

# OLD ARABIC SAYINGS SIMILES & METAPHORS

من  
أقوال  
الحريز  
وتشبيهاته  
الأدبية

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OLD ARABIC SAYINGS,  
SIMILES, AND METAPHORS

من أقوال العرب وتشبيهاتهم الأدبية

Translated from the Arabic by

SAAD ELKHADEM



YORK PRESS LTD.

## PREFACE

Translating literary texts is not only an exacting task, but also a risky and thankless one. No matter how faithful a rendition a translator tries to create, he, or she, may be forced to make certain concessions in matters of phraseology, syntax, rhythm, or poetic diction, which, if not meticulously checked, may change the inherent meaning of the text significantly. Of all the literary genres, lyrical poetry (on account of its intricate rhythmical patterns and innumerable connotative implications) and epigrammatic statements (often due to their cryptic brevity and conflicting cultural associations) are undoubtedly the most demanding ones to translate. I have, therefore, paid particular attention to the different intrinsic and extrinsic features of these short texts, for they combine several lyrical qualities as well as many aphoristic elements.

However, in dealing with some ambiguous sayings and abstruse proverbs, I have permitted myself to make changes which seemed unavoidable in order to clarify the meaning of the text, or to increase its readability. Of course I am aware that during this purely subjective process I ran the risk of doing too much or too little. However, I also know that no reader who is in good command of both languages would be totally satisfied with this or with any other translation, and that he, or she, would always feel capable of producing another translation that would correspond more closely to his or her own understanding of the original text. Some, I am sure, would be encouraged--when they see how the two texts, the Arabic and the English, face one another on the same page, and even on the same line--to compare, to criticize, and to modify what is in front of them. All of this is welcome, of course, because I have made this effort in the sincere hope that English-speaking readers (Arabs and non-Arabs) may be able to enjoy and to reflect upon some of the sagacious statements, profound thoughts, and witty observations made by the Arabs over the years and passed down from generation to generation.<sup>1</sup>

S.E.

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<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to several encyclopedias and anthologies; I am particularly grateful to *al-Munjid* (Beirut: Catholic Press, 1956), for its rich and accurate collection of Arabic proverbs.

## A

1. Abandon evil and evil will abandon you.      ١. أَتْرُكُ الشَّرَّ يَتْرُكْكَ.
2. Actions are judged by their results.      ٢. الْأَعْمَالُ بِخَوَاتِمِهَا.
3. After the sword has been thrust, any blame becomes futile.      ٢. سَبَقَ السَّيْفُ الْعَذْلَ.  
(الْعَذْلُ: اللوم)
4. After utter silence, he uttered nonsense.      ٤. سَكَتَ أَلْفًا وَنَطَقَ خَلْفًا.
5. The aged are revered.      ٥. لِكُلِّ قَدِيمٍ حُرْمَةٌ.
6. All foreigners are related to one another.      ٦. وَكُلُّ غَرِيبٍ لِلْغَرِيبِ نَسِيبٌ.
7. All the things that belong to us, are the things that trouble us.      ٧. مَنْ كَانَ لَكَ كُفْلَةٌ كَانَ عَلَيْكَ  
كُفْلَةٌ.  
(الْكُلُّ: التعب)
8. All good intentions are forgotten, if one doesn't keep one's promise.      ٨. أَفَةُ الْمَرْوَةِ خُلْفُ الْوَعْدِ.
9. All precautions are in vain when man faces his destiny.      ٩. لَا يَنْفَعُ حَذْرٌ مَنْ قَدَرِ.  
إِنَّ الْحَذَرَ لَا يَدْفَعُ الْمَقْدُورَ.
10. All transgressors must one day suffer adversities.      ١٠. عَلَى الْبَاغِي تَدُورُ الدَّوَائِرُ.
11. Although they had the best forefathers, they left behind the worst offspring.      ١١. نَعَمَ الْجَدُّودُ وَلَكِنْ بَشَسَ مَا  
خَلَفُوا.
12. Anger is the first sign of helplessness.      ١٢. أَوَّلُ الْعَمِيِّ الْإِحْتِلَاطُ.  
(الْعَمِيُّ: العجز؛ الإحتلاط:  
الغضب)

13. Annihilation or Domination! ١٣. إِمَّا هُلِكَ وَإِمَّا مُلِكَ.
14. [His anger was as ineffective] as a horse's anger towards its bridle. ١٤. غَضَبَ الْخَيْلِ عَلَى اللَّجْمِ.
15. [They scattered in all directions] as if a skunk had sprayed them with its offensive odor. ١٥. فَسَا بَيْنَهُم الظَّرَبَانِ.
16. [They sat so still] as if birds had nested upon their heads. ١٦. كَانَ عَلَى رُؤُوسِهِم الطَّيْرُ.
17. Averting evil is better than any worldly gain. ١٧. دَرءُ الْمَافَاسِدِ أَوْلَى مِنْ جَلْبِ النِّعَمِ.
18. Avoiding evil is a good deed in itself. ١٨. مِنْ ابْتِغَاءِ الْخَيْرِ اتِّقَاءُ الشَّرِّ.

## B

1. Barer than the palm of your hand. ١. أَنْقَى مِنَ الرَّاحَةِ.
2. Be hard as bones, and dogs will chew you. ٢. مَنْ جَعَلَ نَفْسُهُ عَظْمًا أَكَلَتْهُ الْكِلَابُ.
3. Because life is just like this, it has to be endured without a complaint. ٣. مَا الدَّهْرُ إِلَّا هَكَذَا فَاصْبِرْ لَهُ.
4. Because the dates are so tasty, one doesn't want to spit the stones. ٤. مِنْ شَهْوَةِ التَّمْرِ يُمَصُّ النُّوَى.
5. Before proposing to the prettiest girl, make sure you can afford her dowry. ٥. مِنْ خَطَبِ الْحَسَنَاءِ يُعْطَى مَهْرَهَا.

6. Befriend the good and flatter the bad.
7. A bereaved mother loves the company of bereaved mothers.
8. The best admonition is the one that deters.
9. The best course is the middle course.
10. The best knowledge is the kind that comes to your aid.
11. [Don't squeeze yourself] between a tree and its own bark.
12. Beware of those whom you once had helped.
13. Birds of a feather will flock together.
14. [It'll be too late, when] the blade hits the bone.
15. Blessed by luck, but doomed by stupidity.
16. Blind is the man who is in dire need.
17. Bolder than a lion.
18. A brief talk is the best talk.
19. Buffoonery eradicates dignity.

٦. آخِ الْأَكْفَاءِ وَدَاهِنِ الْأَعْدَاءِ .
٧. الشُّكْلَى تَحِبُّ الشُّكْلَى .
٨. خَيْرُ الْوَعْظِ مَا رَدَعَ .
٩. خَيْرُ الْأُمُورِ أَوْسَاطُهَا .
١٠. خَيْرُ الْعِلْمِ مَا حَضَرَكَ .
١١. بَيْنَ الْعَصَا وَلِحَائِهَا .
١٢. اتَّقِ شَرَّ مَنْ أَحْسَنْتَ إِلَيْهِ .
١٢. إِنَّ الطُّيُورَ عَلَى أَشْكَالِهَا تَقَعُ .
١٤. بَلِّغِ السَّكِّينَ الْعِظْمَ .
١٥. حَظٌّ فِي السَّحَابِ وَعَقْلٌ فِي التَّرَابِ .
١٦. صَاحِبُ الْحَاجَةِ أَعْمَى .
١٧. أَجْرًا مِنْ أَسَامَةٍ .  
أَجْرًا مِنْ ذِي لُبْدَةٍ .  
(أَسَامَةٌ: الْأَسَدُ؛ ذُو  
اللُّبْدَةِ: الْأَسَدُ)
١٨. خَيْرُ الْكَلَامِ مَا قَلَّ وَدَلَّ .
١٩. الْمَزَاحَةُ تُزْهِبُ الْمَهَابَةَ .

20. [Like someone who] builds a house and destroys a city.

٢٠. يَبْنِي قَصْرًا وَيَهْدِمُ مِصْرًا.

21. A bull uses his horns to protect his nose.

٢١. الثَّوْرُ يَحْمِي أَنْفَهُ بِرَوْقِهِ.  
(الرووق: القرن)

### C

1. Can a falcon ever fly without wings?

١. هل ينهض البازي بلا جناح!  
(الباز، البازي: الصقرا)

2. Can a wolf ever turn into a ewe?

٢. ذئب استنمع.

3. Can the moon be overlooked?

٣. وهل يُخْفَى على الناس القمر!

4. Can the shadow be straight when the rod is crooked?

٤. هل يستقيم الظلُّ والعودُ  
أعوجُ.

5. Cheaper than the dates of Basra.

٥. أرخصُ من التمر بالبصرة.

6. Choose a wise man to be your emissary, and don't give him any instructions.

٦. أَرْسِلْ حَكِيمًا وَلَا تَوْصِيهِ.

7. Clearer than a rooster's eye.

٧. أَصْفَى مِنْ عَيْنِ الدِّيكِ.

8. Clearer than honey.

٨. أَصْفَى مِنْ جَنَى النحل.

9. Clearer than a teardrop.

٩. أَصْفَى مِنْ الدَّمْعَةِ.  
أَنْتَقَى مِنْ الدَّمْعَةِ.

10. Closer to a man than his own shadow.

١٠. أَلْزَمُ لِلْمَرْءِ مِنْ ظِلِّهِ.

11. Complaining is a weak man's only weapon. ١١. سِلَاحُ الضَّعْفَاءِ الشَّكَايَةُ.
12. Contentment is better than all the riches of the world. ١٢. خَيْرُ الْغِنَى الْقَنُوعُ.
13. [Someone is] covered with more clothes than an onion. ١٣. أَكْسَى مِنْ بَصْلَةٍ.
14. [Someone is like] a cow that is butting its kindest milker. ١٤. خَيْرُ حَالِبِكَ تَنْطَحِينَا.
15. Cowardice begets neither gain nor loss. ١٥. ثَمَرَةُ الْجُبْنِ لَا رِيحٌ وَلَا خُسْرٌ.

## D

1. Daylight makes all candles superfluous. ١. أَغْنَى الصَّبَاحُ عَنِ الْمَصْبَاحِ.
2. [Like someone who is trying to] daub the sun with mud. ٢. يُطَيِّنُ عَيْنَ الشَّمْسِ.
3. Deeds testify better than any witness. ٣. شَهَادَاتُ الْفَعَالِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ شَهَادَاتِ الرِّجَالِ.
4. The deluge is about to cover all mountaintops. ٤. بَلَغَ السَّيْلُ الزُّبْيَ.  
(الزُّبْيُ جَمْعُ زُبْيَةٍ: مَكَانٌ عَالٍ لَا يَصِلُ إِلَيْهِ الْمَاءُ)
5. [The difference between the two of them is like] the difference between a date and a lump of burning coal. ٥. كَالْفَرْقِ بَيْنَ التَّمْرَةِ وَالْجَمْرَةِ.

6. [Like someone who keeps] dipping his brush in an empty can of paint.      ٦. يَذْهَبُ مِنْ قَارُورَةٍ فَارِغَةٍ.
7. Discreeter than a chameleon.      ٧. أَحْزَمُ مِنَ الْحِرْبَاءِ.
8. Disobey your own self, and you will be doing the right thing.      ٨. خَالَفَ نَفْسَكَ تَسْتَرْحِ.  
خَالَفَ هَوَاكَ تَرْشُدُ.
9. Distrusting people is sheer prudence.      ٩. الْحَزَمُ سُوءُ الظَّنِّ بِالنَّاسِ.
10. A dog remains a dog even if it wears a golden collar.      ١٠. الْكَلْبُ كَلْبٌ وَلَوْ طَوَّقَتْهُ  
ذَهَبًا.
11. A dog's barking never reaches the clouds.      ١١. نَبْحُ الْكَلَابِ لَا يَضُرُّ  
بِالسَّحَابِ.
12. Don't be soft or you'll be squeezed, and don't be hard or you'll be broken.      ١٢. لَا تَكُنْ رَطْبًا فَتُعْصَرَ وَلَا  
يَابَسًا فَتُكْسَرُ.
13. Don't be too sweet or you'll be swallowed, and don't be too bitter or you'll be tossed off.      ١٢. لَا تَكُنْ حُلُوءًا فَتُسْتَرْطَ وَلَا  
مُرًّا فَتُعْثَقِي.  
(يَسْتَرْطُ: يَبْتَلَعُ؛ يَعْثَقِي  
الشَّيْءُ: يَلْفِظُهُ)
14. Don't censure a certain behavior, only to embrace it afterwards.      ١٤. لَا تَنْهَ عَنْ خَلْقٍ وَتَأْتِي مِثْلَهُ.
15. Don't dive if you can't swim.      ١٥. لَا تَقْعَنَّ الْبَحْرَ إِلَّا سَابِحًا.
16. Don't lose the hens to save the eggs.      ١٦. لَا تُحْيِ الْبَيْضَ وَتَقْتُلِ  
الْفِرَاحَ.
17. Don't squeeze yourself between the layers of an onion.      ١٧. لَا تَدْخُلْ بَيْنَ الْبَصَلَةِ  
وَقَشْرِهَا.

18. Don't take a poison only because you have its antidote.

١٨. لا تشرب السمَّ اتكالاً على الترياق.

19. [Someone] drifts with every wind.

١٩. يَهْبُ مع كلِّ ريح.

## E

1. Each head has its own ache.

١. كل رأسٍ به صُداع.

2. [Someone] eats more than a whale.

٢. أَكَلُ من حوت.

3. [Someone] eats more than a wood worm.

٢. أَكَلُ من السوس.

4. Enmity, hatred, and sickness never arrive in small shares.

٤. لا قليل في العداوة والإحن والمرض.  
(الإحنة: الحقد)

5. An envious man will be smitten for his grudge.

٥. ويلٌ للحسود من حسده.

6. [Like someone who] escapes the heat by jumping into the fire.

٦. كالمستجير من الرمضاء بالنار.  
(الرمضاء: شدة الحر)

7. Even a little evil is too much evil.

٧. الشرُّ قليلُهُ كثير.

8. Even an unskilled archer may sometimes hit the target.

٨. رَبُّ رَمِيَةٍ من غير رام.

9. Even a she-camel is sometimes kind to her suckling. ٩. لا يُعَدُّم الحَوَارُ مِنْ أُمِّ حَنَّةَ.  
(الحوار: رضيع الناقة)
10. Even if I tried to feed him honey, he'd always try to bite my fingers. ١٠. لو أَلَقَمْتَهُ عَسَلًا لَعَضَّ  
إصبعي.
11. Even the cow that doesn't like to be milked, will have to fill its pail. ١١. الضَّجُورُ تَحْلُبُ الْعَلْبَةَ.
12. Every chick was once an egg. ١٢. كُلَّ قَائِبٍ مِنْ قُوبَةٍ.  
(القائبة: الفرخ أو البيضة؛  
القوب: الفرخ أو البيضة)
13. Every dress fits someone. ١٣. لِكُلِّ ثَوْبٍ لَابَسَ.
14. Every dog barks loudly, when it stands beside its home. ١٤. كُلُّ كَلْبٍ يَبَاهُ نَبَاحٌ.
15. Every era has its men. ١٥. لِكُلِّ دَهْرٍ رِجَالٌ.  
لِكُلِّ زَمَانٍ رِجَالٌ.
16. Every girl admires her father. ١٦. كُلُّ فَتَاةٍ بِأَبِيهَا مُعْجِبَةٌ.
17. Every distress ends in relief. ١٧. كُلُّ هَمٍّ إِلَى فَرَجٍ.  
إِنَّ بَعْدَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا.
18. Every man has his share of grief. ١٨. كُلُّ إِنْسَانٍ وَهْمٌ.
19. Every man is formed by his days. ١٩. الْإِنْسَانُ ابْنُ يَوْمِهِ.
20. Every man reflects his clan. ٢٠. الْمَرْءُ مِرَاةُ أَخِيهِ.

21. Every new day brings along its own sustenance. ٢١. لكلّ غدٍ طعام.
22. Every learned man will once err. ٢٢. لكلّ عالم هفوة.
23. Every pasture was grazed once. ٢٣. بكلّ عُشبٍ آثارُ رَعِي.
24. Every plant has its sap. ٢٤. لكلّ عُودٍ عُصارة.
25. Every pot oozes what it has inside. ٢٥. وكلّ اناءٍ بالذي فيه ينضح.
26. Every runaway camel will eventually return to its hitching place. ٢٦. عُودي الى مَبَارِكِكَ.
27. Every sun will have to set. ٢٧. لكلّ شمسٍ مَغْرِبٌ.
28. Everything folded will one day be unfolded. ٢٨. لكلّ طَيٍّ نَشْرٌ.
29. Every thoroughbred may once trip, and every learned man may once err. ٢٩. لكلّ جَوَادٍ كَبُوةٌ ولكلّ عالم هفوة.
30. Every torrential rain starts with a trickle. ٣٠. أوّلُ الغيثِ قطرٌ ثم ينهمر.
31. Every tree was once a pit. ٣١. أوّلُ الشجرةِ النواةُ.  
النوى أوّلُ الشجرةِ.
32. Every war has its ups and downs. ٣٢. الحربُ سِجالٌ.  
(سجال: مساجلة)
33. Excessiveness is never good; even good deeds shouldn't be excessive. ٣٣. لا خير في السرف ولا سرف في الخير.

34. Excuses and lies are one and the same.

٢٤. المَعَاذِرُ مَكَاذِبُ.

35. Excuses will be accepted by noble-minded people.

٢٥. وَالْعِذْرُ عِنْدَ كِرَامِ النَّاسِ  
مَقْبُولٌ.

36. Eyes reveal the truth better than words.

٢٦. اللَّحْظُ أَصْدَقُ إِنْبَاءٍ مِنَ  
اللِّفْظِ.

## F

1. Fairer than a weight scale.

١. أَعْدَلُ مِنْ مِيزَانٍ.

2. Falsehood has a short life-time, but truth will endure until the end of time.

٢. جَوَلَةُ الْبَاطِلِ سَاعَةٌ وَجَوَلَةُ  
الْحَقِّ إِلَى قِيَامِ السَّاعَةِ.

3. Farther back than yesterday.

٣. أَفَوْتُ مِنْ أَمْسٍ.

4. Feather your arrow before you shoot it.

٤. قَبْلَ الرَّمْيِ يُرَاشُ السَّهْمُ.

5. First attacks are usually awkward.

٥. أَوَّلُ الْغَزْوِ أَخْرَقٌ.

6. First the companion, then the road.

٦. الرِّفِيقُ قَبْلَ الطَّرِيقِ.

7. First the neighbor, then the home.

٧. الْجَارُ ثُمَّ الدَّارُ.

8. First you scold, then you punish.

٨. الْعِتَابُ قَبْلَ الْعِقَابِ.

9. Flawless are the things we desire.

٩. حَسَنٌ فِي كُلِّ عَيْنٍ مَا تَوَدُّ.

10. Flaying doesn't hurt the slaughtered lamb.

١٠. الشاة المذبوحة لا يؤلمها السلخ.

11. Flies recognize the milkman.

١١. الذَّبَّانِ يَعْرِفُ وَجْهَ اللَّبَّانِ.

12. [Someone, or something,] follows him closer than his own shadow.

١٢. أَتَبِعُ مِنَ الظِّلِّ.

13. Fools have it easy in every respect.

١٣. إِسْتِرَاحَ مَنْ لَا عَقْلَ لَهُ.

14. Forbidden things are what we covet.

١٤. أَحَبُّ شَيْءٍ إِلَى الْإِنْسَانِ مَا مُنِعَا.

15. For every beautiful thing there is a faultfinder.

١٥. لِكُلِّ حَسَنٍ عَائِبٌ.

16. For every beautiful woman there is a detractor.

١٦. لَا تُعَدُّ الْحَسَنَاءُ ذَامًّا.

17. For every claimant there is a contestant.

١٧. لِكُلِّ زَعْمٍ خَصْمٌ.

18. For every occasion there is a fitting word.

١٨. لِكُلِّ مَقَامٍ مَقَالٌ.

19. Forgetfulness is a disease that afflicts knowledgeable people.

١٩. آفَةُ الْعِلْمِ النِّسْيَانُ.

20. Forgiveness is at its best, when one is mighty.

٢٠. خَيْرُ الْعَفْوِ مَا كَانَ عِزُّ الْمَقْدَرَةِ.

21. For one reason or another, masters become masters.

٢١. لِأَمْرِ مَا يَسُودُ مِنْ يَسُودَ.

22. For those who see with their own eyes, proofs are never needed. ٢٢. العِيَانُ لَا يَحْتَاجُ إِلَى الْبَيَانِ .
23. [Don't wait until tomorrow,] for tomorrow may belong to someone else. ٢٣. عَسَى غَدٌ لِّغَيْرِكَ .
24. For waging wars, God has created a special breed of men. ٢٤. خَلَقَ اللَّهُ لِلْحَرْبِ رِجَالًا .
25. Frailer than a spiderweb. ٢٥. أَوْهَنُ مِنْ بَيْتِ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ .
26. A free man always keeps his promise. ٢٦. أَنْجَزَ حُرٌّ مَا وَعَدَ .
27. A free man's chest is the tomb of his secrets. ٢٧. صُدُورُ الْأَحْرَارِ قُبُورُ الْأَسْرَارِ .
28. [Someone] fumbles like a half-blind camel. ٢٨. يَخْبِطُ خَبِطَ عَشَوَاءَ .  
(العشواء [مؤنث الأعشى]:  
الناقة التي لَا تَبْصُرُ جَيِّدًا)

## G

1. Generosity will be discredited if it is given in excess. ١. آفَةُ الْجُودِ الْإِسْرَافُ .
2. God's hand is above all hands. ٢. وَمَا مِنْ يَدٍ إِلَّا يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَهَا .
3. Good deeds enslave people. ٣. النَّاسُ عَبِيدُ الْإِحْسَانِ .
4. Good deeds end all kinds of malice. ٤. الْإِحْسَانُ يَقْطَعُ اللِّسَانَ .

5. Good deeds will prevail, even after a long time. ٥. الخير أبقي وإن طال الزمان به.
6. A good man's joy is written on his face, but his grief is hidden deep in his heart. ٦. المؤمن بِشْرُهُ فِي وَجْهِهِ وَحُزْنُهُ فِي قَلْبِهِ.
7. Gentle words capture hearts. ٧. لين الكلام قيد القلوب.
8. Give bad things a chance to miss you. ٨. دع العوراء تخطأك.  
(يُقَالُ أَنَّ هَذَا هُوَ أَحْكَمُ مِثْلٍ ضَرَبَتْهُ الْعَرَبُ!)
9. The truth lies under the bubbles. ٩. الصريحُ تحت الرغوة.
10. Give him first your best dates, then if needed, what he hates. ١٠. أعطِ أخاك تمرّة فلن أبي فجمرة.
11. Good deeds make a man happy in both worlds. ١١. خير الأمور ما أسعدك في داريك.
12. The graying of a man's hair is the first announcement of his impending death. ١٢. شيبك ناعيك.
13. Greed leads to privation. ١٣. الحرصُ قائدُ الحرمان.
14. Greedier than an ant. ١٤. أحرص من نملة.
15. A greedy man doesn't get more than his allotted share. ١٥. ليس الحريصُ بزائدٍ في رزقه.
16. A grudge is not needed when you have power. ١٦. إنَّ المقدرة تُذهب الحفيظة.

## H

1. A habitual liar should have a good memory. .١ إن كنت كذوباً فكن ذكوراً.  
كن ذكوراً اذا كنت كذوباً.
2. Happy are those who share the happiness of others. .٢ خير الناس من فرح للناس  
بالخير.
3. Hardships will never dishearten a man of courage. .٣ الحرُّ حرٌّ وإن مَسَّهُ الضرُّ.
4. Hard work may exhaust a man, but idleness for sure will ruin him. .٤ إن يكن الشغل مَجهدةً فإنَّ  
الفراغ مفسدة.
5. Harder than a rock. .٥ أقسى من صخر.
6. A harmless chat can sometimes lead to serious topics. .٦ الحديث ذو شُجون.
7. Harsher than fate. .٧ أجفَى من الدهر.
8. Hearing is never the same as seeing. .٨ ليس الخبرُ كالمعاينة.
9. Haughtier than a crow. .٩ أزهى من غراب.
10. Haughtier than a lion's nose. .١٠ أعزُّ من أنف الأسد.
11. Haughtier than a mountain goat. .١١ أزهى من وعل.
12. Haughtier than an eagle in the sky. .١٢ أعزُّ من عُقاب الجوّ.

13. Haughtier than a peacock.

١٣. أزهى من طاؤوس.

14. Have mercy on those below you, and you'll have mercy from those above you.

١٤. إرحم من دونك يرحمك من فوقك.

15. [Someone is so helpless that] he can neither pull nor let go.

١٥. ما أملكُ شدًّا ولا إرخاءً.

16. [Someone is so poor that] he doesn't even have a date pit to his name.

١٦. لا يملك شروى نقير.  
(الشروى: المثل؛ النقير: شق في النواة تنبت منه النخلة)

17. [Someone is so poor that] he has neither wine nor vinegar.

١٧. ما عنده خلٌّ ولا خمرٌ.

18. [Someone is so poor that] he owns neither a sheep nor a camel.

١٨. ما له ثاغيةٌ ولا راغية.  
(الثاغية: النعجة؛ الراغية: الناقة)

19. [A shameless liar may even claim that] he had once captured a donkey that had a pair of horns.

١٩. جاءَ بقرنيَّ حِمَارٍ.

20. He who asks for a faultless friend, is doomed to stay without a friend.

٢٠. من طلب أخًا بلا عيب بقي بلا أخ.

21. He who aspires higher than others, has more worries to contend with.

٢١. من علت همته طال همُّه.

22. He who becomes a lamb, will be devoured by wolves.

٢٢. من صار نعجةً أكله الذئب.

٢٣. من أَمِنَ الزَّمانَ خانَهُ.  
23. He who blindly trusts the days, will always be betrayed.
٢٤. من غَالِبَ الأَيَّامِ غُلِبَ.  
من سابقِ الدهرِ عثرَ.  
24. He who challenges his destiny, will be vanquished every time.
٢٥. من سَلَكَ الجَدَدَ أَمِنَ العِثارَ.  
(الجَدَدُ: الأرضُ المستوية)  
25. He who chooses the smooth road, will be safe of all pitfalls.
٢٦. سَبَّكَ من بَلَّغَكَ السَّبَّ.  
26. He who conveys an insult to you, shares the blame for insulting you.
٢٧. من أَهَانَ مالَهُ أَكْرَمَ نَفْسَهُ.  
27. He who despises his money, dignifies himself.
٢٨. من لا يَخافُ أَحَدًا لا يَخافُ أَحَدٌ.  
28. He who fears no one, no one will ever fear.
٢٩. من أَطَاعَ هَواهَ باعَ دينَهُ بَدَنياهُ.  
29. He who follows his desires, is choosing this world and not the next.
٣٠. من أَكْثَرَ أَهْجَرَ.  
(الهاجرات، المهجرات؛  
الفضائح، الفحش)  
30. He who goes beyond his limit, will one day disgrace himself.
٣١. من عَزَّ بَزَّ.  
(عَزَّ: قوي، اشتد؛ بَزَّ:  
غلب، سلب)  
31. He who has the might, will always get the spoils.
٣٢. من أَعانَكَ على الشَّرِّ ظَلَمَكَ.  
32. He who helps you abuse others, is himself abusing you.

33. He who informs you about them, will soon inform them about you. ٢٢. من نقل اليك فقد نقل عنك.
34. He who is not a real wolf, will be devoured by other wolves. ٢٤. من لم يكن ذئبًا أكلته الذئاب.
35. He who looks hard within himself, will undoubtedly find God. ٢٥. من عرف نفسه عرف ربّه.
36. He who magnifies his own misfortunes, will be afflicted with greater ones. ٢٦. من عَظَّمَ صِغار المصائب ابتلاه الله بكبارها.
37. He who moves cautiously, will surely reach his goal. ٢٧. من تأثّى ادرك ما تمنّى.
38. He who ponders all results, will avert all disasters. ٢٨. من نظر فى العواقب سلم من النوائب.
39. He who repents all his sins, is like a man without sins. ٢٩. التائب من الذنب كمن لا ذنب له.
40. He who says something nice, will always hear something nice. ٤٠. مَنْ أَجْمَلَ قِيلاً سَمِعَ جَمِيلاً.
41. He who serves others, others will always serve him. ٤١. من خَدَمَ الرجالَ خُدِمَ.
42. He who slights himself, will be slighted by everyone. ٤٢. من هانت عليه نفسه فهو على غيره أهون.
43. He who tries hard, will ultimately find the right path. ٤٣. مَنْ جَدَّ وَجَدَّ.

44. He who transgresses the truth, will find himself on a sinister path. ٤٤. من تعدَّى الحق ضاع مذهبه.
45. He who trusts his fellowmen, will always have a peaceful life. ٤٥. من حسن ظنه طاب عيشه.
46. He who was once bitten by a snake, becomes cautious of every length of rope. ٤٦. من نهشته الحية حذر الرسن.  
(الرسن: الحبل)
47. He who wavers, will always fail. ٤٧. من هاب خاب.
48. He who wrestles with the truth, will ultimately be brought to the ground. ٤٨. من صارع الحق صرعه.
49. He who yields to his anger, is a man of bad manners. ٤٩. من أطاع غضبه أضاع أدبه.
50. [Someone is so deft that] he would easily lift the kohl from a woman's eyelids. ٥٠. يسرق الكحل من العين.
51. [Someone is so stupid that] he wouldn't know the difference between his elbow and his foot. ٥١. لا يعرف الكوع من البوع.  
(البوع: عظم في مشط القدم)
52. His words are air in a cage. ٥٢. كلامه ريح في قفص.
53. An honorable man's word is a debt he must repay. ٥٣. وعد الكريم دين.
54. Hope ends when life ends. ٥٤. لا تخرج النفس من الأمل حتى تدخل في الأجل.

55. Horses are the best judges of their riders.

٥٥. الخيلُ أعلمُ بفِرسانِها.

56. Horses recognize their own riders.

٥٦. عَرَفَتِ الخيلُ فِرسانَها.

57. Hotter than live coal.

٥٧. أحرُّ من نار الغَضَى.  
(الغضى: نوع من الخشب  
يبقى جمره زمنا طويلا  
لا ينطفئ)

58. An hour's pain is better than hours of pain.

٥٨. وجعُ ساعةٍ ولا كُلُّ ساعةٍ.

59. How painful can an ant's bite be!

٥٩. ما عسى ان يبلغَ عَضُّ  
النملِ.

60. Hungrier than a wolf.

٦٠. أَجْوَعُ من ذئبٍ.

61. Hurricanes sweep away all kinds of windfall.

٦١. مالٌ تجلبه الرياحُ تأخذه  
الزوابع.

## I

1. I am furious and you're in rage,  
how can we turn a new page!

١. أنا تَتَّقُ وأنت مَتَّقُ فكيف  
نَتَّفِقُ.

(التَّتَّقُ: الممتلئ غضباً؛  
المَتَّقُ: من يكاد يبكي من  
شدة الغيظ)

2. I am not the first man to be de-  
ceived by a mirage.

٢. لست بأوّل من غرّه السَّرَابُ.

3. I bet if I traded in coffins, no one would ever die.
  4. I'd rather be devoured by a lion than eaten by a dog.
  5. I'd rather eat my own flesh before anyone else does.
  6. I fed you my best broth, in anticipation of a day like this.
  7. If a lion spares you, don't be tempted to hunt it down.
  8. If God doesn't provide, all hard work remains useless.
  9. If God has given you a ladle, then there is no need to burn your fingers.
  10. [It wouldn't have been such a disgrace,] if I had been slapped by a real lady.
  11. If it is your rip, patch it up.
  12. If it weren't for concessions, there wouldn't be a human race.
  13. If lying is a sickness, telling the truth is the only remedy.
  14. [This will be possible only] if milk could be pushed back into the udder.
٢. لو اتجرت بالأكفان ما مات أحد.
  ٤. ياكلني سبع ولا ياكلني كلب.
  ٥. أكل لحمي ولا أدعه لأكل.
  ٦. لمثل هذا كنت أحسيك الحسا.
  ٧. إن سلمت من الأسد فلا تطمع في صيده.
  ٨. رزق الله لا كدك.
  ٩. إذا رزقك الله مغرفة فلا تحرق يدك.
  ١٠. لو ذات سوار لممتني.
  ١١. عندك وهي فارقيه.  
(الوهي: العيب، الشق)
  ١٢. لولا الوئام لهلك الأنام.
  ١٣. الكذب داء والصدق شفاء.
  ١٤. حتى يرجع الدر في الضرع.  
(الدر: اللبن)

15. If owls were good for something, hunters wouldn't have left them alone.

١٥. لو كان في البومة خير ما تركها الصياد.

16. If people were fair, judges would have nothing to do.

١٦. لو أنصف الناسُ استراح القاضي.

17. If the bow maker and the arrow maker get entangled, no hunt will ever take place.

١٧. إختلط الحابل بالنابل.  
(الحابل: من ينصب  
الحبال، الصائد، أو من  
يشد حبال القوس؛  
النابل: صاحب النبال أو  
السهم، أو صانعها أو  
الرامي بها)

18. If you become an anvil, be patient; if you become a hammer, be painful.

١٨. إذا كنت سنداناً فاصبر  
وإذا كنت مطرقة فأوجع.

19. If you don't push and shove, you'll end up holding an empty bag.

١٩. إن لم تُزاحم لم يقع في  
الخُرْج شيء.

20. If you haven't woven it yourself, then drag it and shove it as you please.

٢٠. ليس عليك نسجُه فاسحب  
وَجُرْ.

21. If you hit, make it painful, and if you scold, make it loud.

٢١. إذا ضربت فأوجع وإذا  
زجرت فاسمع.

22. If you scratch a wound, it will certainly bleed.

٢٢. إذا حككتُ قرحةً أدميتها.

23. If your brother pulls hard, then it is your turn to release.

٢٣. إذا عَزَّ أخوك فهُنْ.

24. Ignorance is a man's worst companion.

٢٤. الجهل شرُّ الأصحاب.

25. I hear grinding but see no flour.

٢٥. [أسمع] جَعَجَعَةً ولا أرى طحناً.

26. It is always nice to be in charge, even if it is only of a pile of rocks.

٢٦. يا حَبْذا الإمارة ولو على الحجارة.

27. It is either your brother or the wolf.

٢٧. أخوك أم الذئبُ

28. It is not fair to ask the wolf to guard the sheep.

٢٨. من استرعى الذئب ظلم.

29. It is the worst of all deals when you lose the camel to save the fetters.

٢٩. بئس العوضُ من جملٍ قَيْدُهُ.

## J

1. Just listening to evil talk is evil enough.

١. حَسْبُكَ من شرِّ سَمَاعَةٍ.

2. Just lower your head, and this too will pass.

٢. تَطَاطَأْ لَهَا تُخْطِئُكَ.

3. Just tell him these are red dates, and he will insist they are glowing embers.

٣. لو قُلْتُ تَمْرَةٌ لَقَالَ جَمْرَةٌ

## K

1. Knowledge is afflicted by forgetfulness. ١. آفة العلم النسيان.
2. Keep your dog hungry, and it will follow you everywhere. ٢. أجمع كلبك يتبعك.
3. Kindness enslaves all free men. ٢. بالبرّ يُستعبد الحرّ.

## L

1. A large spoon reaches the bottom of every pot. ١. تُخرج المقدحة ما في قعر البرمة.  
(المقدحة: المغرفة؛ البرمة: قدر مصنوع من حجر)
2. Learned men are God's custodians of humanity. ٢. العلماء أمناء الله على خلقه.
3. Less defined than a "thing." ٢. أنكر من شيء.
4. Less food means less illness. ٤. خَفَّفْ طعامك تأمن سقامك.
5. Less reachable than an eagle in the sky. ٥. أَمْنَعُ من عُقاب الجوّ.
6. Less reachable than a vulture's egg. ٦. أبعد من بيض الأنوق.  
أَعَزُّ من بيض الأنوق.  
(الأنوق: العقاب، الرخمة)

7. Less reliable than the water of a creek. ٧. أَغْدَرُ مِنْ غَدِيرٍ.
8. Less useful than a lamp placed in the sunlight. ٨. أَضْيَعُ مِنْ سِرَاجٍ فِي شَمْسٍ.
9. Less useful than a sheath that has no blade. ٩. أَضْيَعُ مِنْ غَمَدٍ بَلَا نَصْلٍ.
10. Let us dismount, for we have reached greener pastures! ١٠. أَمْرَعْتُ فَاَنْزِلْ.
11. Lies undermine all communications. ١١. آفَةُ الْحَدِيثِ الْكَذْبُ.
12. [Someone] lies more than a captive. ١٢. أَكْذَبُ مِنَ الْأَخِيذِ.  
(الْأَخِيذُ: الْأَسِيرُ)
13. Like a camel driver who has just lost his caravan. ١٣. كَالْحَادِي وَلَيْسَ لَهُ بَعِيرٌ.  
(الْحَادِي: سَائِقُ الْإِبِلِ)
14. Like a thunderbolt that brings no rain. ١٤. إِنَّمَا هُوَ كِبْرَقِ الْخُلْبِ.  
(الْخُلْبُ: سَحَابٌ لَا مَطَرُ فِيهِ)
15. Like a physician who is trying to heal others, while he himself is sick. ١٥. طَبِيبٌ يَدَاوِي النَّاسَ وَهُوَ مَرِيضٌ.
16. Like a scorpion who challenges a snake to a fight. ١٦. تَحَكَّكَتِ الْعَقْرَبُ بِالْأَفْعَى.
17. Like a vicious circle that has no beginning and has no end. ١٧. كَالْحَلْقَةِ الْمُرْغَةِ لَا يُدْرَى أَيْنَ طَرَفَاهَا.
18. Like iron, a human heart also rusts. ١٨. تَصْدَأُ الْقُلُوبُ كَمَا يَصْدَأُ الْحَدِيدُ.

19. Like sheep on a green pasture  
that aren't allowed to graze.

١٩. كالمربوط والمرعى خصيبٌ.

20. Like someone running from the  
heat into the fire.

٢٠. كالمستغيث من الرمضاء  
بالنار.

(الرمضاء : شدة الحر)

21. Like someone who roasted his  
meat, then dropped it into  
the fire.

٢١. أنضج أخوك ثم رمّد.

22. Like swarms of locust that  
strip the land of all seeds and  
plants.

٢٢. كالجراد لا يُبقي ولا يذرُ.

23. Like the Kaaba, people come  
to it, but it goes to no one.

٢٣. كالكعبة تُزارُ ولا تزور.

24. Like the ostrich, it is neither  
a bird nor a camel.

٢٤. مثل النعامة لا طير ولا  
جمل.

25. Like writing on water.

٢٥. كالراقم على الماء.

26. A listless person has no  
friends.

٢٦. ليس لللولي صديق.

27. Longer lasting than a message  
engraved in stone.

٢٧. أبقي من وحي في حجر.  
(الوحي : الرسالة، المكتوب)

28. Longer lasting than eternity.

٢٨. أبقي من الدهر.

29. Longer than the month of  
Ramadan.

٢٩. أطول من شهر الصوم.

30. Longer than the shadow of a  
lance.

٣٠. أطول من ظلّ الرمح.

31. The longer you live, the more you see. ٢١. مَهِمَا تَعِشْ تَرَهُ.
32. Look after your friend even if you were engulfed by fire. ٢٢. حَافِظٌ عَلَى الصَّدِيقِ وَلَوْ فِي الْحَرِيقِ.
33. [Someone] loses his way easier than a lizard does. ٢٣. أَضَلُّ مِنْ ضَبٍّ.  
(الضَّبُّ: حَيَوَانٌ مِنَ الزَّحَافَاتِ، "السَّحْلِيَّة")
34. Lost are those who are guided by blind people. ٢٤. قَدْ ضَلَّ مَنْ كَانَتْ الْعُمَيَانُ تَهْدِيهِ.
35. A lover's eye never sees the truth. ٢٥. عَيْنُ الْهَوَى لَا تَصْدُقُ.
36. A low land sucks its water and the water destined for other lands. ٢٦. الْأَرْضُ الْوَاطِنَةُ تَشْرَبُ مَاءَهَا وَمَاءَ غَيْرِهَا.
37. Lower your bucket in every well. ٢٧. أَلْقِ فِي الدَّلَاءِ دَلُوكَ.  
(دَلَى الدَّلُو: أَرْسَلَ الدَّلُو فِي الْبَيْتِ)

## M

1. Madness takes many shapes and forms. ١. الْجُنُونُ فُنُونٌ.
2. Make sure your bed is snug and soft before you lie down. ٢. دَمَّثْ لَجَنَبِكَ قَبْلَ النَّوْمِ مُضْطَجِعًا.  
(دَمَّثْ: لَيَّنَ)
3. Man always covets what he doesn't possess. ٣. الْمَرْءُ تَوَاقَى إِلَى مَا لَمْ يَنَلْ.

4. A man always senses who is on his side.

٤. النفسُ تعلمُ مَنْ أخوها  
النافعُ.

5. The man in charge is the most tormented man around.

٥. سيّدُ القومِ أشقاهم.

6. Man is enslaved by good deeds.

٦. الإنسانُ عبدُ الإحسان.

7. A man is known by the friends he keeps.

٧. المرءُ بخليله.

8. A man is sometimes blamed for what takes place in his neighbor's house.

٨. قد يؤخذُ الجارُ بذنبِ الجار.

9. Mankind is the prey of fate.

٩. الأنامُ فرائسُ الأيام.

10. A man shouldn't be blamed for evading his own destruction.

١٠. ليس يُلامُ هاربٌ من حتفه.

11. A man stands where he puts himself.

١١. المرءُ حيثُ يضعُ نفسه.

12. A man's choice is an indication of his wisdom.

١٢. دلٌّ على عاقلٍ اختيارُهُ.

13. A man's companion is a reflected image of himself.

١٣. جَلِيسُ المرءِ مثله.

14. A man's appearance may be more telling than his words.

١٤. رُبُّ حالٍ أفصحُ من لسان.

15. A man's erudition is in his heart, and not within the pages of his books.

١٥. العلمُ في الصدور لا في  
السطور.

16. A man's good manners are better than all his riches. ١٦. أدب المرء خير من ذهبه.
17. A man's injustice is what causes his downfall. ١٧. ظلم المرء يصرفه.
18. A man's inner wealth is better than any other wealth. ١٨. غنى النفس أفضل من غنى المال.
19. A man's livelihood depends on good planning. ١٩. التدبير نصف المعيشة.
20. A man's might is measured by the degree of his independence. ٢٠. عزُّ الرجل استغناؤه عن الناس.
21. A man is most vulnerable between his jaws. ٢١. مقتلُ الرجل بين فكَّيه.
22. A man's true nature will always prevail. ٢٢. الطبع أغلب.
23. A man's wisdom is reflected in what he does, and his knowledge, in what he says. ٢٢. دليلُ عقل المرء فعله ودليل علمه قوله.
24. Many arrows may miss, but eventually one will hit the mark. ٢٤. مع الخواطي سهم صائب.
25. Meager but yours, is better than plump but theirs. ٢٥. غثك خيرٌ من سمين غيرك.
26. Milk the cow only if you'll get your share. ٢٦. احلب حلباً لك شطره.
27. Merry days are short days. ٢٧. يوم السرور قصير.

28. Misfortunes of some, are blessings for others. ٢٨. مصائب قوم عند قوم فوائد.
29. Modesty is the crown of all knightly virtues. ٢٩. تاجُ المروءة التواضع.
30. Money is the most effective emissary. ٣٠. لا رسول كالدرهم.
31. Money salves every wound. ٣١. الدراهم مراهم.
32. More acquisitive than an ant. ٣٢. أجمعُ من نملة.
33. More adrift than the people of Moses. ٣٣. أثبُّ من قوم موسى.
34. More aggressive than a scorpion. ٣٤. أَعْدَى من العقرب.
35. More arrogant than a crow. ٣٥. أخيلُ من غراب.
36. More arrogant than a rooster. ٣٦. أخيلُ من ديك.
37. More barren than solid rock. ٣٧. أجردُ من صخرة.
38. More brutish than torrential rain. ٣٨. أغشَمُ من السيل.
39. More cautious than a crow. ٣٩. أَحْذَرُ من غراب.
40. More cautious than a wolf. ٤٠. أَحْذَرُ من ذئب.
41. More confused than a lizard. ٤١. أخيرُ من ضَبّ.
- (الضب: حيوان من الزحافات، "السحلية")

42. More contagious than scabies. ٤٢. أَعْدَى مِنَ الْجَرَبِ.
43. More courageous than a lion. ٤٣. أَشَجَعُ مِنْ لَيْثٍ.
44. More cowardly than an ostrich. ٤٤. أَجْبَنُ مِنْ نَعَامَةٍ.
45. More cunning than a fox. ٤٥. أَرَوُّغُ مِنْ ثَعْلَبٍ.
46. More daring than a fly. ٤٦. أَجْرَأُ مِنْ ذُبَابٍ.
47. More deceptive than a mirage. ٤٧. أَغْرُثُ مِنْ سَرَابٍ.
48. More deceptive than a wolf. ٤٨. أَخْتَلُ مِنَ الذِّئْبِ.
49. More deluding than our ambitions. ٤٩. أَغْرُثُ مِنَ الْأَمَانِي.
50. More desperate than a drowning man. ٥٠. أَيْأَسُ مِنْ غَرِيقٍ.
51. More diligent than ants. ٥١. أَكْسَبُ مِنْ نَمَلٍ.
52. More lasting than a tattoo. ٥٢. أَثْبَتُ مِنَ الْوَشْمِ.
53. More foolish than a butterfly. ٥٣. أَجْهَلُ مِنْ فَرَّاشَةٍ.
54. More foolish than someone who chews his water. ٥٤. أَحْمَقُ مِنْ مَاضِغِ الْمَاءِ.
55. More foolish than an ostrich. ٥٥. أَحْمَقُ مِنْ نَعَامَةٍ.
56. More foolish than a scorpion. ٥٦. أَجْهَلُ مِنْ عَقْرَبٍ.
57. More harmful than a wood worm. ٥٧. أَفْسَدُ مِنَ السُّوسِ.

58. More harmful than locusts. ٥٨. أَفْسَدُ مِنَ الْجَرَادِ.
59. More humble than a peg. ٥٩. أَذْلُ مِنْ وَتْدٍ.
60. More humble than a rug. ٦٠. أَذْلُ مِنَ الْبِسَاطِ.
61. More humble than a sole. ٦١. أَذْلُ مِنَ النَّعْلِ.
62. More imitative than a monkey. ٦٢. أَحْكَى مِنْ قَرْدٍ.
63. More cutting than a sword. ٦٣. أَمْضَى مِنَ السَّيْفِ.
64. More piercing than death. ٦٤. أَمْضَى مِنَ الْأَجْلِ.
65. More industrious than a honeybee. ٦٥. أَصْنَعُ مِنَ النَّحْلِ.
66. More industrious than a silk-worm. ٦٦. أَصْنَعُ مِنْ دُودِ الْقَزِّ.
67. More intricate than a lizard's tail. ٦٧. أَعْقَدُ مِنْ ذَنْبِ الضَّبِّ.  
(الضب: نوع من  
الزحافات، "السحلية")
68. More jinxed than a grave digger. ٦٨. أَشَامُ مِنْ حَفَّارٍ.
69. More noticeable than a fire on a mountaintop. ٦٩. أَشْهَرُ مِنْ نَارٍ عَلَى عَلاَمٍ.
70. More noticeable than the sun. ٧٠. أَشْهَرُ مِنَ الشَّمْسِ.
71. More penetrating than the wind. ٧١. أَمْضَى مِنَ الرِّيحِ.
72. More piercing than an arrow. ٧٢. أَنْفَذُ مِنَ السَّهْمِ.

73. More reckless than a butterfly. ٧٣. أطيّشُ من فراشة.
74. More revealing than daylight. ٧٤. أنمُّ من الصبح.
75. More secretive than the earth. ٧٥. أكتُمُ من الأرض.
76. More sharp-sighted than a bat in the dark. ٧٦. أبصرُ من الوطواط في الليل.
77. More sharp-sighted than an eagle. ٧٧. أبصرُ من عُقاب. أبصرُ من نسر.
78. The more the wisdom, the less the words. ٧٨. إذا تَمَّ العقلُ نقصَ الكلامُ.
79. More thirsty than a funnel. ٧٩. أشربُ من القمع. أعطشُ من قمع.
80. More thirsty than the sand. ٨٠. أظمأُ من رمل. أشربُ من الرمل. أعطشُ من رمل.
81. More tumultuous than a torrential stream. ٨١. أطفئُ من السيل.
82. More useful than a much-needed rain. ٨٢. أجدى من الغيث في أوانه.
83. More vengeful than a camel. ٨٣. أحقدُ من جمل.
84. More wakeful than a star. ٨٤. أسهرُ من النجم.
85. More wicked than a snake. ٨٥. أظلمُ من حية.

86. The most evil people are those who don't try to hide their evil from other people.

٨٦. شرُّ الناس من لا يبالي أن يراه الناسُ مسيئاً.

87. A mute's mother knows how to talk to the mutes.

٨٧. أمُّ الأخرس تعرف بلغات الخرسان.

88. My bow may be crooked, but my arrows never miss.

٨٨. إن حالت القوسُ فسهمي صائبٌ.

## N

1. Necessities acknowledge no restrictions.

١. الضرورات تُبيح المحظورات.

2. Necessity is the mother of invention.

٢. الحاجةُ تفتق الحيلة.

3. Need drives a man to theft.

٣. الخلَّة تدعو إلى السلَّة.  
(الخلَّة: الحاجة، الفقر؛  
السلَّة: السرقة)

4. [Someone, or something,] needs less water than a lizard.

٤. أروى من ضبٍّ.  
(الضبُّ: نوع من  
الزحافات، "السحلية")

5. [Someone, or something,] needs less water than a snake.

٥. أروى من حية.

6. [Someone] needs this less than a baldhead needs a comb.

٦. أغنى عن الشيء من الأقرع عن المشط.

7. Never lie to your God or to your friend.

٧. ربَّكَ وصاحبك لا تكذب عليهما.

8. The night is short for those who are sound asleep. ٨. ما أقصر الليل على الراقد.
9. No action can ever be blamed, if it was preceded by a proper warning. ٩. أعذر من أنذر.
10. No deal is as profitable as a good deed. ١٠. لا تجارة كالعمل الصالح.
11. No drug can ever erase the mark of time. ١١. وهل يصلح العطار ما أفسد الدهر!
12. No guilt after repentance. ١٢. لا جرم بعد الندامة.
13. No matter how hard you polish it, copper will always remain copper. ١٣. شوف النحاس يظهر النحاس.  
(شاف الشيء : صقله وجلاه)
14. No need or desire is worth the pain of fire. ١٤. لا خير في أرب القاك في لهب.  
(الأرب: المأرب، الغاية)
15. No property will ever be lost, if its rightful owner doesn't give up. ١٥. لا يضيع حق وراءه طالب.
16. No reproach after death. ١٦. لا عتاب بعد الموت.
17. Not all we know can be divulged. ١٧. ما كل ما يُعلم يُقال.
18. Not answering a foolish man is an answer in itself. ١٨. ترك الجواب على الجاهل جواب.
19. Not every archer hits the mark. ١٩. ما كل رامى غرض يصيب.

20. Not every black thing is a date.

٢٠. ما كل سوداء تمرّة.

21. Not every thunderbolt brings rain.

٢١. ما كلّ بارقة تجود بمائها.  
(البارقة: سحابة ذات برق)

22. Not every question has a reply.

٢٢. ما كلّ قولٍ له جواب.

23. Not every weak spot is vulnerable.

٢٣. ما كلّ عورةٍ تُصاب.

24. Not good enough to join the gentry, and not bad enough to join the herd.

٢٤. لا في العير ولا في النفير.  
(العير: قافلة الحمير؛  
النفير: مجموعة من الناس)

25. Not only did they eat my dates, but they also threw the pits at me.

٢٥. يأكلُ التمر وأرجمُ بالنوى.

## O

1. Of all the herds you see around, not a single camel belongs to me.

١. لا ناقة لي في هذا ولا جمل.

2. Oil kneaded in dough is never lost.

٢. الزيتُ في العجين لا يضيع.

3. Older than an eagle.

٣. أعمر من نسر.

4. Older than a lizard.

٤. أحيا من ضَبّ  
(الضَبّ: "السحلية")

5. Older than a serpent. ٥. أَعْمَرُ مِنْ حَيَّةٍ.
6. On the day of examination, one faces praise or humiliation. ٦. عِنْدَ الْإِمْتِحَانِ يُكْرَمُ الْمَرْءُ أَوْ يُهَانُ.
7. Once he was an anvil, now he became a hammer. ٧. كَانَ سِنْدَانًا فَصَارَ مِطْرَقَةً.
8. [Nothing can be done] once the saddle straps slip down the horse's belly. ٨. بَلَغَ الْحِزَامُ الطَّبِيئِينَ.  
جَاوَزَ الْحِزَامُ الطَّبِيئِينَ.  
(الطبي: حلمة ضرع الناقة، وهي بعيدة تماما عن مربوط حزام السرج)
9. One catches the fish, but another eats it. ٩. هَذَا يَصِيدُ وَهَذَا يَأْكُلُ السَّمَكَةَ.
10. One disaster is still better than two. ١٠. وَيْلٌ أَهْوَنُ مِنْ وَيْلَيْنِ.
11. One never tires of talking about the things one loves. ١١. مِنْ أَحَبِّ شَيْئًا أَكْثَرَ مِنْ ذِكْرِهِ.
12. One is always dazzled by the things that happen fast. ١٢. النَّفْسُ مُوَلَعَةٌ بِحَبِّ الْعَاجِلِ.
13. One water wheel wouldn't roil a sea. ١٣. سَاقِيَةٌ لَا تَعْكَرُ بَحْرًا.
14. Only a fool would knock his head against a rock. ١٤. أَحْمَقُ مِنْ نَاطِحِ الصَّخْرِ.
15. Only after you have galloped with it will you know whether you had mounted a thoroughbred or a hee-haw. ١٥. سَوْفَ تَرَى إِذَا انْجَلَى الْغُبَارُ، أَفْرَسٌ تَحْتِكَ أَمْ حِمَارٌ.

١٦. الشماتة لؤم.

16. Only an evil person would take pleasure in the mishaps of others.

١٧. الشرُّ للشرِّ خُلِقَ.

17. Only evil repels evil.

١٨. الحليم مطية الجاهل.

18. Only foolish people take advantage of gentle and obliging people.

١٩. إن الحديدَ بالحديدِ يُفْلَحُ.

19. Only iron can split iron.

٢٠. لا يَفْلُحُ الحديدُ إلاَّ الحديدُ.

20. Only iron defeats iron.

٢١. العجلةُ فُرصة العجزة.

21. Only unskilled people do things in haste.

٢٢. ما حَكَ جلدك مثلُ ظفرك.

22. Only when you yourself scratch the spot that itches you will you ever get real relief.

٢٣. خالف تُذكر.

23. Oppose and you'll be noticed.

خالف تُعرف.

٢٤. قد يخرج من الصدف غير الدرّ.

24. Oysters may give other things beside pearls.

## P

١. الصبر حيلة من لا حيلة له.

1. Patience is a hopeless man's last hope.

٢. دواء الدهر الصبرُ عليه.

2. Patience is the best medicine against the changes of fate.

3. Patience is the key to relief. .٢ الصبرُ مفتاحُ الفرج.
4. Paying attention to obscenity is an obscene act in itself. .٤ تأمل العيب عيب.
5. People always follow a winner. .٥ الناس أتباعُ من غلب.
6. People always stumble into the pitfalls they dig for others. .٦ من حفر حفرةً وقع فيها.
7. People are enemies of the things they don't know. .٧ الناسُ أعداءُ ما جهلوا.
8. People don't lack strength when they work together. .٨ لا يعجز القوم إذا تعاونوا.
9. Persistence sometimes helps, but it also sometimes harms. .٩ ومن اللجاجة ما يضرُّ وينفع.
10. A pig's skin cannot be tanned. .١٠ جلدُ الخنزير لا يندبغ.
11. Pleasing everybody is an unreachable aim. .١١ رضا الناس غايةٌ لا تُدرَك.
12. Pour water on your embers when they become too hot. .١٢ هَرِّقْ على جَمْرِكَ.  
(هرق الماء، أو هرق  
الماء : صب الماء)
13. Prettier than a peacock. .١٣ أحسنُ من الطاووس.

## R

1. A race is decided at the finish line.      ١. عند الغاية يُعرف السبق.
2. A rage begins with frenzy and ends with remorse.      ٢. أوَّلُ الغضب جنون وآخره ندم.
3. Rain heals what hail ruins.      ٣. أصلح غيثٌ ما أفسد البردُ.
4. Rarer than a rooster's egg.      ٤. كبيضة الديك. كانت بيضة الديك.
5. Rarer than a white-footed crow.      ٥. أعزُّ من الغراب الأعصم. (أعصم: به بياض وسواد)
6. The rays of the sun cannot be hidden, and the light of truth cannot be obscured.      ٦. شعاعُ الشمس لا يُخفى ونور الحق لا يُطفئ.
7. Read the signs of coming events!      ٧. خذ الأمر بقوابله. (قوابل الأمر: أوائل الأمر)
8. A real healer must be able to heal himself.      ٨. يا طبيبُ طبِّ نفسك.
9. Reason is man's best adviser.      ٩. العقلُ وزيرٌ ناصح.
10. Rebuking your friends is much better than giving up on them.      ١٠. مُعاتبة الإخوان خير من فقدهم.
11. Refusing everybody pleases everybody.      ١١. منعُ الجميع أَرْضَى الجميع.

12. Regretting your silence is better than regretting your words.

١٢. الندم على السكوت خير من الندم على القول.

13. Remoter than a star.

١٣. أنأى من الكوكب.

14. Rewards should match the deeds.

١٤. الجزاء من جنس العمل.

15. [Someone] rises earlier than a crow.

١٥. أہکر من غراب.

16. [Someone went so fast, as if he were] riding on the wings of an ostrich.

١٦. ركب جناحي النعامة.

17. Roses come from thorny bushes.

١٧. من الشوكة تخرج الورد.

18. Ruined is the man who seeks help from an evil man.

١٨. العديم من احتاج الى لئيم.

## S

1. A sage's supposition is better than a fool's certitude.

١. ظنُّ العاقل خير من يقين الجاهل.

2. Saying "If I had done this," or "If I had done that," will never be able to change the past.

٢. وهل يُغني من الحدثان ليت!

3. A scorpion stings then shrieks for help.

٣. تلدغ العقرب وتصيء.

(يصيء، يصوي؛

يصوصق، يزقزق،

يصرصر)

4. A scout doesn't lie to his own people.
5. Should one hope for rain when there are no clouds in the sky?
6. Shyer than an ostrich.
7. Sift people and people will sieve you.
8. Silence may sometimes be the proper answer.
9. Silence is always better when you can't find the right words.
10. Silence is the brother of consent.
11. Similar to each other as if they were two dates.
12. Simple events sometimes lead to serious events.
13. A simple demand may sometimes lead to war.
14. A single cadaver cannot befoul the whole sea.
15. A single glance is sometimes more eloquent than many words.
16. [Someone was so restless, as if he were] sitting on smoldering coal.
٤. الرائد لا يكذب اهله.
٥. هل يُرتجى مطر بغير سحب!
٦. أنفَرُ من نعامة.
٧. من غربل الناس نخلوه.
٨. ربّما كان السكوتُ جواباً.
٩. عَيْ صامتٌ خيرٌ من عِيّ ناطق.  
(العِيّ: العجز)
١٠. السكوت أخو الرضا.
١١. إنه لأشبهُ به من التمرة بالتمرّة.
١٢. ويحدث من بعض الأمور أمور.
١٢. رَبُّ طلبٍ جرّ إلى حرب.
١٤. جيفةٌ لا تُعكّر بحراً.
١٥. رَبُّ طرفٍ أفصح من لسان.
١٦. أحرّ من الجمر.  
على أحرّ من الجمر.

17. A slave is the man who has no slaves. ١٧. العبدُ من لا عبدَ له.
18. A slave must be beaten to get his attention, but a freeman needs nothing more than a hint. ١٨. العبد يُقرع بالعصا والحرُّ تكفيه الإشارة.
19. A slip of the foot is less harmful than a slip of the tongue. ١٩. عَثْرَةُ الْقَدَمِ أَسْلَمُ مِنْ عَثْرَةِ اللِّسَانِ.
20. Small pebbles are parts of big mountains. ٢٠. الْحَصَاةُ مِنَ الْجِبَلِ.
21. A snake charmer is never safe from bites. ٢١. الْحَاوِي لَا يَنْجُو مِنَ الْحَيَّاتِ.
22. Socialize like brothers, but do business like foreigners. ٢٢. تَعَاشَرُوا كَالْإِخْوَانِ وَتَعَامَلُوا كَالْأَجْناسِ.
23. Soft words but harsh deeds. ٢٣. كَلَامٌ لَيِّنٌ وَظَلَمٌ بَيِّنٌ.
24. Solitude is better than an evil companion. ٢٤. الْوَحْدَةُ خَيْرٌ مِنْ جَلِيسِ السُّوءِ.
25. Some dead people are not worth the tears we shed on them. ٢٥. هَذَا الْمَيِّتُ لَا يَسَاوِي هَذَا الْبَكَاءِ.
26. Some diseases may make the body stronger. ٢٦. وَرُبَّمَا صَحَّتِ الْأَجْسَامُ بِالْعِلَلِ.
27. Some eloquent words work like magic. ٢٧. إِنَّ مِنَ الْبَيَانِ لَسِحْرًا.
28. Some evil is less evil than others. ٢٨. بَعْضُ الشَّرِّ أَهْوَنُ مِنْ بَعْضٍ.
29. Some eyes say more than tongues. ٢٩. رُبَّ عَيْنٍ أَنْتُمْ مِنْ لِسَانٍ.

30. Some friends are closer than real brothers.

٢٠. رَبُّ أَخٍ لَمْ تَلِدْهُ وَالِدَةٌ.

31. Some fulfilled wishes cause a person's downfall.

٢١. رَبُّ أُمْنِيَّةٍ جَلَبَتْ مَنِيَّةً.

32. Some gladness easily turns into sadness.

٢٢. رَبُّ فَرَحَةٍ تَعُودُ تَرَحَةً.  
(الترح: الحزن)

33. Some hearts have eyes.

٢٣. فِي بَعْضِ الْقُلُوبِ عَيُونٌ.

34. Some kinds of liberation are much worse than slavery.

٢٤. رَبُّ عِتْقٍ شَرٌّ مِنْ رِقٍّ.

35. Someone must have drawn all this milk.

٢٥. لِكُلِّ دَرٍّ حَالِبٌ.

36. Some silence is more eloquent than words.

٢٦. رَبُّ سَكُوتٍ أْبْلَغُ مِنْ كَلَامٍ.

37. Some swords inspire fear, even when they remain in their sheaths.

٢٧. قَدْ يُتَوَقَّى السِّيفُ وَهُوَ  
مَغْمَدٌ.

38. Some words are mightier than hard blows.

٢٨. رَبُّ قَوْلٍ أَشَدُّ مِنْ صَوْلٍ.  
(الصول: الهجوم)

39. Some words vanish in thin air.

٢٩. وَبَعْضُ الْقَوْلِ يَذْهَبُ فِي  
الرِّيَاحِ.

40. The sovereignty of knowledge will always prevail.

٤٠. لَيْسَ لِسُلْطَانِ الْعِلْمِ زَوَالٌ.

41. [It] sticks harder than ticks.

٤١. أَعْلَقَ مِنْ قُرَادٍ.

42. Support your brother, even if only with words.

٤٢. أَعِنْ أَخَاكَ وَلَوْ بِالصَّوْتِ.

43. Swifter than an arrow.

٤٣. أَمْرَقُ مِنْ سَهْمٍ.

## T

1. Take part or depart.
 

١. إن لم يكن وفاقً ففراق.
2. [A confusion like the one that happens, when] tamed and untamed camels get together.
 

٢. إختلط المرعيُّ بالهمل.  
(المرعيُّ: الإبل التي لها راع؛ الهمل: الإبل التي لا راع لها)
3. Tamer than a dog.
 

٣. ألف من كلب.
4. Tamer than the doves of Mekka.
 

٤. ألف من حمام مكة.
5. There are four kinds of men: A man who knows and knows that he knows; he is a learned man, follow him. A man who knows, but doesn't know that he knows; he is asleep, awake him. A man who doesn't know and knows that he doesn't know; he needs guidance, teach him. And a man who doesn't know and doesn't know that he doesn't know; he is a fool, renounce him.
 

٥. الرجال اربعة: رجل يدري ويدري انه يدري فذلك عالم فاتبعوه. ورجل يدري ولا يدري انه يدري فذلك نائم فأيقظوه. ورجل لا يدري ويدري انه لا يدري فذلك مسترشد فعلموه. ورجل لا يدري ولا يدري انه لا يدري فذلك جاهل فارفضوه.
6. There are two kinds of days: days you win, and days you lose.
 

٦. الدهر يومان، يومٌ لك ويومٌ عليك.  
يومٌ لنا ويومٌ علينا.
7. There is always enough room on this earth for free, honorable people.
 

٧. وفي الأرض للحرِّ الكريم منادح.  
(المندوحة، المنتدح: السعة، الفسحة)

8. There is always more room behind you. ٨. وراءك أوسع لك.
9. There is an eavesdropper for every word uttered loosely. ٩. لكل ساقطة لاقطة.
10. There is a proper reward for every deed, and a fitting reply to every question. ١٠. لكل عمل ثواب ولكل كلام جواب.
11. There is a reply for every speech. ١١. لكل خطاب جواب.
12. There is enough room in your chest for all your secrets. ١٢. صدرك أوسع لسرك.
13. There is no good deed like helping a man in need. ١٣. أفضل المعروف إغاثة الملهوف.
14. They defeated the high-minded, but the base-minded defeated them. ١٤. يغلبن الكرام ويغلبهن اللئام.
15. Things always go back to where they came from. ١٥. عاد الأمر إلى نصابه.
16. Things always become clearer, after the dust settles down. ١٦. سوف ترى إذا انجلي الغبار.
17. Things you store in pots will be consumed, but things you keep in your heart will stay forever. ١٧. يفنى ما في القدور ويبقى ما في الصدور.
18. Thinner than the shadow of a lance. ١٨. أضيّق من ظلّ الرمح.
19. This cake is made from that dough. ١٩. هذا الكعك من ذاك العجين.

20. This will take place when the crow's feathers turn white. ٢٠. لا يكون ذلك حتى يشيب الغراب.
21. A thorny bush doesn't yield any grapes. ٢١. لا يُثمر الشوك العنب.
22. Those who believe in the goodness of others are liable to get in trouble. ٢٢. حُسنُ الظنِّ ورُطَةٌ.
23. Those who have no followers also have no opinion. ٢٣. لا رأي لمن لا يُطاع.
24. Throw the stone back at those who threw it at you. ٢٤. رُدِّ الحجر من حيث جاءك.
25. Time is the best of all mentors. ٢٥. نِعَمَ المؤدِّبُ الدهرُ.
26. Tinier than a mosquito's brain. ٢٦. أعزُّ من مُخِّ البعوض.
27. A tit for tat, and he who starts will be the villain. ٢٧. هذه بتلك والبادي أظلم.
28. Today's egg is better than tomorrow's chicken. ٢٨. بيضةُ اليوم خير من دجاجة الغد.
29. Today's work shouldn't be delayed until tomorrow. ٢٩. لا تُؤخَّرْ عمل اليوم لغدٍ.
30. Toil for me and I'll toil for you. ٣٠. إكدح لي أكدح لك.
31. To hurry is to err. ٣١. الخطأ زاد العَجُول.

32. [Because this day is almost over,] tomorrow, for the hopeful, is close at hand. ٢٢. [فإن يك صدرُ هذا اليوم ولياً فإن غداً لناظره قريب.]
33. Too many helmsmen wrecked the ship. ٢٣. من كثرة الملاحين غرقت السفينة.
34. Too much jesting breeds ill will. ٢٤. المزاح لقاح الضغائن.
35. To their mothers people run, whenever they are hurting. ٢٥. إلى أمّه يلهف اللّهفان.
36. To panic in face of a calamity, always makes it twice as bad. ٢٦. الجزعُ عند المصيبة مُصيبةٌ أخرى.
37. To save myself, I lost my nose. ٢٧. شفيتُ نفسي وجدعتُ أنفي.
38. To scare away a vicious dog, another vicious dog is needed. ٢٨. يُعدُّ لكلب السوء كلب يعادله.
39. Truth is always covered by bubbles. ٢٩. تحت الرغوة الصريح.
40. Truth gets on people's nerves. ٤٠. الحقُّ مَغْضِبَةٌ.
41. Truth glitters and falsehood falters. ٤١. الحقُّ ابلجُ والباطلُ لَجَلَجُ.
42. Truth is the best than can be said. ٤٢. الحقُّ خيرٌ ما يُقال.
43. A truth that displeases is better than a lie that pleases. ٤٣. حقٌّ يضرُّ خيرٌ من باطلٍ يسرُّ.
44. Turning back is always safer. ٤٤. العودُ أحمد.
45. Two blades will never fit in a single sheath. ٤٥. لا يُجمعُ سيفانِ في غمدٍ.

## U

1. Upholding the truth is a noble deed. ١. نُصْرَةُ الْحَقِّ شَرَفٌ.
2. Useful possessions are the best possessions. ٢. خَيْرُ الْمَالِ مَا نَفَعَ.  
خَيْرُ مَالِكَ مَا نَفَعَكَ.

## W

1. War is a monster. ١. الْحَرْبُ غَشُومٌ.
2. War is deception. ٢. الْحَرْبُ خُدْعَةٌ.
3. War seems harmless to the onlookers. ٢. مَا أَهْوَنَ الْحَرْبِ عَلَى  
النَّظَّارَةِ.
4. A watchful dog is better than a sleepy lion. ٤. كَلْبٌ عَسِرٌ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَسَدٍ  
رَبَضٍ.  
(عَسِرٌ: طَافَ بِاللَّيْلِ بِغَرَضِ  
الْحِرَاسَةِ)
5. We become blind and deaf, when it comes to what we love. ٥. حُبُّكَ الشَّيْءَ يُعَمِّي وَيُصِمُّ.
6. We can only give what we have received. ٦. وَإِنَّمَا نُعْطِي الَّذِي أُعْطِينَا.
7. We drink tonight, and tomorrow we fight. ٧. الْيَوْمَ خَمْرٌ وَغَدًا أَمْرٌ.

8. The well lasts longer than the bucket and the rope. ٨. البئرُ أبقى من الرشاء .  
(الرشاء : حبل الدلو)
9. What good are swords, if we don't have men! ٩. وما أنفعُ السيوفِ بلا رجال .
10. What is good for the liver, is bad for the spleen. ١٠. ما ينفع الكبد يضرُّ الطحال .
11. What can a marksman do, when his bow suddenly ruptures. ١١. ما حيلةُ الرامي إذا انقطع الوتر .
12. What will happen, will happen on time. ١٢. كلُّ آتٍ قريب .
13. When a camel is about to die, it goes in circles around the well. ١٣. إذا جاء أجلُ البعيرِ حام حول البئر .
14. When a jackass went to get itself a pair of horns, it came back without its ears. ١٤. ذهب الحمارُ يطلب قرنين فعاد مصلومَ الأذنين .  
(صلم الشيء : قطعه من أصله)
15. When a learned man errs, many men will follow and err. ١٥. إذا زلَّ العالمُ زلَّ بزغتِه عالم .
16. When a man's predestined time arrives, his eyesight will be restricted. ١٦. إذا جاءَ القدرُ غشيَ البصر .
17. When an inquisitive man was thrown into Hell, he asked why the firewood was not dry enough. ١٧. دخل فُضُولِي النار فقال الحطبُ رطب .
18. When a rip becomes too wide, it is too late to patch it up. ١٨. اتَّسع الخرقُ على الراقق .

19. When facing a common disaster, people forget their hate and anger. ١٩. عند الشدائد تذهب الأحقاد.
20. When God wants to destroy an ant, He gives it wings and lets it fly. ٢٠. إذا أراد الله هلاك نملة أنبت لها جناحين.
21. When he is straight, he is like a knife, and when he bends, he becomes a sickle. ٢١. إن استوى فسكين وإن اعوج فمجل.
22. [I taught him how to hold the bow, and] when his hands became steady, he made me his first mark. ٢٢. [أعلمه الرماية كل يوم] فلما استد ساعده رماني. (استد: استقام)
23. When in love, advice has no effect. ٢٣. ليس في الحب مشورة.
24. When it faces an isolated man, a wolf suddenly becomes a lion. ٢٤. الذئب خالياً أسد.
25. When it is time for us to go, the cosmic space will close on us. ٢٥. إذا حان القضاء ضاق الفضاء.
26. [This will happen] when the lizard and the whale become friends. ٢٦. حتى يؤلف بين الضب والنون. (الضب: "السحلية"; النون: الحوت)
27. [This will happen] when the lizard goes to drink. ٢٧. حتى يرد الضب. (ورد الماء: صار إليه; الضب: "السحلية")
28. 29. When the wind blows, it favors no ship. ٢٨. تجري الرياح بما لا تشتهي السفن.

29. When there is no other cure,  
searing must be done. ٢٩. آخرُ الداء الكي.
30. When they bump against one  
another, the hornless ram  
will always lose. ٣٠. عند النطاح يُغلب الكبشُ  
الأجم.  
(الأجم: ليس له قرون)
31. When you betray, you become  
a prey. ٣١. من خان هان.
32. When you hear poorly, you  
answer poorly. ٣٢. أساءَ سمعاً فأساءَ إجابةً.
33. When you plant a thornbush,  
don't ever expect grapes. ٣٣. من يزرع الشوك لا يحصد  
به العنبا.
34. When you renounce all your  
desires, you'll gain your total  
freedom. ٣٤. من ترك الشهوات عاش  
حرّاً.
35. When on foot, all rides are  
welcome. ٣٥. من يمشي يرضى بما ركب.
36. When you talk much, you err  
much. ٣٦. أفرطَ فأسقطَ.
37. When you wish, wish a lot. ٣٧. إذا تمنيتَ فاستكثر.
38. While his tongue was pray-  
ing, his hand was slaying. ٣٨. فم يُسبح ويدٌ تُذبح.
39. While man is contemplating  
the universe, God is conduct-  
ing its course. ٣٩. الإنسانُ بالتفكير والله  
بالتدبير.
40. Whom you can't conquer, try  
to cajole. ٤٠. إذا لم تغلبْ فاخلبْ.

41. Why do you keep blowing,  
when there is no fire! ٤١. نَفَخْتَ فِي غَيْرِ ضَرَمٍ.
42. Why would I want a sun that  
doesn't make me warm! ٤٢. مَا لِي بِشَمْسٍ لَا تَدْفِينِي.
43. Wisdom is the purpose of  
every believer. ٤٣. الْحِكْمَةُ ضَالَّةُ الْمُؤْمِنِ.
44. A wise man will never win, if  
he does battle with a fool. ٤٤. لَا يُنْتَصَفُ حَلِيمٌ مِنْ جَهُولٍ.
45. The wisest of men appreciate  
the failings of other men. ٤٥. أَعْقَلُ النَّاسِ أَعْذَرُهُم  
لِلنَّاسِ.
46. Within the walls of his  
home, every grown-up  
becomes a child. ٤٦. كُلُّ أَمْرِيٍّ فِي بَيْتِهِ صَبِيٌّ.
47. A wolf in sheep's clothing. ٤٧. تَحْتَ جِلْدِ الضَّانِ قَلْبُ  
الْأَذْوَبِ.  
(أَذْوَبٌ: جَمْعُ ذَنْبٍ)
48. A woman's wisdom is her  
beauty, and a man's beauty is  
his wisdom. ٤٨. عَقْلُ الْمَرْأَةِ فِي جَمَالِهَا  
وَجَمَالُ الرَّجُلِ فِي عَقْلِهِ.
49. Women are snares designed by  
the Devil. ٤٩. إِنَّ النِّسَاءَ حَبَائِلُ الشَّيْطَانِ.
50. [His] words are like honey,  
but [his] deeds are like dag-  
gers. ٥٠. كَلَامٌ كَالْعَسَلِ وَفِعْلٌ كَالْأَسَلِ.  
(الْأَسَلُ: الرَّمَاخُ، السِّیُوفُ)
51. The worst disasters are the  
ones that make us laugh. ٥١. شَرُّ الشَّدَائِدِ مَا يُضْحِكُ.

## Y

1. You can only sing when you're merry. .١ النشيد مع المسرة.
2. You can protect your brother from everything but himself. .٢ تَحَفَّظُ أَخَاكَ إِلَّا مِنْ نَفْسِهِ.
3. You can't forge cold iron. .٣ إِنَّكَ تَضْرِبُ فِي حَدِيدٍ بَارِدٍ.
4. You can't harvest grapes from a thorny bush. .٤ إِنَّكَ لَا تَجْنِي مِنَ الشَّوْكِ الْعِنَبَ.
5. You can't hide if you are sitting on a camel. .٥ مَا اسْتَتَرَ مِنْ قَادِ الْجَمَلِ.
6. You'd better fill your quiver, long before you start to shoot. .٦ قَبْلَ الرِّمَاءِ تُعْمَلُ الْكِنَائِنُ.  
(كِنَائِنٌ جَمْعُ كِنَانَةٍ، وَهِيَ الْجَعْبَةُ الَّتِي تَحْفَظُ فِيهَا السَّهَامُ)
7. You'd better quit, if it doesn't fit. .٧ مَا لَا يَصْلَحُ تَرَكْهُ أَصْلَحَ.
8. You'd better start with the things nearest to you. .٨ خُذْ مَا طَفَّ لَكَ.  
(طَفٌّ مِنْهُ: دَنَا مِنْهُ)
9. You don't need to teach an orphan how to cry. .٩ لَا تُعَلِّمِ الْيَتِيمَ الْبُكَاءَ.
10. You I mean, but also your neighbor will get the message! .١٠ إِيَّاكَ أَعْنِي وَاسْمِعِي يَا جَارَةَ.
11. You keep cutting, but you keep missing the joint. .١١ تُكْثِرُ الْحَزَّ وَتُخْطِئُ الْمَفْصَلَ.  
(الْحَزٌّ: الْقَطْعُ)

12. You may cut your own nose,  
while you're trying to protect  
it. ١٢. رُبَّ حَامٍ لَأَنْفِهِ وَهُوَ جَادِعُهُ.
13. You owe your brother, exactly  
what he does owe you. ١٣. لِأَخِيكَ عَلَيْكَ مِثْلُ الَّذِي  
لَكَ عَلَيْهِ.
14. You reached greener pastures,  
now you should dismount! ١٤. أَغْشَبْتَ فَانْزِلْ.
15. You reap what you sow. ١٥. كَمَا تَزْرَعُ تَحْصِدُ.
16. Your hand is a part of you,  
even if it is lame. ١٦. يَدُكَ مِنْكَ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ شَلَاءً.
17. Your informer and your enemy  
are one and the same. ١٧. الرَّائِيَةُ أَحَدُ الشَّاتِمِينَ.
18. Your nose is a part of you, even  
if it has been disfigured. ١٨. مِنْكَ أَنْفُكَ وَإِنْ كَانَ أَجْدَعًا.
19. Your true brother is the one  
who tells you the truth. ١٩. أَخُوكَ مَنْ صَدَقَكَ.
20. You would really know how it  
tastes, only if you would  
choke on it. ٢٠. أَعْلَمُ بِهَا مِنْ غَضٍّ بِهَا.  
(غَضٌّ بِالطَّعَامِ: تَوَقَّفَ  
الطَّعَامُ فِي حَلْقِهِ وَمَنَعَهُ مِنَ  
التَّنَفُّسِ)

من أقوال العرب وتشبيهاتهم الأدبية

# OLD ARABIC SAYINGS, SIMILES, AND METAPHORS

A Bilingual Edition  
English / Arabic

Translated from the Arabic by  
SAAD ELKHADEM

A compilation of some of the wisest proverbs and wittiest metaphors used by the Arabs over the years, and passed down from generation to generation.

Saad Elkhadem (Sa'd al-Khâdim) teaches German and comparative literature at the University of New Brunswick; he is the editor of *The International Fiction Review* and the general editor of *Authoritative Studies in World Literature*. Dr. Elkhadem has written a considerable number of novels, plays, and short stories, edited numerous scholarly books, and translated several works of literature.