

eat a date
keep the stone
put it in your pocket

in the olden days the arab sailors were the only sailors who did not contract scurvy while at sea they were still getting vitamin c from the dates they packed. i do not fact check this because i trust my dad.⁸

if you are on your deathbed lying on the sand, plant a date before your last breath and you will go straight to heaven^{1*}. i do not fact check this because my teacher scares me.

8 jeanine reads my manuscript in draft form to check the political messaging and highlights the word “dad” and comments “pretty sure i told him that story”

١* anas ibn malik reports that rasool allah pbuh said, *even if the resurrection were established upon one of you while he has in his hand a sapling, let him plant it.*⁹

وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ

and he delivers unto them birds in flocks
god issues to aves droves
orders onto masses
dispatches upon clusters
sends hoards

تَرْمِيهِمْ بِحِجَارَةٍ مِّن سِجِّيلٍ

throwing at them stones of clay
casting rocks from
launching
shooting
flinging
slinging

i am walking down the street and there is a rock on the pavement and look another one. the first city i see when i see palestine is jericho. we are driving down a flat wide road in a straight line, boulders and hollows on either side and i'm thinking *yes i made it* and then *yes i get it now* because it is about the earth. it has always been about the earth.

9 "Hadith on Trees," Daily Hadith Online The Teachings of Prophet Muhammad, accessed November 2022, <https://www.abuaminaelias.com/dailyhadithonline/2012/11/24/plant-tree-ressurrection/>.

empires that created
the state that chokes us
to keep the empires
empires

god created the earth and said *gibril go plant these stones all over it* and gibril took them and because we live on a sphere the rocks spread like butter: evenly, melting. and then gibril tripped on the taut string border into palestine and his bag of rocks spilled and now our country is a monument of stones, and a garden of stones, and a reminder of *do not fall over*. a reminder of *when you are fleeing, look to your feet*.

eat a date
keep the stone
in your pocket: the weight of the afterlife
of ammunition

a rock isn't a rock

until it is thrown

and then it is a weapon

and then you are put into a box