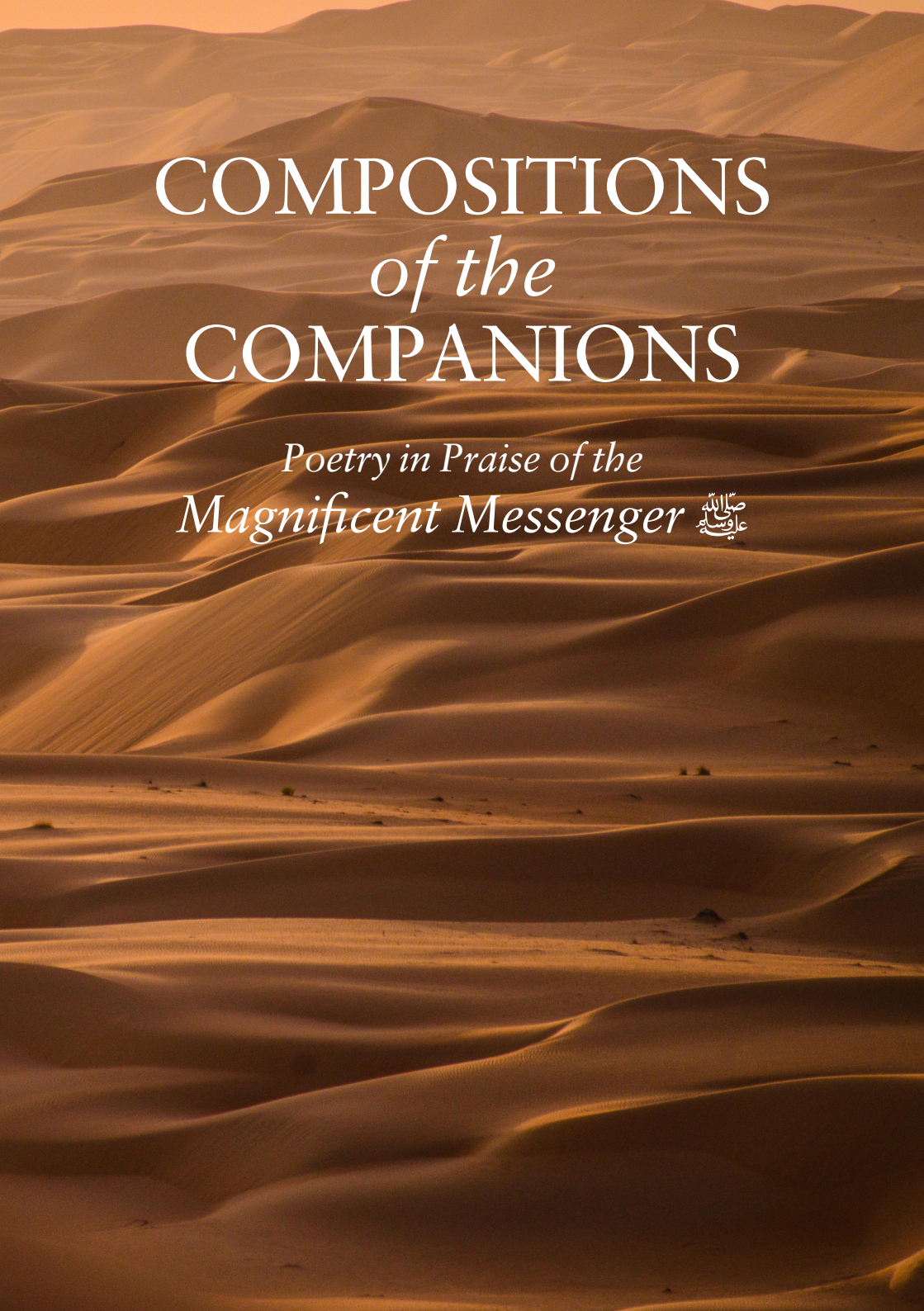




COMPOSITIONS *of the* COMPANIONS

*Poetry in Praise of the
Magnificent Messenger ﷺ*

ARABIC POETRY SERIES

COMPOSITIONS *of the* COMPANIONS

*Poetry in Praise of the
Magnificent Messenger ﷺ*

Translated by
MOUSTAFA ELQABBANY



THE ROYAL ISLAMIC STRATEGIC STUDIES CENTRE

ARABIC POETRY SERIES

COMPOSITIONS OF THE COMPANIONS

Poetry in Praise of the Magnificent Messenger ﷺ

Translated by Moustafa Elqabbany

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TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

*Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. May He confer blessings
upon our Master Muhammad, his folk, and companions,
and grant them peace.*

This is a collection of poetry in praise of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ that was recited by his companions in his presence ﷺ. This collection draws almost exclusively from Imam Ibn Sayyid al-Nās's *Minaḥ al-Midah*. On occasion, verses have been adjusted for clarity by including alternate recensions from other sources.

While the translations herein are not literal, they do present a poetic rendition of Prophetic-era verse in idiomatic English. With one exception, all translations in this work are originals. As for Ka'b ibn Zuhayr's epic *Mantle Ode* (*Burdah*), its translation has been copied verbatim from Suzanne Stetkevych's *The Mantle Odes: Arabic Praise Poems to the Prophet Muhammad*.

May Allah accept this work and increase love for the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ through it. *Ameen*.

MOUSTAFA ELQABBANY

The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre
Amman, Jordan

16 May 2023 C.E. / 26 Shawwāl 1444 A.H.

COMPOSITIONS
of the
COMPANIONS



Poets Whose Names Begin with *Alif*

Aswad ibn Masʿūd al-Thaqafī

Tonight, I've come to worship only God,
The Lord of Men when mankind's been amassed,
Creator of this world and all we laud.
When tree and water are no more, He's asked.

I seek but God alone. I'll worship Him
As long as valley beds are made of stone.
The Messenger's the one who's gifts are sought
In drought when what remains of rain is none.

أَسْوَدُ بْنُ مَسْعُودٍ الثَّقَفِيُّ

[البسيط]

أَمْسَيْتُ أَعْبُدُ رَبِّي لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ رَبِّ الْعِبَادِ إِذَا مَا حُصِّلَ الْبَشَرُ
أَهْلُ الْمَحَامِدِ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَخَالِقُهَا وَالْمُجْتَدَى حِينَ لَا مَاءٌ وَلَا شَجَرُ
لَا أَبْتَغِي بَدَلًا بِاللَّهِ أَعْبُدُهُ مَا دَامَ بِالْجَزَعِ مِنْ أَرْكَانِهِ حَجَرُ
إِنَّ الرَّسُولَ الَّذِي تُرْجَى نَوَافِلُهُ عِنْدَ الْقُحُوطِ إِذَا مَا أَقْحَطَ الْمَطَرُ

Anas ibn Zunaym

Through your command, Maʿadd is set aright,
Nay, God guides, bidding you bear witness bright.

No beast has carried on its back a greater man,
Than great Muhammad, truthful, kind beyond the span.

He bids for good and gives with open hand;
His parting gleams like sword of Indian brand.

Unasked, he paid for Yemen's cloaks with due respect,
And for the swiftest steed, unmatched, he gave direct.

God's Messenger, know you have caught me, and
Your threat's like being bounded by the hand.

God's Messenger, know you possess domain
Of those in Najd and on Tihāmah's plains.

God's Messenger's been told I've criticized
Him—may this hand of mine be paralyzed!

No honour have I soiled, no blood I've shed.
Remind the folks who know, with level head.

أَنَسُ بْنُ زُنَيْمٍ

[الطويل]

وَأَنْتَ الَّذِي تُهْدِي مَعَدُّ بِأَمْرِهِ
فَمَا حَمَلْتُ مِنْ نَاقَةٍ فَوْقَ رَحْلِهَا
أَحْتَّ عَلَى خَيْرٍ وَأَوْسَعَ نَائِلًا
وَأَكْسَى لِبُرْدِ الْخَالِ قَبْلَ اجْتِدَائِهِ
تَعَلَّمْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَنَّكَ مُدْرِكِي
تَعَلَّمْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَنَّكَ قَادِرٌ
وَنُبِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ أَنْ قَدْ هَجَوْتُهُ
فَإِنِّي لَا عِرْضًا خَرَقْتُ وَلَا دَمًا
بَلِ اللَّهُ يَهْدِيهَا وَقَالَ لَكَ أَشْهَدُ
أَبْرًا وَأَوْفَى ذِمَّةً مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ
إِذَا رَاحَ يَهْتَزُّ اهْتَزَّازَ الْمُهَنْدِ
وَأَعْطَى لِرَأْسِ السَّابِقِ الْمُتَجَرِّدِ
وَأَنَّ وَعِيدًا مِنْكَ كَالْأَخْذِ بِالْيَدِ
عَلَى كُلِّ سَكْنٍ مِنْ تِهَامٍ وَمُنْجِدِ
فَلَا رَفَعْتَ سَوْطِي إِلَيَّ إِذْ نِيَدِي
هَرَقْتُ فَذَكَّرُ عَالِمَ الْحَقِّ وَاقْصِدِ

Poets Whose Names Begin with *Thā'*

Tharwān ibn Fazārah ibn ʿAbd Yaghūth

God's Messenger, to you my camel's run
Across great lands as rises, sets, the sun.

Poets Whose Names Begin with *Jīm*

Jahīsh ibn Uways al-Nakhaʿī

God's Messenger, you speak the truth, indeed!
Blessèd be you, our guide and guided lead!

You brought the faith that spun our lives anew;
Like asses we had worshipped gods untrue.

O greatest of those called and those God sent—
From man and jinn—I serve your call's ascent.

You've brought clear proof about this here affair,
And you've emerged among us true and fair.

ثُرَوَانُ بْنُ فَزَارَةَ بْنِ عَبْدِ يَغُوثٍ

[الطويل]

إِلَيْكَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ خَبْتُ مَطِئَتِي مَسَافَةً أَرْبَاعِ تَرَوْحٍ وَتَغْتَدِي

جَهَيْشُ بْنُ أُوَيْسٍ النَّخَعِيُّ

[الطويل]

أَلَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنَّكَ صَادِقٌ فَبُورِكَتَ مَهْدِيًّا وَبُورِكَتَ هَادِيَا
شَرَعْتَ لَنَا دِينَ الْحَنِيفَةِ بَعْدَمَا عَبَدْنَا، كَأَمْثَالِ الْحَمِيرِ، طَوَاغِيَا
فِيَا خَيْرَ مَدْعُوٍّ وَيَا خَيْرَ مُرْسَلٍ مِنَ الْإِنْسِ بَلِّ وَالْجَانِ، لَبَّيْكَ دَاعِيَا
أَتَيْتَ بِيْرَهَانَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ وَاضِحٍ فَأَصْبَحْتَ فِينَا صَادِقَ الْوَعْدِ زَاكِيا

Poets Whose Names Begin with *Ḥā'*

Ḥassān ibn Thābit

O trusty pillar, refuge of the destitute,
O shelter sought, and kindest neighbour, sans dispute,
O you the Lord has picked for everyone,
And thus He graced you with all good, bar none.
For you're the Prophet, best of Adam's seed,
O you whose gifts flood forth like endless seas.
Both Gabriel and Michael at your side
Are aids to victory from God, Most High.



Most noble are God's Messenger's own team
At times when minds and men do plot and scheme.

Ḥumayd ibn Thawr Al-Hilālī

No friend of yours will ever find a cure,
Despite his love and loss in paths obscure,
Until he's with Muhammad, all secure.

حَسَّانُ بْنُ ثَابِتٍ بْنِ الْمُنْذَرِ بْنِ حَرَامِ الْأَنْصَارِيِّ

[الكامل]

يا رُكْنَ مُعْتَمِدٍ وَعِصْمَةٍ لَا تُدْ وَمَلَاذٍ مُتَتَجِعٍ وَجَارٍ مُجَاوِرِ
يا مَنْ تَخَيَّرَهُ الْإِلَهُ لِيَخْلُقَهُ فَحَبَاهُ بِالْخَلْقِ الزَّكِيِّ الطَّاهِرِ
أَنْتَ النَّبِيُّ وَخَيْرُ عُصْبَةِ آدَمَ يا مَنْ يَجُودُ كَفَيْضِ بَحْرِ زَاخِرِ
مِيكَالُ مَعَكَ وَجِبْرِئِيلُ كِلَاهُمَا مَدَدٌ لِنَصْرِكَ مِنْ عَزِيزٍ قَاهِرِ



[البسيط]

أَكْرَمَ بِقَوْمِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ شِيعَتَهُمْ إِذَا تَفَرَّقَتِ الْأَهْوَاءُ وَالشَّيْعُ

حُمَيْدُ بْنُ ثَوْرِ الْهَلَالِيِّ الشَّاعِرِ

[الرجز]

مَا يَشْتَفِي مِنْكُمْ حَيْبٌ أَبَدًا أَلْحَدَ فِيمَا يَنْبَغِي وَأَوْجَدَا
حَتَّى أَتَيْتُ الْمُصْطَفَى مُحَمَّدًا

Poets Whose Names Begin with *Khā'*

Khufāf ibn Naḍlah al-Thaqafī

I've been in touch with someone in the know,
A jinn from Wajrah letting secrets flow.
On many nights, he recommended you,
And then, in hubris, said: 'I shall not go.'

Poets Whose Names Begin with *Dhāl*

Dhubāb

I followed God's Apostle, when truth he'd proclaimed
And left Farrāṣ¹ behind in ruin and in shame.

With force I'd pushed him, then released his frame,
And he was naught. Life's trials are untame.

When God's faith triumphed, resolute and pure,
I heeded His Apostle's call for sure.

And as Islam's aid, I've emerged most true,
With truth of purpose, all that I can do.

Sa'd al-ʿAshīrah—tell him of this news:
I've purchased what remains for transient views.

¹ The name of an idol belonging to Sa'd al-ʿAshīrah that the poet had destroyed.

خُفَافُ بْنُ نَضْلَةَ الثَّقَفِيُّ

[الكامل]

إِنِّي أَتَانِي فِي الْأُمُورِ مُخَبِّرٌ مِنْ جَنٍّ وَجَرَةٍ فِي الْأُمُورِ مُوَاتٍ
يَدْعُو إِلَيْكَ لِيَالِيَا وَلِيَالِيَا ثُمَّ احْزَأَلَّ وَقَالَ لَسْتُ بِآتٍ

ذُبَابٌ

[الطويل]

تَبِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِذْ جَاءَ بِالْهُدَى وَخَلَفْتُ فَرَاصًا بِدَارِ هَوَانٍ
شَدَدْتُ عَلَيْهِ شَدَّةً فَتَرَكْتُهُ كَأَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ، وَالذَّهْرُ ذُو حَدَثَانٍ
وَلَمَّا رَأَيْتُ اللَّهَ أَظْهَرَ دِينَهُ أَجَبْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ حِينَ دَعَانِي
فَأَصْبَحْتُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ مَا عَشْتُ نَاصِرًا وَالْقَيْتُ فِيهِ كُلِّكَلِي وَجِرَانِي
فَمَنْ مُبْلِغُ سَعْدِ الْعَشِيرَةِ أَنَّنِي شَرَيْتُ الَّذِي يَبْقَى بِأَخْرَفَانٍ

Poets Whose Names Begin with *Zāy*

Ziml ibn ʿAmr al-ʿUdhri

To you, God's Messenger, my mount I've spurred
Through rough terrain and dunes, with faith assured,

To grant the best of men a victory,
And link your rope to mine in unity.

My debt's to God alone, I testify,
As long as my own sandals bear me nigh.

Zuhayr ibn ʿUrad al-Jushamī

God's Messenger, please shower us in grace,²
For you're our hope, our valiant embrace.

Grace nobles hindered by fate's dire plight,
Whose stature fell from fortune's lofty height,

Left stranded crying in life's hardest place,
Our hearts o'erwhelmed by sorrow's grim embrace.

Unless your grace, most kind and proven true,
Should reach us now, then what are we to do?

² This poem was composed when the poet's tribe had been taken as captives by Muslims.

زِمْلُ بْنُ عَمْرِو الْعُذْرِي

[الطويل]

إِلَيْكَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَعَمَلْتُ نَصَّهَا أَكَلَّفَهَا حَزْنًا وَقَوُزًا مِنَ الرَّمْلِ
لِأَنْصُرَ خَيْرَ النَّاسِ نَصْرًا مُؤَزَّرًا وَأَعَقَدَ حَبْلًا مِنْ حِبَالِكَ فِي حَبْلِي
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا شَيْءَ غَيْرُهُ أَدِينُ لَهُ مَا أَثْقَلَتْ قَدَمِي نَعْلِي

زُهَيْرُ بْنُ صُرَدِ الْجُشَمِيِّ

[البسيط]

أَمُنْ عَلَيْنَا - رَسُولَ اللَّهِ - فِي كَرَمٍ فَإِنَّكَ الْمَرْءُ نَرَجُوهُ وَنَتَّظِرُ
أَمُنْ عَلَى بَيْضَةٍ قَدْ عَاقَهَا قَدَرٌ مُشَتَّتٌ شَمْلُهَا، فِي دَهْرِهَا غَيْرُ
أَبَقْتُ لَنَا الدَّهْرَ هَتَّافًا عَلَى حَزَنِ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمُ الْغَمَاءُ وَالْغَمَرُ
إِنْ لَمْ تُدَارِكْهُمْ نِعْمَاءُ تَنْشُرُهَا يَا أَرْجَحَ النَّاسِ حِلْمًا حِينَ يُخْتَبَرُ

Grace ladies who'd once nursed yourself with care,
Back when your mouth was filled with milk, most fair;

When, as a child, you suckled at their breasts,
And you they'd teach to seek and to protest.

So treat us not like folk devoid of guide,
But spare a group, for we're a decent tribe.

Grateful are we for blessings shunned by some;
Today we'll get a surplus, goodly sum.

So clothe your mothers, who gave life's first feed,
In pardon, for your pardon's known indeed.

O best of men for whom bay chargers leap³
Into the battle's fray when sparks burn deep.

We're hopeful that your pardon clothe this folk,
O man of pardon, bearing triumph's cloak.

Forgive us; may God pardon what you've given
On Judgment Day, when triumph's to you driven.

³ In this context, a 'charger' is a powerful steed of war, and 'bay' is its colour.

إِذْ فُوكَ تَمَلَّؤُهُ مِنْ مَحْضِهَا دِرَرُ	اُمْنُ عَلَى نِسْوَةٍ قَدْ كُنْتَ تَرْضَعُهَا
وَإِذْ يُرِينُكَ مَا تَأْتِي وَمَا تَذَرُ	إِذْ أَنْتَ طِفْلٌ صَغِيرٌ كُنْتَ تَرْضَعُهَا
وَاسْتَبَقِ مِنَّا فَإِنَّا مَعَشَرُ زُهْرُ	لَا تَجْعَلُنَا كَمَنْ شَأَلَتْ نَعَامَتُهُ
وَعِنْدَنَا بَعْدَ هَذَا الْيَوْمِ مُدَّخَرُ	إِنَّا لَنَشْكُرُ لِلنَّعْمَاءِ إِذْ كُفِرْتُ
مِنْ أُمَّهَاتِكَ إِنَّ الْعَفْوَ مُشْتَهَرُ	فَأَلْبَسِ الْعَفْوَ مَنْ قَدْ كُنْتَ تَرْضَعُهُ
عِنْدَ الْهِجَابِ إِذَا مَا اسْتَوْقَدَ الشَّرُّ	يَا خَيْرَ مَنْ مَرَحَتْ كُمْتُ الْجِيَادِ بِهِ
هَذِي الْبَرِيَّةُ إِذْ تَعْفُو وَتَنْتَصِرُ	إِنَّا نُؤْمَلُ عَفْوًا مِنْكَ تَلْبُسُهُ
يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِذْ يُهْدَى لَكَ الظَّفَرُ	فَاغْفِرْ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَمَّا أَنْتَ وَاهِبُهُ

Poets Whose Names Begin with *Sīn*

Salamah ibn ʿIyāḍ al-Asadī

O noblest of mankind, you've spread a tome
Whose clear instruction with the truth is known.

Through it, you've shown truth's great and guiding light
When darkness reigned, and blinded was our sight.

With the Qur'an, despite our darkest fray,
You did extinguish disbelief's deep sway.

God's grandeur's far above celestial spheres;
His rank transcends all things, both far and near.

Sawād ibn Qārib

After a lull, my confidant appeared—
A truthful one, by lying words, unsmeared—

Three nights elapsed, each eve he'd say most clear:
'A messenger from great Lu'ayy is here.'

I tied my wrap and mounted, camel-back—
A swift, neat ride across the desert's tracks.

I testify that God alone does reign.
Your truth in unseen matters, I maintain,

O son of noble lineage, pure, refined,
And closest of God's messengers, assigned.

سَلَمَةُ بْنُ عِيَاضِ الْأَسَدِيِّ

[الطويل]

رَأَيْتُكَ يَا خَيْرَ الْبَرِيَّةِ كُلِّهَا
شَرَعْتَ لَنَا فِيهِ الْهُدَى بَعْدَ جَوْرِنَا
وَأَوْضَحْتَ بِالْقُرْآنِ ظُلُمَاءَ حَنْدِسٍ
تَعَالَى عُلُوُّ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ سَمَائِهِ
نَشَرْتَ كِتَابًا جَاءَ بِالْحَقِّ مُعْلِمًا
عَنِ الْحَقِّ لَمَّا أَضْبَحَ الْأَمْرُ مُظْلِمًا
وَأَطْفَأَتْ نَارَ الْكُفْرِ لَمَّا تَضَرَّمَا
وَكَانَ مَكَانُ اللَّهِ أَعْلَى وَأَعْظَمَا

سَوَادُ بْنُ قَارِبٍ

[الطويل]

أَتَانِي نَجِييَ بَعْدَ هَدْيٍ وَرَقْدَةٍ
ثَلَاثَ لَيَالٍ، قَوْلُهُ كُلَّ لَيْلَةٍ:
فَشَمَّرْتُ عَنْ ذَيْلِي الْإِزَارَ وَوَسَّطْتُ
فَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا رَبَّ غَيْرُهُ
وَأَنَّكَ أَدْنَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ وَسِيلَةً
وَلَمْ يَكُ فِيمَا قَدْ عَهِدْتُ بِكَاذِبٍ
أَتَاكَ رَسُولٌ مِنْ لُؤَيٍّ بْنِ غَالِبٍ
بِی الدَّعْلُبِ الْوَجْنَاءِ بَيْنَ السَّبَابِ
وَأَنَّكَ مَأْمُونٌ عَلَى كُلِّ غَائِبٍ
إِلَى اللَّهِ يَا ابْنَ الْأَكْرَمِينَ الْأَطَايِبِ

Poets Whose Names Begin with *Zā'*

Zabyān ibn Kudādah

By Ṣafā and The Ancient House I swear,
The oath of one whose words will truth lay bare:

In you we find praise, virtue, blessed light,
And truthfulness, trustworthiness, most bright.

Poets Whose Names Begin with *ʿAyn*

Al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib

In shadows deep, how lovely was your grace,
Amidst a heap of leaves that were embraced.⁴

Then you descended, not in human guise;
Not flesh, nor clot, did at that time arise,

But as a drop, you sailed the Ark's great tide,
While Nasr⁵ and kin, by drowning, were belied,

From loins to wombs, your passage did proceed;
As one group died, another would succeed,

⁴ A reference to *Ṣād*, 20:121. The poet is referring to the existence of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in the loins and womb of Adam and Eve in Paradise.

⁵ A deity that the people of Noah ﷺ had worshipped.

ظَبْيَانُ بْنُ كُدَادَةَ الْإِيَادِي

[الطويل]

فَأَشْهَدُ بِالْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ وَبِالصِّفَا
بِأَنَّكَ مَحْمُودٌ لَدَيْنَا مُبَارَكٌ
شَهَادَةٌ مِّنْ إِحْسَانِهِ مُتَقَبَّلٌ
وَفِيَّ أَمِينٌ صَادِقُ الْقَوْلِ مُرْسَلٌ

الْعَبَّاسُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْمَطَّلِبِ

[المنسرح]

مِنْ قَبْلِهَا طُبْتَ فِي الظَّلَالِ وَفِي
ثُمَّ هَبَطْتَ الْبِلَادَ لَا بَشَرٌ
بَلْ نُطْفَةٌ تَرَكَبُ السَّفِينِ وَقَدْ
تُنْقَلُ مِنْ صَالِبٍ إِلَى رَحِمٍ
مُسْتَوْدَعٌ حَيْثُ يُخْصَفُ الْوَرَقُ
أَنْتَ وَلَا مُضْغَةٌ وَلَا عَلَقُ
أَلْجَمَ نَسْرًا وَأَهْلَهُ الْغَرَقُ
إِذَا مَضَى عَالَمٌ بَدَأَ طَبَقُ

‘Till Khindif’s noble house a summit claimed,
Adorned below by belts, with pride sustained.⁶

And at your birth, the sun lit up the land;
Its light filled up horizons, vast and grand.

Immersed we stand; in radiant glow we’re draped;
In virtue’s paths and goodness we’ve been shaped.

Al-‘Abbās ibn Mirdās al-Sulamī

O Prophet, Seal of Truth, of noble mission:
All guidance of the path is your possession.

Among creation, love for you’s been set;
Muhammad is your name per God’s behest.

‘Abdullāh ibn Ḥadaf

O sons of Ḥārith,⁷ hailed as Yemen’s best,
Unto Muhammad is your noble quest.

The Prophet’s call you’ve answered with your zeal;
Your idols you’ve forsaken, truth revealed.

⁶ Khindif (or, Khindaf) was wife to Ilyās and mother to Mudrikah, ancestors of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The reference to ‘belts’ is a play on words: it can refer to either mountain belts below a summit or women’s belts. In the first sense, the poet is saying that Khindif’s descendants are nobler than other tribes. In the second, he is saying that other tribes provide support for Khindif’s descendants.

⁷ A tribe from Najrān, Yemen.

حَتَّىٰ اَحْتَوَىٰ بَيْتَكَ الْمُهِمِّمُنْ مِنْ
وَأَنْتَ لَمَّا وُلِدْتَ أَشْرَقْتَ الْ
فَنَحْنُ فِي ذَلِكَ الضِّيَاءِ وَفِي النَّ
خَنْدِفِ عَلِيَاءَ تَحْتَهَا النُّطُقُ
أَرْضُ فَضَاءَتْ بِنُورِهَا الْأُفُقُ
نُورِ وَسُبُلِ الرَّشَادِ نَخْتَرُقُ

الْعَبَّاسُ بْنُ مِرْدَاسِ السُّلَمِيِّ

[الكامل]

يَا خَاتَمَ النَّبَاءِ إِنَّكَ مُرْسَلٌ
إِنَّ الْإِلَٰهَ بَنَىٰ عَلَيْكَ مَحَبَّةً
بِالْحَقِّ، كُلُّ هُدَى السَّبِيلِ هُدَاكَ
مِنْ خَلْقِهِ وَمُحَمَّدًا سَمَّاكَ

عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ حَدَفٍ

[الخفيف]

قَدْ وَفَدْتُمْ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ وَكُنْتُمْ
فَقَبِلْتُمْ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ دُعَاهُ
يَا بَنِي حَارِ خَيْرٍ وَفِدِ يَمَانٍ
وَحَلَعْتُمْ عِبَادَةَ الْأَوْثَانِ
فَاسْتَقِيمُوا عَلَى الطَّرِيقِ إِلَى اللَّهِ
وَمُوتُوا فَرَضًا عَلَى الْإِيمَانِ

So in God's path persist in steadfast might;
In faith, depart this world to endless light.

ʿAbdullāh ibn Rawāḥah

In you, I've seen all goodness, clear and true;
God knows my sense is truthful, through and through.

You are the Prophet—those denied your plea
At Judgment are disgraced most fatefully.

God fortify the good bestowed on thee,
Like Moses, and the like with victory.

ʿAbdullāh ibn al-Zibāʿrī

My sleep took flight, and worries filled my nights—
Most dark and topsy-turvy, void of light—

As Ahmad's⁸ censure fell upon my ear,
A feverish night befell me, filled with fear.

O best of all those carried by swift-paced-
And-onager-like camels, full of grace,

I do apologize for errant ways
When aimlessly I'd wandered, lost, astray,

⁸ I.e., The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

عبدُ اللهِ بنُ رَواحة

[البسيط]

إِنِّي تَفَرَّسْتُ فِيكَ الْخَيْرَ أَعْرِفُهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّ مَا خَانَنِي الْبَصَرُ
أَنْتَ النَّبِيُّ، وَمَنْ يُحَرِّمُ شَفَاعَتَهُ يَوْمَ الْحِسَابِ لَقَدْ أَزْرَى بِهِ الْقَدَرُ
فَتَبَّتْ اللَّهُ مَا آتَاكَ مِنْ حَسَنِ تَثْبِيتَ مُوسَى وَنَصْرًا كَالَّذِي نَصَرُوا

عبد الله بن الزبَعْرَى

[الكامل]

مَنْعَ الرُّقَادِ بِلَابِلٍ وَهَمُومٍ وَاللَّيْلُ مُعْتَلِجُ الرُّوَاقِ بِهِيمٍ
مِمَّا أَتَانِي أَنَّ أَحْمَدَ لَامَنِي فِيهِ فَبْتُ كَأَنِّي مَحْمُومٍ
يَا خَيْرَ مَنْ حَمَلْتُ عَلَى أَوْصَالِهَا عَيْرَانَهُ سُرْحُ الْيَدَيْنِ غَشُومٍ
إِنِّي لَمُعْتَذِرٌ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الَّذِي أَسَدَيْتُ إِذْ أَنَا فِي الضَّلَالِ أَهِيمٍ

When I'd been then assigned a devious plot
By Sahm and by Mahkzūm, with evil fraught!⁹

Misguided men's commands, which proved untrue,
I'd heed with rope outstretched, their plans pursued!

Today, my heart finds faith in Prophet's creed:
Muhammad, from whom miscreants recede!

Enmity's passed; its reasons are now lore.
Show mercy as you're shown, have shown, before.

With regal grace, the King bestowed a sign,
Of radiant blaze,¹⁰ perfected seal, most fine—

He gave you love along with proof combined—
The Lord's immense proof, through His grace entwined.

‘Abd ‘Amr ibn Jabalah

For guidance, to God's Messenger I went,
And thanks to God, in love, my heart's content.

From goblets' joys, I've chosen to depart,
Though drink and mirthful times had been my art.

In God, of lofty rank, I do believe,
Denying idols, long as I can breathe.

⁹ Sahm and Mahkzūm are the names of two clans.

¹⁰ A horse's blaze is a white strip that extends down its face. It is commonly used when describing nobility.

أَيَّامَ تَأْمُرُنِي بِأَغْوَى خِطَّةٍ سَهْمٌ وَيَأْمُرُنِي بِهَا مَخْزُومٌ
وَأُمْدُ أَسْبَابِ الرَّدَى وَيَقُودُنِي أَمْرُ الْغُوَاةِ، وَأَمْرُهُمْ مَشُوءٌ
فَالْيَوْمَ آمَنَ بِالنَّبِيِّ مُحَمَّدٍ قَلْبِي، وَمُخْطِئُهُ هَذِهِ مَحْرُومٌ
مَضَتِ الْعَدَاوَةُ وَانْقَضَتْ أَسْبَابُهَا وَارْحَمْ فَإِنَّكَ رَاحِمٌ مَرْحُومٌ
وَعَلَيْكَ مِنْ سِمَةِ الْمَلِكِ عَلَامَةٌ نَوْزُ أَغْرُ وَخَاتَمٌ مَخْتُومٌ
أَعْطَاكَ بَعْدَ مَحَبَّةٍ بُرْهَانُهُ شَرَفًا وَبُرْهَانَ الْإِلَهِ عَظِيمٌ

عبدُ عمرو بن جبلة

[الطويل]

أَتَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِذْ جَاءَ بِالْهُدَى فَأَصْبَحْتُ بَعْدَ الْحَمْدِ لِلَّهِ أَوْجَرَا
وَوَدَّعْتُ لَذَاتِ الْقِدَاحِ وَقَدْ أَرَى بِهَا سَدِكََا عُمْرِي وَلِلَّهِ أَصُورَا
وَأَمَنْتُ بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ مَكَانُهُ وَأَصْبَحْتُ لِلْأَوْثَانِ مَا عِشْتُ مِنْكَرَا

‘Urfuṭah ibn Naḍlah (Abū Muk‘it)

I, Abū Muk‘it, truthfully do stand and say:
‘May peace upon you, Abul-Qāsim, be conveyed.’

May peace and fragrance from the Lord be yours,
And peace from those who fast and pray all hours.

No one will conquer your good family,
Nor will your way divided ever be.

‘Amr ibn Sālim

My Lord, I call Muhammad by this claim—
A pledge by our great sire, well-sustained:

Quraysh has broken covenant, firm, true;
Their faithlessness revealed, their deeds askew.

They’ve claimed you hold no sway; their words untrue;
For truth be told, it’s them who’re weak and few.

And in Kadā’, an ambush they have laid,
So call God’s slaves that help may be displayed!

Amidst them stands God’s Messenger, sleeves rolled,
White as the full moon, climbing hilltops, bold.

When asked for some disgrace, his face grows dark;
He glides like foam; his sea of men embark.

عُرْفُطَةُ بْنُ نَضْلَةَ أَبُو مُكْعَتٍ

[المتقارب]

يَقُولُ أَبُو مُكْعَتٍ صَادِقًا	عَلَيْكَ السَّلَامُ أبا القاسِمِ
سَلَامُ الْإِلَهِ وَرِيحَانُهُ	وَرُوحُ الْمُصَلِّينَ وَالصَّائِمِ
فَمَا إِنَّ لِأَهْلِكَ مِنْ غَالِبٍ	وَمَا لِسَبِيلِكَ مِنْ قَاسِمِ

عَمْرُو بْنُ سَالِمٍ

[الرجز]

يَا رَبِّ إِنِّي نَاشِدُ مُحَمَّدًا	حَلَفَ أَبِيهِ وَأَبِينَا الْأَثَلَدَا
إِنَّ قُرَيْشًا أَخْلَفُواكَ الْمَوْعِدَا	وَنَقَضُوا مِيثَاقَكَ الْمُؤَكَّدَا
وَزَعَمُوا أَنْ لَسْتَ تَدْعُو أَحَدًا	وَهُمْ أَذَلُّ وَأَقْلُّ عَدَدَا
وَقَدْ أَقَامُوا بِكَدَاءٍ رَصَدَا	فَادْعُ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ يَأْتُوا مَدَدَا
فِيهِمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ قَدْ تَجَرَّدَا	أَبْيَضُ مِثْلَ الْبَدْرِ يَسْمُو صُعْدَا
إِنْ سِيمَ خَسَفًا وَجْهَهُ تَرَبَّدَا	فِي فَيْلَقٍ كَالْبَحْرِ يَجْرِي مُزْبَدَا

They crushed us as we slumbered on high ground,
Or read Qur'an while praying, safe and sound.

For if we're children, you're our father dear;
And we've embraced Islam; our fealty's clear;

So help, may guidance from the Lord be near!

‘Amr ibn Subay^c

To you, God's envoy, this here mount I've driven,
Through barren wastelands, all alone and riven.

By night, on wide-backed camel, I advance:
By saddle jump, and then its rapid prance.

There's no respite with me—'till you find rest ¹¹
In Hashemite realm, at his door, most blessed.

Then you'll be free; no grief will you then carry
Of sleepless treks, through dunes, and growing hoary.

¹¹ Here and in the following verses, the poet is addressing his camel.

وَقَتَّلُونَا بِالصَّعِيدِ هُجَّدَا نَتْلُو الْقُرْآنَ رُكَّعًا وَسُجَّدًا
وَوَلَدَا كُنَّا وَكُنْتَ الْوَالِدَا ثُمَّتَ أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمْ نَنْزَعْ يَدَا
فَانْصُرْ هَذَاكَ اللَّهُ نَصْرًا أَبَدَا

عمرو بن سبيع

[الطويل]

إِلَيْكَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَعْمَلْتُ نَصَّهَا تَجَوَّبُ الْفَيَافِي سَمْلَقًا بَعْدَ سَمْلَقٍ
عَلَى ذَاتِ الْأَوَاحِ أَكَلَفْتُهَا السُّرَى تَحُبُّ بِرَحْلِي مَرَّةً ثُمَّ تُعِنُّ
فَمَا لَكَ عِنْدِي رَاحَةً أَوْ تُلَحِّحِي بَابِ النَّبِيِّ الْهَاشِمِيِّ الْمُؤَفَّقِ
عُثِّقْتَ إِذْنٌ مِنْ رِحْلَةٍ ثُمَّ رِحْلَةٍ وَقَطَعَ دِيَامِيمٍ وَهَمَّ مُورِقِ

ʿAmr ibn Murrah al-Juhanī

I know God's real! Of stone gods, I'm the first
To shun their worship, while in light immersed.

With wrap rolled up, to you I've made my way,
Through plains, then sinking sands, in light of day.

To join the greatest soul, of sire most fine,
The Messenger of God, Lofty, Divine.

Poets Whose Names Begin with *Qāf*

Qaṭan ibn Ḥārithah

I deem you, O creation's very best,
To've sprung forth pure, from Ka'ab's line, wholly blessed.

In Yem'ni garb, he stands before our sight;
His face a full moon, radiant in the night.

You set the truth's path straight when it was twined;
In drought and harvest, orphans' needs you'd mind.

عَمْرُو بْنُ مُرَّةَ الْجُهَنِيِّ

[الطويل]

شَهِدْتُ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ حَقٌّ وَإِنِّي لِأِلَهَةِ الْأَحْجَارِ أَوَّلُ تَارِكِ
وَشَمَّرْتُ عَنْ سَاقِي الْإِزَارِ مُهَاجِرًا إِلَيْكَ أَجُوبُ الْوَعْثَ بَعْدَ الدَّكَادِكِ
لِأَصْحَبِ خَيْرِ النَّاسِ نَفْسًا وَوَالِدًا رَسُولَ مَلِكِ النَّاسِ فَوْقَ الْحَبَائِكِ

قَطْنُ بْنُ حَارِثَةَ الْعُلَيْمِيِّ الْكَلْبِيِّ

[الطويل]

رَأَيْتُكَ يَا خَيْرَ الْبَرِيَّةِ كُلِّهَا نَبَتْ نُضَارًا فِي الْأَرْوَمَةِ مِنْ كَعْبِ
أَغْرُ كَأَنَّ الْبَدْرَ سُنَّةُ وَجْهِهِ إِذَا مَا بَدَا لِلنَّاسِ فِي حُلِّ الْعَضْبِ
أَقَمْتَ سَبِيلَ الْحَقِّ بَعْدَ اغْوِجَاجِهَا وَرُشْتَ الْيَتَامَى فِي السَّقَايَةِ وَالْجَدْبِ

Qays ibn Nushbah

Muhammad's path I've chosen, heart and soul;
For faith and honour, it's my chosen role.

A man with whom, on guidance, I did vie,
Then pledged my right in his, under the sky.

His era's dawn I'd eagerly await,
'Till God had guided me and sealed my fate.

Of Āminah's son, the trusted one I claim,
My refuge from disgrace, a shield from shame.

Poets Whose Names Begin with *Kāf*

Ka'b ibn Zuhayr

Su'ād has departed and today
 my heart is sick,
A slave to her traces,
 Unransomed and enchained.
On the morning of departure
 when her tribe set out,
Su'ād was but a bleating antelope
 with languid gaze and kohl-lined eye.
When she smiles she flashes
 side teeth wet
As if with a first draught of wine
 or with a second,

قَيْسُ بْنُ نُشْبَةَ بْنِ أَبِي عَامِرٍ

[الكامل]

تَابَعْتُ دِينَ مُحَمَّدٍ وَرَضِيَّتُهُ
كَلَّ الرِّضَا لِأَمَانَتِي وَلِدِينِي
ذَاكَ امْرُؤٌ نَازَعْتُهُ قَوْلَ الْهُدَى
وَعَقَدْتُ فِيهِ يَمِينَهُ بِيَمِينِي
قَدْ كُنْتُ آمَلُهُ وَأَنْظُرُ دَهْرَهُ
وَاللَّهُ قَدَّرَ أَنَّهُ يَهْدِينِي
أَغْنِي ابْنُ أَمْنَةٍ الْأَمِينِ وَمَنْ بِهِ
أَرْجُو السَّلَامَةَ مِنْ عَذَابِ الْهُونِ

كَعْبُ بْنُ زُهَيْرٍ

[السيط]

بَانَتْ سُعَادُ فَقَلْبِي الْيَوْمَ مَتَبُولُ
مَتَيْمٌ إِثْرَهَا لَمْ يُفَدَ مَكْبُولُ
وَمَا سُعَادُ غَدَاةَ الْبَيْنِ إِذْ رَحَلُوا
إِلَّا أَغْنُ غَضِيضُ الطَّرْفِ مَكْحُولُ
تَجَلَّوْا عَوَارِضَ ذِي ظَلَمٍ إِذَا ابْتَسَمَتْ
كَأَنَّهُ مِنْهَلٌ بِالرَّاحِ مَعْلُولُ

Mixed with cool water from a wadi's bend,
 in a pebbled streambed limpid
And sparkling in the noontime sun,
 chilled by the north wind,
Cleansed by the winds
 of all dirt and dust,
And by white cumuli left overflowing
 with a night cloud's rain.
Alas! What a mistress, had she been true
 to what she promised,
Had true advice not gone
 unheeded.
But she is a mistress
 in whose blood are mixed
Calamity, mendacity,
 inconstancy, and perfidy.
She never stays the same
 but is as mutable
As the ghūl in her garb
 ever-changing.
Nor does she hold fast love's bond,
 once she has claimed it,
Except as sieves
 hold water.
The false promises of ʿUrqūb
 were her model;
Her promises were nothing except
 empty prattle.

صَافٍ بِأَبْطَحِ أَضْحَى وَهُوَ مَشْمُولُ	شَجَّتْ بِذِي شَبَمٍ مِنْ مَاءِ مَحْنِيَّةٍ
مِنْ صَوْبِ سَارِيَةِ بِيضٍ يَعَالِيلُ	تَجْلُو الرِّيحُ الْقَذَى عَنْهُ وَأَفْرَطُهُ
مَوْعُودَهَا أَوْ لَوْ أَنَّ النُّصْحَ مَقْبُولُ	يَا وَيَحَهَا خُلَّةً لَوْ أَنَّهَا صَدَقَتْ
فَجَعَّ وَوَلَعُ وَإِخْلَافُ وَتَبْدِيلُ	لَكِنَّهَا خُلَّةٌ قَدْ سَيْطَ مِنْ دَمِهَا
كَمَا تَلَوْنُ فِي أَثَوَابِهَا الْغُولُ	فَمَا تَدُومُ عَلَى حَالٍ تَكُونُ بِهَا
إِلَّا كَمَا تُمَسِّكُ الْمَاءَ الْغَرَابِيلُ	وَمَا تَمَسَّكُ بِالْوَصْلِ الَّذِي زَعَمَتْ
وَمَا مَوَاعِيدُهَا إِلَّا الْأَبَاطِيلُ	كَانَتْ مَوَاعِيدُ عُرْقُوبٍ لَهَا مَثَلًا

I hope and pray that in the end
they'll be fulfilled,
But they will remain forever
unfulfilled.
Don't be deceived by the desires
she aroused, the promises she made,
For hopes and dreams
are a delusion.
Su'ād alit at nightfall in a land
unreachable
But by the best of she-camels
of noble breed and easy pace,
Never to be reached but by a she-camel
huge and robust
That despite fatigue sustains
her amble and her trot,
Sweat gushing from the glands
behind her ears,
Eager for the nameless road,
its way markers effaced,
With the eyes of a lone white antelope
she pierces the unknown
When badlands and sand dunes blaze
in high noon's sun,
Stout where the pendant hangs,
full where the shackle binds,
Her build, the best of all
the stallions' daughters,

أَرْجُو وَأُمَلُّ أَنْ يَعَجَلَنَ فِي أَبَدٍ وَمَا لَهُنَّ طَوَالَ الدَّهْرِ تَعَجِيلُ
فَلَا يَغُرُّنَكَ مَا مَنَّتْ وَمَا وَعَدَتْ إِنَّ الْأَمَانِيَّ وَالْأَحْلَامَ تَضْلِيلُ
أَمَسْتَ سَعَادُ بِأَرْضٍ لَا يُبَلِّغُهَا إِلَّا الْعِتَاقُ النَّجِيَّاتُ الْمَرَاسِيلُ
وَلَنْ يَبْلُغَهَا إِلَّا عُذَافِرَةٌ فِيهَا عَلَى الْأَيْنِ إِرْقَالُ وَتَبْغِيلُ
مِنْ كُلِّ نَضَاحَةِ الذِّفْرِى إِذَا عَرِقَتْ عُرْضَتُهَا طَامِسُ الْأَعْلَامِ مَجْهُولُ
تَرْمِي الْغُيُوبَ بِعَيْنِي مُفْرَدٍ لَهَقٍ إِذَا تَوَقَّدَتِ الْحُزَانُ وَالْمِيلُ
ضَخَمَ مُقَلَّدُهَا فَعَمَّ مُقَيَّدُهَا فِي خَلْقِهَا عَنْ بَنَاتِ الْفَحْلِ تَفْضِيلُ

Huge as a mountain, her sire her sibling,
by a dam blood-stallion bred,
Her uncle by sire and dam the same,
She is long-necked, brisk-paced.
The tick walks on her hide,
but then the smoothness
Of her breast and flank
makes it slip off.
Sturdy as the onager,
her sides piled with meat,
Her knees set wide, clear of
The breastbone's daughters,
As if her muzzle and
the two sides of her jaw
Between her eyes and throat
were an oblong stone.
She brushes with a tail
like a stripped palm branch, tufted
Over a dry udder,
its milk ducts unimpaired,
Hook-nosed, in her ears the expert eye
discerns nobility of breed,
In her two cheeks,
great smoothness.
Overtaking others, she speeds
on legs lance-like and nimble,
Like an oath annulled they barely
touch the ground,

حَرَفُ أَخُوها أَبوها مِنْ مُهَجَّجَةٍ
يَمشي القُرْأُ عَلَيْها ثُمَّ يُزَلِّقُها
عِيرانَهُ قَذَفَتْ فِي اللَّحْمِ عَنْ عُرْضِ
كَأَنَّما فَاتَ عَيْنِها وَمَذْبَحَها
تَمَرٌّ مِثْلَ عَسِيبِ النَّخْلِ ذَا خُصَلٍ
قَنَواءُ فِي حُرَّتِها لِلْبَصِيرِ بِها
تَخْدي عَلَى يَسَراتٍ - وَهِيَ لَاحِقَةٌ -
وَعَمَّها خالُها قَوداءُ شِمْلِيلُ
مِنْها لَبانٌ وَأَقْرابُ زَهايلُ
مِرْفَقُها عَنْ بَناتِ الزَّورِ مَفْتُولُ
مِنْ خَطَمِها وَمِنْ اللَّحْيَيْنِ بِرِطِيلُ
فِي غارِزٍ لَمْ تَخَوْنَهُ الْأَحالِيلُ
عِتْقُ مُبِينٌ وَفِي الخَدَّيْنِ تَسْهِيلُ
ذَوابِلُ وَقَعُهنَّ الْأَرْضَ تَحْلِيلُ

Brown their sole sinews, they scatter
 pebbles in their wake,
So tough no shoes protect them
 on the hilltops
On a day when the chameleon
 is as burnt as if
His sun-scorched parts were bread
 baked on hot rock.
As if the repeating motion of her forelegs—
 when she is drenched in sweat
And when the narrow mountain peaks
 are cloaked in the mirage,
And the camel driver, his song their goad,
 says to the tribe
When ashen locusts kick up pebbles,
 “Stop and rest,”—
At high noon were the arms of a woman
 tall and middle-aged,
Risen in lament, then others,
 near-barren and bereft, respond,
Wailing, arms flailing,
 when the heralds announced
The death of her firstborn,
 bereft of reason,
Tearing her clothes from her breast
 with her bare hands,
Her woolen shift ripped from her collarbone
 in shreds.

سُمِرُ الْعُجَايَاتِ يَتَرُكْنَ الْحَصَى زَيْمًا	لَمْ يَقِهَنَّ رُءُوسَ الْأُكْمِ تَنْعِيلُ
يَوْمًا يَظَلُّ بِهِ الْحِرْبَاءُ مُصْطَخِمًا	كَأَنَّ ضَاحِيَهُ بِالنَّارِ مَمْلُوءُ
كَأَنَّ أَوْبَ ذِرَاعِيهَا وَقَدْ عَرِقَتْ	وَقَدْ تَلَفَعَ بِالْقُورِ الْعَسَاقِيلُ
وَقَالَ لِلْقَوْمِ حَادِيهِمْ وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُ	وُورِقُ الْجَنَادِبِ يَرْكُضْنَ الْحَصَا: قِيلُوا
شَدَّ النَّهَارِ ذِرَاعَا عَيْطَلٍ نَصَفٍ	قَامَتْ فَجَاوَبَهَا نُكْدٌ مَثَاكِيلُ
نَوَاحَةٌ رَخْوَةٌ الضَّبْعَيْنِ لَيْسَ لَهَا	لَمَّا نَعَى بِكَرْهَا النَّاعُونَ مَعْقُولُ
تَفْرِي اللَّبَانَ بِكَفِّيْهَا، وَمِدْرَعُهَا	مُشَقَّقٌ عَنْ تَرَاقِيْهَا رَعَابِيلُ

My slanderers at her two sides
denounced me saying,
“You, O Son of Abū Sulmá, are
as good as dead.”
And every trusted friend in whom
I put my hopes
Said, “I cannot help you, I am occupied
with other things.”
So I replied, “Out of my way,
you bastards!”
For all that the All-Merciful decrees
will come to pass!
For every man of woman born,
though he be long secure,
Will one day be borne
on humpbacked bier.
I was told God’s Messenger
had threatened me,
But from God’s Messenger
pardon is hoped.
Go easy, and let Him be your guide
who gave to you
The gift of the Qur’ān in which
are warnings and discernment!
Don’t hold me to account for what
my slanderers have said,
For, however great the lies against me,
I have not sinned!

يَسْعَى الْوُشَاةُ بِجَنَبَيْهَا وَقَوْلُهُمْ
وَقَالَ كُلُّ خَلِيلٍ كُنْتُ أَمْلُهُ
فَقُلْتُ خَلُّوا طَرِيقِي لَا أَبَا لَكُمْ
كُلُّ ابْنِ أُنْثَى وَإِنْ طَالَتْ سَلَامَتُهُ
أُنْبِتُ أَنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَوْعَدَنِي
مَهْلًا هَذَا الَّذِي أَعْطَاكَ نَافِلَةَ الْ-
لَا تَأْخُذْنِي بِأَقْوَالِ الْوُشَاةِ وَلَمْ
إِنَّكَ يَا ابْنَ أَبِي سُلَمَى لَمَقْتُولُ
لَا إِلَهِيَنَّكَ إِنِّي عَنْكَ مَشْغُولُ
فَكُلُّ مَا قَدَّرَ الرَّحْمَنُ مَفْعُولُ
يَوْمًا عَلَى آلَةٍ حَذَبَاءَ مَحْمُولُ
وَالْعَفْوُ عِنْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ مَأْمُولُ
قُرْآنٍ فِيهَا مَوَاعِيظُ وَتَفْصِيلُ
أُذْنِبَ وَلَوْ كَثُرَتْ عَنِّي الْأَقَاوِيلُ

I stood where I saw and heard
 what would have made
The mighty pachyderm,
 had it stood in my stead,
Quake with fear unless
 the Messenger of God,
By God's leave,
 granted it protection,
Until I placed my right hand,
 without contending,
In the hand of an avenger,
 his word the word.
He is more dreaded by me
 when I speak to him
And I am told, "You will be questioned
 and must answer,"
Than a lion,
 snapping and rapacious,
Its lair in 'Aththar's hollow,
 thicket within thicket,
Who in the morning feeds flesh
 to two lion whelps
That live on human flesh,
 flung in the dust in chunks,
Who when it assaults its match
 is not permitted
To leave its match
 unnotched,

لَقَدْ أَقَوْمُ مَقَامًا لَوْ يَقَوْمُ بِهِ أَرَى وَأَسْمَعُ مَا لَوْ يَسْمَعُ الْفِيلُ
لَظَلَّ يُرْعَدُ إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ مِنْ الرَّسُولِ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ تَنْوِيلُ
حَتَّى وَضَعْتُ يَمِينِي لَا أَنَا زِعُهُ فِي كَفِّ ذِي نَقِمَاتٍ قِيلُهُ الْقِيلُ
لَذَاكَ أَهْيَبُ عِنْدِي إِذْ أَكَلَّمُهُ وَقِيلَ إِنَّكَ مَسْبُورٌ وَمَسْؤُولُ
مِنْ ضَيْغَمٍ مِنْ ضِرَاءِ الْأُسْدِ مُخْدَرُهُ بِبَطْنِ عَشَرَ غِيلٍ دُونَهُ غِيلُ
يَغْدُو فَيَلْحَمُ ضِرْغَامَيْنِ عَيْشُهُمَا لَحْمٌ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ مَعْفُورٌ خَرَاذِيلُ
إِذَا يُسَاوِرُ قِرْنًا لَا يَحِلُّ لَهُ أَنْ يَتْرِكَ الْقِرْنَ إِلَّا وَهُوَ مَفْلُولُ

For whom the braying onager
 falls silent,
 In whose wadi no hunters
 stalk their prey,
 In whose wadi lies an honest man,
 his weapons and torn clothes
 Flung in the dust,
 his flesh devoured.
 The Messenger is surely a sword
 from whose flash light is sought,
 One of the swords of God,
 an Indian blade unsheathed,
 In a band of Qurashis whose spokesman
 said to them in Mecca's hollow
 When they submitted to Islam,
 "Depart!"
 They departed, but no weaklings
 departed with them,
 None who flee the battle,
 none unsteady in the saddle, none unarmed.
 Haughty, high-nosed champions,
 who on battle day
 Don shirts
 of David's weave,
 White, ample, their rings
 interlocking
 As if they were the qaf^{ca}' plant's
 interlocking rings.

مِنْهُ تَظَلُّ حَمِيرُ الْوَحْشِ ضَامِرَةً وَلَا تُمَشِّي بِوَادِيهِ الْأَرَاغِيلُ
 وَلَا يَزَالُ بِوَادِيهِ أَخُو ثِقَةٍ مُطَرَّحُ الْبَزِّ وَالْدَّرْسَانِ مَأْكُولُ
 إِنَّ الرَّسُولَ لَسَيْفٌ يُسْتَضَاءُ بِهِ مُهَنَّدٌ مِنْ سُيُوفِ اللَّهِ مَسْلُوكُ
 فِي عُصْبَةٍ مِنْ قُرَيْشٍ قَالَ قَائِلُهُمْ بَبْطَنِ مَكَّةَ لَمَّا أَسْلَمُوا زَوْلُوا
 زَالُوا فَمَا زَالَ أَنْكَاسٌ وَلَا كُشْفٌ عِنْدَ اللَّقَاءِ وَلَا مِيلٌ مَعَاذِلُ
 شُمُّ الْعَرَانِينِ أَبْطَالٌ لَبَّوْهُمْ مِنْ نَسِجِ دَاوُدَ فِي الْهَيْجَا سَرَابِيلُ
 بَيْضٌ سَوَابِغٌ قَدْ شُكَّتْ لَهَا حَلَقُ كَأَنَّهَا حَلَقُ الْقَفْعَاءِ مَجْدُولُ

They walk as the white camels walk
 when kept in check by blows,
While the stunted black ones
 go astray.
Neither jubilant when their spears
 strike down a tribe,
Nor distraught when
 they are struck,
The spear does not pierce them
 except in the throat,
Nor do they shrink from
 death's water troughs.

Kulayb ibn Asad

O Prophet long foretold in Torah's lore,
Fulfilling ancient prophecies of yore.

Poets Whose Names Begin with *Lām*

Labīd ibn Rabī'ah

To you, supreme creation, we draw near,
Seeking your mercy, trials we endure.

To you we come, our grievances laid bare:
Seven long years of destitution's glare.

يَمْشُونَ مَشْيَ الْجَمَالِ الزُّهُرِ يَعِصْمُهُمْ
 لَا يَفْرَحُونَ إِذَا نَالَتِ رِمَاحُهُمْ
 لَا يَقَعُ الطَّعْنُ إِلَّا فِي نُحُورِهِمْ
 ضَرَبْتُ إِذَا عَرَّدَ السُّودُ التَّنَائِيلُ
 قَوْمًا، وَلَيْسُوا مَجَازِيْعًا إِذَا نِيلُوا
 مَا إِنَّ لَهُمْ عَنْ حِيَاضِ الْمَوْتِ تَهْلِيلُ

كُلَيْبُ بْنُ أَسَدِ الْحَضْرَمِيِّ

[البيط]

أَنْتَ النَّبِيُّ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَخْبَرُهُ
 وَبَشَّرْتَنَا بِكَ التَّوْرَةَ وَالرُّسُلُ

لَبِيدُ بْنُ رَبِيعَةَ

[الطويل]

أَتَيْنَاكَ يَا خَيْرَ الْبَرِيَّةِ كُلِّهَا
 لَتَرْحَمَنَا مِمَّا لَقِينَا مِنَ الْأَزْلِ
 أَتَيْنَاكَ نَشْكُو حِطَّةً جَلَّ أَمْرُهَا
 لِسَبْعِ سِنِينَ وَاقِفِينَ عَلَى مَحَلِّ

If once again you pray for drought's cruel might,
Legends shall we become, in history's light.

If you beseech for rain and pardon's grace,
The sky will pour, restoring life's known pace.

The gums of virgins bleed as we seek aid,
And mothers are distracted from their babes.

In hunger's clasp, brave men throw hands above,
Not tasting bitter, sweet; devoid of love.

We lack what others eat, save bitter fruit
Of colocynth, and ^ʿ*ilhiz*,¹² destitute.

In Life and then Hereafter, our sole trust,
Reliance on your favour is a must.

At Judgment's call, we wait your intercession,
Delivering us, a fit-for-kin concession.

Poets Whose Names Begin with *Mīm*

Māzin ibn Ghaḍūbah

And through the Hashemite, God led us straight,
Though faith unthought of, saved from errant fate.

¹² ^ʿ*Ilhiz* was a food eaten during cropless times in the Jāhiliyyah. It was a combination of camel hair and blood that was then baked.

فَإِنْ تَدْعُ أُخْرَى بِالْقُحُوطِ فَإِنَّا
فَإِنْ تَدْعُ بِالسُّقْيَاوِ بِالْعَفْوِ يُرْسِلِ السَّـ
أَتَيْنَاكَ وَالْعَذْرَاءُ تَدْمَى لِثَانِهَا
وَأَلْقَى بِكَفِّهِ الشُّجَاعُ اسْتِكَانَةً
وَلَا شَيْءَ مِمَّا يَأْكُلُ النَّاسُ عِنْدَنَا
وَأَنْتَ لِدُنْيَانَا وَأَنْتَ لِدِينِنَا
لَنَا مِنْكَ فِي يَوْمِ الْحِسَابِ شَفَاعَةٌ
أَحَادِيثُ طَسَمٍ، مَا دُعَاؤُكَ بِالْهَزْلِ
سَمَاءَ لَنَا وَالْأَمْرُ يَبْقَى عَلَى الْأَصْلِ
وَقَدْ ذَهَلَتْ أُمُّ الصَّبِيِّ عَنِ الطُّفْلِ
مِنْ الْجُوعِ صَمْتًا مَا يَمُرُّ وَلَا يُحْلِي
سِوَى الْحَنْظَلِ الْعَامِيِّ وَالْعَلْهَزِ الْفَسْلِ
تُؤَمِّلُ لِلدُّنْيَا وَلِلْآخِرِ الْفَصْلِ
تُرْخِزُحُ عَنَا، وَالشَّفَاعَةُ فِي الْأَهْلِ

مَازَنُ بْنُ الْغَضُوبَةِ

[البسيط]

بِالْهَاشِمِيِّ هَدَانَا مِنْ ضَلَالَتِنَا وَلَمْ يَكُنْ دِينُهُ مَنِّي عَلَى بَالٍ

Mālik ibn ʿAwf

Among all men, none can I hear or see
Quite like Muhammad in nobility.

In bond and gifts, he's generous and true,
And if he wills, tomorrow's course he'll cue.

And when battalions bare their teeth at fray
With highland swords and Indian blades asway,

In battle's dust, he stands a sight to see:
Lion in ambush, guarding cubs, most free.

Musliyah ibn Ḥaddān

I vow the Lord of prancing, ridden camels,
From sands emerging, to Minā, sans trammels:

Muhammad is God's envoy to our sphere.
His sires from Kaʿb are chief and king, endeared.

He brought a proof from God, a radiant ray,
Through which The Merciful lit dark away.

He fortified The Helpers through its way,
When brave men met with lances, swords asway.

مَالِكُ بْنُ عَوْفٍ النَّصْرِي

[الكامل]

ما إِنْ رَأَيْتُ وَلَا سَمِعْتُ بِوَاحِدٍ فِي النَّاسِ كُلِّهِمْ بِمِثْلِ مُحَمَّدٍ
أَوْفَى وَأَعْطَى لِلْجَزِيلِ إِذَا جَدَى وَإِذَا يَشَأُ يُخْبِرُكَ عَمَّا فِي غَدٍ
وَإِذَا الْكَتِيبَةُ عَرَّدَتْ أَنْبَاءُهَا بِالْمَشْرِفِيِّ وَضَرْبِ كُلِّ مُهَنَّدٍ
فَكَأَنَّهُ لَيْتٌ عَلَى أَشْبَالِهِ وَسَطَ الْهَبَاءَةِ خَادِرٌ فِي مَرْصَدٍ

مُسْلِيَةُ بْنُ حَدَّانَ الْحَدَّانِي

[الطويل]

حَلَفْتُ بِرَبِّ الرَّاقِصَاتِ إِلَى مِنًى طَوَالِجَ مِنْ بَيْنِ الْقَصِيْمَةِ بِالرَّكْبِ
بِأَنَّ نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ فِينَا مُحَمَّدٌ لَهُ الرَّأْسُ وَالْقُدُمُوسُ مِنْ سَلَفِي كَعْبِ
أَتَانَا بِبِرْهَانٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ قَابِسٍ أَضَاءَ بِهِ الرَّحْمَنُ مُظْلِمَةَ الْكَرْبِ
أَعَزَّ بِهِ الْأَنْصَارَ لَمَّا تَقَارَنْتَ صُدُورُ الْعَوَالِي فِي التَّنَاوُشِ وَالضَّرْبِ

Poets Whose Names Begin with *Wāw*

Waraqah ibn Nawfal

So O Khadijah, if your words are true,
Then Ahmad is the messenger that's due.

God's spirit, Gabriel, who brings relief
Descends to him, with Michael—this believe!

Through him, success is found in faith's embrace,
Through him, lost souls will meet their ruinous chase.

Two groups emerge, distinct in their end fate:
One graced in gardens, one in Hellish state.

وَرَقَةُ بْنُ نَوْفَلٍ

[الطويل]

فَإِنْ يَكُ حَقًّا يَا خَدِيجَةُ فَأَعْلَمِي	حَدِيثُكَ إِيَّانَا فَأَحْمَدُ مُرْسَلُ
وَجِبْرِيلُ يَأْتِيهِ وَمِيكَالُ مَعَهُمَا	مِنْ اللَّهِ رُوحٌ يَشْرَحُ الصَّدْرَ مُنَزَلُ
يَفُوزُ بِهِ مَنْ فَازَ عِزًّا بِدِينِهِ	وَيَشْقَى بِهِ الْغَاوِي الشَّقِيَّ الْمُضَلَّلُ
فَرِيقَانِ مِنْهُمْ، فِرْقَةٌ فِي جَنَانِهِ	وَأُخْرَى بِنِيرَانِ الْجَحِيمِ تُغْلَلُ



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