

Some Aphorisms on God, Evil, and Liberation

By Mohammed Rustom

God's all-possibility entails Self-negation, which entails manifestation,
which entails separation, which entails evil.

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The potentiality of evil is a natural feature of divine freedom,
but the actuality of evil is a natural feature of human freedom.

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Evil is good if it facilitates human perfection,
and good is evil if it impedes human perfection.

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Do not ask why there is evil when there is an all-good God.
Rather, ask why we are evil when there is an all-good God.

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“Not all that happens is good, but there is good in all that happens.”

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You complain God does not open the door despite your knocking.
But have you been knocking the right way?

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Evil is real in relation to the world,
but both are unreal in relation to the Real.

To deny the existence of evil on its own level
is to deny the existence of the world on its own level.

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Nothing in the cosmos is pure evil, for pure evil is absolute
nonexistence,
just as pure goodness is absolute existence.

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To ask for a world without evil is to ask for another kind world. But
to ask for another kind of world is to ask for another kind of cosmic
configuration which will exclude the presence of freedom, since
freedom is unique to our current cosmic configuration.

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A person mired in evil will never solve the problem of evil.

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The sage sees no darkness and evil,
for he beholds all things through the light of God.

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Those going to God flee from evil,
but those coming from Him move towards it.

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Pull back the veil of evil in order to truly live.¹

¹ When we “pull back” the spelling of the word evil, that is, reverse it, we get the word “live.” Evil is a veil since it veils true life, just as the spelling of the word evil conceals the fact that it contains a veil: through the transposition of the “e” and the “v,” we get the word veil itself, as it is made of the same stuff as the word evil, both substantially and linguistically. On the substantial side of things, we must transcend the veil of evil and see beyond it, which is where true life begins.

God is never silent since He is the Speaking;
but we do not hear Him, since we are never silent.

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Ours is the best of possible worlds,
but it is also the lowest of worlds.

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Things do not happen in accordance with what we deem as good,
but in accordance with the order of the good.

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Fire burns by virtue of the same property that it warms.

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Metaphorical love is suffering, real love liberation.

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Deliverance lies not in this or that “ism,”
but in the one and only *Ism*.

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There is no ugliness in the cosmos,
only privations of beauty.

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The sage lives his best life by dying his best death.