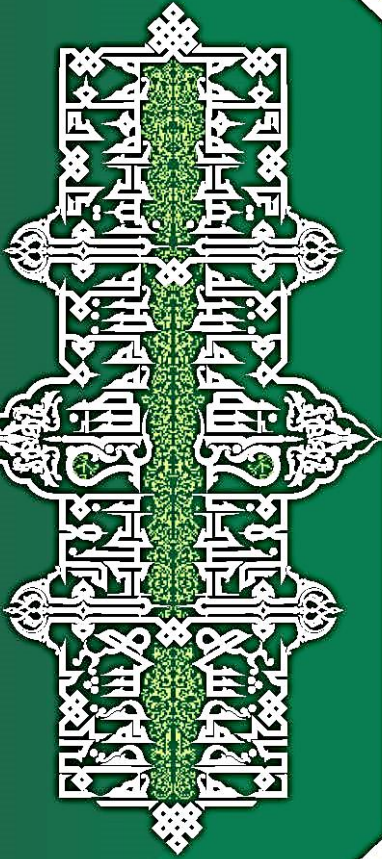


Part 1

Treasure of Knowledge

'Allamah Nasir al-Din Nasir Hunzai

(S.I.)



Treasure of Knowledge

‘Ilmī Khazānah

Part 1

By

‘Allāmah Naşir al-Din Naşir Hunzai (S.I.)

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Dedication

Mahdi Ali Qasim Ali Dhanji and his wife Naheed have been very dedicated and devoted office-bearers of Dānishgāh-i Khānah-yi Ḥikmat for nearly two decades. They have rendered numerous services to spread the light of knowledge and have sponsored the publication of books like *Casket of Pearls Volume I*, *Imām-shināsi* and *Kitābu'l-Walāyah* in the past. Now the sponsorship of this publication is an example of their continued services to spread sacred knowledge in the *jamā'at*.

Both Mahdi and Naheed have also served in different *jamā'at-khānahs* as volunteers for several years in the past and they are transferring the same keenness and zeal for community service into their two sons.

Their elder son Abdu'r-Rahim was born on 28 Sep, 1998. He has appeared in the examination of grade twelve and wants to continue his education. Beside secular education, Rahim has equally progressed in religious education and has done HRE from Platinum REC. In terms of *jamā'atī* service he has served as a teacher in Platinum REC and is now serving at Platinum *mayyit* committee.

Their younger son Abdu'l-Karim was born on 15 Sep, 2002. He is a student of grade 9 and wants to pursue his career in the field of computer science. He is a student of class 8th in Platinum REC and is also serving in Platinum scouts.

May the lasting services of this family bring *barakāt* manifold in their physical, spiritual and intellectual lives. May Khudāwand keep them in His merciful protection from every evil and grant them and other *mu'mins* the courage and inspiration to do similar service of esoteric knowledge. *Āmin! Yā Rabba'l-ālamīn.*

Acknowledgements

Al-ḥamduli 'llāhi °alā mannihi wa-iḥsānihi! By the grace of Imām-i zamān the English translation of “*°Ilmi khazānah ḥiṣṣah-yi awwal*” i.e., “Treasure of Knowledge Part I” is ready to be published. This booklet consists of five articles, as its old name “*°Panj maqālah*” also depicts, wherein the author °Allāmah Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai has revealed numerous wisdoms of some fundamental concepts of Islām.

This is the first translation effort by this humble servant of the Imām of the time and indeed needs special mention of my mentors Dr. Faqīr Muhammad Hunzai and Rashida Noormohamed-Hunzai. They inspired and motivated me to embark upon translating the Urdu books of my revered teacher into English and continuously supported me during this task by making several edits of the same. I am highly indebted to them for all their favours and kindness and convey my extreme gratitude to them. However, the fact is that in whatever words I try to express my gratitude to them the expression falls short of the intention.

I gratefully acknowledge the contributions of Nizar Fath Ali Habib in the publication of this book. He did the internal formatting and also designed an extremely attractive cover page.

My daughter Meherangez wished to contribute in my first translation effort thus she prepared the indices at the end of the book.

I hope that the seekers of spiritual knowledge will benefit from this translation and will pray for all who by their united efforts ensured the publication of this book.

Azeem Ali Lakhani

Karachi

18th August, 2017

Important Note

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

- (§) – *ṣalla'llāhu ʿalayhi wa-ālihi wa-sallam*
(May Allāh send blessings and peace through him and his progeny).
- (c) – *ʿalayhi's-salām / ʿalayha's-salām / ʿalayhima's-salām / ʿalayhimu's-salām / ʿalaynā salāmuhu/ ʿalaynā minhu's-salām*
(May peace be through him / her / them both / them / may his peace be upon us).
- (q) – *qaddasa'llāhu sirrahu*
(May God sanctify his secret).

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Foreword

Infinite and boundless gratitude to God, the Ever-lasting (*Qayyūm*), the Omnipotent (*Qādir*), for He accepts the insignificant service for knowledge from humble servants like us. Even if we prostrate till our last breath in gratitude to the Lord of the world for this huge bounty and great favour, the smallest fraction of the debt would not be repaid.

It is evident from the name Five Articles (*Panj Maqālah*) that this book is just a collection of five essays, but in my opinion each topic in this book is extremely important, beneficial, wisdom-filled and comprehensive. For this reason it would not be wrong to say that each article is a huge book in its own right. However, it is the readers who by their comments determine the value and worth of the book.

The first article in the book “*Panj Maqālah Part I*” speaks about the realities and recognitions of the great names of God (*asmā’u’l-ḥusnā*) in the light of the holy Qur’ān. In this article, answers to thousands of questions are present and available for those *mu’mins* who possess intellect and knowledge and use rectitude and guidance. It is so because when it is accepted that the supreme name of God is present as the Perfect Man among the people of the world then many logical conclusions can be drawn and numerous problems can be solved.

The second article is “The Rope of God”, which is a *ta’wili* subject of the holy Qur’ān and with the help of its wisdoms which are explained here, many realities of the glorious Qur’ān can become clear, provided Divine help and guidance are received.

The third article is “Piety” and its importance is that it is the essence of all Islamic worship and matters. It is true that piety has been of prime importance and is required from the very beginning i.e., the purpose of piety was addressed in the invitations and

shari'ats of all the prophets. Thus writing on this topic and placing it here in this book was extremely necessary.

The fourth article is “The Philosophy of Belief”. It is required because most of the people of the world do not understand the importance of belief and due to this reason they have gone far outside the circle of religion and are roaming in the desert of atheism. Today they have lost the peace of heart and the hope for tomorrow. Due to this great universal danger, it is incumbent upon every true *mu'min* to understand some fundamental concepts of the philosophy of belief.

The fifth article is “Fundamental realities of Islām”, in which 40 important points are mentioned and in my opinion, each point comprises multiple answers for the wise people, provided that they ponder and reflect upon them. This is so because the essence of meaning and purport is obtained only by pondering and reflecting.

After this short introduction, I must record my gratitude to all knowledge-nurturing people for the diverse support they have rendered. These people live in different places of the Ismaili world, their far-reaching eyes greatly value knowledge and they always strive hard to spread the light of knowledge; the food for their souls and intellects is knowledge, recognition, *zīkr* and worship. Their most favourite hobby is to study religious books and by doing so they enhance the repository of their religious knowledge day by day. In this way their spiritual progress is assured, all their doubts have vanished and as a result they receive Divine mercies and blessings day and night.

Humble Servant

Naṣīr al-Dīn Naṣīr Hunzai

Sunday 6th Ramaẓān 1397 AH / 21st August 1977

The Great Names of God

1. “And to God belong the beautiful names (*al-asmā’u’l-ḥusnā*), so call on Him by them” (7:180).
2. Imām Ja’far aṣ-Ṣādiq^(c) has said: “We [the Imāms] are the beautiful names of God and without our recognition no person’s deeds will be accepted”.
3. Here it becomes evident that God’s names are of two kinds: Verbal names and luminous names. God’s luminous names or His great names are the pure Imāms through whom we are commanded to invoke Him.
4. In the light of the above-mentioned Qur’ānic verse (7:180) remember that the supreme name of God whose recognition is essential with respect to the time and age is the Imām of the time.
5. There is no classification in God’s essence and attributes because He is one in all respects. However, the difference lies in expressing and explaining His attributes through different meanings and things. Moreover, the requirements of space and time are also taken into consideration.
6. Thus compared to the verbal names, the luminous names of God are His great names (*asmā’-yi ‘iẓām*), who are the Prophets and the Imāms. In this context, the Imām of the time is [God’s] supreme name (*ism-i a’ẓam*) in the present time.
7. This shows that some names of God are silent (*ṣāmīṭ*) and some are speaking (*nāṭiq*) and the speaking names are those who guide and give salvation.
8. The Divine Throne is living, the Divine Pen is living, the Divine Pedestal is living and so is the Divine Tablet. In short, everything that belongs to God is living, speaking and rational, because the example used for God is supreme. Such as when it is said “God’s hand”, it is an example and it is supreme in the sense that the Prophet and the Imām are designated as God’s hand. Similarly God’s face also symbolizes the same reality [i.e., Prophet and Imām].

9. In the light of the above-mentioned words, who can benefit from the supreme name of God? Can it be accessible to all or not?
10. What does it mean when God says: Call God by His beautiful names? Does it mean that whoever does not recognize His real name will be ignored?
11. Is it true that the Prophet and the Imām are the real names of God, therefore, He should be called through them and recourse should be taken to Him through them?
12. It is true that God's supreme name and God's vicegerent cannot be two separate things. Had it been so both these ranks would have been incomplete and imperfect. That is, the supreme name would not have the attributes of God's vicegerency and His vicegerent would not have been His supreme name.
13. How logical is the point that the Prophet and Imām of the time who can be God's vicegerent, can also be His supreme name. [Further] since His vicegerency is possible then the vicegerency of His names is even more so.
14. From the time of Ḥaẓrat Ādam^(c)'s appointment as the Divine vicegerent, this magnificent office continues in the holy chain of the Prophets and the Imāms. It has never been mentioned that God's vicegerency is the responsibility of the heavenly book or of the house of God (*baytu'llāh*), or that one of the angels is God's vicegerent. Thus it is evident that the office of vicegerency is not separate from Prophethood and Imāmat. Hence, the perfect man (who sometimes manifests as a Prophet and sometimes as an Imām) is also the supreme name of God.

The Rope of God

Among all the wisdom-filled examples which Allāh mentions in the wise Qur’ān, a very beautiful and extremely comprehensive example is the Divine rope (*ḥablu’llāh*). Certainly the reality (*mamṣūl*) of this symbol (*miṣāl*) is the Divine light of guidance present from pre-eternity (*azal*) and is guiding the people of the world by manifesting itself in the holy chain of the noble Prophets and the glorious Imāms. Thus here, with the help of God, we present some of the realities and recognitions of this luminous rope.

There are many verses in the noble Qur’ān which urge to seek the means of Divine closeness and to hold God firmly. Also there is a verse which says: “And hold fast, all of you together, to the rope of Allāh, and do not be divided” (3:103). This Divine command makes it evident to the people of wisdom that, this noble verse regarding the Divine rope, represents and elucidates all those holy verses in which it is emphatically ordered to be attached to Divine guidance, to get closer to it and to hold it firmly. If God could be found without any means and if His holy hem could be touched [directly] it would not have been commanded to hold His rope and the need of a true guide and guidance on the true path would not have been required. Thus it becomes very clear that this wisdom-filled verse regarding Allāh’s rope possesses prime importance hence wise people must reflect on its wisdoms.

Wisdom 1:

God has used a rope to symbolize the chain of the light of guidance, which implies that the chain of Divine guidance is established and continuing from pre-eternity (*azal*) to post-eternity (*abad*). Its one end is in the hand of God and the other is among the people or we can say that the rope of Divine guidance exists in the form of a circle between pre-eternity (*azal*) and post-eternity (*abad*) and between the higher world (*‘ālam-i ‘ulwi*) and the lower

world (*‘ālam-i suflī*) and it always manifests itself in this world in the personality of the Imām of the time.

Wisdom 2:

This world, which is the lower world (*‘ālam-i suflī*) is like a narrow and dark well in comparison to the higher world (*‘ālam-i ‘ulwī*). People should hold fast to the rope of Divine guidance so that they can be spiritually and luminously lifted up and taken to the bright atmosphere of the angelic world (*‘ālam-i malakūt*) similar to the worldly example of a rope being used when a person falls into a deep well.

Wisdom 3:

According to the law of nature it is possible that in spite of being present among them some people do not grip the Divine rope. It is also possible that some people hold it loosely and there is also the possibility that some people hold it initially and then suddenly they leave it and get separated and such is the real case. Allāh knew this and that is why He said: *wa‘taṣimū* = hold fast (not lightly), *bi-ḥabli’llāh* = to the rope of Allāh (i.e., the chain of light of guidance), *jamī‘ā* = all of you together (i.e., not separately), *wa lā-tafarraqu* = and do not get divided into sects (i.e., if you all do not hold to the rope of the light of guidance together you will have sectarianism). Complete guidance regarding adherence to the rope of God is present in this command of Allāh.

Wisdom 4: Knowledge for a united humanity

According to this verse about the Divine rope disunity and sectarianism were utterly prohibited in Islām. The emphatic nature of this command is evident from its context. The purport is that disunity and differences at any place in religion, whether it is in the community or the *jamā‘at*, in a religious institution or in the thoughts of a *mu‘min*, is a big loss. Therefore, this fundamental guidance prohibits it and it is ordered to prevent it by holding [fast] to God’s rope.

Wisdom 5:

It is as necessary for the rope of Divine guidance to reach every person as it is to be present and manifest in every period. Certainly

it can reach every person in the form of guidance and command (*amr-ū farmān*) so that in this way every person has access to the Divine rope and it becomes possible for them to follow God's commands.

Wisdom 6:

A rope has some components therefore, one part of the Divine rope is the spirit and spirituality of the Qur'ān, which is also known as reality (*ḥaqīqat*), wisdom (*ḥikmat*) and esoteric meaning (*ta'wil*), and the second part is the light of the Imām. A physical rope is a material object hence its different parts could be separated from each other. The rope of religion however is spiritual and luminous therefore its parts are so united that they cannot be separated.

Wisdom 7:

God says: "But how can you disbelieve while it is you to whom the verses of Allāh are recited, and among you is His Messenger? And whoever holds fast to Allāh is surely guided to the right path" (3:101). From this verse it is evident that during the Prophet's time, holding to God, i.e., God's rope, and to guide on the straight path was possible only through the sublime teachings of religious harmony and unity which the Prophet used to impart to the Muslims and *mu'mins* by the command of God. Thus the Prophet himself had the status of the Divine rope in his time.

Wisdom 8: Knowledge for a united humanity

After Prophet Muḥammad^(s), Mawlānā 'Alī^(c) and each of the true Imāms from his children is God's pure rope in his time. This Divine rope will continue to remain present in the world forever so that the means of unity and salvation remains available for the people of religion and faith.

Wisdom 9:

Having listened to and understanding God's command that all of us together should hold fast to His rope and not become separated, it becomes unacceptable that the Qur'ān, Islām, Prophet and Imām are separate entities and that only one among these is God's rope and the others are not. Rather the very purport of this saying is that

God's things are already united, thus people [too] should unite, because this blessed command teaches that the ranks of religion should be considered close to each other and that the human powers of faith should be united so that religious unity, centrality and brotherhood are established.

Wisdom 10:

The reality of the rope of God (*ḥablu'llāh*), as mentioned earlier, is the chain of guidance, which is the chain of the light of guidance of the Prophets and the Imāms. It means that the light of God and Prophet (whose manifestation is the Imām of the time) is the Divine rope and following his guidance means to hold fast to it.

Wisdom 11:

The Imām of the time who is the firm rope of God, is also the true guide and the straight path because the final reality (*mamsūl*) and the meaning of all these examples is one and different examples of this one reality are mentioned (17:89) in the entire Qur'ān.

Wisdom 12:

The Imām of the time is the pure rope of God because he is the true vicegerent and the representative of God and the Prophet. Thus to give allegiance to the Imām, to obey him and to have love for him are indeed holding fast to God's rope.

Wisdom 13:

Despite the fact that God's sublime glory is far beyond the reach of feeble human beings, His command to together hold fast to Him, and then His explaining this as together holding fast to His rope, is His unique blessing, because this verse mentions the representation of God's extreme proximity.

Wisdom 14:

According to this command of Allāh, when a person holds fast to God's rope it means that he holds to God and truly designates Him as his guide and advocate. In such a case this person is liberated from worrying about what to think, what to say and what to do in religious matters because he has embraced God as his guide and

advocate and in this example he is very near to God, rather God is with him.

Wisdom 15:

It is impossible that people possessing different attitudes and thinking can unite without a means and a centre of unity, harmony and centrality. Therefore there is a means and a centre for religious and national unity and oneness and that is the Divine rope (*ḥablu'llāh*) and leaving it will result in disharmony among the people of religion. May God help us to understand the truth.

Note: For more information on this topic please refer to the holy Qur'ān, especially the study of following verses is essential: 3:101, 3:103, 4:146, 4:175 and 22:78.



Piety (*taqwā*)

Piety is the spirit and essence of all worship and matters in Islām. No word or deed is accepted in the Divine court without piety because God does not value words and deeds which are devoid of the essence of piety.

Piety means righteousness, fear of God and to refrain from all types of sins. Thus the standard of piety is common for ordinary people and special for chosen people. Or we can say that piety has many stages at the top of which there is a perfect rank which is the characteristic of Prophets and Imāms.

The initial stages of piety are within the confines of intention, its intermediate stages are related to speech and the final stages relate to actions. This means that the foundation of piety starts with the state and intention of the heart and passing through different stages of thought, it enters the stage of words and finally it enters the field of actions.

This shows that the foundation and centre of piety is in the human heart, as the wise Qur’ān says:

“Those are they whose hearts Allāh has tested for piety” (49:3).

And again:

“And whoever respects the signs of Allāh, this surely is (the outcome) of the piety of hearts” (22:32).

The purport of the holy Prophet Muḥammad^(s)’s statement that deeds depend on intentions is tantamount to saying that without the right intention, no deed can be correct and right intention is impossible without the righteousness of heart. Thus the fundamental obligation becomes incumbent upon a faithful servant to form a habit of having good intentions (*nayk-niyyat*), which can only be done through the righteousness of heart.

It is clear from the stories of the Qur'ānic prophets that piety is the soul of their missions and there is no *shari'at* among their different laws (*sharā'ī'*) in which piety is not given prime importance. Rather its need and importance is such that it was established as a universal (*kullīyyah*) in the *shari'at* of the first prophet Ādam^(c) that:

“He said: Allāh only accepts from those who are righteous” (5:27)

The vastness of the meaning of piety and its value is clearly elucidated by the Qur'ānic reality in which it is said:

“O people! Verily We have created you from a male and a female, and made you nations and tribes, so that you may recognise each other. Verily the most honoured of you with Allāh is the one who is the most righteous (*atqākum*). Verily Allāh is knower, aware” (49:13)

This noble verse shows that, on the one hand the attribute of piety is inevitable in faith, religion and for humanity. Every human being should be at one or the other stage of piety because the above verse is addressed to the world of humanity from the time of [Ḥazrat] Ādam^(c) till the resurrection and no person is exempted from this challenge [of practicing] piety. From another aspect piety, which due to being common amongst ordinary people and special in the chosen ones, is a human attribute common to all human beings. This is the reason why piety is considered the pre-requisite for the collective human honour. In contrast to this, the pre-requisite for special esteem is wisdom and wisdom is that universal good (*khayr-i kull*) in which a world of goodness and well-being is encompassed and piety is also included in it.

In the meaning of piety as fear of God, a faithful servant should fear the Divine law in his heart, which can only be in the form of complete obedience. It is obvious that every person obeys the Divine law to some extent according to his faith or concept. This is a bright proof that the fear of God is common amongst people. Where piety means righteousness, it also has the same meaning, that is, to refrain from those thoughts, words and deeds which are

prohibited (*ḥarām*) and to protect oneself from God's disobedience. This is the meaning of piety.

If we limit ourselves to the word “*taqwā*” in studying the Qur’ān we will find more than 250 verses on this subject and if we consider the wider meaning of piety then no verse will be devoid of this topic. This same principle of oneness of meaning (*wahdat-i ma^cnawī*) of the Qur’ān is applicable to other topics as well.

Thus an example of the universality and comprehensiveness of piety is that Allāh says:

“O you who believe! Save yourselves and your families from the fire” (66:6).

It is evident that this command “Save! (*qū!*)” is directly linked to piety and it is also obvious that the only way to avoid hell is to obey God as mentioned in the Qur’ān, however, this obedience of God is such that it becomes incumbent to act upon all the orders of God, the Prophet and the custodians of the Divine command (*sāhibān-i amr*). This shows that piety (*taqwā*) is among the comprehensive words of the wise Qur’ān and all the religious commands are included in its purport.

At the beginning of the third *rukū^c* of *sūrah-yi A^crāf* (7) it is said that piety is the best attire of a *mu’min*'s soul, which means that the spiritual characteristic of piety acts as an attire for the soul. [O children of Ādam^(c)! We have sent down to you a garment to cover your shameful parts and garments of adornment, and the garment of piety (*libāsu t-taqwā*) is best (7:26)]. Thus, it should always be remembered that when a person sees himself naked or wearing torn clothes in a dream, he should understand this spiritual signal that he has become the victim of religious impiety. Contrary to this if he sees himself in fine clothes in the world of dream or in the luminous world of imagination, it means that his piety is symbolized by the fine clothing.

Several verses of the holy Qur’ān state that God befriends those who are pious. It means that Allāh loves those who are righteous. A person who considers himself pious can ascertain the immediate result of piety in this world within himself by checking if he has

love for God or if there exists any such attraction which always or sometimes draws his attention to the remembrance of God. God's friendship and His love is not a silent and static thing without any influence and attraction, rather it is a living reality which gives a human being the strength and zeal to obey God as it is mentioned in the verses regarding God's love.

The holy Qur'ān also says that God is with the pious people, which means that as a result of piety the vicious characteristics and satanic insinuations of His servant perish and in its place manifest the attributes of the Compassionate (*ṣifāt-i Raḥmāniyyah*). A heart in which God's attributes manifest contains everything and this is the meaning of God being with someone.

The wise Qur'ān mentions that to forgive and to be just is very close to piety. This shows that piety is superior to forgiveness and justice even though they are among the special attributes of a human being.

According to *sūrah-yi A'raf* (7) verse 128; *wa'l-^cāqibatu li'l-muttaqin* (and the good end is (only) for the righteous ones), it is essential to know that ^c*āqibat* means results, which are at least four. Two of them belong to the collective state of people and two belong to their individual state. It is in this way that from one aspect, the end result of all the people of the world is the hereafter and from the other aspect it is the ultimate epoch (*ākhir zamānah*). Likewise individually from one aspect the last period of every person's life is his result and from another the immediate result of every deed is its end. Here the reality becomes very clear that the reward of ^c*āqibat* for the pious people is that not only will they be prosperous in the hereafter and in the ultimate epoch but they will also be very happy in the last period of their lives as well as after performing every good deed.

Verse 67 of *sūrah-yi Zukhruf* (43) says: "Friends on that day will be foes one to another, save the righteous ones." Its reality is that all the friendships which are based on worldly objectives will become enmity but those friendships which are established by the pious people in relation to God, the Prophet and the true *awliyā'* will endure and will obviously be beneficial.

Allāh says in verse 197 of *sūrah-yi al-Baqarah* (2): “And whatever good you do, Allāh knows it; and make provision, for surely the best of provisions is piety”. Here it becomes known that generally every good deed and especially piety provides the provision for the path of spirituality (*rāh-i rūhāniyyat*) and for the stage of the hereafter (*manzil-i ākhirat*). Thus, one should know that *mu'mins* who are keen to progress spiritually, if in spite of performing many good deeds are unable to do so, certainly it is due to not having the best provision of the path of spirituality, i.e., piety.

None of the seven pillars of Islām i.e., *Walāyat*, *Ṭahārat*, *Ṣalāt*, *Zakāt*, *Ṣawm*, *Ḥajj* and *Jihād* is without the purpose of piety and if we read the Qur'ānic verses and prophetic traditions (*aḥādīs-i nabawī*) related to them, we will know that their prime objective, origin and foundation is piety.

Since man is a collection of three things, namely: body, soul and intellect, piety and fear of God also has three stages namely: physical piety, spiritual piety and intellectual piety and the highest rank is that of intellectual piety, regarding which the wise Qur'ān says: “And among the servants it is the *'ulamā'* who truly fear God” (35:28). It is evident that the highest rank of piety is impossible without wisdom and recognition (*ma'rifat*).

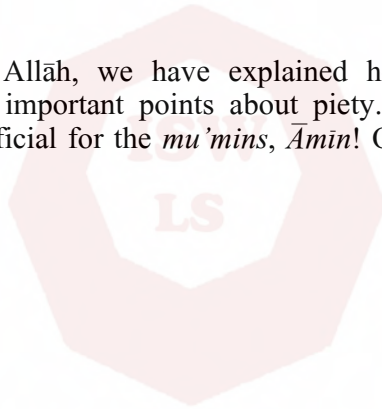
It should be known that recognition of God is attainable only through the intellect, knowledge and wisdom. Moreover, piety and fear of God can only be understood through them. It is only then that one can differentiate between innumerable concepts and beliefs and can choose some and refrain from others so that the heart and mind can become free from the contamination of ignorance, falsehood and polytheism (*shirk*). This is the reason why the wise Qur'ān designates the real scholars (*'ulamā'*) as the model of piety and fear of God.

The principle that ease automatically comes after enduring hardship is also among the teachings of the glorious Qur'ān. Therefore, after passing through numerous stages of piety there comes a stage in the path of spirituality where piety becomes a living word, i.e., an automatic speaking Supreme Name (*ism-i a'zam*) and causes a personal resurrection or revolution in the

spirituality of true *mu'mins* which the people of recognition (*ahl-i ma'rifat*) call the power of 'Izrā'il (*tāqat-i 'Izrā'iliyyah*). In this regard, the wise Qur'ān says:

“Then Allāh sent down His peace (*sakīnah*) upon His messenger and upon the believers and affixed to them the word of piety (*kalimatu't-taqwā*), and they were worthy of it and entitled to it” (48:26).

By the help of Allāh, we have explained here some of the fundamental and important points about piety. May God make these points beneficial for the *mu'mins*, *Āmin!* O the Sustainer of the worlds!



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The philosophy of belief (*‘aqīdah*)

Literal analysis:

The word *‘aqīdah* comes from *‘aqad* which means a knot. Thus *‘aqada* means to tie a rope and *‘aqqada* means to tie a rope fast. In this sense *‘aqīdah* is used for such religious narrations and traditions which people generally consider correct without properly knowing them. Or we can say that prior to education, research, wisdom and recognition, the faculty by virtue of which religious matters are believed, is known as *‘aqīdah*.

‘Aqīdah is faith (*īmān*):

It should also be noted that *‘aqīdah* is another name of such a faith (*īmān*) which is primordial in nature and is called “to believe (*bāwar karnā*)” in the lexicon. As God says:

“O you who believe! believe in Allāh and His Messenger” (4:136).

It asks the people who had earlier accepted the fundamentals of the religion just on the basis of *‘aqīdah*, to have faith in the light of realities and recognitions and to become true *mu’mins*. Thus, religion demands that in the first stage people should accept the holy sayings and the related traditions of God, the Prophet and the custodian of Divine command by considering those as firm belief and later they should gradually make their faith perfect in the light of realities and recognitions.

Firm belief (*‘aqīdah-yi rāsikh*):

People’s beliefs are not similar; rather, they are at different stages. At one end belief is such that it is practically non-existent and at the other it is firm and at the highest rank. Only a person with a firm belief can progress on the path of religion. The firmness and growth of belief is gained through true love and obedience. Thus those people who are intoxicated with religious love and are the Imām’s obedient and firm believers, are very fortunate. Only these people can succeed ethically, religiously and spiritually and only

these are the people who can transform their belief (*‘aqīdah*) into perfect faith.

***‘Aqīdah* is a mediator:**

One should know that *‘aqīdah* is the foundation of faith; and perfect faith and firm belief cannot be generated without it. Belief (*‘aqīdah*) is the only intermediary through which a person can reach the fountainhead of knowledge, wisdom and guidance. A person without belief is like a non-existent person because the concept of the religious existence of a human being can only be correct when he or she has a belief.

The foundation of *‘aqā’id* (beliefs):

Beliefs are established on the foundation of holy sayings of God, the Prophet and the exalted Imāms. Traditions and rituals are essential for the survival of beliefs as they play their part in their explanation. This is so because trivial and minor religious matters are also very important for the existence of *‘aqīdah* and we can understand it through the example of the very delicate branches and thin roots of a fruit-bearing tree. The branches which bear sweet fruits seem very weak and insignificant to an ordinary person. Similarly the roots of a tree which absorb the elements for its sustenance from the earth seem so tiny and disarranged that a person without vision may consider those entirely useless, however, the prosperity and growth of a tree depends on these little roots and delicate branches.

Respect for *‘aqā’id*:

A person who does not respect beliefs, despite being secure inside the castle of religion, cannot reach the realities and thus cannot respect them. This is analogous to a child who does not respect his parents at home, does not respect his schoolteacher at a later stage and therefore he remains deprived of his teacher’s knowledge. Thus one should know that for a *mu’min* the phase of beliefs and rituals is like the nurturing of parents and the stage of realities and recognition is like the knowledge of a teacher.

The danger for *‘aqā’id*:

The biggest danger for beliefs is the concept of atheism. Any contrary concept to our belief can deceive our new generation. Thus, we should take action to protect our beliefs from the influence of atheists and the discourses of outsiders, otherwise we stand to lose the great spiritual wealth of belief.



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Fundamental realities of Islām

1. Islām is the religion of God, therefore, it is eternally present and established (9:36, 12:40, 30:30, 30:43). In accord with the time, it is called the religion of nature, because God has created people according to His nature i.e., His religion (30:30). To understand the meaning of the religion of nature, one should reflect upon the best example in nature i.e., a human being who after being born as a little baby progresses through the different stages of life and gradually reaches perfection. In a similar way Islām gradually passes through different stages of progression and its light becomes complete and perfect (9:32, 61:8). The proof that the light reaches the stage of perfection as a result of Islām's all-embracing progress is that as the true religion, it will surpass all the other religions of the world (9:33, 61:9).
2. The Qur'ān teaches that the greatest preacher, supreme *dā'i* and the strongest centre of Islām is Prophet Ḥazrat Muḥammad Muṣṭafā^(s) and this religion begins from the time of Ḥazrat Ibrāhīm^(c) (22:78), rather from one aspect it commenced at the time of Ḥazrat Nūḥ^(c) (42:13) and from another aspect, it is from the period of Ḥazrat Ādam^(c) (23:51-52).
Knowledge for a united humanity
3. The light of Islām is one but its manifestations are different with respect to time and age. Thus Islām was one in reality and it was one religion in the time of Ḥazrat Ādam^(c), Ḥazrat Nūḥ^(c), Ḥazrat Ibrāhīm^(c), Ḥazrat Mūsā^(c), Ḥazrat 'Īsā^(c) and Prophet Muḥammad^(s) but since the circumstances and demands of these Prophets' time and space were different, therefore, their *shari'ats* and guidance were also different.
4. Allāh says that the glorious Qur'ān is present in the heavenly books of previous communities (26:196). This does not mean that the wise Qur'ān was narrated in the divine books of the previous prophets with respect to its language and exoteric

sense. Rather, it was present in the sense of the spirit, spirituality, light and esoteric essence of those heavenly books. Thus, in a similar way the esoteric and inner guidance of the holy Qur'ān is present in the sacred commands of the Imām of the time.

5. The right path which goes to Allāh and on which He is accessed is only one and it is [called] Islām, the right path (*ṣirāṭ-i mustaqīm*). Hence “*ihdina 'ṣ-ṣirāṭa'l-mustaqīm*” (1:6) teaches to attain God's recognition through knowledge and deeds according to true Islām and for this first and foremost the mediation of the true guide is required.
6. It is evident that the final stage of the path of Islām is God's recognition (*Khudā-shināsi*) i.e., *ma'rifat* which is actually the stage of salvation as well as the real paradise and all the prophets invited towards this goal.
7. The religion of all the prophets and their purpose of inviting [to it] is one, similarly their book is also one. However, apparently their *shari'ats* and their books are different and many.
8. The holy Qur'ān which is the last book of the Lord of the world is the compendium of everything (16:89). All the teachings and guidance of [the levels of] *shari'at*, *ṭariqat*, *ḥaqīqat* and *ma'rifat* are mentioned in it. It is *tanzil* as well as *ta'wil*, it is manifest as well as hidden, it is knowledge as well as wisdom, it is the fruit as well as its kernel. Therefore, not only are the commands relating to the past mentioned in its exterior and interior, in fact it does not lack guidance for the present and the future. However, to see and understand all these things human beings require the Divine light, which is always present in this world along with the Qur'ān (4:174).
9. The wise Qur'ān is certainly Allāh's guidance. However, not only is its exterior (*tanzil*) guidance, its interior (*ta'wil*) is also guidance. According to a prophetic tradition (*ḥadis*) the Qur'ān's hidden meaning is seven times more than its apparent meaning and according to another narration it is

seventy times more. There is an abundance of guidance in the glorious Qur'ān so that the Muslims and *mu'mins* may progress physically and religiously in the light of its guidance and this is possible only when they read and understand the noble Qur'ān with its [living] light (5:15) and act according to it.

10. Without the Prophet and his vicegerent no heavenly book can benefit the people (*ummat*). Further, the book can never be unaccompanied [by a teacher] in any condition or in any time. Thus, it was present in pre-eternity in the Divine pen in an intellectual form, then it manifested in the spiritual scripture of the Divine tablet, then in the spiritual remembrance of Jibrā'il, after that it descended on the blessed heart of the Prophet Muḥammad^(s) and finally the true vicegerent of the Prophet was nominated as the teacher of the book and the Qur'ān was entrusted to him. From this it is evident that the Qur'ān was never alone, nor is it so today or will it be in the future.
11. If to understand the Qur'ān had been an easy matter and it had not been required to refer to those who are well-grounded in knowledge (*rāsikhūn fi'l-ilm*, 3:7) this would have been the case first for those Muslims who were living in Arabia in the time of the holy Prophet, since by virtue of its language they were not only very near to the Qur'ān but it had also descended physically according to the requirements of their circumstances and as solutions for their problems and necessary guidance for them etc., yet it is said to the Prophet:

“And we have revealed the Qur'ān to you that you may make clear to human beings what has been revealed to them” (16:44).

Thus, to have the teacher of Qur'ān in all times after the Prophet is indispensable and that teacher is the Imām of the time.

12. In Islām two just witnesses are required to testify to the truthfulness of a claim. Similarly, two glorious and eternal

miracles are always present in this world as evidence of the truthfulness of the prophethood of the holy messenger: one is the Qur'ān and the other is its teacher who is appointed by God and the Prophet i.e., the Imām of the time. These two precious things are not only the two great and eternal miracles to prove prophethood, they are also the two just witnesses to testify to this reality.

13. The fundamental words to testify to the oneness of God and the messengership of the Prophet are also two and are called *shahādātayn*. This is so because the veracity and truthfulness of any claim depends upon two witnesses, therefore, two just witnesses are always present by virtue of the Divine law to affirm the prophethood of the Prophet of mercy and they are the sacred Qur'ān and the Imām of the time.
14. It is a fact that a Prophet possesses [the power of] miracles. The greatest and the most beneficial miracle is the one which is intellectual and eternal in nature since only such a miracle is all-embracing and possesses far-reaching results. Therefore, two such blessed miracles are present from the time of the holy Prophet till the resurrection, and they are the Qur'ān and the Imām.
15. It is known that the Qur'ān is the first miracle of the Prophet and that *jinn* and humankind [together] are unable to produce such an unprecedented and wisdom-filled book. The true Imām is the Prophet's second miracle. This is in the sense that no individual among the *jinn* or human beings except the Imām, can explain the esoteric wisdom of the Qur'ān, because after the Prophet it is with the Imām of the time. Thus, no question can arise about the personal miracle of the Imām, since he is himself the miracle of the Prophet.
16. Since it is a fact [as mentioned above] that the Imām with the Qur'ān is the living miracle of the Prophet, it is not necessary for the Imām to perform miracles for the common people, just as no Muslim requires a miracle in order to accept the Qur'ān as the Divine book. Rather the Qur'ān is itself a miracle but one requires the inner eye to see miracles.

17. Notwithstanding the above, special people always see the Imām as the locus of manifestation of wonders (*mazharu'l-^cajā'ib*) i.e., they observe his wonders with the heart's eye. These wonders are spread through the stage of imagination to all the stages of true spirituality and Qur'ānic *ta'wils*. Thus, these are called intellectual, spiritual and luminous miracles.
18. An unbiased and wise person should check the esoteric books of the Ismā'īlī dignitaries to see the wonderful wisdoms of the wise Qur'ān mentioned in them. What is the source of these magnificent wisdoms? It is the help (*ta'yīd*) of the true Imām's holy light. Thus, whoever has relatively more wisdom, has the abundant good (*khayr-i kaṣīr*, 2:269) and this is the prime objective of the presence of the Qur'ān and the Imām.
19. According to the indications of the noble Qur'ān, a great miracle of the holy light of God is that nobody can extinguish it. Thus, Ḥaḏrat Imām Ḥusayn^(c)'s physical martyrdom in Karbalā was a failed attempt to extinguish the pure light of God, since according to Divine expedience, Allāh's light was to remain present and luminous forever. By the command of God it is living and present now and will remain so until the resurrection.
20. The intellectual and luminous status of the Qur'ān and the Imām is that of God's rope (3:103) and to hold it fast is to act according to the order and command of the Qur'ān and the Imām. It means that the Qur'ān should be obeyed according to the teachings and guidance of the Imām because he is well-grounded (*rāsikh*, 3:7) in Qur'ānic knowledge.
21. Reflect on why the light of God's guidance is not symbolized by the sun although it is a great fountainhead of light, rather it is symbolized by a house lamp? This is so because every person cannot observe the sun [scientifically] but everyone can reflect on the lamp, how its flame physically remains the same, yet in reality it is being renewed each and every instant. By the supply of fuel, the lamp's light continues forever and it spreads out as a fountain. This means that the light of

knowledge, wisdom and guidance continues luminously, it moves at lightning speed, it continues like a fountain and never ceases, it is like a discourse which is endless, it is like the rain of light which never stops, it is a living thing and is dynamic. Thus, the light of guidance spreads out as a fresh and renewed light each and every second, which is felt by true *mu'mins* physically and its waves run in their hearts and minds.

22. All the quotations, matters and rites of religion which are present among us now, existed in the time of Prophet in two forms, some manifested actually and some existed potentially and thus were hidden. Also there are innumerable things in religion which have appeared after the time of the Prophet: such as the current script of the holy Qur'ān, its diacritical marks (*a'rāb*), signs and symbols, translations, exegeses, and all other sciences related to it, the current script of *ḥadis*, jurisprudence and its principles, Imamate, *khilāfat*, Islamic kingdom and related laws, the concepts and beliefs of the people of *ṭariqat* (*ṣūfis*) and their terminologies and esoteric meanings (*ta'wils*), and many other sciences and their inventions which are being incorporated in religion after the scientific revolution, for example telephone, telegram, loud speaker, radio, newspaper, television, train, motor, airplane etc. Thus, it is clear that a thing which is invented after the time of the Prophet of Islām and if it is beneficial from a religious aspect, it is not prohibited by God and the Prophet, as the exoteric and esoteric guidance of the wise Qur'ān encourages and motivates to strengthen Islām by making use of all permissible and appropriate means. As God says:

“And prepare against them what force you can and horses tied at the frontier, to frighten thereby the enemy of Allāh and your enemy and others besides them, whom you do not know (but) Allāh knows them; and whatever thing you will spend in Allāh's way, it will be repaid to you fully and you shall not be treated unjustly” (8:60)

This Divine guidance evinces the reality that Muslims of every period should themselves think and decide regarding

the progress and strengthening of Islām according to the demands of time and by assessing the strengths of the enemy they should decide which power should be used to compete with it. In the above verse no other thing is mentioned except the preparation of horses and it is left to the Muslims to use the power they consider most appropriate among intellectual, ethical, spiritual, financial, political, technological and armament so that the enemy becomes frightened. This means that in Islām there is but progress and in this connection there is freedom for beneficial words and deeds both in a religious and a physical sense.

23. Who according to the Qur'ān can be good at acting upon its injunctions? They are the people who collectively in the past, present and future act upon the exoteric as well as the esoteric meaning of the Qur'ān because it is a unique fruit of paradise with respect to its physical knowledge and a precious kernel with respect to its inner wisdom. In this example the maximum benefit is for those who eat the fruit as well as the kernel.
24. Every person naturally claims that his path is the right path, however, one should compare who is more pious, because piety is the essence of all worship and matters of religion and it is the benchmark of religion and faith.
25. The Qur'ān says that the religion of Islām is perfect and complete in all aspects (5:3) and it also says that God's physical and hidden bounties are complete (31:20), how is it possible for the Imām of the time, who is the teacher of the Qur'ān and the true guide, to not be available and present? Had that been the case and the Imām were absent and unavailable, religion would be incomplete and there would be considerable shortcoming in God's spiritual and intellectual bounties.
26. After Prophet Muḥammad^(s)'s demise all the Muslims agreed upon the necessity of his vicegerent and it was a separate issue who it should be. Although the problems at that time were limited as compared to now, they agreed that there

should be a vicegerent or an Imām, either by God’s and the Prophet’s command or by the decision of their own intellects. In this context, when we have a whole universe of material and religious problems before us why should there not be an Imām [today]?

27. Islām’s *shari‘at* is true but some people judge the matters of *ṭariqat*, *ḥaqīqat* and *ma‘rifat* on its standard, which is not correct because its standard is dedicated only to it whereas the standards for the later stages are distinct and different. For example every judicious *mu‘min* knows that there are many conditions ordained for the *shar‘i* prayer (*namāz*) which are not required during the remembrance of God.
28. Ismā‘īlis are sometimes asked to explain why they are free to go to the mosque (*masjid*) whenever they wish without any hindrance, whereas, non-Ismā‘īlis are not permitted to attend *jamā‘at-khānah*. The answer is very simple and easy. In Islām the mosque comes first which is at the stage of *shari‘at* and it is for all Muslims. Then there is a *khān-qāh* which is the stage of *ṭariqat*, thus it is not for everyone except for *sūfis* and after that there is *jamā‘at-khānah* which is the stage of *ḥaqīqat* and it is specifically for the Ismā‘īlis. Thus, until a Muslim becomes a disciple of a *shaykh* or a *murshid* of *ṭariqat* and takes the oath of allegiance, he cannot enter his *khān-qāh*, although they and those outside are both Muslim groups. The same principle applies to a *jamā‘at-khānah*. Thus if we [Ismā‘īlis] go to a mosque nothing in reality is outside our belief, contrary to which if non-Ismā‘īlis go to a *khān-qāh* or *jamā‘at-khānah* they are neither acquainted with its manners and customs nor do they go there with all its conditions of belief and respect. Thus if non-Ismā‘īlis go to *jamā‘at-khānah* it would be without permission and in a true sense without reward.
29. The exalted Imām is the living light of the pure Qur’ān and [he is] the speaking book (*kitāb-i nāṭiq*), thus he is the proof (*ḥujjat*) of God for people. Thus, there will be no *ḥujjat* on God on the day of resurrection, i.e., no person will be able to say that a guide was not available for him in the world.

30. The Prophet of Islām continued to receive the revelation of the wise Qur’ān for 23 years. Thus some of its verses were abrogated and their commands were substituted by those mentioned in the new verses (*nāsikh*). During this period there were amendments in some of the Prophet’s *aḥādīs* according to the time. Thus had the holy Prophet been physically present until today certainly there would have been many other changes during these 1400 years and the same reality is present in the fresh guidance of the Imām of the time.
31. The holy Qur’ān says: “O you who believe! Obey Allāh, and obey the Messenger and the *ulu’l-amr* from amongst you” (4:59). This Divine command shows that the Prophet’s obedience and that of God are separate. Also the obedience of *ulu’l-amr* and that of the Prophet are distinct. The obedience of all the ranks is due to their authority and guidance i.e., the Imām of the time is the possessor of authority after God and the Prophet, which is why he not only directs the guidance of God and Prophet towards the people but also gives them his own guidance according to the time and space by virtue of his authority.
32. Disease can be of a physical nature as well as spiritual; it is worldly as well as religious. Thus the only cure for all religious and spiritual diseases is love for the Imām of the time, because it is only through this that his true obedience becomes very easy and the tendency to disobey is removed from a *mu’min*’s being.
33. Why is there disunity in Islām today? Why cannot Muslims be more powerful than other nations? Why are there so many different exegeses of the Qur’ān? Why cannot the Muslim community gather and unite whenever necessary? Alas! If only the Prophet were present or his true vicegerent had been recognized and obeyed by everyone!
34. Allāh never asked His rope to encompass the people rather He ordered the people to together hold fast to God’s rope (3:103). In this context, the question why they did not recognize the

true Imām should be addressed to the people and the Imām cannot be asked why he did not perform luminous miracles to invite the people.

35. Mawlā ʿAlī^(c) said: ‘ask me before you lose me’. In this statement it is clear that some people were going to lose the Imām and thus the link to ask questions was going to be broken. This shows that people should first accept the Imām and then they should ask questions as the Qurʾān says: “If you do not know, then ask the people of *zīkr*” (16:43).
36. The holy tree of knowledge, wisdom and guidance is mentioned in the *sūrah-yi Ibrāhīm* (14:24). This holy tree is the Prophet and the Imām through whose light the *muʾmins* always obtain the fruit of external and internal guidance. Thus in Islām the Imām of the time is the evergreen tree after the noble Prophet.
37. The glorious Qurʾān says: “And to Allāh belong all the beautiful names (i.e., great names); so call Him by them” (7:180). According to a saying of Imām Jaʿfar aṣ-Ṣādiq^(c), the Imāms are the beautiful names i.e., the great names of God. Thus the Imām of the time is the living supreme name of Allāh and to call Allāh through him is the most excellent worship.
38. Many [self-proclaimed] teachers, being unable to explain the present reality to their followers, occupy them with the stories of the past so that in the darkness of their imaginations everything appears astonishing and amazing to them, to the extent that they stop the process of questioning and reflection.
39. All religious commands from the time of [Ḥaḏrat] Ādam^(c) till the resurrection are of two types. One are those in which there cannot be any amendment and the others are the ones in which there can be modification at appropriate times so that relevance and suitability according to time and space can be achieved.
40. The beginning and ending of religion is the oneness (*tawḥīd*) of Allāh. It means that the first thing in Islām is the

acceptance and belief in the oneness of God and finally the recognition of God's oneness should be known as the result of all the religious words and deeds.

Our *tawhīd* is the one which is mentioned in the Qur'ān and the *ḥadīṣ* and the same is stated by Ḥaẓrat Mawlānā Imām °Alī^(c) in his splendid book “*Nahju'l-balāghah*”. The real recognition of the same *tawhīd* has been emphatically ordered by our holy Imāms. Our religious dignitaries have explained this same *tawhīd* in the language of philosophy, wisdom and *ta'wil* as it is evident from the famous book “*Rāḥatu'l-aql*” by Sayyidnā Ḥamīd al-dīn Kirmānī^(q) and the teachings of Pir Nāṣir-i Khusraw^(q).



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Glossary

A

abad – post-eternity

a^crāb – diacritical marks

ahl-i ma^crifat – the people of recognition

ākhir zamānah – ultimate epoch

^cālam-i ^culwī – the higher world

^cālam-i malakūt – the angelic world

^cālam-i suflī – the lower world

^caqidah (pl. *^caqā'id*) – belief

^caqidah-yi rāsikh – firm belief

asmā'-yi ^cizām – great names

asmā'u'l-^chusnā – beautiful names [of God]

azal – pre-eternity

B

baytu'llāh – house of God

H

hablu'llāh – God's rope, Divine rope

hadīs (pl. *aḥādīs*) – Prophetic tradition, a saying of the holy Prophet Muḥammad^(s)

hajj – pilgrimage

ḥaqīqat – reality, the path followed by the Ismā'īlīs

ḥarām (opp. *ḥalāl*) – prohibited

ḥikmat – wisdom

ḥujjat – proof

I

ism-i a^czam – supreme name

J

jamā'at-khānah – community house. Technically it is used for the place where Ismā'īlīs gather and offer their prayers.

jihād – struggle

K

kalimatu 't-taqwā – the word of piety

khān-qāh – the place where the *ṣūfis* i.e., people of *ṭarīqat* do *zīkr*

khayr-i kasīr – abundant good

khayr-i kull – universal good

Khudā-shināsi – God's recognition

khwud-shināsi – one's own recognition

kitāb-i nāṭiq – the speaking book

kitāb-i ṣāmīṭ – the silent book

kullīyyah – universal

L

libāsu 't-taqwā – the garment of piety

M

mā^crīfat – recognition, recognition of God

mamsūl – symbolized, the reality

mansūkh – abrogated. Technically it is used for an *āyat* which is invalidated by a succeeding *āyat*

manzil-i ākhirat – the stage of the hereafter

masjid – mosque

māzharu 'l-^cajā 'ib – the locus of manifestation of wonders

miṣāl – similitude

muttaqī – pious

mu'mīn (pl. *mu'mīnīn*) – true believer

N

namāz – prescribed *shar^ci* prayer

nāsikh – abrogator. Technically it is used for an *āyat* which invalidates a preceding *āyat*

nāṭiq – speaking

nayk-nīyyat – a person having good intentions

P

panj maqālah – five articles

Q

Qādir – the Omnipotent

Qayyūm – the Ever-lasting

R

rāh-i rūḥāniyyat – the path of spirituality

rāsikhūn fi 'l-ilm – those well-grounded in knowledge

S

ṣāhib-i amr (pl. *ṣāhibān-i amr*) – the custodian of the Divine command

sakīnah – peace

ṣāmīṭ – silent

ṣalāt – prescribed prayer

ṣawm – fasting

shahādatayn – two witnesses

shari'at – law, the law prescribed by the Prophet according to God's command

shirk – polytheism

ṣifāt-i Raḥmāniyyah – the attributes of the Compassionate

ṣirāt-i mustaqīm – the right path

ṣūfis – people of *ṭariqat*

T

ta'wil – esoteric meaning

ta'yīd – Divine help

ṭahārat – purity, cleanliness

tanzīl – revelation

ṭāqat-i 'Izrā'iliyyah – the power of 'Izrā'il

taqwā – piety

ṭariqat – the spiritual path, the path of *ṣūfis*

tawḥīd – oneness of God

U

'ulamā' (sing. *'ālim*) – scholars, learned ones

ummat – community

W

waḥdat-i ma^ʿnawī – the oneness of meaning

walāyat – submission to the Imām’s authority and love for him

Z

zakāt – religious due

z̄ikr – remembrance



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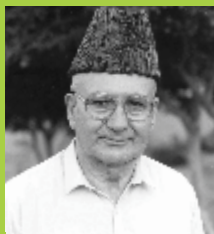
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Ask me before you lose me 28
- **Mawlānā Imām Ja^cfar al-Ṣādiq^(c)**
We [the Imāms] are the beautiful names of God and without our recognition no person's deeds will be accepted 3, 28



In his 100 years life, overcoming all odds such as lack of secular education in the isolated mountain fastness of Hunza, Northern Areas of Pakistan, he has left a legacy of over a hundred books related to the esoteric interpretation of the holy Qur'an. He has written both prose as well as poetry. He is the first person to have a Dīwān of poetry in Burushaski, his mother tongue, which is a language isolate and is known as "Bābā-yi Burushaski" (Father of Burushaski) for his services to it. He has composed poetry in three other languages: Persian, Urdu and Turkish. He coined the term "Spiritual Science" and his contribution to it is widely recognised. His works include "The Wise Qur'an and the World of Humanity", "Book of Healing", "Practical Sufism and Spiritual Science", "Balance of Realities" and "What is Soul?". He co-authored a German-Burushaski Dictionary with Professor Berger of Heidelberg University and "Hunza Proverbs" with Professor Tiffou of University of Montreal, Canada. He collected and provided the material for a Burushaski-Urdu Dictionary, prepared by the Burushaski Research Academy and published by Karachi University. He is a recipient of "Sitārah-yi Imtiyāz" awarded by the Government of Pakistan for his contribution to Literature.

The knotted *Kūfic* calligraphy mirrors and depicts verse 21 of *sūrah* 15.



وَأَنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا عِنْدَنَا خِزْيَانَةٌ
وَمَا نَزَّلْنَاهُ إِلَّا بِقَدَرٍ مَعْلُومٍ

"And there is not a thing but its treasures are with Us, and We do not send it down but according to known measure." (15:21)



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