



Suras of the New Age

by

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(Sufi Ahmed Murad Chisti)

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One

Trace in the Immortal Silence the words enscrivened in the Book of Life.
A camel's-hair brush dipped in centuries' blood
Relates the history of the world,
But the tale of Heaven—
Ah, the tale of Heaven—
Written by the hand of man,
Read by the heart of man ...
Look! the new Revelation!—Day is come.

I heard a Voice at dawn cry:
"Shanti! Shanti! Shanti!"
Kotis of Bodhisattvas in adoration gathered round the Arsh-throne.
Music! Breathe in my ears those rhapsodies from lumen atmosphere;
Burst these mortal bonds, accordion of flame!
With Gandharvas' song,
With the passionate pourings from Krishna's pipe.
Come to me, raga divine! Come!

.....
The sama of the Sufis! the sama of the Sufis!
Angels tremble as the dervishes whirl,
And the Universe chants a tempo.

I stood upon the summit of Meru.
They come! they come!
Rama with his mighty bow,
Rudra with his fiery steeds,
Jamshid with his crystal cup,
Buddha with his sacred bowl.
They come! they come to the summit of Meru!
Moses with the tablets of the Law,
Solomon with his magic seal,
Jesus with his healing divine,
Mohammed with his sword of might.
They come! they come to the summit of Meru!
From North, from South, from East, from West,
Arisen from Nadir, descended from Zenith,
To the summit of Meru, they come; they come!

Hail, Zardusht of the Holy Aryas!
Zardusht with golden crown and radiant countenance,
Zardusht at the summit of Meru
Gathers them all in dance celestial,
The holy ones, the holy ones together.
Buddha with Rama and Mohammed near Krishna's hand.
Jesus goes to Jamshid's side, and Abraham is nigh Vishnu.
Then the chorus seraphic and into flame Meru.

Enwrapped in cosmic whirl the mountain finds its freedom,
In ecstasial mergence with Divinity's Self.

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A lotus from its heart,
A prophet standing thereon,
Crying at Zardusht's nod:
"Son of man, see these Messengers Divine joined in Brotherhood!
Who follows one, needs follow all."

Kneeling in prayer at Zardusht's feet, I cried:
"Mighty Lotus of the world, undone am I, thy slave!"
And then that Holy Touch.
Who can describe that Holy Touch?
Nor word nor pen nor feeling nor gesture.
That Holy Touch ... and all was Light.

Two

Hail the new born day in the light of all the Prophets!
The sons of earth together shall sing with the morning stars.
Color of skin shall not hinder their coming,
Nor position nor power enter them in,
Love alone shall open the portals of joy.
From the depths of Senegambia, from the land of the Rising Sun,
From the densest of Amazon's jungles, from Sahara's parched wastes,
From the great American cities, from the tundras of the North,
From field and forest and marshland and veldt,
From desert and mountain and valley and seaside,
Gather them all, gather them all in symphony,
The sons of earth together shall sing with the morning stars.

Assemble on the mountain of the Lord the leaders of mankind.
Peace shall be their watchword, peace their goal,
Neither will they contend nor strive;
Their hearts shall be open,
Their vision shall be keen.
Laying opinions aside,
Throwing traditions to the winds,
And the hatred from their souls.
Once the Bodhisattva was a king;
A blinded beggar came, demanding his eyes,
He gave, and lo! Samsara's veil was lifted,
With the Eye of Delight he saw forevermore.
Thus, if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out,
If thy doctrines confound thee, throw them away,
Cast off these choking dogmas,
And let the radiant Truth shine down on all.
Christian and Hebrew with the scions of Aryavarta,
The followers of Islam shall join with Zardusht's kind,
Those that bow to Sakya Muni and even the unbelievers
Shall congregate together on the mountain of the Lord,
The sons of earth together shall sing with the morning stars.
Then shall the Triumph be, Peace on earth, Good will to men.

Let the Light shine forth! Let that Light shine forth!
Om! Hari! Om!

Three

High on the Himalayan peak stood I,
Vanished the world infinitesimal before me.
Out of phantom mists the ghosts of munis appeared,
And from the imperturbable Silence:
Sounds, oceans of sounds.
The Soul of the World addresses the lordly company,
“Hearken, men of good family, to the voice of Sakya the Sage.
Hearken to the Blessed One, the Wholly Enlightened One,”
Sutras from the Heaven of Amitabha,
Wisdom from its Source for the Holy Ones.

Then the troops of munis came marching by: Om! Om! Om!
The sages of ages, prophets of old: Om! Hari Om!
Each step paced to breath,
Each tongue raised in praise,
Chanting together: Om!
“Hearken men of good family to the voice of Sakya the sage.”

Out of the midst of the Silence Adam came;
And he blessed his servant, saying,
“Speak to the children of men,
Unto the earth-born betake thyself and be thou unafraid.
Prophecy whatsoever the Holy Ones have taught thee,
And honor the Lord forever.”

Once more the munis came marching by: Om! Om! Om!
One with the Soul of the World was I; Om! Om! Om!
There, Sound was Light and Light was Sound,
Life and Love and Wisdom Profound,
And all was One, One, One!
The Glory of God on High.

Four

O, for the Night of Power!
O, for the Day of Gladness!
When that Night cometh, shall all woe disperse;
When that Day cometh, shall the tides of joy run high.
Thou art the praised one, Mohammed, Prophet of God.

Through the ocean of Night to the Palace of Dawn,
High, on high, lead thou, Burrak!
Patriarchs await the soul of its coming,
And the Heavens declare the Glory of God.

Into that palace, into that exalted palace,
Light upon Light and Light upon Light!
Bathed in Beauty Divine, I see! I see! I see!

There the Heavenly Qur'an,
A single page stretching from Beyond to Beyond,
A single paragraph seven miles high,
Written with the fineness of a camel's-hair brush.
In English and Arabic and Hebrew was it enscribed,
Yet the three were one.
Nearer came the Heavenly Qur'an,
And I saw it was written in the language of the Heart.
Then a wonder,
In the heart were found
Bible and Vedas, Sutras and Gathas, Upanishads and Kings.

Then was the breast opened and the Word spoken thereon,
Mathra Spenta, that Holy Word of Truth,
The message of the King of Kings,

Away! away to earth,
To Jerusalem, Burrak to Jerusalem!
To the further temple from the palace on High,
Bringing tidings of Peace from the King.
Cease from your turmoil, children of Father Abraham,
Listen to the news from your Lord,
Hear, ye scions of Ishmael and Isaac, for thus speaks He:
"Let all men worship together;
Then shall the Lord be One and His Name be One."

Rest, faithful steed.
Temples to the Glory of God shall be built upon this earth,
And in the further skies,
And shall shout His Praises all the world.
The peoples of the earth shall congregate about the mountain
Of the lord,
Beating the swords of their minds into ploughshares,
And purifying their thoughts,
Till fresh as mountain streamlets shall they become.
Let all the world worship together,
Then cometh Peace.

Five

In the days of old cameth the Word of the Lord unto Isaiah,
It cameth in the days of old,
It shall be fulfilled in the days of new:
"For My house shall be called
A house of prayer for all peoples."
No race, but shall enter there in,

No class but shall enter for worship,
No man but shall enter for prayer.
The saint shall not be more welcome because of his virtues,
Neither shall the sinner be withheld because of his short-comings.
"For My house shall be called
A house of prayer for all peoples."
Who is then to be named an Unbeliever?
Who is then to be known as Idolater?
Who shall be the Heathen and who the Atheist?
And who shall say to his fellow, "Thou art a Pagan,"
Come, Buddhist from the East and Christian from the West;
Come, Moslem from the South, and Hebrew from the North;
Come, ye that fellow the sastras and the Dharma,
Who read the pages of the Granths,
Who worship at the shrines on Fujiyama.
"For My house shall be called
A house of prayer for all peoples."
Enter the temple and worship as ye will,
Enter freely and pray,
Enter freely and meditate,
Come and contemplate and adore, ye lovers of truth.
Artist, philosopher, scientist, leader of men,
Join in fraternity in this sacred edifice,
"For My house shall be called
A house of prayers for all peoples."
Render puja unto Siva and lay flowers on Krishna's altar,
Burn incense on the statues of Buddha Gautama,
Bow down before Christ,
Render thanksgiving to Ahura Mazda,
For who is there in Heaven saveth Allah?
And to Whom shall ye offer worship save Adonai?
Come from the ends of the earth, singly or in groups,
In congregations in the day,
Or alone in the silent watches of the night,
Come to the temple, the holy edifice.
"For My house shall be called
A house of prayer for all peoples."
This from the lips of Isaiah in the days of old;
"But this shall be fulfilled," sayeth the Lord,
"In the days that are to come."

Six

Is God,
And Infinite is God.
Nothing in the world is there in which God is not,
And nothing in the world is there which is not in God.
Infinite Good and Infinite Evil alike is He,
Both Heavenly Father and Mother of the Universe,

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Yet above all attributes,
Above all names and forms.

Is God.

Nor can He be defined, but for ourselves alone,
Whatsoever our definitions, are for ourselves alone,
Whatsoever our beliefs, are for ourselves alone,
Nor code nor book nor church nor creed,
Nor concept nor theory nor the mind of man containeth the Lord.
Divine Mind you say He is, and it is true.
Divine Mater you think He be, it is not false.

Is God.

Call Him Brahma or Adonai,
Name Him Allah or Vairochana,
Vishnu or Ahura or Amida or Tao,
Bhutathata or Heavenly Father.
Look to the absolute, the unknowable, Nirvana,
For all is One, the Unity Profound.
In that Infinite Oneness, realize thyself a part,
A part containing the Essence of the Whole,
Ever He reveals Himself to His creatures,
For all exist in God, and all
Is God.

Seven

Whence this kindling within the human heart?
Whence this note of sympathy within the breast?
Whence this response when other beings suffer?
Wherefore this impulse towards adoration and towards love?
Analyze the infinitesimal—it is not found;
Clean the protoplasmic cell—it is not there.
Seek through the world of atoms and electrons—there is no answer.

Whence this kindling within the human heart?
The muni meditated beneath the Bo-tree:
The sculptors carve the walls of Borobudur.
At eventide, Christ raised aloft in crucifixion;
And Raphael sketches his murals in sacred chapels.
Mohammed gives the Arabs his holy message.
The sultan of Cairo erects a magnificent mosque.
A Voice from the burning bush beckons to Moses:
A race learns how to suffer for noble ideals.

Whence this kindling within the human heart?
The blood of martyrs,
The liberators thrown into prison,
The sacrifices of saints,
The long watches of holy men,

Temples and churches, stupas and shrines,
The sempiternal urge—
Whence this kindling within the human heart?

Eight

Place thy books upon the library shelves,
And listen to the Voice of the Silence.
Enter the chambers of the heart;
Knock, and it shall be opened unto you,
Stands the Silent God Who would speak.

Lift up ye gates, and raise your heads ye everlasting doors,
That the Lord of Hosts may enter in.
Who is this Lord of Hosts!
The Lord of Peace, the Lord of Mercy and Compassion,
The Lord of Wisdom, the Lord of Love and Truth.

Cometh the hour when the Message shall travel far and wide.
Hear ye, my people;
Open your ears who stand in far away places,
This is the dawn of Peace,
The day of the Message is at hand.

Open the chambers of thy heart that the Lord of Hosts may enter therein.
Who is this Lord of Hosts;
The Lord of Peace, the Lord of Mercy and Compassion,
The Lord of Wisdom, the Lord of Love and Truth.

Nine

Out of thy mouth shall go the Message,
And from thy tongue the Word of thy Lord,
For thou hast opened the doors of thy heart.

Hear ye the clashing and the clamoring,
'Tis the whirlwind of the Lord!
The Lord cometh! the Lord cometh!
'Tis He Who will reign on earth,
'Tis His Word that shall guide men aright.
The Message riseth from the heart;
Like a guiding beacon it shall lead the way over the ocean,
To the Orient and to the Occident shall it lead,
And thou shalt speak it forth.

Has the Lord ever departed from His children?
Or the Eternal Watcher deserted His chosen ones?
Open thine ear and hear His call!
The Message riseth from the breast,

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The Message lighteneth the mind,
The Message guideth the tongue,
The Message elevateth the personality,
The Message keepeth thy right hand from going astray,
The Message poureth blessings upon thee, that thou mayest bless mankind;
The Message keeps calling,
The Message keeps rising,
The Message keeps on coming.
The chariot of the Lord cometh from Heaven and his Glory manifests on earth.
"Behold," sayeth the Lord, "again will I speak unto my children
Through the mouth of prophets as in days of old,
"For whatsoever was spoken through my servants,
Whatsoever was stated by Isaiah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel,
By the greater prophets and the lesser prophets,
By the holy men of Israel and Ishmael and Aryavarta,
By the guiding Messengers who have brought faiths to men,
By My chosen saints, who appear on earth at all times,
Hear ye, My peoples, all shall be fulfilled.
In that hour ye think least, shall it be fulfilled.
For captains and kings depart,
And nations rise and fall;
The mighty will be no more and the heroes shall be forgotten,
But I, "sayeth the Lord, "abideth forever.
I will show Mercy unto whom I will show Mercy,
And be gracious unto whom is deserving of Grace;
My Light shall illuminate the whole earth,
And My every word shall not go unfulfilled."

Ten

I passed a church wherein they prayed:
"Lord Christ come to earth, that we may be saved."
Poverty and suffering showed themselves on every hand,
And the depths of degradation revealed themselves before me,
Still rose that cry from within the walls:
"Lord Christ come to earth, that we may be saved."
I crossed a square, whereon stood a sign:
"Jews and dogs are not permitted here."
And still the prayers from across the way,
"Lord Christ come to earth, that we may be saved."
Then I joined that congregation, mingling with their prayers:
"Lord Christ come to earth, that they may be saved,"
A miracle: appears the Lordly Christ.
On their knees, the people shouted hosannas.
The people: "Lord, we worshipped thee,"
Christ: "Love I commanded, hate ye sowed."
The people: "Lord, we worshipped thee."
Christ: "As ye did to the least of my brethren, that also did ye unto me."
The people: "Lord, we worshipped thee."
Christ: "Who can count the starving for Truth and Light?"

The people: "Lord, we built thee temples."
Christ: "And starved they that builded."
The people: "Lord, we built thee altars."
Christ: "Knew not the Son of Man where to lay his head."
The people: "We worshipped in thy temples."
Christ: "God dwelleth not in the work of human hands."
The people: "Lord, we spread thy teachings."
Christ: "By fire and sword, the Word of the Prince of Peace."
The people: "Lord, we worship thee."
Christ: "As thou forgiveth others, so shall I forgive thee,"
The people: "Lord, we worship thee."
Christ: "As thou doest unto others, so shall I do to thee."
The people: "Lord, we worship thee."
Christ: "Not by tongues which gossip, but by hearts which love; go! and sin no more!

Christ: I have been a nigger, beaten and oppressed,
I have been a coolie, subject to taunt and jest,
I have been a poor man, driven from post to post,
I have been a peon, admired when I cowered most,
I have been a laborer, earning little fare,
I have worked as a servant, admonished everywhere,
I have lived as a neighbor, subject to ridicule,
I, your Lord, Who came to earth to teach the Golden Rule.

And then another vision: Christ upon the cross.
For twenty passing centuries, Christ upon the cross.
The sweat of a billion peasants, and Christ upon the cross.
The Jews, his people, bathed in blood, and Christ upon the cross.
Ignorance seated on mighty thrones, and Christ upon the cross.
The ages of the right of prima nux, and Christ upon the cross.
Children slaving in factory and mine, and Christ upon the cross.
Bishops sleek and lords in plenty, and Christ upon the cross.
Peonage, poverty and dirt, with Christ upon the cross.
"Heaven and earth may pass away,
But My Word standeth forever," sayeth the Lord.

Eleven

Watch the dancing heads of boys intoning the Qur'an,
Listen to their sonorous voices.
Ken they the verity behind their deed?
Attend the chapel where priests chant their orisons,
Listen to the bhikkhus as they recite the Sutras
Or the mantra yogi while he performs his practices.
Hearken to the lesson from the Adi Granth,
Tell them, Kabir, the truth of human brotherhood.

Organize, ye wearers of woolen clothing,
And traffic not with they that don fine raiment,
Enter no council with them in silk attire,

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And beware of them that go about in linen.
O foolishness with men and sagacity with God!
O wisdom of this world that counts for nought above!
The fabrics of the soul are many, who can know them all?
The body with its organs and muscles and bones,
A marvel of unity and a unity of marvels.
As above, so below; as without, so within.
Seek ye this mystery, my brethren.

Tell them, Kabir, the truth of human brotherhood.
Where is that Holy Book that all can read?
I searched through all the libraries of the world—it was not there;
Visited many schools and lecture halls,
Busied myself at congresses and at parliaments,
And everywhere dispute, debate and argument.

Then the Voice from the heart, Beth Kol, cried out,
“Look thou within, look thou within, look thou within!”
Stands every sacred Scripture
Within the heart, within the heart—
Study the teachings of the ancient Upanishads;
Tell them, Kabir, the truth of human brotherhood.

Twelve

Hail the day when aviators fly over the earth,
The day when the elements are mastered.
When humanity has come into its own.
Look, thou, flyer, down upon the ground!
Tell me the small, the great, the meek, the proud;
Point out who is slave and who is master,
Distinguish between the learned and the fools.
Measure their nearness to heaven and give the answer.

Hail the day when the mind of man files over the earth,
And learns the secret of his greatness in his realization,
And learns the secret of his smallness in his realization,
Then descends to earth,
Calling every man his brother.

Thirteen

On subtler planes unseen by eye,
The Congress of Holy Men.
Rabbis and munis, fakirs and priests,
Tirthanks and magi and sanyassins.
Where mighty-eyed Bodhidharma welcomes devout Ben Jochai,
Where the strong hearted sage of Jilani greets the keeper of sacred fires,
Courageous Padma Sambhava stands meek in the midst of great munis.

There come the saints of the Holy Catholic church,
The wearers of the girdle and the triple cord,
And they that bind themselves with phylacteries.
Candles and prayer books; praises and orisons,
And who can distinguish one from another,
Lost in devotion in the Supreme Sublimity.

The dream of Akbar fulfilled.
All the devout are there,
Chanting hymns of joy toward the throne of Light,
Where all is love and harmony and peace,
Bodhisattvas and walis and prophets commingling.

The dream of Akbar fulfilling.
Let thy Will be done an earth as it is in Heaven,
And may the blessings enjoyed by saints above,
Rain down on earth.
Cometh the dawn; cometh the light, cometh the day.
Shanti! Shanti! Shanti!

Fourteen

The trumpet soundeth, the trumpet soundeth,
The gong summoneth all to prayer.
High on the rock the muezzin is calling:
"Come to Allah, ye faithful, come to Allah."
The Lord of the East bringeth them from the East,
And the Lord of the West bringeth them from the West;
The Lord of the South bringeth them from the South,
And the Lord of the North bringeth them from the North.
Even from the four corners of the earth bringeth He them.

Behold, a wonder!
A woman mounteth the rock to speak.
The multitudes bow in awe to the voice of the prophetess,
For the Lord speaketh through His chosen one.
Shout it from the mountain tops,
And re-echo it in the valleys,
The Lord speaketh from the rock.
From the whole world gather they in brotherhood,
From every land come they in pilgrimage,
From every race are they amid the throngs.

Shout and sing praises, ye people, to the Glory of the Lord.
His Love encompasseth the whole world,
His Light travelth over the earth,
His Message has been uttered to all peoples.
Now they have come together,
To worship have they come,
In pilgrimage have they come,

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In humility have they come,
Of every race and every religion.

Buddha and Christ and Moses and Zardusht,
Mohammed and Rama and Lao-Tse and Krishna,
Nanak and Confucius and Abraham and Siva,
In union give their blessing to mankind.
Even from the mightiest Heaven,
Even from the throne of the Lord come the hosts of Heaven.
The glory of the Lord shineth on the face of His chosen one,
And all exult for the Day of Alast.

Let the Message of God illuminate the world,
Let the message of God spread to every land,
May God keep thee and guide thee and watch over thee,
And praise ye the Name of the Lord forevermore. Amen.

.....
(To Samuel Lewis, on Monday Morning, August 26, 1929 at 6:00am)
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Biographical Note by Abdarrahan

Murshid Sufi Ahmed Murad Chisti, also known as Samuel L. Lewis, symbolized by his very life the unity of religious experience expressed in the *Suras of the New Age*. While his work concentrated in the area of Sufism, he knew that God is not the property of the East, or the West. Responsible for the introduction of Hazrat Inayat Khan, founder of the Sufi Order as it exists in the West, to Nyogen Senzaki, the Zen monk (which meeting is described in the Ikhwan pamphlet, *Sufism and Zen*), Murshid Samuel Lewis continued his study of Buddhism to such a degree that he was initiated and recognized as “Zen-shi” and was accorded an unprecedented welcome on his visit to Japan. Murshid’s penetrating insight also revealed to him the esotericism of Yoga systems, of Christianity and of the Kabbalah.

There are those who claim that “there is no form of Sufism other than Islamic.” We might agree that Sufism is the authentic Islam (the surrender to God), yet Murshid was not so discursive: he simply said “Allah” — and many said it with him — and left the arguments to the philosophers.

The Sufi Way, a film narrated by Huston Smith, quotes from Murshid’s poem *Crescent and Heart* (also published by Ikhwan press), without mentioning his name and in a context that one accepts the lines as those of a classical Sufi:

Let me sing until I am nothing but a voice,
Let me pray until I am nothing but a prayer.
No Islam do I see but only Allah,
For what is Islam but the sight of Allah?
...
What is Sufism but the promise of a song,
That the song be sung on earth as it is in Heaven,
And that man who is greater than the angels
Prove his greatness by his better deeds.