



Wisdom of Sa' di

Professor Mohammad Kazem Kamran

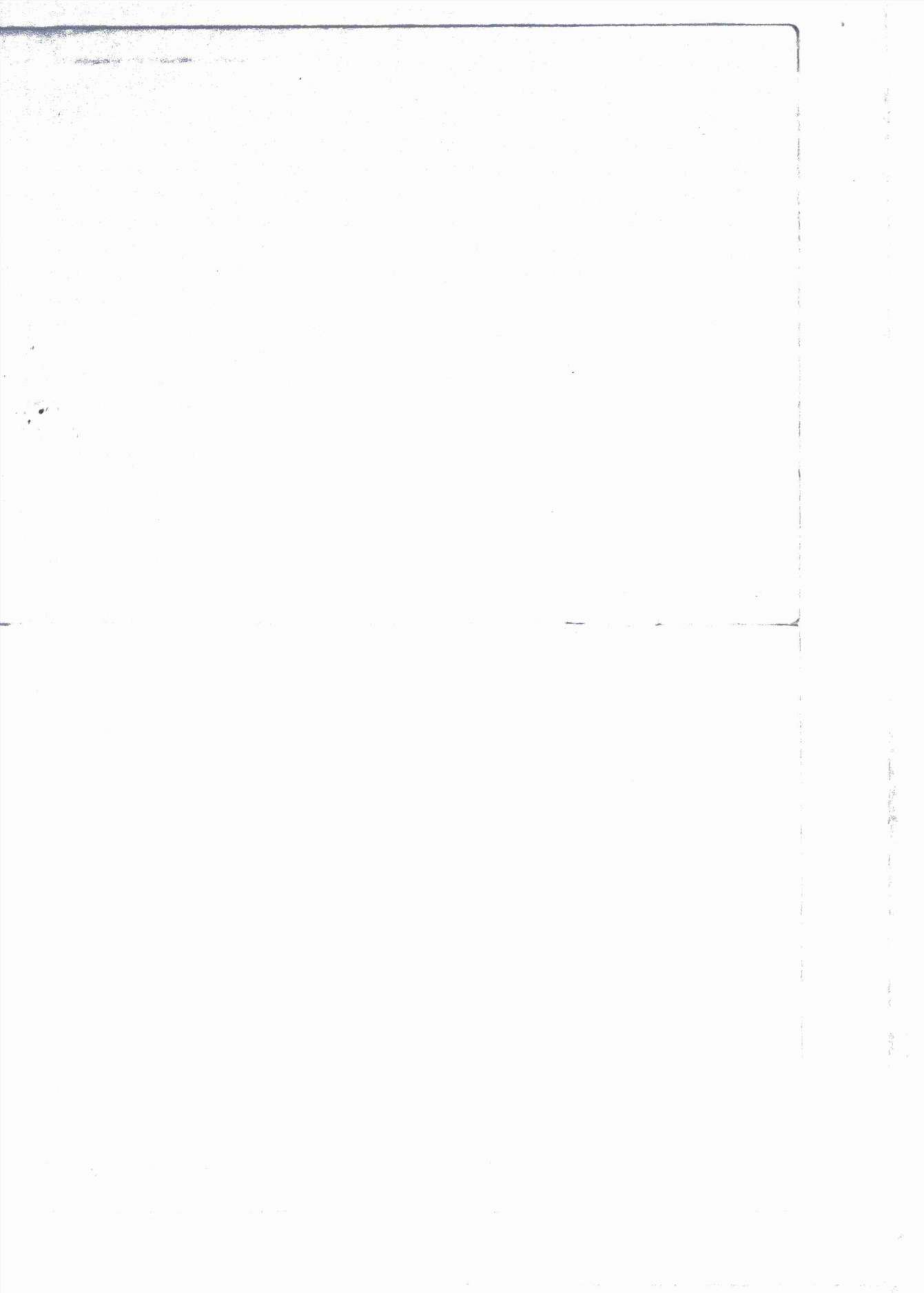
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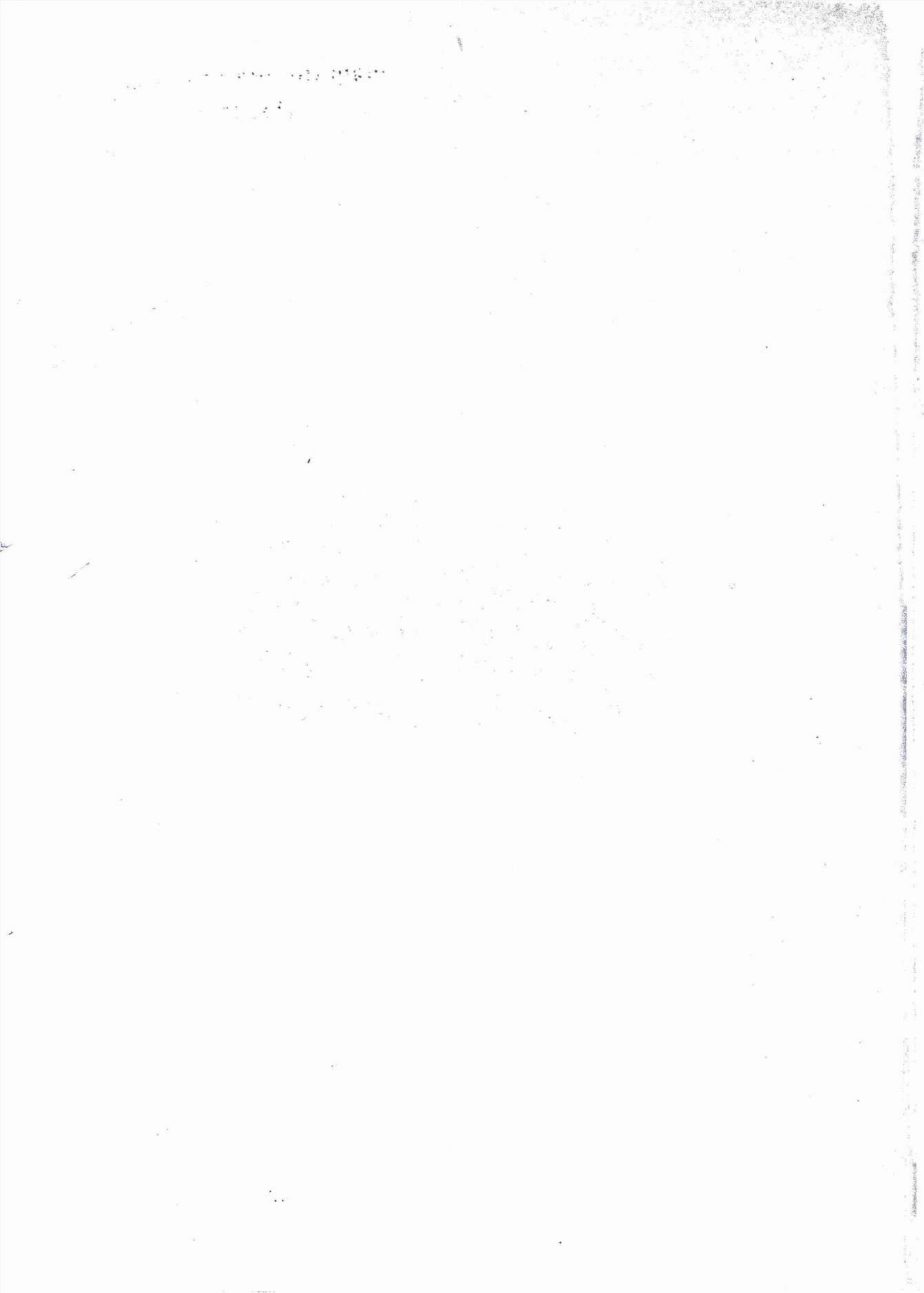






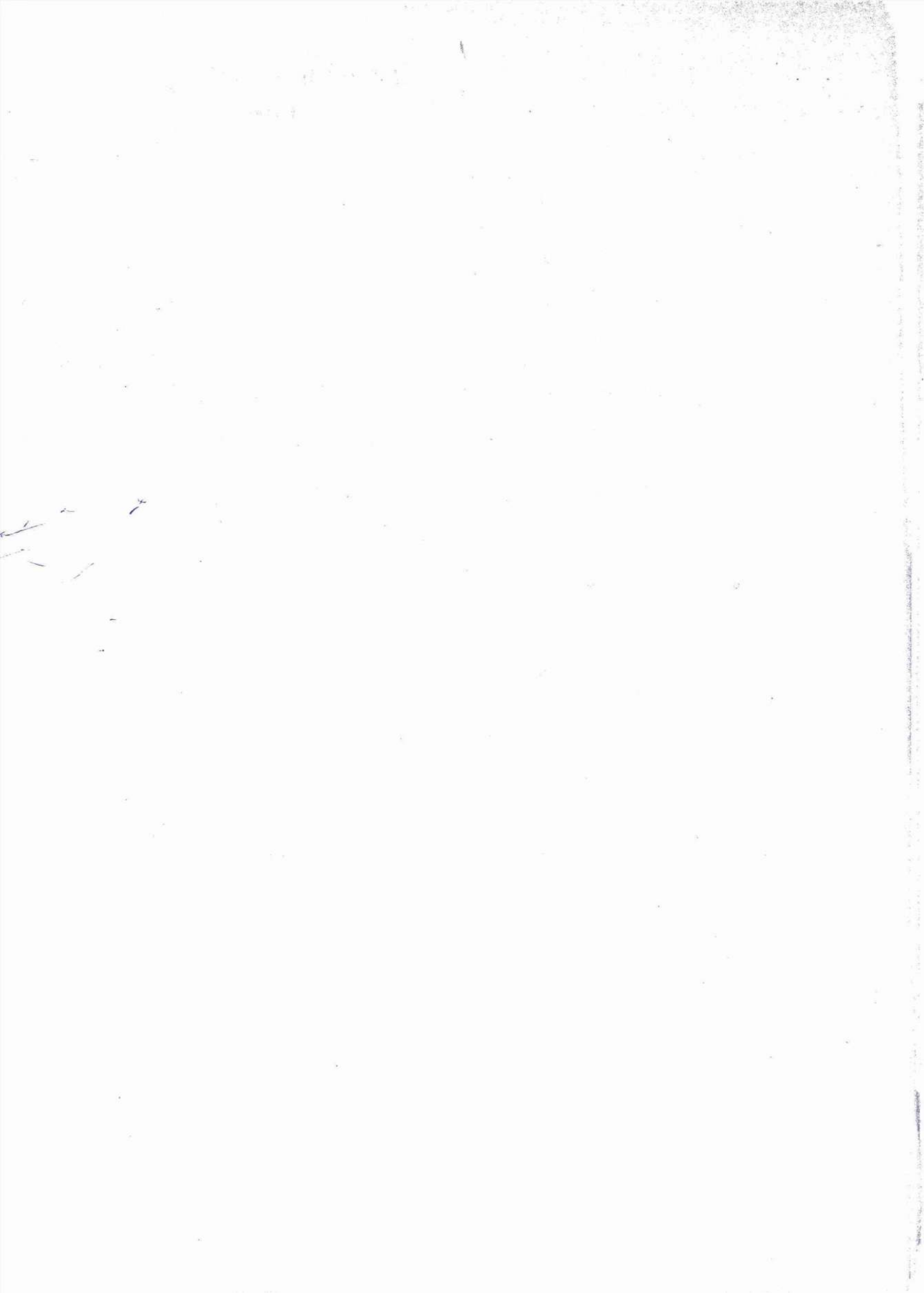
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حکیم سخن در زبان آفرین
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کریم خطابخش پوزش پذیر

**In the name of the Lord, Who created life;
Wise One, Who created speech in the tongue.
Lord, the Forgiver and Helper; Generous,
Fault-Condoner and Repentance-Acceptor.**



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Wisdom of Sa'di

by

Professor Mohammad Kazem Kamran
(Compiler, Translator and Annotator)

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**Dedicated to the loving memory of my
late son Mohammad Nasser Kamran**

کاش کان روز که در پای تو شد خار اجل
دست گیتی بزدی تیغ هلاکم بر سر
تا در این روز جهان بی تو ندیدی چشمم
این منم بر سر خاک تو که خاکم بر سر

**On the day when the thorn of death pierced your foot,
I wish the world had struck my head with the sword of death,
so that today I would not have to see the world devoid of you.
Woe unto me that I am now beside your grave (mourning
your untimely death).**

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In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

FOREWORD

Eminent writers and thinkers of every society who have reflected the wise thoughts of their period in their literary works, have played an important role in promoting and propagating their culture. The excellent thoughts of Shaikh Sa'di Shirazi, the outstanding ethical poet and writer of the 7th Century Hijri (solar calendar), undoubtedly falls in such a category.

From among the best literary works in Persian literature, Golestan and Boostan are, in every aspect, unique and perhaps matchless. These two treasures abound in knowledge and wisdom derived from Persian culture and are considered to be charming classic models in prose and poetry.

Sa'di, who enjoys the distinction of being the lord of the literary world of Iran, has opened an endless field for the connoisseurs with these two masterpieces. Within this field, poets and writers have become his students forever. With his sound talent, sensitive soul and loving heart, Sa'di sings the theme of monotheism and preaches love for all good things, sympathy for orphans and the oppressed and at the same time, advises and guides the mighty rulers, leaders and politicians.

It was imperative that the uninitiated should have an opportunity to taste the honey of Sa'di's thoughts and works and also be overwhelmed by its fragrance. Accordingly, the Culture House of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Mumbai decided to publish this book, which is enriched with the fragrant flowers of Golestan and Boostan, in order to take another step towards the propagation of the genuine and noble Islamic culture of Iran.

We are happy to present to the literati, the scholars and the admirers of the sweet Persian language this book, which is a collection of selected verses from these two masterpieces, compiled and elegantly translated and annotated by Professor Mohammad Kazem Kamran, former Head of the Persian Department and former Professor of Islamic Culture of the prestigious St. Xavier's College of the University of Mumbai.

Place: Mumbai, India
Date : March 2001

Ali Fuladi
Director, Culture House of
the Islamic Republic of Iran
Mumbai

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

PREFACE

This is the first type of work where the verses from *Golestan* and *Boostan* have been dealt with subjectwise. It is the compilation of the condensed and striking thoughts of the distinguished poet and writer Shaikh Sa'di on important and interesting subjects, arranged in English alphabetical order of topics, for ready reference. This book represents a 'Dictionary of Thoughts' of the great writer on various topics as depicted in *Golestan* and *Boostan*. It makes it possible to find all the quotations on associated subjects from the above two books with a minimum of effort. No other Persian poet has provided as many proverbs and maxims as the honourable sage has. For a speaker or writer, it becomes easy to give quotations from this book. There have been translations of Sa'di's *Golestan* and *Boostan* in the past, but such books are not within easy reach of the readers today.

I hope this book will be most helpful to students, scholars and the general reader. Since English is the most widely followed international language in the world today, this book will find ready acceptance by a large number of readers. Even those who do not know Persian can read the translation and get acquainted with the brilliant thoughts of Shaikh Sa'di of Shiraz.

Great care has been taken to select the best of his verses from his two books, literally representing the precis of his vast work. Although *Golestan* is the best prose work in Persian literature, only verses from that book have been selected, because this work is meant to represent the best in poetry, for which Persian literature is universally renowned. It must be admitted that Sa'di, as all poets, loses much of his original force in translation, but his verse has often a meaning so well grounded in human experience that it retains interest even when the translation has adversely affected much of the original beauty of expression.

To quote Professor R. Levy, "Rhythm, cadence and turn of phrase, unfortunately, cannot be transferred into a foreign tongue without distortion or serious weakening of the force of the original text. The only resort of the translator is to do the best he can with prose renderings of what he considers characteristic."

Persian is a language which is flexible, rich in vocabulary, ample in synonyms and rhyming words, and therefore offers an unparalleled instrument for composing verses.

Explanatory notes have been provided, wherever necessary, to elucidate certain words and topics for a clearer understanding of the overall meaning of the verses.

Words cannot adequately express my gratefulness to Mr. Ali Fuladi, the capable and dynamic Director of the Culture House of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Mumbai. He has been a source of encouragement and a pillar of support in the publication of this book.

I also express my sincere gratitude to Mr. Farhad Palizdar, the efficient and energetic former Director of the Culture House, for his encouragement in the initial stages of the conception of this book.

I am grateful to Mr. Ahmad Shahvary, the knowledgeable and learned former First Consul of the Consulate General of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Mumbai, for his whole-hearted co-operation.

I am thankful to Dr. Sayed Jafar Najafi, the erudite and well-informed Professor of Geology, St. Xavier's College, Mumbai, for aiding me during the different stages and providing me with unending support.

I wish to express my gratitude to Mr. Mohammad Feroz for having painstakingly typed the manuscript of this book.

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University of Mumbai, India

Mumbai, India

March 2001

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

INTRODUCTION

"Shaikh Moslehuddin Abdullah Sa'di Shirazi is not only one of the most honourable Iranians, but is also one of the greatest writers of the world. Among the writers in the Persian language, there are only one or two who can be compared to him. From among the writers of other nations, both ancient and modern, only a few are comparable to him. In Iran, his fame is rarely matched, and both the intelligentsia and the common man are familiar with his works. If he is not known by the masses outside Iran, at least scholars have recognised his greatness". This is how the eminent Iranian literary critic Mohammad Ali Foroughi eulogises the distinguished poet, philosopher and sage.

Sa'di was born in 1184 or 1185 in Shiraz. He hailed from a family of clerics and was orphaned at an early age. After receiving his early education in Shiraz, he went to Baghdad and there studied at the Nezamieh Academy and other reputable institutes of higher learning. Thereafter, for 30 years, he wandered hither and thither in the lands of Islam, from India on the East to Syria and Hejaz on the West. He visited Balkh, Ghazna, India, Yemen, Hejaz and other parts of Arabia, Abyssinia, Syria, Baalbek, North Africa and Asia Minor. He travelled in true dervish-fashion, in all sorts of ways, and mixed with all sorts of people.

He returned to Shiraz towards the end of the reign of Abu Bakr ibn Sad ibn Zangi and made quick strides in winning his patronage. He also enjoyed great favour with Sa'd, the son of the ruler, from whose name he derived his nom de plume Sa'di. The *Boostan* is his first dated composition and was completed and presented to Abu Bakr ibn Sa'd in 1257. Professor R. Levy comments thus on the book: "The *Boostan* forms an excellent introduction to the whole range of Persian didactic

mathnavis of mystic-ethical lore, of which many a great exist. Its ten chapters are headed respectively: Justice, Equity and Government Administration; Benevolence; Love (Physical and Mystical); Modesty; Resignation; Contentment; Self-Restraint; Gratitude; Penitence; Devout Meditation."

According to Professor A. J. Arberry, "The *Boostan* quickly attained and has ever since enjoyed a popularity almost unexampled in Persian literature. Not a few before Sa'di had composed didactic poetry. Sa'di, however, excelled all his predecessors, and all his successors too, by the fluent affability and artless simplicity of his diction. Many verses from the *Boostan* have achieved the status of proverbs, the surest proof of epigrammatic brilliance. The interweaving of popular wisdom with appropriate anecdote is done with great skill. Sa'di shows himself a master at telling simple stories and in his stories he includes numerous incidents from his own adventurous life. The book continues to cast its magic spell over Sa'di's countrymen".

Mohammad Ali Foroughi has the following opinion to express about the *Boostan*: "Perhaps one can say that this book has no like or parallel, either in Persian or in any other language, as regards elegance, eloquence, fluency, delicacy, charm, wisdom and insight".

Sa'di wrote his *Golestan* in the following year in 1258. The eight sections of the Book deal with Morals of Kings; Morals of Dervishes; Contentment; Advantages of Silence; Love; Imbecility and Old Age; Effects of Education; Rules of Conduct in Life. The poet compares his *Golestan* with a Persian garden, and the comparison is very apt. The eight partitions into which it is divided are planted each with its own cluster of gay and sombre stories, in the deductive intermixture of rhymed prose and verse which had by now come to be regarded as the prerequisite of elegant composition.

In the words of Professor E. G. Browne, "When Sa'di is described as essentially an ethical poet, it must be borne in mind that

his ethics are somewhat different from the theories commonly professed in Western Europe. Indeed, the real charm of Sa'di and the secret of his popularity lies in his catholicity".

In the preface to the first American edition of Francis Gladwin's translation of the *Golestan*, the great American essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson comments on Sa'di and his *Golestan* in the following manner: "Sa'di has wit, practical sense and just moral sentiments. He has the instinct to teach, and from every occurrence must draw the moral, like Franklin. He is the poet of friendship, love, devotion and serenity. There is a uniform force in his page, and, conspicuously, a tone of cheerfulness, which has also made his name a synonym for this grace. He inspires in the reader a great hope. What a contrast between the cynical tone of Byron and the benevolent wisdom of Sa'di. He asserts the universality of moral laws, and the perpetual retributions. He celebrates the omnipotence of a virtuous soul. A certain intimate and avowed piety is habitual to him. All the forms of courtesy and of business in daily life take a religious tinge, as did those of Europe in the Middle Age".

To quote Mohammad Taqi Bahar, "It is in the *Golestan* that one must look to discover Sa'di's art, mastery and personality. Had this book, small in size but large in substance, not existed, two thirds of the master's personality and sublime rank would vanish, and it may well be that Persian prose would have been deprived forever of such a splendid and valuable treasure".

In addition to *Golestan* and *Boostan*, Sa'di wrote his *Kulliyat* or *Collected Works*, comprising Arabic and Persian panegyrics (قصاید), threnodies (مراثی), poems partly in Persian and partly in Arabic (ملمعات), *Tarji-band* (ترجیع بند), ghazals or odes arranged in four groups, namely early poems (غزلیات قدیمه), fine odes (طیبات), cunning odes (بدایع) and signet-rings or gems (خواتیم). He also wrote many

quatrains (رباعيات), fragments (قطعات) and isolated verses.

To quote Professor A. J. Arberry, "Sa'di composed his quota of panegyrics, but it is characteristic of his boldness that he did not hesitate to tell his royal patrons bluntly how they ought to conduct themselves, and why. To advocate virtue and truth in a time of terror and to preach justice to princes called for courage of a rare order, and an unwavering devotion to the high principles of Islam".

Mohammad Ali Foroughi observes, "Sa'di's laudatory poems are not like those of other panegyrists who were absolutely servile. His panegyrics are in reality sermons and moral discourses. He criticises the sycophants and pleads with his patrons to practise justice, generosity, kindness and benevolence. He implores them to spare no effort in alleviating the misery of the poor and the destitute. He advises them to fear God, make provisions for the world hereafter, and to strive to earn a good name for themselves".

Sa'di is also a supreme composer of lyrics. In the words of Foroughi, "He deals with every subject in the best possible manner, but on the subject of love, he is overwhelmed with a different kind of ecstasy and fervour. Nobody has ever felt the palpable world of love like Sa'di, and nobody has ever elaborated upon it like him. Sa'di's love is not mere infatuation, but a very serious matter. It is sublime, pure, self-sacrificing and self-denying. His love begins with God's creatures, but ultimately culminates in love for God Himself".

According to Professor E. G. Browne, "In his ghazals or odes, Sa'di is considered as inferior to no Persian poet, not even Hafez".

Professor A. J. Arberry mentions, "Before Sa'di's time, not much attention had been paid by the poets to the writing of lyrics, and it may be said that this genre first acquired importance in the master's own age, and through his genius reached the pinnacle of advancement and

esteem. It is perhaps his greatest glory that he pioneered the way for Hafez. His use of the lyric is marked by perfect technical control, ease and fluency of diction, a pleasing formality, and an occasional true touch of the sublime".

To quote Mohammad Ali Foroughi once again, "The Golestan and Boostan are a perfect syllabus of practical wisdom. Sa'di has written about politics, ethics, prudence and administration in the most admirable style. Although the subjects are serious, Sa'di is also witty and humourous at times. In his own words, he has blended the bitter medicine of advice with the honey of wit, so that it is accepted for greater effectiveness. In fact, one can never tire of reading the Golestan and Boostan. No other writer has ever guided the kings and powerful officials regarding good management, justice and the welfare of subjects to the extent of Sa'di. Nobody has laid greater emphasis on these subjects. He has also reminded the other sections of society, such as the administrators and military officials, the privileged and disadvantaged, the powerful and weak, the poor and rich, the pious and gnostics, the merchants and businessmen, the lovers and profligates, the materialists and spiritualists, about their duties and obligations. He has availed himself of every opportunity to advise and even admonish them, and has concerned himself with their interests and detriments. Sa'di is deeply religious, but he is not a fanatic. He is an embodiment of love and affection and is kind, benevolent and just to friends, foes, relatives and strangers. Verily, he is a humanitarian in the true sense of the word. His sympathy for his fellow human beings is boundless. His kindness and compassion embrace even the animals".

Shaikh Sa'di died in Shiraz in 1292 and was buried in a suburb of that city. His mausoleum has ever since been the centre of pilgrimage of his countless admirers and devotees.

Since this book deals exclusively with Sa'di's *Golestan* and *Boostan*, I shall elaborate upon a few of his brilliant thoughts on various subjects in a topic-wise manner.

Shaikh Sa'di is a strong believer and proponent of the universal brotherhood of mankind and fervently propagates it. He denounces the indifference of man to the sufferings of his fellow human beings and considers such indifferent people to be grossly inhuman:

بنی آدم اعضای یکدیگرند
 که در آفرینش ز یک گوهرند
 چو عضوی به درد آورد روزگار
 دگر عضوها را نماند قرار
 توکز محنت دیگران بی غمی
 نشاید که نامت نهند آدمی

Human beings are like parts of a body (lit: limbs of one another), as they are created from the same substance. When the world causes pain to a single part, the other parts also cannot be at ease. You who are indifferent to the sufferings of others, do not deserve to be called a human being.

چو انسان را نباشد فضل و احسان
 چه فرق از آدمی تا نقش دیوار؟
 به دست آوردن دنیا هنر نیست
 یکی را گر توانی، دل بدست آر

If a man is devoid of excellence and benevolence, what is the difference between him and the painted figure on the wall? Acquiring worldly riches is not an accomplishment. Win over a single heart if you can.

The great Shaikh is basically a votary of peace and strongly advises the wisdom of pursuing peace in all spheres of life, as peace is the happy, natural state of man, and war is his corruption and disgrace. He vehemently criticises the enemies of peace and believes that man can achieve and gain much more through peace than by resorting to war. The five great enemies to peace which inhabit with us are avarice, ambition, envy, anger and pride. If these enemies were to be banished, we would infallibly enjoy perpetual peace. The following are some of the couplets which prove the great poet's concern for peace:

با مردم سهل خوی دشخوار مگوی
با آنکه در صلح زند جنگ مجوی

Speak not harshly to men of gentle manners; seek not hostility with one who knocks at the door of peace.

اگر پیل زوری و گر شیرچنگ
به نزدیک من، صلح بهتر که جنگ

Even if you have the strength of an elephant and the claws of a lion, in my opinion, peace is preferable to war.

به مردی که ملک سراسر زمین
نیرزد که خونی چکد بر زمین

I swear by manliness that all the kingdoms on earth are not worth conquering at the cost of a drop of blood being spilled in war.

Service to humanity is an essential prerequisite of devotion to God. Half of the misery of human life might be extinguished if men would alleviate the general curse they live under by mutual offices of compassion, benevolence and humanity. He who wishes to secure the good of others, has already secured his own:

طریقت به جز خدمت خلق نیست
به تسبیح و سجّاده و دلق نیست

Service to humanity is the true path of religion which leads to God. It is not the rosary, the prayer mat and the cassock. (These do not constitute devotion, as they are mere symbols).

The great poet recommends the obedience of the Almighty, citing the bounties that have been showered upon man by God. In return man should obey God and be grateful to Him for all His favours. Obedience to God is the most infallible evidence of sincere and supreme love for Him. From obedience and submission spring all other virtues, as all sin does from self-opinion and self-will:

ابر و باد و مه و خورشید و فلک در کارند
تا تو نانی به کف آری و به غفلت نخوری
همه از بهر تو سرگشته و فرمانبردار
شرط انصاف نباشد که تو فرمان نبری

The clouds, the wind, the moon, the sun and the heavenly sphere are all at work to enable you to earn your daily bread and not eat it carelessly (without thanking God). All of them are bewildered and are subservient to you. It will be unjust on your part to disobey Him.

The respected sage is a firm believer in the Islamic tenet of the Day of Judgement and accordingly reminds oppressors and tyrants

about the vanity of life and the certainty of accountability on the Day of Judgement. He advises them to always keep the Day of Judgement in view and frame every action and plan with a reference to its unchanging decisions:

به بازوان توانا و قوت سر دست
خطاست پنجه مسکین ناتوان بشکست
ز گوش پنبه برون آر و داد خلق بده
وگر تو می ندهی داد، روز دادی هست

It is a crime to break the hands of poor and helpless men with your powerful arms and overwhelming strength. Remove the cotton from your ears and render justice to people, for if you do not do so, remember there is a Day of Judgement (when you will be judged).

The honourable poet stresses upon the universality of compassion and treats the topic with due emphasis. He considers compassion to be the essence of humanity, as is evident from the following verses:

به روزگار سلامت، شکستگان دریاب
که خیر خاطر مسکین بلا بگرداند
چو سائل از تو به زاری طلب کند چیزی
بده، وگرنه ستمگر به زور بستاند

Help those who are in trouble when you are safe and secure, as assistance to the poor will prevent a calamity to you. If a mendicant pleads for alms, give it to him willingly. Otherwise, a tyrant will take it by force from you.

Beneficence is considered by Sa'di to be a virtue which must be cultivated, as the luxury of doing good surpasses every other personal enjoyment, and the consciousness of well doing is, in itself, ample reward:

عدو را به الطاف گردن ببند
 که نتوان بُریدن به تیغ این کمند
 چو دشمن کرم ببند و لطف و جود
 نیاید دگر خُبث از او در وجود

Win over your enemy with your beneficence, for such a favour cannot be undone (lit: such a lasso cannot be cut with a sword). When your enemy sees such liberality, kindness and magnanimity from you, he will never again show you any meanness.

The wise poet fearlessly advises the rulers to follow the path of justice and warns them that they will pay heavily for ignoring it. God's mill grinds slow but sure. God is Just, and finally justice triumphs. He who commits injustice is ever made more wretched than he who suffers it:

پریشانیِ خاطر دادخواه
 براندازد از مملکت پادشاه
 ستانندهٔ داد آنکس خداست
 که نتواند از پادشه داد خواست

The sufferings of one who seeks justice, will cost the king his throne. God exacts justice for a man who does not get justice from the king.

نَکُن تا توانی دل خلق ریش
و گر می‌کنی، می‌کنی بیخ خویش

Hurt not the hearts of men as far as possible, and if you do so, you are destroying your own roots

از آن بهره ورت‌ر در آفاق کیست؟
که در ملکرانی به انصاف زیست
چو نوبت رسد زین جهان غربتش
ترحم فرستند بر تربتش

Who is more fortunate throughout the world, than the ruler who has always abided by justice? When it is time for him to depart from the world, people will pray for God's compassion on his soul.

به قومی که نیکی پسندد خدای
دهد خسروی عادل و نیک رای
چو خواهد که ویران شود عالمی
کُند ملک در پنجه ظالمی

When God wills to be beneficent to a nation, He gives it a king who is just and sagacious. But when He wills to destroy the world, He places the country in a tyrant's clutches.

In addition to his constant advice to rulers to practise justice, the intrepid poet has the courage of his conviction to admonish the bad leaders. The index of judging a ruler is by the popularity he enjoys among his subjects:

ریاست به دست کسانی خطاست
که از دستشان دستها بر خداست

Leadership in the hands of those against whom people raise their hands to God for help, is disastrous.

الا تا به غفلت نخفتی که نوم
حرام است بر چشم سالار قوم
غم زبردستان بخور، زینهار
بترس از زبردستی روزگار

Sleep not negligently, as slumber is forbidden for a ruler. Beware! Share the sorrows of your subjects and dread the high-handedness of Fate.

Shaikh Sa'di abhors and detests oppressors and tyrants, and considers rebellion to tyrants as obedience to God. Tyrants and oppressors, when living, are the terror of mankind; but when dead, they are the objects of general contempt and scorn. Tyrants know no law but their own caprices. He therefore strongly advises them to practise benevolence and urges them to avoid causing harm to people:

نکند جور پیشه سلطانی
که نیاید زگرگ چوپانی
پادشاهی که طرح ظلم فکند
پای دیوارِ مُلکِ خویش بکند

A tyrant can never rule well over a kingdom, just as a wolf can never be a shepherd. The king who establishes an order of oppression, saps the foundation of his own kingdom.

نماند ستمکار بد روزگار
بماند بر او لعنتِ پایدار

The evil tyrant does not last long, but the curses of his victims last forever.

خبر داری از خسروان عجم
که کردند بر زبردستان ستم؟
نه آن شوکت و پادشایی بماند
نه آن ظلم بر روستایی بماند
خطا بین که بر دست ظالم برفت
جهان ماند و او با مظالم برفت

Do you know of the Persian kings who oppressed their weak subjects? Neither their splendour and kingship, nor their tyranny against the villagers, lasted. See the wrong committed by a tyrant. The world has remained, but the tyrant and his tyranny have both been obliterated.

He believes that happiness consists, not in possessing much, but in being content with what one possesses. The contented man is never poor; the discontented never rich. The following verses illustrate this philosophy:

نیم نانی گر خورد مرد خدا
بذل درویشان کند نیمی دگر
ملک اقلیمی بگیرد پادشا
همچنان در بند اقلیمی دگر

If a virtuous man eats half a loaf of bread, he gives the other half to a poor man. If a king acquires a kingdom, he is still obsessed with the thought of conquering another land.

قناعت کن ای نفس بر اندکی
 که سلطان و درویش بینی یکی
 چرا پیش خسرو به خواهش روی؟
 چو یکسو نهادی طمع، خسروی

O my soul! Be content with a little, so that you may see the sultan and the mendicant to be alike. Why should you approach the king with your solicitation? When you have put aside your greed, you are a king yourself.

خدا را ندانست و طاعت نکرد
 که بر بخت و روزی قناعت نکرد
 قناعت توانگر کند مرد را
 خبر کُن حریص جهانگرد را

He who has not been content with his fortune and daily bread, has neither known God nor been obedient to Him. Inform the avaricious man who explores the world (in pursuit of wealth) that contentment makes a man wealthy.

Gratitude to God makes even a temporal blessing a taste of heaven, and should be as habitual as the reception of mercies is constant, and as ardent as the number of mercies is great. The poet advises people to be grateful to God for favours received:

برو شکر کن چون به نعمت دری
که محرومی آید ز مُستکبری

Go, offer thanks if you enjoy affluence, for deprivation comes from arrogance.

The great philosopher also expresses gratitude to God for not having given him the power to oppress mankind, as is seen from the following verses:

من آن مورم که درپایم بمالند
نه زنبورم که از دستم بنالند
کجا خود شکر این نعمت گزارم؟
که زور مردم آزاری ندارم

I am the ant which men crush under their feet. I am not the wasp whose sting makes people cry out in pain. How can I express my gratitude to God for not giving me the power to oppress mankind?

چو بینی توانگر سر از کبر مست
برو شکر یزدان کن ای تنگدست
نداری بحمدالله آن دسترس
که برخیزد از دستت آزار کس

O poor man! When you see a wealthy man's head intoxicated by pride, go and express your gratitude to the Lord that, praise be to Allah, you do not have the power to harm anyone.

The great Shaikh strongly advises the pursuance of the path of truth, because the most natural beauty in the world is honesty and

moral truth, and the only atheism is falsehood and dishonesty:

گر راست سخن گویی و در بند بمانی
به زانکه دروغت دهد از بند رهایی

It is better to be in fetters for speaking the truth, than attaining release by telling a lie.

The poet has also highlighted the advantages of the rare quality of self-control:

نه مرد است آن به نزدیک خردمند
که با پیل دمان پیکار جوید
بلی مرد آن کس است از روی تحقیق
که چون خشم آیدش، باطل نگوید

Anyone who can battle a furious elephant is not a brave man in the opinion of a wise man. Truly, a brave man is he who controls himself when he is angry, and does not speak absurdly.

He attaches great importance to the subject of humility which is the root, mother, nurse, foundation and bond of all virtue:

ز خاک آفریدت خداوند پاک
پس ای بنده افتادگی کن چو خاک
حریص و جهانسوز و سرکش مباش
ز خاک آفریدنت، آتش مباش

God has created you from dust. O man! Therefore, be as humble as dust. Do not be greedy, evil and rebellious. You were created from dust. Therefore, do not be like fire.

His best known poem on humility is about a drop of rain water which was converted into a royal pearl because it displayed modesty:

یکی قطره باران ز ابری چکید
 خجل شد چو پهنای دریا بدید
 که جایی که دریاست، من کیستم؟
 گر او هست، حقاً که من نیستم!
 چو خود را به چشم حقارت بدید
 صدف در کنارش به جان پرورید
 سپهرش بجایی رسانید کار
 که شد نامور لوء لوء شاهوار
 بلندی از آن یافت کو پست شد
 در نیستی کوفت تا هست شد
 تواضع کند هوشمند گزین
 نهد شاخ پر میوه سر بر زمین

A drop of rain trickled from the clouds, and on seeing the ocean, it was embarrassed by the ocean's vastness and said, "What am I in comparison to the vast ocean? Truly, I do not exist when compared to the ocean". Since it regarded itself with contempt, a pearl-oyster nurtured it within its bosom. The heavenly sphere elevated it to such a status that it became an illustrious royal pearl. It attained greatness because it displayed humility. It knocked at the door of nothingness and consequently became worthy. An honourable wise man will always be

modest. A branch laden with fruits shall always touch the ground.

Generosity is a virtue about which Sa'di has written extensively in his *Golestan* and *Boostan*. He considers generosity as an essential part of fruitful life, and believes that men of the noblest dispositions consider themselves happiest when others share their happiness and wealth with them:

به بخشندگی کوش کآب روان
به سیلش مدد می رسد ز آسمان

Strive to be generous, for running water is supplemented by a flood of water from the sky.

زر و نعمت اکنون بده کان تست
که بعد از تو، بیرون ز فرمان تست

Donate now your wealth and bounties when they are yours, for after you pass away, they are not in your possession.

Shaikh Sa'di strongly recommends the path of moderation, as moderation is the silken string running through the pearl-chain of all virtues and is the inseparable companion of wisdom:

مگوی و منه تا توانی قدم
از اندازه بیرون وز اندازه کم
اگر تند باشی به یکبار و تیز
جهان از تو گیرند راه گریز

نه کوتاه دستی و بیچارگی
نه زجر و تطاول به یکبارگی

As long as possible, do not say a word or take a step beyond or short of the perfect measure. If you are completely harsh and severe, the world will take the path of avoiding you. Be neither meek and helpless, nor totally arrogant and harsh.

He constantly advises man on how to live graciously and fruitfully. He also reminds man about the certainty of death and the reaction of the people after a man's death:

چنان زی که ذکرت به تحسین کنند
چو مُردی، نه بر گور نفرین کنند

Live in such a manner that people will talk about you with admiration when you pass away, and not curse your grave when you are dead.

The wise poet has described the evil qualities of man at length. He discusses the demerits of possessing such vices and warns man against them. One of these evil qualities is miserliness. There is not in nature anything so remotely distant from God, or so extremely opposite to Him, as a greedy and griping niggard. A miser lives like a wretch so that he may die rich:

بخیل توانگر به دینار و سیم
طلسمیست بالای گنجی مقیم
از آن سالها می بماند زرش
که گردد طلسمی چنین بر سرش

به سنگ اجل ناگهش بشکنند
 به آسودگی گنج قسمت کنند
 پس از بُردن و گرد کردن چو مور
 بخور پیش از آن کت خورد کرمِ گور

A wealthy miser who possesses dinars and silver, is indeed a talisman who is perched over a treasure. His wealth lasts for many years because a talisman like him hovers around it. He will suddenly be smashed with the stone of death and his treasure shall then be comfortably distributed. Hence, after carrying and hoarding wealth like ants, consume it before the worms of the grave consume you.

Avarice is the root of all evil as it engenders injustice, and is so insatiable that it is not in the power of abundance to satisfy it. Poverty wants some things, luxury many, avarice all things:

دیده اهل طمع به نعمت دنیا
 پُر نشود، همچنان که چاه به شبنم

The eyes of an avaricious man cannot be filled by worldly riches, just as an empty well cannot be filled with dew drops.

Jealousy or envy has no other quality but that of detracting from virtue. The envious man is tormented not only by all the ill that befalls him, but by all the good that happens to another:

الا تا نخواهی بلا بر حسود
 که آن بخت برگشته خود در بلاست
 چه حاجت که با او کنی دشمنی؟
 که او را چنین دشمنی در قفاست

Do not wish ill for an envious man, as the unfortunate person is a calamity unto himself. What need is there for you to show enmity to him, who already has such an antagonist pursuing him?

Everyone is eagle-eyed to see another's faults and deformity. But one must endeavour to be always patient of the faults and imperfections of others; for one has many faults and imperfections of one's own that require forbearance. Sa'di vehemently attacks fault-finders and opposes such people explicitly:

مَنه عیب خلق ای فرومایه پیش
 که چشمت فرو دوزد از عیب خویش
 چو بد ناپسند آیدت، خود مکن
 پس آنگه به همسایه گو بد مکن

O worthless man! Do not enumerate the faults of others, lest your eyes may not see your own faults. Do not practise evil if it displeases you, and then ask your neighbour to desist from evil.

The respected poet has also vehemently attacked slanderers, as a slanderer inflicts wrong by calumniating the absent. The slanderer and the assassin differ only in the weapons they use. The former is worse than the latter, for the assassin only kills the body, while the slanderer murders reputation and peace:

به عذر و توبه توان رستن از عذاب خدای
 ولیک می نتوان از زبان مردم رست

One can obtain deliverance from the wrath of God by seeking His pardon and by means of repentance, but one cannot escape from the tongues of people (slanderers).

The great sage has highlighted the fact that even good virtues like beneficence, kindness and mercy cannot be showered on those who are evil and undeserving:

هر آنکس که بر دزد رحمت کند
به بازوی خود کاروان می زند

Whoever shows mercy to a highway robber, is in fact looting a caravan with his powerful arm.

نکویی و رحمت بجای خود است
ولی با بدان نیکمردی بد است

Goodness and clemency are ideal, but it is wrong to be benevolent to evil men.

The honourable poet is a firm believer in fate and destiny. We are but the instruments of heaven; our work is not design, but destiny. Death and life have their determined appointments. Nothing comes to pass but what God appoints. Our fate is decreed, and things do not happen by chance, but every man's portion of joy and sorrow is predetermined:

قضا کشتی آنجا که خواهد بَرَد
وگر ناخدا جامه بر تن دَرَد

Destiny carries the ship wherever it pleases, even if the navigator tears off his clothes from his body in desperation.

به روز اجل نیزه جوشن درَد
 ز پیراهن بی اجل نَگذرَد
 کرا تیغ قهر اجل در قفاست
 برهنست اگر جوشنش چند لاست

On the day when death is destined, the spear will penetrate one's armour, but will not even pass through the garment of one who is not destined to die. He who is being pursued by the sword of death's wrath, is naked even if his armour is multi-layered.

چو نتوان بر افلاک دست آختن
 ضروریست با گردشش ساختن

Since we cannot grapple with the heavens, it is necessary for us to put up with their vicissitudes.

به بد بختی و نیکبختی قلم
 بگردید و ما همچنان در شکم

Ill-fortune and good fortune have both been written for us when we were still in the womb.

Shaikh Sa'di has laid great emphasis on the importance of companionship, because good company and good discourse are the very sinews of virtue. He rightly believes that a good companion can make or break a person. He has composed several verses on the subject of companionship, among which the following tale is the most popular:

گلی خوشبوی در حمام روزی
 رسید از دست محبوبی به دستم
 بدو گفتم که مشکی یا عبیری؟
 که از بوی دلاویز تومستم
 بگفتا من گلی ناچیز بودم
 و لیکن مدتی با گل نشستم
 کمال همنشین در من اثر کرد
 وگرنه من همان خاکم که هستم

I once received some fragrant mud from a dear friend in the public bath. I said to it, "Are you musk or ambergris, as I am intoxicated by your fragrance?" It replied, "I was some worthless mud, but was in the company of a rose for some time. It is the perfection of my associate that has influenced me. Otherwise, I am the same ordinary mud which I was before."

In poverty and other misfortunes of life, true friends are a sure refuge, and a true friend is more prompt to go to a friend in adversity than in prosperity. Shaikh Sa'di believes that a friend in need is a friend indeed, and therefore advises men to shun the company of fair-weather friends:

دوست مشمار آنکه در نعمت زند
 لاف یاری و برادر خواندگی
 دوست آن دانم که گیرد دست دوست
 در پریشان حالی و درماندگی

Do not consider him to be a friend, who boasts of friendship and brotherly love when you are prosperous. I consider him to be a true

friend, who assists his friend when he is needy and in adversity.

The pious adviser reveals a soft heart with respect to orphans as he had himself lost his father at a very early age. He constantly reminds people about the need to nurture orphans and look after their interests:

چو بینی یتیمی سرافکنده پیش
 مده بوسه بر روی فرزند خویش
 یتیم ار بگرید، که نازش خرد؟
 وگر خشم گیرد، که بارش برد؟
 الا تا نگرید، که عرش عظیم
 بلرزد همی چون بگرید یتیم
 به رحمت بکن آبش از دیده پاک
 به شفقت بیفشانش از چهره خاک

Whenever you see an orphan with his head cast down, do not kiss your child's face in his presence. Who will ever show affection to an orphan when he weeps? Who will ever show sympathy to him and carry his load when he is upset? Beware that he does not cry, because the Throne of Almighty God trembles when an orphan sobs. Wipe the tears from his eyes with compassion and cleanse the dust from his face with kindness.

The benevolent sage has shown the way to success in life by giving counsel to all sections of society. He reminds parents of their paternal duties and exhorts them to educate and train their children:

چو خواهی که نامت بماند بجای
 پسر را خردمندی آموز و رای

خردمند و پرهیزگارش برآر
گوش دوست داری، به نازش مدار

If you want your name to remain eternal, teach your son wisdom and good judgement. Train him to be wise and abstinent, and do not pamper him if you truly love him.

You cannot repent too soon, because you do not know how soon it may be too late. Of all acts of man, repentance is the most divine, and true repentance is to cease from sinning. Sa'di is a God-fearing man. His belief in God is very strong and unshakeable. He advises people to seek timely repentance and ask God for forgiveness:

کنونت که چشم است، اشکی بیار
زبان در دهان است، عذری بیار
نه پیوسته باشد روان در بدن
نه همواره گردد زبان در دهن
کنون بایدت عذر تقصیر گفت
نه چون نفسِ ناطق ز گفتن بخفت

Shed tears now that you still possess eyes, and seek pardon while you yet have a tongue in your mouth. The soul will not always remain in the body; the tongue will not always revolve in the mouth. Now is the time for you to seek pardon for your faults, and not when the judicious spirit is overwhelmed by sleep, and is unable to speak any more.

The poet's impeccable faith in God has produced some of his best verses in the form of supplication or fervent prayer which constitutes the last chapter of his *Boostan*. Prayer is a sincere, sensible and affectionate pouring out of the soul to God, and a holy, humble,

penitent, earnest and persevering prayer of a suppliant is never lost:

خدایا به عزّت که خوآرم مکن
 به ذلّ گنه شرمسارم مکن
 مرا شرمساری ز روی تو بس
 دگر شرمسارم مکن پیش کس

O God! By Your Glory! Do not degrade me, and do not humiliate me with the disgrace of sin. Being put to shame before You is sufficient for me. So do not humiliate me before others.

نگویم بزرگی و جاهم ببخش
 فروماندگی و گناهم ببخش
 کس از من سیه نامه تر دیده نیست
 که هیچم فعال پسندیده نیست
 جز این کاعتماد به یاری تست
 امیدم به آمرزگاری تست
 بضاعت نیاوردم الا امید
 خدایا ز عفوّم مکن ناامید

I do not ask You to give me position and status, but implore You to forgive my failures and sins. Nobody has seen a blacker record than mine, as I have no virtuous deeds to offer. All I have is only confidence in Your assistance and faith in Your forgiveness. I have brought with me no provisions but hope. O God! Do not disappoint me by not pardoning me.

گلچینی از اشعار گلستان

GOLESTAN

(Selected Verses)



مُرَاد مَا نَصِيحَت بُوَد وَ كَفْتِيْم
حُوَالَت بَا خَدَا كَرْدِيْم وَ رَفْتِيْم

Our intention was to advise, and we have done so. We have entrusted you to God's care, and departed.

ABILITY

ندهد هوشمند روشن رای
به فرومایه کارهای خطیر
بوریا باف اگر چه بافنده است
نبرندش به کارگاه حریر

A wise and enlightened man does not entrust a person of mean abilities with important tasks. Although a mat-maker is a weaver, he is not employed in a silk-weaving workshop.

ABSTINENCE

حذر کن ز درد درونهای ریش
که ریش درون عاقبت سر گُند
بهم برمکن تا توانی دلی
که آهی جهانی بهم برگند

Beware of the pain in wounded hearts, as the internal sores will ultimately surface. As far as possible, avoid hurting anyone, as his sighs can ruin the entire world.

سخنی در نهان نباید گفت
که بر انجمن شاید گفت

One should not say something in private, which one dare not say in public.

ADVICE

گفت عالم به گوش جان بشنو
ورنماند به گفتنش کردار

باطل است آنچه مدعی گوید
خفته را خفته کی کند بیدار
مرد باید که گیرد اندر گوش
ور نوشته است پند بر دیوار

Heed the advice of a learned man, although he does not practise what he preaches. It is wrong for a claimant to say, "How can he who is asleep, awaken others?" A man should benefit from an advice even if it is written on a wall.

سنگی به چند سال شود لعل پاره ای
زنهار تا به یک نفسش نشکنی به سنگ

A stone takes ages to be converted into a ruby. Beware that you do not break it in a moment with a stone.

گرچه دانی که نشنوند، بگوی
هرچه دانی ز نیکخواهی و پند
زود باشد که خیره سر بینی
به دو پای اوفتاده اندر بند
دست بر دست می زند که دریغ
نشنیدم حدیث دانشمند

Although you are certain that people will not listen to you, say whatever you consider to be advisable and in their interest. You will soon see how the obstinate one who has not listened to you will have his feet caught in a trap. He smites his hand and exclaims, "Alas! I did not heed the advice of the wise man".

ما نصیحت به جای خود کردیم
روزگاری در این بسر بردیم
گر نیاید به گوش رغبت کس
بر رسولان پیام باشد و بس

We have offered our advice in its propriety and spent a lifetime in doing so. A messenger is only obliged to convey the message, even if it is not carefully heeded by those advised.

ندانستی که بینی بند بر پای
چو در گوشت نیامد پند مردم
دگر ره چون نداری طاقت نیش
مکن انگشت در سوراخ کژدم

Did you not know that you would see your feet in chains, since you did not heed the advice of wise men? Alternately, if you cannot bear the pain of a sting, do not put your finger into the scorpion's hole.

AFFECTION

نه آنچنان به تو مشغولم ای بهشتی روی
که یاد خویشتم در ضمیر می آید
ز دیدنت نتوانم که دیده در بندم
وگر مُقابله بینم که تیر می آید

O heavenly-faced one! I am so obsessed with your love, that I cannot devote any thought to myself. I cannot prevent my eyes from beholding you, even if I see an arrow coming at me.

AIDING AND ABETTING

خبیث را چو تعهد کُنی و بنوازی
به دولت تو گُنه می کُند به انبازی

If you support and patronise a malicious person, he will commit crimes with your power and shall make you a partner in his misdeeds.

ALERTNESS

برو با دوستان آسوده بنشین
چو بینی در میان دشمنان جنگ
و گر بینی که با هم یک زبانند
کمان را زه کُن و بر باره بر سنگ

When you see a conflict among your enemies, rest at ease with your friends. But if you find them to be united, string your bow and place stones on your fortifications.

ANGER

به تندی سبک دست بردن به تیغ
به دندان برد پشت دست دریغ

He who swiftly draws his sword in anger, will bite the back of his hand in regret.

ANXIETY

خداوندان کام و نیک بختی
چرا سختی خورند از بیم سختی؟
برو شادی کن ای یار دل افروز
غم فردا نشاید خورد امروز

Why should the fortunate and prosperous people fear hardship by anticipating it? O my enchanting friend! Go and enjoy yourself today, for it is improper to suffer today the anxieties of tomorrow.

APPEARANCES

هر کرا جامه پارسا بینی
پارسا دان و نیک مرد انگار
ور ندانی که در نهانش چیست
مُحتسب را درون خانه چه کار

Consider the one you see in a pious man's garb, to be pious and upright. And if you do not know what is in his mind, a vigilante has nothing to do with what transpires inside a private home.

ARMY

چو دارند گنج از سپاهی دریغ
دریغ آیدش دست بردن به تیغ

The troops whose wages are withheld, will be unwilling to use their swords in battle.

زر بده مرد سپاهی را تا سر بنهد
وگرش زر ندهی، سر بنهد در عالم

Pay the soldier well so that he may give his life for you. If you do not pay him well, he will abandon you and go elsewhere.

همان به که لشکر به جان پروری
که سلطان به لشکر کند سروری

It is advisable to nurture the army with your heart, as a king derives his leadership from his army.

ASSISTANCE

تا توانی درون کس مخراش
کاندرین راه خارها باشد
کار درویش مُستمند برآر
که تو را نیز کارها باشد

As far as possible, avoid tormenting anyone, as such a path is full of thorns. Assist the mendicant in need, as you are also in need of assistance from others.

ATTACHMENT

نباید بستن اندر چیز و کس دل
که دل برداشتن کاریست مشکل

One should not become attached to anything and anyone, as it is very difficult to detach oneself from them.

AVARICE

وه که گر مُرده باز گردیدی
به میان قبیلَه و پیوند
ردّ میراث سخت تر بودی
وارثان را ز مرگ خویشاوند

Alas! If a dead man were to return to his tribe and relatives, his heirs would suffer greater grief for having to restore to him his estate, than the earlier sorrow of his death.

مسکین حریص در همه عالم همی رود
او در قفای رزق و اجل در قفای او

An avaricious poor man explores the entire world in pursuit of his daily bread, whilst death is in pursuit of him.

آن شنیدستی که در اقصای غور
بارسالاری بیفتاد از ستور
گفت: چشم تنگ دنیا دوست را
یا قناعت پر کند، یا خاک گور

Have you heard that in the remotest region of Ghoor, the owner of some merchandise fell off his horse, upon which he exclaimed, "The avaricious eyes of a materialist can either be satisfied by contentment or filled by the dust of the grave."

بدوزد شره دیده هوشمند
درآرد طمع مرغ و ماهی به بند

Avarice sews up the eyes of the wise; greed causes the birds and fish to fall into the net.

روده تنگ به یک نان تهی پر گردد
نعمت روی زمین پر نکند دیده تنگ

The narrow intestine becomes full with a loaf of plain bread, but the narrow eyes of avarice cannot be filled with all the bounties of the earth.

ای طببل بلند بانگ در باطن هیچ
بی توشه چه تدبیر کنی وقت بسیج؟
روی طمع از خلق بیچ، ار مردی
تسبیح هزار دانه بر دست مپیچ

O hollow drum which makes a loud sound! Without provisions, what preparations can you plan? If you are truly a virtuous man, rid

yourself of your greed from people, instead of turning in your hand a rosary containing a thousand beads.

دیده اهل طمع به نعمت دنیا
پُر نشود، همچنان که چاه به شبنم

The eyes of an avaricious man cannot be filled by worldly riches, just as an empty well cannot be filled with dew drops.

BACKBITING

بزرگش نخوانند اهل خرد
که نام بزرگان به زشتی برد

Wise men will never consider a person to be noble, if he speaks ill of great men.

BEAUTY

شاهد آنجا که رود حرمت و عزت بیند
ور برانند به قهرش پدر و مادر و خویش
پر طاووس در اوراق مصاحف دیدم
گفتم: این منزلت از قدر تو می بینم بیش
گفت: خاموش که هر کس که جمالی دارد
هر کجا پای نهد، دست ندارندش پیش

A handsome person is honoured and respected wherever he goes, even if he is driven out by his parents and relatives. I saw a peacock feather in the leaves of the Qur'an. I said to it, "I consider this to be an honour beyond your worth." It replied, "Be silent, as one who has beauty is welcomed wherever one goes".

از این مه‌پارهٔ عابد فریبی
 ملایک صورتی، طاووس زیبی
 که بعد از دیدنش صورت نبندد
 وجود پارسایان را شکیبی

A beautiful moon-faced maiden, capable of enticing a pious devotee, whose angel-like appearance was as lovely as a peacock. On beholding her, the most pious would be overwhelmed by her charm and lose their steadfastness.

کاش کآنان که عیب من جستند
 رویت ای دلستان بدیدندی
 تا به جای تُرنج در نظرت
 بی خبر دستها بریدندی

O beloved! I wish that those who find fault with me had first seen your face, so that they would have inadvertently cut their hands instead of the citrons, on beholding your beauty.

Note: The reference is to Zulekha's companions who taunted her for having lost her heart to Prophet Joseph, and having thereby disgraced herself. She resorted to the following ruse to justify her infatuation with Joseph. Holy Qur'an, Chapter 12 - Yusuf (Joseph), Verse 31: "And when she heard of their sly talk, she sent for them and prepared for them a cushioned couch (to lie on at the feast) and gave to every one of them a knife and said (to Joseph): Come out unto them! And when they saw him, they exalted him and cut their hands, exclaiming: Allah Blameless! This is not a human being. This is no other than some gracious angel!"

با تو مرا سوختن اندر عذاب
 به که شدن با دگری در بهشت

بوی پیاز از دهن خوب‌روی
نغزتر آید که گل از دست زشت

Burning in fire with you and suffering, is better than going to Heaven with another. The odour of onions from the mouth of a beautiful person is more pleasant than accepting a rose from an ugly one.

مگر ملائکه بر آسمان، و گر نه بشر
به حُسن صورت او در زمین نخواهد بود
به دوستی که حرام است بعد از او صحبت
که هیچ نطفه چنو آدمی نخواهد بود

Perhaps she was an angel from Heaven, for no mortal on earth could be so beautiful. I swear by friendship, I shall not befriend anybody hereafter, as no mortal can ever be like her.

دوستان! گو نصیحتم مکنید
که مرا دیده بر ارادت اوست
جنگجویان به زور پنجه و کتف
دشمنان را کُشند، خوبان دوست

O friends! Do not advise me, as I am totally devoted to her. Warriors kill their enemies with their powerful hands and shoulders, whereas the graceful ones kill their admirers with their beauty.

BEGGARY

گر گدا پیشرو لشکر اسلام بود
کافر از بیم توقّع برود تا در چین

If a beggar were to lead an Islamic army, the unbelievers would flee to China, fearing his importunity.

BELOVED

معلّمت همه شوخی و دلبری آموخت
جفا و ناز و عتاب و ستمگری آموخت
من آدمی به چنین شکل و خوی و قدّ و روش
ندیده ام، مگر این شیوه از پری آموخت

Your teacher has taught you charm and seduction as well as cruelty, coyness, reprehension and oppression. I have never seen a mortal who has such a face, nature, stature and manners. Perhaps she has learnt such coquetry from a fairy.

یار دیرین مرا گو به زبان توبه مده
که مرا توبه به شمشیر نخواهد بودن
رَشکم آید که کسی سیر نگه در تو کند
بازگویم نه، که کس سیر نخواهد بودن

Tell my old-time beloved not to ask me to repent, as I cannot vow to relinquish her even at sword point. I envy anyone who sees you to derive complete satisfaction (from your beauty). Then again I reassure myself, saying that it is impossible for anybody to be fully satisfied by seeing you.

هر که بی او بسر نشاید برد
گر جفایی گُند، ببايد برد
نکند دوست زینهار از دوست
دل نهادم بر آنچه خاطر اوست

گر به لطفم به نزد خود خواند
ور به قهرم براند، او داند

If one, without whom you cannot live, should treat you unkindly, you must patiently bear it. A lover cannot refrain from loving his beloved. I have surrendered my heart to my beloved. It is for her to decide whether to accept me kindly or reject me angrily.

نگار من چو درآید به خنده نمکین
نمک زیاده کند بر جراحت ریشان
چه بودی ار سر زلفش به دستم افتادی
چو آستین کریمان به دست درویشان

When my sweetheart appears with her salty smile, she adds salt to the wounds of her admirers. How fortunate would I be if I could hold her tresses with my hands, like the sleeves of generous men, which are grasped by (importunate) mendicants.

BENEVOLENCE

حاصل نشود رضای سلطان
تا خاطر بندگان نجویی
خواهی که خدای بر تو بخشد
با خلقِ خدای کن نکویی

You cannot gain the monarch's assent if you do not win over the hearts of his subjects. If you desire God to be merciful to you, be benevolent to His creatures.

سرهنگ لطیف خوی دلدار
بهتر ز فقیه مردم آزار

A military officer who is kind and benevolent is better than an oppressive jurist.

BETRAYAL

شنیدم گوسپندی را بزرگی
رهانید از دهان و دست گرگی
شبانگه کارد در حلقش بمالید
روان گوسپند از وی بنالید
که از چنگال گرگم در بودی
چو دیدم، عاقبت گرگم تو بودی

I have heard that a great man saved a sheep from the mouth and clutches of a wolf. At night, he applied a knife to its throat to slaughter it. The sheep lamented and cried out to him, "You saved me from the clutches of the wolf, but now I realize that ultimately you are the wolf to me".

BRIBERY

قاضی چو به رشوت خورد پنج خیار
ثابت کند از بهر تو ده خربزه زار

A judge who accepts five cucumbers as bribe from you, will pass a judgement that you are the owner of ten fields of musk-melons.

CARNAL DESIRE

فرشته خوی شود آدمی به کم خوردن
وگر خورد چو بهایم، بیوفتد چو جماد
مُراد هر که بر آری، مطیع امر تو گشت
خلافِ نفس، که فرمان دهد چو یافت مُراد

A man gains the nature of an angel by eating less, but if he eats like animals, he will degrade himself and become an inanimate object. The one whose desire you gratify, will become an obedient slave to you, but if you gratify your lust, it will become your master.

CAUTION

نرود مرغ سوی دانه فراز
چون دگر مرغ بیند اندر بند
پند گیر از مصائب دگران
تا نگیرند دیگران ز تو پند

A bird does not go in the direction of the scattered seeds when it sees another bird caught in the snare. Draw a lesson from the miseries of others, so that others may not take an example from you.

CHARITY

نیک و بد چون همی ببايد مُرد
خنک آن کس که گوی نیکی بُرد
برگ عیشی به گور خویش فرست
کس نیارد ز پس، تو پیش فرست

Since the good and the bad have both to die, happy is he who has been virtuous (lit: carried the ball of goodness). Make provisions for life hereafter, since nobody will send it for you after your death. Send it in advance.

نماند حاتم طایی ولیک تا به ابد
بماند نام بلندش به نیکویی مشهور
زکات مال به در کُن که فضله رز را
چو باغبان بزند، بیشتر دهد انگور

Hatam Tai is long dead, but his exalted name has been immortalised because of his goodness. Be charitable and pay the *zakat* (poor-dues) of your wealth, for it is only when the gardener cuts the superfluous branches of the grape-vine, that it produces more grapes.

Note: Zakat is the prescribed poor-rate. The rank of the ordinance about its payment is immediately after that of the prescribed prayer in Islam.

CHEERFULNESS

اگر حنظل خوری از دست خوشخوی
به از شیرینی از دست تُرُشروی

Eating colocynth from the hand of a good-natured man is preferable to sweetmeat from the hand of a sourpuss.

مبر حاجت به نزدیک تُرُشروی
که از خوی بدش فرسوده گردی
اگر گویی غم دل با کسی گوی
که از رویش به نقد آسوده گردی

Never approach a sourpuss with a request for help, as you will be distressed by his ill nature. If you wish to reveal your heart's sorrow, let it be to one whose pleasant countenance will provide you instant relief.

ز بخت روی تُرُش کرده پیش یار عزیز
مرو، که عیش بر او نیز تلخ گردانی
به حاجتی که روی تازه روی و خندان رو
فرو نبندد کار گُشاده پیشانی

Do not approach a dear friend when you are upset and in adversity, as this will also embitter his joy. When you are in need of

something, put on a lively and smiling appearance, as one who maintains a cheerful countenance never fails.

COINCIDENCE

گه بود کز حکیم روشن رای
بر نیاید درست تدبیری
گاه باشد که کودکی نادان
به غلط بر هدف زند تیری

At times, the counsel of a prudent sage may not prove beneficial, whereas at times, an ignorant child may hit the target with an arrow.

COMMUNION

چو هر ساعت از تو به جایی رود دل
به تنهایی اندر، صفایی نبینی
ورت جاه و مال است و زرع و تجارت
چو دل با خدایست، خلوت نشینی

Since your heart is constantly wandering from place to place, you cannot experience serenity in solitude. But if your heart is with God, you are a pious recluse, even though you possess status, riches, farms and merchandise.

COMPANIONSHIP

با بدان یارگشت همسر لوط
خاندان نبوتش گم شد
سگ اصحاب کهف، روزی چند
پی نیکان گرفت و مردم شد

Prophet Lot's wife befriended immoral men and consequently his posterity lost the status of prophethood. The dog of the Companions of the Cave followed virtuous men for a few days and became like a human being.

Note: The reference is to Lot's wife who was immoral, as she associated with evil men. It also refers to the virtuous men who sought refuge in a cave and the dog which followed them. Holy Qur'an, Chapter 18 - Kahf (The Cave), Verse 10: "When the young men fled for refuge to the cave and said: Our Lord! give us mercy from Thy presence, and shape for us right conduct in our plight".

Verse 18: "And thou wouldst have deemed them waking though they were asleep, and We caused them to turn over to the right and the left, and their dog stretching out his paws on the threshold "

به یک ناتراشیده در مجلسی
برنجد دل هوشمندان بسی
اگر برکه ای پرکنند از گلاب
سگی در وی افتد، کند منجلاب

The presence of an uncouth man in an assembly hurts the feelings of men of intelligence. If a pool is filled with rose water and a dog falls in it, the pool would get contaminated (and the water will be unusable).

نه عجب گر فرو رود نفسش
عندلیبی، غراب هم قفسش

It is no wonder if a nightingale stops singing when a crow is in the same cage with it.

گلی خوشبوی در حمام روزی
 رسید از دست محبوبی به دستم
 بدو گفتم که مشکى یا عبیری؟
 که از بوی دلاویز تومستم
 بگفتا من گلی ناچیز بودم
 و لیکن مدتی با گل نشستم
 کمال همنشین درمن اثر کرد
 و گرنه من همان خاکم که هستم

I once received some fragrant mud from a dear friend in the public bath. I said to it, "Are you musk or ambergris, as I am intoxicated by your fragrance?" It replied, "I was some worthless mud, but was in the company of a rose for some time. It is the perfection of my associate that has influenced me. Otherwise, I am the same ordinary mud which I was before."

گر نشیند فرشته ای با دیو
 وحشت آموزد و خیانت و ریو
 از بدان نیکویی نیاموزی
 نکند گرگ پوستین دوزی

If an angel associates with a demon, he will learn terror, treachery and deceit. You cannot learn goodness from the wicked; the wolf cannot be a tailor of fur cloaks.

جامه کعبه را که می بوسند
 او نه از کرم پيله نامی شد

با عزیزی نشست روزی چند
لاجرم، همچو او گرامی شد

The cover of the House of God which is kissed by people, is not honoured because it is made from silk. The cover was in the company of the venerable House for some days and consequently became honourable like it.

ز خود بهتری جوی و فرصت شمار
که با چون خودی، گم کنی روزگار

Seek someone better than yourself for company and avail yourself of such an opportunity, because in the company of people like yourself, you will waste your life in vain pursuits.

رقم بر خود به نادانی کشیدی
که نادان را به صحبت برگزیدی
طلب کردم ز دانایی یکی پند
مرا فرمود: با نادان مپیوند
که گر دانای دهری، خر بباشی
وگر نادانی، ابله تر بباشی

You have disgraced yourself as an ignoramus by selecting an ignorant man as your associate. I asked a prudent man to give me an advice. He said to me, "Do not associate with the ignorant, as you will become an ass even if you are the most intelligent man on earth; and if you are already ignorant, you will become even more stupid.

پارسا را بس این قدر زندان
که بود هم طویله زندان

It is adequate imprisonment for a pious man, if he is compelled to live in the company of profligates (lit: to be with profligates in the same stable).

همی گریختم از مردمان به کوه و به دشت
که از خدای نبودم به آدمی پرداخت
قیاس کُن که چه حالم بود در این ساعت
که در طویله نامردمم ببايد ساخت

I fled from people to the mountains and deserts to avoid mankind and devote myself to God. Just imagine what my state can now be, that I am compelled to suffer in this stable the company of wretched men (who are worse than beasts).

COMPARISON

عالم اندر میان جاهل را
مثلی گفته اند صدیقان
شاهدی در میان کوران است
مصحفی در سرای زندیقان

A learned man in the company of ignorant men has been compared by pious men to a beautiful maiden in the company of blind men, and to the Holy Quran in the house of infidels.

COMPASSION

به روزگار سلامت، شکستگان دریاب
که خیر خاطر مسکین بلا بگرداند
چوسائل از تو به زاری طلب کند چیزی
بده، وگرنه ستمگر به زور بستاند

Help those who are in trouble when you are safe and secure, as assistance to the poor will prevent a calamity to you. If a mendicant pleads for alms, give it to him willingly. Otherwise, a tyrant will take it by force from you.

زنبور درشت و بی مروت را گوی
باری چو عسل نمی دهی نیش مزن

Tell the big bee, which is devoid of compassion, "If you cannot give honey, at least do not sting."

همچنان در فکر آن بیتم که گفت
پیل بانی بر لب دریای نیل
زیر پایت گر ندانی حال مور
همچو حال تست زیر پای پیل

I constantly recollect the couplet which an elephant rider was reciting on the banks of the river Nile: "If you are ignorant of the plight of an ant under your foot, know that it is similar to your own plight under the foot of an elephant".

CONCEIT

نبیند مدعی جز خویشان را
که دارد پرده پندار در پیش
گرت چشم خدا بینی ببخشند
نبینی هیچ کس عاجزتر از خویش

A pretender is only concerned with himself, as the veil of conceit obstructs his view. If you were to be granted all-discerning eyes, you would realize that nobody is more helpless than yourself.

مشو غره بر حسن گفتار خویش
به تحسین نادان و پندارِ خویش

Do not be proud of the excellence of your discourse, by the praise of an ignorant man or on the basis of your own judgement.

خویشتن را بزرگ پنداری
راست گفتند: یک، دو بیند لوچ

You consider yourself to be great. It has been truly said that a squint sees everything double.

CONTENTMENT

نیم نانی گر خورد مرد خدا
بذل درویشان کند نیمی دگر
ملک اقلیمی بگیرد پادشا
همچنان در بند اقلیمی دگر

If a virtuous man eats half a loaf of bread, he gives the other half to a poor man. If a king acquires a kingdom, he is still obsessed with the thought of conquering another land.

عمر گرانمایه در این صرف شد
تا چه خورم صیف و چه پوشم شتا؟
ای شکم خیره، به نانی بساز
تا نکنی پشت به خدمت دوتا

Precious life was spent in pondering over what I should eat in summer and wear in winter. O impudent belly! Be content with a loaf of bread, so that you may not have to bend yourself in obedience to others.

مطلب گر توانگری خواهی
جز قناعت که دولت‌یست هنی
کز بزرگان شنیده ام بسیار
صبر درویش به که بذل غنی

Seek only contentment if you desire riches, for there is no wealth greater than contentment. I have often heard great men say that the patience of a mendicant is better than the generosity of a wealthy man.

همای بر همه مرغان از آن شرف دارد
که استخوان خورد و جانور نیازارد

The phoenix enjoys greater honour than other birds, as it is content with eating bones and does not harm other living creatures.

گهن خرقه خویش پیراستن
به از جامه عاریت خواستن

It is better to wear one's own old patched gown than to borrow another's (new) garment.

ای قناعت! توانگرم گردان
که ورای تو هیچ نعمت نیست
کنج صبر اختیار لقمان است
هر کرا صبر نیست، حکمت نیست

O contentment! Make me rich, for there is no wealth other than you. Luqman opted for the nook of patience. Whoever has no patience, has no wisdom.

Note: Chapter 31 of Holy Qur'an is named after Luqman who was blessed with abundant wisdom. He was also known for his patience.

CONVERSATION

مجال سخن تا نبینی ز پیش
به بیهوده گفتن، مبر قدر خویش

Speak not until the time is opportune. Do not lose your dignity by talking without sense.

مزن تا توانی به گفتار دم
نکوگوی، گر دیر گویی چه غم؟
بیندیش، وانگه برآور نفس
وزان پیش بس کن که گویند بس
به نطق آدمی بهتر است از دواب
دواب از تو به، گرنگویی صواب

Do not speak as far as possible and speak well. What does it matter if you ponder and speak? Think and then only speak, and stop yourself before people ask you to do so. Human beings are superior to beasts because of their power of speech, but beasts are better than you if what you speak is improper.

CORRUPTION

زاهد که درم گرفت و دینار
زاهدتر از او کسی به دست آر

If an ascetic accepts dirhams and dinars, you must seek someone more pious than him.

Note: An ascetic who accepts money is corrupt and does not command any respect.

COUNSEL

هر که شاه آن کُند که او گوید
حیف باشد که جز نکو گوید

It will be a pity if he who is a counsellor to the king, advises him incorrectly.

CRITICISM

همه حمّال عیب خویشتید
طعنه بر عیب دیگران مزنید
هر که او عیب خویشان بیند
طعنه بر عیب دیگران نکند

All of you are bearers of your own defects. Do not taunt others for their faults. Whoever acknowledges his own faults, will not taunt others for their drawbacks.

CRUELTY

زورمندی مکن بر اهل زمین
تا دعایی بر آسمان نرود

Do not be cruel to people, so that their curses may not ascend to the heavens.

DAILY BREAD

رزق اگر چند بی گمان برسد
شرط عقل است جستن از درها
ور چه کس بی اجل نخواهد مرد
تو مرو در دهان از درها

Although we are destined to secure our daily bread, yet reason demands that we should endeavour to seek it by all means. Although nobody can die before his death is destined, you should not enter the dragon's mouth.

فراموشت نکرد ایزد در آن حال
 که بودی نطفهٔ مدفون مدهوش
 روانت داد و طبع و عقل و ادراک
 جمال و نطق و رای و فکرت و هوش
 ده انگشتت مرتب کرد بر کف
 دو بازویت مرکب ساخت بر دوش
 کنون پنداری ای ناچیز همت
 که خواهد کردنت روزی فراموش؟

God did not forget you when you were an entombed and unconscious embryo (in your mother's womb). He bestowed on you a soul, temperament, reason and perception, as well as beauty, speech, judgement, reflection and consciousness. He decorated your palms with ten fingers and perfected your shoulders with two arms. O worthless wretch! Do you now imagine that He will forget to provide you with your daily bread?

اگر دانش به روزی در فزودی
 ز نادان تنگ روزی تر نبودی
 به نادانان چنان روزی رساند
 که دانا اندر آن عاجز بماند

If knowledge could be the cause of increasing the daily bread of people, the ignorant would be most deprived of sustenance. The wise are confounded by the manner in which God provides daily bread to the ignorant ones.

DAY OF JUDGEMENT

به بازوان توانا و قوت سر دست
خطاست پنجه مسکین ناتوان بشکست
ز گوش پنبه برون آر و داد خلق بده
وگر تو می ندهی داد، روز دادی هست

It is a crime to break the hands of poor and helpless men with your powerful arms and overwhelming strength. Remove the cotton from your ears and render justice to people, for if you do not do so, remember there is a Day of Judgement (when you will be judged).

Note: The Day of Judgement or Retribution is the Day when men will be judged by God for their deeds and misdeeds. Firm belief in the Day of Judgement is one of the basic tenets of Islam.

DEATH

اگر بمرد عدو جای شادمانی نیست
که زندگانی ما نیز جاودانی نیست

There is no reason for me to rejoice over my enemy's death, as my own life is also not eternal.

Note: This is what King Noshirwan said when he was informed about the death of his enemy.

وه که هرگه که سبزه در بستان
بدمیدی، چه خوش شدی دل من
بگذر ای دوست تا به وقت بهار
سبزه بینی دمیده بر گل من

Ah! How happy does my heart become whenever the garden is bedecked by greenery in spring. O friend! Wait for another season of spring to come, when you will behold greenery growing from my grave.

اگر کشورگشای کامران است
وگر درویش حاجتمند نان است
در آن ساعت که خواهند این و آن مرد
نخواهند از جهان بیش از کفن برد
چو رخت از مملکت بر بست خواهی
گدایی بهتر است از پادشاهی

Whether a successful conqueror, or a mendicant who is in need of bread, both cannot take with them anything except their shrouds when they die. As you have to depart from the world, the plight of the beggar is better than that of the monarch.

ندیده ای که چه سختی همی رسد به کسی
که از دهانش بدر می کنند دندانی
قیاس کن که چه حالت بود در آن ساعت
که از وجود عزیزش به در رود جانی

Have you not observed how much pain a person suffers when they extract a tooth from his mouth? Just imagine what will be his state at that hour when his soul departs from his precious body.

یکی امروز کامران بینی
دیگری را دل از مُجاهده ریش
روزکی چند باش تا بخورد
خاک، مغز سرخیال اندیش

فرق شاهی و بندگی برخاست
چون قضای نبشته آمد پیش
گر کسی خاک مرده باز کند
ننماید توانگر و درویش

Today, you will find someone successful and another who is frustrated (lit: heart is wounded by labour). Wait for some days to pass, when the earth will consume the brain of the vain braggart. When the decree of Fate is implemented, there will be no difference between a king and a pauper. If anyone opens a grave, he will find that there is nothing to distinguish the rich from the poor.

DECEPTION

هرگز ایمن ز مار ننشستم
که بدانستم آنچه خصلت اوست
زخم دندان دشمنی بتر است
که نماید به چشم مردم دوست

I never considered myself immune from a serpent, as I was well aware of its nature. A wound inflicted by the enemy's teeth is more severe when it is given in the guise of friendship.

DEEDS

از من بگوی حاجی مردم گزای را
کو پوستین خلق به آزار می درد
حاجی تو نیستی، شتر است از برای آنک
بیچاره خار می خورد و بار می برد

On my behalf, inform the Haji who harms and mercilessly torments mankind, that it is not you who are the true pilgrim, but your poor camel which feeds on thorns and carries loads.

DESPERATION

به روزِ معرکه ایمن مشو ز خصمِ ضعیف
که مغزِ شیر برآرد چو دل ز جان برداشت

On the day of battle, do not consider yourself to be safe from a weak enemy, as desperation may enable him to overcome the fear of death and crush a lion's head.

DESTINY

گر گزندت رسد ز خلق، مرنج
که نه راحت رسد ز خلق، نه رنج
از خدا دان خلاف دشمن و دوست
که دل هر دو در تصرف اوست
گرچه تیر از کمان همی گذرد
از کماندار بیند اهل خرد

Do not feel hurt if you are harmed by people, since neither comfort nor harm proceeds from them. Consider the opposition of enemies and love of friends to come from God, as only He has control over their hearts. Although the arrow is shot from the bow, the wise know that it is the Archer who has shot it.

شنیده ای که سکندر برفت تا ظلمات
به چند محنت، و آنکه نخورد آب حیات

You have heard that Alexander went to the unexplored dark

regions and after suffering great hardships, he did not succeed in drinking the water of life.

Note: It was believed that the water or elixir of life was found in dark and unexplored regions. Alexander took great pains to find the water, but was not destined to drink it.

بخت و دولت به کاردانی نیست
جز به تأیید آسمانی نیست
اوفتاده ست در جهان بسیار
بی تمیز ارجمند و عاقل خوار
کیمیاگر به غصه مرده و رنج
ابله اندر خرابه یافته گنج

Good fortune and wealth are not attained by one's ability. They are only achieved by God's Grace. It has often happened that the undiscerning is honoured, while the wise is despised in the world. The alchemist has died in grief and frustration, whereas the fool has found a treasure in the ruins.

جهد رزق ار کُنی و گر نَکُنی
برساند خدای عزوجل
ور روی در دهان شیر و پلنگ
نخورندت مگر به روز اجل

Whether you endeavour or not to get your daily bread, God the most Glorified and Honoured will bestow it; and if you enter the jaws of lions and leopards, they will not devour you except on the day when death is destined.

قضا دگر نشود و هزار ناله و آه
 به کفر یا به شکایت بر آید از دهنی
 فرشته ای که وکیل است بر خزاین باد
 چه غم خورد که بمیرد چراغ پیرزنی؟

Destiny cannot be altered, either by our thousand lamentations and sighs, or by our ingratitude and complaints. What does the angel who presides over the treasures of wind care, if the lamp of an old widow is extinguished?

آنکه حظ آفرید و روزی داد
 یا فضیلت همی دهد یا بخت

He Who has created joy and provides daily bread, either bestows virtue or good fortune upon you.

شخصی همه شب بر سر بیمار گریست
 چون روز شد، او بمرد و بیمار بزیست

A person wept all night beside a sick man, but on daybreak, he died and the sick man recovered.

ای بسا اسب تیزرو که بماند
 که خر لنگ جان به منزل برد
 بس که در خاک تندرستان را
 دفن کردیم و زخم خورده نمرد

How often has a swift horse been left behind, while a lame donkey has reached its destination. How frequently have we buried the healthy ones, while the wounded ones have survived.

DESTITUTION

درویش و غنی بندهٔ این خاک درند
و آنانکه غنی ترند، محتاج ترند

The poor and the rich are slaves at this door (of God), and the richer they be, the greater are their needs.

بس گزسنه خفت و کس ندانست که کیست
بس جان به لب آمد که بر او کس نگریست

Many a person has slept hungry, which has gone unnoticed.
Many a person has died, without a soul mourning for him.

DEVOTION

دو بامداد اگر آید کسی به خدمت شاه
سیم هرآینه در وی کند به لطف نگاه
امید هست پرستندگان مخلص را
که ناامید نگردند از آستان اله

When a person devotedly serves his king for two days, the king is bound to look at him favourably on the third day. Sincere worshippers are therefore hopeful that they will not return empty-handed from the threshold of God.

ای مرغ سحر عشق ز پروانه بیاموز
کان سوخته را جان شد و آواز نیامد

O nightingale! Learn the art of love from the moth which was burnt to death, but did not complain.

باز آی و مرا بگُش که پشت مردن
خوشر که پس از تو زندگانی کردن

Return to me and kill me, for it is preferable to die in your presence than to live after you.

DIGNITY

تو بر سر قدر خویشتن باش و وقار
بازی و ظرافت به ندیمان بگذار

Preserve your own dignity and status, and leave games and pleasantries for your attendants.

DISBELIEF

آن کس که به قرآن و خبر زو نرهی
آن است جوابش، که جوابش ندهی

It is best not to argue with the man who vexes you and is not convinced by the Quran and Prophetic Traditions you swear by.

DISCIPLINE

هر آن طفل کو جور آموزگار
نبیند، جفا بیند از روزگار

The child who does not suffer punishment at the hands of the teacher, will invariably suffer affliction at the hands of the world.

DISCOURSE

تا ندانی که سخن عین صواب است، مگوی
و آنچه دانی که نه نیکوش جواب است، مگوی

Speak not until you are convinced that what you say is proper, and do not say something which you are sure will result in an unfavourable response.

DISCRETION

جنگ و زورآوری مکن با مست
پیش سرپنجه، در بغل نه دست

Do not fight with, or match your strength against an intoxicated person. Put your hands under your armpit when you confront someone powerful.

DISOBEDIENCE

برسر مُلک مباد آن مَلک فرمانده
که خدا را نبود بنده فرمانبردار

May there never be on the throne of a kingdom a ruler who is not an obedient servant of God.

ابر و باد و مه و خورشید و فلک در کارند
تا تو نانی به کف آری و به غفلت نخوری
همه از بهر تو سرگشته و فرمانبردار
شرط انصاف نباشد که تو فرمان نبری

The clouds, the wind, the moon, the sun and the heavenly sphere are all at work to enable you to earn your daily bread and not eat it carelessly (without thanking God). All of them are bewildered and are

subservient to you. It will be unjust on your part to disobey Him.

DISTRESS

آن که در راحت و تنعم زیست
او چه داند که حال گرسنه چیست ؟
حال درماندگان کسی داند
که به احوال خویش درماند

How can he who lives in comfort and luxury know the pangs of hunger of others? Only he who is distressed can understand the sufferings of the helpless.

DIVINE GUIDANCE

از تو به که نالم، که دگر داور نیست ؟
وز دست تو هیچ دست بالاتر نیست
آنرا که تو رهبری، کسی گم نکند
و آنرا که تو گم کنی، کسی رهبر نیست

To whom but You can I complain, since there is no other Judge besides You, and there is no hand more powerful than Your Hand! He who is guided by You cannot be misled by anyone; and he who is abandoned by You has no other guide.

DIVINE GRACE

شب تاریک دوستان خدای
می بتابد چو روز رخشنده
وین سعادت به زور بازو نیست
تا نبخشد خدای بخشنده

The dark night of the friends of God is as bright as the shining day, and this prosperity cannot be attained by the strength of one's arms, unless it is granted by the Bestower.

DIVINE PARDON

گر به محشر خطاب قهر کند
انبیا را چه جای معذرت است ؟
پرده از روی لطف گو بردار
کاشقی را امید مغفرت است

If God be strict on the Day of Judgement, what excuse can even the Prophets offer? Let us plead to God to show His Grace, for even the vicious are hopeful to be pardoned by Him.

DREAM

تشنگان را نماید اندر خواب
همه عالم به چشم، چشمه آب

In their dreams, the thirsty ones visualise the whole world to be a spring of water.

ENEMY

دانی که چه گفت زال با رستم گُرد؟
دشمن نتوان حقیر و بیچاره شمرد!

Do you know what Zal said to the paladin Rostam? "An enemy should never be underestimated and considered weak".

Note: Zal was the father of the great paladin Rostam. (Ferdowsi's SHAHNAMEH)

حذر کن ز آنچه دشمن گوید آن کن
 که بر زانو زنی دست تغابن
 گرت راهی نماید راست چون تیر
 از او برگرد و راه دست چپ گیر

Avoid doing what an enemy recommends, or else you will smite your knee with regret. If he shows you a right path which is as straight as an arrow, turn away from it and follow the opposite direction.

گل به تاراج رفت و خار بماند
 گنج برداشتند و مار بماند
 دیده بر تارک سنان دیدن
 خوشتر از روی دشمنان دیدن

The rose was plucked and the thorn has remained; the treasure was carried away and the serpent has remained. Seeing one's eye being pierced by a spear is preferable to seeing the faces of enemies.

Note: These couplets are with reference to an unfortunate man whose young and beautiful wife is dead, and who has to put up with his old and ugly mother-in-law who continues to live with him.

EXAGGERATION

اگر صد ناپسند آید ز درویش
 رفیقانش یکی از صد ندانند
 و گر یک بذله گوید پادشاهی
 از اقلیمی به اقلیمی رسانند

If a poor man were to commit a hundred indecent deeds, his friends would ignore them, but if the king were to narrate a single joke,

its news would spread from kingdom to kingdom.

Note: A king must always maintain his dignity and composure.

EXCELLENCE

مرغک از بیضه برون آید و روزی طلبد
و آدمی بچه، ندارد خبر و عقل و تمیز
آن که ناگاه کسی گشت به چیزی نرسید
وین به تمکین و فضیلت بگذشت از همه چیز
آبگینه همه جا یابی، از آن قدرش نیست
لعل دشخوار به دست آید، از آن است عزیز

A chicken is hatched and instantly starts seeking its food, but a new-born infant has no awareness, reason and discernment. The former which suddenly acquired ability is not worth anything, whereas the latter has surpassed everyone and everything by his dignity and excellence. Ordinary glass is found everywhere and is consequently worthless. Rubies are found with great difficulty and are therefore valuable.

EXPECTATION

گر نبودى امید راحت و رنج
پای درویش بر فلک بودى
ور وزیر از خدا بترسیدى
همچنان کز ملک، ملک بودى

If there was no expectation of comfort and pain, the mendicant's feet would be on the heavenly sphere. If the minister feared God as much as he fears the king, he would become an angel.

امیدوار بود آدمی به خیر کسان
 مرا به خیر تو امید نیست، شر مرسان

Men expect goodness from people. I have no expectation of any goodness from you; only cause me no harm.

چو کعبه قبله حاجت شد، از دیار بعید
 روند خلق به دیدارش از بسی فرسنگ
 ترا تحمل امثال ما بباید کرد
 که هیچ کس نزند بر درخت بی بر سنگ

People from distant lands travel many a mile to go and pray at Ka'ba, because it is the centre of fulfilment of hopes. You should therefore bear the importunities of men like us, as nobody flings a stone at a tree which bears no fruits.

EXPERIENCE

به کارهای گران مرد کاردیده فرست
 که شیر شوزه درآرد به زیر خم کمنند
 جوان اگرچه قوی یال و پیلتن باشد
 به جنگ دشمنش از هول بگسلد پیوند
 نبرد پیش مصاف آزموده معلوم است
 چنان که مسئله شرع پیش دانشمند

Employ the services of an experienced man on important affairs, as he will be able to overpower a fierce lion and tie it with a lasso. If a young inexperienced man has powerful arms and the strength of an elephant, he will tremble with fear in battle with the enemy. An experienced warrior is well qualified to act in war, just as a learned theologian is able to solve a theological problem.

EXPLORATION

تا به دگان و خانه در گروی
هرگز ای خام، آدمی نشوی
برو اندر جهان تفرج کن
پیش از آن روز کز جهان بروی

O immature one! As long as you are attached to your shop and house, you can never become a successful man. Go and travel around the world, before the day that you have to depart from the world.

EXTRAVAGANCE

ابلهی کو روز روشن شمع کافوری نهد
زود بینی کش به شب روغن نباشد در چراغ

You will soon see that the fool who burns a candle made of camphor during a bright day, will have no oil left in his lamp at night.

مکن فراخ روی در عمل اگر خواهی
که وقت رفع تو باشد مجال دشمن تنگ
تو پاک باش و مدار از کس ای برادر باک
زنند جامه ناپاک گازران برسنگ

Do not live extravagantly while in office, if you want to be safe from the intrigues of your enemy when you are removed from office. O brother! Be upright and fear nobody, as washermen beat only the dirty clothes on stone.

FATAL ATTRACTION

در سر کار تو کردم دل و دین با همه دانش
مرغ زیرک به حقیقت منم امروز و تو دامی

Because of your love, I have lost my heart and religious faith, despite my wisdom. Truly, today I am the clever bird and you are a snare into which I have fallen.

FATE

به رنج و سعی کسی نعمتی به چنگ آرد
دگر کس آید و بی سعی و رنج بردارد

A person acquires riches with great hardships and efforts, while another person comes along and takes it away without any effort and hardship.

چو آید ز پی دشمن جان ستان
ببندد اجل پای اسب دوان
در آندم که دشمن پیایی رسید
کمان کیانی نشاید کشید

When the murderous enemy pursues you, Fate (death) ties up the legs of your swift horse. At the time when the enemy assaults from behind, one is unable to draw the royal Kiyanian bow.

هرآنکه گردش گیتی به کین او برخاست
به غیر مصلحتش رهبری کند ایام

کبوتری که دگر آشیان نخواهد دید
قضا همی بردش تا به سوی دانه و دام

Destiny misguides anyone who becomes a victim of the vicissitudes of the world. Fate directs the pigeon which is not destined to see its nest again, to the seeds and the snare.

FEAR

از آن گز تو ترسد بترس ای حکیم
وگر با چنو صد، برآیی به جنگ
از آن مار بر پای راعی زند
که ترسد سرش را بکوبد به سنگ
نبینی که چون گربه عاجز شود
برآرد به چنگال چشم پلنگ

O wise man! Dread him who fears you, although you may be able to grapple with a hundred men like him. The snake bites the foot of a farmer because it fears that he may crush its head with a stone. Do you not see that when a cat becomes desperate, it plucks out the eyes of a leopard (which attacks it)?

FILIAL INGRATITUDE

سالها بر تو بگذرد که گذار
نکنی سوی تربت پدرت
تو به جای پدر چه کردی خیر؟
تا همان چشم داری از پسرت

It is ages since you have visited your father's grave. What good deed have you performed for your father that you now expect your son to do for you?

چه خوش گفت زالی به فرزند خویش
چو دیدش پلنگ افکن و پیلتن
گر از عهد خردیت یاد آمدی
که بیچاره بودی در آغوش من
نکردی در این روز بر من جفا
که تو شیرمردی و من پیرزن

How well did an old woman say to her son, when she found him in all his might and strength, like a leopard and an elephant: "If you could remember your infancy, when you were helpless in my arms, you would not torment me on this day, when you are strong like a lion and I am an old and infirm woman".

FIRMNESS

کسی که لطف کند با تو، خاک پایش باش
وگر ستیزه برَد، در دو چشمش آکن خاک
سخن به لطف و کرم با درشتخوی مگوی
که زنگ خورده نگردد به نرم سوهان پاک

Be the dust of the feet of a man who is kind to you, but if he shows violence, pour dust in his eyes. Do not speak politely and kindly to one who is rude, as rust cannot be removed by a soft file.

FLATTERY

صلح با دشمن اگر خواهی، هر گه که تو را
در قفا عیب کند، در نظرش تحسین کن
سخن آخر به دهن میگذرد مودی را
سخنش تلخ نخواهی، دهنش شیرین کن

If you wish to be on peaceful terms with your enemy, praise him to his face whenever he speaks ill of you behind your back. The baneful foe will invariably speak ill of you. Sweeten his mouth if you do not want his words to be bitter.

از صحبت دوستی به رنجم
 کاخلاق بدم حَسَن نماید
 عیبم هنر و کمال بیند
 خارم گل و یاسمن نماید
 کو دشمن شوخ چشم ناپاک؟
 تا عیب مرا به من نماید

I am annoyed by the behaviour of a friend who looks upon my ill manners as ideal conduct. My defects seem as accomplishments and perfections to him, and my thorns are regarded as roses and jasmines. Where is the impudent and wicked enemy who shall point out my fault to me?

الا تا نشنوی مدح سخنگوی
 که اندک مایه نفعی از تو دارد
 که گر روزی مرادش بر نیاری
 دو صد چندان عیوبت بر شمارد

Take care not to listen to the praise of a flatterer who expects to derive some material benefit from you, for if you do not comply with his wishes some day, he will point out two hundred defects in you.

FORBEARANCE

یکی را زشت خوئی داد دشنام
 تحمل کرد و گفت ای نیک فرجام

بتر زانم که خواهی گفتن آنی
که دانم عیب من چون من ندانی

Somebody was abused by an ill-tempered man. He tolerated it and said, "O honourable man! I am worse than what you have called me, as I am sure that you do not know my defects as well as I know them".

FORGIVENESS

گر گزندت رسد تحمل کن
که به عفو از گناه پاک شوی
ای برادر! چو خاک خواهی شد
خاک شو، پیش از آنکه خاک شوی

Patiently bear the harm you suffer at someone's hands, as by forgiving him, your sins will be pardoned. O brother! As you have to die, be as humble as dust, before you are reduced to dust.

متاب ای پارسا روی از گنهکار
به بخشاینده در وی نظر کن
اگر من ناجوانمردم به کردار
تو بر من چون جوانمردان گذر کن

O holy man! Do not turn away your face from a sinner. Look upon him with compassion. If my deeds are ungentlemanly, overlook my shortcomings and be magnanimous to me.

به لطافت چو بر نیاید کار
سر به بی حرمتی کشد ناچار

هر که بر خویشتن نبخشاید
گر نبخشد کسی بر او، شاید

When a dispute cannot be resolved amicably, it will inevitably lead to harshness (lit: disrespect). A person who is not willing to forgive, deserves not to be forgiven by others.

این دو چیزم بر گناه انگیختند
بخت نافرجام و عقل ناتمام
گر گرفتارم کنی، مستوجبم
ور ببخشی، عفو بهتر کانتقام

These two things have prompted me to sin: ill-fortune and imperfect reason. If you punish me, I deserve it. But if you pardon me, forgiveness is better than revenge.

آنرا که بجای تست هر دم گرمی
عذرش بنه ار کند به عمری ستمی

Forgive a man who has always been generous to you, although he may cause some harm to you only once in his lifetime.

عذر تقصیر خدمت آوردم
که ندارم به طاعت استظهار
عاصیان از گناه توبه کنند
عارفان از عبادت استغفار

I seek pardon for my failings, as I cannot rely on my devotion. Sinners atone for their sins, whereas the gnostics seek forgiveness for their improper worship.

FRIENDSHIP

دوست مشمار آنکه در نعمت زند
لاف یاری و برادر خواندگی
دوست آن دانم که گیرد دست دوست
در پریشان حالی و درماندگی

Do not consider him to be a friend, who boasts of friendship and brotherly love when you are prosperous. I consider him to be a true friend, who assists his friend when he is needy and in adversity.

پای در زنجیر پیش دوستان
به که با بیگانگان در بوستان

To have fetters on one's feet and be with friends, is preferable to be in a garden with strangers.

بشوی ای خردمند از آن دوست دست
که با دشمنانت بود هم نشست

O wise man! Wash your hands of that friend, who associates with your enemies.

FRUGALITY

چو دخلت نیست، خرج آهسته تر کن
که می گویند ملاحان سرودی
اگر باران به کوهستان نبارد
به سالی دجله گردد خشک رودی

When you have no income, be frugal in spending, as sailors have

a song which says: "If it does not rain in the mountains, the river Tigris will dry up in a year".

GENEROSITY

بزرگی بایدت، بخشندگی کن
که دانه تا نیفشانی، نروید

Be generous if you seek greatness, for seeds will not grow unless they are sown.

تا دل دوستان به دست آری
بوستان پدر فروخته به
با بد اندیش هم نکویی کن
دهن سگ به لقمه دوخته، به

It is better to sell your patrimonial garden to win over the hearts of your friends; also be good to malicious ones, as it is best to shut the mouth of a dog with a morsel.

نَبشته است برگور بهرام گور
که دست کرم به ز بازوی زور

It is inscribed on the tomb of King Bahram Goor, that a generous hand is better than a powerful arm.

آن کس که به دینار و درم خیر نیندوخت
سر عاقبت اندر سر دینار و درم کرد
خواهی مُتمتع شوی از نعمت دنیا
با خلق کرم کن، چو خدا با تو کرم کرد

He who has performed no act of charity with his money, has wasted his life in amassing wealth. If you wish to benefit from worldly riches, be generous to others, since God has been generous to you.

درخت کرم هر کجا بیخ کرد
گذشت از فلک شاخ و بالای او
گر امیدواری کزو برخوری
به منت منه ارّه بر پای او

Wherever the tree of generosity takes roots, its trunk and branches surpass the sky. If you hope to enjoy its fruits, do not commit the folly of cutting its roots.

مکن ز گردش گیتی شکایت ای درویش
که تیره بختی اگر هم بر این نسق مردی
توانگرا، چو دل و دست کامرانت هست
بخور، ببخش، که دنیا و آخرت بردی

O poor man! Complain not of the vicissitudes of the world, as you will be unfortunate if you continue to torment yourself in this manner and die. O rich man! Since you are fortunate and successful, eat and bestow upon others, for you will thereby gain this world and the next.

کس نبیند بخیل فاضل را
که نه در عیب گفتنش کوشد
ور کریمی دو صد گنه دارد
کرمش عیبهها فرو پوشد

A learned man who is a miser, will be criticised for his fault, whereas generosity will cover two hundred faults of a man who is liberal.

GLAD TIDINGS

بلبلا مژده بهار بیار
خبر بد به بوم باز گذار

O nightingale! Bring the glad tidings of spring and leave the bad news to be communicated by the owl.

GLUTTONY

اندرون از طعام خالی دار
تا در او نور معرفت بینی
تُهی از حکمتی به علت آن
که پُری از طعام تا بینی

Keep your belly empty so that you may see the light of knowledge in it. You are devoid of wisdom, as your belly is full with food up to your nose.

نه چندان بخور کز دهانت برآید
نه چندان که از ضعف جانت درآید

Neither eat so much as to fill yourself to the throat, nor so little as to die due to weakness.

با آنکه در وجود طعام است عیش نفس
رنج آورد طعام که بیش از قدر بود
گر گلشکر خوری به تکلف، زیان کند
ور نان خشک دیر خوری، گلشکر بود

Although food is a pleasure of life, it will cause harm if eaten in excess. If you eat the conserve of roses when you are not sufficiently hungry, it will cause you harm; and if you eat dry bread sparingly, it

will be as delicious as the conserve of roses.

چو کم خوردن طبیعت شد کسی را
چو سختی پیشش آید، سهل گیرد
وگر تن پرور است اندر فراخی
چو تنگی بیند از سختی بمیرد

If a person accustoms himself to eating sparingly, he can easily bear hunger when he faces hardship. But if he indulges himself during bountiful days, he is bound to die during scarcity.

خوردن برای زیستن و ذکر کردن است
تو معتقد که زیستن از بهر خوردن است

Food is eaten to support life and praise God, whereas you believe that one lives only to eat.

تنور شکم دم به دم تافتن
مصیبت بود روز نیافتن

To feed the oven of one's belly frequently will cause anguish on the day of scarcity.

شکم، بند دست است و زنجیر پای
شکم بنده، نادر پرستد خدای

The belly is a fetter which binds the hand and a chain which binds the feet. A slave to the belly rarely worships God.

اسیر بند شکم را دو شب نگیرد خواب
شبی ز معده سنگی، شبی ز دلتنگی

Whoever is a slave to his belly, cannot sleep for two nights: one night is when his belly is loaded, and another night is when he is worried about filling his belly.

GOD

هر سو دَوَدِ آن، کش ز بر خویش براند
وآن را که بخواند، به در کس ندواند

One whom God drives away from His precinct, wanders aimlessly; but one whom God beckons, does not have to seek refuge from anyone else.

آن کس که توانگرت نمی گرداند
او مصلحت تو از تو بهتر داند

He Who does not make you wealthy, knows better than you what is advantageous to you.

در بسته به روی خود ز مردم
تا عیب نگسترند ما را
در بسته چه سود و عالم الغیب
دانای نهان و آشکارا

I have sought solitude so that people may not know my faults. But of what use is solitude, as The Omniscient knows both: the concealed and the obvious.

GOLESTAN (ROSE GARDEN)

به چه کار آیدت ز گل طبقی؟
از گلستان من ببر ورقی

گل همین پنج روز و شش باشد
وین گلستان همیشه خوش باشد

Of what use is a tray of flowers to you? Carry a leaf from my Golestan (Rose Garden). Flowers last only for five days or six, whereas this Golestan will always provide joy.

GRATITUDE

من آن مورم که درپایم بمالند
نه زنبورم که از دستم بنالند
کجا خود شکر این نعمت گزارم؟
که زور مردم آزاری ندارم

I am the ant which men crush under their feet. I am not the wasp whose sting makes people cry out in pain. How can I express my gratitude to God for not giving me the power to oppress mankind?

شکر خدای کن که موفق شدی به خیر
ز انعام و فضل او نه معطل گذاشتت
منت منه که خدمت سلطان کنی همی
منت شناس از او که به خدمت بداشتت

Be grateful to God for honouring you with success in performing good deeds and for not excluding you from His bounties and favours. Do not boast that you are holding an office under the king, but be grateful to Him for having conferred this honour on you.

HARM

مسکین خر اگر چه بی تمیز است
چون بارهمی برد، عزیز است

گاوِان و خِرانِ بارِ بردار
بِه ز آدمیانِ مردمِ آزار

Although the poor donkey is devoid of discernment, it is valuable because it carries load. The load-bearing cows and donkeys are better than people who harm others.

ضعیفان را مکن بر دل گزندی
که درمانی به جور از زورمندی

Do not harm the weak, or else you will suffer at the hands of the strong.

HASTE

ای که مشتاق منزلی، مشتاب
پند من کار بند و صبر آموز
اسب تازی دو تک رَوَد به شتاب
و اشتر آهسته می رَوَد شب و روز

O you who desire to reach your destination! Do not hurry. Heed my advice and be patient. An Arab steed gallops for a short distance, whereas the camel moves slowly throughout the night and day.

نیک سهل است زنده بی جان کرد
گشته را باز زنده نتوان کرد
شرط عقل است صبر تیرانداز
که چو رفت از کمان نیاید باز

It is easy to take away life, but it is impossible to restore it. Reason demands that an archer should be patient, for when the arrow

has left the bow, it cannot be brought back.

HOPE

سگی را گر کلوخی بر سر آید
ز شادی بر جهد کین استخوانی است
و گر نعشی دو کس بر دوش گیرند
لئیم الطبع پندارد که خوانی است

If a dog is struck with a stone on its head, it jumps up joyfully thinking it to be a bone; and if two persons carry a corpse on their shoulders, a wretched scoundrel shall think it to be a tray of food.

ز کار بسته میندیش و دل شکسته مدار
که آب چشمه حیوان درون تاریکیست

Do not be upset about your failures and be not distressed, because the water of life exists in dark regions.

HUMANISM

بنی آدم اعضای یکدیگرند
که در آفرینش ز یک گوهرند
چو عضوی به درد آورد روزگار
دگر عضوها را نماند قرار
تو کز محنت دیگران بی غمی
نشاید که نامت نهند آدمی

Human beings are like parts of a body (lit: limbs of one another), as they are created from the same substance. When the world causes pain to a single part, the other parts also cannot be at ease. You who are indifferent to the sufferings of others, do not deserve to be called a human being.

Note: These couplets adorn the portals of the United Nations General Assembly Hall.

به صورت آدمی شد قطره آب
 که چل روزش قرار اندر رحم ماند
 وگر چل ساله را عقل و ادب نیست
 به تحقیقش، نشاید آدمی خواند

After remaining for forty days in the womb, a drop of water (semen) obtains human form, but the man who is forty years old, and is yet devoid of reason and good manners, truly does not deserve to be called a human being.

جوانمردی و لطف است آدمیت
 همین نقش هیولایی مپندار
 هنر باید، که صورت می توان کرد
 به ایوانها در از شنگرف و زنگار
 چو انسان را نباشد فضل و احسان
 چه فرق از آدمی تا نقش دیوار؟
 به دست آوردن دنیا هنر نیست
 یکی را گر توانی، دل بدست آر

Humanism is comprised of liberality and kindness. Do not think that it is only the material form. Virtue is a must, since pictures can be painted on the walls of a palace with vermilion and verdigrease. If a man is devoid of excellence and benevolence, what is the difference between him and the painted figure on the wall? Acquiring worldly riches is not an accomplishment. Win over a single heart if you can.

HUMILITY

گر گزندت رسد تحمل کن
 که به عفو از گناه پاک شوی
 ای برادر! چو خاک خواهی شد
 خاک شو پیش از آنکه خاک شوی

If you suffer any harm, bear it patiently so that your sins are pardoned. O brother! As you are to become dust at last, be humble as dust before you are reduced to dust.

اگر خود بردرد پیشانی پیل
 نه مرد است آنکه در وی مردمی نیست
 بنی آدم سرشت از خاک دارد
 اگر خاکی نباشد، آدمی نیست

If someone is able to smash an elephant's forehead, he will not be considered to be brave if he is not humane. Children of Adam are created from dust, and if they are not humble, they are not human beings.

شخصم به چشم عالمیان خوب منظر است
 وز خُبث باطنم سر خجالت فتاده پیش
 طاووس را به نقش و نگاری که هست، خلق
 تحسین کنند و، او خجل از پای زشت خویش

Although I appear handsome to people, I bow my head with shame due to my malevolence. The peacock is praised for its colourful beauty by people, but it is ashamed of its ugly claws.

HUNGER

کوفته بر سفره من گو مباحش
گرسنه را نان تهی کوفته است

I am least concerned if there is no dish of meatballs on my dining table. For a hungry man, plain bread is like a dish of meatballs.

گوش تواند که همه عمر وی
نشنود آواز دف و چنگ و نی
دیده شکیب ز تماشای باغ
بی گل و نسرين بسر آرد دماغ
ور نبود بالش آکنده پر
خواب توان کرد، خزف زیر سر
ور نبود دلبر همخوابه پیش
دست توان کرد در آغوش خویش
وین شکم بی هنر پیچ پیچ
صبر ندارد که بسازد به هیچ

The ear can afford not to listen to the sound of the tambourine, harp and flute for a lifetime. The eye can abstain from seeing the garden and the mind can do without the fragrance of the rose and wild rose. The head can rest on earthenware if there is no feather pillow. If the beloved is not beside one in bed, one can embrace oneself instead. But the wretched belly cannot patiently bear the pangs of hunger.

ای سیر ترا نان جوین خوش ننماید
معشوق من است آنکه به نزدیک تو زشت است

حوران بهشتی را دوزخ بود اعراف
از دوزخیان پُرس که اعراف بهشت است

O you who are sated! A loaf of barley will not appear attractive to you. Although it seems ugly to you, this loaf is my beloved. To the nymphs of Paradise, Purgatory is like Hell. Ask those dwelling in Hell, and they will tell you that Purgatory is indeed Paradise!

مرغِ بریان به چشم مردم سیر
کمتر از برگ تره بر خوان است
وانکه را دستگاه وقوت نیست
شلفم پخته، مرغِ بریان است

In the eyes of men who are satiated, a grilled chicken is of lesser value than green leek on a dining table. But to him who has no wealth and means, a boiled turnip is as good as a grilled chicken.

با گرسنگی قوتِ پرهیز نماند
افلاسِ عنان از کفِ تقوی بستاند

Abstinence is of no avail when one suffers the pangs of hunger; poverty snatches the controlling reins from the hands of piety.

تشنه سوخته در چشمه روشن چو رسید
تو مپندار که از پیل دمان اندیشد
ملحد گرسنه درخانه خالی بر خوان
عقل باور نکند کز رمضان اندیشد

Do not imagine that a person who is scorched by thirst will be afraid of facing a furious elephant when he sees a spring of clear water.

It will be unreasonable to believe that a hungry infidel will have any regard for the month of *Ramzan*, when he sees food on the dining mat in an empty house.

گر همه زر جعفری دارد
مرد بی توشه برنگیرد گام
در بیابان فقیر سوخته را
شلفم پخته به که نقره خام

Even if he has pure gold, a traveller does not undertake a journey without provisions. For a poor and famished man in the desert, a boiled turnip is better than crude silver.

HYPOCRISY

اگر آنچه می گفتمی، کردمی
نکو سیرت و پارسا بودمی

If I were to practise what I preach, I would be a virtuous and holy man.

ترک دنیا به مردم آموزند
خویشتن سیم و غله اندوزند
عالمی را که گفت باشد و بس
هرچه گوید، نگیرد اندر کس
عالم آن کس بود که بد نکند
نه بگوید به خلق و خود نکند

They teach people to forsake the world, whilst they are busy accumulating wealth and filling up their granaries. A learned man who only preaches will never be able to impress anyone. A learned man is he

who commits no wrong, and not he who asks people to do good and does not perform a good deed himself.

به صنع خدا چون کسی اوفتاد
همه عالمش پناهی بر سر نهند
چو بینند کاقبال دستش گرفت
ستایش کنان، دست بر بر نهند

Whenever, by the will of God, somebody falls from grace, the entire world tramples on his head. But when they see good fortune coming to his assistance, they sing his praises and fold their hands in obedience to him.

مگو آندوه خویش با دشمنان
که لاحول گویند شادی کنان

Do not narrate your grief to enemies, as they will outwardly sympathise and say, "May God avert this evil", although in reality, they are overjoyed by your grief.

Note: لاحول ولا قوة الا بالله - "There is no strength nor power but in (or by means of) Allah".

(لاحول گفتن): To say 'lahaul' is a formula which Muslims repeat on the receipt of bad news, or on hearing or seeing anything disagreeable, or to express aversion or contempt, or to drive away evil spirits.

در برابر، چو گوسپند سلیم
در قفا، همچو گرگ مردم خوار

To your face, they are as meek as lambs; behind your back, they are like the man-devouring wolves.

IGNORAMUS

تو بر اوج فلک چه دانی چیست؟
که ندانی که در سرایت کیست

What do you know of the heavenly sphere, when you do not know who is in your house?

Note: The reference is to an astrologer whose wife was having an affair with her paramour.

IGNORANCE

وجود مردم دانا مثال زر طلاست
که هر کجا که رود قدر و قیمتش دانند
بزرگ زاده نادان به شهرها ماند
که در دیار غریبش به هیچ نستانند

The presence of an intelligent man is like pure gold, as his worth and value are appreciated wherever he goes. But the ignorant son of a high-ranking official is like money which is valid only in a certain place, and has no value whatsoever outside that place.

علم چندان که بیشتر خوانی
چون عمل در تو نیست، نادانی
نه محقق بود، نه دانشمند
چارپایی بر او کتابی چند
آن تُهی مغز را چه علم و خبر؟
که بر او هیزم است یا دفتر

However much you may study, you are ignorant if you do not make practical use of it. He is neither a profound scholar nor a learned

person, but is a beast of burden which is laden with books. What does the stupid beast know whether it is laden with books or firewood?

وقتی افتاد فتنه ای در شام
 هر کس از گوشه ای فرا رفتند
 روستازادگان دانشمند
 به وزیری پادشا رفتند
 پسران وزیر ناقص عقل
 به گدایی به روستا رفتند

Once, an insurrection took place in Syria and people deserted their dwelling places. The wise sons of peasants became ministers of the king, whereas the ignorant sons of the minister took to begging in the villages.

چو کردی با کلوخ انداز پیکار
 سر خود را به نادانی شکستی
 چو تیر انداختی بر روی دشمن
 چنین دان کاندرا آماجش نشستی

When you fight with one who slings stones, you break your own head due to your ignorance. When you shoot an arrow at your enemy, you should realize that you have also placed yourself within his shooting range.

ILL-OMEN

کس نیاید به زیر سایه بوم
 ور هُما از جهان شود معدوم

Nobody ever seeks refuge from an owl, even if the phoenix is exterminated from the world.

ماری تو که هر کرا ببینی، بزنی
یا بوم که هر کجا نشینی، بگنی؟

Are you a serpent, that you bite everyone you see, or an owl, that you ruin every place that you inhabit?

ILL-TEMPER

اگر ز دست بلا بر فلک رود بدخوی
ز دست خوی بد خویش در بلا باشد

If an ill-tempered man goes to the heavenly sphere to escape from a calamity, he will still be in calamity due to his own evil disposition.

IMPIETY

هر که پرهیز و علم و زهد فروخت
خرمنی گرد کرد و پاک بسوخت

Whoever has sold his abstinence, learning and piety, has in fact piled up a harvest and then burnt it.

عابد که نه از بهر خدا گوشه نشیند
بیچاره در آینه تاریک چه بیند؟

What can a helpless devotee, who does not seek retirement for devoting himself to God, behold in a dark mirror?

گه اندر نعمتی مغرور و غافل
گه اندر تنگدستی خسته و ریش
چو در سرّاً و ضرّاً حالت این است
ندانم کی به حق پردازی از خویش؟

At times, you are proud and negligent in prosperity; and at times, you are afflicted and wounded in adversity. Since this is your condition in happiness and misery, I wonder when you will find time to worship God instead of attending to yourself?

عالم که کامرانی و تن پروری کند
او خویشتن گم است، کرا رهبری کند؟

The learned man who is obsessed with his own prosperity and is self-indulgent, is himself lost and distracted. How can he guide others?

عام نادان پریشان روزگار
به ز دانشمند ناپرهیزگار
کان به نابینایی از راه اوفتاد
وین دو چشمش بود و در چاه اوفتاد

An ignorant and unfortunate common man is better than a wise man who is not abstinent. The former was blind and consequently deviated from the right path, whereas the latter had two eyes and yet fell into the well.

ترسم نرسی به کعبه ای اعرابی
کین ره که تو می روی به ترکستان است

O Arab! I am afraid you will not reach Ka'ba, since this road which you are pursuing leads to Turkistan.

IMPRUDENCE

نه در هر سخن بحث کردن رواست
خطا بر بزرگان گرفتن خطاست

It is incorrect to argue on every topic. It is imprudent to find fault with great men.

INFATUATION

معشوق هزار دوست را دل ندهی
ور می دهی، آن دل به جدایی بنهی

Do not lose your heart to a beloved who has a thousand admirers, and if you do so, be prepared to live in separation from her.

از دست تو مُشت بر دهان خوردن
خوشر که به دست خویش نان خوردن

To receive a blow on my chin from your fist is preferable to eating bread with my own hand.

INFIDELITY

نه ما را در میان عهد و وفا بود؟
جفا کردی و بدعهدی نمودی
به یک بار از جهان دل در تو بستم
ندانستم که برگردی به زودی
هنوزت گر سر صلح است باز آی
کز آن مقبول تر باشی که بودی

Had we not vowed to be faithful to each other? You were cruel to me and have broken your pledge. I renounced the world and completely lost my heart to you, but did not know that you would soon change your attitude towards me. Despite this, return to me if you desire peace, as you shall be dearer to me than ever before.

INFLUENCE

در میر و وزیر و سلطان را
 بی وسیلت مگرد پیرامن
 سگ و دربان چو یافتند غریب
 این گریبانش گیرد، آن دامن

Do not approach the gates of the houses of an emir, a minister and a king, without proper influence. Because on seeing a stranger at the entrance, the guard will seize him by the collar and the dog will grab his cloak (lit: skirt).

INGRATITUDE

سگی را لقمه ای هرگز فراموش
 نگردد، ور زنی صد نوبتش سنگ
 وگر عمری نوازی سفله ای را
 به کمتر تندی آید با تو در جنگ

A dog to which you have once given a morsel will never forget it, even if you stone it a hundred times. But if you cherish a mean person throughout his life, he will fight with you for a minor sternness.

یا وفا خود نبود در عالم
 یا مگر کس در این زمانه نکرد
 کس نیاموخت علم تیر از من
 که مرا عاقبت نشانه نکرد

Either there was no faithfulness in the world, or nobody practises it now. Nobody has ever learnt the skill of archery from me, without ultimately making me a target of his arrow.

INSINCERITY

پسری را پدر وصیت کرد
کای جوان بخت یاد گیر این پند
هر که با اهل خود وفا نکند
نشود دوست روی و دولتمند

A father commanded his son by will: "O fortunate one! Take this advice from me. Whoever is insincere to the members of his family, will never be fortunate and prosperous".

وفاداری مدار از بلبلان چشم
که هر دم بر گلی دیگر سرایند
جوانان خرمند و خوب رخسار
و لیکن در وفا با کس نپایند

Do not expect sincerity from the nightingales, as they fly from flower to flower while singing. The young are charming and beautiful, but they are not faithful to anyone.

INSOMNIA

مؤذن بانگ بی هنگام برداشت
نمی داند که چند از شب گذشته است
درازی شب از مژگان من پرس
که یک دم خواب در چشم نگشته است

The *muezzin* announced prayers at the wrong time, not knowing the time of the night. Ask my eye-lashes the correct time of the night, because not even for a moment has sleep come to my eyes.

INTERRUPTION

سخن را سر است ای خردمند و بن
میاور سخن در میان سخن
خداوند تدبیر و فرهنگ و هوش
نگوید سخن تا نبیند خموش

O wise man! A discourse has a beginning and an end. Do not interrupt a speech with another one. A man of prudence, culture and wisdom will not speak until there is silence.

INTOXICATION

خرم آن فرخنده طالع را که چشم
بر چنین روی اوفتد هر بامداد
مست می بیدار گردد نیم شب
مست ساقی، روز محشر بامداد

How happy is the fortunate man whose eyes behold such a face every morning! A wine-intoxicated man may sober up at midnight, but the man who is intoxicated by the cupbearer will not recover his senses until the Day of Resurrection.

JEALOUSY (ENVY)

توانم آنکه نیازم اندرون کسی
حسود را چه کنم؟ کو زخود به رنج درست
بمیر تا برهی ای حسود، کاین رنجیست
که از مشقت آن جز به مرگ نتوان رست

I can avoid harming the feelings of people, but how can I deal with the envious man who suffers from this malady? Die, O envious wretch! Only death can rid you of the affliction you suffer from.

الا تا نخواهی بلا بر حسود
که آن بخت برگشته خود در بلاست
چه حاجت که با او کنی دشمنی؟
که او را چنین دشمنی در قفاست

Do not wish ill for an envious man, as the unfortunate person is a calamity unto himself. What need is there for you to show enmity to him, who already has such an antagonist pursuing him?

نور گیتی فروز چشمه هور
زشت باشد به چشم موشک کور

The radiance of the sun which illuminates the world will appear ugly to the blind mole.

شپره گر وصل آفتاب نخواهد
رونق بازار آفتاب نکاهد

If the bat does not wish to be united with the sun, it does not diminish the splendour of the sun.

کند هرآینه غیبت حسود کوه دست
که در مقابله گنگش بود زبان مقال

The wretched jealous man who is tongue-tied in your presence, will invariably slander you behind your back.

JOY

غمی کز پیش شادمانی بری
به از شادی کز پسش غم خوری

A sorrow which is followed by joy, is better for you than the joy

which is followed by grief.

KING'S DUTY

پادشاه پاسبان درویش است
گرچه رامش به فرّ دولت اوست
گوسپند از برای چوپان نیست
بلکه چوپان برای خدمت اوست

The king is the sentinel of the poor, although tranquillity is due to his splendour. The sheep are not for the shepherd. Rather, the shepherd is meant to serve the sheep.

KNOWLEDGE

بپرس هرچه ندانی که ذلّ پرسیدن
دلیل راه تو باشد به عزّ دانایی

Ask whatever you do not know, as the hardship of asking will result in acquiring the honour of knowledge.

میراث پدر خواهی، علم پدر آموز
کین مال پدر خرج توان کرد به ده روز

Acquire your father's knowledge if you want to inherit his wealth, for his wealth can be spent in ten days (if you are ignorant).

LEADERSHIP

تمیز باید و تدبیر و عقل، و آنگه ملک
که ملک و دولت نادان سلاح جنگ خداست

Discernment, prudence and reason are the basic requisites, and

then comes rulership. Leadership and authority in the hands of an ignorant man are like weapons for waging war against God.

LEANNESS

آن شنیدی که لاغری دانا
گفت باری به ابله ای فربه
اسب تازی اگر ضعیف بود
همچنان از طویله ای خرابه

Have you heard what a wise slim man once said to a stupid fat man? "Even if an Arab horse is weak, it is better than a stable full of donkeys."

ای که شخص منت حقیر نمود
تا درشتی هنر نپنداری
اسب لاغرمیان بکار آید
روز میدان، نه گاو پرواری

O you to whom I appear despicable! Do not consider obesity to be an accomplishment. On the day of battle, a lean horse will be of use, rather than an ox that has been fattened.

LENIENCY

استاد معلّم چو بود بی آزار
خرسک بازند کودکان در بازار

If the teacher is lenient, the students will play leap-frog in the market place.

LIBERALITY

هر که فریادرس روز مصیبت خواهد
گو در ایام سلامت به جوانمردی کوش
بنده حلقه بگوش ار ننوازی برود
لطف کن لطف، که بیگانه شود حلقه بگوش

Whoever looks for help on the day of hardship should be told to practise liberality when he is safe and healthy. If you are not kind to a devoted slave, he will desert you. Be kind and benevolent, so that even a stranger becomes your devoted slave.

کریمان را به دست اندر درم نیست
خداوندان نعمت را کرم نیست

Those who are liberal have no money, and those who are wealthy are not generous.

قرار بر کف آزادگان نگیرد مال
نه صبر در دل عاشق، نه آب در غربال

Wealth does not remain in the hands of the liberal ones, just like a lover who is devoid of patience, and a sieve which is unable to hold water.

LIFE

هر دم از عمر میروود نفسی
چون نگه می کنم نمانده بسی
ای که پنجاه رفت و در خوابی
مگر این پنج روزه دریابی

خجل آن کس که رفت و کار نساخت
کوس رحلت زدند و بار نساخت

Every moment, a breath of life is spent. When I observe it, I realize that not much of it has remained. O you who have crossed fifty and are yet to wake up, make sure that you avail of the remaining five days of life. Humiliated is he, who has departed without performing any virtuous deed. The drum of departure time was beaten and he made no provisions for himself.

کوس رحلت بکوفت دست اجل
ای دو چشمم وداع سر بکنید
ای کف دست و ساعد و بازو
همه تودیع یکدگر بکنید
بر من اوفتاده دشمن کام
آخر ای دوستان گذر بکنید
روزگارم بشد به نادانی
من نکردم، شما حذر بکنید

The hand of death has beaten the drum of departure. O my eyes! Bid farewell to the head. O my palms, wrists and arms! Bid adieu to each other. O friends! Come and visit me now that I am overwhelmed by my enemy (death). I have wasted my life in ignorance and have not utilised my time judiciously. Take a lesson from my wasted life.

بدین امید بسر شد دریغ عمر عزیز
که آنچه در دلم است، از درم فراز آید
امید بسته برآمد، ولی چه فایده زانک
امید نیست که عمر گذشته باز آید

Alas! Precious life has been spent in the hope that I would acquire what my heart desired. My wish has been fulfilled, but of what use is it, since I am not hopeful of getting back my past life.

LINEAGE

چو کنعان را طبیعت بی هنر بود
 پیمبرزادگی قدرش نیفزود
 هنر بنمای اگر داری، نه گوهر
 گل از خار است و ابراهیم از آزر

Since Can'aan (the son of Prophet Noah), was devoid of virtue, his being a son of a Prophet did not increase his worthiness. Display your accomplishment, if you have any, and not your lineage, for a rose comes from thorns and Abraham comes from Azar.

Note: Prophet Abraham is one of the major Prophets, who is revered by Jews, Christians and Muslims alike.

LOAN

وامش مده آنکه بی نماز است
 گرچه دهنش ز فاقه باز است
 کو فرض خدا نمی گزارد
 از قرض تو نیز غم ندارد

Do not lend money to one who does not offer prayers, even though he may be starving. He does not perform his duty towards God, and hence will not care to repay your loan.

LOVE

هر کجا سلطان عشق آمد، نماند
 قوت بازوی تقوی را محل

پاک دامن چون زید بیچاره ای ؟
اوفتاده تا گریبان در وحل

Wherever the monarch of love appears, the arm of piety loses its power to resist it. How can the helpless wretch who has fallen up to his neck in a quagmire, retain his continence?

دلی که حور بهشتی ربود و یغما کرد
کی التفات کند بر بُتانِ یغمایی؟

How can he, who has won over and conquered the heart of a nymphet of Paradise, ever incline towards the graceful damsels of Yaghma?

Note: Yaghma is a city in Turkistan celebrated for the beauty of its inhabitants.

دانی چه گفت مرا آن بلبل سحری
تو خود چه آدمیی کز عشق بی خبری؟
اشتر به شعر عرب در حالت است و طرب
گر ذوق نیست ترا، کژ طبع جانوری

Do you know what the nightingale said to me at dawn? "What kind of a man are you, that you are ignorant of love? The camel is in ecstasy and rapture on hearing the Arabic poems. If you are devoid of enthusiasm (on hearing it), you are only a brute by nature.

LUST

پدر چون دور عمرش منقضی گشت
مرا این یک نصیحت کرد و بگذشت

که شهوت آتش است، از وی پرهیز
به خود بر آتش دوزخ مکن تیز
در آن آتش نداری طاقت سوز
به صبر آبی بر این آتش زن امروز

When my father's term of life was about to expire, he gave me this one advice and departed: "Lust is fire. Avoid it. Do not precipitate the fire of hell for yourself, as you will not be able to bear its suffering. Quench this fire today, with the water of patience."

MAGNANIMITY

متاب ای پارسا روی از گنهکار
به بخشاینده در وی نظر کن
اگر من ناجوانمردم به کردار
تو بر من چون جوانمردان گذر کن

O holy man! Do not turn away your face from a sinner and be benevolent to him. If my conduct is impolite, forgive me like magnanimous men.

MALEVOLENCE

شور بختان به آرزو خواهند
مقبلان را زوال نعمت و جاه
گرنبیند به روز شپیره چشم
چشمه آفتاب را چه گناه؟
راست خواهی، هزار چشم چنان
کور بهتر که آفتاب سیاه

Unfortunate men wish that those who are prosperous should lose their wealth and dignity. How can the sun be faulted if the bat's eyes

cannot see the sun's radiance during the day? Verily, a thousand eyes like these being blind is better than the sun being dark.

MALICE

توان شناخت به یک روز در شمایل مرد
که تا کُجاش رسیده است پایگاه علوم
ولی ز باطنش ایمن مباش و غرّه مشو
که خُبثِ نفس نگردد به سالها معلوم

In a single day, one can know how learned a man is by his good disposition. But consider not yourself secure against his scheming mind and do not be proud, for one's malicious nature cannot be known in years.

MATERIALISM

اگر دنیا نباشد، دردمندیم
وگر باشد، به مهرش پای بندیم
بلایی زین جهان آشوب تر نیست
که رنجِ خاطر است، ار هست و گر نیست

If the world is not in accord with our wishes, we suffer pain, and if it is in our favour, we are overpowered by its charm. No calamity is greater than attachment to the world, as one's mind suffers in prosperity as well as adversity.

هر که هست از فقیه و پیر و مُرید
وز زبانِ آورانِ پاکِ نفس

چون به دنیای دون فرود آید
به عسل در بماند پای مگس

Whenever jurists, spiritual guides, devotees and righteous orators get involved with mean materialistic matters, they get entrapped like the feet of a fly in honey.

MATURITY

دریای فراوان نشود تیره به سنگ
عارف که برنجد، تُنک آب است هنوز

An ocean does not become muddy when a stone is cast into it. The gnostic who is easily agitated, is still shallow (immature).

MEANNESS

ابر اگر آب زندگی بارد
هرگز از شاخ بید بر نخوری
با فرومایه روزگار مبر
کز نی بویا شکر نخوری

Even if the water of life were to pour from the clouds, you will never get fruits from the branch of a willow tree. Do not associate with mean people, as you can never get sugar from an ordinary reed.

عاقبت گرگ زاده گرگ شود
گرچه با آدمی بزرگ شود

The cub of a wolf will ultimately become a wolf, even if it is brought up in the company of human beings.

خوی بد در طبیعتی که نشست
 نرود جز به وقت مرگ از دست

The ill-tempered nature of a man does not leave him until his death.

چو با سفله گویی به لطف و خوشی
 فزون گرددش کبر و گردنکشی

If you speak kindly and politely to a mean person, he will become more proud and arrogant.

MELODIOUS VOICE

آواز خوش از کام و دهان و لب شیرین
 گر نغمه کند و نر نکند، دل بفریبد
 و پرده عشاق و خراسان و حجاز است
 از حنجره مطرب مکروه نزیب

A pleasant voice from a sweet palate, mouth and lips, whether accompanied by music or not, captures the heart. But the musical modes of Oshaq, Khorasan and Hejaz, sung by an abominable singer will be repulsive to the ears.

Note: Oshaq, Khorasan and Hejaz are modes in Persian music, similar to different Raags in Indian music.

چه خوش باشد آواز نرم حزین
 به گوش حریفان مست صبح
 به از روی زیباست آواز خوش
 که آن حظ نفس است و این قوت روح

How pleasant is a soft and plaintive voice to the ears of those

intoxicated with the morning draught. A sweet voice is better than a beautiful face, as beauty gives only carnal delight, while a good voice nourishes the soul.

MISDEED

چو از قومی یکی بی دانشی کرد
نه که را منزلت ماند، نه مه را

When somebody from a tribe commits a foolish deed, both the young and the elders lose their dignity.

MISERLINESS

مکن نماز برآن هیچکس که هیچ نکرد
که عمر در سر تحصیل مال کرد و نخورد

Pray not for the soul of the miserable miser who has never performed an act of charity, and has wasted his life in amassing wealth without making any good use of it.

پیش درویشان بود خونت مُباح
گر نباشد در میان مالت سبیل
دوستی با پیلبانان یا مکن
یا بنا کن خانه ای در خورد پیل

Shedding your blood with impunity, will be permissible for the mendicants, if there is no share in your wealth for them. Either do not befriend the elephant riders, or construct a house which is large enough to accommodate an elephant.

دریغاً! گردن طاعت نهادن
 گرش همراه بودی دست دادن
 به دیناری چو خر در گل بمانند
 و الحمدی بخواهی، صد بخوانند

Alas! Obedience to God should be combined with generosity. If you ask for a *dinar* as charity, they refuse to oblige, like a donkey stuck in the mud. But if you ask them for a prayer, they will offer you a hundred *Fatehas*.

Note: Surah Fateha is the opening chapter of the Holy Qur'an and is recited in all daily prayers and also for the dead.

کریمان را به دست اندر دم نیست
 خداوندان نعمت را کرم نیست

Those who are generous have no money, and those who are wealthy are miserly.

گر بجای نانش اندر سفره بودی آفتاب
 تا قیامت روز روشن کس ندیدی در جهان

Had the sun been on his dining table instead of bread, nobody would ever see a bright day in the world until the Day of Resurrection.

درویش بجز بوی طعامش نشنیدی
 مرغ از پس نان خوردن او ریزه نچیدی

A mendicant could only smell the miser's food, but never see it. The birds were never able to get crumbs after the miser ate his meals.

هر کرا جاه و دولت است و بدان
خاطری خسته در نخواهد یافت
خبرش ده که هیچ دولت و جاه
به سرای دگر نخواهد یافت

Inform him, who possesses status and riches, and yet does not help those who are in distress, that he will not get any wealth and status in the world to come.

MISFORTUNE

مردکی خشک مغز را دیدم
رفته در پوستین صاحب جاه
گفتم: ای خواجه گر تو بدبختی
مردم نیک بخت را چه گناه؟

On hearing a stupid fellow speaking disparagingly about a high-ranking man, I said to him, "Dear Sir! If you are unfortunate, why should you find fault with the fortunate ones?"

اگر به هر سر موئیت صد هنر باشد
هنر به کار نیاید چو بخت بد باشد

If every strand of your hair possesses a hundred skills, they will be of no consequence if good fortune does not favour you.

MISPLACED AFFECTION

خواجه با بنده پری رخسار
چون درآمد به بازی و خنده
نه عجب، کو چو خواجه حکم کند
وین کشد بارِ ناز چون بنده

When a master plays and jests with his angel-faced maid, it will not be a wonder if she orders him about, and he bears the burden of her blandishment like a slave.

MISPLACED MERCY

پسندیده است بخشایش ولیکن
مَبَنه بر ریش خلق آزار مرهم
ندانست آنکه رحمت کرد بر مار
که آن ظلم است بر فرزندِ آدم

Forgiveness is commendable, but do not apply ointment to the wound of an oppressor. Does not he who shows kindness to a serpent realize that this is tantamount to oppression towards mankind?

MODERATION

وقتی به لطف گوی و مدارا و مردمی
باشد که در کمند قبول آوری دلی
وقتی به قهر گوی که صد کوزه نبات
گه گه چنان بکار نیاید که حنظلی

At times, speak politely, moderately and kindly, so that you may be able to captivate one's heart with your words (lit: lasso). At times, speak harshly, since a hundred pitchers of crystal candy cannot be as effective as colocynth.

با مردم سهل خوی دشخوار مگوی
با آنکه در صلح زند جنگ مجوی

Speak not harshly to men of gentle manners; seek not hostility with one who knocks at the door of peace.

شبانی با پدر گفت: ای خردمند
 مرا تعلیم ده پیرانه یک پند
 بگفتا: نیک مردی کن نه چندان
 که گردد چیره گرگ تیز دندان

A shepherd said to his father, "O wise one! Give me a saintly advice." He replied, "Be benevolent, but not to an extent as to make the sharp-toothed wolf overpower you."

درشتی و نرمی بهم در به است
 چو رگزن که جراح و مرهم نه است
 درشتی نگیرد خردمند پیش
 نه سُستی که ناقص کند قدر خویش
 نه مر خویشان را فزونی نهد
 نه یکباره تن در مذلت دهد

Harshness and lenience should be blended together, like the phlebotomist who is both a surgeon and one who applies the ointment. A wise man never resorts to harshness, nor does he show so much lenience as to reduce his own dignity. He neither overrates himself, nor does he become totally servile.

MONOTHEISM

موحد چه در پای ریزی زرش
 چه شمشیر هندی نهی بر سرش
 امید و هراسش نباشد ز کس
 بر این است بنیاد توحید و بس

Whether you bribe him with money or threaten him with an

Indian sword, a monotheist will neither entertain hope from, nor fear anyone. This alone is the basis of monotheism.

MOURNING

کاش کان روز که در پای تو شد خار اجل
دست گیتی بزدی تیغِ هلاکم بر سر
تا در این روز جهان بی تو ندیدی چشم
این منم بر سرِ خاک تو که خاکم بر سر

On the day when the thorn of death pierced your foot, I wish the world had struck my head with the sword of death, so that today I would not have to see the world devoid of you. Woe unto me that I am now beside your grave (mourning your untimely death).

NAME AND FAME

دولت جاوید یافت هر که نکونام زیست
کز عقبش ذکر خیر زنده کند نام را
وصف تو را گر کنند ورنکنند اهل فضل
حاجتِ مشاطه نیست روی دلارام را

Whoever lives with a good name has acquired eternal wealth, as he attains immortality by people remembering him for his goodness. It is immaterial whether men of erudition praise you or not, as a lovely face does not need the cosmetic aids of a beautician.

زنده است نام فرخ نوشیروان به خیر
گرچه بسی گذشت که نوشیروان نماند
خیری کن ای فلان و غنیمت شمار عمر
زان پیشتر که بانگ برآید فلان نماند

The auspicious name of Noshirwan is still remembered for his goodness by people, although he died long ago. O man! Perform good deeds and know the true value of your life, before it is proclaimed that such a one is no more.

قارون هلاک شد که چهل خانه گنج داشت
نوشیروان نمرد که نام نکو گذاشت

Korah, who had forty treasure houses was destroyed, whereas Noshirwan is immortal as he left behind a good name.

Note: Korah was a detractor of Prophet Moses and his wealth was phenomenal. He was, however, an evil miser who fiercely opposed the Apostle. Noshirwan was a just and benevolent monarch.

این همه هیچ است چون می بگذرد
بخت و تخت و امر و نهی و گیر و دار
نام نیک رفتگان ضایع مکن
تا بماند نام نیکت پایدار

All these are of no consequence as they are transient: Good fortune, the royal throne, the power to command and prohibit, glory and pomp. Do not destroy the good name of those who have passed away, so that your good name may also be eternal.

NEGLIGENCE

گرچه بیرون ز رزق نتوان خورد
در طلب کاهلی نشاید کرد

Although we cannot eat more than what has been destined for us, we must not be negligent in acquiring it.

(BAD) NEIGHBOUR

خانه ای را که چون تو همسایه است
 ده درم سیم بدعیار ارزد
 لکن امیدوار بایند بود
 که پس از مرگ تو هزار ارزد

A house which has a neighbour like you is worth only ten *dirhams* of counterfeit money. But one should be hopeful that after your death, it may fetch a price that is a thousandfold.

NON-ATTACHMENT

چون مرد درفتاد ز جای و مقام خویش
 دیگر چه غم خورد، همه آفاق جای اوست
 شب هر توانگری به سرایی همی رود
 درویش هر کجا که شب آمد، سرای اوست

When a man loses his rank and position, he need not be concerned, as the entire world is his dwelling place. At night, every rich man retires to his mansion, whereas the mendicant sleeps wherever he wishes as night falls.

برآنچه می گذرد، دل منه که دجله بسی
 پس از خلیفه بخواهد گذشت در بغداد
 گرت ز دست برآید، چو نخل باش کریم
 ورت ز دست نیاید، چو سرو باش آزاد

Do not lose your heart to what is transient, as the river Tigris will continue to flow in Baghdad even after the Caliph is dead. If you have the means, be generous like the date tree, but if you are devoid of

it, be independent like the cypress tree.

OBEDIENCE

مهتری در قبول فرمان است
ترک فرمان دلیل حرمان است
هر که سیمای راستان دارد
سر خدمت بر آستان دارد

Obedience ensures greatness; disobedience leads to failure. Whoever possesses the face of righteousness, places his head of obedience on the threshold (of God).

OBLIGATION

هر که نان از عمل خویش خورد
منت حاتم طایی نبرد

Whoever eats the bread of his own labour will not have to undergo the obligation of Hatam Tai.

Note: Hatam Tai was known for his generosity and hospitality.

حقاً که با عقوبت دوزخ برابر است
رفتن به پایمردی همسایه در بهشت

Truly, going to Heaven with the help of neighbours is equal to the sufferings of Hell.

به نان خشک قناعت کنیم و جامه دلچ
که بار محنت خود به که بار منت خلق

It is better to be content with one's dry bread and coarse cassock, since it is preferable to suffer the load of one's own necessities than to

undergo the obligation of others.

نانم افزود و آبرویم کاست
بینوایی به از مذلتِ خواست

He increased my bread, but lessened my dignity. It is better to bear destitution than to suffer the humiliation of solicitation.

OLD AGE

طرب نوجوان ز پیر مجوی
که دگر ناید آب رفته به جوی
زرع را چون رسید وقت درو
نخرامد چنان که سبزه نو

Do not expect the fervour of youth from an aged man, as water that has flown by in a stream cannot be returned. When a crop is ready for harvesting, it will not stand aloft and erect like fresh greenery.

دور جوانی بشد از دست من
آه و دریغ آن زَمَن دلفروز
قوت سرپنجه شیرى گذشت
راضیم اکنون به پیری چو یوز
پیر زنی موی سیه کرده بود
گفتمش: ای مامک دیرینه روز
موی به تلبیس سیه کرده گیر
راست نخواهد شدن این پشت کوز

Alas! I have lost the days of my youth. I remember with sorrow the pleasant days gone by. I have lost my lion-like strength and am now

content with a piece of cheese, like a greyhound. I said to an old woman who had dyed her hair, "O elderly mother! You have deceptively blackened your hair, but your bent back will not become straight."

OPPORTUNITY

امروز بکش چو میتوان کُشت
کاتش چو بلند شد، جهان سوخت
مگذار که زه کند کمان را
دشمن که به تیر میتوان دوخت

Kill him today when you have the ability to do so, as once the fire becomes strong, it can burn the entire world. Do not give him the opportunity to string his bow and shoot him with your arrow, now that you are able to do so.

ناسزایی را که بینی بخت یار
عاقلان تسلیم کردند اختیار
چون نداری ناخن درنده تیز
با بدان آن به که کم گیری ستیز
هر که با پولاد بازو پنجه کرد
ساعد مسکین خود را رنجه کرد
باش تا دستش ببندد روزگار
پس به کام دوستان مغزش برآر

Wise men yield to a mean person who is aided by good fortune. When you do not have sharp ripping nails, you should be prudent enough not to contest with worthless men. Whoever grapples with one who has an arm of steel, will hurt his own weak forearm. Wait until fortune deserts him (lit.: the world ties his hands), and thereafter smash

his brains to the satisfaction of your friends.

OPPRESSION

زورت ار پیش می رَوَد با ما
با خداوند غیبدان نرود
زورمندی مَکُن بر اهل زمین
تا دعایی بر آسمان نرود

Although your power can prevail upon us, it will be of no avail against God who sees everything. Do not use force against the inhabitants of the earth, so that their curses may not ascend to the sky.

OSTENTATION

ای هنرها گرفته برکف دست
عیبها بر گرفته زیر بغل
تا چه خواهی خریدن ای مغرور
روز درماندگی به سیمِ دغل

O you who display your accomplishments and conceal your faults under your armpit, and O proud one! What do you hope to purchase with your ill-gotten wealth, when you are distressed?

PAIN

آتش سوزان نکند با سپند
آنچه کند دودِ دلِ دردمند

What fire does to the wild rue, which is cast in it, pales into insignificance as compared to the sighs of an afflicted heart.

PATIENCE

منشین تُرُش از گردش ایام که صبر
تلخ است، ولیکن بر شیرین دارد

Let not the fluctuations of fortune cause you grief, as patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet.

PEACE

با مردم سهل خوی، دشخوار مگوی
با آنکه در صلح زند، جنگ مجوی

Do not speak harshly to men of gentle manners; do not seek war with a man who knocks at the door of peace.

PIETY

صاحبدلی به مدرسه آمد ز خانقاه
بشکست عهد صحبت اهل طریق را
گفتم: میان عالم و عابد چه فرق بود؟
تا اختیار کردی از آن این طریق را
گفت: آن گلیم خویش بدر می برد ز موج
وین جهد می کند که بگیرد غریق را

A pious man came to a school after quitting the monastery and leaving the company of its religious men. I said to him, "What was the difference between a scholar and a pious devotee, that has prompted you to prefer the society of the former to the latter?" He replied, "The pious devotee seeks his own salvation (lit: saves his own rug from the waves), whereas the learned scholar endeavours to save others from drowning".

نان از برای کنج عبادت گرفته اند
صاحب‌دلان ، نه کنج عبادت برای نان

Pious men eat to be able to live to offer prayers in solitude. They do not pray in solitude to earn money.

ترک دنیا و شهوت است وهوس
پارسایی، نه ترک جامه و بس

True piety involves the renunciation of the lusts and passions of the world, and not merely in changing one's attire.

POLITENESS

چو پرخاش بینی، تحمل بیار
که سهلی ببندد در کارزار
به شیرین زبانی و لطف و خوشی
توانی که پیلی به مویی کشی
لطافت کن آنجا که بینی ستیز
نبرد قز نرم را تیغ تیز

Be tolerant whenever you are confronted by violence, as a peaceful disposition shuts the door of dispute. With sweet words, gentleness and politeness, you can pull an elephant by a strand of hair. Show kindness whenever you see a strife, as soft silk cannot be cut by a sharp knife.

POVERTY

آتش از خانه همسایه درویش خواه
کآنچه بر روزن او می گذرد، دود دل است

Do not ask for fire from your poor neighbour's house, as the smoke which issues from his chimney is in reality the sigh from his heart.

PRAISE OF GOD

ای برتر از خیال و قیاس و گمان و وهم
وز هر چه گفته اند و شنیدیم و خوانده ایم
مجلس تمام گشت و به آخر رسید عمر
ما همچنان در اول وصف تو مانده ایم

O You Who are beyond imagination, comparison, presumption, and apprehension! And whatever has been said, heard and written about You. The assembly has concluded and life is about to end, and we are still in the initial stages of praising You.

به ذکرش هر چه بینی در خروش است
دلی داند در این معنی که گوش است
نه بلبل برگلش تسبیح خوانی است
که هر خاری به تسبیحش زبانی است

Everything that you observe is singing the praises of God, and this is known to those who have a discerning ear. It is not only the nightingale in the rose-bush which chants the praises of God, but every thorn has also become a tongue to glorify Him.

PRAYER

دوش مرغی به صبح می نالید
عقل و صبرم ببرد و طاقت و هوش
یکی از دوستان مخلص را
مگر آواز من رسید به گوش

گفت: باور نداشتم که ترا
بانگ مرغی چنین کند مدهوش
گفتم: این شرط آدمیت نیست
مرغ تسبیح گوی و من خاموش

Last night, I heard a bird lamenting at dawn, and this deprived me of my reason, patience, power and sensibility. When one of my sincere friends heard my voice, he said, "I could not believe that the voice of a bird would deprive you of your senses." I replied, "It will be inhuman on my part to be silent, whilst a bird is singing the praises of God."

PREJUDICE

کسی به دیده انکار اگر نگاه کند
نشان صورت یوسف دهد به ناخوبی
و گر به چشم ارادت نگه کنی در دیو
فرشته ایت نماید به چشم کرّوبی

If anyone looks unfavourably at someone, even the beauty of Prophet Joseph will appear ugly to him; but if you look favourably at a demon, he will appear as attractive as the angel Cherub to you.

چشم بداندیش که برکنده باد
عیب نماید هنرش در نظر
ور هنری داری و هفتاد عیب
دوست نبیند بجز آن یک هنر

May the malicious eye of a prejudiced man be destroyed, for it regards every accomplishment to be a flaw. But if you have a single

accomplishment and seventy defects, a friend will perceive only the single accomplishment.

PRIDE

نشاید بنی آدم خاک زاد
که در سر کند کبر و تندی و باد
ترا با چنین گرمی و سرکشی
نپندارم از خاکی، از آتشی

It is improper for the earth-born children of Adam to assume pride, ferocity and arrogance. I consider you, who are so haughty and arrogant, not to have been created from dust, but from fire.

هر که بیهوده گردن افرازد
خویشتن را بگردن اندازد

Whoever foolishly considers himself to be great, brings about his own downfall.

PROVIDENCE

چه جرم دید خداوند سابق الانعام؟
که بنده در نظر خویش خوار میدارد
خدایراست مسلم بزرگواری و لطف
که جرم بیند و نان برقرار میدارد

What fault has my bountiful master found in me, that this servant has become hateful in his sight? Only God enjoys indisputable Greatness and Kindness, for He sees one's crime, but still provides one's daily bread.

PROXIMITY

دوست نزدیکتر از من به من است
وینت مشکل که من از وی دورم
چه کنم؟ با که توان گفت که او
در کنار من و من مهجورم

The Friend is closer to me than myself, but the difficulty is that I am far from Him. What shall I do? To whom can I say that He is beside me, and yet I am separated from Him.

Note: Holy Qur'an, Chapter 50 Qaaf, Verse 16: "We verily created man and We know what his soul whispereth to him, and We are nearer to him than his jugular vein." (حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ)

PURSUIT

تو که در بند خویشتن باشی
عشقباز دروغزن باشی
گر نشاید به دوست ره بردن
شرط یاری است در طلب مردن

You who are obsessed with yourself can never be a true lover. If one cannot gain access to one's beloved, love demands that one should die in her pursuit.

QUALITY

اگر ژاله هر قطره ای در شدی
چو خرمهره بازار از او پر شدی

If every dew drop were to become a pearl, the market would be full of pearls and their value would be that of shells (or glass beads).

خاک مشرق شنیده ام که کنند
 به چهل سال کاسه ای چینی
 صد به روزی کنند در مردشت
 لاجرم قیمتش همان بینی

I have heard that in the East, it takes forty years to make a China bowl. But they make a hundred bowls in a day in Mardasht, and therefore you see how cheap these are.

RECITATION

گر تو قرآن برین نمط خوانی
 ببری رونق مسلمانی

If this is how you recite the Qur'an, you will ruin the splendour of Islam.

Note: The reference is to a Qari whose recitation of the Holy Qur'an was repulsive. On being asked by a pious man as to how much he was being paid, he replied, "I recite it gratis for the sake of God." To which the pious man said, "For God's sake, do not recite it."

RELATIVES

چون نبود خویش را دیانت و تقوی
 قطع رَحِمِ بهتر از مودتِ قربی

If one's relatives are irreligious and impious, it is better to break the bonds of kinship with them.

هزار خویش که بیگانه از خدا باشد
 فدای یک تن بیگانه کاشنا باشد

A thousand relatives who are irreligious, should be sacrificed for a stranger who acknowledges God.

REPETITION

سخن گرچه دلبنده و شیرین بود
سزاوار تصدیق و تحسین بود
چو یک بار گفتی، مگو باز پس
که حلوا چو یک بار خوردند، بس

However attractive and sweet a speech may be, and although it is commendable and admirable, do not repeat it when you have once delivered it, because a sweetmeat eaten once is more than enough.

REPUTATION

یکی کرده بی آبرویی بسی
چه غم دارد از آبروی کسی؟

One who has lost his own reputation, does not care for the reputation of others.

هر که علم شد به سخا و کرم
بند نشاید که نهد بر درم
نام نکویی چو برون شد به کوی
در نتوانی که ببندی به روی

Whoever acquires the reputation of being generous and liberal, should not tie up his money bags. When your good name has spread in the streets, you should (live up to your reputation and) not shut your door against people.

RETRIBUTION

بر غلامی که طوع خدمت تست
 خشم بی حد مران و طیره مگیر
 که فضیحت بود به روز شمار
 بنده آزاد و خواجه در زنجیر

Do not show excessive anger and harshness to a slave over whom you have absolute command, as it will be disgraceful to find on the Day of Judgement, that the slave is set free and you are bound in chains.

نه هر که قوت بازو و منصبی دارد
 به سلطنت بخورد مال مردمان به گزاف
 توان به حلق فرو بردن استخوان درشت
 ولی شکم بدرد چون بگیرد اندر ناف

Not everyone who enjoys strength and official power, can freely usurp the property of people with impunity. One may swallow a big bone, but it will tear one's belly on getting entangled in the navel.

نه هر بازو که در وی قوتی هست
 به مردی عاجزان را بشکند دست
 ضعیفان را مکن بر دل گزندی
 که در مانی به جور زورمندی

It is improper for a powerful man to break the hands of those who are weak. Do not cause distress to the weak, lest you too should suffer at the hands of one who is stronger than you.

RIGHTEOUSNESS

راستی موجب رضای خداست
کس ندیدم که گم شد از ره راست

Righteousness begets Divine favours. I have not seen anyone lost on a right path.

RISK

غواص اگر اندیشه کند کام نهنگ
هرگز نکند در گرانمایه به چنگ

If the diver were to fear the jaws of the whale, he would never be able to obtain precious pearls from the sea.

زود بینی شکسته پیشانی
تو که بازی کنی به سر با قوچ

You who play with the ram with your head, will soon find your forehead broken by it.

SA'DI

هنر به چشمِ عداوت بزرگتر عیب است
گل است سعدی و در چشمِ دشمنان خار است

In the eyes of the enemy, accomplishment is a great flaw. Sa'di is indeed a rose, but is a thorn in the eyes of his enemies.

SAFETY

به دریا در منافع بی شمار است
اگر خواهی سلامت، در کنار است

There are innumerable riches to be obtained from the sea, but if you desire safety, it is on the shore.

SAVING

اندک اندک به هم شود بسیار
دانه دانه است غله در انبار

A little added to a little becomes a lot. A grain added to a grain makes a granary.

SECRET

به دوست گرچه عزیز است، راز دل مگشای
که دوست نیز بگوید به دوستان عزیز

Do not reveal your secret to your friend, however dear he may be to you, for he will also relate it to his dear friends.

خاموشی نه که ضمیر دل خویش
با کسی گفتن و گفتن که مگوی
ای سلیم آب ز سرچشمه ببند
که چو پُر شد، نتوان بستن جوی

It is better to be silent and not disclose your secret to anyone, than to tell him and ask him not to reveal it to others. O sensible man! Stop the water at the fountain-head, as you cannot stop it when the water is in full stream.

SELF-CONTROL

نه مرد است آن به نزدیک خردمند
که با پیل دمان پیکار جوید

بلی مرد آن کس است از روی تحقیق
که چون خشم آیدش، باطل نگوید

Anyone who can battle a furious elephant is not a brave man in the opinion of a wise man. Truly, a brave man is he who controls himself when he is angry, and does not speak absurdly.

SELF-ESTEEM

نخورد شیر نیم خوردهٔ سگ
وَر به سختی بمیرد اندر غار
تن به بیچارگی و گرسنگی
بنه و دست پیش سفله مدار
گر فریدون شود به نعمت و ملک
بی هنر را به هیچ کس م شمار

A lion will never eat a dog's leavings, even if it perishes due to hunger in its den. Bear your helplessness and pangs of hunger, but never condescend to approach a mean person with a request for help. Ignore a man who is devoid of virtue and consider him to be worthless, even if he acquires the wealth and power of King Faridun

هر که بر خود در سؤال گشاد
تا بمیرد نیازمند بود
آز بگذار و پادشاهی کن
گردن بی طمع بلند بود

He who takes to begging, will always be in need as long as he lives. Give up avarice and rule like a king, as the head of a man who is content, is always held high.

سرکه از دسترنج خویش و تره
بهتر از نان دهخدا و بره

Vinegar and green leek of one's own labour is better than bread and mutton from the village headman.

SELFISHNESS

مبین آن بی حمیت را که هرگز
نخواهد دید روی نیک بختی
که تن آسانی گزیند خویشان را
زن و فرزند بگذارد به سختی

Do not look at the face of the spiritless man, who shall never be fortunate, as he seeks his own comfort, while abandoning his wife and children to suffer hardships.

دست تضرع چه سود بنده محتاج را ؟
وقت دعا بر خدای، وقت کرم در بغل

Of what use are the supplications of a needy man, who raises his hands to God during prayers, but folds his hands under his arms when he is asked to offer some charity.

دونان چو گلیم خویش بیرون بردند
گویند: چه غم گر همه عالم مردند

After having saved themselves (lit: saved their rugs), mean persons proclaim, "What does it matter, even if the entire world is destroyed?"

SELF-OBSESSION

آن شنیدی که شاهی به نهفت
با دل از دست رفته ای می گفت
تا ترا قدر خویشتن باشد
پیش چشمت، چه قدر من باشد؟

Have you heard what a beautiful damsel quietly said to her admirer? "As long as you are obsessed with yourself, what will be my worth in your eyes?"

SELF-RESTRAINT

به دیدار مردم شدن عیب نیست
و لیکن نه چندان که گویند بس
اگر خویشتن را ملامت کنی
ملامت نباید شنیدن ز کس

There is no harm in visiting people, but not so often that they may say that it is enough. If you censure yourself, you will not have to hear the reproach of others.

SEPARATION

سود دریا نیک بودی، گر نبودی بیم موج
صحبت گل خوش بدی، گر نیستی تشویش خار
دوش چون طاووس می نازیدم اندر باغ وصل
دیگر امروز از فراق یار می پیچم چو مار

The gains from the sea would be attractive, if it were not for the fear of the waves; the company of roses would be welcome, if it were not for the anxiety of the thorns. Last night, I was strutting about like

a peacock in the garden of union with my beloved, but today I am writhing with pain like a snake, on being separated from her.

SERVILITY

به دست آهک تفته کردن خمیر
به از دست بر سینه پیش امیر

Using one's hands in kneading quick lime to make mortar is better than folding one's hands in obedience to an *emir*.

چون درآید مه از تویی به سخن
گرچه به دانی، اعتراض مکن

When one who is superior to you speaks, do not raise any objection, even if your knowledge is greater than his.

SHAM PIETY

آن که چون پسته دیدمش همه مغز
پوست بر پوست بود همچو پیاز
پارسایان روی در مخلوق
پشت بر قبله میکنند نماز

He who appeared to me like a fleshy pistachio, was in reality a multi-layered onion. Sham religious men who make a show of their piety, actually offer prayers with their backs to the altar (Holy Ka'ba).

تا مرا هست و دیگرم باید
گر نخوانند زاهدم، شاید

It would not be improper if people do not consider me to be pious, when I am wealthy, and yet covet the wealth of others.

پارسا بین که خرّقه در بر کرد
جامهٔ کعبه را جلّ خر کرد

Behold the ascetic who has covered his body with a cassock, and has thereby made the cover of the venerable Ka'ba an attire for an ass like himself.

SILENCE

چو کاری بی فضول من برآید
مرا در وی سخن گفتن نشاید
وگر بینم که نابینا و چاه است
اگر خاموش بنشینم، گناه است

If an affair can be accomplished without my interference, it is improper for me to express an opinion on the subject. But if I see a blind man near a well, it will be sinful on my part if I observe silence (and do not alert him).

تا مرد سخن نگفته باشد
عیب و هنرش نهفته باشد

As long as a man has not spoken, his defects and accomplishments remain unknown.

هر که تأمل نکند در جواب
بیشتر آید سخنش نا صواب
یا سخن آرای چو مردم به هوش
یا بنشین چون حیوانان خموش

The speech of one who does not ponder before replying, will be

mostly incorrect. Either talk intelligently like human beings, or remain silent like animals.

چون نداری کمال و فضل، آن به
که زبان در دهان نگه داری
آدمی را زبان فزیه کند
جوز بی مغز را سبکباری

If you are devoid of accomplishment and learning, it is better to remain silent. The tongue betrays a man, just as a hollow walnut is detected by its light weight.

خری را ابلهی تعلیم میداد
بر او بر صرف کرده سعی دایم
حکیمی گفتش: ای نادان چه کوشی
در این سودا؟ بترس از لوم لایم
نیاموزد بهایم از تو گفتار
تو خاموشی بیاموز از بهایم

A foolish man was training a donkey and made every effort to instruct it. A wise man said to him, "O ignorant man! Why do you waste your efforts in this deal? Be afraid of the reproaches of reprovers. Beasts will not learn to speak from you. You should learn silence from beasts".

SKILL

گر به غریبی رود از شهر خویش
سختی و محنت نبرد پینه دوز

ور به خرابی فتد از مملکت
گرسنه خفتد مَلِکِ نِیمِ روز

If a cobbler travels to another place, he will suffer no hardship and affliction. But if the King of Neemrooz were to wander out of his kingdom, he would have to sleep hungry.

Note: Neemrooz was the old name of the province of Sistan. The King of Neemrooz is one of the titles of the great paladin Rostam of Shahnameh.

SLANDER

شاید پس کار خویشتن بنشستن
لیکن نتوان زبان مردم بستن

One may perhaps be able to keep to oneself and mind one's own business, but one can never prevent people from slandering.

نعوذ بالله! اگر خلق غیب دان بودی
کسی به حال خود از دست کس نیاسودی

We seek refuge in God! If people were to be omniscient, nobody would be safe from harm at the hands of others.

Note: نعوذُ بالله : We seek refuge in God, or may God protect or preserve us, or 'God forbid. In this couplet, 'We seek refuge in God' is more appropriate.

به عذر و توبه توان رستن از عذابِ خدای
ولیک می نتوان از زبان مردم رست

One can obtain deliverance from the wrath of God by seeking His pardon and by means of repentance, but one cannot escape from the

tongues of people (slanderers).

SLOW AND STEADY

به چشم خویش دیدم در بیابان
که آهسته سبق بُرد از شتابان
سمند بادپای از تک فرو ماند
شتربان همچنان آهسته می راند

I saw with my eyes in the desert how one who walked slowly, overtook another who ran fast. The swift steed was exhausted by galloping, whilst the camel driver was still proceeding at a slow pace.

SOLICITATION

هرچه از دونان به منت خواستی
در تن افزودی و از جان کاستی

Whatever you obtain by solicitation from mean persons, benefits the body, but harms the soul.

SOLITUDE

آنان که به کنج عافیت بنشستند
دندان سگ و دهان مردم بستند
کاغذ بدریدند و قلم بشکستند
وز دستِ زبانِ حرف گیران رستند

Those who have sought the peace of solitude, have thereby muzzled the mouths of dogs and men. They have torn their papers and broken their pens, and have thus attained salvation from censors.

SPEECH

بسیج سخن گفتن آنگاه کن
که دانی که در کار گیرد سخن

Speak only when you are sure that your words will bear results.

حکایت برمزاج مستمع گوی
اگر خواهی که دارد با تو میلی
هر آن عاقل که با مجنون نشیند
نباید کردنش جز ذکر لیلی

Tell your story in accordance with the temperament of the listener, if you wish that he should incline towards you. Any wise man who sits in the company of *Majnoon*, should talk of nobody but *Leila*.

SPOUSE

زن بد در سرای مرد نکو
هم در این عالم است دوزخ او
زینهار از قرین بد، زینهار
وَ قِنَا رَبَّنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

A bad wife in the house of a good husband, is a living hell for him in this world. Beware of a bad companion. Our Lord! Guard us from the doom of fire.

***Note: Holy Qur'an, Chapter 2 - Baqarah (The Cow), Verse 201:
"And of them also is he who saith: Our Lord! Give unto us in the world that which is good, and in the Hereafter that which is good, and guard us from the doom of fire."***

STRANGER

درشتی کُند با غریبان کسی
که نابوده باشد به غُربت بسی

Only he who has not been a stranger, is ready to cause distress to a stranger.

STRICTNESS

پادشاهی پسر به مکتب داد
لوح سیمینش بر کنار نهاد
بر سر لوح او نبشته به زر
« جور استاد به ز مهر پدر »

A king sent his son to school and placed a silver slate beside him. On the slate was written in letters of gold: "The severity of a teacher is better than the affection of a father."

SUBMISSION

هرچه رَوَد بر سرم، چون تو پسندی رواست
بنده چه دعوی کُند؟ حکم خداوند راست

Whatever ill befalls me with your approval, is acceptable to me. What excuse can this servant offer? Your command is the law for me.

SUFFERING

تندرستان را نباشد درد ریش
جُز به همدردی نگویم درد خویش

گفتن از زنبور بی حاصل بود
 با یکی در عمر خود ناخورده نیش
 تا ترا حالی نباشد همچو ما
 حال ما باشد ترا افسانه پیش
 سوز من با دیگری نسبت مکن
 او نمک بر دست و من بر عضو ریش

Those who are healthy do not comprehend the pain of a wound. I shall not talk about my pain to anyone except a fellow-sufferer. It is futile to talk about the sting of a wasp to someone who has never suffered its pain in his lifetime. As long as you have not suffered like me, my grief would sound like idle talk to you. Do not compare my agony to the pain of someone else. He only has salt in his hand, whereas I have salt on my wound.

SUPPLICATION

بر در کعبه سائلی دیدم
 که همی گفت و می گزستی خوش
 می نگویم که طاعتم بپذیر
 قلم عفو برگناهم کَش

At the gate of Ka'ba, I saw a mendicant who was weeping and saying, "I am not asking You to accept my worship. I only ask You to forgive my sins".

SYCOPHANCY

خلاف رای سلطان رای جستن
 به خون خویش باشد دست شستن

اگر خود روز را گوید شب است این
بباید گفتن اینک ماه و پروین

To express an opinion which is contrary to that of the king, is like washing one's hand in one's own blood. If the king calls the day a night, one should prudently agree with him and say that the moon and the Pleiades are visible.

TALE-BEARER

هر که عیب دگران پیش تو آورد و شمرد
بی گمان عیب تو پیش دگران خواهد برد

Whoever recounts the faults of others to you, will undoubtedly tell others of your faults.

میان دو کس جنگ چون آتش است
سخن چین بدبخت هیزم کش است
کنند این و آن خوش دگر باره دل
وی اندرمیان، کور بخت و خجل
میان دو تن آتش افروختن
نه عقل است و خود درمیان سوختن

Conflict between two persons is like fire, and the tale-bearer is one who feeds the fire with firewood. Later, the two persons may become reconciled, and the tale-bearer will be despised and put to shame. It is unwise to kindle fire between two persons and then burn in it yourself.

TIMELY EFFORT

درختی که اکنون گرفتست پای
 به نیروی شخصی برآید ز جای
 وگر همچنان روزگاری هلی
 به گردونش از بیخ بر نگسلی
 سر چشمه شاید گرفتن به بیل
 چو پُر شد، نشاید گذشتن به پیل

The tree that has just taken root can be uprooted by the strength of a man. But if you allow it to continue to grow, you will not be able to uproot it. It is possible to stop the flow of water at the fountain-head with a spade, but once the water is in full stream, it cannot be stopped even by an elephant.

TOLERANCE

در خاک بیلقان برسیدم به عابدی
 گفتم: مرا به تربیت از جهل پاک کن
 گفتا: برو چو خاک تحمل کن ای فقیه
 یا هرچه خوانده ای، همه در زیر خاک کن

In the land of Beelqan, I met a pious devotee, to whom I said, "Rid me of my ignorance with your instructions." He replied, "O learned jurist! Go and be tolerant like the earth, or else bury in the earth all that you have learnt."

TRAINING

هر که در خردیش ادب نکنند
 در بزرگی فلاح از او برخاست

چوب تر را چنانکه خواهی پیچ
نشود خشک جز به آتش راست

Whoever is not trained and taught good manners in childhood, will be deprived of happiness when he grows up. The green branch can be given any shape one desires, but once it is dry, it will not become straight even by fire.

TRUTH

تا نیک ندانی که سخن عین صواب است
باید که به گفتن دهن از هم نگشایی
گر راست سخن گویی و در بند بمانی
به زانکه دروغت دهد از بند رهایی

Unless you are convinced that what you say is perfectly correct, do not open your mouth to utter it. It is better to be in fetters for speaking the truth, than attaining release by telling a lie.

یکی را که عادت بود راستی
خطایی رود، در گذارند از او
وگر نامور شد به قول دروغ
دگر راست باور ندارند از او

When someone is used to telling the truth, a fault committed by him will be overlooked. But if someone becomes notorious for telling lies, a truth spoken by him will not be believed.

TYRANNY

نکند جور پیشه سلطانی
 که نیاید زگرگ چوپانی
 پادشاهی که طرح ظلم فکند
 پای دیوار ملک خویش بکند

A tyrant can never rule well over a kingdom, just as a wolf can never be a shepherd. The king who establishes an order of oppression, saps the foundation of his own kingdom.

پادشاهی کو روا دارد ستم بر زبردست
 دوستدارش روز سختی دشمن زورآور است
 با رعیت صلح کن وز جنگ خصم ایمن نشین
 زانکه شاهنشاه عادل را رعیت لشکر است

The king who oppresses his weak subjects, will have powerful enemies to deal with when he is in trouble. Make peace with your subjects and be secure from battle with the enemy, since subjects are an army for a just king.

ای زبردست زبردست آزار
 گرم تا کی بماند این بازار؟
 به چه کار آیدت جهانداری؟
 مُردنت به که مردم آزاری

O powerful one who tyrannize your subjects! How long will you continue to practise tyranny? Of what use is your sovereignty? It is better that you die and do not persecute people.

ظالمی را خفته دیدم نیمروز
 گفتم این فتنه است، خوابش برده به
 آنکه خوابش بهتر از بیداری است
 آنچنان بد زندگانی مرده به

I saw a tyrant sleeping at noon. I said, "He is wicked. It is better that he sleeps". For him who is better asleep than awake, death is preferable, as his living is evil.

دوران بقا چو باد صحرا بگذشت
 تلخی و خوشی و زشت و زیبا بگذشت
 پنداشت ستمگر که جفا بر ما کرد
 در گردن او بماند و بر ما بگذشت

The period of life passed like wind in the desert. All that was bitter, sweet, ugly and beautiful also passed by. The tyrant imagines that he has oppressed us, but in reality it is he who bears the burden of his sin, whereas our sufferings have passed away.

نماند ستمکار بد روزگار
 بماند بر او لعنت پایدار

The evil tyrant does not last long, but the curses of his victims last forever.

بد اخترتر از مردم آزار نیست
 که روز مصیبت کسش یار نیست

There is no greater unfortunate man than a tyrant, as he has no friend in adversity.

اگر ز باغ رعیت ملک خورد سیبی
 برآورند غلامان او درخت از بیخ
 به پنج بیضه که سلطان ستم روا دارد
 زنند لشکریانش هزار مرغ به سیخ

If the king were to eat a single apple from a peasant's garden, the king's servants would uproot the tree. And if the king were to take five eggs from the peasant by force, his soldiers would grill a thousand fowls of the peasant.

UGLINESS

تو گویی تا قیامت زشت رویی
 بر او ختم است و بر یوسف نکویی

You may say that until the Day of Resurrection, he is the epitome of ugliness, just as Prophet Joseph is the incarnation of beauty.

کس نیاید به پای دیواری
 که بر آن صورتت نگار کنند
 گر ترا در بهشت باشد جای
 دیگران دوزخ اختیار کنند

Nobody will approach a wall on which your portrait is painted. If you gain admission to Paradise, others would prefer to go to Hell.

UNITY

پشه چو پر شد بزند پیل را
 با همه تندی و صلابت که اوست

مورچگان را چو بود اتّفاق
شیر ژیان را بدرانند پوست

A swarm of mosquitoes can overpower an elephant, notwithstanding its strength and might. If the ants are united, they can flay a fierce lion alive.

UNPLEASANT VOICE

به تیشه کس نخراشد ز روی خارا گل
چنانکه بانگِ درشتِ تو می خراشد دل

The sound of a spade scraping off mud from a rough rock, pales into insignificance as compared to your harsh voice which scrapes the hearts of men.

مطربی، دور از این خجسته سرای
کس دوبارش ندیده در یک جای
راست چون بانگش از دهن برخاست
خلق را موی بر بدن برخاست
مرغِ ایوان ز هول او بپرید
مغزِ ما برد و حلقِ خود بدرید

Far be such a singer from this auspicious mansion! Nobody ever saw him in the same place again. Truly, whenever he opened his mouth to sing, it made men's hairs stand on end. Fearful were the birds and flew away on hearing him. He drove us mad and tore his own throat.

نبیند کسی در سماعت خوشی
مگر وقتِ رفتن که دم در کشی

Nobody will enjoy your singing, except when it is time for you to depart and be silent.

VALUE

گر سنگ همه لعل بدخشان بودی
پس قیمت لعل و سنگ یکسان بودی

If every stone were to be a ruby from Badakhshan, the value of a ruby and a stone would be the same.

Note: Badakhshan is the name of a place in Afghanistan, famous for its rubies.

VAIN EFFORT

آهنی را که موریانه بخورد
نتوان برد از او به صیقل زنگ
با سیه دل چه سود گفتن و عظ؟
نرود میخ آهنین در سنگ

The iron that has rusted cannot be refurbished by polishing it. Of what use is a sermon to a black-hearted man? An iron nail cannot penetrate a stone.

VIOLENCE

چو دست از همه حیلتی در گسست
حلال است بُردن به شمشیر دست

When one has failed in all attempts to resolve a matter amicably, one can lawfully draw the sword as a last resort.

VIRTUE

چند گویی که بداندیش و حسود
 عیب جویان من مسکینند
 نیک باشی و بدت گوید خلق
 به که بد باشی و نیکت بینند

How long will you complain and say, "My jealous ill-wishers are finding faults with a poor man like me?" It is better to be good and be considered bad, than to be bad and be considered good.

گرت خوی من آمد ناسزاوار
 تو خوی نیک خویش از دست مگذار

If my disposition does not live up to your expectation, do not give up your own good behaviour.

تو نیکو روش باش تا بد سگال
 به نقص تو گفتن نیابد مجال
 چو آهنگ بر ربط بود مستقیم
 کی از دست مُطرب خورد گوشمال؟

Let your conduct be good, so that your detractor cannot dare speak ill of you. When the harp is in tune, why should it suffer correction by the hand of a musician?

خاتون خوب صورت پاکیزه روی را
 نقش و نگار و خاتم پیروزه، گو مباش
 درویش نیک سیرت پاکیزه خوی را
 نان رباط و لقمه دریوزه، گو مباش

For the beautiful and attractive lady, cosmetic aids, make up and turquoise rings are redundant. For a virtuous and righteous dervish, the bread of an inn and victuals obtained by begging, are immaterial.

Note: Dervish is a mystic (Sufi) who has taken the vows of poverty and austerity.

آن را که سیرتی خوش و سرّی است با خدای
بی نان وقف و لقمه در یوزه، زاهد است
وانگشت خوبروی و بنا گوش دلفریب
بی گوشوار و خاتم پیروزه، شاهد است

A truly religious man is one who has a righteous nature, is devoted to God, does not feed on bread dedicated to a religious cause and does not resort to begging. The fingers of a lovely lady and the elegant lobes of her ears are beautiful, even without ear-rings and turquoise rings.

VISION

در چشم من آمد آن سهی سرو بلند
بر بود دلم ز دست و در پای فکند
این دیده شوخ می کشد دل به کمند
خواهی که به کس دل ندهی، دیده بیند

I had a vision of that stately cypress. She captivated my heart and cast it at her feet. My impudent eyes have caused my heart to be ensnared. Shut your eyes, if you do not want to lose your heart to someone.

WEALTH

دریاب کنون که نعمت هست به دست
کین دولت و ملک میرود دست به دست

Realize now, and utilise the riches you possess, because power and sovereignty pass from hand to hand.

هر کرا جاه و دولت است و بدان
خاطری خسته در نخواهد یافت
خبرش ده که هیچ دولت و جاه
به سرای دگر نخواهد یافت

Inform the man who has position and wealth, and yet does not help others with it, that he will find no wealth and position in the next world.

چه خوش گفت آن تھی دست سلحشور
جوی زر بهتر از پنجاه من زور

How well has the needy gladiator said: "A grain of gold is better than fifty maunds of strength."

توانگران را وقف است و نذر و مهمانی
زکات و فطره و اعتاق و هدی و قربانی
تو کی به دولت ایشان رسی؟ که نتوانی
جز این دو رکعت و آن هم به صد پریشانی

The wealthy make charitable dedications, perform their vows and are hospitable. Further, they pay the poor-rate and alms, and also free slaves, offer gifts and sacrifices. How can you who reluctantly offer two *rak'ats* of compulsory prayers, ever equal them?

بنی زر نتوانی که گنی بر کس زور
ور زر داری، به زور محتاج نه ای

You cannot use force against anyone if you do not have wealth; and if you have wealth, you need not resort to force.

مُنْعَمٌ به کوه و دشت و بیابان غریب نیست
 هر جا که رفت، خیمه زد و خوابگاه ساخت
 و آنرا که بر مراد جهان نیست دسترس
 در زاد و بوم خویش غریب است و ناشناخت

A wealthy man is not a stranger in the mountains, fields and wilderness. Wherever he goes, he pitches his tent and makes it his abode. But he who is destitute and unsuccessful, is an unknown stranger even in his native place.

هر که زر دید، سر فرو آورد
 و رترازوی آهنین دوش است

Whoever sees money (wealth), bows before it, like the tilting beam of the scales which is made of iron.

WICKEDNESS

زنان باردار ای مرد هشیار
 اگر وقت ولادت مار زایند
 از آن بهتر به نزدیک خردمند
 که فرزندان ناهموار زایند

O Wise man! In the opinion of men of intelligence, it would be better if pregnant women were to give birth to serpents than disagreeable children.

شنیدم که مردان راه خدای
 دل دشمنان را نکردند تنگ
 ترا کی میسر شود این مقام؟
 که با دوستانت خلاف است و جنگ

I have heard that truly pious men cause no harm even to their enemies. How can you attain such a status, as you are in conflict and contention even with your friends?

سفله چو جاه آمد و سیم و زرش
 سیلی خواهد به ضرورت سرش
 آن نشنیدی که فلاطون چه گفت؟
 مور همان به که نباشد پرش

When a wretched man acquires status and wealth, he often requires a slap on his face. Have you not heard what Plato said? "It is better that the ant has no wings".

WISDOM

توانگری به هنر است، نه به مال
 بزرگی به عقل است، نه به سال

Ability is not dependent on wealth, but on skill. Greatness is not dependent on age, but on wisdom.

سُخَن آنگه کُنَد حَکیم آغاز
 یا سر انگشت سوی لقمه دراز
 که ز ناگفتنش خلل زاید
 یا ز ناخوردنش به جان آید

لاجرم حکمتش بود گفتار
خوردنش تندرستی آرد بار

The wise man commences speaking only when he fears that his silence may lead to some harm, and extends his hand to eat only if he fears that he may die by avoiding food. Consequently, his discourse is wisdom, and his eating brings good health.

دو عاقل را نباشد کین و پیکار
نه دانایی ستیزد با سبکسار
اگر نادان به وحشت سخت گوید
خردمندش به نرمی دل بجوید
دو صاحب‌دل نگهدارند مویی
همیدون سرکشی و آزرم جویی
و گر بر هر دو جانب جاهلانند
اگر زنجیر باشد، بگسلانند

Two wise men will never be vindictive and quarrel with each other. Neither will a wise man fight with an ignorant one. If an ignorant man speaks harshly, the wise one will try to pacify him. Two pious men will not allow a strand of hair to be broken. The same is the case of an unruly man and a peace-loving one (as the latter will relent). But if both the parties are ignorant, they will break even an iron chain.

نگویند از سر بازیچه حرفی
کزان پندی نگیرد صاحب هوش
وگر صد باب حکمت پیش نادان
بخوانند، آیدش بازیچه در گوش

A wise man will derive instruction from anything that is said even in jest. But if a hundred chapters on philosophy are read out to an ignorant man, he will consider it to be a game.

فریدون گفت نقاشان چین را
که پیرامون خرگاهش بدوزند
بدان را نیک دار، ای مرد هشیار
که نیکان خود بزرگ و نیک روزند

Faridun ordered the Chinese embroiderers to embroider the following words all around his pavilion: "O wise man! Be good to those who are bad, for those who are virtuous, are themselves great and fortunate".

WORLD

جهان ای برادر نماید به کس
دل اندر جهان آفرین بند و بس
مکن تکیه بر ملک دنیا و پشت
که بسیار چون تو پرورد و کُشت
چو آهنگ رفتن کند جان پاک
چه برتخت مُردن ، چه بر روی خاک !

O brother! The world does not constantly remain with anyone. Attach your heart only to the Creator of the Universe. Neither rely upon the kingdom of this world, nor seek its support, as it has nurtured and killed many like you. When the soul is departing from the body, it makes no difference whether one expires on the throne or on bare ground.

چه سالهای فراوان و عمرهای دراز
 که خلق بر سر ما بر زمین بخواهد رفت
 چنان که دست به دست آمدست مُلک به ما
 به دستهای دگر همچنین بخواهد رفت

For many long years and ages, men will pass over our graves. Just as the kingdom has come to us by succession, it will pass to the hands of others after us.

Note: These verses were written on the crown of King Kaikhosrow.

WORLDLY ATTACHMENT

ای گرفتار پای بند عیال
 دیگر آسودگی مبنند خیال
 غم فرزند و نان و جامه و قوت
 بازت آرد ز سیر در ملکوت
 همه روز اتّفاق می سازم
 که به شب با خدای پردازم
 شب چو عقد نماز میبندم
 چه خورد بامداد فرزندم

O you who are occupied with the cares of a family! Do not hope to rest at peace hereafter. The thought of your children and their food, garments and subsistence, deprives you of the privilege of contemplating the celestial world. Throughout the day, I think of devoting myself to God at night. But at night, when I intend to offer my prayers, I start worrying about what my children will eat on the following day.

WORTHINESS

کس نبیند که تشنگان حجاز
 به لب آب شور گرد آیند
 هر کجا چشمه ای بود شیرین
 مردم و مرغ و مور گرد آیند

You will never see the thirsty pilgrims of Mecca gathering around a salt-water spring. But men, birds and ants gather around a spring of sweet water.

WORTHLESSNESS

پرتو نیکان نگیرد هر که بنیادش بد است
 تربیت نااهل را، چون گردکان بر گنبد است

Whoever is evil by nature, can never acquire the excellence of good men. To educate one who is worthless, is like throwing walnuts at the dome.

چون بود اصل گوهری قابل
 تربیت را در او اثر باشد
 هیچ صیقل نکونداند کرد
 آهنی را که بدگهر باشد
 سگ به دریای هفتگانه بشوی
 که چو تر شد، پلیدتر باشد
 خر عیسی گرش به مکه برند
 چون بیاید، هنوز خر باشد

If a person is basically capable, instructions will prove effective. But the iron which is not of a proper temper cannot be furbished. Wash a dog with the water of seven seas, and it will become more unclean when it is wetted. If the ass which carried Jesus were to be taken to Mecca, it will still be an ass when it returns.

WRETCHEDNESS

زمین شوره سنبل برنیارد
در او تخم و عمل ضایع مگردان
نکویی با بدان کردن چنان است
که بد کردن بجای نیکمردان

Brackish land will never yield hyacinths. Do not waste your labour and seeds on it. Showing favour to wicked men is tantamount to harming those who are righteous.

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گلچینی از اشعار بوستان

BOOSTAN

(Selected Verses)

ترا پند سعدی بس است ای پسر
اگر گوش گیری چو پند پدر
گر امروز گفتار ما نشنوی
مبادا که فردا پشیمان شوی
ازین به نصیحتگری بایدت
ندانم پس از من چه پیش آیدت

My son! The advice of Sa'di is sufficient for you, if you heed it like the advice of your father. But if you do not heed my advice today, I hope you will not have to regret it tomorrow. And if you need a better counsellor than me, I do not know what will be your fate after me.

ACCEPTANCE

یکی پیش شوریده حالی نبشت
که دوزخ تمنا کُنی یا بهشت؟
بگفتا: می‌پرس از من این ماجرا
پسندیدم آنچه او پسندد مرا

Someone wrote to a distressed man, asking him, "Do you desire Hell or Heaven?" He replied, "Do not question me about such matters, for I readily accept whatever He wills to grant me."

ACCOMPLISHMENT

اگر هست مرد از هنر بهره ور
هنر خود بگوید، نه صاحب هنر
اگر مشک خالص نداری، مگوی
ورت هست، خود فاش گردد به بوی
به سوگند گفتن که زر مغرب‌یست
چه حاجت؟ محک خود بگوید که چیست

If a man is endowed with accomplishment, not him but his accomplishment will speak for itself. If you do not possess pure musk, you need not announce it. But if you have it, musk will proclaim itself by its fragrance. What need is there to swear that your gold is pure? The touchstone itself will reveal its identity.

ADMINISTRATION

دو تن، پرور ای شاه کشورگشای
یکی اهل رزم و دگر اهل رای

هرآن کو قلم را نورزید و تیغ
 بر او گر بمیرد، مگو ای دریغ
 قلمزن نکو دار و شمشیرزن
 نه مطرب، که مردی نیاید زن
 نه مردیست دشمن در اسباب جنگ
 تو مدهوش ساقی و آواز چنگ
 بسا اهل دولت به بازی نشست
 که دولت برفتش به بازی ز دست

O conquering monarch! You should patronise two types of men: One of them is the man who is a veteran in combat, and the other is the man who is prudent and wise. Mourn not for the man who neither wields the pen nor the sword. Patronise the wise man and the swordsman, but not the minstrel, as manliness cannot come from women. It is unmanly on your part to be occupied with the sound of the harp and intoxicated by the cupbearer, when the enemy is ready for battle at your gate. Many prosperous rulers have lost their kingdoms as they were busy with games (and entertainment).

قلمزن که بد کرد با زیردست
 قلم بهتر او را به شمشیر دست
 مدبر که قانون بد مینهد
 تو را میبرد تا به دوزخ دهد

It is better to cut off the hands of an administrator who is cruel to his subordinates. The law-giver who enacts a bad regulation, carries you with himself to Hell.

خدا ترس را بر رعیت گمار
 که معمار ملکست پرهیزگار
 بداندیش تست آن و خونخوار خلق
 که نفع تو جوید در آزارِ خلق

Appoint a God-fearing man as an administrator , for a virtuous person is a builder of a prosperous kingdom. But he who harms people to benefit you, is in reality your ill-wisher and a bloodthirsty tyrant.

ADVENTURISM

تنت زورمند است و لشکر گران
 و لیکن در اقلیم دشمن مران
 که وی بر حصاری گریزد بلند
 رسد کشوری بی گنه را گزند

Even though you are powerful and your army is strong, do not venture into the enemy's territory. The enemy will seek refuge in a lofty fortress and the innocent inhabitants of that land will suffer harm needlessly.

ADVICE

شنیدم که یک بار در حله ای
 سخن گفت با عابدی کله ای
 که من فر فرماندهی داشتم
 بسر بر کلاه مهی داشتم
 سپهرم مدد کرد و نصرت وفاق
 گرفتم ببازوی دولت عراق

طمع کرده بودم که کرمان خورم
 که ناگه بخوردند کرمان سرم
 بکن پنبه غفلت از گوش هوش
 که از مُردگان پندت آید بگوش

I have heard that once in a certain place, the skull (of an arrogant ruler) said to a pious devotee, "I had at some time the splendour of absolute command and a crown on my head. The heavens aided me and victory was my helper, and with my great power I conquered Iraq. I had entertained the ambition to conquer Kerman, but suddenly the worms ate up my head". Remove the cotton from your ear of prudence, to enable you to hear the counsel of the dead.

چو مُنکر بود پادشه را قدم
 که یارد زد از امر معروف دم
 تحکم کند سیر بر بوی گل
 فرو ماند آواز چنگ از دُهل
 گرت نهی مُنکر برآید ز دست
 نشاید چو بی دست و پایان نشست
 و گر دست قدرت نداری، بگوی
 که پاکیزه گردد به اندرز خوی

When the king himself deserves to be censured, who will dare direct others to perform good deeds? The odour of garlic will overwhelm the fragrance of the rose and the sound of the drum will drown the melody of the harp. If forbidding evil lies within your powers, you should not sit idle like helpless ones. And speak if you are powerless, for an evil nature can become pure by sound advice.

AFFECTION

طلبکار باید صبور و حمول
 که نشنیده ام کیمیاگر ملول
 زر از بهر چیزی خریدن نکوست
 نخواهی خریدن به از ناز دوست
 گر از دلبری دل به تنگ آیدت
 دگر غمگساری به چنگ آیدت
 ولی گر به خوبی ندارد نظیر
 به اندک دل آزار، ترکش مگیر
 توان از کسی دل برداختن
 که دانی که بی او توان ساختن

A seeker must be patient and forbearing, for I have never heard an alchemist to be dispirited. Gold is good for buying goods, and there is nothing more precious to buy than the beloved's charm. If you grow weary of your beloved, you will be able to find someone else to take tender care of you. But if she has no equal for beauty, do not abandon her for some trivial grievance. You can detach your heart from someone only when you are sure that you can live without her.

ANIMOSITY

کسانی که پیغام دشمن برآند
 ز دشمن همانا که دشمن ترآند
 کسی قول دشمن نیارد به دوست
 جز آنکس که در دشمنی یار اوست

Those who carry the enemy's message are indeed greater enemies than the enemy himself. None will carry an enemy's message to a friend,

except he who is indeed the enemy's friend.

ARMY

مَلک را بود بر عدو دست چیر
 چو لشکر دل آسوده باشند و سیر
 بهای سر خویشتن میخورد
 نه انصاف باشد که سختی برد
 چو دارند گنج از سپاهی دریغ
 دریغ آیدش دست بُردن به تیغ
 چه مردی کند در صف کارزار؟
 که دستش تُهی باشد و کار، زار

The king has an upper hand over his enemy, only when his army is contented and satisfied. The soldier gives his head for his master in battle, and it will, therefore, be unjust if he is made to suffer any hardship. When treasures are denied to the soldier, he will be reluctant to use his sword in battle. How can he be expected to show manliness on the battlefield, if his hand is empty and his condition is pitiable?

دلاور که باری تهور نمود
 ببايد به مقدارش اندر فزود
 که بار دگر دل نهد بر هلاک
 ندارد ز پیکار یا جوج باک
 سپاهی در آسودگی خوش بدار
 که در حالت سختی آید به کار
 سپاهی که کارش نباشد به برگ
 چرا دل نهد روز هیجا به مرگ؟

کنون دست مردان جنگی ببوس
 نه آنکه که دشمن فرو کوفت کوس
 نواحی مُلک از کف بدسگال
 به لشکر نگهدار و لشکر به مال

When a valiant soldier shows bravery once, he should be promoted, so that he may risk his life again in battle and not fear fighting Gog. Keep your troops happy in days of ease, so that they may be of service to you during hardship. If your troops are not well provided for, why should they risk their lives on the day of battle? Kiss the hands of your brave soldiers now, and not when the enemy is beating the drums of war. Protect the regions of your kingdom from the evil enemy with the help of your army, and gratify your army with your wealth.

Note: Gog and Magog were wild and violent people who oppressed the inhabitants of their neighbouring territory. The oppressed people appealed to Zulqarnain to construct a barrier to stop the depredations of Gog and Magog. Zulqarnain did so, and by the grace of Allah, put an end to the aggression of these vicious people. Holy Qur'an, Chapter 18 - Kahf (The Cave), Summary of Verses 93-97.

AWARENESS

نه تدبیر محمود و رای نکوست
 که دشمن نداند شهنشه ز دوست
 چنان است در مهتری شرط زیست
 که هر کهتری را بدانی که کیست

It is neither prudent nor judicious that a king should be unable to distinguish between friend and foe. Greatness demands that one who

is superior, should be aware of those who are inferior to him.

BACKBITING

چرا گوید آن چیز در خفیه مرد
که گر فاش گردد شود روی زرد؟

Why should a man say something in private, which will make him turn pale if it is disclosed in public?

بد اندر حق مردم نیک و بد
مگوی ای جوانمرد صاحب خرد
که بد مرد را خصم خود میکنی
وگر نیکمرد است، بد میکنی

O wise brave man! Do not speak ill of good and bad men, for you will make the bad man your enemy by doing so; and if he is good, you shall be committing a wrong.

هر آنکو بَرَد نام مردم به عار
تو چشم نکو گویی از وی مدار
که اندر قفای تو گوید همان
که پیش تو گفت از پس مردمان

Do not expect anyone who speaks disparagingly of others, to speak well of you. For behind your back, he will speak ill about you, just as he had spoken ill about others in their absence to you.

BEASTLY PROPENSITIES

نه هر آدمی زاده از دد بهست
که دد ز آدمی زاده بد بهست
بهست از دد انسان صاحب خرد
نه انسان که در مردم افتد چو دد
چو انسان نداند بجز خورد و خواب
کدامش فضیلت بود بر دواب؟

Not every human being is superior to beasts, for beasts are better than men who are evil. A wise man is better than a beast, but not a man who ill treats people like a beast. When a man is concerned only with eating and sleeping, what superiority has he to the beasts of burden?

BENEFICENCE

عدو را به الطاف گردن ببند
که نتوان بریدن به تیغ این کمند
چو دشمن کرم بیند و لطف و جود
نیاید دگر خُبث از او در وجود

Win over your enemy with your beneficence, for such a favour cannot be undone (lit: such a lasso cannot be cut with a sword). When your enemy sees such liberality, kindness and magnanimity from you, he will never again show you any meanness.

بزارید وقتی زنی پیش شوی
که دیگر مخر نان ز بقال کوی
به بازار گندم فروشان گرای
که این جو فروشیست، گندم نمای

به دلداری آن مرد صاحب نیاز
 به زن گفت کای روشنایی، بساز
 به امید ما کُلبه اینجا گرفت
 نه مردی بود نفع از او واگرفت
 ره نیکمردان آزاده گیر
 چو استاده ای، دست افتاده گیر
 ببخشای، کانان که مرد حقند
 خریدار دگان بی رونقند
 جوانمرد اگر راست خواهی، ولیست
 کرم پیشه شاه مردان علیست

A woman once lamented and said to her husband, "Do not buy bread any more from the grocer of this lane. Go to the wheat-sellers' market, for this man is a barley-seller who displays wheat." The needy man comforted her and said, "O my brightness! Put up with this, for he has set up his shop here, hoping to profit from us. It will be inhuman to take away his profit from him." Follow the path of virtuous and righteous men. Help the fallen one, now that you are on your feet. Be beneficent, for those who are men of Truth, are customers of a shop where business does not flourish. If you want to know the truth, a generous man is a saint. Truly, generosity is the profession of Ali, the king of men.

Note: Hazrat Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of Holy Prophet Mohammad, is known for his beneficence, bravery and generosity.

BENEVOLENCE

شنیدم که فرماندهی دادگر
 قبا داشتی هر دو روی آستر

یکی گفتش: ای خسرو نیکروز
 ز دیبای چینی قبایلی بدوز
 بگفت: این قدر ستر و آسایش است
 وزین بگذری، زیب و آرایش است
 نه از بهر آن میستانم خراج
 که زینت کنم بر خود و تخت و تاج
 چو همچون زنان حله در تن کنم
 به مردی کجا دفع دشمن کنم؟
 مراهم ز صد گونه آز و هواست
 و لیکن خزینه نه تنها مر است
 خزاین پُر از بهر لشکر بود
 نه از بهر آذین و زیور بود

I have heard that a just ruler had a tunic which was made of lining-cloth. A person said to him, "O fortunate king! Make for yourself a tunic of Chinese brocade". He replied, "This much is sufficient for my covering and comfort. Anything beyond this is merely for adornment and decoration. I do not take taxes to adorn myself, my throne and my crown. How will I bravely repulse the enemy if I bedeck myself with a woman's robe? I too have a hundred desires and yearnings, but the treasury does not belong to me alone. The coffers are full and are meant for maintaining the army. They are not meant for bedecking and beautifying me".

یکی از بزرگان اهل تمیز
 حکایت کند ز ابن عبدالعزیز

که بودش نگینی در انگشتری
 فرومانده در قیمتش جوهری
 قضا را در آمد یکی خشک سال
 که شد بدر سیمای مردم هلال
 چو در مردم آرام و قوت ندید
 خود آسوده بودن مروت ندید
 بفرمود و بفروختندش به سیم
 که رحم آمدش بر غریب و یتیم
 به یک هفته نقدش به تاراج داد
 به درویش و مسکین و محتاج داد
 فتادند در وی ملامت کنان
 که دیگر به دست نیاید چنان
 شنیدم که میگفت و باران دمع
 فرو میدویدش به عارض چو شمع
 که زشت است پیرایه بر شهریار
 دل شهری از ناتوانی فکار
 مرا شاید انگشتری بی نگین
 نشاید دل خلقی اندوهگین

A great man of distinction tells thus of the son of Abdulaziz: That he had a precious stone in his ring, which the jewellers were at a loss to evaluate. By chance, a drought befell in his realm, and the moon-shaped faces of people became as lean as crescents. When he saw that his people were deprived of their comfort and strength, he considered it unmanly to be comfortable himself. He ordered the precious stone to be sold for silver, as he felt compassion for the destitutes and the orphans. Within a week, he distributed the money among the poor, the

miserable and the needy. His associates reproached him and said that he would never again obtain such a precious stone. While a stream of tears was flowing down his cheeks like molten wax, I heard him say, "Adornment is improper for a king when his citizens are miserable and suffering pains. I can well do with a ring that has no precious stone to embellish it, but it is improper for people to suffer grief".

Note: Omar ibn Abdulaziz was an Omayyad Caliph who was known for his benevolence and justice.

نکو کار مردم نباشد بدش
 نوزد کسی بد که نیک افتدش
 شرانگیز هم بر سر شر شود
 چو کژدم که با خانه کمتر شود
 اگر نفع کس در نهاد تو نیست
 چنین گوهر و سنگ خارا یکیست
 غلط گفتم، ای یار شایسته خوی
 که نفع است در آهن و سنگ و روی
 چنین آدمی مرده به ننگ را
 که بر وی فضیلت بود سنگ را

Men who practise goodness suffer no evil. No goodness accrues to the one who commits evil. One who incites evil will meet an evil end, just like the scorpion which seldom returns to its hole. If you lack the good nature to benefit someone, in that event, a gem and a granite rock are one and the same. O good-natured friend! I have wrongly said this, for there are advantages to be obtained from iron, stone and brass. For such a non-benevolent one, death is preferable to living, as even stones are superior to him.

کسی دانه نیکمردی نکاشت
کزو خرمن کام دل برندااشت
نه هرگز شنیدیم در عمر خویش
که بد مرد را نیکی آمد به پیش

Nobody has ever sown a grain of beneficial deeds, without reaping the harvest of his heart's desires from it. I have never heard in my lifetime that an evil man has been rewarded with goodness.

CARNAL DESIRE

کند مرد را نفس اماره خوار
اگر هوشمندی، عزیزش مدار

Carnal desire degrades a man. Do not hold it dear if you are wise.

CAUTION

مسوزان درخت گل اندر خریف
که در نوبهارت نماید ظریف

Do not burn the rose-bush in autumn, for it will display its beauty in spring.

CHARITY

کسی خُسبَد آسوده در زیر گل
که خُسبند از او مردم آسوده دل
غم خویش در زندگی خور که خویش
به مُرده نپردازد از حرصِ خویش

پَریشان کن امروز گنجینه چُست
 که فردا کلیدش نه در دست تُست
 تو با خود ببر توشهٔ خویشتن
 که شفقت نیاید ز فرزند و زن
 کسی گوی دولت ز دنیا بَرَد
 که با خود نصیبی به عقبی بَرَد

He sleeps comfortably in his grave, at whose hands people are at ease and in comfort. As long as you live, be concerned with your life hereafter, as greedy relatives will not spare a thought for their dead ones. Promptly be charitable today, when your treasure is at your disposal, for tomorrow its key will not be with you. Carry along your provisions with you, since tomorrow your wife and children will not show any sympathy for you. He takes with him good fortune from this world, who carries a portion of his wealth for the world hereafter.

یکی تخم در خاک از آن مینهد
 که روز فروماندگی بر دهد
 حدیث درست آخر از مُصطفی است
 که بخشایش و خیر دفع بلاست

One sows seeds in the ground in order that it may yield fruits on the day of distress. It is a saying of the Chosen One (Holy Prophet Mohammad), that charity and good deeds ward off calamities.

مگردان غریب از درت بی نصیب
 مبادا که گردی به درها غریب
 بزرگی رساند به محتاج خیر
 که ترسد که محتاج گردد به غیر

درون فروماندگان شاد کُن
 ز روز فروماندگی یاد کُن

Do not turn away from your door a poor stranger without being charitable to him, lest you also become a stranger knocking at others' doors. A great man is charitable to a needy one, as he fears that he may himself be in need of others. Make happy the hearts of the distressed ones, and remember that you may some day be distressed yourself.

COMPASSION

چو تمکین و جاهت بود بر دوام
 مکن زور بر ضعف درویش عام
 نصیحت شنو مَرْدُمِ دوربین
 نپاشند در هیچ دل تخم کین
 خداوند خرمن زیان میکند
 که بر خوشه چین سر گران میکند
 نترسد که نعمت به مسکین دهند
 وز آن بار غم بر دل این نهند

Now that you enjoy authority and status, do not use your power against poor common men. Those who heed advice and are far-sighted will never sow the seeds of animosity in the heart of anyone. The owner of the harvest who treats his gleaners harshly, causes harm to himself. Is he not afraid that the poor may be favoured, and he may be loaded with the burden of grief?

یکی را خری در گل افتاده بود
 ز سوداش خون در دل افتاده بود

همه شب در این غصّه تا بامداد
سقط گفت و نفرین و دشنام داد
نه دشمن برست از زبانش، نه دوست
نه سلطان که این بوم و بر زان اوست
قضا را خداوند آن پهن دشت
در آن حال منکر بر او بر گذشت
شنید این سخنهای دور از صواب
نه صبر شنیدن، نه روی جواب
ملک شرمگین در حشم بنگریست
که سودای این بر من از بهر چیست؟
یکی گفت: شاهها به تیغش بزن
که نگذاشت کس را، نه دختر نه زن
نگه کرد سلطان عالی محل
خودش در بلا دید و خر در وحل
ببخشود بر حال مسکین مرد
فرو خورد خشم سخنهای سرد
زرش داد و اسب و قبا پوستین
چه نیکو بود مهر در وقت کین

A man's donkey had fallen into a quagmire and he was extremely agitated and grieved because of this. He was so anguished that throughout the night, he raved, ranted and abused. Neither enemy nor friend escaped from his abuses, nor did the sultan to whom that territory and plain belong. By chance, the lord of that wide plain passed by him in that unlawful state. He heard his foul language which was unbearable to him, and to which he could not respond. The king was abashed and looking at his retinue asked, "Why is this man so furious

with me?" One of them replied, "Your Majesty! Kill him with your sword, for he has spared no one, neither daughter nor wife." The exalted sultan saw that the man was afflicted and his donkey was trapped in the quagmire. Hence, he forgave him and controlled his own wrath, despite the abuses. He gave him gold, a horse and a leather cloak. How noble it is to be compassionate when one can be revengeful!

یکی در بیابان سگی تشنه یافت
 برون از رمق در حیاتش نیافت
 کُله دلو کرد آن پسندیده کیش
 چو جبل اندر آن بست دستار خویش
 به خدمت میان بست و بازو گشاد
 سگ ناتوان را دمی آب داد
 خبر داد پیغمبر از حال مرد
 که داور گناهان از او عفو کرد
 الا گر جفا کاری، اندیشه کن
 وفا پیش گیر و کرم پیشه کن
 کسی با سگی نیکویی گم نکرد
 کجا گم شود خیر با نیک مرد؟
 کرم کن چنان کت برآید ز دست
 جهانبان در خیر بر کس نبست

In a desert, someone found a dog which was panting for life and on the verge of death. The righteous man made a bucket and rope with his hat and turban, and girded his loins to attend to it. He then gave some water to the helpless dog. About his condition, the Holy Prophet announced that the Just God pardoned all his sins. Come, reflect upon it if you are a tyrant! Be devoted and practise compassion. When a person earns such goodness for helping a dog, how can he be deprived

of it if he serves a good man? Be compassionate to the best of your ability, for the Lord of the universe never shuts the door of blessing on anyone.

یکی بربطی در بغل داشت مست
 به شب در سر پارسایی شکست
 چو روز آمد آن نیکمرد سلیم
 بر سنگدل برد یک مشت سیم
 که دوشینه معذور بودی و مست
 ترا و مرا بربط و سر شکست
 مرا به شد آن زخم و برخاست بیم
 ترا به نخواهد شد الا به سیم
 از این دوستان خدا بر سرنند
 که از خلق بسیار بر سرخورند

A drunkard had a harp under his arm, and at night broke a pious man's head with it. On the following day, the humble generous man brought a handful of silver to the stone-hearted one, saying, "Last night, you were drunk and your conduct was excusable. Your harp and my head were both broken. My wound has healed and I am now relieved, but only with silver can your harp be mended." It is for this reason that God's friends are far above others, since they are able to patiently suffer at the hands of mankind.

CONSPIRACY

میان دو بدخواه کوتاه دست
 نه فرزانی باشد ایمن نشست

که گر هر دو با هم سگالند راز
 شود دست کوتاه ایشان دراز
 یکی را به نیرنگ مشغول دار
 دگر را بر آور ز هستی دمار

Between two evil-intentioned men, even if they are not strong, it is not prudent to be void of care. Because, if they both conspire secretly, they will reinforce each other. Keep one of them engaged by guile, and totally destroy the other by force.

CONTENTMENT

خدا را ندانست و طاعت نکرد
 که بر بخت و روزی قناعت نکرد
 قناعت توانگر کند مرد را
 خبر کن حریص جهانگرد را
 سکونی به دست آور ای بی ثبات
 که بر سنگ گردان نروید نبات
 مپرور تن ار مرد رای و هشی
 که او را چو می پروری، میکشی
 خردمند مردم هنر پرورند
 که تن پروران از هنر لاغرند
 کسی سیرت آدمی گوش کرد
 که اول سگ نفس خاموش کرد

He who has not been content with his fortune and daily bread, has neither known God nor been obedient to Him. Inform the avaricious man who explores the world (in pursuit of wealth) that contentment makes a man wealthy. O unstable one! Acquire some tranquillity, for

plants do not grow on a rolling stone. Do not cherish your body if you are prudent and intelligent, for you kill it when you nourish it. Wise men nurture accomplishments, while those who nourish the body are devoid of virtue. Only he who has first silenced the dog of his carnal desires, has acquired humaneness.

قناعت کن ای نفس بر اندکی
 که سلطان و درویش بینی یکی
 چرا پیش خسرو به خواهش روی؟
 چو یکسو نهادی طمع، خسروی

O my soul! Be content with a little, so that you may see the sultan and the mendicant to be alike. Why should you approach the king with your solicitation? When you have put aside your greed, you are a king yourself.

یکی را ز مردان روشن ضمیر
 امیر ختن داد طاقی حریر
 ز شادی چو گلبرگ خندان شکفت
 نپوشید و دستش ببوسید و گفت
 چه خوب است تشریف شاه ختن
 وز آن خویرتر خرقة خویشتن
 گر آزاده ای بر زمین خسب و بس
 مکن بهر قالی زمین بوس کس

The Emir of Khotan presented a certain man of enlightened mind with a bale of pure silk. He bloomed like a smiling rose with joy. He did not wear it, but kissed the hand of the Emir and said, "How good is the honour of the King of Khotan, but better than that is one's own patched gown." If you are unfettered, sleep on the bare ground and do not kiss

the ground before anyone for obtaining a carpet.

یکی گربه در خانه زال بود
 که برگشته ایام و بد حال بود
 دوان شد به مهمانسرای امیر
 غلامان سلطان زدندش به تیر
 چکان خونش از استخوان می دوید
 همی گفت و از هول جان می دوید
 اگر جستم از دست این تیر زن
 من و موش و ویرانه پیر زن
 نیرزد عسل جان من زخم نیش
 قناعت نکوتر به دوشاب خویش
 خداوند از آن بنده خرسند نیست
 که راضی به قسم خداوند نیست

There was a cat in an old woman's house which was unfortunate and miserable. It ran to the guest-house of the emir and the servants of the sultan shot it with their arrows. While blood was dripping from its bones, the cat was running in fear of its life and saying, "If I manage to escape from this archer's hands, I shall be content with the mice and the old woman's shed." My dear one! Honey is not worth the sting of the bee. It is better to be content with your own grape-syrup. God is not happy with that servant of His, who is not satisfied with the share God allots him.

خبر ده به درویش سلطان پَرست
 که سلطان ز درویش مسکین تَرست

گدا را کُند یک درم سیم سیر
 فریدون به مُلک عجم نیم سیر
 نگهبانی مُلک و دولت بلاست
 گدا پادشاهست و نامش گداست

Inform the mendicant who worships sultans, that a sultan is poorer than mendicants. A beggar can be sated with a dirham of silver, whereas Faridun is half-sated with the entire Persian kingdom. The guardianship of a kingdom and dominion is a calamity. The mendicant is verily a king, and only a beggar in name.

Note: Faridun was a powerful rich Persian king.

COWARDICE

یکی را که دیدی تو در جنگ پشت
 بکش، گر عدو در مصافش نکشت
 سواری که در جنگ بنمود پشت
 نه خود را، که نام آوران را بکشت
 چو بینی که یاران نباشند یار
 هزیمت ز میدان غنیمت شمار

When you see a soldier turning his back in battle, kill him even if he is not killed by the enemy. The horseman who shows his back in war does not kill himself, but kills warriors of distinction. When you realize that your comrades do not support you, practise discretion and escape from the battlefield.

CRUELTY

مها! زورمندی مکن با کهان
 که بر یک نمط می نماند جهان
 سر پنجه ناتوان بر مپیچ
 که گر دست یابد، برآیی به هیچ
 عدو را به کوچک نباید شمرد
 که کوه کلان دیدم از سنگ خرد

O great man! Do not use force against those who are weaker than you, for the world does not remain in the same state. Do not twist the paw of the infirm, as you will be humiliated if he gains the upper hand. You should never underestimate the enemy, for I have seen that tiny stones form a huge mountain.

CURSE

نخواهی که نفرین کنند از پست
 نکو باش، تا بد نگوید گست

If you wish that people should not curse you behind your back, be good so that none speaks ill of you.

چه نیکی طمع درد آن بی صفا؟
 که باشد دعای بدش در قفا

What goodness does the unhappy one who is constantly cursed by people, hope to attain?

DEATH

مگو جاهی از سلطنت بیش نیست
 که ایمن تر از ملک درویش نیست
 سبکسار مردم سبکتر روند
 حق این است و صاحب‌دلان بشنوند
 تُهی دست تشویش نانی خورد
 جهانبان بقدر جهانی خورد
 گدا را چو حاصل شود نان شام
 چنان خوش بخسبد که سلطان شام
 غم و شادمانی بسر میرود
 به مرگ این دو از سر بدر میرود
 چه آنرا که بر سر نهادند تاج
 چه آنرا که برگردن آمد خراج
 اگر سرفرازی به کیوان برست
 و گر تنگدستی بزنندان درست
 چو خیل اجل بر سر هر دو تاخت
 نمیباشد از یکدگرشان شناخت

Do not say that no dignity is greater than sovereignty, for no realm is safer than that of the pauper. Light-burdened men travel lightly. This is the truth and men of excellence know it. The worry of a pauper is to obtain a loaf of bread, whereas the concern of the sovereign is to acquire the entire world. If a beggar obtains his supper, he will sleep as peacefully as the Sultan of Syria. Sorrow and joy will both come to an end. With death, both of them will depart from the head. Both, for the man on whose head they placed the crown, and the man on whose neck the taxes were imposed: Both, for the sovereign who is

elevated to the Saturn, and the pauper who languishes in prison: When the army of death tramples upon their heads, it will not be possible to distinguish one from the other.

مکن شادمانی به مرگ کسی
که دهرت نماند پس از وی بسی
تن ما شود نیز روزی چنان
که بر وی بسوزد دل دشمنان

Do not rejoice at the death of anyone, for after him, time will not let you also live for long. Some day, our bodies will also become such, that even the hearts of enemies will sympathize with them.

زدم تیشه یک روز بر تلّ خاک
به گوش آمدم ناله ای دردناک
که زنهار اگر مردی، آهسته تر
که چشم و بناگوش و روی است و سر

One day, I struck my axe into a mound of earth and heard a painful wail: "Beware! If you are a man, please be gentle, for these are eyes, ear-lobes, face and head."

DEEDS

قیامت که بازار مینو نهند
منازل به اعمال نیکو دهند

On the Day of Resurrection, when the market of Heaven is held, positions will be awarded for virtuous deeds.

DESTINY

سعادت به بخشایش داور است
 نه در چنگ و بازوی زورآور است
 چو دولت نبخشد سپهر بلند
 نیاید به مردانگی در کمنند
 نه سختی رسد از ضعیفی به مور
 نه شیران به سرپنجه خوردند و زور
 چو نتوان بر افلاک دست آختن
 ضروریست با گردشش ساختن
 گرت زندگانی نبشتست دیر
 نه مارت گزاید نه شمشیر و شیر
 وگر در حیات نماندست بهر
 چنانت گُشد نوشدارو که زهر
 نه رستم چو پایان روزی بخورد
 شغاد از نهادش برآورد گرد؟

Prosperity is a favour of the Just One and cannot be acquired by force. If the high Heaven does not grant dominion, it cannot be attained (captured) by the lasso of manliness. The ant does not suffer hardship because of its weakness, and the lions do not eat by their powerful paws and strength. Since we cannot grapple with the heavens, it is necessary for us to put up with their vicissitudes. If you are destined to live till old age, neither serpents nor swords and lions can harm you. But if no part of living is left for you, even an antidote will kill you like poison. Did not Shaghaad reduce Rostam to dust, when the latter ate his last share of daily bread?

Note: نوشدارو: "Nooshdaru" was supposed to cure people on the verge of death. The Persian king deliberately delayed providing Rostam

with the healing antidote when the great paladin had seriously wounded Sohrab, not knowing that he was his son. Sohrab died in the arms of his father.

شغاد : Shaghad was the brother of Rostam and treacherously killed the illustrious paladin. But Rostam managed to impale Shaghad to death.

سرنوشت : Destiny: The doctrine that God has decreed everything that comes to pass.

کلید ظفر چون نباشد به دست
به بازو در فتح نتوان شکست
چه زور آورد پنجهٔ جهد مرد
چو بازوی توفیق یاری نگردد؟

If the key to victory is not in a man's hand, he cannot break open the gate of triumph. What can the powerful fist of a man's efforts attain, if the arm of success does not assist him?

DEVOTION

طریقت به جز خدمت خلق نیست
به تسبیح و سجاده و دلوق نیست

Service to humanity is the true path of religion which leads to God. It is not the rosary, the prayer mat and the cassock. (These do not constitute devotion, as they are mere symbols).

دریغ است روی از کسی تافتن
که دیگر نشاید چنو یافتن
چرا سر کشی زآن که گر سر کشد
به حرف وجودت قلم در کشد

یکم روز بر بنده ای دل بسوخت
 که می گفت و فرماندهش می فروخت
 ترا بنده از من به افتد بسی
 مرا چون تو دیگر نیفتد کسی

It is regrettable to turn away your face from someone like whom, you will never find again. Why should you turn away from someone who can ruin you if she stops loving you. One day, I felt sad for a slave who was saying while his master was selling him, "You will find many better slaves than me, but I shall never again find a master like you."

خلاف طریقت بود کاولیا
 تمنا کنند از خدا، جز خدا
 گر از دوست چشمت بر احسان اوست
 تو در بند خویشی، نه در بند دوست

It will be contrary to the religious way which leads to God, that saints should seek from God, anything else but God Himself. If you desire to seek favours from your Friend (God), you are in bondage to yourself and not to the Friend (God).

فدایی ندارد ز مقصود چنگ
 وگر بر سرش تیر بارند و سنگ
 به دریا مرو، گفتمت زینهار
 وگر میروی، تن به طوفان سپار

A true devotee will not give up his object even if arrows and stones are showered on his head. Do not venture into the sea and beware that I have warned you. But if you do so, be ready to submit yourself to the storm.

ره راست رو تا به منزل رسی
 تو بر ره نه ای، زین قبل واپسی
 چو گاوی که عصّار چشمش بیست
 دوان تا به شب، شب همانجا که هست
 کسی گر بتابد ز محراب روی
 به کفرش گواهی دهند اهل کوی
 تو هم پشت بر قبله ای در نماز
 گرت در خدا نیست روی نیاز

Travel along the right road to reach your destination. You are not on the right road and are therefore distracted. You are like the bull whose eyes are covered by the oil-presser and goes round in a circle till night, and yet at night it is at the same place. If anyone turns away his face from the altar, the people of the lane will testify to his infidelity. You too have your back to the Qibla when you pray, if you do not truly supplicate to God

جوانا، ره طاعت امروز گیر
 که فرداً جوانی نیاید ز پیر

O young man! Follow the path of devotion today, for tomorrow, youthfulness cannot be displayed by one who is old.

DISPOSITION

به دوزخ برد مرد را خوی زشت
 که اخلاق نیک آمدست از بهشت
 برو آب گرم از لب جوی خور
 نه جُلابِ سردِ تُرُشروی خور

حرامت بود نان آنکس چشید
 که چون سفره ابرو بهم در کشید
 مکن خواجه بر خویشان کار سخت
 که بدخوی باشد نگونسار بخت
 گرفتم که سیم و زرت چیز نیست
 چو سعدی زبانِ خوشت نیز نیست؟

An evil disposition takes a man to Hell, for a good disposition comes from Paradise. Go and drink warm water from the stream, but do not drink cold rose-water of a sourpuss. It is unlawful for you to taste the bread of one who scowls like a creased tablecloth. O distinguished one! Do not make matters hard for yourself, as an ill-natured man is bound to suffer adversity. I acknowledge that you have no silver and gold, but are you also devoid of the sweet tongue of Sa'di?

DIVINE MERCY

یکی حلقهٔ کعبه دارد به دست
 یکی در خراباتی افتاده مست
 گر آن را بخواند، که نگذاردش؟
 و این را براند، که باز آردش؟
 نه مستظهرست آن به اعمال خویش
 نه این را در توبه بستست پیش

One man holds the knocker of Kaba's door in his hand, while the other who is drunk, has fallen in the ruins. But if God calls the drunkard, who will prevent him from entering? And if He drives away the one who knocks at His door, who will dare bring him back? One who knocks at the door of Ka'ba cannot rely on his good deeds, while the door to repentance is not closed to the sinful drunkard.

EFFORT

الا گر طلبکار اهل دلی
 ز خدمت مکن یک زمان غافل
 چو هر گوشه تیر نیاز افکنی
 امید است ناگه که صیدی زنی
 دُری هم برآید ز چندین صدف
 ز صد چوبه آید یکی بر هدف

If you seek the company of men of excellence, do not hesitate even for a moment to serve them. When due to need, you shoot arrows in every direction, you can hope to shoot a prey by chance. A single pearl is obtained from many oyster-shells. One arrow out of a hundred, can hit the target.

EVIL

نخفتست مظلوم، از آهش بترس
 ز دود دل صبحگاهش بترس
 نترسی که پاک اندرونی شبی
 بر آرد ز سوز جگر یا ربی؟
 نه ابلیس بد کرد و نیکی ندید؟
 بر پاک ناید ز تخمِ پلید

Fear the sighs of an oppressed one who cannot sleep at night, and dread his lamentation at dawn. Are you not afraid that a righteous man may cry to God for help at night when his heart is burning with grief? Did not Satan commit wrong and, therefore, saw no goodness? Good fruits cannot be obtained from evil seeds.

EXPERIENCE

گرت مملکت باید آراسته
 مده کار مُعظم به نوخاسته
 سپه را مکن پیشرو جز کسی
 که در جنگها بوده باشد بسی
 به خردان مفرمای کار درشت
 که سندان نشاید شکستن به مشت
 نتابد سگ صید روی از پلنگ
 ز روبه رَمَد شیر نادیده جنگ

If you want your kingdom to prosper, do not entrust the young and inexperienced ones with important affairs. Appoint only the experienced man who has seen many battles as the commander of your army. Do not assign important matters to the young ones, as an anvil cannot be broken by the bare fist. A hunting dog will not turn away from a leopard, but an inexperienced lion will run away even from a fox.

به پیکار دشمن دلیران فرست
 هژبران به ناورد شیران فرست
 به رای جهاندیدگان کار کن
 که صید آزمودست گرگ کهن
 مترس از جوانان شمشیرزن
 حذر کن ز پیران بسیارفن
 جوانان پیل افکن شیرگیر
 ندانند دستان روباه پیر

خردمند باشد جهان‌دیده مرد
 که بسیار گرم آزمودست و سرد
 جوانان شایسته بخت و ور
 ز گفتار پیران نیچند سر

Send valiant men to battle with the enemy. Send lion-like warriors to fight with lions. Act in accordance with the plans of experienced veterans, for the old wolf is an experienced hunter. Do not be afraid of young gladiators; beware of the cunning of dexterous old warriors. Young men who can overpower elephants and capture lions are unaware of the guile of the old fox. A worldly-wise experienced man is prudent, as he has undergone the test of time. Worthy and fortunate young men do not disregard the counsel of the elders.

EXTRAVAGANCE

به دنیا توان آخرت یافتن
 به زر، پنجه شیر بر تافتن
 به یک بار بر دوستان زر مپاش
 وز آسیب دشمن به اندیشه باش

With the world's riches, one can attain the world hereafter. With gold, one can twist the paw of the lion. But do not shower wealth (gold) on your friends all at one time, and be apprehensive of the harm that can be caused by enemies.

تُهی دست، در خوبرویان مپیچ
 که بی سیم مردم نیرزند هیچ
 بدست تُهی بر نیاید امید
 به زر بر گنی چشمِ دیو سفید

وگر هر چه یابی به کف بر نهی
 گفت وقت حاجت بماند تهی
 گدایان به سعی تو هرگز قوی
 نگردند، ترسم تو لاغر شوی

Do not incline towards the beautiful if you are poor, for indigent people are worth nothing. One cannot fulfil one's wishes if one is a pauper, but with gold, one can gouge out the white demon's eyes. But if you spend all you earn, your palm will be empty when you are in need. The beggars will not become strong with your generosity, but I am afraid that you may become emaciated.

Note: Rostam was able to overpower and destroy the white demon in one of his expeditions, as mentioned in the Shahnameh, written by Ferdowsi.

FATALISM

به روز اجل نیزه جوشن درَد
 ز پیراهن بی اجل نَگذرَد
 کرا تیغ قهر اجل در قفاست
 برهنست اگر جوشنش چند لاست
 ورش بخت یاور بود، دهر پُشت
 برهنه نشاید به ساطور کُشت
 نه دانا به سعی از اجل جان بُرد
 نه نادان به ناساز خوردن بُمرد

On the day when death is destined, the spear will penetrate one's armour, but will not even pass through the garment of one who is not

destined to die. He who is being pursued by the sword of death's wrath, is naked even if his armour is multi-layered. But if fortune supports him and time sustains him, a naked man cannot be killed by a chopping knife. No wise man has saved himself from death by his efforts, and no ignoramus has died by merely eating something unhealthy.

Note: Fatalism is belief that all that happens is predetermined and therefore inevitable.

شنیدم که دیناری از مُفلسی
بیفتاد و مسکین بجستش بسی
به آخر سر ناامیدی بتافت
یکی دیگرش ناطلب کرده یافت
به بدبختی و نیک بختی قلم
بگردید، و ما همچنان در شکم
نه روزی به سرپنجگی میخورند
که سرپنجگان تنگ روزی ترند
بسا چاره دانا به سختی بمرد
که بیچاره گوی سلامت ببرد

I have heard that a dinar of a poor man fell down and was lost, and the wretched man searched much for it. Ultimately, he turned away in vain, and another man found it without seeking it. Ill-fortune and good fortune have both been written for us when we were still in the womb. Daily bread is not attained by the power of the mailed fist, for mail-fisted ones often have a lesser portion of sustenance. Many an intelligent one has died in hardship, while a helpless one has enjoyed good health.

Note: روزی : "Roozi" is man's daily portion fixed by Providence.

FAULT-FINDING

مَنه عیب خلق ای فرومایه پیش
 کَه چشمت فرو دوزد از عیب خویش
 چو بد ناپسند آیدت، خود مکن
 پس آنگه به همسایه گو بد مکن

O worthless man! Do not enumerate the faults of others, lest your eyes may not see your own faults. Do not practise evil if it displeases you, and then ask your neighbour to desist from evil.

زبان آمد از بهر شکر و سپاس
 به غیبت نگرداندش حق شناس
 گذرگاه قرآن و پند است گوش
 به بهتان و باطل شنودن مکوش
 دو چشم از پی صنع باری نکوست
 ز عیب برادر فرو گیر و دوست

The tongue has been given to express gratitude and offer thanks. The man who knows his moral obligation will not use it for slander. The ear is a route for the Holy Qur'an and good advice. Do not endeavour to hear calumny and falsehood. The two eyes are given for beholding God's creative power. Abstain from seeing the faults of your brother and friend.

FORBEARANCE

شنیدم که لقمان سیه فام بود
 نه تن پرور و نازک اندام بود

یکی بنده خویش پنداشتش
 زبون دید و در کار گل داشتش
 جفا دید و با جور و قهرش بساخت
 به سالی سرایی ز بهرش بساخت
 چو پیش آمدش بنده رفته باز
 ز لقمانش آمد نهیبی فراز
 به پایش در افتاد و پوزش نمود
 بخندید لقمان که پوزش چه سود؟
 به سالی ز جور جگر خون کنم
 به یک ساعت از دل به در چون کنم؟
 ولی هم ببخشایم ای نیکمرد
 که سود تو ما را زیانی نکرد
 تو آباد کردی شبستان خویش
 مرا حکمت و معرفت گشت بیش
 غلامیست در خیلیم ای نیکبخت
 که فرمایمش وقتها کار سخت
 دگر ره نیازمش سخت دل
 چو یاد آیدم سختی کار گل

I have heard that Luqman was dark-complexioned, and was not self-indulgent and delicate. Someone mistook him for his missing slave and considering his wretched state, put him to work as a mason's labourer. He suffered intensely and bravely put up with all harshness and hardships, and constructed a house for the man in a year. But when the man's slave returned to him, he was apprehensive of Luqman. He fell at his feet and apologised to him. Luqman smilingly said, "What is the use of an apology? For a year, my heart has bled with grief at your

hands. How can I overcome my resentment in an hour? Nevertheless, I shall pardon you, good man, for your gain has not been my loss. You have developed your house, and I have gained more wisdom and knowledge. O fortunate one! I have a slave in my household, to whom I assign hard work at times. Henceforth, whenever I remember my hardship as a mason's labourer, I shall not treat him harshly".

Note: Luqman was known for his wisdom and forbearance. He was not an apostle. Chapter 31 of the Holy Qur'an is named after him. The following verse is Luqman's advice to his son:-

"O my son! Establish prayer and enjoin the good and forbid the evil, and be patient against what befalleth thee: Verily this is the task of steadfastness." (Verse 17)

چو خود را قوی حال بینی و خوش
 به شکرانه بار ضعیفان بکش
 اگر خود همین صورتی چون طلسم
 بمیری و اسمت بمیرد چو جسم
 وگر پرورانی درخت کرم
 بر نیکنامی خوری لاجرم
 به دولت کسانی سرافراختند
 که تاج تکبر بینداختند
 تکبر کند مرد حشمت پرست
 نداند که حشمت به حلم اندرست

When you find yourself to be healthy and happy, carry the burden of the weak as a token of gratitude to God. If you only have this outward form like a talisman, you shall die and your name will perish along with your body. But if you cultivate the tree of beneficence, you are bound to enjoy the fruits of good name and fame. Only those who have cast aside the crown of pride, have attained eminence and dominion.

A pomp-worshipper practises insolence. He does not realize that splendour stems from forbearance.

FORGIVENESS

چو خشم آیدت بر گناه کسی
تأمل کنش در عقوبت بسی
که سهل است لعل بدخشان شکست
شکسته نشاید دگر باره بست

When you are angry with someone's shortcoming, ponder well before you punish him. It is easy to break a Badakhshan ruby, but once broken, it cannot be joined again.

خدا را بر آن بنده بخشایش است
که خلق از وجودش در آسایش است
کسی نیک بیند به هر دو سرای
که نیکی رساند به خلق خدای

God is merciful to that slave of His, whose existence is a source of comfort for others. Only he will see goodness in this world and the next, who is the cause of goodness for mankind.

FORTHRIGHTNESS

چو دور خلافت به مأمون رسید
یکی ماه پیکر کنیزک خرید
شب خلوت آن لعبت حورزاد
مگر تن در آغوش مأمون نداد

گرفت آتش خشم در وی عظیم
 سرش خواست کردن چو جوزا، دو نیم
 بگفتا: سر اینک به شمشیر تیز
 بینداز و با من مکن خفت و خیز
 بگفت: از چه بر دل گزند آمدت؟
 چه خصلت ز من ناپسند آمدت؟
 بگفت: ار گُشی، ور شکافی سرم
 ز بوی دهانت به رنج اندرم
 دلش گرچه در حال از او رنجه شد
 دوا کرد و خوشبوی چون غنچه شد
 پریچهره را همنشین کرد و دوست
 که این عیب من گفت، یار من اوست
 به نزد من آنکس نکوخواه تست
 که گوید فلان خار در راه تست

When Ma'mun became the Caliph, he purchased a moon-figured slave girl. In the privacy of night, the houri-born beauty did not surrender herself to Ma'mun's embrace. He was overwhelmed by the fire of wrath and wished to cleave her head into two, like the Gemini. The slave girl said, "I offer you my head! Behead me with the sharp sword, but do not sleep with me." He asked, "What offends you? What trait of mine are you displeased with?" She replied, "Whether you kill me or behead me, the odour of your mouth is offensive to me." Although his heart was offended by her, he got himself treated and his mouth became fragrant like a rose. He made the angel-faced beauty his companion and friend, saying, "She has pointed out my fault to me and is, therefore, my real friend." In my opinion, your true friend is one

who points out the thorns in your path.

Note: Ma'mun was the son of Haroon al-Rashid, the Abbasid Caliph.

FRIENDSHIP

ز دشمن شنو سیرت خود که دوست
هر آنچ از تو آید به چشمش نکوست

Hear about your character from your enemy, as your friend will consider everything you do to be commendable.

رفیقی که غائب شد، ای نیک نام
دو چیز است از او بر رفیقان حرام
یکی آن که مالش به باطل خورند
دوم آن که نامش به زشتی برند

O reputed one! When a friend has passed away, two things are unlawful for his friends to commit: One is to usurp his property by cheating, and the other is to speak ill of him.

GENEROSITY

مروت زمین است و سرمایه زرع
بده کاصل خالی نماند ز فرع
خدایی که از خاک مردم کند
عجب دارم ار مردمی گم کند
ز نعمت نهادن بلندی مجوی
که ناخوش کند آب استاده بوی

به بخشندگی کوش کآب روان
به سیلش مدد می رسد زآسمان

Generosity is land and capital the seed. Be generous so that the root may not be void of branches. It will be a wonder to me, if God Who creates human beings from dust, would allow humanism to be ignored. Do not seek exaltation by hoarding wealth, as stagnant water gives a foul smell. Strive to be generous, for running water is supplemented by a flood of water from the sky.

چنین گفت شوریده ای در عجم
به کسری، که ای وارث ملک جم
اگر مُلک بر جم بماندی و بخت
ترا کی میسر شدی تاج و تخت؟
اگر گنج قارون بدست آوری
نماند، مگر آنچه بخشی، بری

Thus spoke a deranged man in Iran to the Persian monarch, "O you who have inherited the kingdom of Jamshid! If this kingdom and good fortune had been faithful to Jamshid, how could you acquire this crown and throne?" Even if you acquire the treasures of Korah, you will have to leave them behind. But whatever you have generously given to others, will be taken by you to the next world.

Note: Korah was the evil miser who fiercely opposed Prophet Moses.

بد و نیک را بذل کُن سیم و زر
که این کسب خیر است و آن دفع شر
خُنک آن که در صحبت عاقلان
بیاموزد اخلاق صاحبان

گرت عقل و رایست و تدبیر وهوش
به عزت گنی پند سعدی به گوش

Be generous to both the bad and the good with your silver and gold, as you will be rewarded for being generous to the good, and will ward off evil by being liberal to the bad. Happy is he who in the company of the wise, learns the manners of the magnanimous ones. If you are blessed with intelligence, good judgement, right conduct and prudence, you will most respectfully heed the advice of Sa'di.

خور و پوش و بخشای و راحت رسان
نگه می چه داری ز بهر کسان؟
زر و نعمت اکنون بده کان تست
که بعد از تو، بیرون ز فرمان تست
به دنیا توانی که عقبی خری
بخر جان من، ورنه حسرت بری

Eat well, dress well, be generous, and provide comfort to others. Why do you save all your wealth for others? Donate now your wealth and bounties when they are yours, for after you pass away, they are not in your possession. You can buy the next world with your worldly riches. My dear one! Promptly buy it, or otherwise you will regret your failure to do so.

الا تا درخت کرم پروری
گر امیدواری کزو بر خوری
کرم کن که فردا که دیوان نهند
منازل به مقدار احسان دهند

Come and cultivate the tree of generosity if you are hopeful of

eating its fruits. Practise generosity, because on the Day of Judgement, when the Court is held, status and rank are given in proportion to one's beneficence.

غم و شادمانی نماند ولیک
 جزای عمل ماند و نام نیک
 کرم پای دارد، نه دیهیم و تخت
 بده کز تو این ماند ای نیکبخت
 مکن تکیه بر ملک و جاه و حشم
 که پیش از تو بودست و بعد از تو هم
 خداوند دولت غم دین خورد
 که دنیا به هر حال می بگذرد
 نخواهی که ملکت برآید بهم
 غم ملک و دین، هر دو باید بهم

Sorrow and joy do not endure, but recompense for good deeds and a good name last forever. Generosity is everlasting, but not the crown and the throne. O fortunate one! Be generous, because only this remains. Do not rely on your kingdom, status and retinue, as all these have been there before you, and shall remain even after you. The fortunate one cares for religious faith, as the world will pass in any case. If you do not wish to see your kingdom destroyed, you must look after both: Religion and kingdom.

ز بنگاه حاتم یکی پیرمرد
 طلب ده درم سنگ، فانید کرد
 ز راوی چنان یاد دارم خبر
 که پیشش فرستاد تنگی شکر

زن از خیمه گفت: این چه تدبیر بود؟
همان ده درم حاجت پیر بود
شنید این سخن نامبردار طی
بخندید و گفت: ای دلارام حی
گر او در خور حاجت خویش خواست
جوانمردی آل حاتم کجاست؟

An old man asked for ten dirhams weight sugar from the store of Hatam. I well remember the narrator saying that Hatam sent him a bag of sugar instead. From the tent, his wife said to him, "What policy is this, for the man needed only ten dirhams weight?" The illustrious man of Tay heard this and smilingly said, "O sweetheart of our clan! Although he has asked me in accordance with his need, what has become of the generosity of the house of Hatam?"

GENTLENESS

سپر نفعند شیر غران ز جنگ
نیندیشد از تیغ بران پلنگ
به نرمی ز دشمن توان کرد دوست
چو با دوست سختی کنی، دشمن اوست

The roaring lion does not cast aside its shield to avoid battle. The leopard does not bother to think about the sharp sword. With gentleness, one can convert an enemy into a friend. But if you treat the friend harshly, he will become your enemy.

چو بر کندی از دست دشمن دیار
رعیت به سامانتر از وی بدار

که گر باز کوبید در کارزار
 در آرند عام از دماغش دمار
 وگر شهریان را رسائی گزند
 در شهر بر روی دشمن مبنند
 مگو دشمن تیغ زن بر در است
 که انباز دشمن به شهر اندر است

When you have conquered some territory from your enemy, treat its subjects better than he did. For if he knocks at the door of war again, the masses will wreak vengeance on him. But if you harm the citizens, you need not bother to shut the gate of the city against the enemy. Do not say that the sword-wielding enemy is at the door, as the companions of the enemy are already in the city.

GLUTTONY

شکم، بند دست است و زنجیر پای
 شکم بنده نادر پرستد خدای
 برو اندرونی به دست آرز پاک
 شکم پُر نخواهد شد الا به خاک

The belly ties up the hand and fetters the foot. One who is a slave to one's belly, rarely worships God. Go and acquire a pure inner self, for the belly cannot be filled except by dust.

GOD

خدای ار به حکمت ببندد دری
 گشاید به فضل و کرم دیگری
 بسا مُفلس بینوا سیر شد
 بسا کار مُنعم زبر زیر شد

If God, in His Wisdom, closes a door, He graciously and liberally opens another. Many a poor and indigent man has been sated with food; many a rich man's affairs have been turned upside down.

بنام خداوند جان آفرین
 حکیم سخن در زبان آفرین
 خداوند بخشنده دستگیر
 کریم خطابخش پوزش پذیر
 ادیم زمین سفره عام اوست
 بر این خوان یغما، چه دشمن چه دوست
 چنان پهن خوان کرم گسترد
 که سیمرغ در قاف قسمت خورد

In the name of the Lord, Who created life; Wise One, Who created speech in the tongue. Lord, the Forgiver and Helper; Generous, Fault-Condoner and Repentance-Acceptor. The surface of the earth is His common banquet table, at which foes and friends all eat alike. So wide does God generously spread His dining table, that even the phoenix eats its share in the Qaf mountain.

Note: Phoenix is a legendary bird which had nurtured Zal in the Qaf mountain. Zal was the father of the great paladin Rostam.

کلید قَدَر نیست در دست کس
توانای مُطلق خداست و بس

The key of destiny is not in any man's hand. God, and only God, is Absolutely Able.

GOOD DEEDS

کسی دید صحرای محشر به خواب
مس تفته روی زمین ز آفتاب
همی برفلک شد ز مردم خروش
دماغ از تبش می برآمد به جوش
یکی شخص از این جمله در سایه ای
به گردن بر از خُلد پیرایه ای
بپرسید کای مجلس آرای مرد
که بود اندر این مجلسست پایمرد؟
رزی داشتم بر در خانه، گفت:
به سایه درش نیک مردی بخفت
در این وقت نومیدی، آن مرد راست
گناهم ز دادار داور بخواسست
که یارب بر این بنده بخشایشی
کزو دیده ام وقتی آسایشی

A person saw in his dream the Gathering-Place of mankind on the Day of Judgement. The earth's surface was like molten copper due to the heat of the sun. The wailing of all mankind rose to the sky, as their brains were boiling due to the immense heat. From among them, there was a man in the shade who was wearing a heavenly pendant

round his neck. The dreamer asked him, "O you who adorn the assembly! Who was your intercessor in this gathering?" The man replied, "I had a grape-vine at the entrance of my house-door and a virtuous man slept in its shade. In this despairing time, that man of Truth sought my salvation from the Just God, pleading, "O Lord! Forgive this servant, as I have once experienced some comfort from him".

کِرا سِیم و زر ماند و گنج و مال
 پس از وی به چندی شود پایمال
 وز آنکس که خیری بماند روان
 دمادم رسد رحمتش بر روان
 بزرگی کزو نام نیکو نماند
 توان گفت با اهلِ دل، کو نماند

Silver, gold, treasures and wealth left behind by someone will soon be wasted after his death. But the man who leaves behind good deeds, continuously receives mercy for his soul. When a great man does not leave behind a good name, it can be said with conviction to men of excellence, that he remains no more.

GOOD MANNERS

به اخلاق با هر که بینی بساز
 اگر زير دست است، اگر سرفراز
 به شیرین زبانی توان بُرد گوی
 که پیوسته تلخی برد تُند خوی
 تو شیرین زبانی ز سعدی بگیر
 تُرُشروی را گو به تلخی بمیر

Befriend one and all with your good manners, whether they are your inferiors or superiors. With sweet words, you can strike the goal, as an ill-tempered one always suffers bitterness. Learn sweetness of tongue from Sa'di and ask the sourpuss to die bitterly.

GOODNESS

یقین بشنو از من که روز یقین
نبینند بد مردم نیک بین

Listen to me with certainty; that on the Day of Certainty, those who see goodness (in others), will suffer no evil.

GRATITUDE

اگر شکر کردی بر این ملک و مال
به مالی و ملکی رسی بی زوال
وگر جور در پادشایی کنی
پس از پادشایی، گدایی کنی
حرام است بر پادشه خواب خوش
چو باشد ضعیف از قوی بارکش

If you are grateful to God for the kingdom and wealth you enjoy, you shall attain imperishable wealth and kingdom. But if you practise tyranny as a king, you shall be reduced to beggary after being a king. Sweet sleep is unlawful for the king when the weak suffer at the hands of the mighty (during his reign).

چو آید به کوشیدنت خیر پیش
به توفیق حق دان، نه از سعی خویش

به سرپنجگی کس نبردست گوی
سپاس خداوندِ توفیق گوی

When some good is achieved by your efforts, realize that it is by the grace of God, and not due to your endeavour. Nobody has carried away the ball with his own powerful fist. Be grateful to God, the Lord of success.

خدایا دلم خون شد و دیده ریش
که می بینم انعامت از گفت بیش
نگویم دد و دام و مور و سمک
که فوج ملایک بر اوج فلک
هنوزت سپاس اندکی گفته اند
ز بیور هزاران یکی گفته اند
برو سعدیا دست و دفتر بشوی
به راهی که پایان ندارد، مپوی

O God! My heart is bleeding and my eyes are afflicted on seeing that Your beneficence far exceeds my power of expression. I say, not only beasts and domesticated animals, but also ants, fish and the army of angels of Heaven have yet expressed only a little thanks to You. They have expressed gratitude for only a single one from Your countless bounties. O Sa'di! Go, wash your hands and account-book of such matters, and do not tread the road that has no end.

برو شکر کن چون به نعمت دری
که محرومی آید ز مُستکبری
یکی را که در بند بینی مخند
مبادا که ناگه در اُفتی به بند

Go, offer thanks if you enjoy affluence, for deprivation comes from arrogance. Do not laugh at a person when you see him in chains, lest you too suddenly fall into chains.

چو بینی توانگر سر از کبر مست
 برو شکر یزدان کن ای تنگدست
 نداری بحمدالله آن دسترس
 که برخیزد از دستت آزار کس

O poor man! When you see a wealthy man's head intoxicated by pride, go and express your gratitude to the Lord that, praise be to Allah, you do not have the power to harm anyone.

HARM

اگر مار زاید زن باردار
 به از آدمیزاده دیوسار
 زن از مرد موذی به بسیار به
 سگ از مردم آزار به

If a pregnant woman gives birth to a serpent, it is better than giving birth to a demon-like child. A woman is far superior to a harmful man; a dog is much better than vicious men.

چه خوش گفت فردوسی پاکزاد
 که رحمت برآن تربت پاک باد
 « میازار موری که دانه کش است »
 « که جان دارد و جان شیرین خوش است »
 « سیاه اندرون باشد و سنگدل »
 « که خواهد که موری شود تنگدل »

How well has the noble Ferdowsi, may the mercy of God be on his holy grave, said: "Do not harm the ant which carries a grain, for it has life and sweet life is pleasant. Evil-minded and stone-hearted is he, who wishes an ant to suffer grief".

خبر یافت گردنکشی در عراق
 که می گفت مسکینی از زیر طاق
 تو هم بر دری هستی امیدوار
 پس امید بر در نشینان بر آر

An intractable person in Iraq heard a helpless man say beneath his portico: "You too are hopeful of attaining your desire from someone's door. Therefore, fulfil the wishes of those who are at your door".

یکی پند میداد فرزند را
 نگه دار پند خردمند را
 مکن جور بر خردکان ای پسر
 که یک روزت افتد بزرگی بسر
 نمیترسی ای گرگک کم خرد
 که روزی پلنگیت بر هم دردد؟

A man was offering advice to his son: "Heed the wise man's advice. O my son! Do not harm the little ones, lest you suffer at the hands of a stronger one some day. O ignorant wolf-cub! Are you not afraid that a leopard may tear you apart one day?"

HARMONY

چو دشمن به عجز اندر آمد ز در
 نباید که پرخاش جویی دگر
 چو زنهار خواهد، کرم پیشه کن
 ببخشای و از مکرش اندیشه کن

When an enemy comes before you meekly, you should not seek further confrontation with him. If he begs for refuge, be generous to him. Forgive him, but be on your guard against his slyness.

HUMAN VIRTUE

سگی پای صحرانشینی گزید
 به خشمی که زهرش ز دندان چکید
 شب از درد، بیچاره خوابش نبرد
 به خیل اندرش دختری بود خُرد
 پدر را جفا کرد و تندی نمود
 که آخر ترا نیز دندان نبود؟
 پس از گریه، مرد پراکنده روز
 بخندید کای بابک دلفروز
 مرا گرچه هم سلطنت بود و نیش
 دریغ آمدم کام و دندان خویش
 محال است اگر تیغ بر سر خورم
 که دندان به پای سگ اندر برم
 توان کرد با ناکسان بد رگی
 و لیکن نیاید ز مردم سگی

A dog bit the leg of a desert-dweller so savagely that poison dribbled from its fangs. At night, the helpless man could not sleep due to pain. There was a young girl in his household who rebuked and scolded her father, saying, "Did you not also have sharp teeth?" The distressed man stopped weeping and laughingly replied, "O mirthful daughter! Although I had power and canine teeth, I refused to retaliate with my jaws and teeth. Even if I were to receive a sword-blow on my head, I would never bite the leg of a dog." One can be malevolent to wretched ones, but a true human being cannot act like a dog.

HUMILITY

بزرگان نکردند در خود نگاه
خدابینی از خویشتن بین مخواه
بزرگی به ناموس و گفتار نیست
بلندی به دعوی و پندار نیست
تواضع سر رفعت افرازدت
تکبر به خاک اندر اندازدت
ز مغرور دنیا ره دین مجوی
خدابینی از خویشتن بین مجوی
گرت جاه باید، مکن چون خسان
به چشمِ حقارت نگه در کسان

Great men have never looked upon themselves with honour. Do not expect those who are self-conceited to have any regard for God. Greatness does not emanate from dexterity and discourse. Eminence does not issue from claims and conceit. Humility will elevate you, whilst pride will cast you in the dust. Do not seek the path of religious faith from those who are proud. Do not seek from those who are self-conceited, the path of devotion to God. If you seek rank and status, do

not, like the abject ones, look down on others with contempt.

طریقت جز این نیست درویش را
 که افکنده دارد تن خویش را
 بلندیت باید، تواضع گزین
 که آن بام را نیست سلّم جز این

For a virtuous mendicant, there is no path of devotion other than being humble. Be humble if you wish to attain greatness, for this is the only ladder to reach such an eminent rooftop.

یکی قطره باران ز ابری چکید
 خجل شد چو پهنای دریا بدید
 که جایی که دریاست، من کیستم؟
 گر او هست، حقّا که من نیستم!
 چو خود را به چشم حقارت بدید
 صدف در کنارش به جان پرورید
 سپهرش بجایی رسانید کار
 که شد نامور لوءلوء شاهوار
 بلندی از آن یافت کو پست شد
 در نیستی کوفت تا هست شد
 تواضع کند هوشمند گزین
 نهد شاخ پر میوه سر بر زمین

A drop of rain trickled from the clouds, and on seeing the ocean, it was embarrassed by the ocean's vastness and said, "What am I in comparison to the vast ocean? Truly, I do not exist when compared to the ocean". Since it regarded itself with contempt, a pearl-oyster

nurtured it within its bosom. The heavenly sphere elevated it to such a status that it became an illustrious royal pearl. It attained greatness because it displayed humility. It knocked at the door of nothingness and consequently became worthy. An honourable wise man will always be modest. A branch laden with fruits shall always touch the ground.

ز خاک آفریدت خداوند پاک
 پس ای بنده افتادگی کن چو خاک
 حریص و جهانسوز و سرکش مباش
 ز خاک آفریدنندت، آتش مباش
 چو گردن کشید آتش هولناک
 به بیچارگی تن بینداخت خاک
 چو آن سرفرازی نمود، این کمی
 از آن دیو کردند، از این آدمی

God has created you from dust. O man! Therefore, be as humble as dust. Do not be greedy, evil and rebellious. You were created from dust. Therefore, do not be like fire. Because, whereas dreadful fire rebelled, dust humbled itself. Since fire displayed arrogance, God made demons from it; and since dust showed humility, He created man from it.

مگر دیده باشی که در باغ و راغ
 بتابد به شب کرمکی چون چراغ
 یکی گفتش: ای کرمک شب فروز
 چه بودت که بیرون نیایی بروز؟
 ببین کاتشی کرمک خاکزاد
 جواب از سر روشنایی چه داد

که من روز و شب جز به صحرا نیَم
ولی پیش خورشید پیدا نیَم

You must have certainly seen in the gardens and meadows a little glow-worm that shines like a lamp. Someone said to it, "O night-illuminating worm! Why do you not come out during the day?" Consider the apt reply which the fiery earth-born glow-worm brilliantly gave to him, "I am in the fields throughout the night and day, but I cannot be seen in the presence of the sun."

اگر مرد عشقی، کم خویش گیر
وگر نه ره عافیت پیش گیر
مترس از محبت که خاکت کند
که باقی شوی گر هلاکت کند
نروید نبات از حبوب درست
مگر حال بر وی بگردد نخست
تو را با حق آن آشنایی دهد
که از دست خویشت رهایی دهد

Humble yourself if you are a true lover. Otherwise, take the safe road. Do not fear that love will reduce you to dust, for you will become eternal if it destroys you. Plants do not grow from seeds until they are first germinated. Only that acquaints you with Truth (God), which releases you from bondage to yourself.

کسان مرد راه خدا بوده اند
که بُرجاس تیر بلا بوده اند
زیون باش چون پوستینت درند
که صاحبدلان بار شوخان برند

گر از خاک مردان سبویی کنند
به سنگش ملامت کنان بشکنند

Only those who have been the targets of calamity's arrows are true travellers along the path of God. Be humble even if they tear off your fur cloak, for virtuous men carry the burden of the audacious ones. If they make a pitcher from the dust of true men, reproachers will still break it with a stone.

تواضع کن ای دوست با خصم تُند
که نرمی کند تیغ برنده گُند
نبینی که در معرض تیغ و تیر
بپوشند خفتان صد تو حریر؟

O friend! Be humble with your bitter enemies, for gentleness blunts a cutting sword. Do you not see how warriors wear a hundred-layered silk jacket under the armour, when they are exposed to swords and arrows?

بھی بایدت، لطف کن، کان بهان
ندیدندی از خود بتر در جهان
تو آنگه شوی پیش مردم عزیز
که مر خویشان را نگیری به چیز
بزرگی که خود را به خردی شمرد
به دنیا و عقبی بزرگی بُرد
از این خاکدان بنده ای پاک شد
که در پای کمتر کسی خاک شد

Be benevolent if you desire well-being, since good men have not considered anyone in the world to be inferior to them. You will be

considered to be eminent by people only when you are self-effacing. The eminent man who considers himself to be insignificant will attain greatness in this world and the next. In the dustbin (of the world), only that servant of God becomes purified, who humbles himself at the feet of someone inferior to him.

شنیدم که در دشت صنعا، جنید
 سگی دید بر کَنده دندان صید
 چو مسکین و بی طاقتش دید و ریش
 بدو داد یک نیمه از زاد خویش
 شنیدم که می گفت و خوش می گریست
 که داند که بهتر ز ما هر دو کیست؟
 به ظاهر من امروز از این بهترم
 دگر تا چه راند قضا بر سرم
 گرم پای ایمان نلغزد ز جای
 به سر بر نهم تاج عفو خدای
 وگر کسوت معرفت در برم
 نماند به بسیار از این کمترم
 که سگ با همه زشت نامی چو مُرد
 مر او را به دوزخ نخواهند بُرد
 ره این است سعدی که مردان راه
 به عزت نکردند در خود نگاه
 از آن بر ملایک شرف داشتند
 که خود را به از سگ نپنداشتند

I have heard that Junaid saw in a desert a dog whose canine teeth had been broken. On seeing the dog helpless, weak and wounded,

he fed it half of his own food. I have heard that he bitterly wept, saying, "Who knows which one of us is better than the other? Apparently, I am better than the dog today, but I do not know what Fate has in store for me. If the feet of my religious faith do not falter, I shall wear the crown of God's forgiveness on my head. But if I were to be devoid of the garment of true wisdom, I would indeed be inferior to it. For despite its bad name, the dog shall not be taken to Hell after death." O Sa'di! This is the true path of devotion, wherein virtuous men have never looked upon themselves with veneration. They have been superior to angels because they did not consider themselves to be better than dogs".

Note: Junaid was a famous mystic saint.

چو خواهی که در قدر والا رسی
 ز شیب تواضع به بالا رسی
 چو سیل اندر آمد به هول و نهیب
 فتاد از بلندی به سر در نشیب
 چو شب‌نم بیفتاد مسکین و خرد
 به مهر آسمانش به عیوق برد

You can reach great heights from the slope of humility if you wish to attain an exalted position. When the flood gushed forth with horror and dread, it fell down headlong from the heights. But when the dew drop fell distressed and petty, the heavens affectionately raised it to the Capella.

Note: Capella is the sixth brightest star in the sky.

HYPOCRISY

شنیدم که نابالغی روزه داشت
 به صد محنت آورد روزی به چاشت

چو بر وی گذر کرد یک نیمه روز
 فتاد اندرو ز آتش معده سوز
 به دل گفت اگر لقمه چندی خورم
 چه داند پدر غیب یا مادرم؟
 چو روی پسر در پدر بود و قوم
 نهان خورد و پیدا به سر برد صوم
 که داند چو در بند حق نیستی
 اگر بی وضو در نماز ایستی؟
 پس این پیر از آن طفل نادانتر است
 که از بهر مردم به طاعت در است
 کلید در دوزخ است آن نماز
 که در چشم مردم گزاری دراز
 اگر جز به حق می رود جاده ات
 در آتش فشانند سجاده ات

I have heard that a boy, who was yet a minor, observed fast. With a hundred hardships he fasted until lunch time. But when half the day had passed, the pangs of hunger (lit: stomach-burning fire) overpowered him. He said to himself, "If I eat a few morsels, how will my father and mother know what is not seen?" Since he was concerned only with his parents and family, he secretly ate food and outwardly kept his fast. When you are not in the bonds of Truth, who will know if you pray without performing ablution? Therefore, the old man who prays to God only to display it to people, is more ignorant than that young boy. The prayer which you prolong to impress people, is verily the key to the door of Hell. If your path leads to anywhere else but Truth (God), your prayer mat will be scattered in the fire of Hell.

Note: "And woe unto those praying ones who are heedless of

their prayer; who worship only to be seen, and yet withhold alms."
Holy Qur'an, Chapter 107 - Ma'un (Small kindnesses), Verses 4-7.

IGNORAMUS

خور و خواب تنها طریق دَدست
 بر این بودن آیین نابخردست
 خُنک نیکبختی که در گوشه ای
 به دست آرد از معرفت توشه ای
 بر آنان که شد سرّ حق آشکار
 نکردند باطل بر او اختیار
 و لیکن چو ظلمت نداند ز نور
 چه دیدار دیوش، چه رُخسار حور
 تو خود را از آن در چه انداختی
 که چه را ز ره باز نشناختی

Eating and sleeping are beastly attributes. Persevering therein is the custom of the ignoramus. Blessed is the fortunate man who, in a secluded corner, acquires provisions of wisdom. Men to whom Truth's secret has been revealed have never preferred falsehood to Truth. But when someone cannot distinguish between darkness and light, the sight of a demon and the vision of a *houri* shall be similar to him. You have cast yourself into the well because you could not distinguish between the well and the road to piety.

IGNORANCE

کسی را که بینی ز حق بر کران
 مَنه با وی ای خواجه حق در میان

دریغ است با سفله گفت از علوم
 که ضایع شود تخم در شوره بوم
 چو در وی نگیرد، عدو داندت
 برنجد بجان و برنجاندت

O man of distinction! When you see anyone inclining against Truth, do not discuss Truth with him. It is useless to talk of sciences with a mean ignoramus, as seeds will be wasted when sown in brackish ground. If your words do not impress him, he will consider you to be an enemy. He will be deeply distressed and cause you anguish.

INEXPERIENCE

چو پرورده باشد پسر در شکار
 نترسد چو پیش آیدش کارزار
 به گرمابه پرورده و عیش و ناز
 برنجد چو بیند در جنگ باز
 دو مردش نشانند بر پشت زین
 بود کش زند کودکی بر زمین

When a lad is well trained in hunting, he will not fear confrontation in combat. But one who is brought up in hot-baths and accustomed to luxury and comfort, will panic when he sees the open door of war. If it takes two men to put him in the saddle, in all likelihood, even a child could easily unseat him (lit: throw him on the ground).

INGRATITUDE

جوانی سر از رای مادر بتافت
 دل دردمندش به آذر بتافت
 چو بیچاره شد، پیشش آورد مهد
 که ای سست مهر فراموش عهد
 نه گریان و درمانده بودی و خرد
 که شبها ز دست تو خوابم نبرد؟
 نه در مهد نیروی حالت نبود
 مگس راندن از خود مجالت نبود
 تو آنی که از یک مگس رنجه ای
 که امروز سالار و سرپنجه ای
 به حالی شوی باز در قعر گور
 که نتوانی از خویشتن دفع مور

A young man turned away his face from his mother's counsel and burned her afflicted heart with fire. When she was frustrated, she placed his cradle before him and said, "O unkind one who have forgotten your bonds! Were you not tearful, helpless and tiny, when I could not sleep at night attending to you? Were you not powerless in your cradle and lacked the ability to drive away flies from yourself? You are the same one who was harassed by a single fly, and are today a powerful leader. You will eventually reach a state when you will be unable to repel an ant in your grave".

INJUSTICE

نخواهی که باشد دلت دردمند
 دل دردمندان برآور ز بند

پریشانیِ خاطر دادخواه
 براندازد از مملکت پادشاه
 ستاننده داد آن کس خداست
 که نتواند از پادشه داد خواست

If you want your heart to suffer no pain, release from bondage the hearts of the pained ones. The sufferings of one who seeks justice, will cost the king his throne. God exacts justice for a man who does not get justice from the king.

رعیت نشاید به بیداد گشت
 که مر سلطنت را پناهند و پشت
 مراعات دهقان گن از بهر خویش
 که مزدور خوشدل کند کار بیش
 مروّت نباشد بدی با کسی
 کزو نیکویی دیده باشی بسی

It is not right to kill your subjects unjustly, for they support and sustain a kingdom. In your own interest, show consideration for the peasants, as a satisfied labourer works better. It is not fair to harm the man who has benefitted you greatly.

چو بیداد کردی، توقع مدار
 که نامت به نیکی رود در دیار
 ور ایدون که دشواریت آمد سخن
 دگر هر چه دشواریت آید، مکن

If you do injustice, do not expect your name to be honourably mentioned in the country. And if you now find these words unbearable,

avoid doing something which is intolerable.

INNOCENCE

نظر کن در احوال زندانیان
که ممکن بود بی گنه در میان

Look into the affairs of the prisoners, as it is possible that there may be an innocent man among them.

JUSTICE

شنیدم که در وقت نزع روان
به هرمز چنین گفت نوشیروان
که خاطر نگهدار درویش باش
نه در بند آسایش خویش باش
نیاید به نزدیک دانا پسند
شبان خفته و گرگ در گوسفند
برو پاس درویش محتاج دار
که شاه از رعیت بود تاجدار
رعیت چو بیخند و سلطان درخت
درخت ای پسر، باشد از بیخ سخت
نگن تا توانی دل خلق ریش
و گر میگنی، میگنی بیخ خویش

I have heard that when Noshirwan's soul was about to depart, he said to Hormoz, "Look after the poor men and do not be concerned with your own comfort. No wise man will ever condone a shepherd who is asleep while the wolf is among the sheep. Go and keep watch over the affairs of the needy, for it is because of subjects that a king wears his

crown. Subjects are like the roots and the king is the tree. O my son! The tree derives its strength from the roots. Hurt not the hearts of men as far as possible, and if you do so, you are destroying your own roots".

از آن بهره ورتر در آفاق کیست؟
 که در مُلکرانی به انصاف زیست
 چو نوبت رسد زین جهان غربتش
 تر حَم فرستند بر تربتش
 بد و نیک مردم چو می بگذرند
 همان به که نامت به نیکی برند

Who is more fortunate throughout the world, than the ruler who has always abided by justice? When it is time for him to depart from the world, people will pray for God's compassion on his soul (lit: grave). Since men, both bad and good, have to pass away, it is preferable that people remember you for your goodness.

JUST RULER

به قومی که نیکی پسندد خدای
 دهد خسروی عادل و نیک رای
 چو خواهد که ویران شود عالمی
 کُند مُلک در پنجهٔ ظالمی
 سگالند از او نیکمردان حذر
 که خشم خدایست بیدادگر
 بزرگی از او دان و منت شناس
 که زایل شود نعمت ناسپاس

When God wills to be beneficent to a nation, He gives it a king who is just and sagacious. But when He wills to destroy the world, He

places the country in a tyrant's clutches. Good men speak about him with fear and are on guard against him, as an unjust ruler is the Wrath of God. Know that greatness is from Him and be grateful to Him, for the affluence of the ungrateful is bound to decline.

KINDNESS

شنیدم که پیری به راه حجاز
 به هر خطوه کردی دو رکعت نماز
 چنان گرم رو در طریق خدای
 که خار مغیلان نکندی ز پای
 به آخر ز وسواس خاطر پریش
 پسند آمدش در نظر کار خویش
 به تلبیس ابلیس در چاه رفت
 که نتوان از این خوبتر راه رفت
 گرش رحمت حق نه دریافتی
 غرورش سر از جاده بر تافتی
 یکی هاتف از غیبش آواز داد
 که ای نیکبخت مبارک نهاد
 مپندار اگر طاعتی کرده ای
 که نُزلی بدین حضرت آورده ای
 به احسانی آسوده کردن دلی
 به از الف رکعت به هر منزلی

I have heard that on the road to Hejaz, an elder offered two rak'ats of prayer at every stage of the road. So eagerly did he travel along the road to God, that he did not even extract the desert thorns from his feet. Ultimately, he was so confounded by Satanic temptation,

that he was fascinated with his own deed. By the guile of Sātan, he fell into the well, for he considered his mode of travelling to be incomparable. Had not God been merciful to him, he would have deviated from the righteous path due to his pride. A mysterious voice from the unknown world called out to him: "O fortunate man of blissful character! Do not consider that you have brought even a titbit to God's presence if you have done obeisance. Providing solace to a single heart is better than a thousand *rak'ats* of prayer at every stage of the road".

به ره بر یکی پیشم آمد جوان
 به تک در پیش گوسفندی روان
 بدو گفتم: این ریسمانست و بند
 که می آرد اندر پیت گوسفند
 سبک طوق و زنجیر از او باز کرد
 چپ و راست پویدن آغاز کرد
 هنوز از پیش تازیان می دوید
 که جو خورده بود از کف مرد و خوید
 چو باز آمد از عیش و شادی بجای
 مرا دید و گفت: ای خداوند رای
 نه این ریسمان میبرد با منش
 که احسان کمندیست در گردنش

Along a road, I met a young man whose sheep was trotting quickly after him. I said to him, "It is the rope and chain which makes the sheep follow you." Immediately, he unfastened the sheep's collar and chain and ran hither and tither. Despite this, the sheep swiftly followed him, as it had eaten barley and corns from his hands. When he returned to his place after playing and enjoying himself, he said to me, "O judicious man! It is not the rope that makes it follow me, but kindness

which is a noose round its neck".

شنیدم که فرزانه ای حق پرست
 گریبان گرفتش یکی رند مست
 از آن تیره دل، مرد صافی درون
 قفا خورد و سر بر نکرد از سکون
 یکی گفتش آخر نه مردی تو نیز؟
 تحمل دریغ است از این بی تمیز
 شنید این سخن مرد پاکیزه خوی
 بدو گفت از این نوع با من مگوی
 ز هشیار عاقل نزیبد که دست
 زند در گریبان نادان مست
 هنرور چنین زندگانی کند
 جفا بیند و مهربانی کند

I have heard that a profligate drunkard seized the collar of a prudent Truth-worshipping man. The pure-hearted man suffered blows at the hands of the black-hearted one, and yet did not raise a murmur of protest. Someone said to him, "Are you not also manly? It is regrettable to show forbearance to such an ill-mannered person." The pure-natured man heard these words and said, "Do not speak to me in this manner, for it is unbecoming of a sober wise man to grapple with an ignorant drunkard." This is how an accomplished man lives: He suffers cruelty and yet shows kindness.

LEADERSHIP

ریاست به دست کسانی خطاست
 که از دستشان دستها بر خداست

نکوکار پرور نبیند بدی
چو بد پروری، خصمِ خونِ خودی

Leadership in the hands of those against whom people raise their hands to God for help, is disastrous. Whoever cherishes the good will suffer no evil. If you cherish the evil, you are an enemy to yourself.

الا تا به غفلت نخفتی که نوم
حرام است بر چشم سالار قوم
غم زبردستان بخور، زینهار
بترس از زبردستی روزگار
نصیحت که خالی بود از غرض
چو داروی تلخ است، دفعِ مرض

Sleep not negligently, as slumber is forbidden for a ruler. Beware! Share the sorrows of your subjects and dread the high-handedness of Fate. An advice which is offered without an ulterior motive is like bitter medicine which wards off illness.

LENIENCY

تو با خلق سهلی کن ای نیک بخت
که فردا نگیرد خدا با تو سخت
دل زبردستان نباید شکست
مبادا که روزی شوی زبردست

O fortunate one! Be lenient to people, so that tomorrow, (on the Day of Judgement), God may not be strict with you. You should not break the hearts of your subordinates, lest you too become a subordinate some day.

یکی خوبکردار خوش خوی بود
 که بدسیرتان را نکوگوی بود
 به خوابش کسی دید چون درگذشت
 که باری حکایت گُن از سرگذشت
 دهانی به خنده چو گل باز کرد
 چو بلبل به صوتی خوش آغاز کرد
 که بر من نکردند سختی بسی
 که من سخت نگرفتمی بر کسی

There was a well-mannered and good-natured man who spoke well of even evil-natured ones. After he expired, someone saw him in his dream and asked, "Narrate to me how you were treated." Like a rose he smilingly opened his mouth and like a nightingale he melodiously sang, "I was not at all treated severely, for I had never been harsh to anyone."

هر آنکس که جور بزرگان نبرد
 نسوزد دلش بر ضعیفان خُرد
 گر از حاکمان سخت آید سخن
 تو بر زبردستان درشتی مکن
 نکو گفت بهرام شه با وزیر
 که دشوار با زبردستان مگیر

He who has not suffered injustice at the hands of powerful ones, will not sympathize with those who are weak and petty. If you cannot bear the harsh words of your rulers, you should not be stern with your subordinates. How well had King Behram said to his minister, "Do not deal severely with the subordinates."

LIFE

دریغا که فصل جوانی برفت
به لهو و لعب زندگانی برفت
ز سودای آن پوشم و این خورم
نپرداختم تا غم دین خورم
دریغا که مشغول باطل شدیم
ز حق دور ماندیم و غافل شدیم
چه خوش گفت با کودک، آموزگار
که کاری نکردیم و شد روزگار

Alas! The season of youth has passed and life was spent in amusements and games. Enamoured by the fancy of what to wear and what to eat, I did not find time to pay attention to religion. Alas! We were occupied with trivial matters. We were isolated from Truth and became careless. How well did the teacher say to the child, "We have achieved nothing and life has gone by."

دریغا که بگذشت عمر عزیز
بخواهد گذشت این دمی چند نیز
گذشت آنچه در ناصوابی گذشت
ور این نیز هم در نیابی، گذشت
کنون وقت تخم است اگر پروری
گر امید داری که خرمن بری
به شهر قیامت مرو تنگدست
که وجهی ندارد به حسرت نشست

گرت چشم عقل است، تدبیر گور
کنون کن، که چشمت نخوردست مور

Alas! Dear life has passed by, and the remaining few moments will also pass away. What time was spent in wrong deeds has passed, and if you do not avail yourself of what remains, it will also pass. Now is the time of sowing the seeds and nurturing them, if you are hopeful of collecting a harvest. Do not go empty-handed to the Day of Resurrection, for sitting in regret is of no consequence. If you have the eye of intelligence, contrive a plan now for your grave, before the ants have eaten up your eyes.

دو بیتم جگر کرد روزی کباب
که میگفت گوینده ای با رباب
دریغا که بی ما بسی روزگار
بروید گل و بشکفد نوبهار
بسی تیر و دی ماه و اردیبهشت
بر آید که ما خاک باشیم و خشت

One day, two couplets sung to the accompaniment of the rebeck by a singer, wrenched my heart: "Alas! Without us, for ages to come, roses will grow and springs arrive. Many a month of summer, winter and spring will come, when we shall be dust and bricks."

نگه دار فرصت که عالم دمیست
دمی پیش دانا به از عالیمست
سکندر که بر عالمی حکم داشت
در آندم که بگذشت و عالم گذاشت
میسر نبودش کز و عالمی
ستانند و مهلت دهندش دمی

برفتند و هر کس درود آنچه کشت
 نماندی بجز نام نیکو و زشت
 چرا دل بر این کاروانگه نهیم؟
 که یاران برفتند و ما بر رهیم
 پس از ما همین گل دهد بوستان
 نشینند با یکدگر دوستان
 دل اندر دلارام دنیا مَبَنَد
 که نشست با کس که دل بر نکند

Avail of every opportunity as the world is but a moment. To the wise, a moment is better than the entire world. At the moment when he passed away and gave up the world, Alexander, who ruled over the world, could not gain a moment's respite in exchange for the entire world. Men have passed away and have reaped what they had sown. Nothing has remained, except a good or ugly name. Why should we set our hearts upon this caravanserai, for friends have departed and we are also on our way? After we have departed, the garden will yield these roses and friends will sit together. Do not lose your heart to this heart-pleasing world, as it has broken the hearts of all those with whom it sat.

LOVE

چو عشق آمد، از عقل دیگر مگوی
 که در دست چوگان اسیر است گوی

Once in love, do not speak of reason any more, for the ball is a prisoner in the hand of the polo stick.

MALEVOLENCE

یکی را حکایت کنند از ملوک
که بیماری رسته کردش چو دوک
چنانش در انداخت ضعف جسد
که میبرد بر زيردستان حسد
ندیمی زمین ملک بوسه داد
که ملک خداوند جاوید باد
در این شهر مردی مبارک دم است
که در پارسایی چنویی کم است
بخوان تا بخواند دعایی برین
که رحمت رسد ز آسمان برین
بفرمود تا مهتران خدم
بخواندند پیر مبارک قدم
بگفتا دعایی کن ای هوشمند
که در رسته چون سوزنم پای بند
شنید این سخن پیر خم بوده پشت
به تندی برآورد بانگی درشت
که حق مهربان است بر دادگر
بخشای و بخشایش حق نگر
دعای مَنّت کی شود سودمند
اسیران محتاج در چاه و بند؟
تو ناکرده بر خلق بخشایشی
کجا بینی از دولت آسایشی؟

They tell the tale of a king who had become like a spindle due to

the threadworm disease. His body had been so enfeebled that he was envious of the good health of his subordinates. An intimate companion kissed the ground before the king and said, "May the realm of my lord be perennial! There lives in this city an auspicious-breathed man who has few equals in devoutness. Invite him to invoke God's blessing on your health, so that His mercy may descend on the earth from Heaven." The king ordered his senior officials to invite the devout man of auspicious presence. The king said to him, "O prudent one! Fervently pray for me, as I have become like a needle chained to the threadworm." The old man whose back was bent by age, angrily raised a loud cry and said, "God is kind to the just! Forgive others and witness the forgiveness of God. How can my prayer benefit you, when you have needy prisoners in dungeons and chains? How can you, who have never forgiven people, seek comfort from good fortune?"

MEANNESS

دو کس چه کنند از پی خاص و عام
 یکی نیک محضر، دگر زشت نام
 یکی تشنه را تا کند تازه حلق
 دگر تا به گردن در افتند خلق
 اگر بد کنی، چشم نیکی مدار
 که هرگز نیارد گز، انگور بار
 نپندارم ای در خزان کشته جو
 که گندم ستانی به وقت درو
 درخت زقوم ار به جان پروری
 مپندار هرگز کزو بر خوری
 رطب نآورد چوب خرزهره بار
 چو تخم افکنی، بر همان چشم دار

Two sorts of people dig wells for mankind. One is the man who is virtuous, and the other who is vile. The former does so to quench the thirst of people, and the latter, for people to fall into it up to their necks. If you commit an evil act, do not expect any goodness in return, as the tamarisk tree can never bear grapes as fruits. O you who have sown barley in autumn! I do not think that you will reap wheat at harvest-time. If you devotedly cultivate the *Zaqqum* tree, I do not think that you will enjoy any fruit from it. The oleander tree does not produce dates. Expect only those fruits whose seeds you have sown.

Note: Zaqqum is a tree which grows in Hell.

MELODY

جهان پر سماع است و مستی و شور
و لیکن چه بیند در آئینه کور؟
نبینی شتر بر نوای عرب
که چو نش به رقص اندر آرد طرب؟
شتر را چو شور و طرب در سر است
اگر آدمی را نباشد، خر است

The world is full of melody, rapture and ecstasy, but what can a blind man see in the mirror? Do you not see how the camel, on hearing the melodious voice of the Arab, dances with joy? Considering that a camel's mind is filled with fervour and joy, the man who does not possess these traits is indeed an ass.

MERCY

مشو تا توانی ز رحمت بری
که رحمت برندت چو رحمت بری

چو انعام کردی، مشو خود پرست
 که من سرورم، دیگران زیردست
 کرم خوانده ام سیرت سروران
 غلط گفتم، اخلاق پیغمبران

Do not be devoid of mercy as long as you can, since people will be merciful to you if you are merciful to men. Do not be proud if you have favoured someone and say, "I am the master and others are my subordinates". I have referred to generosity as the conduct of noble men. Nay, I am wrong! It is indeed the character of Prophets.

بنازند فردا تواضع کنان
 نگون از خجالت سر گردنان
 اگر می بترسی ز روز شمار
 از آن کس تو ترسد خطا در گذار
 مکن خیره بر زیردستان ستم
 که دستت بالای دست تو هم

Tomorrow (on the day of Judgement), the humble shall be exalted and the heads of proud ones shall bow in shame and suffer humiliation. If you fear the Day of Reckoning, overlook the faults of those who dread you. Do not brazenly oppress your subordinates, for there is also a Hand above your hand.

*Note: يدالله فوق ايديهم: "The Hand of Allah is above their hands".
 Holy Qur'an, Chapter 48 - Fat'h (Victory), Verse 10.*

MIGHT

به خردی درم زور سرپنجه بود
 دل زیردستان ز من رنجه بود

بخوردم یکی مُشت زورآوران
نکردم دگر زور بر لاگران

When I was young, I was strong and my subordinates suffered at my hands. I was hit by the fists of powerful men and thereafter I never practised any violence on the weak.

MISAPPROPRIATION

چو بازارگان در دیارت بمرد
به مالش خساست بود دستبرد
کز آن پس که بر وی بگریند زار
به هم باز گویند خویش و تبار
که مسکین در اقلیم غربت بمرد
متاعی کزو ماند ظالم ببرد
بیندیش از آن طفلک بی پدر
وز آه دل دردمندش حذر
بسا نام نیکوی پنجاه سال
که یک نام زشتش کند پایمال
پسندیده کاران جاوید نام
تطاول نکردند بر مال عام
بر آفاق اگر سر بسر پادشاست
چو مال از توانگر ستاند، گداست
بمرد از تهیدستی آزاد مرد
ز پهلوی مسکین شکم پر نکرد

When a merchant dies in your territory, it will be mean on your part to touch his property. For after having wept over his death, his

relatives and near ones will say to each other, "The poor man has died in a foreign land and the merchandise left behind him has been looted by a tyrant". Consider the state of his orphaned infant and beware of the sighs of his afflicted heart. Many a good name of fifty years reputation has been ruined by a single misdeed. Those who have gained immortality for their good deeds have never misappropriated the properties of others. If a king were to be the emperor of the entire world, he would still be a beggar if he seizes the property of the rich. A magnanimous person suffers death due to poverty, but does not fill his belly at the expense of the poor.

MISCHIEF

مگو آن که گر بر ملا اوفتد
وجودی از آن در بلا اوفتد

Do not say anything, which on becoming public, will become a source of harm to another person.

MISERLINESS

زر از بهر خوردن بود ای پدر
ز بهر نهادن، چه سنگ و چه زر؟
زر از سنگ خارا برون آورند
که با دوستان و عزیزان خورند
زر اندر کف مرد دنیاپرست
هنوز ای برادر به سنگ اندرست

O father! Gold is for consumption. If it is to be merely stored, what difference is there between stone and gold? Gold is extracted from rough rocks to be spent with friends and loved ones. O brother! in the palm of one who is attached to the world, gold is as good as being still

within the rocks.

بخیل توانگر به دینار و سیم
 طلسمیست بالای گنجی مقیم
 از آن سالها می بماند زرش
 که گردد طلسمی چنین بر سرش
 به سنگ اجل ناگهش بشکنند
 به آسودگی گنج قسمت کنند
 پس از بُردن و گرد کردن چو مور
 بخور پیش از آن کت خورد کرم گور

A wealthy miser who possesses dinars and silver, is indeed a talisman who is perched over a treasure. His wealth lasts for many years because a talisman like him hovers around it. He will suddenly be smashed with the stone of death and his treasure shall then be comfortably distributed. Hence, after carrying and hoarding wealth like ants, consume it before the worms of the grave consume you.

MISPLACED BENEFICENCE

بگفتیم در باب احسان بسی
 و لیکن نه شرط است با هر کسی
 بخور مردم آزار را خون و مال
 که از مرغ بد کنده به پر و بال
 هر آنکس که بر دزد رحمت کند
 به بازوی خود کاروان می زند

We have discussed at length the advantages of beneficence, but it should not be shown to everyone. Shed the blood and eat up the wealth of one who harms people, as it is better to pluck the wings and

feathers of the evil bird. Whoever shows mercy to a highway robber, is in fact looting a caravan with his powerful arm.

MISPLACED KINDNESS

نه هر کس سزاوار باشد به مال
یکی مال خواهد، یکی گوشمال
چو گربه نوازی، کبوتر بَرَد
چو فربه کنی گرگ، یوسف دَرَد
بنایی که محکم ندارد اساس
بلندش مکن، ور کُنی، زو هراس

Everyone does not deserve property and possession. One deserves property and another deserves punishment. If you are kind to the cat, it will carry away the pigeons. If you fatten the wolf, it will tear Joseph to pieces. Do not erect high an edifice whose foundation is infirm, and if you do so, beware of it.

Note: The reference is to Prophet Joseph who was thrown into a well by his brothers. They lied to their father that Joseph had been devoured by a wolf.

شنیدم که مردی غمِ خانه خورد
که زنبور بر سقف او لانه کرد
زنش گفت: از اینان چه خواهی، مکن
که مسکین پریشان شوند از وطن
بشد مرد دانا پس کار خویش
گرفتند یک روز زن را به نیش
زن بی خرد بر در و بام و کوی
همی کرد فریاد و میگفت شوی

مَكُن روى بر مردم اى زن تُرُش
 تو گفتى كه زنبور مسكين مَكُش
 كسى با بدان نيكويى چون كند
 بدان را تحمّل، بد افزون كند
 چو اندر سرى بينى آزار خلق
 به شمشير تيزش بيازارد خلق

I have heard that a man was sad because of the condition of his house, as wasps had made a nest on its roof. His wife said to him, "What do you intend to do with them? Do not destroy their nest, lest the poor wasps be dispersed." The wise man went away to attend to his work, and one day, the wasps stung his wife. The foolish woman fled to the door, the roof and the lane and cried out for help. Her husband said to her, "O woman! Do not make a sour face before people, for it was you who asked me not to kill the poor wasps." Why should one do good to those who are evil, for when evil is tolerated, it increases? If you see a person persecuting mankind, torment his neck with a sharp sword.

MISPLACED MERCY

نكويى و رحمت به جاى خود است
 ولى با بدان نيكمردى بد است
 سر سفله را گرد بالش منه
 سر مردم آزار بر سنگ به
 مَكُن با بدان نيكى اى نيكبخت
 كه در شوره، نادان نشاند درخت
 نگويم مراعات مردم مكن
 كرم پيش نامردمان گم مكن

به اخلاق نرمی مکن با درشت
 که سگ را نمالند چون گربه پشت
 گر انصاف خواهی، سگ حق شناس
 به سیرت به از مردم ناسپاس

Goodness and clemency are ideal, but it is wrong to be benevolent to evil men. Do not place a round pillow under the head of a mean person, for it is better that the head of a malevolent man should rest on a stone. O fortunate one! Do not be benevolent to evil men, for only an ignoramus plants a tree in brackish soil. I do not ask you to be inconsiderate to people, but I tell you not to squander liberality on inhuman ones. Do not be kind to one who is ungracious, for a dog is not affectionately caressed as a cat. But to be fair, one must acknowledge that a grateful dog is better than men who are ungrateful.

MISRULE

چو سلطان عنایت کند با بدان
 کجا ماند آسایش بخردان؟

If the sultan favours evil men, how can the wise ones be at ease?

رئیی که دشمن سیاست نکرد
 هم از دست دشمن ریاست نکرد

The ruler who does not chastise his enemies, will not exercise authority due to his enemies.

MISTRUST

گرت خویش دشمن شود دوستوار
 ز تلبیسیش ایمن مشو، زینهار

که گردد درونش به کین تو ریش
 چو یاد آیدش مهر پیوند خویش
 بد اندیش را لفظ شیرین مبین
 که ممکن بود زهر در انگبین

If a relative of your enemy feigns friendliness, do not be assured by his deception and beware of it. Because, whenever he remembers the loving bonds of relationship (with your enemy), he will be inwardly grieved by hatred for you. Do not be deceived by the sweet words of the malicious person, as it is possible that poison may be hidden in his honey.

سپاهی که عاصی شود در امیر
 ورا تا توانی به خدمت مگیر
 ندانست سالار خود را سپاس
 تورا هم ندارد، ز غدرش هراس
 به سوگند و عهد استوارش مدار
 نگهبان پنهان بر او بر گمار

As far as possible, do not avail of the services of a soldier who has rebelled against his emir. He was not grateful to his chieftain and will, therefore, not be faithful to you. Beware of his treachery. Do not trust his oaths and pledges, and appoint a guardsman to keep watch over him.

MODERATION

چو نرمی کُنی، خصم گردد دلیر
وگر خشم گیری، شوند از تو سیر
درشتی و نرمی بهم در بهست
چو رگزن که جراح و مرهم نهست

If you are lenient, the enemy becomes bold; but if you are too harsh, people will be disgusted with you. Harshness and softness should be blended together, like the phlebotomist who is both a surgeon and a nurse who applies the ointment.

مگوی و منہ تا توانی قدم
از اندازه بیرون وز اندازه کم
اگر تُند باشی به یک بار و تیز
جهان از تو گیرند راه گریز
نه کوتاه دستی و بیچارگی
نه زجر و تطاول به یکبارگی

As long as possible, do not say a word or take a step beyond or short of the perfect measure. If you are completely harsh and severe, the world will take the path of avoiding you. Be neither meek and helpless, nor totally arrogant and harsh.

MODESTY

گدا گر تواضع کُند، خوی اوست
ز گردنفران تواضع نکوست

If a beggar is humble, it is his nature to be so. Modesty becomes those who are powerful (and mighty).

MOTH AND CANDLE

کسی گفت پروانه را کای حقیر
 برو دوستی در خور خویش گیر
 رهی رو که بینی طریق رجا
 تو و مهر شمع از کجا تا کجا؟
 سمندر نه ای، گرد آتش مگرد
 که مردانگی باید، آنگه نبرد
 ز خورشید پنهان شود موش کور
 که جهل است با آهنین پنجه زور
 کسی را که دانی که خصم تو اوست
 نه از عقل باشد گرفتن به دوست
 نگه کن که پروانه سوزناک
 چه گفت: ای عجب گر بسوزم چه باک؟
 نه خود را بر آتش به خود می زخم
 که زنجیر شوق است در گردنم
 مرا همچنان دور بودم که سوخت
 نه این دم که آتش به من در فروخت
 مرا بر تلف حرص دانی چراست؟
 چو او هست، اگر من نباشم رواست

Someone said to a moth, "O insignificant thing! Go and take a friend who is suitable for you. Follow the path where you may hope to survive. How dare you desire the love of the candle? You are not a salamander and should not hover around the fire, as one must first be manly and then seek combat. The mole hides itself in the presence of the sun, for it is sheer folly to grapple with an iron-fisted one. When you

know that someone is your antagonist, reason demands that you should not befriend him." Consider what the burning moth said to him: "Why should I be concerned if I am burnt up? I do not consciously cast myself in fire, but because I have the chain of desire around my neck. I was far away when the fire burnt me up, and not at this moment when it has totally destroyed me. Do you know why I so eagerly desire to perish? As long as the candle exists, it is proper that I do not survive".

شبی یاد دارم که چشمم نخفت
 شنیدم که پروانه با شمع گفت
 که من عاشقم، گر بسوزم رواست
 ترا گریه و سوز باری چراست؟
 بگفت ای هوادار مسکین من
 برفت انگبین یار شیرین من
 چو شیرینی از من به در می رود
 چو فرهادم آتش به سر می رود
 همی گفت و هر لحظه سیلاب درد
 فرو می دویدش به رخسار زرد
 که ای مدعی، عشق کار تو نیست
 که نه صبر داری، نه یارای ایست
 تو بگریزی از پیش یک شعله خام
 من استاده ام تا بسوزم تمام
 قرا آتش عشق اگر پر بسوخت
 مرا بین که از پای تا سر بسوخت

I remember that I could not sleep one night and heard what the moth said to the candle: "I am a lover, and hence it is proper for me to burn. But why should you weep and burn?" The candle replied, "O my

poor admirer! My honey-like beloved has deserted me. Now that my Shirin has abandoned me, like Farhad, the fire consumes my head." While a flood of painful tears was running down its pale cheeks every moment, the candle spoke thus: "O pretender! Love is not your profession, as you are devoid of patience and steadfastness. You run away from a single flame, whereas I firmly stand till I am totally consumed. The fire of love has only burnt your wings, but see how I have been scorched from head to foot."

Note: There is a reference to Shirin and Farhad in one of the couplets. The love of Farhad for Shirin was a one-sided affair. She was the wife of the Persian king Khosrow Parviz.

NAME AND FAME

جوانمرد و خوشخوی و بخشنده باش
 چو حق بر تو باشد، تو بر خلق پاش
 نیامد کس اندر جهان کو بماند
 مگر آن کزو نام نیکو بماند
 هرآن کو نماند از پشش یادگار
 درخت وجودش نیآورد بار
 وگر رفت و آثار خیرش نماند
 نشاید پس مرگش الحمد خواند

Be liberal, good-natured and forgiving. Since God has been generous to you, likewise be generous to the people. Nobody has come to the world to stay forever, except one who leaves behind a good name. He who does not leave behind a good memorial, is like a tree which has borne no fruits. No prayer (*Fateha*) should be offered for the soul of one who has departed without leaving any trace of goodness.

NON-ATTACHMENT

مَنه بر جهان دل که بیگانه ایست
 چو مُطرب که هر روز درخانه ایست
 نه لایق بود عیش با دلبری
 که هر بامدادش بود شوهری
 نکویی گن امسال چون ده تراست
 که سال دگر، دیگری دهخداست

Do not set your heart on the world as it is a stranger. It is like a minstrel who is in a new house every day. It is most unseemly to shower love on a beloved who has a new spouse every morning. Do good this year, when the village is in your possession, for next year it will have another headman.

مَنه دل بر این دولت پنج روز
 به دود دل خلق، خود را مسوز
 نه پیش از تو، بیش از تو اندوختند؟
 به بیداد کردن جهان سوختند
 چنان زی که ذکرت به تحسین کنند
 چو مُردی، نه بر گور نفرین کنند

Do not set your heart on this kingdom which lasts only for five days. Do not burn yourself with the sighs of men's hearts. Have not those before you, amassed more wealth than you, and burnt the world with their injustice? Live in such a manner that people will talk about you with admiration when you pass away, and not curse your grave when you are dead.

OPPORTUNISM

چو در لشکر دشمن افتد خلاف
 تو بگذار شمشیر خود در غلاف
 چو گرگان پسندند بر هم گزند
 بر آساید اندر میان گوسفند
 چو دشمن به دشمن بود مشتغل
 تو با دوست بنشین به آرام دل

When there is dissension in the enemy's camp, let your sword rest in its scabbard. When wolves prefer to harm one another, the sheep rest safely in their midst. When an enemy is occupied with another enemy, you can rest with your friend in tranquillity.

OPPRESSION

سپاهی که خوشدل نباشد ز شاه
 ندارد حدود ولایت نگاه
 چو دشمن خر روستایی برد
 ملک باج و ده یک چرا میخورد؟
 مخالف خرش برد و سلطان خراج
 چه اقبال ماند در آن تخت و تاج؟

The army that is not happy with the king will not guard the frontiers of his kingdom. Why should the king exact tribute and tithe from his villager when the enemy takes away his donkey? The enemy has taken away his donkey and the king has exacted tribute. What prosperity remains in such a kingdom?

میازار عامی به یک خردله
 که سلطان شبان است و عامی گله
 چو پرخاش بینند و بیداد از او
 شبان نیست، گرگست، فریاد از او
 بدانجام رفت و بد اندیشه کرد
 که با زیردستان جفا پیشه کرد
 به سختی و سُستی بر این بگذرد
 بماند بر او سالها نام بد

Do not oppress commoners even to the extent of a mustard seed, for the sultan is a shepherd and commoners are his flock. But if they suffer brutality and injustice at his hands, he is not a shepherd, but a wolf. They cry out for help to be rescued. Whoever has been cruel to his subordinates, has suffered an unhappy ending because of the evil thoughts that he entertained. His victims shall somehow endure frailty and hardship, but he gains a bad reputation for years together.

حکایت کنند از یکی نیک مرد
 که اکرام حجّاج یوسف نکرد
 به سرهنگ دیوان نگه کرد تیز
 که نطعش بینداز و خونش بریز
 بخندید و بگریست مرد خدای
 عجب داشت سنگیندل تیره رای
 چو دیدش که خندید و دیگر گریست
 پرسید: کاین خنده و گریه چیست؟
 بگفتا: همی گریم از روزگار
 که طفلان بیچاره دارم چهار

همی خندم از لطف یزدان پاک
که مظلوم رفتم، نه ظالم به خاک

They tell the tale of a holy man who did not show respect to Hajjaj ibn Yusuf. Hajjaj angrily looked at his court official and said, "Spread the execution mat and behead him". (On hearing this), the holy man laughed and then wept. The stone-hearted and injudicious Hajjaj was astonished when he saw the holy man weeping as well as laughing. He asked him, "What is the reason for this laughter and weeping?" He replied, "I weep at Fortune, for I have four helpless infants; and I laugh, as by God's Grace, I go to my grave as a victim of oppression, and not as an oppressor."

Note: Hajjaj ibn Yusuf was one of the most bloodthirsty tyrants in Arab history. He was a governor under the Omayyads and thousands of innocent people were executed by him. Tens of thousands suffered untold misery in his dungeons.

OPTIMISM

ز ظلمت مترس ای پسندیده دوست
که ممکن بود کآب حیوان دروست
دل از بی مرادی به فکرت مسوز
شب آبستن است ای برادر به روز

O admirable friend! Do not fear darkness, for the elixir of life may lie therein. O brother! Although you are disappointed, do not be perturbed, for the night is pregnant with day.

ORPHAN

چو بینی یتیمی سرافکنده پیش
مده بوسه بر روی فرزند خویش

یتیم ار بگرید، که نازش خرد؟
وگر خشم گیرد، که بارش برد؟
الا تا نگرید، که عرش عظیم
بلرزد همی چون بگرید یتیم
به رحمت بکن آتش از دیده پاک
به شفقت بیفشانش از چهره خاک

Whenever you see an orphan with his head cast down, do not kiss your child's face in his presence. Who will ever show affection to an orphan when he weeps? Who will ever show sympathy to him and carry his load when he is upset? Beware that he does not cry, because the Throne of Almighty God trembles when an orphan sobs. Wipe the tears from his eyes with compassion and cleanse the dust from his face with kindness.

یکی خار پای یتیمی بکند
به خواب اندرش دید صدر خُجند
همی گفت و در روضه ها می چمید
کز آن خار بر من چه گلها دمید!

Someone extracted a thorn from an orphan's foot and the lord of Khojand saw him in his dream. He was strutting about in the gardens of Paradise and proclaiming, "What roses have bloomed for me from that thorn!"

Note: Khojand is the name of a city in Turkistan and the lord of that city was a pious man.

PATERNAL DUTIES

چو خواهی که نامت بماند بجای
 پسر را خردمندی آموز و رای
 چو فرهنگ و رایش نباشد بسی
 بمیری و از تو نماند کسی
 بسا روزگارا که سختی برَد
 پسر چون پدر نازکش پرورد
 خردمند و پرهیزگارش برآر
 گرش دوست داری، به نازش مدار
 به خردی درش زجر و تعلیم کن
 به نیک و بدش وعده و بیم کن
 نوآموز را ذکر و تحسین و زه
 ز توبیخ و تهدید استاد به

If you want your name to remain eternal, teach your son wisdom and good judgement. If he lacks culture and good judgement, you will die and none will remain after you. A son will suffer many a hardship if his father brings him up in luxury. Train him to be wise and abstinent, and do not pamper him if you truly love him. Treat him severely and instruct him when he is still young, and teach him the good and the bad by promising and scolding him. For a beginner, good words, appreciation and approbation are better than the reproaches and threats of the teacher.

بیآموز پرورده را دسترنج
 وگر دست داری چو قارون به گنج

مَكُنْ تَكِيهَ بَرِ دَسْتِگَاهِي كِه هَسْت
 كِه بَاشَد كِه نَعْمَتِ نَمَانَد بَه دَسْت
 بَه پَايَانِ رَسَد كِيسَةُ سِيمِ وَ زَر
 نَغَرَدَد تُهِي كِيسَةُ پِيشِه وَر
 چَو بَرِ پِيشِه اِي بَاشَدَش دَسْتَرَس
 كَجَا دَسْتِ حَاجَتِ بَرَدِ پِيشِ كَس؟

Teach your ward to do hard work, even if you have the treasures of Korah at your disposal. Do not rely upon the wealth that you possess, for it is possible that riches may not remain in your hands. The bag of silver and gold may get depleted, but the purse of an artisan will never become empty. When he possesses the skill of an artisan, why should he stretch his hand of need before others?

PEACE

مَزَن بَا سِپَاهِي زِ خُودِ بِيَشْتَر
 كِه نَتَوَانِ زِدِ اَنگِشْتِ بَرِ نِيَشْتَر
 وَگَرِ زُو تَوَانَاتَرِي دَرِ نَبَرَد
 نَه مَرْدِيَسْتِ بَرِ نَاتَوَانِ زُورِ كَرَد
 اِگَرِ پِيلِ زُورِي وَگَرِ شِيرِچَنگِ
 بَه نَزْدِيكِ مَن، صِلحِ بَهْتَرِ كِه جَنگِ
 اِگَرِ صِلحِ خَوَاهَدِ عَدُو، سَرِ مِپِچِ
 وَگَرِ جَنگِ جَوِيدِ، عِنَانِ بَرِ مِپِچِ

Do not attack an army which is larger than your own, as one cannot strike one's finger on a lancet. And if you are more powerful

than your enemy, it is unmanly to harm one who is weaker than you. Even if you have the strength of an elephant and the claws of a lion, in my opinion, peace is preferable to war. If your enemy seeks peace, do not turn down his request; but if he wants war, do not hesitate to face him.

چو شاید گرفتن به نرمی دیار
 به پیکار خون از مشامی میار
 به مردی که مُلک سراسر زمین
 نیرزد که خونی چکد بر زمین
 شنیدم که جمشید فرخ سرشت
 به سرچشمه ای بر به سنگی نوشت
 گرفتیم عالم به مردی و زور
 و لیکن نبردیم با خود به گور

Do not shed blood in battle when a territory can be acquired by peaceful means. I swear by manliness that all the kingdoms on earth are not worth conquering at the cost of a drop of blood being spilled in war. I have heard that the auspicious-natured Jamshid wrote thus on a stone at a fountain-head: "We conquered the entire world with our bravery and might, but did not take it with us to the grave".

چو شمشیر پیکار برداشتی
 نگه دار پنهان ره آشتی
 که لشکر شکوفان مغفر شکاف
 نهان صلح جستند و پیدا مصاف

When you have drawn the sword in battle, you should secretly keep open the road to conciliation, since army-crushing paladins who can split the helmets, have secretly desired peace and outwardly sought war.

PERSECUTION

برانداز بیخی که خار آورد
 درختی بپرور که بار آورد
 کسی را بده پایۀ مهتران
 که بر کهتران سر ندارد گران
 مبخشای بر هر کجا ظالمیست
 که رحمت بر او، جور بر عالمیست
 جهانسوز را کُشته بهتر چراغ
 یکی به در آتش که خلقی به داغ
 جفاپیشگان را بده سر به باد
 ستم بر ستم پیشه عدل است و داد

Uproot the tree which produces thorns; nurture the tree which produces fruits. Confer greatness on him, who does not oppress his subordinates. Do not forgive him, who is an oppressor, for mercy to him is tantamount to injustice to the entire world. It is better that the lamp of one who burns the world is extinguished. It is preferable that a single oppressor burn in the fire, than a whole population be scorched. Destroy the oppressors who practise cruelty. Cruelty to the oppressors is tantamount to justice and equity.

PIETY

تنی زنده دل خفته در زیر گل
 به از عالمی زندهٔ مرده دل
 دل زنده هرگز نگرودد هلاک
 تن زنده دل گر بمیرد، چه باک

A pious man sleeping inside his grave is better than a multitude

of living men who are devoid of piety. A pious heart will never suffer destruction. It is immaterial if the body of such a man perishes.

چو روی پرستیدنت در خداست
اگر جبرئیلت نبیند رواست

If your attention is towards God when you worship, it will be immaterial if Gabriel does not observe you.

POLITENESS

چو کاری برآید به لطف و خوشی
چه حاجت به تُندی و گردنکشی؟
نخواهی که باشد دلت دردمند
دل دردمندان برآور ز بند

If a matter can be resolved by politeness and kindness, what need is there for arrogance and harshness? If you do not want your heart to suffer any pain, alleviate the sufferings of the unfortunate ones.

PRAISE OF GOD

اگر مُرده مسکین زبان داشتی
به فریاد و زاری فغان داشتی
که ای زنده، چون هست امکان گفت
لب از ذکر، چون مرده برهم مَخْفَت
چو ما را به غفلت بشد روزگار
تو باری دمی چند فُرصت شمار

If the helpless dead had tongues, they would cry out and weep in grief, saying, "O living one! Now that you have the power to speak, do

not close your lips like the dead, but recite the praises of God. Realizing that we have wasted our days in carelessness, you should make the most of your remaining few moments."

PRAYERS

غنیمت شمارند مردان دعا
که جوشن بود پیش تیرِ بلا

Men consider a prayer to be a bounty, as it is an armour which protects one from the arrows of calamity.

کرم کن، نه پرخاش و کین آوری
که عالم بزیر نگین آوری
به بازو توانا نباشد سپاه
برو، همت از ناتوانان بخواه
دعای ضعیفان امیدوار
ز بازوی مردی به آید به کار
هر آنک استعانت به درویش بُرد
اگر بر فریدون زد از پیش بُرد

Practise generosity and do not be quarrelsome and spiteful, so that you may bring the world under your control (lit: signet ring). An army is not strong only by force of arms. Go and seek the support of the weak, as the prayers of hopeful weak men are more useful than the arm of manliness. Whoever prays for help from the poor, will be victorious even if he attacks Faridun.

Note: Faridun was one of the most powerful kings of ancient Iran.

PRECAUTION

بباید نهان جنگ را ساختن
 که دشمن نهان آورد تاختن
 حذر، کار مردان کار آگهست
 یزک، سدّ روئین لشکر گهست

One should prepare for war secretly, since the enemy attacks in a clandestine manner. Vigilance is the practice of the wary; a guard is an iron barrier for an army camp.

PREDESTINATION

زنی جنگ پیوست با شوی خویش
 شبانگه چو رفتش تُوهدست پیش
 که کس چون تو بدبخت و درویش نیست
 چو زنبور سرخت بجز نیش نیست
 کسان را زر و سیم و ملک است و رخت
 چرا همچو ایشان نه ای نیکبخت؟
 بر آورد صافی دل صوف پوش
 چو طبل از تُهیگاه خالی خروش
 که من دست قُدرت ندارم به هیچ
 به سرپنجه دست قضا بر مپیچ
 نکردند در دست من اختیار
 که مر خویشان را کُنم بختیار

At night, a woman quarreled with her husband when he went home empty-handed to her, saying, "Nobody is as unfortunate and poor as you, and like a red wasp, you have nothing but a sting. Others have

gold, silver, property and garments. Why are you not prosperous like them?" The woollen-clad, pure-hearted poor man roared from his empty drum-like belly, saying, "I do not have the power to do anything. Do not try to twist the hand of destiny with your fist. They have not granted me the option of free choice to make myself fortunate."

قضا کشتی آنجا که خواهد بَرَد
وگر ناخدا جامه بر تن دَرَد
مکن سعديا دیده بر دست کس
که بخشنده پروردگار است و بس

Destiny carries the ship wherever it pleases, even if the navigator tears off his clothes from his body in desperation. O Sa'di! Do not seek favours from anyone, for the Provider Himself allots peoples' shares.

PRIDE

چو استاده ای بر مقامی بلند
بر اُفتاده گر هوشمندی، مخند
بسا ایستاده درآمد ز پای
که اُفتادگانش گرفتند جای

When you are occupying a high position, do not sneer at those who are fallen, if you are wise. Many a great man has lost his status and rank, and the fallen ones have taken his place.

PRISONER

چو سالاری از دشمن اُفتد به چنگ
به کُشتن دَرش کرد باید درنگ

اگر کُشتی این بندی ریش را
نبینی دگر بندی خویش را

When an officer of the enemy falls into your hands as a captive, hesitate in executing him, for if you kill the afflicted prisoner, you shall never again see your own prisoner of war.

PRUDENCE

ز تدبیر پیر کهن بر مگرد
که کار آزموده بود سالخورد
در آرند بنیاد رویین ز پای
جوانان به نیروی و پیران به رای

Do not discard an old veteran's plan, for a veteran enjoys years of experience. Young ones can destroy foundations of brass with force, whereas veterans can accomplish the same by prudence.

اگر دشمنی پیش گیرد ستیز
به شمشیر تدبیر خورش بریز
برو دوستی گیر با دشمنش
که زندان شود پیرهن بر تنش

If the enemy takes the initiative in war, shed his blood with the sword of prudence. Go and befriend his enemy, so that his shirt becomes a prison for his body.

PUNISHMENT

گنهكار را عذر نسيان بنه
 چو زنهار خواهند، زنهار ده
 گر آيد گنهكاري اندر پناه
 نه شرط است كشتن به اول گناه
 چو باري بگفتند و نشنيد پند
 بده گوشمالش به زندان و بند
 وگر پند و بندش نيايد به كار
 درختي خبيث است، بيخش برآر

Pardon the sinner who makes forgetfulness his excuse. Protect them if they seek quarter from you. If a sinner seeks refuge, it is improper to execute him for his first sin. But if he does not heed advice, punish him with imprisonment and chains. And if advice and chains prove useless, uproot him, for he is an evil tree.

كرا شرع فتوى دهد بر هلاك
 الا تا نداری ز كشتنش باك
 و گر دانی اندر تبارش كسان
 بر ايشان بيخشای و راحت رسان
 گنه بود مرد ستمكاره را
 چه تاوان زن و طفل بيچاره را؟

Do not hesitate to execute someone who has been condemned to death by a religious edict. But if you know that he has dependants, pardon them and provide succour to them. It was the oppressor who was the sinner (and deserved execution). Why should his helpless wife and children be penalised?

PURITY

ز هجران طفلی که در خاک رفت
چه نالی؟ که پاک آمد و پاک رفت
تو پاک آمدی، بر حذر باش و پاک
که ننگ است ناپاک رفتن به خاک

Why bemoan separation from your infant who was buried, as the infant came pure and also departed pure? You have come pure. Beware and be on your guard, for it is disgraceful to be buried as an impure one.

QUALITY

نه مردم همین استخوانند و پوست
نه هر صورتی جان معنی در اوست
نه سلطان خریدار هر بنده ایست
نه در زیر هر ژنده ای زنده ایست

Men are not merely bones and skin; the spirit of thought is not in every form. A sultan does not buy every slave for sale; not under every patched garment can be found a pious man.

RATIONALITY

شنیدم که وقتی سحرگاه عید
ز گرمابه آمد برون بایزید
یکی طشت خاکسترش بی خبر
فرو ریختند از سرایی به سر

همی گفت شوریده دستار و موی
 کف دست شکرانه مالان به روی
 که ای نفس! من درخور آتشم
 به خاکستری روی درهم کشم؟

I have heard that once at dawn, on the day of Eid, Bayezid came out of a public bath. A pan of ashes was unknowingly poured on his head from a mansion. His turban and hair were dishevelled and yet Bayezid rubbed his face and expressed his gratitude, saying, "O my soul! I deserve to be burnt by fire. Why should I therefore be upset by ashes?"

Note: Bayezid was a famous mystic saint.

RECONCILIATION

حذر کن ز پیکار کمتر کسی
 که از قطره سیلاب دیدم بسی
 مزن تا توانی بر ابرو گره
 که دشمن اگر چه زبون، دوست به
 بود دشمنش تازه و دوست ریش
 کسی کش بود دشمن از دوست بیش

Beware of combat with the weak, for I have often seen how drops of water form a deluge. Do not scowl at the enemy as far as possible, for it is better to befriend the enemy although he is despicable. He who has more enemies than friends, will find that his enemies are fresh and vigorous, while his friends are weak and weary.

RELIGIOUS FAITH

کجا عقل یا شرع فتوی دهد؟
که اهل خرد دین به دنیا دهد
و لیکن تو بستان که صاحب خرد
از ارزان فروشان به رغبت خرد

How can reason and religious law ever justify that a wise man should exchange his religious faith for worldly riches? But you should avail yourself of this opportunity, as a wise man will readily buy from those who sell their religious faith so cheaply.

REPENTANCE

کنونت که چشم است، اشکی بیار
زبان در دهان است، عذری بیار
نه پیوسته باشد روان در بدن
نه همواره گردد زبان در دهن
کنون بایدت عذر تقصیر گفت
نه چون نفسِ ناطق ز گفتن بخفت

Shed tears now that you still possess eyes, and seek pardon while you yet have a tongue in your mouth. The soul will not always remain in the body; the tongue will not always revolve in the mouth. Now is the time for you to seek pardon for your faults, and not when the judicious spirit is overwhelmed by sleep, and is unable to speak any more.

اگر هوشمندی، ز داور بخواه
شب توبه تقصیر روز گناه

هنوز ار سر صلح داری، چه بیم؟
 در عذرخواهان نبندد کریم
 کریمی که آوردت از نیست، هست
 عجب گر بیفتی، نگیرد دست
 اگر بنده ای، دست حاجت برآر
 وگر شرمسار، آب حسرت ببار
 نیامد بر این در کسی عذرخواه
 که سیل ندامت نشستش گناه
 نریزد خدای آبروی کسی
 که ریزد گناه آب چشمش بسی

If you are wise, ask the Just Lord to forgive the faults of your sinning day, when you repent at night. What fear have you, if you desire peace, as the Generous Lord will not close the door on those who seek pardon. As He has liberally brought you forth from nothingness to existence, it will be strange if He does not hold your hand when you fall. If you are a slave, raise your needy hands of supplication to Him; and if you are ashamed, shed the tears of remorse. No pardon-seeker has ever come to this door, whose sins have not been washed away by the flood of repentance. God does not dishonour the man who sheds abundant tears to wash away his sins.

REPRESSION

رعیت درخت است، اگر پروری
 به کام دل دوستان برخورداری
 به بی رحمی از بیخ و بارش مکن
 که نادان کند حیف بر خویشتن

مروّت نباشد بر افتاده زور
 برد مرغ دون دانه از پیش مور
 کسان بر خورند از جوانی و بخت
 که بر زيردستان نگیرند سخت
 اگر زيردستی در آید ز پای
 حذر کن ز نالیدنش بر خدای

Your subjects are like a tree, and if you nurture it properly, you shall enjoy its fruits to the satisfaction of your friends. Do not uproot it mercilessly, for only an ignorant man causes harm to himself. It is unmanly to use force against the fallen; it is only a mean bird which takes away seeds from the ants. Only those who are not harsh to their subordinates, enjoy the fruits of their youth and good fortune. If your subordinate becomes destitute, beware of his wailing before God.

RESTRAINT

یکی بر سر شاخ بُن میبیرید
 خداوند بستان نگه کرد و دید
 بگفتا: گر این مرد بد میکند
 نه با من، که با نفس خود میکند
 نصیحت به جایست اگر بشنوی
 ضعیفان میفکن به کتف قوی
 که فردا به داور بود خسروی
 گدایی که پشت نیرزد جوی
 چو خواهی که فردا بوی مهتری
 مکن دشمن خویشان کهنتری

که چون بگذرد بر تو این سلطنت
 بگیرد به قهر آن گدا دامن
 مکن، پنجه از ناتوانان بردار
 که گر بفکنندت شوی شرمسار
 که زشت است در چشم آزادگان
 بیفتادن از دست افتادگان

A person was sitting on a branch of a tree and cutting the base of it. The owner of the garden saw him and reflecting upon it said, "If this man commits evil, he does so to himself and not to me." An advice is proper, if you will only heed it. Do not subdue the weak with your powerful shoulder, for tomorrow, by the Grace of the Just God, the beggar who is not worth a grain of barley to you, may become a king. If you desire to attain greatness tomorrow, do not make the lowly man your enemy, for when this kingship departs from you, that beggar will forcefully seize you by your collar (lit: skirt). Restrain yourself and do not use force against the weak, as you will be humiliated if they overpower you. Unbefitting it is in the eyes of men of excellence, to be vanquished by the weak.

RETORT

چو دشنام گویی، دعا نشنوی
 بجز کشته خویشتن ندروی

If you utter an abuse, you will not receive blessings in return. You will only reap what you have sown.

RETRIBUTION

مُكَافَاتِ مَوْذِي بِه مَالِش مَكُن
 كه بيخس برآورد بايد ز بُن
 مَكُن صَبِرِ بَرِ عَامِلِ ظَلَمِ دُوسْتِ
 كه از فربهي بايدش كند پوست
 سر گرگ بايد هم اول بُرِيدِ
 نه چون گوسفندان مردم دريد

Do not punish one who causes distress to people by merely thrashing him, for he deserves to be totally uprooted. Show no hesitation in chastising an oppressive administrator, as he deserves to be flayed alive. The wolf should be beheaded right at the start, and not after it has torn the sheep of people to pieces.

RIGHTEOUSNESS

بزرگان روشندل نيكبخت
 به فرزاني تاج بُردند و تخت
 به دنباله راستان كج مرو
 و گر راست خواهي، ز سعدي شنو

Great men who are blessed with clear hearts and good fortune, have acquired crown and throne with sagacity. Do not deviate from the straight path when you are following the right ones, and listen to Sa'di if you wish to know what is right.

شنيدم كه از نيكمردي فقير
 دل آزرده شد پادشاهي كبير

مگر بر زبانش حقی رفته بود
 ز گردنکشی بر وی آشفته بود
 بزندان فرستادش از بارگاه
 که زور آزمایست بازوی جاه
 زیاران کسی گفتش اندر نهفت
 مصالح نبود این سخن گفت، گفت:
 رسانیدن امر حق طاعت است
 ز زندان نترسم که یک ساعت است

I have heard that a great king was offended by the words of a virtuous pauper. Perchance, he had spoken a truth which had aroused the anger of the arrogant king. He sent him to prison from his imperial court, as the arm of power is forceful. One of the condemned man's friends privately told him, "It was indiscreet on your part to have uttered these words." The virtuous pauper said, "To convey the command of Truth is an obligatory duty, and I do not fear imprisonment as it lasts only for an hour."

یکی بچه گرگ می پرورید
 چو پرورده شد، خواجه برهم درید
 چو بر پهلوی جان سپردن بخت
 زبان آوری در سرش رفت و گفت:
 تو دشمن چنین نازنین پروری
 ندانی که ناچار زخمش خوری؟
 نه ابلیس در حق ما طعنه زد
 کز اینان نیاید بجز کار بد؟

فغان از بدیها که در نفس ماست
 که ترسم شود ظنّ ابلیس راست
 چو ملعون پسند آمدش قهر ما
 خدایش بینداخت از بهر ما
 کجا سر برآریم ازین عار و ننگ
 که با او به صلحیم و با حق به جنگ
 نظر دوست نادر کند سوی تو
 چو در روی دشمن بود روی تو
 گرت دوست باید کزو برخوردی
 نباید که فرمان دشمن بری

Someone was rearing a wolf-cub, and when it grew up, it tore its master to pieces. When he was lying on his side, giving up his soul, an eloquent person went to him and said, "When you nurture your enemy so affectionately, do you not know that you shall be wounded by it? Had not Satan sarcastically said about us to God, that only bad deeds can proceed from us? Alas for all the baseness in our inner self, for I am afraid that Satan's opinion about us may turn out to be correct. When the accursed one derived joy from the wrath which we suffered, God degraded him for our sake. How can we raise our heads from the shame and ignominy of being on peaceful terms with him, and at war with Truth? The Friend (God) will rarely look towards you if you are inclined towards the enemy. If you desire to enjoy fruits from the Hands of the Friend (God), you must not obey the order of the enemy".

Note: "Did I not charge you, O ye sons of Adam, that ye worship not the devil - Lo! he is your open foe! But that ye worship Me? That was the right path. Yet he hath led astray of you a great multitude. Had ye then no sense? This is Hell which ye were promised (if ye followed him). Burn therein this Day for that ye disbelieved." Holy Qur'an, Chapter 36 - Yasin, Verses 60 to 64.

یکی برد با پادشاهی ستیز
 به دشمن سپردش که خونش بریز
 گرفتار در دست آن کینه توز
 همی گفت هر دم به زاری و سوز
 اگر دوست بر خود نیازدمی
 کی از دست دشمن جفا بُردمی؟
 تو از دوست گر عاقلی، برمگرد
 که دشمن نیارد نگه در تو کرد
 تو با دوست یکدل شو و یکسخن
 که خود بیخ دشمن برآید ز بن
 نپندارم این زشت نامی نکوست
 به خشنودی دشمن، آزارِ دوست

Someone quarreled with a king, and the latter turned him over to his enemy, saying, "Shed his blood." Captive in that revengeful enemy's hands, he constantly lamented and cried out, "Had I not displeased my friend, why would have I suffered cruelty at the hands of the enemy?" Do not turn away from The Friend (God) if you are wise, so that your enemy dare not cast a glance at you. Become one-hearted and unanimous with the Friend, so that the enemy is totally uprooted. I do not think that it is good to be infamous for the crime of pleasing the enemy, by distressing the Friend."

SA'DI

در اوراق سعدی نگنجد ملال
 که دارد پس پرده چندین جمال

مرا کاین سخنهاست مجلس فروز
 چو آتش در او روشنایی و سوز
 نرنجم ز خصمان اگر برطپند
 کزین آتش پارسى در تبند

There is no scope for weariness in Sa'di's pages, since he has so much beauty behind the veil. These assembly-illuminating words of mine are like fire which has the power to light and burn. I am unaffected if my rivals are confounded, for they are burning in fever from this Persian fire.

نکوکاری از مردم نیک رای
 یکی را به ده می نویسد خدای
 تو نیز ای عجب هر کرا یک هنر
 ببینی، ز ده عیبش اندرگذر
 نه یک عیب او را بر انگشت پیچ
 جهانی فضیلت بر آور به هیچ
 چو دشمن که در شعر سعدی نگاه
 به نفرت کند ز اندرون تباه
 ندارد به صد نکته نغز گوش
 چو زحفی ببیند، برآرد خروش
 جز این علتش نیست کان بد پسند
 حسد دیده نیک بینش بکند

God credits tenfold every good deed performed by men of good judgement. When you also see a single accomplishment in anyone, it will be strange if you do not overlook his ten faults. Do not count on your fingers his single fault, and do not consider as nothing his world-full of

virtues. Like the enemy who hatefully looks upon the verses of Sa'di due to his corrupt heart. He pays no attention to a hundred refined points, but raises a cry when he sees a single blemish. The only reason for this is that envy has gouged out the eye of good regard of that evil-seeing man.

الا ای که بر خاک ما بگذری
 به خاک عزیزان که یاد آوری
 که گر خاک شد سعدی، او را چه غم
 که در زندگی خاک بودست هم
 به بیچارگی تن فرا خاک داد
 و گر گرد عالم برآمد چو باد
 بسی بر نیاید که خاکش خورد
 دگر باره بادش به عالم برسد
 مگر تا گلستان معنی شکفت
 بر او هیچ بلبل چنین خوش نگفت
 عجب گر بمیرد چنین بلبلی
 که بر استخوانش نروید گلی

O you who pass by my grave! By the dust of your dear ones, I implore you to remember: "What matters to Sa'di if he has been reduced to dust, as in life too, he was only dust. Helplessly, he has surrendered his body to dust, although he explored the world like the wind. It will not be long before dust consumes him, and once again the wind will carry him around the world. But ever since 'thought' blossomed in the rose garden, no other nightingale has sung so melodiously in it. It will be a wonder if such a nightingale dies and a rose does not grow from his bones".

زبان در کش ار عقل داری و هوش
چو سعدی سخن گوی، ورنه خموش

Check your tongue if you have intelligence and sense. Speak like Sa'di, or else remain silent.

SATAN

ندانم کجا دیده ام در کتاب
که ابلیس را دید شخصی به خواب
به بالا صنوبر به دیدن چو حور
چو خورشیدش از چهره میتافت نور
فرا رفت و گفت: ای عجب، این تویی؟
فرشته نباشد بدین نیکویی
تو کاین روی داری به حُسن قمر
چرا در جهانی به زشتی سَمَر؟
چرا نقش بندت در ایوان شاه
دژم روی کردست و زشت و تباه؟
شنید این سخن بخت برگشته دیو
به زاری برآورد بانگ و غریو
که ای نیک بخت! این نه شکل من است
و لیکن قلم در کف دشمن است
برانداختم بیخشان از بهشت
کنونم به کین می نگارند زشت

I do not remember where I have read in a book, that someone saw Satan in his dream. He had the stature of a fir tree and appeared as handsome as an angel, and light shone from his face like the sun. The

person went up to him and said, "It is a wonder! Is it you? An angel is not as handsome as you! Why have you, whose beautiful face is like the moon, become notorious in the world for your ugliness? Why has the painter depicted you as morose, ugly and repulsive in the royal portico?" On hearing these words, the unfortunate demon cried out and exclaimed, "O fortunate man! This is not my form, but the pen is in the hand of the enemy. I uprooted man from Paradise, and now to seek vengeance, he depicts me as an ugly one."

SECRECY

به تدبیر جنگ بداندیش کوش
مصالح بیندیش و نیت بیوش
منه در میان راز با هر کسی
که جاسوس همکاسه دیدم بسی
اگر جز تو داند که عزم تو چیست
بر آن رای و دانش ببايد گریست

Fight the enemy with prudence. Consider your own interests and conceal your intention. Do not reveal your secrets to anyone, as I have often seen many spies who drank from the same cup. If anyone besides you knows what is your intention, one may well mourn for such discernment and knowledge.

SECRET

دل است ای خردمند، زندان راز
چو گفتی، نیاید به زنجیر باز

O wise one! The heart is the secret's prison. Once revealed, the secret cannot be brought back by chains.

تو پیدا مکن راز دل بر کسی
که او خود بگوید بر هر کسی

Do not reveal your secret to anyone, for he will in turn disclose it to others.

ضمیر دل خویش منمای زود
که هر گه که خواهی توانی نمود
ولیکن چو پیدا شود راز مرد
به کوشش شاید نهان باز کرد

Do not reveal your mind soon, as you can do so whenever you desire it. But when a man's secret is revealed, it cannot be hidden despite all his efforts.

SELF-CONCEIT

کرا جامه پاک است و سیرت پلید
در دوزخش را نباید کلید
بر این آستان عجز و مسکینیت
به از طاعت و خویشتن بینیت
چو خود را ز نیکان شمردی، بدی
نمی گنجد اندر خدایی، خودی

He whose garment is clean, but whose conduct is evil, does not need the key to Hell's gate to enter it. On this threshold, your helplessness and feebleness are better than your devotion and self-conceit. If you consider yourself to be from among the good, you are bad. Self-conceit can never be condoned by God.

SELF-DISCIPLINE

یکی نیشکر داشت بر طبعری
 چپ و راست گردنده بر مشتری
 به صاحب‌دلی گفت در کنج ده
 که بستان و چون دست یابی بده
 بگفت آن خردمند زیبا سرشت
 جوابی که بر دیده باید نبشت
 ترا صبر بر من نباشد مگر
 و لیکن مرا باشد از نیشکر
 حلاوت نباشد شکر در نیش
 چو باشد تقاضای تلخ از پی‌ش

A man had a tray of sugar-cane and was looking out for customers everywhere. He said to a devout person in the corner of the village, "Take it and pay me whenever you are able." The wise good-natured man gave him a reply which deserves to be inscribed upon the eyes: "You may not be able to wait for me, but I can wait for the sugar-cane. There can be no sweetness in the sugar of the cane, when a bitter claim follows it."

مکن عیب خلق ای خردمند فاش
 به عیب خود از خلق مشغول باش
 چو باطل سرایند، مگمار گوش
 چو بی ستر بینی، بصیرت بپوش

O wise man! Do not make public the defects of others. Be concerned with your own faults, so that you may overlook the defects of others. Do not pay attention when they utter falsehood. Cover up

your eyes when you see someone unveiled.

SELF-EFFACEMENT

به مجنون کسی گفت کای نیک پی
چه بودت که دیگر نیایی به حی؟
مگر در سرت شور لیلی نماند؟
خیالت دگر گشت و میلی نماند
چو بشنید بیچاره، بگریست زار
که ای خواجه، دستم ز دامن بدار
مرا خود دلی دردمند است ریش
تو نیزم نمک بر جراحت مریش
نه دوری دلیل صبوری بود
که بسیار دوری ضروری بود
بگفت: ای وفادار فرخنده خوی
پیامی که داری به لیلی، بگوی
بگفتا: مبر نام من پیش دوست
که حیف است نام من آنجا که اوست

Someone said to Majnoon, "O auspicious one! Why do you not visit your tribe any more? Is the passion for Leila no more in your mind? Has your fondness changed and are you no more inclined towards her?" On hearing this, the helpless man wept and said, "Leave me alone, Sir, for I have a heart that is afflicted and wounded. You too should not rub salt into my wound. My distance from her is not a sign of self-constraint, since keeping away is often a necessity". The man said, "O faithful one of auspicious nature! Give me your message for Leila." Majnoon replied, "Do not utter my name to my beloved, as it is unworthy of mention in her presence."

SELF-HELP

بخور تا توانی به بازوی خویش
 که سعیت بود در ترازوی خویش
 چو مردان ببر رنج و راحت رسان
 مَخْنَث خورد دسترنج کسان
 بگیر ای جوان، دست درویش پیر
 نه خود را بیفکن که دستم بگیر
 خدا را بر آن بنده بخشایش است
 که خلق از وجودش در آسایش است
 کسی نیک بیند به هر دو سرای
 که نیکی رساند به خلق خدای

As long as you can, eat what you earn by your own hands, for the greater your effort, the bigger will be your gain (lit: your effort will be recorded in your own scale-pan). Like men, labour hard and bring comfort to others, for it is the effeminate man who eats by the labour of others. O young man! Assist the aged poor man, and do not cast yourself down, asking for assistance from others. God will be merciful to that servant of His, whose existence is a source of comfort for others. Only he, who is benevolent to the creatures of God, will enjoy benevolence in both the worlds.

SELFISHNESS

شبی دود خلق آتشی بر فروخت
 شنیدم که بغداد نیمی بسوخت
 یکی شکر گفت اندر آن خاک و دود
 که دگان ما را گزندی نبود

جهانديده اي گفتش: اي بوالهوس
 ترا خود غم خويشتن بود و بس؟
 پسندي که شهري بسوزد به نار
 اگر چه سرايت بود بر کنار
 توانگر خود آن لقمه چون ميخورد
 چو بيند که درويش خون ميخورد؟

One night, the sighs of people kindled a fire and I heard that half of Baghdad was burnt down in it. In the midst of the dust and smoke, I saw a person expressing his gratitude to God and saying, "My shop has not been affected." A worldly-wise man said to him, "O capricious man! Are you only concerned with yourself? Do you approve that a city should be destroyed by fire, although your own house is on one side of it?" How can a rich man eat his meal when he sees a poor man starving to death?

SELFLESSNESS

چنان قحط سالي شد اندر دمشق
 که ياران فراموش کردند عشق
 چنان آسمان بر زمين شد بخيل
 که لب تر نکردند زرع و نخيل
 در آن حال پيش آمد دوستي
 از او مانده بر استخوان پوستي
 بدو گفتم: اي يار پاکيزه خوي
 چه درماندگي پشت آمد، بگوي؟
 بفريد بر من که عقلت کجاست
 چو داني و پُرسی، سؤالت خطاست؟

نبینی که سختی به غایت رسید
 مشقت به حدّ نهایت رسید
 بدو گفتم: آخر تو را باک نیست
 گُشد زهر جایی که تریاک نیست
 گر از نیستی دیگری شد هلاک
 ترا هست، بط را ز طوفان چه باک؟
 نگه کرد رنجیده در من فقیه
 نگه کردن عالم اندر سفیه
 که مرد ارچه بر ساحل است، ای رفیق!
 نیاساید و دوستانش غریق
 چو بینم که درویش مسکین نخورد
 بکام اندرم لقمه زهرست و درد
 یکی را به زندان درش دوستان
 کجا ماندش عیش در بوستان؟

Such a severe famine struck Damascus one year, that friends forgot what affection means. So niggardly did the sky become to the earth, that neither cultivation nor date-palms wetted their lips. Under such conditions, I came across a friend who had been reduced to bones. I said to him, "O good-natured friend! Tell me what calamity has befallen you?" He roared at me and said, "What has happened to your intelligence? When you know the facts and still persist in asking, your question is but erroneous. Do you not see that hardship has reached its zenith and adversity has crossed its furthest limit?" I said to him, "You have nothing to fear, as poison kills only where antidote is unavailable. If someone else has starved to death, you have the means to provide for yourself. Why should the duck fear the deluge?" The learned man looked at me angrily, akin to a wise man looking at a fool, and said, "O

friend! Even if a man is on the shore, he does not rest comfortably while his friends are drowning. When I see a needy mendicant starving, the morsel that I eat becomes poison and affliction for me. When a person's friends are languishing in prison, how can he enjoy himself in the garden?"

به ایثار، مردان سبق برده اند
 نه شب زنده داران دل مُرده اند
 کرامت جوانمردی و نان دهیست
 مقالات بیهوده، طبل تهیست
 قیامت کسی بینی اندر بهشت
 که معنی طلب کرد و دعوی بهشت

By being selflessly generous, true men have attained eminence. It is not the impious ones who spend the entire night in devotion. Generosity means benevolence and providing bread; vain declamations are hollow drums. On Resurrection Day, only he who has sought the true intention and discarded pretence, shall be seen in Paradise.

SELF-OBSESSION

بر از شاخ طوبی کسی بر نداشت
 که امروز تخم ارادت نکاشت
 ارادت نداری، سعادت مجوی
 به چوگان خدمت توان بُرد گوی
 ترا کی بود چون چراغ التهاب
 که از خود پُری همچو قندیل از آب؟
 وجودی دهد روشنایی به جمع
 که سوزیش در سینه باشد چو شمع

One who has not sown the seeds of devotion today will not attain the fruits of the Tooba tree in the next world. If you are devoid of devotion, do not seek prosperity, for one can carry off the ball only with the polo stick of service. How can you provide brightness like a lamp, when you are obsessed with yourself like a lantern full of water? Only the existence of one who has a grief-stricken heart like the candle can spread light in an assembly of men.

Note: Tooba is the name of a tree which grows in Paradise.

یکی در نجوم اندکی دست داشت
 ولی از تکبر سری مست داشت
 بر کوشیار آمد از راه دور
 دلی بی ارادت، سری پر غرور
 خردمند از او دیده بردوختی
 یکی حرف در وی نیاموختی
 چو بی بهره عزم سفر کرد باز
 بدو گفت دانای گردنفر از
 ز دعوی پُری، زان تُهی می روی
 تُهی آی تا پُرمعانی شوی
 ز هستی در آفاق، سعدی صفت
 تُهی گرد و باز آی پُرمعرفت

There was a man who had some knowledge of astronomy, but was intoxicated with pride. With a heart devoid of devotion and a head full of arrogance, he travelled a long distance to meet Kooshyar. The wise man totally ignored him and did not teach him a single word. When the disconcerted man prepared to return, the illustrious wise Kooshyar said to him, "You are obsessed with yourself and hence are

going empty-handed. Overpower your self-obsession, so that you may become full of knowledge." Be selfless like Sa'di, and after exploring the world, return with abundant wisdom.

Note: Abolhasan Kooshyar was a renowned mathematician who lived in the later fourth and early fifth Hijri century.

SELF-SACRIFICE

چه نغز آمد این نکته در سندباد
 که عشق آتش است ای پسر، پند باد
 به باد آتش تیز برتر شود
 پلنگ از زدن کینه ورتتر شود
 ز خود بهتری جوی و فرصت شمار
 که با چون خودی، گم کنی روزگار
 پی چون خودی، خودپرستان روند
 به کوی خطرناک مستان روند
 سرانداز در عاشقی صادق است
 که بد زهره بر خویشان عاشق است
 چو بی شک نبشتست بر سر هلاک
 به دست دلارام خوشتر هلاک
 نه روزی به بیچارگی جان دهی؟
 همان به که در پای جانان دهی

How well has this epigram appeared in Sindbad: O my son! Love is fire. Beware of it. Wind causes a brisk fire to vault higher; a leopard becomes more spiteful when beaten. Seek someone better than yourself for company and make the best of such an opportunity, for in the company of one like yourself, you will waste your days in vain pursuits. Only self-conceited ones go after people like themselves; only intoxicated

ones opt for the dangerous lanes. One who imperils his life is faithful in love, whereas a coward is in love with himself. Since one is undoubtedly destined to die, it is better to perish at the hands of one's sweetheart. Do you not have to helplessly suffer death some day? Hence, it is better to sacrifice yourself at the feet of your beloved.

SERVICE

قدیمان خود را بیفزای قدر
که هرگز نیاید ز پرورده غدر
چو خدمتگزاریت گردد کهن
حق سالیانش فرامش مکن
گر او را هرَم دست خدمت بست
ترا بر کرم همچنان دست هست

Honour and patronise your senior associates, for they will never be treacherous to you. If your servant grows old, do not forget the years of service he has rendered to you. If he cannot serve you any more due to infirmity, you are still empowered to be generous to him.

SHALLOWNESS

تفاوت کند هرگز آب زلال
گرش کوزه زرین بود یا سفال؟
کس از سربزرگی نباشد به چیز
کدو سر بزرگ است و بی مغز نیز
به صورت کسانی که مردم و شنند
چو صورت همان به که دم در کشند

Does it make any difference if clear water is stored in a pitcher

of gold or earthenware? A person is not worthy merely because he is big-headed, for a pumpkin is brainless although it is big-headed. It is better for those who resemble human beings only in form, to observe silence like portraits.

SHAM PIETY

سخن ماند از عاقلان یادگار
 ز سعدی همین یک سخن یاد دار
 گنهکار اندیشناک از خدای
 به از پارسای عبادت نمای

Good sayings are left behind by wise men. Bear in mind this saying from Sa'di: "A sinner who is afraid of God is better than a pious man who makes a public display of his piety."

به سرهنگ سلطان چنین گفت زن
 که خیز ای مبارک، در رزق زن
 برو تا ز خوانت نصیبی دهند
 که فرزندگان نظر بر رهند
 بگفتا: بود مطبخ امروز سرد
 که سلطان به شب نیت روزه کرد
 زن از ناامیدی سر انداخت پیش
 همی گفت با خود دل از فاقه ریش
 که سلطان از این روزه گویی چه خواست؟
 که افطار او عید طفلان ماست
 خورنده که خیرش بر آید ز دست
 به از صائم الدهر دنیا پرست

مسلم کسی را بود روزه داشت
که درمانده ای را دهد نان چاشت

The wife of the Sultan's colonel said to him, "O auspicious one! Get up and knock at the door of sustenance. Go, so that they may give you a share from the dining table, as your children are looking forward with expectation." He replied, "The kitchen will be cold today, for last night the Sultan intended to fast today." His wife lost hope and while her heart was grieved by hunger, she despondently said to herself, "What does the Sultan hope to achieve by this fasting, as his *iftar* (fast-breaking) is a feast for our children?" A man who does not observe fast, but is helpful to others, is better than an ever-fasting materialistic person. Only he has the right to fast, who feeds a distressed hungry man.

نکو سیرتی، بی تکلف برون
به از نیکنامی، خراب اندرون
به نزدیک من شبرو راهزن
به از فاسق پارسا پیره‌ن

Having an innate good character and being devoid of outward refinement, is better than having a good name and an evil nature. In my opinion, a highway robber who strikes at night is superior to a pious-clothed debauchee.

SILENCE

ترا خامشی ای خداوند هوش
وقار است و نااهل را پرده پوش
اگر عالمی، هیبت خود مبر
و گر جاهلی، پرده خود مدر

O intelligent man! For you silence is dignity, whereas for an unworthy man, it is a cover for his faults. If you are learned, do not lose your eminence; and if you are ignorant, do not expose yourself.

SINCERITY

درختی که بیخش بود برقرار
 بپرور، که روزی دهد میوه بار
 گرت بیخ اخلاص در بوم نیست
 از این بر کسی چون تو محروم نیست
 هر آن کافکند تخم بر روی سنگ
 جوی وقت دخلش نیاید به چنگ

Nurture the tree whose roots are firm, so that it may produce fruits some day. If you do not have the roots of sincerity in the soil, nobody will be more deprived than you of its fruits. Whoever sows seeds in stones, will not gather even a grain of barley at harvest time.

SINFUL LIFE

هوس پختن از کودک ناتمام
 چنان زشت نبود که از پیر خام
 نکو گفت لقمان که نا زیستن
 به از سالها بر خطا زیستن

The self-indulgence of an immature child is not as detestable as that of an imperfect old man. Luqman has aptly said: "Not to live at all, is preferable to living for years in sin."

Note: Chapter 31 of Holy Qur'an is named after Luqman who was blessed with abundant wisdom. He was also known for his patience and forbearance.

SLANDER

به بد گفتن خلق چون دم زدی
اگر راست گویی سخن هم، بدی

When you resort to speaking ill of people, you are bad even if what you speak may be true.

کسی را که نام آمد اندر میان
به نیکوترین نام و نعتش بخوان
چو همواره گویی که مردم خرنند
مبّر ظن که نامت چو مردم برنند

When a man's name is mentioned in a gathering, refer to him by the best name and describe him in the best manner. If you constantly say that people are asses, do not presume that your name will be spoken of as a human being.

SPEECH

سخن تا نگویی بر او دست هست
چو گفته شود، یابد او بر تو دست

As long as you have not spoken, you have the upper hand on your words. But once you have spoken, your words will get the upper hand on you.

بهایم خموشند، گویا بشر
زبان بسته بهتر که گویا به شر
چو مردم سخن گفت باید به هوش
وگرنه شدن چون بهایم خموش

به نطق آدمی بهتر است از دواب
دواب از تو به گر نگویی صواب

Beasts are silent while man is a speaker. But to be silent is better than speaking evil. One should either speak sensibly like human beings or observe silence like beasts. Human beings are superior to beasts because of their power of speech, but beasts are better than you if what you speak is improper.

SPOUSE

زن خوب فرمانبر پارسا
کند مرد درویش را پادشا
همه روز اگر غم خوری، غم مدار
چو شب غمگسارت بود در کنار
کرا خانه آباد وهمخوابه دوست
خدا را به رحمت نظر سوی اوست

A good, obedient and virtuous wife will make a poor man a king. Grieve not even if you suffer grief throughout the day, when at night you have beside you someone to share your grief. God looks upon that man with mercy, whose house prospers and who has an affectionate bed-mate.

دلارام باشد زن نیکخواه
ولیکن زن بد، خدایا پناه
چو طوطی کلاغش بود هم نفس
غنیمت شمارد خلاص از قفس

A benevolent wife is a soother of the heart, but as for a bad wife,

may God protect us! When a parrot has a crow for a companion, it considers escaping from the cage to be a blessing.

سفر عید باشد بر آن کدخدای
که بانوی زشتش بود در سرای
زن خوب و خوش طبع، گنج است و یار
رها کن زن زشت ناسازگار

A journey is an Eid for that married man who has an ugly wife in his house. A good wife of pleasant disposition is a treasure and a friend, but give up the ugly and incompatible wife.

خرابت کند شاهد خانه گن
برو خانه آباد گردان به زن
نشاید هوس باختن با گلی
که هر بامدادش بود بلبلی

A home-wrecking beautiful damsel will ruin you. Go and make your house prosperous with your wife. One should not be enticed by any rose that has a new nightingale every morning.

SUBMISSION

یکی پیر درویش درخاک کیش
چه خوش گفت با همسر زشت خویش
چو دست قضا زشت رویت سرشت
میندای گلگونه بر روی زشت
که حاصل کند نیکبختی به زور؟
به سُرْمه که بینا کند چشم کور؟

How appropriately did the old mendicant in the land of Kish say to his ugly wife: "Since the hand of Fate has created you ugly, do not apply rose-coloured rouge to your ugly face." Who can attain good fortune by force? Who can make a blind man see by applying collyrium to his eyes?

نیاید نکوکاری از بدرگان
 محال است دوزندگی از سگان
 همه فیلسوفان یونان و روم
 ندانند کرد انگبین از زقوم
 ز وحشی نیاید که مردم شود
 به سعی اندر او تربیت گم شود
 توان پاک کردن ز زنگ آینه
 و لیکن نیاید ز سنگ آینه
 چه رد می نگرده خدنگ قضا
 سپر نیست مر بنده را جز رضا

Goodness cannot emanate from those whose blood is evil. It is impossible to expect tailoring from dogs. All the philosophers of Greece and Rome cannot produce honey from the Zaqquq tree. Savages cannot be expected to become human, and the efforts involved in educating them will be wasted. Rust can be removed from a mirror, but mirror cannot be made from stones. Since Destiny's poplar-arrow cannot be averted, the only shield for man is graceful submission.

Note: زقوم : "Zaqquq" is a tree which grows in Hell.

SUBORDINATE

بسا زورمندا که افتاد سخت
 بس افتاده را یاوری کرد بخت

دل زيردستان نبايد شكست
مبادا كه روزي شوي زيردست

Many a powerful man has suffered decline, and many a weak one has been aided by good fortune. You should not break the hearts of your subordinates, lest you also become a subordinate some day.

SUPERSTITION

يكي روستايي سَقَط شد خورش
عَلَم كرد بر تاك بستان سرش
جهانديده پيري بر او برگذشت
چنين گفت خندان به ناطور دشت
مپندار جان پدر كاین حمار
كُنَد دفع چشم بد از كشتزار
كه اين دفع چوب از سر و گوش خویش
نمی کرد تا ناتوان مُرد و ریش

A villager's donkey died and he raised its skull upon the grapevine of his garden like a flag. An experienced old man who passed by, laughingly said to the keeper of the vineyard, "Dear son! Do not think that this donkey will be able to ward off evil eyes from your field, since it could not fend off the stick from its own head and ears, until it died weak and wounded".

SUPPLICATION

خدایا به عزت كه خوارم مكن
به ذل گنه شرمسارم مكن

مُسَلِّطْ مَكُنْ چُونِ مَنِي بَرِ سَرَمِ
 زِ دَسْتِ تَو، بَه گَرِ عَقُوبَتِ بَرَمِ
 بَه گِيتِي نَباشَدَ بَتَرِ زِينِ بَدِي
 جَفَا بُرْدَنِ اَزِ دَسْتِ هَمچُونِ خُودِي
 مَرَا شَرْمَسَارِي زِ رُويِ تَو بَسِ
 دِگَرِ شَرْمَسَارَمِ مَكُنْ پِيشِ كَسِ

O God! By Your Glory! Do not degrade me, and do not humiliate me with the disgrace of sin. Do not impose upon me a person like myself, as it is better to suffer chastisement at Your Hands. In the world, there is no evil worse than suffering cruelty at the hands of someone like oneself. Being put to shame before You is sufficient for me. So do not humiliate me before others.

خَدَايَا بَه ذَاتِ خَدَاوَنَدِيَتِ
 بَه اَوْصَافِ بِي مَثَلِ وَ مَانَنَدِيَتِ
 كِه چَشْمَمِ زِ رُويِ سَعَادَتِ مَبْنَدِ
 زَبَانَمِ بَه وَقْتِ شَهَادَتِ مَبْنَدِ
 چَرَاغِ يَقِينَمِ فَرَا رَاهِ دَارِ
 زِ بَدِ كَرْدَنَمِ دَسْتِ كُوتَاهِ دَارِ
 بَگَرْدَانِ زِ نَادِيدَنِي دِيدَه ام
 مَدَه دَسْتِ بَرِ نَپَسَنَدِيدَه ام

O God! By the Essence of Your Godhood! By all Your Matchless and Incomparable Attributes! Do not shut my eyes from the face of blissfulness, and do not bind my tongue at the time of acknowledging Your Oneness (whilst dying). Illuminate my path with the lamp of true faith, and restrain me from committing evil. Divert my eyes from what should not be seen, and do not give me the power to do what is wrong.

نگویم بزرگی و جاهم ببخش
 فروماندگی و گناهم ببخش
 کس از من سیه نامه تر دیده نیست
 که هیچم فعال پسندیده نیست
 جز این کاعتماد به یاری تست
 امیدم به آمرزگاری تست
 بضاعت نیاوردم الا امید
 خدایا ز عفو مکن ناامید

I do not ask You to give me position and status, but implore You to forgive my failures and sins. Nobody has seen a blacker record than mine, as I have no virtuous deeds to offer. All I have is only confidence in Your assistance and faith in Your forgiveness. I have brought with me no provisions but hope. O God! Do not disappoint me by not pardoning me.

چه خوش گفت درویش کوتاه دست
 که شب توبه کرد و سحرگه شکست
 گر او توبه بخشد بماند درست
 که پیمان ما بی ثباتست و سُست
 به حَقّت که چشمم ز باطل بدوز
 به نورت که فردا به نارم مسوز
 ز مسکینیم روی در خاک رفت
 غُبار گناهم بر افلاک رفت
 تو یک نوبت ای ابر رحمت ببار
 که در پیش باران نیاید غُبار

ز جُرْمِ دَرِین مَمْلَکَتِ جَاهِ نِیَسْت
 و لَیْکِن بَہ مُلْکِی دَگَر رَاہِ نِیَسْت
 تُو دَانِی ضَمِیرِ زَبَانِ بَسْتِگَانِ
 تُو مَرَهْمِ نَہِی بَرِ دَلِ خَسْتِگَانِ

How aptly has the abstinent dervish, who repented at night and relapsed at dawn, said: "If He bestows repentance, it shall endure, as our vows are inconsistent and infirm. By Your Truth! Sew up my eyes from what is wrong! By Your Light! Do not burn me tomorrow with fire! My face has indigently gone into the dust; the dust of my sins have risen to the heavens. O Cloud of Compassion! Rain down on me once, as dust cannot endure where it rains. I have no place in this kingdom because of my crime, but I have no way to another country. You know the inner mind of the tongue-tied; You apply ointment to the hearts of those who are wounded".

SYMPATHY

بَہ رَغْبَتِ بَگَشِ بَارِ ہَرِ جَاہِلِی
 کَہ اُفْتِی بَہ سَرَوَقْتِ صَاہِبِ دَلِی
 غَمِ جُمْلَہِ خُورِ دَرِ ہَوَایِ یَکِی
 مُرَاعَاَتِ صَدِ کُنِ بَرَایِ یَکِی
 کَسی رَا کَہ نَزْدِیْکِ ظَنَّتِ بَدِ اُوسْتِ
 چَہ دَانِی کَہ صَاہِبِ وِلَایْتِ خُودِ اُوسْتِ؟

Cheerfully bear the burden of every ignorant one, so that you may ultimately meet a man of excellence. Suffer the sorrows of all, in your love for a single one. Assist a hundred needy ones for the sake of one. How do you know that the one whom you suspect to be evil, is not the one who enjoys God's Grace?

کسی بندیان را بود دستگیر
 که خود بوده باشد به بندی اسیر
 اگر سر نهد بر خطت سروری
 چو نیکش بداری، نهد دیگری
 اگر خفیه ده دل بدست آوری
 از آن به که صد ره شبیخون بری

Only he who has been a prisoner himself, will provide succour to prisoners. If you treat well a leader who bows before your order, others will also follow his example. Gaining the hearts of ten men secretly is better than launching a hundred surprise attacks in the night.

TACTFULNESS

همی تا بر آید به تدبیر کار
 مدارای دشمن به از کارزار
 چو نتوان عدو را به قوت شکست
 به نعمت ببايد در فتنه بست
 گر اندیشه باشد ز خصمت گزند
 به تعویذ احسان زبانش ببند
 عدو را بجای خسک زر بریز
 که احسان کند کند دندان تیز

When a matter can be resolved with tact, showing moderation to an enemy is better than combat. When you cannot overpower an enemy, you should shut the door of sedition by patronising him. If you are apprehensive of suffering harm at the hands of an antagonist, tie his tongue with the amulet of kindness. Instead of thorns, scatter gold before the enemy, as kindness blunts sharp teeth.

TACTICS

چو بینی که لشکر ز هم دست داد
 به تنها مده جان شیرین به باد
 وگر خود هزاری و دشمن دویست
 چو شب شد، در اقلیم دشمن نایست
 شب تیره پنجه سوار از کمین
 چو پانصد به هیبت بدرّ زمین
 چو خواهی بُریدن به شب راهها
 حذر کن نخست از کمین گاهها
 میان دو لشکر چو یک روز راه
 بماند، بزن خیمه بر جایگاه
 گر او پیشدستی کند، غم مدار
 ورافراسیاب است، مغزش بر آر

When you observe that your army has been scattered, do not give up your sweet life in vain. If your army comprises of a thousand men and your enemy number two hundred, do not stay in the enemy's territory at nightfall. In the darkness of night, fifty riders who are waiting in ambush, can tear the earth with the awe of five hundred. If you wish to march at night, you must first beware of the ambush sites. Pitch your tent at that point which is one day's distance from your enemy. Do not be alarmed if the enemy takes the initiative. Crush the enemy (lit: take out his brain), even if he has the strength of Afrasiyab.

Note: Afrasiyab was the emperor of Tooran and was the cruel villain of Shahnameh, written by Ferdowsi.

TALE-BEARER

سخن چین کند تازه جنگ قدیم
 به خشم آورد نیکمرد سلیم
 از آن همنشین تا توانی گریز
 که مر فتنه خفته را گفت خیز
 میان دو تن جنگ چون آتش است
 سخن چین بدبخت هیزم کش است

The tale-bearer renews old quarrels and enrages a peaceable good man. As far as possible, run away from that companion who awakens a sleeping mischief. Between two men, a quarrel is like fire, and the unfortunate tale-bearer supplies the firewood.

ندیدم ز غمّاز سرگشته تر
 نگون طالع و بخت برگشته تر
 ز نادانی و تیره رایى که اوست
 خلاف افکند در میان دو دوست
 کنند این و آن خوش دگر باره دل
 وی اندر میان کور بخت و خجل
 میان دو کس آتش افروختن
 نه عقل است و خود در میان سوختن

I have never seen anyone more bewildered, ill-fated and unfortunate than a tale-bearer. Due to his ignorance and ill-judgement, he creates a rift between two friends. The two may once again rejoice in peace, and in between, he will become unfortunate and humiliated. It is unwise to kindle fire between two persons and then burn in it yourself.

TALK

چو خواهی که گویی نفس بر نفس
 حلاوت نیابی ز گفتار کس
 تأمل کنان در خطا و صواب
 به از ژاژخایان حاضر جواب
 کمال است در نفس انسان سخن
 تو خود را به گفتار، ناقص مکن

If you wish to talk continuously, you will not find sweetness in anyone else's talk. Those who ponder on what is proper and improper, are superior to those who are always ready with an answer, but talk senselessly. Speech is perfection in the personality of man. Do not render yourself defective by what you speak.

کم آواز هرگز نبینی خجل
 جوی مشک بهتر که یک توده گل
 حذر کن ز نادان ده مرده گوی
 چو دانا یکی گوی و پرورده گوی

One who talks infrequently will never be humiliated. A grain of musk is superior to a pile of mud. Be wary of the ignoramus who speaks as ten men. Speak once like the wise man and let it be perfect.

TOLERANCE

سر پُر غرور از تحمل تُهی
 حرامش بود تاج شاهنشهی
 نگویم چو جنگ آوری پای دار
 چو خشم آیدت، عقل بر جای دار

تحمّل کند هر که را عقل هست
نه عقلی که خشمش کند زیر دست

The crown of a king is unlawful for the head that is filled with pride and devoid of tolerance. I do not say, "Be firm when making war, but preserve reason when you are overwhelmed with anger. Whoever is guided by reason, is tolerant; and whoever is overpowered by anger, lacks reason".

تحمّل کن ای ناتوان از قوی
که روزی تواناتر از وی شوی
به همت برآر از ستیهنده شور
که بازوی همت به از دست زور
لب خشک مظلوم را گو بخند
که دندانِ ظالم بخواهند گند

O infirm one! Tolerate the might of the powerful one, for some day you may become more powerful than him. Overpower the quarrelsome one with your magnanimous spirit, as the loftiness of ambition is better than the arm of force. Tell the dry lips of the oppressed man to smile, as the teeth of the oppressor will be forcefully extracted.

تحمّل چو زهرت نماید نخست
ولی شهد گردد چو در طبع رُست

Tolerance at first will seem like poison to you, but when nurtured, it will turn into honey.

TRANSIENCY

گر از جاه و دولت بیفتد لئیم
دگر باره نادر شود مستقیم
وگر قیمتی گوهری، غم مدار
که ضایع نگرداندت روزگار
پسندیده و نغز باید خصال
که گاه آید و گه رود جاه و مال

If a despicable person falls from rank and position, he can seldom regain them. But have no fear if you are a precious stone, for the vicissitudes of time will not let you be degraded. One must possess admirable and excellent attributes, as rank and wealth but come and go.

TRAVELLERS

شهنشه که بازارگان را بخست
در خیر بر شهر و لشکر بست
کی آنجا دگر هوشمندان روند
چو آوازه رسم بد بشنوند؟
بزرگان مسافر به جان پرورند
که نام نکویی به عالم برند
تبه گردد آن مملکت عنقریب
کزو خاطر آزرده آید غریب
غریب آشنا باش و سیاح دوست
که سیاح، جلاب نام نکوست

The monarch who hurts the merchants, shuts the door of prosperity on his own citizens and army. How can the wise ones again

go to a place, when they hear about the bad customs prevailing there. Great men take good care of travellers in order to earn a good name throughout the world. The country from which a traveller returns dissatisfied will soon be in ruins. Be fair to the stranger and kind to the traveller, for a happy traveller is a source of fame for you.

TRUST

خدا ترس باید امانتگزار
امین کز تو ترسد، امینش مدار
امین باید از داور اندیشناک
نه از رفع دیوان و زجر و هلاک

One who has to manage a trust must be God-fearing. Do not appoint a trustee who only fears you. A trustee must be fearful of the Just God. He must not be one who fears the loss of his ministry, the king's punishment and execution.

TRUST IN GOD

یکی طفل دندان برآورده بود
پدر سر به فکرت فرو برده بود
که من نان و برگ از کجا آرمش
مروت نباشد که بگذارمش
چو بیچاره گفت این سخن نزد جفت
نگر تا زن او را چه مردانه گفت
مخور هول ابلیس تا جان دهد
هم آن کس که دندان دهد، نان دهد

تواناست آخر خداوند روز
که روزی رساند، تو چندین مسوز

An infant had started teething and its father had bowed his head in thought, saying, "From where can I get its bread and provisions? It will not be compassionate to leave it without them." When the helpless man spoke thus before his wife, see how manfully the woman said to him, "Do not fear Satan and let him be damned, for The One Who has given teeth, will also provide bread. Almighty God, the Lord of days, is also capable of providing daily bread. Do not be perturbed."

TYRANNY

فراخی در آن مرز و کشور مخواه
که دلتنگ بینی رعیت ز شاه
ز مُستکبران دلاور بترس
از آن کو نترسد ز داور، بترس
دگر کشور آباد بیند به خواب
که دارد دل اهل کشور خراب

Do not expect to find affluence in the land and kingdom where you see people suffer persecution at the hands of their king. Fear the haughty and arrogant ones. Dread him, who does not fear the Just One. Whoever causes grief to the hearts of his subjects can hope to see prosperity only in his dreams.

شنیدم که خسرو به شیرویه گفت
در آندم که چشمش ز دیدن بخت
بر آن باش تا هر چه نیت کنی
نظر در صلاح رعیت کنی

گریزد رعیت ز بیدادگر
 کُند نام زشتش به گیتی سَمَر
 بسی بر نیاید که بُنیاد خود
 بکند آنکه بنهاد بنیاد بد
 خرابی کند مرد شمشیر زن
 نه چندان که دود دل طفل و زن
 چراغی که بیوه زنی بر فروخت
 بسی دیده باشی که شهری بسوخت

I have heard that Khosrow told Shiruyeh just before his death, "You should always strive to work for the welfare of your subjects. Subjects flee from an unjust ruler and he becomes infamous throughout the world. It will not be long before a ruler who lays a bad foundation, uproots the basis of his own authority. The destruction caused by a swordsman is insignificant in comparison to the devastation caused by the sighs of infants and women. It is often seen that the lamp lit by a widow, has burnt down an entire city".

نماند ستمکار بد روزگار
 بماند بر او لعنت پایدار

The unfortunate tyrant will not survive, but the curses of his victims will always be on him.

یَد ظُلم جایی که گردد دراز
 نبینی لبِ مَرْدُم از خنده باز

You will never see the smiling faces of people wherever the hand of tyranny prevails.

خبر داری از خسروان عجم
 که کردند بر زيردستان ستم؟
 نه آن شوکت و پادشایی بماند
 نه آن ظلم بر روستایی بماند
 خطا بين که بر دست ظالم برفت
 جهان ماند و او با مظالم برفت

Do you know of the Persian kings who oppressed their weak subjects? Neither their splendour and kingship, nor their tyranny against the villagers, lasted. See the wrong committed by a tyrant. The world has remained, but the tyrant and his tyranny have both been obliterated.

تو کی بشنوی ناله داد خواه
 به کیوان برت کله خوابگاه؟
 چنان خُسب کاید فُغانت به گوش
 اگر دادخواهی برآرد خروش
 که نالد ز ظالم که در دور تست
 که هر جور کو میکند، جور تست
 نه سگ دامن کاروانی درید
 که دهقان نادان که سگ پرورید

How will you be able to hear the lament of a justice-seeker when your bedchamber is as high as Saturn? Sleep such that you can hear the wailing of a justice-seeker who bitterly groans under injustice. Who can complain against an oppressor who lives in your reign? In reality, you are responsible for every tyranny that he commits. It is not the dog

which is responsible for tearing a caravan-rider's skirt, but the foolish farmer who reared the dog.

UNITY

نبینی که چون باهم آیند مور
ز شیران جنگی برآرند شور
نه موری، که مویی کزان کمتر است
چو پُر شد، ز زنجیر محکمر است

Have you not seen how, when ants get together, they create a commotion among ferocious lions? Not ants, but even strands of hair, which are thinner than ants, when bound together, become stronger than a chain of iron!

VANITY

شنیدم که در مصر، میری اجل
سپه تاخت بر روزگارش اجل
چو نزدیک شد روز عمرش به شب
شنیدند میگفت در زیر لب
جهان گرد کردم، نخوردم برش
برفتم چو بیچارگان از سرش
کنونت که دست است، خاری بکن
دگر کی بر آری تو دست از کفن؟
بتابد بسی ماه و پروین و هور
که سر بر نداری ز بالین گور

I have heard of a distinguished ruler of Egypt who was attacked by the army of death. When the day of his life was approaching

darkness, they heard him whisper softly, "I conquered the world, but did not enjoy its fruits. Like helpless men, I now leave it behind me." Now, while things are under your control, provide succour to people (lit: take out a thorn). How can you ever again bring out your hand from the shroud? The Moon, the Pleiades and the Sun shall continue to shine for ages to come, and yet you will not be able to raise your head from the pillow of your grave.

قزل ارسلان قلعه ای سخت داشت
 که گردن به الوند بر میفراشت
 شنیدم که مردی مبارک حضور
 به نزدیک شاه آمد از راه دور
 قزل گفت چندین که گردیده ای
 چنین جای محکم دگر دیده ای؟
 بخندید کاین قلعه ای خرم است
 و لیکن نپندارمش محکم است
 نه پیش از تو گردنکشان داشتند؟
 دمی چند بودند و بگذاشتند
 نه بعد از تو شاهان دیگر برند
 درخت امید تو را بر خورند
 بر مرد هشیار، دنیا خس است
 که هر مدتی جای دیگر کس است

Qizil Arsalan possessed a strong fort that raised its head to the Alvand mountain. I have heard that a gracious man came to the King from a distant land. Qizil said to him, "In all your travels, have you seen such a mighty fortress?" (On hearing this), he laughed and said, "This is a pleasant fortress, but I do not think that it is strong enough. Had not other proud rulers possessed it before you? They held it for

some time and then relinquished it. Will not other kings attain it after you, and eat the fruits of the tree of your hopes? To the judicious man, the world is as worthless as brush-wood, for its possession is ever-changing."

VENERATION

ثنا گفت بر سعد زنگی کسی
 که بر تربتش بناد رحمت بسی
 درم داد و تشریف و بنواختش
 به مقدار خود منزلت ساختش
 چو الله بس دید بر نقش زر
 بشورید و بر کند خلعت ز بر
 ز سوزش چنان شعله در جان گرفت
 که برجست و راه بیابان گرفت
 یکی گفتش از همنشینان دشت
 چه دیدی که حالت دگرگونه گشت؟
 تو اول زمین بوسه دادی بجای
 نبایستی آخر زدن پشت پای
 بخندید کاوّل ز بیم و امید
 همی لرزه بر تن فتادم چو بید
 به آخر ز تمکین الله و بس
 نه چیزم به چشم اندر آمد، نه کس

A poet recited an encomium in praise of Sa'd bin Zangi -- may the Mercy of God be on his grave. Sa'd rewarded him with dirhams, a robe of honour and patronage. He also granted him a status which was in keeping with his worth. But when the poet saw the word ALLAH

inscribed on the gold coins, he became restless and tore the robe of honour from his body. Such a burning fire overpowered his soul that he fled and took to the plains. One of his companions from the plains said to him, "What did you see that has so upset you? You first appropriately kissed the ground at the feet of the king. Hence, you should not have undone the good work you did." (The poet) laughingly replied, "At first, due to fear and hope, my body trembled like a willow tree. But later on, due to my submission to the One and Only Allah, nothing and nobody mattered to me any more."

VIGILANCE

اگر خوش بخُسبَد ملک بر سریر
 نپندارم آسوده خُسبَد فقیر
 و گر زنده دارد شب دیر باز
 بخُسبند مردم به آرام و ناز

If the king sleeps happily on his throne, I do not think that the poor man will sleep comfortably. But if he remains awake till late at night, his subjects will sleep quietly and safely.

نگویم ز جنگ بند اندیش ترس
 در آوازه صلح از او بیش ترس
 بسا کس به روز آیت صلح خواند
 چو شب شد، سپه بر سر خفته راند
 زره پوش خُسبند مرد اوژنان
 که بستر بود خوابگاه زنان
 به خیمه درون مرد شمشیر زن
 برهنه نخُسبَد چو در خانه زن

I do not say that you should fear fighting the malevolent man, but fear him more when he talks of peace. Very often has someone recited the verse of conciliation in daytime, but has attacked the sleeping man at night with his army. Those who are conquerors of men, sleep with their armour, as the bed is a sleeping place for women. The swordsman will not sleep naked in his tent, like a woman in her home.

VIRTUE

زلیخا چو گشت از می عشق مست
 به دامان یوسف در آویخت دست
 چنان دیو شهوت رضا داده بود
 که چون گرگ در یوسف افتاده بود
 بتی داشت بانوی مصر از رُخام
 بر او مُعتکف بامدادان و شام
 در آن لحظه رویش بپوشید و سر
 مبادا که زشت آیدش در نظر
 غم آلوده یوسف به کُنجی نشست
 به سر بر ز نفس ستمکاره دست
 زلیخا دو دستش ببوسید و پای
 که ای سُسْت پیمان سرکش، در آی
 به سندان دلی روی درهم مگش
 به تندی پریشان مکن وقت خوش
 روان گشتش از دیده بر چهره جوی
 که برگرد و ناپاکی از من مجوی
 تو در روی سنگی شدی شرمناک
 مرا شرم باد از خداوند پاک

When Zulaikha was intoxicated by the wine of lust, she seized Joseph by the hem of his shirt with her hand. She had so surrendered herself to demonic sensual desire, that she pounced on him like a wolf. The Egyptian lady had a marble idol to which she prayed morn and evening. At that moment, she covered up its face and head, lest it should consider her act to be evil. Grief-stricken, Joseph sat in a corner, holding his head with his hands, from the tyranny of lust. Zulaikha kissed his hands and feet, saying, "O disloyal rebellious one! Come to me. Do not frown due to your anvil-heartedness (stone-heartedness) and do not squander this pleasant moment in anger". (On hearing this), a stream of tears began to flow down his cheeks, and he told her, "Go away and do not seek impurity from me. You felt ashamed in the presence of a stone idol, whereas I feel ashamed in the presence of the Pure Lord Himself".

Note: Chapter 12 of the Holy Qur'an - Yusuf (Joseph) gives the narrative of the beauty of the physical body, the ideal character and the chaste conduct of high morals. The story narrated in this Chapter is the most detailed one of all the references in the Holy Qur'an to the historic events of the ancient Prophets. The events of this story serve as very effective and impressive factors of guidance for men and women in the various walks of life. In the above tale, reference is made to the infatuation of Zulaikha with Joseph:

"And she, in whose house he was, sought to seduce him from his pure self; and she fastened the doors and said: Now come on thou! Said he: I seek God's refuge! Verily He is my Lord! He made good my abode; verily prosper not the unjust ones."

"She verily desired him, and he would have desired her if it had not been that he saw the argument of his Lord. Thus it was that We warded off from him evil and lewdness. Lo! he was of Our chosen slaves". (Verses 23 and 24)

WEALTH

اگر تنگدستی، مرو پیش یار
 وگر سیم داری، بیا و بیار
 اگر روی بر خاک پایش نهی
 جوابت نگوید به دست تهی
 خداوند زر بر کند چشم دیو
 به دام آورد صخر جنی به ریو

If you are indigent, do not go to your beloved but if you are wealthy, come and bring it forth. Even if you place your head at her feet (lit: on the dust of her feet), she will not respond to you if you have no wealth. A wealthy man can gouge out the demon's eyes, and with guile, he can ensnare the Sakhr Jinni.

Note: Genie (in French) and Jinni (in Arabic) is a spirit of supernatural power, able to appear in human form. According to a legend, the Sakhr Jinni cunningly stole the signet ring of Prophet Solomon and ruled over the Prophet's kingdom for a few days with its help. By the grace of God, Prophet Solomon was able to recover the ring and regain his vast kingdom.

WICKEDNESS

چو گرگ خبیث آمدت در کمند
 بکش، ورنه دل بر کن از گوسفند
 از ابلیس هرگز نیاید سجود
 نه از بدگهر نیکویی در وجود
 بداندیش را جاه و فرصت مده
 عدو در چه و دیو در شیشه به

Now that the despicable wolf has fallen into your trap, kill it instantly, or give up your concern for the sheep. Humble prostration can never proceed from Satan; goodness can never come from one who is vile. Do not give rank and scope to a man whose intention is evil. It is best that an enemy should be in a well, and the demon should be imprisoned in a bottle.

Note: It was believed that demons were imprisoned in bottles, from which they could not escape to oppress people.

گزیری به چاهی در افتاده بود
 که از هول او، شیر نر ماده بود
 همه شب ز فریاد و زاری نخفت
 یکی بر سرش کوفت سنگی و گفت
 تو هرگز رسیدی به فریاد کس؟
 که میخواستی امروز فریادرس
 همه تخم نامردمی کاشتی
 بین لاجرم بر که برداشتی
 که بر جان ریشت نهد مرهمی؟
 که دلها ز ریشت بنالد همی
 تو ما را همی چاه گندی به راه
 بسر لاجرم در فتادی به چاه

A high-ranking official, whose awe would turn a male lion into a female, had fallen into a well. He spent the night sleeplessly, wailing and crying for help. A person smashed a stone on his head and said, "Have you ever come to the rescue of others, that you now ask to be rescued? You have always sown the seeds of inhumanity. Consequently, you are now reaping the fruits of your misdeeds. Who will now apply ointment to your wounded heart, as the hearts of people are still

smarting from the wounds that you have inflicted on them? You always dug wells for us to fall into them. You have therefore fallen into the well yourself".

WORLD

مشقّت نیرزد جهان داشتن
گرفتن به شمشیر و بگذاشتن
بدین پنج روزه اقامت مناز
به اندیشه تدبیر رفتن بساز
کرا دانی از خسروان عجم
ز عهد فریدون و ضحاک و جم
که برتخت و مُلکش نیامد زوال؟
نماند بجز مُلک ایزد تعال

Having the world at one's command is not worth the toil involved, as one has to leave it after acquiring it by sword. Do not be proud of life which is so brief (five days). Contemplate well and make provisions for your departure. Which Persian king do you know of, from the time of Faridun to Zahak and Jamshid, whose throne and kingdom did not suffer decline? It is only the Kingdom of God which is eternal.

جهان ای پسر مُلک جاوید نیست
ز دنیا وفاداری امید نیست
نه بر باد رفتی سحرگاه و شام
سریر سلیمان علیه السلام؟
به آخر ندیدی که بر باد رفت
خُنک آنکه با دانش و داد رفت

کسی زین میان گوی دولت رُبود
 که در بند آسایش خلق بود
 به کار آمد آنها که برداشتند
 نه گرد آوریدند و بگذاشتند

O my son! The world is not an eternal possession. One should not expect faithfulness from it. Did not the throne of Prophet Solomon, peace be upon him, fly in the wind at dawn and sunset? Did you not see how eventually the throne has gone with the wind? Blessed is he, who went away with wisdom and justice. One who has concerned oneself with the welfare of mankind, is blessed and successful (lit: has struck a goal). Those who have used their wealth for charity have succeeded, and not those who amassed wealth and left it behind.

WORTHLESSNESS

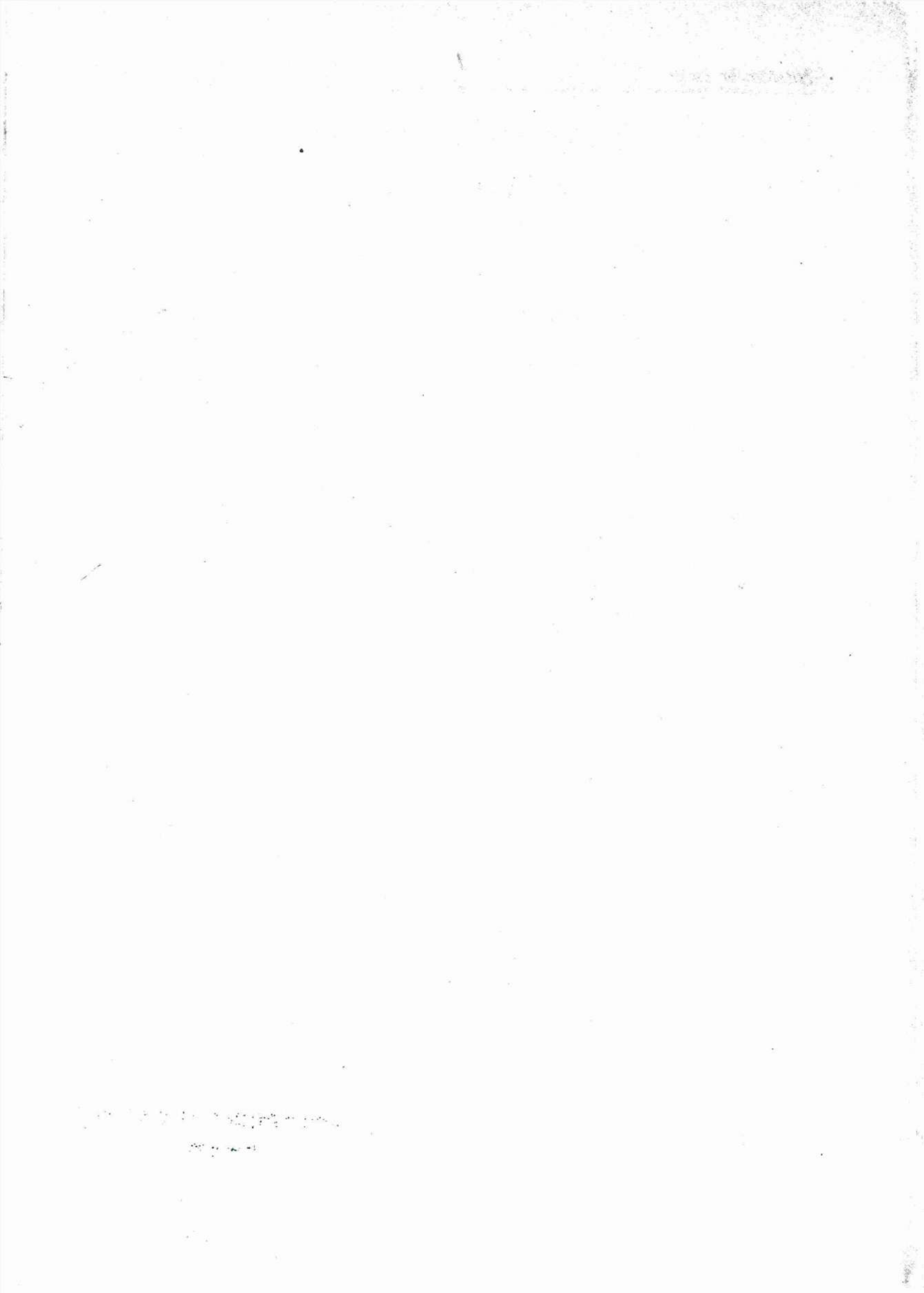
چه خوش گفت خرمهره ای در گلی
 چو بر داشتش پر طمع جاهلی
 مرا کس نخواهد خریدن به هیچ
 به دیوانگی در حریرم مپیچ
 نه مُنعم به مال از کسی بهتر است
 خرا ر جُلّ اطلس بیوشد، خراست

How appropriately did the glass bead lying in mud, say to an avaricious ignoramus who picked it up, "Nobody will purchase me at any price. Do not, therefore, foolishly wrap me up in silk." An affluent man is not superior to others because of his wealth. An ass will be an ass even if it is covered with satin.

و آخر دعوینا ان الحمد لله رب العالمین

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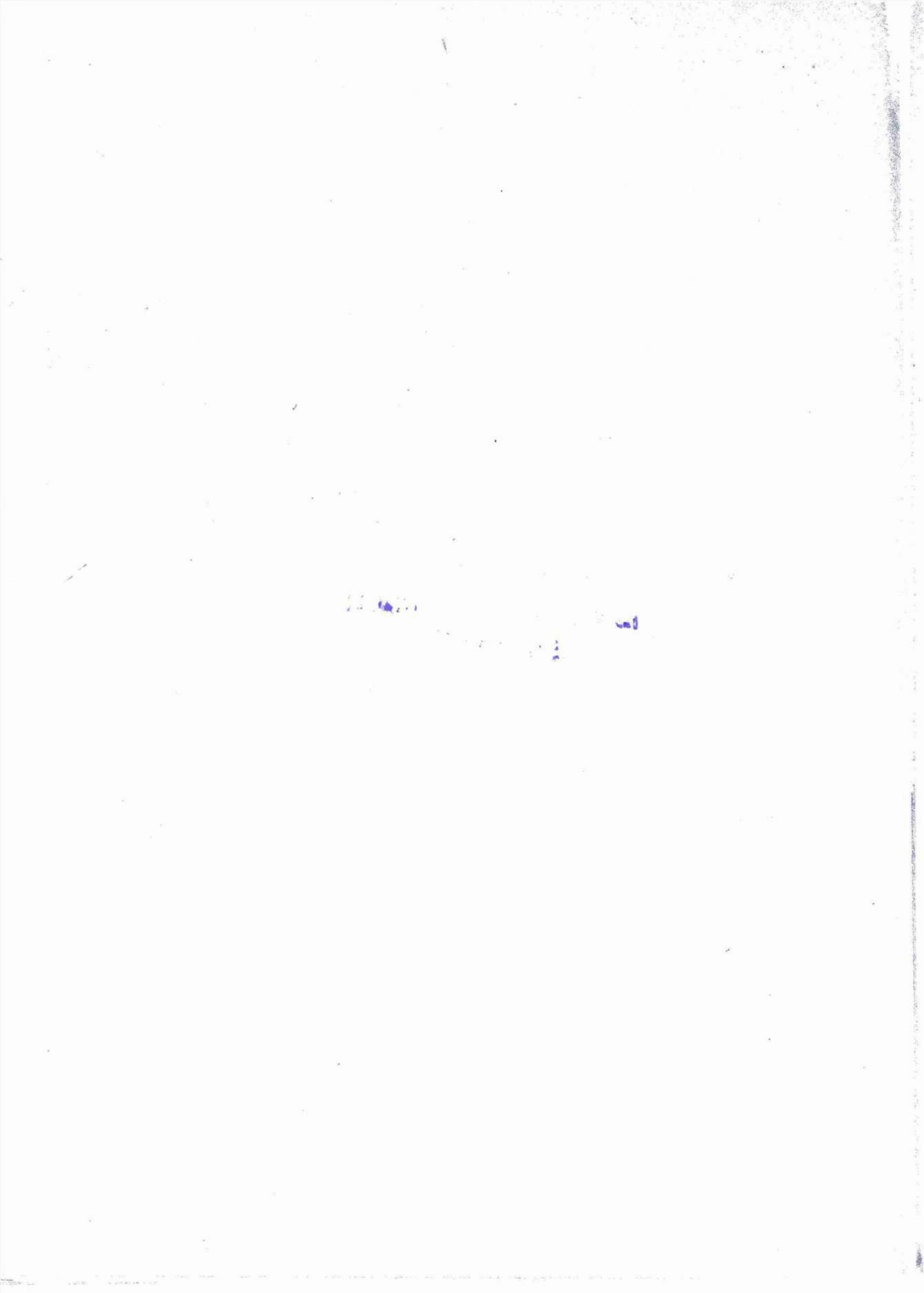
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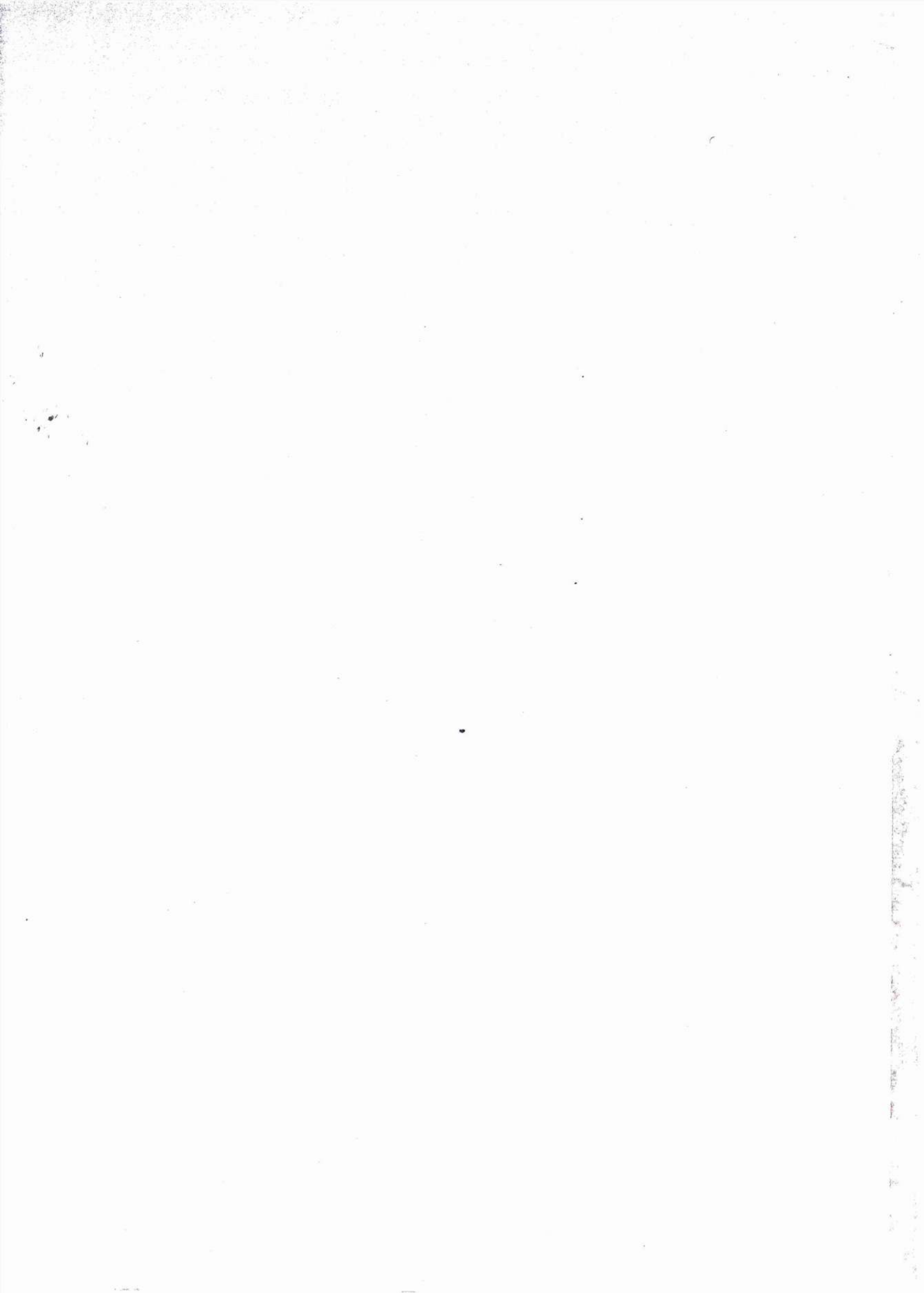


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وز هر چه گفته اند و شنیدیم و خوانده ایم
مجلس تمام گشت و به آخر رسید عمر
ما همچنان در اوّل و صَفِ تو مانده ایم

O You Who are beyond imagination, comparison, presumption and apprehension! And whatever has been said, heard and written about You. The assembly has concluded and life is about to end, and we are still in the initial stages of praising You.

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