The signs of darkness were effaced from the world, for the moon arose in the house of its exaltation. But for a long time the moon did not shine, for the moonlight of the Prophethood was clouded. But in the fortieth year, by the grace of God, the moon arose from the cave of Hira.

The sending of the Seal of the Prophets

The one who has received the title of 'Mercy' among the prophets, the one who fulfils the desires of the wretched, The one who comes to the help of others in trouble, the one who takes to his heart the sufferings of his own and other people, The refuge of the poor, the asylum of the weak, the guardian of orphans and the protector of slaves,

24 The one who pardons the wrongdoer, who makes his abode in the heart of the ill-intentioned, The one who destroys evils, and reconciles tribes with one another— He came down from Hira and drew near his people, and brought with him an alchemical formula,

25 One which turned crude copper into gold, and clearly separated the counterfeit and the pure. Arabia, which had been covered with ignorance for centuries, was transmuted in a single instant. The boat had no fear left of the wave of disaster. The direction of the wind had quite changed about.

26 An ore had lain useless in the mine, and had no worth or value. The real qualities which it naturally possessed had all been turned to dust through lying in the earth. But in the knowledge of destiny and fate it had been irrevocably decided that it would become pure gold in the twinkling of an eye.

The first preaching of the Apostleship

27 That glory of Arabia, the adornment of niche and pulpit, Taking with him all the people of Mecca, went out one day to the desert in accordance with God's command. He climbed up to Mount Safa and spoke to them all, saying, 'Oh descendants of Chalib, do you think I am truthful or a liar?'

The descendants of Chalib include most of the tribes of the Quraisht, especially the Hashimites (Bani Hashim) and the Umayyads (Bani Umayya).
28 They all replied, 'To this day, we have never heard nor seen you say anything false.'
He said, 'If this is how you think of me, then will you believe me
If I tell you that a mighty army is waiting behind Mount Safa in ambush,
waiting to plunder you?'

29 They replied, 'Everything you say finds credence here, for you have been truthful and trustworthy since childhood.'
He said, 'If these words of mine have found acceptance, then listen, for in this there is absolutely no falsehood:
The whole caravan is going to depart from here. Be afraid of the time which is to come!'

30 Was it the crash of a thunderbolt or the voice of the Guide which shook the whole land of Arabia,
Which implanted a new passion in the hearts of all, and aroused the sleeping population with a single cry?
Such clamour was caused on all sides by God's message that desert and mountain echoed with His name.

The preaching of the Law

31 Then he taught them the lesson of the Holy Law. He explained to them each formula of the truth, one by one.
He refashioned the ruined ones of the age, and aroused those who had been sleeping for many days.
He raised a veil and revealed those secrets which had not till then been made manifest to the world.

How the Muslims were in error

32 No one had remembered the covenant of eternity without beginning. God's slaves had forgotten their Master’s commands.
It was the wine of falseness which was being passed round in the world then. The assembly of that age was unacquainted with the wine of truth.
The cup of monotheism was still untouched, and the lid of the jar of divine knowledge was still unopened.

33 Men were not acquainted with God's judgment and requital, or aware of the beginning and the end.
Each was devoted to 'all except God'. God's creatures had fallen very far from Him.
The whole flock trembled as soon as they heard the shepherd challengingly cry:

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34 'It is the One Being who is worthy to be worshipped, who is worthy of the witness of tongue and heart.

'It is His commands which are worthy of obedience, and His court which is worthy of service.

'If you are to devote yourselves to anything, then devote yourselves to Him.

If you bow your head, then bow your head before Him.

35 'In Him ever put your trust, for Him constantly profess your love.

'If you fear at all, then fear His wrath. If you are to die, then die in seeking Him.

'His divinity is untainted by partnership. No one possesses greatness before Him.

36 'Intelligence and perception are upset there. The moon and sun are quite humble servants there.

'Emperors are vanquished and subdued there. The prophets and Siddiq are helpless there.

'There is no asking after monks and rabbis there. There is no concern for the holy and the unenthralled there.

37* 'Do not be misled like others. Do not make anyone the son of God.

'Do not magnify my rank beyond its due limit. Do not demean me by over-glorying me.

'Even as all men hang their heads there, I too am one of His humble slaves.

38 'Do not make an idol of my tomb, or bow your heads before my grave.

'In being His humble servants, you are no less than me. In helplessness, you and I are equal.

'God has granted me only this much greatness—that besides being His humble servant I am also His envoy.'

39 In this fashion he severed their hearts' attachment to their individual idols.

He turned their faces away from each distorted direction of prayer.

Nowhere did he leave any connexion with 'all besides God'.

He cemented men's ties with their Master. He made those who had long been wandering about in flight from their Lord bow down their heads before Him.

38 Cf. Qur'an 41:6: 'Say thou: I am but a man like you. It is revealed to me by inspiration.'
Instructions on how to live

40 Once they had realized the ultimate purpose, once they had acquired a clue to the rich treasure,
Once their hearts were on fire with love, once they had been steeped in the atmosphere of monotheism,
Then he taught them the proper ways of carrying on their lives, and instructed them in all the subjects of civilization.

Time

41 He made them realize the value and worth of time, and imparted to them the keen desire and urge to work.
He told them, 'Everything will abandon your company at last, whether this comprises wife and children or wealth and property.
But the one thing that will never leave your side is the time which you have spent in doing good.

42 'You have your opportunity in health before sickness, in leisure before abundant occupations,
In youth before the affliction of old age, in halting before the traveller goes on.
'You have your opportunity in wealth before poverty. Do what you ought, for there is little time to spare!'

43 He made them passionately keen on learning, saying, 'The people of the world are all far removed from His mercy,
'Except those who ever meditate upon God, or those who are constantly engaged in imparting knowledge.
'It is to them that God has given blessings here, and upon them that His mercy will be when they go there.'

Compassion

44 He taught them loving kindness to mankind, saying,
'It is the mark of Muslims that they bear love to their neighbour, and promote his welfare day and night.
'They desire the same thing for every man as they desire from God for themselves.'

45 Cf. the Hadith: 'Ilā 'ainā nā kā'irūna wa-mā 'arīrūna wā 'ābīghā nā tilābū nūsūla takān mu'āminūn. 'Do good to your neighbour so that you may be a believer, and desire for people what you desire for yourself that you may be a Muslim.'
45 'God does not show His mercy to the man who does not feel the bruise of pain in his heart.  
'Nor does He show mercy to the wretch who is not overcome by grief if disaster overtakes anyone.  
'Be compassionate to all the people of the world, and God will be compassionate to you in His highest heaven.'

**Fanaticism**

46 He then made them afraid of fanaticism, saying,  
'He who lives and dies for this lies outside our community. He is no companion of ours, nor are we his fellow.  
'Those who have in themselves the virtue of fearing to do wrong will never be equalled by the pious.  
'Wherever you mention those who fear to do wrong, do not speak of the pious.'

**The avoidance of evil**

47 He saved them from evil, saying, 'The abandonment of disobedience is better than obedience.  
'Those who have in themselves the virtue of fearing to do wrong will never be equalled by the pious.  
'Wherever you mention those who fear to do wrong, do not speak of the pious.'

**Earning a livelihood**

48 He gave the poor the urge to work hard, saying, 'Earn your living by your own means.  
'So long as you support your own and strangers, you will not have to beg from door to door.  
'If this is your purpose in seeking worldly goods on earth, you will shine like the full moon in heaven.'

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45 This is a translation of two Hadith:  
Lā yarḥānu ʾllāhin man lā yarḥānu ʾllāhin 'God is not merciful to anyone who is not merciful to people'; and Ḥamāma ʾrāʾi ʾrāʾi yahrismātum man ft l-ʾasnāf 'If you are merciful to whoever is on earth, He who is in heaven will be merciful to you.'

46 Cf. the Hadith:  
La'isa minnā min man dā lā ilā l-ʾasabiyātun wa-laiṣa minnā min man qātala l-ʾasabiyātun  
wa-laiṣa minnā min man mā kā ʾlāsabiyātun 'None of us support him who cleaves to fanaticism,  
or who fights in the name of fanaticism or who dies in fanaticism.'

47 Cf. the Hadith:  
Dhakīra muqullūn 'inda rasūl ʾllāhi bi-ʾdhilālāt tin wājihātun wa-dhakhār akhānku  
bi-ʾdhilālāt fa-qilā ʾl-ʾasabiyātun la taʿdālil bi l-ʾrāʾi ṭīna l-ʾrāʾi yin l-ʾrāʾi yin l-ʾrāʾi yin l-ʾrāʾi  
'He who seeks legitimate livelihood for himself and for the support of his family, to act properly towards his neighbour and to escape questioning, come before Almighty God on the day of resurrection with a face shining like the moon on the night of its fulness.'
Text and translation

The rich

49 He admonished the rich in this fashion, saying, 'Let those among you who are wealthy and powerful,
'If they are the best of their class, if they are helpers and assistants of mankind,
'If they never act without taking counsel, nor take any step precipitately—

50 'Then that class to whom such happy times come is more at peace than the dead.
'But when the rich are the worst people in the world, and in their selfish
pleasure-seeking have no care for others,
'Then in those times there is no welfare and well-being, and then it is better to depart than to stay.'

Morality

51 He turned their hearts away from deceit and hypocrisy, and filled their breasts with truth and purity.
He saved them from lying and slandering, and made them honourable in the eyes of God and man.
They shrank no more from the word of God. In just one washing he made them clean.

Civilization

52 Now he taught them the rules of preserving health, now implanted in them the desire to travel.
He explained to them the benefits of trading, and told them the principles of government.
He showed them each sign along the road to their goal, and made them the guides of mankind.

The effect of his teaching

53 His teaching so prevailed over habit that those who had been addicted to falsehood came to be seekers of the true God.
All their vices were changed into virtues. Their frames were endowed with the spirit.
The stone which the masons had rejected came at last to be set at the head.

49 Cf. the Hadith: Iḫā kāna ʿumād ʿakun khiyāṣa ʿakun wa-ugāniyaʿakum sumahā ʿakum wa-
umurākum šāhī biannam ʿaṣ-ṣulūn ʿantili khaṣṣi ʿakum min batnihi, ʿaṣ-ṣulūn ʿaṣ-ṣulūn wa-
sumahā ʿakum ashar ʿakum wa-ugāniyaʿakum biannam ʿaṣ-ṣulūn ʿaṣ-ṣulūn ʿaṣ-ṣulūn ʿaṣ-ṣulūn
When your leaders are the best amongst you, when your rich men are the most generous amongst your, and when your affairs are wisely counselled, the back of the earth is better for you than its belly; but when your leaders are the worst amongst you, when your rich men are the most miserly amongst you, and when your affairs are entrusted to your women, then the belly of the earth is better for you than its back.'

53 This is a reference to the prophecy in the Gospel of Matthew: 'The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner' (Matthew 21:42), which Muslims take to refer to the prophet Ismail.