

## **A Philosophical Journey**

Life is shaped by the paths we walk and the thoughts we encounter. On the road of seeking truth, philosophy is both our light and our companion.

On the road of learning, philosophy is the meaning of the path; the torch of both mind and heart.

Philosophical weakness is not a deficiency in a single matter, but in every matter. Such weakness intensifies the negative influence of conditioned reality and prevents the unveiling of the true self.

For material wealth to bring peace to the world of meaning and thought, it must be supported by cultural richness. For no matter how high the mountain of materialism, egotism, and selfishness may rise, the road of culture always passes above them.

One of the essential aims of a healthy life is to transform life itself into a field of learning. And this must be realised not only for ourselves, but also for others, and indeed for everyone.

To walk this path with wings opened to love is of great importance for social development. For every light kindled along the road of learning illuminates not only today, but also the way of the future.

When something is given to life, life does not abandon the giver; it surely returns what is deserved. Yet when learning — which enlarges awareness — is neglected, the heart darkens and hardens.

To attempt to build growth upon a hardened heart is like trying to sow seeds upon a rock.

Just as a seed requires fertile soil to sprout, intellectual growth requires hearts that are alive and unclouded, and it thrives upon philosophical exchange.

Encounters that enable this spirit are among the most precious of human interactions; they nourish our humanity and strengthen our souls. They are the silent yet powerful actors upon the road of growth.

For as long as I can remember, I have cherished being with personalities whose philosophical world is rich and whose cultural awareness is profound, and spending time with them.

On Sunday, 27 April 2025, the soil of Mardin welcomed a most esteemed guest: Professor Dr Ahmet Aslan, one of the contemporary representatives of philosophy, who has brought depth and horizon to our world of thought.

This meeting was for me not only a joy, but also a source of profound honour and inspiration.

Through the presence of our esteemed teacher, filled with knowledge and wisdom, we delved into the historical depths of our region and embarked upon a unique journey through the corridors of philosophy. Alongside another book in the Syriac language, I had the opportunity to present my own work, *Syriac Culture and Inner Transformation*.

The intellectual clarity and elevated horizon of thought of our venerable teacher, Professor Dr Ahmet Aslan, opened new windows in my mind. During our exchange of views, I once again realised that, amidst life's difficulties, what must above all be preserved is the spirit of kindness. To multiply compassion is to enable humanity to look upon one another with understanding and love.

With full awareness of the path we must walk, let us exalt and sanctify human dignity.

For the true road is the one that binds the side paths of the inner world to the main road of the divine system — that is, the road of truth.

On this road:

- Respect exists in order to listen, and to understand.
- Learning exists in order to be shared with others.
- Accepting constructive criticism exists in order to advance upon the path of growth.
- Embracing differences exists in order not to alienate.

Though rugged, this road must be walked, for it is a beautiful road.

It is the road of inner enlightenment, the road of spiritual awakening.

It is the road of courtesy and morality.

It is the road not of being “like everyone else”, but of being “like oneself” — the road of remaining authentic and genuine.

And the greatest achievement of the one who walks this road is to know themselves and to confront their own inner darkness.

The ancient philosopher Seneca (4 BC – AD 65) said: **“The road that misleads people most is the one worn down by everyone passing along it.”**

Yet the unique road that a person opens from themselves to themselves — that is the true road which leads to truth.

**Yusuf Beğtaş**