- Many of those who light the charcoal in hookahs, of those who carry bundles of grass,
  Of those who eat by begging from door to door, of those who die from prolonged starvation,
  If you ask which mine these jewels come from, most of them will emerge as being of the stock of kings.
- 149 If was their ancestors who were once rulers, it was they whom young and old humbly served,
  They who were the shelter of the helpless and weak, they who were the asylum of Dailam and Isfahan,
  They who acted as shepherds of the realm, in their households that the conjunction of benefics occurred.
- This, oh community of Islam, is an occasion for taking heed, that the descendants of kings are beggars from door to door.

  Whoever you hear of is immersed in poverty, whoever you see is destitute and without resource.

  None of them is capable of earning. If they are capable of anything, it is of eating by begging.
- There is not just a single method of begging here. There are ever new ways of mendicancy here.

  Here mendicity is not restricted to the destitute. If anyone will give, there is no lack of mendicants here.

  Many have stretched out their hands beneath the cloak. Whether in secret or in open guise, most are beggars.
- Many profess themselves to be founders of mosques, many make themselves out to be of Sayyid lineage.
   Many learn laments and passionate mourning, many exercise their brilliant style in encomium.
   Many become attendants at thresholds, and keep on begging for their food, going about from door to door.
- Those who think hard work and effort disgraceful, craft and profession demeaning,

  Trade and agriculture difficult, the Franks' money carrion, who desire easy circumstances and honour besides,

  That people will sink today, if it has not already sunk yesterday.

#### Text and translation

### The hangers-on of the rich

Even if they are employed, it is in a disgraceful capacity. The bread which they earn is that of dishonour.

If they find any service, it is disgraceful. One should curse their 'good fortune'.

When they become the boon-companions of the rich, they go abandoning all sense of honour.

Sometimes they play and sing in their company, sometimes they turn jester and laugh and amuse,
 Sometimes they make up nicknames and get a reward, sometimes in teasing they suffer general insults.
 They do other things too, but no such as to befit a fellow Muslim.

#### The rich Muslims

- Do not ask what the state of the rich is. Their essence and their constitution are in a class of their own.
   What is unbecoming is fitting for them, all that is impermissible is permissible for them.
   The Holy Law has gained fair repute from them! Islam prides itself greatly upon them!
- The whole company is beside itself at everything they say. Their every remark is followed by 'Quite so!' and 'Hear, hear!'

  There is no error in their speech, nothing unbecoming in their actions. No matter what they are, who can tell them? Their boon-companions have made them Pharaohs.
- Wealth, which is the substance of religion and the world, wealth which is the provision for the journey to the next world, Which Solomon besought God for, on account of which the fame of Chosroes was spread to the ends of the world, Which made Hatim the most famous man of his age, and Joseph the object of his brothers' adoration,
- Has, thanks to them, been invested with the 'glory' of being considered the root of disgrace.
  Now it acts as the capital of ignorance and oblivion, now as the intoxicating wine of conceit and arrogance.
  That which was the water of eternal life for the world is, in relation to this people, a poisonous draught.

- As soon as property and wealth showed themselves here, they were accompanied by the arrival of misfortune.
   From any house where wealth came and spread itself, blessing removed its operation.
   Even four paisas do no good to anyone here. They are as inauspicious for them as its wings are to an ant.
- Those habits which all consider disgraceful, those qualities which are associated with beasts,

  Those features which riff-raff conceal, those actions which the lower orders do not commit,

  These are mother's milk for the wealthy here, who have no fear of God, nor shame before the Prophet.
- 62 If their desires turned to games and sports, they squandered plenty of money in this pursuit.
  When Sir Love acted as their guide, they cleaned out all their household wealth in an instant.
  Then at last they began to beg for their food. Thousands of families have been destroyed here just like this.
- 163 They pay not the slightest attention to their beginnings nor feel any concern about their end.
  They have no thought for their children's upbringing, nor any care for the community's disgrace.
  They have no rights in this world or the next. How will they go and face God?
- When the record of any people is ruined, the first to be deformed among them are the rich.

  No excellence or skill is left in them. Their intelligence does not guide them, nor faith conduct them.

  They care neither about disgrace and honour in this world, nor about hell and paradise in the next.
- They have no fear of the cries and laments of the oppressed, nor pity for the condition of the unfortunate.

  In their greed and concupiscence they abandon self-awareness. They live in luxury and die to make a show.

  They remain for ever unconscious in the sleep of oblivion, self-forgetful until their death-agonies.

- Cf. the two Hadith: Al-khalqu 'ayālu 'llāhi fa-ahabbu 'l-khalqi ilā 'llāhi man ahsana ilā 'ayalihi 'Creatures are the family of God, and of God's creatures the dearest to Him is the one who does good to this family'; and Al-dīnu al-nasīhatu 'Religion is good advice.'
- 171 I.e. the Europeans, who are superior to the whole world in sympathy with their nation, in supporting their country, and in aiding and helping all mankind.

- The whole world may be distressed by famine, but they are careless, for they have provisions at home. If the season of autumn comes upon the garden of the Community, they are happy, for their garden is in bloom. What rights can mankind claim from them? They are of a separate species, quite different from humankind.
- How can humble folk be compared with them? They live free from worry as to food and bread. They wear nothing but furs and silks, they keep houses which rival paradise. They do not go a step except in a conveyance. They do not remain for an instant without songs and music.
- People stand in attendance to serve them. The rose and the tulip remain in their company. Their natures are filled with refinement, their habits are permeated with In their draughts masses of musk arise, their garments are steeped in pounds of rose perfume.
- How can these people be of the same species as those who are never at ease in the world, even for a moment, Who have no horse to ride on, no attendant to serve them, no house to live in, no bed to sleep in, No clothes to wear or bread to eat, and who, if their plans go wrong, have just their wretched luck to blame?

## Love for God's creatures

This was the first lesson of the Book of True Guidance: 'All creatures belong to God's family. 'The beloved of the Creator of the two worlds is the one who maintains the ties of love with his creatures.

'This is devotion, this is religion and faith, that man should come to the service of his fellow man in the world.'

# The public spirit of the peoples of the West

Those who act on the basis of this weighty utterance today flourish upon the face of the earth. They are superior to all, high and low. They are now the central axis of

humanity.

Those covenants of the Holy Law which we have broken have all been firmly upheld by the people of the West.

- 172 Those whom the Muslims think are lost and have no hope of pardon in the next world,
  No paradise or Rizvan allotted to them, no houris or heavenly slaves granted in their fate,
  Whose place after death is hell, whose water is hot and whose food is cactus,
- 173 Are devoted to their country and community, and all fulfil the needs of everyone mutually.
  Those among them who possess learned skills or are wealthy seek the welfare of God's creatures.
  It might be said that this was their trademark, for patriotism is the sign of true believers.
- 174\* The wealth of the rich, the energy of the poor, the compositions of the writers, the wisdom of the philosophers,
  The speeches of the orators, the daring of the brave, the weapons of the soldier, the power of the kings,
  The hopes of their hearts, the joys of their desires, all these are devoted to their fellow countrymen and their country.

### The results of their philanthropy

Now you see their ascendancy manifest, you see them successful in the world,
You see the whole world obedient to them, you see them loftier than the sky,
These are the fruits of their acts of magnanimity, the results of their mutual fellow-feeling.

#### The high-minded wealthy Muslims

- As for those rich people among us who are magnanimous, whose generosity is acknowledged throughout the world,
   If they believe in Shaikhs, their property is given in pious bequest to the descendants of Pirs.
   They uselessly spend day and night enjoying themselves, while all their servants are starving.
- 177 If they act in accordance with the preachers' words, they may hope for pardon without expenditure of gold.
  If they are in the habit of observing prayers and fasts, then whom do they need to fear on the Day of Judgement?
  If someone has built a mosque in the city, he has laid his foundation in paradise.

<sup>172</sup> Hamīm is the hot water which will be given to those in hell to drink, while zaqūm is a kind of food which will be given to them to eat.

<sup>173</sup> Cf. the Hadith: Hubbu 'l-watani min al-îmân 'The love of country is a part of faith.'