

FOR THE
CHOSEN ONE

A HEROIC
CROWN OF PRAISE



[SONNET REDOUBLÉ]

PALMER ESTES

I. Servant and Vicegerent

Introduction | Servant ('*Abd*)
Vicegerent (*Khalīfah*) | Isthmus (*Barzakh*)

A servant and vicegerent, Chosen One,
before the Lord, His gracious Signs to bear,
in measure of the Word a paragon; 3
the first to bow, His bidding to attend,
submitted in devotedness and prayer,
an intimate, at Heaven's furthest end. 6
The last to stand, His standard full unfurled,
to wholly witness to that Unity,
a deputy, descended to the World; 9
thus double-turned, at once to God and man,
to Him in service bound, his surety,
in trust to lead the homeward caravan. 12
Of noble mettle, qualities assayed,
of Him in Beauty, Majesty arrayed.

II. Divine Majesty, Beauty, Reality

Divine Majesty (*Jalāl*) | Divine Beauty (*Jamāl*)
Divine Reality (*Ḥaqq*) | Perfect Man (*al-Insān al-Kāmil*)

Of Him in Beauty, Majesty arrayed,
 Exalted high, Incomparably above,
in Justice rigorous and Might unswayed; 3
but near in Bounty, gentle Tenderness,
 and Loving us, that we in turn may love,
a Mercy all-embracing, measureless. 6
All aspects of the One Reality,
 the Truth at once Transcendent, Immanent,
His Names the veils of that Simplicity; 9
the same inherent, traced within each soul,
 in him complete in their embodiment,
a paradigm whereby we may be whole. 12
To hold His Attributes in unison,
in pride of poverty, shade of that Sun.

III. Servant of Divine Majesty (1)

Spiritual Poverty (*Faqr*) | Detachment (*Iḥtisāb*)
Humility (*Tawāḍu'*) | Modesty (*Ḥayā'*)

In pride of poverty, shade of that Sun,
surrendered all to Majesty enthroned,
in need of the Sufficient, else of none; 3
in spare detachment, as but for a day
to bide beneath a tree, the world disowned,
the rider mounts and passes on his way. 6
A servant merely, humbled to that King,
not proud to bow or laud above with cries,
or hold to heart the Truth, remembering; 9
in modesty before the Merciful,
with faith adorned, the faith of Paradise,
and words of peace to provocation's call. 12
Submitted wholly, body, soul and word,
a penitent, sincere before his Lord.

IV. Servant of Divine Majesty (2)

Repentance (*Tawbah*) | Pious Vigilance (*Taqwā*)
Trust in God (*Tawakkul*) | Hope in God (*Rajā'*)

A penitent, sincere before his Lord,
so oft to plead forgiveness, turning to
the Clement from whom pardon is assured; 3
and wary of the Wise who knows all hearts,
the root of wisdom, this, and raiment true,
in flight toward Him thus feared, the best of arts. 6
Yet trusting to that Guardian secure,
in confidence but also provident,
that He his day's provision will ensure; 9
and more, in hope from the Compassionate,
Whom only the astray ever lament,
His Mercy near when troubles overset. 12
No darkened heart, nor brittleness betrayed,
a light unsheathed, a finely tempered blade.

V. Vicegerent of Divine Majesty (1)

Striving (*Mujāhada*) | Courage (*Shajā'ah*)
Strength (*Quwwah*) | Steadfastness (*Istiqāmah*)

A light unsheathed, a finely tempered blade,
to strive, with self and all, in God's concern,
but greater yet to strive with self ill strayed; 3
in steady courage in the face of foes,
a bulwark stout in battle, brave and stern,
amidst the fray a refuge from all blows. 6
With strength of heart, His heavy trust to bear,
which through that Power only is attained,
yet stronger than to act is to forswear; 9
a rock unyielding, standing resolute,
held steadfast to the Firm, His bond ordained,
a way unwavering and absolute. 12
Thus raised above the field, all trials endured,
a standard whereby justice is secured.

VI. Vicegerent of Divine Majesty (2)

Justice (‘*Adl*) | Equity (*Qist*)

Chivalry (*Futuwwah*) | Gallantry (*Shahāmah*)

A standard whereby justice is secured,

to weigh in rectitude between each claim,
a weight immense, so has the Just adjured; 3

to treat, despite disdain, in equity,
another as oneself, each one the same,
although against oneself, in penalty. 6

In chivalry, both brave and generous,
to grant the better though accorded worse,
ennobling deeds with good and kindness; 9

and gallantry, in boldness for the right,
the favor to bestow, the wrong reverse,
to bear that charge and with the best requite. 12

So rightly wrought in noble sentiment,
with sweet tranquility, a soul content.

VII. Servant of Divine Beauty (1)

Tranquility (*Sakīnah*) | Contentment (*Riḍā*)

Love of Beauty (*Yuḥibbu l-Jamāl*) | Joyous Intimacy (*Uns*)

With sweet tranquility, a soul content,

in peace transcendent, care and sorrow eased,
sent from the Source of Peace in blessed descent; 3
a boundless treasure, to serenely bide,

well-pleasing to his Lord, in turn well-pleased,
so destined for that Garden, gratified. 6

With love for beauty, traced upon each thing,

for perfume, women, prayer, all admirable,
as with the Beautiful, from which they spring; 9
and drawn in nearness, bowed before the Friend,

yet further drawn is He, a doubled pull,
in heart's embrace, each finds the journey's end. 12

A servant bearing that benefic seal,
a grateful tongue, to glorify with zeal.

VIII. Servant of Divine Beauty (2)

Gratefulness (*Shukr*) | Glorification (*Sabbāḥa*)
Remembrance (*Dhikr*) | Seclusion (*‘Uzla*)

A grateful tongue, to glorify with zeal,
 amidst the signs, in Book and earth and sky,
inscribed with mercy, Mercy to reveal; 3
to magnify His blessings, morn and eve,
 yet praise falls short that lauds upon the High,
that Majesty too great to well conceive. 6
In God’s remembrance, of all best and blessed,
 the Name alive within, but better still
that he instill the Word where hearts find rest; 9
and in seclusion wrapped, to keep the call,
 in vigil for the Lord, the nights to fill,
a solitary set before the All. 12
In recognition’s bond, a reverent,
a mercy sent in grace, beneficent.

IX. Vicegerent of Divine Beauty (1)

Mercy (*Raḥmah*) | Compassion (*Raḥimah*)
Generosity (*Karam*) | Courtesy (*Adab*)

A mercy sent in grace, beneficent,
 unto all beings, to gain felicity,
for Mercy, so prescribed, stands precedent; 3
compassionate, so grieved before distress,
 and anxious for the good, in remedy,
becomingly adorned in gentleness. 6
With ready hand, to generously give,
 and so expend in ease of indigence,
just as the Generous by which we live; 9
and courteous, to greet in cordial grace,
 with due propriety's fair deference,
but also bearing amity's embrace. 12
Conformed to charity and tender care,
a loving heart, beloved, in longing fair.

X. Vicegerent of Divine Beauty (2)

Love (*Maḥabbah*) | Longing (*Shawq*)
Patience (*Ṣabr*) | Forbearance (*Hilm*)

A loving heart, beloved, in longing fair,
in deep affection and devotedness,
for love itself is the Beloved's heir; 3
with ardent yearning for His countenance,
and all that bodies forth that blessedness,
more dear than life is that deliverance. 6
Possessed of patience, faithful constancy,
to calmly bear with trials or offense,
enduring all with equanimity; 9
and with forbearance, to be reconciled
in clemency and kind benevolence,
as the Forgiving, in forgiveness mild. 12
To overlook, upturned in love's appeal,
for there, but God, is naught, the only Real.

XI. Servant of Divine Reality (1)

First Shahādah: (*illā Llāh*: “but God”) [*ithbāt*: affirmation]
Recognition, Gnosis (*Maʿrifah*) | Discernment (*Furqān*)

For there, but God, is naught, the only Real,
His signs without, within—the Evident,
His Face, from East to West, fills heaven’s wheel; 3
the First and Last, the Veiled and Manifest,
and ever with each soul, a wonderment,
and what is more, His Self within each breast. 6
In such to recognize the Absolute,
to know the Actual with certainty,
and see that all is only His at root; 9
and blessed with wisdom, ever bound to good,
in right discernment, clear sagacity,
that each, in essence, may be understood. 12
In sapience, and ever thus aware,
no god nor else before the True but error.

XII. Servant of Divine Reality (2)

First Shahādah: (*lā ilāha*: “no god”) [*naḥy*: negation]
Truthfulness (*Ṣidq*) | Trustworthiness (*Amāna*)

No god nor else before the True but error,
for all is perishing save for His Face,
and only through the Real is life to spare; 3
a Hidden Treasure, from whose treasuries
He sends down all, and to Him all retrace,
effaced to see that Truth that ever sees. 6
Thus to the Sure avowed in truthfulness,
the false unreal, in word and world devoid,
affirming All, denying nothingness; 9
and trustworthy, in dictum and in deed,
secure with God, in guidance unalloyed,
in trust to Him who holds each thing in seed. 12
Unborn in Truth, from Being thus became,
and you, Muhammad, did the truth proclaim.

XIII. Vicegerent of Divine Reality (1)

Second Shahādah: (*Muḥammad*: “Muhammad”)
Virtuous Perfection (*Iḥsān*) | Noble Character (*Khuluq*)

And you, Muhammad, did the truth proclaim,
of Him, revealed in Names Most Beautiful,
inscribed within your being just the same; 3
perfected in His Form, enformed anew,
in heart inhered, Throne of the Merciful,
one ‘I’ alone—the Lord, the One, the True. 6
In fairest stature, virtue burnished bright,
with beauty, goodness, excellently made
to worship Him as seen or in His sight; 9
a noble character, traced from that Pen,
the Book evinced, its qualities inlaid,
a precious gem among the stones of men. 12
The Message borne, inherent in your frame,
the Messenger of God, praised be your name.

XIV. Vicegerent of Divine Reality (2)

Second Shahādah: (*rasūlu Llāh*: “Messenger of God”)
Sincerity (*Ikhhlās*) | Unification (*Tawhīd*)

The Messenger of God, praised be your name,
in grace unmarked, to hear the Angel’s Word,
a virgin soul, received before that flame; 3
a good example, guiding to that End,
to call in witness, by His leave assured,
a kindled lamp, a light that Light did send. 6
In faith sincere, upon the straightest way,
a right religion, firm fidelity,
before Him, life and death, surrendered, lay; 9
and singular in heart, all unified
unto a single Lord, in purity,
a sole concern, each thought to Him thus tied. 12
The Seal of Prophets, in comparison,
a servant and vicegerent, Chosen One.

XV. Final Encomium

A servant and vicegerent, Chosen One,
of Him in Beauty, Majesty arrayed,
in pride of poverty, shade of that Sun; 3
a penitent, sincere before his Lord,
a light unsheathed, a finely tempered blade,
a standard whereby justice is secured; 6
with sweet tranquility, a soul content,
a grateful tongue, to glorify with zeal,
a mercy sent in grace, beneficent; 9
a loving heart, Beloved, in longing fair...

For there, but God, is naught, the only Real,
no god nor else before the True but error, 12
and you, Muhammad, did the Truth proclaim
the Messenger of God, praised be your name.