

A large, intricate decorative border in a golden-brown color frames the central text. The border is composed of complex Arabic calligraphy, likely the Basmala (Bismillah), arranged in a circular pattern. The background is a light orange color with a subtle geometric pattern of interlocking lines.

# Precious Treasure

*Allāmah*  
*Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai*  
(S.1.)

# PRECIOUS TREASURE

*(Ganj-i girān-māyah)*

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Translated from Urdu into English by

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## Dedication

Plans to commemorate the centennial of Buzurgwār ʿAllāmah Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai gave the impetus to publish this English translation of “*Precious Treasure*” properly. It is full of the gems of Qurʾānic *taʿwīl* and the knowledge of higher realities.

The privilege of sponsoring this historic publication goes to the young family of Sameer (Imran) and Gul-i Aftab Mehsania and their two NLAs Irfanali and Rizwanali. Gul-i Aftab has been a member and student of Khānah-yi Ḥikmat since 1999 and Sameer joined it in 2003. Both have shown great commitment and dedication to the aims of our organisation, which are to spread the esoteric knowledge of the Qurʾān and to progress spiritually and intellectually whilst leading a healthy and balanced material life. They are fulfilling Mawlānā Ḥāzīr Imām’s aspirations which he explains in his *farmāns*, particularly one of his Golden Jubilee *irshāds* where he said that when he talks about the quality of life, he does not mean only the quality of the material life because there is also ‘the life of the heart, the life of the soul, the life of the spirit’. Not only does this young family strive to live according to the guidance of the Imām of the time, but by their generosity in sponsoring this book they are enabling others to do the same. The benefit of their lasting gift of knowledge is praised in the verses of *Kalām-i Mawlā* attributed to Mawlānā Murtaẓā ʿAlī as follows:

*If mastery of knowledge is attained, it is there to stay forever,  
such a person is never at a loss.*

*Other possessions can be stolen, but the wealth of knowledge can  
never be stolen.*

*The wealth you accumulate in this world is left here, but the  
wealth of knowledge will accompany you to the Hereafter and  
enable you to enter Paradise.*

Gul-i Aftab has served as a teacher for two years and as vice-Principal for two years at a Religious Education Centre. She is

pursuing higher studies at present whilst fulfilling her role in nurturing her two sons and other NLAs in conjunction with other young mothers in her group. They are presently engaged in writing a curriculum and lesson plans for their children.

May Mawlānā Ḥāẓir Imām bless them with success in all their activities to promote the physical, spiritual and intellectual lives of their own children as well as the other NLAs in DKH, *Āmīn!* May their children grow up to be exemplary *murīds* of Imām-i zamān and fulfil his vision of the community in their great country, *Āmīn!* May they look back at their parents' foresight and struggle to give them a truly balanced life with a little pride and a lot of happiness, *Āmīn!*



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## Acknowledgements

*Al-ḥamdu li'llāhi ʿalā mannihi wa-iḥsānihi!* This book *Precious Treasure* was translated by us a long time ago and circulated in a cyclostyled form. The centennial celebrations for Buzurgwar's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday provided the motivation to publish it in a proper printed form. This proved to be challenging because we did not have the typed version done a long time ago after which we have changed computers and programmes several times. In the spirit of co-operation, unity and dedication to the esoteric knowledge of the Ismaili *Tariqah*, several students of the Institute for Spiritual Wisdom & Luminous Science in the east and the west volunteered to help us in this project. Their combined effort resonates the example which the author, Buzurgwar ʿAllāmah Naṣīr Hunzai gives in the chapter entitled '*Interrelated Wisdoms*' that it is not possible for a few bees to make honey. It takes many workers and volunteers to prepare the honey of *ta'wil* of our esoteric *Tariqah*.

Zulfiqar Jamani undertook to scan the entire document using a software programme. However, since we use many technical terms from several languages, he had to proof read the document to ensure that the text was in its original form. He was ably supported in this service by Farhat Jamani.

Azeem Ali Lakhani once again undertook the responsibility of checking the diacritical marks and the numerous Qur'ānic references to ensure accuracy and consistency with his usual professionalism and sharp eye. He also assisted in the preparation of the Indices, a task in which his daughter Meherangez worked side by side with him. It gives great satisfaction that the Nurani Little Angels are following in the *mubārah* footsteps of their parents' service. Indeed this bodes well for our organisation and its future work, *al-ḥamdu li'llāh!*

Zahir Lalani proof read and gave many suggestions to enhance the readability of this very significant book. The translators have



an onerous duty to remain faithful to the original text in Urdu and yet balance it with the importance of making the text accessible in the English language. We hope we have been able to fulfil this with his able assistance.

Amjad Ali has played a crucial role in the preparation of the several indices, which enhance the usefulness of this book.

Nizar Fath Ali Habib as always approaches the printing of these books as a vocation and invests much time and energy in ensuring the quality of their design and print. He is to be commended for his patience in sending several proofs of the book before the final printing.

May *Imām-i zamān* bless all the above named members and students for their voluntary service in the cause of serving true knowledge. Future generations of readers in search of spiritual enlightenment will pray for them as we do now with all our hearts and souls. May this truly magnificent service continue in the future generations of their families and may it bring abundant *barakāt* in their material, spiritual and intellectual lives, *Amin! Yā Rabba'l-ālamīn!*

F. M. & R. N. Hunzai,  
London.

## Important Note

The following symbols have been used in the text with the names of Prophets and Imāms.

(§) = *ṣalla 'llāhu alayhi wa-ālihi wa-sallam* (May Allāh send blessings and peace through him and his progeny).

(c) = *alayhi 's-salām/ alayha 's-salām/ alayhima 's-salām/ alayhimu 's - salām/ alaynā salāmuhū/ alaynā minhu 's-salām* (May peace be through him/her/them both/them/may his peace be upon us).

(qs) = *qaddasa 'llāhu sirrahu* (May God sanctify his secret).

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## Introduction

*In the Name of Allāh, the Compassionate, the Merciful*

Why should there not be immense joy, happiness and yearning for gratitude where there are extremely great favours and bounties of God, may He be exalted and blessed, in the form of intellect and recognition (*maʿrifat*)? These bounties are always available in Islam, because God, Who is the Master of grace and mercy and the true Sovereign of both the worlds, has granted them by making it possible to hold the holy hem of the exalted Imām and to follow him through His Messenger.

This humble servant, who zealously considers himself the dust under the feet of *muʿmins*, believes that every individual's real well-being and success lie in the golden principle that he should form the habit of humility, modesty and well-wishing [for others]. In my view, the more difficult the task, the more useful it is. Difficult in the sense that as long as someone does not understand the great wisdom of altruism, sacrifice, effacement and annihilation and is not sure of how the souls of *muʿmins*, by the command of God, are working as the hosts of angels, he cannot be ready to crush his 'I' (ego) into pieces and scatter them in the *muʿmins*' path. However, there is one miraculous means to surmount this difficulty [of crushing the ego] and that is the perfect and wisdom-filled love for the Imām of the time. *Muʿmins* have always continued to seek favour from this source of grace.

One secret as to why respect and well-wishing for *muʿmins* is specifically necessary, lies in this blessed saying of God: "(Remember O Muḥammad!) when you said to the believers: 'Does it not suffice you that your Lord should help you with three thousand angels sent down upon you?' Yes! If you are steadfast and God-fearing, and if (the enemy) come upon you suddenly, your Lord will help you with five thousand angels with signs (*musawwimīn*)" (3:124-125). This verse on the one hand reveals that Divine succour and help come through the angels who are the souls of the *muʿmins*, and on the other it is alluded that just as

Divine help is possible in the external struggle (*jihād*), similarly it is also possible in the internal *bāṭini jihād*. The internal *jihād* is the *jihād* of knowledge in which there is fierce fighting against ignorance.

Refer to the holy Qur’ān and see how the angels befriend *mu’mins*. God says: “Those who have said: ‘Our Lord is God’, then have remained firm, upon them the angels descend, saying ‘Fear not, neither sorrow, rejoice in Paradise that you were promised. We are your friends in the present life and in the world to come; therein you will have all that your souls desire, all that you call for, as hospitality from One All-Forgiving, One All-Compassionate’” (41:30-32). God’s countless favours and mercies, in which the *mu’mins* have no doubt at all, are mentioned in this verse.

The ultimate *ta’wīl* of angels is the living and present Imām. For at the place of intellect, soul and body, he is such a supreme angel and such a great soul [and such a great intellect], that all the angels and souls are contained in him, since God has encompassed everything in him (36:12). He is the Divine light, which is always in the form of the perfect intellect, the supreme angel and the greatest human, so that the world of intellect (*‘ālam-i jabarūt*), the angelic world (*‘ālam-i malakūt*) and the human world (*‘ālam-i nāsūt*) may always remain illumined.

The Qur’ān says: “On the Day of Resurrection, the entire earth (i.e., universe) will be rolled up in His grip and the heavens will be rolled up in His right hand” (39:67, 21:104). Qur’ānic wisdom also dictates that resurrection always continues secretly. This means that if the veil is lifted for someone, it will be evident for him that the heavens and the earth are always confined in the right hand of God (21:104, 39:67). But it should be remembered that this act of God is not in an external and material form, rather it is in an internal, spiritual and intellectual form. That is, the heavens and the earth exist and subsist in their own place, but God always extracts their essence, because the external world is encompassed by God’s Pedestal (*kursi*), namely, the Universal Soul by its overwhelming power. One such result of this act is apparent in front of all in the form of the solar disc, the sun. Therefore, there

is no doubt that the sun is the material essence of our solar system, which means that the solar system, despite subsisting in its own place, is centered and contained in the sun in the form of essence or light. The proof of this is the reaction of the sun, which is in a constant state of radiating particles of light and emitting waves of solar energy to its surrounding space.

The sun, in the centre of [its own little] universe is constantly transformed into luminous gas due to the overwhelming pressure of God's Pedestal on its spherical surface. This grip and pressure from the outer surface of the universe on its centre is spiritual, due to which the ethereal fuel constantly falls into the solar furnace, dissolving in it and causing solar flames to burn continuously. This shows that the sun is the result of the pressure of the Pedestal of God, namely, the Universal Soul.

Similarly, in the world of humanity there is the blessed personality of the Imām of the time, which is its luminous sun. The world of humanity is also ruled by the law of action and reaction and the reaction of the Imām, the fountainhead of light, is that like the sun, he always continues to radiate spiritual light.

One of the *ta'wils* of the blessed Olive tree is the world of humanity, in which there is no distinction and discrimination of colour or race, neither of the east or west. Its fruits are human beings; its kernel and oil are their collective spirit and spirituality; the oil, moment by moment, drips into the lamp of Imāmat. That is, the particles of the souls of all the human beings are drawn to and enter his holy personality, where he, the workshop of light transforms them into light by God's command. However, as long as someone is unsure of this fact [in the light of knowledge and *ma'rifat*], he cannot be revived in this light. Just like the silk worm, which although it certainly transforms into a moth, can attain no pleasure and happiness at all from this miracle due to not having intelligence and understanding. It knows neither the significance of its previous state, nor the reality of the present one, due to which the worm and moth are separated from each other. This example shows the importance and benefit of knowledge and recognition.

Now a few words about the present book, which is called “*Ganj-i girān-māyah*” or *Precious Treasure*: This book consists of the articles which were written during my second visit to London. In the very beginning of this introduction the kind of Divine favours and blessings which can be attained by the souls of *mu’mins* has already been explained. In the field of knowledge, this humble and indigent servant is so weak that he cannot ever stand on his own feet, therefore he always needs *mu’mins*’ sincere prayers and the spiritual help of the Divine light. Millions of thanks to the Holy Lord, that numerous pure and purified hearts in the east and west prayed with recognition and humility and the souls of many affectionate and kind friends worked as the angels of spiritual help, the result of which, by Divine grace, is in front of you.

*Gar qabūl uftad zihē ʿizz-ū sharaf*

If it is accepted, what an honour and eminence!

Some of my dear friends, with earnest and ardent yearning, had requested this humble *darwish* to write the second part of “*Zikr-i Ilāhī*” or *Divine Remembrance*. I am sure that that book, like “*Hazār Hikmat*” (*A Thousand Wisdoms*), which is scattered in the writings of Khānah-yi Hikmat and Idārah-yi ʿĀrif, has also come (in a scattered form) in some of the articles, and particularly in “*Precious Treasure*”. It can be studied in this form and later some researcher may also compile and edit it separately, with the permission of the organisation.

*Knowledge for a united humanity*

The purport of one of the wisdom-filled exhortations of the wise Qurʾān, which is the unprecedented book of God, the One, the Unique is that if a *muʾmin* has progressed in any way, he should remember his early condition time and again, so that in the light of the difference between his previous and present life, he will be duly grateful to God for His bounties. There are many such events in my early life, which I always remember and am duly grateful to my Lord, the Nourisher, for His present bounties of knowledge. However, it is true, that a human being is very ungrateful.

One of my dear friends asked me: What is the reason that all those articles which you have written in the previous and this year’s visit to London are full of the essence and flavour of

knowledge and wisdom and they are extremely useful? Do you like the cold climate there or do you find leisure and seclusion? What is the secret of this? I humbly replied that although the climate of London and seclusion were useful to me, they were not of special importance. For these facilities are greater for me in my own country, Pakistan. If I need a cold climate, there are the Northern Areas where I have my own humble abode and if I need to escape cold weather there is Karachi. So, the main reason for my good and useful work in London is that there I have some friends, who if they were to kindly accompany me to a desert the rain of their blessed tears would cause London to envy the desert! God willing, I will present practical proof that the spirit of special work for knowledge, according to the law of spirit, comes to me from my friends and students.

Mr. Amin Kotadia and Mrs. Mariam Kotadia, the president and secretary of the Idārah-yi <sup>°</sup>Ārif, London branch, are two such <sup>°</sup>*amaldārs*, without whose great cooperation and planning, this *darwish's* visit to London would not have been successful. These two devoted *murīds* of the true Imām are very fortunate to have inherited yearning for <sup>°</sup>*ibādat* and knowledge and are almost entirely adorned with all the qualities of *īmān*. They have rendered services beyond expectation on behalf of the London branch and on their own behalf for the dissemination and transmission of knowledge. I am deeply grateful to them and all the <sup>°</sup>*amaldārs* and members in Pakistan also express their gratitude to them.

At this point, I would like to mention the beautiful and honourable name of Mr. Faḥ <sup>°</sup>Alī Ḥabīb, the president of Khānah-yi Ḥikmat, considering that the rest of the <sup>°</sup>*amaldārs* and members of the headquarters and branches of Khānah-yi Ḥikmat are gathered and united in his blessed personality according to the law of unity. It is his very great honour and fortune that he is the present and senior patron of an epoch-making institute of knowledge like Khānah-yi Ḥikmat. He is its foundation and heart and soul. His personality is full of virtues: his recitation of *gīnāns* is an example of the *ṣūr* of Isrāfil<sup>(c)</sup>, he is my extremely dear spiritual brother and extremely dear student, he is a kind friend and affectionate co-worker and he is honourable and respected



like a father and serving like a son. May the Lord of the worlds confer the crown of success and eminence in both the worlds on president Mr. Faṭḥ °Alī Ḥabīb and his family!

Our next terrestrial angel, who is also endowed with the above-mentioned virtues, is the honourable president of Idārah-yi °Arif, Mr. Muḥammad °Abd al-°Azīz, in whose beloved personality are gathered and united all the souls attached to Idārah-yi °Arif. It is the great favour and mercy of God that both the presidents personally work tremendously hard. Their hard work inspires me to carry them and all those °*amaldārs* and members like them on my head or place them in my eyes or accommodate them in my heart, because I earnestly cherish their constructive hard work. Indeed it is dear and sweet to me like my own soul. Therefore, I consider president Muḥammad and every °*amaldār* and member who works hard for the cause of knowledge, as my very soul. In addition to other activities, our beloved president Muḥammad is also working hard for the progress of the cassette library. He is also among the patrons of our organisation. He has ardent love for knowledge. Sometimes he smiles from overwhelming happiness and sometimes sheds tears of gratitude when listening to the discourse of knowledge and wisdom. *Al-ḥamdu li'llāh* I have introduced many bright and glowing faces of Khānah-yi Ḥikmat and Idārah-yi °Arif in the mirror of similitude (*ā'inah-yi miṣāl*) of president Faṭḥ °Alī Ḥabīb and president Muḥammad °Abd al-°Azīz, for it is not possible to mention all of them individually.

#### Knowledge for a united humanity

Let us pray together that God, the Most High, may unite all Muslims and *mu'mins* at the centre of His Rope! May He ease all difficulties, remove afflictions and calamities and may He help every faithful person to reach the ultimate destination in the light of knowledge and action!

Dust beneath the feet of *Jamā'at*,  
Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai,  
Karachi,  
Saturday, 27 *Zu'l-Qa'dah* 1404 A.H.  
Year of Mouse, 25 August, 1984 A.D.



## Three Great Questions

I have a very dear friend in [the field of] spirituality and knowledge. By the grace of the Lord of honour, he is endowed with great wisdom and higher qualities. At present, he is engaged in the higher stages of worldly and spiritual knowledge in a renowned university of the west. In order to promote knowledge and as an encouragement, he has asked me three important questions in an extremely lovely letter. They [the answers] are prepared with great wisdom in the light of both spiritual knowledge and philosophy. These questions [and their answers] are therefore extremely important. God willing such meaningful and useful questions and their answers will help, first in research and creative work, and then they will be an addition to the treasure of knowledge. The questions are:

1. What part do the five senses play in acquiring real knowledge?
2. What is the relation between the mind (*zih*n) and soul? What role do they play in acquiring knowledge?
3. How can the act of entering the boundary of the non-temporo-spatial world and returning from it to the temporo-spatial world during *ibādat* and *zīkr* be described?

In the name of Allāh, the Compassionate, the Merciful. *Allāhumma ṣalli ʿalā Muḥammadin wa āli Muḥammad* (O Allāh send blessings through Muḥammad and his progeny). In the hope of the infinite mercy of the Lord of the worlds, I, a humble *darwish*, would like to sacrifice my dear soul for the sake of all friends and *mu'mins*. O my friends! Why do you give so much respect and eminence to this humble servant? Let him not die the death of pride or you will not feel good. Therefore, my friends come, tread on me and trample me under your feet! Call me the dust under the feet of *mu'mins*! This name gives me great pleasure and great wisdoms are hidden in it.

**Answer 1:** With utmost humility, love, sincerity and respect to my esteemed friends, we have to first examine what real knowledge (*ḥaqīqī ʿilm*) is or what its definition is? Does it mean spiritual knowledge? Yes, perhaps by real knowledge is meant spiritual and religious knowledge and the question is indeed about this knowledge. Therefore, knowledge literally means to know and in a secondary sense it means to know the reality of things. The knowledge through which the reality of things is understood and recognised is spiritual knowledge, which is also called real knowledge. For, it is this, which in a real and true sense, is knowledge.

Further, before discussing the senses, it is also necessary to know the grade or levels of knowledge and to do so we need to see how many kinds of things there are in the external and internal existents. As you know, things are altogether divided into three kinds: physical, spiritual and intellectual and accordingly, there are three levels of knowledge: the knowledge of certainty (*ʿilmuʿl-yaqīn*), the eye of certainty (*ʿaynuʿl-yaqīn*) and the truth of certainty (*ḥaqquʿl-yaqīn*). Since knowledge is related to the understanding of the reality of things, therefore three levels are determined to acquire knowledge: the level of the body for the knowledge of certainty, the level of the soul for the eye of certainty and the level of the intellect for the truth of certainty.

If someone asks: How can knowledge be called certainty (*yaqīn*)? With due humility, the answer is that knowledge is both common as well as special and each has many levels. Indicating such a special knowledge which is free from all doubts, the Qurʾān refers to it as *ʿilmuʿl-yaqīn*, or the knowledge of certainty,<sup>1</sup> namely, knowledge in the form of certainty. The paramount significance of certainty lies in the fact that the main source of real knowledge is the rank of the truth of certainty, namely, the fountainhead of

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<sup>1</sup> Regarding the knowledge of certainty, the holy Qurʾān says: “Nay, would that you knew the knowledge of certainty, you would have seen the hell fire, then you would have seen with the eye of certainty” (102:5-7). Here knowledge of certainty and the eye of certainty are mentioned respectively. Regarding the truth of certainty, it is said: “Lo this is the truth of certainty” (56:95). Indeed, it is the same truth of certainty, namely, the rank of the Pearl of Intellect.

the light of Intellect. From it knowledge descends to the level of the eye of certainty, namely the level of spirituality, and from there it descends to the level of the knowledge of certainty [namely, the physical level]. Therefore, the knowledge of certainty is that treasure of knowledge which has been revealed to this world through the Prophet, and which the Imām of the time teaches us.

Now, this humble servant would like to explain the part which the external senses<sup>2</sup> play in acquiring real knowledge. In this connection, there are three states of the external senses. The first is that as far as the knowledge of certainty is concerned, the external senses need to participate fully, since this level of knowledge of certainty is external and is in the corporeal world. The second state is to awaken the inner senses or to actually acquire knowledge from the level of the eye of certainty. [In this context] the external senses have to be silent, dormant or dead-like, for so long as the external senses are not suspended, the inner senses remain dead or dormant. This is why silence is imposed on the external senses during the special *bandagī*. The third state is that if the stages of the eye of certainty have been traversed and the individual resurrection occurs, the Gog and Magog (18:94-96) eliminate the wall of *Zu'l-Qarnayn* by licking it and hence with the inner senses being revived, they become one with the external senses and work together. It is a fact that in the normal [human] condition, the inner senses lie dormant within the external senses. That is, the inner eye is hidden in the external eye and inner ear in the external ear and so on and so forth. The answer to the first question is completed here.

For further information in this connection, the knowledge of certainty is apparent since it is related to the external senses; the eye of certainty is hidden since it is related to the inner senses and

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<sup>2</sup> There are three categories of the external senses: (a) the senses of animals, (b) the senses of animal-like human beings, for the Qur'ān says that they are like cattle (7:179; 25:44) and (c) the senses which work in *mu'mins*. From this example one can realize the importance of the external senses of a *mu'min*. Thus, those *mu'mins* who are successful in acquiring the knowledge of certainty, have done so through their external senses.

the truth of certainty is the hidden of the hidden, and it therefore needs the intellectual senses (<sup>c</sup>*aqli mudrikāt*).

Now, the holy and pure Imām's humble slave says that in order to acquire real knowledge, it is of paramount importance that the Holy Spirit (*rūhu'l-qudus*) is gradually breathed into the external senses in the form of knowledge. That is, the particles of the Holy Spirit enter the obedient and sincere *mu'mins* as they continue to acquire real knowledge. The Holy Spirit is breathed into them twice, first potentially and then actually. In the first, it continues from the beginning to the end of the level of the knowledge of certainty and the second breathing is with the blowing of the *ṣūr* of *Isrāfīl*<sup>(e)</sup>.

At this point the question may arise: How is it possible for *mu'mins* to observe and experience such [lofty] spiritual stages whereas this progress, destination and favour on the path of spirituality have been granted only to the Prophets and Imāms as their share? The answer is that hundreds of proofs can be provided to show that it is possible for *mu'mins* to observe such stages. However, for the wise it is enough to mention just one Qur'ānic proof and that is that the Lord of the worlds, through His grace and mercy, has wanted all *mu'mins* to follow those of His chosen servants upon whom He has bestowed His favours in the form of intellect, knowledge and spirituality and He has emphatically commanded them to say: "Guide us on the right path, the path of those upon whom You have bestowed favours" (1:5). That is, grant us such high ambition and clear guidance with which, with gratitude, we will be able to follow the Prophets, the truthful (*ṣiddiqin*) the martyrs (*shuhadā'*) and the righteous ones (*ṣāliḥin*) on the path of spirituality (4:69).

The magnificent and special favours of God, may He be exalted, are in an intellectual and spiritual form. There is only one Divine law (*sunnat-i ilāhi*) to grant these favours, which is that the Holy Spirit is breathed into that fortunate person whom God wills to grant these favours. Spiritual favours are not possible without the breathing in of the Holy Spirit. If these spiritual favours are not possible for obedient *mu'mins*, then in what sense can they be in the companionship of the Prophets and Imāms, which is praised

for those who follow them (4:69)? Therefore, it becomes clear that the Divine or the Holy Spirit can indeed be breathed into real *mu'mins*, but on the condition of the absolute obedience to God, the Prophet and the *waliyy-yi amr* (the holder of the Command), which also includes the duty to acquire knowledge. Further, in this connection, the gift of the *ism-i a'zam* from the Imām of the time has prime importance. All of this is in the sense of the breathing of the Divine Spirit potentially at the first stage, which is related to the external senses and corporeality.

The Divine or the Holy Spirit is the light of the Imām of the time, which brings everything with it according to the Qur'ān (36:12). This light includes one [more] extremely important thing and that is the individual resurrection, with which the door of complete spirituality opens and the inner senses wake up completely. Although the inner eye opens quite early on, the world of colourful lights which is in front of it is silent and devoid of speech.

The Divine law (*sunnat*) and the law of nature (30:30) are one and the same, the example of which is found in a human being or the personal world. For instance, when an affectionate mother wants to persuade her suckling child to suck milk, she says: "My dear baby, this nipple is beautiful and the milk is very sweet." But when she wants to wean him, she blackens the nipple and says: "Pooh, pooh! It has become bad. I don't know what has happened to it", etc. For the wise people this example is quite thought provoking. They can be sure that in spiritual and intellectual upbringing, the (Divine) Nurse of power and mercy also has the same habit or law, such as the law of abrogator (*nāsikh*) and abrogated (*mansūkh*) (2:106), and effacing one thing but establishing another thing (13:39) as mentioned in the Qur'ān. This law is not only in the personal world, but also in the world of religion so that there should not be any impediment in the progress of knowledge and recognition (22:78).

**Answer 2:** Mind (*zihn*) means the faculty of understanding in the brain. A suitable example to explain its quality and reality is that in its material constitution the brain is in a way a clean and clear mirror, the soul through the intellect is [like a] sun and the mind

is that light of the sun which is reflected in this mirror. In this sense, the mind is a reflection and a living picture of the light of the soul. This then is the relation of the mind and the soul.

The intellect is mentioned here in order to discuss the question of the mind and the soul. The human soul consists of a basic intellect called the 'innate intellect' (*ʿaql-i gharīzi*) namely, the inborn, natural and original intellect, which needs real knowledge because of its progressive nature. Further, the mind does not mean anything without the concept of the intellect.

More examples are presented here regarding the relation between soul and mind: (1) The mind is the product of the soul because the intellect is from the soul and the mind from the intellect. (2) The mind is the instrument of the soul, which it uses for perception and conception. (3) The soul is like the oil of the lamp, the intellect like the flame and the mind is the light, which scatters and reaches everything in the house and illumines it. (4) The soul is like a fruitful tree, the intellect like its branch and the mind is like its fruit. (5) The soul is like a fountainhead of clean, clear and sweet water, the intellect like a canal [branching] from it and the mind like a fertile habitation. (6) The soul is like a cultured lady, the intellect like a wise husband and the mind like a promising child. (7) The soul is like the ink pot, the intellect like a pen and the mind is like the writing. All these examples demonstrate the reality of the relationship between the soul and the mind.

Since the relation between the soul and the mind through the intellect has been established, some more examples of their mutual relation are given here: (1) Human personality is a microcosm in which the soul stands for Eve and the intellect for Ādam. (2) The soul and the intellect are like the parents of the human 'I', in which the soul stands for the mother and the intellect for the father, for the soul is the representative of the *asās* and the intellect is the representative of the *nātiq*. (3) The soul is the indication of the Universal Soul and the intellect that of the Universal Intellect. (4) The soul is the moon of the personal world and the intellect is its sun. (5) The soul is the indication of the *hujjat* and the intellect is that of the Imām. (6) The soul in the



personal world is the queen (i.e., the female sovereign) and the intellect her sagacious minister. (7) The soul is a sage and the intellect its lustrous and dignified countenance. Through all these examples the relationship between the soul and the intellect has been made quite clear, so that it may help one to understand how the mind is the reflected light of the soul and the intellect.

Now, as for the part of the question: “What is the function or act of the soul and the mind in acquiring knowledge?” The answer is that the soul is like a refined and intelligent queen, the intellect like a wise king, the brain is the [country’s] capital, and the heart is the powerhouse and the electric system. This is a ministry consisting of the faculties of the brain. In this ministry, the mind is the prime minister, the external senses are the servants of the department of communication, who being equipped with the wonderful instruments of communication constantly send the knowledge or information of the external world to the central office (mind) of the brain. In this example, an attempt has been made to give a true picture of how the soul and the intellect are accomplishing their function through the mind and the senses in acquiring knowledge.

However, if the question is regarding the acquisition of spiritual knowledge, I would like to say with utmost humility that the temporary suspension of the external senses and self-forgetfulness is necessary. This blissful state, which is also called *fanā’* (merging) is imposed on oneself through the special *‘ibādat*, so that the Holy Spirit may function [without the interruption of the external senses] for miraculous knowledge.

The fact is that through real obedience, *‘ibādat* and knowledge, we need to elevate the ordinary human soul and the mind to the level of the satisfied soul (*nafs-i muṭṭma’innah*)!<sup>3</sup> In other words,

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<sup>3</sup> Regarding the satisfied soul, the holy Qur’ān says: “O the satisfied soul! Return unto your Lord content in His good pleasure! Enter among My (special) servants! Enter My paradise!” (89:27-30). When is the soul satisfied? When the duties of obedience, *‘ibādat* and knowledge are fulfilled. How does the return take place? In this world because of the satisfaction and in the next because of death.



we must cause the third soul,<sup>4</sup> the human soul to merge into the fourth soul, the Holy Spirit. Here one should ask the following pertinent question: Why is there the concept of holiness or purity in the Holy Spirit? The answer is that in Islam purity has very great importance and it is of three kinds: intellectual purity, which is through real knowledge, spiritual purity which is through *‘ibādat*, and physical purity which is through obedience. Obedience means every kind of obedience, without which the body cannot be purified.

**Answer 3:** Firstly, to make the answer understandable, it is necessary to explain what the non-spatial world is and what the non-temporal world means, so that the related question may be clearly answered. The non-spatial world means the state which is free from space and its dimension, that is, the spiritual and intellectual world, which is opposite to the material world. The non-temporal world means that state which is not related to time and is inert and static. It is also called the immovable time (*dahr*) (76:1).

If we forget this material world for a while, or imagine that we have travelled beyond this world, or suppose that this world has vanished, this would be the non-spatial and non-temporal world. For when space vanishes, logically it not only becomes non-spatial but also non-temporal. For time is the name of the rotation within space (universe). That is, if there were no sky, sun and earth, there would be no time too. However, there is no doubt that in that case there would be immovable time or *dahr*.

There are two levels of the non-spatial or the inner world: the level of the spirit and the level of the intellect. Similarly, there are two examples of the non-spatial state in this world: the world of imagination and the world of dreams. These two examples are so sufficient and complete that if we reflect on them well, we can understand a great deal about the non-spatial and non-temporal world. This means that the journey of the non-spatial world can

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<sup>4</sup> Every human being has three souls: vegetative, animal and rational or human soul.

be compared either with the imagination or dream. For instance, a person closing his eyes silently enters the world of imagination. His imagination is an ocean of pleasure and fascination. He is immersed in it and dives into its depth. Now, despite being physically in this world, he has consciously reached the non-spatial world, for the forgetting of the material world is itself entering into the non-spatial world. Now, in his imagination, he observes the events of the past one by one in such a way as if no time has passed for him. Although the undeveloped imagination is as dim as the false dawn, nevertheless all the things of the heaven and the earth are seen in it in some way. This example is concerning an ordinary imagination. However, if the imagination is trained morally, religiously and spiritually it is then not only an example, but can itself become the non-spatial world. Therefore, the example of the journey to the non-spatial world and the return from it is like a fascinating and deep imagination into which someone gradually and silently immerses and re-emerges after some time.

Another example of the non-spatial world is the world of dreams. In sound sleep, the lamp of the external senses of a human being is gradually extinguished. The reason for this is that the attention of the soul is centered in the opposite direction to that of the external senses. This is the journey of the world of dreams that is very brief and the journey of the non-spatial world is similar. However, it is worth mentioning here that not only can the imagination of a human being progress, but so can his dream, to the extent that both imagination and dream merge with spirituality. In an ordinary state the proof of how the world of dreams is the example of the non-spatial world is that the things which are seen in the world of dreams are immaterial, non-spatial and non-temporal. For instance, if someone eats something in a dream it does not fill his stomach. The reason is obvious that material things do not exist there. Further, if it is autumn in the external world, it is not bound to be so in the world of dreams. It is never so. For, the world of dreams in its essence and nature is the fountainhead of the manifestations of the non-spatial world and many other diverse things. This nature of dream is among the Divine miracles. As the Qur'ān says: "And of His signs is your dream (*manām*) by night and by day, and your seeking of His

bounty. Verily there are signs (miracles) in this for those who listen (with the ear of understanding)” (30:23). The *ta’wil* of this verse will be explained later. Here, at the place of *tanzil* the meaning of *manām* as dream is correct, and it (dream) is among the Divine miracles.

In this verse, the word ‘*manām*’, which means sleep and dream, is full of wisdom. Its *ta’wil* is to enter the spiritual or non-spatial world through *zikr* and ‘*ibādat*. For one of the states of spirituality resembles sleeping or being overtaken by sleep, as already mentioned in connection with imposing sleep upon the external senses in order to awaken the inner ones.

The complete *ta’wil* of the verse is: And your spirituality (*manām*) by night and day which is like sleeping and dreaming and your seeking of knowledge and wisdom in it and its results, are indeed the Divine miracles for those who listen with the real ear. This shows that the state of entering the boundary of the non-spatial and non-temporal world is like sleeping and the return from it is like waking up from a dream.

The following verse is also in this connection: “Then, after grief, He sent down the state of satisfaction upon you which was as a slumber which overcame a party of you” (3:154). This refers to the defeat at the battle of Uḥud, in which the special *mu’mins* in the state of fear and grief, remembered God abundantly. The result came forth in the form of spirituality. That is, the miraculous sleep was imposed upon them, which brings spirituality with it. Otherwise, no sleep of negligence can be praised in this way.

Another verse in this connection is: “When He made the slumber (*nu’ās*) fall upon you as the state of satisfaction and fearlessness and sent down water from the sky upon you, that thereby He may purify you, and remove from you the filth of Satan, and make strong your hearts and firm (your) feet thereby” (8:11). Here too, *nu’ās* is the wisdom-filled dream, namely spirituality, water is knowledge and filth is doubt and disturbing thoughts (*waswasah*), tying (*rabṭ*) is to establish the *ism-i a’zam* firmly in the heart and firm-footing is to advance in *zikr* without slipping. Here, this

spirituality of real *mu'mins* is related to the battle of Badr. One of the implications of this verse is that spiritual progress results from accomplishing dangerous religious tasks like *jihād*. The second is that spirituality is compared to sleep, and the third is that during sleep the external senses are suspended and the link with the non-spatial world is established.

When the individual resurrection and spirituality reach the treasure of the Hidden Pearl (*gawhar-i makhnūn*) the non-spatial world of the rank of Intellect is reached. For, in that state, intellectually the concept of space and time come to an end and the manifestation of pre-eternal (*azalī*) and post-eternal (*abadi*) realities and recognition begin while the entire world is rolled up in God's grip, as the Qur'ān says: "The day when We shall roll up the heavens as a recorder rolls up a written scroll. As We began the first creation, We shall repeat it. (It is) a promise (binding) upon Us. Verily We are to perform it" (21:104). Another verse on this subject is: "When the whole earth is in His grip on the day of Resurrection, and the heavens are rolled up in His right hand." (39:67).

Both these blissful and wisdom-filled verses are specifically related to [the explanation of] the concepts of the fundamental and final realities, such as: (1) *azal* (pre-eternity), *abad* (post-eternity), Command, *Khalq*, survival (*baqā'*), merging (*fanā'*), space-less, space, time-less, time, light, Throne, Pen, Hidden Treasure, *'Ilīyyūn*, Imāmat, etc. (2) From one aspect it is the mention of the material world and from another it is the mention of the world of knowledge. (3) In the wise Qur'ān, the concept of the Divine Throne is both prior and posterior to the [creation of the] Universe and that is the same concept as mentioned above. (4) This is the concept of the Divine Pen which is the fountainhead of all heavenly knowledge. (5) This is the Hidden Treasure, namely, the treasure of the secrets of recognition (of God). (6) The journey of spirituality and knowledge of a human being is on a circle, on which he starts the journey from pre-eternity and going around the circle reaches the same pre-eternity, another name of which is post-eternity. (7) This is the concept of the Hidden Book (*kitāb-i makhnūn*) in which is the Qur'ān. (8) The Archangel who bears the Throne and in whose hand is the bezel

of wisdom is mentioned in this concept. (9) The east and the west of the light of oneness (*nūr-i tawhīd*) is the same place. (10) This concept shows the concept of the kingdom of God. (11) This is the concept of the supreme similitude which embraces all similitudes. (12) This is the mountain upon which if the Qur'ān were to descend, it would have been rent asunder into pieces. (13) This is the White Stone, the similitude of which is the Black Stone. (14) This is the mountain, which had scattered into pieces by the manifestation of God. (15) This is the pearl and coral which are mentioned in the Qur'ān. (16) This is the rock, by the falling of which, the water of knowledge gushes forth. (17) At this place is the fountain of *Salsabil*. (18) In this place, there is the miracle of the white hand. (19) This is the place of the merging of the intellect and knowledge. (20) This is also the light, niche, lamp, glass and the glittering star. (21) Here is the blessed tree of the Olive, which is neither of the east nor of the west, for it is non-spatial. (22) At this place there is the light in front and on the right side [of *mu'mins*]. (23) This is the concept of the Perfect light. (24) This is the luminous book. (25) This is the mountain of *Qāf* of knowledge. (26) This is *ʿIlliyūn*. (27) This is the main place of purification (*tasbiḥ*) and sanctification (*taqdis*). (28) This is also the ark of knowledge and wisdom.

Karachi,  
24<sup>th</sup> August, 1983.

Spiritual Wisdom  
and  
Luminous Science  
Knowledge for a united humanity

## Şamşām-i ʿIlmi (Twenty Wisdoms)

*Şamşām* is an Arabic word which means a cutting sword, a sharp sword, a sword which does not bend. In some traditions, it is the name of one of Mawlā ʿAlī<sup>(e)</sup>'s swords.

*Şām şām* is also a name among the blessed names of the holy Prophet, mentioned in the *Şuḥuf* of Ḥazrat-i Shīs<sup>(e)</sup>. In this article, it is used in the sense of “*qatṭāʿ bi'l-hujjah*” i.e., the one who cuts [with the sword of] proof and demonstration, the one who passes decisive judgement with proof and demonstration. Therefore, here by *Şām şām* is meant the sharp sword of knowledge, namely the sword of true or real knowledge, as true and truth are compared with a sharp sword in a Prophetic Tradition: “Truth is the sword of God, when it strikes a thing it does not leave without cutting.” We want to explain some wisdoms regarding *Şām şām* in this sense:

1. The way the Prophet of Islam has presented the concept of *jihād*, the struggle, in the Tradition of *Khāşifu'n-naʿl* (the mender of the shoes, i.e., Mawlā ʿAlī<sup>(e)</sup>), it is clear that *jihād* in Islam is twofold, the *jihād* of *tanzil* (exoteric) and the *jihād* of *ta'wil* (esoteric). The master and chief of the *tanzilī jihād* was the holy Prophet and for the *ta'wilī jihād*, Mawlā ʿAlī<sup>(e)</sup> was appointed by God and the Prophet, as he was the *waliyy-yi amr* (the holder of the Command). Here, by Mawlā ʿAlī<sup>(e)</sup> is meant the entire chain of Imāmat, for the *ta'wilī jihād* is spread throughout the entire cycle, exoterically and esoterically.
2. The above-mentioned Tradition throws light on many realities. For instance, in Islam there is *daʿwat* (mission) one after another, because Islam is the straight path to progress step by step and stage by stage. Another reality is that the *Şamşām* or *Zu'l-Faqār* of iron was meant for the external *jihād* whereas the *Şamşām* or *Zu'l-Faqār* of knowledge is



meant for the internal *jihād* or the *jihād* of knowledge. In this *jihād* the exalted Imām is the commander of God’s army and the *mu’mins* perform the various duties of the army in this *jihād* of knowledge. This *jihād* has two battlefields: the battlefield of spirituality (*rūḥāniyyat*) and that of corporeality (*jismāniyyat*), for which God’s army is divided into two sections: the heavenly army and the terrestrial army. The heavenly army means the souls of *mu’mins* and the terrestrial, their persons (48:4, 7).

3. The efficacy of true knowledge in Islam and the effectiveness of the swords of proofs can be properly assessed from this verse: “... that he who perishes may perish after a clear proof (*bayyinah*) and he who lives may live after a clear proof” (8:42). That is, if someone potentially perishes according to the law of intellect, then their living is useless and so they should perish in reality; whereas he who potentially survives according to this law should actually survive. It should also be noted here that the soul of the proofs of Islam is always the True Guide, the Imām of the time. This is why according to the Qur’ān, one of the names of the holy Prophet is “*al-Bayyinah* (the Proof)”, which also means the Imām of the time.
4. One of the loveliest words among the wisdom-filled words of the Qur’ān is “*sulṭān*” which is mentioned in the Qur’ān thirty-seven times. It means argument, proof, authority, overpowering, power and king and its *ta’wil* is the Imām of the time, for it is he who is the successor of the Prophet who was “*al-Bayyinah*” or “the Clear Proof” (98:1) in the time of prophethood. As God says: “O group of *jinn* and humankind, if you have power to penetrate the regions of the heavens and the earth, then penetrate them! You will never penetrate them save with the proof (*sulṭān*)” (55:33). That is, it is not possible for the *jinn*s and human beings to transcend the material world through spirituality and knowledge and penetrate the higher and non-spatial world, except through the Imām of the time, who is the “*sulṭān*” with all the meanings mentioned above.



5. Reflect on this verse carefully: “As for My slaves, you have no power over them save those who follow you” (15:42). This means that Satan cannot mislead the *mu'mins* when the power of God (*sultān*, namely, the Imām of the time) is with them. But Satan can make someone his follower if he has deviated from the straight path, the True Guide and the guidance. For, since the real power is no longer with him, Satan can understandably have power over him.
6. The holy Qur'ān has called all false guides ‘idols’ (*aṣnām*). Just as idols are carved by people themselves, so these guides are also appointed by the people themselves and given names like *pīr*, *murshid*, *imām*, etc. They are not appointed by God, nor has He revealed any proof about them. On the contrary He has revealed the proof, namely, *sultān*, with all its lofty meanings in favour of the true Imāms.
7. There can be no greater proof of the perfection of religion and the completion of favour than the fact that the blessed personality of the Imām with his exalted attributes is always present in this world after the true Prophet, as is said in the Qur'ān about Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā<sup>(e)</sup> and Ḥaẓrat-i Hārūn<sup>(e)</sup>: “Then We sent Mūsā and his brother Hārūn with Our signs and a clear proof (*sultān mubīn*) to Pharoah and his chiefs” (23:45-46). The main purpose of presenting the example of Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā<sup>(e)</sup> and Ḥaẓrat-i Hārūn<sup>(e)</sup> in this verse and in many other Qur'ānic verses is to show the mutual relationship of Prophethood and Imāmat. Here, by a clear proof is meant knowledge and wisdom and the *ta'wil* after the *tanzil*, which is greater than sensory miracles.
8. It has already been said that *jihād* is of two kinds: the physical *jihād* and the *jihād* of knowledge. Similarly, there are two kinds of sword: the sword of iron and the sword of knowledge, and two kinds of migration (*hijrat*): the external and the internal. External migration is to leave one's home and familiar country for the sake of religion when necessary and the internal migration is to travel from the physical world to the spiritual world to strengthen religion. Therefore, this verse mentions two such forms [of *jihād* and migration]:

“Verily those who believed and left their homes (externally or internally) and did *jihād* with their wealth (material possessions or the wealth of knowledge) and their souls in the path of God and those who took them in and helped them, these are protecting friends one of another” (8:72).

9. The purport of verse (29:69) is that God shows the paths of His knowledge and recognition and without doubt He is with those who do good deeds such as when people accomplish meritorious deeds like *jihād* in the service of His religion.
10. The importance, necessity, virtue and loftiness of true knowledge is mentioned in abundance in the holy Qur’an and by its command to know the higher realities, it is established that it is possible to reach the pinnacle of knowledge. See for instance: “And know that Allāh comes between man and his own heart, and that to Him you will be gathered” (8:24). This wisdom-filled concept shows that man’s heart is separate from his body and by this heart is meant, not the physical heart which is a lump of flesh, but the real heart which is the holy and pure Imām, who is the real heart and the ‘higher I’ (*anā-yi ‘ulwī*) of the *mu’min*, which has to be attained, if not today, then tomorrow.
11. The word ‘*qalb*’ (heart) which refers to the Imām in the above-mentioned verse has many meanings, such as heart, intellect, soul, the centre of an army, kernel, marrow, the purest or choicest part, essence, pith, core and noble. It is said that *qalb* is so called because it changes and turns. All these meanings befit the holy Imām. The Imām is the intellect and soul of the entire universe, he is the real intellect and soul of every *mu’min*, he is the centre of God’s army and the quintessence of everything, he is noble from every aspect and he travels throughout the universe with the *ibdā‘i* or the subtle body. Therefore, one of his *ta’wīlī* names is ‘*qalb*’ (changing, turning).
12. All the similitudes mentioned in the Qur’an have the same principle and the same object, and this can be understood from the following verse: “As for these similitudes, We coin

them for humankind, but none grasp their meaning save the people of knowledge (*al-<sup>c</sup>ālimūn*)” (29:43). This verse clearly shows that since the similitudes coined to make people understand are among the equivocal verses (*mutashābihāt*), therefore they cannot understand them on their own. This indicates that to understand them, they should have recourse to such <sup>c</sup>*ulamā*’ who know the meaning (*mamsūl*), i.e., the *ta’wīl* of the similitude (*miṣāl*). Such <sup>c</sup>*ulamā*’ are the holy Imāms only. Many wisdoms are revealed from this: First, all higher realities, which are beyond people’s comprehension are described in the form of similitudes. Secondly, it is necessary to have recourse to the Imām of the time to understand these similitudes. Thirdly, all the Qur’ānic similitudes come under this law. Fourth, so long as the Qur’ān exists in this world and the people need to understand the secrets of its *ta’wīl*, the chain of Imāmat must exist and continue in this world. Fifth, these <sup>c</sup>*ulamā*’ are the ones on whom God has conferred the title of “*rāsikhūn fi’l-<sup>c</sup>ilm* (those who are firm in knowledge)” (3:7).

13. The special *ta’wīl* of the Divine Throne (*‘arsh*) is the light of Intellect. Therefore, the bearer of the light - the Imām of the time - alone is the Archangel who bears the Divine Throne in his time. However, from verse (69:17) “And eight will uphold the Throne of your Lord that day” it apparently seems that there are many great angels who together are holding it up. The reality is not related to the number of Imāms, but to their chain and order. That is, from the seven Imāms of a cycle, each Imām holds up the Throne of light in his respective time and after the seventh Imām, there is a *Khalīfah* (successor) and [in this sense] together they become the eight angels (mentioned in this verse).
14. Ḥazrat-i Mūsā<sup>(c)</sup> prayed to God: “Give me the strength to see You, that I may gaze upon You. He said: You will not see Me, but gaze upon the mountain. If it stands still in its place, then you will see Me. And when his Lord revealed (His) glory to the mountain He sent it crashing down. And Mūsā fell down unconscious” (7:143). For the sake of the great *ta’wīl* wisdom of this verse it is appropriate to ask if it was an

external and material mountain, how did a lifeless and irrational mountain accept the impact of the Divine light's manifestation and in what sense or how did it smash into pieces? The answer is that there were two mountains in front of Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā<sup>(c)</sup>: one was the material and the other was spiritual and intellectual. The Lord had revealed Himself to the mountain of the intellect in the form of intellect and knowledge and not in any other form, because whenever 'Lord (*rabb*)' is mentioned in the holy Qur'ān it means the upbringing and nourishing of the intellect and knowledge. Therefore, at this highest stage of Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā<sup>(c)</sup>'s spirituality, the Benevolent Lord through His wisdom-filled luminous manifestation, smashed the mountain of intellect into pieces intellectually and in the form of knowledge and scattered the pearls of great secrets. The *ta'wil* of Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā<sup>(c)</sup> falling down unconscious is that he was bewildered by this supreme, unprecedented and most comprehensive demonstration of knowledge and wisdom, and the *ta'wil* of coming to consciousness is that he gradually started to grasp the wisdom of the fountainhead of the light of Intellect.

15. There is no doubt that exoterically, *sūrah-yi Fātiḥah* is the Mother of the Book (*Ummu'l-kitāb*) and esoterically, the *asās*, namely, Ḥaẓrat-i Murtaẓā 'Alī<sup>(c)</sup> (43:4). For he is the Face of God and the "Pearl-producing Ocean" (55:27). Indeed, this hidden pearl is itself the Hidden Book (56:78) and this sacred ocean is the mother of pearls.
16. The external and internal *jihād* can only be accomplished through the Prophet and the Imām, an example of which is in the story of Ḥaẓrat-i Ṭālūt<sup>(c)</sup> (Saul) (2:246-251). Ḥaẓrat-i Ṭālūt<sup>(c)</sup> was the Imām of his time, as it is said in the Qurān: "He said: Verily Allāh has chosen him above you (to rule over you), and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and body. Allāh bestows His kingdom on who He wills. Allāh is All-Embracing, All-Knowing" (2:247). Twofold wisdom is hidden here in the word "*zādahu* (has increased)": One, that in comparison to the people of the world, the Imām is greater than all of them, for he has spiritual knowledge and the *ibdā'i* body. The second is that the Imām becomes greater than his

previous state when he is given the esoteric knowledge and the subtle body in addition to the exoteric knowledge and the dense body.

17. It is said in this story that God appointed Ḥaẓrat-i Ṭālūt<sup>(e)</sup> as a king. This means that he was an Imām, since the notion of a worldly kingdom does not exist in God's religion. However, a religious kingdom does exist, and that is in the form of Prophethood and Imāmat. This kingdom is in fact the kingdom of Allāh, which He bestows on who He wills. It was His will as stated in the Qur'ān (4:54) that this religious and spiritual kingdom should endure and continue in the progeny of Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(e)</sup> and in the progeny of Ḥaẓrat-i Muḥammad<sup>(s)</sup>.
18. Wise people universally accept that the entire kingdom of God works in favour of the one whom God and the Prophet have placed on the throne of religion. Such a king is the Imām of the time and everything in the heaven and the earth serves him by God's command. This is in the sense that the way this kingdom is affirmed is indeed an affirmation [of being wise], but the way it is rejected is also not devoid of wisdom. After all, the negative is necessary along with the positive in order to generate power and movement. This is the Divine law and the law of nature.
19. No human being can test and try the Imām on any set standard, because the Imām is the king and his is the law of standardization, so that he may establish a standard in keeping with the time and place and hence try the people, in which lies their well-being. Although the Imām has innumerable miracles and wonders it is an error to seek a miracle or *karāmat* (wonder) from him to test him. However, it is necessary to seek insight or the inner eye, through the obedience of God, the Prophet and the *ṣāhib-i amr* (holder of the Command), so that one may always see Divine miracles externally and internally.

Although it is true that Ḥaẓrat-i Sulaymān<sup>(c)</sup>, whose kingdom was the example of the spiritual kingdom of the Prophets and the Imāms, was king both in a physical and spiritual sense, nevertheless the benefit of knowledge and awareness lies in understanding its real state. The reality is that he was more of a king in a spiritual than in a physical sense. His army, which consisted of *jinn*, humankind and birds (27:17) was in a spiritual form and whatever power or miracle is related to him was in a spiritual form. This means that like Ḥaẓrat-i Sulaymān<sup>(c)</sup>, every Prophet and every Imām in his time is the master of the spiritual kingdom.

20. The greatest benefit for every *mu'min* lies in accepting the Imām of the time as his religious and spiritual king, and he should fill his heart and soul with the everlasting wealth of love for him. For, love for the Imām is love for the Prophet and love for the Prophet is love for God. Therefore, when the believing servant becomes God's friend, God too, will become his friend. This Divine friendship will be in the form of manifold bounties and favours of religion.

Praise be to God for his favours!

Karachi,

29<sup>th</sup> August, 1983.



## An Excellent Question

*My very dear al-Wā'iz Ṣaghīr al-Dīn, who is among the devoted lovers of the 'Alī<sup>(c)</sup> of the time, is a self-immolating moth of the candle of knowledge and intoxicated with the wine of recognition and to whom God has given many innate abilities. He sometimes writes letters to this humble servant, full of the fragrance of sincerity and love. Sometimes there are questions in these beautiful letters. He has asked an excellent question in a recent letter, which is as follows:*

“Finally, I would like to ask a question and hope that you will graciously reply. Question: The moment plants grow from the soil or the minerals they turn their head upwards, whilst in animals the head protrudes forward and in humans the head is upright. What secret of wisdom is hidden in these three different states?”

You can appreciate the depth and grasp of intellect and wisdom with which the question is asked and how clear and comprehensive it is!

**Answer:** It is true that every plant, whether it is a cypress tree whose head is raised upward or it is the creeper of a water-melon which spreads on the ground, the moment it sprouts its head is turned towards the heaven. This is its natural guidance and recourse towards the system of providence which is availed through the physical heaven and the sun so that it may be nurtured and nourished by heat, light, rain and air. Plants are nurtured not only through their roots but also through their branches. This implies the wisdom-filled divine indication that if someone wants to grow from the earth of religion and have recourse to the heaven of knowledge and the sun of guidance, he can do so with utmost happiness. He may thus be considered a new plant of the garden of God's religion, about whose upbringing in spirit and knowledge, it is said: “If they had observed the Torah and the Gospel and that which was revealed unto them from their Lord, they would surely have been



nourished from above them and from beneath their feet” (5:66). That is, there is a stage of spirituality in which the higher particles descend to the spiritual traveller (*sālik*) from the side of the head and the lower particles enter from the side of the feet, so that he the fortunate servant, may be nourished and grow like an ever-green tree as God says about Ḥaẓrat-i Maryam<sup>(6)</sup>: “And He made her grow a goodly growth” (3:37). If plants and trees had not served as examples of the perfect and complete human, the wise Qur’ān would not have mentioned them.

Since the position of an animal is between plants and humankind, there are examples of both progress and regress in it. This means that there are both the positive and negative aspects of *ta’wil* in the example of animals. Therefore, the holy Qur’ān uses animals as parables for the *ḥudūd-i din* and sometimes as examples of the ignorant people too. The answer to the question: ‘Why does the head of the animals protrude forward and why does it bow time and again towards the ground?’ can be given in two ways:

- a) Plants raise their heads towards the heaven. In this state, their face is turned towards the animal who is above their heads. The *ta’wil* of this is that the *ḥudūd-i din* rule the subordinate souls, who are taught by them so that they may ascend their ladder and the *ḥudūd* may attain the rank of perfection, just as in the encounter of plants and animals there is mutual benefit: the plant revives in the form of the animal and the latter progresses in the stages of life.
- b) The heads of animals point down and their backs are towards the heaven, alludes to those people who have fallen down in the baseness of the carnal soul. That is, as an example animals have turned their faces away from the humans who are their heaven. The *ta’wili* wisdom in this is that the heads of those who turn their backs towards the Prophets and the Imāms (who are the heaven of knowledge and recognition), always remain bowed down towards baseness and meanness, just as the animals’ heads remain bowed down towards the grass.

As for the answer to the question: ‘Why is the head of humankind upright?’ is that those who are human beings in a true sense turn their faces towards the spiritual heaven. The external and the

internal senses are [centred] in the head, and they attend to and focus on the light of guidance to attain [spiritual] elevation and eminence.

In the chain of progress and regress, one type of animal precedes humankind and the other follows. The one which precedes may be good or bad, but the one which comes after is extremely bad. Therefore, some of the apes and swine of the remote past were extremely vicious and mean animals that came into being because of the disfiguration of some disobedient people, whether this disfiguration was external or internal. Therefore, Qur'anic wisdom says that some people despite being in a human form become animals, as God says: "Already have We urged unto hell many of the *jinn* and humankind, having hearts with which they understand not, and having eyes with which they see not, and having ears with which they hear not. These are as cattle - nay, but they are worse! These are the neglectful" (7:179). This shows that the one who is disobedient is ignorant and the one who is ignorant in this way is an animal although outwardly a human being.

In verse (36:67) God says: "And had We willed, We verily could have transformed them in their place, making them powerless to go forward or turn back." By their place is meant the human body, shape and form; by transformation (*maskh*) is meant the change of the human soul into an animal; not to be able to walk is not to be able to progress and not to be able to return means not to be able to repent. Therefore, the meaning of a person's transformation is that his soul has fallen from the eminence of humanity to the baseness of animality and he can neither progress morally and spiritually nor return to the presence of God.

I humbly pray that may the Lord of the world grant all Muslims and *mu'mins* success in obeying Him, as He ought to be obeyed!  
*Bi-haqqi Muḥammad wa ālihi't-tāhirin* (for the sake of Muḥammad<sup>(s)</sup> and his pure progeny).

London,  
20<sup>th</sup> June 1984.

## Journey and Observation

May the True God grant peace, progress and success in this world and the next and may He exalt in both the worlds all the respected office-bearers and members of Khānah-yi Hikmat and Idārah-yi °Arif of Karachi and the Northern Areas, who are extremely dear to my heart and soul and who are parts and pieces of my soul and heart! *Āmīn yā rabba 'l-°ālamīn* (*Āmīn*, O the Lord of the worlds!)

With heartfelt appreciation and gratitude for the Divine blessings and bounties, I convey the holy prayer of *Yā °Alī Madad* and *salām* to all nears and dears in the east and west and always expect the same kind of prayer from them, for this magnificent prayer is full of Divine mercies and blessings.

*Al-ḥamdu li 'llāh*, I flew on 18th June, at 11p.m. from Karachi and reached London the next day via Tashkent and Moscow. The duration of the journey was about twenty hours, including a stop-over and the distance perhaps more than twelve thousand kilometres. The journey was extremely wonderful and marvellous for me. I shall always remember the way my friends helped me and the way they demonstrated their sincerity and love at the time of my departure from Karachi and my arrival in London.

Knowledge for a united humanity

There is no doubt that the spiritual journey is by far more wondrous, amazing and important, in which the soul and the particles of soul pass through various wonders and marvels. If it is accepted that we, as the particles of soul, come and go from one another, this law of omnipresence and ubiquity of soul necessitates that not only in this journey but also in the great journey of China we were together in the search for knowledge, so that on the Day of Resurrection, God willing, we will see our common achievement.

There are wondrous and marvellous concepts of spirituality in the poetry of great Sufīs like Mawlā-yi Rūm, who had successfully attained the stage of *ṭariqat*. But if we study deeply, we will come

to know that the concepts of Ismaili spirituality and reality (*ḥaqīqat*) are most amazing. The reason is obvious that here, the far distant journey of spirituality reaches its ultimate destination in the guidance of the *mazhar* (locus of manifestation) of God's light, namely the Imām of the time, and then every spiritual observation gradually becomes a treasure of knowledge and recognition.

The three tenses of the external world - past, present and future - are either far from or running away from man. That is, the past has gone, the present passes fast and the near future arrives fast and escapes. As for the remote future, it undoubtedly remains far away and therefore human beings suffer from wistfulness and dependency owing to ignorance of the events and conditions of all these states. Contrary to this, in spirituality and paradise time is immovable, which is present only without the past or the future. The immovable time of paradise is called *dahr*, in which all the times of the world are centred and become everlasting.

The wise Qur'ān says that on the Day of Resurrection, the universe will be folded in the right hand of God (39:67). This wisdom-filled verse speaks of the centring of the expanse of space (universe), in which is also included the centring of time and its becoming immovable. Since time is the name of the movement of the spheres it cannot be separated from space. Therefore, despite being far and wide, when space by the command of God becomes centred and near, time too leaving the distance of past and future, is contracted in the centre of the present. This means that everything of spirituality and paradise draws near and comes in front without spatial distance and temporal duration, as God says: "And the paradise is brought nigh for the righteous ones, no longer distant" (50:31). That is, paradise which is equal to the length and breadth of the heavens and earth (3:133; 57:21) will be compacted and centred in the size of a pearl and will come before [an *ʿarif*].

The entire universe, namely, the heavens, the earth and what they contain has four forms: dense body, subtle body, soul and intellect. The dense body [consists of] the universe, the heavens and the earth; the subtle body and the Universal Soul are the

paradise that is equal to the universe, and the Intellect is the paradise which is being brought close to the righteous, as mentioned above.

If we accept that resurrection is the name of spiritual progress and closeness to God, which is possible individually (6:64), it means that the real resurrection happens individually, in which a collective resurrection is also hidden. If such is the case, no time is devoid of the chain of this spiritual resurrection. However, it is a different matter whether the resurrection is a small one or a big one. This concept raises the question that if such is the case, why does the Qur'an speak mostly about the occurrence of resurrection in the future tense, as it says that "the resurrection is going to come"?

The answer to this question is that except for the Perfect Men, resurrection does not happen to people consciously. Therefore, with respect to the common people resurrection is mentioned mostly in the future tense. For, there is no past and no future in any act of God. For the past is related to the one from whose hand a portion of time has passed away and the future is related to the one who cannot reach the time that is going to come. However, God is One, and all the things of time and space are confined in His powerful grip. This means that at the place of Intellect, the entire time turns into a finite and immovable present and prostrates in God's presence, since all temporal and spatial things prostrate in His Divine presence (16:49).

London,  
22<sup>nd</sup> June, 1984.

## Divine Treasures

It is a bright fact of the Qur’ān and the religion of Islam that the treasures of all those things that exist in His godhead and kingdom are in the holy presence of God, as He says in the following wisdom-filled verse: “And there is not a thing [without this law] but with Us are the treasures thereof (*‘indanā khazā’inuhu*). And We send it not (as a whole) save in a known measure” (15:21).

Many bright realities appear before us one by one in this holy verse, which is full of extremely great wisdoms. For instance:

- 1) Nothing really exists outside the Divine Treasures.
- 2) The pure essence of God is not such that a thing may come out of it or reveal from it, since the attribute of His treasures is that everything reveals from them.
- 3) This verse also shows that God, the Holy, the High, is not Himself a treasure, but He is the True Owner and Absolute King of all treasures.
- 4) Under this fundamental law even the human soul is in the Divine Treasures, and like all other things it has not come to this world totally but partially. That is, a greater part of it is [still] in the Divine Treasures.

The concept of *‘indiyyat* (closeness) of God is in the above verse. Closeness of God is not possible in the spatial (*makānī*) state, it is only possible in the intellectual, spiritual and religious state. Therefore, the most important, fundamental and greatest treasures of God are five: The Divine Word (*kalimah-yi bārī*), Pen, Tablet, *nāṭiq*, *asās*, just as you can see here that *‘indanā khazā’inuhu* consists of five separate parts (in Arabic):

$$\text{ع} + \text{ن} + \text{ا} + \text{خ} + \text{ز} = 5$$



The Manifest Imām (*imām-i mubīn*), i.e., the Imām of the time in every age is the *mazhar* (locus of manifestation) and representative of the Divine Treasures so that there should be no lack or narrowness in Islam, which is the religion of God and the religion of nature. As said in the Qur’ān: “*Wa kulla shay’in ahşaynāhu fī imāmin mubīn*” (36:12), i.e., ‘And We have encompassed everything in the manifest Imām.’ Another translation and explanation of this verse is: “And We have enumerated everything in the manifest Imām.” That is, ‘We have encompassed the particles of all souls in 360 *dā’is* and these *dā’is* in the 12 *hujjats* of the *jazirahs* and the latter in the four closest *hujjats* (*hujjatān-i huẓūr or muqarrab*) and the four *hujjats* We have revived in the exalted personality of the Imām, like the four birds of Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(6)</sup>.’ This is the enumeration of all things in the manifest Imām. Whenever God wants to enumerate things, He enumerates in this way and encompasses them in one number. A third translation and explanation of the verse is: “And we have made everything a pearl in the personality of the manifest Imām.” ‘*Ḥaşan*’ in Arabic means pebbles and its *ta’wil* is the Pearl of Intellect, for a pearl is a precious stone. Everything has to necessarily be in an intellectual form.

Innumerable wisdoms lie hidden in the way the Pearl of Intellect has been compared to a pebble. One of them is that the order of the external creatures starts with stones etc., and that of the internal existents becomes complete and perfect in a stone, namely a pearl, after passing through numerous stages so that the importance of the circle may appear in the concept of creation.

The subject of the Divine Treasures is extremely important in the wise Qur’ān. The verse: “The Book is an explanation of everything” (16:89) means that the explanation of some things is both in a direct and indirect way and that of others only in an indirect way. The subject of the Divine Treasures is mentioned in both a direct and an indirect way.

There are many ways of guarding a material treasure. For instance, it is narrated that in the old times some kings used to guard their treasures with talismans. Another way of guarding

treasures is to hide them in the cavity of a mountain or in ruins under the ground so that people cannot even imagine that there is a treasure in such ruins. A third way of guarding a treasure is that the building containing the treasure is known to all, but it is protected by powerful guards and its key is in the custody of the treasurer. God has the same habit where His treasures are concerned.

The wise Qur'ān is the greatest world (*‘ālam*) of knowledge and wisdom. It contains the traces of the religious and spiritual prosperity as well as the destruction of the people of the past. Therefore, let us examine the ruins of the destruction of Qārūn (Korah), about which the Qur'ān says: “And We gave him so many treasures that their keys would verily have been a burden for a troop of mighty men” (28:76). Qārūn was one of Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā<sup>(c)</sup>'s people. Spiritual wealth had been revealed to him and with whose keys a mighty group of souls had come before him. But Qārūn did not know the wisdom of giving the *zakāt* of knowledge, due to which he was ruined. This is an example of the law of God, how and where He hides His higher and lower treasures.

Regarding the Divine Treasures, it is necessary to know the principle that the gate of the treasures of the Divine Word is the Pen, that of the Pen is the Tablet, that of the Tablet is the *nāṭiq*, that of the *nāṭiq* is the *asās*, and that of the *asās* is the Imām, and that of the treasures of the light of the Imām is his presence in this world!

The gate (*bāb*) of the Imām of the time used to be the *ḥujjat-i a‘zam*, but now apparently, the Imām does not give this title to anyone nor is there apparently a *ḥujjat* other than the heir of the Imām.

London,  
25<sup>th</sup> June, 1984.

## Some Questions and Answers

- Q 1. Of the Qur'ānic verses related to the subject of wisdom (*ḥikmat*), some show that wisdom is taught, while others show that it is given. Is there any difference in the teaching and giving of wisdom, or do they mean the same thing?
- A 1. There is a great difference between teaching and giving. Teaching is the tongue's speech and giving is the hand's action. Therefore, in the external world and at the place of spirit, wisdom is taught, but at the rank of intellect the light of wisdom is given by God's hand itself. A careful study of the holy Qur'ān evidences the reality that the function of the Prophets is to teach wisdom and to give it is mentioned in relation to God.
- Q 2. “And We gave him wisdom and decisive speech” (38:20). Could you kindly explain what *faṣl al-khiṭāb*, other than wisdom, had God given to Ḥaẓrat-i Dāwūd<sup>(c)</sup> in this noble verse?
- A 2. God gave Ḥaẓrat-i Dāwūd<sup>(c)</sup> the light of Intellect, namely wisdom and the greatest treasure of the Divine Word (*kalimah-yi bāri*), namely *faṣl al-khiṭāb* (decisive speech). *Faṣlu'l-khiṭāb* is among the names of the Divine Word, by which all enquiries (*abhās*) are completed. It also means that there is no speech above it.
- Q 3. Verse (14:34) states that God has given humankind or only the people of faith, all they had asked Him. The verse does not say that He will give everything in the future on the Day of Judgement, rather it says that He has already given everything in this world, but despite this we see that human beings are very poor. What is the secret hidden in this holy verse?

A 3. A human being in the original state of his higher soul (*rūh-i ʿulwī*) is in paradise, but his personality is like a shadow in this world. Therefore, there is no doubt in the Qurʾānic reality that man is given everything both today and tomorrow in the life of paradise.

Q 4. The glorious Qurʾān says that in paradise, its people will be given every bounty of their desire. Here the question arises: if someone wants the kingdom of this world in paradise how would it be possible to have this world in the next?

A 4. The next world is concealed in this world, but this world exists and appears in the next, for the next world is a living and conscious mirror, in which the picture (*ʿaks*) of this world becomes ever living. Therefore, the subtle aspect of this world is also included among the bounties of paradise. Despite being a powerless human being a scientist can create a world of film and its numerous copies. However, the great angels who are appointed by God, the Omnipotent to record the individual and collective deeds of humankind, can create far greater conscious and real worlds (82:10-12).

Q 5. It is said in the *sūrah* of *Maʿārij*: “But no! I swear by the Lord of the easts and the wests that We are certainly able to transform them in a better state than they [are in]. And We are not powerless” (70:40-41). Where are the more than one east and one west? How does the Lord nourish the east and the west? In what sense will God transform the people into a better state?

A 5. This verse is about the world of Intellect where the same one place serves as the east and the west, but where the sun of light demonstrates a new day of knowledge and a new night of wisdom by each rising and setting, therefore, more than one east and one west are mentioned. The nourishment of the world of Intellect by the Lord is that it constantly receives the favour of Divine help from the Divine Word. God can transform people from the present body into a better state in the sense that He is going to transform them into the subtle body.

Q 6. You have frequently mentioned the subtle body in your writings, but I understand that you have not given a Qur'ānic reference for it. Would you kindly give us a Qur'ānic reference for it?

A6. “And We are not powerless to change your personality (*miṣāl*) and create you in what you know not” (56:60-61). This Qur'ānic verse is regarding the subtle body of which people are presently unaware. It is also said: “Indeed, We have created them (*hūris*) as ought to be created and made them virgins” (56:35-36). That is, ‘We made them pass through all the stages of a worldly and physical life and then made them virgins’, namely, resurrected them in the subtle bodies after death. Mawlā ‘Alī<sup>(e)</sup> says that every *mu'minah* (faithful woman) becomes a *ḥawrā'*, i.e., every *mu'minah* in paradise receives the subtle body. This means that the subtle body is a reality.

Q 7. The holy Qur'ān has many names and one of them is “*rūḥ* (spirit)”(42:52). Please tell us how it is a spirit? Where is it? What is the relation of our soul with that spirit?

A 7. The holy Qur'ān was gradually revealed to the blessed heart of the holy Prophet in the form of a great spirit. He preserved it in two ways: Firstly, it was recorded in the form of writing and secondly its spirit was transferred to his successor. Therefore, the Qur'ān in the Imām of the time (who is the heir of the Prophet) is in the form of a Holy Spirit and the same Spirit is also called the Light of the Imām. The relation of our soul with that Spirit is that our soul is from it, i.e., our soul is a part of that Spirit.

London,  
26<sup>th</sup> June 1984.

## Wisdoms of the Hand of God (*yadu'llāh*)

1. God has created the heavens and the earth of the personal world from the light of Intellect (*nūr-i 'aql*), as He says: “Have you not seen that God has created the heavens and the earth from *ḥaqq* (True) (i.e., the light of Intellect)?” (14:19).
2. God, the Wise, moved the light of Intellect seven times with His right hand and thereby, the seven heavens of Intellect came into existence and a command was given regarding every heaven and the lowest heaven was adorned with lamps and made to guard over all heavenly secrets (41:12).
3. The seven heavens correspond and conform with each other, therefore the nature of their creation is called “*ṭibāqan* (in harmony with one another)” (67:3). The holy Qur’ān sometimes mentions the heaven of the Intellect in the singular (*samā’*) and sometimes in the plural (*samāwāt*), the reason being that in reality the light of Intellect is one, but its manifestations related to the heaven are in seven ranks.
4. The earth of the personal world is created from the light of Intellect. The earth too is one but like the heaven, its ranks are seven (65:12). It should be noted that just as a world of numbers and things related to it come into existence from the number one, the heaven and the earth of the personal world and all other things related to them come into existence from the light of Intellect (Pearl of Intellect). All this is done by God’s hand (*dast-i qudrat*).
5. The purport of verse (38:75) is that God created Ḥaḏrat-i Ādam<sup>(e)</sup> with both His hands. The *ta’wil* of this verse is that God employed both the external *ḥudūd* and the internal *ḥudūd* in his creation and completion. For, the left hand of God means the external or the physical *ḥudūd* and the right hand means the internal or the spiritual *ḥudūd*.



6. The word “*fazl* (excellence)” is mentioned in the Qur’ān 104 times. *Fazl* in the language of wisdom is the Pearl of Intellect, also called the light of Intellect. Therefore, it is said: “*Fazl* is in the Hand of God” (3:73; 57:29).
7. At the end of some of the *sūrahs* of the glorious Qur’ān there is an extremely wisdom-filled verse. For example, at the end of *Sūrah* of *Yā-Sīn* it is said: “So He (God) is pure from all attributes, in Whose hand is the kingdom of everything and you will return towards it (hand)” (36:83). That is, God is free from everything and every attribute. Therefore, God’s hand means the higher ranks of religion, who are given the intellectual and spiritual kingdom of everything by Him (*zāt-i subhān*). Thus, the kingdom [of everything] is also in the light of Intellect (Pearl of Intellect).
8. Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā<sup>(c)</sup> used to perform the miracle of showing *yad-i bayzā’* (luminous hand), which means that he, as God’s hand, was performing the miracle of intellect and knowledge (7:108; 20:22; 26:33; 27:12; 28:32).
9. The word *ṣadaqah* is derived from *ṣidq* (truth), which is one of the names of the Intellect. In the external world *ṣadaqah* is the *zakāt* of wealth and in the internal, it is that of intellect and knowledge, as said in the holy Qur’ān: “O you who believe! When you hold a private conversation (*najwā*) with the Messenger, then offer some *ṣadaqah* before it” (58:12). Whether it is *ṣadaqah* or *zakāt*, giving and taking it is the hand’s act. Therefore, it is said [above]: Attain the place of Intellect, so that there, before holding private conversation with the Divine Word, you may be able to offer the *ṣadaqah* of intellect.
10. It is said in verse (9:111): “Verily Allāh has bought from the believers (*mu’minīn*) their lives and their wealth because paradise will be theirs (as the price of this transaction).” The practical *ta’wīl* of this transaction, which takes place between God and a *mu’min* is also in the world of Intellect. However, since the world of Intellect is the place of oneness (*maqām-i*

*wahdāniyyat*), therefore only one personality demonstrates the action of both sides there.

11. The Arabic word *bayʿat* (48:10) means to buy and to sell. Therefore, the purpose of repeating it in the external world is that *muʿmins* should not forget that God has bought their lives and their wealth. Thus, a representation of the rite of *bayʿat* in the external world is also to be found at the place of Intellect.
12. God says: “(O Messenger) and make mention of Our servants, Ibrāhīm, Ishāq and Yaʿqūb, men of hands and eyes” (38:45). In this verse, God has mentioned the luminous hands of the Prophets and Imāms, in which the Pearl of Intellect is demonstrated and also their inner or spiritual eyes, which observe this demonstration. Otherwise, every human being has physical hands and eyes.
13. God says: “(The Qurʾān is) on honoured leaves, exalted, purified, (written down) by scribes noble and righteous” (80:13-16). These are the leaves of Intellect which are honoured, exalted and purified and the scribes are the Prophets and Imāms and their writing is that they move the Pen of Intellect as it ought to be moved, so that the practical *taʿwil* of the Qurʾān may be obtained.
14. In the meaning of verse (29:48) neither was the holy Prophet reading any heavenly Book nor was he writing its *taʿwil* in his personality holding the Pen of Intellect in his right hand before the revelation, rather he started to do so only after the revelation of the Qurʾān.
15. In verse (37:93), Ḥazrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup> struck the idols with his right hand. This means that he used the power of the light of Intellect against false and futile statements and here his right hand means the power of the light of Intellect.
16. In verse (20:69), the rod of Ḥazrat-i Mūsā<sup>(c)</sup> used to be in his right hand. The *taʿwil* of it is that this rod was first related to his right ear in the form of *ism-i aʿzam* (Supreme Name) and

*zīkr* (remembrance), then it came to his inner right hand in the form of the light of Intellect and knowledge.

17. In verse (111:1) both the hands of Abū Lahab perished and he himself perished. Here the point worth pondering is: why do the hands of Abū Lahab, the infidel, perish first and only then he himself? The reason for this is that the external intellect and the internal intellect are as two hands of man and when they do not serve religion, they perish and thereby the disobedient man also dies spiritually.
18. Verse (56:77-79) states: “That this is indeed a noble Qur’ān (when) it is in a hidden Book (*kitāb-i makhnūn*), which none touches save the purified ones (*al-muṭahharūn*).” That is, none touches the spirit of the Qur’ān, which is in the light of Intellect with the inner hand except the purified ones.
19. Verse (9:103) has many *ta’wils*. One important *ta’wīl* is: “(O the Messenger!) Take a *ṣadaqah* from their wealth (a pearl from their spiritual wealth) and thereby purify them (to the utmost end) and give them *ṣalawāt*, for in your *ṣalawāt* there is peace for them.” That is, enable them to attain the favour of the Divine Word at this place.
20. Regarding the descending of *ṣalawāt* to the *mu’mins* from God’s exalted court, He says: “He it is who reveals to you *ṣalawāt* and His angels also reveal to you *ṣalawāt* that He may bring you forth from darkness unto light” (33:43). God’s *ṣalawāt* is revealed from the treasure of the Divine Word, which is the basis of the knowledge and wisdom of *ta’yīd* (Divine help).
21. Knowledge is taught as well as given, but giving of knowledge is higher than teaching, as God says: “But it (Qur’ān) is clear signs (i.e., living miracles) in the hearts of those who have been given knowledge” (29:49). This verse is about the pure Imāms and reveals the reality that they have been given knowledge in the form of the light of Intellect.

22. In verse (17:71) God says: “(Remember) that day when We shall summon the people (of every age) with their Imām, whoever is given his book in his right hand – such (fortunate ones) will read their book and they will not be wronged a shred.” The question here is: Will this book or the record of deeds be in any physical writing, such as Arabic, Persian, Urdu, English etc.? No, not at all. This will be the book of the soul and intellect, which will be easily read by every literate or illiterate person, for this will be the Speaking Book, i.e., the light of the Imām of the time.
23. It is true that everyone receives his record of deeds only after death. But is it not possible that some may die (with respect to their carnal soul), whilst being alive in this world? I believe after every Prophet, every Imām, every *Pir* and many *mu'mins* with high ambition die with respect to their carnal soul, and they attain and read their book of deeds [in this life].
24. In verse (2:94) God says: “(O Messenger!) Say (unto them): If the abode of the Hereafter with God (*‘inda’llāh*) is for you specially and not for others of humankind, then long for death if you are truthful.” This verse mentions the death of Prophets and Imāms whilst living in this world, in which the carnal soul dies and therefore they become the paradise of their respective times, because the supreme purpose of the concept of paradise is that a great, obedient soul may become a paradise. This paradise belongs exclusively to the one who attains this most exalted status. In other words, this means that the supreme status of paradise is that by God’s command a righteous person may become the paradisaal existence. Ranks other than this are such, that [common] people who enter them are considered to be in the paradise [of lower ranks].
25. A wise person can infer that ranks are ordained in the beginning of paradise from the way the commands of *sāri‘ū* (vie one with another, 3:133), and *sābiqū* (compete one with another, 57:21) are given [to attain paradise]. The highest rank among these is becoming a living paradise in one’s own self, the example of which is the holy personalities of the Prophets and Imāms.

26. Light is not hidden, it is apparent, but it is in the veil of a multitude of lights. The sun is apparent, but since we are very far it appears very small to us with respect to its original size and volume. We can neither see its interior nor its background, for it is like “Light upon Light”. This means that the light of the Intellect of the Imām of the time is in the veil of the soul’s light and its light is in the veil of the personality’s light.
27. Where the blessed hand of God is mentioned in the Qur’ān, it means the same blessed hand mentioned in the verse of *bay’at* (48:10). A *mu’min* should not forget the Divine law that when God attributes some magnificent thing to His Holy essence and says that “this thing is mine”, it becomes ever-lasting and imperishable and never disappears from the world, such as the Book of God (the Qur’ān), the Rope of God, the Light of God, the House of God (*Ka’bah*), the Religion of God (Islam), the Symbols of God, the Signs of God in the physical and the spiritual worlds, etc. Then how is it possible that the hand of God (*yadu’llāh*) may sometimes exist and sometimes not? This bright proof increasingly strengthens our certainty that the Prophet’s true successor (i.e., the Imām of the time) has the status of being God’s hand.

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds!

London,  
29<sup>th</sup> June, 1984.

## Record of Deeds (*Nāmah-yi A<sup>c</sup>māl*)

The “Record of Deeds” is one of the most important and magnificent subjects of the wise Qur’ān. There are many reasons for its importance. One main reason is that in it spirituality is explained in the way of wisdom to all human beings both ordinary and the chosen, which has made it very easy to conceive of spiritual realities, as God says: “And every person’s record of deeds (*tā’ir*) have We fastened to his own neck, and We shall bring it forth for him on the Day of Resurrection, which he will find (in the form of) a scattered book. (And it will be said to him): Read your book. You are sufficient as reckoner against yourself this day” (17:13-14).

A human being’s neck means his religious guide, whether true or false. The main reason to call the record of deeds “*tā’ir* (flying)”, is that it flies. Since it consists of flying subtle particles, it is also called the “scattered book (*kitāban manshūra*)”, in which every particle speaks. (In this connection), God says: “And whoever does a particle’s weight of good will see it then, and whoever does a particle’s weight of ill will see it then” (99:7-8). That is, the good and the bad deeds of a person will be in the form of particles. Although resurrection will happen in this world, the world of particles (*‘ālam-i zarr*) will be in front of the beholder, in the sense that he will see only the particles of soul in his interior and exterior.

It is said in verse (18:49): “And they will find present (*hāzīr*) (in the form of a living recorded film) what deeds (good or bad) they had done.” The word “*hāzīr*” (present) conceals the living and conscious filming of spirituality by which a human being’s deeds are recorded without leaving anything out. A minor example of this in the material world is film, without which it would be impossible for all the deeds to be recorded in written words alone. Therefore, the living and speaking picture of whatever deed has been done by a person will appear in front of him, to the extent that time, space and everything of the surroundings will also be



included. Further, if the deed is related to an area or country, they will also appear spatially in the living, speaking pictures.

The result of one's deeds is related not only to the body and the external world, but also to the soul and the intellect. Therefore, in the book of deeds there will be three kinds of observation: physical, spiritual and intellectual. Had it not been so, the glorious Qur'an would not have interpreted [this verse] in this way: "What kind of book is this that leaves not a small thing nor a great thing but has counted it!" (18:50).

The records of deeds are basically related to the people of religion and their schools of thought. Therefore, the greatest collective records of deeds will be related to nations (*ummats*), as the Qur'an says: "Each nation is summoned to its record" (45:28). That is, each great Prophet's luminous existence, through his successors, comprises the people of the entire cycle. Therefore, summoning to the records of deeds means that the nation or the people will be summoned with this blessed personality, as God says: "This Our Book (in which all the deeds of all of you are recorded) speaks against you with truth. Verily We have caused (all) that you did to be recorded" (45:29). The Speaking Book means the light (*nūr*), which in the status of Prophethood and Imāmat, has a right to speak. To speak as a record of deeds means to witness, for the conditions and deeds of man are spread over physical, spiritual and intellectual boundaries. Nothing can witness all such conditions and deeds except the light of guidance, which encompasses body, spirit and intellect and which [as the Imām] is appointed by God as the guardian angel over the people of his time.

Regarding this book of luminosity, it is also said: "And with Us is the Book (of the deeds of the people) which speaks truth, and they will not be wronged (even a particle)" (23:62). 'Speaks truth' (*ḥaqq*) means that it speaks with the tongue of the light of Intellect, for *ḥaqq* is among the names of the light of Intellect.

In the *sūrah* of *Tatfif*, it is said: "No, but the record of the vile is in the *Sijjin*. Ah! What will convey unto you what *Sijjin* is! A written record" (83:7-9). *Sijjin* is the false guide and he is in the form of the false book and therefore the collective record of deeds of the vile is confined and imprisoned in the narrowness of *Sijjin*.

In the same *sūrah*, it is said: “No, but the (collective) record of the righteous is in *‘Illiyūn*. Ah! What will convey to you what *‘Illiyūn* is! A written record. The near ones are present in it” (83:18-21). *‘Illiyūn* is the true guide, whose rank is at the extreme height of the highest paradise and the collective records of the righteous are in his holy light. He is the living and speaking book of truth (*haqq*) and truthfulness (*sidq*), and its spiritual aspect is observed in the hereafter, but is also possible in this world.

With respect to giving the Book or the record of deeds, there will be three kinds of people: *aṣḥāb-i yamīn* (those on the right hand) who will hold the record of deeds in their right hand; *aṣḥāb-i shimāl* (those on the left hand), whose record of deeds will be in their left hand and *sābiqūn* (the foremost ones), who will receive their record of deeds from the front and they will be elevated to the foremost and highest rank. The main relationship of their record will be with the light of Intellect, therefore they will be called *muqarrabīn* (the closest ones). After them is the rank of *aṣḥāb-i yamīn*, who are the people of salvation (*ahl-i najāt*) and whose record of deeds will reach the soul, but they will gradually advance, passing through the stages of soul. Last will be the *aṣḥāb-i shimāl*, whose record of deeds will be confined only to the body and the external world, while the record of the *aṣḥāb-i yamīn* will have access to the inner (*bāṭin*) and the soul and the *sābiqūn* will have access to the inner of the inner and the light of Intellect. Therefore, the *ta’wīl* of the left hand is *zāhir* (external) or the place of the body, that of the right hand is the *bāṭin* where the soul is, and that of ‘in front’ is the *bāṭin* of the *bāṭin*, where the light of Intellect manifests, as God says: “On the day you will see the believers, men and women, their light running in front of them and on their right hand” (57:12). This light is the real light and the record of deeds of the *sābiqīn* and *muqarrabīn*. The intellectual journey of this light is circular and the *ta’wīl* of its running is that, a single luminous day at this place consisting of just a few seconds, contains the events of a thousand years of this world.

In the following verse, God says: “On the day when the hypocritical men and the hypocritical women will say to those who believe: Wait for a while, so that we may take a spark from your light (and make it a light in us)! It will be said: Go back (in

the chain of the past) and seek (there) a light! Then there will be erected a wall between them, in which there will be a gate, within (the *bāṭin* of) which there is mercy, and outside (*zāhir*) of it is torment” (57:13). This is the mention of the individual resurrection, which occurs in every time with the spiritual elevation of the Perfect Man. In this resurrection, the world of particles appears in front [of him] and all the people become present in the form of particles and their entire story is narrated in unspoken language (*zabān-i ḥāl*) in the way of wisdom. That is, this is not their conscious resurrection as the event of “*alasi*” (Am I not?) is itself a spiritual reality, but since it is related to the world of particles nobody remembers it. Therefore, the erecting of the wall between the hypocrites and the believers means that after a fixed time the particles of soul are removed from the place of resurrection and a wall of parables is erected between them.

The wise Qur’ān contains innumerable, diverse wisdoms. One of these wisdoms is that Qur’ānic words have semantic and *ta’wīlī* relations. Therefore, in the wisdom-filled book of God, the Qur’ān, *zaraba* and *zuriba* are used to strike a parable or to explain it. Hence, *fa-zuriba baynahum bi-sūrīn*, means a wall of parables was erected between them, on the inside of it being mercy and on the outside, intellectual torment. The gate in the wall means the principle of *ta’wīl*, so that those who are capable may enter the *bāṭin* from the *zāhir* and *mamsūl* (meaning of parable) from *misāl* (parable).

*Zaraba* (struck) is derived from *zarbun* (to strike), but no dictionary can tell you the reason why. In a wisdom-filled Book like the Qur’ān, the word *zaraba* is used to explain a parable, while its original meaning is ‘to strike’. Its reason can only be understood in the light of *ta’wīl*, and that is, since *zaraba* is the hand’s act, it therefore indicates God’s hand. For, it is only God’s hand, which creates various parables by the stroke (*zarb*) of the Pearl of Intellect.

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## Bounties of the Intellectual Paradise

First, it should be known that paradise exists in three forms: physical, spiritual and intellectual. A clear proof of this concept is the human personality, which as the model of creation and the quintessence of existents, is the sum of body, spirit and intellect. It is also necessary to give an example of paradise from the human personality, because paradise is created according to the physical, spiritual and intellectual requirements of man, and it is therefore living, speaking and knowing in the highest and the truest attributes of body, spirit and intellect, as God says: “This life of the world is but a pastime and a game. And verily the abode of the Hereafter is true life (*ḥayawān*) (and living=*ḥaywān*), if they but knew” (29:64). Although there is a difference in the meanings of *ḥayawān* (life) and *ḥaywān* (living), but according to the principle of the way the Qur’ān is revealed in seven modes (*aḥruf*), *ḥayawān* can also be read as *ḥaywān* and this alludes profoundly to the fact that the abode of the Hereafter is living (*ḥaywān*) and is in human form. For, the way the life of the Hereafter is given greater preference over the life of this world and the sagacious way in which paradise is praised and described in the word ‘*ḥayawān*’, shows that paradise is like a perfect and complete personality.

Knowledge for a united humanity

Consider this verse: “And when the sky is peeled off” (81:11). By the ‘sky’ is meant each and everything which belongs to the universe and the existents. Therefore, on the day of resurrection, the heavens, the earth and all their things will be peeled off and will be transformed from dense into subtle. This universe with all its constituents will appear in the form of a physical paradise, in which the world of humanity too, will necessarily be in the subtle body. You may remember that in the Qur’ān physical paradise is equal to the length and breadth of this universe (3:133; 57:21). This is the paradise of the subtle body (*jism-i laṭīf*), also called the body of similitude, (*jism-i miṣāli*), and the *ibdā‘i* body, and it is the soul of this universe or the Universal Soul in which everything exists under the will of ‘Be’.

The Universal Soul has many names. One of its Qur'ānic names is the Divine Pedestal (*kursī*), in which lies the spiritual paradise, as it is said: "His pedestal includes the heavens and the earth" (2:255). Thus, the Universal Soul is God's Pedestal, as well as the paradise of souls in which all kinds of spiritual bounties are provided.

The Universal Soul is God's Pedestal and the spiritual paradise, whereas the perfect or the Universal Intellect is the Divine Throne and the intellectual paradise. However, it should be remembered that the Qur'ānic concept of the intellect is such that it unites all things into pre-eternal and post-eternal unity by ending all temporal duration and spatial distances. Consequently, although the universe is spread out in its physical form, in its internal form it is united and centred at the place of intellect, as the wise Qur'ān says: "The day when We shall roll up the heavens (i.e., the entire universe) as a recorder (*al-sijill*) rolls up a written scroll. As We created (the creatures) the first time, We shall repeat it" (21:104). *Sijill*, which is an Arabicised form of *sang-i gil*, means a crayon of clay used for writing and signifies the pastel of ink. It should be remembered that a special reason for the usage of [certain] words in the Qur'ānic parables is their *ta'wīlī* wisdom. Thus, the *ta'wīlī* wisdom mentioned in this noble verse is the concept of *ʿaql*, which is the concept of the intellectual paradise, in which everything and every bounty of knowledge and wisdom exists, as the Qur'ān says: "By the Ink-pot and the Pen and that which they write" (68:1). That is, God swears by the concept of Intellect, the essence of the universe, which contains every thing related to the pen, the ink-pot and the writing of the intellect, for it is because of the intellect that the practical writing of paradise comes into existence and the external and internal existence of the universe is created. Another fundamental *ta'wil* is: According to the sublime similitude (*maṣal-i a'tā*), by the blessed mouth is meant the ink-pot of wisdom, and by the light of Intellect is meant the Divine Pen and by that which is written by the archangels from this ink-pot with this Pen, is meant the Divine Word.

The *ta'wil* of clay is a *mu'min* and that of *sijjil* or *sang-i gil*, the clay which has become hard like a stone, is a staunch *mu'min*.



Such a *mu'min* has two aspects: with respect to belief he is very strong, but with respect to true knowledge he is extremely soft-hearted. *Sijjil* is very hard as well as very soft so that when it is put in the ink-pot and water poured over it, it dissolves and turns into ink to write with.

We should also think about the *sūrah* of *Fil* (the Elephant) (105) where God destroyed the owners of the elephant with nothing but the pebbles of *sijjil*. This contains a great secret: just as the Ka'bah exists materially in the external world and the people of falsehood once tried to destroy it in a physical sense, in the same way it exists spiritually in the inner world and the people of falsehood are trying to destroy it time and again. In this attempt, in the form of particles the people of falsehood attack the spiritual house of God, the Perfect Man, in a specific time. But God protects His holy luminous house by sending an army of angels, who pelt the enemies of God's house with the pebbles of the particles of the souls of staunch and devoted *mu'mins*, men and women. Thus, the enemies of God's house are destroyed.

In verses (11:82; 15:74), it is said that the township of the disobedient people of Ḥaẓrat-i Lūṭ<sup>(c)</sup> was destroyed by raining pebbles of *sijjil*, layer on layer upon it. Its *ta'wilī* aspect is that such an event had also taken place in the Perfect Man's personal world, in which the disobedient people were destroyed spiritually and the souls of the *mu'mins* had participated as the Divine force in this destruction. In this context, an important point regarding *sijjil* is “layer on layer (*manzūd*)”, the *ta'wil* of which as mentioned earlier is that there are many other souls in a *mu'min*'s soul.

Verses (15:75-77) say: “Indeed in this are signs for *mutawassimīn* (those who understand the main purport) and it (township) is on a permanent road (*sabilin muqīm*), and indeed in it there is a sign for the *mu'mins*”. Here by the *mutawassimīn* are meant the Prophets and the Imāms, who know that the spiritual miracles mentioned are observed on the path of spirituality, whereas for *mu'mins*, there is only one miracle in it. To say that there are [many] miracles for the *mutawassimīn* and only one miracle for



*mu'mins*, implies that the former are distinguished from and superior to the *mu'mins* who are mentioned above.

One needs to cross many distances in search of worldly bounties, but contrary to this, intellectual and spiritual bounties are such that they come in front of the *mu'mins* if the condition of knowledge and practice is fulfilled. All this is due to the intellectual paradise, which is always in God's hand, with many supreme names and sublime similitudes. For instance, the following Divine commandment: "Blessed is He in Whose Hand is the kingdom and He has power over everything" (67:1). The *ta'wili* wisdom of this verse is that all the blessings of the true kingdom, which are spread through the wide and spacious universe and through all time, are centred and united in the light of Intellect. This is that paradise, which despite being far flung, is brought near, as the wise Qur'ān says: "And the paradise is brought near for the righteous ones, no longer distant" (50:31). That is, the paradise or spiritual kingdom, which is spread through the length and the breadth of the universe, will be presented in the essence of the Universal Intellect, which contains the gems of the intellect and knowledge of all times, as the Qur'ān says: "Have We not established for them a secure sanctuary, where the fruits of everything are brought as a provision from Our court? But most of them know not" (28:57). This "Secure Sanctuary" is the light of the Imām of the time, which is the place of honour and security. God's main and fundamental miracle in it is that the fruits of intellect, knowledge and soul of all things from every place and every time of the first, the last, the apparent and the hidden are drawn to and contained. In this way, the people of recognition may constantly receive this provision from the exalted court of God. Here, the point worth pondering is: Where are the fruits of everything in this world and how is it possible for everything of the heaven and the earth to be fructified? Indeed it is true that everything contains a soul of its own and [a kind of] knowledge, as the bearers of the Throne in the light of perfect recognition said: "Our Lord! You have encompassed everything in mercy and in knowledge" (40:7). Thus, two concepts are established regarding everything, one is mercy and the other is knowledge. In other words, everything is like a tree in which its fruit (soul) is its mercy and the kernel of

the fruit is the quality and form of knowledge. Hence, the fruit of everything reaches God's House in the form of spirit and knowledge.

The first and foremost and the most exalted among the bounties mentioned in the Qur'ān, are those of the intellectual paradise, followed by those of the spiritual paradise and those of the subtle body. The bounties of the subtle body are mentioned in the holy Qur'ān under the title of "*al-manna wa al-salwā* (manna and quails)" and "*al-ṭayyibāt* (pure things)". These bounties of the subtle body in the form of subtle food are given to the Prophets, Imāms and when necessary to some *mu'mins* too, as said in verse (23:51): "O you messengers! Eat of the good things (*al-ṭayyibāt*), and do good deeds." God would not have given them this specific command as a favour had these good things been among those which can be eaten even by the common people. This shows that these good things are the food(s) of the subtle body. The food of the subtle body [as is evident in the manna and the quails] is of two kinds: in the form of the vegetative soul and of the animal soul. The soul of every vegetable, such as a flower, herb or fruit, is in its fragrance, some of which are familiar and some unfamiliar. As for the animal soul, certainly, it is the soul of the lawful birds.

The recognition of the human self (soul) is so important and so great that it eventually turns into the recognition of God. It is obvious that the recognition of the Divine Treasures, such as the Pen, the Tablet, the Angel, the Prophet, the Imām and other realities cannot be excluded from such a recognition. Nonetheless, one can ask this question here: How is it possible to recognise the thousands of important things mentioned in the Qur'ān one by one? The short and precise answer to this question is that the wise Qur'ān does not really mention many things. There are but many examples, each of which describes only one and the same reality, namely oneness. The greatest and the most important example of this reality is that the innumerable things of the universe and the existents are one in God's hand, pre-eternally and post-eternally, as the wise Qur'ān says: "On the Day of Resurrection the whole of the earth will be His handful and the heavens will be rolled up in His right hand" (39:67). The fact that this reality continues

from eternity (*azal*), should be duly noted, because God has not left any of His works undone for the future, nor does He have any past or future. Therefore, rest assured that this is the mention of the light of Intellect, which is in God's hand, in which both the heavens and the earth are the same one light, as said in verse (21:30): "Have not those who disbelieve known that the heavens and the earth were joined together, then We parted them, and We made from water every living thing." This is the description of the personal world, where there is only one light with thousands of names and in which the heavens and the earth, namely, the entire universe is one. Thus, God brought the Pearl of light into motion, whereby the heavens and the earth came into existence separately, although no decrease and change took place in the original light. That is, even now the universe is one with respect to light without the heavens and the earth being separated. The *ta'wili* wisdom of making every living thing from water is that, God breathed the spirit of recognition into each and everything of the personal world from the knowledge of this light of Intellect.

As you know, at the end of some of the *sūrahs* of the Qur'ān, there are allusions to great secrets, for instance, the *sūrah* of *Qaṣaṣ*, in which it is said: "Everything is perishable except His face. The Command (*hukm*) is His and towards Him you will return" (28:88). That is, where the universe and the existents are one light in God's hand (39:67) everything there perishes and the Divine vision takes place. As for the individual merging (*fanā'*) of a person, it is to observe this inner reality. However, without tasting [experiencing] the death of the carnal soul (3:185; 21:35; 29:57), it is not possible to observe this reality during one's life-time.

Worldly things are of two kinds: the higher and the lower. When things merge [in higher things], they [too] become higher. For instance, some of them by burning transform into light or fragrance or energy etc., and some others become food for the plants, animals or human beings. In both cases, there is betterment and progress for these things. This example is from the external world. The result of the merging of the internal world is extremely great where, as mentioned above, everything goes into God's handful and transforms into the light of intellect and

knowledge. In addition to this, see verses (55:26-27): “Everything on it is perishable; there remains only the face of your Lord of might and glory”. The *ta’wil* of these verses is that all the creatures and existents of the personal world merge in the light of Intellect and there remains only the face of God, Who has might and glory and in Whose hand is this light [of Intellect]. This Divine law always continues to occur. Reflect on verse (40:85): “The Divine law ever continues in His servants and there the disbelievers are in loss.” *Ta’wili* purport: God’s habit (law) always continues in the spirituality of His selected servants (the Prophets and Imāms), and the disbelievers are in loss at this place, because they do not recognise the Perfect Man, in whose person the Divine law remains hidden.

In this context if we accept that everything has already merged in the light of Intellect, does it mean that the intellectual existence of a stone is also in the world of the light of Intellect? Yes, it is true. In this connection, see verse (2:74), in which it is mentioned that the streams of knowledge and wisdom are gushing from an intellectual stone. In fact, wherever a stone or a mountain is mentioned in the wise Qur’ān, intellectual gems are also presented with the beauty and elegance of wisdom. See the following examples:

1. The personal worlds of the Prophets and the Imāms are under the same law of spirituality. If we accept the reality that God manifested His glory on Ḥaḏrat-i Mūsā’s intellectual mountain and smashed it into pieces, we have to accept too that this miracle of the Divine law occurs to every Perfect Man, so that a world of knowledge and wisdom may be built from these innumerable pieces of the intellect. (7:143).
2. Since mount Sinai of the intellect being smashed into pieces has been used as an example, hence wherever ‘mountain’ is mentioned it refers to these pieces. Further, where it was said to the bee that it should build its habitations in the mountains (16:68), it means that the honey of *ta’wil* is obtained from these pieces of the mountain of intellect.

3. It is said in the Qur'ān: “And among the mountains are streaks, white and red of diverse hues and (others) raven-black” (35:27). This verse alludes that the intellectual mountain (i.e., the Pearl of Intellect) represents the pearls and gems of all kinds and all colours.
4. It is said in the Qur'ān: “And God has made for you the shadows of that which He has created and of the mountains has made for you places of refuge” (16:81). This shows that there is a hidden house for everyone in the mountain of Intellect.
5. God says: “If We had caused this Qur'ān to descend upon a mountain, you (O Muḥammad) would certainly have seen it humbled and rent asunder by the fear of God” (59:21). The glory which God had manifested upon the mountain of Intellect was in the form of knowledge and wisdom, therefore this mountain (of Intellect) was smashed into pieces. Thus, the Qur'ān in its spiritual and intellectual state, is the same manifestation of God, which smashes the mountain of the personal world into pieces.
6. See verse (13:31): “If there were a Qur'ān with which mountains were moved, or the earth were cloven asunder, or the dead were made to speak”. Indeed, this inner miracle of the Qur'ān occurs in the world of similitude (personal world), in which the mountain of Intellect moves by God's hand.
7. God says: “And (We created) a tree that springs forth from Sinai (i.e., Olive tree) that grows oil and relish for the eaters” (23:20). The olive tree means the Perfect Man who represents God's face, by Mount Sinai is meant the Mountain of Intellect and by the Olive oil is meant the Divine Word and relish is the interpretation and explanation of the Divine Word. The word “relish” (*ṣibgh*) implies to dip and colour bread in it, which alludes to dive in the depth of the Divine Word and attain some result.

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8<sup>th</sup> July, 1984.

## Interrelated Wisdoms

The Qur'ān says: “And (O Prophet!) your Lord inspired (*awhā*) the bee, saying: ‘make beehives in the mountains and in the trees and in that which people build, then suck all fruits, and follow the ways of your Lord, made smooth (for you)’” (16:68-69). These verses contain the principle of interrelated wisdoms and systematic *ta'wil*. The principle of systematic *ta'wil* is that its keys are in the blessed hand of the Imām of the time, who is the *mazhar* (locus of manifestation) of the Divine light and the successor of the Prophet. Thus, it is the Imām of the time who permits someone to do *ta'wil*. In such a case, the origin and foundation of *ta'wil* or interrelated wisdoms is based on spirituality and recognition, the ultimate fountainhead of which lies where the three greatest treasures of God are working together. These treasures have many names and examples and in the above-mentioned verse, their examples are the mountains, trees and tall human buildings and they are the light of Intellect, the Olive Tree and the Divine Word (*kalimah-yi bāri*) respectively. The Olive Tree is in a human form.

Bees are also raised by people, who use a different method of keeping them and the system of *ta'wil* has no concern with that. The system of *ta'wil* is in accordance with the natural law. Honey is of two kinds: external and internal. Similarly, Divine bounties are not only in the external world, they are far superior in the internal world (31:20). It is for this reason that God has compared intellectual and spiritual honey, namely *ta'wil*, with external honey. He has drawn attention towards the sources of this spiritual and intellectual honey, which is extremely sweet, strengthening, healing, soul-increasing and intellect-nourishing. He has addressed the bees of this honey (*ta'wil*) through wisdom filled indication: first, make beehives on the mountain of Intellect, the Pure Tree and the tallest buildings and then go to My ever-green gardens, which are in the wise Qur'ān, the external world (*āfāq*) and the internal world (*anfus*), [because] all the paths related to the making of honey have been subjugated to you.



### **Examples:**

1. The wise Qur'ān, repeatedly invites people to reflect on everything of the universe and the existents, particularly certain things such as the bees. God, by His perfect power has made the bee's abdomen extremely wonderful and it works unlike any other animal's abdomen. Everything which goes into the bee's abdomen becomes sweet honey, while in other animals, [a part of] it turns into filth. A great Divine secret is hidden in this significant difference between the bee's abdomen and that of other animals.
2. A very great wisdom is also hidden in the fact that the bees have a queen, who never works herself, but directs others to do the work. The reason for this is that God has endowed the queen with some additional virtues, so that the other bees may be attracted to and follow her and this may be an example of their centre [focus of attention].
3. If we observe the animal kingdom, we find the best example of harmony, unity and monoreality amongst the bees. For, it is not possible for a single bee or even a few of them to make honey. It is such a difficult task that it can only be done by many bees. There is surely an allusion in their example that it is extremely difficult, rather impossible for one or a few persons to prepare *ta'wīl* (wisdom) in a cogent form and convey it to the people. Rather, a huge army of knowledge similar to the [number] of bees is needed not only in the external world, but also in the internal.
4. Every wise person should think deeply about the centrality and oneness of the archangels – *Jibrā'il*<sup>(c)</sup>, *Mikā'il*<sup>(c)</sup>, *Isrāfil*<sup>(c)</sup> and *'Izrā'il*<sup>(c)</sup>. Why do they work together, despite their separate duties and their own huge armies? The reason is not that they cannot accomplish their duties individually and therefore they need the help of others, rather it is the secret of oneness. They therefore continue to work together under the law of oneness.

5. The Qur'ān says that the angels hold up the Divine Throne. However, this reality is not explained, in order to test our knowledge and recognition and [ensure that we] have recourse to the centre of guidance. It is impossible for the Divine Throne to be like a material thing, which the angels hold up like a heavy object. It should therefore be known that it is the absolute light that is the Divine Throne (*‘arsh-i Raḥmān*) and it is the Imāms<sup>(c)</sup> who are its bearers, one after another. This concept also conveys the example of centrality in that the archangels hold up the Throne one by one, while the rest of the countless angels circumambulate it for the sake of proximity and union.
6. The souls of all *mu'mins* are working like bees and the Imām of the time is like the king of the bees (*amīr al-naḥl*). The souls' work can be seen when the inner eye is created in a human being. The coming and going of the body takes time, but the soul does not take any time to become present, nor does it always need to ride the subtle particle for it can also come without it.
7. You can liken the Holy Spirit or any other great soul like it with bees: that it is simultaneously one, many and oneness. By one is meant the leader, by many the army and by oneness is meant that the essence of all of them is one. For example, in the case of numbers from the beginning to a thousand and more, the essence of all of them is [the number] one and that is its oneness, which is hidden in every number.
8. Bees are also the model of monoreality because they obliterate the differences and multiplicity of every kind of colour, smell and taste of thousands of fruits and flowers and merge them into the oneness of the same colour, one smell and one taste.
9. God's miracle in the bees' abdomens is that they can prepare honey from every kind of sweet and bitter fruit and flower. This demonstrates that there are bitter fruits and flowers in the gardens related to *ta'wil*, but the same kind of honey of *ta'wil* comes into existence from their nectar.

10. A mountain has many *ta'wils*. One is the light of Intellect, the other *hujjat*, the third solidified soul and the fourth is the human head. As it is said about Ḥaẓrat-i Dāwūd<sup>(c)</sup>: “And assuredly We gave Dāwūd grace from Our court, (saying): O mountains and birds, echo his psalms of praise!” (34:10). That is, when Ḥaẓrat-i Dāwūd<sup>(c)</sup> was doing the hidden and open *zīkr*, the bones of his head and the particles of his soul were reciting in harmony with him.
11. Regarding the solidified soul, God says: “You see the mountains, you deem them solid, but (on the Day of Resurrection) they will fly like the flight of clouds” (27:88). This describes the state of the solidified souls and what happens to them in their personal resurrection, where the souls fly like scattered clouds. But the journey of the mountain of Intellect is different from this.
12. Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup> slaughtered four birds by God’s command. He cut them into pieces, ground them well and divided them into twelve parts and placed them on the twelve mountains of the world. Then he summoned them and they came to him. In reality, these four birds were his closest *hujjats* (*hujjatān-i muqarrab*). They were ground in the mortar of the Supreme Name, (i.e., they were trained in the *zīkr* of the Supreme Name) then they were sent to the twelve *hujjats* of the islands (*jazā’ir* pl. of *jazīrah*, island). When they came back, they also brought the twelve *hujjats* with them, who had three hundred and sixty *dā’is* with them and with whom were all the people of the world. In this case, the *ta’wil* of mountains is *hujjats*.
13. Spirituality and the science of *ta’wil* are like water and the Qur’ānic stories and parables are like the different sized and shaped vessels. The vessel of Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam<sup>(c)</sup>’s story is made in such a way as to correspond with the law of wisdom (*qānūn-i hikmat*). Similarly, every Prophet’s vessel of parables is different and distinct. However, the spirituality of all the Prophets is the fixed form of the straight path, therefore their spirituality is really one and the same and there is no difference in it.

14. According to the *ta'wili* allusion of verses (22:26-30) Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup> was the meaning or *mamsūl* of the House of God (*baytu'llāh*). If we study verse (22:27) carefully: “And proclaim unto humankind the pilgrimage”, it is the same story in which Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup> had called the people of the world to him through the four birds. Otherwise, what material means [of communication] existed at that time with which to summon all the people of the world? For, ‘people (*nās*)’ means all the people, including the first ones and the last ones, since it is the description of Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup>’s personal resurrection.
15. Words such as *tūr*, *jabal*, *jibāl*, *rawāsī*, *a'lām*, (all of which mean mountain(s)), refer to the light of Intellect, therefore the many things which a mountain produces, such as precious stones, minerals, stones, fountains too, mean the light of Intellect. For instance, the *ta'wil* of clay is a *mu'min* and the *ta'wil* of ‘Ādam<sup>(c)</sup> was created from clay’ is the spiritual creation of Ādam<sup>(c)</sup>, which started from the rank of a *mu'min*. In other words, he was a *mu'min* in the beginning then he was gradually elevated.
16. God has said: “Indeed I am going to appoint a vicegerent of (mine) in the earth (*fi al-arḏ*)” (2:30). See also this verse: “Verily We inherit the earth and all who are on it (*alay-hā = alā al-arḏ*), and unto Us they will be returned” (19:40). In the former verse, it is ‘in the earth (*fi al-arḏ*)’ and in the latter it is ‘on the earth (*alay-hā = alā al-arḏ*)’. What is the *ta'wili* secret in this? Its *ta'wili* secret is that the former verse is related to the earth of religion and *mu'mins* are the earth of religion, because the *ta'wil* of clay is a *mu'min*. Thus, the earth of religion or the earth of *ta'wil* is *mu'mins*. Since God’s vicegerent is both amongst the *mu'mins* and in their heart (*bāṭin*), therefore, ‘in the earth’ is very appropriate here. The latter verse is related to ‘the earth of the world’ on the surface of which people live and they are not ‘in’ it, therefore, with respect to the physical position of the people who live on its surface, it is very true and correct to say those ‘those who are on it (*man alay-hā*)’.

17. It is not a wonder if a student asks the following question: There are numerous such verses in the noble Qur'an, in which the relation of human beings with the physical earth is expressed by saying '*fi al-arḍ* (in the earth)' or '*fi-hā* (in it)', as it is said: "From it We created you and into it (*fi-hā*) We return you, and from there We bring you forth a second time" (20:55). Please explain the *ta'wil* of this verse. The answer to this question is that the *mu'mins'* spiritual position is God's earth, from it all people are created and all are returned unto it and all of them will be resurrected there.
18. The *ta'wil* of land is materiality and that of ocean is spirituality. God says: "It is He Who has subjugated the ocean to you that you may eat fresh meat from there and bring forth from it ornaments (pearls, etc.) which you wear" (16:14). Its *ta'wil* is that God has subjugated spirituality to you through the Imām of the time, so that you may acquire knowledge from it and bring forth the Pearl of Intellect from its depth.
19. The Qur'an says: "My Lord! Vouchsafe me wisdom and unite me to the righteous ones (*al-ṣāliḥin*) and make for me a tongue of truth in the later generations" (26:83-84). The greatest secret of monoreality lies in these verses, in which God expresses Ḥaḏrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup>'s prayer. Its *ta'wil* is: My Lord, grant me a treasure of the word 'Be' and unite me to the righteous ones, i.e., keep me alive forever in the chain of light and make my tongue the Perfect Men's tongue of truth, the tongue of the Prophets until the final Prophet, and after him the Imāms' tongue.
20. In verse (19:50) God says: "And We made for them a sublime tongue of truth". That is, We made them alive forever in the light of Intellect, so that they may explain the sublime realities to their successors, as the Prophet, according to the Divine Command is witness (*shahīd* or *shāhid*) over the just *ummah* (i.e., the Imāms, 2:143). It is not possible for someone who is absent to be witness, only someone who is present can be a witness. This shows that the Prophet witnesses the Imāms and the Imāms are witnesses over the people of their respective times and therefore, on the Day of Resurrection,

God summons the people of the time with their respective Imām (17:71).

21. The Imām of the time can and does give a spark of light to every *mu'min* and this Divine law and habit has always continued. This spark is from the fountainhead of the light of Intellect, not from a low level, as the Qur'ān says: "He (Mūsā) said to his people: Bide you (here). Verily, I see in the distance a fire; peradventure I shall bring some information (*khabar*) from there or a brand (*jazwah*) from the fire that you may warm yourselves" (28:29). The gist of its *ta'wil* is that when the True Guide succeeds to the rank of light, the *mu'mins* receive two great benefits from this: *khabar* (information) and *jazwah* (firebrand). *Khabar* means knowledge and guidance, and *jazwah* means *ism-i a'zam*; and 'to warm from the fire' means to benefit from the *ism-i a'zam* or the Supreme Name.
22. In verse (5:54) God says: "God will bring a people (in the personal world) whom He loves and who love Him, humble towards the believers, stern towards the disbelievers, struggling in the way of Allāh, and fearing not the blame of any blamer." This is the mention of the spiritual army of God, the Prophet and the Imām, through whose help the personal worlds always attain victories.
23. The light of guidance in the world of religion in a sense travels from the past towards the future, while contrary to this external time travels from the future to the past. This means that the light of guidance travels towards the future, recording all the events and conditions of the past, since the Divine treasures contain everything and nothing is excluded from them (15:21).
24. The beehives of the bees of *ta'wil*, such as the pure tree (14:24), the tree of mount Sinai (23:20), the blessed Olive tree (24:35), the tree of the blessed place (28:30), the tree under which the *mu'mins* gave the oath of allegiance to the Prophet (48:18), are the many trees of the world of spirituality and the



world of the Qur'ān. There are other such trees [in the Qur'ān], but all of them are the same one tree.

25. God mentioning the event of the Pharaoh's wife, Āsiyah<sup>(c)</sup> as a parable, says that she prayed: "My Lord! Build for me a home with You in Your neighbourhood in Paradise..." (66:11). This concept is very thought provoking, that in paradise some or all the people will be God's neighbours and God will be their neighbour. This is indeed true, otherwise Āsiyah<sup>(c)</sup>'s prayer would not have been included in the Qur'ānic law. However, despite accepting these words, a wise person can ask the question: How is it possible that God can be the neighbour of all? The answer to this question is that this is not a physical concept, it is an intellectual matter, and in the personal paradise of the Intellect, every greatest bounty can be attained. The concept that just as everybody has a personal world in his *bāṭin* (heart, mind), similarly he will have a personal world in paradise, is extremely useful.
26. Special importance is given to the word "lu'lu' (pearl)" in the glorious Qur'ān and this has been used as an example within an example. This word is mentioned six times in the Qur'ān, once in the form of the word *durry* (*durr+y*) (24:35) and nine times as *ḥilyah* (ornaments). *Lu'lu'* and *durr* both mean a pearl. They also mean a precious stone. Although pearls are produced in the depths of the oceans and precious stones in the heart of mountains, in many senses they are one thing and the different forms of one essence.

According to one Tradition, God has created the true religion on the pattern of this external world. Just as there are treasures in this world, there are Allāh's treasures in the world of religion. God's extremely unique precious stones are hidden in those treasures and they are those of the light of Intellect, knowledge and wisdom, and the spirit and spirituality.

27. A pearl is hidden in an oyster shell, which is concealed in the ocean's depth and even when it is brought out, it is kept hidden by some means in the protection of a jeweller, in a

royal treasure, or in the house of a rich man. Similarly, the pearls of God's secrets are hidden in His treasures and in this sense the Pearls of Intellect are called 'the hidden pearl'. The important point that the hidden Pearl is linked with the hidden Book should not be forgotten.

28. In the holy Qur'an when God compares the highly sublime realities with the precious gems of this world, He has kept in view their internal wonders and marvels in addition to their external beauties. For instance, the creation of mountains countless years before the creation of gems in specific parts of the mountains, the concept of the mineral soul, etc. [are such inner marvels and wonders].
29. Everything has a soul and so too gems have a soul. For instance, a ruby comes into existence in a kind of white stone. It is obvious that no material seed can penetrate the mountain's heart. However, it is true that the soul can reach there and hence it is the mineral soul which gradually transfers the white stone into a red ruby. In fact, this is a great miracle of the soul by which it transforms a stone into a gem. Similarly, nature's miracle in coral (55:58) is that it is the example of how the vegetative soul turns into the mineral soul, whereas a pearl is an example of the animal soul transforming into the mineral soul.
30. The light of Intellect is undoubtedly the world of symbols (*mamsūl*), therefore all the things of the world indicate the latter through symbols. In particular gems and pearls which are the most precious, finest things of this world by their external, material, finite and transitory beauties indicate the internal, spiritual, intellectual, infinite and everlasting virtues and perfection of that light, so that the people of the world may recognise the treasures and precious pearls and gems of light, and in a true sense, may struggle constantly to attain them.

London,  
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## Wisdoms of *Salāmatī* (Peace)

1. The general meaning of *salāmatī* are soundness, good health, protection, life, intactness, well-being, peace, safety, security, etc., and its specific meanings are spiritual help (*ta'yīd*) and conversation (*mukālamah*), submission, to be in God's protection, eternal life and to know the secret of monoreality.
2. In the wise Qur'ān the original word for *salāmatī* is *salām*, which is derived from the root letters *sin-lām-mīm*. Therefore, all such Qur'ānic words which are derived from this root, are related to the subject of *salāmatī*. We find many meanings in the Qur'ān concerning this subject, some of which, God willing, we will explain here. One such word is *musallamah*, which in verse (2:71) is used in the sense of sound, unimpaired, unblemished, flawless; and in verse (4:92) in the sense of resigned, surrendered or submitted. This surely shows that soundness and submission are both included in the meanings of *salām* and *salāmatī*.
3. The original meaning of Islam is 'to surrender' or 'to submit'. Thus, Islam means to surrender oneself to God, as has been mentioned regarding Ḥazrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(6)</sup>: "When his Lord said unto him: Surrender (*aslim*)! He said: I have surrendered (*aslamtu*) to the Lord of the worlds" (2:131). Further, Islam also implies knowledge and action, as it is said: "Whosoever submits (*yuslimu*) his (inner) face to Allāh and is doer of good (*muḥsin*), he verily has grasped the firm handle" (31:22). To accept the concept of Islam and to act upon it accordingly are [specifically] mentioned in this verse.
4. When the Prophet implemented the concept of Islam and made his inner face, the vicegerent of God's Face in the light of knowledge and recognition, God commanded him to explain his model of action in the light of wisdom to the people, as He says: "And if they argue with you, (O Muḥammad) say: I have submitted my (inner) face to God

and (so have) those who follow me (i.e., the Imāms of true guidance)” (3:20). In the Prophet’s excellent example, had there not been this indication of submitting his inner face to God, no Muslim would have hope of an eternal life, since [the Qur’ān states that] everything and every person is perishable, except God’s Face (28:88; 55:27). It is God’s great law that nothing remains alive and safe outside the paradise of His Holy Face. This sublime reality clearly reveals that every *mu’min’s salāmatī* lies in the recognition of God’s Face and merging in it.

5. The fundamental wisdoms of *salāmatī* are hidden in the following verse. God says: “Now has come to you a light from God and a manifest Book, whereby God guides those who seek His good pleasure on paths of peace (*salām = ta’yīd*). He brings them out of darkness unto light by His permission (*izn*), and guides them on a straight path” (5:15-16). In this verse, light means the Prophet since he has come first in the order of things in Islam. The holy Qur’ān is mentioned next. It is obvious that the purpose of both is *salāmatī*, that is, to show the paths of *ta’yīd* (Divine help), and by these paths are meant the Imāms such that every Imām in his time is the path of spiritual or Divine help. The *ta’wīl* of *izn* (permission) is *hujjat, pīr*, etc., who are not physically present today, because of the cycle of *qiyāmat* (Resurrection). Another *ta’wīl* is *ism-i a’zam*, which is God’s *izn* or permission through the Imām of the time and the *ta’wīl* of the straight path (*ṣirāt-i mustaqīm*) is *Ḥazrat-i qā’im*. You can see that all the means of Divine guidance are directed towards this holy personality. Otherwise, if we reflect on this verse without its *ta’wīl*, the mention of either *sabil* (path) or *ṣirāt-i mustaqīm* would have sufficed [rather than ‘paths of peace’]. However, it is not so and the reason for this is the wisdom of *ta’wīl* as mentioned above.
6. In this connection, it is said: “And God invites to the abode of peace (*dāru’s-salām*), and guides whom He wills on a straight path” (10:26). *Dāru’s-salām* has four meanings: (a) the abode of peace or *ta’yīd*, (b) the abode of paradise, as it is the name of paradise, (c) the abode or God’s house, for *al-salām* is

among God's names, and (d) from one aspect, God Himself, for He is *al-salām*, which means *salāmatī* or peace, namely, light is the abode of peace because peace is not separate from light.

7. His extreme proximity and closeness is attained by merging, which is the peace and the abode of peace, as the Qur'ān says: "For them is the abode of peace close to their Lord and He will be their friend because of what they used to do [in this world]" (6:127). God's friendship is a *mu'min's* supreme bliss, as said in verse (10:62): "Verily the friends of God are (those) on whom fear (comes) not, nor do they grieve; these are the people who believed and used to practise piety, they have glad tidings in this life and in the Hereafter – there is no changing in the words of God, that is the supreme triumph." (10:62-64). Here, it should be remembered that fear is related to the future and grief to the past. For instance, if someone fears becoming extinct in the future, or if he feels he has been sleeping in the sleep of nothingness for a long time and has thus been deprived of God's bounties during that time, such conditions reveal his fear and grief regarding the past and the future. Whereas what God has said regarding His friends gives them the guarantee of pre-eternal and post-eternal peace. Divine mercy is such that everyone can attain the recognition of that permanent and perpetual subsistence (*baqā'*) and peace which is linked with the abode of peace without any beginning or end.
8. The leader of God's friends is the Imām of the time, in other words this is like the *mu'mins* and their prince (*amīr al-mu'minin*). The secrets of peace are hidden in the light of the Imām of the time, who is God's *mazhar*; his friends are God's friends and the secrets of peace are his prerogative. Thus, when one prays in God's presence: "Guide us on the straight path", it certainly does not mean that the *mu'min* has lost the straight path rather it means that he wants to advance on it more and more and reach the ultimate destination. In the same way, *mu'mins* living in the abode of peace, pray: "O God! Usher us in the abode of peace." This prayer seeks such a knowledge and recognition that may reveal the hidden secrets,

due to which they may realise that they were already in that ultimate destination or in the abode of peace.

9. In verse (36:57-58) God says: “In it (paradise) are fruits for them and whatever they ask for is present for them; a word from a Merciful Lord”. Here ‘a word’ means the Divine Word, which is the light of *ta’yid*. Thus, numerous kinds of fruits are provided in paradise for the intellect, the soul and the subtle body. Further, the people of paradise receive everything they desire: for instance, in the light of the knowledge of the soul’s secrets they want to find themselves in the abode of peace without any beginning or end. The limited and wrong concept of life, which they had in this world will prove to be as baseless as a painful dream from which one wakes up and is grateful that the pain in it has no lasting existence. Such will be the state in paradise and the people of paradise will come to know that they were already there, in peace. This is due to their ‘higher I’ having never come to this world; only the ‘lower I’ has descended here. The sun and its rays are an example of the ‘higher I’ and the ‘lower I’, namely, that the sun remains in its own place, it does not come down to this world, but its rays continue to reach everywhere.
10. The secrets of the highest *ta’yid* and supreme *salāmatī* or peace are hidden in ‘a Word of a Merciful Lord (*kalimah-yi bārī*)’ (36:58), as God says in a *ḥadīṣ-i qudsī*: “O son of Ādam! Obey me, I will make you ever living like Myself that you will never die, almighty that you will never be humiliated and ever rich that you will never be needy”. (*al-Majālis al-Mu’ayyadiyyah, Majlis No. 12*). A question arises here: Will this be a new creation which was not there before? No. Here God does not say “I will create you (*akhluquka*)” rather He says “I will make you (*ajʿaluka*)”. This means that God will reveal to His obedient servants such secrets that they will recognise themselves, and they will see their ‘higher I’ or higher soul in the abode of peace without any beginning or end.



11. If *mu'mins* have already been living in the abode of peace in their 'higher I', the question is: Why is this prayer said time and again: "... and *salāmatī* is from You and *salāmatī* returns to You. O Lord! Give us life through peace (*ta'yid*), and usher us in the abode of peace." The answer to this question is that although it is true that the 'higher I' of every *mu'min* is in the abode of peace, but with respect to the 'lower I', he has come to this world and has completely forgotten his reality. This forgetfulness can only be amended through knowledge and recognition. Therefore, he is taught the prayer in which the main object is true knowledge: "You are the light of *ta'yid* and the light of *ta'yid* is from You and this light of *ta'yid* – guiding our 'lower I' returns towards You. O Lord! Give us life through this *ta'yid* and join us with Your 'higher I' in the abode of peace (*dāru's-salām*). Regarding "*anta's-salāmu wa minka's-salāmu wa ilayka yarji'us-salām*" i.e., You are the peace, and from You is the peace and peace returns towards You", some friends requested that this humble servant should explain it. This article is specifically written in response to it. Apparently to raise a question about the sacred words of this prayer is logical, for according to the external intelligence after saying "You are the peace" to God, to say "From You is the peace" amounts to saying: "You are God" and "God is from You". However, we are fully aware that it's *ta'wili* wisdom is something different, which is that God cannot be ascribed any attribute except figuratively. Thus, *al-salām* means *al-nūr* (the light), which is not a real but a figurative name of God. Light and darkness are opposite to each other, but the essence of God has no opposite. Other than God, everything has an opposite and the pairs of opposites are created by God, as is mentioned in verse (36:36). In this context, the universal principle to remember is that although God is not ascribed any attribute, nonetheless some names are selected for His Holy Essence, such as *Allāh*, *Subhān*, *Raḥmān* etc., which are not used for creatures, whereas other names which are not real but figurative names of God are used for the creatures as well. *Nūr* and *Salām* are among the names which are used in the Qur'ān, both for God as well as for the creatures. For example, the name "*nūr*" in verse

(24:35) shows God's attribute of guidance and in verse (5:15), it is used as one of Prophet Muḥammad<sup>(9)</sup>'s names.

12. *Salām* is the name of the light of *ta'yid*. First, it rises in the form of the Divine Word or Word of Command. Since at that place all pre-eternal and post-eternal realities and recognitions are one, therefore, one of the many names of the Divine Word is *Salām*, as in verse (36:58): “*Salāmun qawlan min rabbīn raḥīm* (A word i.e., Divine Word of the Merciful Lord is the light of *ta'yid*).” Prophets and Imāms receive this light and in this sense God says: “*Subḥāna rabbika rabbi'l-‘izzati ‘ammā yaṣifūna wa salāmun ‘ala'l-mursalin*, i.e., your Lord, the Lord of honour, is free from what they ascribe to Him” (37:180-181), and the Prophets have continued to receive the light of *ta'yid*. Three great wisdoms are mentioned in this verse: (a) God is free from what people ascribe to Him without recognition. (b) He nourishes the religious, spiritual and intellectual honour and elevates it. (c) Prophets and Imāms receive the light of *ta'yid*, and it is they who recognise God.
13. *Ṣalawāt* or peace from God and His angels to the *mu'mins* (33:43) is mentioned in the holy Qur'ān. Nonetheless, ordinarily they do not receive the heavenly peace (*salām*), rather it is bound to and conditional on following [Divine] guidance (20:47; 36:58; 13:24). This is why *salām* is not recited for every *mu'min*, except the Prophet, the Imām, the archangel and the *ahl-i bayt*. This is because *salām* or peace is the light of *ta'yid*.
14. If someone asks why a *mu'min* does not receive *salām* from God and His angels in his present condition and *salām* should not be recited for a *mu'min*, why do Muslims and *mu'mins* say: *as-salāmu ‘alaykum wa ‘alaykumu's-salām*? The answer to this question is that, when God says *salām*, it shows the meaning of a practical *salāmati* (peace), as shown in “*salāmun ‘alā ...*” about Prophets. In such a case, to know this Divine mercy and to understand the rank of a Prophet or an Imām, we should also say: “*‘alayhi's-salām ...*”, whereas it should not be said for any other human being who has not attained this excellence. However, where *salām* is for each

other in a general sense, it is used in the sense of prayer and in that sense it must be said for each other.

15. Full light is shed on the meaning and wisdom of the word “*salām*” by the way Ḥaẓrat-i Yahyā<sup>(c)</sup> and Ḥaẓrat-i ʿĪsā<sup>(c)</sup>’s spiritual birth, death of carnal soul and *inbiʿās* (resurrection) are mentioned in verses (19:15, 33). These verses do not mention the *salāmatī* or protection of the physical body; it is the protection of the soul and the intellect, which is in the form of luminous *taʿyīd*. In this example it is important to know that Ḥaẓrat-i Yahyā<sup>(c)</sup> and Ḥaẓrat-i ʿĪsā<sup>(c)</sup> are representing the spirituality of all Perfect Men, because the path of *salāmatī* for all of them is one. Had the path of every Prophet’s spirituality been different, God forbid, God’s *sunnats* (laws) would also have to be different. But the *sunnat* of God has continued to be one and the Divine *sunnat* or law is that the spiritual birth, the death of the carnal soul and *inbiʿās* of people depends on the Guide of the time (*hādī-yi zamān*). For, it is he who is the *nafs-i wāḥidah*, the single and unifying soul (31:28) and the abode of peace (*dāru’s-salām*). Otherwise, how is it possible that God should invite people to the abode of peace when it does not exist? Further, it is impossible that someone may reach God directly without any means.
16. In addition to an external deluge, Ḥaẓrat-i Nūḥ<sup>(c)</sup> was also passing through a spiritual deluge. When the spiritual deluge subsided, God commanded him: “It was said (unto him): O Nūḥ! Come down with peace (*salām*) from Us, and blessing on you and those people who are with you” (11:48). *Salām* (*taʿyīd*) is a very great thing. It is because of this that, first the Perfect Men are tried rigorously and then they are granted the wealth of luminous *taʿyīd*. You can see that Ḥaẓrat-i Nūḥ<sup>(c)</sup> received God’s *salām* or *taʿyīd* after passing through great and arduous trials as did Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup> (21:69).
17. Regarding the verses: “And We left for him among the later generations (recognition of his status); peace be unto Nūḥ among the worlds! Verily thus do We reward those who do good” (37:78-80), a wise person can ask: what wisdom is

hidden in them? The answer to this question is in the following explanation: And We left the recognition of the status of Nūḥ<sup>(c)</sup> in the Perfect Men to come. It is in the sense that this spiritual deluge will continue to take place in every personal world, where he will continue to receive *salāmātī* and *ta'yīd* and We reward Perfect Men like this.

18. The miracles of every great Prophet take place in the personal world, and therefore their spiritual status which is mentioned in the Qur'ān, is recognised. For instance, it is said about Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup>: “And We left the recognition of the status of Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm in the Perfect Men-to-come” (37:108-110). That is, the miracles of Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup> will take place in every personal world. That is, Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup> will repeat his spiritual and religious life in every Prophet and Imām. In this sense, there is *salāmātī* and *ta'yīd* for him, which is granted to every Prophet.
19. An ordinary person can easily understand that things in the world of multiplicity exist separately, but it is extremely difficult to know how the Prophets and Imāms exist together in the world of unity. In this connection it is necessary to know that the world of unity is extremely wondrous and extremely difficult to understand, because it is in the form of a person, in whom are first gathered the righteous ones. It is this person who is the abode of peace, as the Qur'ān says: “And for those who (duly) believe and (duly) do good works, We verily shall make them enter in the righteous ones” (29:9). That is, that they will be able to enter the personal world of the Guide of the time, for it is he who is the abode of peace where all the righteous ones of the past are gathered. If we accept the example that in the language of Qur'ānic wisdom, “*fi al-kitāb*” cannot be translated as “on the surface of the pages”, rather it means meaningfulness and depth of words, similarly “*fi al-ṣāliḥīn*” does not mean the external closeness and companionship of the Perfect Men, but rather to enter their personal world.
20. One of the everlasting and unchangeable laws of the Qur'ān is that God's things are not scattered or dispersed, they are

arranged systematically in His treasures. All things of this world have descended from these Divine treasures (15:21). According to this law, paradise too is like a treasure, for which God appoints treasurers, as He says: “And the treasurers of it (paradise) say to them: Peace be on you! You have become purified, so enter paradise forever” (39:73). The treasurers of paradise are the Imāms from the progeny of Muḥammad<sup>(s)</sup> and paradise is their personal worlds. That is, the personal world of the Imām of the time is the paradise for the people of his time. Thus, the Imām of the time is the abode of peace and *ta’yid* (*dāru’s-salām*) in this sense.

The Divine law that the *mamsūl* or reality is one, but its examples are numerous should also be remembered, as mentioned in the Qur’ān: The Divine Pedestal has encompassed all the things of the universe and existents (2:255), everything is confined in a book (78:29), all things are recorded in the record of deeds (18:49), all things are in the manifest Imām (36:12), God has counted all things and included them in a single number (72:28; 19:94), everything is in the Guarded Tablet (6:59), heavens and earth, i.e., the entire universe and the existents are in God’s hand (21:104; 39:67), all possible things are in God’s treasure (15:21), all people will be present in God’s presence (36:32), and He has given you what you had asked Him (14:34). These are representations of some of the great [Qur’ānic] examples and their reality and *mamsūl* is the holy personality of the Imām of the time, who, in the status of God’s House, is the House of peace and luminous *ta’yid*. For, it is through him that God and the Prophet are obeyed; and it is he who is God’s vicegerent and the representative of the Prophet in this world. Praise be to God, the Lord of the worlds!

**Note:**

All the Qur’ānic verses quoted in this and other articles should be studied with their preceding and subsequent verses to understand and to increase Qur’ānic knowledge.

London,  
20<sup>th</sup> July, 1984.

## Ranks of Light (*Maqāmāt-i Nūr*)

1. There is no doubt that “Allāh is the light of the heavens and the earth” (24:35). However, it is extremely important that we should think deeply about this great secret and ask ourselves: which world’s heavens and earth does the Divine light illumine directly? Is it the external world or the internal? Is it the world of religion or the personal world?  
The correct answer to this key question is that the world of religion is in this physical world and the personal world is in the former, which is directly illumined by the holy light of God. The personal world here means the true Imām’s blessed personality, which is the place of manifestation and illumination of God’s light, which illumines the heavens and earth of the world of religion. The external world too receives light from the true Imām by degrees.
2. God, the Nourisher of honour, first of all appointed Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam<sup>(e)</sup> as the *maẓhar* of His absolute light, which is also called the Divine Spirit, as God says: “When I will perfect him (*sawwaytuh*) and breathe into him My Spirit (the word ‘Be’) (at the rank of soul and the rank of intellect), then fall down, prostrating yourselves to him” (15:29; 38:72). In this Divine teaching, the Divine act of the word “*sawwaytuh* (I have perfected him)” means to be elevated from the stages of spirituality and to reach the light of Intellect (the Divine Throne), for the Divine Spirit, which is the Divine Word (*kalimah-yi bāri*) is breathed in at this stage.
3. Two kinds of light are mentioned in the holy Qur’ān: *ẓiyā’* and *nūr* (10:5). Kindly explain to us which light was in Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam<sup>(e)</sup>? Are two separate lights mentioned here?

Answer: Light, in reality, is one. However, with respect to the Divine Word it is called *ẓiyā’* and when it is transferred to the Intellect, it is *nūr*. An example to explain this reality is that the sun is called *ẓiyā’* and the moon *nūr* in the wise Qur’ān



(10:5). The reason for this is that the light of the sun is its own, but that of the moon is not as it comes from the sun. Both the lights were in the personal world of Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam<sup>(c)</sup>. On the one hand, the sun of the Divine Word was radiating its light (*ẓiyā'*) and on the other, the moon of Intellect was shedding its light (*nūr*).

4. The rank of the Divine Spirit and light was also given to Ḥaẓrat-i Nūḥ<sup>(c)</sup>. Thus, the ark of luminosity, which was in his personality, is mentioned in the Qur'ān in these words: “And build the ark with Our essence (*a<sup>c</sup>yun=jawāhir*) and with Our inspiration (*wahy*)” (11:37). *A<sup>c</sup>yun* is the plural of *a<sup>c</sup>yn*. *a<sup>c</sup>yn* has many meanings, one of which is essence. Thus, *a<sup>c</sup>yun* means the essences of things, which are the realities of the rank of Intellect. Inspiration or *wahy* means the Divine Word. Another verse in this connection is: “And We carried him on a thing (ark) of planks and nails that was floating according to the essences of things as a reward for the one who was rejected (so that the disobedient may perish in the deluge of ignorance)” (54:13-14). In this verse, planks mean the manifestations of the Divine Word and nails mean the demonstration of the light of Intellect. The ark was floating according to the realities or the essences of things, so that the disobedient people who were outside it may perish in the deluge of ignorance.
5. There is another verse in this regard: “And it was said: O earth! Swallow your water, and O sky! Withhold (your rain)! And the water subsided and the commandment was fulfilled. And the ark rested on Mount Jūdi and it was said: A far removal (from Divine mercy) for wrongdoing people” (11:44). The *ta'wil* of this verse is: The souls of the personality were absorbed in the body and the external souls flew back and thus the water of the deluge of spirituality subsided and manifested the Word of Command, with which [his] spirituality reached its climax and the ark went to the Mount of Intellect to rest there forever. In such a state, Ḥaẓrat-i Nūḥ<sup>(c)</sup> and the *mu'mins* were receiving God's mercy and the others were far removed from it. This shows that Ḥaẓrat-i Nūḥ<sup>(c)</sup> had the same light as Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam<sup>(c)</sup> before

him. The reality and the light are one and the same, although the words to describe it with respect to these two great personalities are different.

6. The light of guidance also called the Divine Spirit, which entered the forehead of Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam<sup>(c)</sup> and which according to the verse of “Selection (*iṣṭafā*’, 3:33)” had to continue and last in the chain of the Prophets and Imāms continued in Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup> generation after generation, as mentioned in the Qur’ān: “And when his Nourisher tried Ibrāhīm with certain Words (*kalimāt*), and he fulfilled them, He said: Verily I am going to appoint you a leader (Imām) for humankind. (Ibrāhīm) said: And of my offspring also? He said: (Yes, but) My covenant is not within the reach of wrongdoers” (2:124). The main focus of our search in this verse is “Words (*kalimāt*)”, which included both “Names (*asmā*)” and “Words (*kalimāt*)”, which (Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup>) completed one after the other. At the end of these “Words (*kalimāt*) was the Divine Word (*kalimah-yi bāri*)”, which contains everything and is the fountainhead of light and the ultimate destination of the spiritual journey.
7. The rank of Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā<sup>(c)</sup>’s light too, was the same as that attained by Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam<sup>(c)</sup>, Ḥaẓrat-i Nūḥ<sup>(c)</sup> and Ḥaẓrat-i Ibrāhīm<sup>(c)</sup> before him, as God says: “And when Mūsā came (to the Mount Sinai) to fulfil Our appointed time and his Nourisher (*rabb*) spoke to him, he said: O Lord! Show me (Yourself) that I may gaze upon You. He said: By no means can you see Me; but look upon the mountain (to which I reveal My glory)! If it stands still in its place, then you will see Me. And when his Nourisher revealed (His) glory to the mountain He sent it crashing down. And Mūsā fell down unconscious. And when he came to consciousness (i.e., when the *ta’wil* came to him) he said: O God, You are free from all attributes! I turn to You, and I am the first to believe (in these realities)” (7:143).

In this verse, Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā<sup>(c)</sup> had the vision (*ru’yat=didār*) from one respect but not from another. This indicates that one should always [aim to] have the vision of the manifestations

of the intellect and knowledge of God. Therefore, God manifested the light of knowledge and wisdom on the Mount of Intellect and transformed it into countless gems. He drew Ḥaẓrat-i Mūsā<sup>(e)</sup>'s attention towards this perpetual and perennial vision and polished and burnished every gem in such a way that Mount Sinai's theophany reflected in it when observed in the light of knowledge and recognition.

Vision (*ru'yat=didār*) in the form of intellect and knowledge is a Qur'ānic reality. God willing, if you reflect on this verse, you will have abundant happiness. It is: "Unto Allāh belong the East and the West, and wherever you turn, there is Allāh's Face. Verily, Allāh is All-Embracing, All-Knowing" (2:115). The *ta'wil* of this verse is that the entire world of the Qur'ān belongs to Allāh. Therefore, you will have an intellectual manifestation and a vision of knowledge of Allāh's Face in the esoteric aspect of whichever verse you study. For God, the Wise, has adorned His Mighty Book with the miracles of knowledge. Indeed, He is the Owner of all-embracing knowledge.

8. It is among the realities of the Qur'ān that Ḥaẓrat-i 'Īsā<sup>(e)</sup> was manifesting the same Divine Spirit breathed into Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam<sup>(e)</sup> and which manifests from the Divine Word. Thus, from the following verse you can determine what kind of miracles manifest from the Perfect Men into whom the Divine or Holy Spirit is breathed. See the verse: "When Allāh will say: O 'Īsā, son of Maryam! Remember My favour on you and your mother; how I helped you with the Holy Spirit, so that you spoke to the people in the cradle and when grown up, and how I taught you the Book and Wisdom and the Torah and the Gospel; and when you made out of clay the likeness of a bird by My permission (*iẓn*), and breathed into it and it became a bird by My permission, and you healed those born blind and the lepers by My permission; and when you raised the dead (from the graves) by My permission" (5:110).

The *ta'wil* of the above-mentioned miracles of Ḥaẓrat-i 'Īsā<sup>(e)</sup> is as follows: When the luminous birth of Ḥaẓrat-i 'Īsā<sup>(e)</sup> took place in the personal world of the *ḥudūd-i dīn*, he started to

speaking immediately in their personal world. This continued and when he became mature, he started to show spiritual miracles in their personal worlds. The Book or *al-kitāb* is that living light whose signs (*āyāt*) are the Pen, the Tablet and the Writing (*raqīm*). This Book contains profound wisdom and all heavenly Books.

Ḥaẓrat-i ʿĪsā<sup>(c)</sup> gave *ism-i aʿzam* to the *ḥudūd-i dīn*. One Qurʾānic name of *ism-i aʿzam* is “*iznu’llāh* (God’s permission)”, through which at the station of ʿIzrāʾīl<sup>(c)</sup> (*maqām-i ʿIzrāʾīl*), his personality became an image and a mould into which the Holy Spirit was cast and consequently an angel like him came into existence and began to fly.

To heal a person born blind means to bring someone who is lost, to the straight path and to give him the inner eye by God’s permission. A leper means someone who has remained in the initial light of spirituality<sup>5</sup> for a long time and who does not realise that its real stages are further ahead, and particularly someone who has seen this light without the Imām of the time’s guidance. Ḥaẓrat-i ʿĪsā<sup>(c)</sup> used to help such people to progress further in the stages of spirituality. This is the *taʿwīl* of healing a leper. The *taʿwīl* of raising the dead from the graves is that, the particles of soul used to resurrect from the living graveyards of human beings and come towards Ḥaẓrat-i ʿĪsā<sup>(c)</sup> when he was passing through the personal resurrection.

9. Regarding the holy Prophet Muḥammad<sup>(s)</sup>, the Chief of the Prophets, no Muslim has any doubt in his being “A light from God (5:15)” and a “Luminous Lamp (33:46)”. Further, the reality that the holy Prophet was the most noble and excellent of all the Prophets and Messengers is crystal clear to the people of wisdom. There are many reasons for this. Nonetheless, the straight path (path of spirituality) and the

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<sup>5</sup> If someone practices arduous mystical exercises without faith in and guidance of the True Guide, he can undoubtedly see the light of the dissolving carnal or animal soul. This is the place where deviation from the straight path reaches its climax, because most people consider this God’s light.

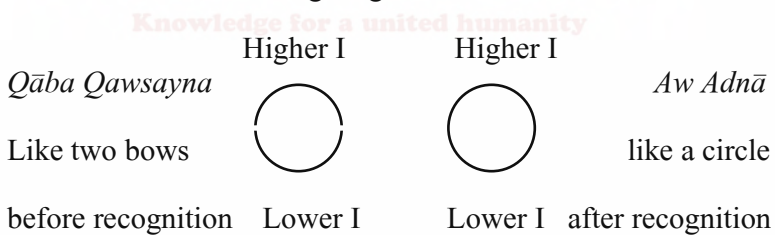
ultimate destination are the same for all Prophets and all *ummats*, as God says: “Verily We inspired you (*awḥaynā ilayka*) as We inspired Nūḥ and the Prophets after him” (4:163). Thus, the way of inspiration and its stages are the same for all the Prophets.

Reflect on this verse too: “And it is not possible for a human that God should speak to him except by inspiration (*wahy*) or from behind a veil, or by the sending of a messenger to reveal what He wills by His permission. Verily He is Exalted, Wise.” (42:51). The main meaning of *wahy* is indication, allusion. It is of three kinds: The first is the vision (*ru'yat, didār*), which is the supreme indication, the second is verbal indication, in which countless spiritual examples are hidden, and the third is the practical (*‘amali*) indication in which there are innumerable examples of the demonstration of the Intellect. In ‘from behind a veil’ implies that at this second level of indication or *wahy* or *kalām*, there is no vision but only the Divine light’s voice. ‘Sending of a messenger to reveal what He wills by His permission’ is the third level of *wahy* or *kalām*. It should be remembered that although *wahy* at the highest level is used in an extremely special sense, it is applicable to all levels of *tanzil*, for each and every verse contains a spiritual and *ta’wili* indication.

The above-mentioned law of *wahy* and *kalām* was common to all the Prophets, accordingly the spirit of the Qur’ān was revealed to the holy Prophet from the Divine Command (*kalimah-yi kun*). In fact, it was the same Spirit which was breathed into Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam<sup>(c)</sup> in the beginning. You can see in verse (42:52) that the same Spirit is also the living light. It is worth pondering: Why is the Qur’ān’s light linked to a living personality? A great wisdom is hidden in this, otherwise God would have given the Qur’ān to the Prophet in the form of an external book instead of revealing it to his blessed heart in the form of a spirit and spirituality (26:194). But God did not do so, rather He revealed the Qur’ān with a light that spoke with its sacred tongue. Then the glorious Qur’ān was given a written form and the light remained in the holy Prophet’s personality. Now the question arises here:

Should the Qur’ān’s light be extinguished with the physical demise of the Prophet? No, never. It is against the Divine will. Thus, it is true that God, by His perfect power, transferred the Qur’ān’s light to the chain of Imāms from the progeny of Muḥammad<sup>(s)</sup> so that His light may continue and last with His Book. This is the law of the religion of nature.

10. Some wisdoms of the *sūrah* of *Najm* (Star) will be explained now as an example of the status of the Prophet’s spirituality and his recognition: First Ḥaẓrat-i *Mubdi*<sup>c</sup>’s manifestation is likened to a falling star and God swears by this great miracle. Through *ibdā*<sup>c</sup> the *Mubdi*<sup>c</sup> manifested in front of the Prophet. In “*wa mā ẓalla ṣāhibukum* (Your companion did not err)”, the way the Prophet’s ascension and elevation has been described and praised, indicates the Prophet’s guidance of and the *mu’mins*’ access to this place, for *inbi*<sup>c</sup>*ās* is their final destination. In the verse “*allamahu shadīdu’l-quwā* (He was taught by one mighty in power)”, God’s overpowering knowledge is mentioned prior to His overwhelming power. And “*ẓu mirrah*” means the one who does an action repeatedly. The act of *ibdā*<sup>c</sup> is mentioned in “*fa’stawā* (then He appeared)”. That is, the *Mubdi*<sup>c</sup> is the one who repeats the act of *ibdā*<sup>c</sup>. He appeared in luminosity and then He came closer and the ‘Higher I’ descended into the ‘Lower I’. Their concept is such that they are like two bows as well as a circle, as shown in the following diagrams:



There were many far-reaching allusions in this event. The Prophet had this vision the second time with his inner eye ‘at the lote-tree of the utmost boundary (*sidratu’l-muntahā*)’, near which is ‘the paradise of abode (*jannatu’l-ma’wā*)’. This lote-tree was repeatedly showing and hiding a treasure. This



manifestation was not such that one could turn away the eye and ignore it nor was there a boundary to transgress. The Prophet saw the extremely great miracles of his Nourisher (*rabb*) here (53:1-18).

11. The most clear and bright realities in the wise Qur'ān are related to light, and the most understandable examples are also regarding light, the reason for which is the very existence of light itself and its importance and usefulness. As the world-illuminating sun is the source of all material blessings and favours, in the same way the sun of religion's light is the fountainhead of all religious blessings. Then how was it possible that light should sometimes exist and sometimes not?

Allāh says that He is the light of the highness and lowness of the universe. Then He says that the similitude of His light is like a niche in which there is a lamp. We should not proceed further in this Divine teaching without understanding the allusions of the niche and the lamp. In this similitude, we see first the Divine light's relation with the niche, then with the lamp, because of it being in the niche. This means that the niche of God's inner house has the supreme rank and is eternal like the concept of God and His kingdom. By God's permission the Prophets and Imāms have been attaining this rank, just as the Prophet's blessed being is a bright proof of the reality that he, in his own time, was a luminous lamp. In this case, can any wise person dare to say that the lamp which was shedding light in the niche of God's house was separate from the Prophet's lamp? Never, never. Rather, the fact is that just as he was mercy for all the worlds (21:107), he was also the light of the heavens and the earth in the status of God's light, so that just as Divine mercy can reach all the worlds through him, Divine light can also reach them through him. For other than this there is no such concept in the Qur'ān by which we should accept the Essence of God as light. Everybody knows that this verse is a *misāl* or similitude and not *mamsūl* (reality or *ta'wīl*). Its *mamsūl* as mentioned above, is that the intellect of the Perfect Man, who is the true guide, God's vicegerent or the Prophet's vicegerent, God's *mazhar*, the speaking Qur'ān, inheritor of the Book and God's

living *ism-i a'zam*, has been made the lamp of guidance and placed in the niche of honour and supremacy and God gives him the status of His light. Now let us see the entire verse of light:

Allāh is the light of the heavens and the earth, the similitude of His light is as a niche in which is a bright lamp and the lamp is in a (chandelier of) glass, the chandelier is as though it were a pearly star; it (lamp) is lit from a blessed tree, an Olive neither of the east nor of the west, the oil of which would well-nigh give light though no fire touch it, light upon light; Allāh guides to His light whom He pleases; and Allāh strikes parables for men; and Allāh knows all things (24:35).

12. In verse (27:8) God says: “But when he reached it (fire), he was called, saying: Blessed is (are) whosoever (*man*) is (are) in the fire and whosoever (*man*) is (are) around about it! And Allāh is free from all attributes (*subhān*), the Nourisher of the worlds” (27:8). In the above translation, both the singular and the plural forms are correct, for in Arabic, *man*, a relative pronoun is used for both singular and plural. As for the fire, it was not a material fire, it was the light. In this connection, see also verses (20:10-12; 28:29-30). The same question arises here: Was this light *Subhān* Himself? No. For this light is blessed and God is free from being blessed, rather He is the one Who blesses. Therefore, this light was God’s *mazhar*. However, with respect to His vicegerency, God always says: “I am this light” and this is the greatest secret in all the verses of light, which are the keys of Qur’ānic treasures.
  
13. In verse (6:122), God says: “Is he who was dead and We raised him to life, and appointed for him a light through which he walks among men, as him whose similitude is in utter darkness whence he cannot emerge?” The wisdom of this noble verse is understandable only when a wise person knows the real meaning of death and life. This external life is a kind of death, therefore, every *mu'min* should be born spiritually so that he may open his eye in his personal world and see the light. Then, he should experience the taste of death finally in this life when his *inbi'ās* takes place and [only

then] in a real sense will he be called alive. Thus, two kinds of death and two kinds of life are mentioned in the holy Qur'ān (40:11).

14. The relation of light after God, the Prophet and the Imām, is with the *mu'mins*, but this secret is hidden in the recognition of the Imām. For it is the Imām who is the treasure of the gems of knowledge and recognition and in this sense, he is also the treasure of light. When a *mu'min* professes this he should think about how this light can be observed and how it can be attained. In this regard, there are the exalted Imām's holy *farmāns*, which can guide in every respect.

Have you thought about whether the light should come to a *mu'min* or should the *mu'min* go to the presence of the light? Can God's house come to a *mu'min* for the [rite] of pilgrimage? Can the Imām go to every *mu'min's* house and give *didār*? Remember that in spirituality, every impossible thing becomes possible. Thus, it is light which sheds light on all the secrets of recognition, and it is light which can advance and cause to advance to the secrets of pre-eternity (*azal*) and post-eternity (*abad*). Thus, many wisdoms are gathered wherever the Qur'ān mentions the [word] light, as it says: "And those who (duly) believe in God and His apostle they are the truthful ones (*al-ṣiddiqūn*) and the witnesses (*al-shuhadā'*) with their Nourisher; they have their reward and their light (*nūruhum*)" (57:19). This wisdom filled verse mentions perfect belief in God and His apostles externally and internally and to testify in the light of recognition. Farther, the words *shahid* and *shahādat* refer to being sacrificed twice in God's path and being revived twice, but additionally spiritual observation and witnessing is mentioned too. Then after the reward, i.e., at the end of everything, light is mentioned. This shows that the perfect stage of light comes after doing all these things and through this very light the supreme secret is revealed that there is the pre-eternal and post-eternal link between God's light, the Prophet's light, the Imām's light and the *mu'min's* light. The word "*nūruhum* (their light)" indicates that at this exalted place, *mu'mins* receive the Imām

as their 'higher I' (*anā-yi 'ulwī*) and everything is available in the holy and pure Imām's light.

15. The light of *mu'mins*, men and women during the individual resurrection (place of spirituality) runs in front of them and on their right side (57:12). Why should the light run? It is a practical example in which the light covers many cycles. This is a journey of the intellect, knowledge and soul. Watching them the hypocrite men and women, will say: "Wait for us! Let us borrow a spark from your light (and make it a complete light in us). It will be said: Turn back (in the chain of the past) and seek light (there)" (57:13). If this event had occurred physically after the death of all people, it would not have been said in the Qur'ān: Turn back to the world. For, the exoteric language of the Qur'ān rejects turning back to the world. Rather, this is the individual or personal resurrection in which the collective resurrection is represented [too]. That is, all this happens in the world of similitudes. There, it is true to say that whoever receives light, receives it from the time of Ādam<sup>(e)</sup> and from the time of the Seal of the Prophets<sup>(s)</sup>. Thus, understand that each of the verses related to light is a subject of special meaning and all the other verses of this nature are included in it. For instance, if we take the subject of the "light of the *mu'min* men and *mu'min* women" in the above-mentioned verse, the rest of the verses of light clarify this subject according to their respective wisdoms. Hence, everything is mentioned in this way in the Qur'ān.
16. Every *mu'min* is absolutely sure that the way God, in His glorious mercy, describes light in verses (57:9, 12, 13, 19, 28) that this holy light is the Imām of the time who is the 'higher I' or the higher soul of *mu'min* men and women. This pre-eternal and post-eternal link of the light and *mu'mins* is also clearly mentioned in verse (66:8) in the way of wisdom, as God says: "On the day when God will not abase the Prophet and those who believe with him. Their light will run before them and on their right hands: they will say: Our Nourisher! Perfect our light for us, and forgive us! Verily You are able to do all things" (66:8).

The holy Prophet, the pure Imāms and the staunch *mu'mins* are mentioned together in the above luminous verse. Thus, from the time of prophethood onwards, this event has continued to take place in every individual resurrection of the personal world. For, with respect to both individual and collective points of view, God perfects His light in this world (9:32; 61:8), where it becomes perfect by the external and internal meritorious deeds of knowledge and action. Is it possible to say that God's light is different from that of the Prophet? It is utterly impossible. Rather, the fact is that the *ta'wil* of God's light is the Prophet's light and that of the true Imām; the same is true of the *mu'mins*' light. Furthermore, we can see that there is room for the entire humanity in God's mercy, since the *sūrah* of *Raḥmān* mentions the law of merging and mercy, by which all of them have to merge in God's Face. However, the point to remember is that this merging is of two kinds: one is consciously in the light of recognition and the other is unconsciously.

One special similitude of light is fire. Fire annihilates things of two kinds: From the burning of one kind are created light, heat, power, fragrance, etc., and from the burning of the other kind nothing useful comes into existence. A great shortcoming in the example of fire is that the things which burn in it are consumed in a limited time, whereas the light and those who burn [meld or merge] in it, last forever, consciously or unconsciously.

May Khudāwand of the world grant everybody the favour to recognise His holy light! And may all human beings benefit abundantly from the law of intercession!

London,  
29<sup>th</sup> July, 1984.

## A Great Gift of Knowledge

On behalf of Khānah-yi Hikmat and Idārah-yi °Arif, I present this gift of knowledge with utmost sincerity and happiness to President Amin Kotadia and Secretary Mariam Kotadia, Idārah-yi °Arif, London Branch, under whose patronage the Branch is flourishing and prospering. Despite all praise, it is not possible to do due justice to their devotion, dedication, numerous services and sacrifices and love for the Imām of the time and earnest and ardent yearning for the acquisition of true knowledge. Therefore, as the army to spread and impart true knowledge, let us pray for their true reward to the Lord of the treasures of the universe, that may He grant them success in every walk of life and bestow upon them the best in this world and best in the next! And may He confer upon them the crown of recognition! *Āmin yā rabba'l-°ālamīn* (Āmin, O the Lord of the worlds!)

### Institute for

1. In verse (78:38) God says: “The day when the spirit and angels will stand in rank, none will be able to speak, save him whom the Beneficent allows, and he will speak what is right.” *Ta'wīl*: The place of Intellect is mentioned in this verse and it is the place of oneness where standing in rank means to be one. In other words, this is the manifestation of the luminous body in which all are gathered. Whoever may be in that holy and pure form, he alone will speak and whatever he speaks will be the truth.
2. In verse (89:22) God says: “And your Lord and angels will come in ranks, as they ought to be in ranks.” *Ta'wīl*: To come from one place to another is the action of the body, and God is free from body, therefore this verse is among the equivocal ones (*mutashābihāt*). The *ta'wīlī* wisdom of this verse is that Ḥazrat-i *Qā'im* and the great angels will come in ranks in the world of religion. The *ta'wīl* of their standing in rank is that they will have one common personality.



3. Wherever the word “*ṣaff* (rank)” is mentioned in the wise Qur’ān, it means one single person at the highest place, as God says: “Verily God loves those who battle in His path in ranks, as if they were a solid structure (*bunyānun marṣūs*)” (61:4). That is, the *mu’mins* are one in the single personality (*shakḥs-i wāḥid*) and this describes their unity and strength when they do spiritual *jihād*.
4. The above explanation was about standing in rank according to Qur’ānic wisdom. Now, let us focus on the enumeration of God. He says: “Verily He has encompassed them and has enumerated them as ought to be enumerated” (19:94). That is, He has unified them by encompassing and enumerating them according to the law of oneness.
5. In verse (72:28) God says: “And He has surrounded the knowledge of the Prophets and has enumerated all things in a (single) number.” That is, all things including the spirituality of the Prophets are encompassed in the manifest Imām. The single number means the holy personality of the Imām of the time. It is important to remember that when God surrounds things, this becomes their centrality and when God enumerates them, this becomes their unity. That is, the meanings of God’s speech and act reach their climax.
6. In verse (6:115) God says: “Perfect is the Word of your Nourisher (*kalimah-yi bārī*) in truth and justice. There is none that can change His words.” That is, the fountainhead of truth and justice is the Divine Word. The Perfect Words are unchangeable and they are the treasures of knowledge and wisdom.
7. The “*muqatta’āt*” letters of *alif*, *lām*, *mīm* (ا ل م) are mentioned in the wise Qur’ān in the beginning of six *sūrahs* (2, 3, 29, 30, 31 and 32) and those of *alif*, *lām*, *rā’* (ا ل ر) in the beginning of five (10, 11, 12, 14 and 15). A special *ta’wīl* of these two forms is: *Alif* is the oath by the First, namely, the Pen; *Lām* is the oath by the Tablet; *Mīm/Rā’* is the oath of writing (*marqūm/raqīm*). In other words, they are the Universal Intellect, Universal Soul and the Word “Be”

(*Kalimah-yi kun*), which are the great signs and the Book as well.

8. All the gardens of paradise are gathered in the luminous body, as God says: “And (created) the gardens of densely growing trees” (78:16). God also says: “And garden-closes of thick foliage” (80:30). This is because all the fruits of knowledge and recognition are gathered here, as said in the verse: “And the shades of the trees of paradise will be close to them and the clustered fruits thereof will bow down” (76:14). That is, if the people of paradise desire a bounty, it will tantamount to their command and anything they desire will appear instantly.
9. In the verse: “Every soul has to taste death. Then unto Us you will be returned” (29:57), this teaching of the heavenly wisdom mentions the miraculous death which occurs sometime after the spiritual birth, which is full of marvels and wonders, the result of which is to return to God.
10. In verse (41:53) God says: “Soon will We show them our signs on the horizons (of the world) and within themselves too, until it will be manifest unto them that He is True.” The present scientific marvels and wonders and then the cycle of spirituality are indicated in this heavenly prophecy made during the time of prophethood. The purpose of these two kinds of miracles is obviously to recognise the soul in its light as it ought to be recognised, so that the recognition of the Nourisher (*rabb*) may be attained when this light reaches the level of the certainty of truth (*haqq al-yaqin*).
11. The *ta'wil* of the shin (*sāq*) is the Intellect, as God says: “The Day the shin will be laid bare and they (disbelievers) will be summoned to prostrate themselves but will not be able (to prostrate)” (68:42). That is, where and when the light of Intellect will manifest and the disbelievers will be summoned to obey, they will not be able to obey. A shin is also mentioned with reference to Queen Sheba, as God says: “It was said to her: Enter the palace. And when she saw it, deemed it a pool and bared her legs” (27:44). That is, when she saw the light of Intellect, she tried to understand it

instantly with the external and internal aspects of her particular intellect and all at once tried to assess its depth to cross it, but her conjecture was wrong. The third mention of the leg is in verse (75:29-30), in which the death of animal soul is mentioned: “And one leg will be joined with another; unto your Lord that day will be the driving”. In *tanzil* this verse mentions the physical death, but in *ta’wil* it is the mention of the spiritual death, in which the external intellect is joined with the internal intellect.

12. Ḥaẓrat-i Sulaymān<sup>(c)</sup> was an Entrusted (*mustawda*<sup>(c)</sup>) Imām. His Qur’ānic story contains an example of the spiritual kingdom of great souls. Queen Sheba represents the *hujjats* of the night (*hujjatān-i shab*). For, it is a great secret that the true guide keeps the people of the entire world attached to his personality through the *hujjats* of the day (*hujjatān-i rūz*) and the *hujjats* of the night. Numerous wisdoms are hidden in this law.
13. God grants to every Prophet and every Imām the same spiritual kingdom that He granted Ḥaẓrat-i Sulaymān<sup>(c)</sup>. This great favour has thus continued from the very beginning as a heritage, as is said: “And Sulaymān became Dāwūd’s heir” (27:16). This wisdom-filled indication makes the reality clear to the intellect and wisdom that Ḥaẓrat-i Sulaymān<sup>(c)</sup>’s spiritual kingdom was already with his father Ḥaẓrat-i Dāwūd<sup>(c)</sup>. The question may arise here that if it was so, it would have been mentioned in the Qur’ān. With due humility, I would like to say that everything is mentioned in the wise Qur’ān in the language of wisdom and it is because of this that this holy Book of God is called the wise Qur’ān.
14. One special name of Qur’ānic wisdom is “*ḥikmat-i bālighah* (the perfect wisdom)” (54:5). For, every example, every word, every allusion and every wisdom of this unprecedented and unique heavenly Book is filled with the light of true guidance and it can therefore guide to the highest stage. Hence, it is very appropriately made the ladder of spiritual access to the light of the Throne (*nūr-i ‘arsh*). Therefore, not only is everything mentioned in the wise Qur’ān, it is also

easy to understand, as God repeatedly draws attention to the “concept of the easiness” of the Qur’ān, such as in the verse: “And We have indeed made the Qur’ān easy to understand and remember: Then is there any that will receive admonition?” (54:17). This means that the Qur’ān is difficult from one aspect and from another, it has been made easy. It is also known that God wants ease for everyone (2:185). Therefore, the Compassionate God made the Prophet [a] light to shed light on the wisdoms and secrets of the wise Qur’ān (5:15; 42:52). In the cycle of Imāmat, by God and the Prophet’s command, the True Imām is the Qur’ān’s light and the lamp of guidance (57:28). Thus, in the *sūrah* of *Qamar* (Moon) attention is repeatedly drawn towards this easy aspect of the Qur’ān.

15. Whether it is time or place, body or soul, everything is in a limited quantity with God (13:8). However, the beginningless and endless nature of the concept of creation does not cease nor is it even affected. In fact, this helps to understand it. That is, according to the law of power and nature God creates everything from its opposite. For instance, the time of the day and night is limited, but by turning it round in the form of a circle, God creates months, years and infinite time. Hence, although everything is in a limited quantity and in a limited circle, there is no beginning and no end of the repetition and revolving of the survival and annihilation of things. This is in the light of Qur’ānic wisdom (21:33; 36:40).
16. A person has more or less as many souls as those of the planet earth. Certainly, it was for this reason that the wise Qur’ān said: “Whoso kills a human being for other than manslaughter or corruption in the earth, it shall be as if he had killed all humankind, and whoso saves the life of one, it shall be as if he had saved the life of all humankind” (5:32). The wisdom of this verse is that a human being is a personal world and potentially the people of the entire world are living in him. Thus, by God’s permission if a divinely guided person revives a person in the sense of faith and real life, it is as if he revives all humankind in his personal world. Such a miraculous

person is the Imām of the time, who alone can revive the dead in this way.

17. Everything has a shadow or a reflection. Likewise, light too has a shadow, however it is more appropriate to say reflection, for the shadow of light is entirely different from the rest of the shadows. It is luminous and bright like the reflection of the sun shining in the mirror. Thus, God, the Compassionate, casts a reflection of His light from the sublime Throne upon the hearts of all humankind, which all of them accept as their natural or inborn intellect. At the same time, by God's permission the sun of guidance rose, so that the particular or inborn intellect may be nourished and progress and simultaneously its status and rank may be determined. Then God seized all these reflections very easily in His hand of power; if He had willed He would not have lifted them from here, as He says: "Have you not seen how your Lord has spread the shade - and if He willed He could have made it still - then We made the sun its guide; then We seized it easily" (25:45-46). There are great luminous wisdoms and the *didār* of knowledge filled with theophanies in this blessed verse.
18. An extremely great wisdom which can puzzle all of us is: A human being, walking on the circle of spirituality reaches the place of post-eternity, he finds pre-eternity in the same place too, and due to which the great miracle of his *ibdā<sup>c</sup>* and *inbi<sup>c</sup>āṣ* becomes one. That is, *ibdā<sup>c</sup>* and *inbi<sup>c</sup>āṣ* are the two names of one reality, as God says: "And you have come to Us one by one as We did create you the first time, and you have left behind you all that We bestowed upon you" (6:94).

London,  
3<sup>rd</sup> August, 1984.

## *Ibdā<sup>c</sup> and Inbi<sup>c</sup>ās*

1. The lexical meaning of *ibdā<sup>c</sup>* is to originate, invent, devise, excogitate, innovate, make, do, produce, cause to be or to exist, bring into existence, newly, for the first time, not having been or existed before, and not as the similitude of anything pre-existing. The lexical meaning of *inbi<sup>c</sup>ās* is: to be sent out, be delegated, awaken, wake up, cause to rise, rise, appear quickly, walk quickly, resurrect. God willing, their *ta'wil* will be discussed in this article time and again.
2. Regarding *ibdā<sup>c</sup>* God says: “(It is He Who is) the originator (*badī<sup>c</sup>*) of the heavens and the earth and when a matter is complete, He but says to it ‘Be’ and it becomes” (2:117). Since according to the *ḥadis* “*man <sup>c</sup>arafa nafsahu faqad <sup>c</sup>arafa rabbahu* (s/he who recognizes their soul, recognizes God)”, the main arena of acquiring recognition is the human soul, hence we must know that first and foremost whatever is said in this verse is related to the personal world.

In this light, this humble servant who is less than the dust under the *mu'mins'* feet, seeks help and success from the luminous presence of the Holy Lord and with the hope of His help and aid is attempting to explain the above wisdom filled verse: The *ta'wil* of the above verse is that God, the Blessed and Exalted, originates *ibdā<sup>c</sup>* in every Prophet and Imām's personal world as it ought to be originated. That is, God, the Knowing, the Wise, creates a world of command (*<sup>c</sup>ālam-i amr*) in the blessed personality of the Perfect Man, which is entirely different from the world of creation. The world of command manifests in such a way that first, according to the law of nature, the physical creation of the Perfect Man's blessed personality is complete, then as a result of special *zīkr-ū <sup>c</sup>ibādat*, knowledge and action his spiritual birth takes place, as mentioned in the wise Qur'ān that Ḥaẓrat-i <sup>c</sup>Īsā<sup>(c)</sup>, representing all Perfect Men, says: “And peace (*salām*) is upon me the day I was born and the day I will die and the day



I will be raised alive” (19:33). That is, ‘I received light and Divine help when I was born and when the spiritual death (personal resurrection) will take place, I will have more spiritual wonders and marvels and when the *inbi<sup>c</sup>ās* (raising alive) occurs, I will receive the Divine help (*ta’vid*) of supreme miracles’. This reveals that (the creation) of the personal world of command of every Prophet and every Imām begins the day they are born spiritually and then as far as the conditions (*umūr*) of knowledge and action are fulfilled, continue to be applied to him until the door of spiritual resurrection opens and the stages of spirituality continue to be traversed rapidly. This continues until the day the great miracle of *inbi<sup>c</sup>ās* appears in front of them. Thus, the Perfect Man undergoes five cycles: (a) the cycle of the completion of physical creation, (b) the cycle of spiritual birth, (c) the cycle of the death of the animal soul (resurrection), (d) the cycle of *inbi<sup>c</sup>ās* (raising alive) and (e) the cycle of perfection (*tamāmiyyat*), that is, the perfection and completion of light mentioned in the Qur’ān (9:32; 61:8; 66:8). It is important to remember that the light gradually becomes perfect not only in the personal world, but also in the world of religion. Thus, the *ta’wil* of God being the Originator (*badi<sup>c</sup>*) of the heavens and earth is that He has created a world of command in the blessed personality of every Perfect Man and whose every action and everything happens under the law of “Be (*kun*)”, although its complete and perfect manifestation takes place at the level of Intellect. for a united humanity

3. It is said in verse (16:81): “And it is God Who made for you shadows of the things He has created and He made for you houses in the mountains, and He made shirts for you which will protect you from the heat and shirts which protect you from the violence of arms. Thus, God completes His favours so that you may surrender your ‘I’ (*anā*) to Him” (16:81).

There is an infinite treasure of Divine favours in this verse. That is, God has created three shadows of all His creatures: physical, spiritual and intellectual. Thus, when you attain the recognition of the rank of intellect, it will be evident that the shadow of every person and everything is present there in the

form of knowledge and wisdom for the sake of intellectual peace. Similarly, at the level of spirituality, the spiritual shadow of every person and everything works in different positions. There is also the subtle body, which as the third shadow, is (also) a great favour. The innermost meaning of this is that in the paradise of his personal world every *mu'min* becomes the king over the intellects, souls and subtle bodies. As for the houses in the mountain of Intellect, God has made them for all the human beings, since there is no difference and discrimination in His mercy, the difference being only due to their affirmation, obedience and recognition. Nonetheless, the law of Divine mercy will gradually work and as a result the entire humanity will be united and the planet earth will be illumined from the light of intellect, wisdom, science and technology (39:69).

We should now discuss the shirts (*sarābil*) [mentioned at the beginning of this section]. What are they? They are the celestial shirts which are the miracles of *ibdā'* of Ḥaẓrat-i *Mubdī'*. In the first kind of shirts there is protection from the external and internal heat (hell); in the second kind of shirts there is salvation and protection from every kind of war. How can these shirts made by the Eternal Tailor be devoid of spiritual and intellectual virtues? Therefore, from one aspect, they are like the Perfect Men and from the other like great angels. They are thus mentioned in many examples in the wise Qur'an. For instance, the aspect of lightning is prominent in the Divine miracle which is ordained to protect from heat (13:12; 30:24), therefore it will be right to say that this is the perfect new creation (*ibdā'*) which is related to the soul. The other great miracle of Islam, which takes place through *ibdā'* and whose purpose is spiritual *jihād* to end hostility and war in the world, is related to the astral body (*jism-i falakī*), which is the final *ibdā'* of the subtle body.

I believe U.F.Os are also the same shirts, in which there is divine mercy for humankind. The proof of this is found not only in the Qur'an, rather rational proofs can also be furnished. The Qur'anic proof is that as the minor or the major miracles take place in the external world, in the same

way they also take place in the internal world or the personal world (41:53). Here a student may query if this is so, can there be things such as the inventions of science: television, wireless, telescope, radio, recorders, camera, film etc., in the human beings' internal world? The answer is yes. There can be such things, but there is a difference in the nature and the purpose of the two. Material instruments since they are material are used for the purpose of attaining benefits of this world, similarly the purpose of the internal instruments which are spiritual and religious, is to attain religion and recognition. Thus, these spiritual instruments will not be called radio, film etc., but they will be called internal senses or spirituality.

Now regarding the U.F.Os, we have to prove rationally how human beings will be able to use them as shirts and in what sense war, ignorance, sickness and poverty in the world will come to an end. The rational proof is that there must be a useful result and a good purpose in the coming of so many astonishing U.F.Os to this world in this period of revolutionary science. Although at present the path of scientific research is not that of the rational soul (*ʿirfānī rūḥ*), [scientists] have encountered the rudimentary soul. Soul has lower and higher levels. Thus, when human beings come to know the benefits of the rudimentary soul, they will progress further in its discovery, at least for worldly benefits and fame. Here it is important to point out that there is really no line of demarcation between soul and matter such that scientists would need to reach the end of their research of matter and be unable to go further. In fact, matter and spirit are one and the same thing and the same existence. However, it is true that where it is dead and dense it is called matter or body and where it is living and subtle it is called soul.

Further, according to the heavenly programme it is also possible that U.F.Os or the Flying saucers may guide and help humankind or establish a reformatory revolution to unite the nations of the world. In any case, there is no despondency for humankind. In fact, flying saucers are not simply flying objects, they are the miracle of the *ibdāʿ* and of Ḥaḏrat-i *Mubdiʿ*, namely, the *Qā'im al-qiyāmat*. Such things are

subjugated to the people of paradise. In ancient times those who came as Ādam from paradise or other planets had come in this *ibdāʿi* body. They started to live in different parts of the earth and gradually their bodies were transformed from subtle into dense.

4. According to verse (23:12) God created man from the quintessence of wet clay (*tīn*). This means that in the beginning, God created the soul from *muʿmins*, for it is they who are (wet) clay. This soul was a living and subtle human picture. Since everything comes from the treasures of God (15:21), it is necessary that the soul should also come from the same treasures. In the article entitled “The Divine Treasure” it has been mentioned that the soul comes to the *muʿmins* from those great treasures and then it spreads in the world of humanity, as God says: “Then We placed him as (a drop of) sperm in a receptacle secure (womb of the mother), then We made the sperm into a clot of congealed blood; then of that clot We made a (foetus) lump; then We made out of that lump bones and clothed the bones with flesh; thereafter We produced him as another creature. So blessed be God, the Best of creators” (23:13-14). There are numerous wisdoms in these wisdom-filled verses. Their gist is that God mentions here that His attribute of creativity (*khāliqiyyat*) is the best and most exalted. It is obvious that this is an allusion to the best of the creatures and that is the *ibdāʿi* creature. Thus, three things are created from every person, whether a believer or a disbeliever, by the miracle of *ibdāʿ*: intellectual shadow, spiritual picture and subtle body. None can know about this miracle except the people of recognition, the reason being that many people do not recognise the bounties of paradise.
5. In verse (13:12), it is said: “It is He who shows you the lightning, for fear and yearning, and produces the heavy clouds.” This is the same *ibdāʿi* miracle which takes place with lights. One of its names, as mentioned in the story of Ḥaẓrat-i Sulaymān<sup>(c)</sup>, is the “chief of *jinn*s”. There is tremendous fear due to the greatness, awe and majesty of this magnificent miracle, and at the same time due to its wonders and marvels, there is a great yearning to see it again and again

and to merge in it. The heavy clouds mean the fruits of knowledge which are related to this place and lightning means the open light and the rapidity of *ibdā'*. In this connection, see also verse (30:24).

6. When the *didār* (vision) of Ḥaẓrat-i Mubdi<sup>c</sup> takes place, it is said to the soul at peace (*nafs-i muṭma'innah*): “O soul at peace, return to your Lord, well-pleased, well pleasing! Enter among My (selected) servants! Enter My Paradise!” (89:27-30).

The final return takes place in the state of *ru'yat* (*didār* = vision) whose place is the *inbi'ās* and *ibdā'*, namely the ultimate destination where the *inbi'ās* results in the form of *ibdā'*. The reason for this is that the spiritual journey is in the form of a circle, therefore its end necessarily joins the beginning. Thus, the real *ibdā'* is the result of *inbi'ās*.

7. In verse (57:25) God says: “Indeed, We sent Our messengers with clear and bright miracles, and We sent down with them the Book and the Balance, so that men might uphold justice. And We sent down iron wherein is mighty war and many benefits for men, and so that God will know who helps Him and His messengers (while God and His messengers are) not in front of them. Surely, God is All-strong, Almighty”. In this Qur'ānic guidance and teaching which is full of wisdom, the Book means the rank of Imāmat, namely, the Imām who is the spirit of *tanzil*, and by the Balance is meant the *Asās*, by whose *ta'wil* essential justice can be established among the people in the sense that the door of gradual guidance which is in the equivocal verses does not close, and iron means Ḥaẓrat-i Qā'im al-qiyāmat, who is the mightiest in performing internal and spiritual *jihād*. As a result of his *jihād* all people will be united and people will gain many kinds of benefits by this international unity and integrity. The souls of those who are true *mu'mins* will participate in this *jihād* and help God and His Messengers in this sense.
8. Verse (21:104) mentions the rolling up of the universe. One of the allusions of rolling up the universe is that the world of



religion and the *ḥudūd* gather in Ḥaẓrat-i *Qā'im*. At the same time to say: “As We originated the first creation, so We shall bring it back again (*nu'iduh*)” means that the *inbi'ās* results in the form of *ibdā'* and the final manifestation of Ḥaẓrat-i *Qā'im* takes place in the rank of Ḥaẓrat-i *Mubdi'*, and hence the world of religion gathers in Ḥaẓrat-i *Qā'im al-qiyāmat*.

Another *ta'wil* of “*nu'iduh*” is: “We repeat it”. Thus this (*ibdā'* and *inbi'ās*) is a chain. For instance, each of the Prophets and Imāms have [experienced] *ibdā'* and *inbi'ās*. Since they are the models of the law of nature, it is therefore absolutely true to say that *ibdā'* and *inbi'ās* always continue. Now at this place, the *ta'wil* of the above blessed verse will be: As We had done the *ibdā'* and *inbi'ās* of the previous Perfect Man, similarly We will repeat it. That is, just as the command of “Be (*Kun*)” namely, *ibdā'* and *inbi'ās* is applicable to Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam<sup>(c)</sup>, so it is equally applicable to Ḥaẓrat-i 'Īsā<sup>(c)</sup> (3:59), although apparently it seems that humanity began with Ḥaẓrat-i Ādam<sup>(c)</sup>.

9. The final salvation and the eternal survival of a human being is in merging (*fanā'*) in God's Face. This merging is entirely different from that of worldly and material things and is extremely unique and miraculous. For it is attained through a supreme and magnificent vision (*liqā'*, *didār*, *ru'yat*) and a significant (*ishārātī*) knowledge and recognition, as it is said in the beginning of the *sūrah* of *Dahr*: “Has there come on man a while of the *dahr* (in which) he was not a thing mentionable” (76:1). *Dahr* means the rank in which the *Mubdi'* and the *Qā'im* are one and the same; by “a while from the *dahr*” is meant the while of *ibdā'* and *inbi'ās*, in which man is merged in the vision of God's Face and he cannot say anything about himself, where he is and what he is. The *ta'wīlī* wisdoms of this extremely great miracle come gradually. The allusion of the above verse, which should not be forgotten, is that this extremely great miracle had also occurred to human beings in the past.
10. The wisdom filled verses (3:76-77) allude that on the Day of Resurrection, the Benevolent Lord will speak to the righteous,



look upon them with mercy and purify them. In the light of the wise Qur'ān you know that one great rank of Divine Speech is (in the form of) the silent *didār* (42:51) and this kind of *didār* is obtained at the place of *ibdā'* and *inbi'ās*.

11. The sense in which the Imām is the Straight Path (*ṣirāt-i mustaqīm*), he is also a wide and strong bridge between corporeality and spirituality or the physical world and the spiritual world. As the two ends of the bridge, the Imām has both the aspects of humanity and angelicity. With respect to humanity, he is a human being and with respect to angelicity he is an angel. The Beneficent Lord has made this bridge for the purpose of enabling people to cross it and become angels, as is said in verses (56:60-61): “We have decreed among you death and We shall not be outstripped that We may change your likes (*amsāla-kum*) and create you in a fashion you know not.” Here there is an allusion to the death of the carnal soul and *ibdā'* and *inbi'ās* as a result of which a person crosses the bridge of Imāmat and becomes an angel.
12. In the wisdom of the wise Qur'ān, Queen Sheba is the veil for the *hujjats* of the night and Ḥaḏrat-i Maryam<sup>(e)</sup>, the veil of the *hujjats* of the day. In both examples, the miracle of *ibdā'* and *inbi'ās* is working, but the great difference between the two examples is that in the case of Queen Sheba, the miracle takes place in an unconscious state and in the case of Ḥaḏrat-i Maryam<sup>(e)</sup>, it occurs in the light of practical spirituality and recognition. The luminous manifestation of the Imām, also known as the Divine Spirit, took place and which Ḥaḏrat-i Maryam<sup>(e)</sup> saw. For the Divine law is not such that *Jibrā'il*<sup>(e)</sup> or any other angel may come to the people without the Prophet or the Imām. The main point is that the Imām is God's Command (*amr*) and in this sense, he is the Lord of the Command (*ṣāhib-i amr*) also. That is, such miracles are related to the holy personality of the Imām which take place by the command '*kun*' (Be) and '*kun*' is the Imām who is God's living Command.
13. “Command (*amr*)” is the greatest subject in the holy Qur'ān. Thus, all those Qur'ānic words which are derived from the

root of *alif-mīm-rā'* are related to this subject directly or indirectly. Furthermore, the Qur'ān itself is the silent command of God (*amr-i ṣāmit*) (65:5) and the Imām is His speaking Command (*amr-i nāṭiq*) (4:59). In both senses, the Lord of the Command is the exalted Imām. For the speaking command is the Lord of the Command as well as the Command itself.

14. In God's godhead, the *ibdā'ī* power of the word of Command (*kalimah-yi amr*) is an extremely great power. The main source of this power is the Divine Pedestal (*kursi*), which is the Soul of souls or the Universal Soul, which has held the heavens and earth in its grip and whose preservation does not cause fatigue in him (2:255). All the Prophets' great miracles appeared through this power; the personal resurrection takes place by it and all favours and bounties of paradise are provided by this power.
15. According to the following verses: "All that (creation) is on this earth is going to be annihilated, but will abide the Face of your Lord, majestic, bounteous" (55:26-27) and then God says: "Of which of your Lord's bounties will you deny (O the groups of *jinn* and humankind)?" (55:28). Some important questions arise here: What is the nature of this annihilation? Is it physical or spiritual? Or both? Can God's Face be included in the category of creatures? If not, then why is it included in "All that is on the earth" and then is excluded from them? Is it a merging for the sake of annihilation or merging for the sake of abiding? These questions are necessary so that every intelligent *mu'min* reflects well on the above verse, which speaks about the law of annihilation and its result. The answers to these questions are: Every kind of annihilation is included in this annihilation, but the most rewarding one, which can only be attained during one's lifetime is the result of *ibdā'* and *inbī'ās*. God's Face is the Imām of the time and he has two aspects, human and angelic. Thus, from one aspect he is with human beings and from another with angels. It is because of this that with respect to the body, the Imām who represents God's Face is included among the creatures, but with respect to light he is considered immortal. This wisdom-

filled verse alludes that all the people on the earth merge, very few of them in the light of recognition and the rest without recognition, and they gather and become encompassed in the sublime and exalted personality of the Imām, as stated in verse (36:12) that God has encompassed everything in the personality of the manifest Imām. Nonetheless, despite being in the Imām all people cannot be equal for the time being, as in the human body there are innumerable particles of soul (=cells) which are not equal with respect to feeling. For among them, those particles which are at the centre of the external and internal senses are more sensitive.

16. Without any doubt and ambiguity and with great clarity the wise Qur'ān teaches that everything comes from the Divine treasures (15:21). Now in this respect, it is necessary to understand the wisdoms of words like *rujū'* (return) in the holy Qur'ān. If man has come to this world from a treasure of God, should he not return to the same treasure? Will not the same treasure be both the beginning (*mabdā'*) with respect to coming to this world and return (*ma'ād*) with respect to returning there? Can there be any place other than the Divine treasures, which stand for the Divine court and His nearness (*indīyyat*), while they are included in them? The answer to these questions is: Yes, man should return to the place from where he has come, for the beginning and the end are the same and His court and nearness are not separate from His treasures. *Knowledge for a united humanity*
17. The world of imagination and the world of dreams in the human personality are two such evidences with whose help everyone can understand the reality of *ibdā'* and *inbi'ās*. For instance, let alone the moon but even the planet Mars can be reached in a person's imagination without any duration of time; he can conceive anything in the heaven and the earth; he can reach the past through a story or a memory; going towards the future, he can conceive of the Resurrection; if he wishes he can see any person he had seen in the past in the mirror of his imagination and he can make an imaginary picture of someone whom he has not seen but only heard about. Each of these actions takes place with great rapidity

like the miracle of ‘*kun*’ (Be), namely, *ibdāʿ* and *inbiʿāṣ*. However, all these actions are potential and far from being actual therefore, there is no light of spirituality in them and without light, how is bliss possible? Nonetheless, it is necessary to understand the miracle of *ibdāʿ* through these examples. It is also necessary to understand the law of nature that in God’s kingdom everything is first potential, then it becomes actual. This means that in Paradise human beings will be able to do every action which they desired to do in this world and for which they were doing exercises in their imagination and dreams, as God says: “Therein (in Paradise) they shall have whatever they will; and with Us there is yet more” (50:35). Remember that there are many such verses in the holy Qur’ān.

Similarly, we get examples of *ibdāʿ* and *inbiʿāṣ* from everything in the world of dreams. There are glad tidings as well as warning in it; the example of paradise as well as hell; light as well as darkness; flight amongst the heights, as well as falling in the lowness. In short, the world of dreams is such that both happiness and sorrow are found in it. It is like the death of the carnal soul, resurrection, *ibdāʿ* and *inbiʿāṣ*. Therefore, we should ask ourselves how do human beings transfer into the world of dreams? Do they go into it with or without this body? From where does the world of dreams appear all of a sudden? When they awaken, where does the world of dreams go or where does it hide itself? Is it like the personal world? If there is no sleep in paradise, will the world of dreams come to an end or will both this world and the world of imagination be transformed into the personal world? Asking such questions necessitates thinking about the world of dreams, for dream is an example of both the physical death and the spiritual death (resurrection), as God says: “It is God that takes the souls (of men) at death (physically and spiritually); and those that do not die (He takes their souls) during their sleep: Those on whom He has passed the decree of death, He keeps back (from returning to life), but (the souls of) the rest He sends back for an appointed term. Verily, in this are signs for those who reflect” (39:42). Three great wisdoms are hidden in this verse: (a) To sleep and to get up

from the world of dreams is like seeing the Hereafter and returning to this world, (b) The soul of the Perfect Man who dies spiritually has, in a sense, reached the Hereafter. (c) In another sense, having seen the Resurrection and the Hereafter, it has returned to this world.

18. Despite the final merging, the survival of the individuality of the people of paradise is necessary, for there is expediency and wisdom in it. Nevertheless, due to merging (*fanā' fi'llāh*) in God and abiding in Him (*baqā' bi'llāh*), *mu'mins'* will become one with God's will, about which there are many clear proofs in the holy Qur'ān. For instance, (1) In verses (76:30; 81:29), addressing the higher ranks of the faith God has said: "But you will not, except as God wills". This is about the people who are at the highest rank of faith. (2) Free will or choice is granted by God, but when the time comes it is taken back. This means that finally it is God's will which becomes the believing servant's will, as said in verse (33:36): "It is not fitting for a believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by God and His Messenger, to have any choice in their matter." This is an allusion that God and the Messenger's choice appears at the place of Command, which the believing servant adopts and abandons his own. (3) To discard the heavy burden of choice or free will at the perfect rank of faith is called *tawakkul* (to make God one's *wakil* or advocate), as in verse (10:84): "And Mūsā said: O my people, if you (really) believe in God, in Him put your *tawakkul* (trust, i.e., make Him your *wakil* or advocate) if you are going to submit (your 'I' to Him)". Thus, it is evident that the righteous will have the Divine will in Paradise and this will work like the word '*Kun*' (Be) in their personal world.
19. By the permission of God, the True Omnipotent, the miracles which were shown by the Prophets of the Qur'ān, were all by the *ibdā'ī* power. Although *ibdā'ī* is mainly related to the world of command and it is working there constantly, nonetheless, its act as a miracle can also appear in the world of creation. Here it is also worth mentioning that there is only one wall between the world of command and the world of creation and it is erected between the external senses and

internal senses, which in *ta'wili* wisdom is called the Wall of *Zu'l-Qarnayn*. Thus, when the Perfect Man's personal resurrection begins to take place, the particles of Gog and Magog lick this wall made of animal soul and reduce it to nothing and as a result the two worlds become one, as also do the external and internal senses. Hence, the Imām means a perfect and complete man who is the practical model of the perfect example (*uswah-yi hasanah*) of the holy Prophet for human ascension and elevation. This wall which becomes a barrier between the external and the internal world is lifted from his holy personality and in all these meanings his holy personality encompasses everything.

London,  
10<sup>th</sup> August, 1984.



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## Token of Appreciation

Respected ʿAllāmah Ṣāhib,

You have brought to us the spiritual heaven which sends torrential rain of love and affection. You have introduced us to the unfathomable ocean of the Pearl of recognition, the precious treasure of the secrets of Khudāwand Mawlānā Ḥāzīr Imām.

Ṣāhib, we wonder how to address you! Your vast and unfathomable knowledge reminds us time and again of the great *dāʿīs* of Ismaili history. We often wondered about the work and achievements of those magnificent personalities of our history, but after meeting you we realise that the Ismaili *ṭariqah* is truly a living and dynamic faith in which there is room for a true *muʿmin* through *ʿishq*, *ʿibādat* and endeavour to have access to the direct knowledge of the Imām. The vastness of your knowledge and the profound nature of your teaching are a living example of the great miracles of our *ṭariqah*.

We have particularly appreciated the way you have explained our faith and the holy Qurʾān in the light of present scientific advancement. For instance, your article on “*Kirāman Kātibin*” shows how Islam is a natural religion. We have been completely absorbed and amazed by your *taʿwīlāt* of our holy Qurʾān – you have truly shown us that everything is contained in the holy Qurʾān, as Mawlānā Sulṭān Muḥammad Shāh, *ṣalawātuʾllāhi ʿalayhi*, says: “The beauty of the Qurʾān is that its conception of Reality automatically adapts itself to the highest and most up to date as well as the most primitive thought.”

Above all, Ṣāhib, we will never be able to express our gratitude for the way you have explained how the sacred light of Imāmat shines forth from the sublime knowledge of every verse of the glorious Qurʾān, which enables a *muʿmin* to live a meaningful life and encourages him to search constantly for the knowledge of the

higher realities, such *nūrānī didār*, *aşl mēn wāşil*, the secrets of monoreality, etc.

The way you have explained the difficult concepts of *azal* and *abad*, *ibdāʿ* and *inbiʿās* to us, confirms the depth of your knowledge and spiritual experience and affirms your mission in life, which is to spread the real *ʿilm* of the Ismaili *ṭarīqah*. Further, the way you practically act upon your teachings leaves a lasting impact on all who have the good fortune to listen to you.

The logical and clear way in which you convey difficult concepts, your patience in the face of opposition, your love and affection for your students and your utter humility – these are the qualities which will console us in the days ahead when physically you will be far from us.

The experience of participating in *majālis* of *giryah-ū zārī* with you is an unforgettable one for all of us – they leave us feeling purified and free of rust and hardness of the heart which so easily affect us. We feel sure that the burning love for Khudāwand Mawlānā Ḥāzīr Imām can overcome any hindrances and obstacles in the spiritual journey to subjugate our *nafs-i ammārah* (carnal soul).

In the last two visits to London, during your personal presence amongst us and through your books, articles and correspondence you have given us so generously and unstintingly of the pure teachings of the Imām of the time, that no words can do justice to the gratitude we feel. Şāhib, pray for us that we make the greatest, the best and the widest use of the *ʿilm* you have given us for the benefit and progress of the *Jamāʿat*.

During your stay here, while you have been teaching regularly and writing without pause, we your humble students have been unable to give you as much time and attention as we should. Please forgive us our shortcomings, and accept our sincere gratitude for the enormous trouble you have taken in coming so far to give us the benefit of your knowledge.

May Mawlānā Ḥāẓir Imām grant you a safe journey, good health, happiness and may He bless you with his holy *didār*. *Amin*.

Your humble students,  
London,  
11<sup>th</sup> August, 1984.



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