

RIV.KIV.HIII: xârf III: This one deals with sermons and counsels. It comprises of three parts. The first is addressed to my son Ghaith al-DînAÍmâd. The second is addressed to Yamîn al-DînMubâarak on five basic themes.

The third one is on the requisites of Light and the Qur'ân, which is addressed to NĒr al-Dîn.

The first one is addressed to my son Ghaith al-DînAÍmâd. It evokes figurative correspondences of various types.

Heading: This can be named a "Counsel-raining cloud," be opened by my dear son Ghaith al-DînAÍmad,¹ who is as dear to me as are the eyes of the loved ones. May it cause the streams of the religion of MuÍammadε to flow placidly.

Hymn:

All praises are for Him who brings awareness to the wayward and awakens the spiritually dormant.

Verse:

I send salutations to my son Ghaith al-Dînthrough whom the tree of my family shall bear fruits. I express to my brave son:
May fortune and honor with my counsel may go
As the 'air² goes with 'âri³ and ghain⁴ does with ghaith.⁵

As long as the letter *nĒnof naÎîÍat* (counsel) remains as the crescent of blessing,⁶ and as long as the bright dot of the word *ma'îbat*(sermon) remains the star⁷ of the sky of guidance, may the comfort of my eye, my beloved son, Ghaith al-DînAÍmad be guided by good counsels; and may the bitter medicine of admonition, poured into his soul by his well-wishers, be palatable to him, and may the sweet (*Íalwâ*) of flattery ever remain alien to his taste,

Verse:

¹The name corresponds to the imagery of *rain* in so far as *ghaith* literally means rain. Ghaith al-DînAÍmadshould mean "the rain of the religion of AÍmadε.

² The word 'ain means: the particular letter common to the words 'ain and 'ariÎ; eye, stream, and cloud.

³ The word 'âriÎ means: cheek and cloud

⁴ The word *ghain*means: the particular letter common to the words *ghain* and *ghaith*; it also means cloud.

⁵ The word *ghaith*, which is the name of the addressee, also means rain.

⁶In this word the orthographic shape is that of a crescent.

⁷ The dot should appear like a star.

By the blessings of the Unlettered Prophet ﷺ whose fragrance of love is
As comforting as the bamboo-sugar to a child confined to bed with fever.

Khusrau Nadīm, in the capacity of an affectionate father, scatters salutations over the blessed head of his son as jewels are scattered over a dear one's head on ceremonial occasions and ribbons, of greetings on his auspicious forehead in the shape of a little horse-shoe of the *'ain* of *'îzzat*⁸. He also sends gifts of affection (presents of love) and gives the impression to the jewel like heart of his son that since imparting advice to children is a parent's duty the present letter, full of affection and the wealth of good disposition, is being sent to him by way of counsel. Parents should hang this advice as an amulet around the neck of their children. It is intended that in the light of the guidance contained in the letter the son will seek the Divine Grace from its Treasurers.

Verse:

May thy Lord bestow on thee from the treasure trove of his providence
whatever thou asketh Or among His gifts infinite.

Here is a piece of advice. Listen to it:

God says: "I have created the *jinn*s and the men, only to serve Me."⁹ It means that the bond of life binds men in servitude to God. If this bond of salvation is undone through Satan's mischief, let it be fastened again. Should a man defy the heaven through pride let his neighbors and passers-by catch hold of his reins and hand him over to the angels who would tie him in the bonds of torment. And let the cry be: Catch hold of him, put a yoke a round his neck and throw him into the hell.¹⁰ In such a situation my son, bound with the bonds of humanity, should kneel in prostrations at the Door of God, into an iron ring not to be bent by the force of Satan's hand.

Verse:

Clever men bind themselves by pledges of love
Their pledges are entwined with the double ringlets of the beloved's hair.

⁸ The word *'îzzat* means honor, and the letter *aâin* is orthographically indicated by a little horse-shoe like stroke.

⁹ The Qur'ân (51:56).

¹⁰ The Qur'ân (69:30-31).

Behold, that the whole earth is flooded with corruption. May my son keep himself free from the filth of corruption, and even the suspicion of such involvement may not cause any hindrance to his prayers in the capacity for prayer. Whosoever has knelt on the carpet of enjoyment and pleasure has the feet of his determination benumbed. He sleeps soundly and does not even dream of wakefulness, and is spiritually dead. So, ere one finds himself thus seated, one should be aware of the secret of this place.

Hemistich:

Lest the numbness of the feet shall go up to the head.

A sluggish person cannot go on foot on a highway. So, one should shun wantonness and lustful sleep from his head lest the feet of determination get benumbed.

Verse:

If thou be not mindful enough thou shalt fall drunkenly in the way
Where in the Satan lies in ambush to rob thee of all that matter

The believer's heart is said to be the throne of God. If it is so, will it be fair to get it drenched in wine?

Verse:

Will the tempests of wine which raise mischievous waves
May even sink the throne of God.
Leave any, chance for the ordinary folk to save themselves?

Anyone who falters, struck by the Satan, and goes headlong into the tavern-mire will certainly get his face blackened in this black filth called 'wine'. And if a face is made up by Satan's make-up, no stream in God's creation except, God's forgiveness can wash it off. Only the pious ones who have washed off the dirty filth of wine with tears of repentance and have thus imbibed: "Light upon Light"¹¹ can have access to this divine stream. For guidance to this divine stream, those who aspire for a countenance of eternally beaming white radiance must seek these pious persons. A true aspirant or "seeker" shall soon be on his way to the divine stream. A single wave of the divine stream shall transform his filth and dirt into purity. And then he shall certainly find himself among those whose faces are lit up by beams of eternal glow.

¹¹The Qur'an (24:35).

Therefore, if my dear aspires for such a countenance he should not refrain from the company of the pious ones mentioned above.

If he wants to be resurrected on the Day of Judgment along with those persons who have countenances of the mystical eternally beaming white radiance, he should keep away from the company of the evil spirited ones.

The water mixed with milk is sold at the price of milk; and conversely the milk adulterated with water gets sold at the price of water.¹² Remember that:

Verse (Arabic):

The fresh water falling into filthy mud
Takes the color and odor of mud.

If you wish to insert the pearl of your being in the thread of some other person's company you shall first evaluate the other person's nature. If his nature is pure you should not cut off his relationship with you, because on the thread of his relationship many a pearl may be studded together.

Verse (Arabic):

The essence of a noble person
Shines like pearls in a necklace.

On the other hand, if you see him unworthy, avoid association with him.

Verse:

For the feeble thread cannot behold the burden and will break up.

Adopt sincerity and purity and shun hypocrisy and dissimulation, because the gold plating on the base of a coin:

Verse:

Is being called a gilded *dinâr* of copper
A *dinâr* appearance but otherwise a tinsel.

The ingenuity of certain persons can be perceived in the veils they put on, as:

Verse:

The inner heart behind the veil of secrecy gets revealed.

¹²Even in the days of Khusrau, Indian mild-sellers mixed not only water with milk but also 'milk with water'.

The light dwelling in a pure existence is secluded and yet manifest like a 'lamp covered in a globe of glass'.¹³ And the effects of your deeds, hidden in the dress of purity will no longer remain hidden. Their falsehood can be witnessed from a distance as wine in a glass vessel.

Verse (Arabic):

There are two things, which cannot remain concealed that which is in a glass vessel And that which is in a man, be it the good in him or the evil!

As such, you are advised to manifest your purity by following the example of water, which is the same in its inner as in its outer being, unlike a mirror, which is clear and bright apparently but black inside. Let your heart be so pure and clear that any particle of dust that might be there be as clearly visible as the earth-bottom of a clear pool of water. Let it not be muddy so as to make the whole being suffused with muddiness and not allow itself to the discerning eyes.

Verse (Arabic + Persian):

Take heed! You will not be able to see your own purest part
You make your mirror out of mud.

One must suppress one's anger, and swallow it just like a juggler who swallows a sword and a dagger! And, by swallowing this he finds peace. And may he who subdues his harmful anger get the gift of divine peace and mercy.

Hemistich (Arabic):

Wise men regard mercy to be the holiest gift of God.

But he who is hot with anger and fury and lacks kindness and mercy is like one who has his house on fire and does not find any water in the house to extinguish it.

Verse:

Behold! thy house has caught fire and there is no water either in the courtyard or atop the roof
By the time thou fetch it the house would have burnt down to ashes.

¹³The Qur'ân (24:35): "God is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of his light is as if there were a niche and within it a lamp, the lamp enclosed in glass."

An evil-natured and bad tempered person cannot be blamed for his temperament as God has created each creature with a certain purpose and has given him a disposition accordingly. The tiger's claw is a crescent that comes out to send one on the journey to the other world. A big shaft is needed as a weapon to protect the hunter getting wounded or mauled by the animals of prey, this shaft must be fine sharp and pointed to penetrate.

Verse:

From its mother's womb the porcupine
Is softly born trained in closing and softening its thorns.

To him the inverted form designed by the Pen of Divine decree is upright, and straight. The Hindus regard their own inverted (left to right) script is right and our right (right to left) script as inverted and wrong. So, the wise men intentionally invert their temper in some situations for the sake of expediency. But if they permanently do so they shall not be exhibiting a pleasant demeanor. A calligraphist inscribes an inverted hand-writing by virtue of his artistic ability for decoration. But he couples the upright and inverted ones (*do-sairī*):

Verse:

That turns the whole letter topsy-turvy,
Making it a counterfeit coin that nobody will accept.

The pen and the tongue must not be trained to indulge in rather extravagance, circumspection and restraint. Indeed, the pen under restraint and the tongue under circumspection are less prone to falter. But in extravagance none of them remain innocent of wrongdoing. Many persons, prodigal with regard to their tongues and pens lacking circumspection and restraint have got both their heads and tongues cut off.

Couplet:

The tongue and the pen of the wrong-doer serve as swords and arrows
First against himself and then against others.

The one who has fire burns can be healed by an ointment; but the one inflicted by the ink of the pen cannot be healed by any ointment. Similarly, one who is bodily injured can be healed, is by life blood, but one, injured by the "sword of human flesh," (the tongue) can never.

Hemistich:

As a crack in copper or lead can not be joined by saliva

Hence, if the "sword of human flesh" (the tongue) causes any injury it deserves to be cut off prevent it from wounding a tongue-tied creature. Similarly, if the pen inflicts any injury, or scratches the heart, so to say, the plume must be cut off, to prevent it from wounding other hearts.

Verse:

When you speak, sometimes you make yourself agreeable to the audience; by not using sharp cutting words like sword, and by not passing a verdict like does a judge in writing decisions.

With a loose and a sharp tongue one hurts a person who is helpless and tongue-tied; while the latter's silence in turn acts like a speech against the former. Take heed of this analogy. A knife scrapes a piece of paper to erase the writing but the piece of paper in turn, does not blunt the edge of the knife.

Verse (Arabic):

The sharpness of tongue gets blunted by oppression,
just as a knife is blunted by its own oppressive act of paper-cutting.

It is advisable to keep away from a person of hot temper and effusive speech, even though he is one's own son, just as it is advisable to keep away one's clothes from fire. If one does not observe such a precaution one has no reason to complain of any affliction. He who keeps a glowing wick of a lamp in his pocket shall not cry out and complain of burns in his bosom.

Verse:

The one captivated by the love of getting burnt
has a life shorter than that of the glowing wick of a lamp.

Some shameless persons would shed their own blood, to invite sympathy, and obtain pity for a bit of a coin. They become victims of the curse of their bad deeds; but are shameless to take pride in their actions, namely.

Verse:

The shameless person who takes pride in
Takes pride in self affliction by needle pricking his arm.

What hurts the victims of oppression is not by the blows of the batons used in thrashing, but rather by the cruelty shown in the behavior of victimization.

People of evil intentions and evil company are without any human traits, as is a skinned sheep without its skin. Having transformed their tongues into butcher's knives, these persons "slaughter" the Muslims, as butchers slaughter the sheep, for the sake of acquiring a small gland. They cut into the skins and flesh of their victims and regard the killing a glorious exploit. Under any circumstances, even though they be blood relations, we shall not be associated with such ones but guard ourselves, and be alert.

Verse:

For if they are after anybody's blood, They
can also yearn for their own blood.

The love that a physically strong aspirant has for an old rich person is actually the love for money material, and not that which implies affection and sympathy. Whenever a wolf scratches the back of a lamb with its claws it does not do so in friendliness, and the neck of a nightingale in the clutches of a cat is a love play with no music of kindness (*nawâzish*)¹⁴ in it.

Verse:

Should the eagle hear the lark¹⁵ sing,
He would like to have its blood for his drink.

When the writers paint flattering pictures of their lords or patrons, the extravagance in the use of colors blackens the canvass of their lords' hearts:

Hemistich:

Like the records of deeds found blackened on the Day of Judgment.

While speaking maliciously about a wealthy person the writers would say that the gold in the king's treasury simply amounts to a grain's worth compared to this man's stock of gold, which cannot be taken out without the use of stringent measures, as flour cannot be obtained merely by sifting the grains of corn through a sieve, unless grounded in a flour mill.

¹⁴ The word *nawâzish* means kindness as well as playing a musical instrument, here too the Figure *is ôhâm*.

¹⁵ For 'lark' Khusrau's word is *chakâwak*, which is also the name of a musical note. This is in line with the analogy of music to which the association of wine is added here.

Verse:

Putting an end to the mischief of these people
Is better than leaving it to God to do the job Himself

God forbid that my son, who has to blacken his pen taking to the vocation of writing, shall paint the oppression and accusations like these black-headed ones (which also means 'pens') who have whitened their heads and grown mature in the profession of writing (black-headedness, the men who will carry books of black deeds). He shall not use his pen in false, hypocritical writings, which God has created straight, and straightness is the original quality in our nature as created by God. My son must keep his pen straight - like it is held in a calligraphic drive. He must not make it apparently straight but rather crooked in implication.

Verse:

Like the mad or the straightly stretched strokes of the accountants,
which look straight but imply devious contingent accounts. Under the head
accounts.

If a pair of dice appear moving in your favor for a few days, don't be tempted by the gamble, because ultimately they will checkmate you to lose the game. These are like two sixes, which are obedient to the stars of those gamblers who keep moving the chess-men of the nine round boxes (the nine heavens).

Verse:

Don't you know of the guile of check mating
Of the gamblers who have both sixes in their possession.

One should not feel proud of being in the king's favor, because if the spring of the sun can confer splendor it can also perish it. If a river fetches pearls it can also drown the divers taking away the pearls of their existence, namely their souls.

Verse (Arabic):

Beware! The wise never trust
Water, fire and the rulers.

Even if the king willfully and cheerfully¹⁶ offers to you his treasure of pearls you must not foster any future hopes on it. The king is a great laughter literally

¹⁶ In *khândân* in relation with *lā'īak*, the Figure is *ôhâm*.

ĪāĪāk who was a cruel king of the Peshādian dynasty), though he may have the appearance of *FarīdĒn*, the just king (who hides injustice and cruelty beneath this appearance).

Verse:

When the lion exhibits its white teeth and smiles
It is for having them reddened (with the blood of his prey).

You must treat your subordinates with kindness, so that no thorn should pop up its head to prick you in the garden of this world. Remember, that if a garden turns into a wilderness of thorns the gardener will have no occasion to see any doves in it.

Verse (Arabic):

And he who nourishes a plant with the water of kindness
Benefits by its fruits and shade.

Since nobody relishes torture one must not refrain from inscribing *la* on the whip that lashes the backs of the subordinates and slaves, lest at the time when one is required to recite the *IĒ* of *kalimah-i-shahâdat*, namely, at the time of death, one's tongue takes the orthographic shape of *la*, (becomes inoperative thus rendering him incapable of reciting *kalimah-i-shahâdat* and making him die a cursed death).

One must also learn a lesson from the hurt one gets from the stroke of a baton. For, when the baton hits you it produces a sound, which suggests something to a wise man. He understands that even the baton cries against the oppression of the hitter as the baton cannot hurt of its own accord.

Verse:

Think how much the victim who is hit suffers
When even the baton which hits him cries.

The eyes of the master suffer inflammation because of too much sleep, and the feet of the servant get inflamed because of too much standing. In one case the inflammation is due to sleep, and in the other the due to keeping awake.

Verse:

Now what do you say observing justice and fairness
Whether the foot inflamed because of waking is superior to the eye
inflamed because of sleep, or not?

If God favors one who has the quality of the palm of the hand which brings comfort to others and engages every finger in some kind of skill or art, unlike the back of the hand which has nothing to do in giving or taking but remains perpetually useless. It can only hit somebody on the face, and it is all that it is capable of doing.

Verse (Arabic):

God does not protect the hand of the oppressor
Which slaps the face of the oppressed or strike him from the back of his hand..

Showing a little favor to a person and putting him under a great obligation is not fair and just. It is like engaging a laborer on meager wages and making him carry heavy loads.

Verse (Arabic):

If the laborer dies under that heavy burden,
Who is going to benefit by the wages given to him in return?

Two silver coins in the hands of mean person, do not make him contented. But by chance if he loses them, he loses self-control, it is because under no circumstance he will open his purse to let his money out, and if someone inserts his hand in his purse, he may go mad.

On the other hand, if someone has a few coins in his purse this mean person will defraud him or even fleece him for that money.

So also if a generous person gives you a necklace of gold you must not put it on, because this necklace of gold:

Hemistich:

Shall turn into a metal piece of armor if you put it round your neck.

If a generous person gives you a piece of gold or a loaf of brown bread you must have a bite at it with your pearly teeth since because of this bread a wealth of blessings shall come down to you from the heavens.

Hemistich:

Beneath you teeth there shall be loaves of gold.

Many persons have closed fists (are tight-pursed) but they are extravagant in the use of their tongues. One must be aware of them, as the luster of a sword is visible on the exterior of the tongue (like shape), and never comes out from within:

Hemistich:

Even if it gets broken into pieces.

Where generous persons manifest the beauty of generosity, the needy shall be gifted by a happy countenance, as well. But where the lion reddens his teeth (with blood),

Hemistich:

The wolf dyes his fore-paws with the *īnā* (of blood), or the feet of the leopard is stained (in blood), and it is certain that the jackals shall enjoy a great feast.

Many persons may boast of their good names, but are incapable of satisfying anybody's needs. A sparrow cannot supply the desired quantity of meat to a butcher. A cook emits a little smoke from the kitchen; a crab does not stop moving its legs except in water or sea-foam.

Verse:

What strange things the sea-wave and the sea-foam are!
Unless people go into them they remain in a state of natural nudity
If it were not so, then the sun vainly takes off this fine clothing from the
body of men.
Why the sun which clothes the world with the clothing of light, should
Take off any clothing from the body of men?
Know that whatever we get from the heaven is a loan and we cannot blame
it
If it recovers that loan from you.

Hemistich:

Persons who spend money in ostentation and put on airs are the purchasers of air.

Hemistich:

He who goes in for air in exchange for gold is a fool indeed.

Generosity possesses a rank higher than what a beggar attributes to you in praise. Similarly, a river has far more authenticity than what the coins (*sikkah* means coin as well as scale of fish) of fish-scales and the sign Pisces go to establish.

Hemistich (Arabic):

The sun is far higher than what a decorative cloud indicates.

The person eulogized does not like the flattery of the flatterer. So the flatterer shall not depend on the generosity of the flattered. Even the generous cloud that sends down abundant rain of gifts behaves at times in a miserly manner and stops raining. So, when a generous person promises gifts but fails to keep up the promise, his behavior shall not be attributed to miserliness.

Verse (Arabic):

It has been observed frequently that a cloud makes a thunderous call on those who hope Benefit of rain fall upon them, but then it suddenly stops raining.

An eulogist shall have a glib tongue to soften the hard temper of the eulogized person or butter him up to get gold from him. But the former must have some sense of appropriateness for flattery. But the fist of a miser cannot be opened by application mere soft soap, of the tensely closed neurotic hand cannot be cured and made to open by applying the aloe-wood oil.

Hemistich:

Washing off an old thread-bare garment with rose-water is an exercise in futility
as it results in the wastage of rose-water itself.

Poetry is a fragrant breeze when charged with the odors of pleasant behavior. But it becomes a whiff of stench if it passes over a decaying corpse. The eulogist making an injudicious use of poetry for flattery is a stupid man mocked by one and all.

Couplet (Arabic):

People will laugh if a stupid man
Rubs sandal on a worm of the gutter

Good poetry is a magic spell fetching golden bars from the treasure trove of a king. It will be futile if this magic spell is cast in a place from where even a rope cannot be found out. Misers will recoil from the stretched hands of the needy as someone recoils from the snake-hoods. The eulogist who casts the magic spell of his praise on a miser is greedier than a snake-charmer of India.

Verse (Arabic):

I've taken note of the snake charmers of India who out of greed for money
Explore the snake-hoods by their hands.

When it comes to coveting what others have a man must be gracious enough to regard the pulling out of lifeless gold serpents from the treasure houses of others to be as difficult as the pulling out of live snakes from their holes. As regards covetousness one shall not brand poets in particular; for the bare truth is that at present nobody can expect any treasure by the magic spell of poetry. Instead, these HÉmân¹⁷ like ministers shall be branded with greed, whose poisonous serpents devoured more in the form of gold than the rod of Mûsâε,¹⁸ which turned into a serpent.

Verse:

The shame that such an affair couldn't be arranged by a magician like me,
Makes me sink into the earth¹⁹ like the prodigiously wealthy Korâh²⁰ did.

If my son, who is begotten from my loins like a pearl, finds it feasible to get himself threaded in the necklace-string of poetry (to assume the career of a poet) he must deliberately detach himself from it. So far as possible he must avoid this boundless sea.²¹ My own immersion in this sea of shame shall be a lesson for him, namely my own involvement for a life-time in this deceitful game of poetry.

¹⁷HÉmÉn, mentioned in the Qur'ân (28:6,8) and other verses was a minister of Pharaoh in the time of Prophet Mûsâε.

¹⁸ The Qur'ân (7:107): "Then (Mûsâ) threw his rod, and behold! It was a serpent, plain all to see."

¹⁹ The Qur'ân (28:76-82): "Qârûn was doubtless of the people of Mûsâε but he acted insolently among them. Such were the treasures We had bestowed on him that their very keys would have been a burden to a body of strong men... Then We caused the earth to swallow up him and his house; and he had not the party to help him against God."

²⁰ The story of Korah occurs in the Qur'ân where he is called Qârûn in Qur'ân (28:76) & the Old Testament (XVI:1-35).

²¹ The word is *baîr* which means a sea boat and also the poetic meter, but here it means sea, hence the Figure is *ôhâm*.

Verse:

I have spent my entire life after this false wealth
And got misery rather than genuine pearls

But if in the sea²² of poetry²³ the wind of desire drifts the ship of his heart to a point of no return, he should better take inspiration from my own poetical works. To set sail the ship of poetry he shall make his sails out of praising the Almighty, and the Prophet Muḥammad, and compose lyrics on the sermons rendered by our prophets. There can be no better reward for him he should see to it that the tablets of commendation get washed away with abundant water like the bottom planks of a ship get washed. But, as said earlier, at present poetry has no worth left in it.

The humbler poet plying his boat of praise to the doors of mean persons, in effect, plies it on dry land. In fact, the poet who praises somebody derives from the praised one just as much benefit as the word *raḥ*²⁴ does from the meter of a poem (that is, no benefit), and just as much nutritional satisfaction as the *alif* of *ishb'* (meaning satisfaction) does from the niceties of poetry (that is, no satisfaction).

Verse:

He who dives in such seas now dies of thirst,
As does the duck swimming on a mirage.

Therefore, you should regard the reward of poetry as unlawful alms given to the undignified beggars of the poetic profession, and keep silent in this matter. In the kingdom of your own being you shall proclaim that "contentment in itself is the wealth of the whole kingdom," and get the rebels of your senses burnt to death through extreme self-denial. You may not have access to a loaf of bread; but you exalt your moral courage to the extent as if you have access to the loaf of the sun, which:

Couplet:

You will not touch out of moral courage and self esteem
as you wouldn't touch a hot loaf of bread with your finger.

²² In words *buhur*, *bad*, *jahâz*, *bazgasht*, the Figure is *Murâ' ât al-Naḏîr*.

²³ In *buḥur* in relation with *nazm*, the Figure is *ôhâm*.

²⁴The last distich.

You must not go in for what is unlawful, even if they be precious and rare pearls like the pieces of your own liver. You must not pick up anything as children do. On the other hand, you must regard a bundle of firewood on your head, which you carry to eke out lawful income, as precious as the crown of a kingdom. You must not deter from this head-crushing labor even if the hair on your head may fall off or your backbone risks breaking down. A man shall toil in earning a lawful livelihood, let alone if mountain loads formed his bundle of firewood. Legends describe that some holy elders of yore used to tie their bundles of firewood with serpents. This was a miracle of their labor of lawful living, as, a serpent lies around the trunk of the sandal tree because of its fragrance. Then why shall it not be there on the bundle of firewood that smells of the trees and fruits of paradise in store for lawful labor.

Verse:

The rope fastened to the bundle of wood, carried by the one
resembles the serpents; around the Tuba tree (that existed in paradise)
before the days of Adam

Any vocation is like a magnet that attracts livelihood. Stretching out an idle hand for alms is beggary. The sweat of your brow that falls off in labors is like drops of mercury used in alchemy for making gold. Whichever of these three modes a man chooses in earning his livelihood, he will surely get benefited.

Hemistich (Arabic):

Whatever work one intends to do his profits are on the magnitude of his
own endeavors.

Still some vocations like weaponry are taboo. Of course it provides livelihood, and caters to the requirements of kings and chiefs. But since it is used in the killing of fellow human beings,

Hemistich:

One shall better keep away from adopting it

A vocation that Islam disapproves of should not be followed. One should toil in a vocation that may not harm the people, disapproving even the arrogance of the chiefs and shall prefer service of an ordinary person.

God's blessing is conferred upon those who earn lawful livelihood, even those who chew at the salted leather used for making shoes and socks. It is conferred upon them because their hands work for the comfort of men's feet and also for their own lawful livelihood, which they earn without any dishonesty.

Verse:

Chewing lawfully at leather
Is better than the unlawful eating of a lamb.

Men of understanding and insight like a tailor's vocation because the tailor devotes his life to making garments for covering the bodies and in earning lawful livelihood. It is understood that he should not keep for his personal use any piece of his customer's cloth, be it as ordinary as the one used for wiping shoes. A stolen piece of cloth would also expose the dishonesty of the tailor:

Verse:

When a cloth thief has been exposed
Even a hundred thousand patches cannot hide his shame.

A shoemaker earns a more lawful livelihood than a tailor does. It is because a shoemaker injures his own skin for the sake of making shoes for others, and this is something that nobody else does. But a tailor can tear through another person's cloth and take out patches for his own veil. Hence if a person wants that on account of unlawful earning like a thread, twisting tailor he may not writhe his hands (free of sorrow), on the Day of Judgment, or writhe (in agony) like a twisted rope, for he should adopt a vocation in which he might have full control on his tools. Shoe making and fabric making and the like are such vocations in which he has his own tools and earns lawful wages. (For example, making socks and similar things that give lawful earning). A man must keep away from the vocation of a goldsmith who would steal gold even from a lion's paw by means of a soldering-iron (*kaf-i-shr* means lion's paw and *kafshîr* means soldering-iron).

Verses:

A goldsmith's livelihood is rarely lawful
It involves the theft of grains of copper or gold
The livelihood of a needle-worker as lawful
It involves neither theft nor unfairly high wages.

Some tailors sew with a needle and some with a bristle. There is a point here. It is that lawful livelihood which is earned either by means of a needle or by the point of a bristle.

Verse (Arabic):

Treasures of gold are not acquired except
By burglary, usurpation or corrupt practice.

Some people obtain their meat (livelihood) by means of (sewing with) pig's hair, and some wear lamb's hair (wool) and eat pig's meat (eat unlawful food). Great is God who gives to one man lawful food through the manipulation of unlawful things like pig's hair, and to another unlawful food by means that appear lawful. This is why it is advisable to subject your food to moral scrutiny and to see to it that even the slightest suspicion is removed like a hair from dough.

If a believer stitches leather with pig's hair - it can be said that he stitches his own liver with lion's hair - he is better than the man who has a hair of other's goat in his blanket. There are many blanket-wrapped, righteous men in whose backs the coarse blanket has dug red impressions like those found in an Indian cloth. Even if the vermine robe of a king was offered to them their hair would stand on end like the quills of a porcupine (for fear of the responsibility that the wearing of it would entail). One cannot afford silken robes by lawful livelihood except cotton or coarse woolen garments, and he cannot eat his lawful loaf of bread with gravy, rather he has to eat it in sore distress. Lawful vocation can provide them with the sweat of their brows in place of cool drinking water. This is the state of those who regard heavy stones on their heads as light as carded cotton, even when their heads are being crushed by such burdens. They keep on stitching leather with their fingers even if their fingers are badly wounded.

Verse (Arabic):

Give glad tidings to the worker who earns a consecrated meal
While the skin of his fingers is being taken off by the stitching of leather
string

Those who have beautiful and tender bodies will do no good to you. For you cannot drink wine from the cup of a tulip; nor can you fill the bottle of a bubble with rose-water. The worth of a person is tested in times of prosperity and misery. An immature mind is changed by the slightest influence.

Hemistich:

A half-baked earthen cup gets spoiled after wine has been poured in it for the first time.

Verse (Arabic):

A mud wall collapses under the influence of water in order to kiss the ground
And the star of the river, the bubble can do no harm to a mountain.

In the preface of a human personality, the writings of misery and of prosperity cannot be read like the contents of a letter merely by the help of your physical sight. When the wheat-color skin of a laborer is scratched, only bran comes out instead of kernel. The subtle point²⁵ is that when laborers are crushed, no pleasant juice comes out.

Verse:

When a grain of barley is crushed after it has been rubbed over
By a grain of sesame it will not yield any oil.

When you scratch a delicate body a red mark like the letter *nĒn* is formed on account of its moist surface. This involves a moral. It is the delicacy (of constitution or upbringing) that can be brought out by scratching with a nail (i.e. easily).

Verse:

On the red mark you've made (with your nail) on a delicate body
If you put your finger you will have a streak of blood coming out there from.

Because of his delicate constitution, even sandal paste gives headache to my son. He is not strong enough to bear a heavy burden on his head. However, he would not sit behind the skirt of trade and craft broken pieces. Yet if he says that on the strength of his own legs he will take his position before the lofty pillars of the government:

Hemistich:

It is likely that through his position my own fortune may advance.

²⁵ In *daqīqah*, which means flour, the Figure is *ôhâm* in relation with *gandum*, *bekhtan*, *maghz*.

But this situation involves an unimaginably great number of troubles. I shall mention two or three of them here.

Verse (Arabic):

Adopt that which you consider good,
But that which you consider otherwise you may adopt or not.

First, in lifting the load of firewood care should be taken not to lift more than one head-load. And with two or three head-loads one would lose his head (the head would be crushed under heavy burden).

Hemistich:

Usual weight would not give you much trouble.

But if you have become a chief or a ruler you will have to bear hundreds and even thousands of head-loads.

Hemistich:

And the greater the load on your head the greater will be the headache for you.

Secondly, during the day a laborer or a craftsman drinks, in the goblet of his own head as it were, the sweat of his brow remains intoxicated with the wine of his painful labor. At night, in his home he performs a rolling dance to the musical accompaniment of his own snores and thus enjoys a sound sleep. On the contrary, there are the associates of noble and kings who, making their legs the pillars of support for many persons, keep standing before a fellow human being. They carry on in this obsequious manner as long as they live and regard this life of abjectness as one of perpetual comfort.

Thirdly, these persons get salaries at the cost of the poor. Their wealth is stamped with oppression just as a *dînâris* stamped with figures. Their salary (*diram*) is from the skin of the oppressed as the leather coin has got the currency by royal decree.

Verse:

No wonder if by the decree of a successful king
Leather coins become current like the silver ones as established as currency

But he who covets a courtly rank for honor is never inclined to acquire a position through lawful means involving neither any honor nor any rank.

Since my son is the lamp of his family, his compassionate father has no other alternative but to kindle his inner fire, and make his glib tongue pour the oil of advice into his son's ears, as it were, so that it may cleanse his brain

Verse (Arabic):

A lamp certainly burns when it is full of oil, and it illumines
But when it runs short of oil, it can no more burn!

One for whom God has spread the table of his bounties shall never starve, and one whose body has been attired by his fortune shall never go naked. A man's fortune does not always correspond to his wishes or efforts, nor to his livelihood.

Verse (Arabic):

When it is raining why shouldst thou
Take pains to irrigate thy land?

A man may have all the skills in the world but if his house is haunted by misfortune he will get nothing but grief over his penury. The reticular²⁶ curtain of his closet will be replaced by nothing but the spider's web and nobody will whitewash his black house of affliction except the spider.²⁷

Verse (Arabic):

He runs away in starvation
As a mouse runs from a cat.

It being established that it is the pen of Destiny that inscribes one's good or bad fortune on one's forehead, one shall not let oneself be deceived, like a child, by the colorful coat of wealth, nor shall one despise the dismal²⁸ looking blister-marked face of an eunuch.

As everyone has inevitably to depart from this world for the next and the journey is extremely long, it is advisable to travel light, or to carry a baggage that may yield profit in the next world.

Verse:

One shall carry worn out blanket and mattress, As
fine silken stuffs are of no worth there.

²⁶ It is *zambûr* which is a good example of Figure *ôhâm*.

²⁷ A forlorn building is full of spider's webs.

²⁸ The phrase *giriâh-i-mukhanat-i-Éblahdâr* is mentioned.

In short, if some relative of my son desires a courtly rank he shall be contented with just one robe, for if he has two robes he would require two head-gears and two head-gears require two heads. And when a soldier has buckled himself up for battle, he must guard the hilt of his sword from a shattering stroke. That is to say that battles are not won through bragging or colorful ostentation that one shall not be proud of the cypress of a pattern,²⁹ for the shield of a tortoise,³⁰ or the armor of a fish, and the chest of a wave are of no avail against the bubbles of water⁵⁴¹ for these submarine cavaliers.

Verse:

My heart goes out for the *surî*-rose and the myrrh-rose
But the blade of a bud cannot pierce the shield of a rose.

If a friendly looking enemy turns his back to you in battle (to signify that he is fleeing) you shall not take it for granted, as over the enemy's back, you cannot recite *SĒrahFatĪa*³¹ and cannot take it as a sure sign of victory.

There are many activities, which people may regard as wars, but they are mere manifestations of pride.

Unless the sword has quivered, the arm of the archer is lifted and the bow is targeted towards the back of the enemy, victory does not come forth.

Verse:

The sword cannot wound unless it stoops to strike; and the arrow cannot hit the target unless it's first drawn.

The sword shall be wielded for the sake of *kalmah-i-shahâdat*, (namely in the cause of faith the confession of faith by which one bears witness to the oneness of God and the Prophet-hood of MuĪammadε) and not for bearing witness, through one's death, to faithlessness and falsehood. So for those who thus died *Dhulfiqâr* – (the sword of 'AlĪτ) is a flame of fire, and:

Hemistich (Arabic):

There are no lamps lit over their graves.

²⁹ The phrase *sarv-i-namĒnah* is mentioned.

³⁰ In this sentence two Figures of *Murâ'ât al-NaĪir* are available – *bargustawân*, *jaushan*, *suwĒrgĒn*, and *bakhâ*, *mĒhĪandĒb*.

³¹ The Qur'ân (48): The chapter on victory.

If, in a holy war (*jihad*) a champion of faith keeps his lamps of arrows burning bright with arrow-heads, and his arched sword burning bright like a flame under an arched fire-place the heads of the infidels surely bow down in submission. If he relies on the power of his tongue, like Bu Lâhab,³² and cannot raise dust in the battle field, like Bu Turâb³³ ('Alîψ), it is certain that in this world, where *li-ġlâf*³⁴ which refers to the covenants of the Quraish and their trade journeys) is recited for the sake of livelihood, *tabbat(SĒrah" Lâhab"* which sends curses on BûLâhab and prophesies his destruction by his own means) will be recited, and "Burnt soon will he be in a fire of blazing flame."³⁵

In these times the most lawful livelihood is the breed earned by a soldier, because the wheat grains of the king cannot be crushed by every tooth of a grinding mill. In putting up with severe afflictions one must be like the lower mill-stone and in bewilderment³⁶ like the upper mill-stone. It is between these two mill-stones of hardship that one must get his bones grounded into flour and his blood turned into water in order to get kneaded the dough for the bread of ones livelihood.³⁷

At the behest of the chief one must leap into the burning furnace or an oven to take the bread of service. How then can such bread be un lawful? But the moment the position of a soldier exceeds the maxim of "one horse: two horses" it gives rise to the desire of a hundred horses lawful bread in no longer in the oven.

Couplet (Arabic):

O thou who rises in the morning with thoughts of acquiring a lawful earning, Thou can achieve it through industry and not through horses and camels.

Baking a lawful or unlawful bread is not the concern of a hard-working laborer who can drive holes into an anvil with an arrow head. It is a hard task for one who mends a worn out cloth with a needle. It is a task beyond the reach of those who eat finely sifted flour and have their stomach turned into a sieve by a single particle of bran. The writer has sorted out various ideas in his writing. These fine divisions are not totally free from coarseness, and those with delicate temperaments may not put up with them.

³² In BûLahab in relation with *ĴarĒrath* (heat) the Figure is *ôhâm*.

³³ In AbûTurâb in relation with *ghubâr*, the Figure is *ôhâm*.

³⁴ The Qur'ân (106), the chapter on *Quraish*.

³⁵ The Qur'ân (111:3).

³⁶ The word *sargardânî* is a case of *ôhâm* in relation with the upper millstone that is always in motion.

³⁷ In words like *sang*, *ĒsiyĒ*, *nan*, *sĒzĒn*, *tanĒr*, etc., the Figure is *Murâ'ât al-NaĒîr*.

Verse (Arabic):

To one who tastes lawful food,
It will be as palatable as the thorns are in a camel's mouth.

The lions of the jungle of stomach exposed to spears and arrows of sugarcane who have never been the refectory of investiture and research in the *Sharî'ah*, and who have been spying in this valley are like animals:³⁸ "nay, even worse than animals" who have nothing to do with the implications of the eating of pork. Do they even know the difference between the meat of the deer and that of the pig that they may not oppress the innocent deer and turn them into the unlawful meat of pigs for themselves. On such occasions it is knowledge that helps.

Couplet:

A teacher's dog is far better than that soldier
whose deer-meat at dinner turns into pig's meat

He who wields a sword and has as well learnt reading and writing shall better exchange the turban of jurisprudence with a paper cap, as the cap is profusely wrapped with cloth, fold after fold, with many patches of contamination and stains of suspicion. Despite the fact that a turban has many turns in a prolonged operation in setting it, the prey turns unlawful. But as it is the headdress of a learned man it can hide corruption, contrary to the golden tassel and silken outside of the cap that takes off honor the head.

Couplet:

After this advice of mine if still any doubt remains in your heart
You must conclude that "Both of them are unlawful."

The tassel and the outside of a cap are ordinary gold and silk; but they are an index of corruption. For he who haughtily holds high the top of his cap will have no hesitation in arranging heads on the top of battlements.

Verse:

The eagle wears a crest so as to
Take off the crown from the peacock's head.

³⁸ The Qur'ân (7:179): They are like cattle – nay more misguided.

But it does not mean that you regard all caps evil. There are many caps that stand for sainthood. God has declared: "My saintly friends are under my robe." The decorated cap of a saint is only the blue sky. Exalted ØËfis have rubbed their heads with the sky (so exalted they have become) till their heads have grown bald. So, if some soldiers with their hidden saintliness do not touch the heaven with their caps they may however, reach the cloud of Divine Mercy, which hides their spiritual beauty.

Verse (Arabic):

If there is nothing to curtain their light it will shine forth in such a manner
That the fountainhead of light in the sky will hide itself behind a veil

A capped soldier who wears under his shirt the ØËfi's garment of coarse wool is like a lion wrapped in satin, and the ØËfi who has fur under his garment of coarse wool, is a dog wrapped in sack-cloth. It is immaterial whether my son dons a tailed turban or a pea-cap. God's work continues whatever the headgear.

Couplet:

Better to be an agent of God
Rather than be an agent of a noble or a minister.³⁹

The purpose of this long discourse is to point out that in going through the dark valley of this world one has to go through many ups and downs to reach the stations of the Hereafter. The oil of sincerity is needed for the lamp of Islam. Lift your hands in prayer and pull the skirt of divine favor towards yourself (beseech God's favor). One should make chastity his curtain for the protection of this lamp, as diabolical winds lurk in the stream of breath, in order that one may pass through the dark regions safely and reach the world where one would witness that "Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth."⁴⁰ On reaching there, one will realize to what light his compassionate father has guided him. Then the tablets of light shall become "the certainty of sight."⁴¹ There, one shall not forget one's moest father, but pray for him to God that he may lift the veil of despair for his father.

Verse (Arabic):

Perchance God, by His Grace
shows him the face of the Beloved.

³⁹ In the text *tâ* is better reading than *yâ*.

⁴⁰The Qur'ân (24:35).

⁴¹The Qur'ân: (102:7).

At the time of completion of this epistle *Ramaḷān* had reached the end of ' *iḏāh*⁴² and the year can be had from *naḷīḷat-i-naḷīḷ*.⁴³

Hemistich:

The fifth day of the month of *Ramaḷān*, and the year seven hundred seven.

Salutations: May the relations on that side have salutations and good wishes more beneficial than a father's advice. The friends of this side send regards more affectionate than the advice of a mother.

Or the scholars: May he always be profited by his advice. May he be favored with divine grace for his sincere repentance of sins. May his sermon bring death to the enemies.

Or the scribes: May God the Reckoner, confer on him rewards in proportion to the sermons he has written to.

Or the Dead: May God resurrect him along with the sermonizer on the Day of Resurrection. May his love secure God's mercy for himself.

Or elders: May he be redeemed for his advice in his own way. May God always reward him for his thanksgiving.

Or a soldier: May he be redeemed for taking advice. Mercy be upon him for listening to the advice.

Or scribes: May his writings be always a guide to scribes. May he have the grace to write words of good advice.

Inversely:

Or Scholars: May he become the counselor for Satan's business of guile. May he remember Satan and may Satan remember him.

Or elders: May his sermon be like vinegar.

Or a Soldier: May his arrow beat the drum of march. May his awakening be the drum of sunset.

Or Scribes: May his advice spell death for ministers and scribes.

Or the Scholars: May he have a pleasing tongue in his sermons.

Or the mystics: May the robe of virtue fit him.

Or soldier: May advice be sweet for him.

Or scribes: May he be freed on the Day of Judgment is the advice of ministers.

⁴² It was the 5th day of Ramaḷān (as the numerical value of ha is 5 according to *abjad* reckoning).

⁴³ The value of words *naḷīḷat-i-naḷīḷ* is 707, and hence the year of completion of letter is 707.