The Mosque of Wazir Khan

Rambling through the narrow bazaars of Lahore, a city renowned for its historic splendour; cramped in the middle of the marketplace, I discover Wazir Khan's mosque, its bejewelled brilliance of decor.

The floral motifs, the intricate calligraphy, the richness of enamelled colours on arches, minarets and domes, the glittering pietra-dura inlay of semi-precious stones, lapis-lazuli, onyx, cornelian, agate and topaz

Compete for my attention with skilled stone carving, stone-inlay work, stucco tracery and fresco paintings; not forgetting the mosaic tiles, carved bricks and glass painting. Once a sheer celebration of magnificence, now sadly fading.

I remove my chappals, cover my head out of respect, as I step through the gateway into the forecourt, moving from one world into the next; as I enter paradise on earth, I am blessed.

My guide translates one inscription for me—
In the cornfield of our world, whatever is sown by man
is reaped by him in the world to come.
In your dealings then, leave a good foundation.

Once a thriving enterprise between commerce and learning, the mosque has lost its purpose, history has a way of forgetting. Enamelled tiles emblazon every surface of this edifice whose grandeur haunts its aging, uncared for facades.

The eyes of children playing in the streets follow me as I walk out of the gateway into the midday scorching sun.

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