

## Chapter 54: Shaddad and his Paradise, those who had very long life-spans

Shaddad bin Aad bin Iram and his paradise. Like which nothing was ever made on this earth.

1 – Informed us Muhammad bin Harun Zanjani through what he wrote to us that: Narrated to us Maaz Abu Muthanna Anbari: Narrated to us Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Asma: Narrated to us Juwairiya from Sufyan from Mansur from Abi Wael that he said:

“A man called Abdullah bin Qalabah set out in search of his lost camel. He was searching it in the desert and wilderness of Aden. He saw a city in those wildernesses, which was surrounded by a city-wall on all four sides and had many palaces and countless flags. He thought that the city would be inhabited and went there to enquire about his camel but he did not see anyone entering or leaving the city.

He reached near the city, got down from his camel and tied it on one side, unsheathed his sword and entered the city through its gate. He saw two more large gates such that no one would have seen gates as large as and as high as those. The wood of those doors was fragrant and was studded with saffron and red rubies, whose light had illuminated all the houses.

He was surprised on seeing this. Then he opened one of the doors and entered. There was a city inside it, which was matchless and unique. He saw such palaces standing, whose pillars were made of emerald and ruby. There were windows in every palace and every window had another window above it. All of them were made from gold, silver, pearls, ruby and emerald.

The doors of those palaces were like the gates of city, whose wood was fragrant and were decorated with rubies. The flooring of those palaces was made from the balls of pearls, musk and saffron. When he saw those buildings, he did not find anyone there and became frightened. There were flower-beds on all four sides of those palaces.

Trees were planted in them and fruits were hanging from the trees. Streams were flowing beneath them.

He thought that it is the same paradise, which Allah has promised for His virtuous servants. He thanked God for making him enter Paradise in the world itself.

Then he picked up small bottles containing pearls, musk and saffron as much as he could. However, he could not remove even a single emerald or ruby because they were strongly fitted on walls and door and balls containing pearls, musk and saffron were spread in palaces and rooms like sand. He collected as much as he could and then came out, mounted his camel and reached Yemen from the way he had come.

There he showed those balls of pearls, saffron and musk and narrated whatever he had seen. He sold the pearls, which had turned saffron and changed because of ravages of time. This news spread and when it reached Muawiyah bin Abi Sufyan, he sent a messenger to the governor of Sanaa and summoned that person. Thus, the person went to Muawiyah. He enquired about that city in private and asked what he had seen in it. He narrated the entire incident to him and showed him the pearls, musk and saffron he had picked up from there and said, "By God, even Sulaiman bin Dawood did not have such a city."

Muawiyah called Kaabul Ahbar and said, "O Abu Ishaq! Have you received the information about a city in this world, which is made of gold and silver? Its pillars are made of rubies and emerald and its palaces and windows are made of pearls. Its flower-beds have trees and streams flow beneath them?"

Kaab said, "Yes, such a city was built by Shaddad bin Aad. It is Iram Dhatul Imad, which was praised by Almighty Allah and He says in the book revealed on His Messenger (S) that nothing was created like that."

Muawiyah said, "Tell me about it." Kaab said, "There was a person called Aad-e-Ula and he was not from Aad, the community of Prophet Hud (a.s.). He had two sons – Shadeed and Shaddad. When Aad died, both of his sons became kings and came to power so much that everyone in the east and west started obeying them. Shadeed died first and Shaddad became the king undisputedly.

He loved books very much. When he used to hear about Paradise that there would be buildings made of rubies, emerald and pearls, he wished that he too would make such a paradise like that in this world against God. He appointed one hundred persons for his work and appointed one thousand people to help each one of them and ordered: "Look for the best and wide ground and make a city of gold, silver, rubies, emerald and pearls for me in it and make the pillars from emerald.

Make its pillars from emerald. Construct palaces in it and make windows in them and construct more windows above the existing ones. Plant trees of different fruits below those palaces and make streams flow beneath the trees as I have read in books about the features of Paradise. I want to construct a city like that in this world.

Those people said, "From where will we get so many jewels and gold and silver to make a city with them

as wished by you? Shaddad said, "Maybe you people don't know that all the countries of world are under my control." The people said, "Yes, we know that." He said, "Go and appoint a group on every mine of gold, silver and jewels so that they collect as much as you want. Also, get the gold and silver from people as much as they have."

Thus, letters were written to the sovereigns of the east and west and they collected jewels for ten years. Then the city was constructed in three hundred years. Shaddad lived for nine hundred years. People informed him that they had completed the construction of Paradise. He ordered, "Construct a boundary on all four sides of it and build a thousand palaces around that boundary and fix a thousand flags near each palace because each palace would be occupied by one of my viziers. Hence, go back and complete this work."

Hearing this, those people came back and constructed as they were ordered and informed him. Now, when he ordered people to make preparations to go to Iram Dhatul Imad, people collected belongings for the journey for ten years.

Then, the king departed with an intention of visiting Iram. When he reached near that paradise and the journey of only a day and night was left, Lord of worlds sent a voice on him and his companions and all of them died after hearing it. Neither he could enter Iram nor could any of his companions do so. It is a characteristic of that Iram that a city could not be created like that one.

Also, I have noted this fact in books that a person would go to that Iram. He would see it and narrate it to the people but the people would not believe him. However, faithful people would enter it during the last age."

The author says: If it is permissible for a paradise made on earth to remain hidden from the eyes of people and no one can find it out and even though its location is unknown, people believe in it on the basis of traditions then why don't they accept the occultation of Qaim (a.t.f.s.) on the basis of traditions? Also if it is acceptable that Shaddad bin Aad lived for nine hundred years then why is the long life of Imam Qaim (a.t.f.s.) objected to?

The narration about Shaddad bin Aad is reported by Abu Wael and reports about the Qaim (a.t.f.s.) are narrated from Prophets (a.s.) and Imams (a.s.). Thus, it is mere rejection of truth.

I have seen in Kitab Muammareen, in which it is narrated from Hisham bin Saeed Rihal: I saw a stone in Alexandria, on which it was inscribed "I am Shaddad bin Aad" who constructed Iram Dhatul Imad such that no city was constructed like it.

I trained many armies and leveled many battlefields with the power of my arms and constructed Palaces of Iram when there was no old age and death and stones were as soft as flowers. Also, I threw a lot of wealth whose quantity reached twelve storeys in sea and no one would be able to remove it but the Ummah of (Prophet) Muhammad (S) will bring it out.

Aus bin Rabiah bin Kaab bin Umayyah al–Astami lived for two hundred years and composed the following verses:

I lived so much that my family members became wary  
Of my living with them and my long life  
And it is justice that apart from two hundred years  
The fourteen years, which were spent  
Making one wary of life and every morning  
Is followed by night  
My bones had left the flesh like Rahib (his bones)  
And my heart accepted it.

Abu Zubaida whose name was Badr bin Hurmula was a Christian and he lived for one hundred and fifty years.

Nasr bin Duhman bin (Basar bin Bakr bin) Sulaiman bin Ashja' bin Reeth bin Ghatfan lived for one hundred and ninety years and all his teeth fell and all his hair turned white and he became unsound of mind. When his community needed his advice in one of the matters, they prayed to Allah to restore his mind and youth. Allah accepted their supplication and granted him mind and youth and all of his hairs turned black.

Thus, Musallama bin Kharshab Anmari told Anmar bin Bagheez (about this) and it is said that Ayaz Mardas Salami said:

Nasr bin Duhman's life was like a hundred year old camel, which he lived  
His posture was straightened and his body accepted it  
And the whiteness of his hair was changed to black for ninety more years  
And his youth began once again after he had lost it  
His also regained his sense Even though he had lost it  
but he died in spite of all these things.

Suwaid bin Hadhdhaq Abadi lived for two hundred years.

Ja'sham bin Auf bin Hudhaimah lived for a long period and composed the following verses:

Till when would Ja'tham have lived among alive?  
Who neither had anyone to support him and nor was he rich  
Alas, there is not medicine for death.

Thalaba bin Kaab bin Zaid bin Abdul Ash–hal Ausi lived for two hundred years and composed the following verses:

I spent life with many groups  
But all of them went away. They became so silent  
That when I call them, they don't respond  
Thus, my life was lengthened too much for me after them  
Hence, I used to sit in a corner of my house whole day  
And spent those days wishing for death.

Rida–ah bin Kaab bin Dhahl bin Qais Nakh–l' lived for three hundred years and composed the following verses:

And it did not remain, alas, what an infamy I am  
neither the father of sons nor of daughters  
Nor am I a

barren woman for whom there is no sleep But the dead are counted daily Is there anyone who would buy my life and I would sell it to him?

Adi bin Hatim Tai lived for one hundred and twenty years.

Ammabaat bin Qais bin Harith bin Shaiban Kindi lived for a hundred and sixty years.

Umair bin Hajir bin Umair bin Abdul Azza bin Qumair lived for one hundred and seventy years and composed the following verses:

I got involved and the time destroyed me and I received Hundred more years of life and ten more years after that And I have become like a chick that I am neither included among dead, Which would have ended my problems nor am I included among alive to give order I spent a long period of my life with the people of my tribe Now I am like a dead for them who is heading to his grave.

A'rraam bin Mundhar bin Zubaid bin Qais bin Haritha bin Laam lived for a long period during the time of ignorance and saw the time of Umar bin Abdul Aziz and met him. When his cloak used to fall, his ribs were visible one above the other. Hence, he asked, "What did you get?" He recited the following lines in reply:

And I swear by Allah that I don't know whether I Have seen the people of the time of Dhulqarnain and thought that I am older than them When you will remove my shirt so that You would see the chest, which neither has flesh nor blood.

Saif bin Wahab bin Judhaimah Taai lived for two hundred years and composed the following verses:

Know that very soon I am going away And don't think I am a liar Whichever cloak I wore was thus, destroyed And the controlling power saw me And warded off the enemy and benefited his friend so that someone may live with him.

Irtah bin Dush-habah Muzni lived for one hundred and twenty years. His agnomen was Abu Waleed. Abdul Malik bin Marwan told him, "O Irtah! Is something left from your verses? He replied, "O Amirul Momineen! I do not drink wine nor do I sing nor get angry while the poets who come to me do not have these characteristics. Then I said:

I showed man that nights eat him up Like earth eats up the fragments of iron And when death arrived The life of Adam's son did not remain even for a moment And know it that it would come back again in order to Complete the offering of Abu Waleed.

Abdul Malik was taken aback. He said, "O Irtah!" Then Irtah said, "O Amirul Momineen! My agnomen is Abu Waleed."

Also Ubaid bin Abras lived for three hundred years and composed the following verses:

I was destroyed and the time destroyed me And my example is like Banu Naa'th and like the polestar.

Then Numan bin Mundhir arrested him and killed him on the day he was angry.

Also Shuraih bin Hani lived for one hundred and twenty years till he was killed during the time of Hajjaj bin Yusuf. He composed the following verses about his weakness and old age:

I became aged and continued to bear the sufferings of old age And I spent a long period among polytheists Then I saw the time of prophet who was a warner And after that I saw Siddique and Farooq also And I also saw the day of Mehran and Shushtar And the gatherings of Siffeen and Nahrawan

Alas, I am sad about this long life.

Also, a person from Bani Z'abbah who was called Majaah' bin Sabaa' Z'abbi lived for a long time and composed the following verses:

I went around the earth many times

I became weak and wished that I should have died

And I was destroyed and if day

And night are destroyed then they come back

And a month comes after a month

And a year comes after every year.

Luqman<sup>1</sup> Aadi, the elder lived for five hundred years. Umar lived for seven Unsurs; and every Unsur consists of eighty years. He was included in the delegation of the community of Aad, which had gone to Haram to pray for rain. He used to keep a female young one of a vulture on the mountain, which was his actual home till the vulture remained alive. After that he used to catch another one and bring it up till nothing remained of it and his life was very long. Thus, it is said about him that he lived till now without having anything.

Also, many famous poems are quoted from him. He was granted strength and sharp hearing sense and sight, which was necessary for him and he has narrated a number of traditions.

Zuhair bin Junaab bin Hubal bin Abdullah bin Kunana bin Bakr bin Auf bin Uzrah bin Zaidullah bin Rufaidah bin Thaur bin Kalb Kalbi lived for three hundred years.

Maziqiyah whose name was Umar bin Aamir was like water from the sky. He used to spread life wherever he went. He was called Maziqiyah because he lived for eight hundred years. He was a common man for four hundred years and ruled for four hundred years. He used to wear two suits

everyday and then tear them so that no one reuses it.

Hubal bin Abdullah bin Kananah lived for six hundred years.

Abu Tahaman lived for one hundred and fifty years.

Mutasawwaghar bin Rabia'h bin Ka'ab bin Zaid Munah bin Tameem lived for three hundred years. He saw the time of Islam but did not accept Islam. The verses quoted from him are famous.

Duwaid bin Zaid bin Nahd lived for four hundred and fifty years. He said:

The time surrounded me

And the time is such that if someone makes something then it destroys it

Whoever is corrected today, it defaces him tomorrow.

When the time of his death arrived, he called all his children and willed them: "Do bad to people and do not accept their apology and do not accept their revenge."

Rabi bin Zaba bin Wahab bin Bagheez bin Malik bin Saad bin Adi bin Fuzara lived for two hundred and forty years. He saw the time of Islam but did not accept Islam.

Maadi Karb Hameeri from the progeny of Dhi Yazn lived for two hundred and fifty years.

Also Sharyah bin Abdullah Jofi lived for three hundred years. Thus, he came to Umar bin Khattab in Medina and said, "I have seen in this desert, in which you are that the people of my community read your testimony i.e. Laa ilaaha illallaah. He was accompanied by his son at that time who stumbled as he walked. He had become very old.

He was told, "O Sharyah! Your son has become old and you are still alive." He replied, "I swear by God, I had married his mother when I was seventy years old. However, this wife of mine was very chaste and loyal. Whenever I was happy, she used to treat me so that my eyes used to become cool and if I was upset she used to coax and make me happy.

However, this son of mine has married a woman who is very immodest and evil-doer. Whenever he is happy, she troubles him so much that he becomes unhappy and if he is sad she abuses so much that he approaches his death.

Narrated to us Abu Saeed Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab bin Nasr Sajzi from Abul Hasan bin Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Hamza bin Zaid She'rani who was from the progeny of Ammar bin Yasir that Abul Qasim Muhammad bin Qasim Misri narrated that:

"The treasures of Egypt opened for Abu al-Jaish Hamaduyah bin Ahmad bin Tuloon so much that they

had not opened for anyone else. When he intended to raze the pyramids of Egypt, his trustworthy advisers advised him not to do so but he did not listen and appointed one hundred laborers for this work who continued to dig the area around it for one year but could not find a way and when they intended to return without any hope, they saw a hole.

Hence, they estimated that it was the same door and opened it through its mechanism. (Muhammad bin Muzaffar says that they saw a foundation behind that, which was very strong. They removed and cleansed it.) It contained an inscription in Greek. All the wise and people from all the religions of Egypt were called to read that inscription but no one was successful in reading it.

There was a person called Abu Abdullah Madini who was one of the great scholars of the world. He told Abu al-Jaish Hamaduyah bin Ahmad, "I know an Ethiopian Bishop whose age is three hundred and sixty years now and he knows this writing. He had tried to teach this writing to me also but I loved Arabic more and hence, I could not learn it.

That person is alive even today." Eventually, Abu al-Jaish Hamaduyah wrote a letter to the Shah of Ethiopia to send that Bishop to him. The Shah of Ethiopia wrote a letter in reply: the Bishop has grown very old and has become used to the environment of this place. If he leaves this environment and goes to another place then there is a risk that the environment will not be suitable for him there and he would die. Also, he can no longer bear long journeys.

His presence is a cause of honor, joy and tranquility for us. Therefore, if you want him to read something or explain or to answer your questions then write and send them here." Hence, that marble slab was kept in a tray and sent to the city of Aswan. Then it was sent to Ethiopia from Aswan, which was near it. When that piece reached Ethiopia, the Bishop read it and translated it into Ethiopian language. It was then translated into Arabic from Ethiopian. It was written as follows in it:

"I am Rayyan bin Dumagh." Abdullah Madini asked the Bishop who that person was. He replied, "He was the father of king Aziz of Egypt during the time of Prophet Yusuf (a.s.) whose name was Waleed bin Rayyan bin Dumagh. The Aziz of Egypt lived for seven hundred years. His father Rayyan lived for one thousand and a hundred years and Dumagh lived for three hundred years. In short, it was inscribed as follows:

"I am Rayyan bin Dumagh who had set out to know where river Nile originated from because I was not aware of its origin. I was accompanied by four thousand people and I continued to travel for eighty months and I reached darkness and the ocean. I saw that river Nile cut that encircling ocean and crossed it. There was no way for me to cross the river and only one person was left with me out of four thousand. I feared that my rule would come to an end and hence, I returned to Egypt. Then I constructed many pyramids and cellars. I also constructed two such pyramids, in which I kept all my treasures safely and I have composed the following verses about it:

My knowledge consists of that which exists And my I don't have knowledge of unseen and Allah knows

better And provided firmness in creation of a thing, which required it I strengthened and Allah is the Most Powerful and Wisest Thus, I tried to find out the origin of River Nile, I became wary and man is wary I spent eighty months in journey Even though I was surrounded by the people Bani Hajar and a very huge army Till the point we had left behind all men and Jinn And I came face to face with a dark river Thus, I accepted that there is no stage after this For any person who dares before or after me.

Then I returned to my country and stayed there Sometimes in calamities and sometimes with bounties I am the owner of all pyramids of Egypt And of all the earthen utensils and I am one who initiated I have left in it signs of my craftsmanship and wisdom And handed over to the time which would neither get torn or destroyed And it has many treasures and strange things And this act is a cause of bitterness and disappointment for the time.

My locks will be opened and my strange things will come out In the hands of a friend of Lord, which would shine like a star during the last age His actions will be seen around the House of Allah And he will reach the peak and then it would be a time of peace and harmony Eight and nine and two and four And other ninety or nine will be killed or taken captives.

Then there would be clashes for ninety-nine years And all signs of mine would come into their hands and will be destroyed All my treasures will come out However I see that blood would be shed because of this I have written my words on rocks They would remain and would then be destroyed and will then become extinct.

After looking at this inscription, Abu Jaish Hamaduya bin Ahmad said, "This is a thing, which would be used by Qaim of progeny of Muhammad (S). Then that marble slab was kept back in its place.

A year later, Abu Jaish was killed in the state of intoxication on his bed by his slaves. It was known after this incident when pyramids were constructed and by whom and it is one of the most authentic narrations about Nile and pyramids.

Zabira bin (Saeed bin) Saad bin Sahm Qarshi lived for a hundred and eighty years. He lived during the time of Islam also. His death was accidental.

Lubaid bin Rabia Ja'fari lived for a hundred and forty years and lived during the time of Islam and accepted it. When he was of seventy years, he composed the following verses:

As if I have spent seventy years And took the cloak off my shoulders This soul is crying and complaining to me That I lifted you for seven years more than seventy years If you complete three more years then you would get a wish And eighty years will be completed after those three years

When he was ninety, he composed the following verses:

As if I have completed ninety years now Thus, I have taken off the bridle of life along with it The daughters of the time attack me from unknown place However, I am injured with something other than

arrows When he completed one hundred and ten years, he wrote: A person who lived for a hundred years and completed ten more years after that Then what is missing in his age?

When he completed one hundred and twenty years, he wrote:

I spent a long life before I fell ill But there is no place for this adamant soul

When he was a hundred and forty, he composed the following verses:

Now I am fed up with life and its length And with the question of people, "Lubaid, how are you?" Men were overcome but you did not lose That lengthy period, which will be forever and elongated

If a day comes for me and a night after that

Then both of them come once again after they have passed.

When he was in his final moments, he willed to his son, "Your father will not only die but will be destroyed. Thus, when your father's soul is captured, close his eyes, make him face Qibla and wrap him in his clothes and tell everyone strictly that they should not cry or shout. Then prepare nice food in the large vessel, in which I used to feast and send it to those people in mosque who have mourned for me. Make the people eat it after the Imam completes prayer with salutation. When they have finished eating, tell them that their brother Lubaid has died and request them to attend my funeral and that Almighty Allah has captured my soul." Then he recited following verses:

"When you bury your father, put some wood and wet sand on him And use such strong planks that uninvited guests do not manage to make nests inside And it is certain that the face would become like fine sand although it is unbelievable."

There is another tradition that Lubaid had taken oath that when northern wind blows, he would slaughter some camels and fill them in a large vessel and invite everyone for feast.

When Walid bin Uqbah bin Abi Mui't became the governor of Kufa, he delivered a sermon and said after praising and glorifying Allah, "O people! You know about Lubaid bin Rabia Ja'fari and his courtesy and helpfulness and you also know that he had taken oath that whenever northern wind blows, he would slaughter a few camels. Hence it is your duty that to help him for his courtesy." Saying this, he got down from the pulpit and sent five camels and wrote the following verses to Lubaid:

I see that when Abi Aqeel Lubaid's northern wind blows

The butchers sharpen their knives

He is a Ja'fari who is very tall and has broad chest He is generous like his lineage and like a sharp sword And these virtues are present in Ja'fari sons also As if there is dearth of wealth for him.

It is said that Walid had send twenty camels. When Lubaid read those verses, he said, “May Allah give ten rewards to Amir for this. Probably, he does not know that I have stopped composing verses.” Then, Lubaid called his five year old daughter and said, “Reply these verses of Amir.” The girl thought for a while and then recited the following verses:

Now, whenever Abu Aqeel’s northern wind blows  
We would remember Walid A tall one with broad chest  
And one who is related to Abdush Shams He helped Lubaid like long ropes, like a caravan of camels  
On which the people of Bani Haam are mounted  
O Abu Wahab (Walid)! May God reward you for it  
We have slaughtered the camels gifted by you and  
Please be generous another time also because a generous is one who  
Is generous again and again and our oath is fulfilled again and again.

Lubaid (after hearing these verses) said, “O daughter! You have quoted very nice verses but you should not have asked for anything in them.” She replied, “A king never gets angry when asked for something.” Lubaid said, “Then you are a very good poet.”

Dhul Asba Adwani whose name was Harthan bin al-Harith bin Muharrith bin Rabia bin Hubairah bin Thalaba bin Zarb bin Uthman lived for three hundred years.

Ja’far bin Qabt lived for three hundred years and lived during the time of Islam.

Aamir bin Zarb Adwani lived for three hundred years

Muhassin bin Utbaan bin Zaalim bin Amr bin Qatiah bin Harith bin Salama bin Mazin Zubaidi lived for two hundred and fifty years and composed the following verses:

Beware, O Muslim (community)! I am not from you

I am such a man whose strength is hungry

When I was challenged by two persons, I told them to come

They said, “Every person who is challenged, displays his strengths

Beware, O (Bani) Muslim! My life has made me wary

And trade and traveling for it has made me weak

I have become a burden for my house because of illness and weakness

And every stranger and relative has become wary of me

This time and days are like a table with food laid on it

Which has a part for every hungry person.

Auf bin Kunana bin Auf bin Uzrah bin Zaid bin Thaur bin Kalb lived for three hundred years. When his final moments arrived, he gathered his children and willed:

“Fear Allah, do not mourn or grieve (for loss of wealth). Keep away from distrust. Do not disturb wild animals otherwise all of them will come out of their shelters and you will be disgraced. Do not hurt people and live with peace and harmony. Do not ask excessive questions so that people do not consider you a burden. Do not speak except truth so that people praise you. Treat people with love so that their hearts become spacious for you. Do not deprive people of benefiting from you.

Otherwise, their hearts will become full of complaints for you and include yourselves among those who give gifts to their children secretly. Do not spend much time with people lest you would be considered lowly. Be patient during the time of difficulty and make the time wear its clothes. Certainly speaking nice with difficulty is better than speaking bad with ease.

Bow in front of the person who bows in front of you, for people come closer because of love. If someone expresses hatred and dislike do not move away from promise and commitment. If someone seeks excuse from you, accept his excuse. Keep your promises and do not break them. Lift your status by keeping away from falsehood because human misfortune is in falsehood and speaking against the will. Do not express your helplessness to people. Otherwise, you will lose respect in their eyes. Fear poverty because it is a disgrace.

Treat your equals honorably and wish that you are uplifted. The beauty of women should not separate you from healthy lineage and involve you in worry because marriage with virtuous women is a cause of respect and honor. Bow down while meeting your community. Do not betray them and do not show indifference in a matter, in which they are united because opposition is against obedience of a leader. First do good to your people and then to others and do not fear the wishes of your near and dear ones because it is a cause of extinguishment of fire of hard work and non-fulfillment of duties.

And leave the one who sleeps and become their helpers during the time of their difficulties and pains so that you will conquer and fear from asking that, whose benefits did not reach them. Treat your neighbors with respect who comes to you with freshness. Give preference to the right of weak over your right. Tolerate fools so that your sorrow and grief is reduced. Keep away from groupism because it is a disgrace.

Do not trouble yourself more than your capacity except during the time of difficulty so that you are not condemned for inspite of your helplessness; and you should have such a strength, which is better than supporting them through apologies in the state of helplessness (i.e. you should assist them before it is time to seek forgiveness) and make effort and do not be sluggish because effort keeps away from poverty and helplessness.

You all should shout one slogan because it is a cause of respect and keep your edges sharpened. Do not pay attention to disrespectful people nor bring them near you and do not meet wicked people

because you will be hurt by them. Do not be jealous among yourselves else you will be destroyed. Miserliness is a disease. Keep away from it.

Elevate your status through generosity, kindness and by respecting the purity of excellent people. Spend and gain love. Take care of knowledge and respect of knowledgeable and excellent persons. Benefit from the experience of the experienced persons. They would not stop you even from a smallest deed, which contains reward and do not consider people lowly.

Otherwise the same would be returned to you because a person is judged by the purity of his heart and purity of his tongue and when you are involved in fear of something then it is necessary for you to be steadfast instead of hurrying up.

Also, see to it that you make your place near rulers through love because whoever tried to disrespect them was disrespected himself and whoever elevated them was elevated. Show courtesy because eyes are pointing you out. Show humility with dignity to people so that your Lord likes you.” Then he said:

“And every intelligent and shrewd will not advise you

Nor every advisor is intelligent

However, if both things are collected in one person Then it is necessary for you to obey him.”

Saifi bin Riyah bin Aktham who was from the progeny of Asad bin Amr bin Tameem, lived for two hundred and seventy years. He used to say, “Your brother is under your control in all circumstances except during the time of war because when a man picks up a weapon, he cannot be controlled by anyone. Sword is the best advisor.

Avoiding pride keeps praises alive. The greatest punishment is that given to a traitor. The mischief of help is injustice. The worst character is one, which is troublesome and bad manners are cause of increasing displeasure.” Then he hit his staff on ground and recited the following verses:

It is necessary for a destroyed person that he realizes his faults before his death comes

And human beings got knowledge so that they understand everything.

Imad bin Shaddad Yarbui’ lived for a hundred and fifty years.

Aktham bin Saifi from the progeny of Asad bin Amr bin Tameem lived for three hundred and sixty years. Some say that he lived for one hundred and ninety years. He saw the time of Islam. There is difference of opinion whether he accepted Islam or not. Most people say that he did not accept Islam. He said about this:

Certainly, a man should spend ninety years of life

If it is extended by hundred more years then an ignorant (person) does not become wary of life

If six and four are subtracted from two hundred then one hundred and ninety would remain

It is when nights are also counted.

Muhammad bin Salama says, “When Aktham wanted to accept Islam, his son made him die out of thirst.

Also, I have heard that this verse was revealed for him:

وَمَنْ يُهَاجِرْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يَجِدْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَاغِمًا كَثِيرًا وَسَعَةً ۗ وَمَنْ يَخْرُجْ مِنْ بَيْتِهِ مُهَاجِرًا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ يُدْرِكُهُ الْمَوْتُ فَقَدْ وَقَعَ أَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ

***“And whoever flies in Allah’s way, he will find in the earth many a place of refuge and abundant resources, and whoever goes forth from his house flying to Allah and His Apostle, and then death overtakes him, his reward is indeed with Allah.”***

There was no one wiser than him among the people of Arabia. When he got the news of annunciation of apostleship of the Messenger of Allah (S), he sent his son Halees to Prophet (S) and said, “O son! I want to give you some advices. You should follow after you depart till your return to me.

Try your luck in the month of Rajab. Then try to make it lawful so that it becomes lawful because of you because unlawful is illegal for oneself but also for one’s acquaintances. During this journey, you should stay with the person who is most respectful, in whichever tribe you happen to pass by.

Maintain your relations with noble persons. Keep away from disgraced ones because if they would not have been disgraced then they would have been respected in their community and when you approach that person then first of all, I am aware of him and his family as he belongs to one of the most honored households of Quraish. You should keep two things in mind. Even if he desires kingdom, you should honor him and stand in front of him.

Do not sit unless he asks you to do so. In this way, you would not be hurt by him and you will be benefited by him and if he is really a prophet then Allah would not like misbehaving with him. You would find that all his matters are right and you would find humility in him. He would be an obedient one of his Lord. Bow down when you meet him and do not say anything except what I have ordered you. Remember whatever I have told you and follow it.

Then he handed over a letter addressed to the Holy Prophet (S) to his son, which contained the following text: In the name of Allah, this letter is from a servant to another servant. I got the news of your apostleship but I don’t know the truth. If you have seen something then show me and if you have received knowledge then give it to me also and include me in your treasury. Wassalaam.

Holy Prophet (S) replied this letter as follows: From Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah (S) to Aktham

bin Saifi. I thank Allah that he ordered me to say 'There is no God except Allah' and order others to do so. All creatures are created by Allah and every order belongs to Allah. Only He gives life and only He gives death.

Only He will assemble people and we have to return only to Him. I have been sent to teach you people the manners of messengers and you would certainly be asked about the great news and that great news would be known soon."

When Aktham bin Saifi read the letter of Holy Prophet (S), he asked his son, "How was he according to you?" He said, "I saw that he orders good things and stops from doing bad deeds."

Thus, he told his son, "O son! Gather Banu Tameem but do not bring any fool because every person has an opinion and a fool's opinion is weak however physically strong he might be. Whoever does not have intelligence, does not have goodness (When Banu Tameem gathered, he delivered a sermon following:)

"O Banu Tameem! Now, I have become aged and I have entered the disgrace of old age. If I say a right thing, you must accept it. Otherwise, inform me about a right thing so that I become steadfast on it. My son had gone to meet a person. He informed that that person orders to do good things and stops from evil. He narrates benefits of good character and restrains one from having bad character. He orders worship of One Allah. He prevents from worshipping idols and fire. He says that he is the messenger of Allah and that messengers had come before him also who had books and ordered worship of One Allah.

Hence it is the duty of you all that you help Muhammad (S) in his mission. If the orders given by him are rightful, you will benefit and if it is not rightful, it is your duty to hide him and do not become angry with him."

"Earlier Asqaf Najran had also narrated his characteristics. Before that, Sufyan bin Majashi' had also talked about him and hence, he named his son Muhammad. Those among you who possess opinion know it well that the matter, towards which he is inviting is a good thing. Hence, you should be the first to accept him and do not delay this matter. If you obey him, it would be a cause of your honor and you would be manifested.

Make haste in obeying him before you are compelled to do so because I see that he would not leave any high or low position and would not live without uprooting fixed thing and would reach everywhere. Even if it is supposed that whatever he is inviting towards is not a religion then too it is merciful character. Accept whatever I say and follow it. I am asking for a thing from you, which can never be snatched from you.

Your population is a majority in Arabia and your cities are largest. I think that even if a disgraced one will follow him, he would become respectful and even if a respectful person opposes him, he would be disgraced. You people are respectful. Hence, your respect will be doubled. Then there would be no one

to compete with you.

Remember that those who go ahead do not leave anything for those who are left behind. Leadership is for those who come first and those who are left behind have to obey. Thus, hasten in your work because determination is strength and precaution is helplessness.

Malik bin Nuwairah said, "O people! This old man has become unsound of mind." Aktham said, "Curse be upon the person who is aggrieved and extremely sorrowful. You people kept quiet over my words. The worst thing for an advice is that people turn their faces away from it."

"Woe unto you, O Malik! You would be destroyed. When truth becomes manifest, it manifests its followers also and backward people also come in the level of those who have progressed. Thus, you should make it obligatory for yourself to be among those who stand up for establishing truth.

Now, when you have considered me elder to you, bring my camel so that I mount on it." Saying this, he mounted on his camel and his son and nephew walked behind him. Then he said: "I am sad about the work, which I could not accomplish and which did not take me ahead."

Banu Tai wrote a letter to Aktham. They were his maternal uncles. Some narrators say that Bani Marrah wrote a letter to him. They were also his maternal uncles. They sought advice from him. Aktham wrote to them in reply:

"So to say: I advise you to fear Allah and maintain relations because its roots are strong and branches are spread out. Keep away from sins and breaking relations because its roots are weak and branches do not spread. Do not marry foolish women because it is abominable to have sexual intercourse with them and the children born are useless.

Consider the worth of camels. They are like a strong fort for Arabia. Do not load them more than their capacity. They are fixed as dower and accepted in expiation for killing. Their milk is a gift for elders and food to children. They can also be used for operating grinding mill. A person who considers his worth will never be destroyed. Poverty of intelligence is the real poverty. A virtuous man would never allow his wealth to be destroyed.

Sometimes, a single man happens to be better than a hundred men and sometimes a single group happens to be better than two groups together. A person, who complains about time, bears pain. A person, who is thankful for his fortune lives a good life. Lust and greed are barriers in the way of (a person with) opinion and habit should be in accordance with good manners. A needy, who has love in his heart is better than a rich who has hatred in his heart. World is a temporary abode, which will be destroyed.

Whatever is bound to come, will come in spite of your weakness even if you fail to seek it and whatever is bound to go, will go in spite of all the force and attempts made by you. The defect of poverty and

hunger wastes honor. Jealousy is such a disease, for which there is no medicine; rejoicing at another's distress comes after that. If a person treats others with goodness, he too would be treated with goodness.

Foolishness is accompanied by shame. Forbearance is the pillar of mind. The collection of all (good) deeds is patience; and forgiveness is the best act. Keeping promises maintains friendship and the love for a person who shows inclination increases.”

Aktham bin Saifi gathered his children at the time of his death and told them: “O my sons! I lived for a long period and want to make some wills to you before I die.

I will you that you should fear Allah and to maintain relations. Continue to do good deeds so that your number increases. Neither its roots nor its branches deplete. Keep away from disobedience of Allah and breaking relations because neither roots nor branches of a person who breaks relations are strong.

Control your tongue because it is your enemy. Even a friend would not like to hear a true thing and look at the necks of camels and load them according to their capacity because they are given in dowers and also accepted as blood-money. You must not marry foolish girls because it would be nothing but trouble for you and children from them would be nothing but trouble.

To have proper food during a journey guarantees comfort and strength and a person who does not become hopeless after losing a thing will get peace and if a person remained satisfied with whatever he has, his eyes will be cooled. Leave that (wrong) deed before you are embarrassed and according to me, it is better to do a good deed than committing a sin.

No man dies without knowing his value and status. Helplessness during distress is a barrier for dignity. Pity on that scholar who is fearless about his foolishness; and fear takes insight away. Whenever some issue is brought to him, he becomes confused and when the work is taken back, he is recognized by clever as well as foolish.

Extravagancy during happy times is stupidity. Attaining heights give respect. Do not be sad if you get a little because you will get more. Do not answer a thing, which is not asked to you. Do not laugh at a thing, which is not worthy of laughing. Express your aloofness from this world and do not have hatred. Jealousy resides among relatives and when everyone gathers in one place, their weapons start cackling.

You get near because of love but do not depend on proximity. Also, it is obligatory that you reform through wealth because the reformation of wealth and property cannot take place without your reformation. Pay attention to your diet. Do not rely on your brother's wealth to fulfill your needs.

It is like that one who tries to enclose water in the fist. If a person wants to become rich, he should spend on his family members. Respect your leaders. The game of a respectful woman is to play with spindle (i.e. she remains busy in her work). When there is no way out, patience is the last policy.”

Qirdah bin Thalaba bin Nafasha Sulooli lived for one hundred and thirty years during the time of ignorance. Then he saw the period of Islam and accepted it.

Masaad bin Junaab bin Maraarah was from the progeny of Amr bin Yarboo' bin Hanzala bin Zaid bin Munaah and he lived for a hundred and forty years.

Qus bin Saada Ayaadi lived for six hundred years and he was one who composed the following verses:

Does a raining cloud take peace away from a person who is in a bad condition?

Or it showers favor on him?

Whatever has passed away and lost from the hands then

There is no use of lamenting and saying, "Only if, it would have been such".

Similarly, Lubaid says:

And Qus said "Only if" and "If I would have been such" He left Luqman the wise behind by saying that.

Harith bin Kaab Madhh'aji lived for one hundred and sixty years.

The author says: All traditions narrated by us are also related by our opponents from Muhammad bin Saaeb Kalbi, Muhammad bin Ishaq Bashaar, Awaana bin al-Hakam, Isa bin Zaid bin Aab and Haitham bin Adi Tai. And the Holy Prophet (S) said, "Whatever has happened in the previous Ummahs will happen in this Ummah also, in the same order."

Thus, if it is appropriate that long life was prevalent among previous Ummahs and the incidents of occultation of proofs of Allah (a.s.) took place in previous centuries, why should the occultation of Imam Qaim (a.t.f.s.) and his long life be rejected in spite of the fact that there are traditions from the Messenger of Allah (S) and holy imams (a.s.) about his, which are narrated in this book?

Narrated to us Ali bin Ahmad Daqaaq from Muhammad bin Abi Abdullah Kufi from Musa bin Imran Nakhai from his uncle, Husain bin Yazid Naufili from Ghiyath bin Ibrahim from Imam Ja'far Sadiq from his holy father from his holy ancestors that Holy Prophet (S) said:

"Whatever has happened in previous Ummahs will happen exactly in the same way in this Ummah also, in the same order."

Narrated to us Ahmad bin Hasan Qittan from Hasan bin Ali Askari from Muhammad bin Zakariya from Ja'far bin Muhammad bin Imarah from Imam Ja'far Sadiq from his father from his holy ancestors that Holy Prophet (S) said;

"I swear by Him, Who made me rightful Prophet and harbinger of good news that all those things are

going to occur in my Ummah in the same order, which had occurred during previous Ummahs. So much so that if a snake entered a hole in Banu Israel, it would happen in my Ummah also.”

Narrated to us Shareef Abul Hasan Ali bin Musa bin Ahmad bin Ibrahim bin Muhammad bin Abdullah from Abu Ali Hasan bin Rakaam from Ahmad bin Muhammad Naufili from Ahmad bin Hilal from Uthman bin Isa Kilaabi from Khalid bin Najeeh from Hamza bin Hamraan from his father from Saeed bin Jabeer that he heard Syed al-Aabideen Ali bin Husain bin Ali bin Abi Talib (a.s.) saying:

“Our Qaim (a.t.f.s.) has Sunnah of prophets. The Sunnah of Prophet Nuh, Prophet Ibrahim, Prophet Musa, Prophet Isa, Prophet Ayyub and Prophet Muhammad (S) is included in it.” The Sunnah of Prophet Nuh is a long life, secret birth and remaining hidden from people is the Sunnah of Prophet Ibrahim.

The Sunnah of Prophet Musa is fear and occultation. The Sunnah of Prophet Isa is that people have difference of opinion about him. The Sunnah of Prophet Ayyub is happiness after bearing calamities and Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad is that he will come out carrying a sword.

Thus, if it is correct that the incidents of long life were prevalent during previous ages, it is appropriate that this Sunnah is true for Imam Qaim (a.t.f.s.) also, who is the twelfth Imam. It is not possible that nothing will be left in the occultation of Imam (a.t.f.s.) and as Holy Prophet (S) said, “Even if one day is left before this world perishes then Allah will prolong that day enough so that Imam Qaim (a.t.f.s.) will reappear and fill the world with justice as much as it would have been filled with injustice and oppression and we would get Islam only when we bow in front of the commandments of Holy Prophet (S) and holy imams (a.s.). There is no power and might except by Allah, the High and the Mighty.”

During the previous ages, the people who were religious, worshippers and abstinent used to hide such a person and their matters and this custom is followed from the beginning of the world till our time. Then how is it possible to deny the occultation of Imam Qaim (a.t.f.s.)? Only those people will reject this, whose hearts are filled with infidelity and misguidance and hatred of Prophet (S) and Imams (a.s.).

## **Incident of Bilohar and Yuzasif**

Narrated to me Ahmad bin Hasan Qattaan from Hasan bin Ali Askari from Muhammad bin Zakariya that:

A king who had a huge army and ruled a vast region in the kingdom of India whom the subjects feared in an uncommon manner, was very lustful. He loved every indecent act and loved to be flattered a lot. He liked those who considered his opinion right and behaved well with them.

However, he hated and ruined those who neglected his orders and had faith on someone else. He had reached his prime youth and his advices were firm, his speech was eloquent and was famous for his statesmanship and maintaining law and order. Thus, because these facts became famous, common people became obedient to him. Strong and weak everyone bowed in front of him. The intoxication of strength, fame and pride was collected in him.

He was granted extra strength because he conquered his enemies, showered anger on the people of his kingdom and obedience of people. Thus, he used to disdain people because of his inebriation. The praises and flatters had made him even more unconscious. Then his view and heart became full of pride so much because people praised him a lot and appreciated his moves in front of him. He desired this world only and world was giving him everything and there was no desire, which remained unfulfilled.

He used to fulfill his lust through women as well as men and was deprived of a male offspring. Religion prevailed before his kingdom and majority people followed the former. Shaitan decorated the enmity of religion and religious people in his eyes and he harmed religious people, broke their strength and terrorized them and he had brought the idol-worshippers near him before and made idols of silver and gold for them. He favored and honored them and prostrated in front of their idols.

Thus, when the subjects saw this, they too got attracted towards idol-worship and the religious people were dishonored.

One day, he enquired about a person, who had good reputation and high status in the country so that he could take his help in some activities and treat him with love and honor him.

People said: "Sir, he has left off this world and whatever is there in it and he has attached himself to the dervishes. The king did not like this and ordered that he should be brought to him. When this person was brought to the king and the king saw him dressed like a dervish and expressing humility like them, he scolded him saying: You were from among our servants and among the nobles of our country.

Then why did you disgrace yourself and destroy your property and family members? Why did you follow those who suffer loss? So much so that you became a butt of ridicule and exemplar for the people. You were our ally in the most important matters and you helped me in whatever I wanted you to help.

That person replied: O king, if I don't have any right upon you, your intellect definitely has a right upon you. So do not be angry at what I say, and decide the matter after understanding it properly because anger is the enemy of reason, and it puts a veil between man and his understanding. The king said: What are you trying to say? The dervish replied: O king, I ask you, have you punished me due to my personal sins? Or my sin is affecting you?

The king replied: Your sins are very serious in my view and if anyone from my subjects causes the destruction of his self I shall come between him and his self. Because his destroying his self is same as destroying another person. I am his guardian and I am having authority on him as well as you. Thus I am having more authority on you and I am going to punish you since you have destroyed yourself in this manner.

The dervish said: O king, Do not condemn me without proof and do not establish proof except that you have a judge with you. You are having many judges from the men and it is their rulings that you enforce. I approve of some of them and I am fearful of some.

The king said: Who are those judges? The person said: The judge I approve is your reasoning faculty and that which I dread is your selfish desire. The king said: What are you trying to say? Since when has this thought appeared in your mind? Who has deviated you? I came to know that I was told something in my childhood which took root in my heart like a seed that germinates in the earth. It continued to grow and became a tree as you can see.

I have heard from a wise man that one who is a fool considers a useless thing as very important and he considers useless that which is really useful. And he does not leave the matter which is having no reality and does not achieve the aim that is having reality and he does not see that which is real. Thus he is not satisfied at leaving that which has no reality and the reality is the life after and that which is not real is the world.

Since I heard this I left off this temporal world which is having no reality and I became attached to that which is real, that is the permanent abode. Now, in my view, life is death and wealth is poverty.

The happiness of the world is sorrow, health is sickness, the strength in the world is weakness and helplessness, the worldly honor is degradation and how the worldly life should not be death because the one who lives, lives for death and he is certain of death and also of the end of life. And why should not its prosperity not be considered penury, as nothing is achieved except that due to this he becomes needful of something else which makes him inclined to that which is necessary for him.

Like man is sometimes needful of an animal that when he rears it, he considers necessary its feed and care. In the same way, for everything he becomes needful of something else, that may be useful and necessary for him. Thus when can the need be fulfilled of one who is needful of this procedure?

And how his happiness should not turn into sorrow that whoever receives some joy is in fact such that sorrow and pain lies in ambush for him? And he himself sees his sorrow being doubled. If he is gladdened through his child, the child's sickness and death brings him utmost grief which surpasses his joy.

If he becomes happy due to his wealth, is he not fearful of its destruction and loss? That the joy of wealth is the greatest joy. If it is so, people have a right that they must not become attached to that about which they know previously. And how cannot his health change into sickness as his health depends upon various factors and the nearest element of life is blood. And the most obvious fact is that the man who is created through blood, can very soon get involved in a sudden death, slaying, plague, cheek injury and pleurisy and perish.

And how cannot his strength not change into weakness while in him are present those powers that can harm and even destroy him. And how cannot the position of these factors change into degradation while honor is not made permanent for man and his family has to suffer disgrace. Except that the days of honor are very few and the days of disgrace are long.

Thus the best option for the people is that they should condemn this world for which they have extended their hands. After the fulfillment of the need he should hope and expect every hour and every moment and every day he should calculate his wealth that he is in need of and in obtaining which he dazzles the eyes of his relatives and they fight each other over the wealth that he has amassed.

They demolish the foundations of his building and death attacks his family members and uproots them completely. And everyone that is having brotherly relations to him is subjected to torture. Thus, O king, I condemn all that the world is giving and the dress with which it is dressing; inherited property that would ultimately make one naked. Sometimes it brings honor to a person but later it brings grief.

And one who is involved in its love, he is going to leave it ultimately. After receiving wealth in inheritance a person becomes hard-hearted. One who obeys this wealth is defrauded and one who relied on it, is betrayed. Inherited wealth is like that beast of burden that throws down its rider, it is like a companion who misappropriates.

It is a way that makes you astray. It is a place of descent that destroys and it is a greatness that does not honor anyone but it degrades all. It is a beloved that does not love anyone and it is a necessary thing but it does not remain with anyone forever. Sometimes this inherited wealth is loyal and at other times it is disloyal. Sometimes it denies and sometimes it verifies. Sometimes it supports and sometimes it goes against.

One who wants to progress with this inherited wealth, it created crookedness in him. It plays with one who has taken possession of it. At the same moment it gives a morsel to one who has decided to eat it. When it makes a person its servant it serves him well. It makes fun of one who laughs upon it. It condemns one who criticizes it. It weeps for one who cries on it.

It extends the hand of charity to one who asks for help and gives respect while he is disgraced. It honors the one who is dishonored. In the same way if one is lowly, it makes him great and makes the lowly one lofty. Sometimes the inherited wealth is obedient even if it is disobeyed. In the same way one feels happy in this inherited wealth while one is caused grief. Similarly the satiated ones by it are those that are hungry. And some people are dead due to this inherited wealth while in fact they are alive.

Thus woe be to the abode that has such qualities that it places the crown of glory on a person in the morning and in the evening assigns him to the pit of destruction. It makes one wear ornaments of gold in the evening and next day puts him in the chains of slavery. Sometimes this world makes one sit on the throne in the morning and throws him to some prison at night. Sometimes it spreads the sheets of silk at night and in the morning forces him to sleep on dust. In the morning it may gather those who have fun and games and at night it gathers those who weep and wail. On some nights it endears to him the proximity of his family members and on some mornings it makes him like aloofness from them.

On some mornings it makes his smell pleasing to him and on some nights it makes the same smell detestable. So, one who is not going to be saved from its evils is the one who relies on his glory. This

man's heart benefits from the worldly things and his eyes relishes its strange things. His hand is full of the worldly bounties but later it also becomes empty.

The spring of wealth remains calm. Whatever is gone is gone and whoever is destroyed is destroyed. Whatever became apparent became apparent. After each one it keeps one in force and it is satisfied with all by way of recompense. It brings peace to all centuries one after the other. It feeds the leaders depending upon their communities.

It makes the lowly ones reach to the position of the superior ones. It makes the helpless ones take the place of those who are cautious. It brings the communities from dryness into freshness. It makes the walkers ride, rings the hungry into prosperity, changes adversity into opulence, humiliation into respect.

So much so that if he is immersed in it, it brings changes in circumstances and then again removes freshness and prosperity from them and takes away the strength from them. And once again they return to the worst destruction, the worst needfulness and the worst drought.

O king, you say that by renouncing the world I have subjected myself and my family to destruction is not true. Rather I have become more attentive towards them and I have maintained a special relationship with them. But I was seeing them with an enchanted eye through which I could not distinguish my relatives from the strangers and the enemies from friends.

Thus when the enchantment ended the enchanted eye changed into the normal eye and the friends were distinguished from the enemies and the relatives stood out from among the strangers. Thus at that moment I began to count my relatives, friends, brethren and the kindred. All of them were like hunting dogs ready to devour me except that they were different in strength and daring.

Some of them were like lions due to their hot temper. Some were like hyenas that tear up its prey and are notorious for snatching and fighting. Some were like flattering dogs that wag their tails and some were deceptive and cheating like foxes. Though their methods differed their aim was one and the same.

O king, even though you are having a lofty position due to the greatness of your kingdom and because of your armies, supporters and servants I have pondered about you a great deal. And I concluded that no one from this world is on your side.

You are alone. And I have also learnt that the common people are hostile to you and the people you rule are very greedy and inimical. They are great hypocrites. These people are more dangerous to you than the hunting dogs. All the strangers bear enmity towards you. When I look at your servants and aides I find that they are a group that acts for vested interests.

And despite this they are involved in greed and selfishness, so that they may work less for you and take more recompense. And when I look at your close confidants and your relatives I find them busy in working for you and increasing your wealth, whereas you always subject them to hardships and not all of

them are like that.

They are happy in working hard for you. Thus if you stop from them this they would not be pleased. So, O king, can you not see that you are alone? You neither have a relative nor any wealth.

Whereas I have family members, wealth, friends and siblings who are neither eating me up nor being fed through me. They love me and there is no discord between us. They testify for me and I testify for them and we do not falsify each other.

They are having concern for me and I have concern for them and there is no animosity between us. They help me and I help them and we are in contact of each other. They like the goodness that I like. They do not fear that I shall influence them.

There is neither corruption nor greed between us. We perform for each other such rewarding acts that are not temporal. And this practise is always established between us. If I become deviated they are my guides. If I become blind they are my eyesight. If I come to them they become my refuge. If I am attacked they become a shield for me.

When I fall into a hardship they become my helpers. And we have kept ourselves safe from houses, shops and eating places and neither have we any desire for them. We have renounced all the wealth and pelf due to which we have no desire for worldly riches. We do not rebel against each other and do not harbor enmity towards each other. Neither we resort to corruption nor have any jealousy. We do not cut off relations.

Thus, O king, these are my family members. They are my brethren and the near kindred and my friend. It is them I love and to them I turn. I have deserted whom I had recognized with my enchanted eye and from whom I wished to be safe.

Thus, O king, this world is like I told you. It has no reality. This is its genealogy and this is its revolution that I had heard of. After knowing this I have renounced it. I have seen the matter which is true reality. Thus, O king, if you like, I will talk to you about the hereafter which I know is the only reality. So you be prepared to hear about it.

Listen with all your attention; not like you listen to other things. Thus the king did not do any injustice upon him except that he told him: You have lied and nothing that you have said is correct. You have remained successful in evil and hatred. Thus you get out of here and do not stay in any part of my kingdom as you are of those who create mischief.

During that time a son was born to the king while he had lost hope of having a male issue. This newborn child was so beautiful and attractive that no one had ever seen such a handsome boy. The king was so much enjoyed that he almost died of happiness. In his view this was a gift from the idols that he worshipped.

Thus the people donated all the wealth they had to the temples that housed the idols. People were ordered to continue the celebrations for a year. The king named his son as Yuzasif and he summoned all the scholars and astrologists of the country to prepare the child's horoscope. After much contemplation the astrologers informed that the boy shall have the highest position among all his contemporaries in India.

But one of them said: Not only the highest position in the world; what I see is that this child will also have an exalted status in the hereafter and that he would be a leader of religion and the religious people. He shall have an honorable position in the hereafter because the greatness I see in him does not resemble any worldly greatness; rather it is akin to the greatness of the hereafter.

These words killed all the joy that the king had experienced with regard to the newborn child. It was so because the person who had given this prophecy was the most reliable astrologer and the most learned and truthful in the king's view.

So the king arranged a house for the child and appointed the most trusted nurses and servants there commanding them that death, hereafter, sorrow, disease and annihilation should not be mentioned in the presence of the child.

So much so that they become accustomed to that and their hearts forget the reality. They were told that when the child grows up nothing should be mentioned in his presence that may create fear in him and lead him to religion. And that they must take care of him and protect him and become so much absorbed in it that they should forget each other.

Due to the fear that his son will adopt the right way, the king was extremely angry at the dervishes.

He had a minister who neither misappropriated his wealth, nor lied or concealed anything from him. He neither tried to influence his decisions and there was no one who shared his actions and the king didn't want to lose him.

In addition to this the minister was kind hearted and well known for his charitable deeds. The common people loved him and he was pleased with them. However the king's aides and relatives were jealous of him. They used to oppress him and tried to lower his status.

One day this king went out for the hunt accompanied with this minister. In the hilly path he found a person with injured legs. He was clinging to the trunk of a tree and it was impossible for him to go away from there. When the vizier inquired he said that the wild beasts have rendered him in that condition.

The vizier was moved by his circumstances and the man pleaded for help and implored the vizier to take him to his house saying perhaps he would benefit him in the future. The vizier said: Even if you don't give me anything in return, it is still my duty to help you; but tell me how you intend to recompense me?

Can you do some work or repair something? The man said that he was capable of changing adverse

circumstances. "How can you do this?" asked the minister. He replied: as soon as discord appears I bring about unity as a result of which there is no mischief. The minister did not pay much attention to his statement but brought him along and got him treated to health.

At last it so happened that the king's aides together decided to accuse the honest minister of something and bring him down in the king's estimation.

So they told the king that this minister was aspiring for the throne and in order to seize power after him he was always behaving nicely with the people. If you want to confirm this you call him and say that you want his advice about giving up the kingdom to become a dervish. His elation at this decision of yours will tell you what the truth is.

Since they all knew that the minister had a soft corner for religion and he was inclined to the hereafter, he would definitely be elated by the king's plan and they would succeed in exposing him to the ruler. The king said that he would ask him about it when he met him next time. Thus when the king met the minister he said: You know well how much I am inclined to worldly things and wealth and I have told you before that in the past I did not possess anything.

And I have realized that one day I will have to revert to the same condition. So I have decided to do something for the hereafter which is better than what I have done to get material wealth. I begin with the realization that the truth is with the religious and first of all I shall leave the kingdom to those who are deserving of it.

So what is your opinion about it? On hearing this, the minister cried intensely and the king understood what the minister's view was. The vizier said: Your majesty, even if something is difficult to obtain, it is worth trying to obtain it if it is going to be permanent. And if something is temporal, it is not worth trying to obtain it even though obtaining it may be easy. Your decision is good and I pray to God that He gives you the best of the world and the hereafter.

The king was extremely annoyed at the minister's opinion and he realized that what he had been told about the latter was true. The minister also felt that the king was displeased with him and he returned home in dismay to discuss with the family members what was the solution to this problem. He lay awake at night thinking of a way out of these circumstances when he remembered of the man he had saved, who had told him that he was capable of changing adverse circumstances.

He summoned him at once and told him: You told me that you can change adverse circumstances to the good. He replied: Yes I had told you that. What is your problem? The vizier said: I will tell you about it. I was a companion of the king before he gained this kingdom and since he became a king I don't remember any instance when he has been displeased with me. But today he called me and said that he was renouncing the world to become a hermit. When I expressed my approval he was dismayed.

The man said: I have understood the problem. Actually the king thinks that you want to oust him and

take over his kingdom. I have a plan which would surely save you from undesirable consequences. In the morning you change into the dress of a hermit, shave your head and rub your head at the king's threshold.

When he sees you he will ask what you are upto. You say: Since I gave you advice I thought that first I must act upon it. The king will then know that you are not after his kingdom. So the vizier did the same and finally the king realized that the former had no evil intentions.

The very next day, the king issued commands that all religious people should be thrown out of his territory. All those who were inclined to religion went into hiding. One day the king was on an excursion when he saw two dervishes.

He summoned them and said: Why have you not left my kingdom? They said: We were leaving but your agents brought us here. "Why are you on foot?" They said, "We are aged, we neither have a vehicle nor any means of travel. Thus we cannot travel any faster." The king said, "When a person is frightened of death he does not need a vehicle to move faster."

They said, "We are not scared of death; rather we don't find pleasure in anything." The king said, "Why are you not scared of death? Because when my agents brought you here why are you trying to flee?" They said, "We are fleeing from death not because we are scared of it. You must not think that we are frightened of death.

We flee in order to help you against our desire." The king was angry with their reply and he ordered that they be cast into the fire. He also issued the edict that any devout person found anywhere be also consigned to the flames. The idol worshippers immediately searched out all religious people in every nook and corner of their country and burnt them alive. From that time the custom of burning the dead started in India.

Most devout and religious people were exterminated from the country. Only a few dared to conceal themselves so that one day they may show the right path to one who came out in search of it.

Yuzasif, the prince reached the age of understanding. He was a very intelligent youth. His wisdom compelled him to ask himself why he was kept with a few person in solitude. He thought of asking his father about it but later realized that it was he only, who has arranged all this so why would he tell him what the matter was?

Among those who were appointed to train the prince in the royal customs and administrative affairs there was a man who due to his wisdom had endeared himself most to the young prince. One day the prince told him: I like you very much. You are like a father to me. After the king I will inherit the kingdom. At that time your position will either be too high or too lowly.

The man said, "Why are you threatening me?" Yuzasif replied, "Because until now you have concealed

from me the fact that I will learn in the future. At that time I will take a dreadful revenge from you.” The man was terrified and he told Yuzasif all the secrets, the prediction of the astrologers, the reason why he was kept in seclusion etc.

The prince thanked him and told him to keep it confidential. One day when the king came to see his son, the son said: “Father, I am indeed yet a child. So I thought about myself and also observed my controversial circumstances. Thus I will mention what I remember and in spite of knowing what I don’t mention; it is something that I also know well.

I also know that I am not like that neither you are in that condition. Neither you shall remain like this forever; and the time will change your condition very soon. Thus if you wanted to conceal the matter of death from me, it has not been so.

And if you restricted my movements and kept a barrier between me and the people so that I don’t become capable to know that which is not in my favor, you have kept me out of your circle. I am anxious and restless because of the barrier between me and the people. So much so, I am not aggrieved of anything.

And I have no intention till I am not satisfied with the condition I am in, from which neither I get any benefit nor am I interested in it. Thus you release me and tell me about that which you dislike and are fearful of so that I may keep away from it and that your satisfaction and pleasure may dominate me. So far I am unable to fathom why I have been kept in this seclusion?

Why I am not allowed to go out? Is it the punishment for some mistake of mine? If it is to ensure that I remain ignorant of death and eternity, how long will this go on? One day this world will itself inform. Now allow me to go out otherwise I will die thinking on it.

When the king heard this he realized that the prince has come to know what was concealed from him. And that these restrictions will only increase inquisitiveness. So he said: My son, I didn’t keep you here except that you remain safe from hardships and discomfort.

Thus you see only that which is favorable and hear only that which pleases you. So when your desire is against this, I will indeed dominate the things with myself over that which you are pleased with and that which you desire.

Then he ordered his men to mount him with all majesty and remove all detestable views from his path.

After this excursion he undertook a number of outings.

One day he was on an unfamiliar route when he saw two beggars. One of them was terribly diseased having yellow complexion and the other was blind. He was shocked at their sight and inquired about them. The people told him that it was due to a terrible disease and that the blind man was like that since a long time.

The prince asked if others were inflicted with this disease. When they replied in the positive the young prince asked if it was not possible to save oneself from these diseases? When they said that it was not possible the prince became aggrieved and was shocked and terrified of that which existed in his father's kingdom. And he remained in this manner for many days.

One day during an excursion he saw an old man. Grey hair, waist bent, unable to walk properly; his complexion had darkened and skin was wrinkled. The prince was amazed at his condition and he asked the people regarding it. They told him that he is an old man. He asked: How much time does it take for man to reach this stage?

They said: Around a hundred years. He asked: Then what happens after that? "After that he dies," they told him. The prince asked, "Does anything remain after the man and his age?" "No, nothing," said the people, "And this happens within a short time." The prince said: There are thirty days in a month and there are twelve months to a year.

Now if the age of man is a hundred years which day of the month passes by fastest? And which month of the year passes soonest? Which year of life goes away in the shortest time? After that the prince returned repeating these sentences. Then he began to remain awake in the nights, his conscience awoke and he gained insight and wisdom. No error or forgetfulness remained in him and he developed seriousness of purpose. His heart turned away from the world and worldly desires. In any case, he accorded respect to his father and behaved with him kindly.

In spite of that he was always waiting to hear anyone speak against the path he himself followed so that he may guide him.

The prince summoned the man who had revealed the truth to him and asked: Do you know anyone who is different from us? "Yes," he said, "There is a group of people called dervishes. They have renounced the world and are in search of the hereafter. Their speech and knowledge is such that I know nothing of it, except that people are inimical to them and they burn them alive; and the king has thrown them out of his kingdom.

Thus these days no one in our towns is aware of them as the surviving ones have gone into hiding waiting for deliverance. And the system of these divine saints has come since the ancient age and they live in tyrant rules concealed from each other." All this made the prince very sad and he became like a man who was in search of something that was important to him. His contemplation, elegance, excellence and wisdom became famous in every nook and corner of the land.

This information also reached to a dervish, Munsh Bilohar of Sirandeeep, who in addition to being a dervish was also a physician. So he boarded a ship and landed at Saulabath and planned to meet the prince and join his order. He took off his dervish clothes and put on the attire of traders. After that he obtained detailed information about the courtiers, associates and people of that place.

Therefore he also learnt about the excellent manners of the prince through his aides and also that the prince had great regard for him. So Bilohar began to frequent the house of this aide till one day he found him alone and said: I am a trader from Sirandeeep. I am here since some days. I am having a priceless thing with me which is highly beneficial.

Since I found you reliable I am telling about it. The thing I have is more precious than red sulphur. It can give sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf. It cures weakness and turns weakness into strength. It protects you from the jinns and helps against enemies and I don't find anyone more worthy of this medicine than this young man.

Thus if you feel appropriate you may mention it to the prince. If he is inclined you may then take me to him because the excellence of this elixir should not remain unknown to him. The aide replied: You have mentioned something that we have never heard before. And I don't think there is any problem in informing the prince about something he is unaware of. But first you let me see this medicine; if I find any reality in what you say I will mention it to the prince.

Bilohar said: I am a physician, I know that you have a weak eyesight and I fear that that if you glance at the medicine you may lose your remaining sight. However the prince has good eyesight and he is also young in age so there is no risk if he looks at it. If he sees it, it would prove beneficial for him. On hearing this, the man went to the prince and mentioned what Bilohar had said. The prince realized that it would be good to meet this person.

So he said: Bring him tonight itself but keep it a secret as such a man is not caused disrespect. The prince's aide informed Bilohar of the appointment. He took a basket containing books. The aide asked: What is there in the basket? Bilohar said: Medicine. Now if you like you may take me to the prince. So they set out to meet the prince. When they arrived the prince greeted Bilohar, prayed for him and welcomed him in the best manner. After that the aide went away.

The Hakim sat down with the prince and asked him first of all: O prince I feel that you have accorded more respect to me than your servants and the nobles of your country. The prince said: It is due to that great hope that I repose in you. Bilohar said: You have done like the king of a country who was well known for his good deeds and people had good hopes in him. One day he was on an excursion with his army when he saw two poor men in tattered clothes. They seemed helpless and deprived.

The king alighted, greeted them and shook hands. His ministers felt very bad on seeing this. So they came to his brother who had influence upon him and said: The king has disgraced himself and the people of the country. He got down to meet two lowly men. So you must scold him so that he doesn't repeat it again. And also ask him why he acted in this manner. The brother did that and in reply the king said something which did not reveal whether the king was angry or he had accepted the critique. The brother returned home after that.

After some days the king ordered the announcer of deaths to go the door of his brother and announce

his death. And this was the method the king followed when he intended to eliminate anyone. When they heard the news there was wailing in the brother's house and he himself rushed out dressed in clothes of death to the royal residence wailing and tearing at his hair.

When the king came to know this, he summoned him. On entering the court the brother threw himself down and began to cry of perdition and plead for mercy. The king said: Come here, you are crying because the caller had conveyed the message of the creature and not the creator. And I am your brother.

You know that you have not done anything for which I may kill you, but condemn me of what I do in the land. While I can see the caller of my Lord and I am more aware of my sins than you. So go back as I have understood that the ministers have fooled you and they will also realize their folly soon.

After that the king ordered them to make four wooden caskets. Tar was applied to two of the caskets and filled them with gold, rubies and emeralds. The other two caskets were gilded with gold sheets but filled with excreta, blood and carrion. Then he summoned the viziers who had blamed him for according respect to the two poor men, and asked them: Which of these caskets are more valuable? They said: As far as we can see and on the basis of what we know the two caskets covered with gold are more valuable, while the caskets covered with tar are worthless.

The king said: So this is your knowledge about things and the reality of your opinions. Then he ordered his men to open the tarred caskets and soon the court was filled with the brilliance of the jewels. The king said: The simile of these caskets is like that of those two who were apparently poor but endowed with knowledge, wisdom and all the good qualities which are more precious than these jewels. Then he ordered them to open the golden caskets.

The people recoiled in horror. The terrible scene made them nauseous and they were tortured by the dirty stench. The king said: The simile of these caskets is like those who are outwardly dressed in good clothes but they have ignorance in the inside, they have blindness, lies, oppression and all kinds of evils which are more horrid than carrion and more detestable.

The people said: We have understood what you intend to say and we have gained lesson from this.

Then Bilohar said: O prince, your meeting me and according honor to me is also similar to that. Prince Yuzasif stood up and said: Narrate to me some more edifying incidents. The Hakim said: Every farmer sows the seeds. Some grains fall at the edge of the field, some fall on stones and dry up ultimately. Some fall in thorny bushes and are unable to take root.

Some fall on clean earth and grow up properly. O prince, except for these all the seeds are wasted. In the same way good counsels are effective only on clean consciences. The prince said: Hakim, your discourse has given me a tranquility that I cannot describe. Please give me an example through which the love of the world can be said to be a fraud.

Bilohar said: It is said that an excited elephant pursued a man who fled in horror. The elephant followed him. On the way there was a well and a tree grew at its edge. The man caught hold of its branch and dangled from it. Then he saw four serpents at the roots of this tree. Below he saw a python with its mouth open. He also saw white and black rats gnawing at the branch. He saw honey applied on the branches of the tree. This man began to lick the honey completely oblivious of the approaching dangers.

O prince, the world is like a well full of calamities and evils and the branch signifies the life of man. The rats stand for day and night that hasten death. The four serpents stand for the four humors that are killing poison. That is: blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile and its owner does not know when they may become excited.

The open-mouthed python below is death which is waiting for him. Honey stands for deception that the one who is proud, is fooled by worldly pleasures, fame, bounties, wealth and good food and aromatics. The prince said: It is a strange simile but nevertheless very much true. Please tell me more about the world, the man of the world, one who is proud of it and gains from it.

Bilohar said: It is said that a man had three friends. He loved one of them very much and through him he used to dominate the most terrible and frightening things. That is why he had become proud. Day and night he used to fulfill his needs. He loved the second friend also, but somewhat lesser. He obeyed this friend and behaved with him kindly and never became careless about him.

However the third friend was a tyrant and a degraded man. He did not like this friend. He was also poor.

Finally a time came upon this man when he needed all the three. The royal police came to take him to the king. So he went to the first friend and said: You are aware of my loyalty towards you and that I had surrendered myself to you. Now today I am in need of you. What can you do for me? He replied: I am not your friend. I have other friends with whom I am busy after you. Today they are better than you. But I can give you clothes that you may need.

Then he went to the second friend who was very kind and loving and said: You are aware of my love and kindness towards you and how much I endeavored to make you happy. Now today I am in need of you. What can you do for me?

He replied: My conscience tells me that I should forget you and what you did. So you must rely only on your own self. You should know that the relationship between us stands broken because our ways are diverse. I can walk with you few steps but it will not be of any use to you. Then I will head for that which is more important than you.

He turned in despair and went to the third friend whom he previously considered lowly, never listened to his advice and never paid any attention to him in his bad times. He said to him: I am ashamed before you but need has brought me here.

What can you do for me? He replied: I have equality and brotherhood for you and the responsibility to protect you even though there was some carelessness on your part. Good news for you, may your eyes become cool with happiness. I will offer you a company that shall neither harm you nor entrust you to someone else.

Thus I will not make you ashamed for that little good that you have done to me. Bilohar said: The first friend was wealth. The second was children and the third was good deed.

The prince said: Indeed this is manifest truth. Tell me something more about the world, pride in it, and one who becomes proud upon it and one who is satisfied with it. Bilohar said: The people of a city used to appoint any poor man that happened to arrive there as their ruler for a year. This stupid man used to rule them thinking that it would go on forever.

But at the end of the year they used to turn him out of the territory empty-handed. So he used to fall in troubles and deprivation and could not even tell anyone what had befallen him. As result of all this he used to be completely broken. Once those people caught hold of a man and appointed him as their ruler.

The man found himself an alien at that place. He also did not have any friend there. When he learnt about the custom of these people he called a man from his native place and informed him about the strange custom of these people. He also showed him the wealth that was at his disposal at that time and instructed him to transfer it little by little to another place where the deposed king would have to move one day so that when he is forced to go there he would find the wealth he had sent ahead of himself.

The man from the native place did as he was told and in this matter he did not do anything on the contrary.

Bilohar said: Prince, I understand that you are that person who has no inclination to the poor and neither are you proud due to power and I am that person whom you called; I have for you the proof, divine recognition and a useful thing. The prince said: O Hakim, you have said the truth. I am that same person and you are my wish that I desired.

Now please explain to me the matter of the hereafter in detail. But as for the world, I swear by my life, I have testified it and I saw all that from the world that guides me on its annihilation and which makes me inclined not have any attachment to it. The world has always been a worthless thing for me.

Bilohar said: O prince, doubtlessly, renunciation of the world is the key to the hereafter and one who yearned for the hereafter, reached to its door and entered its limits. Why should you not renounce this world as the Almighty Allah has endowed you with reason and you saw that even though the worldly people are more in number they shall be seen in that same temporal bodies the physical bodies are not imperishable?

And bodies are also necessary for them that melt in its heat and freeze in its cold and its wind hits like

poisonous spears. Its water drowns, its sun scorches and its wind makes them fall sick. The beasts of the world tear them up and devour them and the birds peck at them. Iron cuts it down and the headache breaks it up completely.

Thus from the aspect of essence it is a compound of various diseases, pains and maladies and it is always involved in them. He experiences discomfort in it and is not even interested in escaping from the world. There he is involved in seven such calamities that it is impossible to escape from them. They are hunger, thirst, heat, cold, pain, fear and death. Regarding what you have asked about the hereafter, I hope you will find near what you think is far and find easy what you feel is difficult and find more what you think is less.

The prince said: O Hakim, You have seen the community that my father burnt alive and kept us away from them. Bilohar said: Yes. The prince said: I have received information that people had unified on his enmity and used to narrate his defects. Bilohar said: It was so. The prince asked: Why is it like that? Bilohar replied: But your statement with regard to their defects; they almost said that one who tells the truth does not lie.

And he knows and is not ignorant. And he stops and does not give trouble. He recites the ritual prayer and does not sleep. He fasts and does not break the fast. When he is in trouble he remains patient. When he contemplates he gains lesson from it. He does not care for the wealth of the wealthy and people do not fear him with regard to their wealth and family members. The prince said: How did the people gather upon his enmity while there was conflict among themselves?

Bilohar said: It is like the case of the dogs that gather on the rotten corpse and tear it apart with their fangs, while at the same time barking upon each other. They are of different kinds and colors but they immediately pounce on this dead body. Meanwhile a man arrives there.

They forget each other and turn towards this man and start barking on him because they are scared of him even though he does not want any part in the decayed dead body neither he wants to have any confrontation with them. But since he is a stranger they are terrified of him and they forget each other even though before his arrival they were fearful of each other.

Bilohar said: The rotten corpse is like the worldly wealth and the dogs are equivalent to those men who resort to killing and plunder for the sake of this world. And the example of the man who comes to the dogs is like that of the religious man who has renounced the world. Thus he does not fight the people of the world regarding it and does not mind if they are inimical to him because he is a stranger.

Therefore if you are surprised you must be surprised on human beings as their aim is only the worldly things, more wealth, pride and dominance etc. so much so that when they see someone renouncing the world they are angry at him in comparison to the one who is clutching it. So, prince, what is the proof which can work by the union of two things on one who is immune from all arguments? The prince asked him to explain in detail.

Bilohar said: Without any doubt when a kind doctor sees a body subjected to destruction by corrupted humors, he intends to make it strong. Thus he does not prescribe in his diet foods based on flesh and blood and that which strengthens him because he knows that when this food enters the corrupted humors it will harm the body.

It would weaken the body instead of strengthening it. The doctor prescribes for him medicines as well as diet to cure his condition. Once the poisonous substances are removed from the body he would start giving him nutritious foods. Now the patient will have more appetite and he will now gain weight in a natural way and also become stronger.

The prince said: O Hakim, tell me what is achieved through eating and drinking?

The Hakim replied: It is well known among the people that a great king used to rule over a big country. He possessed a huge army and exceeding wealth. He started a battle with another king so that he may annex his territory and increase his wealth by adding to it the wealth of that king. Thus he took his armies, weapons, ladies, children and treasures and set out to fight.

When the confrontation took place he was badly defeated and had to flee with his women and children. In the evening they reached the banks of a river. They tied up the mouths of their beasts so that their neighing may not reveal their location to the enemy. They spent the night at the river bank and continued to hear the enemies go here and there on their horses.

Neither could they reach open land nor cross the river. It was impossible to leave that place since they were surrounded by the enemies. They were troubled by the cold and they were very frightened. Hunger had made them weak and they had neither food nor rations etc. The young children of the king were crying of hunger.

Two days passed in this condition. Then one of his sons died and they had to throw his body into the river. The next day he said to his wife: All of us are going to die in a short time. In my opinion we should slaughter one of our children to feed ourselves, till the time Allah opens up a way for us. If we delay in this matter we shall all perish one by one. There is no other option.

His wife supported him in this and they slaughtered one of the children and they fed on the flesh. So, prince, what is your opinion about this helplessness? What is the difference between these people who are compelled to do this and the dogs that devour carrion?

The prince said: Those that eat lesser are better.

The Hakim said: O prince, my eating and drinking in the world is like this only; as I eat and drink under compulsion.

The prince said: O Hakim, that towards which you invite me, is it something that is according to the intellect of the people in their view? That they have renounced the world and accepted it? Or it was that

Allah called them towards it and they accepted? More interesting is the fact that it is decreed by the people and by their opinion and if this matter is from the side of the people they have invited towards its work, its embellishment, its protection and its gifts, its bounties, its pleasures, its pastimes and its joys. But this is a strange matter.

And it is a manifest invitation from Allah, the Mighty and Sublime and it is the straight path which is against the acts of the people of the world. It points out their defects, it criticizes them, it changes their joys and it invites them to the worship of their Lord and it is clear for the one who takes lesson from it and those who are useless, this matter is concealed from them. So much so that Allah will reveal the truth after its occultation and exalt the word about which the evil people are ignorant.

The prince said: You have said the truth.

Then the Hakim said: There are some among the people who contemplate before the arrival of the prophets (a.s.). Thus they are on the right path. There are some who are invited by the prophets and they harken to their call. You, O prince is one who has contemplated on the basis of your intellect, therefore you are also on the right path.

The prince said: Do you know anyone else, other than you who also invites people to renounce the world? The Hakim said: Not in this country. However there is a community among all the communities that verbally claims to profess religion but does not fulfill its rights. Our and their ways are different.

The prince said: How is that? Do you truly consider yourself better than them? And without any doubt this strange matter has reached you from the same source that has supplied to them also. The Hakim said: All the truth is from Allah, the Mighty and Sublime and indeed Allah, the Mighty and the High has invited His servants to Himself.

Thus the people accepted it as truth subject to certain conditions. Till it was returned to those who were qualified for it as was commanded. Neither they committed injustice nor any mistake; and they did not waste it. While others accepted it in such a way that they neither rose up for its truth and conditions nor returned it to one who deserved it. Neither they had determination nor their action was a hidden secret. Thus they wasted it and considered it a burden. Hence the one who has wasted is not like one who protects, neither one who retracts is like the reformer. Neither is the patient like one who is impatient.

Thus in comparison to them we are closer to the truth and we are better than them. And some communities are such that they followed the religion of their prophet after he had passed away for some time and they did not make any changes in it. After that people fell into various accidents and began following the selfish desires, continued to waste knowledge.

Thus the reliable scholar used to conceal his identity and did not reveal his knowledge. People knew his name but not his location. Only those remained with them who were insincere among the learned and they continued to dominate the ignorant people. They were making knowledge anonymous and openly

expressed ignorance.

Centuries passed but they did not realize their ignorance and falsehood. The ignorant were dominant and in majority. The learned were in hiding and in few numbers. They had changed the divine signs and given up the aim to tread its path. Along with this they confessed of its decline and followed their interpretations. They were according to its quality and were of those who left its reality. They were against its laws.

Thus prophets of every quality arrived who invited towards it. Thus in this quality we were in agreement with them and we were in opposition of the law of those prophets and their manners. And we did not oppose them in any matter till we did not have a manifest evidence or argument based on the information contained in the present divine scriptures.

Thus each of them (prophets) spoke some words of wisdom and he became a witness for us and a witness between us that our quality, appearance and command is in agreement with them and he also used to testify that he is an opponent of their practice and their deeds. So they did not know the book except its introduction and neither were they familiar with the name of religion. In fact they were not from the people of the book that they may rise up on its basis.

The prince asked: What is the condition of the messengers and the prophets that arrived from one period to another? The Hakim said: Its example is that of a king whose lands are barren and where there is no habitation. Thus when he decided to populate these places he sent a strong, honest reformer to that country. Then he ordered him to inhabit that place and plant various kinds of trees and irrigate different types of farmlands.

He made it a country filled with various hues of crops and became famous because of myriad kinds of agricultural lands. Then he ordered that strong, honest reformer not have enmity with the nation and must not do anything in it that its chief has not ordered. And he ordered him to make a canal through it and construct the boundary walls so that it may not be destroyed by any mischief-maker.

Thus the messenger who was deputed to this place, in spite of the fact that it was barren land he gave it a new life and changed its desolation into habitation. He irrigated it and cultivated different kinds of crops that he was ordered. Then he transported water to this place to irrigate the farms and grow crops. Then he stayed there for sometime. Finally the one who had developed this land met his death. After him his successors arrived.

They acted in contravention of all that he had established and they gained more dominance. They destroyed the population, made the stream dry up and all the freshness was changed into dryness and the crops were wiped out.

When after the death of the messenger the people destroyed the place, the king sent another caretaker so that he may look after its upkeep, bring it back to its previous condition and work for reform. In this

way divine prophets and messengers were sent by Allah, the Mighty and Sublime one after the other to correct the affairs of the people and to reform them.

The prince said: Are the prophets and messengers specialized in such a way that whatever they bring is for the common people? Bilohar said: Certainly, when the prophets and messengers arrive they invite the people.

Thus those who obey them are included with them and those who do not obey them are excluded. And the earth had never been devoid of a divine prophet, messenger or their successor; who is obedient. Its example is like that of Qudam, a bird that lives at the sea shore. It lays many eggs and desires to have a large number of chicks. But a time comes when he becomes completely helpless as he is compelled to shift to another place. Fearing that his eggs will spoil due to neglect he places each of them in nests of different birds.

So the different birds warm this egg along with their own eggs and its chick also hatches with their chicks. After sometime the chicks of Qudam become friendly with the chicks of the other birds and when Qudam returns to his place he goes to the nests of the other birds at night and hears the sounds of his chicks as well as of the chicks of other birds.

When his chick hears its sound it begins to talk as do the chicks of other birds also. Although it is not necessary that the chick of Qudam should harken to its call as it is now attached to the chicks of the other bird. In the same way when the prophets call the people to religion, those endowed with wisdom and recognition, answer their call.

The example of the bird that raised its voice is like that of the prophet whose call is common for all the people. And the example of the eggs placed in different nests is like that of wisdom and the companionship of the chicks of other birds with the chick of Qudam is like that of the man who accepted the statements of the wise people before the arrival of the prophets.

Because Allah, the Mighty and Sublime has endowed His prophets with such excellence and views that He has not given to anyone else. And gifted them with such effulgence and evidences that He has not given to anyone else.

This happens only at the time when He intends to spread the message and send down the proofs. When the prophets arrive and their call becomes dominant some people who had not accepted the statements of the wise also accept them because the Almighty Allah has placed a manifest proof in their call.

The prince said: You say that whatever the prophets and the messengers bring is not from the words of humans and it is only the words of Allah, the Mighty and Sublime and the words of His angels are also words?

The Hakim replied: Have you not seen people who in order to control animals and birds whistle and

produce strange sounds and the animals do as they order. They also know that they are not eligible to understand their talks. In the same way there are people who are incapable of understanding the words of Allah, the Mighty and Sublime and His angels with all its subtlety and quality, the common people harken to the calls like sounds made for the animals and birds.

This sound is in the place of that wisdom which shows that these voices are clear and strong among the common people. And wisdom does not restrain them from understanding it in different occasions and it also does not stop them from spreading that through which Allah, the Mighty and Sublime has established His proof on the people.

For wisdom, the voice is like a body and a house and for the voice, wisdom is like a spirit and a soul and people cannot reach to the depths of the words of wisdom.

Neither can they encompass it through their intellects. And before this the learned have attained excellence in their knowledge. Thus one learned always obtains knowledge from another. Till the final point of reference is the being of Allah, the Mighty and Sublime from Whom that knowledge has arrived. In the same way there are the scholars who gain something from knowledge that saves them from ignorance.

But the excellence of every excellence owner is sufficient like people benefit from the light of the sun which is necessary for the needs of their life and bodies. But they are not capable to look at the sun with their eyes which are like the natural eyes which though apparently its status is that of an executive but its element is hidden. Thus people accept what is obtained through its wetness and do not reach to its depth. And the example of this eye is like those stars through which people get guidance but they are not aware of their true position.

Thus whatever I have mentioned; wisdom is loftier and greater than it. It is the key to all the doors of good and a means of deliverance from all evil. It is the elixir of life. One who drinks it never dies. It is such a cure that one who has taken it would never fall ill. It is the straight path that if one takes he will never go astray. It is the strong rope of the God Who is never exhausted by forgiving and bestowing. It saves one from blindness if he takes hold of it. One that caught it became successful and received guidance.

The prince said: The wisdom that you have explained in such a beautiful manner if it is something that cannot benefit all the people, what is the use of it? Bilohar replied: The example knowledge and wisdom is like that of the sun which throws its light on all, whether dark or fair, small or big. One who wants to benefit from it, does not stop it from reaching him. But one who doesn't like to benefit from the sun the sun is not to blame.

Neither does the sun restrain people from this, nor does it act as an obstacle between the people and its benefit. In the same way is the wisdom which shall remain among the people till the Judgment Day. Wisdom is common among the people but people have precedence among each other regarding it.

When the sun appears before the seeing eyes it is divided among three types of people.

Those who have the right view gain benefit from it and his sight becomes stronger. Some of them are blind; hence even if a number of suns shine upon them it would not do them any good. There are also some who have weak eyesight that are neither counted as blind nor those who have correct sight. In the same way is wisdom which is the sun of the hearts.

When it arises it is also divided into three stages. The first stage is of the people of insight who understand wisdom and they are counted among the wise. And they also make this act manifest. The second stage is of the blind ones whose heart become indolent due to their denial of wisdom.

They do not accept wisdom just as the blind cannot see the light of the sun. And the third stage is that of those with a sickened heart who have very little knowledge and whose deeds are very weak and in their view the good and the evil and the right and the wrong, all are equal. And without any doubt those upon whom the sun shines the most, it is that same wisdom about which the people are blind.

The prince said: Does anyone possess the capability of rejecting wisdom for some time and then accept it after that? Bilohar said: Yes, this is how most of the people react to wisdom.

The prince said: Has my father heard all this? Bilohar said: No, I never found him listening in the right way, which would have reached to the depths of his heart neither has any kind advisor spoken to him.

The prince said: Why did those wise man omit this; inspite of the fact that they were senior in age?

Bilohar said: They left it due to exigency and lack of opportunity. Rather they left to a thing that is better for your father for justice, which is softer for the self and better in form. So much so that when people live together a kind of love and attachment develops between them and nothing except religion and wisdom creates disunity among them. He bewails for it and is pained for it, yet the effects of wisdom do not become apparent as he did not find any opportunity for it.

And it has reached us that a wise king who was close to the people and who reformed their affairs, who had a good view and was very just; he also had a vizier who very righteous and truthful. He helped the king in public reforms and advised him in the affairs of people. This vizier was cultured and intelligent. He was religious, pious and unattached to material wealth. He used to mix with religious persons, heard their discourses, recognized their merits, obeyed them and had brotherly relations with them. For the sake of the king he was also accorded great respect and honor.

The king did not keep anything confidential from him and the vizier was also at this stage. But he did not inform the king about the religious matters and neither did he expose the secrets of wisdom. They continued in this manner for a long time. When the vizier came into the presence of the king, he bowed to the idols and accorded respect to them and enacted many rituals to show that he was following the religion of the king, although it was very hard upon him. But he did all this for the sake of dissimulation.

At last he sought the advice of his friends and brothers. They told him be on the lookout of an opportunity and convey the word of truth to the king. Otherwise you are helping him against your being and you are making him infuriated against the people of your faith. Because you must not deceive the king like this and neither must you be frightened of his glory. Thus the vizier prepared himself for this and in this hope he remained his friend so that whenever he got an opportunity, he would dispense advice to him and convey the truth.

In spite of his deviation, the king was very humble and kind. He behaved very nicely with the subjects and was always keen for public welfare. He also tried to reach to the root of their problems. Thus after a long time the vizier got an opportunity to be alone with the king. One night when all the town slept the king asked the vizier:

Will you come with me to tour the city so that we may learn what is the condition of the people and what ill afflicts them? The vizier agreed and the two of them set out on the nocturnal excursion. On their way they came across a garbage lot that looked like a hill. When the king saw a fire around the garbage he said to the vizier: Alight here so that we may walk and see what is going on there.

When they went there they saw a hole like a cave in which there was a poor man. When they looked around in the cave they could not see anyone else. The poor man was in a terrible condition. He was wearing tattered clothes of the garbage and he was resting on a pillow of dirt. He had a canvas huge bag full of wine before him and he held a tambourine that he was playing. His woman was also dressed in rags and she was serving wine to him. When he hit out her she responded by dancing for him.

By serving wine to him she was according him the honor that is usually reserved for kings. The man addressed the woman as the chief of ladies and they considered each other as extremely handsome and attractive. There was such a joy and merriment among them that it can hardly be expressed in words. The king stood motionless and the vizier also watched this scene in amazement. They were astonished at the pleasure and attraction that was obvious between the two gypsies.

After that the king and the vizier returned and the king said: How do you feel about the pleasure that time showed us tonight? I think those two must be enacting this every night. The vizier found this moment right and after sometime he said: O king I fear that we are also living in the same kind of deception and that your kingdom and all the things we are pleased with and that which is before our eyes; who knows that this everlasting kingdom is also like the garbage lot and that we are like those two people.

Who can understand it like the man who has hope in deliverance and the rewards of the hereafter that our kingdom is like the cave that we have just seen? Perhaps our bodies that are recognized through purity, freshness and health are actually like the body of that gypsy and our bewilderment may astonish the people like we were amazed at those two.

The king said: Do you find anyone worthy of this quality? The vizier replied: Yes. The king asked: Who

are they? The vizier said: They are the people of faith who have recognized the kingdom of the hereafter and its bounties and then sought them too. The king said: What is the kingdom of the hereafter?

The vizier said: It is a bounty after which there is no destruction. It is a prosperity after which there is no poverty. It is a happiness more than which there is no comfort and it is such a health that after that there is no illness. It is a satisfaction after which there is no dissatisfaction and it is a peace after which there is no fear. It is a life after which there is no death and it is a kingdom that has no decline.

It is an abode of eternity and it is such an abode of life that one would never be separated from it and which will never change. Allah, the Mighty and Sublime has neither decreed old age for the residents of the house of the hereafter nor illness or hardship, tiredness, hunger, thirst or death. This is the description of the kingdom of the hereafter, O king.

The king said: Can one desire for this abode; and is there any way to enter this place? The vizier said: Yes, the abode of the hereafter comes to the lot of one who desires it and one who reaches to its door becomes successful. The king said: What stopped you from telling me all this before? The vizier said: Your awe and glory stopped me from it.

The king said: If what you have mentioned is true we must not ignore it and we must try our best to reach it. However we must assure that the information we have received about the hereafter is correct. The vizier said: O king, are you asking me to mention this to you again and again?

The king said: Rather I want you to talk to me about it day and night and stop never, because it is a strange matter which should not be regarded easy. One must not be careless about something like this.

Thus was the path of the deliverance of the king and the vizier.

The prince said: I do not have any interest in the royal affairs and the way of the king. What I want is to accompany you this night itself to the place from where you have obtained this knowledge. Bilohar said: How can you accompany me and how can you remain patient in my companionship when I have nothing that could protect me.

Neither do I have any means of travel nor am I a kingdom of gold. I don't have anything to eat for supper. I don't have clothes to wear and I don't stay permanently in any place; I leave every place in a short time. Neither have I rations to travel from one place to another.

The prince said: That which has strengthened you will also make me strong. Bilohar said: But if you give up the thought of my companionship you shall have very good morals and manners and you would be like that rich man who is related to a beggar.

Yuzasif said: How is it possible? Bilohar said: Take for example that there was a young man among the children of the rich. His father wanted him to marry the rich and beautiful daughter of his paternal uncle. Though the young man did not agree to this he did not tell his father about his unwillingness. Instead of

that he went to some other place.

On the way he met a slave girl who was dressed in rags and begging from people in a pitiable condition from her doorway. This boy was attracted to that slave girl. So he asked her: Who are you? She said that she was a daughter of an old man who lived in that house. The boy announced his arrival to the old man and went into the house.

He said: Will you give the hand of your daughter in marriage to me? The old man said: You will not marry the daughter of a beggar as you belong to a wealthy family. The youth said: I have found this girl attractive and I am running away from a wealthy and noble lady whom I was supposed to marry as I don't like her. So you marry your daughter to me and you will find me a good husband for her.

How can I marry my daughter to you because you will take her away from us and I also think that your people will not like her living with you. The youth said that he was willing to stay with them at their house. The old man said: If what you say is true, you take off this dress and ornaments. Bilohar said: The youth did the same. He took an old dress from their belongings, put it on and sat with them.

The old man wanted know about his antecedents and gauge his wisdom so he spoke to him for sometime and at last concluded that he was in his right state of mind. Thus he said: Since you have taken a liking to us and agreed to stay with us, enter this hole. There were many houses behind that house. They were extremely grand and palatial and they contained all that anyone could ever need.

The old man then gave him the keys to these houses and said: Whatever is there is all yours and you can do whatever you like with it because you are the finest young man. In this way the youth got all that he wanted.

Yuzasif said: Just as the old man tested the intelligence of the youth so that he may trust him, I also want to be like him. Thus you try to increase my intelligence and tell me whatever you know about it.

The Hakim said: If you want to entrust this matter to me I can solve the issue with ordinary conversation. But I have another idea which is the method of the Imams of guidance to reach to the ultimate end of good sense. It is a knowledge that is treasured in the breasts. But I fear that if you oppose this method I may be responsible of starting an innovation. I will take your leave tonight but pay you a visit every night.

So you think upon it and gain lesson from this. Employ your understanding and intelligence and be steadfast. And do not make haste in acknowledging the responsibility that falls on your shoulders so that you may know about it after you have fulfilled it. You must also take care to avoid selfish desires and suspicion. Then you must clarify your doubts after discussing them in detail with me and then tell me what you conclude. They parted at this point that night.

When the Hakim paid the second visit he saluted and blessed him and sat down with him. And in his supplication he said: I pray to that Allah Who is the first and before Whom there was nothing and Who is

such a last one that after Him there will be nothing. He is such everlasting that He has no end.

He is so unique and needless that there is nothing like Him. He is so powerful that He has no partner and such a Creator that there is no maker with Him. He is so competent that He has no opponent and He is so self-sufficient that there is nothing like Him. He is such a ruler that He makes you a just king, whereas no one else can do this. He shows the way to guidance. He calls you to piety and changes blindness into sight.

He endows abstemiousness and indifference to the material world. He likes the people of reason and is hateful to those who head for destruction. He conveys complete benefit to us all and takes us to Paradise and His pleasure that He has promised through His prophets and saints. Thus our inclination to Allah bestows us with effulgence and we are internally fearful of Him due to which we become humble and sincere and all our affairs return to Him.

This supplication had a profound effect on the prince and he became more inclined towards righteousness. His surprise was evident from this when he asked: O Hakim, tell me what your age is? The Hakim said: Twelve. The prince was astonished. He said: A twelve year old is a child whereas I thought you were at least sixty!

The Hakim said: From the aspect of birth I am indeed sixty years old but you asked me about age and age is in fact life and life is gained through religion and acting according to it and being away from the world. This is not more than twelve years for me, because before that I was dead and I don't include the days of death in my age.

The prince said: Why did you eat and drink if you were dead? The Hakim said: I was like the dead in blindness, deafness and dumbness. My life was very weak and I depended on others. As if in this quality I was a partner of them. Thus I was like them in name.

The prince said: If you cannot calculate your age and neither of that happiness which is necessary for you, you should take into consideration death that is going to occur and which you do not dislike.

Hakim said: My being will guide you inspite of knowing that your father's absolute deviation will be the cause of destruction for the people of religion. It is so because I neither consider death as death nor consider life as life and neither do I expect something hateful from death. Thus what inclination that person would have for life who has renounced it all altogether?

And why would he flee from death when he has killed himself with his own hands? O prince, don't you see that the religious person had renounced the people and wealth of the world and also forsaken the things that he possessed but he did not become inclined to them. He took up the burden of worship which cannot separate from him except by death. Thus one who cannot be excited by the pleasures of life why he should need such a life? And why should he run after that comfort which he can get through death?

The prince said: O Hakim, you have said the truth. Would you be happy if death comes to you tomorrow? The Hakim replied: I would be happier if instead of tomorrow it came tonight. Because one who has recognized good and evil and understood the enforcement from Allah, the Mighty and Sublime which is there for forsaking evil and in the fear of its recompense.

And one who performs good deeds in hope of its rewards and one who is certain of the oneness of God and one who testifies for His promise; he is actually fond of death because only he is eager for death who is hopeful of comfort that is to come after that and who is terrified of worldly desires and disobedience of the Almighty. The prince said: This is very strange that one should wish for an early death in order to gain salvation! Anyway, tell me about this community of mine.

Why does it rely on idols? The Hakim said: A man planted an orchard through great efforts. Staying in it gave him comfort. One day he saw a bird in his garden which was feeding at a fruit that grew on a tree. So he shot hurled stone upon it. When he decided to slaughter the bird, Allah, the Mighty and Sublime gave it the power of speech and it said to the garden owner: You want to slaughter me while you cannot satisfy your hunger through me and neither can you gain any strength from this.

Thus can there be found a good angle in what you have decided? "What is that good?" asked the man. The bird replied: If you release me I will tell you three things. If you remember them it will be better for you than having your family and wealth. The man said: I have decided to perform the good deed. Now tell me those things. The bird said: Remember what I say. Do not be sad at what you lose; do not testify for that which does not exist and do not desire that for which you don't have the capability.

When the conversation came to an end the man released the bird. It flew up and sat upon a tree and said to the man: If you only knew what has been wasted by you. Let me tell you that a great matter has been destroyed by you. "What is that?" he asked. The bird said: If you had slaughtered me you would have found in my stomach a pearl as big as a duck's egg. You would have become its owner and financially independent.

When the man learnt what he had lost he became full of regret. He said: Let bygone be bygone. Come down so that we can go home as I want to gain goodness from your companionship and greatness through your favors.

The bird said: You fool, you did not remember what I taught you and did not gain benefit from my statements. Did I not take oath from you that you must not be sad on that which you lose, you must not believe that which does not exist and do not vie for that which you cannot obtain?

Are you not regretful of that which you have lost and asking me to come back to you and that you seek something which you cannot get? You think it is true that there is a duck-egg sized pearl in my stomach, whereas my whole body is smaller than the egg of a duck. I had made you take oath that you will not believe that which does not exist.

In the same way your people made idols with their own hands and thought that it was them who have created you and tried to save you from fear and dangers. And you also were of the view that these idols protect you, therefore you spend your money upon them. And your people thought that it is the same idols who give them sustenance and they sought from them that which they cannot get from them and they thought true that which did not exist. Thus they also considered necessary what the owner of the garden thought was important.

The prince said: You have said the truth, but I don't know anything about the idols. I have never been inclined to them and neither have I gifted them anything. Now you tell me about that being towards which you invite me, and also tell me about that which you have preferred for your self.

Bilohar said: Religion is based on two things. One is the recognition of Allah, the Mighty and Sublime and the other is His satisfaction. The prince said: How is recognition of Allah obtained? The Hakim said: I invite you to know that Allah is one and He has no associate. He is one since eternity and everything other than Him are created by Him. He is the Creator and all else is creation. He is eternal and all else is temporal. He is the Maker and all else is made.

He is the controller and all else is controlled by Him. He is permanent and all else is destructible. He is the one with honor and all else is lowly. He neither sleeps nor becomes oblivious. He neither eats nor drinks. He is neither weak nor can He be dominated. He can neither be made a target of displeasure nor anything makes Him helpless.

The sky, the earth, the atmosphere, the land and the sea cannot disregard His command. He has created everything from nothing. He is from ever and will remain forever. There are no changes in Him and circumstances have no effect upon Him. Neither can time bring changes in Him. He does not change from one condition to another. No place is devoid of Him, and neither is He confined in a place.

No place is nearer than Him and nothing is hidden from Him. He is the knower from Whom nothing is hidden. He is such a powerful one that nothing is beyond His reach. You can recognize Him through His kindness, mercy and justice. He has decreed reward for one who obeys Him and appointed punishment for one who disobeyed Him. Therefore you must act according to the pleasure of Allah and refrain from His dissatisfaction.

The prince said: Is this One Creator satisfied with good deeds? The Hakim said: O prince, His satisfaction lies in that you obey Him and do not disobey His commands. And that you must prefer to give to others what you have been given. You must try to restrain from others what is kept away from you. Thus this is justice and the satisfaction of Allah lies in justice and in following the heritage of the prophets messengers you must not forget their practice.

The prince said: O Hakim, tell me about the piety of the world and its conditions.

The Hakim said: When I found the world an abode of disposal and decline and saw it changing from one

condition to another, and when I saw the people of the world becoming targets of calamities and found them afflicted with different maladies, and sometimes I saw them in sickness after health and in old age after youth, in poverty after affluence, in sorrow after happiness, in disgrace after honor, in deprivation after prosperity, in fear after security, in death after life, and I saw the short lives, I witnessed sudden deaths without any murder or killing; and I saw the arrows that were to hit the target, and I saw bodies that were frail.

Whose joints were shattered, who were not safe; I understood that the world is something that would separate and that it is temporal. And I also recognized that whatever I have seen from the world is much less than what has escaped my view. I have seen the inside and outside of the world and recognized it to its depths. I saw its hidden aspects in a manifest way.

When I saw it from its arrival unto its laws I became fearful of this death of mine and I fled from that which I had seen. In the meantime you will also see people who are extremely proud and rebellious. You will see rulers who are at the pinnacle of prosperity, who are proud of their kingdom. They are intoxicated with the joy of their power and physical health. When a revolution appears in the world, man is reduced to be its prisoner.

One who has seen it himself, he testifies for it. So you should come out of this worldly kingdom, its pride and its prosperity. Replace degradation with honor, sorrow with joy, destruction with bounties, poverty with affluence, deprivation with prosperity, old age with youth, infamy with nobility and life with death.

Thus it is a narrow grave in which there is extreme horror in which man is alone like a traveler who has separated from his companions who have deserted him. And his brothers have also abandoned him and there is no impediment from their side. And his enemies have deceived him. Now he has no defender. After him his wealth and property and everything he owns is open to plunder. As if he has never lived in the world.

He is not even mentioned occasionally and no one even remembers him. As if he never had received any share from the world. Thus, O prince, do not take up such an abode. And neither should you keep you wealth and animals in it. Thus there is regret for it as well as fie.

The prince said: Fie on the world and one who is proud upon it while it is such. Saying this, the prince began to cry and he told the Hakim: Please elaborate what you have said as it is a cure for my heart.

The Hakim said: Life is very short and the days and the nights are changing with speed. Departure from the world is soon. No matter how much you live, death is imminent and the one who departs will have to leave and whatever is there in this world, has to disintegrate and whatever acts he has committed in the world, these acts are fed up with him. And even his most solid constructions are going to be ruined.

People will become unfamiliar with his name and his memory will be forgotten. His genealogy will become unknown and his body will decay. His nobility will change into disgrace. His boons will turn into

banes. His profit will change into loss. Someone else will become the owner of his property and those who remain behind will be disgraced. His women will become permissible for others. His oaths and vows will be broken.

His responsibilities will be ignored. His heirlooms will become old. His property shall be divided. His personal effects shall be bundled up. His enemies shall be pleased, his kingdom shall be destroyed. Inheritors will appear for his crown and they shall occupy his throne. Everything shall be taken away from him and he will be made to leave the house and taken to the grave. They would leave him alone and terrified in the darkness of the grave. Friends will consign him to the dust and then go away. He will never become attached to his loneliness and he will never come out of the condition of alienation.

You should also know that an intelligent man has the right to crucify his selfish desires especially like the policy of the just Imam and the cautious man who teaches manner to the public and who reforms the people. He orders what is right for them and stops them from that which corrupts them. Then he punishes those of them who disobey and honors those who obey him. In the same way it is necessary for a man of intellect that he should teach himself all the good morals and manners and control his selfish desires. And he must bear it even though he may like their necessary benefit. He must protect his self from its harms.

When he does something good and is pleased by it, he must prepare himself for its reward and punishment. In the same way when he is aggrieved, the man of reason has the right to look objectively at the circumstances that befall him. He must obtain their correct matters and restrain his self from making his affairs wrong. He must consider himself and his deeds lowly and he must never be proud, because Allah, the Mighty and Sublime has praised the one who has intellect and condemned the proud.

He has also condemned those who have no sense. Through intellect and by the permission of Allah one can understand every goodness, whereas souls are destroyed through ignorance. Doubtlessly the most authentic matter for the people of sense is that we must derive benefits from that which their senses have understood and which has reached us through their experiences.

And it is not appropriate for the sensible man that inspite of being capable of protecting his deeds, he should consider it unimportant and leave it while he not capable of performing the act which is more important than that. And it is one of the secret weapons of Satan that only one who ponders upon it, sees. And no one is safe from it except one that Allah has protected. The weaponry of Satan consists of two weapons.

One of them is denial of intellect that appears in the heart of the man of intellect and it is that he has neither intellect nor opinion. And neither there is any benefit in his intellect and opinion. It wants to stop him from love and acquisition of knowledge.

It presents to him some worldly past times in good light. If man begins to follow this way, it is the success of Satan. But if he disobeys the Satan, the latter uses another weapon to defeat him. It is that

when a person does something and thinks upon it, Satan puts such things before him that he cannot understand that they will put him into some trouble and that about which he has no knowledge; it will cause such harms to him.

So much so that those things become the cause of the weakening of his intellect and he develops hatred and suspicion and the Satan says: Don't you know that you cannot complete this job and you never had the capability to do it? You have put in so much effort for nothing. Thus the Satan subdues many through this weapon. Thus you must keep away from the acquisition of that knowledge that teaches you this and what you have obtained from it is deception.

You are in such a place where most of the people have been subdued through the various machinations of Satan. Among them are also those who have killed their ears, intellects and hearts and the Satan has abandoned such people as like animals they do not ask what they don't know. There are various religions among the common people. In this some have gone so much ahead in deviation that consider it permissible to kill and loot others.

Their deviation takes them away from the true things so that this religion may continue to dominate them. And that it may embellish this weakness and stop them from the upright faith. Satan and his army is always busy in trying to destroy the people and they never despair from taking them astray, and neither do they flee from the scene. Their number cannot be calculated by anyone except Allah. No one can save himself from the deception of Satan except with the help of Allah and by holding firmly His religion. Thus we pray from Allah for the good sense of obeying Him and for gaining an upper hand over our enemies, because no one has any power except Allah.

The prince said: Describe the Almighty Allah in such a way as I am seeing Him with my own eyes. The Hakim said: One Whose remembrance is so pure, cannot be described through narrations. And through intellects you cannot reach to the depths of His realities. Neither can the tongues reach to His true position.

The people cannot encompass Him through their knowledge except through the knowledge that the Almighty Allah has taught to His prophets (a.s.). Only they can truly describe His qualities. And our power of imagination and understanding cannot perceive His lordship. He is much higher than this. He is the most beneficent and the most merciful.

Thus He endowed whatever He liked from His knowledge and He made apparent to them whichever of His quality He liked. And He made them recognize His lordship and guided them by creating that which was not present and by turning into nothing those things that existed.

The prince said: What is the absolute evidence for His existence? The Hakim said: When you see a created thing and its creator is not there before you, you understand through your intellect that it has a creator. In the same way the heavens and the earth and whatever is there between them is also having a creator. What proof can be stronger than this?

The prince said: O Hakim, tell me whether the maladies, pains and poverty that afflict the people are from the power of Allah or without it. Bilohar said: No, rather they are related to power. The prince said: Then tell me about the bad deeds of the people. Bilohar said: The Almighty Allah is immune from the bad deeds of those people but He has kept a great reward for those who obey Him and there is terrible chastisement for those who disobey Him.

The prince said: Now tell me about the most equitable person, the greatest oppressor, the most hardworking, the greatest fool, most evil and the most righteous people.

Bilohar said: The most equitable are those who have done justice with their souls. The greatest oppressors are those who consider their injustice as justice and in whose view the justice practiced by the just is injustice. And the most hardworking is one who has achieved more for the hereafter and the biggest fool is one whose aim is material world whose mistakes are deeds. And the most righteous is one who ends his life in goodness. And the most unfortunate is one who end his work on the dissatisfaction of Allah.

Then he said: One who considers his religion at par with his selfish desires, he was destroyed. Thus he is the one who has angered Allah and he is an opponent of that which he should have liked. And one who believed that religion is like peace, he is the one who has obeyed Allah and this will save him from divine anger.

Then he said: If there is goodness in doers of bad deeds do not consider it bad. If something bad is found in righteous people do not consider it good.

Then the prince said: Tell me who are worthy of success and who are worth to be called unfortunate?

Bilohar replied: The ones eligible for success are those who obey the commands of Allah and who refrain from what He has prohibited. And unfortunate are those who disobey the Almighty and leave aside His obedience. They have followed their base desires in contravention of his selfish desires.

The prince said: Who are the ones that are best in obeying the Almighty?

The Hakim said: Those who follow His command, are firm on His religion and keep away from bad deeds.

The prince said: What are good and bad deeds? The Hakim replied: Good deeds consist of intention, action, good word, good deed and truthfulness. Bad deeds consist of bad intention, bad action and bad words.

The prince said: What is the sincerity of intention? The Hakim replied: Moderation in intention.

The prince asked: What is foul mouthing? The Hakim said: To lie. He asked: What is bad action? Bilohar said: Disobedience of the Almighty Allah.

The prince said: Tell me how one can be moderate in intention? Bilohar said: By talking frequently about the decline of the world and dissociating from the worldly affairs and by keeping away from the matters in which lies the destruction of the hereafter.

The prince said: What is charity? Bilohar replied: Charity is to give up wealth for the sake of Allah. He asked: What is good deed? Bilohar said: Piety is the name of good deed. He asked: What is miserliness? Bilohar said: Not paying the rights to the rightful owners and taking away their rights without any reason.

The prince said: What is greed? Bilohar said: To be always inclined to the material world and to be attentive to those matters that have nothing but corruption and whose recompense is the chastisement of the hereafter.

The prince said: What is truthfulness? Bilohar said: In the path of religion it is necessary that man should neither deceive himself nor deny this path of religion.

The prince said: What is foolishness? Bilohar said: To be satisfied with the world and to leave those having permanence.

The prince asked: What is lying? Bilohar said: It is that man falsifies himself and he follows his selfish desires and is stubborn on his stance.

The prince asked: Who are the most perfect for taking advice?

Bilohar said: Those who are perfect in intellect and who have more insight about the consequences of matters. Those who have complete knowledge about their enemies and who are earnest in escaping from them.

The prince asked: What is consequence and who are those enemies that a sensible man should recognize and keep himself safe from them? Bilohar said: Consequence is the name of the hereafter and the annihilation of the world.

The prince asked: Who are the enemies? Bilohar said: Greed, anger, jealousy, selfishness, sensuality, show off and haste are enemies.

The prince said: Who are those that you consider stronger and more important that one should save oneself from them? Bilohar said: Greed, in which there is no satisfaction and which is worse than anger and anger in dominance does more injustice and reduces thankfulness and it is the greatest recompense of those who harbor malice.

And greed is that which shows the anonymity of intention in more unfavorable light. And suspicion follows it. And restlessness is worse than entreaty and it is more troubling than disobedience. The fire of malice burns for a long time and it is the opposite of mercy and is very severe. Show off is worse than

deception and it hides further that which is hidden and it is against chance and opportunity. And entreaty increases enmity and cuts off making of excuses.

The prince asked: What ruses of Satan are more effective in deviating the people?

The Hakim said: The Satan makes people blind in following the selfish desires, in good deeds, sins, reward and punishment.

The prince said: Tell me about this power through which Allah has empowered the people to gain dominance over these evil matters and the destructive desires.

The Hakim said: It is knowledge that is accompanied by intelligence and deeds and to restrain oneself from the selfish desires. And to be hopeful of getting rewarded in religion. To mention more about the annihilation of the world and proximity of death. To refrain from that which is the opposite of that which will remain after the end of the world. Thus the estimation of the past matters depends upon their consequences.

And to keep them safe in the mind. Except for the people of intelligence no one else stop himself from bad habits and keeps it on good manners. The persons of wisdom will reach to a correct stage in their lives. It is this, which is called contentment and consider the imminent result must for himself. And one who undergoes the most hardships and who works hard to gain something, he is not aggrieved at what he has lost, who is pleased with the self, and one who leaves the cure which cannot be complete, one who is patient on that which befalls him, one who chooses the right path instead of the way of misguidance, one who convinces himself that he if does good he will be rewarded and if he does bad he will be punished.

Thus one should be aware of all these things, and the rights and the limits of piety and to act on good advice, one who restrains himself from following the selfish desires, one who dominates over the selfish desires and one who looks at every matter based on his opinion. And one should have the recognition to be firm upon it with certainty. Thus if he is faced with a trial he considers it excused without any aversion.

The prince said: Which morals are the best and worth respect? The Hakim said: To behave with people in a nice way.

The prince asked: Which worship is better? The Hakim said: It is the worship of dignity and love. He asked: Tell which of the worship acts are superior? Bilohar said: To love the good people.

The prince inquired: Which remembrance is superior? The Hakim said: It is the mention that encourages one to do good and restrains him from evil.

The prince asked: Which enemy is the most disliked one? The Hakim said: There is no enemy greater than sins.

The prince asked: Tell me which excellence is the best? Bilohar said: To be content with what one has in life.

The prince said: Which respect is best? The Hakim said: The respect of religion.

He asked: What is that, which does the most injustice? He replied: Rebellious king and hard-heartedness.

The prince asked: What is that which is most remote? The Hakim said: The eye of that greedy one which is not satisfied with the world.

The prince said: What are the affairs which are bad from the aspect of consequences? The Hakim said: To seek the pleasure of the people in the displeasure of the Almighty Allah.

The prince asked: What is that which changes sooner? Bilohar said: The hearts of the kings who work for the material world.

The prince said: Tell me which sins are worse? The Hakim said: To accept the covenant of Allah and then to be unfaithful to it.

The prince said: What is that which is going to end soon? The Hakim said: The love of a transgressor ends soon.

The prince asked: What is the most dishonest thing? Bilohar said: The tongue of a liar is the most dishonest.

The prince said: What is it that remains more concealed? Bilohar said: The evil of the fraudsters.

The prince asked: What is it that is more resembling to the circumstances of the world? The Hakim said: The false dreams of a person who sleeps.

The prince asked: Who is the most superior from the aspect of satisfaction? Bilohar said: Those who expect good from Allah, who are more pious, who are not careless of the remembrance of Allah, who remember death and have certainty in the end of the tenure of life.

The prince asked: What is the most pleasing thing of the world? Bilohar said: A well-mannered son, a supportive wife who is an associate for the matters concerned with the hereafter.

The prince said: Which is the disease that is stuck to the world? Bilohar said: One who has a bad mannered son and a irritating wife and he could not get rid of them.

The prince said: Which prosperity is the best? Bilohar said: When man is content with what he has and to have regard for the people.

Then the prince said to the Hakim: You may rest your mind for a while as I am going to ask you about the most important things. While the Almighty Allah has bestowed me the insight about those things regarding which I was ignorant. And He gave me the sustenance of religion about which I was in despair. The Hakim said: Ask me about whatever is exposed to you.

The prince said: In your view the child who is given a kingdom in childhood and whose religion is idol worship and who is gaining benefits from the pleasures of the world and is being reared and shaped on it, so much so that he becomes an adult and also enters old age and due to ignorance he does not have his condition changed by Allah and who entrusts his soul to the selfish desires due to which he fails to achieve his objective.

It is so because desires have become embellishments for him and they affect him and he has daring for them and he finds guidance in them alone and he remains involved in the love and deception of these desires. For his people and persons of opinion he is a cause of pride and love and his insight has deserted him. So much so that he is also ignorant and careless about the affairs of his hereafter and he considered it light and corruption developed in his self. He became evil intentioned and narrow-minded.

His enmity to the religious people and those who were hiding from him, assumed severity. Can he hope to leave the fears in which his life will be prolonged? Can his coming out be proper to the mercy that is light and to the proof that is manifest? And the greatest part of religion will be that he should ask for the forgiveness of his past sins and hope for good rewards in this religion. Can he achieve this?

The Hakim said: You have understood this; now what do you want in this matter?

The prince said: I am not the denier of the excellence that is endowed to you through intelligence and understanding and neither do they deny the knowledge which is given to you specially.

The Hakim said: It is the king who has these qualities and the person whose generosity has invited you; from whom you have inquired and one who has arranged this. Allah had promised chastisement but He dealt with affection as this man wished.

Along with this you intended to fulfill the rights of the Almighty that He made incumbent upon you. And I think that you want to reach to the depths of the excuse in kindness. So that you may remove yourself from a great peril and save yourself from this perennial trouble, because it is not possible to escape the chastisement of Allah except with His help.

The prince said: Do not deprive me from whatever you wish. Tell me about your opinion regarding the fear that a king has about his death due to which he is in regret and nothing can make up for it. You give me assurance about it and remove my sorrow because I have no other solution to it.

The Hakim said: It is my opinion that we cannot make the creatures despair of the mercy of their Creator, Allah, the Mighty and Sublime till the soul remains in his body even though he may be a

profligate and a rebel because we have described the Almighty to be kind, affectionate and merciful and have proved faith through it and in that which you are commanded to seek forgiveness, in that if Allah wills, there is favor of your choice according to your need.

And people think that once upon a time there was a king who was well known for his knowledge. He was a kind protector who was always trying to bring about welfare among his subjects. He lived in this way for a long time and after that he died. So his people mourned for his death. His wife was pregnant; so the astrologers and soothsayers said that she would give birth to a son who will rule the kingdom with competence. One who lives in his time will witness this.

Thus on the basis of the predictions it was decided to make him the king. When the child was born the people celebrated the whole of the first year by music and wine and food. After that the wise men of the community said that this child is the gift of God but you have thanked someone else. If he is the gift of someone other than God you have fulfilled the rights of the one who has bestowed him to you.

But have you tried to fulfill the thanks of the one who gave you sustenance? So the people told these people that this newborn child is given to us by Allah and no one other than Him has done a favor to us. The scholars said: If only Allah has bestowed you this child, you have pleased someone other than Allah who has not bestowed the child and you have displeased Allah Who has bestowed him to you.

The people said to the scholars: O wise men, please give us good counsel; and O scholars, inform us so that we may follow what you say and accept your advice and act according to your instructions. The scholars said: In our opinion music, wine and vain pastimes are things liked by Satan , so you give up all this and instead of that pay thanks to Allah, the Mighty and Sublime so that God may forgive you for what you have committed. The people said: We cannot carry the burden of whatever you have said.

The scholars said: O ignorant people, how you have become obedient to one who has no right upon you and you are disobeying one whose right is incumbent on you? How you have become strong in an appropriate thing and weakened in that which is proper? The people said: O leaders of wise men, our sensualities have increased and we have become much involved in worldly pleasures so whatever we found great in resemblance they strengthened us and our intentions became weak.

Thus we are unable to lift a heavy burden. So let us return to those things and do not compel us to lift the heavy burden. The wise men said: You fools, are you not the sons of ignorance and brothers of misguidance when you find hardship easy and righteousness difficult? So the people said: O leaders of wise and chiefs of scholars, we seek refuge with the forgiveness of Allah from this hardship. And we beseech you not to associate us with disgrace. So do not condemn us and neither should you call our weakness as disgrace nor blame us for ignorance.

Because if we obey Allah with the same forgiveness and weakness of good deeds; and we worship like the one who has adjudged our desires unlawful we shall fulfill our need and Allah will achieve make us our purpose. And He would be merciful upon us like He has created us. Thus when they said this, their

scholars made them confess and they accepted their statements and they prayed, fasted, gave charity and worshipped for a whole year.

When they had done that the soothsayers said: The one who favored the people by the birth of this child, he has informed that he would be a sinful ruler and might also be righteous or rebellious or humble. Sometimes he would commit evil and sometimes perform good deeds. The astrologers also gave the same prediction. So the soothsayers and astrologer were asked how they have concluded this.

The soothsayers said: We have said this because first the birth of this child was celebrated with music and unlawful acts and later they did the opposite of all this. The astrologers said: We have said this because of the balance of the Venus and Jupiter because this child was born with nobility whose greatness cannot be sufficiently praised. And he was born in such joy that it cannot be described fully.

And he was born with such oppression that no one has the strength to bear it. Thus he will enact repressive and unjust laws, usurp rights and his most favorite people will be those who support him and the one he will hate most will be ones that oppose him. He shall remain oblivious due to youth, health, power and success. And he will remain in the same joy. He will see on that which he likes and hear only that which he desires.

Thus when he was thirty-two years old he told his women, children, friends, servants and riders to put on the best clothes and decorate themselves. He ordered them to organize a gathering at the place of the rising of the sun and instructed them to make the floor of gold inlaid with jewels. Its length should be 120 yards and breadth 60 yards.

Its roof and walls should be decorated with gold and decorated with precious items. And he ordered all types of costly items to be piled on both the sides of the road. Then he ordered all his armies, associates, scribes and nobles of the town to be present there. They all arrived decked in their best uniforms and decorations.

They stood there depending upon their ranks. The king had thought that it would be a pleasing spectacle and he would be glad to see it. Then he walked to the stage and sat down on the royal throne and all of them prostrated to him. He told his attendant: I have seen a good spectacle of my subjects, now I want to see my face. So they brought a mirror and he looked at his face. He was looking at his face from all sides when he saw some grey hair in his beard. This terrified him so much that his mood changed completely and all his happiness turned into sorrow.

Then he said to himself that this time in his prime youth was informing him about his death and it is telling me that my kingdom and power is to go away and that I shall be removed from the throne and disgraced. Then he said: This time is the prelude of death and the messenger of calamity which cannot be stopped by any bodyguard.

It is informing me about death and predicting the decline of my kingdom. How much haste it is making in

changing my elegance, in killing my joy and in reducing my strength. That which could not be stopped by the forts and from which the armies could not save me. This time is going to take away youth and strength. It will destroy respect and wealth. It will create discord among the people. It will distribute inheritance among the friends and enemies. It will destroy the crop of life, spoil the taste of pleasures, make buildings into ruins, disintegrate the society, make the lofty one base and humiliate the powerful. It has laid burdens upon me and it has taken me in its clutches.

Then he descended from his seat in fear and gathered his armies, summoned his reliable men and said: O leader of the people, since the time I became a king and took over affairs of governance, what have I done for you? They said: O nice king, your trouble is great for us and our lives are spent in your obedience. So you may tell us about this matter. The king said: A dangerous enemy came in the night.

You did not stop him from me while you are my reliable men. They said: Your majesty, where is that enemy? Is he visible or invisible? The king said: It is seen through its effect and eyes cannot see it. The important people said: Your majesty, you can see our congregation and we have blessings and tranquility and there are persons of intellect and understanding among us. You show us that enemy and we shall stop him from you.

The king said: I was wrongly proud upon you and I reposed reliance in a wrong place when I made you as a shield for myself. I gave you wealth and money and increased your status and made you my special associates so that you may defend me against the enemies. After that I took your help in building cities and in procuring weapons. I solved your problems and kept you free so that you may perform in the best way.

So that you should not have any worry that may affect your functioning. I never feared any danger to befall my mansion because you lived in it and you were obedient. When I walked you surrounded me and when I came you were with me. Thus if this happened as a result of your weakness I would not have feared to rely on you in my affairs.

If it is due to your carelessness you don't deserve advice and are neither eligible for my affection and kindness. They said: Your majesty, as long as we live we shall not let any danger against which our armies can defend to reach you. But we don't know about that which we cannot see and our power is ineffective against it.

The king said: Did you not take oath that you will protect me from my enemies? They said: Yes. The king said: Will you defend me from the enemy which can harm me or the enemy that does not cause harm? They replied: We shall defend you from the enemy who cause harm to you. The king said: From all harmful people or from someone in particular? They said: From all harmful ones.

The king said: The messenger of trials has reached to me who is informing me about my kingdom that he will destroy all I have built and that he will disperse all that I have gathered; spoil all that I have improved; spend all that I have saved; change whatever I have done; to weaken whatever I have

strengthened; and in it lies the satisfaction of the enemy who are pleased in my trouble.

And he also wants to gladden my enemies; he has also said that he would soon defeat my armies; he would change my company into isolation; destroy my dignity and orphan my children. He would also disperse my congregation. My brothers, family members and relatives will have to undergo hardships because of me. He will cut me into pieces. He will settle my enemies in my localities.

The people said: Your majesty, we can defend you from people, beasts, poisonous insects and crawling creatures, but we cannot save you from this trial. So the king asked: Is there anyway I can be saved from this? They replied: No. The king said: But you can at least save me from another enemy? They asked: What is that? The king said: They are diseases and sorrow. The people said: Your majesty, these are having subtle power and they attack the body and soul; they reach you without being identified.

They cannot be concealed from you even though they may be hidden. The king said: There is one more problem. They asked: What is that? He said: What is it that has taken precedence on fate? They said: Your majesty, who is it that can dominate fate and not be defeated by it? Who is it that has opposed it and was not defeated by it? The king said: What is your solution regarding it?

They said: We cannot defend you from fate. We are remote from good sense and reform. So what do you want? The king said: I want companions who may take a permanent covenant and remain loyal to me. And that their brotherly love for me should endure forever. And that death should not keep them veiled from me; trials and tribulations must be able to stop them from my company.

They should not be able to live without me and they should not leave me alone even if they were to die for it. If I am alive they should not entrust me to anyone else. They should protect me from death. Which you cannot do. They said: Who are those that you have described? The king said: It is the same who have spoilt your well being.

They said: Your majesty, can you not do a favor on them and on us? Because your morals are perfect and you are very kind. The king said: Now your neighborhood is fatal poison for me; there is deafness and blindness in your obedience and dumbness in your approval. They said: Your majesty, how is it possible?

The king said: Your neighborhood is because of affluence and wealth; your approval is because of gathering and your obedience is due to anticipation of carelessness. You restrained me from resurrection and showed me the world in favorable light. If you had given me good counsel and had told me about death and reminded me about it; had behaved in sincere manner you would have mentioned this trial and had collected for me that which will endure, and had not made efforts to gather wealth for me that is going to perish. Thus the benefit that you have mentioned is in fact, harm. And this love is enmity. I have returned them to you. I have no need of any of them.

The people said: O wise and well mannered king, we have understood what you want to say and accepted it in earnest. We cannot present any argument against you as the proof is exhausted for us. Thus if we remain silent from our conviction it will result in the destruction of the country, in the death of our world and in the rejoicing of our enemy.

We are facing an important issue which has changed us from your opinion. The king said: Tell me everything without any fear and hesitation, because till now I was subdued by obstinacy and arrogance but today I have conquered them. So far I was under their influence but now I have got over them. I was your ruler till today and I had enslaved you, but now I am free and you are the freed people of my country.

They said: Your majesty, why were you a slave inspite of being our ruler? The king said: I was slave of my desires, a bondmen of my ignorance and helpless of my selfish desires. I have myself freed myself from these attachments and thrown them behind. They said: Your majesty, What have you decided? The king said: I have decided to become a hermit for the sake of the hereafter. I have given up arrogance and removed the burden from my back.

I have prepared myself for death and to defend myself from calamities because its emissary has informed me that it has been ordered to remain with me till my death. They said: Your majesty, who is that emissary that came to you and that we did not see; which is the prelude of death that we did not recognize? The king said in reply: Its messenger is this whiteness that is shining in blackness and which is screaming decline in everything. The people believed him and became certain that the prelude of death is the calamity of the white path.

They said: Your majesty, will you abdicate? And make your subjects weep? Will you commit the sin of leaving your people without a successor? Don't you know that the greatest reward lies in welfare of the people? And the best reform is the reform of community? Are you not fearful about this sin? You must be more concerned about public welfare than the well being of the noble class. Don't you know that the best worship act is doing good to others?

And the most difficult deed is ruling a kingdom and administering the nation. So, your majesty, as far as possible you must pay attention to the well being of the people, because as much you work in this regard as much you would be rewarded. Your majesty, is it not true that if you leave the throne and keep away from the affairs of the people they will fall into perdition? Thus in this regard you will be more sinful than you hope for the reward of your special class.

Your majesty, don't you know that scholars say that one who has destroyed his soul he has become a cause of the corruption of his self. One has maintained it in order, has maintained the well being of his body. And what evil can be greater than deserting ones subjects? Your majesty, will you leave it and take off the black dress which is the medium of the world and the hereafter? The king said: I have understood what you said.

If I want to rule you for doing justice and in anticipation of divine rewards I cannot reach this stage alone regarding you. Are you all not obsessed with the world and worldly desires and pleasures? And neither I am certain that I will remain in this condition that I want to come out of. Thus if I do that, I will die in the condition of ignorance which will take me down from the throne and make me kiss the ground and it will make me wear the dress of mud instead of the clothes of silk, gold and brocade and precious jewels.

And after a spacious place make me enter; after this honor and glory subject me to disgrace. I will then become alone and none of you will accompany me in this loneliness. You will take out from the inhabited area and consign me to a deserted place and leave my flesh to the beasts, birds and worms. And I will be eaten up by the ants and more than that by the lions. My body will be filled with worms and become like a decayed corpse. Degradation will be my companion and honor will become a stranger.

You will try to bury me as soon as possible as an expression of your affection and leave me alone among my past deeds and sins. I will get regret by way of inheritance and as the final consequence. And you people have promised me that you will defend me from the harmful enemy. Right now you neither have the capability of preventing him nor any solution to this problem. O people, I am deceiving myself or you are deceiving? And you have laid out a deceptive trap.

So the people told their popular ruler: We are not what we were before and you are also not what you were previously. Whatever has changed you has also transformed us so do not reject our repentance and give us a beneficial advice. The king said: I will do as you say for the time being but when you go against your word I will leave you.

After that he continued to rule the kingdom and all his army emulated his behavior. They remained engrossed in worship. Their country became green and fresh; their enemies were defeated and their dominion expanded. This continued for thirty years till the death of the king who lived for a total of sixty-four years.

Yuzasif said: I am very happy to hear this story. Relate some more things like this so that it may increase my joy and thankfulness to the Lord.

The Hakim said: It is known among the people that there was a righteous king who had soldiers in his army who feared the Almighty and worshipped Him. The kingdom of his father used to be attacked and there was discord among them but the prince used to reduce the number of enemies from his cities and encourage them to become religious, god-fearing and seekers of divine help and refuge. When he came to the throne he defeated his enemies, united his people and brought reforms in the cities and set up administration of the country.

When he was bestowed with so many blessings he became rebellious and arrogant. He went so astray that he even abandoned the worship of the Almighty and became thankless of His favors. He went to the extent of eliminating those who worshipped God. His kingdom lasted for quite a long time and people forgot the path of rightfulness that they had previously followed in his initial stage.

They remained drunk and only followed his dictates. They hastened towards deviation and remained on the crooked way. Their children grew up in this atmosphere. None of them worshipped God or even uttered His name. Other than the king, they had no other god. Although the prince, during the lifetime of his father, had vowed that if he became a king he will do those things with regard to divine obedience that none of his predecessors have ever done and neither were they capable of it.

But when he became the king, he forgot his previous opinion and intention and was always seen in intoxicated condition from which he never came out again. Among those who were thankful to the king for his favors there was a righteous man who commanded more respect among his associates. He was saddened by the deviation of the king and the fact that he had broken the covenant he had made to God. Whenever he tried to advise the king the latter used to warn him not exceed the limits of his position even though there was no other person in the kingdom having such status. All the people of the kingdom knew him by name.

One day he came to the king with a skull wrapped up in a piece of cloth and sat down on the right hand side of the ruler. Then he removed the skull from the cloth and placed it before the king. Then he trampled it with his feet and continued to rub it on the floor till the seating area of the king was full of the particles of this skull.

The king was enraged at this and the king and his associates stared at him. With their swords drawn the guards were just waiting for the command of his execution. The king was trying to control his anger. The kings of that time used to contain their anger despite their power and in spite of their disobedience for the sake of the well being of their subjects and for the welfare of their nations. So that this helps them for their benefit and in the collection of land tax.

So the king controlled his anger and finally the man wrapped up the skull and arose from there. He repeated this procedure on the second and the third day also, but when he saw that the king never asked him about the skull, once day he brought a weigh scale and some mud along with this skull. In one pan of the balance he placed a silver coin and in the other he kept mud equal to its weight.

Then he placed that mud in the eye socket of that skull and some of it in the skull's mouth. When the king saw him doing this he could not remain patient any more and wanted to know why he was doing this. He said: I know you are indulging in such antics only because of the post I have given you and you want to guide me. Although you have a very lofty position in my view you have done this to invite my attention.

The man bowed to the king, kissed his feet and said: Your majesty, you have become attentive with your intellect because the example of a statement is like that of an arrow which if thrown on soft ground gets embedded in it. But if it is shot at a hard surface it remains ineffective. And the example of a word is like that of rain; when it falls on fertile ground it produces vegetation; but when it drops on barren earth, nothing grows from it. And indeed the desires of the people are different and intellect and desires both

affect the heart.

And if the desires dominate intellect a man acts in anger and foolishness and if the desire is defeated no deviation is seen in what he does. I had liking for knowledge since my childhood and I considered it effective in all my affairs. Thus I did not forsake knowledge and I reached a lofty stage due to it.

Meanwhile once I was roaming through the graves I took out this skull from the graves of kings. It was detached from its body. In view of the awe of kings I found this very regretful. So I picked it up and brought it home. I dressed it in brocade, washed it with fragrance and rose water and placed it on the floor.

I said to myself: If it is from the skulls of kings it deserves respect from my side and that I must keep it decorated. However if it be a skull of a poor man such respect will not be a cruelty upon it. So I continued the same behavior with it for a number of days, but I was not able to learn anything about its life. When I realized this I called my servant who was very helpful to me. Then I insulted this skull. But its condition remained same. When I saw this I went to the men of wisdom and asked them about it.

They also could not enlighten me on the subject. I also knew that the king was very wise and knowledgeable so I came to you fearing all the time, but it was not possible for me to ask you anything till you don't tell me about it yourself. And I also wanted you tell me, your majesty, whether it is a skull of a king or a poor man? Because when I thought about it and looked into its eyes I could not see anything except emptiness. If I could find out what is behind the skies I would have come to know what lies above it. So I continued to contemplate what it is that holds the eyes in the sockets.

At last I took mud equal in weight to a silver coin as the weight of an eyeball is also almost that much, and placed that mud in the socket. But I found that there was nothing which could hold the mud. If you say that it is a skull of poor man, what will you say when I tell you that I found it in graves of kings? I request you to gather the skulls of kings and poor people together. Thus if it is from the skulls of you kings, who have excellence, then what I have said is true and if you can tell me that it is not from the skull of kings I tell you that it belongs to the king who was the beauty of his kingdom and its honor like you are today.

Thus, may Allah protect you from this same condition of getting trampled and gets mixed up in the soil. On which worms feed; and that you feel shortage after excess, and experience degradation after honor and placed in a ditch which is around four yards in length. And that there is no inheritor of your kingdom. That your remembrance is finished and your affairs spoil and those whom you have accorded greatness be degraded and those that you considered debased should be exalted.

And that your enemies may rejoice and your helpers be destroyed. That mud may come in between you. Thus if we call you, you will not answer and if we accord you honor you will not accept it. And if we insult you, you will not be infuriated. Thus your children will be orphaned and your wives will be widowed and it is possible that your relatives may get your widows remarried.

When the king heard this he became aggrieved and he began to weep. He began to utter the word of 'woe'. When the man saw this he understood that his discourse had the desired effect and that it has pained the king.

Thus his audacity increased and he repeated what he had said. He said: May Allah give you a good reward and may He keep you safe from the evil of great people. The king said: I swear by my life I have understood what you said and I have realized the truth.

When the people heard this news, the excellent persons and others like them prayed for him and the king remained in this manner till his last moments.

The prince said: Tell some more stories like this.

The Hakim said: There was a king in the days gone by who wanted to have a male issue. For this end he did not leave any cure. After a long time passed one of his wives became pregnant and she gave birth to a male child. When he grew up into a young man one day he said: Your return (to the hereafter) restrains you from evils.

And the next thing he said: You will become old. And the third thing he said was: After that you will die. Then his condition became like children. After his birth the king had summoned the scholars and astrologers and asked them about the fortune of his son. When they tried to conclude his destiny they were stumped and could not reach any conclusion.

When the king saw that they could not say anything he entrusted the child to the nurses for nursing him. But one astrologer said that very soon he will become an Imam and such helpers will be appointed on him who would never leave him. When this child reached adulthood he left his nurses and guards secretly and came out in the open.

He reached a bazaar from where a bier was being carried. He asked the people: What is it? They replied: A man is dead. He inquired: What has made him dead? People said: Old age and the passage of time destroyed him. Thus his death came near and he died.

He asked: Was he healthy, alive and active? Did he eat and drink?

"Yes," said the people.

Then he moved ahead and saw a very old man. He was highly astounded on seeing him. So he asked a youth: What is it? People explained that he was an old man whose youth had departed and old age has come upon him. The youth asked: Did he grow up from childhood to youth?

"Yes," said the people.

When he moved ahead he saw a man suffering from disease lying on his back. He stood there and

stared at him in amazement. Then he asked the people: What is it? They said: It is a sick man. He asked: Was he previously healthy and then he fell sick? “Yes,” said the people.

The young man said: By Allah, if what you say is right, people are insane.

At that moment a slave found him in the bazaar and he took him back to his house. When he entered the house he looked at a wooden beam of the roof and asked: What type of a thing is it? He was told: It was previously a tree. After that it became a wooden piece. When this house was constructed it was placed there.

Meanwhile the king sent to him some persons to find what the young prince is talking about. They reported back: The things he says make us conclude that it is kind of suspicion. When the king heard this he summoned the scholars and asked them about it but none of them could enlighten him about this except the one who had initially predicted but the king had refused to believe him.

Then some scholars said: If you get him married all this will come to an end. He will accept that condition and become intelligent and develop insight. So the king sent his men in the country to search for a suitable girl for his son. They found a very beautiful girl and the king married his son to her. During the marriage feast performers began to display dances and musicians played music.

When the prince heard these combined sounds he asked: What is it? He was told: These are performers, dancers and musicians who have come to entertain on the occasion of your wedding. The prince fell silent. When the guests departed after the program the king called his daughter-in-law and said: I have no other son. When you go to him, behave with him kindly and gain his proximity.

You must express your love for him. When the bride came to him and tried to come near him the boy said: Give me sometime because the night is long. May Allah bless me about you. Be patient so that we may eat something.

Thus dinner arrived and they began to eat. After they finished he took wine from this woman and she also drank wine and went to sleep.

The young man escaped the surveillance of the guards and left the house. But when he reached the city he hesitated and he found among the citizens a young man of his own built. He went to him and changed his clothes with him. In this way his appearance changed. Then the two of them came out of the town and continued to walk the whole night but in the morning they hid themselves for the fear of being caught.

On the other hand, in the morning when the people asked his drowsy wife about him she said that he was with her a moment ago.

The two young men used to travel at night and hide somewhere during the day, till they came out of the territory of his father and entered the kingdom of another king. The king of this area had a daughter

about whom it was decided that she will marry the boy she likes. Hence a tower was constructed for her on the main road in which she sat to watch the passers by. One day her eyes fell on a young man roaming in the market and his companion was wearing old clothes.

The princess sent a message to the king that she has selected a boy and that if he wished he could marry her to this youth. This information reached the queen and she was overjoyed. At once she came to her daughter to look at her choice. She pointed out the young man to her mother. The queen was pleased. She came down from the tower, came to the king and said: Your daughter has fallen in love with a young man. So the king also expressed his desire to see the boy.

He was also shown the young man. The king descended from the tower and ordered the youth to change his clothes and asked him who he was and where he lived. The boy said: Why are you asking me all this? I am a poor man. The king said: You are a foreigner. Your appearance is not like that of the people of this country. The young man said: I am not a foreigner. The king asked him to prove it. The boy refused to offer the proof.

So the king appointed some spies on him to find where he lived without his knowledge. Then he returned home and said: I think he is a prince and he is not interested in marriage.

Finally the king sent a messenger to summon him. The young man said: I have no worth, yet the king is calling me and I have no need from him; and he also doesn't know who I am. Yet he came to the king unwillingly and the ruler made him sit on a chair. He called his wife and daughter who sat behind a curtain.

The king said: I have called you for a nice thing. I have a daughter who has taken a liking for you and I want to give her hand in marriage to you. If you are poor I shall make you rich and increase your status. The boy said: I don't need what you are offering me, but if you like I can narrate an example for you. "Tell me," said the king.

The youth said: There is story among the people about a prince who was invited by his friends for dinner. So he went and they all ate well and went to sleep in a satiated condition. The prince awoke in the middle of the night and became restless for his family. So he set out for home at once. None of his friends were awake.

As he walked in a sleepy condition, on the way he came across a grave. Thinking that it was an entrance to his house he entered the grave. In his intoxication when he smelt the stink of the corpse he thought it was fragrance. When he saw the bones he thought it was a bed that was laid for him. When he saw the fresh corpse and felt its bad smell he thought that it was his wife. So he placed his arms around the body and kissed it and continued to play with it all night.

When he regained his senses and saw that he was lying on a corpse and in order to hide the stink and dirt of the corpse that had contaminated his clothes, he headed for the city gates which stood open. So

he reached to his clansmen thinking himself lucky that he met no one in this condition. He took off his clothes, performed the ritual bath, put on fresh clothes and applied perfume.

O king, may Allah give you a long age, tell me if in your opinion can that man return to the condition he was in? "No," replied the king. He said: I am that same person. The king turned to his wife a daughter and said: I told that he is not interested in marriage. The queen said: You have not fully praised and described my daughter.

So I want to talk to him directly. So the king said to the young man: My wife wants to come out and speak to you although before this she has never talked to a stranger. The boy said: She may come. She came out and said to the boy: Come to the matter that Allah has given you as a blessing and sustenance, then I will marry my daughter to you. If you see what beauty Allah has given her you shall be amazed. The boy looked at the king and said: Shall I not tell you a story? "Do," replied the king.

The boy said: Some thieves decided to enter the royal treasury and steal from there. So they dug a hole in the wall and went in. They saw such treasures as they had never seen anything like it. Their eyes fell on a pot of gold which sealed with a seal of gold. They said: There is nothing better than this pot of gold and whatever is inside the pot is better than all we have seen. So they took the pot and walked away till they entered a forest. They did not trust each other so they opened the pot at once. The pot was full of snakes that rose up and stung them all, killing them.

O king, may Allah give you a long age, have you ever heard of such an incident when a man put his hand in a pot containing snakes? "No," said the king. The boy said: I am such a man. The princess sought the permission of her father to come out and speak to the youth directly. She said: If he sees my beauty that Allah has given me he will not refuse to marry me.

The king said to the boy: My daughter wants to come out and speak to you although she has never come out for anyone else. The boy said: Let her come out if she likes. So she came out to him. She was extremely beautiful and had a shapely body. After greeting the young man she said: Have you seen such a pretty girl? I have fallen in love with you. The young man turned to the king and asked: Shall I relate to you a famous story? "Do it," replied the king.

The man said: A king had two sons, one of whom left for another country where he was arrested and imprisoned in a house. The ruler of that place issued a command that whosoever passed from there, should stone him. A long time passed in this manner. His brother sought the permission of his father to go and find him and try to rescue him.

The king said: Prepare for the journey and take whatever rations and weapons you may need. So he set out fully equipped. He was also accompanied with singing girls and those females who cried and wailed on payment. When he reached the capital of that king, the king was informed of his arrival. The king ordered the people to go out for his welcome and he ordered the young man to camp outside the town. So the prince (disguised as a trader) camped at that place and after settling down told his men to

unpack their goods and instructed them to be generous while selling the wares to those people.

So they followed these directions and when the prince saw that the people were busy in shopping he entered the town stealthily. He knew about the prison where his brother was held. He entered the prison and cast a pebble to him so that he may know that his brother was alive. When this prisoner was hit by the pebble he screamed and said: You have killed me. The royal guards became alert. They came and asked him what was wrong.

They said: Why did you scream, while we never heard you say a word? Even though we were hard on you and whoever passed from here stoned you? Now when this man threw a pebble on you, you screamed? The prisoner said: People had no information about me but this man hit me even though he knows who I am.

The brother returned to his entourage and said: Come to me tomorrow and I will show such clothes, weapons and goods as you have never seen before. So the people returned home. When they came back the next day he ordered his men to unpack and display the clothes. He ordered his performers to begin the show and the people became engrossed in them. Meanwhile he came to the prison, cut off the chains from his brother and said: I will get you treated. Then he somehow brought him out of the town and applied ointment to his wounds. When his pain decreased he was told about directions of the way: Go now, you will see a boat in the sea. So he headed towards that direction hiding and in secret.

Suddenly he fell in a deep ditch in which there was a python. Above the ditch was a huge tree. When his eyes fell on the tree he saw twelve horrible faces upon it. On its lower portion were twelve swords that hung out of the scabbards. He continued to struggle to save himself. A branch of the tree came into his hold, hanging from which he saved himself. Then he walked on till he reached the sea. There he saw a boat at the shore. He boarded it and went to his country and then to his family.

O king, may Allah give you a long life, have you seen a person suffer such calamities and then again return to them? "No," replied the king. The young man said: I am that man. At last the king, the queen and the princess, all despaired but the man who accompanied the prince spoke to the prince in ear: Give them proposal to marry the princess to me. So the prince told the king: This is my companion, he would like to marry the princess. The king said: I will not. The prince said: Can I relate to you another famous story?

The king said: Yes, why not? The prince said: A man was traveling with some people in a boat. They traveled for some days, then their boat was wrecked near an island and all were drowned except that man whom the waves threw upon that island. This island was inhabited by wild ghouls and these ghosts used to watch the sea.

That man became enamored with a female ghost and married her. In the morning the witch killed the man and distributed the parts of his body among her companions. The same thing occurred for another man whom they took for the daughter of the king of ghosts. This man spent the night with the witch but

since this man was aware of what had happened to the man before him, he could not sleep the whole night. Finally it was morning and the witch went to sleep. So the man came out quietly and reached the sea shore. Suddenly he decried a boat and he began to shout to the boatmen to save him.

They took him aboard and he was able to reach home. In the morning when the ghosts came to the witch who had spent the night with the man they asked her: Where is that man who spent the night with you? She said: He ran away from me. They refused to believe her and said: You have eaten him all by yourself and preferred yourself over us. If you don't bring him to us we would kill you. So she traveled over the sea and reached the home of this man. She entered the house and sat besides the man.

She asked him: What all happened to you during your journey? The man replied: I was caught in a trouble from which Allah saved me. And he related the whole story to her. The witch asked: Have you got free of the trouble? "Yes," replied the man. She said: I am that same witch and I have come to take you back. The man said: I put you under oath not to harm me and I will tell you the whereabouts of a man with whom your purpose will be solved. The witch said: I feel sorry for you. Then the two of them went to the king.

She said to the king: Your majesty, may God bless you. Please listen to our problem. I had married this man and I liked him very much, but he dislikes me and doesn't like my company. Please tell what we should do. When the king saw her beauty he became infatuated by her. He took the man aside and said: I want you to leave her so that I can marry her.

The man said: May Allah make better what the king intends to do. So the king married the witch, they spent the night together and at dawn she killed the king, cut him into pieces and picking up the pieces headed for her companions.

O king, have you seen anyone, who being aware of all circumstances may again go to that island? "No," said the king. The companion who wanted to marry the princess said to the prince: I don't want to leave you and I don't want to marry her. So they took leave of the king and continued to worship and tour the lands. The Almighty Allah showed many people the right path through them.

The prince earned a lot of respect and he became famous everywhere. Then he remembered his father and he said to himself: If I am sent towards him, it is my duty that to save him from whichever condition he is. So he sent a messenger to his father who told the king: Your son has sent you his greetings. Then he described all that has passed on him. The king and his family members came to the prince and he saved them from the circumstances they were involved in.

After that Bilohar returned to his lodging and continued to visit Yuzasif for many days till he became sure that he has opened a door of knowledge for him and has guided him to the path of rightfulness. After that Bilohar departed from those areas and traveled to other countries. As a result of which Yuzasif was sad for some days, but finally he went to the pious and religious people in order to convey to them the voice of truth and call them towards it.

The Almighty Allah sent an angel to him who came to him when he was alone and stood before him. The angel said: May God bless you. You are a human being among the ignorant beasts and oppressors. I bring you greetings from God and the deity of the creatures has sent me to you so that I may give you glad tidings and remind you of the affairs of the world and the hereafter that are hidden from you.

So you must accept my glad tidings and advice and you must not disregard my statements. You must get rid of the world and free yourself from worldly desires. You must become disinclined to this hateful country and rulership. You must leave this temporal rulership whose end result will be regret and seek the kingdom which will never decline and try for the joy that never ends, a comfort that will never change. You must be truthful and just because you are the leader of the people whom you are calling towards Paradise.

When Yuzasif heard the angel's discourse he fell down to prostrate before the Almighty and he said: I am obedient to the commands of God and His command is His favor so command me about your matter as I am thankful to you and to that being Who has sent you to me because he has done a favor to me and He did not leave me among the enemies.

Thus I will make efforts for that being from Who you have brought this. The angel said: I will come back after some days and take you out of here, so you be prepared and take care. Thus Yuzasif made a firm determination to leave that place without telling anyone about it. When the time of his departure arrived the angel came to him in the middle of the night and said to Yuzasif: Get up, let's go immediately.

Yuzasif arose and departed with the angel and no one knew about it except his vizier because when he was mounting, this handsome young man, whom Yuzasif has appointed over the administration of the towns, came to him and after paying due respects, asked: Where are you going, prince? O our reformer with perfect wisdom, we are in dire circumstances at this time. Are you leaving us because of these problems?

Please stay with us; because after coming into this world we grew up in comfort and prosperity and we never faced any hardship. Yuzasif remained silent for some time, then he said: You stay in your houses in the city with your families because I have to go where I am being sent. Thus if you help me in this you will share the reward. After that he mounted and left according to divine commands.

But after riding for some time he had to dismount because his vizier was holding the reins of his beast, protesting and wailing and saying: How will I face your parents and what explanation will give to him? They would kill me! How can you bear such hardships when you are not even used to them? How can you bear loneliness when you have not remained alone even for a single day? Can your body tolerate hunger, thirst and change of atmosphere?

The prince comforted him and showed him his concern. He also gave him the horse and equipments. So the vizier kissed his feet and said: O my chief, don't leave me here. I will come with you wherever you go as there is nothing here after you. And if you don't take me along I will go out in the desert and never

meet any human being. Yuzasif again comforted him and said: O vizier do not think of anything except goodness because I am sending you to the king and advising you about him that he should behave with you in a nice way.

Then he took off the royal dress and gave it to the vizier and said: You wear my clothes. And he also gave him that ruby which he wore in his crown. He told him: Take this with my horse, and when you reach the king give him the ruby after paying respects to him and also convey my greetings to him.

Tell him that when I contemplated on things that are permanent and those which are temporal I became inclined to that which is permanent and became disinclined with the temporal matters. And when I learnt about my reality and genealogy I became aloof from them and the enemies and relatives. Thus I left the enemies and relatives and cut off myself from my reality and genealogy.

When my father sees the ruby he would be happy and when he sees you wearing my clothes he will remember me and mention the love I have for you. After that through you only I forbid my father to act with you in any unacceptable manner. Thus the vizier returned and Yuzasif moved on. He continued to walk till he came to a wide place.

When he raised up his head he saw a huge tree over a spring of water. It was a very beautiful tree having many branches and very sweet fruits. So many birds had flocked on the tree that one cannot count them. This scene elated him and he moved forward to reach near it. He was trying to understand what it all signified. He took it to be a glad tidings towards which he was called. And the spring of water he compared with wisdom and knowledge. The numerous birds stood for people who would gather upon it and accept religion from him.

As he stood there he saw four angels walking in front of him. He followed them till they lifted him up in the atmosphere and took him away and bestowed him that knowledge and wisdom which he used to get from middle and last things and he was also given the knowledge that was to come at the last.

Then they brought him back to the earth and the four angels stayed with him and he stayed in that area for a long time. Then he reached the land of Saulabath and his father learnt of his arrival. Thus he and all the dignitaries of the kingdom came and paid respects to him. The people of his country also arrived with their relatives, greeted him and sat down before him. Yuzasif laid out the carpet for them and spoke to them about many things.

He told them to pay attention to him and prepare themselves to contemplate on divine wisdom which is the light of souls, and that they must rely on knowledge which is the guide to the right path. They must awaken their intellects and understand the difference between right and wrong and between guidance and deviation. And also know that it is the religion of truth that the Almighty Allah revealed on the prophets, messengers and the people of the previous centuries.

And that the Almighty Allah has again bestowed us this blessing. He has done a favor upon us and in

this way saved us from the fire of Hell. Except that man was able to reach the heavens and enter there without being perfect in faith and who performs the good deeds. So you must struggle in this regard so that you may achieve eternal comfort and a life that will never leave you. Those of you who bring faith they should not do so in hope of material wealth and worldly benefits. Your religion should be in anticipation of the heavenly kingdom and salvation.

It should be in hope of salvation from deviations and prosperity in the hereafter because the worldly kingdom is going to end sometime or the other. Its pleasures will be over. Thus one who is deceived by it shall be destroyed and degraded. If you believe what the religious people have faith in you will realize that death is attached to your bodies and along with your bodies it also subdues your soul.

You must also know that just as birds are incapable of defending themselves against the predators except through the strength of their wings and legs in the same way you also cannot get salvation except through your good deeds. Your majesty, you and your officials must think deeply on what I am saying and take lesson from it.

They must cross the sea in which a boat is always present. They must cross the deserts in which the facilities of transportation are always available. You must continue to travel on your way till the time you have the lamp and along with the pious continue to increase the treasure of good deeds. You must become their associates in their good works. You must follow them properly. You must become their helpers.

You must go on with your deeds in such a way that along with you they must also enter the illuminated kingdom. You must accept the effulgence and remember your duties. You must beware of worldly desires, liquor and sensual wants. You must keep away from every evil that may cause the destruction of the body. You must refrain from anger, haste, malice and back biting. If you are given something that you don't like, don't pass it on to someone else. Keep your selves pure and clean, keep your intentions pure so that when you die you may be on the right path.

After that he departed from the land of Saulabath and traveled to many areas propagating religion and reached the land of Kashmir. He toured the place and gave a new life to the dead hearts of the people of this country and he died during this period. Leaving the mortal body his soul flew up to the ethereal world. Before his death he summoned his disciple named, Ayabad who was serving him in sincerity and was a perfect man in all regards.

He made a bequest to him in which he stated that it was time for him to depart from the world. You must fulfill all your duties. You must never give up truth and continue to remain on piety and worship. Then he ordered Ayabad to prepare a place for him to lie. Then he stretched out his legs and turned his head to the west and his face to the east. He died in this position.

The author says that narrations like the above and similar reports about people with long lives are not relied upon by us to prove occultation and its occurrence because occultation is proved authentic on the

basis of the traditions of the Holy Prophet (S) and the Holy Imams (a.s.). But in my view after the divine prophets and messengers (a.s.) a number of rightful guides and righteous people received occultation from the Almighty Allah and our opponents also do not deny this.

All the narrations on this subject are correct. In addition to this, there are traditions of the Holy Prophet (S) and the Holy Imams (a.s.) regarding the twelfth Imam, His Eminence the Qaim (a.s.) and his occultation and that the time of occultation shall prolong and hearts will harden and people shall despair of his reappearance. Then the Almighty Allah will bring him out and the earth shall be filled up with his effulgence.

Through his justice and equity will be destroyed all the injustice and oppression. No one denies this except that they agree to these views and in spite of that intend to put off the divine light and wish to falsify His religion; and Allah does not want except to perfect His light, and exalt His word and reveal the reality of truth, and prove falsehood false even though it may be extremely despicable to the deniers. This is the promise of Allah to the righteous through the tongue of the chief of the prophets (S).

Nothing else is intended from this tradition and other traditional reports like this except that all the opponents and supporters who are inclined to traditions like this. So when they become successful in this journey due to this book they should aspire to become aware of the whole matter. Then they must become familiar with one who denies, one who views and one who is in doubt. Through one who accepts they must increase their insight and one who denies it may have the proof established upon him by Allah.

Those who are in doubt whether they should accept it or not they must be invited for discussion on the unseen and the occurrence of occultation. If it is done it would most probably convince them that discussions about right matters do not increase anything except emphasis and evidence. It is like gold that when heated in the fire becomes purer and more beautiful.

Allah, the Mighty and the High has concealed His great name at the beginning of the chapter of the Holy Quran.

When you supplicate through them it is accepted and when you ask Allah through it, you are given what you ask for. Allah, the Mighty and Sublime mentioned words like: Alif Laam Meem, Alif Laam Meem Raa, Alif Laam Raa, Alif Laam Meem Saad, Kaaf Haa Yaa Ain Saad, Haa Meem Ain Seen Qaaf, Taa Seen Meem, Taa Seen and Yaaseen etc, for two reasons. One is because of the veil on eyes of infidels and polytheists from remembrance of Allah and the Messenger. The Quran says:

قَدْ أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكُمْ ذِكْرًا رَسُولًا

***Allah has indeed revealed to you a reminder, An Apostle...[2](#)***

The infidels and polytheists did not have the capability to hear the Quran, so the Almighty Allah revealed the great name in different letters at the beginning of some chapters. These were letters of their language and they were not familiar with those broken letters. When they heard whose words they were astounded and they said that they would hear that which will come after it with attention. After that they heard the following verses with attention.

Thus the proof was established for the deniers and the insight of those who agreed to it was increased. Some people remained in doubts who only had the courage to argue in a doubtful matter and not reach to the proper conclusion even after that.

The second purpose of revealing the broken letters at the beginning of some chapters was that so that the persons of infallibility and purity maybe specialized with them through which they may establish the proof and by them they may show miracles. If the Almighty Allah had made the knowledge of those letters common for all the people, it would have been against wisdom and would have corrupted the divine plan.

No one from the fallibles could be trustworthy that he should have prayed through these letters against the messenger prophet or the tested believers. It would also not have been proper for Allah to not have accepted the supplication because He has promised it and it would have been going against His word.

Therefore it was only proper for Him to give the knowledge of these letters to few persons who may become an exemplar for the people. And not those who may exceed the limits like Balam Baoor. When he wanted to pray against Prophet Musa (a.s.) he forgot the Great Name and had to flee from there. It is mentioned in the Holy Quran:

وَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ الَّذِي آتَيْنَاهُ آيَاتِنَا فَانْسَلَخَ مِنْهَا فَاتَّبَعَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الضَّالِّينَ

***And recite to them the narrative of him to whom We give Our communications, but he withdraws himself from them, so the Shaitan overtakes him, so he is of those who go astray.***[3](#)

Allah, the Mighty and Sublime did this so that people may know excellence is only for one who has knowledge as he is eligible for it. He did not make it free for all as the same thing is expected from common people as was seen from Balam Baoor.

Thus when it is possible for the Almighty Allah to conceal His Great Name in the letters at the beginning of some chapters of His Book which is His Proof, it is also possible for Him to conceal His Proof from the believers and others because Allah, the Mighty and Sublime knows when He would not reveal him till the majority of the people do not act against the divine commands and become eligible for execution. But their killing shall not be permissible if their loins have believers. And if the Proof of Allah does not kill them it was also not be right as they must be deserving death.

In such circumstances occultation becomes a necessity. When they all separate and their loins contain no more believers Allah will reveal His Proof and he will eliminate His enemies. Don't you see that if a married woman commits fornication and becomes pregnant she is not stoned to death till she does not give birth to the child and suckles it for the prescribed period except that a Muslim man may take up the responsibility of its guardianship during the period of suckling.

The same condition applies to the one who has a believer in his loins but at the same time he is eligible for death penalty. In that case also he is not killed till the believer child comes out from him and no one knows this except the Almighty Allah and His Divine Proofs and none else can establish divine penalties. That is why Amirul Momineen (a.s.) did not take up arms against his enemies for 25 years after the passing away of the Messenger of Allah (S).

Narrated to us Ja'far bin Muhammad bin Masroor (r.a.) that: Narrated to us Husain bin Muhammad bin Aamir from his uncle, Abdullah bin Aamir from Muhammad bin Abu Amr from one who mentioned it to Abi Abdullah (a.s.) that he asked Abi Abdullah (a.s.) why Amirul Momineen (a.s.) did not take up arms against his opponents during the initial period of his tenure. The Imam replied:

“Due to the following verse of Quran:

لَوْ تَزَيَّلُوا لَعَذَّبْنَا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا

***Had they been widely separated one from another, We would surely have punished those who disbelieved from among them with a painful punishment.*** [4](#)

The narrator says that he asked what was the meaning of the word “تَزَيَّلُوا”. The Imam replied that it implies those believing trusts present in the loins of the infidels.”

In the same way the reappearance of Qaim (a.s.) will not take place till the trusts of Allah, the Mighty and Sublime are not born. When those trusts take birth, the Imam will appear to the enemies of Allah and eliminate them all.

Narrated to us Muzaffar bin Ja'far bin Muzaffar Alawi; he said: Narrated to us Ja'far bin Muhammad bin Masud from his father; he from Ali bin Muhammad from Ahmad bin Muhammad from Hasan bin Mahboob from Ibrahim Karkhi that he said:

I asked Abi Abdullah (a.s.) or someone asked him: “May Allah give you good reward, was Ali (a.s.) not firm in the religion of Allah?” He replied: “Yes, he was firm and strong.” The narrator asked, “Then how could the people subdue him and he did not defend himself and neither did he stop them?” The Imam said, “There is a verse in the Book of Allah which stopped him from it.” “What verse is that,” asked the narrator. Imam (a.s.) said:

لَوْ تَزَيَّلُوا الْعَذَابَ الَّذِي نَكَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا

***Had they been widely separated one from another, We would surely have punished those who disbelieved from among them with a painful punishment.***[5](#)

It was so because the believing trusts of Allah, the Mighty and Sublime were present in the loins of the infidels and hypocrites, therefore it was not possible for Ali (a.s.) to kill their ancestors till the trusts do not take birth. When the trusts came out Ali (a.s.) attacked them and eliminated them. In the same way the reappearance of our Qaim (a.s.) will not take place till the trusts of Allah do not take birth. After that he would subdue his opponents and eliminate them.”

Narrated to us Muzaffar bin Ja'far bin Muzaffar Samarqandi Alawi: Narrated to us Ja'far bin Muhammad bin Masud from his father that he said: Narrated to us Jibraeel Ibne Ahmad from Muhammad bin Isa bin Ubaid from Yunus bin Abdur Rahman from Mansur bin Hazim that he asked Abi Abdullah (a.s.) about the verse:

لَوْ تَزَيَّلُوا الْعَذَابَ الَّذِي نَكَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا

***Had they been widely separated one from another, We would surely have punished those who disbelieved from among them with a painful punishment.***[6](#)

The Imam said: If the Almighty Allah removes the believers from the loins of the infidels, He would punish the infidels.

The report about people who lived to a long age was mentioned to us by Abul Hasan Ali bin Abdullah bin Ahmad Faqih Aswari in Ilaaq. He said: Narrated to us Makki bin Ahmad Barzai that he said: I heard Ishaq bin Ibrahim Tartoosi say:

“I reached the house of Yahya bin Mansur at the age of 97 years to see the Indian king of Kanauj, Sarbanik. We asked him his age. He said that his age was nine hundred and twenty-five years and that he was a Muslim. He narrated: The Messenger of Allah (S) sent ten of his companions to me, including Huzaifa bin Yaman, Amr bin Aas, Usamah bin Zaid, Abu Musa Ashari, Sahib Rumi and Safinah etc. They invited me to Islam and I accepted it. When he kissed the letters of the Holy Prophet (S) I asked him: In spite of your physical weakness, how do you sit for the ritual prayer? He replied: the Almighty Allah has said:

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا أَوْ قُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ

***Those who remember Allah standing and sitting and lying on their sides***[7](#).

I asked him: What is your diet? He said: I need a little once a week. I asked him about his teeth and he said: They have changed twenty times. In his stable I saw an animal larger than an elephant which is called Zind Feel. I said: In what way do you make use of it? He replied: He carries the dirty clothes of the servants to the washer man.

The extent of his kingdom was having length and breadth of four years of travel and his capital was fifty farsakhs from all sides. On every gate there were 120000 troops so that if any attack is launched from there they may tackle it effectively without needing enforcements. The king himself stayed at the center of his capital. I heard him say: I reached a western country and saw a desert in which there was no vegetation. After traveling for sometime I reached the people of Musa (a.s.) the roof of their houses were equal in height and the store houses of rations were located outside the town.

They brought home some rations and left the rest in the store houses. The graves of their dead were inside their houses and their orchards were located at a distance of two farsakhs. None of them were old in age and I did not see any of them ill or on the verge of death.

There was a market also where one would go if one wanted anything and weigh and take whatever one liked without the shop owner being present there. When they wanted to pray they would come, pray and then go back. There were no fights among them ever; they spent all the time in prayers and never talked of anything except about God and death.”

The author (r.a.) says: If our opponents consider the life of Sarbanak, the king of India as possible they must not present any excuse with regard to the age of the Proof of Allah and there is no power and strength except by Allah.

1. This is other than the Luqman who lived during the time of Prophet Dawood (a.s.).

2. Surah Talaq 65:10-11

3. Surah Araaf 7:175

4. Surah Fath 48:25

5. Surah Fath 48:25

6. Surah Fath 48:25

7. Surah Aale Imran 3:191

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