Taj Mahal’s Spiritual Message

Zakat Foundation of India
In collaboration with India Islamic Cultural Centre

Release of Zakat Foundation of India’s Coffee table book

Taj Mahal’s Spiritual Message

New Delhi 03 January 2018
Bill Clinton: 
There are two kinds of people in the world: Those who have seen the Taj Mahal and those who haven’t.
But, even Clinton didn’t know that appreciating mere marble beauty is not the full realization of the Taj.
Taj Mahal’s intrinsic beauty is the **Beauty of God** manifested through the **Quranic Calligraphy** on its multiple arches on all the four sides as well as elsewhere inside the chambers.
"نقوش اقبال" بقلم مولانا علي میان (رح)

تاج کو چاند نی سی دکھ کر معلوم بوتا پہ یک مرمر کی سلون مین
آب رووان سے زیادہ تیزی اگی پہ یک
ابد کا طویل دور یہاں کے یک ایک لمحہ کے برابر بو گیا پے یک

یہاں عشق نے پتھر کی زبانی اپنا اپنا راز کهولا
اور انہیں نوک مرگان مین پرویا پے

یہاں سنگ و خسک سے جنت کے نغمے پھوٹ رہے بین اور
عشق حدود و تعینات کی سرحدین پہاند کر لا زوال بن گیا پے

شوق سے اب لدا کو سینا سینا اور اب لد بنر کو ید یبیضا مل جاتا پے

Nuqoosh-e-Iqbal by Maulana Ali Mian: p95:
Taj ko chandni mein dekh kar maloom hota hai ki marmar ki silon mein aab-e-rawaan se zyaada teeri aagayee hai. Abad ka taweel daur yahaan ke ek ek lamhe ke baraabar hogaya hai.
Yahaan ishq ne patharon ki zabaani apna raaz khola aur unhen nok-e mizgaan mein piroya hai. Yahaan sang-o-
hisht se jannat ke naghme phoot rahey hain aur ishq hudood-o-ta'ayyunaat ki sarhadein phaand kar la-zawaal ban gaya hai.
Ishq se ahl-e dil ko seenah-e-Seena aur ahl-e hunar ko yad-e-baiza mil jaata hai.
Calligraphic Elegance
Taj Mahal’s calligraphy was created by the Persian calligrapher Abdul Haq who came to India from Shiraz, Iran, in 1609.

Shah Jahan conferred the title of "Amanat Khan" upon him as a reward for his dazzling virtuosity.
Submission

We may like it or not, we have to believe that God is the most systematic person known to mankind and to others. That's what our God-gifted prudence counsels. His structural design of creating and sustaining the humanity began with Adam who was the first man and the first messenger of God. As humanity progressed, God decided to appoint fresh messengers in different parts of the world and in various phases of human history. To some of them He revealed His message that can be broadcast in the form of a document.

Each such message was meant for the entire humanity though it was clothed in the local language of the recipient community. As per Islamic belief, Mohammad is God’s last messenger and Quran the last message. Quran is in Arabic which was the language of Mohammad and his contemporaries in Arabia. Names of some of the earlier messengers and books have been mentioned in the last book and many have not. Twenty-five messengers and three revealed books are mentioned by name. When chronologically appraised, the list of messengers begins from Adam and includes, among others, Abraham, Isaac, Ishmael, David, Jacob, Joseph, Moses and Christ. The books mentioned are Psalms, Old Testament and New Testament.

Yet, God says that the human beings should believe in and revere all the messengers and all the revelations. These injunctions verbatim form part of the Quran (2.285). Again, prudence leads us to another premise that God would not have committed the injustice not to appoint messengers and revealed books in a large South-Asian chunk of the world that is India. When we juxtapose this premise with the centuries old spiritual names and related literature in India we find it unwise to rule out that Rama, Krishna, Mahavir and Budha were messengers of God and Vedas His revealed book. Once again, prudence dictates that we better respect all of them. To Rama, the Poet of the East, Allama Iqbal has reverently attributed the title of Imam-e-Hind, the spiritual leader of India. Many other great persons have been responsible for guiding sections of humanity on different parts of the global surface. They too separately find special appreciation in Quran.

It is understood from Quran that even before God created life outside the heavens, He caused to be written, in what is known as the Protected Tablet, His grand comprehensive message that was set to be revealed to humanity - intermittently and repeatedly - through a battery of messengers during the millennia to come. On the eve of beginning the earthly creation, this comprehensive message was brought down to the worldly sky. From there, it was revealed to God's messengers at various global locations in different languages, many times over, in different phases of human history.
God goes on to explain that humanity was created by Him to test the comparative levels of righteousness among the human beings, or absence thereof. Worldly life is temporary and insignificant. It is only a trial. The award or punishment for good or bad deeds done here will be given in the next life which will be everlasting and permanent. The final dwelling place will be either Heaven or Hell. That would be decided on the Day of Judgement when all human beings will be resurrected.

The moral of this narration is that the human beings should try to be more and more righteous during their limited tenure in this world. This realization seems to have intensely dawned upon Emperor Shahjahan after the immature death of his beloved queen. So, in addition to creating a long lasting memorial for her - in brick, mortar and marble - the monarch also used the edifice to telecast his supernatural realization for the spiritual pleasure and benefit of the upcoming generations of humanity. He expanded his architectural project to include imparting to the millions of prospective visitors to the shrine - and today's online surfers sitting in the cozy comfort of their houses and offices the world over - some nuances of God's Last Message to humanity. Proper appreciation thereof is sufficient to keep the day to day activity of human soul altruistically attuned toward the service of the fellow creatures, elevating it to a level much above the confines of individual bodily confines.

In this coffee table book some specific camera views of the Taj Mahal (shot by my son Kashif) are being presented that focus the calligraphic beauty of the wonderful monument. Each photo has been inscribed with ZakatIndia.org. My other two sons Saad and Abid, my better half Nazira and our three daughters-in-law Sadia, Aanam and Mahrukh and all our grandchildren helped me in many other ways. Along side each photo view one Quranic message has been briefly summarized and appended. For this purpose cues have been taken from well known translations and commentaries; may God bless the noble authors and their associates. The English words on each page are not the translation of the Arabic calligraphy shown on that or the adjoining page. That correlation would require several additional volumes of this book. Scholars who are interested in deeper understanding of the subjects will do well to access the commentaries of the holy Quran by Abdullah Yusuf Ali and many others. ‘Concepts of the Quran’ by Fathi Osman is also recommended.

Syed Zafar Mahmood PhD
President, Zakat Foundation of India, New Delhi
zakatindia.org info@zakatindia.org
January 2018
Front of Taj Mahal

The bigger arch has Arabic inscriptions from Chapter 36, Surah "Yaseen", Verses 45-66 of Holy Quran

Oneness of God (Tauheed)
the signs of the universe and from common sense;

The Hereafter
the signs of the universe, from common sense and from man's own existence itself; and

Prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him)
the fact that he was facing all kinds of hardships in the preaching of his message without any selfish motive, and from the fact that whatever he was inviting the people to was rational and reasonable.
It establishes the Oneness of the Creator: the doctrine of Tawhid.

It says that God is without equal, without origin, without end, and unlike anything else that exists.

The fourth line, "Nothing is like Him", is a fundamental statement of tanzih; God as the incomparable.

This sura was inscribed on the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem by Abd-al-Malik ibn Marwan.
Al-Takwir

Surat Al-Takwir (Arabic: سورة التكوير) (The Overthrowing)
81st sura of the Qur'an with 29 ayat.

The **prohibition of female infanticide** was revealed in ayat 8, 9 of this Sura:

"And when the female (infant) buried alive (as the pagan Arabs used to do) shall be questioned: For what sin she was killed? (9)"

Al-Infitar
Praise be to God!
He is the Creator of the heavens, the cosmos and the earth, He owns them and His command is absolute.

(7.54)
30.21

God has created mate for you and He has engendered love and tenderness between you. Surely in these are signs for people who reflect.
Earth stay is for a limited period (2.36)
God's knowledge and mercy are infinite

(40.7)
God rewards the charitable (12.88)
12.76

Over every possessor of knowledge there is one knowing more
God likes people who are good hosts

12.59

I am the best of hosts

Hazrat Yusuf - peace be upon him - (Prophet Joseph) to his brothers
2.58

God likes Sajda (prostration) as expression of Thanks to Him
17:26

Render to your kindred their due rights, as also to those in want, and to the wayfarer.

But, waste not
(your wealth, time, health, talents, opportunities etc)
in the manner of a spendthrift.
17:27

The wasteful are the siblings of Satan; and Satan is ungrateful to his Lord.
17:34

Fulfill your contracts; contracts will be asked about.
2.48

On the day of judgement

NO INTERCESSION

will be accepted from anybody
22.34

Give them glad tidings who humble themselves.
Of God alone be in awe and fear

16.51, 27.10, 28.31

Have no fear
(of anybody else)
25.45

God has given to Sun the subservience of every shadow

Likewise, the human being and all other creation is subservient to God
Whether you reveal what is within yourselves (of intentions, plans) or keep it secret, God will call you to account for it.
2.38-39

God talks of

The great planning done by Him to anoint messengers & prophets and reveal Divine books.
2.42

Do not confound the truth by mixing it with falsehood, and do not conceal the truth while you know.
2.45

Seek help through Patience and Prayer.

Indeed the Prayer is burdensome, but not for those humbled by their reverence of God.
2.220

God knows well him who causes disorder from him who sets aright
Before granting Hazrat Moosa's (Moses') prayer for water for his people, God wanted him to do whatever he could, in the given situation.
Chapter 81

On the Judgement Day

When the Sun will be folded up
The stars will lose their luster
When the mountains will vanish
When the wild beasts will be herded together
When the oceans will swell over with flames
When the souls will be sorted out
When the female infant will be asked:
For what crime was she killed
When the scrolls will be laid open
When the sky will be stripped away
When hellfire will be set ablaze
When Paradise will be brought near
When each soul will realize what it has brought ...

Each will get his/her reward or punishment.
17.23, 31.14-15
Show gratitude to your parents; 
Be kind to them, 
Bear them company in life 
with justice and consideration.

17.24
Lower to them the wings of humility

4.11
Your parents or your children - 
you know not who of them are 
nearer to you in benefit.
6.152

Fulfill God's covenant
(and the covenants you make with one another in God's Name)
23.12-14

God made the moist germ a clot of blood; then made the clotted blood into a piece of flesh; then made the piece of flesh into bones and God clothed the bones with flesh; thus brought forth a man of yet another make.

"Yet another make" indicates what we know today as DNA.
Before advising others for righteousness, practice yourself

Do you enjoin upon people godliness and virtue but forget your own selves, even while you recite this Book (and see therein the orders, prohibitions, exhortations and warnings)? Will you not understand and come to your senses?
O Prophet!

They ask you what they should dedicate
(in God's cause and for the needy)

Say: Whatever is left over
(after you have taken care of
yourself and your dependents)
Your proactive benevolence
toward the
Extended Family
and the
Neighborhood
will suffice
to network the society
into an amiable whole
Wealth must keep on circulating in the society
40:78

God did send forth so many conveyors of His message;

Of them there are some whom God has mentioned in the Quran,

while there have been many others of His messengers He has not told us about.
4.163-4

God has revealed His books to the prophets whose names He has mentioned in the Quran

and even to those prophets whom He did not mention in the Quran
14:4

Never has God sent forth any conveyor of His message otherwise than in his own people's language so that he might make the truth clear to them.
The faithful believe in God and His angels and His books and the conveyors of His message, not differentiating between any of His messengers.
God's mercy and knowledge are infinite
4:136

One who stubbornly denies God and His books and the conveyors of His message has surely gone on the wrong path.
With every difficulty there is relief.
Consult others in affairs of the moment. Then, after you have taken a decision put your trust in God, For God loves those who put their trust in Him.
4.1

Duly observe the rights of the **WOMBS THAT BORE YOU**
Those who are closely inter-related have a greater right upon one another than the rest of humanity.  

For such group of relatives God has used the term Al-mawaddata Fil-Qurba.
Among them
the orphaned relative
has the priority
Kind treatment (Sila-Rahmi) has been declared as the right of the needy relatives in the assets & capabilities of the better off among the relatives.
4.36

God expects us to be good to the neighbor who is near, the neighbor who is distant and the companion by our side (on the way, in the locality, in the workplace, etc.)
I HAVE BREATHED IN HIM (THE HUMAN BEING) MY SPIRIT

(Thus, we the human beings are under obligation to imbibe some of godly qualities.)
Most certainly God helps whoever helps His cause 22.40
Taj Mahal’s Spiritual Message

Zakat Foundation of India