Cf. the Hadith: Idhā kāna umarā ukum khiyārukum wa-aghniyā ukum sumahā ukum wa-umūrukum shūrā bainakum fa-zuhūru 'I-ardi khairun lakum min batnihā, wa-idhā kāna umarā ukumashirrā ukum wa-aghniyā ukumbukhalā ukumwa-umūrukum ilānisā ikum fa-batnu 'I-ardi khairun lakum min zahrihā 'When your leaders are the best amongst you, when your nich men are the most generous amongst your, and when your affairs are wisely counselled, then 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.'

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-
- 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.

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.

Text and translation

The passing of the Seal of the Prophets

When the community had received all God's bounty, when the apostleship had discharged its function,
When there remained among men no argument to advance against God, when the Prophet decided upon departure from the world,
Then he left behind as heirs of Islam a people which has few parallels in the world.

The age of the Caliphate

- All men were obedient to Islam. All men came to the aid of Muslims. Men were true to God and the Prophet. Men treated orphans and widows with compassion.
 All were disgusted with the way of unbelief and falsehood. All were drunk with the intoxicating wine of truth.
- They were ready to destroy all the customs of their barbarism, to demolish the foundations of sorcery,
 To bow their heads before the commandments of religion, to strip their homes of goods for God,
 To confront every disaster bravely, to fear only the one God.
- 57 If there was disagreement amongst them with one another, it was based entirely upon sincerity.
 They used to dispute, but there was no viciousness in their disputes. Their discord was more agreeable than peace itself.
 This was the first wave of the liberation by which the garden of the world was to become green.
- There no tedious excess of formality in their meals, nor was the purpose of their apparel a display of elegance.

 Commanders and soldiers had the same appearance. Poor and rich were all in the same state.

 The Gardener had laid out a garden which did not contain any very large or small plant.
- 59* The Caliphs were guardians of the community in just the same way the shepherd in the guardian of the flock.

 They thought of non-Muslims and Muslims in similar fashion. There was no striking difference between slave and free man.

 Bondwoman and lady were like sisters born of the same mother are in the world.

- I.e., the nations of Europe. The English word neshan means 'nation' (qaum).
- By 'Hebrews' is meant the Jews. The Sasanians were kings descended from Sasan the son of Darius. Rome is a very famous city in Italy situated on the left bank of the river Tiber at a distance of 16 miles from the Mediterranean Sea. During the time of the Roman empire, this city was its capital. The appropriateness of the 'ship' for the Romans and of the 'lamp' for the fireworshippers, i.e. the ancient people of Persia, is obvious.
- For 600 years during the Middle Ages (which lasted from the time of Jesus to AD 1500), i.e. up until the time of Alfred and Charlemagne-the whole of Europe was covered in darkness. All the nations were overcome by oppression, anarchy, barbarism and dishonesty. Asia and Africa were in the same state. At that time only the Arabs, thanks to Islam, spread light in every corner of the old world.

Text and translation

Their course was run in the way of truth, and whatever they were attached to was based only upon truth.

Their fire did not blaze up of its own accord. Their reins were held in the grasp of the Law.

Where it made them gentle, they became gentle. Where it aroused them, they became aroused.

Where frugality was needed, they practised frugality. Where lavishness was needed, they practised lavishness.

Their hostility and their affection were measured and weighed. There was no causeless cordiality or causeless hatred.

They bowed down before him who bowed down before God, and stood aloof from him who stood aloof from God.

The period of general darkness

62 At the time that the idea of progress came to them, a darkness was spread over the inhabited quarter of the world.

Over every people lay the shadow of decline, which had caused them all to fall from the heights.

Those nations which are the stars of heaven today were all hidden in the twilight of degradation.

63* The Hebrews did not possess their former dominion, nor the Christians their present good fortune and prosperity.

The volume of the Greeks was scattered, and the binding of the Sassanians was undone.

The ship of the Romans was listing, and the lamp of the Iranians was flickering.

Darkness lay in all directions here in India, for the tent of knowledge and skill had been loaded up away from here.

There barbarism had engulfed Persia, where everyone had turned their hearts away from creed and temple.

The gyanis no longer meditated upon Bhagvan, nor was there any worship of Yazdan by his people.

Everywhere there raged the wind of calamity. Throats were being cut by the knife of cruelty.

There was no limit to torture, nor investigation into wrongdoing. God's trust lay being plundered.

The hard rain of the cloud of tyranny pelted upon the earth. The fleet of mankind lay wrecked.

66 Those peoples which are today the well-wishers of humanity were similar in nature to savage beasts.
Where the decrees of justice are current today, tyranny and rebellion extended far.

Those who have today become our shepherds were all man-eating wolves.

67* Where skill is now in keen demand, where a busy trade is now done in intelligence and learning,
Where the cloud of divine mercy now rains pearls, where the golden rain now pours down continually,
There was not even a trace of civilization to be found, nor had the wave of the sea reached there.

68 No way of progress lay open, no ladder was placed against the heights. They had to traverse a desert in which there was no footprint or sound of the caravan-bell.
As soon as the voice of truth reached their ears, their heart began of itself to give them guidance.

The advances of the Muslims

69 A rain-cloud arose from the mountains of Batha, and its fame suddenly spread in all directions. Its thunder and lightning extended far. When it thundered over the Tagus, it rained over the Ganges. No creatures of water or of earth remained in want of it. God's whole plantation became green.

The spread of monotheism

70 The 'illiterate' Arabs kindled a radiance in the world, which made Islam prosper gloriously.

They expelled idols from Arabia and the rest of the world. They went and set to rights every sinking ship.

They spread pure monotheism over the world. The cry of 'He is the true God!' began to come from every home.

71 Virtues wreaked havoc among the evil. Unbelief was thrown into confusion within its frontiers.
The fire died down in the fire-temples, and a sort of dust began to arise in all other places of worship.
The Kaaba became flourishing, while all other houses fell into ruin. All gathered in one place, while all other assemblies dispersed.

⁶⁹ The Tagus is the largest river in Andalus, i.e. Spain. Its length is approximately 550 miles. It starts from the borders of Aragon and enters the sea at Lisbon.

⁷⁰ The word ummī means 'illiterate', and has been applied to the inhabitants of Arabia because there had from ancient times been no tradition there of education and study.

تے علم ون اُن سے نصافیوں نے کیا کب اخلاق روحانیوں نے
اوب اُن سے بیک اصفا کا فور نے کہ ارٹر سے بیک بیڈوانیوں نے
اوب اُن سے بیک اُن کو خور نے بیال اُن کو زر اُن سے بیڈوانیوں نے
ارسلو کے مردہ نسنوں کو جلایا فلائوں کو زر اُن سے کو کو کا یا
ارسلو نے رود ہے جا اس کے
المحکم نے کو کو اُن اس کے خوال کے
المحکم کے خوال اُن کو خوال کو اُن کے اور اُن کو اُن کی اُن کے بیاب اور کیم بیاب موسی کے اور کو کی اُن کے بیاب اور کیم بیاب موسی کے بیال کو اُن کے اُن کے دور اُن کا میں سے بالا اُن کے دور
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المحکم کے فی سے جوانی کو نے دور ایک کا میں سے بالا اُن کے دور
المحکم کے فی سے جوانی کو کے دور اُن کا میں سے بالا اُن کے دور
المحکم کے فی سے جوانی کو کے دور اُن کا میں اُن کی کیم بی مارت
المحکم کے فی سے جو بیا زادہ ہیں اُن کی کیم بی مارت کے بیال اُن اُن کو کی سے کیا مارک کا میں کہا ہیں اُن کی کیم بی مارت کے بیال اُن اُن کو کی سے بیار اور ہی بیار اور سے کیم بیار اور سے کیا تور اُن اُن کو کی سے بیار اور سے کیم بیار اور سے بیار اور سے بیار اور سے کیم بیار اور سے بیار سے بیار اور سے بیار سے بیار اور سے بیار سے بیار سے بیار سے بیار سے بیار سے بیار اور سے بیار س

- 72 By 'spiritualists' (rūhānī) is meant those people who consider only spiritual teaching to be necessary.
 The followers of Yazdan (yazdānī) are the Zoroastrians.
- Aristotle was one of the most famous Greek philosophers. He was the teacher of Alexander the Great and the pupil of Plato. He died in 322 BC at the age of 63. Plato was a native of Athens, the capital of Greece, and a pupil of Socrates. He too was an extremely famous philosopher. He died in 348 BC at the age of 81.
- 74 Cf. the Hadith: Al-hikmatu dällatu 'l-mu'mini fa-haithu wajadahā fa-huwa ahaqqu bihā 'Wisdom is something lost by the believer, to which he is entitled wherever he finds it.'

Text and translation

The spread of virtues

72 The Christians took learning and art from them. The Idealists acquired morality.

The Persians learnt manners from them. The Zoroastrians came forward and said, 'Here I am before thee at thy service.'

They broke every heart's connexion with barbarism, and left no house in the world in darkness.

The revival of learning

73* They resurrected the dead arts of Aristotle, and made Plato come to life again.

They made every city and town a Greece, and let everyone taste the delights of learning and philosophy.

They pulled aside the veil from the eye of the world, and aroused the age from its heavy slumber.

The quest for knowledge

74 They went and filled their cup from every tavern, and came sated from every watering-place.

They fell like the moth on every flame. They guarded as precious the Prophet's command,

'Think of learning as a lost ruby. Wherever you find it, consider it to be your property.'

75* They became seekers after every science and every art. They excelled everyone in every task.

They became unmatched and unique in agriculture, and famous throughout the world in travelling.

Their architecture spread into every land. Every people learnt trade from them.

Public works

76 They went and made every desolate land flourish. They prepared the material basis for everyone's comfort.

Mountains and deserts were dangerous were turned by them into the envy of the rose-garden's enclosure.

The spring season which has now come into the world had its seedlings planted by them.