God to look at anyone's words not with the eyes of opposition, but rather with the eyes of compassion and mercy—except for the words of those persons who, today, have written fiery treatises in refutation of God. It is absolutely incumbent on all persons to write whatever they can in rebuttal of those who have sought to refute God. Thus has it been decreed by the Mighty, the All-Powerful. For today, all must aid God by words and utterances, not with the sword and its like. This is what we have revealed before, as well as at this time, if you but knew. By the one who is now saying in all things that there is no God but him! Should anyone pen a single word in rebuttal of a polemic against God, a station would be bestowed upon him such as would be the envy of the concourse on high. All the pens in creation are powerless to describe this station, and the tongues of all beings are inadequate to depict it. For any individual who today perseveres in this most holy, exalted and sublime cause is equal to all who are in the heavens and the earth. God knows and bears witness to this. Beloved of God, do not recline on the carpets of ease. When you recognize your creator and hear what has befallen him, arise to aid him. Speak, and do not remain silent for an instant. In truth, this is better for you than the treasures of all that was and shall be, if you only knew. This is the counsel of the pen of the most high to the servants of God.

[29] Salman, know that no one among God's servants who had any wisdom at all has asserted that adherents and opponents, and monotheists and idolaters, are all on the same level. The real intent of that which you have heard, or seen in

some books of the ancients, lies in the holy court of God. As for the assertion that names are one in the kingdom of names, you must not think that the metaphysical realms of the kingdom, dominion and divinity are today circling the throne. The dimensions of divinity, dominion and the kingdom, as well as realms above these, exist and subsist by virtue of the emanation from the planes and worlds that are visible in this station. It is impermissible to give the details of these stations, which are suspended in the heavens of the divine will until such time as God reveals them by his grace. He is, in truth, powerful over all things. Yes, in the court of the Absolute Truth, all names are one. But this is before the appearance of the differentiating word. For instance, note that today all manifestations of the names in their own kingdom are present before God. The same is true of the dawning-points of attributes and of all existing things. That the temple of pre-existence seated himself upon the throne of justice required that his grace be bestowed equally upon all. But afterwards, the distinguishing and discriminating word came into existence and became visible to the servants. Thus, all persons who answered "Yes," attained to all good. I swear by the sorrow of the divine Beauty that a station has been foreordained for the believer, such that were it revealed to the people of the earth to less than the extent of the eye of a needle, all would die yearning for it. In this physical life the stations of believers are hidden from the believers themselves. Any persons who were not confirmed in replying, "Yes," are not mentioned in God's presence. We take refuge in God from the unremitting torment predestined for such a one.

[30] Salman, deliver the words of the All-Merciful to the servants and say, "Safeguard yourselves from the wolves of the earth. Do not listen to the deceitful discourse in which some engage. Purify your ears so that you might listen to my words. Refine your heart from all that has been created in preparation for its mystical knowledge of my beauty." Say: "How many a morning has the effulgence of the beauty of the chosen one passed over your hearts, and found you busy with another, and returned to its fixed abode!" Say: "Walk, O servants, in the footsteps of God. Meditate on the deeds of the manifestation of pre-existence, and contemplate his words. For thereby perhaps you will attain to the heavenly and inexhaustible divine spring of the All-Glorious."

[31] If believers and unbelievers had the same station, and the worlds of God were limited to this world, the manifestation who preceded me would never have given himself into the hands of his enemies, nor would he have sacrificed his life. I swear by the dawning sun of command that if the people were aware to the slightest degree of the longing and pining of the chosen beauty at the time when they suspended that divine body in the air, all would out of yearning give their lives for the sake of this great and divine revelation. "They gave sugar to the parrot and dung to the beetle. The crow is bereft of the nightingale's song, and the bat flees from the rays of the sun."

[32] Salman, my tribulations among the nations and states is powerful evidence and unassailable proof. For a period of twenty years we have not so much as

taken a drink of water in peace, or rested all night. Sometimes we were bound with chains and fetters, and at others we were arrested and made prisoner. If our gaze had been fixed upon this world and what is on it, we would never have fallen victim to these afflictions. Blessed is the soul who is nourished by the fruit of this station, and tastes of its sweetness. Beseech God for eyes to see, and ask for sound taste, for to one deprived of sight the forms of Joseph and the wolf seem identical, and to the taste buds of one ill, the bitter gourd and sugar taste the same. I maintain the hope, however, that from the holy breezes of these days souls will become manifest who would not pay a penny for this world and all that it contains. Shorn of all else but him, they will gaze toward the precincts of God and consider sacrificing their lives in the path of the All-Merciful to be the easiest of things. They will not stumble on the way because of the opposition of opponents, and will choose to seat themselves under the shade of the friend. Blessed be the former and happy are the latter. How glorious are the former and how noble are the latter. By God, the houris in the most exalted chambers find no rest because of their pining to meet these souls. The concourse of immortals cannot sleep because of their yearning. Thus has God singled those out for himself and rendered them detached from all the worlds.

[33] Salman, the sorrows befalling the pen of the All-Merciful have prevented it from mentioning the stations of oneness. This injury to the seat of glory has reached the point that if all existence came to the table of his bounties and partook of its fare until the end that has no end, no one could say a word. They have made charges of miserliness against me, writing to the ends of the earth, saying "Our stipend has been cut off." Consider their vileness and abasement, and how they have written and dispatched such calumnies everywhere in order to attract to themselves earthly vanities from the people and in order to slander the ancient beauty. Since you were here, you saw that this servant never even saw the monthly stipend provided by the state with his own eyes. Whatever money does exist is divided up outside and distributed to each individual. Even though it surely undermines the cause of God, they have established this practice of taking the money, as you have heard. By the beauty of the pre-existent, the first tribulation that befell this youth was that he took a monthly stipend from the Ottoman state. Had these companions not been my fellow-travelers, I would, of course, never have accepted it. You are well informed as to how difficult matters were for the exiles. Even so, all showed forth nobility and patiently acquiesced in the divine decree. Nothing can befall us save what God decrees for us. We have put our trust in him in every affair. This group that has complained to all regions about the stipends, and who have fallen to begging, claim divinity and have risen in opposition to the Eternal Truth. Again, contemplate those persons who followed this group here. Woe unto them and to all those who support them, for they shall be seized by the angels of wrath at the behest of the All-Glorious, the mighty, the eternal. They shall not find for themselves any ally or helper. Thus has it been revealed in truth from the kingdom of God, the help in peril, the mighty, the beloved. Glory be upon you, Salman, and upon those who have not sold the words

of God for the vain imaginings of a reprobate.

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